

Summer 2007

Contents

Click on the hyperlink to go straight to an article:

[Play Your Part – new DVD being launched](#)

[What a difference a week makes!](#)

[Happy holidays!](#)

[Community representatives needed for Racial Harassment Forum](#)

[Free electric blanket testing – please publicise!](#)

[Safer Neighbourhood Teams - update](#)

[Penalty notices come into force for truancy](#)

[New centre for people to report racist incidents](#)

[Specialist court to deal with domestic violence](#)

[Suffolk's refugees and asylum seekers question regional decision makers](#)

[Drug and alcohol telephone information service](#)

[Social inclusion and community cohesion at Suffolk County Council](#)

[Your future Link On!](#)

Play Your Part – new DVD being launched

Contact: Alan Keely,
Suffolk County Council, tel:
01473 265157; email:
alan.keely@csu.suffolkcc.gov.uk

Suffolk County Council
has been developing a
training package for staff

to help them understand their responsibilities under section 17 of the
Crime and Disorder Act 1998, with the help of all local authorities in the
county.



The scheme, called Play Your Part, also forms part of the Community
Warden scheme which contributes to the county's Safer Neighbourhood
Teams.

As part of this training package there is a short 10-minute DVD outlining
various aspects of community safety, which will be used to trigger
discussions with staff in team meetings. There is also a one-number
reporting system and email address, which are being provided by
Customer Service Direct. This will complement the local reporting
systems which are already in place in many areas.

The aim of the Play Your Part scheme is to explain to staff how they can
help to tackle the 'low-level' criminal and anti-social behaviour issues that
affect communities. This in turn will help to reduce more serious
offending and make the local area a better place to live.

Many council employees spend their time out and about in the community
or come into direct contact with members of the public. The scheme helps
them to easily report problems they may come across which are affecting

communities and people's lives but that are going unreported.

The official launch of the Play Your Part DVD, and training materials, is currently planned for 13 & 14 September.

[Back to top](#)

What a difference a week makes!

Contacts:

Denise Whiting from
Suffolk Fire & Rescue
Service, tel: 260481; email:
denise.whiting@fire.suffolkcc.gov.uk

Charlotte Foster from
Suffolk County Council, tel:
01473 265159; email:
charlotte.foster@csu.suffolkcc.gov.uk

Hannah-Jo Besley from
Ipswich Borough Council
email: hannah-jo.besley@ipswich.gov.uk

Residents of Ipswich are enjoying the benefits following a week of action across the town. Officers from Ipswich Borough Council, Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Police and other agencies hit the streets of Ipswich to tackle real issues affecting the community.



A number of activities took place between 4 and 11 July which were designed to reduce crime and make people feel better about the areas in which they live. These included two impact days, truancy sweeps, vehicle checks, action to check licenses, test purchases of knives, promotional events, and positive activities for young people.

Joanna Spicer, Suffolk County Councillor portfolio holder for public protection said: "This week was a great success. By agencies working together in a coordinated approach we were able to improve a number of real issues for the local community. I look forward to increasing this type of multi agency working in the future so more residents can enjoy the benefits."



Liz Harsant, Leader of Ipswich Borough Council said: "We are very pleased with the way the week of action worked. By coming together with our partners we were able to make a real difference to people's lives in their own communities. I would like to thank everyone who made such a great effort and to stress that our work goes on."

Tim Beach, Temporary Chief Superintendent at Suffolk Police said: "This week was an example of joint working which helped the community combat the issues affecting communities. I believe that this has helped Ipswich residents identify that issues can be acted on quickly and efficiently when working together."

The week of action in Ipswich was an extension of other successful impact days held across the county. During 2007, Brandon and Mildenhall were targeted in March, and Lowestoft was targeted in May. Also in May, an impact evening was held in Woodbridge, where one particular licensed premises was targeted for action by a range of agencies, following intelligence that a number of their licensing conditions were potentially being breached.

[Back to top](#)

Happy holidays!

Suffolk communities are taking a pro-active approach to preventing anti-social behaviour problems arising over the summer holidays.

Complaints about litter, damage and noise tend to rise in July and August with groups of young people hanging about or playing in the streets and parks when school's out. Suffolk's anti-social behaviour co-ordinators are targeting problem 'hotspots' by supporting a wide range of summer holiday activities designed to give young people something to do in their free time.

For example, football coaching sessions have been arranged in a nearby leisure centre following complaints of cars being damaged by children playing ball games in the streets, while a series of self-defence sessions aim to raise young people's self esteem and reduce their own fear of crime.

Other projects for children and young people include football tournaments, community gardening, self-defence sessions, a mobile skatepark and graffiti wall, sports sessions, art workshops, and family events.

In Newmarket, the Newmarket South Safer Neighbourhood Team is helping to develop a project in response to incidences of "free-running", or "Parkour", in the town centre, where police and town centre security staff have dealt with several reports of young people climbing onto roofs and jumping to other buildings.

Forest Heath District Council, Newmarket's Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Suffolk County Council youth workers are keen to embrace the energy and enthusiasm of these young people, and are putting funding into setting up a project to allow them to enjoy a similar activity in a safe environment.

Two "Parkour" participants from Cambridge are being consulted, who work closely with recognised bodies where the sport is carried out safely and with consideration to the community. There has already been interest from local schools to potentially host such activities.

[Back to top](#)

Community representatives needed for Racial Harassment Forum

For further information about the Forum, please call 01473 613990 and quote 'RHF'.

Or contact: Emma Polkinghorne, SCJB communications officer, tel: 01473 282146; email:

Do you know of any community representatives who would be interested in joining the Racial Harassment Forum?

The Forum continues to support the work of the Racial Harassment Initiative implementation plan (part of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Plan). It plays a pivotal role in evaluating the work of groups and agencies in respect to racial related incidents.

One of the Forum's key achievements is the set up of the Case Review Panel. This panel consists of not just representatives from Crown

emma.polkinghorne@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

Prosecution Service, Suffolk Constabulary and Suffolk County Council, but community representatives as well. It sits twice a year to review cases of hate crime, which have been investigated within Suffolk, in order to identify good practice, and most importantly, areas for further development.

In addition, Case Conference Panels have also been set up, which are separate multi-agency panels that meet periodically to respond to unresolved incidents of racial harassment. Here, a number of approaches are taken into consideration to achieve lasting solutions which can include housing, social care and education, through to criminal justice agency involvement.

Members of the Forum meet on a quarterly basis to review not just the work of the panels, but to share ideas for best practice and hold agencies to account. Of course, key to the success of the Forum is the input from members of diverse communities across Suffolk.

[Back to top](#)

Free electric blanket testing – please publicise!

With the summer (if you can call it that) almost over, and autumn around the corner, people are being urged to get their electric blankets tested for FREE by Suffolk County Council.

Members of community safety networks around the county are encouraged to help publicise these safety checks, which will be carried out across the county by Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service in partnership with Trading Standards.

Expert electrical testers will be on hand to give blankets which are over three years old a free 'health check'. Where blankets are found to be unsafe, a 10% discount voucher will be provided towards the cost of a new one.

All testing days run from 9:30 to 16:30, and the dates and venues for the testing week are:

Ipswich - Colchester Road Fire Station, Colchester Road - 10 Sept

Sudbury - Sudbury Fire Station, Gregory Street - 11 Sept

Bury St Edmunds - Bury Fire Station, Park Way (North) - 12 Sept

Stowmarket - Stowmarket Fire Station, Lockington Road - 13 Sept

Lowestoft - Normanshurst Fire Station, Normanston Drive - 14 Sept

As well checking blankets, officers from trading standards and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service will be on hand to offer advice on dealing with doorstep callers and fire safety at home. Age Concern will also be at each of the testing days to offer general advice and guidance.

People can book their blanket in for its free health check by calling 01473 260586 and saying which venue they'd like to attend. Blankets will only be checked if they are over 3 years old, in a dry condition, complete with any switch or controller and clearly labelled with the owner's name, address and contact number.

[Back to top](#)

Safer Neighbourhood Teams - update

Contact: Moira Hurlock,
deputy project manager at
Suffolk Police; tel: 01473
613853; email:
[moira.hurlock@suffolk.pnn.
police.uk](mailto:moira.hurlock@suffolk.pnn.police.uk)

All 47 Safer Neighbourhood Teams are now up-and-running across Suffolk. The teams are made up of police officers, police community support officers and other police staff working alongside councils, community partners and volunteers.



The teams aim to have a positive impact on crime, anti-social behaviour and safety. They will be listening to people's concerns, working together to solve problems and keeping the community informed about progress.

Most areas have now had their formal launches at district/borough council level, and the individual teams are now organising their own launches to try and reach different sections of their local communities.

People can also more easily find out about their local team, thanks to new searches available on the homepage of the Safer Neighbourhoods website – www.safersuffolk.org.uk. There is a postcode search, as well as a parish search, district/borough council ward search and an A to Z of the teams.

By typing in their full postcode, people will be directed straight through to the Safer Neighbourhood Team that serves their area. Or they can look up their parish or local council ward name on the A to Z list. Each Safer Neighbourhood Team website provides details of the priorities for the team in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, and a list of who's in the team.

Most of the teams are based in the communities which they serve, and building work has been taking place in different areas to provide offices – often shared premises which emphasise the partnership working of the teams.

The North East Ipswich team has a new base in Conifer House, and the South East Ipswich team has moved to Gainsborough Clinic. Three of the teams in mid Suffolk – Mid Suffolk South, Stowmarket South and Stowmarket North – will all work out of the Mid Suffolk District Council Offices in Needham Market. Finally, the Wilford Peninsula team, which covers the Suffolk Coastal wards of Sutton, Hollesley with Eyke, Orford and Tunstall and Rendlesham, has a new home on Rock Barracks. The next phase of developments includes work on premises in North West Ipswich, Capel, Hadleigh, Lavenham, Newmarket, Eye, Aldeburgh and Framlingham.

Neighbourhood tasking is a key part of the Safer Neighbourhoods programme. This involves all the partners in the Safer Neighbourhood Teams coming together on a regular basis to deal with two or three priorities for the work of the team.

The Safer Neighbourhoods Project Board has discussed a county-wide approach to neighbourhood tasking, to establish a common framework.

Each area will now be working to standard terms of reference for neighbourhood tasking in their teams.

This includes deciding which organisations and people should be involved in the tasking meetings, ensuring that there are links to neighbourhood panels (or other ways of gauging public opinion on priorities) and intelligence-led tasking, and using problem solving methods to agree on priorities and actions.

[Back to top](#)

Penalty notices come into force for truancy

Contact: Adrian Orr, Senior Education Officer Social Inclusion at Suffolk County Council; tel: 01473 264709; email: adrian.orr@educ.suffolkcc.gov.uk

From September, Suffolk County Council's Education Attendance Service will start to enforce unauthorised absence from school with penalty notices.

The law says that parents or carers whose children of compulsory school age are absent from school without good reason are committing an offence, and those parents may be prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court.

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced additional powers under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 authorising local authorities to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school.

Cllr Patricia O'Brien, Suffolk County Council's portfolio holder for children, schools and young people's services said: "School attendance is critical to the development and safety of every child and young person. Improvements in attendance in recent years have been achieved by supporting parents effectively in meeting their legal responsibilities towards their children's education, rigorously challenging reasons for absence, and enforcing attendance where necessary. Fixed penalty notices, when they are introduced into Suffolk in September, will be another method to persuade parents that their children should regularly attend school."

The Education Attendance Service will continue to work with schools and parent and carers to improve pupil attendance but will issue penalty notices in the following situations where unauthorised absence occurs:

- Where a pupil has taken holiday during term-time and the absence is not authorised by the school
- Where a pupil is stopped with parents/carers during a truancy sweep and the absence is not authorised by the school
- Where a pupil has missed at least 10 sessions (5 school days) due to unauthorised absence in a school term.

In every case a pupil will have lost a minimum of 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence during the current term before a penalty notice is considered.

Details of payment arrangements will be included on the penalty notice. The penalty must be paid in full. The penalty is £50 if paid within 28 days, doubling to £100 if paid after 28 days. If the penalty is not paid in full within 42 days of issue, then legal proceedings through the Magistrates' Court will begin, which may lead to a fine of up to £1000.

Full information is available on the Suffolk County Council website:
<http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/EducationAndLearning/CaringForChildrenAndYoungPeople/SchoolAttendanceAndPenaltyNotice%28InformationForParentsAndCarers%29.htm>

[Back to top](#)

New centre for people to report racist incidents

Contact: Victoria Rudkin,
tel: 01473 265162; email:
victoria.rudkin@csu.suffolkcc.gov.uk

A new reporting centre for racist incidents has opened at the West Meadows Gypsy and Traveller site in Ipswich. This means that people from this community can easily report racist incidents to a trained person, who can identify the right organisations to help them.

Councillor Joanna Spicer, Suffolk County Council's portfolio holder for Public Protection, said: "Research shows that for every racist incident that's reported, sixteen go unreported. This is something that's unacceptable, and which Suffolk County Council is committed to changing.

"I know that it can be difficult to come forward and report a racist incident, or any form of harassment. By opening this centre at West Meadows, we hope that we can build the trust of the gypsy and traveller community, and encourage them to help us stamp out racism in our county."

Similar reporting centres have already been set up in 14 Citizens Advice Bureaux across Suffolk, to provide more places where people can easily report racial incidents.

This is part of the Racial Harassment Initiative's work to provide support and advocacy to victims of racial harassment across the county, and to ensure that all incidents are properly and sensitively investigated.

People can also phone the Racial Harassment Initiative 24 hour helpline on 0800 138 1643, where a message can be left in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, Farsi, French, Kurdish, Portuguese or Turkish.

[Back to top](#)

Specialist court to deal with domestic violence

Contact: Emma Polkinghorne, SCJB communications officer, tel: 01473 282146; email:
emma.polkinghorne@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

Marianne Fellowes,
tel:01473 613873; email:
marianne.fellowes@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

Victims in Ipswich are benefiting from greater support in bringing their cases to court with the introduction of a Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC) in the town.

Based at South East Suffolk Magistrates Court in Ipswich, one courtroom each Wednesday is used as a Specialist Domestic Violence Court. Designed to fast-track domestic violence cases through the judicial system whilst providing victims with a high level of support, it is expected that it will encourage more victims to give evidence against their abusers.

John Budd, Chair of the Suffolk Criminal Justice Board, said: "All the partnering agencies involved took a thorough look at the way in which the court could be introduced into the judicial system. It was agreed that

Wednesday would be the most appropriate day for the SDVC to operate with all the supporting services available on that day each week.”

Marianne Fellowes, Domestic Violence and Abuse Service Development Manager for Suffolk, added: “The set-up of the SDVC has sent out a powerful message about the way in which domestic violence is regarded and handled by the Criminal Justice System in Suffolk.

“By providing a network of support and advice, we expect to continue to see a fall in the number of victims who retract statements before the cases come to court, together with a reduction in the levels of repeat victimisation.”

[Back to top](#)

Suffolk’s refugees and asylum seekers question regional decision makers

Contact: Allison Coleman,
Suffolk County Council,
Tel: 01473 265160; Email:
allison.coleman@csu.suffolk.gov.uk
kcc.gov.uk

Refugees and asylum seekers living in Suffolk turned the tables on some regional decision makers, at a special ‘Question Time’ style event held at Endeavour House as part of national Refugee Week.

The panel of five political representatives and experts on asylum and immigration issues, which included John Gummer MP and Richard Howitt MEP, were faced with a number of searching questions which highlighted issues that people face when working their way through the asylum process.

For instance, new people coming to this country now claiming asylum are being dealt with by the New Asylum Model and can hear in as little time as five months whether they will have a right to remain or not; while others who were in the system before this model was introduced may have to wait up to five years before getting a decision, as there is such a large backlog of cases.

Many people also said they would like to be able to work while their claim is processed, rather than exist on limited benefits, but most are not allowed to. The panel supported the view that a change to the regulations to allow people to work and support themselves, but with the understanding that putting down roots in this way would not influence the decision on whether they ultimately have the right to remain or not, would be an improvement.

About 40 people attended the event, with 8 nationalities represented. The audience included representatives from Suffolk Constabulary, Suffolk PCT, Ipswich BC, Suffolk CC, The Refugee Council and Suffolk Refugee Support Forum. Suffolk County Council Chairman Cllr Bill Sadler welcomed people to the event, which was chaired by Ian Beattie, from the East of England Regional Assembly’s Consortium for Refugee Integration.

[Back to top](#)

Drug and alcohol telephone information service

Contact: Debbie Carr,
Suffolk DAAT, tel: 01473
265174; email:
[deboarah.carr@csu.suffolk
cc.gov.uk](mailto:deboarah.carr@csu.suffolkcc.gov.uk)

The Drug and Alcohol Community Information Service provides information on all the services available in Suffolk for both drug and alcohol users and for their families and friends. People can call 01473 299640 between 9am and 6pm, Monday to Friday to get advice and information.

The people on the end of the line will be able to direct callers to services that will best suit their needs, as well as providing details of county-wide needle exchanges, blood borne virus services and a homeless service aimed specially at drug and alcohol users.

The information line is run for the Drug and Alcohol Action Team by Take Care Now, working in partnership with Suffolk Doctors on Call. People calling the number out of hours (between 6pm and 9am) will be answered by the on-call team, and referred to the most appropriate help available.

[Back to top](#)

Social inclusion and community cohesion at Suffolk County Council

Contacts:
Shammi Jalota on 01473
265161
Victoria Rudkin on 01473
265162
Keren Wright on 01473
265194
Allison Coleman on 01473
265160
Emily Bird on 01473
265163

Email:
[firstname.surname@csu.s
uffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:firstname.surname@csu.suffolkcc.gov.uk)

Shammi Jalota, Social Inclusion Manager, manages this team, based in the Social Inclusion and Diversity unit at Endeavour House. There have been a number of changes to the team recently, so here are some up-dates for your contacts book.



Shammi Jalota

Shammi says: "This is a really exciting and fast moving area. Mainstreaming the principles of social inclusion and community cohesion are important in order to ensure fair and accessible services for all."

Victoria Rudkin is the Racial Harassment Case Officer (covering maternity leave), working in the Racial Harassment Initiative (RHI). Her role is to support victims of racial harassment across Suffolk, particularly by co-ordinating responses from partner agencies to ensure that harassment stops. There's a freephone helpline number which people can use to report problems - 0800 138 1643.

Keren Wright is the Traveller Liaison Officer. She is responsible for improving community cohesion around Gypsy and Traveller issues, by representing both the settled and Travelling communities. Her work includes visiting unauthorised encampments, considering welfare needs and advising on appropriate action.

Allison Coleman is the Social Inclusion Co-ordinator. Her recent work has included preparing action plans for the New & Emerging Communities Forum and the Multi Agency Forum for Refugees and Asylum Seekers, and organising a "Question Time" event for refugees and asylum seekers to quiz political representatives.

Emily Bird is the team administrator, who ensures the RHI database is up to date and provides admin support for the four steering groups that the team is involved in.

[Back to top](#)

Your future Link On!

Link On! is currently produced as an e-newsletter so that we do not have design and print costs and save on postage. In addition, it's also more environmentally friendly.

However, we are interested in hearing your views to help plan future editions. So please feel free to give us your answers to the following questions, by emailing them to sue.burstall@csu.suffolkcc.gov.uk

1. Would you prefer an e-newsletter or a hard copy version?
2. Would you prefer to receive Link On! twice a year or four times a year?
3. Would you prefer a fully designed version of the newsletter, even if that would involve a cost to produce?
4. Do you have any ideas for articles that could be included in future editions?

[Back to top](#)