



"This is Swindon" May 2007

Central Area Action Plan

Swindon Central Area Action Plan – "Preferred Options Draft"

The Council is consulting on an Area Action Plan for Central Swindon, which on adoption will provide a planning framework that will guide development and regeneration in the area to 2026. The proposals in this document will affect everyone who has an interest in the future development of the town.

The Area Action Plan can be viewed on the Council's website at www.swindon.gov.uk/centralareaactionplan. The Area Action Plan can also be viewed at the Council's Premier House Offices and at Libraries throughout the Borough. The deadline for comments is **Monday 25 June 2007**. Comments can be made by:

- email, to forwardplanning@swindon.gov.uk
- online, using the online form at www.swindon.gov.uk/centralareaactionplan
- or in writing to the following address

Forward Planning Group
Swindon Borough Council
Premier House
Station Road
Swindon SN1 1TZ
(Free Post reference SCE5251)

Refresh

Confirmation has now been received that the 2007 refresh of the LAA has been agreed by the Department for Local Communities. The refresh document can be viewed at www.swindonlaa.org.uk



SSP

The 2007 SSP Conference will be held on Thursday 28th June at the University of Bath in Swindon, Oakfield Campus from 10.00 am.

Flyers have already been sent out to around 200 people and further information will be following in the next few weeks. If you are interested in attending the conference and have not received a flyer please contact Janet Beattie at jbeattie@swindon.gov.uk who will be happy to add you the distribution list.

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Outcome 3—We will be a pioneer in the use of digital technology ensuring that all people have access to the benefits of the Internet and information technology.

Connecting Swindon

As a part of the 'Connecting Swindon' project on Friday 16th March was held the first meeting of the Swindon Digital Stakeholder Board (SDSB). Four projects concerning wireless cities, the schools network, community websites and telecare were presented.

There was a mutual recognition of both supply and demand of digital options and Swindon requiring unique and specific answers. The priority continues being the assessment of the needs and hence the enablement of the technology.



Swindon Digital Stakeholder Board meeting.

A subgroup was responsible for establishing a vision framework document and plan of activities for the current calendar year. This document will allow us to not only pave the way for a long and sustainable strategy but also to address those successful projects currently in the pipeline or needing short-term development.

The Swindon Borough Council backs this project, which will also act as a vehicle through which to include some of the more disadvantaged groups in Swindon in the local economy. Recent trials in other parts of the UK have demonstrated the potential for job creation and retention through improved technology links.

If you want to send articles for the website "Connecting Swindon" please send an email to economicdevelopment@swindon.gov.uk

Information relating to the Swindon community Digital Strategy are available on the Connecting Swindon website, at <http://www.swindon.gov.uk/community/connectingswindon.htm>

To find out more information please contact Ernesto Gómez on 01793 466168 or e-mail economicdevelopment@swindon.gov.uk

Reviewing our Community Assets



A major consultation on how Swindon Borough Council uses community assets to support services in the community is underway. Give us your views about community assets (such as halls, community centres and local facilities). We need to ensure that the future provision reflects the views and needs of the community, it's citizens and the voluntary sector.

Details of how you can participate can be found on the LAA website, just follow the link below www.swindonlaa.org.uk/laa-index/laa-newletter.htm. Further questionnaire's are also available at www.swindon.gov.uk/communityassetconsultation from the 1st May.

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



**Outcome 16: We will reduce health inequalities in the Borough
16.07—Achieve a total of 75 prescription for learning referrals with support from Swindon's Adult Community Learning programme.**

Prescriptions for learning

Jonjo Higgins writes Can you educate yourself out of a looming mental health crisis? Some people think so. As a mental health service user myself I can only agree that the correct action at the right time can help avert disaster. Recovery from a mental health problem that required pills and hospitalisation includes rebuilding your life. Why not make a few changes now and avoid a lot of pain and suffering. If people are trying to tell you something about your stress levels, maybe you should take some time out.

Swindon's Prescription for Learning (P4L) Task Group believes that widening participation in adult learning and community involvement can help to reduce health inequalities across Swindon. So here's some tips from me:

- Don't go down the pub every night;
- Move away from the TV;
- Get locally active;
- Do a keep fit class;
- Dance;
- Improve your maths and English;
- Do a course in photography;
- Play squash.

The personal and social benefits are endless.

This is a new way to promote benefits of learning. The P4L Task Group includes representatives from the Avon and Wiltshire Psychology and Counselling Service, Swindon Learning Partnership, Swindon Primary Care Trust, RFET Wiltshire Qest & Swindon Learning Ambassadors.

Don't wait until it's too late, get involved now.

For more details contact: Jonjo Higgins, Learning Ambassador, Swindon Learning Ambassadors, on Swindon (01793) 818604.

www.la-swindon.org.uk



**LIVE TO LEARN
LEARN TO LIVE**





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

9.03: Establish a Borough wide Youth Forum by 2009.



Youth Parliament

Two Swindon teenagers have been elected onto the National Youth Parliament. Although it may be a few years before Sam Weekes and Josh Chesterman can stand for the House of Commons they are well on their way after becoming the town's first ever members of the UK Youth Parliament.

The elections took place in February and more than 1,000 school pupils in the town cast their vote for who they wanted to represent them.

Sam, 16, is the town's official Youth Parliament MP, and Josh, also 16, is his deputy. They will both be supported by the Swindon Youth Service during their year in office.

Both of them found out about the elections through youth projects they were involved in and they are already busy finding out what is important to youngsters in the town.

Sam added "at the minute we are coming up with questionnaires to see what young people feel needs to be highlighted, we have already taken a couple of ideas forward to the first regional meeting, including transport. That is a really important issue at the moment, especially as bus fares have just gone up again."



Josh, deputy Youth Parliament MP

Josh agreed, "Fares are a problem, as by the time you have got on a bus and gone to a leisure centre like the Oasis or the Link, you can't afford to do an activity like swimming."

As new representatives there is a lot of hard work ahead, Josh added "because we are new, we have to do everything from scratch."

The pair, who will be in office for a year, have also been invited to the Houses of Parliament by the town's two MPs and are hoping to visit in June.

Swindon youth champion, Cllr David Samuels, said it was great to see the teenagers getting involved. "I am looking forward to working with both of them in order to really know what young people think about what is happening in Swindon" he added. "There is always a lot of stories about young people doing wrong and I do not think that is always the case. With the Swindon youth MPs we can see young people making a positive contribution to the community as well.

Any young person who has a suggestion for something they would like to see in the town can get in touch with Josh and Sam by e-mailing

swindon.youthparliament@hotmail.co.uk





Outcome 13: We will reassure the public, reducing the fear of crime.

13.22: We will reduce the extent to which overall Swindon residents perceive anti-social behaviour to be a problem.

Police tackle Graffiti

Police disrupted the tranquillity of a Swindon suburb when they hauled a suspected graffiti artist out of bed during a dawn raid.

The community beat manager for the Orbital policing team in north Swindon, PC Troy Smith, said "We have collated intelligence regarding graffiti and we believe the suspect has done vast swathes of graffiti throughout the estates and the Orbital Centre which is the main shopping park in the area."



Picture courtesy of Swindon Advertiser.

The Police say that the action shows they are determined to weed out those behind the scrawls of paint blighting the town.

PC Smith added "We have received many, many complaints about graffiti from residents and it's not just the northern expansion. Throughout Swindon it's a major problem."

The new Orbital Neighbourhood Policing Team recently held a public meeting and PC Smith said that 90% of the concerns were about graffiti.

PC Smith also urged shop staff to be responsible when it comes to selling paints. "We are working together with the council to try and eradicate this problem" he added. "The message to people who are doing graffiti is we are going to find out who you are, you will be arrested and you will be charged. Basically just don't do it."

Winning war on graffiti

The man in charge of Swindon graffiti-busting team has claimed a victory in the war against the taggers. But Steve Harcourt, the Council's Director of Environment and Health, says it is vital residents keep reporting the anti-social scrawl.



Picture courtesy of Swindon Advertiser.

Steve added "We are encouraged. We have had a series of initiatives that have helped which, on their own might not have had much effect. A combination of the support from the community and the police action that has followed on from that is all helping and we are also working with the police to share intelligence."

The Council working with police, town centre management and Swindon Commercial Services, will pay residents £100 for information that leads to the conviction of any of the town centre's six most wanted taggers.

Swindon Council leader, Roderick Bluh, said he wants to stamp out the problem so that money can be spent elsewhere. Cllr Bluh added "We have seen signs that there has been a reduction in the number of referrals, but we need to keep on top of it if we are going to beat it. If the reward scheme is working to help us prosecute offenders that will only help us stamp it out."



Outcome 13—We will reduce crime; reduce the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and reduce the harm caused by alcohol abuse.

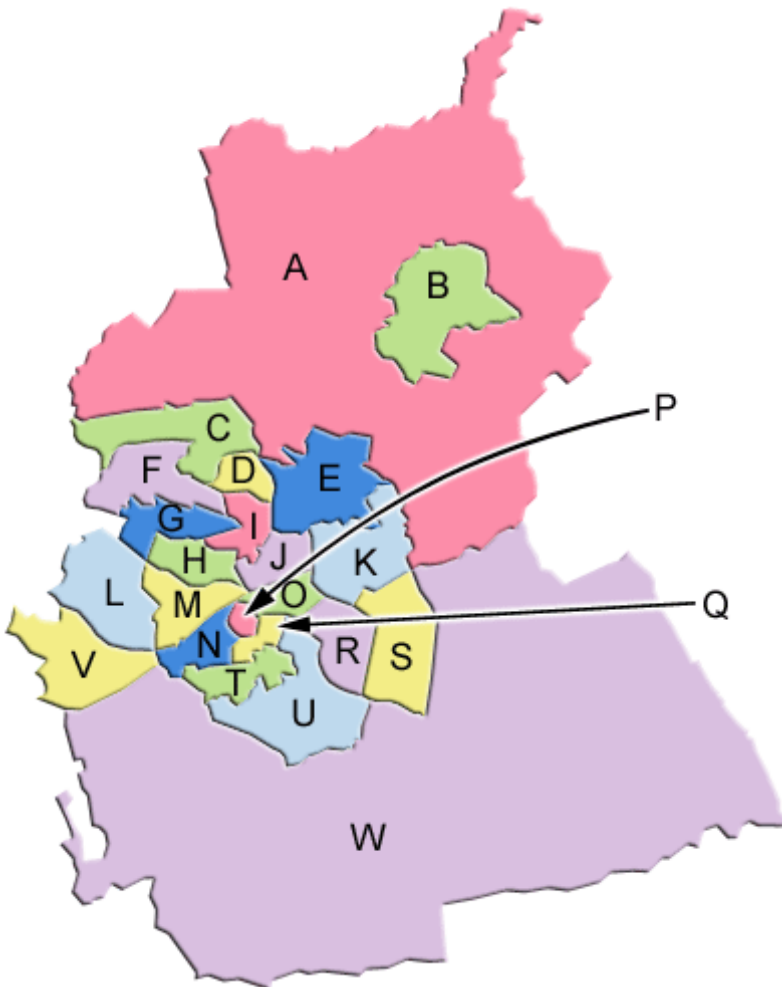
Neighbourhood Policing

What is neighbourhood policing?

Effective neighbourhood policing is all about providing dedicated teams of police officers, community support officers and special constables who will work, in partnership with local communities and local partners, to tackle the problems that matter most to local people.

In your community you can expect:

- A local neighbourhood policing team (NPT) to tackle local issues.
- More visible and accessible policing.
- More regular contact with, and direct access to, the same local officers.
- To have your say—local priorities will be set in consultation with local people.
- The ability to hold people to account: by knowing exactly who is responsible for reducing crime in your area.



Most neighbourhood policing teams (NPTs) are already up and running in Wiltshire and, by early summer 2007, a total of 90 NPTs will be in place. The map alongside shows the neighbourhood policing areas. The community beat managers (CBM) are listed on the following page.

Please visit the 'Policing in your area' pages on the website for further details—

www.wiltshire.police.uk

Neighbourhood Policing

Contacting your Neighbourhood Policing Team

You can get in touch with your community beat manager, or any other member of your neighbourhood policing team:

Call: 0845 400 700

E-mail: each NPT has a dedicated team e-mail address—visit the 'Policing in Your Area' section of the website—www.wiltshire.police.uk

Map Ref:	Neighbourhood Policing Area	Community Beat Manager
A	Swindon Rural North	Sofia McIntyre
B	Highworth	Martin Miles
C	Swindon Northern Expansion	Troy Smith
D	Penhill	Conway Duncan
E	Upper Stratton	Stephen Fletcher
F	Haydon Wick	Chloe Smith
G	Moredon	Andrew Carr
H	Cheney Manor	Tom Evans
I	Pinehurst	Vicky Floyd
J	Gorse Hill	Stephen Yeates
K	Stratton St Margaret	Paul Phelps
L	West Swindon North	Dean Hoskins
M	Rodbourne	Megan Kenzie
N	Kingshill / Westcott	Paul Best
O	Broadgreen	Matt Barnett
P	Swindon Town Centre	Andy Alexander
Q	Eastcott	Sally Davis
R	Parks & Walcot East	Billy O'Sullivan
S	Eldene & Covingham	Jo Phelps
T	Old Town Swindon	Tim North
U	Lawn & Walcot West	Phil Young
V	West Swindon South	Tim Titchener
W	Swindon Rural South	Tony Miles



Outcome 10: We will improve the health of young people in the Borough.

Young Mum encourages safe sex

A young mum who gave birth at 15 is helping the Swindon Primary Care Trust teenage pregnancy unit warn youngsters against underage sex.

Emma Page is now 17 and her toddler is 18 months old. Emma has been working at the PCT on work experience and was due to finish but the PCT wants to extend it. Emma has been working on a campaign at the PCT to help it educate youngsters about safe sex. She advises teenagers to "use a condom and use it properly."

Even though Emma was "shocked" to discover she was pregnant at 15, she decided to keep her child. Her parents and the baby's father helped her cope, she said. "It was hard even though I'm still with the father. I wouldn't encourage anyone young to get pregnant, but I wouldn't change it for the world."

Emma said being a young mum meant she grew up fast. "It has made me a lot more mature and it has made my life happier as I have someone who depends on me."

She said her friends lead very different lives to hers. "They all go out drinking alcohol but I obviously can't do that. I have to be there at my son's beck and call."

Working at the PCT has given Emma confidence and she encourages other teenage mums to pursue their ambitions. She said: "I can still gain a career even though being a young mum might slow me down. I wanted to help get the message across that if you get pregnant at a young age your life is not over. You can still fulfil your dreams. Also, I want to educate other people that young mums should not be put under the same umbrella, we are not all slags' and we have aspirations like anyone else."

Emma, who did not want her child or school to be named, hopes to do her GCSEs and become an accountant.

Fran Birch, the teenage pregnancy coordinator at Swindon PCT, said: "Having a teenage parent working with us is very helpful as she has an insight." She believes Emma is in a good position to advise other teenagers. "Emma has a good message. Clearly she loves her son to bits, but her message is you can avoid getting pregnant as it is really hard."

The PCT has been creating posters and postcards with advice on safe sex.

It encourages teenagers to wait until they are older to have sex but if not to use a condom.

The unit plans to launch a Parentline Plus campaign to help parents talk to teenagers about underage pregnancy.

Teenagers can call 0800 282930 for advice on sex.

Parents can call 0808 8002222



Picture courtesy of Swindon Advertiser



Outcome 17.4: 100% of schools to have school travel plans in place by 2009

School Travel Plans

To date 36 Swindon schools have developed School Travel Plans, with a further 15 submitted for approval in March this year. This is an opportunity for a school to look at the travel situation for their pupils and staff, to identify any problems or successes, and to come up with an action plan to promote sustainable modes of travel (walking, cycling and public transport) reduce car use and improve safety on and around the school site. School Travel Plans link with both the Healthy Schools and Eco-Schools schemes, and should involve the whole school community, particularly the pupils themselves.



Picture courtesy of www.walktoschool.org.uk

The Government awards capital grants to schools with approved travel plans, currently around £5000 for a primary school and £10,000 for a special or secondary school, which schools can spend on making the school journey easier or safer for pupils who want to walk, cycle or travel by bus.

In addition, Swindon schools with travel plans can bid for funding from the Local Transport Plan budget under the School Travel Challenge scheme. In recent years for example, this scheme has provided cycle storage at 16 schools, parent waiting shelters at 5 primary schools and pedestrian crossings in Wroughton, Shaw, Toothill, Stratton and Walcot.

Current projects to watch out for include the launch of the Bike-It project in a number of schools in partnership with Sustrans; a new walking and cycling incentive scheme for Swindon called 'Feet First', sponsored by the Dettol Foundation, and the setting up of Walking Buses at seven primary schools with Government funding, to enable children to walk to school under the supervision of adult volunteers.

For further information about School Travel Plans, or any of these projects, please contact Jane Deeley on 466335.

Useful websites include www.saferoutestoschool.org.uk and www.walktoschool.org.uk





Outcome 19: We will encourage older and disabled people and their carers to maintain their independence, and have increased choices about the care and support they receive.

Age Concern Swindon helps put money back in pockets

Jo Osorio writes in a personal capacity as Director Age Concern Swindon

Within outcome 17 & 19 there are references to poverty, older people and advice-giving. Age Concern Swindon aims to hit the targets where it's most effective – putting money back into older people's pockets – over £650,000 in new benefits claimed with our help by our clientele last year.

Your Rights, Age Concern's annual benefits take-up campaign launched back in April and is now in full swing. It's a year-long campaign and will focus on different benefits every two months. This is the programme for the year and This is Swindon readers might like to focus their own efforts alongside Age Concern Swindon on these areas during the following months to re-inforce the message to those thousands of people to whom we need to take it:

April/May:	Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit
June/July:	Carer's Benefit
August/ September:	Attendance Allowance/ Disability Living Allowance
October/ November:	Pension Credit
December/ January:	Help with heating costs
February/ March:	Help with health costs

Increases in council tax bills stretch the finances of many older people in the borough. Yet around £1.2 billion of Council Tax Benefit went unclaimed by older people in the UK last year, with almost 50% of those entitled to claim (up to two million pensioners) missing out – and that means thousands, in and around Swindon.

Despite millions of pensioners finding it hard to make ends meet across the country, up to £4.2 billion of money benefits is left unclaimed by millions of older people each year. Many older people miss out because they don't realise that they are entitled to extra cash, don't know how to claim, think the system is too complicated, or feel there is a stigma attached and would rather 'make do'. Age Concern Swindon, like other local advice agencies, offers clear, free and confidential help and advice, which can overcome these obstacles.

"Claiming the benefits you're entitled to can make a massive difference to your quality of life. On average those older people missing out on claiming Council Tax benefit are losing £580 per year" says Val Newell at Age Concern Swindon.

"Claiming really doesn't have to be difficult. We and the Pension Service have benefits advisors available throughout the year to provide help and information to older people across town. We would urge all older people in the area to pop in to Number One Milton Road for a benefits check on Monday, Wednesday (Pension Service "surgery") or Friday mornings or call 692166 to request a home visit if need be."

Age Concern's bestselling book, 'Your Rights: a guide to money benefits for older people', has been updated and is on sale now. Copies are available from Number One Milton Road price £5.99 + 1.99 postage and packing or call our hotline on 0870 44 22 120 to order your copy now. You can find out more about Age Concern and Your Rights at www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/campaigns.asp

For further details please contact Jo Osorio on 692166.



Outcome 5: We will establish Swindon as a national destination for cultural and leisure events and ensure that more of those who work in Swindon also live, shop and socialise in the Borough.

Arts Centre programme of events

Arts Centre
Devizes Road
Swindon
SN1 4BJ



Box Office: 01793 641837

What's on at the Arts Centre this season.

Comedy

Character comedienne *Lizzie Roper* wows audiences with her one-woman show. Her superb control of accent, intonation and body language brings every scenario to lurid life, long enough to get some home truths about sexuality and sex lives.

Count Arthur Strong returns to the stage following his hit Radio 4 series, as he attempts to recall his distinguished career in musical, hilarious and bewildering.

Drama

What I Heard About Iraq is an exhilarating and powerful piece of hard-hitting drama. Using the actual words spoken and written by politicians, soldiers and civilians, this brilliant performance will make you reassess what you think about the war and our political leaders.

Image Musical Theatre have again produced a superb adaptation of the original Rudyard Kipling story *The Jungle Book*. Set in the vibrant tropical jungle of India this production brings to life the journey to maturity of Mowgli the man cub.

Music

The powerful singing voice of *Gwyneth Herbert* will simply fill the entire space of the Arts Centre. Her jazz, folk singing has been described as sassy and sultry as she hits the top notes with ease.

Putting on the Style is a genuine musical tribute to the words and music of Lonnie Donegan and his numerous talents and styles but it also commemorates many other great names of the 50's and 60's.

The above shows are just a taster of what is coming to the Arts Centre over the next few months. Please contact the Arts Centre Box Office on 01793 614837 if you would like more information on any of the above shows or to be added to our mailing list.

www.swindon.gov.uk/artsandculture.htm



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The Summer Reading Challenge



Every year Swindon Libraries encourages children aged 3-12 to join the Summer Reading Challenge. They read six books of their own choice through the holidays to keep up their reading skills.

They do activity sheets about the books including designing bookmarks and imagining what happens to the characters once the story has finished.

We give them stickers for every book they read and a certificate and medal for reading six books. They are also entered into a prize draw, the winners are invited to an event to meet a children's author.

This year the Challenge is called The Big Wild Read and will encourage children to think about the local environment.

To promote the Challenge, Swindon Libraries and local author Neil Griffiths have invited school children to hear stories in strange places around Swindon, including Cricklade Railway and Sainsburys. It doesn't matter whether you're waiting for a train or buying bread, it's always a good time for a story.

To find out more contact Emma McElwee at emcelwee@swindon.gov.uk

Book Prescription Service

- Swindon Libraries in collaboration with Swindon Primary Care Trust are working with local doctors and mental health professionals to offer this scheme to those who want to use books to help themselves.
- Nineteen self-help titles, carefully chosen by health professionals, are available from libraries across the Borough.
- Your doctor or health professional prescribes a book that addresses your area of concern. A prescription can be exchanged for the book at any Swindon library. If the book is not on the shelf, then we can arrange a free request for the next available copy.
- All you need to do is join the library!

Quotes:

"An excellent self-help guide I have been diagnosed with depression, and this book was recommended by my GP."

"After reading this book, I felt a new sense of well being."

For more information click the link below:

www.swindon.gov.uk/leisuresport/libraries/book_prescription_scheme.htm



Outcome 5: We will establish Swindon as a national destination for cultural and leisure events and ensure that more of those who work in Swindon also live, shop and socialise in the Borough.

Bookstart



Bookstart

Est.1992 by BOOKTRUST

The Bookstart scheme is providing every child under five and their parents three free packs of books and information – the Bookstart baby pack for six to twelve month olds provided by Health Visitors, the Bookstart Plus pack for eighteen to thirty month olds provided by Libraries and Children's Centres, and the Bookstart Treasure Chest for three year olds provided by early Years settings.

In Swindon the scheme is run by librarians, health visitors, nursery nurses and the Children's Information Service.

Bookstart exists to promote the idea of early book sharing, and seeks to give every child the opportunity to develop a lifelong love of books.



Packs for babies
0 – 12 months



Packs for Toddlers
18 – 30 months



Treasure Box for Children
36 - 48 months

Comments from Swindon Bookstart families:

"Excellent books with very useful information which gives very good tips for getting the most out of reading with toddlers"

"It would encourage anyone not already reading to their baby to do so"

"She loves the small square book as it is her size"

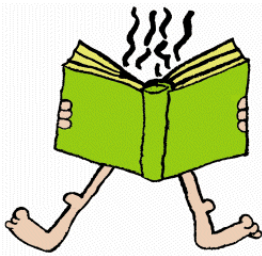
For more information contact:

Robin Griffiths,
North Swindon Library,
Orbital Shopping Park,
Thamesdown Drive,
Swindon
SN25 4AN,
Tel. 01793-707130,
Email: rgriffiths@swindon.gov.uk



Outcome 5: We will establish Swindon as a national destination for cultural and leisure events and ensure that more of those who work in Swindon also live, shop and socialise in the Borough.

Children Choosing Books



Over a period of six months, four primary schools each receive two selections of 35 books, which range from younger children's picture books to challenging reads. The children are encouraged to keep a record of their opinions of the books by written and/or online reviews. At sessions with the librarians the children talk about the books and vote for their favourites in each of the two selections. At the end of the project, all the teachers and children are invited to a presentation at a library with a guest author.

The aim of the project is to improve the selection of children's stock, to inform teachers about current children's literature, and for the child, to broaden experience of story books and others.

Comments from teachers:

"I think that my class have really got a lot out of it so far. We have had some good class discussions and helped to raise the profile of reading. Thank you." (Tregoze)

"The variety of books ensured all children of all abilities could access the collection. The class were motivated and were keen to share the books with each other." (Goddard Park)

Seventeen Libraries at Your Service

The Borough of Swindon's library service offers a wide range of consumer services at various locations throughout the borough.

There are 17 libraries, including one mobile library, which serve the whole community. The libraries offer services which are mostly free including:

- Adults' and children's books
- Reference and enquiry service
- Business information
- Local studies
- Archives

The libraries also offer hire services for a wide range of cassettes, CDs, videos and language courses.

For locations, opening Times and facilities follow the link below:

www.swindon.gov.uk/leisuresport/libraries/libraries-libraries



Outcome 5: We will establish Swindon as a national destination for cultural and leisure events and ensure that more of those who work in Swindon also live, shop and socialise in the Borough.

Partners for Change



The project aimed to provide young people at risk of social exclusion with a real say in running libraries, encourage better use of the service, and improve access to books and reading by those aged 11 to 19.

Funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the project involved young parents on the Graduate Mums course run by U-Too, a community business, helping us to create story sacks which would give parents ideas about what and how to read to their children. In addition looked after children in Swindon were asked to get involved in designing the layout

of the teenage area for the new Central Library.

The project culminated in the re-launch of the children's area at West Swindon Library on Families Love Libraries Day. A day of activities saw young parents take part in baby massage workshops and enjoy story times with their children.

Book Bars

A successful funding bid to the Big Lottery Fund will see a Book Bar located in the teenage area of the new Central Library. The Book Bar will open in the late summer of 2008 and be one of 20 across the country. The project involves the Library Service working with the Youth Service to deliver volunteering opportunities for the young people of Swindon.

The Book Bar will be a place where young people can relax, meet friends, use the internet, enjoy activities and read a good book. They will be modern and stimulating with friendly adults to help and support them. In addition, Book Waiters, young people volunteering on an accredited programme, will be there to publicise the hottest new books, CDs, games and DVDs to borrow and serve drinks.





Outcome 5: We will establish Swindon as a national destination for cultural and leisure events and ensure that more of those who work in Swindon also live, shop and socialise in the Borough.

Free Computer Training in Swindon Libraries

Lots of people know that Swindon libraries provide free computer access for the public. Not so many people know that Swindon libraries provide free computer training for the public. To date approx. 669 people have benefited from the sessions, which include: how to use a mouse and keyboard, how to use a Search Engine, how to set up an e-mail account etc.

Libraries are great places for learning because, they provide an informal and relaxed environment. Our staff are friendly and enthusiastic and the focus is on building confidence and enjoying the learning experience.

This is what our customers have to say about the computer courses:

- “Instructors great, course all very useful.”
- “I really enjoyed all of it, starting with the basics.”
- “I’m glad I came and learnt a lot.”
- “I now feel more confident about using the computers in the library.”
- “The welcome, the clear, concise and individual tuition – excellent!”
- “I liked the gentle pace and the mix of listening, activity on screen and activity directed by tutor.”

Making it all worthwhile

Picture this. Park Library – a computer session with four people, one of which is a 91 year old lady who had never used a computer before.

The moment we got her to start typing on the keyboard, she was off, fingers whizzing across the keys. “I used to type during the war”, she announced modestly.

The session included setting up an e-mail account. She had brought along her daughter’s e-mail address and sent a message straight away. Her delight when she had an answer almost immediately was wonderful.

We had enabled her to experience a whole new world of communication, and her excitement equalled ours.

As trainers we never cease to be amazed by the learning capacity of the older people on the course. Some are daunted by the jargon, some by the technology, but all are determined to learn. They have taught us a lot.



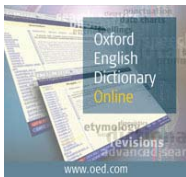


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Free Online Resources

Swindon Libraries subscribe to many online resources which are available free of charge to Library members at home or in any of Swindon's Libraries.

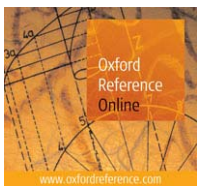
Oxford University Press publish many of their works online including:



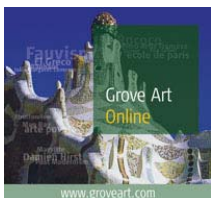
Oxford English Dictionary- unrestricted access to the full 20 volume print edition.



Oxford Dictionary of National Biography – over 50,000 biographies of men and women who have shaped British history.



Oxford Reference Online – a virtual reference library of 219 books, including many of the “Oxford Companion” series.



Grove Dictionary of Art – online access to this remarkable 34 volume resource.
Grove Music Online – full access to this world's leading musical reference work.



Ancestry.Library edition is a vast genealogical resource which includes the censuses for England and Wales 1841-1901 and the Civil Registration Index 1837- 2004. Only accessible in a Library.



The Times Digital Archive 1785-1985. Complete digital version of 200 years of the major national newspaper.

KnowUK – Online reference collection including such standard works as Crockford's Clerical Directory and Writers and Artists Yearbook.

NewsUK – Online access to the major national and some regional newspapers.



Britannica Online – the world's most famous and respected encyclopaedia available online.



Outcome 12.04—We will create a project to improve family stability to pilot in at least two Neighbourhood Renewal areas and will achieve participation in the project from at least 120 families/couples by 2009 achieve a total of 75 prescription for learning referrals with support from Swindon's Adult Community Learning programme.

Neighbourhood Renewal Projects update

Two successful projects which have been taking place within the Neighbourhood Renewal Area are detailed below.

The first is the 'Lush Project' this trial is taking place at Greendown School and talks to young people about feelings and morals and is run by the Youth for Christ and Swindon Pregnancy Crisis Centre. The training takes the form of a 90 minute presentation and classwork. 225 year 9 pupils have received the training so far. There has been very good feedback from Community & Voluntary organisations.

The second project is run by Stepping Forward in the Park North area and is working with disadvantaged young people and children. They are working with parents of teenage children who are at risk of exclusion and with parents whose young children are in care. They also run course about relationship skills, money matters, sexual health, substance misuse and anger management.



Outcome 10: We will improve the health of young people in the Borough.

School Meals Update

Continuing the work towards achieving this Outcome, The School Meals Project Manager has recently sent out a 'Transforming School Food Provision' Improvement Bid Application Pack to schools in Swindon.

Schools can bid for any capital item or scheme that improves or introduces hot school meal provision in schools. The Local Authority has a total of £80,000 for this initiative, and wish to help as many schools as possible with this funding. The LA is inviting bids from any school that has, or is working towards their Healthy Schools Status, and who has a desire to improve or build upon their school food provision.

The deadline for the return of the bid is **Friday 25th May 2007**, if you have any enquiries about the Bid, please contact Kerry Davison on 01793 465764 or email her at: kdavison@swindon.gov.uk.

Kerry has also been working with Swindon College on the School's Cookery Challenge, with the semi finals and final being held this month. All secondary schools have been invited to put forward a team from KS3 and one from KS4. There will be heats held within the schools, with the semi finals being held on 9th and 16th May at Swindon College. The theme is "Food from Wiltshire". Teams are asked to spend no more than £7.50 on the ingredients. Kerry is thrilled with the amount of schools that have entered the competition this year and is looking forward to being a judge at that event. This is a great way to engage young people in selecting, preparing and trying healthier foods All the pupils taking part in the semi-final will receive a prize and the all competitors will receive a medal and apron for getting through to the semi finals. The final will be held at Swindon College on May 25th.



And Finally.....

Forthcoming Events

- Community Assets consultation—15th May 2007 10.00 am-12.00 pm University of Bath, Oakfield Campus.
- Walk to School week—21st to 25th May 2007, more info on www.walktoschool.org.uk
- Festival of Sport 2nd & 3rd June 2007. www.challengeswindon.org.uk
- Get Active Week—4th to 10th June 2007
- SSP Conference 28th June 2007 at University of Bath, Oakfield Campus.

E-mail the team at:
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Telephone the team on:

01793 466301—Alison Chamberlain
 01793 463883—Matthew Pearce
 01793 463248—Janet Beattie



Left to right: Janet, Alison & Matthew.

LAA Survey 2007

This year's Life in Swindon Survey will be distributed to around 6000 homes in Swindon during May 2007.

The results from the 2006 survey can be found on the LAA website at www.swindonlaa.org.uk and we aim to post the results from this years survey to the website in late August 2007.

Feedback

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

Future Newsletters

What would you like to see in future editions of "This is Swindon"?

Send your comments, contributions and information on your forthcoming events to:

swindonlaa@swindon.gov.uk

Articles for the next edition to be submitted by 15th June 2007

July 2007 edition will be published on: 2nd July 2007