

Aims

Neighbourhood Management sets out to narrow the gaps between the more deprived areas of the local authority and the remainder of wards within County Durham. This will be achieved by delivering services geared and focused towards the needs of the local community. The Centre will be focused on delivering improvements in the five key areas of employment, health, community safety, housing and education.

Location

The initiative is located within the Sedgefield Borough Council area which comprises a mix of ex-coalfield villages, a 1960's new town and rural villages with an agricultural focus.

The Western Area of Newton Aycliffe covers some 1,500 homes with a population of 6,000. This ward is the most deprived ward within the Sedgefield Borough Council administrative area and is positioned within the top 5% of deprived wards nationally (Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2000.)

The Neighbourhood Management Centre opened at 8 Silverdale Place, Newton Aycliffe in the Autumn of 2003. The Centre is a converted house based in the heart of the estate to ensure the local community have an accessible base from which multi-agency sessions may be delivered.

The Intervention Strategy

Staffing

The Neighbourhood Management Team is comprised of four full-time staff based within the Neighbourhood Management Centre:

- ◆ A Neighbourhood Manager, an Administrative Officer, a Neighbourhood Engagement Officer.
- ◆ In addition there are two sessional workers one a Jobsearch Advisor, the other sessional worker a Citizens Advice Bureau/SureStart Advisor.

Funding

NRF, European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Local Authority.

Operating method

The West Area Neighbourhood Management Centre has been in operation since November 2003, to provide a 'one-stop-shop' service to the area's residents as relating to services/service provision within the following five areas of action: employment, health, community safety, housing and education. The initiative is still in the embryonic stages of development but key elements of the work programme are:

- ◆ To develop a partnership group and partnership board which will support and prioritise the work of the Centre.
- ◆ To bring together stakeholders to address issues of concern
- ◆ The development and implementation of a clear delivery plan and associated action plan complete with performance indicators to facilitate the analysis of the Centre's role, activities and progress in identifying those issues identified above and wider area resident's concerns.

It is intended the initiative will demonstrate the effective use of all resources in delivering services tailored towards the needs of the community.

A key focus of the intervention is the facilitation, promotion and fostering of events/sub-initiatives and programmes whose focus is to foster, develop and enhance Community Capacity Building within its geographical area of operation.

Achievements of the Intervention

Main achievements

- ◆ Establishment of SureStart/Citizens Advice Bureaux Sessions.

This has proved to be an extremely successful service meeting a high level of need within the local community. Up-to-date help and advice is provided with regard to a range of services and provision incorporating the specific expertise of the two separate organisations (SureStart and the Citizen's Advice Bureaux.)



- ◆ Newton Aycliffe JobSearch Project

A dedicated advisor is at the West Area Neighbourhood Management Centre for two days a week (Tuesday and Wednesday.) The role of the advisor is to assist and facilitate those activities connected with the search for gainful employment. These activities include Jobsearch techniques and procedures, the completion of application forms, the preparation, design and the layout and completion of Curriculum Vitae.

In addition the advisor assists with regard to 'one-off' training and provides assistance with regard to the expenses incurred when the search for employment is undertaken.

- ◆ Development of Mothers & Toddlers Group

The Western Area Neighbourhood Management Centre is engaged with SureStart and local parents with regard to the establishment, promotion and delivery of this element of the initiative. A bid has been submitted to 'Awards for All' for a Messy Play session.

- ◆ Substantive Linkages with Local Police

Initial discussions have been undertaken, and are continuing with regard to the securing of dedicated police beat officers for those areas identified as being of concern.

- ◆ Community Listening Event

At this event seven agencies and thirty-three local residents engaged in a debate addressing concerns and planning future ways forward and the ways in which such concerns could be addressed.

- ◆ Young Peoples Consultation Event

At this event one hundred and fifty young people engaged in debate as to their views on the needs and aspirations of the local community and their expectations and hopes in relationship to this.

In addition a competition has been held for the young people of the neighbourhood to design an appropriate logo for the use of Neighbourhood Management and the West Area Neighbourhood Management Centre.

Linked to this initiative are two future projects:

1. Newton Aycliffe Detached Youth Work Project
2. Silverdale Community Project

Mainstreaming Strategy

With regard to the mainstreaming strategy appropriate baseline markers are in place for initiative assessment against the relevant NRF floor targets.



Western Area Neighbourhood Centre

Contact:

Angelina Maddison
Telephone: (01325) 304391

NRF Priority:

Crime/Education/Employment/Health/Housing

NRF Authority:

Sedgefield

NRF Funding Level:

Medium

PTO for additional Information

Lead Agent:

Sedgefield Borough Council

Main Partners:

Local Strategic Partnership, Police, Health, Durham County Council, Faith Groups, Sedgefield Borough Council, Local Education Authority, Youth Offending Team (YOT) and JobCentre Plus

Location:

Western Newton Aycliffe NRF ward, Newton Aycliffe, County Durham

Main achievements:

SureStart/ Citizen's Advice Bureaux (CAB) sessions commenced

Newton Aycliffe Job Search Project

Community Listening Event undertaken

Development of Mothers and Toddlers Group

Young People Consultation Event undertaken

e-mail: amaddison@sedgefield.gov.uk



The Learning Curve

Early and on-going community consultation, involvement and capacity building are pre-requisites for the successful operation of initiatives of this nature.

Pockets of partisan behaviour enhanced by entrenched apathy have to be addressed in the early stages of initiative formation when approaching local communities. A sub-culture of 'What are you going to do for me?' has to be continually addressed from within the initiative. This can only be addressed by constant positive engagement from initiative members (employed), all partner agencies, stakeholders and all wider community members.

Key Lessons

Community involvement from an early stage is absolutely essential. The Community Listening Event was positive in identifying key community stakeholders who would wish to participate in the initiative in such a way that the initiative could be seen to be specific to both their skills, competences and aspirations for themselves, their families and the wider community.

Community involvement in this fashion, from the early planning stages, has resulted in feelings of 'ownership' towards the neighbourhood management process on the part of members of the local community. Such ownership will in turn have a significant impact on the sustainability of neighbourhood management within the area.

It is key to have an established base with easily identifiable and accessible staff, who are not subject to rapid re-location and re-deployment for daily face to face contact with local residents.

Contact Details

Angelina Maddison
Neighbourhood Manager
The Western Area Neighbourhood Centre
8 Silverdale House
Newton Aycliffe
County Durham
DL5 7DZ

Telephone: (01325) 304391

e-mail: amaddison@sedgefield.gov.uk