



South West Neighbourhood Resource Centre

“For Excellence in Neighbourhoods”

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Festive Wardens!

At this time of year several of our wardens dust off their Santa outfits and go out to create a bit of Christmas cheer amongst local children. Here are some of our favourite warden Santa's!

Swindon Santa



Santa (aka Warrick Lynham, Lead Warden for Pinehurst) recently went to Moredon Primary school where they were holding a German Christmas Market. When Santa arrived, the choir sang "Here comes Santa Claus" in his honour. During the visit, Santa took present requests from over 50 children who asked for a variety of things from the more traditional dolls to technology such as i pads. Oh how times have changed !! Santa will be visiting other Swindon schools in the run up to Christmas.

Santa Shane

Alliance Homes Warden Shane Edwards came to the rescue when Santa was needed for a party for children living in temporary accommodation. Shane's colleagues suggested that he was a natural for the part, and Shane was happy to oblige and make the children's Christmas celebration complete!



Santa by the Sea



How could we miss out Torbay Street Warden, local radio star and Come Dine With Me contestant (he lost!) Gavin Dyer. Gavin brings great enthusiasm to everything he does so its no surprise he has been billed as the most popular Santa in Torbay! Gavin is pictured at a party for children with learning difficulties where he spread festive cheer amongst the youngsters.

Resource Centre News

By Lynn Jarvie, Training Officer

It has been an interesting year for us at the South West Neighbourhood Resource Centre. Despite receiving no government funding since April, we have managed to continue to offer a service to Neighbourhood Warden schemes in South West and in some areas of the South East, who unfortunately lost their Resource Centre in 2010.

We really appreciate the support we receive from our warden schemes in supporting our Warden Core Training programmes, hosting the regional network meetings, and of course contributing to our newsletters.

Our aim is to continue to offer good value training which is enjoyable as well as informative, and which is tailored specifically to the needs of our delegates. Our main focus as a Resource Centre has been on Community Engagement, Community Safety and Environmental issues, but with over 20 years experience in designing and delivering training on a vast range of topics, I am happy to discuss your training needs and see if we can help.

During 2011 we have been gradually increasing the circulation of our newsletter and we have received very positive feedback. On behalf of our wardens, I'd like to thank our readers for taking an interest in the important work our schemes are doing in their communities. I really appreciate your feedback, comments and articles, please keep them coming!

We are all too aware of the problem of youth unemployment in the current climate. In Swindon, we have tried to do our bit this year by helping young people get work experience through the Future Jobs Fund and now through the Housing Apprenticeship Programme. We have worked with our young people to help them develop the sort of skills and experience that will help them find work. It is very satisfying that several of the people we had on Future Jobs Fund have now found employment, some even with the council. This has been one of the most satisfying aspects of my job in 2011.

Much of my time is taken up at the moment with organising our Housing Apprentice Programme. Our apprentices have now completed the first quarter of their programme and are currently working towards their Chartered Institute of Housing Level 2 Certificate. They will start working towards their Housing Level 2 NVQ early in the new year. This has been quite a learning curve for everyone concerned as it's the first time both Swindon Borough Council Housing department and Swindon College have delivered these qualifications and we are very pleased so far with the hard work the apprentices' have put into the programme. I am looking forward to continuing to work with the apprentices during 2012.

Meanwhile, on behalf of Mathew and myself, we would like to wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Community News

Aiming High – Wild Fox and the Great Tree House Challenge

By Hayley Read, Street Warden, Torbay District Council

In May 2011 Sky 1 HD invited communities across the United Kingdom to put forward their ideas on how they could build an amazing, unique tree house using salvaged materials. This was The Great Tree House Challenge and there were to be only three winners across the whole country. The winning communities would receive £20,000 towards the cost of building the tree house and Sky would come and film the build.

A large number of communities put themselves forward to be considered. We were therefore thrilled that Foxhole Community in Paignton were chosen as one of the three lucky communities who would get to take part. The Foxhole bid was successful because so many people got behind the idea and were willing to work together for the good of the whole community.

A group called the Wild Fox Community Development Project was set up to run the project with Play Torbay. They decided that the aim of the project, which was also supported by Torbay Council, would be to create the tree house and an adventure play area accessible to all the people of Foxhole.



The project site



Aiming High!

Over the summer we built the most fantastic tree house with the help of architectural designer and sustainability expert Charlie Luxton and the good folk of Foxhole, young and old. The materials used in the build included two living sycamore trees (already in situ), 4 beach huts, a big cable drum, sea salvaged materials including nets, lobster pots from Brixham Harbour, 7 tree stumps, salvaged wood, 3 boats, 30 meters of aircraft engine cover material and tyres!

The Street Wardens supported the project, working with Junior Street Wardens to clean up the area prior to the build and consulting with them about the design. Street Warden Hayley Read recruited and co-ordinated volunteers from the Junior Wardens and also acted as Secretary supporting the group during this very exciting but stressful time! The wardens also helped to move the beach huts and to sand and re paint them. These were incorporated into the design.

The Wild Fox group are now working on developing the project further, looking into getting a zip wire installed and a skate park! A manager will be appointed and we aim to offer training and development opportunities to local people involved in this Project including the chance to gain qualifications



The finished article

The project was filmed by Sky 1 and shown on 12th, 13th and 14th December. It can still be viewed on Sky TV's website.

Torbay Wardens' Update

On the Catwalk with Torbay Junior Street Warden Crew! By Hayley Reed, Street Warden

In November our Junior Street Wardens took part in a fashion show, modelling outfits they made themselves out of recycled material. The event was organised by Play Torbay who worked in partnership with Recycle Torbay and Always Scrapstore.

The juniors used sewing machines, fabric and recycled clothes donated from local charity shops to make their outfits and they took part in a catwalk workshop to make sure they could show them off at their best! They used their own belts, jewellery, ribbons, scarves, hats and attitude to add speciality to their outfit.



We were thrilled that our junior wardens were chosen to be part of a Gok Collection Fashion Show at Sainsbury's Willows. The fashion show took place on Wednesday 16 November at Sainsbury's. The children paired up to do their catwalk in front of an audience of customers who helped judge the best GOK creations.

The Junior Wardens really enjoyed the event and they have come up with the idea of doing another fashion show during the Christmas holiday so they can perform on the cat walk all over again!



The winners are pictured on the right receiving their prizes from Torbay Deputy Mayor David Thomas.

Hayley Is Top For Customer Service



During the recent national customer services week Street Warden Hayley Reed won a Customer Services Excellence Award.

Hayley won the Community Award for the worker whose work has helped engage residents in activities leading to positive outcomes for their community.

The team at Torbay are thrilled that Hayley's work has been recognised in this way. She is much loved and respected by the community she works in as she goes the extra mile every minute of every day.

Well done Hayley!

Teignbridge Environmental Wardens' Update

By Kevin Arnold, Lead Warden

You Can't Say We Didn't Warn You!

One of our community wardens recently visited a local shop following complaints about staff discarding of cigarette butts outside the store during their smoking break. Our warden pointed out to the store manager that this behaviour is illegal and could result in prosecution. He left having received assurances that the practice would cease.

One week later, when passing the same shop he witnessed the very same manager throw a cigarette butt onto the pavement! The warden issued a fixed penalty notice which has since been paid. It just goes to show that some people never learn!

Fishy Goings On

What do you do with a fish that's had its chips?

The answer isn't witty, just very odd.

Take an 8 inch goldfish, (firstly making sure it has shrugged off its mortal coil), place it in a large empty chocolate box, place the box in a carrier bag and finally hang it on the side of a bottle bank skip where it will be discovered some time later when the environmental wardens were alerted due to the pungent aroma given off by the deceased.

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Cheltenham Wardens' News

By Chris Traversa, Neighbourhood Warden

Cheltenham Borough Homes Continue Community Improvements

Cheltenham Borough Homes are in the process of improving yet another local community and have identified Hobart House flats in St Marks as a priority area. Following consultation in August 2011 with residents a scheme has been developed called Hobart House Community Project.

This scheme will transform the communal outdoor space around the three main blocks of flats/maisonettes. A landscape architect has produced a draft design which includes an allotment garden area, grass area with picnic tables, a secure bike store, play equipment suitable for football and basketball and a dog area complete with dog bins.

A residents group is being set up to enable them to have their say and take action and monthly newsletters will be used to inform all residents how the environmental works are progressing.

This is a joint venture with colleagues from the Neighbourhood Management Team and Community Development leading the way.

Alliance Homes Community Wardens

By Anthony Hill, Anti-social Behaviour Manager

A New Name for Some Old Faces!

North Somerset Housing who managed the warden schemes in Weston super Mare and Portishead has changed its name to Alliance Homes.

Our 4 wardens are still working hard, undertaking a wider range of duties which have uplifted their status within Alliance Homes. The team now also have new vans bought especially for the wardens.



Shane, Stuart and James, all set for new challenges!

The warden's new enhanced duties include:

- From next year they shall be covering the whole of the North Somerset area rather than the selected areas they currently operate in.
- Their vans are fully equipped with various tools to help them in their work, as well as offering a garden tool hire service to tenants.
- Community Wardens have taken on the responsibility of operating "Molly" the Alliance Homes mobile office and will benefit from the service of a dedicated relief / admin warden.
- Community Wardens, alongside the Resident Involvement team have been involved with Street Pride on one of our estates. They have been working with residents from the Oldmixon Estate identifying areas in need of de-weeding.
- The 15th December sees the start of the Community Wardens supervising and working with Community Payback who will be assisting with the clean up work in their areas.
- The Junior community wardens have started back after a long break. They are pictured below in action last week, putting up Christmas decorations in one of our sheltered schemes.
- Finally from next year the Community Wardens will be taking over the lead role in estate inspections from Estate Managers. This is a huge change in their responsibilities.

We look forward to keeping you up to date with news from our warden scheme.

Junior Wardens Get Festive



Last week our junior wardens visited one of our local sheltered housing scheme to put up their Christmas decorations. The residents really appreciated their efforts and young and old enjoyed sharing a drink, a mince pie and a chat!



Wokingham Community Wardens News

By Jenny Bennett, Community Safety Operations Manager

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Slipper Exchange Event Reduces Slips and Falls

Older residents of Wokingham were invited to exchange their old slippers for a brand new well-fitting pair free of charge on November 23.

The slipper exchange event, organised by Wokingham Borough Council's Community Wardens, in partnership with representatives from Age UK, NHS, the council's sports development team, Nana Fridays and the Society of Shoe Fitters, took place at Wokingham Town Hall. Supported by Mayor Cllr Dianne King, the purpose of the event was to promote personal safety inside the home and to help reduce the risk of falls due to ill fitting footwear. In the photo are Community Warden Susan McIntyre, Mayor Cllr Dianne King, a Wokingham resident exchanging his slippers and Community Warden Mohammed Ahmed.



Falls represent one of the most frequent and serious types of accident in the over 65s and the slipper exchange is a national initiative to help reduce the risks of falling amongst the older population. A total of 40 pairs of slippers were exchanged on the day and the NHS health check nurse provided free cardiovascular health checks to 12 people between the ages of 40 and 74, offering advice and signposting.

Community wardens will now be visiting various older residents within the community to offer them the opportunity to exchange their old slippers and hopefully prevent more accidents in the home."

Not So Pretty In Pink!

Our community wardens recently responded to complaints of dog fouling from dog walkers, football teams and children playing in East Park Farm and Vale View in Charvil by spraying dog faeces with a bright pink luminous spray to highlight the problem.



Foul Play - warden Emma Bacca cleans up!

The spray, which highlights to dog owners the extent of the problem and that their behaviour has been noted, is environmentally friendly, and washes away over time. In addition, our wardens picked up 64 bags of dog foul in the hope that it will encourage more dog walkers to do the same and make the area more pleasant to use.

At the same time the community wardens distributed dog fouling bags and information regarding the dangers of not clearing up after their canine friends to any dog walkers they met. The community wardens also have the power to issue fixed penalty notices to anyone caught not picking up after their dog.

We are constantly receiving complaints about this problem and it extends across the whole Wokingham Borough. We hope that this will go some way to reminding residents of their duty to pick up after their dogs and make the Borough a more pleasant place for everyone.

Swindon Neighbourhood Wardens Update

Working in the Community

By Joan Woods, Lead Warden, Team 4

Team 3 and 4 wardens are fortunate to work with Swindon Walcot And Parks Community Group (SWAP). Here are just a couple of projects where we have worked together.

Planting With Goddard School

Goddard Park School organised a planting project in and around the school grounds. Children, parents, Neighbourhood Wardens, members of the Rotary Club, teachers and residents got involved over the 2 days planting trees and shrubs.

The children enjoyed getting involved by removing the soil, planting the plants, and putting wood chippings around the plants to help suppress the weeds and to lock in the moisture to help the growth.



Warden Terry Tucker helps his daughter Abigale



Lead Warden Lorna Brown gets some instruction!

The children from Goddard Park school were back in action on 15 November, this time on Buckhurst field. Along with the Neighbourhood wardens and SWAP the children removed the annual flowering plants that have now died off. The children put down fresh compost before planting a variety of colourful pansies and daffodil bulbs that will bloom in the spring.

Mr Terrence Haywood, a member of SWAP, gave the children an educational talk about the names of plants, the best time to plant and how long they will last

A great day, with plenty of fun and laughter was had by all and we were all very impressed with the work of the children.

The wardens received lovely thank you letters from the children

Christmas Party For Older Residents

A Christmas party for older residents was organised and run by SWAP with the help from the Neighbourhood Wardens in Parks and Walcot.



Warden Rob Stygall meets the residents

It was a very jolly afternoon with Carol singing, bingo, a raffle and a beautiful buffet.



Merry Christmas!

Everyone had a fantastic time meeting old friends and new!



A fun time was had by all



Sovereign Housing Neighbourhood Warden News

Newbury Neighbourhood Wardens Taken Over for a Day By Chris Burch, Neighbourhood Warden

National Takeover Day gives children the opportunity to join an organisation for the day to find out what work is like, and actually be involved in some of the organisation's decision-making processes. Children benefit from the opportunity to experience the world of work and make their voices heard, while adults and organisations gain a fresh perspective on what they do.

This year Takeover Day was planned to coincide with Remembrance Day, which encouraged young people taking part to incorporate remembrance activities into their programme, in the hope that it would break down barriers between generations and encourage children's active involvement in their communities

On Friday 11th November the Newbury Neighbourhood Wardens were joined by five young people. All of the youngsters were from local Pupil Referral Units, where individuals excluded from mainstream education go for their schooling.

Unfortunately the weather was rather inclement on the day, and all of the activities the Wardens had planned were outdoors. However, despite the weather everyone got on with the work, and the team were able to clear fly-tipping from the woods in Greenham in just two hours.



Before the clean up



What a difference!

In the afternoon everyone went out on patrol so the youngsters could find out what the Wardens do each day, such as dealing with fly-tipping, graffiti, vehicle theft, and ASB. The youngsters also went to known drugs hotspot areas and looked for the signs of drug use, with the Wardens explaining why a lot of crime is drug related. The Wardens also explained about how they work with partner agencies to reduce drug litter, and the work they do on community cleanup days.

As a result of the day, the children gained a great deal of respect for the work the Wardens do. The Wardens also got a lot out of National Takeover Day and took the opportunity to develop a greater rapport with young people who they regularly see out and about in the community. Some of these youngsters have had a bad reputation for no reason - they're simply hanging out with nowhere to go.

It is hoped that this experience will help make the community a more harmonious place to live.

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Stroud Neighbourhood Wardens Update

By Paul Helbrow, Community Safety Manager

Raising Awareness about the Dangers of Alcohol & Drink Driving

Over the past few weeks and in the run up to the festive period, Neighbourhood Warden Tracy Young has been supporting local police officers to deliver sessions at Stroud College to raise awareness of safe drinking and also the dangers of drink driving. The sessions are being delivered to groups of students who are on a range of courses at the college from construction to health and beauty.

The session includes a DVD put together by a group of young people highlighting the impact of alcohol misuse on individuals, communities and the emergency services. This is then linked to the dangers of drink driving by using a hard hitting presentation focussing on a young girl whose car is hit by a drink driver and how this traumatic experience has affected her, her family and the impact this has on the drink driver.

Advice is presented to students, supported by interactive sessions facilitated by Tracy and the police to discuss personal experiences. So far, Community Safety has received some very positive feedback from the 200 plus students who have attended the awareness sessions to date.

Walking to Community Engagement

Neighbourhood Wardens Pete Glead and Morgana Simpson have begun working with Teckels Animal Rescue Centre in Whitminster to provide cooped up animals with some much needed human interaction and exercise.

“Walking the dogs has given us a great opportunity to meet members of the public that we wouldn’t normally get to see” said Morgana. “Fellow dog walkers are happy to stop for a chat and meet our dog and we get to tell them about the Neighbourhood Warden Service at the same time”

Teckels are under enormous pressure to look after and re home significantly higher numbers of dogs and cats than they have ever had to do previously. Hopefully the more human interaction a dog gets the more likely they will go to a new home.

Further information about Teckels can be found on <http://www.teckels.org/>

The Common Scrubbers

Neighbourhood Warden Pete Wilson and the Mayor of Nailsworth recently joined in with the Common Scrubbers working group to clear areas of scrub land. Their aim is to return the area to more natural grassland allowing other flora to flourish, and cattle to graze off road.



The common scrubbers at work

The group was formed by the Mayor to provide better visibility from the town to the ‘W’ (a hair pin bend, well known locally) where there will be a torch light procession for the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 2012.

The group have made excellent progress and even the cows have been giving a

News Round Up

Congratulations!



To Stroud Neighbourhood Warden Pete Gleed, and former Lead Warden (now parking manager) Ashley Nicholson, on achieving their NVQ Assessor (A1) qualification.

New Recruit for Stroud Wardens



Stroud Neighbourhood Wardens have recently been joined by new recruit, Morgana Simpson who becomes Stroud District Council's 8th Warden.

Morgana has a great deal of experience in working in the community, formerly working for the sports development team at Gloucester City Council. She will now take over the role of lead officer for the Stonehouse and surrounding rural areas, from Senior Warden Chris Acock. Providing a uniformed presence, Morgana will be working closely with her new communities to support their development, assist with environmental improvements, as well as acting as the eyes and ears of the police, local authority and communities.

Welcome Morgana!

Regional Network Meetings

The next Regional Network meeting will be held on:

Friday 17 February 2012
10.30 am – 3pm
at
Sovereign Housing
Brabazon Court
Unit 11, Golf Course Lane,
Filton, Bristol, BS34 7PZ

All Welcome!

A fond farewell to:

Swindon Neighbourhood Warden Julie Broad who retires on 23 December. Julie has been with the Swindon warden service in since it was set up and was one of the first wardens in the country to achieve the Community Warden Level 2 NVQ.



We would like to wish Julie all the best for her retirement.

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