

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	AGENDA ITEM No 6
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TITLE OF REPORT: CHAMPION NEWS - LETCHWORTH AREA COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Development Team has been involved.
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention some important community based activities that will be taking place during the next few months.

2 THE FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

3. PROJECT/ ACTIVITY/ SCHEME DETAILS

- 3.1 **Letchworth Youth Council**
(Please see separate report attached)

- 3.2 **Over 50s Seminar**

In partnership with Herts County Council's 'Wellbeing for Over Fifties' project group, the 50+ Community Development Officer is coordinating the largest event aimed people between the age of 55 and 70 years, the district has ever staged. This project is being seen as pilot by HCC who are looking to roll out similar events countywide.

On Saturday June 14th at the Spirella Building in Letchworth, people from across the district will be invited to attend a community engagement exercise called 'Talking about My Generation'. In conjunction the Big F.A.B. (Fifty and Above) Event will take the form of an Information fair with Free Prize Draw, Health Checks, Complementary Therapies, Stalls provided by local community groups and organisations, as well as tours of the public areas of the Spirella building.

Using the information gained from the community engagement process the 'F.A.B. Development Plan - 2009 to 2012' will be drawn up to look at what activities and services will be required by the new generation of retired people in North Herts.

To be involved in the event or for more information contact Claire Morgan, 50+ Development Officer on 01462 474226.

3.3 **Wilbury Youth Issues**

Installation of a mobile CCTV camera outside the shops on a temporary basis has led to a significant reduction in the number of young people congregating and in the incidents of anti social behavior.

The multi-agency led Community Partnership Surgery has recently been reviewed and has agreed to run last Thursday of each month at St Thomas Church between 6.30 to 7.30pm, instead of 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month.

The surgery is attended by representatives from local Housing Associations, Council Officers, Neighbourhood Police, Crime Prevention Panel and Ward Councillors to discuss any issues that arise and take appropriate action.

3.4 **Grange Youth Provision**

Due to a considerable amount of vandalism to the exterior of the Youth Wing the youth club was shut for a number of weeks. All the glass on windows and doors are now replaced with tough polycarbonate sheet and the Youth Club re opened on Friday 11th April 2008.

Community Development Officer is assisting the group to obtain charitable status as well as towards developing a number of other policies e.g. Health & Safety, Complaint Policies & Procedures, Equal Opportunities, Child Protection Policies & Procedures etc in order for the group to secure external funding.

The group has recently applied for and successfully obtained external funding to purchase three computers with Internet connection and a digital camera. These equipment has already been installed and helps youth workers to offer young people a range of innovative projects.

In order to increase the revenue the group will be letting the centre 3 days a week to Adult Care Services with an option to increase to 5 days.

3.5 **Rap-Aid**

CDO is continuing to support the group with external funding applications with a view to develop Mrs Howard Hall as a focal point for young people with appropriate resources.

Rap-aid Festival:

The group has provisionally put together a plan subject to external funding being achieved, to promote a week long festival, which will take place from 26th July to 2nd August 2008. Activities will take place at Mrs Howard Hall, Howard Gardens and end with a live music festival at the Broadway Gardens.

3.6 **Westbury Action Group (WAG)**

The group continue to meet on a regular basis to discuss and develop community led provision / activities in the area.

The group has set up an on-line discussion forum for local residents. Address for the website is <http://westbury-lgc.no-ip.org>

3.7 **Dog waste bins:**

All three dog waste bins (2 in Westbury & 1 in Jackmans) have now been installed.

3.8 **Letchworth African Caribbean Harmony Group**

Is a new group established to mainly serve the needs of the African Caribbean elderly community. The group had a successful launch party on Saturday 29th March 2008 at the Jackmans Community Centre, with over a hundred people attending from all walks of life.

The group received a grant of £520 from the Letchworth Area Committee towards the launch event and has submitted the project evaluation form along with copies of receipts / invoices.

3.9 **Jack Wilkinson Memorial Garden**

Planting of the Jack Wilkinson Memorial Garden took place on Saturday 12th April. Around 20 adults and 20 children from the local community took part in planting 200 shrubs to create the new garden from a former piece of rough ground on Jackmans Central amenity area. The project was financed by NHDC with contributions from WREN, NHH and LGCC.

Sadly, within few days of planting, more than half the shrubs and trees were stolen. The incident was reported to the Police and a local resident was caught and extra shrubs were replanted to replenish those stolen.

3.10 **Service Level Agreements**

A review of the Council's Policies and Procedures for Financial Assistance to the Voluntary and Community Sector is currently underway, with a report scheduled to go to Cabinet in the near future. This review includes the arrangements for Service Level Agreements as well as the general grants that are awarded by Area Committees.

4. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place with the respective agencies, organisations and ward members with regards to the activities and events mentioned in section 3 of the report.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well - being for Letchworth Garden City.
- 5.2 That the Committee with consideration to the information provided at Appendix A provide to the Projects Officer – Planning Control or Letchworth Committee Administrator (preferably by email) any such schemes or projects that could be considered for joint matched funding with the JMP Discretionary Budget for 2008-2009.

6. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 6.1 Ashuk Ahmed, Community Development Officer - Letchworth x4225
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