

## **New virtual community notice board launched in Salisbury**

People in Salisbury will have the opportunity to talk about what matters to them through a new community blogsite.

Salisbury Our Community Matters is the first in a series of community blogsites that is being launched across Wiltshire throughout this year. You can visit the site and join the conversation at [www.salisbury.ourcommunitymatters.org.uk](http://www.salisbury.ourcommunitymatters.org.uk)

These sites will act like a virtual notice board that local communities can use to publicise events and have discussions.

Unlike more traditional websites, these blogsites will be fully interactive and local people will be able to post stories and have their say on what other people are talking about. They will also be a free channel for local organisations to publicise community events.

People will be able to see an informal demonstration of the site at the Salisbury Area Board on July 5 at Salisbury Methodist Church between 6.30pm and 7pm before the start of the meeting. The Board will also launch its search for local volunteer community reporters who will be trained and equipped to post stories, photos and videos featuring anything from concerts and events to oral histories and vox pops.

It has been developed by Wiltshire Council with the support of NHS Wiltshire, Wiltshire Police, Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service and Salisbury City Council as part of its commitment to help strengthen local communities.

These blogsites are part of the council's innovation with social media to find additional ways to talk with local people about what matters to them. Social media is being used across a range of council services already to better engage with local people and provide them with relevant, instant and up to date information.

John Thomson, deputy council leader and cabinet member for local communities, said: "We are committed to working with people at a local level and helping them continue to create strong and vibrant communities. These blogsites will build and support the work we are already doing to help 18 community areas help themselves through area boards, developing neighbourhood plans and creating state-of-the-art campuses."

Similar blogsites will be rolled out to the other 17 community areas by February 2013.

Ends

## **WANTED: VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY REPORTERS**

Do you love Salisbury? Do you enjoy the buzz of community life? Do you keep up with current affairs and local news? Do you know your way around a computer? If so, you could be just the person we are looking for.

The Salisbury Area Board is looking to recruit a team of volunteer community reporters to cover events, stories and issues in the City. You will work as a team to report on things going on in Salisbury – you might be: writing theatre reviews, reporting on the match, interviewing people about local issues, taking photos at special events, shooting a short oral history video. Who knows where the next commission might lead?

And don't worry; you will receive training from professional journalists. You will be accredited with a press pass that will get you back stage and behind the scenes at events. You will be given the equipment that you need to take photos, record interviews and shoot short films. You will gain new skills and your blogs will be read by thousands of local people. You will be at the very heart of community life and be part of the transformation of this fabulous City.

As part of the team, you will meet up regularly with fellow community reporters to plan your activities and as your skills and confidence grow you will play a leading role in managing the City's first ever community owned blog.

So, if you have a few hours to spare each week and you want to be part of something new and exciting for Salisbury, then why not give it a try?

If you are interested in becoming a community reporter or you just want to find out a little more about what is involved, please contact:

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