

Listening to You



Batley, Birstall and Birkenshaw

Venue: Batley Salvation Army

Date: 29 November 2007

Attendance: 32

Facilitators: Rob Vincent and Janet Russell

Following suggestions from the last series of “Listening to You” events we invited front line workers from partner organisations including, Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing, Kirklees Active Leisure, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, West Yorkshire Police and Kirklees Primary Care Trust.

Key points from discussions

1. Young people and anti-social behaviour was highlighted as an issue, for example on the Wilton and Fieldhead Estates: young people set fire to rubbish in green wheelie bins, burning different materials to inhale. Look to good practice in other areas.
2. Language appears to be a barrier with a need for free English courses such as ESOL.
3. Community cohesion is needed to bring older and younger people together. Possibly offer incentives to encourage all age groups to become involved in projects and discuss issues in their area.
4. A tracker survey highlighted Fieldhead and Healey as some of the most deprived areas and communities who feel forgotten about, for example Soothill.
5. Better transport and road networks are needed to improve travel locally and outside the area, to minimise travel times and avoid queuing traffic which increase air pollution. To encourage a healthier approach to travel – especially more walking through school travel plans.
6. Shopkeepers sell alcohol to young people that they know. When reported to trading standards they send in young people for test purchases. As the shopkeepers don't know them they won't sell it and the problem is never resolved. Good practice pilot in Huddersfield.
7. There is a need for more quality office space in this locality to attract business into the area along with wealth from Leeds, Wakefield, Bradford and Manchester. There is already plenty of manufacturing space in this area and wages tend to be low. Young people's aspirations are low in this area -