

Report of the BA13+ Partnership Meeting

The BA13+ Community Area Partnership's latest meeting was held on 19th November at the Laverton in Westbury. The theme of the evening was Children and Young People.

The guest speakers were Ruth Brooks-Martin from the Children's Centre, Phoebe Brazier, Westbury's Community Youth Officer, and Catherine Maxwell from Anybody Can Cook.

Phoebe opened by explaining the new model for youth in the community area. The new model incorporates community youth workers, and a Local Youth Network which includes representation such as Sally Hendry from the Area Board, plus school, town and parish council, police, health organisations, etc. There will be a management group of around 10 people. Young people will work with the members to decide how the money that the Area Board has is going to be spent. There will be a catalogue containing providers approved by Wiltshire Council and local groups can apply for a grant from the available funding (£11,000 in total).

The 15 or so young people who attended the meeting expressed an interest in learning skills such as cooking and video editing.

Ruth Brooks-Martin then explained about the work that goes on the Children's Centre. They were set up by the labour govt. aimed primarily at less well-off children aged 5 and under. They work with lone parents, workless households (something like 91% of the workless households locally are registered with the children's centre). They have outreach workers who work with families in the home. There was some concern expressed by the meeting over dental health and the fact that it's very difficult to access data about oral health in the Westbury area. The presentation was followed by a short exercise based on three scenarios which underlined the work that the Children's Centre undertakes. Ruth also explained the value and importance placed on working closely with Crosspoint.

Catherine Maxwell then explained the Anybody Can Cook initiative, which was delivering cookery sessions tailored to meet the needs of a particular group. Public health have commissioned courses for children's centres, for example. Catherine was looking for a grant to work with the food bank to teach people who are accessing the food parcels the skills they need to cook very basic recipes. It doesn't have to be expensive to cook, and the food parcels often contain quite a motley selection of different goods. The grant application will be considered at the next Steering Group meeting, which takes place on Wednesday 2nd December at Crosspoint.