

**Welcome to the August edition of our newsletter.
Many thanks to everyone who contributed.**

The Apprentice – You’re Hired! Swindon Borough Council’s Housing Apprentice Scheme



Over the past 18 months Swindon Borough Council Housing Department has offered work experience opportunities to a number of young people from the Future Jobs Fund Scheme.

We were pleased to see how our trainees developed during the 6 months they were with us and are happy to report that several of them have already obtained permanent employment.

We were keen to carry on providing work opportunities to young people so we decided to offer Apprenticeships in Housing. In the first year we are employing 7 apprentices who will be work from a base in one of our departments while spending time in other areas of housing to give them a good understanding.

In addition to gaining valuable work experience, the apprentices will have the opportunity to obtain Chartered Institute of Housing qualifications, including the Level 2 Certificate and Level 2 NVQ. There may then be an opportunity for the apprentices to go on and study for level 3 qualifications.

These qualifications are being offered in partnership with Swindon College who will deliver the classroom sessions and set work based assignments. The South West Neighbourhood Resource Centre will liaise with the college and with the apprentices’ line managers to make sure they get the support and experience they need to complete these assignments. We will also arrange for the apprentices to be assessed for their NVQ. This will also create an opportunity for some of our staff to develop their skills by undertaking their NVQ assessor award.

Applicants underwent a rigorous selection process including writing an article on current affairs affecting housing, tests and a panel interview. We are delighted that 4 of our Future Jobs Fund staff will be joining the programme.

The successful candidates start their apprenticeships in September and begin working towards their qualifications the following month. We are looking forward to working with them and keeping you updated on their progress.

For more information on the Apprenticeship Programme, go to www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Community Warden Level 2 NVQ

City & Guilds have decided they can no longer offer the Community Warden Level 2 NVQ due to the low numbers of candidates taking up this qualification. I have been looking for alternative providers but unfortunately it looks like we would need to have 200 candidates per year before it would be cost effective for anyone to offer this award. Even across the whole country we don't come close to this.

I do feel this is a real shame as the hands on role of the warden lends itself very well to doing an NVQ. However, in the current economic climate, it is understandable that awarding bodies are having to cut costs.

The Resource Centre will shortly be offering Housing NVQs at levels 2 and 3 which may be of interest to some of our schemes. We would also be happy to consider offering other NVQs such as Customer Service, if there were sufficient demand. Please give me a call if you would like to discuss this.

The award is now closed to new registrations so we are unable to register any further candidates. This situation does not affect candidates who are already registered and working towards their NVQ.

Certificate in Warden Core Training

Meanwhile, we will be continuing to offer the Level 2 Certificate in Warden Core Training.

We will be running 2 core training programmes in the autumn – one in Swindon from 26 – 29 September and one in Plymouth, dates to be confirmed soon. We currently only have one place available on the Swindon course, but there are spaces still available on the Plymouth programme.

Remember, core training isn't just of benefit to new wardens. It also provides a refresher for experienced wardens. Some of our wardens were in post before this programme was available and we would be happy to for them to attend so they can still achieve a warden related qualification.

For more details please contact me on 01793 464003.

Other Training

Remember that we also offer accredited training in Restorative Approaches, First Aid training and Conflict Management and are happy to discuss design and delivery of bespoke training programmes to meet your organisation's needs.

Community News



CSV Make a Difference Day – 29 October 2011

This autumn make sure you get involved in Make a Difference Day, the UK's biggest day of volunteering!

Last year more than 70,000 volunteers were involved in over 2,000 activities, including renovating community centres, creating bus stop gardens, helping housebound neighbours and hosting street parties. This year the campaign will focus on activities that combat loneliness and isolation in society.

Organising an event is a great opportunity to make your neighbourhood friendlier and more inclusive while raising your profile and encouraging first-time volunteers to get involved. It is your chance to rally your community into action and join tens of thousands of people across the UK giving time to help others!

Free resources to help and inspire organisers and participants include a handbook packed with tips and advice, how-to Guides, t-shirts, certificates, free chocolate and more! Your activity can also go on the CSV website for new volunteers to find out about and come along to help out!

The day takes place on 29 October, with activities between 22 October and 6 November. For more information visit www.csv.org.uk/difference, call us on Freephone 0800 284 533 or email difference@csv.org.uk.

Life's a Beach in Boscombe

The BBC and British Swimming have launched the Big Splash campaign to encourage people to learn to swim and inspire more people to swim regularly. As part of the campaign, the Life's A Beach Festival was held at Boscombe, on 24 July. The event was organised by local volunteer Lee Park who obtained a £2,000 grant from the Swiss Embassy to help fund the event.

Free surf lessons proved very popular with local young people and the beach volleyball courts were in use throughout the day. People were also able to try their hand at Slacklining which involves flipping and jumping on a 1" strip of nylon netting. Twelve local people successfully undertook intensive life guard training. They received their certificates from the Swiss Ambassador and Mayor of Bournemouth and are now fully qualified volunteer lifeguards – just in time for "Learn To Swim in the Sea" which is taking place in Boscombe from 2 – 23 August. The Swiss Embassy also donated some wetsuits and surfing equipment to encourage local people to carry on developing their beach skills.

For more information go to www.bbc.co.uk/bigsplash

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West Berkshire Neighbourhood Wardens

By Andrew Cooch, Warden Manager



West Berkshire Neighbourhood Warden Jenni Nash recently worked with Reading Community Church (RCC) to organise and run the second annual Community Funday in Calcot. The aim of the event was to be a free, or absolute minimum cost activity bringing people in the community together.

A lot of background work was done in partnership with the RCC during the build up to the event. Jenni and the whole West Berkshire Neighbourhood Warden team took the lead on obtaining external funding for the event and on booking the fire engine and local charities and organisations. They also took on the challenge of finding ways to make the event bigger and better than the previous year. This included sourcing a human table football game.

The Wardens also helped to deliver advertising leaflets to both the Calcot and Beansheaf estates to publicise the event.

The event was a huge success, with at least double the number of people attending compared to last year. Lots of community groups got involved: the local pre-school ran a "soak the teacher" stand and the local Infants' school organised a badge making activity. Many local and national charities ran activities such as face painting, Xbox Kinect, soft play area, tombola, and a "name the teddy" stand. There was even a free popcorn and candyfloss stand for those with a sweet tooth! There was also a ring where clubs such as Rugby Tots, Tai Kwon Do, and local dance groups put on displays and interactive sessions. This was extremely popular and attracted a lot of attention throughout the day. Even the rain which had been forecast held off until after the event had finished!

The Wardens and the local Neighbourhood Police Team ran four activities including the Mobile Police Station where members of public could raise concerns with the relevant agency (including Police, Wardens, and Sovereign's Local Housing Officer) and the first aid room. The main event run by the Wardens was the "Human Table Football" which was extremely successful, especially with the kids. Lastly the Wardens ran the soft archery session, which was also really popular with adults and kids alike!



The very popular Human Table Football Game in action

The event could not have run without the dedication of the team of volunteers from RCC. Their fantastic organisation meant that local residents were able to enjoy a day out with the family at virtually no cost to themselves. This was a truly successful community building event that can only get bigger each year.

Swindon Neighbourhood Wardens – Working Across Generations

Teams 2 & 3 Launch Young Wardens

By Lead Wardens Lorna Brown, and Warrick Lynham

Following the success Team 1 have had with their Young Wardens programme in the Penhill area of Swindon, the scheme has now been extended to cover Toothill, Freshbrook and Pinehurst.

Team 3 hosted the official launch on Tuesday 2 August. Swindon Mayor Ray Ballman opened the event which was attended by many housing dignitaries, representatives from the fire service and sponsors of the scheme. The scheme, for children between 7-11 years, is free of charge and aims to engage with them. We hope they will be educated about the benefits of helping the community while they have fun!



Young Wardens with Swindon Mayor Cllr Ray Ballman at the launch

Team 3 are holding events every Tuesday throughout August and have a fun filled programme which includes a trip to the Fire Station and the Link Centre.



Team 2 Young Wardens at work

Meanwhile Team 2 have got off to a great start with their scheme which held its first event on Wednesday 3 August. 19 children came along to take part in the first project which involved planting a flower bed and litter picking an area in the Tree Courts which was looking worse for wear. The plants and soil were donated by Swindon Garden Centre and refreshments were provided by Tesco. The Young Wardens had a brilliant time, and enjoyed improving something in the community they live. They are looking forward to the next event - a treasure hunt on 10 August.

Later in Life Event Sponsored by Age UK

by Neighbourhood wardens Dave Fletcher and Joe Gassmann

After their successful application for an Age UK grant, Swindon wardens Joe Gassmann and Dave Fletcher organised an event for People in Later Life. The 'Later Life Party' took place on 26 July at Walcot Dome where older residents were provided with a buffet lunch prepared by the wardens and served by children from Churchfield School.



Warden Joe Gassmann with some of our older residents

The aim was to provide an informal event where local residents could speak to representatives from the Police, Citizens Advice, Housing, Neighbourhood Wardens and AGE UK and get advice

The event was well attended and the feedback from the residents was very positive. Some even asked if this could be held on a regular basis.

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Stroud Neighbourhood Wardens On Patrol

By Chris Acock, Lead Neighbourhood Warden

Warden, there's a sofa on my car!



Unusual place for fly tip!

No task is too big, or too bizarre for Stroud Neighbourhood Wardens! Lead Warden Chris Acock recently received a call from an elderly resident who looked out the window to discover that a sofa had been placed on top of his car during the night. Not knowing who else to turn to, he called the Neighbourhood Wardens and Chris was able to arrange for the sofa to be removed.

Factoring Out Fly Posting

Stroud District Council have an approach to fly posting known as "Factor 4". Under this approach, people are able to advertise their event no more than 4 weeks before, within 4 miles of the venue and posters need to be removed within 4 days after the event. In addition, posters cannot be placed anywhere they cause a hazard e.g. obscure a clear view of the road.

Despite the council's efforts to control fly posting, eagle eyed wardens recently spotted over 160 signs that had been displayed at traffic lights, on street furniture and on roundabouts across the district. These advertisements, inviting people to Persian rug and garden furniture sales, contravened our 'Factor 4' anti-fly posting policy and were promptly removed by Pete and Andy.



Poster boys Pete and Andy

As well as removing the signs, the neighbourhood wardens contacted the promotions company responsible and advised them of the Council's anti-fly posting policy and their liabilities under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

Stroud District Council, working in partnership with Gloucestershire Highways, are prepared to help charitable organisations to allow them to advertise on the highway, in a balanced way that allows advertising which is safe and doesn't spoil our lovely countryside.

Teignbrige Environment Warders

By Kevin Arnold, Senior Warden

Ghost Busters See Off Phantom!

We have had a long running battle with the 'Phantom Fly-Tipper' who for some time has been dumping black sacks containing straw, millet, dog food cans and dog excrement randomly in the lanes surrounding Kingsteignton.

The good news is that although we have been unable to discover the identity of the miscreant, evidence was found in the last recorded fly-tip that led us to visit several businesses and make enquiries. Since those visits were made, the 'Phantom' appears to have vanished from the highways of Teignbridge with no further incidents of that type discovered or reported.

Fine Performance By Dog Walker

An eagle eyed Teignbridge resident was sitting on his balcony taking the air recently, when he spotted a man walking his dog.

The dog adopted the position to foul and completed the act. The owner then mimed picking it up, but didn't! The incident was immediately reported to the Dog Warden, who was then able to speak to the owner and point out the error of his ways. A £50 fixed penalty was issued and paid on the spot!

News Round Up

Windmill Skate Park Project

Many thanks to everyone who voted for the Torbay Windmill Skate Park to receive funding from the Jubilee People's Millions.

The good news is that we were awarded **£60,000** and we are now looking forward to work starting on the park.

We really appreciate your support!

The Torbay Street Warden Team

Next Regional Network Meeting

Friday 30 September
10.30am – 3pm
Civic Offices
Swindon, SN1 3AH

All Welcome

Congratulations

to Winchester (and previously Bournemouth) Neighbourhood Warden Hannah King and her husband Stephen on the birth of their daughter Lily on 22 July



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Winchester Neighbourhood Wardens Winnall residents celebrate their Golden Anniversary

By Clive Elliston, Neighbourhood Warden Supervisor

Residents of a Winchester estate came together to celebrate its 50th Anniversary with a street party, organised jointly by Winnall Community Association and Winchester City Council's Neighbourhood Warden service.

The party, held in Garbett Road, took place on Saturday 30 July to mark this important milestone for the estate. Cars were barred from the street as local community partners erected gazebos and decorations. Tables and chairs lined the street for the day so residents could enjoy their refreshments and the local entertainment on offer.

Local resident Jeanne Saunders commented "It's a pity the estate does not get together more often," whilst her friend Sheila Reed, who was enjoying the celebrations said "It's lovely, better than I expected".

This was a unique opportunity for current and former residents to meet and reminisce. Trevor Lynas, Neighbourhood Warden was delighted to see several generations joining together to celebrate the history of Winnall.



Warden Trevor Lynas with Jeanne Saunders and Sheila Reed who have both lived on the estate for 50 years



A Winnall Rock School band perform

The attractions included a willow workshop, comedy magic show, over 50s sing-along, inflatable games, a mobile farm, African drumming and performances by the Intregr8 Dance Academy and Winnall Rock School.

Ross Turler of the Winchester City Council museums service liaised with local residents to set up an exhibition of Roman and Anglo-Saxon finds from the locality, as well as black and white photographs from Winnall's early days. This included photos of the former train line and church that once made up part of the estate.



The mobile farm was a huge hit

Prior to the event school children created bunting and a commemorative textile piece which served as a backdrop for the celebrations. Funding for the event, which was enjoyed by young and old alike, was arranged by Cllr Brian Collin and Winchester City Council's Landlord Services team.

Winnall
Rock
School
Band
Perform

Torbay Street Wardens
By Brian Mallaney, Senior Street Warden

Go Adventure

Our Junior Street Warden summer programme kicked off with Go Adventure - a week of fun activities including getting up close with the animals at Paignton Zoo, a coastal traverse on kayaks, sea scavenging, rock climbing, archery and bow making. The event ended with a quest to Berry Head where we created a scenario with 2 casualties so the junior wardens could practice first aid. Over the 6 days, 95 young people took part in activities funded by Play Torbay.

Ria Walters our new street warden attended every day of the go adventure activities and proved to be a real star with the young people. Ria is proving to be a great asset to the team.

The Great Tree House Challenge

Hayley Reed Street Warden for Foxhole and Queen Elizabeth Drive has been praised by the community and partner agencies for her hard work in helping the Wild Fox Community Development Project Play Torbay get funding from Sky Television to have a tree house built in Foxhole, Paignton.

Hayley took a group of juniors to Paignton railway station where she was filmed being presented with the money. Thank you Hayley!

Our wardens and junior wardens are soon to be filmed by Sky Television building the tree house. Watch our for us on a documentary called The Great Tree House Challenge

Other News

Gavin Dyer Street Warden for Watcombe has been involved in an application to Awards For All to fund a variety of activities between November 2011 and April 2012 . The activities will include healthy cooking, arts and crafts, games and small community projects to engage with the young people of Watcombe. The aim of the programme is to reduce anti-social behaviour and we will be working along side youth workers and play rangers to deliver the activities.

Gavin has assured us he will be able to deliver the healthy cooking programme despite his lack of success in the Torbay edition of Come Dine With Me, where he came 4th out of 5 contestants!

Other work includes supporting Torbay's application for a purple flag award. The judges could be in Torbay anytime up to 20 August so Town Centre Warden Kevin Dinnacombe is working hard as always to keep the centre of Torquay clean and safe.

Finally, we are all looking forward to the return of the return of Street Warden Lyndsey Johnson in September after the birth of her baby boy Callum.

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Plymouth Neighbourhood Wardens

The Big Bug Hunt

By Maria Sibson, Neighbourhood Warden

On 29 July our team in the North Prospect area of Plymouth held a bug hunt in a local park known as Titchy Park. The event was part of a national bug hunt to document the type of creatures that can be found living in urban areas and the results went towards national statistics.

The team put in a lot of preparation work and we distributed hundreds of leaflets advertising the event outside all the local primary schools in the area. This paid dividends with over 70 families turning up to enjoy the day and join in the fun.

The children were really enthusiastic and found all sorts of bugs, from different types of spiders to a tiger caterpillar using nets, trays and even a bug vacuum!



Cleaning up with a bug vacuum!

Residents Fun Day

By Caroline Fiske, Neighbourhood Warden

We have been very busy in one of our areas in Whitleigh with a new residents group called Friends of Aylesbury Crescent. They live in a lovely area which has a large open space to the rear surrounded by woodland. One of the projects they have been involved with is clearing the woodland and encouraging residents to take woodland walks.

Neighbourhood wardens recently supported a fun day held to promote the group's good ideas for the area. The event included a picnic where children were invited to create a healthy lunch box with food provided for them by a grant from Stepping Stones to Nature. A brilliant time was had by all – there was a bouncy castle, face painting, a raffle, nature trail, 5 aside football decorating cakes and a story teller.



Having a go at Zumba!

Over 200 residents joined us on the day and many of them joined in on a Zumba (a latin inspired dance fitness programme) demonstration which was great fun.

A very successful day all round!

Cheltenham Borough Homes

By Lucy Harrison & Caroline Wheelhouse, Neighbourhood Wardens

Regeneration In Action

Regeneration work at Scott House has now been completed and as you can see from the before and after photos it looks great!



Before



and after - what a difference!

We have a Community Hub on site providing sessions for our residents to enjoy. These sessions have included making a mosaic and cooking on a budget. We also provided some of the residents with a food hygiene certificate.



Look at that lawn!

All the homes come with parking spaces, rear gardens with sheds, water butts and compost bins. They also all have an air ventilating system and solar panels to make them eco-friendly. The residents were very pleased with their new homes! They were surprised how big the rooms were inside, and couldn't wait to get keys and move in!

Cheltenham Borough Homes has officially tenanted our first new build properties at Brighton Road, with 16 tenants moving in over the next couple of weeks. All the new homes are either 2 or 3 bed houses and we also built four 2 bed bungalows.



Welcome home!

Work has also begun on the Transforming St Paul's programme. In the coming months and into 2012, a total of 48 new affordable homes will be built. In addition, existing properties in the neighbourhood will be improved. These improvements are an essential part of the regeneration project, and will improve the external appearance of homes by providing new doors and windows are re-rendering the front of the houses. Improvements are also being made to gardens including new walls and railings and paving and planting to create new front gardens.

And Community Working

Neighbourhood Warden, Lucy Harrison, regularly visited an elderly resident who had health problems causing her difficulties climbing three flights of stairs to her flat. Lucy put her in touch with Guidepost Floating Support Services for Older People and also referred her on to Housing Options to registering for a move. Within the space of a few weeks the resident had a bid accepted on a Sheltered Accommodation property in the town centre exactly where she wanted to be. The resident is now settled in her new home, making new friends and is very happy.

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Wardens Work with Young People!

Our Work Experience in Stroud Community Safety

By Tim, George and Jordan

We spent our recent work experience in the Community Safety Department of Stroud District Council and worked very closely with the Neighbourhood Wardens. We all found it very enjoyable and helpful and the experience gave a good insight to our possible future careers as police officers.

The things we most enjoyed of our week of work experience was a visit to the Stroud Police Station in which we had the privilege of being shown the arrest procedure that is carried out when an arrest takes place as well as getting to see their full range of equipment. We were given an active way of learning whilst at the police station by each one of us being handcuffed and Jordan receiving a breathalyser test.

We very much enjoyed going out and patrolling our given areas with our wardens and finding out all the things that they do to help the community. We also each had a 3 hour session on reception. This gave us the opportunity to observe the full range of problems and jobs in which Stroud District Council deal with.

We had set many targets of what we wanted to achieve from our work experience, the most popular being “helping the community” and “gaining more confidence in talking to members of the public”. By working with the Neighbourhood Wardens we fulfilled these targets and achieved great satisfaction in the process.

We are all very grateful for this opportunity and would like to thank all the members of the council for giving us an insight of what our careers could possibly be in the future and ways to achieve them.

Neighbourhood Warden Tracy Young said “It was a pleasure to have Tim, George and Jordan with us for a week in Community Safety. They were keen to learn, enthusiastic and they all engaged with the activities of the whole week. As the week went on I seen how they all became more confident and I’m pleased the experience has been a positive one for them”.



Tim, George and Jordan with Stroud Warden Tracy Young

And Wardens Work with Older People!

Age Awareness Training for Neighbourhood Wardens – Provided by Age UK

By Mathew Randall, Resource Centre Administrator

Over the past couple of months, Age UK have held a number of these training sessions across the country. I attended the session on 16 June in Bristol together with some of my neighbourhood warden colleagues from schemes across the South West and the South East regions.

The aim of the course was to highlight the effects of getting older on our day to day lives.

The trainer gave us special glasses which replicated the different sight problems that affect many people as they get older. These include diabetic retinopathy which is damage to the retina causing black marks over the lens, and Macular Degeneration, which leaves the person with periphery vision but no forward vision. We also used accessories to affect our mobility, touch and senses and once we were kitted up, attempted some basic tasks.

Normally simple tasks such as filling in an application form, locating the correct medication bottle, looking up numbers in a telephone directory or reading an instruction manual became extremely difficult for us when we were struggling with sight problems. We also experienced first hand how difficult turning pages can be for someone with dexterity problems.

As a result of attending this event, we became more aware of the support older people need. Sometimes these changes can be simple such as changing the type font but we also need to consider how we can offer more support to older people living in the community.

Wardens are often the key to linking older people to the outside world. Their presence within a community helps make people feel safe and secure, an important factor when fear of crime is such a key worry for many older people. Wardens can also help to combat the isolation that can happen when older people don't have many friends, or have limited social interaction due to disability, lack of money etc.

The warden can offer a friendly face and just a 5 minute chat can be beneficial to the person. We can check up on the persons condition, see if they are in need of anything, and signpost them to other organisations who can help.

This course was well worth attending and Age UK run many course around the region. For more information about course run by Age UK please contact Alex Rogacewicz Alexandra.Rogacewicz@ageuk.org.uk

The Emergency Services Show

**10am – 4pm on Sunday 11 September 2011,
At Hullavington Airfield, near Chippenham, Wiltshire (off M4, junction 17)
All proceeds to Charity**

This show is supported by Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service, Wiltshire Police and Great Western Ambulance Service. Its aim is to educate members of the public about many aspects of community safety and help them gain insight and knowledge of how the blue light services work in partnership to protect the community.



Attractions include:

- A display by the Silver Stars Parachute Team
- Fire engine and police car rides
- South West regional police dog trials
- It's A Knockout tournament in aid of Wiltshire Air Ambulance
- Demonstrations by all three 'blue light' services
- And much more!

Last year's Emergency Services Show raised over £17,000 for charity and attracted over 10,000 visitors from across the region. Don't miss out on the 2011 event!

There will also be a commemorative balloon launch as a mark of respect on the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, which cost the lives of so many emergency services workers in New York. Chairman Chris Harvey said that this year's event was particularly important: "Obviously, the Show falls on the anniversary of 9/11, and we will be remembering our colleagues who made the ultimate sacrifice. However, 2011 also matters as we will be taking a break in 2012 because of the operational commitments faced by the 'blue light' services during the Olympics."

There's still time to book space at this year's Show, which is being sponsored by More Radio – just visit www.emergencyservicesshow.com

Contact details

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