

South West Neighbourhood Resource Centre

"For Excellence in Neighbourhoods"

Neighbourhoods Now Conference

*Making a Difference To Your
Community*



An Evaluation Report

South West Neighbourhood Resource Centre

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Introduction

Since 2004 the South West Neighbourhood Resource Centre has been commissioned to support neighbourhood wardens and neighbourhood management projects across the South West region. We are extremely proud of the quality learning and development we provide, advice, events, study visits and good practice materials disseminated to community workers and various local and statutory organisations, and to the third sector community.

The Conference

The Neighbourhoods Now – *Making a Difference to your Community* event was held in Torquay on 30 September 2009 to help promote and show case how warden schemes and neighbourhood management workers support empowerment, promote cohesion and support the stronger communities agenda.

“The room was buzzing with excitement and enthusiasm”

quote from Bryony Houlden, Chief Executive – South West Councils

We, yet again, delivered an extremely successful event which focused on community and statutory organisations showcasing good practice in delivering exceptional services to our communities as well as adapting and diversifying to provide value for money, especially in our current economic climate.

We were welcomed to Torquay by the Mayor, Nick Bye, who spoke passionately and proudly of the successes made in deprived areas of the community and a special mention was made of the work done in helping vulnerable residents who occupied the Shekinah Mission in Torquay. The aim of the Shekinah Mission is to offer support, care and respect to anyone who is homeless and disconnected from their usual social environment..... through poverty, a criminal record or an addition to substance, regardless of their religion, gender, ethnic origin, sexuality or disability.

The Resource Centre would like to thank residents and staff who took the time to welcome workshop delegates and discuss frankly the reasons why the Mission is so important to them and the help given to restore their confidence enough to move forward and positively back into community life.

The Conference had also shown the value of working with organisations to improve community living and add value. This was borne out by a number of presentations and workshops that focused on partnership working and the need to share intelligence to enable a more rounded approach to be undertaken when helping to meet the needs of the community and individuals.

In the current economic climate, we felt it important to showcase how neighbourhood wardens and community workers prove their worth with regards value for money and making a difference to their localities.

“Making the South West a Better Place to live, work and visit”

South West Councils Chief Executive Briony Houlden outlined the South West ‘picture’ and the contribution made by neighbourhood working throughout the region. Below is listed some of the national statistical evidence showing where contributions have been made:

- Residents surveys suggest a 27.6% decrease in crime in community warden areas vs a 4.7% increase elsewhere
- 25% of residents surveyed felt happier about where they lived since the introduction of community wardens
- People living on deprived estates where wardens operate feel safer: 10% lower fear of mugging or robbery, compared to estates without community wardens
- Older people in general feel safer in their homes: 6.5% decline in concerns over bogus callers vs a 4.9% increase in concern in areas without community wardens
- Community wardens are responsible for an estimated 114,400 fewer offences a year nationwide, **representing a public saving of an estimated £228,800,000**

Briony also spoke about the delivery of key national indicators in Local Area Agreements that neighbourhood wardens help contribute towards:

Environmental Sustainability

NI 189 Flood and coastal erosion risk management

NI 195 Improved street and environmental cleanliness levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly-posting)

NI 196 Improved street and environmental cleanliness – fly tipping

Stronger and Safer Communities

NI 15 Serious violent crime

NI 16 Serious acquisitive crime

NI 17 Perceptions of anti-social Behaviour

NI 21 Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police

NI 23 Perceptions that people in the area treat one another with respect and consideration

NI 24 Satisfaction of different groups with the way the police and local council deal with anti-social behaviour

NI 27 Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police

NI 33 Arson incidents

Examples of how neighbourhood wardens deliver key indicators in the South West region were highlighted:

- Soft Patrolling in Neighbourhoods
- Conduct Equipment marking
- Provide / promote victim support
- Hot spotting
- Conduct environmental surveys
- Remove and clear rubbish
- Initiate 'Safe and Clean' days
- Remove graffiti
- Remove needles from public areas
- Remove / clear drug dens
- Report and facilitate the removal of litter, dog fouling, abandoned vehicles, fly tipping, graffiti, etc.
- Help reduce the Fear of Crime
- Promote existing community and social activities
- Develop and establish activities, local help groups, counselling services
- Work with young people to establish diversionary activities
- Support vulnerable residents
- Be a friend to everyone
- Give information to the community and receive it - Linkers
- Give presentations in schools, community meetings, to other agencies, etc.
- Establish and work with Neighbourhood Watch schemes
- Act as professional witnesses

The Conference showcased specific examples of achieving the above by diversifying roles to help create added value for money and providing greater support to the community.

Neighbourhood Wardens from Torbay Council, South Ward Neighbourhood Partnership and North Somerset Council, Stroud District Council and Forest of Dean District Council all contributed to the event by outlining how their schemes help improve the quality of life for people in their most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and how they ensure that service providers are more responsive to local needs whilst improving delivery.

Windermere Garden Area
Weston Super Mare 2008

Windermere Garden Area
Weston Super Mare 2009

Residents develop sense of pride and ownership in the neighbourhood



We would like to thank all those who had taken part during this event for their contribution to our regional Conference and helping to make it such a success. Links to presentations can be found on our website www.swresourcecentre.org.uk

A special **thank you** to the Torbay Street Wardens who provided an exceptional welcoming service throughout the day.

Developing Staff in a Changing World

“We all have to expand our capabilities to encompass the changing world, its growing diversity and, indeed, its complexity.”

Lachlan Murdoch

A session was facilitated by Mark Walker, Manager of the South West Neighbourhood Resource Centre, focusing on how we all have to be aware of change and adapt our personal development to enable us to continually meet the ever changing needs of the communities we live and work in.

Delegates were asked to think about their job role and what they see as a learning need to improve the service that they offer and help meet Local Area Agreement Indicators.

The South West Neighbourhood Resource Centre is in the process of reviewing the list and working towards developing programmes that cover themes outlined in delegates' responses.

Themes include:

- Adapting to change
- Change management
- Networking and shared learning with other agencies and communities
- Engaging the community
- Partnership working

Below is a breakdown of delegates' responses to 'skills required in their job role' and their 'perceived learning requirements'.

Skills required to successful deliver job roles within community sectors	Perceived learning requirements and needs for continued evolvment and success in job role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acceptance of change ▪ Adaptable ▪ An open mind ▪ Assessable/visible ▪ Being honest and truthful ▪ Best practice ▪ Change management skills ▪ Common goals ▪ Communication ▪ Community development skills ▪ Courage ▪ Creativity ▪ Empathy ▪ Energy and enthusiasm ▪ Engagement ▪ Existing life experiences and skills ▪ Flexibility ▪ Good communication skills ▪ Good people ▪ Imagination ▪ Integration and diversity ▪ IT skills ▪ Knowledge ▪ Knowledge of how to access service ▪ Liaison skills ▪ Life skills ▪ Listening ▪ Local and contact networks ▪ Local knowledge ▪ Meditation ▪ Mobile and rapid response ▪ Motivation ▪ Natural thanks ▪ Organisational skills ▪ Partnership working ▪ Patience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to adapt to change (tech) ▪ Adding to service not making new one's/new jobs - doing the same as others jobs ▪ Belief and trust ▪ Breaking away from 'silo' thinking ▪ Change management skills ▪ Commitment ▪ Communication ▪ Community consultation ▪ Community engagement ▪ Cultural change of recognition of volunteers ▪ Cultures ▪ Development needs ▪ Empathy ▪ Engagement ▪ Funding ▪ Imagination ▪ Improved working environment ▪ Improvement ▪ Increase contacts ▪ Increase funding (to expand to be maintained) ▪ Information sharing ▪ Languages ▪ Leadership skills ▪ Listen to peoples needs ▪ Local knowledge and experience ▪ Match skills to Individuals ▪ More link up working ▪ More networking ▪ More staff ▪ Motivation ▪ Multi-agency working ▪ Natural thanks ▪ Negotiation skills ▪ Non-judgemental

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Problem solving ▪ Receptive to change ▪ Resilience ▪ Respect ▪ Respect & credibility ▪ Shared resources ▪ Signposting / networking skills ▪ Sense of humour ▪ Skills ▪ Skills, mixed and working in different teams ▪ Specialist knowledge of flood risk ▪ The potential to co-ordinate between stakeholders and partners ▪ Tools for the Job ▪ Training ▪ Understanding social costing ▪ Voluntary members of the community ▪ We have made it work this far ▪ Willingness to learn and change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open mind ▪ Understanding risks and acceptance ▪ Opportunities ▪ Optimism ▪ Partnership working ▪ Patience ▪ Perspective ▪ Political awareness ▪ Problem solving ▪ Processes to enable sharing of information ▪ Proper training ▪ Resources ▪ Respect ▪ Shared resources ▪ Shared targets ▪ Smarter working practises ▪ Source training ▪ Strategic direction ▪ Team building ▪ The tools to do the job properly ▪ Tolerance ▪ Too many irrelevant targets ▪ Training opportunities ▪ Trust ▪ Try new things ▪ Understanding ▪ Understanding partner agencies roles, can we share more! ▪ Vision ▪ Wisdom
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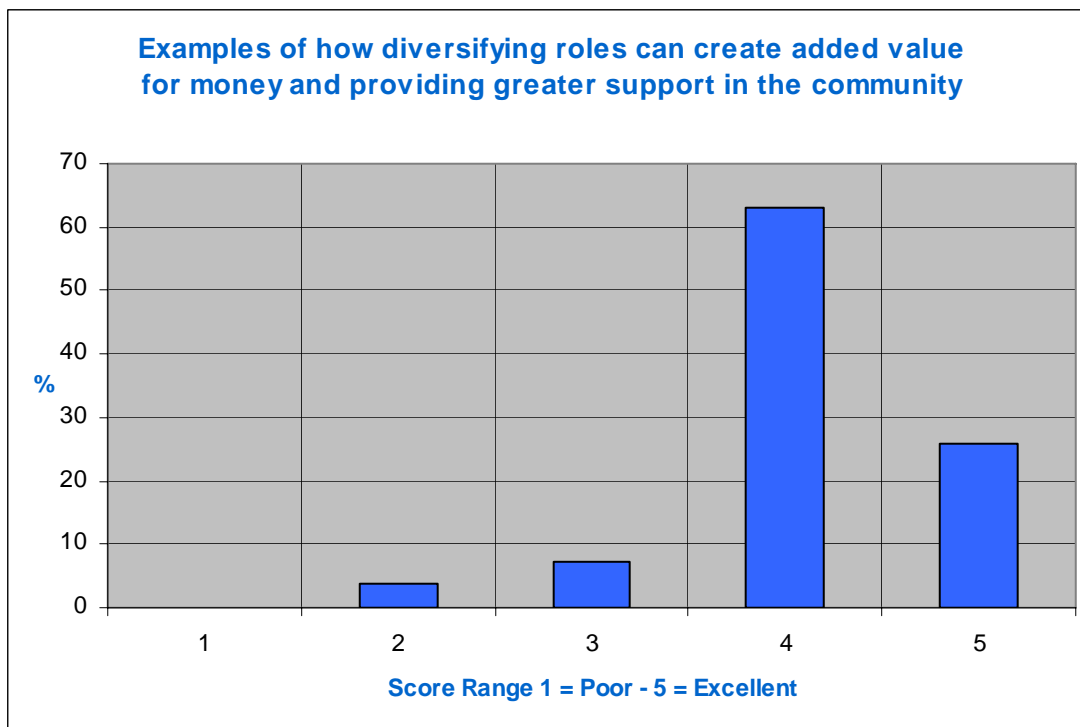
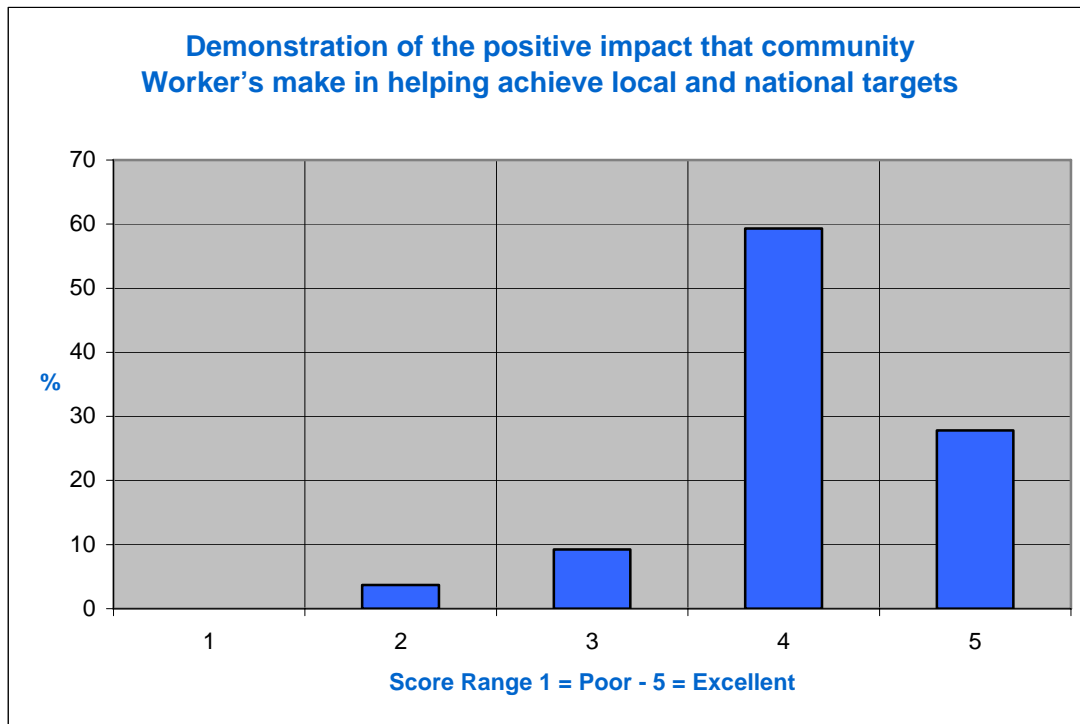
Attendance

A total of 93 people attended this event from various organisations across the South West. Below is a graph showing the locations and organisations of attendees.

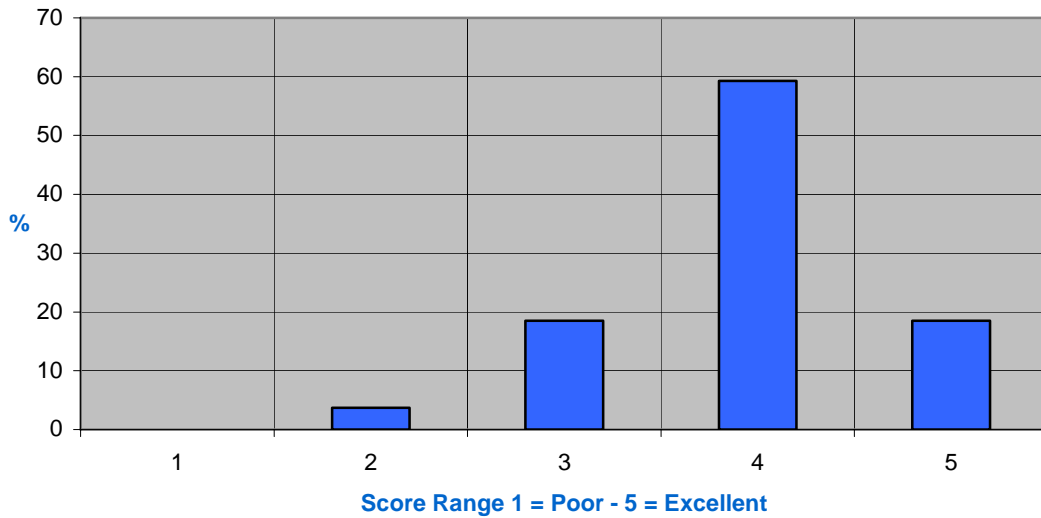
Organisation	TOTAL	Wiltshire	Cornwall	Devon	Dorset	Glos	Avon	Somerset
LA Elected Member		1		1				1
LA Co-Location Partnership Manger					1			
LA Housing Community Development Worker				1				
LA Business / Development Officer								1
LA Learning and Engagement		1						
LA Safer Stronger Communities						2		
LA Communities Co-Ordinator / Officer						1		
LA Private Sector Housing / Regeneration				1				
LA Corporate Director				1				
LA Information / Community Officer				1				
LA Neighbourhood Officer								1
LA Gipsy & Traveller Team							3	
Town Clerk/Town Warden								1
Audit Commission				1				
Environment Agency			1		1			
Strategic Partnerships								1
Fire and Rescue				1				
HM Court Services / Probation Service				1	1			
Police		2		13				
British Transport Police				1				
Voluntary Sector		1		1	1			2
Housing Associations				9	1	5		2
Tenants/Residents				1	1			
BME Groups							1	
Neighbourhood Warden / Street Wardens		2	1	9		10		2
Street Pastors				3				
TOTAL NUMBERS OF ATTENDEES	93	7	2	45	6	18	4	11

Feedback Sheets

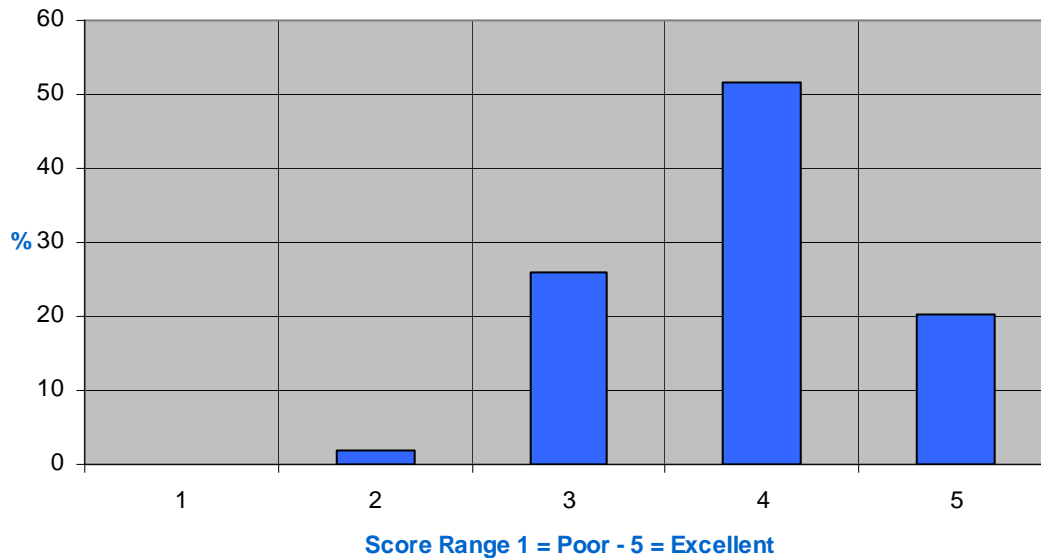
The feedback sheets asked delegates to rate various aspects of the Conference.

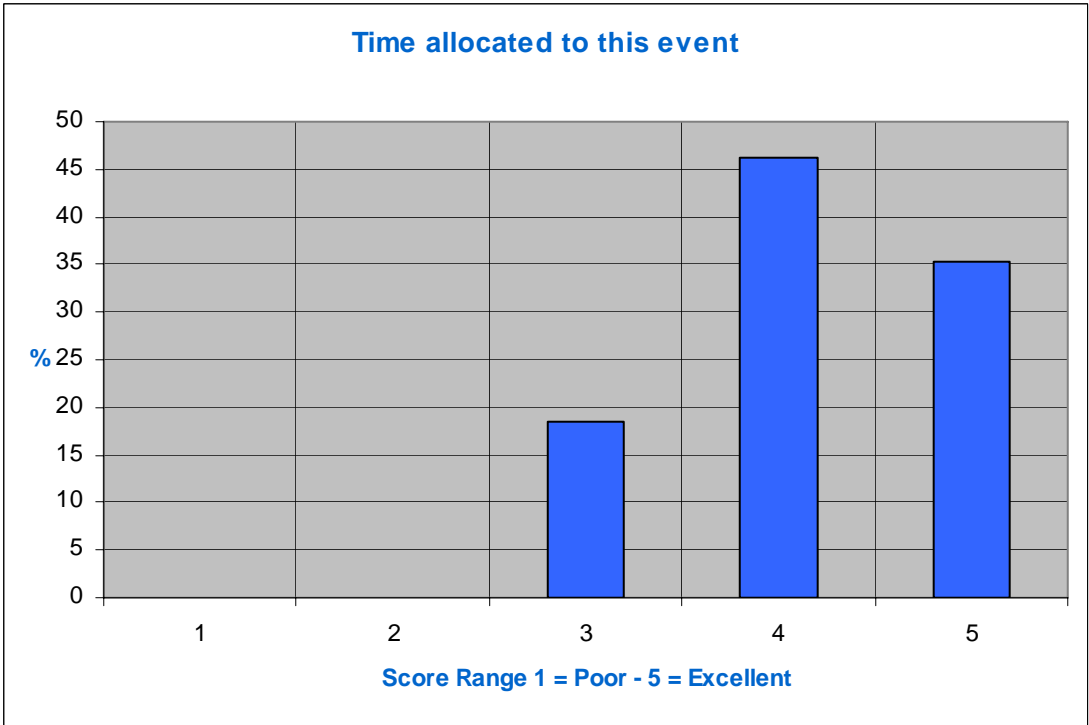
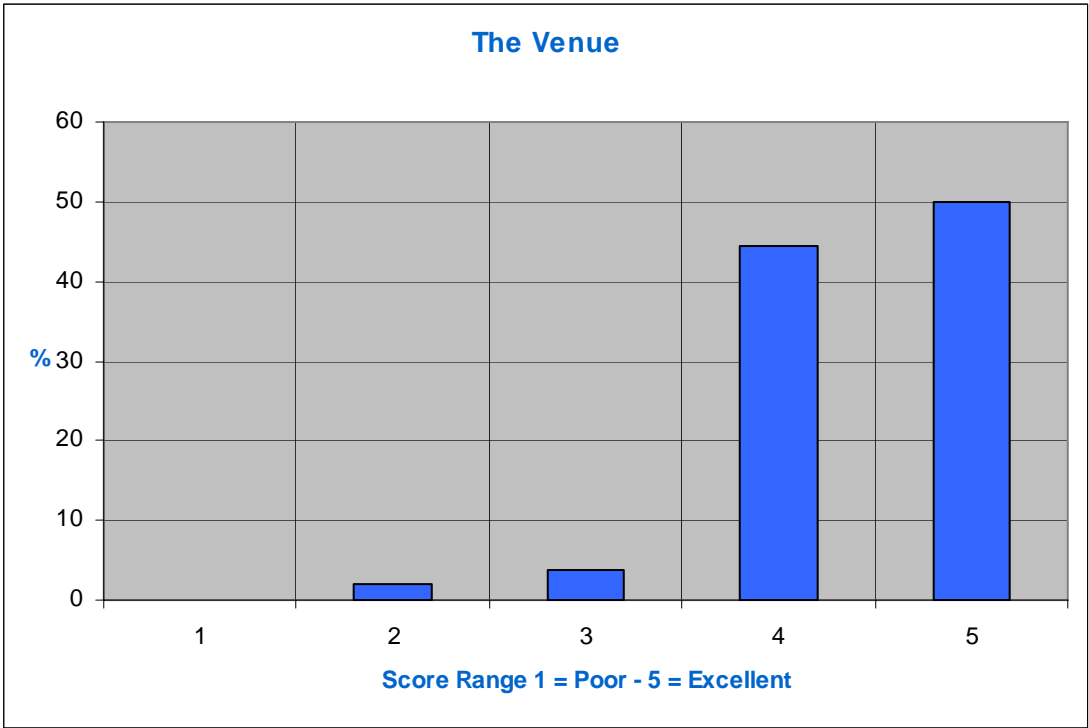


Providing examples of opportunities available to help community-based roles develop to increase both maximum potential of workers and cost effectiveness to organisations

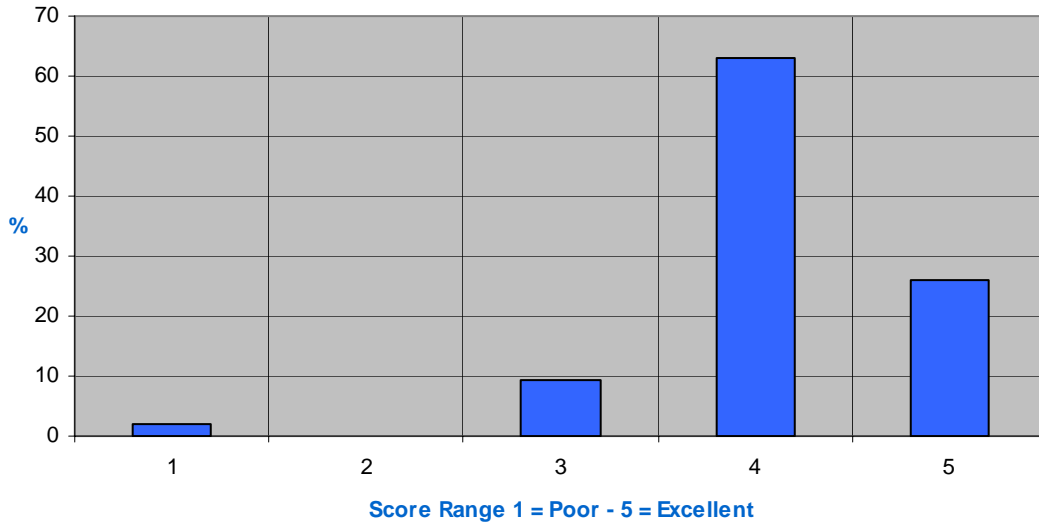


The vital role statutory authorities play in developing initiatives to support the local needs

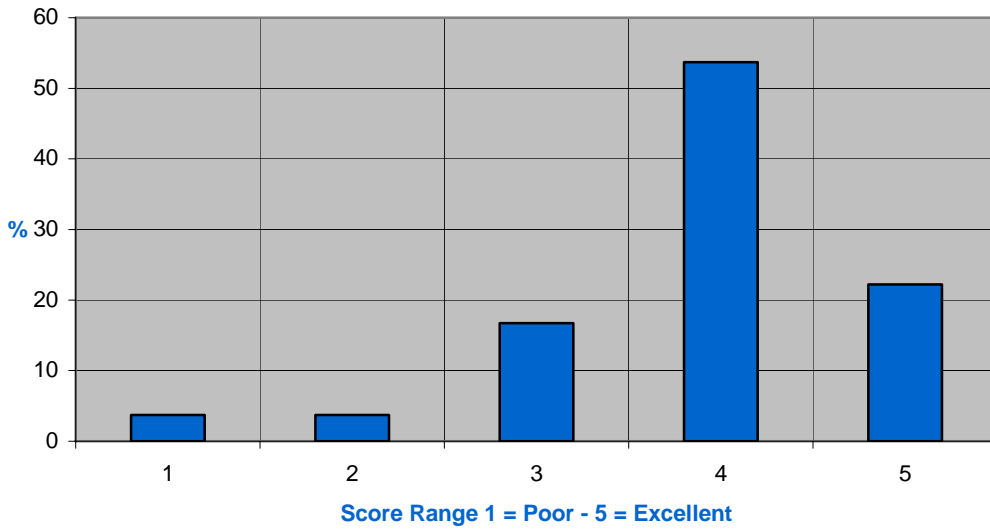




Overall assessment of the standard of the event and the Speakers



To what extent were your expectations from the programme fulfilled?



Overview of Feedback Received and Comments Made

Well organised, polite staff, excellent venue.

Councillor Mollie Groom, Wiltshire Council

I would like to say as a CDW myself, the work the wardens are doing is very beneficial to our communities. Keep up the good work.

Anne Crocker, Gypsy and Traveller Community Development Worker, Bristol City Council

Useful insight to wardens – would like more explanation of inter-work with PCSO/Police at local level to see how county's differ in using resources.

Steve Houston, Sgt, Dorset Police

A brilliant opportunity to network and identify contact who can share ideas and best practice/knowledge/experiences. Made some useful contacts in the hope of setting up an event to bring people together to showcase the work of the street wardens in the hope Dorset could have something similar – we need them!

Kris Hallett, Community Development Worker, Dorset Community Action

Thoroughly enjoyed the event. The work of the street wardens is truly inspirational! Would be good to know a bit more about how work is funded and building a case for funding.

Jackie Blight, Community Projects Officer, Devon and Cornwall Housing Association

Very well organised day. Good opportunity to network with other agencies and staff who do a similar job. Great information and packs made available for all delegates.

Ken Bodycombe, Community Development Officer, Magna Housing Association

The speakers were good but it would have been good if more time had been allocated. They were all packed into a short space of time. Workshops were very good and informative – gave good examples of partnership working. It would be nice to have more representation of schemes in the Plymouth area.

Sue Edmans, Neighbourhood Co-ordinator, West County Housing

A very stimulating and interesting day – good mix of speakers and presentations. Very well organised. 'Making a difference' workshop – excellent. Thank you.

Caroline Longstreet, Policy Manager, S W Councils

Good mix of presentations and workshops – got the balance right.

Ged Cassell, Head of Learning and Engagement, Swindon Borough Council

And finally

Our Regional Conference was designed to showcase the excellent work of Neighbourhood Wardens and Community-based workers. We wanted to promote the value for money of wardens and how working together and adapting working practices achieves maximum results for those who live, work and manage in communities.

These outcomes were successfully achieved.

The South West Neighbourhood Resource Centre is looking forward to continuously reviewing and improving the services we offer to community organisations across the South West region. If you would like to find out more about the Resource Centre and the types of support and training opportunities available to you please do not hesitate to contact us.



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