

Bromley Safer Neighbourhoods Team Visits Scouts Hall

Bromley Town Safer Neighbourhoods team (Bromley borough) have been engaging with several youth groups across the ward in an attempt to find out what views young people have on the police and their community. PC Headley is working closely with local schools such as Ravensbourne Secondary School to establish a Youth Panel on the ward whereby young people can have their say about what happens in their community.

An example of this was at the beginning of February when PC Mark Headley of Bromley Safer Neighbourhoods team visited Bromley's 3rd Scouts Group based in Glanville Road and spoke to them regarding the laws surrounding and consequences of carrying knives on the streets with many of the procedures that followed explained, in a bid to deter young offenders. It gave the scouts a chance to meet their local officers and have any of their questions answered. Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) Dan White and Mark Simpson, also of the team, presented them with the opportunity to try on some Police Issue Body Armour along with a Police Radio and other equipment. PC Headley, of the same team, also demonstrated how suspects would be handcuffed and 'captured' with the aid of PCSO Dan White.

PC Mark Headley said, "The team really enjoys interacting with young people and attending youth meetings. Although the visits are fun there are usually important crime messages or advice to be conveyed to the young people."

Tulse Hill's Safer Neighbourhoods Team's Junior Citizen Programme Deemed A Success

A certificate presentation ceremony marked the end of a 10-week Junior Citizen programme created and carried out by Tulse Hill Safer Neighbourhoods team (Lambeth borough) as part of an important youth engagement and child development training.

Holy Trinity Primary School and Fenstanton Primary School both in SW2 took part in the programme that saw the Safer Neighbourhoods team visit 2 classes from each school every Monday. Classes comprised of 15-20 children aged 10 years.

Different topics were covered each week discussing issues ranging from illegal activities such as drugs and knife crime to what the police do and their procedures such as stop and search. Important advice was also given on being streetwise and how to be a good citizen. The sessions consisted of a quiz followed by group discussions.

PC Ogun-Young of Tulse Hill Safer Neighbourhoods team said, "The Junior Citizenship has proved to be a fantastic opportunity to work with local youngsters in a positive capacity. Whilst the programme was able to educate the young people about their rights, it also taught young people about their duties as young citizens."

Sergeant Michael Meekums, also of the team, proudly handed out the certificates on the day and said, "I would like to thank the teachers and my staff for their efforts. Above all I thank the children for their enthusiasm and keenness in making this worthwhile project happen."

Brent Borough Involved with Youth Crime Prevention

At the end of March in the Advait Centre, Wembley, four groups of young people pitched innovative ideas on how to prevent youth crime to Brent's very own Dragons. Inspired by the hit BBC series, Dragon's Den, the teams presented their ideas before a panel of judges who decided that a team of students from Willesden's Capital City Academy deserved the £6,000 investment to make their concept a reality.

Damion Stewart, Justyn Page-Allen and Jordan Kurankyi made up the team for Ride 4 Life and the winning concept was to set up a local community cycling project. Inspector Neil Anderson, who heads up Brent's Safer Neighbourhoods teams, thought of the idea and said, "I meet lots of young people who have some great ideas about how to stop young people engaging in crime. I thought by using the Dragon's Den format we could give young people the opportunity to pitch their proposals and roll them out for real.

"In particular we were looking for initiatives which will help promote positive images of young people or projects that will improve the local environment and make residents feel safer. I was really inspired on paper by the applications we received and was even more impressed when their ideas were brought to life in their presentations. The ideas from the all entrants were fantastic and I know the judges had a tough time picking the winner. Congratulations to Ride 4 Life."

Brownies Learn about Safer Neighbourhoods at Bexley Police Station

Thirty brownies visited their local police station to learn about Safer Neighbourhoods policing.

At the beginning of April the youngsters from the 6th Barnehurst Brownie Pack were welcomed to Bexleyheath police station by officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) from Bexley's Barnehurst Safer Neighbourhoods team.

They were given a tour of the police station that included a visit to the cells. Officers were on hand to demonstrate how fingerprints are taken. In the station yard they were shown the different types of police vehicles, police safety equipment such as riot shields, helmets and Met vests and were allowed to try on items of police uniform.

PCSO Cathy Nolan of the team who organised the visit said, "It is important for us to build positive relationships with young people. The visit enabled the brownies to meet their local policing team, to get an insight into police life and learn something

about what we do on a daily basis. After the visit three of the brownies said they would like to become police officers when they grow up.”

Hanworth Safer Neighbourhoods Team Hold Youth Event

During the Easter half-term Hanworth Park Safer Neighbourhoods team (Hounslow Borough) ran "Easter Contender Am Box" for local children at Feltham Community College. The event saw 14 youngsters being put through their paces over three days in April by the teams qualified Amateur Boxing Association coaches. With the assistance of funding from the Extended Schools project each child received a Police Community Clubs of Great Britain t-shirt and was also given a certificate of attendance.

Sergeant Darren Weston of the team said, "The event was enjoyed by the children and coaches alike and follows on from an earlier successful diversionary boxing scheme that we ran at the beginning of the year for 25 children. The boxing scheme has been a real success and has taken off and led to a new Friday nightclub being established by us for local children in Feltham."

Sutton Safer Neighbourhoods Team Start after School Club

Youngsters in Year 5 at Avenue Primary School, Belmont, got an insight into police work from officers within the local Belmont Safer Neighbourhoods team (Sutton borough), who started an after school club called the 'Avenue Police Academy'.

During the first two sessions, the 9-10 year-old boys and girls made warrant cards, heard about the history of the police, identified badges of rank, saw the police uniform close up and learned the phonetic alphabet such as, "b" for bravo.

PC John Carpenter and Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) Jen Stockwell managed the Academy for the whole of the summer term. PC Carpenter, of Belmont Safer Neighbourhoods team, said, "It was a chance for the youngsters to have some fun with us and to learn about what police officers do. We really enjoyed doing it."

The idea for the club came from Lisa Prietley, the Assistant Head Teacher at Avenue Primary School. She commented, "We are so pleased to be working closely with Belmont Safer Neighbourhoods team. The Avenue Academy is a really exciting project giving our children a great opportunity to find out about the police and to develop this valuable community link."

Ealing Safer Neighbourhoods Team in Partnership with High School

In early May, on the ground of Northolt High School, officers from Northolt Mandeville Safer Neighbourhoods team (Ealing borough) kicked off a new community project in partnership with Kickz and Youth Connections.

Around 40 youngsters from a local area attended the opening session. The launch of the project was also attended by a number of local councillors and MP Steve Pound.

The project ran every Saturday between 10:00am and 1:00pm for 10 weeks and included a variety of workshops. Safer Neighbourhoods team officers gave a number of talks about personal safety and knife crime.

Sergeant Andy Copping said, "I am grateful that we have the Kickz project on Northolt Mandeville and for all the work that the staff do. Lots of boys attended the Football League and they all played their matches in the right spirit. We will continue to support this event and will take the opportunity to discuss issues such as personal safety and knife crime with them."

Newham Borough Promotes School Children Safety in their Neighbourhood

Towards the end of June, 32 pupils from Colegrave Primary School placed posters in the windows of local businesses to communicate their ideas on how they want their local community to behave.

PC Paul Ross from Stratford Safer Neighbourhoods team (Newham borough), who assisted the children in designing the posters, has been working with the school for a year and in that time his work has included, establishing lunch time surgeries for pupils, conducting assembly talks covering a wide range of subjects, such as bullying and Halloween, and held a stall at a parents evening as well as late gates, to engage with the parents and guardians.

In addition to this he has carried out an environmental audit of the area around the school after pupils identified that they did not feel safe going to and from the school.

PC Paul Ross said, "As a result of these interactions we have forged a very good relationship with the pupils and often get approached outside of school time. The school's work with the Safer Neighbourhoods team has also been recognized and commended by the LBN'S Shining through Award scheme.

"I feel this interaction at primary school age is very important to promote a positive image of the police at a key developmental stage in the children's lives."

The Head Teacher, Christine Alexander, added, "The children of Colegrave Primary school have benefited enormously from the partnership between the school and the Stratford Safer Neighbourhoods team. It is an excellent example of multi-agency working which directly benefits young people. The work on looking at safety in their neighbourhood has resulted in the posters and has enabled our children to feel they have a real 'Voice' in their community."

Police Mentor Group on Fishing Trip

A group of young people from Lewisham's Somalian community have been taught fishing skills as part of the first event in a new police-funded scheme.

Lewisham Police teamed up with volunteer organisation, Angling Projects, and local group, Somali & Somaliland Lewisham Community, to give seven young men the opportunity to get involved in a positive activity.

The group was mentored by four Lewisham police officers who are keen anglers during a three-day period in August during the first of many trips to the Berkshire based education fishery.

Angling Projects is part of a number of initiatives started by Lewisham Police to work with the community and ensure all the young people in the borough have alternatives to getting involved in crime, anti-social behaviour, or joining gangs.

The new Angling Projects scheme takes young people from different communities and encourages them to mix with other groups, and the police, while learning an activity they may not have easy access to usually.

Rather than solely focusing on young people who have been in trouble with the police before, this project is open to all 13-20 year-olds in Lewisham, and intends to mix groups of young people from different backgrounds on trips in the future.

Inspector Andy Laurie, of Lewisham borough who organised the event, said, "This is the start of a very worthwhile project. On this occasion we improved our relationship with young people from the Somalian community, and we fully intend to progress further by linking different communities together through fishing.

"It will improve relationships between young people and the police. This is one of many projects on a range of subjects including art and sports, which aim to bring individual community groups together through their young people so they can interact with each other more."

Les Webber, MBE, who has been running free schemes like this at his fishery for over 30 years, said, "This is a fantastic event, which I am really pleased to be working on with the police. It is great to talk on a one to one basis with young people while giving them an education on the outdoors, and over the years I have seen it does work for kids from all walks of life."