



South West Neighbourhood Resource Centre

“For Excellence in Neighbourhoods”

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Hello and Happy New Year to you all!

All of us at the South West Neighbourhood Resource Centre would like to thank you for your support during the year and look forward to working with you in the coming year.

## National Conference Report South West Wardens Win National Awards

By Lynn Jarvie, Training Officer

The Wardens 08 National Conference took place on 28 October in Birmingham. The event, which was sponsored by NewStart magazine, was a great success, with very interesting speakers and workshops, finishing with an informative “ask the panel” session

Of course the big news for us in the South West was the success of both our nominees in winning their awards. Sue Smith from Torbay (Supporting Vulnerable People) and Chris Acock from Stroud (Creating Sustainable Communities) won their categories with substantial majorities. The fact that many people in the communities in which they work, as well as their colleagues around the region, took the trouble to vote for them, says a great deal about the work that they do and the high regard in which they are held.

We are especially proud of our award winners as we do not have the number of large warden schemes that exist in other regions.

The fact that we won two of the five awards available is a testimony to the quality of wardening throughout the South West.



Award winners Sue and Chris with Mark, Mathew, Sue & Lynn from the SW Resource Centre

The keynote speaker at the conference was Carl Hopkins who worked as a warden when he took part in the channel 4 programme Secret Millionaire. Carl entertained us with tales of his time as a warden, as well as commending wardens their work supporting communities.

The conference offered a number of workshops including Setting Up A New scheme, Sustainability Through Recognition, Delivering LAA indicators and Supporting Place Management.

The highlight of the sessions was of course the workshop run by the South West Resource Centre on Added Value and Innovation.

During the workshop delegates were given the unique opportunity to demonstrate their innovative skills by building a rocket (with prizes for the best effort) before hearing about how wardens added value during the Gloucestershire Floods from Ashley Nicholson (Lead Warden, Stroud) and about new innovations in engaging with the community from Tara.

The three of us hadn't been able to get together until the afternoon before the conference, so while our colleagues were enjoying a relaxing drink in the bar, we were frantically working to pull our presentations together. We then had even more work to do, making up the drinking time we'd lost. Luckily we're old hands at it by now and were soon back on terms with the others.

Our workshop was one of the best attended and feedback was excellent – thanks again to Tara and Ashley for your help and hard work. Tara was such a hit that she has now been booked for the South East Neighbourhood Resource Centre conference in March.



**Ashley explaining how Stroud Wardens added value during the floods of July 2007**

The panel for the final sessions was made up of managers from each of the award winning schemes, with Tara once again in the spotlight. This time she was accompanied by Paul Helbrow, Community Safety Manager, Stroud who manages the warden scheme there.



**Tara Fowler,  
Torbay**



**Paul Helbrow,  
Stroud**

During the session they gave their views on a variety of relevant issues including sustainability, the role of wardens in the community, branding and funding.

Overall the conference was very well organised and well attended and it was good catch up with some of our colleagues from schemes across the South West.

## Empowering & Engaging Citizens Roadshows

Well, it seems like no time at all since we were sending round our last newsletter advertising these events, and here we are having held the last roadshow in Bristol. It was a hectic time, as we travelled round the region, delivering the event to approximately 300 people.

During this time, we've met so many people who are dedicated to improving our communities and the lives of the people who live in them. We really have been so impressed with the work being done throughout the South West.

The feedback sheets have now been analysed, and we have found that the majority of delegates enjoyed the events and found them useful. We have also looked at the comments people made and will incorporate some of the suggestions should we run similar events in the future. Hopefully many of you who attended will stay in touch with the Resource Centre and we will have the opportunity to work together in the future.

It was especially good for us during these roadshows to be able to work with many of our partners involved delivering the empowerment agenda. We had fantastic input from Government Office South West, the Regional Improvement and Empowerment Partnership, Creating Excellence and the Audit Commission, as well as input from a number of community groups around the region. We were also thrilled that Chief Executives and other senior figures from each of the areas we visited were prepared to give up their valuable time to open our events and give us their views on empowerment.

Delivering community empowerment is a big challenge for organisations, so it is vital that we continue to build on these partnerships so we are best placed to assist the people working on the frontline and living in the communities.

Details of the presentations given at each event can be found on our website – [www.swresourcecentre.org.uk/eventsandconferences](http://www.swresourcecentre.org.uk/eventsandconferences) and copies of the evaluation report can be obtained by contacting the resource centre.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed to the success of these events.



Plymouth Aquarium



Tank Museum Dorset

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## **Plymouth Wardens Instigate Operation Refuse Inspection**

The early morning mist swirled around their boots. This elite troop gathered, nervous laughter filling the air. The mission was simple. A covert operation? Well maybe not, but Operation Refuse Inspection was under way.

The brief: to assess the performance of the refuse collectors.

With that in mind, a group of 4 residents, the Neighbourhood Management Team and Plymouth's Waste Services Manager took to the streets in an unmarked minibus with blacked out windows, roaming the streets to assess the implementation of the Service Level Agreement, a contract laying out what residents can expect from the Council's Waste and Streets Services department, and equally what the Council can expect from residents.

Common resident complaints about refuse are:

- Wheelie bins and bags not returned to where their collection point.
- Spillages by bin men not being cleared up

Both of these complaints were seen on our inspection.

However it became evident that residents were not playing by the rules either, with the following being noted:

- Large amounts of side waste (black bags not in wheelie bins or weighted bags). This can cause problems with seagulls and rats, with mess caused by these being blamed on the bin men.
- On tipping of bins into the recycling lorry, glass could be heard. This poses the obvious health and safety risks to the recycling sorters, but also results in the need to tip a full 6 tonnes worth of recycling. Not only is this not great for the environment, but it also results in us being charged tipping fees which have to be passed on to tax payers in some way.

So far both residents and service providers have felt the benefits of discussing the issues around refuse collection and street sweeping, and being able to watch the teams in action together contributed to this process. It's positive that we are all committed to making North Prospect a cleaner place to live, and residents appreciate a more interactive approach from service managers.

## Torbay Wardens Working with Older People

The Wardens in Torbay have been working towards reaching the older members of their Community. Some older residents can feel quite isolated during the winter months, particularly around Christmas and to help combat this the Wardens invited small groups to a number of events they organised during November and December.



Cream tea at Torre Abbey

One event included an outing to Torre Abbey in Torquay to examine the History and everyone, including the wardens was rewarded with a cream tea for good behaviour! Another group was taken to a fantastic lunch at Living Coasts with stunning views over the bay.

As well as these outings, the wardens also provided transport to enable older residents to attend Christmas lunches.

The Torbay Wardens are currently part funded by Help The Aged and as a thank you the wardens organised a bag packing event in the local Morrison's to raise money for Help The Aged Childline. Sue and Kevin donned their Christmas attire especially for the event and I'm sure you'll agree they look very fetching!



Would you trust these wardens with your shopping!

HELPTHEAGED WE WILL

## First Exclusive Interview with Award Winner!

Have you seen award winning Torbay warden Sue Smith in the January edition of NewStart Magazine.

Sue is the first warden to be in a new regular feature – On Patrol, giving an insight into the day to day work of a neighbourhood warden.

If you've missed this and would like to find out more about Sue's work, you will find a copy of the interview on our website:

<http://www.swresourcecentre.org.uk/swrc-index/swrc-latestnews.htm>

## Network Meeting

The next network meeting will be held on:

**Friday 20 March**

At Drove Training Centre  
Drove Road  
Swindon  
SN1 3AH

Wardens  
On  
Patrol

## Happy Birthday Weston Wardens

Just before Christmas, the Weston Super Mare warden scheme celebrated its first birthday.

The scheme covers 4 estates in Weston super Mare and is funded jointly by the South Ward Neighbourhood Partnership and NS Housing (the biggest local housing provider). Wardens James and Shane both live locally and are a recognisable duo on the streets of South Ward where they are the eyes and ears of the neighbourhood.

Here are a couple of examples of the fantastic work that Shane and James do :

### Supporting Vulnerable Residents

We heard that an elderly person we knew was not well and had not been out in several weeks so we decided to call round and see him. When he let us in he did not look well at all and as we started to chat we found out he had not been able to get up stairs to go to bed and that he had been sleeping in a chair for the last couple of months.

The 3 bedroom house he was living in was too much for him and he needed to move to smaller accommodation, so we contacted the estate manager for his area and arranged for her to come and see him the next day. The estate manager helped him fill out the forms to start the process moving and explained that if he moved from his present home to a smaller one there would be financial rewards. We also made a referral to the local housing association so he could have a Floating Support Worker and we also moved his bed from upstairs to down so he could have a good nights sleep. Since that initial contact things have moved quickly he is now in a small bungalow, close to his family.

He has a Floating support worker, contact with the Royal British Legion who have helped him finance a new carpet and a new cooker for his new home, and we helped him find a second hand Mobility Scooter which has helped him to get to the shops, the lunch club and the church that he was missing so much. In the space of six weeks, by speaking to the right people and agencies we were able to help improve the life of an 83 year old man who has gone from looking grey and sullen to someone who looks very well and with a spring in their step (or a bit of extra speed in their scooter!!).

### Improving the Environment

We have been working closely with the local council on the issue of refuse being presented early or late on the estate. We have dealt with it by searching the bags and if evidence is found we send a warning letter to the address with in 24 hours and monitor to see if it continues. In the case where several properties in the same Road or block have done it we have lettered the whole area. By keeping on top of this problem we have reduced litter and reduce chances of infestation and in most areas we have stopped refuse being put out early completely.

### Innovative Ideas

We have been running a dog fouling campaign called "YOU'VE BEEN TANGPOO'ED" in which we have been using an orange spray on dog mess to highlight the issue of fouling across the estates. We also put up posters, did a talk in a local School and ran a poster competition for the best anti-fouling poster. The winning poster is up in all the local shops. The issue has become a good talking point for residents as they were interested to know why there were all these orange marks around and we are now seeing a decrease in fouling.

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## Stroud Neighbourhood Wardens

### Crime Doesn't Pay – when there's a warden around!

#### Andy Foils Arsonist

Following reports of anti social behaviour in Bussage, Stroud Warden Andy Murray teamed up with PCSO Karen Mark to increase the regularity of patrols in the area. During one of these patrols, Andy observed a group of local youths setting fire to a park bench.

From the information Andy was then able to provide to his Police colleagues, the main offender has been issued with an anti-social behaviour order.

#### Simon finds stolen Vehicle

While on patrol Warden Simon Moulding came across insecure vehicle in Cainscross Car Park. He discovered that the rear offside window had been smashed, the casing around steering column removed and radio missing. He reported to police who confirmed that this vehicle was stolen from Lincoln and had been used in a make off without payment in Northamptonshire.

Police arranged for collection and for vehicle to be forensically examined before returning to owner.

## Swindon Neighbourhood Wardens

### Santa in Swindon

Leading up to the Christmas holidays, Swindon Warden Service had 2 very special new recruits – none other than Santa Clause himself, complete with his little elf helper. Santa and elf (better known to most of us as neighbourhood wardens Colin Phillips and Caroline Henly) visited several schools in North Swindon to bring some festive cheer. Colin and Caroline distributed gifts to the children, making sure of course that the wrapping was disposed of correctly!



I'm sure you'll agree that Colin bears an incredible likeness to Father Christmas – maybe we've found out what Santa does for the rest of the year!

## News Round Up

### Resource Centre Training

**Warden Core Training** 9 – 12 February at Drove Centre Swindon

A few places are still available

**New Accredited Restorative Approaches in Action package is now available.**

This training is designed for anyone working in communities and is designed to enable them to facilitate a quick and effective resolution to low level disputes.

As anyone working in neighbourhoods will know, it doesn't take long for a low level dispute to escalate, leading to tension in the community and higher workloads for community workers.

This can be avoided by adopting a restorative approach before the conflict escalates, saving time and money and reducing stress for staff and residents.

Other available training includes: First Aid, Conflict Management (accredited and non-accredited), Community Empowerment, Community Cohesion and Partnership Working.

Contact Lynn or see our website for details

### Warden Vacancies in Plymouth

Plymouth City Council is currently recruiting 3 new wardens – 1 fixed term until March 2010 and 2 to cover maternity leave.

The people they are looking for will be motivated and people orientated, with a can-do attitude who can help continue our work in improving the quality of life for residents in the Stonehouse and North Prospect areas of Plymouth.

Full details of the vacancies, a job description and information on how to apply are available from our website – [www.swresourcecentre.org.uk](http://www.swresourcecentre.org.uk), or e-mail Karen Renshaw at [Karen.renshaw@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.renshaw@plymouth.gov.uk) to find out more.

### Congratulations to:



Pam Wood,  
Lead Warden, Torbay

Joan Woods,  
Lead Warden, Swindon

On completing their Level 2  
Community Warden NVQ

### Contact details

Recourse Centre website  
[www.swresourcecentre.org.uk](http://www.swresourcecentre.org.uk)

Resource Centre email  
[Swresourcecentre@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:Swresourcecentre@swindon.gov.uk)

Training officer: Lynn Jarvie  
[Ljarvie@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:Ljarvie@swindon.gov.uk)  
01793 464003

Development officer: Sue Stevens  
[Sstevens@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:Sstevens@swindon.gov.uk)  
01793 464001

Administrator: Matthew Randall  
[mrandall2@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:mrandall2@swindon.gov.uk)  
01793 464001