

**Item 11**

**Annual Report on Self-Reliance.**

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S LOCAL COMMITTEE IN  
SURREY HEATH**

**18<sup>th</sup> March 2004**

**KEY ISSUE:**

The progress of self reliance work and projects in two relatively high need wards in Surrey Heath.

**SUMMARY**

The Surrey County Council Self Reliance Policy invites Local Committees to identify the high need areas within each Borough, and to decide on whether to promote any activity to promote self reliance. The report describes the progress of ongoing work in St Michael's and Old Dean, and seeks the Committee's support for continued funding of these projects.

**OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the Surrey Heath Local Committee

1. discusses and notes the progress made
2. notes the funding implications for 04/05.

**INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND**

1. The County Council's corporate plan – "Making Surrey a better Place" includes a policy of promoting self – reliance for disadvantaged groups. Recent work by Surrey County Council using data from the Census 2001 shows wards in the County that have been identified as having high needs, and Old Dean is 3<sup>rd</sup> on this list.
2. Surrey County Council has five identified self-reliance projects in North Guildford, Preston, Sheerwater and Maybury, Court and Ruxley, and Leatherhead North. Local Committees have been asked to review the high need areas in their Borough and decide on whether to promote any self – reliance initiative locally.

## **ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY**

3. In Surrey Heath, two projects have been underway pre-dating the Self-Reliance work, in two wards, Old Dean and St Michaels.
4. **Old Dean:** An Old Dean Steering Group was established in January 2002 on a multi – agency basis, involving the Borough Council (Members and officers), the Police, Headteachers, Childrens’ Services, Early Years, Health, Probation, Peerless (Housing Association), the Youth Development Service, local Faith representatives and representatives of the Old Dean Residents’ Association. The need for the Group arose from two public meetings in January and October 2001 at which it was evident that was widespread concern about disorder, particularly by young people. This group was highly successful and supported many interventions in the area. The steering group no longer meets as projects have been supported in becoming independent. However, a network group of all providers in the area meets every six months to update each other on projects, look for areas to work jointly and for gaps in provision.
5. The Police have a dedicated Neighbourhood Specialist Officer and a Police Community Support Officer on the Old Dean. There remain concerns amongst residents about some of the problems in the area, but a greater confidence that these are being addressed.
6. In 2002 the idea of a community advice shop was investigated by the Steering Group. This project is now at an advanced stage. Planning permission has been granted by Surrey Heath Borough Council and the lease on the vacant shop unit is due to be signed soon. Funding of over £40,000 has been brought to this project to cover running and set up costs. This includes £27,000 from the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, £10,000 from the Surrey Heath Borough Council Community Fund and £5,000 from Members Pooled Allocations.
7. The project is managed by a Management Committee of three local church representatives, a Guildford Diocese representative, the Chair of the Residents Association plus other local representatives. A member of Surrey County Council’s Community Support Team attends to provide secretariat and project management support but is not a member of the Committee.
8. It is hoped that the Old Dean Advice Centre (ODAC) will provide learning opportunities, advice and support as well as act as a meeting place for local people. The services that could be operated from the centre have been discussed with leading partners, and are as follows:

**Police:** drop in centre for Neighbourhood policeman, and community support officer so that they are still better networked into the local community and accessible to residents at predetermined times of the week.

**Health:** venue for Health Visitor to work with Young Parents group, and others to receive advice on healthcare issues,

**Early Years and Childcare:** possible venue for Children’s Information Outreach worker, and, in time, as a venue for childcare, new venue for the Old Dean toy library,

**Housing Advice:** Could be a drop in advice centre for Peerless Housing Association to provide advice to tenants, and be available to answer questions,

**Community Capacity raising:** training support to the Residents Association from Adult Education in relation to essential skills.

**Debt Counselling/ Benefits entitlement/ Signposting to Legal Advice:** several service providers are interested in using the shop as an outlet, and there may be possibilities to access external funding through the Legal Services Commission.

9. It is hoped that once the ODAC is up and running a community worker could be employed to maximise the potential of the centre and to provide additional support to local people. A worker would also allow new projects to be taken forward including a community bank or credit union.
10. **St Michaels:** The St. Michael’s Project Group started in 1999 and the Community Flat opened in July 2000. The project was started because of concerns about the uptake of services, especially health and adult learning. The scheme was funded by the Borough Council, Peerless Housing Association and the County Council operating in partnership. Peerless provided a flat in Surrey Avenue so that a community base could be set up. In the first years there was considerable enthusiasm for services provided at The Flat, sessions provided included library and health visitor sessions. A Residents association was also set up and this took an active part in the running of the project.
11. Nikki Steer has been employed as the Community Development Worker at The Flat since March 2003. Members will remember that Nikki attended the Local Committee meeting in March to introduce herself.
12. The Flat currently has the following activities running:

Day	Activity	Attendance
Monday 7-9pm -	Young peoples drop-in session, Youth service lead for 11+ year olds	8 – 15 young people.
Tuesday 10am – 12 noon	Senior citizen’s computer course	Attended by 4 students aged between 60 and 90 years of age
Wednesday 1 – 2.30pm	SAS residents association meeting	Meets once a month – usually attended by 6-8 local residents
Wednesday 4-5pm –	Do it now! After school craft activity club for 5-11 years	Attended by 6-8 children

Thursday 11.00am – 1.00pm.	Computer course	Group of 4 studying for CLAIT qualification. Another 4 students have now moved on from the flat to Camberley adult education centre to do a more advanced course, having attended training at The Flat for 18 months.
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Other activities held at The Flat:

- During the 2 week St. Michaels Blitz, 14 young people helped litter pick on the estate, followed by a Halloween Party at The Flat.
- Three local residents were trained in First Aid by St. John Ambulance in October.
- Fire service and police visited the estate during October half term – approximately 30 children turned up to the event.

Activities that will be going on at The Flat over the next couple of months:

- Young parents group to be started on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March 10am to 12noon. (Supported by the Local Committee)
- Adult education taster sessions. Two for DIY sessions already booked, Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 7-9pm & Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February 10am – 12noon.
- Cookery demonstration concentrating on simple, healthy meals followed by lunch at The Flat eating the prepared food. Booked for March 5<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. Following success of these other sessions will take place.
- Literacy / English course – start date to be confirmed but there are a number of young parents interested, and a tutor organised.
- Youth group – this has been so successful that this initial pilot project is to continue, with the youth service hoping to start another evening in the spring

13. In November a two week St Michael's Blitz was held. The Police, Surrey County Council and Surrey Heath Borough Council along with partners carried out a coordinated "Street Care Blitz" on St Michaels Ward to improve the environment, reduce levels of crime and disorder and increase the community's sense of well being. Over a two period in October to November this was highly successful and has resulted in the formation of a panel of local people who meet with police monthly to discuss their priorities. This work will be rolled out across the Borough next year.

14. The costs of the St Michael's project for the fifth year (04 / 05) will be £18,000 funded by the three original sponsors, i.e. £6,000 each. £3,000 has been secured from the County Council's central Self-Reliance budget which leaves a remainder of £3,000 to be funded. In recent years this has been sourced from Members Allocations.

**CONSULTATION**

15. Both projects are run in a culture of consultation. There are regular consultations with the community in both St. Michael's and the Old Dean.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

16. £3,000 is required for the continuation of the St. Michael's project in 04 / 05. The ODAC requires £5,000 to cover its running costs each year. Funding has already been secured for the running costs of the ODAC in 04 / 05. Members may wish to consider funding these projects from the Members Allocations in 04 / 05.

### **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS**

17. Care will be taken in both areas to ensure that developments are sustainable by the local community and services involved.
18. Both the Old Dean and the St Michael's projects currently have action Plans for 04 / 05 at the final draft stage. These will be agreed with the local projects in the next few weeks.

### **CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

19. It is hoped that the broad approach to community development in both areas will have significant impacts on the crime and disorder concerns of local people.

### **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

20. All Self Reliance projects will be run with regard to equalities implications. The building being leased for the ODAC is fully accessible.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS:** None