



SPREADING the word

I hope you are able to take five minutes to update yourselves with all the latest LSP news and information, and to forward this newsletter to any colleagues who may also be interested.

Contents:

1. [James Blake – Chief Policy and Partnership Officer](#)
2. [Refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy for 2009 – Consultation](#)
3. [Centre for Voluntary Service Coffee Morning](#)
4. [Comprehensive Performance Assessment - Latest News](#)
5. [Helping the DCTP plan for 2009/2010 - Young People's Viewfinder](#)
6. [Hertfordshire Police Authority Safer Neighbourhood Awards 2009](#)
7. [Young People's Live Music](#)
8. [First NHS constitution launched](#)
9. [Major cycleway scheme to start – a final link in the chain for St Albans](#)
10. [Eastern Region Youth Exchange](#)
11. [EEDA Cut your Carbon - Funding competition](#)
12. [Directgov.uk – Real Help for Real People and Businesses](#)

Key dates for your diary

CVS Coffee Morning
12th February 2009 10 a.m. — noon

The Maltings Arts Theatre, AL1 3HL
 An invitation to: Ethnic Minority Groups, Faith Groups and related support services (more information inside)

LSP Board Meeting
Tuesday 24th February 2009 7.00pm

St Albans City and District Council Chamber





James Blake – Chief Policy and Partnership Officer

It's been a real pleasure to start work in the council this month as Chief Policy and Partnership Officer, where I will have overall responsibility for partnerships, including the LSP, communications, policy, strategy and performance.

Before joining the council I worked in the Department of Communities and Local Government where I had overall policy responsibility for Local Strategic Partnerships – so I am a real gamekeeper turner poacher! But I'm really enjoying seeing how things work much closer to the ground. I'm also a local resident, which I hope will help to keep me focused on things that actually matter to the local community.

It has been particularly interesting to join in the middle of the work to refresh the Community Strategy, where I've had the opportunity to see the energy and commitment behind partnership working in St Albans. Unsurprisingly, one of the key issues emerging is how we take account of the very challenging economic situation, while not losing sight of other important local priorities.

I've already had the chance to meet a number of partnership members and I will be continuing to get out too meet people over the next few weeks. But don't hesitate to get in touch if you'd like to have a chat! You can contact me on 01727 819552 or email james.blake@stalbans.gov.uk



Refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy for 2009 – Consultation update

The first stage of consultation to inform the refresh of the 'Shaping our District Together for 2021' Sustainable Community Strategy is now taking place through current partnerships/forums and targeted focus group activities.

Members of the LSP Management Committee are covering the refresh with the following groups during January and February:

- District Children's Trust Partnership
- Community Safety Partnership
- Health, Housing and Social Care
- Disability Access Group
- St Albans Racial Equality Council
- St Albans Inter Faith Forum
- Sopwell Community Partnership
- Community Sports Network
- Youth Council
- St Albans Learning Forum

Specific focus groups are also being held to consider the current priority gap areas and potential new gap areas as follows:

Environmental impact

Tuesday 20th Jan (3pm)

Economic development	Tuesday 20 th Jan (4.15pm)
Providing youth activities & facilities	Tuesday 20 th Jan (5.30pm)
Deprivation & inequalities	Wednesday 4 th Feb (4pm)
Building the capacity of the voluntary sector	Wednesday 4 th Feb (6pm)
Meeting the needs of an ageing population	Friday 6 th Feb (10am)
Community engagement & participation	Friday 6 th Feb (12pm)

If you wish to attend a specific focus group please contact Jane Pearce in Corporate Policy - jane.pearce@stalbans.gov.uk or 01727 819349.

Once these initial consultation activities have taken place an outline of the emerging updates to the Sustainable Community Strategy will be presented to the LSP Board at their next meeting (24th February 2009). This will be followed by more detailed work on the updates and a draft which will be sent out for wider consultation during March and April.



Centre for Voluntary Service Coffee Morning

12th February 2009 10 a.m. — noon
The Maltings Arts Theatre, AL1 3HL

An invitation to:
Ethnic Minority Groups, Faith Groups and related support services

What's In It For You:

- Find out how to apply for more funding and help with applications
- Identify training courses to help you
- Discover how you qualify for training discounts
- Raise your awareness of local support services
- Catch up with people with similar issues
- Learn from other groups' success
- Locate partners for joint work
- Delicious coffee, tea and cake!

RSVP with your name, email address and group name to the
St Albans Centre for Voluntary Service (CVS) 31 Catherine
Street, St Albans AL3 5BJ
Email: wendy@cvsstalbans.org.uk Tel: 01727 852657



Comprehensive Performance Assessment - Latest News

St Albans District Council receives its Comprehensive Performance Assessment judgement on 3rd February.

For the uninitiated, the Audit Commission (an independent body which carries out inspections of public sector organisations) carries out 'Ofsted' style inspections of councils. This is to ensure that we work hard to engage with the community to deliver what they want, we deliver good value for money services and those outside local government can compare and contrast the performance of different organisations.

Each council has undergone a 'CPA' since 2003/04 to determine how good they are compared to other similar organisations. However, as St Albans District Council had undergone the last review in 2004, we felt that it was time to take stock of the improvements that have been made since that time, as well as use the feedback to help us improve further.

Key to the assessment of the Audit Commission was how we work with partners, and the CPA team talked to key people from the LSP during the site visit in October, as well as received feedback from a wide range of people through an electronic survey in August about how the council is perceived.

The final conclusions will be available on Tuesday 3rd February simultaneously on the Council's website (www.stalbans.gov.uk) and the Audit Commission's website (www.audit-commission.gov.uk).



Helping the DCTP plan for 2009/2010 - Young People's Viewfinder

Identified as a model of good practice in the last Joint Area Review (JAR), the Youth Connexions Annual Evaluation and Planning Process for youth work projects is a consultative, evidence based review and planning mechanism for ensuring that as an organisation we respond in the most appropriate way to young people's needs and community issues through the effective deployment of resources.

During late 2008 St Albans team worked to seek the views of young people to inform where and when provision should be available, what the programme should contain and what issues were important. Existing users of Youth Connexions provision all responded to a survey that provided useful feedback on what we do well and where we can improve; with an overall resounding good and very good grading being given to current youth work projects operated by Youth Connexions. Through a survey called "Viewfinder", alongside partners through St Albans Children's Trust, we engaged with 500 young people across the district to gain a snapshot of their wants, needs and issues in relation to their free time and positive activities. Further to this, Youth Connexions in St Albans identified targeted groups of young people that we recognised to be of greatest benefit to the outcomes delivered through youth work and through in-depth focus group discussions the research provided local insight to specific groups of young people within the locality, including, young people with special needs and disabilities, young people not in education, training and/or employment and young people at risk to exclusion from school.

Final clarifying of the data and consolidation of the data is taking place at the time of going to press but will be available via the Youth Connexions District Manager and in summary on www.channelmogo.org

Using this information at local level has contributed significantly to the early planning of Youth Connexions projects for 2009/2010 and will play a key role, alongside other research, such as the St Albans City Vision Survey and the mapping work of Active St Albans in developing the St Albans Youth Offer being co-ordinated by the District Children's Trust Partnership.

For further information, please contact youth.connexions@hertscc.gov.uk or Matthew Green the St Albans Youth Connexions District Manager & Chair of the DCTP 11-19 sub group on 01442 454060.



Hertfordshire Police Authority Safer Neighbourhood Awards 2009

You can now make nominations on line for Hertfordshire Police Authority Safer Neighbourhood Awards 2009:-

NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2009

Neighbourhood Police Officers are nominated for the award by people living or working, including police officers and staff, in the officer's district or borough council area, and judged on their exceptional personal skills, local initiatives to combat crime and working relationships with their communities.

POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICER (PCSO) OF THE YEAR AWARD 2009

PCSOs are nominated for the award by people living or working, including police officers and staff, in the PCSO's district or borough council area, and judged on their exceptional personal skills, local initiatives to combat crime and working relationships with their communities.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AWARD 2009

This award will recognise the outstanding contributions made to community safety in the county.

Nominations are invited for an individual or a group that has made outstanding contributions in their local community through establishing or taking part in an initiative or project that has improved community safety and/or made their neighbourhood a safer place in which to live or work.

For example, projects could include diversionary activities for young people, safety schemes to provide protection for elderly or vulnerable people or exceptional contributions to Neighbourhood or other Watch schemes. Most importantly, the project, initiative or work should have made their local area or community a safer place and/or improved feelings of safety and quality of life.

You may nominate yourself or your group.

The project, initiative or work could have started at any time, providing it was active after January 2008.

You can make nominations by using the following link for more information:-

<http://www.herts.police.uk/awards/>

If you would like further information or assistance in completing the nomination form(s), please contact Emily Anderson on 01992 555628 or email: emily.anderson.hpa@herts.pnn.police.uk

The closing date for nominations is Friday 20 March 2009



Young People's Live Music

A network of youth gigs is spreading across Hertfordshire and Youth Connexions in St Albans is playing a key role to support and fund the development locally. These live music events are being staged in the main Youth Connexions centres in districts across the County, with Pioneer Youth Centre as the St Albans venue.

These well attended events for 13 to 19 year olds, have young people at the core and are driven by local youth events committees working hard to plan, organise, promote and run successful gigs for young people.

Led by Youth Connexions, these events showcase local talent, giving young bands an opportunity to play in front of an audience and develop their live performance skills. Off stage Youth Connexions practitioners are working with young people to professionally record their original works at the County Music and Media Studio, many of which are uploaded via Channel Mogo and the social networking sites that young people regularly interact with.

Many of these events are attracting 150 plus young people and they have provided a great chance for the Youth Workers, Personal Advisers and District Children's Trust Partners, such as the Police, the Extended Schools Co-ordinators and St Albans Leisure Connections to engage with some young people they might not have, allowing an opportunity to promote other positive activities and key services in and around the district.

Future gigs will take place at Pioneer Youth Centre, off Harpenden Road on the first Friday of every month for ten months throughout 2009/2010.

For further information visit www.channelmogo.org or email youth.connexions@hertscc.gov.uk



First NHS constitution launched

An historic signing ceremony to mark the launch of the NHS Constitution for England took place at Downing Street this week. The Constitution, the first of its kind in the world, was signed by Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Health Secretary Alan Johnson and NHS Chief Executive David Nicholson.

The Constitution will give power to patients and the public by bringing their existing rights together in one place so they know what they are legally entitled to - and how

they can exercise their rights as well as understanding their responsibilities. It also contains a range of pledges to patients, public and staff, which the NHS is committed to achieving. For NHS staff, the Constitution will mean an NHS-wide commitment to equipping them with the tools, training and support they need to deliver high quality care for patients.

Lord Darzi's review of the NHS, High Quality Care for All concluded last summer that there was a case for an NHS Constitution to enshrine the principles and values of the NHS in England. The landmark document will put in one place what patients, staff and the public can expect of the health service. It is designed to safeguard the future of the NHS and renew its core values, making sure it continues to be relevant to the needs of patients, the public and staff in the 21st century.

The Constitution is the result of extensive consultation with staff and patients, which was led by strategic health authorities and overseen by independent experts on the Constitutional Advisory Forum (CAF). In response to the consultation and report published by the CAF, the final Constitution includes:

- A right to makes choices about your care and to information to help exercise that choice
- A new legal right to receive the vaccinations that the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation recommends that you should receive under an NHS-provided national immunisation programme
- A right making explicit your entitlement to drugs and treatments that have been recommended by NICE for use in the NHS, if your doctor says they are clinically appropriate for you
- A right to expect local decisions on funding of other drugs and treatments to be made rationally following a proper consideration of the evidence
- Clear and comprehensive rights to complaint and redress

Notes:

1. The NHS Constitution can be found at <http://www.dh.gov.uk/nhsconstitution>
2. Also published today are the Handbook to the NHS Constitution and a Statement of NHS Accountability. The Handbook to the NHS Constitution is designed to give NHS staff and patients all the information they need about the NHS Constitution. It explains in more detail what the rights, pledges and responsibilities mean and explains what to do if rights are not met or pledges are not upheld. It also explains the legal basis of each right. The Statement of NHS Accountability describes the system of responsibility and accountability for taking decisions in the NHS and provides a summary of the structure and functions of the NHS in England.
3. The Health Bill, published on 16 January, provides for a legal duty on NHS bodies and independent contractors providing NHS services to have regard to the NHS Constitution in their decisions and actions. The Bill also requires the NHS Constitution to be reviewed at least every ten years with full consultation. The bill can be viewed online here: http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Legislation/Actsandbills/DH_093280



Major cycleway scheme to start – a final link in the chain for St Albans

A major project will get underway next week (January 26) to complete the National Cycle Network in St Albans by linking it up with existing routes to the north, south and east of the city centre.

When the 4.4 mile (7.1km) connecting route is finished, it will enable local residents to cycle to the local railway stations and the city centre itself – or to the surrounding countryside for leisure activities. This is in line with the county and district councils' strategies to encourage cycling as a sustainable means of transport.

The route, which will mainly make use of signed sections on existing roads, has been finalised following extensive consultation work and discussion with the St Albans Cycle Forum. It will carry on from the existing section on Watford Road, going northwards through St Julians, the city centre, Townsend and New Greens to Harpenden Road. It will also link to the Alban Way cycle track, which provides an off-road link to Hatfield.

Work will need to be done at the following locations to improve safety for cyclists using the route:

- Watford Road junction with Robert Avenue
- Watling Street junction with Vesta Avenue
- Path between Tavistock Avenue and Abbots Avenue West
- Berners Drive junction with Abbots Avenue West
- Path between Cottonmill Lane and Berners Drive
- Keyfield Terrace
- Path across Bernards Heath between Townsend Drive and Harpenden Road
- Path between Batchwood Drive and Therfield Road
- Path between New Greens Avenue and Harpenden Road.

Most of this work is due to start on January 26 and to be completed by the end of March, apart from improvement work on the existing path through Bernards Heath (which is owned by the Althorp Estate). This is due to take place in March, subject to a legal agreement with the landowner.

Hertfordshire Highways have worked in partnership with St Albans City and District Council and Groundwork Hertfordshire to design a route that will be in keeping with the environment of the Heath while providing better access for users.

For more detailed information visit

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/envroads/roadstrans/transplan/ltp/ltp2/newcyclestrat/>



Eastern Region Youth Exchange

In February 2009, 10 young people from Wheathampstead Youth Project will be participating in a youth exchange with young people from Great Yarmouth. The young people will participate in two weekend residential experiences. The first will see young people from Wheathampstead taking to the road and travelling to Great Yarmouth in Norfolk. With the Norfolk return visit to Hertfordshire two weeks later.

From the very start young people from St Albans, who attend the increasingly popular Wheathampstead Youth Project and Pioneer Youth Centre, have influenced every aspect of the planning for this project, and have led on the successful funding bid that will underwrite the full financial costs of this work.

Leading up to the residential component of the project the host groups have been planning a varied programme of activities, visits and discussions in preparation for the visiting group. The project has encouraged young people to consider their communities, environment and experiences and how to present this to young people from another part of the country.

The project is enabling young people in a range of skill and knowledge areas, including communication, organisation and team building and has directly challenged some attitudes and perceptions that have previously been a block to stepping out of familiar home territories, because, for several of the young people involved in the project this will be a first opportunity to be away from home outside of St Albans and the County.

The programme will include a mixture of adventurous activities and visits to places of interest.

For further information contact Youth Connexions Hertfordshire, St Albans Team on youth.connexions@hertscc.gov.uk or the main office on 01442 454060.



EEDA: Cut your Carbon - Funding competition

Cut your Carbon is an exciting regional initiative, led by the East of England Development Agency (EEDA), with the goal of helping communities respond to climate change by reducing their carbon emissions.

Many carbon saving actions are low-cost or free, and Cut your Carbon is largely about taking those actions. However, beyond these actions funding is often needed to deliver larger projects that will make a big impact on carbon emissions. EEDA wants to help make your bright ideas happen, so we are offering £2.5 million for community projects through a series of funding rounds taking place over the next three years (to 2011).

What kind of projects?

Communities can seek between £5,000 and £200,000 for capital assets that will cut their carbon emissions. We are taking a broad approach as to what this could include, but some examples include:

- renewable / sustainable energy solutions
- reducing waste or water usage
- cutting carbon from transport

We welcome big ideas and creativity, but there doesn't necessarily have to be any sophisticated technology involved. We want to see projects that are inspiring and could be copied by others, or that tackle a familiar problem in an innovative way. It's up to you to tell us how you want to cut your carbon!

For more information about the second and third rounds of funding:-

<http://www.cutyourcarbon.org.uk/Page.aspx?ID=19>



Real help for people and businesses

A new booklet has been produced by the government giving practical information and advice - Help with keeping your home, with training and skills and with jobs and benefits

This booklet tells you what help is available now and where to find it. It also includes details of extra support that is being introduced this spring, and it will be updated as more help becomes available.

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/campaigns/RealHelpNow/index.htm>

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To find out more about the information within this document, to give us feedback or to send information for the next issue, please contact:

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ST ALBANS
& DISTRICT
LOCAL STRATEGIC
PARTNERSHIP