

Suicide and Self Harm the PIPS Project

In our last edition we provided some information on a local suicide awareness support group entitled 'Public Initiative for the Prevention of Suicide and Self Harm' (PIPS).

Tragically since then yet another young person who lived locally has taken his own life. Given the shocking increase in the level of suicide and self harm in North Belfast since the start of the new year we feel it is crucial that we once again publicise information about the PIPS project.

The reasons for this frightening upsurge are complex and difficult to fully understand. However it is hardly a coincidence that it is occurring more frequently in areas such as the New Lodge and Ardoyne that have suffered severely from unemployment, poverty and under development as well as from decades of armed conflict.

During recent consultations with local people the issues of anti social behaviour, crime and vandalism have been identified as a scourge in this community. More often than not young people have been blamed. People feel helpless and angry and sometimes demand extreme measures. This is often an understandable reaction. Nevertheless there can be no quick fixes to the many, deeply complex social and economic problems that afflict this community. Let's be clear, anti-social behaviour, crime and vandalism are unacceptable.

However it is also important that we as a community do not forget that this neighbourhood has been starved of resources for decades. Indeed without resources, jobs and hope for the future the problems that we are now experiencing are inevitable.

It is crucial that our young people are given the opportunities that everyone should be entitled to in order to lead a decent life. It is probably more important than ever that we should all pay special care and attention to our young people and particularly those who appear to be under pressure, stress or who are suffering depression. It is also important that we as a community look out for each other and pull together in common cause to make the New Lodge a better place to live in. This means that there must be an improved common understanding between all sections of our community, while everyone has the right to be heard, everyone must also be prepared to listen.

Anyone seeking advice help or support in relation to issues of self -harm should contact:

Joe Barnes at Tar Isteach 133 Hillman St. 90-746798,

Joe Doherty at the Ashton Centre 90-742255

Jo Murphy at Partnership Board (Duncairn Gardens) 90-752990



Community Empowerment Youth Day

On Saturday 28th of February a Youth Open day will be held in the New Lodge and Newington areas. The aim of the day is to let all local young people know what is available to them. The day will also enable young people to have their say on what they feel should happen in their area and how they think the area can be improved. They can do this by talking to workers and filling in questionnaires.

All the youth centres in the area are opening their doors for the day. Local youth workers also aim to provide a wide range of fun and activities for young people. These will include out-door pursuits, video production and editing, health and beauty, football, swimming, bowls, graffiti art and much more. For any further information contact any of the following youth providers;

- Artillery Youth Centre 90-752069
- Grey Gables Upper Meadow St (BELB) 9075 4835
- Star Neighbourhood Centre 9074 0693
- Newington Residents 9074 0919



Training for Registered Child Minding

When applying to register as a childminder no formal qualifications are required. However if you are interested in becoming a child minder you must attend a training course one evening per week for five weeks. The course covers:

Why registration? The role of the childminder, Health and Safety
Child Protection
Play Provision
Behaviour Management /childhood illness/child development
Business side of childminding/fees etc

The next course will run in March. For further information contact Christine McKeown at the Ashton Centre, phone 90-742255.



Computer Connections

Based in North Belfast, Computer Connections is a community owned computer support enterprise that focuses on delivering quality, computer hardware, software and networking support. The enterprise is owned and managed by the Ashton Community Trust and as such will be representative of and accountable to the community, mirroring the Trusts many other successful projects.

Services Include:

Hardware supply and installation
Software supply and installation
Supply of complete computer systems
Computer systems built to customer specification
Supply of peripherals
Upgrading
Service contracts and support
Network installation and set-up

Customer Focus

We believe our background allows us to give better customer support and gives us a greater knowledge of the sector and its needs. Our emphasis will be on a "customer focused" approach rather than either a technology or purely profit led one. We aim to give comprehensive advice on all of the services outlined above so that the SMEs, groups and individuals who approach us receive a solution best suited to their needs rather than ours.

Contact Robin or Jason on 90742255.

This project will be moving to new premises soon.

Families of the New Lodge Six Petition the U.N.

Belfast Lord Mayor, Martin Morgan, MLA Gerry Kelly, international Lawyer Ed Lynch and New York Supreme Court Judge, Patrick Henry were among a host of legal dignitaries and politicians that joined with the relatives of the New Lodge Six at a press conference in the Lord Mayor's parlour at City Hall on Wednesday the 11th of February. The press conference was held to officially launch a petition to the United Nations in respect to the killings of six young local men on the weekend of February 3rd and 4th 1973. This latest move by the



Families of New Lodge Six gather at the City Hall

comes on the back of a Community Inquiry held in St Kevin's Hall last year that found that Tony Campbell, Ambrose Hardy, John Loughran, Brendan Maguire, Jim McCann and Jim Sloane had been killed without any justification by the British Army.



Willie Loughran, brother of John signs petition.

Turning The Tides

If you are aged 18-22 and want to talk about history, politics and society but want to do it in a way that is challenging and exciting the Turning The Tides project may be the experience you have been waiting for. This project is funded through the Shankill Stress and Trauma Centre in partnership with the Ashton Community Centre and TIDES training.

The aim of the project is to bring young people from different backgrounds together to get talking, get active and get creative. The project will include residentials, evenings and day trips and will look at life through art, chat, outdoor adventure and meeting others. If you want to know more, contact Joe Doherty at the Ashton Centre or phone him at 90-742255.

Part – Time Survey Workers Needed

- Are you interested in getting involved in your local community?
- Do you have the time to take part in a survey for the local area?

There is a survey about to be done in the Greater New Lodge area to find out what people know about their social and economic rights.



There is a local task group looking at how a rights agenda can improve the quality of people's lives, working with Community Technical Aid Dublin and we are looking for a number of local people to do the research over an 8 weeks period

You will get all the training you need And there will an allowance for the work.

If you are Interested please contact: Paul O'Neill/Jim Deery
Ashton Centre, 5 Churchill Street, Belfast BT1 5 2BP, Phone 90 742255

Community Consultation Process

A very successful series of community empowerment public information meetings have taken place in the area during January. The purpose of these meetings was to give people an opportunity to come together in order to reflect on needs, issues and concerns affecting the local community.

While the meetings offered an opportunity to focus on serious social matters they also provided the chance for local residents to relax and enjoy time out in the company of friends and neighbours.



At the meetings residents were asked to complete questionnaires that had been prepared by local community activists. The information gathered will assist local community groups to develop a strategy aimed at addressing the needs of local people. The meetings are also intended as the first step in a process aimed at maximising community ownership of and participation in local community development activity.

Local residents gather for Community information meetings.

From top down: Senior citizens in St Kevin's Hall. Men in Fitzgeralds. Women in 174 Trust.



COMMUNITY NOTICE

**ARE THERE OLD MATTRESSES,
FRIDGES ETC LYING ABOUT
YOUR AREA? OR DO YOU NEED
SOMETHING REMOVED FROM
YOUR HOUSE?**

GET IT LIFTED AND SHIFTED.

PHONE 90-270230

**A FREE SERVICE FROM
THE BELFAST CITY
COUNCIL**

