

# Listening to You

## Huddersfield North

Venue: Deighton Centre

Date: 16 May 2008

Attendance: 35

Facilitator: Tony Hood



Front line workers from Kirklees Council services and partner organisations including Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing, Kirklees Active Leisure, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, West Yorkshire Police and Kirklees Primary Care Trust were invited to this series of “Listening to You” events.

### Key points from discussions

#### 1. Children and young people

A number of issues were highlighted around the lack of facilities for young people and around promoting the work that is going on in the area for them. There is a need to provide activities that interest young people as well as to break down barriers, for example the police put on shorts and play sport with them.

Money was seen to be a major issue both for funding activities as well as promoting ongoing work. It was also highlighted that young people get a lot of bad press and we need to promote the positives.

Highlighted it would be useful for services to know where and how to access funding and a possible solution would be recruiting someone to do this.

Housing for young people is also a problem. Young people are asked to leave home due to overcrowding. This can lead to mental health issues – where can they go when they can't go home? Young people also feel unsafe walking around the areas as they get followed.

### General comments

- Locality working will help to build personal relationships and trust. A ‘who’s who’ would help with this so that people know who to refer people to. It would be useful to have an e-communications wheel of up to date information.
- It was felt that although these events are useful they should be limited to two per year and money used for the priorities.

## 2. Elderly Isolation

It was suggested there is a lack of information about the facilities/social activities available for older people as well as a lack of transport.

We also need to look into people's attitudes and perceptions towards the services that are available.

It was mentioned there is also a lack of understanding from ethnic groups due to language barriers and a lack of funding/services to improve this. Available classes are in the evenings and people are afraid of leaving their homes to attend. However, it was felt that the statistics for 'fear of crime' was overstated.

### Actions

- Improve information for the elderly on current services available ie Gateway to care (also known as SSIPs)/Age Concern.
- Need a central point for elderly to contact for information, or GPs to refer to
- Develop a means of identifying an 'isolated person'
- Support groups financially to extend their services to more people
- Make a directory of services for the elderly and include all available facilities/activities

## 3. Domestic Violence

- DV Unit
- Preventative work
  - advertising (subtle)
  - police surgeries
  - bus stop adverts
  - police
  - homelessness unit
  - fire service

It was highlighted that most work done by other services is reactive:

- Police pass incidents to DV practitioner department
- Homelessness unit deal with cases as they come in.

Further support is needed through the wider distribution of information across services with frontline workers knowing how to report suspected incidents.

### Action

- Engage the community
- Go to DV Unit before it becomes a crisis

#### **4. Getting people into work**

The need for partnership working with Job Centre Plus was suggested to address myths about loss of benefits when people go into work. It was felt there are mixed messages about work, graduates, lower education and benefits. Limited resources mean work is reactive and dedicated to small groups. It was also highlighted there is a cycle of dependency (motivations and family aspirations, absence of learned behaviour and absence of interests).