



Communities First Report Sketty Park – May 2011

The Communities First Partnership for Sketty Park continues to develop with strong input from the community members, groups, organisations and service providers. We now have an elected chair person for the partnership and have begun partnership training specifically for Sketty Park in order to ensure its sustainability with special regard to the uncertainty around the Government's plans regarding Communities First.

There is a need to focus on training for individuals within the partnership, which will enable their continued involvement and support of local groups. After the March meeting, we will be able to book up a visit with another partnership. This visit is overdue but will fit well within the planned work around structuring the partnership.

The Communities First programme's current funding ends in March 2012. It is likely to be late 2011 before we know the government's plans for the continuation of this programme. As we gain a better understanding of these plans, we will look at how we can continue to influence the local authority's work within Sketty Park, as a partnership.

Our Work Programme for 2011/12 has been received by the Welsh Assembly Government. Our Work Programme for 2011/12 was defined at the last partnership meeting and has now been sent to the Welsh Assembly Government. They have not contacted us so far to confirm their acceptance of this plan. We will update you at the next partnership meeting. Much of the work within this plan relates to progression from last year. Some new elements include an increased focus on involving children and young people, and BME minority groups within our partnership work and developing the IT Collaboration initiative. We are also looking to develop the SkettyPark.org newsletter and website with much of them actually put together by the community. This will involve training which will be provided.

AREA OF WORK: Jobs, Business and Income Generation

The IT Collaboration bid has been successful and the project will now be called Sketty Park Online. The total project will cost £54,000 but a lot of this is accounted for with the contribution of the project partners. The actual fund granted is for £37,000 and Coastal Housing are the grant recipient body for this bid. They will work with Communities First and the other partners such as the Community Centre, Hazel Court, both local schools, Sketty Library, Lifelong Learning and Age Concern, with the support of Communities 2.0. Following a collaborative recruitment process an IT Tutor Kevin Hedges has been appointed. He will begin working at the beginning of July. Over the next couple of months there are to be three community events to provide taster sessions of information technology and assess the needs of the community in terms of what they'd like to learn. A timetable of classes will be drawn up in addition to drop-in tutor supported sessions at locations across the community.

The IT Collaboration bid has now been submitted. We should hear from Communities 2.0 on our success in this bid, sometime in May. If successful, there will be a significant amount of training and support available within the area for people wishing to learn, using IT, and access computers locally.

LASA Credit Union attended our I Love Sketty Park event and said they had a very positive response from local people about them coming to Sketty Park. We have had one volunteer to support us in making a local information and pay-in point.

LASA Credit Union will continue attend local events and are looking for volunteers who would like to help in setting up a local information and pay-in point. Please contact us on 284740 to offer support for this, or to find out about opening a savings or a loan account.

LASA and the Citizen's Advice Bureau have both spoken to us about possibilities of supporting local people with money management training and debt advice. This may be a sensitive area but is well worth pursuing as a local option.

AREA OF WORK: Education and Training

In addition to the IT Collaboration bid mentioned above, Parkland School continues to deliver IT training. This training's continuation does depend

in part on the success of the IT Collaboration bid. Currently demand is increasing for IT learning and they may have to run a second course in the short term, to keep up with this demand.

Workshops took place in support of the 'I Love Sketty Park' event and were well attended with a total of 64 people benefitting from the workshops.

Following on from this, we are organising an introductory session in 'Community Journalism' for anybody interested in contributing to newsletters, websites, local history and digital storytelling. Further details will become available shortly; if you are interested let us know.

Communities First Trust Fund (CFTF)

Over £10k has been applied for in Sketty Park, taking us beyond our limit of funds available to our area. This should not be a problem as there is usually underspend when all areas have been combined. The panel for any outstanding bids will be meeting on the 8th of March, after which we will have a better understanding of the spend.

AREA OF WORK: Community Safety & Community Cohesion

The Sketty Park Community Safety Workshop took place and was attended by 45 people in total – 28 workers and 17 residents. The workshop saw people putting together maps of their local community, highlighting areas of concern. It was encouraging to hear the positive feedback from local people, regarding community safety within the area. The information from this meeting will be collated and a report will come from the Community Regeneration Unit of the local authority. Once we have this, we will pass on to the partnership.

'I Love Sketty Park' proved to be an amazing event with nearly 1,500 people attending. The event saw many local organisations and cultures mixing to demonstrate how strong a community Sketty Park is. A separate report is being produced which will be made available to the partnership shortly. The 'I Love Sketty Park' committee is already looking to the future, and next meeting in April to make plans for further activities. The committee will need help for future events and is looking to gain more members. Please consider joining them.

AREA OF WORK: Children and Young People

The Youth Workers for Sketty Park have worked tirelessly to ensure an excellent provision is developing in the area. The Thursday evening youth drop-in is going really well with around 20 young people attending each work. The group now has an Xbox, TV and pool table available for use by the young people. If the IT Collaboration bid is awarded, we will also see them learning about safe use of the Internet, as well as getting support with their homework and studies.

Unfortunately, the requests made to the Welsh Assembly Government to transfer some of our underspend into feasibility training was turned down. This training would have enabled us to develop a local group to carry out feasibility studies on potential youth facilities and a playground. We will now look back at the options available to see if we can organise and fund a similar piece of work.

In February, we had our second Youth Workers Network meeting, which was well attended with encouraging ideas coming forward for working together. Long term, this will enable us to see more consistent provision in the area

AREA OF WORK: Older Persons

Our Older Person Forum will be launched on Wednesday the 30th of March at 3pm, in the Community Centre. The full details of this event are yet to be confirmed, but we will likely see ballroom dancing, a choir and light refreshments as a part of the event. We will have a chance to look at what is going on in the community for older people, during this event, and talk about the extra activities we want to see taking place.

AREA OF WORK: The Environment

The 1st of a number of Safer Routes events took place in February with a lot of information gathered from local people. We will next send out a questionnaire to at least 10% of the community to get a picture of travel habits – ie how people get about. Once done, we will look at running some additional focus groups to map out further, the concerns of local people regarding safe access to local amenities. We will also compile a

list of suggestions for improvement, which will help build a case for our future bid to the Welsh Assembly Government for funding.

The Environment Group within Sketty Park will have its launch on the 21st of March at 4.30pm, meeting at the Community Centre. The first meeting will involve us looking at an area beside Clyne Court for development, followed by a short planning meeting. Please contact us on 284740 for more details.

The 31st of March is the last date for the Local Development Plan candidate site submissions. An information session will take place on the 23rd of March; time and venue to be confirmed. Please call us to register your interest and for more details. The Local Development Plan relates to designated use of land and any proposed changes.

Financial

The following details a summary of our main operational budgets for the year. For further details, or to discuss this with us, call in to our office at 134 Clyne Court where we will very happy to go through full details

Training - £5,332.09 spend to date.

There will be £2-3k underspend on this budget with some of this absorbed by partnership visits.

Premises - £13,023.37 spend to date.

There will be a saving of approximately £20k by the end of this financial year, after £3.5k has been vired into Community Events, mainly to support the Community Cohesion: I love Sketty Park programme.

Community Events - £4,056.00 spend to date.

An overspend on this budget will result by the end of the financial year, with approximately £3.5k vired from Premises.

Consultation & Communications - £3,723.00

This spending is to budget.

Translation Costs - £494.65 spend to date.

This spending is to budget.

Jason Williams
Communities First Coordinator for Sketty Park



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