

whitefriars **talk**

St James



Ebbw Vale residents

How are WE Doing?

Just to give you some idea of the volume of activity of your housing office, here are some figures for the period October 2009 to February 2010:

- Callers to reception 3697
- Telephone calls dealt with 15776
- Home visits 2573

- Bulk rubbish 668 tons (October to December 2009)

- Graffiti 130 lots (October to December 2009)



Pride in Our Street Success!

There's been lots of activity since our last issue, and here we have just a few examples of some of the projects that have benefitted from our Pride in Our Street Award Scheme.

Ebbw Vale Terrace - Cheylesmore

The residents of Ebbw Vale Terrace made a successful Pride in Our Street bid to have the service road at the side of the block re-surfaced, it was in a terrible condition and many were reluctant to use the access. Christine

McAvoy spearheaded the bid and, when they visited the area, the Awards Panel were in full agreement.

The work was completed in February and residents now feel confident in using their scooters and wheelchairs and the more sprightly residents will be now be able to dash home!

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Pride in Our Street **Success!** con't from page 1

Residents have commented on how much happier they are with the new surface and how it will allow them to use it with more confidence. 'It was such a mess for visitors to see' said one 'but now it's so much better'.

The Village Green – Willenhall precinct

Pride in Our Street has awarded a grant to help refurbish the Village Green, at the heart of the community, next to the Hagard Centre. Work is already underway and hopefully by the time you are reading this article the Hagard community café will be open with tables and chairs on the green for residents to enjoy the long hot summer!

Mud and Wellies in Willenhall Wood

Thanks to a Pride in Our Street grant local groups and agencies in Willenhall got together to supply a week long timetable of activities for local children during February half term. The activities included making and installing bird boxes, planting trees in the local woodland and orienteering.

The weather was a bit wet but it failed to dampen anyone's spirits and everyone involved had a great time.

Eureka Childcare Club – Willenhall

After being forced to close, back in July 2009 by cutbacks, Eureka Childcare reopened again in February, thanks to a Pride in Our Street Grant. Based at the Hagard Community Centre and also The Hut, the club has had great attendance from local children, so much so that by it's second week they were sadly



Village Green

having to turn some children away because they were full. As one of the staff explained "The limited funding of the Club means that we can only employ two members of staff who together can take 26 children, we take children on a first come first served basis, and the children we turn away get in first the following week. However without the Pride in Our Street grant from Whitefriars we wouldn't be able to operate at all".

During their time at club children interact with peers from other schools, join in cooperative large group games, cook and take part in craft activities.

Breathe Easy Coventry

1 in 7 people in the UK are affected by a lung condition and the British Lung Foundation is here for every one of them.

Breathe Easy Coventry provides support and information for people with lung conditions and also to their family members, partners and friends. Breathe Easy is part of the British Lung Foundation – the only UK charity working for everyone affected by lung disease.

New members are always welcome.

For more information please contact the British Lung Foundation on **0116 249 5780** or by emailing midlands@blf-uk.org

The group meets from 2pm to 4pm on the 2nd Friday of every month at Central Hall, Warwick Lane, Coventry, CV1 2HA.

Please contact the Midlands office before going to your first meeting by telephoning **0116 249 5780** or emailing midlands@blf-uk.org.



breatheeasy
British Lung Foundation Support Network

www.lunguk.org



Mud and Wellies

One of the parents said “I think this is the best club around for young children and even though it hasn’t been running for very long my child has made new friends and become more confident, he is learning new things all the time.”

Another parent commented “I think it’s great that the kids have somewhere to go, I see kids playing in the streets all the time usually with

a football in the road which isn’t safe. I hope once someone sees how much that the club is needed it is allowed to be run on more than 1 night a week.’

It’s probably best summed up by Caine, aged 7, has asked “Why can’t the club be on 2 or 3 nights? 1 night just isn’t enough”.

Willenhall Boxing Club

Thanks to a Pride in Our Street grant the club was able to buy new equipment and expand the number of sessions they offer. Local training and coaching sessions are held at the Willenhall Social Club in Robin Hood Road every Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings, with sessions for beginners and advanced levels for boys and girls. Sessions are free for 10 to 34 year olds and are run by fully qualified coaches. If you are interested contact Seamus on **07980 620 843** or pop in on a training night.

History talks

History at the Hagard, Willenhall

Recently, local historian and Whitefriars resident John Russell, started opening up the ‘History Office’ at the Hagard Centre on Tuesday mornings. This is an opportunity for local residents to see the work of the group and get involved in the recording of local history in the area.

One local customer was surprised to discover that the History Group had, amongst their collection of local images (27,000 and still growing) a number of photos from a school production she and some of her school friends were in when they were 8 years old. Better still they even had a photo of her mother, who had sadly died when she was very young.

Thanks to a donation by Whitefriars towards office equipment, the lady was then able to take away copies of the pictures, which until then she had no idea existed.

The history Group are keen to show residents what great community history Willenhall has and hopefully inspire more people to take that spirit into the future.

If you want to know more, why not pop in on a Tuesday morning or visit the Website, www.virtualmuseum.co.uk.

Winter planting

Junior Friends of Willenhall Woodland go bulb planting

December was been a really exciting time for Friends of Willenhall Woodland, firstly the group were successful in securing funding via a Whitefriars ‘Street Pride’ grant and through the City Councils, Neighbourhood Management ‘You Decide’ grant funding.

The first phase of bulb planting, began in early December by the Junior Friends of Willenhall Woodland. 3 local schools, Willenhall Community Primary School, Stretton Primary and St Bartholomew’s

Primary met Park Ranger Steve Wright, Councillors Chater and Lakha, wardens from Street Services and other members of the Friends of Willenhall Woodland to spend an hour braving the December cold and damp, 1000 native daffodils were planted and I think I would be honest in saying everyone seemed to enjoy the experience.

So keep your eyes out, because they should be flowering by the time you are reading this article!

Your finances

Don't Struggle with your Finances, help is at hand.

When an elderly resident came into our office recently, she was struggling to pay her weekly rent. Having been told that she was not entitled to pension credits she was under the impression that she was therefore not entitled to any other benefits either.

Our staff sat down with her and explained that this not the case. They did a provisional assessment and it turned out that she was indeed entitled to housing benefit, which meant that she would receive a rebate of around £51 of her £85

weekly rent, and this was then back dated to cover her rent arrears.

This has made a huge difference to her life and has taken a great weight off her shoulders. If you are struggling, don't suffer in silence. Come and talk to us at your housing office and we will be happy to help you find out what benefits you are really entitled to.

Money Aid

Money Aid is a fund established by Whitefriars to help alleviate some of the problems associated with

extreme debt and at times of crisis. Decisions are made by a customer panel.

Recently a Willenhall customer was successful with a money aid application. The panel agreed to match fund his rent payments for a period of 12 weeks, (to maximum of £96).

If you would like to be considered for a Money Aid Application contact St James Lane on **024 7651 6700** or just call into the office and speak to staff.

Two Little Ducks...

We found out that customers at Stretton Lodge in Willenhall take their Bingo very seriously when we organised an afternoon session recently. Members of Whitefriars staff ran several games of Bingo at the lodge, giving the residents an opportunity to win shopping vouchers. Of course we also provided

refreshments in the form of tea and cakes for the very lively group.

We had a fun afternoon and over tea we had the opportunity to talk to the residents about any issues they had. The afternoon was a great success and it gave staff and residents the chance to get to know each other in a relaxed atmosphere.



Need help in your own language?

If you would like this leaflet in large print or audio format, please contact the Communications Team on 024 7676 7029.

French

Pour vous assister en votre propre langue

Portuguese

Assistencia na sura propria lingua

Somali

Luqadaadoo lugugu caawinaayo

Farsi

برای کمک به زبانتان

Arabic

لمساعدتكم في لغتكم

Kurdish

بۆیارمه تیدان به زمانی خؤ

t: 024 7676 7000

Contact corner

Our office is based at St James Lane, Willenhall.

We are open from 9am - 4:30pm every day except Thursday, when we open later, at 11am.

Call: 024 7651 6700 Email: info@whitefriarshousing.co.uk www.whitefriarshousing.co.uk

