



Area Forum (Bidston and Claughton)

Date:	Monday, 8 June 2009
Time:	7.00 pm
Venue:	St James Centre, 344 Laird Street, Birkenhead CH41 7AL

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AGENDA

1. **WELCOME**
2. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (Pages 1 - 20)**
 - Update from forum members "what's been happening in your area"
3. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**
 - opportunity to raise your issues & concerns
4. **VISIT OUR EXHIBITION STANDS**

Help yourself to refreshments and visit the following exhibition stands:

- **7 Waves Radio** ("local radio station")
- **"You Decide" 2009 – 2010** (take a few minutes to complete our questionnaire on what additional services you would like to see in your area)
- **"Funds for You"** (funding available for local community groups to apply for)
- **What's on at the St James Centre**

5. RESPECT BUS

- Have a look around the - RESPECT Bus, which is active within the community and is part of the respect campaign, to engage with all young people across Wirral

6. NEXT AREA FORUM MEETING

- **Thursday 8th October 2009** to be held in the Claughton Ward area



Wirral's Area Forums

**Bidston & Claughton
Area Forum**

Papers for the forum meeting

Monday 8th June 2009

**St James Centre
344 Laird Street, Birkenhead
Wirral, CH41 7AL**

7.00pm

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Code of Conduct for Area Forums

- Indicate to the Chairperson when you would like to speak
- Let invited speakers finish what they have to say
- Respect others right to be heard
- Do not use abusive or offensive language
- Do not make any discriminatory remarks
- Do not have private conversations while meeting is in progress

Section One

Minutes from last meeting February 2009

Area Forum (Bidston and Claughton) Thursday 12 February 2009

Present:	Councillor D Roberts (Chair)
In attendance:	Councillors G Davies, S Foulkes, H Smith
Community Representatives:	Jean McIntosh
Lead Officer:	John Webb, Director of Adult Social Services
Council Officers:	John Entwistle, Corporate Services; Jan Johnson, Adult Social Services (minute taker); Mark Smith, Technical Services; Jim Thompson, Community Safety Team; Faye Williams, Corporate Services
Area Service Co-ordinator:	Michelle Gray
Merseyside Police:	Inspector Paul Harrison
Merseyside Fire and Rescue:	Ben Ryder
Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust:	Marie Armitage, Joint Director of public health Public Governors; Laura Quigley, Joyce Jackson
Apologies:	Councillor A. McLachlan; Ian Jones, NHS Wirral; Pat Landsborough; Dr Abhi Mantgani

1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

The Chair, Councillor Denise Roberts, welcomed forum members and 8 members of the public to the Bidston & Claughton Area Forum meeting being held at Birkenhead Sixth Form College, Claughton, Birkenhead. A loop system was installed for anyone with a hearing impairment.

Apologies noted from Councillor Ann McLachlan, Dr Abhi Mantgani and Community Rep Pat Landsborough

2 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS FORUM

The minutes of the Area Forum meeting of 24 October 2008 were agreed.

Under Item 4 – You Decide Results – a member of the public asked if all sites had been identified for litter bins, he suggested one be sited on the corner of Hoylake Road and Challis Street. Councillor Smith responded that this had already been actioned.

Minute Decision Resolved that: Minutes of the Forum held on 24 October 2008 be agreed.

3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Michelle Gray briefed on issues from her Area Co-ordinator's report: LSP website was up and running. This was still in the operational stage and people were encouraged to look at this website and give their views.

You Decide, each Area Forum had been allocated £20k to spend on additional services. The Panel, consisting of councillors and community reps met and the money had been divided into provision for Litter Bins, Safety/Sport and Youth Activity/Environment/Road Safety.

Departments have produced reports on decisions from all Area Forums. Work was ongoing and we would have a clearer idea of progress by June.

Money was also available through the Your Wirral fund and contact details were available at the Forum. This was a funding initiative for communities for activities and services in the local area.

In relation to You Decide, Councillor Foulkes encouraged people to feedback on whether they thought it a good idea. He thought more progress would have been made by now on timescales. The Council wanted to ensure resources were allocated to things that people considered imaginative and engaging. In response Mark Smith from Department of Technical Services, confirmed timescale was to feedback specific plan before the next cycle of Forums in June/July.

Minute Decision Resolved: To thank the Area Co-ordinator for the report.

4 INTEGRATED TRANSPORT BLOCK FUNDING

Mark Smith, Head of Service Streetscene and Waste, Department of Technical Services attended the Forum to present on the Integrated Transport Block Funding. All 11 Area Forums had been consulted on their allocation of the fund and whether they would like their own 11th share of the money or whether to have this held centrally. During 2007-2008 two of the Area Forums decided to have their own share whereas others decided would like to continue with having the money held centrally. Activities were highlighted in the report to Cabinet. Neighbouring Area Forums could combine together to fund a larger scheme, if they chose to. Area Forums were now been asked if want to reconsider that decision or not. Money had been used on a variety of items, including kerb crossing and tactile paving, vehicle activation signs, slow road markings and drop crossings.

Cloughton/Bidston had made the decision last time to keep as a central pot and the Forum discussed whether this had been beneficial.

Mark confirmed that there was a priority list around road safety concerns and funds kept in the central pot would go to priority locations. Responses were needed from forums to feedback to Cabinet report for 19 March.

Q - why are pedestrian crossings silent?

MS – very often noise can affect residential properties. Under each crossing there is a spinning tone

Q – where does it tell you that?

MS – this was a national UK standard and anyone with a hearing impairment would be made aware.

Jean – who decides where new crossings go?

MS - factors are taken into account and money spent in the best places to help with those problems. Sites have worked their way up to the top because those sites are based on problem areas.

Q – If this forum decides to go for its own funding our own, one place for a crossing would be Gautby Road by the school's entrance and play scheme.

Councillor Foulkes informed that the cost for a pedestrian crossing was in the region of £50k. MS also confirmed that cost for traffic markings in general was high as need to also include cost of infrastructure, design etc.

Councillor Foulkes where people felt they had enough information to make the decision? Area Forum Councillors present would not take part in the vote as they would be making the ultimate decision.

The Chair moved to take the vote and thanked Mark for his presentation.

Vote carried in favour of centralisation, (cabinet members did not take part in the vote).

5 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

John Entwistle, Principal Planning Officer, Corporate Services, attended to provide a draft update on the Local Development Framework for Wirral. This was a new style Development Plan which replaced the Unitary Development Plan for Wirral (February 2000). This was a key document with a spatial plan covering 15-20 years. John went through the Core Strategy, Consultation and Next Stages. This would produce a series of options which would then go out to consultation. The Draft Core Strategy would then be submitted to the Secretary of State aiming for adoption by 2011. How could people get involved? There were copies available tonight, there was a contact database and copies could be posted, faxed or emailed. Deadline for comments was 27 March.

Q – is there any way we can make it easy-read?

A - As we progress we would be producing a high quality document. Summary would be in non-technical language.

Q – even at this stage, it would be better to make it more user-friendly to encourage people to be involved.

A – we would do our best to take that on board.

Councillor Foulkes briefed that he had worked on the team that had created the Unitary Development Plan. That plan had been in a user-friendly format, however this document was broken up into policy areas so was not as readable. It would however have significant impact on the local environment so the more people that engage with it the better.

A member of the audience had been asked to take part in the consultation and had eventually received his copy. He confirmed that it was heavy, but it was readable.

Another member of the audience suggested giving presentations to community and voluntary groups, places where members of the public were already interested and involved in their local communities and may, therefore, be more responsive.

A – we would be giving presentations to all Area Forums and would be happy to give presentations to other groups

Councillor Foulkes commented that this would be an agenda item at Local Strategic Partnership and all sub divisions. The voluntary sector and Equality and Diversity were represented so this would raise awareness in trying to get as many people engaged as possible.

John reported that some workshops had been run at Wallasey Town Hall. They had analysed geographically groups that had attended and proactively identified gaps and now contacting groups and individuals in those areas. This was the starting point in a 2 year consultation.

The Chair thanked John for his presentation.

6 PARTNER ORGANISATIONS UPDATE

Police

Inspector Paul Harrison attended to update the forum on recent activity. The Police always wanted to improve services to communities and rely on local communities to tell us when we get it wrong, to enable us to put it right.

Alpha 5 had seen a reduction in every crime area in the last 6 months through the hard work of every police officer and partners that work in this area. We are the best performing of all areas in Merseyside Police, however would always be striving to improve.

There were areas of concern and using problem solving groups to help achieve progress. We need to try and improve attendance at these groups, so if you can tell us what you need we can try and adapt our services to fit. We have produced a Newsletter, so if you can let us have addresses of neighbours, friends let me know and we can email or post.

Activities include a Respect Week planned for end of month in Noctorum to deal with anti social behaviour and would involve truancy sweep/search warrants/high visibility patrols. Results would be circulated. There would be an operation running to end March to tackle increase in robberies at off licenses etc.

Councillor George Davies asked for an update on investigation around the missing offender within the Claughton Village area.

A – understand people’s anxiety, done utmost to find and kept search up for length of time, however not able to sustain that level in a particular area as need to move on. Forensic team were working hard on investigation and work is still progressing. Condolences to family of the victims and people who live around this location.

Q – Jean raised the following queries:

- Newsletter referring to the ASBO meeting on 3 Feb went out too late
- Respect scheme at Bidston Rise, was to run for 12 months although we had wanted it for 2 years. Would like that issue taken up and reported back please.
- Community mobile police station. Sounds good, however it has been on Hoylake Road 6 months and I have not seen it open.

Inspector Harrison responded:

- the late notice was raised at the meeting so they are aware of it. Meeting had been called by Wirral Anti Social Behaviour Team.
- Understanding was the scheme was for 12 months but would find out for you.
- Police have part in staffing the mobile station, don’t have resources to staff all the time, however it has been open. It is also staffed by other partner agencies to want to use it.

Councillor Davies asked when the next meeting was due to take place.

Inspector Harrison did not think it had been scheduled yet. Michelle would check and circulate date to Forum members.

Inspector Harrison concluded by saying that there were a lot of activities going on around Respect and the partnership between all agencies in that area was starting to work.

Wirral University Teaching Hospital

Laura Quigley attended from WUTH and the community rep was also present.

Highlights included:

- Control infection was a high priority, now have an 8-bedded isolation unit. Recently launched publicity campaign ‘Working Together to Keep it Clean’ campaign.
- Trust had been awarded Best Hospital in Dr Foster Good Hospital Guide.
- A major capital build was starting in May this year, bringing together women’s and children’s services.
- Urological ward just had an upgrade and achieved specialized status for cancer.
- New web site email for patients.
- Foundation Trust seeking public members, if anyone was interested in becoming a member please let me know.

Councillor Davies had been on the website and confirmed it was easy to navigate. He asked the question why the blood service had been stopped at Clatterbridge. He also raised concern about the oncology unit at Clatterbridge and possible transfer of some facilities to Royal in Liverpool.

A – Blood sample services had been run in hospital and one run in the community. However, Trust no longer provide community phlebotomy services, this service is now with GPs. Secondly in relation to oncology unit, would transfer some service to Liverpool as majority of cancer patients from that area. However, the Clatterbridge site would still remain as centre for oncology, with radio therapy and chemotherapy inpatient services. Process would commence from April.

Suggestion from member of the audience re a recording around MRSA at hospital in Walton entrance and whether the Trust could adopt that.

A – not heard that suggestion before. I am part of Infection Control Committee would feed that back. Thank you for raising it.

NHS Wirral

The name had recently been changed as not everyone understands what a PCT is, however calling it NHS Wirral recognised the PCT's role as local leader of the NHS

NHS Wirral has received an initial assessment of our progress, accompanied by detailed guidance and recommendations on areas we must address to evolve into a world class organization. The report notes our strengths and PCT received a "green" highest scoring assessment in respect of its draft strategic plan, financial plan and governance arrangements.

Over this winter NHS has faced an unprecedented level of admission, ambulance call outs. There are a large number of people who go to A&E unnecessarily. We were extending hours that GPs are open and ensuring some appointments are bookable in advance.

The Chair asked whether people going to A&E were referred to the walk in centre?

A - yes we have developed a single tier system

Q - is there any truth in rumour that certain GPs practices are going to be identified as minor injuries units?

A - a minor injury unit has opened at Clatterbridge and we are developing another at St Cath's similar to VCH. GPs are on those sites, however not aware of anything in practices. MA would check and feedback.

Q when does the new health centre Laird Street open?

A – October

Q – re the consultation exercise - are there any other GPs moving to St Cath's

A – the consultation with patients/practices resulted in Devaney Practice not wanting to move, so that practice has stayed. Victoria Practice is moving to St Cath's and one other. Would check which and feedback.

Wirral Community Safety Team

Jim Thompson from Wirral Community Safety Team briefed that Wirral has developed a nationally recognised system of working through partnership and within the multi-agency team are reps from Acute Trust/GP/Police/Fire Service/:Probation/Children's services/Youth Offending Service. Wirral leads the way with comparators and continues to be a very safe place to live.

There was no rep today from Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, however they are concerned about fire safety and issue free home fire safety checks which they would encourage you take up

Q - How long would the community police station be in that location for?

A – it is there to analyse data from police community patrols, looking at high spots for anti social behaviour in Wirral. From this we would develop a plan. It has been put in there for a period of time and we would review as it proceeds. There isn't a specific time, we would follow up and continue to monitor what is happening in that area. It is a focal point to give various agencies a place to work.

A member of the audience congratulated on domestic violence figures which were very good. It showed that if you had an LAA target and put some resource into that work as a multi agency, it does work. The Race Hate Task Group was a similar group, of families suffering from racial violence and currently in the process of looking how that can be addressed. I would ask for some commitment from all the agencies to work together to try and put a similar support into Race Hate because it is going to increase.

Police confirmed that Domestic Violence issues had historically been given high priority and it had now become a very successful unit. We are now working closely with other agencies and have a strategy in place to improve confidence of people from minorities who have been a victim of crime. The Police are doing good work, would want other agencies to join in. The Lead Officer confirmed that there was now a joint strategy - indicator NI115 Wirral looking together at how we take these things forward.

Fire Service

Pages 11/12 of the Community Engagement Co-ordinator's report contained a comprehensive update on the Service in Wirral, and highlighted the following: Risk Management Plan – copies of the latest plan are available at libraries, one stop shops and can be viewed on line at www.merseyfire.gov.uk. The comments received during the consultation undertaken over the last three months will be taken into consideration before the final draft is published. Fire Safety Checks – free safety checks are still available, the area around Brackenwood golf course was targeted last week and we achieved 30 checks. During the last quarter the Fire Service visited nearly 6,000 homes on Wirral to complete home fire safety checks. This scheme has been running for ten years and comments on how this service could be improved would be welcomed along with details of any home that may need a safety check.

7 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Don Charlton representing Thornton Allotment Plot Holders, raised a public meeting that had been held and the promise made of investment around site clearance. Further additional funding had also been committed via the CIF. He said that he had found out recently that no investment had been provided. A Development Officer had been employed whose main task would be to identify problems on allotments and look for funding. Said I would raise this and ask for continued support from the Area Forum.

Councillor Foulkes queried the amount of funding promised. Councillor Smith had attended the public meeting and confirmed that no money was promised, the commitment had been for appointment of a Development Officer.

Following this lively discussion, Councillor Foulkes suggested altering future agendas to accommodate more time at the end for Public Question Time. Agreed and MG and the Chair would look at this prior to the next meeting.

8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair thanked people for attending and Sixth Form College for the use of the venue. The next Area Forum would take place Monday 8 June in Bidston ward.

Section Two

Area forums provide an opportunity for people who live or work in Wirral to have a greater say on local issues and be more active in decision making and shaping local services.

They involve local ward councillors, police, NHS Wirral, University Teaching Hospital Trust, fire safety representatives etc along with community representatives and officers from various departments of the council.

Forums also provide information about current services, how they can be accessed and ultimately raise awareness of local council initiatives.

Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team

January 2009 – May 2009

Legal action against the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour within our area has included:

Reported January 2009:

- 34-year old male from Fairbrook Drive, **Birkenhead**, issued with an interim Anti-Social Behaviour Injunction following alleged verbal abuse and threatening behaviour to refuse collectors employed by Biffa;
- 48-year old female from Rundle Street, **Birkenhead**, issued with an eviction order due to criminal behaviour by her children, postponed on condition that she complies with the terms of her tenancy agreement;
- 38-year old female from Price Street, **Birkenhead**, gave a 12-month legal Undertaking following alleged threatening behaviour. The female was also served with two months' notice to leave her tenancy with Wirral Partnership Homes;
- 35-year old male from Neston Gardens, **Birkenhead**, issued with a 12-month Anti-Social Behaviour Order following threats of violence to his ex-partner.

Reported February 2009:

- 31-year old female from Laird Street, **Birkenhead**, issued with a further 2-year Anti-Social Behaviour Injunction due to abusive and threatening behaviour. She was subsequently sentenced to 28 days' imprisonment, suspended until January 29th, 2010, for breach of an earlier Anti-Social Behaviour Injunction;
- 15-year old male from Stanley Road, **Birkenhead**, issued with an interim Anti-Social Behaviour Order due to alleged repeated incidents of anti-social behaviour, primarily in the Beechwood area;
- 21-year old female from Hillburn Drive, **Birkenhead**, was issued with a stern warning by the courts that she faced a prison sentence if she committed a further breach of a legal Undertaking;
- 39-year old female from Avon Street, **Birkenhead**, was issued with an immediate eviction order due to repeated anti-social and criminal behaviour at her home;

Reported March 2009:

- 34-year old male from Fairbrook Drive, **Birkenhead**, issued with a 12-month Anti-Social Behaviour Injunction following verbal abuse and threatening behaviour to refuse collectors employed by Biffa (see January 2009);

Reported April 2009:

- 32-year old male from Neston Gardens, **Birkenhead**, issued with an eviction order to leave his home and pay costs, following complaints of anti-social behaviour including loud music;

- 35-year old male from Neston Gardens, **Birkenhead**, sentenced to three months' imprisonment suspended until December 2009 for repeatedly breaching an Anti-Social Behaviour Injunction (see January 2009);

Additional activity has included:

- **Youth Respect Team**

The Anti-Social Behaviour Team's youth outreach team has operated in **Seacombe, Poulton, Liscard, Bromborough, Beechwood, North Birkenhead, Central Birkenhead, Rock Ferry and Tranmere.**

- **Respect Watch Scheme implemented in Bidston Rise, Birkenhead (January 2009)**

Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team, in partnership with Merseyside Police and landlord Wirral Partnership Homes, designated the Bidston Rise area as a Respect Watch Scheme Area. The Scheme is designed to provide further protection to residents who have suffered anti-social behaviour so serious that it has warranted legal action by the Anti-Social Behaviour Team. The Scheme includes a local lettings agreement with residents and a commitment from Wirral Partnership Homes that steps will be taken to ensure that applicants for housing within that area or members of their household, guilty of previous unacceptable behaviour, will not be re-housed within the area. The Scheme has supplemented activity around the deployment of the Community Mobile Police Station in the north Birkenhead area.

- **Mobile CCTV camera relocated (February 2009)**

The Anti-Social Behaviour Team's mobile 3G CCTV camera was relocated to Sherlock Lane, Poulton.

- **Team raises £700 for Comic Relief (March 2009)**

Officers from Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team were out in force in Liscard Town Centre with its Respect Bus raising awareness about anti-social behaviour whilst supporting a good cause. The activity saw the Team's Senior Youth Worker, Alf Mullin, and Enforcement Officer, Andy O'Rourke, sat in a bath of red custard. A colleague and analyst from the Joint Community Safety Team, Sai Maing, joined in the activity having been sponsored to work all day in his pyjamas. In total the activity raised £718.25 for Comic Relief.

- **Opportunities knock for Wallasey teenagers (May 2009)**

A group of young people came together to celebrate a successful application to the Youth Opportunities Fund that saw them pay a visit to the country's seat of power. The group of ten young people, aged between thirteen and eighteen, from the Seacombe and Liscard areas gave a presentation to their local ward councillors about their trip to the Houses of Parliament and the Home Office, which was funded by the Youth Opportunities Fund. The young people were brought together by the Youth Respect Team which was working in the area to address complaints of anti-social behaviour. At the celebration at Wallasey Town Hall, the young people outlined the positives they had got out of the trip; this included increased confidence, experience of teamworking and many new skills, including leadership.

During the event the (annual) Sheila Jordan Respect Champion Trophies were presented (Sheila was a local resident who was instrumental in developing activities for local young people and who died at Christmas 2007). The Junior Shield was presented to one of the young people (15 years old) from the trip as he had been the driving force behind the trip, taking a strong leadership role and now wishes to volunteer with the Youth Respect Team. The Senior Shield was presented to an 18-year old who had originally participated in football sessions in the area organised by the Youth Respect Team and progressed to volunteering with Wirral's Positive Futures led programme on Friday and Saturday evenings in Seacombe, co-ordinated by Wirral's Community Sports Development Unit.

- **Pupils earn respect from range of agencies (May 2009)**

Representatives from a range of local organisations joined together with primary school pupils to celebrate the completion of another year of Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team's awareness programme designed to steer youngsters away from anti-social behaviour. The Respect Programme for Primary Schools is a seven-week modular interactive programme which makes pupils aware of what anti-social behaviour is and the possible consequences if they were to get involved in it. The programme includes a number of classroom sessions and two location-based activities, including a trip to the Old Courthouse in Wallasey – a decommissioned courtroom - where the pupils take part in a mock courtroom session.

During this academic year the Anti-Social Behaviour Team worked with more than 500 pupils from Year 5 or Year 6 from primary schools including Liscard, Our Lady of Lourdes, Egremont, Woodchurch Road, Black Horse Hill Juniors, Holy Cross, Woodsee, Woodlands, Bidston Village, Raeburn and Bidston Avenue. The programme is lead by an Education Social Worker and Police Officer seconded to the Anti-Social Behaviour Team and key elements are delivered by other agencies and Council departments, including Arriva, Merseyrail, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service, HM Courts Service, Tranmere Rovers FC and the Dog Wardens;

Equality & Diversity



Equality Standard for Local Government



Wirral Council was assessed for level 3 of the Equality Standard on the 20 and 21 May but unfortunately did not meet the full criteria. However, the Council was commended for the progress it has made regarding equality and diversity over the last 12-18 months, and has been given until September 2009 to submit further evidence in order to be awarded level 3.

A peer challenge team from the Improvement and Development Agency were on site for 2 days at Wallasey Town Hall.

Over the 2 day period Councillors, Chief Officers, staff, representatives from partner organisations, members of the equality watch scheme, local strategic partnership members and community representatives took part in focus groups and interviews.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank EVERYONE who has played a major part in the whole process both behind the scenes, leading up to the assessment and over the 2 day challenge itself.

Equality Watch Scheme

The Equality Watch Scheme is the Council's equality and diversity action plan for the period April 2009 to March 2012, covering all six equality strands, also taking into consideration multi-forms of discrimination

Gender (including transgender), Disability, Race, Sexual Orientation, Age, Religion or Belief

The Equality Watch Scheme details the actions that will be taken across the whole Council to eliminate any discriminatory practices and to promote equality and recognise diversity within employment and service delivery. The scheme will also provide the framework for the Council achieving the different levels of the Equality Standard for Local Government. The three year action plan is split into four sections and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Equality Watch Scheme replaces the Council's Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes. However, this proposed scheme does take into account the Council's statutory equality duties under the Race Relations Act 1976, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The Equality Watch Scheme also gives appropriate regard to the forthcoming Single Equality Act relating to sexual orientation, age, religion or belief. Most comments received from the two consultation events held in January along with comments received via email and telephone, have been incorporated into the final draft. The updated document will be presented to Cabinet on 28th May 2009 for final endorsement, following this it will be published on the Local Strategic Partnership and Council's websites.

All Together Now magazine

The Council have distributed this free magazine through our one stop shops and libraries since it was launched several years ago. They have now presented a distribution box, which is located in the Wallasey Town Hall foyer and branded with our Equality Watch logo.

The award-winning All Together Now! magazine is aimed at EVERYONE — but especially anyone whose lives are affected by disability, long-term health conditions, or, age - plus health professionals.

With the help of NHS Trusts, local authorities and community groups, 73,000 FREE copies are distributed across Merseyside, Cheshire and North Wales. The full colour tabloid magazine promotes full social inclusion in all aspects of life. There are strong regional/national news sections, plus sections on employment, education and training, housing, welfare benefits, holidays, transport, motoring, aids and equipment, the arts, leisure and recreation, gardening, and sport.

The All Together NOW! charity plan to publish the magazine every two months.

So get your free copy of All Together Now! when you next visit the Town Hall.

Do you want to become a member of Equality Watch?

This will entitle you to receive copies of equality watch newsletters, regular updates on national and local equality and diversity headlines and the opportunity to be involved in the council's equality watch initiatives. If you are interested in becoming a member of equality watch and would like to register please email: equalitywatch@wirral.gov.uk *We are waiting to hear from you!*



Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service

The Fire Service on Wirral is delivered through 6 community fire stations located at Birkenhead, Bromborough, Heswall, Upton, West Kirby and Wallasey.

We are committed to innovative and imaginative change in order to help make our communities safer and stronger. We are also committed to integrated working with other authorities, agencies and the voluntary sector to improve public safety and well being.

We have an **Integrated Risk Management Plan** which is a local strategic plan that outlines the measures intended to be taken to continue the modernisation and improvement of services to the people of Merseyside. Past and current I.R.M.P can be viewed online at www.merseyfire.gov.uk or copies of the latest plan are available at local community fire stations across the district, public libraries and One-Stop shops.

Community engagement remains the cornerstone of our proactive activities, in particular the delivery of the **Home Fire Safety Checks** and the provision of free smoke detectors where necessary. Our HFSC campaign has been in existence for over ten years and despite all our efforts and undertaking nearly 6000 Home Fire Safety checks since the last area forums, there still remain areas within the borough which have proven difficult to access and have never received a HFSC. We have made a commitment to risk assess every home in Merseyside and now are proactively targeting those homes that are still outstanding an initial assessment. We are utilising a variety of intelligence methods to identify these homes. It is the intention of the Authority to ensure that every home on Merseyside has had a Home Fire Risk Assessment/ Vulnerable Property Assessment by the end of the current fiscal year. In addition we are running a series of specific targeted campaigns in our highest risk areas, in order to make our community safer. The Service has set challenging performance targets and we are pleased to report that Wirral stations regularly achieve and exceed these targets.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service has set a goal to become an environmentally regenerative service. We will carry out investigations to reduce our carbon footprint with the ultimate aim of becoming carbon positive. The aim of which is to leave the climate in better shape at the end of each year. This goal will take a sustained effort over a number of years and will require radical change in how we operate as a business, whilst we maintain our high levels of service, intervention and response to the people of Merseyside. The Fire Service are committed to working in partnership to achieve strategic objectives within the Local Area Agreement, examples of this are

The Fire Service have been working with partners to develop facilities at Wallasey Fire station as part of an integrated healthier lifestyle project. Work has now been completed on a new **Lifestyle Centre** which incorporates a Wirral HeartBeat gym and new community meeting and welfare facilities. The gym facilities are now being used by the Wirral Heartbeat members and the community meeting facilities are now available.

A number of forums recently funded a **Beacon Programme** which was run out of Birkenhead Fire Station. This was run 1 day a week for 12 weeks and was designed for children aged 11-16yrs, although there were younger children who attended. The course participants were given a learning experience outside the school environment to build their confidence and self-esteem. The course combines practical drill ground and scenario based training with classroom centred activities and workshops-including community fire safety. The group of youngsters successfully passed out from the course in July at the Fire Service Training & Development Academy and were presented with their certificates by the Mayor of Wirral in front of family, friends and representatives from the Local Area Forums.

In conjunction with **Wirral Road Safety Partnership** we are continuing to work towards reducing road traffic accidents across the district through the development of an educational training package, which is to be delivered to students by FS personnel. Fire Support Network volunteers will also be utilised in the overall strategy to assist in reducing speeding and other contributory factors of road traffic collisions. The Service continues to maintain a high level of operational preparedness and has carried out an number of realistic training exercises with some of our major industry partners on the Wirral.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service will soon be hosting thirteen Fire Officers from the Kuwait. These delegates will be undertaking a 2 year course through the National Fire Service College following which they will return to Kuwait to take on the role of managers. During their 4 weeks in Merseyside they will be spending time on Wirral stations to enhance their knowledge in terms of practical fire-fighting. With summer approaching fast, and hopefully the nice weather with it, there is an increased risk of grass fires. In order to tackle this MFRS have organised a number of campaigns which include -

SPARC campaign – this is aimed at parks and recreational spaces and will be run in conjunction with the Fire Support Network, directly engaging with park users to highlight the risks associated with dry weather conditions within these areas. Further details of these campaigns will be published in the local press nearer to the time. Wirral has a number of areas of natural heath land which are recognised to be Sites of Special Scientific interest. These areas attract large numbers of visitors and this increases the risk from accidental fires which can severely affect the flora and fauna. MFRS are working in partnership with Wirral Ranger Service, Natural England, local Police and other interested groups to proactively engage and educate the public in the risks that exist. We would ask all members of the community to be vigilant during the season and to report any suspicious activities.

Fire Support Network is a non-profitable registered charity which works in partnership with the Fire Service on Merseyside to promote fire safety to the local communities through volunteers and partner organisations. Volunteer roles vary from working directly with the fire-fighters, leafleting and replacing batteries in smoke detectors to providing an after fire care service and fund raising. Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer can register online at www.firesupportnet.org.uk or contact via telephone on 0151 296 4600.

We are currently working closely with Wirral PCT on the **Smoke Free Homes Campaign**, the aim of which is to encourage smokers to make a pledge not to expose their family and friends to second hand smoke in their homes and cars, this will also assist in the reduction of accidental fires in properties and vehicles due to smoking related material. This scheme is currently being rolled out across the district, half of which is now included with the other station areas to follow shortly.

Community Fire Stations

- **Birkenhead:** Exmouth Street. Birkenhead.CH41 4AX. 0151 296 5325
- **Bromborough:** Dock Road South. Bebington.CH62 4SQ 0151 296 5925
- **Heswall:** Telegraph Road, Heswall, CH60 OAF. 0151 296 5805
- **Upton:** Arrowe Park Road. Upton.CH49 OUF. 0151 296 5895
- **West Kirby:** The Concourse. West Kirby. CH48 4HX. 0151 296 5955
- **Wallasey:** Mill Lane. Wallasey. CH44 5UE. 0151 296 6180

For a FREE Home Fire Safety Check, including FREE smoke alarm installation if required please contact Fire Service Direct on: FREEphone 0800 731 5958

Personal Travel Planning Report

Aim of Project A Personal Travel Planning project is proposed for Wirral in 2009 which will contact 10,000 households in order to reduce car use.

Background In 2008 the Merseyside Transport Partnership (MTP) commenced a three year Personal Travel Planning (PTP) project as part of the partnership's TravelWise programme to help people make smarter travel choices. JMP Consultants were contracted to support management and delivery of the project. Transport and Travel Research (TTR) provide research and evaluation services in support of the TravelWise Merseyside programme and were contracted to provide independent evaluation of the PTP project.

The PTP project has the following aims:-

- a) Reduce private motor vehicle kms among participants particularly for morning peak trips into Liverpool city centre and Birkenhead town centre;
- b) Reduce travel and establish sustainable travel patterns among participants; and
- c) Reduce carbon emissions from travel.

An area encompassing 3500 households in Childwall, Liverpool was selected for a pilot programme for delivery in summer 2008. Evaluation of the Merseyside pilot revealed similar levels of behaviour change to those seen in comparable projects elsewhere. Comparing the interviewer led travel diary data of all those who participated in the project with those who did not recall being asked to participate, reveals a 9.9% increase in trips made by sustainable modes and a 10.2% reduction in car use.

Wirral Project, Area Selection In preparing for the 2009/10 project it was recognised that a larger scale residential programme should be conducted and that this be designed in such a way as to contribute to the congestion corridor management programme. Heswall, Irby and Pensby were selected as providing the most potential for reducing car use and meeting the programme aims.

The following characteristics contribute to the potential of the area to meet the programme aims.

- a) Heswall has high level of car ownership (83%) and very high car usage for local work trips providing an opportunity to address local travel as well as travel to the city centre.
- b) High potential for people to use public transport as bus services originate in Heswall. Comparable car and bus journey times – bus quicker along corridor during 8am-9am peak.
- c) Suitable catchment area with larger numbers of people travelling to work by car along congestion corridor.
- d) Distinct local community.
- e) Capacity on 472 / 71 / 72 services (in project area).
- f) Potential to also impact other local trips (e.g. shopping, leisure, health and education).
- g) 10 primary schools and 2 high schools in area all working with TravelWise on travel plans.
- h) Amalgamation and relocation of GP surgeries in project area.

Wirral Objectives These specific objectives have been set for the Wirral programme

- a) Reduce car use from the project area for peak hour trips to Birkenhead / Liverpool in order to contribute to reduced car trips on the designated congestion corridor.
- b) Reduce car use between the project area and Arrowe Park hospital in order to reduce traffic / parking problems at the hospital.
- c) Reduce car use for other trips to and from the project area in order to reduce traffic growth and encourage sustainable travel behaviour.
- d) Improve efficiency of trips made by car in order to reduce CO₂.
- e) Improve perception of sustainable modes of travel
- f) Improve awareness of information sources for sustainable modes of travel

- g) Increase understanding and awareness of TravelWise

Planned Activity – the project A team of advisors will be recruited and trained via JMP. A project office above Heswall post office, has been identified from which the programme will run. The project will be delivered in waves moving across the area – a sequence can be provided for this nearer the time. Initial contact leaflets, bearing the Wirral logo will be delivered to the first wave area mid May. Following training, residents will begin to be contacted in person from May 20th. All advisors will carry id and will wear red TravelWise t-shirts. It is proposed that media are informed about the project prior to the first information reaching households and that a launch event be held in the project office during w/c May 25th. Throughout the project opportunities for media coverage will be sought, utilising project participants etc and elected member participation will be sought for all such opportunities. Similarly the www.LetsTravelWise.org website will be utilised to encourage communication of participants' achievements and project progress.

Engagement Outline

- a) A before survey will be conducted end of April to set a baseline
- b) A leaflet will be sent to homes in the project area outlining the project and inviting participation from mid May (not more than 2 weeks before doorstep contact attempted).
- c) Three attempts to contact people at home will be made (i.e. weekday, weekday evening, Saturday) and if willing to participate a 10-15 minute conversation will be held to identify information and incentives that would help meet an individual's travel needs and encourage sustainable travel behaviour.
- d) An information pack will be delivered containing the incentives and information relevant to their needs within 5 days – eg cycle maps, discount bus tickets etc.
- e) JMP will make use of existing Merseytravel / Wirral / Merseyside resources and any relevant national campaigns (e.g. Change4Life, etc.)
- f) Additional resources and incentives will be developed for the project, including an Area Guide, Buses from Your Stop, Personal Journey Plans and a TravelWise Challenge.
- g) Challenge participants will be emailed and/or texted to encourage greater participation and to present further offers
- h) A Customer Aftercare service will be carried out by the Travel Advisors. This will be done using telephone and email follow-ups.
- i) An independent evaluation of the project will be conducted by TTR using a telephone after survey in October
- j) The target for Year Two is 5000 participants.

Wirral University Teaching Hospital 
NHS Foundation Trust

Pleased to be able to participate in the Local Area Forums and welcomes the opportunity to brief Wirral residents and our partner organisations on topical issues. Representing the Trust will be an Executive Director or Senior Manager and the elected Public Governor for the host constituency.

- **Controlling Infection.....**
 - Our Elective Surgical Unit at Clatterbridge remains MRSA bloodstream infection free – this Unit can undertake most planned surgical procedures including joint replacements.
 - Our Women's Services Unit at Arrowe Park is also MRSA bloodstream infection free
 - Reducing the incidence of MRSA and Clostridium difficile is a very high priority for the Trust and figures released by the Health Protection Agency in April show that between October and December 2008 there was a significant decrease – 60% - in cases of C.diff. compared to the same period in 2007.
 - 'Working Together to Keep It Clean' – an on-going campaign that aims to raise the Infection Control profile even higher at the Trust and to increase awareness amongst staff, patients and visitors of how important it is to 'Keep it Clean'
- **Improving Our Standards.....**
 - The Trust has been awarded the title of 'Best Large Hospital*' in the Dr Foster Good Hospital Guide 2008 which compares services and treatment outcomes at all hospitals across the country.
 - We are proud to have been named, for the third year running, as one of the country's Top 40 performing hospitals by an independent benchmarking company that compares our

performance in 20 key areas – including infection rates, mortality rates and waiting times – against other, similar hospitals.

- Our Stroke Services have been rated as among the best in the country by the Royal College of Physicians following a recent audit and we will be improving services even further when we become a hyper-acute stroke centre thanks to an investment of £1.6million from NHS Wirral
- In the most recent (2007/08) Healthcare Commission Annual Health Check we scored ‘excellent’ for our use of resources and ‘good’ for the quality of our services
- Our Maternity Unit was judged to be one of the ‘best performing’ in the country according to the 2008 Healthcare Commission’s Maternity Services Review and was named ‘best in the region’ in a national survey of new mothers and mothers-to-be.
- An external assessment of our standards by the Patient Environment Action Team resulted in the following scores being awarded to the Trust for 2008 –

<i>Environment</i>	<i>Food</i>	<i>Privacy & Dignity</i>	
<i>Arrowe Park</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Good</i>
<i>Clatterbridge</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>

- **Providing New Services.....**

- The Trust has announced a major capital investment in services for Women and Children at Arrowe Park Hospital. The £11million scheme, due for completion in spring 2011, will radically change the face of the current Maternity services building and will create a ‘centre of excellence’ by bringing together under one roof, all acute hospital services for women and children. The development will include:
 - A major refurbishment of the maternity wards, providing all patients with single rooms and en-suite facilities
 - A brand new maternity delivery suite featuring five new delivery rooms, including two with birth pools and additional facilities to allow partners to stay overnight
 - Creation of an attractive single front entrance and reception area to welcome patients and visitors.
 - On 1st June our brand new Children’s Outpatients Department will open at Arrowe Park Hospital. Re-located from the main hospital building, this is the first phase in our plan to bring all children’s services together.
 - Work has just started on building a new accommodation facility for parents of children being treated at Arrowe Park Hospital. Funded by Ronald McDonald House Charity, this is the granting of the Jellybean Kid’s Appeal third wish and is due to open in the autumn.
 - Over the course of the next two years we will be upgrading wards in the main hospital block at Arrowe Park on a rolling programme to provide more single rooms and better sanitary facilities.
 - A second MRI scanner is currently being installed at Arrowe Park.
 - We are investing nearly £1million in adapting our wards to comply with Department of Health guidance on eliminating mixed sex accommodation for patients.
 - The Trust is a designated Urology Cancer Centre for Wirral, Chester and Northern Cheshire patients requiring major cancer surgery
 - We were the first NHS organisation in Merseyside and Cheshire to offer a new laser technique – the *greenlight laser* – that is transforming the treatment of prostate conditions for men
 - A brand new, multi-million £ Dialysis Unit has opened at Clatterbridge Hospital to treat patients with renal (kidney) conditions.

- **Easy to Use Website.....**

- Our new-look, easy access website can provide lots of useful information for patients, the public, staff and GPs about the Trust and its services go to www.whnt.nhs.uk
- The website is speech enabled for browsers with sight related problems
- The new, easy click, ‘email a patient’ facility continues to be a popular feature

- **Come and Join Us!**

- As a Foundation Trust we want to involve our Public Members in helping us to shape future services – we currently have 8,000 Public Members and are keen to recruit more. Public Members can get involved as much or as little as they like – from just receiving ‘Public Membership News’, our regular newsletter, to participating in surveys or standing for election as a Public Governor. To join on-line go to www.whnt.nhs.uk

Best large acute trust outside London
awarded jointly with Darlington and County Durham NHS Foundation Trust



Launch of What? alcohol misuse campaign NHS Wirral has invested heavily in alcohol misuse treatment, prevention and care with spending rising from 845K to 2.2M by the end of 09/10. Part of this investment includes the development of the What? campaign aimed at providing information about sensible drinking and signposting to services. Look out for the campaign logo over the next few weeks. Try the website for more information. <http://www.wirralalcohol.co.uk>

All Day Health Centre In March 2009 a new facility opened on the Arrowe Park site. The 'All Day Health Centre' includes services from GPs and nurses 8am – 10pm, 365 days of the year. This additional service is designed to complement and support existing GP services currently available across Wirral. Since March, people have been able to book an appointment to see a GP at the new centre, up to a fortnight in advance. Patients can call the booking phone number 0151 201 4188 or 'drop-in' and see a nurse at any time between 8am and 10pm. Patients are not required to register but are able to do so if they wish.

Carers week 8th-14th June '09 Six million people provide unpaid care to someone they know. 3 in 5 people will be carers at some point in their lives. Carers Week will highlight and celebrate the incredible contribution that carers make, sharing the positive experiences as well as the more difficult. For more information about the national campaign go to: <http://www.carersweek.org>

Locally NHS Wirral is working closely with Adult Social Services and Wired who are a local organisation involved in supporting the needs of unpaid carers. If you are caring for someone, your GP would like to know so they can ensure that you are provided with the support you need in this role. A full programme of events are planned including information and displays in all Wirral Libraries. For more information call the helpline below. If you wish to receive further information and support for you in your caring role then please contact the following helpline number: Wired on 0151 670 0777 or go online <http://www.wirralcarers.com>

Swine Flu update Work is well underway across Wirral to ensure that our pandemic flu plans are in place. NHS Wirral receives up to date information on a daily basis from our Wirral partners, and works with colleagues across Merseyside and the North West to co-ordinate intelligence and activity. There has only been one confirmed case of swine flu in Wirral to date. The patient who had returned from Mexico has fully recovered.

It is important that the public pay particular attention to hygiene messages:

1. Covering your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, using a tissue when possible.
2. Disposing of dirty tissues promptly and carefully.
3. Maintaining good basic hygiene, for example washing hands frequently with soap and water to reduce the spread of the virus.
4. Cleaning hard surfaces (e.g. door handles) frequently using a normal cleaning product.
5. Making sure children follow this advice.

Most importantly, advice to the public remains that anyone returning from Mexico or one of the affected countries who develops flu-like symptoms within a week or so of their return should stay at home and call their GP or NHS Direct on 0845 4647. There is also a health information line which is updated regularly: Tel: 0800 1 513 513 or visit www.nhs.uk.

Is the NHS prepared for a possible pandemic? The UK has been preparing for a flu pandemic for the last five years. We have established a stockpile of enough antivirals to treat more than 33 million people,. All NHS organisations have pandemic flu plans in place and the Department of Health is now working closely with the NHS to ensure that these plans can be put into action so that antivirals can be made available to the public very rapidly should we reach that stage.

How will we keep the public up-to-date We already have well advanced plans for providing information to the public in the event of a pandemic, in particular about what people can do to help themselves in the event of swine influenza being confirmed in the UK.

How are we making sure that GPs and other staff are up-to-date? We keep our plans under regular review. The Department of Health has published a range of guides that support health and social care services to develop pandemic action plans including acute trusts, (secondary or hospital care trusts) primary care trusts, ambulance trusts and social care trusts. They offer practical advice and suggestions for actions needed by GP practices now and in the event of a pandemic

We recommend that you check the relevant web sites for the most recent information:

Latest health advice from the Health Protection Agency:

http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1240732817824?p=1240732817665

Patient advice from NHS Direct: <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Pandemic-flu/Pages/QA.aspx>

Latest information from the Department of Health: <http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/index.htm>

Wirral Youth Service

Wirral Youth Service provides opportunities, which are open to all Wirral young people. Youth work helps young people learn about themselves, others and society, through informal educational activities which combine fun, challenge and learning.

The Service works with young people aged 13-19 years, and specifically targeted young people aged 20 until their 25th birthday who have additional needs and need support with transition into adult life/services.

The Youth Service in Wirral works with many young people in a variety of different settings, these include:

Youth clubs, Street work projects, "Kontaktabuses", "Wirral Youth Theatre" and Youth Arts, "Response" – Advice, support, advocacy and information service and Substance Misuse Service, International exchanges, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Outdoor activities, Projects in schools

The Service is flexible and able to respond to the needs of young people and offers opportunities that are both universal and targeted. Youth work on Wirral is delivered through joint working between the Local Authority, voluntary organisations and other agencies.

Youth workers work with young people in many different localities in Wirral. Having a variety of youth clubs and street work projects allows youth workers to work with young people in their neighbourhoods, meet their specific needs and respond to issues that are important to them.

Much of the work of the Youth Service takes place in one of fourteen open access youth clubs located across the Borough. Street work teams of youth workers make contact with young people who do not access the service elsewhere, build relationships with them and in negotiation with the young people, develop programmes which address their specific needs. This work is delivered on the streets, through project work and on mobile Kontaktabuses.

Response is a Borough wide Youth Service provision, providing counselling, support, advocacy and information for young people. Many of these young people have complex needs requiring intensive support from the service including homelessness, abuse, poor health and poverty. The agency also has a team of specialist workers providing support to young people who have drug and alcohol problems. The team work with those individuals in a variety of settings including outreach street work and one to one work in their homes or wherever young people feel safe. The team also deliver educational programmes within schools and other youth settings on the risk, consequence and health implications of substance misuse. Partnership work plays an important role in targeting vulnerable, hard to reach groups of young people. Service level agreements and regular joint working ensures the needs of young people are met.

Each year the Youth Service runs a comprehensive programme of International Youth Exchanges. Young people from Wirral take part in a number of international opportunities including, Hong Kong and the Azores. They have recently hosted a group from Germany; this is done in partnership with Upton Hall School

The Youth Service is the Licensed Operating Authority for the whole of Wirral. Awards can be gained through a variety of approved operating units and access organisations made up of a combination of youth centres, schools, an open award centre and a selection of voluntary groups. Young people in Wirral consistently gain over 450 awards per year at bronze, silver and gold levels.

The DofE is available to all young people aged between 14 and 25 with the emphasis being the development of young people's leisure time. By taking part in the DofE, participants are able to increase their own self confidence and self esteem, make new relationships and develop fresh skills.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award staff continue to work with a group of Looked After Children who after successfully achieving their Bronze Award are now working towards their Gold. This group recently successfully bid for Youth Opportunity Funding to enable them to visit the Czech Republic. This visit, which involved studying social and foster care in a former communist state, satisfied the requirements of their DofE Gold Residential. A newly formed Bronze group is hoping to complete their expedition at the Oaklands centre in the forthcoming expedition season. In our drive to make the DofE available to everyone and to diversify its delivery we are now helping several new units to run the Award. This includes Meadowside Special School and the Observatory School where we will adapt the Award for pupils with learning difficulties.

Wirral Youth Theatre operates across the Borough to enable young people to access a wide range of performing arts related activities. Art forms such as drama, dance, music, technical theatre and new media are used to help young people to develop personally and socially as well as developing theatre and media related skills. A peer education company within the Wirral Youth Theatre have performed in parks and youth clubs a play about risk taking behaviour this is now going into schools

The North End Young People's Project undertakes streetwork in the North End of Birkenhead, in Birkenhead Park and in the Exmouth area. The Kontakt-a-Bus is also used in some locations. The young people participate in a wide range of activities that aid their personal development as well as making a positive contribution to the community. The youth workers deliver a programme that addresses the needs and interests of the young including visits to the theatre and dance sessions. With the support of the youth workers, the young people are very active in applying for Youth Opportunities Fund money to finance their activities.

The Fender Youth Action Project works with young people from Beechwood and Ballantyne Estates. The young people have enjoyed participating in creative and cultural activities as well as developing a Youth Opportunity Funded health promoting project. A health project has been undertaken by young women who made a successful Youth Opportunities Fund bid to finance the project.

The Cavendish Youth Centre is open on Monday and Wednesday 7.00 pm – 10.00pm. The newly refurbished club is proving very popular with young people; there are now separate areas for specific activities including a chill area, a computer room and a fitness room. It is planned run a monthly Disco on Saturdays. Funding from the Tudor trust to expand youth activities and family work for the next three years has recently been awarded and an innovative youth offer is now being planned. The D.i.ing and M.C.ing continues in popularity with the young people and the theme of health continues with a special young peoples health check day in June.

Noctorum Young People's Project works with young people in public places that include the Noctorum Estate, the Townfield Lane vicinity and the Arno. Where appropriate, some of this work is undertaken with the support of Response substance misuse workers and on occasion, with Community Support Officers. The youth workers deliver a programme that addresses the needs of the young people both in terms of life skills and physical activity. Ridgeway School Sports Hall continues to be used on a Monday night by several groups of young men.

Older People's Parliament

We have continued to work towards improving the environment and services for the older population of Wirral. Our full parliamentary meetings, on the first Friday morning of March, June, September and December are held in the Town Hall, and provide a summary of our work, most of which takes place through monthly executive meetings and a great number of smaller groups. Our membership currently consists of 44 volunteers, 4 from each of the 11 Area Forums of the Wirral, plus several hundred associate members. We are preparing for formal elections in the year 2010. We are asking who is interested in becoming one of the 4 elected members from each Area Forum patch, and elections will be conducted by post amongst the associates from each area. Hopefully, by that time, we will have many more associates. It costs nothing to become part of this powerful voice for the over 50s. Please join if you are old enough. The bigger our electorate, the more influence we will have.

Our activities include:-

Regular liaison with police and magistrates. There will be a full day of presentations and discussion with a panel of experts on August 14th on aspects of safety for the older person.

Liaison with Adult Social Services. We want the best possible domiciliary and residential care for those of us who need it. We support the moves to personalise this, and are watching developments closely. We have members sitting on many policy and development groups in this area of the Council. Liaison with NHS Wirral (our PCT) where again we are invited onto many committees and interview panels for senior posts which will be crucial in delivery of health care to the elderly. We are constantly supportive of moves for health and social care to work in tandem, and we also remind them all the

time of the valuable role which voluntary bodies play in this area. More and more public funding is now going to voluntary groups to provide quality and flexible services.

Our Hospital Discharge survey has started a huge movement to improve and streamline discharge. We are keeping a close watch on this, and would welcome any reports, good or bad, from those who leave hospital.

We organised a very successful day conference entitled "Keeping warm next winter" The presentations focussed on home improvements, fuel costs, healthy eating, grants available and generally keeping fit when it is cold. We are very grateful for generous financial support from NHS Wirral, Riverside Housing, Oakhouse Foods and others.

We are in regular contact with providers of life long learning opportunities. We are also trying to encourage older people to get involved in local schools. This is very rewarding for both the volunteer and the children. We can arrange the necessary police check.

A very active subgroup is that of grandparents who have the permanent care of grandchildren, for whatever reason. They are working, both locally and nationally to highlight the huge gaps in provision and information.

We have members working at a national level with a variety of organisations which are trying to improve the financial and human rights status of older people.

We have a member working hard on aspects of public transport, and he needs more support with this. Housing developments for older people (extra care housing, a possible retirement village, and mapping the existing provision) are high on our agenda.

Whatever your interest, please contact us with ideas, problems enquiries and requests to join as an associate or stand for election.

Dates of Interest for your Diary

Parliament Meeting held at Wallasey Town Hall

- Friday 4th September 2009 11am
- Friday 4th December 2009 11am

Special Events

Crime & Respect (Information and Advice) for the over 50's

St Werburghs Parish Centre, Birkenhead.

- Friday 14th August 2009
10am to 3pm Refreshments and lunch provided.

Committee Meetings please phone for Venue's and dates.

Phone Brian Christian on 666 2220

email parliament@ageconcernwirral.org.