

Northwich and Rural North Area Partnership Board (APB) News

January 2012

Verges

Northwich and Winsford Highways department is introducing a new engineering solution to try to address the problem of damaged verges in the area of Greenbank, Hartford.

As you are aware, many of our estates have grassed verges that have become muddy with deep ruts in them and look unsightly. However the Council's Highways Section have trialed a new product that is mixed with excavated soil before being replaced in to the verge area which hardens to form an incredibly strong surface.

Greenbank local Councillors Herbert Manley and Keith Musgrave along with Weaver Vale Housing Trust have joined forces to fund the scheme in the Greenbank area.

Councillors Manley and Musgrave said, "We are very happy to fund this new initiative and having seen the verge problem in Greenbank we hope it will make a big improvement for people. "

Highways Area Manager said ...saves time and money, and is environmentally friendly.

Bike Initiative

A new bike recycling scheme is being developed in the Northwich Area. Using established methods tried in other parts of the country including Chester, the Bike Revival Initiative has been pulled together in partnership between David Cotterell (Dr Bike) and Gary Cliffe (Changing Lives in Cheshire).

The initiative aims to take second hand or dumped (abandoned?) bicycles, refurbish them and sell them on at an affordable price to local residents in the Northwich area communities.

The Initiative is being developed and a business case has been compiled in order to seek funding from a number of recognised schemes. In addition to the recycling of bikes, the initiative aims to work with the local unemployed and NEET to provide them with skills training, thus creating potential opportunities for local employment.

It is planned that the new Initiative, if successful with funding, will operate within the Weaver Square area of Northwich Town Centre, thus bringing addition retail activity into a location that desperately needs new businesses.

Frodsham Participatory Budgeting Event – Change of Date

The next participatory budgeting event for the Frodsham area was due to take place on Saturday 28 January 2012 at Frodsham Community Centre. The date will now be rescheduled to either end of February or early March. As soon as a date is confirmed I will contact everyone.

For any groups who are interested in the event please contact:

Fiona Dunning (01606) 353526 fiona.dunning@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Rudheath & Witton Together Neighbourhood

1. Community Board

The creation of a new community board was recently passed with the inaugural meeting endorsing the new executive roles and constitution. The board will meet quarterly and consists of local community representatives. The constitution stated that at least 50% of the board members must be resident within the neighbourhood, the good news is that of the 11 members, 8 are residents and three are actively involved in the neighbourhood through their professional or voluntary roles. The new Board will have responsibility for the creation of a neighbourhood plan, which will consist of community led plans, service improvements and the Big Local £1m plans.

2. Big Local

Phase 1 of Big Local Getting People Involved completed at the end of August with final analysis being presented to the new Community Board in November. This programme relates to the £1million pounds that is available to the local communities over a ten year period. Phase 1 started the gathering requirements phase. Phase two is now nearing commencement with draft plans being put to the new board at the end of January. A significant aim of phase two supported by the board is for the commencement and delivery of local community led plans for both the parish of Rudheath and part of the Witton element of the Town Council. Such community led plans will start to give the local communities a voice and through the R&WT community board leading this, there will be a real sense of ownership and empowerment.

3. **New activities for older people in Rudheath and Witton Neighbourhood**

A new activity club is being started at the Bethel Church on Middlewich Road, following a survey of residents by Cheshire Community Development Trust.

Over 300 letters were hand delivered in the area and a high proportion of those replying said there was not enough to do for older or retired people.

CCDT arranged three afternoons in partnership with the church in December, beginning with an extremely interesting presentation by Colin Edmondson on Northwich's history of salt and subsidence. The second afternoon featured former VR Councillor Brian Lloyd with a history of comedy featuring great impressions of 'oldies' like Jimmy Jewel and Tommy Cooper. The final

event before Xmas had the choir from Victoria Road Community Primary fresh from their appearance on BBC Blue Peter.

CCDT are now planning a regular Thursday afternoon at the Church from 2 pm starting 19th January 2012

For further information please contact: Arthur Neil (01606) 723180

Email: aneil@cheshirecdt.org.uk

Snow Angels

We know that during the cold weather some extra help can make some peoples lives easier and this year a new project called Operation Snow Angel is running from January in the Northwich area to do just that. Operation Snow Angel has been developed by a number of partners including Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, Age UK Cheshire, Cheshire West and Chester Council and Weaver Vale Housing Trust.

The Snow Angel scheme is designed to support older people to give assistance during extreme cold weather through a range of activities such as help with shopping, access to health appointments, clearing paths etc and telephone advice for accessing help with benefits. So far 30 volunteers have already been recruited and trained with nearly 100 older people taking up the scheme.

If you are interested in becoming a snow angel volunteer please contact Cheshire Community Development Trust on 01606 723180 or email twalford@cheshirecdt.org.uk

APB - Sub Group Updates

1. Health and Well being

Members of the group have arranged to meet with several student focus groups at Hartford College to obtain their views about sexual health advice and services. The group have also met GP's in Weaverham with a view of the GP's attending the High School for a question and answer session with pupils.

To promote physical activities new Zumba sessions were held to target certain age groups namely teens in Weaverham and the over 55 in Rudhealth. A cycling initiative was also held in Northwich in Roker Park to encourage more people to take up cycling. This enabled people to receive a free bicycles MOT as well as meeting other people and going on a led bicycle route. These initiatives also promoted the 5 Ways to Wellbeing that your sense of wellbeing is increased if you add the following into your life on a daily basis namely to: connect, be active, take notice, keep learning and give.

2. Economy & Education Sub Group

Each of the five priority issues (Educational attainment, NEET reduction, Unemployment reduction, Rationalising Benefits and Think Family) have now had respective task/finish

workshops held in order to discuss and agree the sub group targets and to confirm specific actions to achieving those targets.

One of the spin off from this work has been the positive progress of the CWAC Benefits teams Helping Hands initiative. This started as an initiative in Ellesmere Port, and has since been rolled out into the R&WT Neighbourhood with some really positive outcomes. "It has only been running for a couple of months and already the benefits team have had success in getting individuals onto training or voluntary placements" said Steve Newson the local Neighbourhood Manager". "The introduction of the Welfare reform Act is going to have an impact upon local people lives and its great to know that we have good partnership relationships across the benefit arena willing to meet and discuss local community needs".

4. Environment & Transport Sub Group

On 25th November a clean up took place at Greenbank station. Around 30 people took part and in addition to clearing litter and weeds Street Scene painted the Chester bound shelter, painted steps to the car park and ordered 3 new litter baskets for the platforms. Since the clean up Street Scene has also installed a new waste bin at the entrance to the steps of the car park, Network Rail has marked out car parking bays and funding has been found for installation of CCTV with contributions from the Local Councillors, Manley and Musgrave.

The sub-group are looking to resurrected the 'Friends of the station' group but also create links with Hartford College and School as they are interested being more active in the community, also Weaver Vale Housing Trust are trying to initiate a resident group. The plan is to bring all the various groups together around April under a wider Friends of Greenbank banner. Hartford College and School are also interested in placing artwork on the old ticket office building to brighten up the station.

5. Community Engagement

A draft calendar of events has been produced for 2012 which includes joint partnership events with emphasis this year on Diamond Jubilee events. For further information please contact Fiona Dunning fiona.dunning@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk (01606) 353526.

Helsby – Community Forum

The next Community Forum for the Helsby Ward is due to take place on Thursday 9 February 2012 at 6:00pm, Helsby Community Centre. The agenda for the forum includes; Police update; New Waste Collection Service; Neighbourhood Planning; APB Matters and Parking around Helsby Train Station.

For further information please debra.brown@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk (01606) 353537.