

Facts and figures

Figures for July show that 350 Community Payback projects operated each week during the month. The total number of hours worked was nearly 52,000 which represents 52% of all unpaid work. Based on the minimum wage this means there was nearly £300,000 of additional work done to help make London cleaner, safer and greener. Seven units achieved the target of 40% with Romford leading the way at 78%. This is another excellent months work by all those involved.

London Peace Award for Hounslow Project

Having picked up a Capital Clean-up award in June, the Worton Road Estate, project in Isleworth received further recognition at the London Peace Awards ceremony on 18 September. The event at the Royal Garden Hotel, Kensington was attended by Jacqui Smith, Home Secretary, and Sir Ian Blair, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. Sir Ian presented the Commissioner's Community Safety Peace Award to; Councillor Geraldine Hibbs Mayor of Hounslow, Councillor Shirley Fisher Deputy Mayor, Councillor Paul Fisher, Kim Dobson Worton Road Youth Centre, Mike James and Phil Beale Safer Neighbourhood Police Officers and Bridget Klempner Placement Manager/Supervisor London Probation. The project started when local young people, involved in Duke of Edinburgh Awards, identified a number of areas on estate which needed cleaning up. They worked alongside Community Payback work groups removing graffiti, fly tipped rubbish and cutting

back overgrown bushes. This work has helped to improve the estate and make it safer for residents. Besides the young people from the estate and the Community Payback work group involved, the project would not have been possible without significant contributions and support from the following; Councillor Paul Fisher, Mike James, Phil Beale, Kim Dobson and Bridget Klempner. The award is fully justified, for a good example of partnership work and community involvement. Congratulations to all involved.



(London Peace Awards)

Islington Runner-up at National Award Ceremony

The APSE (Association of Public Service) Awards Ceremony took place on 11 September at Nottingham Arena. Islington's Community Payback was among seven finalists for the Best Community and Neighbourhood Initiative. I know those involved were disappointed at not getting top place but being runner-up for a prestigious national award is a considerable achievement. Since Community Payback started in Islington in 2006, local authority staff have made a significant contribution along with those from London Probation and Safer

Neighbourhoods. This has been recognised by two successful charter mark assessments which marked Islington Community Payback as examples of Best Practice. In June the scheme received the Best Borough Award for the 2008 Capital Clean-up campaign. A good example of Community Payback work carried out in Islington was the Mayor's Project in 2007. This focused on children's playgrounds and during the Mayor's term of office 14 were refurbished. I would like to congratulate and thank Janice Grant, Community Payback Project Officer Islington Council and Kevin Sutton, Placement Manager Lansdowne Road UPW for all the work they have put in to make the scheme a success.

Employment Opportunities in Hammersmith and Fulham

Offenders working on Community Payback projects in Hammersmith and Fulham are being offered the chance to learn skills which might lead to employment in park maintenance work. Working in Partnership with Quadron Services Ltd, who are contractors for the council, London Probation's High Path UPW unit have set up a number of Community Payback work groups. These offer offenders the chance to learn new skills and be considered for employment with Quadron Services Ltd when vacancies arise. The scheme started in July and two offenders have started work and three more are being considered for vacancies. Ben Binnell, Senior Contract Manager for Quadron Services Ltd, had this to say about the scheme: "Quadron are very pleased to be working closely with the Probation Services in a number of the Parks in the Borough for example Bishops and Hammersmith Park. The Probation Services team members work closely with our staff in the Parks in order to improve standards. A typical example of work carried out include rose pruning and path edging. The partnership works well because the teams are enthusiastic and willing to put in hard work. In fact the scheme has worked so well that we will be increasing the number of teams that we use. Quadron have also offered work to two of the

members from one of the groups and they have contributed significantly to our team in Hammersmith and Fulham. I'm sure that should progress continue at its current rate then more members from the Probation team will be offered work with us. I am confident that our partnership will continue to develop over the term of the contract." Chris Powell, LP Placement Manager and Rahamatt Lewis, LP Employment Development Officer have worked closely with me, Quadron Services Ltd and the offenders to ensure that those taking up employment have the right skills and support to make the most of this exciting initiative.

Partnership Conference

On 18 September, the second annual Partnership Conference took place at the Oval Cricket Ground. The event was organised by London Probation, Safer Neighbourhoods and TfL. It was attended by about 200 delegates, 50 of which were from UPW units. The main theme of the conference was safer school routes and presentations were given by partners about the work they have done to make travel to schools safer. Among the presentations were two by UPW staff, the first of which was given by Bridget Klempner, Placement Manager Southall UPW, who was accompanied by Richard Lee, formerly of Hounslow Council. It featured work done to improve the route to Edward Pauling School, Hounslow. It involved Community Payback groups working with Network Rail staff to clear fly tipped rubbish, overgrown bushes and graffiti from alongside a railway line and footpath which is a popular route to the school. The path was attracting anti-social behaviour, drug use and dealing, illegal motor cycle riding and arson. Nick Varns, Feltham West Safer Neighbourhood Sergeant, said this about the work; "since the work has been completed here, the area is easier to navigate and has a far safer feel to it. There has been a drop in reported crime with drugs no longer an issue." A DVD was shown which demonstrated the scale of the problem and the work which had taken place.



(Ray Peverill speaking at the TfL Conference)

The second presentation was given by Ray Peverill, Placement Manager Harrow UPW, and John Burnett, Sergeant Safer Neighbourhoods. They explained about the work which had been carried out on the "Belmont Flyer Safer School Route" which is close to Elmgrove School, Harrow. This project came about following the rape of a 51 year old female in Kenton Park and parents complaining about feeling unsafe when walking their children to school, because of the speed of vehicles in a nearby road. One solution was to clear the "Belmont Flyer" an old railway track which would offer an alternative route to schools and the leisure centre. The track which was overgrown was the haunt of graffiti artists and burglars. Community Payback groups cut back overgrown bushes and cleaned up the graffiti to provide a safe route for parents, children and commuters. The track also has a nature trail which local children can now enjoy. Certificates were presented to partners involved in projects at Edward Pauling, Elmgrove, Coombe Girls and Shene Schools for outstanding work on safer school routes.



(Edward Pauling School Project - before)



(Edward Pauling School Project - after)

Goldsmith Nature Reserve, Southwark

This project is another example of one of the many Capital Clean-up projects which took place this year. The nature reserve had become the haunt of homeless people and offenders, who used overgrown trees and bushes for cover to attack their victims. During the 100 day clean-up, the trees and bushes were cut back, rubbish was removed to leave the area clean, tidy and safe for local people to use. These include children from a nursery which is adjacent to the reserve. This is yet another example how agencies working together can make a big difference within their communities. Partners involved in this were London Probation, Southwark Street Wardens, Southwark Council and Safer Neighbourhood Police.

Clean-up Westcombe Park Station Greenwich

A 100 metre wall at Westcombe Park station was covered in unsightly graffiti, until Community Payback work groups set about removing it during this year's 100 day Capital Clean-up campaign. It involved partnership work between London Probation, Greenwich Council, Cleansweep, Network Rail and Blackheath and Westcombe Park Safer Neighbourhood Team and was one of 80 projects which took place in the borough during

the campaign. The work has helped to improve the appearance of the station for those who use it and live nearby. Peter Reeves, Network Rail Maintenance Protection Coordinator said: "We do have particular problems with graffiti and fly tipping at this station and we will do whatever we can to improve the look of any station. This exercise shows what can be achieved if everybody presents a united front." Councillor Maureen O'Mara, the council's cabinet member for neighbourhood services, said; "This is excellent partnership work. I'm sure that local residents and the users of Westcombe Park station will be very pleased with the results of this clean-up." Well done to all the staff and offenders from Beckenham UPW unit for the part they played in this project.

Telephone Kiosks Cleaned in Kensington & Chelsea

The Community Payback partnership in Kensington and Chelsea has been tackling vandalism by cleaning up BT payphones, bus shelters and street furniture in the borough. Vandalism costs councils and BT large sums of money each year and the Community Payback partnership is an effective way of addressing the problem and restoring facilities so that they are fit to use. Jerry Shelton, BT retail's customer Service and Business Support Manager, said: "We're very happy to support an initiative where individuals who have been caught and convicted of acts of criminal damage are now required to clean up similar acts of vandalism. Hopefully it will make them think twice about reoffending."

Barnet Resident Praises Community Payback

I recently spoke to a resident of Luther Close, Edgware who told me how impressed she was by the work carried out by Community Payback groups in an alley close to her home. She told me that people could not get to their garages, which were also covered in graffiti, because of

rubbish that had been dumped in the alley. She had this to say about the work "I could not believe that offenders would do such dirty work and work so hard. The work has made a difference. I would like to thank them all and the supervisor for all his hard work and professionalism." Well done Hocine Dib, supervisor at Lansdowne Road UPW and his team of workers for doing a good job.

Thank You from Hillingdon Church

Eastcote Methodist Church magazine recently printed a message of thanks to Don Rueben, supervisor at Harrow UPW, and his Community Payback work group. Don and his team have been busy working in the church and grounds. This has included tidying the garden, marking the car park and painting the vestibule. The message acknowledged that many improvements have been made by Don and his team and what a difference they have made.

I would appreciate any suggestions for forthcoming issues. Please email me with any interesting news items you have about Community Payback and work you are doing with black and minority ethnic communities.

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