

Appendix A – Community Development update – minute 21 refers

Intro

Hallo we are Mark and Victoria, 2 of 5 members of the Community Development team which also includes Aaron Clark, Alex Gibson and Deirdre Ryan. We are also lucky enough to be joined by the Education Ranger, Penny Evans one day a week. Over nearly a decade the Community Development role has evolved from being purely youth based to encompassing the whole community and supporting a wide range of people and agencies, not just tenants.

We'd like to give you a snapshot of the work we have undertaken in the last year; there isn't time in 15 minutes to cover everything, so we have each picked the work we feel was most successful or has meant the most to us.

SWITCH

We still run 3 clubs during term times in Littleham in Exmouth, Millwey in Axminster and St Pauls in Honiton, which continue to be very successful. We have also expanded our activities so that we offer more wrap around contact – trips and activities in half term and the very popular Easter Experience where we take the young people away for 3 days and provide activities that will challenge them and take them out of their comfort zones. Activities have included SUP – stand up paddleboarding - high ropes and looking for bats in Beer Quarry caves. As well as the activities, camping can itself be a challenge for the young people when we take away wifi and hair straighteners.

Pictures of clubs, trips and Easter Experience.

Early Help involvement

Our work at the SWITCH clubs has rippled out into other areas.

Because of the links we build with young people and their families through the clubs, when problems arise they are confident enough to approach us with them. This can be anything from repairs to their houses and trouble with debt to drug problems, eviction notices and domestic abuse.

It has been recognised by the police, social services and Early Help that we see a different side to the young people and their families than more official workers do. This more candid relationship can help with getting a complete picture of the situation when support needs to be put into place.

In the Early Help forum Practitioners come together to discuss families and create an action plan for moving those families forward. This includes schools, EWO, police, nurses and community and voluntary sector. It is a safety net for those who don't meet the threshold for Social Services involvement. In recent years we have become a respected voice at these meetings.

On this slide our basic service sits within the Universal Services part of the flowchart but actually the knowledge and expertise we have elevates our role to Single agency response and even into multi agency response through TAFs – team around the family meetings for example.

By putting support in early problems can be prevented from escalating and prevent knock effects such as bills not being paid on time and houses and gardens falling into disrepair which has positive effects for the council.

Another project we are involved in is the LAG – Local Action Group – arranged by the Community Safety partnership and the anti social behaviour officer. This draws

local workers such as police, fire, councillors, schools, and various council officers together with the aim of reducing anti social behaviour and increasing equality. In these groups we can be a voice for young people, with our knowledge of how they feel and their needs, where sometimes that voice is not considered. Any actions taken, rather than being punitive, can be measured and appropriate. An example of this can be in response to graffiti by young people or when there are complaints about noise levels in parks.

Our presence on these groups, we feel is an important part of Priority One of the Council plan – encouraging communities to be outstanding through safeguarding and supporting health and wellbeing.

Flowchart of involvement with Early Help.

Outcomes plan

Right Track Programme

The Right Track programme is a development programme for tenants and young tenants to improve key life skills, employability success, confidence building and mental health mentoring (amongst many other elements). Each programme is designed around the individual's needs and preferred outcomes.

Tenants are able to self-refer or be referred by other working professionals who are supporting them. An initial consultation and visit is carried out where plans are put in place to ensure that the programme is suited to their desired outcomes and style of working. A range of topics are covered and then further plans put in place to make next steps and progress.

A tenant in Axminster was supported for 12 weeks on the programme in 2017 and is now running her own self-employed community handy lady service.

Young people have been the predominant audience over the past 12 months, supporting local colleges and school with our young tenants and their struggles in education. Some of the young people supported through the RTP are involved in SWITCH groups in Honiton and Exmouth so we are able to support our young tenants at both school and in their free time at club. The RTP has worked with 9 individuals over the past 12 months from Honiton, Exmouth and Sidmouth and all have thrived from the programme put in place for them, all different to fulfil their needs.

One of the young people had been part of a managed move and was getting continuous suspensions/exclusions prior to working with him but through the power of baking, confidence building and behavioural management, he was removed from manage move and improved significantly during the remainder of his school term.

Youth Tenant conference

Each year East Devon holds a tenant conference. When I started working for the council Community Development were bought in to keep the children of any tenants entertained while the main conference happened but we aspired for more, a conference where young tenants could have their voices heard alongside the attendees of the main event. We have been gaining opinions from young people at the Takeover Day in November each year, when groups of year 6's come into the council to learn more about the officers' roles, and in the last 3 years we have expanded this by inviting young tenants to spend a day discussing topics such as the environment and what community means to them.

This year, for the first time, the two conferences came together in the afternoon and shared their discussions on social isolation. We think it is really important for young people's voices to be heard and considered by funders and policy makers.

This is part of Priorities 1 and 4 – bringing communities together to solve problems and striving to improve as a council.

South West Rotary Youth Games

For the last 4 years we have taken part in the Youth Games in its various forms. Basically it is a one day Olympic style event in which at least 20 sports take place ranging from Badminton to Triathlon and Indoor Athletics to Girls Rugby 7's or Gymnastics to Ability Sports plus a lot more. The idea being that each district puts in a team to cover as many sports as possible and that those taking part are young people who don't already regularly take part in sport but after the event can go on and join clubs and take part in a new passion. We've never had a big team but each year we have managed to do well in some events. The last two years has seen the Street sports event take place on a separate day in Mount Hawke Skate Park down in Cornwall but under the SWRYG banner. This year for the first time Netball was run as a separate event. The Main event was held in Dawlish back in July. Our girl's Rugby and the boy's hockey team did exceptionally well as did our Scooter team in Mount Hawke and the netball and High 5 netball in Paignton. As a team we came 5th overall.

Fundays and festivals

Some other work we engage in from our early days and which continues to be very popular are our Community Festivals and Fundays. We have 4 festivals – Littleham, Millwey, Honiton and Sidmouth and more recently National Playday in Seaton. All continue to grow and bring families out to enjoy themselves.

The fundays take us out to rural districts in the summer holidays to meet people who might not usually benefit from our work and provide activities for families who might not be able to access those in towns. It is wonderful to see families playing together – sometimes 3 generations, and amazing the skills people say they haven't used since they were a child.

We are supported in this by Penny, the Education ranger and the Thelma Hulbert Gallery who have access to families who wouldn't normally make it to the gallery or Seaton Wetlands for example.

Pics of families and children having fun.

Sidmouth Family Adventure Days

From our work with Early Help, supported local families and key workers in the community came the idea of Sidmouth Family Adventure Days.

We work closely with the local school liaison officer, Tracey Tipton to offer outdoor, interaction opportunities to families to improve family dynamics, break down parent-to-child difficulties and issues, boost morale and bring all age groups together to work cohesively in a day of outdoor learning and enjoyment.

Working with toddlers through to grandparents – the adventure and survival themed days have involved woodlands, beaches, rivers and wetlands. We have up to 9 families involved in the provision and hope to see this continue to grow over the coming year with 4-5 events being held each year in holiday time.

(see images attached)

Honiton Dragons' Den –

The Dragon's Den has been going for 4 Years, growing out of a piece of work done to assess the needs of the community in Honiton – Honiton Together. Groups bid for funding to a panel of experts and a variety of community groups have been successful including a Kickboxing boxing which continues to subsidise subscriptions from tenants to encourage them to take part when finances might not otherwise allow it.

In the past year one group has evolved with funding from Dragon's Den. Open Arms East Devon is a peer support group for people with mental health problems. It is coordinated by one of our tenants Garry Wakeham, and meets twice a week at Dunning Court, in Honiton. The group encourages provides a safe place as well as organised activities to improve wellbeing and reduce isolation. Our team have supported the group from the beginning and it is now established enough for us to take a step back and just offer advice when needed. A gap was identified in mental health provision in Honiton and Open Arms has gone a long way to filling it. They have since gained funding from others sources to continue their good work and Garry was awarded 'Tenant of the year' at this year's tenant conference for his efforts with the group.

The Littleham Project

After the success of Honiton Together we have taken the model to Axminster and more recently Littleham but with the idea growing and changing each time to suit the needs of each community.

The Littleham Project is running at the moment and aims to build the skills of the community so that they can lead and shape the future of the area. Through events that are run at the community centre we hope to stimulate enthusiasm among residents for proposing and running community projects and support the creation of a robust, self-sustaining community with strong links to Town, District and County Councils and the services they offer.

Three things which have happened already are

Scoop the Poop

Dog poo is constant topic of conversation whenever we go to meetings in East Devon, and Littleham is no different! Environmental Health Officer, Kaz Arnett, delivered a school presentation alongside Eddy the Dog, giving the young people inspiration to design posters encouraging people to look after their pets and respect their local environment.

We then ran a competition for young people to design a poster which could be used around Littleham at dog fouling hotspots.

3 young people from Littleham Primary School then worked with the council's design team at Strata, where they designed new signage which has been put in place in Littleham on the Crescent and John Hudson Way. It has been found in other areas that signs designed by local children have more impact than tradition council signs so we wait to see if these will work.

Pop-Up Services –

We are inviting other agencies to come and use the space at Clayton House in order to engage the harder-to-reach members of the community. It is recognised the tenants can be reluctant to leave estates to take part in activities elsewhere which is why we run many of our events on the estates.

In June we ran a Health and Functional Fitness MOT day in association with Age UK Devon. Attendees measured their Functional Fitness with a series of exercises developed by Glasgow University and received some basic medical tests from a

community nurse. They also had the opportunity to receive advice on healthy living with representatives from LED, Age UK Devon and Drink Wise Age Well. There are plans to invite more practitioners to the community centre over the next year.

Clayton House Refurbishment –

The community is being consulted in Littleham to find out how Clayton House can best meet their needs. We have carried out a doorstep consultation, and are currently collecting responses with a Survey Monkey survey – you can see the link on the slide.:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/PRY87GJ>

Several areas of improvement have been identified and we will be working with Repairs to carry out the work.

Conclusion

We hope this gives you a good idea of what we have been up to and the variety of work we undertake.

We referred to how some of our work fits in with the Council's plan, for example Early Help in Priority One – Encouraging Communities to be Outstanding.

If you refer to the plan you will see that most of our work comes under this priority but helping people find work, Right Track and supporting people set up their own projects comes into Priority Two – Developing an Outstanding local economy; taking young people and families out to Seaton Wetlands and our other open spaces comes into Priority Three – Delivering and promoting our outstanding environment; our everyday work in which we talk to young people and their families face to face and through surveys we run relates to Priority Four – Continuously improving to be an outstanding council. So though it may seem that our role should be Encouraging Communities we actually fall into all the priorities.

As we said there wasn't time to cover everything - here are some of the things we didn't have time to touch on –

If you want to know more please do get in touch with us and we will be happy to talk to you about our work.