

Test Valley Partnership News

September 2007

Welcome to our new look Partnership Newsletter. The summer holidays a distant memory, it's time to report on our partnership activity over the past few months and the many exciting things happening in Test Valley.



We now have an updated Community Plan which was launched at the Partnership's AGM in June, where we celebrated just some of the success stories of partnership work over the past year. We hope to publish a summary version of the Community Plan in the near future.

The Turnaround Project is a key success story for the Partnership, where we are achieving a great deal within the Alamein Ward in Andover through our shared efforts and by working with the local community.

I hope you enjoy reading about the latest for the Turnaround Project and all of the other news items in this edition.

Janet

Janet Blann, Chair of Test Valley Partnership

A Splashing Time!

Thousands of Andover residents had a great day out at this year's Hampshire Water Festival on 7 July. Festival-goers enjoyed one of the sunniest and warmest days we have had this summer and turned out in force to enjoy free entertainment and learn about everything to do with water.



Water efficiency was still a major part of this year's Festival, but the Festival promoted other avenues for engaging with water issues. One of the highlights of the day was the Environment Agency's 'Good River, Bad River' display. Two temporary waterways were installed in Vigo Road Park, one illustrating the key features of a river in good condition, and immediately next to it was a contrasting bad river.

Test Valley Borough Council, together with the Environment Agency, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, and Hampshire County Council, launched the River Anton Strategy. Aimed at improving the condition of the River Anton's urban reaches in Andover, the Strategy enjoyed a very good response during public consultation at Test Valley Borough Council's stand in Vigo Road Park.

Test Valley Partnership secured some additional funding from the County Council to support this event.

Hampshire Water Coordinator Andrew Pitt said 'We are thrilled with the



success of this year's Water Festival. Attendance was excellent, and the partners, organisers and fundraisers are very pleased that we succeeded in engaging a largely new audience with Water Festival messages.'

Play time beckons

Following the development of a multi-agency Children's Play Strategy last year, the Big Lottery Fund has offered a grant of £202,053 towards improving play opportunities for local children in Test Valley. This grant will pay for 3 projects:-



1) Community Play Coordinator

A Community Play Coordinator will be employed to set up play activities in parks and open spaces that are supervised by volunteers. Test Valley Community Services will receive a 3 year grant to make this happen.

2) New Junior Play Space

A new junior play space will be created on Phoenix Park (River/Pilgrims Way). This project forms part of a bigger plan to develop the open space behind the Phoenix Centre.

3) Outdoor Play Network

The third project is at Sir Harold Hiller Gardens where a grant will be passed to the Trust for a number of outdoor play features that can be used by all children – particularly those with profound disabilities.

These projects were identified in the Children's Play Strategy developed by the Partnership's Leisure and Culture Action Group in partnership with organisations involved in children's play provision. The research on which this strategy was based was undertaken in the summer of 2006. This highlighted the need to:

- Encourage play within communities – so that children feel that they can play in parks and open spaces without feeling they are an nuisance.
- Raise standards of existing play spaces – to improve satisfaction levels with play provision within walking and cycling distance.
- Ensure better provision for children with disabilities – to reduce the need to travel outside of the Borough for quality play experiences.
- Improve provision of play spaces within rural communities – to provide opportunities where currently none exist.
- Improve positive play experiences – so that issues with bullying and anti-social behaviour are addressed.

I name this shop

A community competition was held to name the new information centre to be opened at the King Arthur's Way shops as part of the Turnaround Project.

Around 500 entries were sent in, many of them from local school children.

The winning name was 'Askalot!', put forward by Sam Oakley from the Entertainer pub. She wins a ticket to a show and will be one of the VIPs at the shop's official opening in October.

The shop will be the place to go for information on jobs and training, health advice, community and social events and other details.

The shop will also play host to an internet café and computer training, through the 'Everybody On-line' project funded by BT. This scheme is designed to promote the use of the internet for learning and employment by having fun. A project worker has been appointed and the scheme is due to be launched in November. This project is one of only two within the South East region.

Let's go round again

A Turnaround Project fund day with a special eco-friendly theme was held on Saturday, 22 September, on King Arthur's Way.

The aim of the day was to get the community together and involved in fun things and at the same time, learning more about eco-friendly and recycling activities.

Fired up to walk for inspiration

Almost 50 people followed in the footsteps of a dragon and took part in a Walk for Inspiration from King Arthur's Way recently.

A dragon sculpture led the walk, from King Arthur's Hall to the Andover town centre, where the intrepid walkers were rewarded with music and food.

The idea of the walk, organised by Kerry St John, the Turnaround Project activities co-ordinator, was to get people to think about what inspires them and their families.

It was also about getting people from the community together and having fun.

Sustainability Co-ordinator

Test Valley Borough Council has contracted the Environment Centre (tEC) in Southampton to provide a sustainability coordinator to develop its sustainability strategy, with the purpose of "getting our house in order".

Laura Wood will be based in Duttons Road and would like to hear from you if you have any comments or suggestions on how TVBC can adopt more sustainable practices.

Upcoming events at Romsey Community School.

Sunday 7th October: we are having our Fall Festival at Hilliers Arboretum. This will include different events held in the gardens including pond dipping, mini beast hunt and art projects.

Sunday 14th October: we are holding our first big extended services event. This is a Family Picnic to be held in Romsey Community School. Lots of different Community Groups are taking part and there are different activities for the whole family such as; archery, a climbing wall, team sports, fitness clubs etc.

During October: as another extended services event, we are holding the Romsey Read. This is based on the book called Mudlarks and both Community Schools, adult classes and local groups are holding different events such as; poetry reading, old time music hall evening, art exhibition etc.

H.A.T. in Test Valley

In February 2007, the Hampshire Action Team (HAT) for Test Valley (made up of the 7 county councillors representing the Test Valley Wards) heard the views of over 100 community representatives to help them determine and prioritise the key HCC issues for the Borough.

Since then it has gone on to examine children's services, adult care and crime and disorder as well as transport and highway matters. With their support the footbridge at Flexford, Ampfield is now approaching reality after 15 years of campaigning.

The HAT has improved cooperation and communication between the County and the Borough Council as Borough Councillors now regularly attend and contribute to HAT meetings.

And Finally Some Sad News

It was with much sadness that we learnt of the death of Jean Lannie. Jean has made a major contribution to family learning in Andover. After working for Cricklade College, Jean led the Andover Family Learning Project and was a tireless champion for adult learning in the town where she was born. Recognition of the importance of adult and family learning will be her legacy.