

WIRRAL COUNCIL

WIRRAL SOUTH CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE

2 FEBRUARY 2017

SUBJECT:	WIRRAL SOUTH COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE REPORT
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <u>BEBINGTON</u>▪ <u>BROMBOROUGH</u>▪ <u>CLATTERBRIDGE</u>▪ <u>EASTHAM</u>▪ <u>HESWALL</u>
REPORT OF:	ENGAGEMENT OFFICER (WIRRAL SOUTH)
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR MATTHEW PATRICK NEIGHBOURHOODS, HOUSING & ENGAGEMENT
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report details progress to date following the co-opting of five Community Representatives (com reps) to the Wirral South Constituency Committee (WSCC) on 15 October 2015 and since the previous committee on 5th October 2016. This report also highlights particular issues being experienced by the communities within the five wards and seeks to bring them formally to the attention of the committee.

2.0 BEBINGTON

2.1 The Com Rep continues to meet with and communicate regularly with Elected Members. There is ongoing progress in the development of a business association in Higher Bebington and engagement with a number of community groups. The Friends of Higher Bebington Library project has stalled slightly and this needs progressing.

4.0 BROMBOROUGH

4.1 New Ferry Christmas Lights

- 4.1.1 The Residents' Association and Traders' Association worked together following a lack of funding for New Ferry's Christmas Lights (which had sometimes come from Your Wirral funds in previous years), and used an online crowdfunding campaign and organised a Santa's Grotto for the first week in December to raise money to pay for the repair of the lights. Along with funding support from Wirral Farmer's Market and Port Sunlight Village Trust, a total of £999 was raised. Half of this was used to pay for the usual repairs to the lights, with the remainder now being held over and used towards the funding of the lights for 2017 and purchase of our own banding machine. Further fund-raising events are to be held throughout the year. The lights were put up for free by NW Construction who offered to sponsor them for this year. When the lights were put up, 5 sockets/columns were found not to be working. The Residents Association notified the Constituency Manager and Engagement Officer of this, and 4 of the 5 lights were fixed within a week and in time for the Christmas period.

4.2 Christmas Lunch at St. Mark's Church

- 4.2.1 The Christmas Day lunch at St Mark's Church Hall attracted 35 people from our area. The eldest participant was a 100 year old lady who lives overlooking New Ferry Park. The food and funding was kindly donated by individuals, Pearson's Butchers, Prenton Golf Club (who also supplied the chef!), Asda, and various members of St Mark's provided various puddings and cakes. St. Mark's Church also received £300 from the Wirral South Constituency Team as part of the Wirral South Christmas Together project. Because donations were so generous, the Church had a small surplus of nearly £50 which with the Council's permission will be used to improve the hall's kitchen facilities.

4.3 New Ferry Town Team

- 4.3.1 The Town Team met on 28th November to discuss putting together its constitution which will be agreed at its next meeting. The 'High Streets in Our Communities' project was also reported to be underway, with the Community Researcher Challenge having been advertised and 3 local residents having put themselves forward. The Traders Association is working hard to make contact with as many of New Ferry's businesses as possible to ensure that they are all kept informed of the work of the Town Team and its efforts to regenerate the town. There was a general feeling amongst the group that other projects in other areas are prioritised over New Ferry. A letter is being prepared by the group to be sent to the Leader of the Council highlighting their disappointment at the lack of investment in New Ferry.

4.4 New Ferry Park Summer Event

- 4.4.1 The Residents' Association is currently trying to find funding and sponsorship for a possible event in July 2017 that will use both New Ferry Park and the precinct in an attempt to bring visitors into New Ferry. The plan is to have classic cars and vehicles back in the precinct, along with a fun fair, performances and perhaps various period re-enactors in the park. This plan is at an early stage and will only happen if funding to start it off can be found.

4.5 Port Sunlight River Park

- 4.5.1 There has been a BIG Lottery Heritage bid to turn the existing office into a Heritage Visitor Centre. Work is due to start shortly on installing a new bridge between the River Park and Bromborough Pool. Concern was expressed following the River of Light Festival which caused a lot of traffic issues in the local area. Although there was a traffic management plan for the Birkenhead Waterfront and Wallasey areas, there was no work in the Port Sunlight River Park area and there were many traffic problems. The River Park would like to be consulted more on large riverside events in future, in anticipation of the same problems occurring.

4.6 Bromborough Village Christmas Lights and Events

- 4.6.1 A 25ft Christmas tree was erected and decorated at the Cross, whilst lamp-post lights and tree lights were put up following the Bromborough Village Community Association (BVCA) raising money during the year to pay for them. The BVCA had to pay for its lights to be installed, and were therefore disappointed when 5 of them were found not be working due to faulty electrical equipment on the lighting columns. They raised the issue with the relevant Council department in late November when the problems became apparent, but the lights were not fixed unlike New Ferry's and Birkenhead's. The BVCA asked for their disappointment that after all their hard effort to get the lights up that several of them would not work, to be noted, and a request that in future, at this time of year, the Council prioritises fixing the connections on lighting columns where local people have gone to the effort of raising money for Christmas lights to be attached to them. The BVCA have also said they will contact their ward Councillors to voice their concerns.
- 4.6.2 Several successful events were held around Christmas that brought visitors into the centre, including St Barnabas Church who held a 5 day Christmas tree festival, and a carol service arranged by BVCA.

4.7 Friends of Bromborough Library

- 4.7.1 A Friends of Bromborough Library group is in the process of being formed after some successful Coffee Mornings were held at the Library by the Engagement Officer and key community contacts. Following these Coffee Mornings a keen group of people got together and held a meeting to arrange their inaugural AGM. This will be held on 25th January 2017.

4.8 New Ferry Park Advisory Board

- 4.8.1 The New Ferry Park Advisory Board has been established to help inform the spend of £15K on New Ferry Park. The next meeting for this will be in February and there is hope of beginning works shortly after.

5.0 CLATTERBRIDGE

- 5.1 The inaugural local action team meeting took place on the 8th November. A note to facilitate the discussion was tabled. The development of local forums was proposed as a sensible and logical way forward following an approach proposed

some 18 months earlier by the Constituency Manager. It was agreed to report progress at the Task & Finish Group meeting on the 15th November and to develop a plan and a programme early in 2017. Unfortunately, due to other business dominating the Task and Finish Group meeting, progress could not be reported. A follow up meeting now needs to be arranged.

6.0 EASTHAM

6.1 Christmas 2016

6.1.1 As part of the Wirral South Christmas Together 2016 project the Delamere Centre and local churches held a Christmas Day event to provide dinner and company for local residents who would otherwise have been alone on Christmas Day. 10 local residents participated in the event and there was significant support from local volunteers and businesses in supporting the event. The NET @ 68 also hosted a Christmas dinner for local residents in December which was supported by ASDA.

6.2 Age UK Door Knock

6.2.1 Age UK carried out a pilot project with the Council and partner organisations to identify socially isolated people, in particular those who live on the Mill Park Estate, with the assistance of local community groups. Many issues were identified by local residents resulting in some issues being resolved on the doorstep and over 120 referrals to other organisations.

6.3 The Eastham Centre

6.3.1 The Eastham Centre is now continuing to deliver services and activities as part of Wirral Evolution with continuing support from the Council and elected members on refurbishment projects. Eastham Nurseries have been providing employment opportunities for clients from the Centre and the centre has developed links with the Everyman Theatre in Liverpool.

6.4 Queen Elizabeth Dock

6.4.1 Peel Holdings have now given the Mersey Mission for Seamen a building to provide canteen facilities for men on ships who were often in port at Eastham for long periods with no pay and few facilities.

6.5 Torr Park Advisory Board

6.5.1 The Torr Park Advisory Board has been set up following consultations with local residents and other interested parties to discuss and inform how the £65,000 available should be spent in Torr Park over the next 2 years (until March 2018).

6.6 Building Developments

6.6.1 Concern has been expressed by many local residents and organisations of the potential impact of proposed new developments in Eastham. These include the former Acre Lane and Lyndale School sites together with the proposals being put

forward by St Anselmian's Rugby Club. These developments consisting of over 400 houses will have a major impact on the existing highway network and service providers in the area.

7.0 HESWALL

7.1 Considerable progress has been made over the last few months. On presenting detailed proposals to the community at the April open meetings, Heswall Together's (HT) formal constitutional remit came to an end. Winding up the organisation has now been completed at an AGM for that purpose. Funds in the bank account have been transferred to a new group, the Heswall Action Team, and are being used to produce a town Directory (out shortly). The Heswall Action Team, chaired by Dr Dick Atkinson, started recently as an informal group of active residents who were working with the HT Acting Chair and Engagement Lead. The team agreed to pick up and develop the aims of HT. The Team report that they intend to bring the aims to practical fruition over the coming months and years by doing and having the following:

- Agreeing an appropriate name
- Developing the aims to include building a more caring, sharing, community, ending isolation for young and old by developing a network of Good Neighbours and partnering and working closely with WSCC and the Council and other statutory and voluntary agencies
- Agreeing a constitution which includes gaining charitable status
- Large numbers of residents electing on an annual basis a Committee of 10 residents who will meet on a monthly/bimonthly basis as well as organising well attended, popular, open meetings at which its activities are discussed and volunteers praised
- Working with a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer who will open a bank account
- Also working with a growing number of resident volunteers

7.2 It is hoped that all of the above will be in place within the next 2 months. This will help the Association to begin to fill the social void in Heswall. This void has been created by the fact that, until now, Heswall has not had a neighbourhood wide voice which seeks to empower residents to do more and more to help each other and to encourage service providers to play more cost effectively to each other's strengths and the expressed needs of their resident customers. By preventing problems from arising it is intended that money will be saved for providers. Thus, in future, 'more can be done with less' at a time of austerity and cuts which risk that 'less is done for less'. The Association aims to link with other neighbourhoods within Wirral South and from other areas from which it can learn as well as being an example of good working practice of which all concerned, including Councillors, can be proud. The relationship with WSCC and its Elected Members will be developed through the Heswall Community Representative.

8.0 COLLABORATIVE NOTE FROM COM REPS - SUMMARY OF 2016/17

8.1 Com Reps continued to meet regularly during 2016 and will do so during 2017. We believe considerable progress was made during 2016 and our aim is to make the strongest possible contribution in the next twelve months. In our review of 2016 we

were pleased to have been instrumental in developing the role of the community representative, establishing the need for strong positive local action teams, and looking at how 'working together' can be established as the 'first choice approach' when considering how improvements can be made in the interest of residents. Our focus for 2017 will be to build on the platform created in the last twelve months and to do this we will set out our detailed thoughts and ideas for the year and bring them forward for consideration and discussion. We aim to complete these discussions in Q1 2017/18 with all relevant stakeholders and decision makers.

8.2 All local action teams will have met by 1st April 2017.

9.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 Community Representatives have been an established part of this committee since its inception.

10.0 CONSULTATION

10.1 Wirral South Community Representatives engage with their respective communities in various ways.

11.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

11.1 The overarching proposed model for neighbourhood working will strengthen the Council's relationship with the voluntary and community sector.

11.2 Tackling the priorities of the Constituency will benefit communities directly.

12.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

12.1 This report has implications for the expenditure of budget allocated to Wirral South Constituency Committee.

13.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The arrangements will help the Council to deliver their 20 pledges for 2020 and also the Localism Act 2011 and Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

14.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

14.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

Yes an impact review can be found at the link below (Progressing Neighbourhood Working). A specific EIA related to the grants fund itself will be carried out should the relevant recommendation be approved.

15.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

15.1 By supporting localised initiatives the need for residents to travel outside their immediate area is reduced.

16.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

16.1 This report may have positive community safety implications on a Ward by Ward basis.

17.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that:

17.1 All Officers and Elected Members note issues raised by Com Reps and address these with Com Reps.

17.2 All Officers and Elected Members note the progress made by Com Reps in their local wards.

18.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

18.1 To enable the work of the Constituency Committee to be focused upon the needs of the local area and to ensure projects commence as expediently as possible.

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REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date

