



NEIGHBOURHOOD TALK

ISSUE THREE - NOVEMBER 2007

A Sweeping Success!

The Neighbourhood Management Partnership has been busy over the past few months organising environmental impact days in all three pilot Neighbourhood Management areas.

Castlefields and Windmill Hill kicked off the programme in style at the end of May when they held a day of action that included a skip scheme, litter picking and the removal of fly tipping and graffiti as part of European Good Neighbours Day. Local young people from the Castlefields Youth Squad and the Windmill Hill Youth Group worked very hard on the day and were rewarded with a bowling trip.

Palace Fields centre was the target for the next event at the end of August. Fences were painted, graffiti was removed, shrubs were cut back, streets were swept and litter picked up in a concerted effort to improve the look of the area. The Canal Boat Adventure Project joined in and re-painted the Lapwing Centre of the Bethesda Church, whilst younger children had their faces painted or their caricature sketched by a local artist.

The October half-term holiday saw two further clean up days take place. The first was on the Stewards Avenue estate in central Widnes where over 30 residents joined in with litter picking and graffiti removal. Skips were also provided for residents to fill with household rubbish. In addition trees and shrubs were cleared along Stewards Brook.

The final event was on the Hallwood Park estate and saw over 100 people take part in cleaning up the estate. One of the activities on the day was a free bulky items removal service, in conjunction with the Safer Halton Partnership's Bonfire Initiative, aimed at removing potential bonfire fuel. Over 50 young people took part in litter picking and collecting trolleys, which were then made into a long train at the end of the day before staff from Tesco and Asda came to pick them up.

None of the days of action would have been possible without the support of our partners, especially the residents of each estate, Cheshire Constabulary, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service, Riverside Housing, LHT, CDS, Halton Housing Trust and Halton Borough Council's waste management and landscape services.



A chance for service providers to meet and network.



Children from Hallwood Park on their day of action.

AREA UPDATES

Castlefields & Windmill Hill

The summer months have seen the partnership build on the success of the first half of the year with more networking and greater development of working relationships between local services and residents.

The partnership used the backdrop of European Good Neighbours Day as a launch event and delivered a high profile Environmental Impact Day on the 29th May. The event brought together service providers and local residents and was a great way to kick-start Neighbourhood Management locally whilst also making a positive impact on the aesthetics of the estate and the local environment.

The Neighbourhood Action plan has been formulated and themed sub groups have been established to deliver activities and encourage partnership working at a local level. Resident involvement has been strong and the foundations are being laid for the development of Neighbourhood Champions across the two estates in the New Year.

The Board is working well and is now looking to strengthen their ranks and co-opted members are being drawn into the process to help address specific issues and challenges.

Central Widnes

Neighbourhood Co-ordinator, Diane White, together with, PCSO Caroline Griffiths and local resident Maureen Macfarlane have each completed Restorative Justice (RJ) training as part of a national pilot on developing the use of Restorative Justice.

Restorative Justice provides a process where the conflicting parties involved in, anti-social behaviour, a crime or local

dispute to communicate with each other in a 'safe' environment where the harm that has been caused can be explained and appreciated, and to agree a resolution.

After a 'CATwalk' around the Stewards Avenue estate in September to identify local issues, a successful clean up day took place on Wednesday the 24th of October. Residents and service providers worked together to remove litter, get rid of rubbish and clear trees and shrubs. Over thirty volunteers turned up on the day to help along with the Police, Halton Borough Council landscape department and Halton Housing Trust.

Hallwood Park and Palace Fields

The Hallwood Park and Palace Fields Neighbourhood Board has been busy in recent months developing a neighbourhood action plan for the area. The action plan has been split into 6 themed groups each of which have a lead officer from one of the partner agencies on the board. The themed groups are: Community Safety, Health and Well Being, Engagement and Cohesion, Housing and the Environment, Children and Young People, Training and Employment.

In addition the board has organised very successful environmental impact days on each estate which have raised the profile of the partnership as well as engaging the community through encouraging neighbourhood pride.

The board continue to strengthen links with agencies not yet engaged in the partnership, and are encouraged by the positive responses towards the process.

The community are becoming more aware of the quick response and community action fund and we are receiving more applications for lots of different types of projects.

Adoption of Partnership Delivery Plan for 2007-2010

This summer the partnership's delivery plan for the next three years, 2007 to 2010 was drafted and then formally adopted by the partnership and endorsed by the Halton Strategic Partnership.

Our delivery plan will be an important tool for the development of the partnership as it provides focus and direction for our work over the coming months and years.

It sets out where we are now, where we want to get to, the tools and processes required to reach our key objectives and how we will assess how well we are progressing towards these objectives.

These four elements are in turn providing the framework for the development of the Neighbourhood Action Plans by the partnerships working in each of the three pilot neighbourhoods. These will reflect the local circumstances, needs and priorities agreed by the stakeholders.

There are a limited number of printed copies of the Delivery Plan and these can be obtained by calling Kelly Keane on **0151 471 7470** at the Neighbourhood Management Office at Runcorn Town. Alternatively, you can download an electronic version by [clicking here](#).





West Bank Bears Rugby Club in their new kit.



Ruth receiving her award.



The study visit to Knutton Cross Heath.

Quick Response and Community Action Fund Updates

The Quick Response and Community Action funds are gaining momentum in the neighbourhoods and here are some of the projects the partnerships have supported to date;

Quick Response Fund (2007/08)

- **New football and netball kit for a local school.**
- **Improving security around a multi use games area.**
- **Martial arts taster classes.**
- **Painting equipment for adventure project.**
- **Senior citizens club day out.**
- **Supporting Party in the Park 2007.**

Community Action Fund (2007/08)

- **Contribution towards purchase of speaker system to assist with safe town centre management.**
- **Purchase of a metal shed, gazebo, tools and clothing with logo for the set-up of a kids bike club.**
- **Building improvements for a local youth centre, including an electronic shutter to improve accessibility.**
- **Piloting a Family Fun Club in Castlefields in partnership with the Adult Learning Team.**

The Community Action Fund allows for grants of between £500 and £3000, and the Quick Response Fund allows for grants of between £100 and £500. These small funds have been proven to make a significant and positive impact within our neighbourhoods.

Help and assistance is available to community groups to apply for funding and the availability of the funds is promoted within the pilot areas, giving all groups a chance to apply. For further details please contact the neighbourhood management team.

Award Winning

Our congratulations go to Ruth Stradling for winning the silver medal in the Local Government Young Thinker of the Year competition. Ruth will now go forward to compete in the UK and Ireland Young Thinker of the Year Finals in Stranraer, Scotland in February.

Ruth spent a week in Bournemouth in October competing against 32 other delegates nominated by local authorities from across England and Wales. The judges were impressed with her argument paper that they felt was 'fizzing with ideas on the complex subject of choice.' The competition is part of the Young United Kingdom and Ireland programme which consists of dedicated programmes for the public sector, local government, the third sector and business.

Knutton Cross Heath Visit

On Thursday 27th September over 20 board members and staff participated in a very successful study visit to the award-winning Knutton Cross Heath Neighbourhood Management partnership in north Staffordshire. The day was spent learning about the challenges and successes they had faced and how they have developed since they began in April 2002.

It is hoped to arrange further study visits to neighbourhood management partnerships in the region.

Intervention Fund

Since our last newsletter, the following projects have been funded from the intervention fund. (This fund is for projects requiring more than £3,000.)

1. iCAN (HBC Trading Standards Team)

A Consumer Alert Network provides prompt warnings and advice to its members about the latest consumer rip-offs, scams, rogue traders and community safety issues that have hit their neighbourhood. It sends messages to members by phone, email or text within hours of receiving information into the service, ensuring maximum impact.

Currently the proportion of people who contact the Halton Consumer Protection service from the three pilot neighbourhood management areas is considerably lower than for elsewhere in the Borough.

iCAN members will also be encouraged to act as the 'eyes and ears' of Trading Standards and Community Safety reporting issues back to them, making the Service much more intelligence led.

2. Mens Health (Halton & St. Helen's PCT)

This intervention will focus on encouraging men living in the three neighbourhood management areas to take better care of their health and to make more use of available health services. We know from the baseline evidence that more must be done to improve men's health since too many men suffer poor health in later years and die prematurely and do not know the symptoms of prostate, testicular and other diseases.

Men are often also very reluctant to visit a doctor until their health problems have become serious and thus harder to treat.

The programme will draw upon best practice developed elsewhere to deliver a programme of men's 'MOTs', signposting, clinical referral and healthy living advice.

At its meeting later this month, the Halton Neighbourhood Management Board will be asked to formally approve funding for the following project.

AIM Higher (Halton Borough Council)

A very small proportion (12%) of young people in the three neighbourhood management pilot areas currently consider remaining in education or work-based learning beyond the age of 18.

Aim Higher will build on very successful programmes delivered in Halton and elsewhere in the region over recent years aimed at tackling the under-representation of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, by raising the aspiration and attainment levels of our 13-19 year olds. This will be supported through improved links between universities, colleges and schools and a range of co-ordinated introductory, taster and mentoring processes for young people for whom higher education or modern apprenticeships are realistic options at 18+.



Young people participating in one of the AIM Higher programmes.

Welcome to Our New Team Member

The Neighbourhood Management Team has recently been joined by a new recruit, Kelly Keane.

Kelly started in September as the partnership's Business Administration Officer, joining us from the Halton Chamber of Commerce.

She has overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Halton Neighbourhood Management Partnership office in Runcorn Town Hall. Kelly also provides statistical reports on key financial and performance issues for the partnership and supports the director and the three neighbourhood co-ordinators arrange and service meetings of the Halton Neighbourhood Management Board and the respective local neighbourhood management boards.

Kelly is a local resident, living in Castlefields, Runcorn. Outside work she is an experienced swimming coach, working with people of a range of ages and abilities at Runcorn Swimming Pool.



Our new team member Kelly Keane.



Cllr John Swain - New chair of the Halton Neighbourhood Management Board.

John will already be well known to many people involved in neighbourhood management as he chaired the neighbourhood management steering group and then the shadow neighbourhood management board that did much of the early foundation work on the development of neighbourhood management in Halton. He stood down in May 2006 upon his election as Mayor of Halton.

At its July meeting the board expressed its sincere thanks to Rob Polhill for his hard work and support during his short time with the partnership and wished him well for the future.

After a brave battle against illness, Bill Edwards passed away this Summer. Bill was another stalwart, having represented the Halton Community Empowerment Network on the steering group, shadow board then full neighbourhood board. He is sadly missed. The Community Empowerment Network has nominated Runcorn resident, Nora Rimmer MBE, as its new representative.

Councillor Kath Loftus, who represents the Hallwood Park & Palace Fields neighbourhood partnership on the board, was elected deputy Mayor of Halton in May. Therefore, she has stood down, and Councillor Alan Lowe has taken her place.

Finally, Debbie Baxter of Job Centre Plus resigned from the board in August upon taking up a position in Crosby. Ian Marshall has replaced her.



Clare Nelson - Castlefields and Windmill Hill Neighbourhood Board.

Comings and Goings...

Because of other pressures, the chair of the Halton Neighbourhood Management Board, Councillor Rob Polhill, had to step down from the board during the summer and was replaced by Councillor John Swain.

Meet a Board Member

Name: Clare Nelson
Castlefields & Windmill Hill
Neighbourhood Board

What made you get involved in Neighbourhood Management?

I was already involved within my local community through my local residents association and I had heard about Neighbourhood Management, but wanted to learn more. I attended an "Introduction to Neighbourhood Management" session which was part of the initial resident recruitment campaign and the session really drove home to me the need for communities and service providers to work together. I was inspired and made a conscious decision to get involved there and then.

How do you think Neighbourhood Management is going so far?

We are progressing at a steady pace with some good quick wins along the way. I know sometimes on the surface people can look and say "what are they doing" and the simple answer is lots. We are laying some solid foundations for local partnership working and our communities will reap the rewards of the period of good planning

What are your hopes for the future?

I hope that Neighbourhood Management does not end when the money runs out and that the residents and service providers will continue to work together. If I have anything at all to do with it that is what will happen!

What is Neighbourhood Management?

Neighbourhood Management means residents working in partnership with mainstream service providers, the local authority, businesses and the voluntary and community sectors, to make local services more responsive to the needs of their area. By listening to the community and identifying local issues, Neighbourhood Managers act as advocates, mediators, influencers and negotiators to help to tailor services to local need and making the existing money work harder.

Contact Details. Neighbourhood Management Team, Runcorn Town Hall, Heath Road, Runcorn, WA7 5TD **Tel.** 0151 471 7470