

## **Report of the BA13+ Partnership Meeting**

The BA13+ Community Area Partnership's latest meeting was held on 17<sup>th</sup> September in Edington Parish Hall. The theme of the evening was Community Safety.

The guest speakers were Mike Bedford MBE and Janine Watkins from the SPLITZ support service. Mike explained that he manages the domestic abuse perpetrators programme. There are currently three full groups, in addition to a Relapse Prevention Group, and currently a waiting list of 44 men. The age range of men they see ranges from 21 to 75. The waiting list is around 8 to 10 months at the moment, and the men have to ring in regularly to show they are motivated. The number of people completing the course is 70%. Abusive behaviour is reduced in an estimated 90% of cases.

Janine explained that she is the outreach worker for West Wiltshire. During the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 there had been 560 referrals to the outreach project for one-to-one work, of which 47 were from Westbury in the past year. This was increase over the previous year (381 with 35 from Westbury). The Police believe they only hear about 20% of cases so it's possible that the true picture could be 5 times worse than this.

Particular issues facing Westbury and other rural areas in Wiltshire are: Lack of knowledge of what's available or accessible to people; concern that people will become the subject of village gossip; concern that other family members will find out; stigma and shame attached to reporting issues, particularly if the perpetrator is seen to be a "pillar of the community".

There are very few services in the Westbury area that are specifically able to deal with young people aged from 5 to 10 years old.

Mike underlined the fact that SPLITZ is a crisis intervention service but that there is no funding whatsoever from Wiltshire Council. Their current funding is from the lottery, and that runs out on 31<sup>st</sup> March.

Last year for example they had 22 children come off the child protection plan as a result of their work, which is a huge saving to the Council – approximately £500,000 in a year.

The meeting agreed that the Partnership should formally write to Wiltshire Council saying that they need to support this very important service.

The date of the next Partnership meeting is on 19<sup>th</sup> November at the Laverton in Westbury. The theme is to be Children and Young People.