



"This is Swindon" July 2008

Welcome to the July edition of "This is Swindon".

June was a very busy month for the Swindon Strategic Partnership, with a successful Conference held on the 12th June at the Oakfield Campus. Over 120 delegates attended representing local businesses, voluntary and community agencies, parish and local councillors, our strategic partners and statutory bodies.

The agenda for the day was exciting and varied and included: final updates for LAA1 from Block Chairs.

Our keynote speakers, Bill Sanderson and Melanie Watson from the Audit Commission, gave a presentation on the Comprehensive Area Assessment and what it will mean to Swindon when it is launched in 2009.

Cllr Roderick Bluh, the Leader of the Council and Chair of the Strategic Partnership Board shared information on the Connecting People - Connecting Places (CP2) programme, launched LAA2 and also launched the first year Action Plan for the Community Strategy.

Delegates also had the opportunity to talk with the block representatives and partners about how they intend to deliver outcomes in Swindon's second Local Area Agreement (LAA) at a Market Place session.

The afternoon of the conference was dedicated to Information Sessions, with delegates having the opportunity to attend sessions on subjects as far reaching as Funding Surgery; Climate Change Action Plan update and the new Carbon Management Plan for Swindon; Compact update and Swindon's Voluntary Sector; Swindon Town Centre Regeneration; and Faith in the Community.



Copies of the presentations are available on the June Conference page of the SSP website.

Copies of the Community Strategy Action Plan which were given out at the Conference are also available on the website.

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It's got to be **local** to be in our Local Area Agreement

Swindon's second Local Area Agreement was signed off in the month of June. In selecting the priorities, contributing partners have considered how we tackle long-standing social, economic and environmental problems by working together to make our local populations lives better.

Our key priority for this Agreement has been an emphasis on the word **local**. Ensuring local goals and local issues of concern has been at the forefront of all our discussions. So key local themed priorities include: reducing teenage pregnancy, cutting CO2 emissions, boosting employment skills, providing more affordable homes, reducing childhood obesity rates, tackling crime. Successful results will be reflected in the rewards for our community in the years ahead.



The Local Area Agreement continues to be a cornerstone of Swindon's partnership approach to improvement by providing a medium term delivery focus to our Community Strategy led by our established Swindon Strategic Partnership. Swindon's Community Strategy 'Sharing future success in a changing Swindon' galvanises the community around a shared vision of Swindon in 2030 as a place with the following outcomes:

- a destination of choice: where people choose to live, visit and invest
- one of the best business locations in the UK offering a high quality of life: where all Swindon people are benefiting from our growing economy
- a safeguarded environment for future generations: by responding to the needs of a growing population in a way that has protected our natural environment as much as possible
- healthy, caring and supportive: where people in Swindon live a longer, healthier, happier and more active life
- high aspirations supported by superb education provision for all ages: where young people will increasingly be aiming high and achieving well
- local people can have real influence and feel safe: where local communities will be working with public organisations and a wide range of voluntary groups to reduce crime, keep people safe and develop a sense of community and belonging



Visit our websites: www.swindonlaa.org.uk and www.swindonsp.org.uk

Key facts...

1. Local Area Agreements are three-year deals between central and local government and its partners, setting out the priorities for a local area.
2. The old-style agreement was launched in Swindon in 2006, it had 19 high level outcomes and around 130 indicators
3. The second agreement has 16 targets on education attainment, and 30 local priorities
4. The most popular indicators selected by the majority of Councils throughout the UK:
 - Reducing teenage pregnancy
 - Increasing the number of affordable homes
 - Reducing CO2 emissions



The full title of the new agreement is **Swindon LAA2 - 'Sharing future success in a changing Swindon'**. A strap line shared with the Swindon Sustainable Community Strategy.

The proofing exercises that the Swindon LAA has been through demonstrates how partnership has been embedded in the process of selecting designated indicators:

- **Equalities:** encompassing age, disability, gender, race, religion and sexual orientation to be meaningful on the lived experiences of all those who live, work and spend their recreational time in Swindon was agreed. The document was scoped at the November 2007 Swindon Equalities Conference. All contributing partners have equalities champions at senior manager grade. The responsibility of considering the equalities agenda is progressed throughout the lifetime of the local area agreement. All 30 LAA2 indicators were tested to establish their relevance against the statutory equalities duties and a programme for in-depth assessments established in April 2008
- **Sustainability:** the Community Strategy includes a strong commitment to sustainability, including outcomes from Swindon's Climate Change Action Plan. The governance of the Swindon Strategic Partnership has been strengthened with the creation in January 2008 of an Environmental Sustainability Block, which has lead responsibility for five of the thirty improvement targets in the Local Area Agreement.
- **Rural:** the Community Strategy includes clear reference to the interests of rural communities. The selection of the Local Area Agreement Improvement Targets involved extensive consultation and engagement with Parished areas. Parish Council interests are also represented on the Swindon Strategic Partnership responsible for the development of the Local Area Agreement
- **Third Sector:** the important role of the Third Sector is clearly referenced in the Community Strategy and acknowledged with representation on the Swindon Strategic Partnership. The Local Area Agreement has been an agenda item at the Community Forums held over the past year, including headlining at the November 2007 and March 2008 conferences, which involved theme based work-shops on Third Sector involvement. In December 2007 Voluntary Action Swindon invited LAA officers and GOSW to share a platform to engage Third Sector partners in choosing LAA indicators.



Outcome 9: We will increase the number of young people who engage in law abiding and positive behaviour

Swindon Youth Empowerment Project (SYEP)

The Swindon Youth Empowerment Project (SYEP) or as it is better known the Tranquility Zone has been named as one of the Mayor's 3 charities for the year 2008/09.

Inspired by insights from the Baha'i Faith about learning what it means to be a good human being and how this motivates children to learn, improve behaviour and be of service in society. We have discovered that young people are not "disaffected", but are "dispirited", so SYEP helps develop a healthy human spirit by inspiring youngsters with a vision of their potential as a "mine rich in gems of inestimable value."

Over 800 children and young people from 10 local schools have benefited from SYEP. An external evaluator (Phd) stated "It has had rapid and lasting results with needy and disengaged children aged nine to thirteen. The processes involved should therefore be taken very seriously by government, schools and youth services as a powerful intervention that has shown it is able to turn youngsters from actual and potential delinquency to becoming committed to contributing to society as good citizens."

Community Strategy Action Plan Year 1

A Shared Vision for Swindon 2008—2030 Community Strategy Action Plan year 1, June 2008 to May 2009 was shared with delegates at the SSP Conference on 12th June. The Action Plan is also available on the Community Strategy pages of the SSP website.

As the "Shared Vision" is a long term strategy, an action plan to achieve this will be developed on an annual basis with input from the voluntary and community sector, private businesses and organisations and the relevant public sector partners in the Swindon area. This is the first of these annual action plans and it also included areas for development over the next 3-5 years.

The key to a successful Community Strategy is genuine involvement and ownership by local people.

It is anticipated that this plan will be reviewed and discussed at the next Swindon Strategic Partnership Conference in December 2008, this will give us the opportunity to develop a more comprehensive action plan for 2009 and beyond. Hard copies of the pack are available from Janet Duffield, Senior Policy Manager, Swindon Borough Council, e-mail jduffield@swindon.gov.uk





Third Sector Development Strategy

Third sector organisations have a crucial role to play in the future of Swindon. Voluntary and Community groups are crucial to social cohesion and the satisfaction that people feel about living in Swindon.

You may be aware that in July 2007, a visioning workshop was held on the third sector, involving a wide range of third sector and statutory sector partners. This was followed up by a further workshop in November 2007 to identify specific objectives to make that vision reality. Many thanks to those of you who were involved in these. Following these workshops, a strategy has been drafted which highlights and capitalises on the special contribution that the third sector can make to achieving Swindon's objectives and priorities. It sets out a clear strategic direction of how the Partnership wants to develop the capability and support the activities of the third sector in Swindon. It is built around the following five themes, which were identified at the workshops last year:

- Recognising difference
- Financial stability and independence
- Governance
- Relationships



The thoughts and comments of all those organisations working for and with the third sector in Swindon are now invited. Your input is vital to ensure that the Strategy properly reflects the diversity of views from and relating to the third sector. The period during which you can send your thoughts will end on Friday 12th September 2008. You will also have the opportunity to contribute to this consultation at the following event:

- Voluntary & Community Forum – 24th July, Broad Green Community Centre, 12 - 2PM.

Copies of the draft strategy and a feedback form to record your comments are available on www.empowerswindon.co.uk, www.vas-swindon.org and www.swindonsp.org.uk. If you require these documents in an alternative format, please contact Chris Lau at Voluntary Action Swindon on 01793 538398.



Once the consultation period has ended, all comments will be considered individually by the Strategy Development Group, which is made up of representatives from statutory and third sector organisations. You will receive detailed feedback on whether or not any changes you suggested will be used in the final document, and reasons why.

Picture courtesy of empower Swindon website.

Visit our websites: www.swindonlaa.org.uk and www.swindonsp.org.uk

Updates

Earth Summit 2008

From 3-6th June, 400 pupils visited Legge House in Wroughton to learn about sustainable lifestyles.

Over the course of the week, Year 5 pupils (aged 9-10) learnt about the environment and took part in a series of hands on practical environmental workshops. Pupils learnt about the importance of recycling and the 3 R's (Reduce, Re-use and Recycle), renewable energy and climate change, how to make paper from recycled paper, they also learnt how to make bug houses and identify insects. Pupils took part in an exciting treasure hunt around the grounds of Legge House and had 45 minutes to follow a trail of clues.



Prior to the trip, pupils were set a series of challenges. These were to design a healthy and waste free lunch box, make a badge, and design a water poster. The posters will be judged by Thames Water and the winning school will receive a water butt for their school grounds.

Nine lucky primary schools took part in this year's event. Those were

- Shaw Ridge
- Catherine Wayte
- Eldene
- Ferndale
- Northview
- Orchid Vale
- Tregoze
- Red Oaks
- Goddard Park



This was the fourth Earth Summit, which was sponsored by npower. This year's theme was Climate Cop Academy. The Earth Summit is a great example of partnership working as it brings together businesses from across the private and public sector. Partners included The National Trust (Coleshill), Swindon Commercial Services, Water Research Company, Thames Water, Cotswold Forest School, Swindon Advertiser, The Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, Swindon Borough Council's Recycling, Rangers and Transport teams and Sustrans.



Gill Chandler, event organiser said "Despite the weather on the first day, everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. I was pleased with the event and greatly appreciated the support of npower and team colleagues".

School Admissions

School Admission update—September 2008

Nationally

- Swindon achieved 2nd place in the country for meeting parents' 1st preferences for secondary schools.
- Swindon was 4th place in the country for meeting one of three preferences parents' submitted. The 3 Local Authorities above Swindon offered more than 3 preferences. This means that Swindon was 1st in the country for meeting one of the 3 preferences for secondary schools.



Online

- Swindon was 40th nationally for the online admissions take-up. This is well above the national average.

Secondary School Places

- 99.9% of children have been offered one of their preferred Swindon schools
- 99.8% of children have been offered one of their preferred schools (including out of borough schools)
- 98% of children have been offered a Swindon school as their first preference
- 97.9% of children have been offered a first preference school (including out of borough schools)

Primary School Places

- 94% of children have been offered a Swindon school as their first preference
- 97% of children have been offered one of their three preferences



MAKE SURE YOU HAVE FUN IN THE SUN

BE SKIN-SMART

Here is a message that is easy for people to remember – be **SKIN-SMART**.

Sunscreen use factor 15+

Keep covered up

Infants and toddlers need extra protection

Never allow yourself or your child to burn.

Stay in the shade between 11am and 3pm

Make sure you drink plenty of water.

Always cover up

Remember to take extra care with children

Then use factor 15+ sunscreen

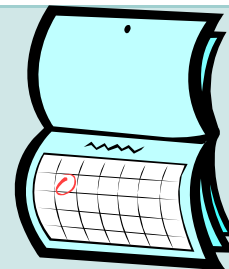
Visit our websites: www.swindonlaa.org.uk and www.swindonsp.org.uk



And Finally.....

Forthcoming Events

- Swindon Mela, Saturday 26th July 12 noon to 7.00 pm Town Gardens, Swindon. For more information visit www.swindonmela.com
- The Annual Quality of Life Awards & Eco-Bash 2008 is to be held on Friday 12th September at the Punjabi Community Centre, Gorsehill. The awards are to reward community / voluntary groups, schools and local businesses for carrying out projects that improve the environment and or quality of life within the borough of Swindon. Come along, entry free, doors open at 11am. For more information contact Gill Chandler, Sustainable Development Officer, Telephone Swindon 463180 or e-mal: gchandler@swindon.gov.uk



Future Newsletters

From September 2008, "This is Swindon" will follow the themes of the Community Strategy and feature one theme per edition.

If you would like us to feature any event you are holding or share information with our readers please send us your comments, contributions and information on your events to: swindonlaa@swindon.gov.uk

Articles for the next edition to be submitted by 22nd August 2008

September 2008 edition will be published on: 1st September 2008



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Feedback

We would appreciate any feedback you may have on the This is Swindon newsletter. Please send your comments to swindonlaa@swindon.gov.uk