

COMMUNITY PROTECTION NEWS

Information Bulletin from the Community Protection Department

Issue No. 40: July 2005

Departmental Matters

Service Plan 2005/06

The department's new service plan has now been published and distributed. It includes a full breakdown of targets and challenges for the year ahead and an honest assessment of last year's performance and achievements.

2004/05 performance was pretty good with virtually all targets achieved and some significant successes in crime reduction and business inspections.

Customer care results were outstanding with overall satisfaction rates at 91% and 92% of customer care problems resolved. The retention of the prestigious Charter Mark Award was the icing on the cake.

Good progress has been made in the ongoing development of what is still a very 'young' department (formed in April 2004). Most staff now seem to know 'what we are all about' and developing the formal and informal networks that help to get the job done.

Note: A copy of the service plan has been sent to all councillors and departments

and is available in local libraries as well as our website.

(Contact: Bob Saunders -  2094)

Environmental Health and Trading Standards

Fly-tippers beware

After plans for a fly-tipping enforcement squad were first announced a few weeks ago the Council's new staff are now in place and are already making an impact. They are equipped with state-of-the-art video surveillance equipment and will come down hard on fly-tippers. Initially the team will concentrate on areas identified as fly-tipping hot-spots.

The Council's stance supports the government's new drive to combat fly-tipping after research showed that, on average, a fly-tipping incident occurs every 35 seconds in the UK. Recent changes in legislation have upped the penalties for dumping waste. Now anyone caught fly-tipping can be arrested and, on conviction, be subjected to a maximum £50,000 fine or five years imprisonment.

Incidents of fly-tipping on open land or in back alleys can be reported to the Streetcare Helpline (01942-404364). Problems caused by rubbish left at houses or commercial premises can be reported to the Public Health teams at Wigan (01942-827110) or Leigh (01942-733349).

(Contact: Dave Bithell -  6823)

Smoke Free

Gallimore's restaurant in the Wiend opened its doors for the first time on 28th June and joined a small but growing band of totally smoke free food premises in Wigan. Many towns and cities around the world now require people not to smoke in enclosed spaces which means that all workers including bar and restaurant staff can work in a smoke free atmosphere.

Whilst many places now provide non-smoking areas, few have banned smoking completely but with local authorities across the north west, including Wigan, looking at the possibility of going smoke free, restauranteurs are already taking matters into their own hands and giving diners the choice of a totally smoke free venue.

(Contact: Tony Dickinson -  3189)

Noise Action Week (23 – 27 April 2005)


Officers from Community Protection took part in this year's noise action week organised by the National Society for Clean Air and Environmental Protection (NSCA). The aim of the week is to provide an opportunity to inform noise sufferers of the services available to help them. This year each of the Greater Manchester Authorities focused upon the problems caused by burglar alarms.



To mark the event adverts were aired on Wish FM, leaflets were handed out to members of the public and posters were displayed around the borough. Five officers also took part in a promotional day held at Asda, Wigan, which involved an information stand with promotional items and a mascot. The stand provided members of the public with an opportunity to talk and ask questions about noise services. There were also opportunities on the day to make a complaint and register their alarm details (keyholder information).

Children were also encouraged to take part in the activities with a colouring competition handed out by the noise action day mascot. Prizes for the competition included a wet and wild slide and books and were awarded to three winners.



(Contact: Dave Young -  2068)

It's Golborne Again! "Young Consumer of the Year" Award

Golborne High School are Wigan winners for the second year running!

The talented team won the competition, which is open to all Wigan Secondary Schools, and earned themselves a place



at the regional finals of the "Young Consumer of the Year".



Mathew Walker, Mark Parrington, Adam Freeman and Kelly Birch came up against fierce opposition at the Trafford Centre's prestigious Orient restaurant on Thursday, 21st April 2005, when a team from Trafford took first place.


The knock out style quiz is aimed at developing team building skills and helping young people become skilled and informed consumers.

Teams are tested on a wide range of issues, including food and health, safety and the environment, travel, money and finance.

Chief Trading Standards Officer, Alan Blundell, says: "The Golborne team have done really well to represent Wigan at the regional event. The value of the competition itself is that it makes young people aware of their rights and responsibilities as consumers. It gives them essential life skills as they prepare for life after school".

The team each got a £25 gift voucher, and received certificates for themselves and the school.

The national final will be held during the Trading Standards annual conference in Brighton with a top prize of £1,000 to the winning school, and the coveted "Young Consumers of the Year" trophy.

(Contact: Alan Blundell -  3183)

Fingers Crossed - Folding Chairs are Safe ...

Trading Standards have recently been visiting garden centres and DIY stores across the Borough looking at the safety of folding wooden garden chairs that are on sale.

This work was carried out as part of a survey conducted throughout Greater Manchester following an accident where a person lost the tip of one of their fingers.



The problem arises due to the way in which the chairs fold up and can occur if someone moves the chair whilst still partially seated on them. The problem is due to the folding mechanism of the some chairs which creates a scissor type action.

Faulty chairs were found in a number of outlets and have been removed from sale.

Modified chairs have a locking mechanism which prevents a person from accidentally putting their fingers into the folding mechanism.

If you have recently purchased a chair similar to the one in the photograph, have a look to see if it is one which has been modified and has a safety lock, this often takes the form of a button which has to be depressed to allow the chair to be folded away.

If you have any doubts as to the whether or not the chair has been modified, please contact Trading Standards.

(Contact: Alan Blundell -  3183)

Urban Renewal

A Bond Move

For many people, a significant barrier to accessing the private rented sector is the rental deposit that most private landlords require. This is charged to protect landlords against potential financial loss through damage or rent arrears. It can mean that those who are homeless, unemployed or on low incomes are unable to access private rented accommodation because they cannot afford the deposit, often the sum of a month's rent.

In order to enhance the accessibility of private rented housing in the Borough, Wigan Council have provided funding to establish a bond scheme. The scheme will be administered by the Citizens Advice Bureau for Wigan Homelessness Forum and managed by the Independent Housing Advice Development Worker. An officer, Louise Atherton, has been recruited in a dual role to jointly administer the scheme and improve housing literacy in the Borough.



Her role will be to liaise with private landlords and applicants looking to access private rented accommodation. She will also carry out housing literacy work to those most at risk of homelessness. This will involve targeting those groups and carrying out sessions in, for example, schools and prisons, with the aim of preventing homelessness.

Through the scheme, a bond will be offered to private landlords in the form of a written guarantee. This will mean that any money owed from the bond to landlords at the end of the tenancy will be paid. The scheme intends to enter into partnership with a credit union to encourage and promote a savings element and enhance social inclusion. A criterion for acceptance onto the scheme is that a tenant will open a credit union account and make regular payments. Any savings made will be held against the bond until the end of the tenancy. If no claim is made against the bond, savings will be made available to the tenant.

It is envisaged that the Bond Guarantee Scheme will be operational in the next few months. If you would like to know more about the scheme, are interested in taking part, or keen to provide additional funding, please contact Michelle Feeney on 01942 486789 or e-mail - m.feeney@wiganmbc.gov.uk

(Contact: Michelle Feeney -  86789)

Community Safety

Wigan Careline Service

Wigan Careline Service provides a social dispersed alarm system for people considered to be at risk, this could be a person who is sick, disabled or infirm but wishes to remain at home. They could be



prone to falls or illness and would require emergency assistance at any time of day or night also people at risk from intimidation or verbal abuse could use this service as a life line.

Applications for the provision of this service can be acquired through the Social Services Department, Housing Department or as a Private Client through Security Section.

Careline is monitored in office hours by a dedicated team of well-trained experienced operators and all enquiries are dealt with in a confidential and professional manner at all times.

Out of normal working hours the Alarm Receiving Centre staff, take over the monitoring duties for the Careline service any enquiries or repairs are completed as required.

Careline offers a range of communications equipment to meet the needs of the forever-increasing client base, technical equipment available: -


Messenger telephone unit:

This type of unit is the same as a standard telephone but with an added bonus of a pendant which allows freedom of movement in and around the home but could still activate the unit in the event of an emergency and a second emergency button on the unit to be used if the client is close to the unit

Horizon or Plinth type unit:

The Horizon or plinth type unit allows the client to still use their own telephone but with the added bonus of an emergency calling facility if required to summon help as required much in the same way as the Messenger unit.

**For more details or a free information pack please telephone: -
The Wigan Careline Service on 01942
827650**

(Contact: Michell Woodburn -  2450)

