Neighbour Leigh

Leigh Neighbours Project news **November 2014**

The magical colours of Leigh!

The summer community arts and crafts project, *Our Art Neighbourhood*, saw parts of the town transformed into colourful murals of urban art and yarn bombing. Read more at ww.lnpb.org.uk Visit facebook/LeighNeighboursBigLocal or watch our film on You Tube!

inside In this issue, read about some of our local heroes here in Leigh and find out how to apply for a Resident's Fund grant.

Making a difference across the community

Leigh Neighbours is all about community… whether that's through empowering local residents to do their bit… supporting those who are already making a difference… creating new opportunities for people with ambition… or simply celebrating those local champions who go the extra mile without expecting anything in return.

A cut above the rest!

When it comes to doing his bit, **Mark Roberts** has proven he really is head and shoulders above the rest! The 45 year old regularly drops in at the community garden on Gordon Street to mow the grass and keep it tidy - never expecting anything in return for his efforts. So he was pretty chuffed when Board Members Susan Gredecki and Christine Farnworth recently presented him with £100 worth of gift vouchers in recognition of all he does in the community. *Thanks a bunch, Mark!*

Flying the flag with pride

316 (Leigh) Air Cadet Squadron recently had an application to the Leigh Neighbours Resident's Fund approved so they could replace the Squadron standards that were stolen over the summer. As well as agreeing to cover this cost, we also approved another bid for funds to pay for the MOT on their mini-bus, altogether amounting to a grant of £750. Flt Lt Glenn Williams said: "I'd like to thank Leigh Neighbours for their generosity. It's a fantastic gesture of support which means a great deal to the Squadron."

If you have an idea that could benefit the community and you'd like to apply for a Resident's Fund for a grant of up to £500, email us at: residentsfund@lnpb.org.uk

Meanwhile, from one kind of flag to another...

Aaron Block is certainly no stranger to flags, either… in fact, he's been involved in lifting and laying quite a few since he began his stint as an apprentice landscaper for the charity Groundwork in January - an opportunity made possible thanks to Leigh Neighbours which agreed to fund the post. And now, with the completion of his NVQ Level 1 in sight, the 17 year old is setting his cap on gaining his NVQ Level 2 - which the Board recently agreed to fund as well! "I'm absolutely thrilled that the Leigh Neighbours board has shown such faith in me," he says. "It's an incredible opportunity which is literally life changing!" Board member, John Gredecki, has watched Aaron's progress with great interest. He says: "When I met Aaron, I knew instinctively that he showed great potential. We've put our faith in him and invested in his future, and he hasn't let us down. This additional funding should help to set him up for life in a career he clearly loves."

Find out about other opportunities at Groundwork on our website: www.lnpb.org.uk

Green-fingered fun!

Budding gardeners from local schools recently took part in a free hanging basket workshop designed to brighten up the neighbourhood.

Pupils from St John's CE Infants School and Sacred Heart RC Primary joined residents at the community garden on Gordon Street to learn how to craft a winter hanging basket.

Christine Farnworth, local resident and member of Leigh Neighbours Board, hosted the event. She says: "Hanging baskets are an easy way to spruce up a neighbourhood and our workshops are always guaranteed to put a smile on everyone's faces. Young and old alike got stuck in and helped create colourful displays for both schools and the wider community.

"After the workshop, we used the remaining materials to create some spare baskets which we dotted around the area, leaving them hanging on any empty hooks we found in the neighbourhood. I hope residents take pleasure from this gesture and enjoy seeing the colourful displays bloom through the winter."

More workshops are being planned for Spring next year so watch this space!

Young people urged: *Have your say!*

Young people are being encouraged to get involved in their community, too! There are lots of ways that you can make a difference in your neighbourhood - and wider afield as well.

Did you know, young people in the borough recently…

… had a say on the look of the new facilities at **Howe Bridge Sports Centre** which is due to open next year following a £2.9m renovation? Visit www.wlct.org to read more.

… attended a **Robin Hood themed health event** to have their say about the health services they receive and to vote on the services of greatest importance to them? These are the services that got their vote:

- Brook Sexual Health Service
- Wigan's Family Welfare
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)

… took part in a consultation exercise for British Youth Council's ***Make Your Mark,*** a national ballot that lets 11-18 year olds cast a vote about 10 national issues? These issues will be debated in the House of Commons on 14th November by Members of Youth Parliament.

Here in Leigh, you too can get involved by coming to Kingsleigh Youth Centre every Tuesday, 4pm-6pm! See you there!

PCSO Gabrielle Fitsimons recently attended the Leigh Neighbours Partnership Board, representing the Leigh Integrated Neighbourhood Policing Team (INPT): She says:

"Residents have expressed concerns about drivers using excessive speed through the new access road at the junction of Grasmere Street and Prescott Street. Residents can report this by calling the Leigh Integrated Neighbourhood Policing Team's telephone number, **0161 856 7225** and leaving a message. The answering machine service is checked daily and all calls are responded to.

"There have also been incidents of anti-social behaviour in Library Square and Bengal Street car park. The area continues to be patrolled by PCSOs and further patrolled by INPT officers at peak times. In line with our zero tolerance policy towards anti-social behaviour, GMP now have new powers to help us tackle these kinds of problems, which adversely affect people's quality of life."

PCSO Fitzsmons also provided an update on recent partnership work: "We've had some success recently working with partners in evicting problematic tenants. Information from the community is a key part of this work. Should residents wish to raise any concerns they have about suspected drug use or criminal activity, they can contact us or call the Crimestoppers confidential reporting line on **0800 555 111**.

"And finally, we ask that residents remain vigilant, particularly in relation to people who call at your home, as there have been a number of incidents of bogus callers recently. We urge residents to ask for identification. If you're concerned, do not allow anybody entry to your home and call the local policing team." To get in touch, call: **0161 856 7225** or email **wiganeast@gmp.police.uk** For all non-emergencies, please call **101**.

The faces behind Leigh Neighbours Board...

Joyce Morris, Leigh Neighbours Board Member, has lived in Leigh for the past 45 years. She says:

"All too often, people just stand by and complain about what's wrong without ever trying to make things better. We've all got a role to play in improving the area we live in. And we should all try to do our bit. Even a few hours can make a difference. And the more that people get involved, the more others become inspired, too. I got involved in Leigh Neighbours because I'm passionate about the town and want to help create a place you can be proud of, a place where my grandchildren can thrive."

This newsletter is brought to you by Leigh Neighbours, a community project set up by Big Local, a National Lottery charity which is investing £1 million in your area over the next 10 years. Leigh Neighbours Project Board is working hard to deliver on the issues you told us were important to you, such as improvements in housing, training opportunities for young people, environmental projects and increased community sprit.

If you would like to find out more, email info@lnpb.org.uk, go to www.lnpb.org.uk or visit our facebook page /LeighNeighboursBigLocal

Leigh Neighbours PROJECT *in partnership with* Local Trust creating lasting change · citizens advice bureau · Wigan Council