

*“For Excellence
in
Neighbourhoods”*



South West Warden Resource Centre

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Anti-Social Behaviour Conference



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The Resource Centre along with the Housing Services of Swindon Borough Council recently hosted a conference to discuss local community issues and concerns in relation to anti-social behaviour on housing estates.

The purpose of the conference was to share ideas and experiences, to openly discuss issues and consider a range of solutions. Over 100 people attended, many from outside agencies, such as the Police, Housing Associations, Community and Tenant groups.

Chief Executive of Swindon Borough Council, Gavin Jones opened the conference by confirming the council's commitment to working in partnership to improve Swindon's reputation as being a good place to live and work. He explained that tackling anti-social behaviour is one of the Council's top priorities.

During the conference Housing Services launched a draft anti-social behaviour policy, which will ensure tenants know what to expect in terms of service and of the Council's commitment to addressing anti-social behaviour. Speakers included Yemi Atiku, Respect and Policy Advisor from the DCLG who presented the government's view on Respect. He said, '*Our mission must be decent communities not just decent homes*'. Everyone who attended the conference was satisfied with the outcome and the council's initiative in dealing with the low level cases swiftly.

Building Respect through Engaging with Young People

by Sue King, Sue King Regeneration Ltd.

Sue was awarded the OBE in 1999 for her contribution to community safety in Wales. In May 2000 she was seconded to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) as Head of the Neighbourhood Wardens' Team (NWT) in the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU). Susan now works as a freelance regeneration consultant.



Young advisors from Brighton, Hull, Middlesbrough and Manchester

The Princess Royal, President of Patrons of Crime Concern, says '*Young people will continue to be part of the problem until they are part of the solution*' and I think she is right. How often have policy makers and service providers made decisions about young people without involving them or asking for their views? A council in a different region put up a shining new youth shelter in a local park, patted themselves on the back for considering the needs of young people, announced its arrival in the local authority newsletter and then were aghast when no young people used it! A local authority official had decided that a shelter would stop young people 'hanging' around street corners. Another official did a 'recce' of the park and found what he deemed to be the most suitable location for the shelter, and another worker erected it. No doubt all of this was well intentioned but it failed abysmally because young people were not involved, they were not part of the decision making about whether the shelter was a good idea or where it should be placed- bit of an own goal then!

In our most deprived neighbourhoods 40% of residents are under 24 years old- major stakeholders and yet probably the group of residents that is least involved in decisions about neighbourhood renewal. More young people voted in Big Brother last year than voted in the General Election. I think there is a message for us all here and one that neighbourhood wardens have been listening to for some time. Wardens are the 'eyes and ears' of the community, which includes young residents. They also act as 'linkers' between people of different age groups, cultures and the services that are provided for them.

Neighbourhood wardens therefore are well placed to encourage respect between different people and for the place where those people live. Very many wise wardens have acted as mediators between young people looking for something to do and older residents who are fearful of young people 'hanging around'. Not only have wardens mediated but many help young people raise funds or lobby for activities that they would like in their own communities.

Warden services across the country have set up junior wardens schemes that foster good citizenship, by encouraging junior wardens to undertake 'grumble walks' around their school and neighbourhood and then report action required to their adult warden mentors. Some warden services run sports and fun activities for their junior wardens and encourage involvement in community clean ups and graffiti removal. Southampton, Swindon, Hull and

Knowsley have very large junior warden schemes, which can help build positive relationships between adults and young people and make young people feel valued local citizens. Junior wardens are treated with respect by wardens and then treat wardens with respect.

Some areas have introduced volunteer wardens who work alongside salaried wardens. This can lead to full time work for the volunteers as well as providing valuable personal development. Setting up a young warden volunteer service could also help build respect between residents and for the neighbourhoods where they live.

Warden services aim to represent the areas that they serve and there has been great success in achieving diversity of gender, culture and professional background. Perhaps we could do more to encourage young people to become wardens by their involvement as junior wardens or volunteers. Having some younger wardens in a service would further

improve diversity but also help the service reach out and include younger residents.

'Young Advisors' is a project supported by The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). Resource Centres are promoting this approach. Young people 16-21 will be recruited and taught to advise adults how best to engage with young people. They will teach adults how to 'youth proof' strategies and procedures in order to maximise youth involvement. Young advisors are paid a 'respectful' wage for doing about 6 hours work per week. Young Advisors have made a 'mini Ant and Dec' movie, spoken at a Strasbourg conference on youth participation, made a DVD about Hull's Community Strategy for the LSP and trained Government Office NE in youth engagement. Your Resource Centre can arrange for you to have the services of a Young Advisor, provide you with more information about Young Advisors, manage a Young Advisor project for you or provide training for Young Advisors.



Project helps keep skaters off streets

by Community Wardens - Bath & North East Somerset Council

The problem of skateboarders zooming up and down the paths laid out in a Midsomer Norton Park has been resolved by a pair of community wardens and a councillor in Bath.

The action follows complaints from local residents and shops that were worried that children were using The Hollies shopping parade for skateboarding.



The community wardens Andy Lapham and Joanna Brain consulted with the youngsters, who suggested a bus service to the skateboard park. After getting the view of the youngsters the community wardens discussed the issue with Councillor Phyllis Gay who helped secure a funding of £500. Once the funding was secured the wardens contacted local Centurion Coach Company who provided a bus service twice a week taking young skating enthusiasts to the skateboard park in the Royal Victoria Park in Bath. The coach collected the skateboarders from the bus stop at the High Street at 10am and brought them back at 3.30pm. The minimum age was 13 years with parental consent.

With this problem being successfully resolved the warden's hope that the community would approach them with other issues at a new series of surgeries to be held in the town, held on the first Monday each month.

Central Subway Art Project, Boscombe

This project won the National Wardens Award in the category of Environmental (Liveability) for Hannah Beech, neighbourhood warden at Boscombe and Springbourne.

Boscombe and Springbourne's Neighbourhood Wardens had the opportunity to apply for a £5000 grant from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to tackle an issue relating to anti-social behaviour.

Hannah and Peter (who has now moved to become a Street Warden in Winchester) submitted a proposal for an art project to be based in a central subway in Boscombe involving local young people and community groups to tackle the issue of graffiti and were very fortunate to receive the full £5000 grant.



The project was photography based and local groups joined the Wardens to take photographs of their favourite places in Boscombe and Springbourne. Photographs from each group were chosen to produce large images, incorporating a quote that reflects why they took the photograph of that particular place and what it means to them.

Hannah and Pete believed that by eliminating the blank canvass within this subway and creating a permanent display it will hopefully deter graffiti artists and taggers from targeting this particular location.

The Bus Station subway (to the rear of the Sovereign Centre), where the project is has a constant flow of people both local residents and visitors to the area. This project is therefore aimed at helping to eliminate graffiti, highlight the positive aspects and beautiful parts of Boscombe West and Springbourne and should in turn have an influential effect on encouraging people to visit them as well as encouraging more people to use the subway rather than crossing the busy road above.

The overall project consists of 12 very large images of areas in Boscombe and Springbourne, which local people believe should be celebrated for various reasons and will be displayed as a permanent exhibition within the subway.

Also as part of the project the walls of the subway to which the artwork has been displayed has been coated with a bright anti-graffiti coating which enables us to wipe off any graffiti that may appear with relative ease.

The Mayor and Mayoress of Bournemouth officially opened the project on Wednesday 9th August. 2CRFM were also present with a Black Thunder to give a live broadcast for the opening.



TRAINING COURSES AVAILABLE AT THE CENTRE

Warden Core Training:
6 – 9 November, Devon
11 to 15 December, Swindon

Conflict Management Training:
15,16, 29 and 30 November,
10,11 January 2007,
27, 28 February
28, 29 March 2007.

Evaluation Toolkit Training: 22 November

Supervisory Training: 20-22 February 2007

Vacancy

There is a vacancy of 1 Neighbourhood Warden within Bournemouth Borough Council - if you fancy working by the seaside.

For further information

Contact Hannah on
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Regional Network Meeting

The next meeting of the South West Regional Network will be held on **Friday 8 December 2006 at Rugby Football Club, Taunton**. Here is a direct link to the web page where you can get your map. [Taunton Rugby Football Club](#)



Have you visited our website www.swresourcecentre.org.uk which contains useful information and links about our activities and forthcoming events.

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