



## "This is Swindon" November 2007

# Volunteering in Swindon



**Get Volunteering  
Swindon!**

**Get Volunteering, Swindon!** is a Swindon-wide opportunity to celebrate and raise awareness of volunteering. The first ever **Get Volunteering, Swindon!** will take place from **14-19 January 2008**. It will play a huge part in raising the profile of Swindon's volunteers while encouraging others to get involved.

There will be extensive media coverage before and during the week, especially as the week coincides with the launch of Community Radio, who have agreed to play a big part in **Get Volunteering**

**Swindon!** Alongside newspaper and radio involvement there will be street entertainment in the town centre, a volunteer fair to find out about volunteering opportunities, there will be stands in the main shopping and leisure centres and organisations and groups all across the Borough will be holding activities and events to celebrate and promote volunteering.

Please use this week to hold events to raise awareness of volunteering within your organisation and encourage new people to sign up as volunteers with you. If you are a business, this is the perfect opportunity to look into encouraging your employees to put something back into the community by becoming volunteers, maybe hold your own employee volunteering day and get out there and do something.

Look out for further information on **Get Volunteering Swindon!** as the list of events and activities across the Borough grows. For more information in the meantime, please contact Caroline Cooper on 01793 466366/538398 or 07766 368371 or [ccooper@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:ccooper@swindon.gov.uk).



Volunteer Centre  
Swindon

**Active  
Swindon**

community  
radio  
swindon 105.5FM



Voluntary Action  
Swindon

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**Outcome 15: We will improve the overall health of local people particularly in relation to coronary heart disease, cancer and sexually transmitted infections.**

**15.1: Reduce smoking prevalence in Swindon from 27% (2006) down to 21% (by 2009) (21% is the national government target)**

## Swindon PCT hits target for helping residents quit smoking

Swindon PCT has hit its first quarterly target to help residents stop smoking in 2007. Breaking a set target of 282, its Swindon NHS Stop Smoking Service helped 286 residents to quit smoking between April and June, meaning it is on track to meet an annual target of 1130. The Stop Smoking Service helped these people kick the habit in the lead up to the 1<sup>st</sup> July smoking ban.



With the smoking ban now in effect, Swindon PCT is reminding residents that now is an excellent time to quit. Cherry Jones, Stop Smoking Service Co-ordinator for the primary care trust, said:

Picture courtesy of Swindon Primary Care Trust

“There are many serious dangers to smoking. Cancer, high blood pressure, a lack of oxygen in the body, and clogged arteries can all be brought on by the habit. The recent smoking ban has made social smoking especially, very inconvenient, and we’re hoping many of those who have been thinking about stopping will see it as the encouragement they need to quit altogether.

“If you’re already trying to quit, remember that you are less likely to want a cigarette when you are physically and mentally busy. When you have a craving, go for a walk or phone a friend. Even drinking cold water and taking some deep breaths can help.”



Picture courtesy of Swindon Primary Care Trust

Swindon residents can take advantage of the Swindon NHS Stop Smoking Service by contacting their local GP or calling the service direct on **0800 389 2229**. This service will support those wanting to quit smoking with one-to-one or and group sessions, and provide support, information and advice on nicotine replacement products.

### A real life story

Mr F from Rodbourne Cheney, who smoked 40 cigarettes a day said if it wasn't for the Swindon NHS stop smoking services he would never have given up.

“ I started smoking when I was 15 and it gradually became my life. Then my doctor referred me to the PCT's stop smoking team and I have never looked back. I've tried cold turkey before but the support that you get is brilliant. Just having someone there at the end of a phone whenever you are struggling to encourage you makes all the difference. I would never of done it without them.”

For more information please contact the Swindon NHS Stop Smoking Service on 0800 389 2229.

# Community Strategy Update

Many, many thanks to all those people who came to one of our Vision for Swindon roadshows or completed one of the questionnaires on the draft strategy. We are currently analysing all the comments and using them to re-draft the final version. Find out more on the Community Strategy pages of the Swindon Strategic Partnership website at [www.swindonsp.org.uk](http://www.swindonsp.org.uk)



In February 2008, we will be launching 'A Shared Vision for Swindon 2008 - 2030' which will be Swindon's new Sustainable Community Strategy.

Between July and September, many hundreds of local people gave us their views on the draft document. They did this in a number of ways:

- By completing an on-line questionnaire linked from [www.swindonsp.org.uk](http://www.swindonsp.org.uk)
- By sending in the form at the back of the Vision for Swindon booklet
- By visiting our stand at one of 17 roadshows or
- By offering to be interviewed by our roving reporters from Your Film

If you were one of the people who contributed, may we offer our sincere thanks to you for sparing your time to contribute to this vitally important document.

We are now analysing all of your comments and redrafting the final version of document. Watch this space for updates.

The consultation closed on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2007, although we held the paper questionnaire open for a further 24 hours to allow for the post. To date 66 electronic and paper responses had been received, with 700+ post-it's from the Roadshows, 30 minutes of interviews and a 8 ½ minute video. 14 different groups have also been consulted with.

The results from the post-it's have been collated and these details have given us emerging areas from the public response:

- 1) Quality of open spaces and parks, protecting the environment for the future;
- 2) More activities for children & young people;
- 3) Improvements to the shopping experience in Swindon, with a variety of larger stores and smaller independent shops;
- 4) Improvement to the visual appearance of Swindon;
- 5) More recycling;
- 6) Culture – larger music venue, arts and theatre;
- 7) More sustainable transport system.

There is also lots of support for the University and the Canal.



It is envisaged that the new Community Strategy will keep the 6 themes and will include description from the consultation. There will be more detail on key measures of success, there will be a chapter and diagram on how it all fits together – LAA/Community Strategy/other plans etc. Appendices will include how the Community Strategy will be measured, more explanation on the 6 themes, and links to who's involved and the consultation process.

Visit our websites: [www.swindonlaa.org.uk](http://www.swindonlaa.org.uk) and [www.swindonsp.org.uk](http://www.swindonsp.org.uk)



## The New 2008 LAA

Until now Local Area Agreements have tackled four themes: children and young people; safer and stronger communities; healthier communities and older people; and economic development and enterprise. From June 2008, our LAA will have 16 statutory education and early-year targets, and up to 35 others taken from a menu of 200 national priority performance indicators set by the Government. We are considering a fifth block entitled Sustainable Growth.

LAA's will no longer have separate funding, nor will cash be ringfenced for specific targets. Public services will agree locally how to fund the agreed priorities. The Government is issuing new guidance this autumn.

The programme will help councils to foster a joined-up approach to health improvement through local strategic partnerships and LAA's.

The Government wants LAA's to work towards delivering the "Sustainable Community Strategy", a long-term vision for a local community which looks at economic, social and environmental needs.

### Stepping up to the next level

The new duty to prepare a joint strategic needs assessment of the health and social care needs of the local population will reinforce partnership working. The joint strategic needs assessment will inform local area agreements to better align incentives for joint planning, assessment and delivery. It is anticipated that a step change in the way people's needs are met at a local level as services become more responsive and as co-delivery between local authorities and primary care trusts leads to more strategic commissioning of health improvement.

### Scrutiny of Local Government

There are different formats of scrutiny in different parts of the public sector. In local authorities, overview and scrutiny committees have formal powers to look at both local government and health services. But there is a Bill going through Parliament that will expand that power to other local public service agencies. In other sectors, scrutiny roles are performed by school governors and in the health service by non-executive directors.

### Getting the blocks right

The PCT has grasped the opportunities offered by new ways of working—and new ways of thinking—in the NHS. New ways which see us focusing on providing services in the community, closer to home, by giving patients the support and advice needed to manage their own conditions and to lead to healthier lifestyles.

We are breaking new ground by integrating a number of services with Swindon Borough Council and providing services that are centred around patient and service users.

## 2008 LAA Timetable

The conversation has begun to scope the new 2008 LAA. Over the next few months the Borough Councils Partnership Team will be consulting with the blocks and groups to produce the new list of indicators. If your group would like the team to visit you during the consultation period please contact Alison, Matthew or Janet, our contact details on the back page of this newsletter.

We've provided the timetable below to indicate the deadlines we are working to. We will be updating the LAA Website at [www.swindonlaa.org.uk](http://www.swindonlaa.org.uk) at regular intervals with further information on the New 2008 LAA. The January 2008 edition of "This is Swindon" will also update you on the position so far.

End November	Produce top 100 indicator list (plus statutory 16 DCSF)
End December	Reduce list to 50 indicators (plus statutory 16 DCSF)
End January	Children & Young People leads to agree targets for all 16 DCSF statutory targets
End February	Up to 35 priority list, plus 5 reserve indicators is agreed
End March	Final 35 indicators to be submitted to Dept Communities & Local Government (CLG) in Whitehall
March – May	Negotiation of targets with CLG
June	Submission to Ministers and Ministerial sign off.

Swindon's strategic partners have grasped the concept of partnership working with enthusiasm in our first local area agreement. This newsletter over the past year has evidenced that partnership working, and in this edition you will see features on town centre street patrols sponsored by the local police, borough council and town centre management.

To move partnership working forward, we are seeking to create a new fifth block which will include the growth agenda for Swindon. Over the next twenty years we anticipate an extra 32,000 dwellings serving a total Swindon population of 225,000. is considered and completed in a fully sustainable manner in line with our adopted Climate Change objectives. But we want to ensure that 30% of the new homes built are affordable housing for rent or part rent/part purchase. Also in this new block we would wish to ensure transport infrastructure is improved. This may include more dedicated bus corridors carrying commuters and shoppers into and out of the town centre, clearly signed pedestrian and cycle routes across the whole borough and variable message signs to car parks indicating space availability.



*"What a coincidence! We're a pair who use teamwork to improve our locality too."*

Picture courtesy of IdEA website



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

## Patrol teams take to the town centre

The town's first Street Team has started patrolling the streets.

The six-strong team has been appointed by inSwindon, formerly the town centre management company, and will be focused on making the area a better place to visit.

The uniformed group will work with the police and the council and act as ambassadors for the town.

Their duties will include tackling anti-social behaviour and they will also be on hand to provide advice for visitors and the local community.

Mark Ross, chief executive officer of inSwindon, said: "The Street Team is highly trained and will use their expertise to spread positive change across the town centre.

"They will be our eyes and ears on the streets engaging with the local community on a daily basis and offering a quick response to any problems such as littering or graffiti."

The team is funded by businesses in the town centre.

InSwindon was created in May as a result of a two-year campaign led by Swindon Council and its project partner, the South West of England Regional Development Agency (RDA).

More than two thirds of local businesses voted in favour of the independent company, agreeing to contribute an additional one per cent of their business rates for five years. In return, inSwindon will play an active role in the regeneration of the town and will pioneer new schemes to make the area a more pleasant place to shop, live, work and visit.

Steve Richards, head of operations for Wiltshire & Swindon branch of the South West RDA, said: "Initiatives such as the Street Team will help implement the day-to-day improvements that are needed to enhance visitors' town centre experience. "This is key to improving the quality and profitability of the area, ensuring that Swindon remains a competitive commercial centre for many years to come."

The inSwindon street team is on hand to provide help and information, as well as move on illegal street traders, help people home at the end of the night and offer on-the-ground CCTV monitoring.

They will work in pairs and will be on duty between 9am and 11pm from Monday to Saturday. For more information visit [www.inswindon.com](http://www.inswindon.com)



Picture courtesy of Swindon Advertiser



**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.**

## Inspired Project

The Science Museum's *Inspired* project will create the largest museum in Europe. It will save irreplaceable heritage from crumbling away and reignite Britain's love affair with technology, machines and stuff that explodes.

At the moment only 8% of the Science Museum's exhibits are on display. The rest is held in seven giant aircraft hangars on a bleak hillside just outside Swindon.



To go there is a truly jaw-dropping experience. Just to the left of the creaking, rusted door, tucked away in an unlit corner, is the world's first hovercraft, the mini submarine used in *For Your Eyes Only* and an early Wurlitzer jukebox. Elsewhere there's a huge 1930s hot metal printing press, several seriously important cars, and lots of early PCs: blue cabinets the size of small vans. In another hangar there are miles of racks, stacked from floor to ceiling and stuffed with everything that was ever important.

It is properly spooky; like being in a 3-D reach out and touch pop-up book on all the stuff that changed our lives. And what makes it even more eerie is this: there is nobody there.

*Inspired* will change all that. Creating somewhere where all the quarter of a million exhibits can be displayed properly. This ten acre, three storey, architectural wonder will sit high on the horizon overlooking the M4 with a rooftop meadow and a massive subterranean vault.



We live in a world where reliance on technology escalates every day, yet the number of people able to develop real solutions is diminishing rapidly. *Inspired* will make science 'serious fun' so that Britain's schoolchildren understand that they can be the ones to find cures for incurable diseases, feed

the world, and save the planet from global meltdown.

### “STOP PRESS”

The Science Museum has been knocked out of the competition for £50m of Lottery funding, below Chris Rapley, Director of the Science Museum has released this statement:

"We are extremely disappointed to find that we have been eliminated from the final round of the Big Lottery Fund's People's Millions. Inspired was a project to open up the 92 per cent of our collections which are at present not on public display. It was a critical project for the nation's heritage and for attracting the next generation of scientists and engineers to combat the pressing issues of our time.



We are devastated, especially for the people of Swindon, with whom we have had the closest and most positive of working relationships. We will be exploring ways with our partners to make these world class collections available to the public in spite of this setback".

Visit our websites: [www.swindonlaa.org.uk](http://www.swindonlaa.org.uk) and [www.swindonsp.org.uk](http://www.swindonsp.org.uk)



**Outcome 18: We will increase the number of people with mental health problems who are able to continue with or return to employment**

## TWIGS

TWIGS is part of the Richmond Fellowship that takes pride in providing a high class service for people seeking improved mental well-being. Whether you are in need of the service or are simply interested in knowing more about how you could become involved in an exciting and innovative community project. TWIGS is a stepping stone to recovery, further training and work integrated within the local community via our opportunities for volunteering and joint working.



### Gardens

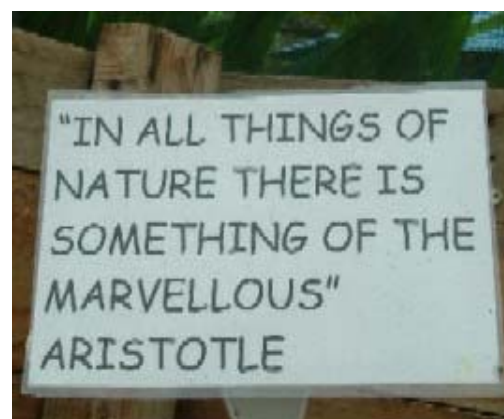


The Themed gardens are the focus of the main site and have evolved over the last seven years. Where ever possible art and sculpture has been incorporated to enhance the setting. There are four willow sculptures (which can be commissioned) within the gardens. These have been made from TWIGS own organically grown willow and add further interest. The plant sales and plant production areas form part of the garden site and visitors can see first hand how quality organic plants are produced.

An extensive collection of trees, shrubs and perennials have been put together over the years, so much so that TWIGS could perhaps now be regarded as 'Swindon's Botanic Gardens'

### Arts & Crafts

In the Craft Studio belief is in...Individuality... recycling... natural... inspiration... organics... balance... harmony... gorgeousness... and acceptance of each other. These are the words of the people who work in the craft studio. Fabulous resources both donated and bought from community funding. Processes are looked for that are therapeutic and enjoyable, such as felt making, textiles work, clay, natural dying, mosaic and papermaking. Skills are then used to create pieces for the site and temporary art projects for the Open Days. At TWIGS working as a group towards a common purpose is enjoyed. Beads are used in many different ways at the project – incorporated into designs for mobiles, jewellery and textile projects such as bags. Feeling part of this is a great way to build self-esteem and confidence, and there are other ways it can help. The process can improve concentration, help to focus and improve dexterity. It is also an opportunity for people to try out their own designs and ideas and make decisions about what works.



# TWIGS continued

## Carpentry

As well as TWIGS' Green Woodworking venture, facilities are offered for individuals of all skill levels to undertake more "conventional" woodworking activities. For those who want to learn the basics of woodworking under supervision, a skilled volunteer is available to teach and mentor on Tuesdays, although the volunteers who attend on other days would also be pleased to help and advise. All this is carried out in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.



## Conservation

The positive benefits from engaging with Nature in an unspoilt environment are now widely recognised. Perhaps the best known programme for promoting the health benefits from conservation activities is the BTCV 'Green Gym'. We work in partnership with Great Western Community Forest and the Forestry Commission to run a weekly group at Nightingale Woods just to the East of Swindon. Participants help maintain a maturing woodland and learn traditional skills and gain self-esteem by contributing to a valued public resource.

TWIGS is open every Wednesday and Friday from 10.00 am to 3.30 pm.

Contact TWIGS at: [twigs@richmondfellowship.org.uk](mailto:twigs@richmondfellowship.org.uk) Or telephone: 01793 523294

TWIGS can be discovered at Manor Garden Centre, Cheney Manor, Swindon, SN2 2QJ.





**Outcome 15: We will improve the overall health of local people particularly in relation to coronary heart disease, cancer and sexually transmitted infections.**

## Swindon wins cycling lottery

Swindon is one of the towns set to benefit from a £6.3 million project promoting cycling to the less physically active. The 4-year 'Cycling Champions' project, starting in January 2008, will be run by CTC (the UK's national cyclists' organisation) and backed by the Big Lottery Fund.

The scheme has the full backing of Active Swindon – a partnership between Swindon PCT, Swindon Borough Council and the Great Western Community Forest – and could help significantly increase the fitness levels and physical activity of residents.



Gesa Reiss, Great Western Community forest officer, commented: "Active Swindon is delighted to be involved in this exciting partnership with the CTC. In the past year we have been developing National Standards Cycle training and promoting cycling in Swindon through the Active Swindon project. Hopefully, the 'Cycling Champions' programme will help to drive up physical activity levels in Swindon by establishing cycling as a major activity within the community. It will also compliment the excellent work going on in our schools through the 'Bike it' initiative."

The Cycling Champions project will organise activities such as group rides, cycle training and cycle maintenance courses. A new Community Cycling Development Officer will also be recruited to work with local community groups in Swindon that are currently less likely to cycle.

CTC Director Kevin Mayne said: "This is a great new job in a national team that can really boost health and physical activity in Swindon. We are looking forward to helping thousands of people in the area give cycling a try because otherwise they might be missing out on a cheap, clean and healthy transport and leisure choice."

[www.swindon.gov.uk/activeswindon](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/activeswindon)



# 10 cycling facts

- 1.** Your heart muscles are strengthened, resting pulse is lowered and blood fat levels reduced. Cycling gives a level of fitness equivalent to being 10 years younger
- 2.** Cycling is a practical way to keep fit and can help you maintain a healthy weight. Average cycling burns about 300 calories per hour. 75% all personal journeys are less than 5 miles long - that's half an hour on a bike.
- 3.** Cycling exercises most of the muscles in your legs and bum - so it's an excellent way to tone these areas
- 4.** Switching short journeys from car to bicycle will benefit your health and your community. You'll be helping to reduce noise and air pollution as well as traffic congestion
- 5.** Your strength, stamina, aerobic fitness and general muscle function will all be improved. Cycling is a low impact activity and one of the safest ways to exercise without risk of over-exertion or strain to muscles and joints.
- 6.** Regular physical activity encourages other healthy behaviour and could even help you give up smoking
- 7.** It's cheaper than joining a gym! Bicycles require no tax to pay, no MOT, no insurance, no licensing and above all no fuel. Bicycles can be parked almost anywhere for free and you won't need to wait for the bus.
- 8.** You'll be keeping good company; well-known cyclists include Madonna and Ellen MacArthur
- 9.** It's not just cheaper for you; it saves the country money too! Every time a car driver converts to cycling, it saves almost £400 a year from reduced costs to the NHS and employers through lower sickness rates and less congestion. A 20 per cent increase in cycling would save more than £500million by 2012.
- 10.** CTC offers its members a range of support services including third party insurance, travel and theft insurance and breakdown cover. More details at <http://www.ctc.org.uk>





**Outcome 15: We will improve the overall health of local people particularly in relation to coronary heart disease, cancer and sexually transmitted infections.**

## Active Swindon

**Do you enjoy walking? Do you like meeting people? Do you want to improve your health?** If the answer is yes, yes, yes, why not join Active Swindon's growing band of volunteer walking leaders? Our walking leaders, whom we support with full training, will lead brisk 30 minute "Health Walks" in different parts of Swindon. Active Swindon's Health Walks take place in green environments to enhance people's feeling of well being, and normally require 2 qualified leaders to cope with varying levels of ability. Walking leaders are also free to design their own walking routes if they wish.



Training days last about 6 hours, are completely free, and are planned around the schedules of our volunteers. Active Swindon will also provide on-going support with expenses, planning the walks, and recruiting participants. Anyone can volunteer, making this a great opportunity to get active and help your community at the same time.

For future Training Day dates, or more information about volunteering for Active Swindon, visit our web page <http://www.swindon.gov.uk/volunteeringopportunities.pdf> or contact Nan Pratt on: 01793 466202 [npratt@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:npratt@swindon.gov.uk)

[www.swindon.gov.uk/activeswindon](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/activeswindon)



## Santa Dash



It may be a way off, but Christmas will come early to Swindon this year, when on Sunday 9th December a crowd of Santas will sprint through the town centre. Active Swindon has teamed up with the local Hash House Harriers to plan the 5km dash, and it is hoped that as well as getting people active, the event will raise money for the Prospect Hospice. So dust down your red suit, trim your beard, and get running – there might even be a mince pie in it for you.!



An entry form will be made available on the Active Swindon web page:

[www.swindon.gov.uk/activeswindon](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/activeswindon)

For further details, contact Nan Pratt on: Tel: 01793 466202

Email: [npratt@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:npratt@swindon.gov.uk)



## And Finally.....

### Forthcoming Events

- 1st-7th November—Youth Work Week
- 5th-11th November—Road Safety Week
- 19th-23rd November—Anti-bullying week
- 25th November—Cani cross event at Lydiard Park [www.canicross.co.uk](http://www.canicross.co.uk)
- TWIGS Christmas Collection Wednesday 28th November
- 9th December—5km Santa Dash through Swindon
- 8th February 2008—SSP Conference—NEW DATE—December conference postponed, full details on the Conference page of the SSP website [www.swindonsp.org.uk](http://www.swindonsp.org.uk)



Left to right: Janet, Alison & Matthew.

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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](mailto: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](mailto:swindonlaa@swindon.gov.uk)

Articles for the next edition to be submitted by 10th December 2007

**January 2008 edition will be published on: 2nd January 2008**

### Coming soon!

The next editions of "This is Swindon" will contain updates on the new 2008 LAA.

A reminder that the SSP Conference is being held on 8th February 2008 at the Oakfield Campus.

If you have anything you would like to contribute to "This is Swindon" please e-mail to:

[swindonlaa@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:swindonlaa@swindon.gov.uk)