

ALDRIDGE & BEACON AREA PANEL

Area Manager's Report

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. This report seeks to inform Elected Members for the Aldridge & Beacon Area Partnership of some of the work carried out within the local area. The information in this report was correct at the time of writing, Monday, 26 September, 2016. All information in this report is for work carried out since May, 2016.

2. Recommendation

The Area Panel is requested to note the contents of this report.

3. Priorities

- 3.1. Walsall Council strategic priorities are:

- Safer Walsall: Creating safe, sustainable and inclusive communities
- Children and Young People: Improving safeguarding, learning and life chances for children and young people
- Business and Jobs: Supporting businesses to thrive and supporting local people in to work
- Health and Well-Being: Improving health, including well-being and independence for older people

- 3.2. Aldridge & Beacon Area Partnership has a number of key priorities which have been identified through work with Ward Councillors, partner agencies, Walsall Intelligence Network and the local community:

- Reducing Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Positive Activities for Young People
- Cleaner Streets & Greener Spaces
- Support and Positive Activities for the Over 50s
- Road & Pavement Maintenance & Safety
- Improving Health
- Reducing Loneliness and Social Isolation in Older People

3.3 Aldridge & Beacon Ward Councillors: Cllr Andrew, Cllr Bird, Cllr Clarke, Cllr Douglas-Maul, Cllr Harris, Cllr Hughes, Cllr Kudhail, Cllr Murray, Cllr Rochelle, Cllr Sears, Cllr Towe, Cllr Wilson

3.4 Aldridge & Beacon Partners: Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Unit, Youth Support Services (YSS), West Midlands Police, Walsall Housing Group (whg), West Midlands Probation Service, Walsall Intelligence Network, Environmental Health, Reassurance Team, Area Partnerships, Public Health, NHS Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Aldridge District Centre, Engineering and Transport, Clean & Green Services, Caldmoreaccord Housing Association, Walsall Voluntary Action, West Midlands Fire Service, Social Care and Inclusion, Leighswood School & Children's Centre, Pheasey Park Farm School & Children's Centre, Area Family Support Team, Trading Standards, Community Development, Streetly Community Association, Aldridge Community Centre, Collingwood Centre, Pheasey Park Farm Community Centre, Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, Sports & Leisure Services, Jobcentre Plus, Citizen Advice Bureau, Welfare Rights, Walsall College, Streetly Library, Aldridge Library, Pheasey Library, Walsall Wood Library, Victim Support, Walsall Adult Community College (WACC), Streetly Neighbourhood Watch, Pheasey Park Farm Neighbourhood Watch, Orchard Hills Neighbourhood Watch, South Aldridge Neighbourhood Watch, North Aldridge Neighbourhood Watch, All Saints Church, St. John's Church, Beacon Church, Aldridge Methodist Church, Pheasey Community Church, The Thomas Project, Friends of Doe Bank Park, Friends of Blackwood Park, Oak Park Leisure Centre, The Hothouse, Aldridge Youth Theatre, Walsall Wood Scouts, Key Ring, Collingwood Autism Support Group, Forget-Me-Not Streetly Dementia Group, Blackwood Pavilion User Group, St. Anne's Coffee Morning Group, Aldridge Friendly Club, Streetly Disabled Senior Citizens Club, Aldridge Volunteer Gardeners, Streetly Community Garden Group, Age UK Walsall, The Well, Brownhills & Walsall Wood Fellowship, Brownhills Community Association, Countryside Services, Walsall Wood Football Club, Aldridge School, Streetly Academy, Castlefort School, St. John's School, Blackwood School, Manor Primary School, Lindens Primary School, Pheasey Park Farm School, Meadow View School, Red Star AFC, Shire Oak Academy, Aldridge Cinema, Aldridge Shed.

4. Safer Walsall: Creating safe, sustainable and inclusive communities

4.1. CCTV Camera Deployment – through confidential tasking meetings, partners agree the priority areas to deploy CCTV, from the crime statistics fed to the area partnership by the Walsall Intelligence Network, which is data shared by all the major stakeholders. Currently we have a CCTV camera deployed in Collingwood Drive, Pheasey.

4.2. Flashing CCTV Sign Deployment – through confidential tasking meetings, partners agree the priority areas to deploy CCTV flashing signs, from the crime statistics fed to the area partnerships by the Walsall Intelligence Network, which is data shared by all the major stakeholders. Currently we have a flashing CCTV sign deployed in

Middlemore Lane, near to Aldridge Community Centre and Collingwood Drive, Pheasey.

- 4.3. Covert Cameras - Our current capability of cameras is, in the majority, deployed in the north east of the Borough where there is a big fly tipping problem. We currently have more than 20 Fly Tipping cases being investigated where good evidence from these cameras has been gathered. All but 2 have been committed in the Aldridge / Barr Beacon area. We have 2 court cases pending – both from the Aldridge area, one of which is expected to make regional headlines in the media. Aldridge & Beacon area partnerships have funded Walsall Council's Community Protection team £4,800 to enable them to purchase 4 new covert cameras, for the exclusive use of the Aldridge & Beacon area.
- 4.4. Neighbourhood Watch Meetings – there have been a number of local meetings for the various Neighbourhood Watch groups since the beginning of May, including the North Aldridge and South Aldridge Schemes. We have received a number of bulletins from Tony Marshall, North Aldridge Neighbourhood Watch, Paul Macey, South Aldridge Neighbourhood Watch, Peter Roberts, Streetly Neighbourhood Watch and Alan Crunden, Pheasey Park Farm AND Orchard Hills Neighbourhood Watch, which have been shared at the monthly Aldridge & Beacon Partnership meeting.
- 4.5. Blackwood Park, Streetly - has achieved the Green Flag Award for the first time. The park is among a record-breaking 1,582 parks and green spaces that will also receive a prestigious Green Flag Award – the mark of a quality park or green space. Clean & Green Services would like to thank all the volunteers and officers who worked hard to make this happen. A recent tidy up was held at Blackwood Park (on 7th June, 2016) and we had over 100 volunteers (including many pupils from the local Blackwood Primary School). In early September, Blackwood Park retained its Green Flag status. Aldridge & Beacon area partnerships have funded the group £1,800 to install a table tennis table in one of the tennis courts. The table will be specifically designed for outdoor use and will hopefully be made of vandal-proof material, enabling anyone to go and have a free game of table tennis in the park.
- 4.6. Networking Groups – meetings are taking place throughout June/July. The dates of the next round of meetings are shown below:-
- Streetly – November, 2016, All Saints Church, Streetly
 - Aldridge – TBC
 - Pheasey – TBC
 - Walsall Wood – TBC
- 4.7. Stroll in the Park – the group meets Tuesday afternoons leaving the starting point 2:15pm. The walks last 60 – 90 minutes for more information please contact Michael Penketh on 0121 353 0666.

5. Children and Young People: Improving safeguarding, learning and life chances for children and young people

- 5.1. BBQs In The Park – Blackwood Park Streetly will be the venue for BBQs in the Park. This year's events will be organised by a number of partners, including Blackwood Pavilion User Group, Streetly Neighbourhood Watch, YSS, Area Partnership and West Midlands Police. The events will be funded by the Blackwood Pavilion User Group. Sadly due to lack of resources and personal issues for the organiser, Pete Roberts, no events have taken place this summer.
- 5.2. Troubled Families – As part of the Troubled Families initiative across the borough, I represent Aldridge & Beacon area partnership in the confidential multi-agency meetings. I am pleased to report that there are very few families in our area that are discussed at these meetings.
- 5.3. Locality Meetings – Walsall Council's "Early Help" team have now set up a series of meetings around children and families in the Aldridge & Beacon area, which I attend.
- 5.4. Park Fun Days – this years Fun Days are organised by Clean & Green Services and are taking place across the borough. The day includes children's rides, storytelling, charity stalls and fun activities. The one in our area took place at Doe Bank Park on Thursday 18th August, between 10.30am and 4pm.
- 5.5. Aldridge Youth Theatre – ran a Summer Drama Workshop supported with funding from Aldridge & Beacon Area Partnership. The Workshops took place from Monday 10th till Friday 12th August 10:30 – 3:30pm for 8 to 16year olds. The event focused on drama, music and movement from around the world. The workshops were well attended with over 30 young people taking part. Cllr Rochelle, Wendy Morton MP and Area Manager visited the final performance took place on the Friday which was well attended by parents and friends of the young people performers. The week was also supported by the Theatre volunteers including a couple of older young people who had been involved in previous years workshops who wanted to offer their support.
- 5.6. 31st Sutton Coldfield West Scout Group, based in Streetly – has received £80,000 grant from Veolia Environmental Trust to help with the building of a Scout facility/community centre. The grant has been awarded through the Landfill Communities Fund for more information www.veoliatrust.org/
- 5.7. St. Martin's Church – appointed a Children & Families Worker last year, and through her have put on a number of events for the community that have included young people (revolving around church activities).
- 5.8. Red Star AFC – two years ago we took over responsibility for the old McKechnies Sports and Social club on Middlemore Lane. after new owners 'the St. Francis group' from Henley-on-Arden began developing the old factory site.

Since that day our story has been one of trial, tribulation and also Joy.

To date we now accommodate over 200 children from the age of 5yrs and their families who enjoy playing football and the social benefits surrounding our club. We also encourage those associated with our club (total over 75 now!) to take part in dance lessons, in our dance studio.

Our club has been given Community amateur sports club status and continues to win Charter Standard awards from the FA. We have many, many parents and guardians who all give their time for free to help us continue.

This despite burglaries, the cutting off of a mains power supply and currently water supply, massive costs to run such a facility and very little help from our landlords.

We are currently in the middle of our closed season where we are all working hard to attend to the many DIY jobs, including a leaking roof and a lack of good machinery to cut grass, tend to borders and fix vandalised fencing.

The old factory next door is causing us untold difficulties as it attracts burglars, vandals and many other unwanted visitors.

Time and again the Police have attended both our site and next-door. As have the fire service, who on one occasion were forced to cut through our gates in order to attend to a fire in the factory.

Although we continue to defy any logic as we become the fastest growing junior club in the area, we live under the threat of our owners and their interest in further development.

With massive potential for this site and very likely financial backing from the FA we have looked in to the possibility of purchasing the site and have had it valued.

If we were able to negotiate a long term agreement there is little doubt Red Star could progress much further and provide Aldridge with a wonderful family friendly venue for the future.

We are currently asking our landlords to reconsider any thoughts of closing us down rather than their interest in the land for potential future development.

- 5.9 Brewood Ringers – Held an event at Wheat & Son on Saturday 13th August 2016, 8am – 1pm called Wheats bioblitz, doing bird ringing, bug hunting, moth trapping, mammal trapping. Location is Wm Wheat & Son, Chester Road, Aldridge WS9 0PU. Aldridge & Beacon area partnership funded the group to the tune of £642 for new equipment to enable the group to run more events between now and the end of March, 2017.
- 5.10 Aldridge Village Partnerships – Aldridge & Beacon area partnerships have funded Aldridge Village Partnerships £3,000 towards the community events that will be held in Aldridge over the next year, including a Christmas event and an Easter event.

- 5.11 Birchills Children's Centre – Aldridge & Beacon area partnerships have funded Birchills Children's Centre £1,250 as a contribution towards outreach sessions in the Aldridge area. These sessions include Sensory Sessions and Play & Stay sessions, enabling the children's workers to engage with families within the Aldridge & Beacon area.
- 5.12 Pheasey Park Farm Children's Centre – Aldridge & Beacon area partnerships have funded Pheasey Park Farm Children's Centre £3,000 towards a project, Making Learning Fun for Families. The funding will enable the children's centre to engage with young families from Pheasey. The children's centre has also co-financed the project, which will see a new toilet block being built, following the recent devastation of the former classroom and toilets due to localised flooding.

6. Business and Jobs: Supporting businesses to thrive and supporting local people in to work

- 6.1. Aldridge Village Partnership – Aldridge District Centre Officer Diane Mansell has worked with the local businesses in Aldridge Village and Aldridge Volunteer Gardens to help make improvements for the Britain in Bloom competition. The judging took place on 17th September, with the Village winning a Gold Award and Best in Category.
- 6.2. Use of social media – through the use of Twitter and Facebook, we are working more than ever with local businesses to promote them through our Facebook pages:-
- <https://www.facebook.com/LetsdoitinStreetly>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/DoltInAldridge>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Lets-do-it-in-Pheasey/337780146321859>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/letsdoitinWalsallWood>

The latest "likes" to these pages are:-

- Let's Do It In Aldridge – 963 likes
 - Let's Do It In Streetly – 341 likes
 - Let's Do It In Walsall Wood – 408 likes
 - Let's Do It In Pheasey – 76 likes
 - Facebook Friends - 646
 - Twitter – 641 followers
- 6.3 Pioneer Magazines – Aldridge & Beacon area partnerships have funded the Pioneer magazines £2,700 to advertise for four months (September – December) in all 3 magazines, which is getting our message out to over 50,000 homes across the Walsall and Great Barr area. There are 4 community pages in each magazine, showcasing the local community & voluntary groups that operate in each of the areas Aldridge, Pheasey, Streetly and Walsall Wood.

7. Health and Well-Being: Improving health, including well-being and independence for older people

7.1. Rosie's Walk, Aldridge Airport – the last ever Rosie's Walk took place on Sunday 17th July. On behalf of everyone associated with the Aldridge & Beacon area partnership we could like to say “thank you” to Karen and Sean Ross for the amazing charity work they have carried out over recent years,

7.2. Cervical Cancer Outreach Screening Service, Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust

In the UK, 22% of women still do not attend their cervical screening, so raising public awareness of cervical cancer prevention is a priority. Public knowledge and understanding of issues such as cervical screening, the causes of cervical abnormalities and cervical cancer and treatment is generally low.

Working women and busy mothers sometimes find it difficult to attend appointments at their GP practice so Cervical Screening is being offered by

Linda Hayes, Cervical Cytology Outreach Nurse, Walsall Palliative Care Centre, Goscote Lane, Walsall WS3 1SJ 07814 986176 01922 602614 Or leave a message on 01922 602610 Linda.hayes@walsallhealthcare.nhs

Linda is offering Cervical Cancer Screening Tests via Home Visits for patients who have limited mobility, sight or hearing impairment or unable to leave the home. So If you want to book a test then please ring Linda on the telephone numbers listed.

The West Midlands Support group has been set up for women affected by Cervical Cancer and meets every two months at the Community Hub, Level 4, John Lewis Store, 2 Station Street, Birmingham, B2 2AU. Check out the Jos Trust Website at Jostrust.org.uk for the dates in 2016.

7.3. Aldridge and Streetly Christmas Tree Festivals –two Christmas Tree Festivals are taking place at Aldridge Methodist Church, Aldridge and All Saints Church, Streetly. Both events will be held on Friday, 2nd December until Sunday, 4th December. This is the fourth year that the Streetly Christmas Tree Festival will have taken place and the third year for Aldridge.

7.4. Aldridge Great War Project - Since the launch of Aldridge Great War project in August 2014, myself, Len Boulton, Karen Ross and a group of volunteers have worked and continue to work very hard to achieve our aims of broadening the knowledge and understanding of the war and how it affected our community as well as identifying, researching and recording the Aldridge people who served in that terrible war. The interest we have had has been astonishing.

The cabinets that you provided in the library, along with the display screen provided

by the Co-op, are a real 'shop window' for the Project and have proved to be much more popular than we could have envisaged. People stop to watch and look. They engage in conversation with library staff and with ourselves at anytime that we are there but perhaps more importantly, with each other as they discuss what they are seeing and what they remember. They attract people of all ages but particularly the over 50s.

Secondly the events we are able to organise have attracted many people. Every tour we did at the Manor House was oversubscribed and that was with very little advertising. People came to that and chatted about their memories, met up with like-minded people and went on to arrange to meet up again. The Somme event this Friday was booked out by the beginning of this week and we are considering putting on another performance. It is also a good example of young people and older people coming together to remember in a truly meaningful way. The classes we run on tracing military history have always been full and people have gone on to volunteer or donate to the Project as a result of them.

Having received donations from individuals who support what we do we are now able to advertise for information about local people who served. As we discover more stories we can attract attention from the media who in turn give us more publicity. This is proving successful, (if very time consuming) as we are contacted by people of all ages and go to visit them in their own homes. When we have interviewed people we have talked about many things including their memories of the village and as a result have decided to publish a book of local memories to raise money for AGWP.

It is our intention to publish a hardback full-colour book relating to Aldridge in the Great War in 2018 and also our intention that we will sell it at cost price to ensure that it is affordable for most people. The cost is substantial but we have raised more than half of the money and a book of local memories to be published later this year seems a good way of not only raising money but also involving a significant number of people who perhaps cannot contribute to the Project financially or by providing information about local people who fought but who can share their memories and their precious family photos (We have been given some fantastic stuff).

7.5. Men In Sheds – inspired by the learning and outcomes of Men's Sheds set up in Australia, a movement is now growing in popularity across the UK. Over the past few months, Area Partnerships has been working with West Midlands Fire Service and Royal Voluntary Service to see how a shed could work locally. An initial meeting was held on the 13th January, attracting a large gathering from local community group leaders. The aims for the Men In Sheds group are:-

- We envisage supporting the set-up of an Aldridge Men's Shed. We want the Shed to become a place for making, mending and hobbies where men and women will feel at home and pursue practical interests with a high degree of autonomy – a self-directed space for constructive activity that can help to address social connections particularly

among older men and women - a place to meet new friends and regain a sense of purpose.

- We want to support the creation of a space where members can come together to share the tools and resources they need to work on projects of their own choosing at their own pace – or be part of a larger joint community project if they so wish - in a safe, friendly and inclusive venue.
- We want to support the creation of a place of skill-sharing and informal learning, of purpose, achievement and social interaction – to help reduce the isolation and loneliness often felt by older people as they move into retirement, experience a decline in their health or the loss of family and friends.
- We want to support the practical renovation of a disused space into a usable and welcoming workshop space – but more importantly - we want to make a difference to Aldridge residents by providing an alternative meeting space that enables increased social contact and well-being and opportunities for lasting friendships between people.

A meeting was held on Friday, 12th February at the Aldridge Youth Theatre, and over 50 potential “shedders” attended that meeting. There have been several meetings since, plus a visit to the nearby Moseley & King’s Heath Shed. Sean Carey, West Midlands Fire Service is leading on this project. At this time the group are still looking for premises to work out of.

Aldridge & Beacon area partnerships have funded the Aldridge Shed to the tune of £3,000 to help the new group with their first year, the funding will help with rental costs, public liability insurance and equipment and materials to help the shed set up.

- 7.11 Aspire2Engage Project – working in partnership with Walsall Football Club Community Programme, we are developing a new project called Aspire2Engage. The idea of the project is to link in local community groups with the football club, who have a responsibility set down by the Football League Trust to help deliver activities that promote, engage and develop the local community in 4 strategic priority areas, which are 1) Participation 2) Education 3) Health 4) Inclusion. The Community Partnership team are working with us on this project, themselves a registered charity, and a separate entity to the commercial arm of the football club. From a speculative email back in December, to date we have held 2 events at the football club, engaging with over 50 people from the local community. The incentive we offer to local groups to engage with us is up to 30 free tickets for a Walsall FC home match, including press coverage and publicity on the day to raise awareness of the group and the work they do within the local community.

We had a borough-side Community Showcase event on Monday, 27th June. This showcase promoted over 100 local community groups and organisations that offer activities, events and volunteer opportunities to the residents in the borough. It is hoped that by showcasing the good work that the community & voluntary sector offer, local businesses will commit to helping these groups through their corporate social responsibility policy, with a community grant scheme the ultimate end goal. Thanks to the support of Barclays Bank, utilising their “Pound for Pound” community scheme, every pound we raised through raffle ticket sales will be matched by Barclays, meaning that we raised over £1,500 at the event.

Unfortunately, we have recently learned that the football club have decided to cease the Aspire 2 Engage project in its current form, as they were putting in a large amount of resources, but not really getting enough return to justify running the project.

- 7.12 Healthy Resilient Communities – a free engagement and investment event for local voluntary and community groups is taking place this Wednesday (28 Sept) at Aldridge Community Centre. The event is open to anyone from the Aldridge & Beacon area, Walsall Public Health is looking to invest in our groups to tackle loneliness and social isolation to improve the health and well-being of Walsall residents.
- 7.13 Older People's Showcase Event – we are hosting a special event at Walsall Town Hall on Wednesday, 16 November (2-6pm). We have the full capacity of 50 local organisations and Doreen (local celerity) will be opening the event and entertaining us with a special stand up performance.
- 7.14 Streetly Community Association – Aldridge & Beacon area partnerships have funded the Streetly CA £1,000, to help them facilitate trips out of the area for the older people of Streetly. So far they have been on 3 trips, including Blackpool and National War Memorial Arboretum.
- 7.15 Oak Park Bowls Club – Aldridge & Beacon area partnerships funded £545 as a 10% match fund to enable the group to claim over £5,000 from Cory Environmental towards a new club house for the bowlers.

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