

South West Neighbourhood Resource Centre

“For Excellence in Neighbourhoods”

February 2011
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Welcome to the first edition of our newsletter for 2011.
Thanks to Scott Glead for all his hard work in editing this edition.

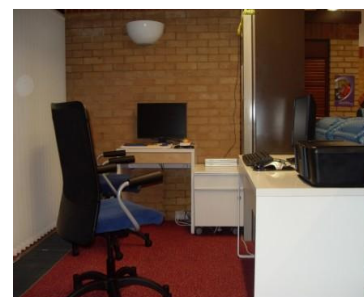
Silver Surfers Do It Online

By Mathew Randall, Resource Centre Administrator

For the past few months, the Resource Centre has been working on an exciting project, bringing digital technology to Sheltered Housing Schemes in Swindon. We have received grants from ‘Get Digital’ to provide equipment, Internet access and support to 5 of the Borough’s Sheltered Housing schemes. Get Digital is funded by communities and local government and it aims to make sure older people living in sheltered housing benefit from access to the internet and online services

The residents of the schemes got together to agree what equipment they would like, and what they wanted to use the Internet for. They were eager to have better contact with friends and family and to be able to shop on-line. Residents were also keen to use this project as an opportunity to spend more time together socially and intergenerational work has been also identified as a benefit. One of the schemes now has local school children come in to offer advice and tips on using the Internet and to share their computer wizardry.

We then bought a range of products to meet with their requirements, including laptops, webcams, projectors, etc. One scheme has installed a webcam in their bird boxes and the feed is displayed on a 50” television screen. Some schemes have a Wii and a Wii Fit to help them stay active. One scheme even has games nights where we understand some pretty competitive bowling matches have taken place!



The digital age comes to Middi Hayes Court

One of the main benefits residents have mentioned is the ability to see and speak to family and friends in far flung places using webcams and Skype. Some have also been introduced to the world of Facebook as well as being able to communicate through e-mail. Partially sighted residents can even have their e-mails read to them with some special software we purchased.

The residents are enjoying the wonders of the Internet and it just goes to show you are never too old to start learning new things!

Resource Centre News

By Lynn Jarvie, Training Officer

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2011 which has been put together by Scott Gleed, one of our Future Jobs Fund work experience staff. I'm sure you'll agree that Scott has done a good job!

Scott started work with us in December and has already been a great help on a number of our projects. Lucy Elliott joined in January and has been involved with a number of our training projects. After only a few weeks with us, Lucy was offered a great job opportunity. We will miss her contribution, but are really pleased for her and wish her every success in her new career. Our third Future Jobs Fund recruit Peter Cox joined us a couple of weeks ago and we're looking forward to getting him more involved in our work.

We have been distributing a steady stream of our Case Study DVDs since they were advertised in our last newsletter. The feedback we have had from the films so far has been very good. If you still haven't seen them, they are available on <http://www.swresourcecentre.org.uk/swrc-index/swrc-sw-councils.htm>.

If you would like a copy of the DVD, please contact any of us at the resource centre and we will be happy to send one to you. We are now looking at the next steps of promoting our case studies DVDs.

We would also be interested to hear from anyone who is considering implementing similar projects to look at how we can

support them with this. We are also considering producing a self-assessment form to get feedback on how well organisations feel they engage with people, how they feel the Big Society will impact and how they would like to be supported moving forward. If anyone is interested in working with us on the next phase, please contact me.

Mathew is continuing his Get Digital work, bringing technology and Internet access to sheltered housing. He is now looking at promoting Spring Online week from 16th – 20th May where older people will be offered a digital taster session. The week ends with Silver Surfer's Day on 20th May. For more details about Get Digital, please contact Mathew.

Our next network meeting is on Friday 25 March in Weston-super-Mare. I have visited the Bourneville Estate on a number of occasions from before the wardens started until now and I am amazed by the difference 2 people (even such wonderful people as Shane and James) have made to the estate. On this visit they have promised us a visit to the new chocolate garden as part of our study tour of the estate. Sadly no chocolate grows there, but I'm sure it will be interesting to see what they have done with the area anyway.

Remember, anyone with an interest in the work of the wardens is welcome to come along. Please contact Lynn or Mathew for information. We'd love to see you there!

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Cheltenham Borough Homes Update

By Lucy Harrison, Neighbourhood Warden

Supporting Our Tenants

Recently the staff of Cheltenham Borough Homes completed a Profiling exercise, which involved everyone going out in their areas knocking on our tenants' doors finding out more about them.

From this we have found a lot of our tenants have been suffering in silence with their living arrangements.

We have been visiting them, asking them to complete Occupational Therapy Referral forms to arrange work such as converting bathrooms into wet rooms, installing grab rails and requesting stair lifts and other adaptations to ease their daily life.

This has been a rewarding exercise for all of us as we been able to assist people who are struggling while making our residents aware of additional ways that we could help them.

Graduation Day for Junior Wardens



Graduation Day

Our first group of Junior Wardens have all graduated with flying colours and were even featured in the local newspaper, The Gloucestershire Echo!

We have started another 11-week programme at Hesters Way School, this time with 14 children. Our graduated Junior Wardens are coming back to help assist with sessions and are very enthusiastic to get involved! During half term our Junior Wardens are getting involved with litter picks and also start planning our Red Nose Day money-raising event.



North Somerset Housing Wardens' News
South Report - Weston Update
By James Clayton, Community Warden

Junior Wardens



Shane and myself gave a presentation to the staff of North Somerset Housing about the junior wardens. The idea is to embed the junior wardens into the organisation and let people know of the good work the kids have been doing.

On the 16th of December we held the junior wardens Christmas party, some staff members of North Somerset Housing kindly volunteered to help out with the party providing face painting and other entertainment. Local businessman Mark Lewis donated £15 of Argos vouchers to each junior warden for all their hard work and dedication.

Football Tournament

Following the success of our last football tournament, we have decided to hold another event this year. Linda Jones our resident involvement co-ordinator, PCSO Kylie Stevens and myself are looking at ways to make the event even more of a success this year. We are at an early stage with this but we have picked the 4th of August as a good date to hold the event. Time for the teams to put in a bit of practice! Watch this space for more details.

Santa Shane!

On top of his generosity to our junior wardens, Mark Lewis kindly donated money for a small party and Christmas presents for children living in temporary accommodation. The only problem was there was no Santa to give out the presents. One of our colleagues made the comment that Shane would make an excellent Santa.



Shane stepped up to the plate and I'm sure you'll agree that he really looks the part! (We hope James is not too disappointed that Shane has found a new chief elf!)

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North Somerset Housing Wardens' News

North Report

By Mack Maconochie, Community Warden

Life on the Streets with The South West's Newest Wardens!

Since the last update our north area wardens have been putting their training to good use proactively working across the district.

Some of the jobs have been fun e.g. helping sheltered scheme tenants put their Christmas decorations up and helping them get in the festive mood. In some cases this was not an easy job!

One job which is not so fun but very important is addressing an ongoing problem with dog fouling in Yatton one of our local rural towns. We are looking at putting in dog bins, patrolling more in that area and trying to re-educate the dog owners who are guilty of not scooping their dogs' poop.

Abandoned cars are on the increase and causing problems for us in Clevedon, Yatton and Pill. We are working in partnership with our local council and police to resolve this issue and have had good results so far. Two vehicles have now been removed and several more are awaiting action.

Green Fingers

One of the ways we are making ourselves visible to residents is by introducing garden clearance projects in one of our most deprived areas, Pill. We hope by doing this it will encourage people to take pride in their neighbourhood and maintain their gardens in the future.

We are looking forward to contributing to the great work that our south wardens have been doing in the past three years and would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a belated fruitful and happy new year.

Regional Network Meeting

on

Friday 25 March

10.30 – 3.30

at the

For All Healthy Living Centre

68 Lonsdale Avenue

Weston-super-Mare

BS23 3SJ

All Welcome – please contact the Resource Centre if you would like to attend

Swindon Neighbourhood Wardens

Animal Rescue

By Warrick Lynham, Swindon Lead Warden

After a call from a member of the public about a pigeon stuck in netting on the 8th floor of Hatherleigh Court, neighbourhood wardens Matt Armstrong and Terry Tucker **flew** into action to rescue the bird.



The rescue team and pigeon

They knocked at the adjacent flat to gain entry, with no success. Warden manager Pete Holohan joined in the rescue attempt, with Matt calling on colleagues Warrick Lynham and Keith Oakey for assistance. Fortunately they were able to get into the flat above and get to work with an extra long set of loppers.

Warrick managed to cut away the netting caught around the pigeon's leg, letting it fall into the net safely. The RSPCA was on the scene to take the injured bird away for a check up and they were very grateful for the help of the warden teams.

However, we're sorry to report that the pigeon didn't make it. His foot and his wing were too badly injured and the vet had no choice but to have him put to sleep.

Inspector Daly of the RSPCA said she was "full of praise for your efforts and commended you for your professionalism and commitment to doing your job."

On The Buses

By Lorna Brown, Swindon Lead Warden

The Neighbourhood Wardens had the pleasure of working in partnership with Arlene Griffin and team to make contact with the local residents in our designated areas to discuss new service standards for Housing

At each stop the Wardens joined the bus and engaged with local tenants to get their take on what services they would like to see improved or if the service they received was satisfactory. We all took the opportunity to hand out our special leaflets detailing the role we as wardens play in the community and encouraged them to use our service.

The day was considered a success and we received lots of great feedback!

School Days

By Joan Woods, Swindon Lead Warden

Neighbourhood wardens Joan, Matt and Terry attended Holy Family School assembly to give a talk to the children about keeping the community a clean and safe place to live. Joan spoke about litter, fly tipping, graffiti and the danger of drug paraphernalia.

At the end of the talk the children asked a lot of questions e.g. how do we remove graffiti, do we work in park areas and woodlands, and how many neighbourhood wardens there are, which was very rewarding knowing the children were engaging and actively listening!

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Stroud Neighbourhood Wardens' News

Supporting Vulnerable Residents - Wardens Support Flood Victim By Peter Glead, Neighbourhood Warden

Neighbourhood Wardens Dan Barker and Pete Glead were contact by a Sheltered Housing Scheme Manager who was about to receive a gentleman and his dog who, just that day, had been made homeless through flooding.

They arrived at the scheme and met with the Scheme Manager, Gloucestershire County Village Agent and the resident who had just been transferred to the scheme. The resident was clearly distressed from his recent ordeal so Dan talked to him about what had happened and what he had lost during the flooding and what he needed to replace, temporarily or otherwise.

A few basic items had been rescued but most essential pieces of furniture were needed. Dan arranged for the Village Agent to supply bedding and carpet from their contacts and for the sheltered housing scheme to provide a bed and basic furniture from a vacant apartment. The wardens then moved the furniture into the flat and made sure the gentleman was comfortable.

We will be maintaining regular contact will be maintained with the resident and the Scheme Manager with a view to providing continuing support during this difficult time.

Preventing Crime – Promoting Bike Marking By Pete Wilson, Neighbourhood Warden

On the run up to Christmas Wardens Andy Murray and Pete Wilson visited Halfords in Stroud with Gary Lynch the local PCSO. Following an increase in bike thefts in the Stroud District Area, the team planned the visit to encourage members of the public to get their bikes security marked.



Teighbridge Wardens' Environmental Round Up

By Kevin Arnold, Senior Warden

Watership Woes

(from the team that brought you the Wallaby Wipe Out)

Watership Down came to Teighbridge in the second week of 2011, albeit in a slightly macabre way. Two plastic bags were spotted by team members dumped in a gateway close to Dacombe at a regular fly tipping hotspot. When we opened them the bags were found to contain a number of wild rabbit pelts and entrails - not particularly pleasant for the people dealing with the fly tip, as they were smelly to say the least.

This incident was topped the following day though, when the team was informed of a fly tipping incident near to Coffinswell. The tip consisted mainly of household rubbish, but one bag was heavier than the others. The bag was opened and found to contain a decomposing fox – could it be the curse of the were rabbit?

Paws for Thought

We have noticed that lately several stray dogs picked up by the Dog Warden and taken to kennels have not been claimed. This seems to be a comparatively recent problem as historically a very high percentage of strays were always restored to the owner within 24 hours.

The exact reason for the change in trends is not yet known, but it may be a sign that some dog owners are finding it increasingly difficult to afford food and veterinary treatment for their pets.

Nationally there appears to be a particular problem with Staffordshire Bull Terriers, although this has not been the case locally.

Crime prevention

Kevin Arnold and the team braved the cold weather during a recent late night shopping event in Newton Abbot to deliver crime prevention advice to shoppers.

Working alongside their police partners, they handed out leaflets and stickers reminding people of the need to safeguard their property, by not leaving it on display in their unattended vehicles. Those spoken to readily accept the advice, with comments such as "It's good to see the council getting involved".

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Plymouth Wardens Get Back to Nature

By Donna Milne, Neighbourhood Warden

PLYMOUTH youngsters took part in tidying up their local nature reserve after concerns about litter were raised at a neighbourhood meeting.

Pupils from Year 5 at Knowle and Shakespeare Primary schools picked up litter in Woodland Wood with help from Plymouth City Council Neighbourhood Wardens, Groundwork Trust, PCSOs and Plymouth Community Homes. This is part of the Stepping Stones to Nature project.



David Vear, Extended Service Co-ordinator and Personal, Social, Health, Economic and Citizenship subject leader for Knowle Primary School, said: "The children say they enjoyed themselves and are very proud of having helped to make the wood look better. It was a really positive activity for the 26 pupils to take part in."

Over the past year the council, together with various organisations, has been working on better path surfaces, easier-to-use gates, picnic areas, school holiday nature activities and new welcome boards (to be installed shortly) in the nature reserve.

Mrs Karen Menis, headteacher of Shakespeare Primary School, said: "The children enjoyed picking up the litter and were surprised at the amount they had to collect."

Cabinet Member for Community Services (Street Scene, Waste and Sustainability) Councillor Mike Leaves said: "We've listened to feedback from local people and it's great to see the efforts that are being made to improve Woodland Woods. Getting the children involved and teaching them the importance of looking after our outdoor environment is vital if we are to maintain the nature reserves for future generations."

Warden Core Training

We need to think about dates for the next Warden Core Training. Please can you let Lynn know if you have anyone who requires this training, or if you have plans to recruit in the near future.

Please also let us know if we can help you with any other training requirements.

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Age UK Wardens' Programme

By Alexandra Rogacewicz, Development Officer - Neighbourhood Wardens, Age UK

Age UK continues to support the work of warden schemes with an offer of free training sessions and grants to support work with older people.

Training Sessions

The free training sessions are designed to help wardens be more effective in their work with older people and increase their skills and expertise.

The one-day programme which is being run by Age UK Training, will include information on:

- ❖ Ageing-related issues and challenges
- ❖ Tools for effective engagement
- ❖ Signposting appropriately and with confidence
- ❖ Age UK's projects, products and services

The dates and venues are:

Doncaster, Crookhill Park Golf Club – 17 May 2011

Birmingham, BVSC, The Centre for Voluntary Action – 25 May 2011

London, The Garden Halls – 2 June 2011

Bristol, Age UK Bristol – 16 June 2011

To find out more about the course and to book a place, please contact Helen Broadhurst at Age UK Training on 01543 503 660 or helen.broadhurst@ageuk.org.uk

Grants Programme

Age UK's Neighbourhood Wardens' Programme is offering a number of £250 one-off grants to support locally based events for people in later life.

If you need funding for transport, venue hire or subsistence for your planned event, apply for your grant now. Grants are limited so apply as soon as possible. Your planned event needs to:

- ❖ Be for a group of older people
- ❖ Support the needs and problems of older people that aren't already being addressed
- ❖ Offer information and advice on relevant issues
- ❖ Provide a chance to socialise, especially for those who find it hard to get out
- ❖ Bridge the generation gap by using youth volunteers.

To find out more, please contact us on 020 8765 7419 or email neighbourhood.wardens@ageuk.org.uk

News Round Up

Congratulations to:

Dan Barker and Andy Murray from Stroud on completing their Community Warden Level 2 NVQ.



And to Peter Newell, Paul Parker, Shelley Gosden, Amy Parsons and Kirsty Lindgren from Horsham District Council on completing their Certificates in Warden Core Training

Welcome to:

David Brown, Neighbourhood Warden Plymouth
Fabrice Seri-Bi and Joshua Bell, Assistant Neighbourhood Wardens joining the Swindon team on 6 months work experience

A fond farewell to:

**Stroud Neighbourhood Wardens Kaz Elliott and Dan Barker.
Swindon Neighbourhood Warden John Richins who retires on 31 March.**

A Training Opportunity

By Normal Amey, Inspector for Devon & Cornwall Police

Devon and Cornwall police are delivering an 'Introduction to Neighborhood Management' training course in the coming months. We've already had wardens from Torbay and Plymouth attending, while other services including the Police and Fire & Rescue have also been getting involved!

The course is for 3 days and includes training on: Community Engagement, Collaborative Problem Solving, Anti-Social Behavior Law, among several other activities. The course is aimed at those working in Devon and Cornwall, however a certain amount would be relevant to other areas.

Those working within Devon and Cornwall can be booked on the course at no charge. People from other parts of the region are welcome and we will negotiate fees with anybody that is interested!

If interested, please contact Kim Hall at: kim.hall@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

Contact details

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