

# Safer Northfield

Working Together for a Safer Neighbourhood

Issue 1 - Autumn 2009

Message from Councillor Khan, Cabinet Member for Local Services and Community Safety



Birmingham is one of the safest cities in the UK thanks to partnership work - but we are not complacent about progress. In Safer Birmingham Partnership the Council, the Police, the Fire Service, the Probation Service, the Health Services and the third sector all work together - and so do Birmingham residents like you. We are working together on the things that you have told us matter to you, and matter to the quality of life in your neighbourhoods.

We know that you want to hear more news about how we deal with your concerns about anti social behaviour and crime and we think this newsletter is a simple way to tell you about our work to make your neighbourhood a safer place. We hope you like it.



## ACTION TAKEN TO TACKLE CRIME ON THE THREE ESTATES

### HOW TO REPORT A CRIME

Contact West Midlands Police on **0845 113 5000** (Always call **999** if it is an emergency).

To report anti-social behaviour, call **0121 303 1111**.

Call the Environmental Services Helpline on **0121 303 1112** to report graffiti, fly-posting and dumped waste.

If you want to provide information about crime and anti-social behaviour in your neighbourhood, but wish to remain anonymous, you can call Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**.

Your call is confidential, and you may receive a reward.

For further information about Crimestoppers, please visit [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

#### You said...

"We're worried about anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and burglary - especially as the Clearance programme on the Three Estates gathers pace".

#### So we...

Took action to remedy the problem.

Police Sergeant, Mark Colwell, said: "This area quickly became a priority due to the problems residents were facing. We were keen to help them as much as possible so we brought the matter to the attention of the Safer Northfield Partnership".

The Neighbourhood Police Team arranged for a Domehawk camera to be re-located to a problem alleyway and ensured extra patrols were carried out in the area to identify offenders. Safer Northfield Partnership also provided funding for new shed alarms, which the Neighbourhood Police Team distributed to residents in the area.

Superintendent Mark Robinson said, "Tackling the concerns of these local residents is a priority for us as it was having an impact on their quality of life. Many different agencies have been involved in dealing with the issues in this area including West Midlands Fire Service and Birmingham City Council, and a range of activities have been delivered such as improving the collection of rubbish from empty properties to securing funding for new fencing to prevent young people from hanging around. At all times, we have communicated to local residents about what is happening so they can see it making a difference".

*continues overleaf >>*

## SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF CRIME

Residents told us that they wanted better support for victims of domestic abuse, so Guiding Light domestic abuse project, based in South Birmingham, held a Picnic in the Park event to provide reassurance and inform local people of the support available in their area.



Although the event had a serious message, there was a wide range of activities for all the family to have fun including street dancing and a graffiti wall. The event was opened by the patron of the charity, Danielle Lloyd.

Guiding Light is a part of the Jan Foundation, a local charity, and it aims to spread the message that Domestic Abuse affects us all. Faye Bowers, Project Co-ordinator said: "We feel that if people really understand how Domestic Abuse works then we may get victims to come forward sooner and therefore shorten the time they and their children stay in abusive relationships".

For further information about domestic abuse, or for help and support if you, or someone you know, is affected by these issues please visit [www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk).

You can also contact the free phone 24 hour helpline on **0808 2000 247**.

# PUBLIC HOUSE DEMOLITION LEADS TO REDUCTION IN CRIME

## You said...

"the former Beeches Public House in Hoggs Lane is an anti-social behaviour hotspot".

## So we...

Took action which led to it being knocked down in a drive to make local people feel safer.

The local landmark lay derelict for over a year while plans for its re-development were being finalised. During this time, the building was plagued by persistent issues of criminal damage, anti-social behaviour and arson, despite the co-operation of the owner and local residents. The matter was further complicated when it was discovered the building was home to a mobile phone mast, which couldn't be removed until a new site had been found.



Following numerous complaints from residents at their local Neighbourhood Tasking meeting, local agencies came together and took the following actions:

- advised the owner to invest in shutters for the doors and windows and new fencing to prevent people from getting into the building;
- pushed for the demolition of the building.

Weoley Ward Councillors also provided funding to purchase a new Domehawk CCTV camera to protect the area. This deterred further damage and enabled us to establish who was causing the problems.

Station Commander, Andy Simmonds, from Northfield Fire Station said: "We're really pleased to see the building finally coming down. Our major concern has been public safety, but we also recognised that the building was becoming an eyesore and a magnet for anti-social behaviour. Hopefully, there will be fewer problems now for local residents.

We would like to thank the residents who attended Northfield Neighbourhood Tasking meetings and provided input on this issue. Without your contributions these problems could not have been addressed as quickly.

If you would like to take part and have your say in your local Neighbourhood Tasking meeting, visit [www.west-midlands.police.uk/np](http://www.west-midlands.police.uk/np)

*continued from front page >>* The Safer Northfield Partnership is currently trying to secure funding to provide new fencing and gates for the area. For further information about Neighbourhood Tasking in Kings Norton ward, please visit [www.west-midlands.police.uk/np](http://www.west-midlands.police.uk/np)

# YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE THEIR SAY ON COMMUNITY SAFETY

**What would make you feel safer in your neighbourhood? That's the question we put to pupils in the Northfield ward when they attended West Heath Extended Schools Cluster's Citizenship Forum.**

The pupils told us that their main concerns were:

- Road safety (particularly in areas around their school and when they were riding their bike);
- Large groups of older children hanging around in parks and at local shops; and
- Graffiti.

Young people from primary schools around Northfield ward, including Albert Bradbeer; Turves Green; Coffon and West Heath were invited to attend events which encouraged them to be more active citizens. They were asked to think about their concerns and the challenges organisations face in tackling them.

Glenn Smith, Highways Engineer for Northfield Constituency, said: "As some of our most vulnerable road

users, it's important that we listen to the views of young people to find out how we can make them feel safer.

The children who attended this event made some valid suggestions for road safety improvements. As a result, a new pelican crossing will be introduced on Rednal Road, opposite West Heath Primary School and we are also looking to improve pedestrian crossing facilities at the junction of Groveley Lane and Wootton Road by Coffon Primary School."

We are keen to ensure young people continue to have a say and plan to invite schools to take part in a series of challenges where they can access funding to tackle the issues which make them feel unsafe.

## FUNDING SECURED FOR YOUTH ACTIVITIES

### You said...

"We'd like to see the Deelands Hall in Cock Hill used for activities for young people so they did not have to hang around on the streets".

### So we...

Secured funding to help young people make a film in the centre.

Over 20 young people from Cock Hill helped to develop the film, either by starring in it or working on its production. Many of the young people involved told us how they wanted to see the centre opened more often for these types of projects, and they went on to secure funding themselves to have the studio open for sessions.

The film promoted the new Ice-Gym at Northfield Leisure Centre, which is for young people from all of Northfield Constituency and has specialist equipment designed for younger users. This is the first gym of its kind in Northfield.

Following this project, further funding has been secured to deliver even more activities in the Cock Hill area.

## FUNDING SECURED TO GIVE LOCAL YOUNGSTERS ACTIVITIES IN THEIR AREA



### You said...

"Young people are persistently hanging around in the area due to a lack of appropriate youth facilities".

### So we...

Took action and secured funding to deliver activities on the 3 Estates.

Positive Futures, a local project managed by Catch 22, were asked to organise the activities which will run from July 2009 until March 2010. Positive Futures is a specialist youth project and has been working with young people as part of the New Deal for Communities programme in the area since 2007. They engage with hundreds of local young people every year and this funding will enable them to deliver activities to a further 18 youngsters.

The programme, which will be run during evenings, weekends and in the school holidays offers sporting opportunities; mechanics training and community clean up sessions.

Simon Brittain, Manager for Positive Futures, said: "This is a great chance for young people to show the community what they can do. We're already proud of the changes we've seen".

# COMMUNITY PAYBACK

**Have you heard of Community Payback? It's the name given to unpaid work by offenders, who wear orange jackets while carrying out a tough visible punishment.**

It's organised by West Midlands Probation, but the public can have their say.

In fact, over 18,000 took part in a national public vote, to decide what work the public wanted offenders to do first as part of Community Payback. Birmingham achieved one of the highest votes in the UK - and the winning area (Witton Lakes and Brookvale in Erdington constituency) registered more votes than any other area in the country.

Sites were identified by constituency Local Delivery Groups using feedback from Police meetings and public concerns.

Neighbourhood Crime and Justice Coordinator, Andy Tipper said, "The results of the public vote on Community Payback were great. It's a winner for everyone because residents get to nominate a project and see their neighbourhood become a cleaner and safer place - the public also get to see visible consequences of crime for offenders."

Although that vote has ended, you can still nominate Community Payback projects. Simply call 0121 248 2688 - or visit the West Midlands Probation website [www.west-midlands-probation.gov.uk](http://www.west-midlands-probation.gov.uk)

## SECURE YOUR PROPERTY

**We know that burglary can have a significant effect on how safe residents feel in this community. We are keen to provide you with as much information as possible about the steps you can take to make your home safer.**

- During the winter months you may not actually arrive home before it gets dark so use a timer switch to ensure there's a light on so it looks like someone is in.
- Make sure your shed and garage are secure - install an alarm if you can.
- If you are away on holiday during the winter months, ask someone you trust to check your home for you and remove the post so it is out of sight
- Don't leave anything valuable on display in your car - it's more likely to be broken into if thieves think there is something worthwhile to steal.
- Always check you've locked the car - and use a steering lock if you can

Superintendent Mark Robinson said, "Unfortunately, a small number of residents are victims of this crime, but we don't want you to feel alone. Bournbrook Community Safety Partnership is funded by the Home Office and local Community Chest to offer advice and practical support in addition to our own Crime Reduction Officer. We refer victims of burglary to this programme to try and prevent them experiencing this crime again".

For further information about home and car security, please visit [www.west-midlands.police.uk](http://www.west-midlands.police.uk)

Safer Birmingham Partnership (SBP), previously known as Birmingham Community Safety Partnership, is the new name given to the City's crime and disorder reduction partnership which includes West Midlands Police, Birmingham City Council, West Midlands Fire Service, Probation, PCTs and the third sector. We all work together to tackle difficult problems that affect communities. We listen to your concerns and do our best to respond to them. We deal with issues such as effective drug treatment, support for people suffering domestic violence or hate crime, protecting people from fire, burglary or anti social behaviour.

The Safer Birmingham Partnership has three core outcomes which are the driving force behind its work programme. It is SBP's aim that Birmingham will:

- Be a safe place in which to live, work & visit
- Feel a safe place in which to live, work & visit
- Be a place where young people choose not to engage in criminal and anti-social behaviour

**Safer Birmingham Partnership**  
Working together for a safer city

Tel: 0121 303 3160 / [www.saferbirmingham.org.uk](http://www.saferbirmingham.org.uk)

## CONCERNED ABOUT CRIME AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR?

Staff from local agencies are working together to reduce crime, prevent fires and make residents feel safer in all areas of Northfield constituency. It is important that we work in partnership to achieve this as one organisation or person cannot tackle this in isolation.

Working together gives us a better chance to bring about real differences to how safe you feel in your local neighbourhood. All organisations have a commitment to consider how they can make communities safer, but we need YOU to tell us about the issues in your area so that we can take action.

In this newsletter, we have highlighted a few stories from across Kings Norton, Longbridge, Northfield and Weoley wards, where local people have done just that. They have told us what made them feel unsafe in their neighbourhood and as a result, they have seen direct action being taken. This newsletter will tell you more about what the Safer Northfield Partnership is doing for you.

### What can I do?

Neighbourhood Tasking meetings provide the chance to meet police and council officers who work in your local area and tell them about your concerns. Any issues you raise become priorities for these local partners and they will report back to you at the next meeting to outline the actions they have taken. For more information about Neighbourhood Tasking meetings and to find out when the next meeting will be held in your area, visit [www.west-midlands.police.uk/np](http://www.west-midlands.police.uk/np)

You can also find updates on your neighbourhood team page on the West Midlands Police website.