

Cluster News

PARISH PARTNERSHIPS May/June 2008

Welcome to the bumper May/June issue!

As well as the usual news and information, this issue will feature some of the many projects the Parish Partnership team has been working on over the last few months. What's featured here is by no means an exhaustive list, but provides a flavour of what we have been up to.

We are pleased to report that the average attendance at cluster meetings is now running at 85%.

We look forward to seeing you at the next round of cluster meetings in July

Connect 2 : Creation of cycle and walking network

We raised the local profile of the Sustrans Connect2 National bid for £50 million from the Big Lottery Fund.

In North Kesteven, the People's £50 Million contest was to secure funding towards a safe crossing over the A17 at the Holdingham roundabout and transform local travel from Leasingham to Sleaford. This involved working closely with a Community Steering Group to organise events and publicity. This resulted in a huge public vote (42%) against some strong competition, from Sherwood Forest, The Black Country and The Eden Project.

In addition to providing sound health benefits, Connect 2 will also help to reduce our carbon footprint in the district.

Speed Indicator Devices roll out

Speeding has emerged as a significant issue across the majority of the cluster groups. This has resulted in six of the clusters voting to spend their Devolved Fund on reactive speed devices.

The County Council Highways Policy meant that parishes were not able to buy and operate reactive speed devices. Other options open to parishes were taking part in the Speed Watch initiative run by the Police, or borrowing equipment from the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership. The difficulty with the latter option, is that the schemes are county wide and involve long waiting lists, due to high demand.

We now have a solution and the relevant clusters are going to work in partnership with the Neighbourhood Policing Teams to address speeding issues. It has been agreed that the clusters will own the reactive speed devices and the Police will operate them in line with priorities decided by the Neighbourhood Policing Panels, and by responding to requests from individual parishes.

The operation and deployment of the reactive speed devices will be included in a Service Level Agreement between the individual clusters. **The Agreement will also include arrangements for gathering information from the speed devices, resulting action, and reporting mechanisms to Cluster meetings.**

Enjoy life in your parish!

The Four Parishes cluster, which comprises Washingborough, Heighington, Canwick, Branston and Mere, has been surveying residents to establish what activities they would like to see in their area. The fundamental purpose of the survey is to look at ways that we might help people to enjoy life more in the North Kesteven district.

We are working with a number of local agencies, including Connexions, the PCT, Adult Learning Disabilities, Millenium Volunteers, the Police, the Church and the Youth service. We hope to achieve some positive outcomes from the information we have collected, which we may be able to use elsewhere in the district.

We intend to be innovative in finding solutions to some of the aspirations of the local community, including:- Increased sports and leisure, opportunities for all residents, volunteering opportunities, and encouraging younger people to mix with older residents.

It is also hoped that the initiative will help in reducing the fear of crime and increasing the feeling of 'belonging' in the community

Results will initially be shared with the four parishes at the end of June.

Arts Ark & Youth consultation: Billinghamay cluster.

The consultation kicked-off in the February half-term holiday, when the Arts Ark visited Billinghamay. A group of young people used state-of-the-art recording equipment, to express themselves, resulting in the production of a short film. As well as fun and entertainment, the event was also used to find out what facilities they would like to access in the village and most were interested in some form of club. We are currently working with Billinghamay Parochial Church Council and the Youth Service to provide a drop-in centre in the village. **Next stop for the Arts Ark is Martin, on Friday August 1st.**

Do you want to be involved in shaping support for carers in Lincolnshire?

The Lincolnshire Carers Partnership is now in place to shape support for carers in Lincolnshire. It is made up of two core partnership meetings (one for all carers and one for young carers) and six working groups focusing on the following :-

- Carers information
- Carers assessments
- Carers training
- Carers Emergency Support
- Palliative care carers strategy
- Carers in or moving closer to employment

Would you like to be involved in this partnership and share your experience as a carer or ex-carer? Would you like to receive information from the partnership?

If so please contact Sarah Oliver, Carers Lead, on 01522 554214 or email sarah.oliver@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Skate park and Parkour in your parish.

Do you have an indoor hall? Do you have any gymnastic equipment? If the answer to both of these is "yes" then ExtremeNK could bring a Parkour workshop to your Parish over the summer holidays! The 2 day workshops will give the young people of your Parish an opportunity to learn new Parkour skills. Parkour is an activity with the aim of moving from one point to another in the most direct route possible, moving over, under, through and around objects. Parkour coaches also stress the importance of obeying laws. At the end of the second day, participants will be able to demonstrate skills that they have learnt.

SkateNK is also able to offer the North Kesteven Mobile Skate Park and Half Pipe facility is also available for your Parish to hire during the summer holidays

If you would like to find out more information about the Parkour workshops, ExtremeNK and SkateNK please contact: **Jennifer Taylor on 01522 870252/ e-mail: extremenk@leisureconnection.co.uk**

New Chairman for North Kesteven District Council

The annual council meeting May 8th, saw the election of Councillor Mrs Susan Waring as the new Chairman for NKDC. She succeeds Councillor Ron Oxby.

Mrs Waring was elected to North Kesteven District Council in May 2007. The new Vice-Chairman is Councillor Frederick Ambridge, who is Member for Billinghamay, Martin and North Kyme.

Councillor Mrs Waring said: "I am very happy that I have been chosen to represent North Kesteven District Council as Chairman this year.

"I feel very happy to be serving the people of North Kesteven, and am looking forward to the next 12 months with real enthusiasm."

"It is a great honour to follow in the footsteps of Councillor Oxby, who did a wonderful job last year, and I hope to promote the Council and my chosen charities to the best of my ability."

Member for Leasingham and Rauceby, Councillor Mrs Waring lives with her husband in Leasingham. She was born in South Wales and has lived in Lincolnshire since the age of 13.

In addition to being a District Councillor, Councillor Mrs Waring also represents North Kesteven on the South Lincolnshire Blind Society's Board of Trustees.

She will announce her two Chairman's charities at the next Council meeting and hopes to hold a series of events throughout the year to raise money for these good causes.

Funding Fair in Leasingham

NKDC is hosting a funding fair at Leasingham village hall on June 12th 2-4.30pm.

There will be a number of guest presenters and presentations will begin at 2pm.

The event is designed to provide an overview of the funding available to groups and organisations. Exhibitors should include:- Capital Grant Aid, Lloyds TSB Foundation, WREN, Big Lottery, and the Arts Council. To reserve your place, please contact: Sue Chambers, Community Partnerships and Lottery Officer, NKDC, Council Offices, Kesteven Street, Sleaford NG34 7EF

BT's Proposals to Remove Payphones

BT is reviewing its provision of payphones in the light of commercial pressure and reduced usage levels. It is proposing to remove a number of payphones where there is another payphone within 400metres and is able to do this without consulting others. In addition there are 46 payphones in North Kesteven that BT is proposing to remove but which are subject to a formal consultation process. These are listed on the enclosed attachment. Notices have been placed in all the affected phone boxes and kiosks which are dated and give a consultation period of 42 days during which members of the public are invited to contact the local authority if they have any comments. The local authority will then forward these comments to BT by the deadline of 2 July 2008.

North Kesteven District Council would also like to receive comments from parishes and District Councillors. On the attachment the payphones affected are listed by Cluster and there is space to indicate agreement or objection to the proposal and to include comments and reasons.

If you wish to respond please return the form to your Parish Partnership Officer by 20 June 2008 so that we can collate a response to BT by the deadline of 2 July 2008

Parish Partnerships moves into Communities

The Council has recently undertaken a realignment of Heads of Service functions.

The Council has worked with the Local Strategic Partnership to identify a new joint range of priorities and on the back of this the duties of Heads of Service have been changed to ensure a focus around delivering these priorities.

One of the key changes has been setting up a new Communities Service. This service covers:

- The management of the Council's housing stock
- Housing benefits
- Property management
- Older Person's Strategy
- Youth Strategy
- Sustainability
- Parish Partnerships

A new Community Initiatives Team has been developed under the guidance of a Community Initiatives Coordinator.

The coordinator will take responsibility for Parish Partnerships, Sustainability, Youth and Older Persons Strategies.

It is hoped that by bringing these communities activities closely together the Council will realise some significant benefits in terms of coordinating these functions and ensuring the involvement of local communities in their development.

From July this year, the number of Parish Partnership Officers will reduce from 3 to 2 posts, although support for the clusters will remain much the same as before.

For further details about the realignment of functions please contact Phil Roberts, Head of Communities.

Wheels to work takes off in NK

Wheels to Work is a scheme which enables young people to access affordable transport,

The scheme offers mopeds, typically loaned for six months, but is more than simply a vehicle on loan. It enables and encourages young people to improve their employability and make choices about their future. So far, we have secured six mopeds for use across the district. Working closely with West Lindsey District Council, we have secured an arrangement whereby they administer the scheme on our behalf. A member of the PPO team remains on the steering group to keep abreast of abreast of bids to secure countywide funding.

Help to improve people's homes

Housing Renewal grants are available to private householders or their partners.

In order to qualify for a Housing Renewal grant, a householder must be in receipt of at least one means tested benefit, such as Pension Credits or Council Tax benefit.

The occupiers must also be living in a property that is in a state of disrepair, for instance, lack of heating or insulation, rotten windows, or dampness. For heating and insulation grants, certain disability benefits would also qualify.

If you are aware of any households that may be in this situation, please can you make them aware of the availability of grants and encourage them to contact the Housing Renewal department on 01529 414155 or 01522 699699.

Cluster emergency planning

We have been working with the emergency planning team to deliver a pilot scheme for an emergency plan in an area identified as at risk from flooding.

This is in the Bassingham cluster area, which has a history of floods.

We hope to report on progress in the next issue of Cluster News.

Your preferred method of communication

Over the last few months, the PPO team has been in contact with every Parish/Town Council in the district.

Wherever possible, we have held one-to-one meetings with the Clerk and or Chairman of the Parish Council, in order to find out your preferred mode of communication. We have now divided parishes into the following four categories:

- Parishes that require all contact by email
- Parishes that require emails but hard copy attachments
- Parishes that require all correspondence by hard copy
- Parishes that require both emails and hard copy.

We are now working with Member Services to pilot a scheme where other officers in the council use the parishes' preferred method of communication.

A review of this scheme is planned for September of this year.

If you would like to know more about any of the items featured in this issue, or have any other queries, you can contact the Parish Partnership Team at:
North Kesteven District Council,
Kesteven
Kesteven Street,
Sleaford NG34 7EF.
Tel: 01529 308257
Or email:
parish_partnership_officers@n-kesteven.gov.uk