



**YOUTH VOICES CONSULTATION**

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL  
LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD)**

**1 December 2005**

**KEY ISSUE:**

The report sets out the background to this consultation, carried out with young people in East Horsley and Bellfields. A DVD film from the consultation sessions will be shown during the meeting.

**SUMMARY:**

Young people from two communities in Guildford borough have participated in an innovative consultation exercise and have raised issues of health, safety and recreation in their respective areas.

**OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Local Committee is asked to:

- i) Consider and agree ways in which the Local Committee can take positive action to address the concerns of young people
- ii) Use some of the Committee's revenue allocation or other funding streams to fund construction of a pathway, lighting, youth shelter at Bellfields, and a shelter and improved lighting at East Horsley, following further consultation and investigation.
- iii) Refer issues of healthier lifestyles in East Horsley to Guildford and Waverley Primary Care Trust.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 In 2004 Guildford's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) identified the need for consultation with young people in order to inform ongoing work of various agencies in supporting young people. The LSP has as one of its 5 cross-cutting priorities the objective to 'enable all young people to have a voice, which will in turn influence the agenda in areas such as transport, safety and health.'
- 1.2 The Guildford Community Learning Partnership took the lead to present a range of consultation ideas and options to the LSP, which agreed one of the options and £500 from its small budget (for administrative and communications costs). SCC Local Committee in Guildford also contributed £500 on the proposal of Cllr Bill Barker.
- 1.3 Two groups of young people were identified from rural and urban parts of the borough. With more time and a larger budget, a wider sample of views might have been gathered, possibly through local schools. While the groups chosen were not particularly 'hard to reach', nevertheless the samples are considered reasonably typical of many young people living in Guildford borough.
- 1.4 It was understood that young people should be familiar and comfortable with the form of consultation that they are asked to participate in. Consultation was carried out using a 'Big Brother diary room' style of interview, with young people supported to play a strong part in conducting the interview behind the camera, as well as in front of it. Jellytree Productions Ltd provided technical support for the project. The DVD to be shown at the meeting contains brief edited highlights of those interviews.

**2. OUTCOMES**

- 2.1 12 young people from Bellfields and 15 young people from East Horsley took part in the consultation sessions.
- 2.2 As well as having the opportunity to express their views the young people gained experience of interviewing skills, and technical skills in operating audiovisual equipment.
- 2.3 Individuals from a range of agencies supported the young people in engaging in the exercise: Guildford Community Learning Partnership, SCC Youth Development Service, Surrey Police, Community Safety Neighbourhood Teams, Guildford Borough Council and Jellytree Productions Ltd.
- 2.4 The methodology, knowledge (e.g. of costs) and good practice employed in this consultation exercise can be shared with other agencies who are considering similar consultations.

**Bellfields**

- 2.5 Young people from this group would like a place of their own to meet safely in their neighbourhood, such as a youth shelter on the park

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bounded by Hazel Avenue and Oak Tree Drive. They currently have no option but to gather at bus stops and park benches, where they are often perceived to be causing trouble by local residents and the police.

- 2.6 They would also like a pathway across the park, with lighting so that they can walk or cycle safely across.
- 2.7 The young people have indicated they are willing to help fundraise for this sort of provision.

### East Horsley

- 2.8 Young people from this group would also like a youth shelter to congregate safely, in the areas away from residents' houses, but near the youth centre. They would also like to see improved lighting of the path near the youth centre. Some young people in the group would welcome information and advice about healthier lifestyles particularly around alcohol and smoking.

## 3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 The final version of the DVD will be shown to the LSP early in 2006, and the issues will also be considered by senior managers at GBC.
- 3.2 Healthier lifestyles: Guildford and Waverley Primary Care Trust's Health Promotion service may be able to provide information in the form of leaflets or advice to help young people make positive changes to their lifestyles.
- 3.3 Youth Shelters: further consultation with young people, residents, youth workers, Neighbourhood Teams and GBC would be required before a shelter could be introduced. Young people are interested in a new design of shelter which captures solar power during daylight hours to provide light after dark.
- 3.4 Lighting: Costs will vary depending on the style of lighting, the number of columns required and the electricity supply. Improved lighting around the Youth Club/Village Hall building at East Horsley would be considerably less costly than free-standing lighting columns with a new electricity supply (estimated at £1,000 per column).
- 3.5 Pathway across Bellfields park: Costs will depend on the width and length of the path, materials used and any landscaping. A basic path across the park may cost around £20,000.

## 4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The issues raised in this consultation are typical of needs expressed by young people and adults across the borough as highlighted in the recent Perception of Crime survey (carried out by the Safer Guildford Partnership for the Safer Guildford Strategy 2005-2008). Young people worry about becoming victims of crime, but their congregating can sometimes be

perceived as threatening by others.

- 4.2 The Local Democracy Week events in October this year took as their theme the promotion of local democracy to young people to encourage their participation in voting in elections and engaging in local decision-making in order to bring about change in local communities. It is hoped that this exercise of consultation, and the response of the Local Committee can reinforce this message.

**Report by:**

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