

Partnership Update Feb 2010

SOUTH WEST

NEIGHBOURHOOD
PARTNERSHIP



City parks are getting better and better

Park Quality Assessments 2009, thirty percent of the city's parks and green spaces have improved in the past year following an annual assessment. For the second year running the City of Edinburgh Council has used the Green Flag criteria, which is the benchmark national standard for parks and greenspaces in the UK, to assess all the parks.

In addition the Council's parks department invited 'Friends of Parks' members to assist in assessing the quality of parks and gardens giving them a valuable opportunity to input into the process.

The assessors used 26 criteria which range from Welcoming, Healthy & Safe, Litter Management and Grounds Maintenance to Conservation and Marketing amongst others. The end result is a detailed assessment of each site that will be used along with the parks and greenspace online survey to develop Park Improvement Plans.

In the South West & Pentlands Partnerships 67%, 20 sites met the new Edinburgh Quality Standard, which represented an increase of 10% up on 2008. This increase was the largest improvement over all partnerships.

Partnership Handbook First

The South West Partnership and the Performance & Information Team are the first Partnership to develop a handbook to assist the development and working practices of the Partnership Members and sub group teams in The South West & Pentlands Partnerships.

The handbook was designed by the P&I Team assisted by the Partnership Members to provide a ready reference to partnership members and officers. Handbook Contents:

1. **Partnership Principles and Values**
2. **Roles and Responsibilities**
3. **Guidance on agenda planning**
 - i. Agenda Setting
 - ii. Contributing to the Agenda
 - iii. Emergency Motions

4. **Structure of meetings**
 - i. Business Meetings
 - ii. Thematic meetings

5. **Sub Groups**
6. **Communication**

Copies of the handbook will be distributed to Partnership Members and libraries through out the South West & Pentland Neighbourhoods.

"Racial Graffiti Gorgie and Dalry Road"

Joint working carried out by Environmental Wardens, the council's Graffiti Unit and Lothian and Borders Police to tackle racial BNP graffiti in on Gorgie and Dalry Road. Environmental Wardens were tasked with the recording of the graffiti and seeking permission from the owners of the effected premises to allow the Graffiti Unit to remove the tags from their property.

Lothian and Borders Police carried out investigations into who was responsible for these tags across the city. Lothian and Borders Police have identified and charged the people responsible.



Cancer Support Project in Wester Hailes Health Agency

Awareness was raised by Dr Bradshaw from Wester Hailes Medical Practice. Her Concern was that there is a high number of patients using the practice that have cancer and are receiving little or no support. She approached the Health Agency with a proposal to run a "Maggi's Centre" type of centre in the Health Agency. An initial visit was made to a project in Blantyre which offered a range of holistic support services to patients with cancer. The services were almost identical to those offered in the Health Agency and therefore it was evident that the Health Agency was best placed for providing the infrastructure for the project.

The three Key services the project will provide are:

- Information and advice, including welfare benefits
- Complimentary therapies
- Counselling and talking therapies

The project would require volunteers to perform a variety of roles, the hub of the project would be a comfortable lounge area offering refreshments supported by volunteers.

The objectives are to enhance cancer support services, in Wester Hailes and surrounding areas where there are high levels of deprivation. Evidence suggests that patients who have access to cancer support centres benefit from prolonged life

Edinburgh Housing Advice Partnership

The South West Rent Arrears Early Intervention Working Group, CHAI, Prospect and CEC first trialed an early intervention approach to engaging with tenants with rent arrears in 2002. CAT (Combating Arrears Together) was limited in its impact due a number of factors including a narrow geographic focus in an area experiencing ongoing re-development and insufficient resources, i.e. only one Housing Advice Worker for the area.

All the partners will be looking to focus on key elements raised at the last meeting of the group:

- **Shadowing** – Develop style of engaging with tenants through staff exchanges/ shadowing as one approach to improve good lines of communication and to develop an understanding of working styles and practices and the underlying reasons.
- **Marketing** - A leaflet will be produced under the EHAP banner but made clear this is a service delivery partnership comprising all partners which is focusing on assistance with rent arrears and not housing issues.
- **Staff resources** – The new trial will be better resourced due to the complimentary low-level housing support and mediation services provided by the Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service.
- **Postage** - Admin Officer at SWNO will be able to handle postage of additional pre-NOP letters. Prospect use freepost envelopes and have found this a successful way of getting responses from tenants. CHAI to investigate feasibility of a freepost CHAI/EHAP address.

Community Safety

Operation Awe has been in force since the beginning of December 2009 targeting housebreaking and vehicle crime in the Gorgie, Dalry, Fountain Bridge, Polwarth and surrounding areas. This operation has been given more focus over the festive period with plain clothes and uniformed officers performing foot patrols. As such there were no crimes of dishonesty reported during the festive period and those officers involved were a credit to themselves. As part of their patrols officers were making enquiries into many common stairs and rear gardens whenever there was access. Due to recent activity particular attention was also given to those that have surrounding scaffolding.

The local community are making it known that they are aware of the increase in housebreakings as on the inside of many common stair doors there were notices highlighting recent dishonesty and requesting that security be maintained whenever possible.

Members of the public were also approached and informed of the initiative being run. They have been routinely asked if they had concerns or were aware of any suspicious on-goings relating to housebreakings or vehicle crime. Thankfully there have been no immediate concerns raised.

For more information about the activities of the South West Neighbourhood Partnership, go to www.edinburghnp.org.uk or contact the Partnership & Information team on 527 3816.

AREA BOARD UPDATE

The Area Board is a joint subgroup of both the South West and Pentlands Neighbourhood Partnerships. It considers tenancy issues and makes recommendations to the Neighbourhood Improvement Fund, which pays for environmental improvements to land and buildings owned by the Council's Housing section (the Housing Revenue Account).

Neighbourhood Environmental Programme (NEP)

At its meeting on 15th December 2009 the Area Board approved the recommendations of its short term working group which reviewed the Neighbourhood Investment Programme, which has been changed to the new title above. This new system delivers a scoring and weighting system for existing and future NEP's projects.

The newly adopted scoring/ weighting system will evaluate potential projects over an eight point criteria which are:

- Addresses needs of the area
- Addresses Area Board priorities
- Meets the Council core priority 1 – Clean
- Meets the Council core priority 2 – Safe
- Meets the Council core priority 3 – Green
- Value for money
- Complimentary funding opportunities
- Historic distribution of funding

If you wish further information contact either Tommy Walker Property Team Leader on tommy.walker@edinburgh.gov.uk or Scott Neill, Partnership Development Officer on scott.neill@edinburgh.gov.uk For further information on the South West Area Board go to the following link http://www.edinburghnp.org.uk/page/South_West_Area_Board.aspx

Area Board Projects Update

Project 157 – Oxgangs Place

- Works completed

Project 159 – North Street (Ratho)

- Contractor on site

Project 175 – Firrhill Drive

- Works almost completed, delay was related to Scottish Power laying cable.

Project 168 – Dumbyden Environmental Plan

- Upgraded plant areas in the Grove work completed
- Two footpaths completed

Project 162 – 12 Westfield Road

- Awaiting start date to upgrade footpath to bin store

Calders High Rise Project

- Phase 1 works completed

Area Board Information

As part of the changes to the way the area Board processes its business, the meetings have been changed to themed sessions.

Themed sessions rotate between Housing Issues, Performance and the Neighbourhood Environmental Programme. At the meeting on 10th November Board members were given a presentation on 'City wide Tenant Participation – an update?' from Sam Reeves Project Officer on the citywide tenant participation work. Further information can be found on the links below.

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Housing/Council_housing/CEC_getting_involved

or for hard copies of any papers, please contact Sam Reeves, Business Centre C2, Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh. EH8 8BG or 0131 529 7805 or sam.reeves@edinburgh.gov.uk

NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP DATES AND VENUES

23 Feb 2010	Meggetland	Theme: Skills & Employment
04 May 2010	Gorgie Parish Church	Theme: End of Year Report

Community Grants Fund

Bridge 8



Thanks to the Community Grants Fund, The Bridge 8 Canoe Club (formerly Wester Hailes Canoe Club) have been participating in regular

paddling sessions on the Union Canal.

Throughout the summer and autumn, the club have met every second Saturday on the canal to take part in coached sessions with instructors from Set in Motion.

Participants have gained experience on the water, developed abilities in canoeing and have been supported in achieving their Scottish Canoe Association one star certificates.

In total the club have engaged around 50 people and, with support from Prospect Community Housing, have developed a solid canoe club committee.



West Edinburgh Time Bank

Received a Community Grant from the Neighbourhood Funding Panel and was launched on 5th August at Wester Hailes Health Agency.

Time Banking is a new and exciting way for people to come together to help others and help themselves at the same time. Participants 'deposit' their time in the bank by giving practical help and support to others and are able to 'withdraw' their time when they need something done themselves. All time "deposited" is valued equally – an hour providing legal advice has the same value as an hour helping someone to do their garden.

Time Banks can transform people's needs into assets and bring people together. Giving and receiving are the simplest and most fundamental ways of building trust between people, helping to build positive social relationships and healthy communities. If you are interested in Time Banking or would like more information contact: verag_traceyl@live.co.uk



Want to know more about the Community Grants Fund? Go to www.edinburghnp.org.uk to download guidance notes and an application form.

Talk to Your Community!

The South West Neighbourhood Partnership Update comes out quarterly. It goes to Community Councils, elected members, service partners, schools, community groups and local libraries.

The Update tells you about the work of the Neighbourhood Partnership and other groups towards achieving the outcomes of the Local Community Plan, developed with local communities to reflect the priorities that matter to you.

If you would like to know more about Neighbourhood Partnerships, the South West Local Community Plan, or the Partnership Update, please contact the South West Partnership & Information Team on 527 3816, southwestteam@edinburgh.gov.uk, or www.edinburghnp.org.uk.