



Date: 11 March 2013

Communities come together to fund youth workers

COMMUNITIES across the Horsham District are working together to provide important and valued community youth work by agreeing to fund new youth workers for the District.

Five Neighbourhood and Parish clusters, which are groups of Neighbourhood and Parish Councils, are funding the employment of full-time and substantial part-time Community Youth Workers to support local young people.

The new Youth Workers, who will be employed by Horsham Matters, will be in post in early June.

The five clusters are: Storrington Area, Steyning, Ashurst, Bramber and Beeding Area, Billingshurst and Pulborough Area, Horsham Area (parished and unparished) and the Broadbridge Heath, Slinfold and Warnham Area.

The clusters have a shared vision 'to enable and empower local young people to make informed, positive lifestyle choices, which promote active, healthy, holistic, safe and social lives'.

The role of the new community youth workers, who will be supported by volunteers, will be to:

- support and engage young people
- initiate new activities
- support existing provision
- demonstrate good practice and professionalism
- respond to the needs of young people / the community
- champion young people's needs and wishes

The new Community Youth Work provision has been realised thanks to significant partnership working, supported by Horsham District Council.

Over the last 14 months, the Council has been engaging with local communities, including Neighbourhood and Parish Councils, encouraging them to consider how they can support the local young people through the provision of positive activities and opportunities for all young people.

A series of meetings have taken place across the District during this time with over 25 community meetings, 30 presentations to Neighbourhood and Parish councils and 20 meetings with other partners taking place.

Over 50 local stakeholders representing a variety of organisations, such as local churches, housing associations, schools, Community Partnerships, local charities and Sussex Police, have been involved in this work.

Cllr Sue Rogers, Horsham District Council's Cabinet Member for a Safer and Healthier District, also hosted three seminars for District, Neighbourhood and Parish Councillors across the Horsham District.

The first Seminar gave the community groups an important platform to launch their aspirations and proposals for community youth work.

Over the next few months, we will be explaining more about what each of these Clusters are doing to support local young people and introduce the new Community Youth Workers.

The Council is also aware that some other parish councils have existing schemes that already provide valuable support for young people. These include:

MORE FOLLOWS

- Southwater Parish Council, which working with a number of local partners, has been successfully running the Southwater Youth Project since 2006
- Henfield and West Grinstead Parish Councils are financially supporting the employment of a local Youth Worker.
- Ashington and Coldwaltham Parish Councils provide grants in support of their local youth clubs

Cllr Sue Rogers said:

"It is important that we take a moment to look back and reflect on the journey that we have taken and the decisions that communities have made towards providing a sustainable service for their young people.

"During this time I have had the pleasure of meeting some dedicated and visionary people from our District."

West Sussex County Council's Youth Support Development Service is continuing to offer intensive and target support to young people with a range of complex needs.

For more information, please call Clare Ebelewicz (Senior Youth and Older Persons Officer at Horsham District Council), who is supporting the clusters to develop their own community youth work, on 01403 215137 or email clare.ebelewicz@horsham.gov.uk

Ends

Note to editors:

Image caption: The young people used bricks to help them build a structure of what they want from their new youth provision.

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