

EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

West Area Neighbourhood Panel

Coveney • Downham villages • Haddenham • Little Thetford • Mepal
Stretham • Sutton • Wentworth • Wilburton • Witcham and Witchford



Welcome to your Neighbourhood Panel Newsletter for the **West Area**. This Newsletter, produced by the East Cambridgeshire Strategic Partnership, is about what partner agencies are doing to make your locality a better place to live in. Please remember, without **your** involvement we cannot start to make the improvements you need.

Background about Neighbourhood Panels, Update on actions, Neighbourhood Profile and all other related documents can be accessed from www.eastcambs.gov.uk/atozn or from Alan Williams (e: alan.williams@eastcambs.gov.uk; t: 01353 – 665555)

At the meeting...

On 25th October in Sutton Ste Thornley (from ECDC) drew participants' attention to 2 items – **using sport to create safer and stronger communities and the Council's Register of consultees** – printed on the reverse side of the agenda, and on 3 additional items – papers were available about **Flood Management and Memories** (deadline 31st Oct), about the **proposal for a Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) around the Cathedral** - this public consultation (deadline 10th November) was considering the implementation of an alcohol restriction order in the public green open spaces around the Cathedral. Finally, there was a consultation on a **Code of Practice regarding Publicity in Local Government** (which parish, district and county councils need to be aware of).

Jane Hollingworth, Head of Housing at ECDC, spoke about **Provision and care for older people** and the increasing proportion of the population who will be over 65, and over 85, by 2021, increases in numbers with dementia and an increase in pressure on all (related) services.

Despite the cuts in public spending, priorities are changing with people choosing to buy services and a transformation of social care, focusing on the more needy.

Jane explained that the District Council

- maintain a housing register and links to sheltered and **'extra care'** accommodation,
- are able to help with grants for disabled facilities and to offset fuel and energy 'poverty';
- are able to provide help with energy efficiency and large/small improvement works;

- provide activities through the County's 'mature and active' programme.

In supporting people-funded services, Jane explained the role of home improvement agencies, sheltered housing, general tenancy support and 'extra care' housing in the mix of provision – with 'extra care' housing increasingly being used to replace residential care homes.

Jane emphasised that **'extra care'** housing provides an older person with their own home, with their own front door, but that essential services are available in the development – capable of meeting a variety of levels of need.

The District Council supports a Care and Repair (improvement works and handyperson) service and there is currently a review within the County of home improvement agency services, a review of all sheltered and 'extra care' provision and an ECDC house condition survey (with a view to upgrading energy efficiency, home security and home-links for possible transfers). The Housing teams have plans for potential redistribution of residents from care/sheltered schemes into 'extra care' accommodation and they have also been mapping the use of domiciliary care. Their planning has been based on reducing sheltered and residential care and providing more 'extra care' housing (which is proving to be the preferred option for many) A 90 unit 'extra care' development is in the process of opening in Soham, and more 'extra care' provision is projected for the Ely and Littleport areas.

**Oct 2010 -
January 2011**

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- **Allegations of drug dealing/ASB at Lucas Court in Wilburton;**
- **Speeding;**
- **A multi-agency approach to the Windmill Walk, Sutton parking issues;**
- **The housing mix at Lucas Court**

Please come to your next Neighbourhood Panel meeting on **24th January** to have your say and to help agree local priorities.

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Jane has been carrying out detailed work for some time in devising an 'Older People's Strategy' and in doing so has worked with other council services at District and County level, as well as working with other appropriate agencies

(including voluntary groups e.g. Care Network) in a partnership approach.

In conclusion, Jane emphasised that good housing is fundamental to all health and well-being outcomes – a summary which Edwin Chadwick had espoused in his reports on conditions of the labouring classes in the mid-19th century, which led to the Public Health Act of 1848. The current picture is constantly shifting, but the Comprehensive Spending Review has clarified that new ideas, new partnerships and new ways of thinking will be needed - working with different investors, different partners and in providing different ways of delivering support.

Hilary Johnys (from **Care Network**) spoke about the 2 main strands of this voluntary organisation's work in helping to provide care and support for older people:

- Development Officers help local residents in areas within the District to run their own car schemes, mobile warden schemes and luncheon clubs;
- Direct schemes, including the voluntary car scheme, Help at Home and Welcome Home from Hospital (details were available at the meeting, but are also available from Alan Williams, the Neighbourhood Panel Coordinator)

Hilary emphasised that local residents should be in contact with **Care Network**, if they found that important services are being reduced/cut altogether.

In discussion the following issues were raised:

- Places are not being filled at the warden-controlled unit in Bakery Close, and there a range of issues relating to Lucas Court in Wilburton – a detailed letter had been sent to Sanctuary Hereward, but as yet no reply had been received – more work needs to be done, starting from the Neighbourhood Action Group meeting on 1st November;
- It was thought that a somewhat depressing picture had been painted of provision and care for older people, and that individual advice would be needed to ascertain the most appropriate provision for each individual;
- the mechanisms of payment for '**extra care**' (which all go through the County Council);
- that more consultation is needed with parish councils and with older people. To date, consultation has only taken place when changes to provision and modes of care were being contemplated, but not when things were remaining stable. Jane and her team will attempt to consult in an appropriate way when completing the Older People's Strategy for the District.

Neighbourhood Updates

Sgt Will Davis outlined actions taken by the Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) as part of engagement activity and to address the priority set at the last Panel meeting (in July):

- **Speeding and vehicle-related offences, including dangerous and obstructive parking**

Sgt Davis referred to pages 17/18 of the current **Neighbourhood Profile** (October, 2010) document that all participants received at the meeting.

The Profile is accessible from the Neighbourhood Panel webpage at www.eastcambs.gov.uk/atoz/n.

Actions taken included

- speed surveys at Ely Road, Little Downham (with an overall 15% of vehicles speeding, but 25% speeding towards Ely) and at Martins Lane, Witcham (with an overall 21% of vehicles speeding);
- parking-related issues around local schools, which are being tackled as part of the District's Safer Schools' Project;
- dealing with obstructive parking at Windmill Walk in Sutton;

- following up on poor driving and speeding by drivers of tractors and other agricultural vehicles;
- Road Policing Officers had also carried patrols in the Panel area – details of the measures taken are outlined on page 17 of the Profile.

Overall crime figures in the Panel area have increased compared to the previous 3 months (to July), **but have remained at comparable levels** to the same period in 2009 – the increase is mainly due to incidents in the Downham villages and Haddenham. Details of the crime and incident levels can be found on pp. 21/23 of the Profile.

Reported incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) have decreased compared to previous 3 months (to July), **but have increased** compared to the same period last year.

Sgt Davis summarised the **emerging issues** in the 4 wards within the Panel area – the detail is given on pp.19/20 of the Profile.

In conclusion, Sgt Davis spoke about the nature of

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violent incidents that had occurred in Haddenham, and then spoke briefly about drugs activity in the village (following the raid by Police on 8th July). Several people are due to be in the Crown Court in the near future, with some currently being held in custody. Sgt Davis appealed for further information about drugs activity in the Panel area.

In discussion, the following issues were raised:

- Joint working by the Police with the Environment Agency to improve a facility near Coveney;
- Hallowe'en posters – asking for no callers – were available at the meeting and from Ely Police Station;
- the use of Police camera vans in the Panel area – the vans have been used 5 times in the area in recent times.

Alan Roffey - local **Speedwatch** scheme Coordinator – reported that 10 checks have been carried by the

team of volunteers. These checks recorded more than 5,000 vehicles, of which more than 380 were speeding. 268 drivers had been sent warning letters. Alan expressed concern that the volunteers came from only four of the Panel areas 11 villages, and he hoped that more volunteers would come forward to be trained (ready for more activity in the Spring).

In discussion, clarification was given that the Speedwatch team need to focus on identifying the locations and times when the police enforcement teams should operate – in this way, the Scheme would be effective in helping to (further) reduce the incidence of speeding in the Panel area.

There was encouragement for representatives from ALL parish councils to help identify more people to join the local **Speedwatch** team of volunteers. Please contact **Alan Roffey on 01353 – 775236** to find out more, and to volunteer your help)

Neighbourhood Issues

John Fuller, the Constabulary's Neighbourhood Engagement Officer, asked members of the audience, in the first instance, and Panel members by Parish to identify issues of concern in their locality:

Coveney

- PCSO asked to attend the youth club on Wednesday evenings;
Concern about the state of the roads between the village and Wardy Hill – undulating roads and drainage problems – being pursued with Highways team;
Suspected drugs activity with young people congregating on the hard-surface entrance to a by-way between the village and Wardy Hill.

Haddenham

- Concern for pedestrians (esp. school children) at the busy cross-roads in the centre of the village and on Station Road;
Careless driving by HCV drivers;
Inconsiderate (obstructive ?) parking on pavements;
Speeding vehicles through village.

Little Downham

- Speeding within the village, on Main Street.

Little Thetford

- Litter on A10 verges (spoils walks/cycling by villagers going to/from Ely);
Monitoring of the issue in New Close Road continues, with the (offending) resident now having returned home;
Concern about the impact on life in the village of the increasing volume of traffic on the A10;
The travellers' site on th A10 opposite the entrance to the village was designated as a single site, but appears now to have multiple occupancy – advice is sought on this.

Mepal

- Concern about 'planning creep' (awareness of amendment to planning conditions) and about straw being deposited on roads/ blown into people's properties;
Sanctuary building properties at Bridge Road/School Lane - concern about the muddy roads and damage to the green verge (which needs to be restored);
Re-cycling of Tetra-pak containers at a limited number of sites in the District – clarification is sought on whether PCs can organise local collections (to then be transported to one of the District's sites) ?

Dates for your diary.....

Next Panel
meeting is on
Monday, 24th
January, 2011
at Little
Thetford Village
Hall
at 7pm

The following
one
is on
Monday, 21st
March
at Witcham
Village Hall
at 7pm

Useful contacts East Cambs Strategic Partnership

Julie Cornwell
01353 665555
lsp2@eastcambs.gov.uk

Alan Williams
01353 665555
alan.williams
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- Pymoor** - Concern re. potential/actual thefts from isolated farms;
People trespassing on Cophall Drove at night.
- Stretham** - ASB from certain people – why cannot Sanctuary evict?
(Need for officers from Sanctuary to be at each Panel meeting)
- Sutton** - as Mepal, concern re. 'planning creep' and the transport of straw.
- Wentworth** - no representative to communicate any issues.
- Wilburton** - the mix of older and younger people at Lucas Court is not working
(range of personal and social problems) leaving an elderly resident
feeling isolated and intimidated by a group of (4) young people.
Alleged focal point for drugs activity and for trouble with other young
people.
The letter which has been written will be taken forward by the NAG
on 1st November.
Noisy party (with young people) held at Carpond Lane;
More cars are often parked on the footpath in High Street.
- Witcham** - no issues identified.
- Witchford** - Need to improve signage for cyclists at the A10 roundabout near
the Little Chef;
Concern about lack of progress with potential cycleway;
A questioning of the future of the Area Joint (Traffic) Committee
[AJC] – the AJC 'does not appear to be working'.

Priorities for Action

It was agreed by the Panel that for the next 3 months (to January)

Policing priorities will be

- **Allegations of drug dealing/ASB at Lucas Court in Wilburton;**
- **Speeding, in consultation with Speedwatch team.**

Non-police priorities (for the next 3 months) will be

- **A multi-agency approach to the Windmill Walk, Sutton parking issues;**
- **The housing mix at Lucas Court (and lessons for other schemes)**
– Sanctuary officers to be asked to attend the Panel meeting in January (and
following).

If you are unable to attend, but would like
to raise an issue of concern, please contact
your local Panel representative (Councillor)
or contact Alan Williams, Neighbourhood
Panel Coordinator,
e: alan.williams@eastcambs.gov.uk ;
t: 01353 – 665555.

For information on the East Cambs
Strategic Partnership, Neighbourhood
Panels and the current Northern
area Neighbourhood Profile please
use N in the A-Z section of the East
Cambridgeshire District Council
website: www.eastcambs.gov.uk