

Report on Community Engagement/Involvement

in Winsford and Rural East

July 2011

(1) Objective

The purpose of this report is to highlight the current partnership community engagement activities being undertaken in Winsford and Rural East from April to July 2011.

The report will also update on progress towards the development of an annual community engagement programme highlighting key activities namely joining up partner community engagement activities, developing community activities and events, supporting community groups and networks, and increasing volunteering.

(2) Partnership Community Engagement Activities

Community strolls

Weaver Vale Housing Trust (WVHT) community strolls have taken place again this year across Winsford and the strolls have been supported by the Councils Area Highways and Streetscene Teams enabling a more effective response to community priorities. The walks are also supported by local elected members, where appropriate Town and Parish Councillors and the Neighbourhood Policing Unit.

Ward Walks have also been undertaken in Moulton and Davenham and more recently the Cuddington Area.

On the Fringe Festival

The Festival was a combination of music, comedy and amateur dramatics which took place over the weekend of 8, 9 & 10 July on the Winsford Marina Island site and was funded by local elected member budgets and was well supported by the local community and visitors. The project was a joint venture by CWaC, Really Short Theatre Company, Mid Cheshire College and Winsford Academy Drama and Music departments, and was led by The Hive. An evaluation will be undertaken soon to move the project forward for next year's festival.

Wharton Library

Increasing footfall is a key priority of a number of partners through Wharton Community Library Management Group. A number of activities have been delivered recently including redesigning the Junior Litter Squad who have been busy designing posters to deter people from walking their dogs on the Bradbury Road Play Area and planting hanging baskets with the resident from the estates.

On 27th June a new group was formed called 10cc (10am for a Cuppa and a Chat) residents from the Laurels, Willow Court and Wharton Ladies Group plan to meet on a Monday morning. Further activities will be delivered by 10cc including an exercise session called 'Easy Movers' which meets on

a Thursday afternoon. The exercises are chair based and highlight the need for exercise as we grow older.

GGO

An involvement plan for GGO (Glebe Green, Greenfields and Over estates) has been drafted after numerous consultation meetings with residents and agencies and following our Community Involvement Planning Process. It will now go back to the residents and agencies involved in the process for their comments before being circulated.

'Talkabout'

Talkabout is a free community newspaper promoting good news stories about Winsford. It was funded by the APB and its first issue was circulated last week to various outlets across Winsford. The newspaper is entirely run by volunteers from the WINCAP project based at The Edge. The volunteers are now busy selling advertising space to make the newspaper sustainable.

(3) Developing an Annual Community Engagement Action

Developing a joined-up approach to Community Engagement

Since April 2009 a number of mechanisms both formal and informal have been utilised by partners to engage communities such as Community Forums, Ward Walks, Neighbourhood Strolls, Inspectors Surgeries and various other panels. Whilst the Community Forums were supported by partners such as Police, Area Highways, Community Safety and Fire & Rescue Service the arrangements were not formalised.

The current review of community forums by Cheshire West & Chester Council therefore presents an opportunity for partners to develop a single joined up community engagement activity.

Developing Community Activities

Winsford & Rural East Area Team are developing a directory of key community events in Winsford and supporting the development of additional events and how these can be more impactful through partnership working. This work includes raising the profile of local events and increasing promotion through electronic mechanisms and other mediums such as the Community Newspaper.

Supporting Community Groups

The Area Team are currently attempting to identify key community groups and partners from the voluntary sector building on the directory published recently by Winsford Town Council.

Encouraging & Increasing Volunteering

Local activity to increase volunteering has initially focused on the work that is being undertaken by WINCAP which received further recognition of its volunteering through a recent positive good practice survey by Ofsted. The Area Partnership Board also supports the post of Volunteering Coordinator at WINCAP.

A joint project is being undertaken between Mid-Cheshire College and WINCAP to develop a local volunteering website to identify volunteering opportunities and match opportunities with those who are seeking to volunteer.

(4) Key Actions & Partnership Support

- 1. Partners support sought to develop a single mechanism for engaging communities.**
- 2. Partners to inform the Area team of key local activities where through partnership working added value can be achieved.**

Community Involvement Planning Process

