

**The Moray Council - Community Support Unit
Elgin North & South Area Update
June 2010**

In Elgin staff from the Community Support Unit, a section of the Moray Council's Chief Executives department, are based in New Elgin Primary School Annexe (NEON) and Elgin Business Centre, Maisondieu Road.

Community Support Officer Elgin North – Denise Gormley (24 hours)

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Please feel free to drop in if you have any questions or have something you wish to discuss with staff. We would suggest that you phone first.

Local Updates – what have we been doing?

Denise and Linda have attended meetings in an introductory capacity with several local groups including:

- Bishopmill Hall
- Spynie Hall
- Elgin City Football Club – Community Development
- Milntonduff Public Hall
- Birnie Village Hall
- Elgin Allotment Association
- New Elgin & Ashgrove Public Hall
- Bilbohall Tenants Forum

We are also continuing support to groups through existing links and where we had previously agreed commitments. These include:

- Elgin North Area Forum
- City and Royal Burgh of Elgin Community Council
- Waulkmill Residents Association
- Elgin Ear
- Linkwood Residents Association
- Elgin South Area Forum

Needs assessments of local community groups – As you may be aware needs assessments with a wide range of community based groups across the Elgin area were undertaken during the latter part of last year and some more recently. This allowed us an opportunity to explain what we within the Community Support Unit would be doing, the types of support on offer locally and an indication of how best we could support a particular group or organisation over a set time of period. As a result of our meetings, we have been able to put together support agreements with a number of groups.

These agreements will ensure that the support we offer groups in the area is based on identified need, will be of a high quality and will allow group members and ourselves to plan the support we can offer. The use of the support agreements will also ensure that everyone will know what to expect at any given time whilst maximising the support to and staff resource section of the community. The support agreements will also allow us to better plan our team activity plan for the Elgin area.

Moray Better Community Engagement Demonstration Project: The BCE Demonstration project is a Scottish Government initiative aimed at supporting frontline agency staff and community based groups in Scotland to develop better community engagement skills. In Moray a Steering Group consisting of members of local Community Councils, Area Forums, and Village Hall Committees & Moray Equalities Forum has been formed to develop and oversee local activity pilot projects. Staff from the Community Support Unit, along with representatives from agencies across Moray attended the launch of The Better Community Engagement Pilot in Elgin on the 1st March 2010. The Community Support Unit staff will be supporting the identified pilot groups to develop and ensuring the use of the VOICE toolkit.

Denise is currently supporting the following pilot project, “Engaging a hard to reach community (youth and adults) which is listed in the deprived data zones within the SIMD.”

National statistics and local professional feedback has indicated and evidenced the difficulties in engaging with all age groups of residents in the South Lesmurdie community. This project is lead jointly by Elgin Community Learning & Development Youth Team and Elgin North Area Forum. The project aims to develop, implement and evaluate an innovative community engagement model to allow consultation, identification of need and ways to respond to need within South Lesmurdie with both young and adult members of the community.

The lead organisations are developing a multi-agency approach and are working in partnership to ensure sustained engagement. The project have held their first meeting, have made initial entries into the VOICE toolkit and are working on developmental aspects of the project. The following is a list of partners involved, at this stage, in the project:

SCVO, Elgin Academy, Elgin Library and Learning Centre, Volunteer Centre, Grampian Police, Moray Council Housing Department, Grampian Health.

Linda was supporting the following pilot project, 'Service user involvement in Long Term Conditions'. However, this pilot project has been suspended following the dissolution of the multi agency Moray Long Term Conditions Steering Group and the setting up of a new Shifting the Balance of Care Group. The pilot project will reconvene as soon as the similarities or differences between the foregoing groups has been established.

Elgin North Area Forum: The Community Support Unit is currently assisting the forum with the following:

- developing forum membership within the local community to ensure it is representative of the Elgin North area.
- developing and implementing protocols and procedures to ensure effective outcomes for the forum.
- reviewing the forum action plan to ensure it reflects current priorities.
- further developing relationships and partnership working with Elgin South Area Forum and Elgin Community Council.
- developing the litter sub group to look at ways of tackling the ongoing litter issues within the community.
- trialling meetings through a rolling programme of different venues and with guest speakers sharing information on topical issues. This will be evaluated at the end of the year.
- responding to community issues as and when raised at meetings.

Elgin North Area Forum also has representatives sitting on the NHS Transport Group and Older Peoples Strategy Group where views are fed in and brought back to the forum.

The next Elgin North Area Forum is scheduled for Tuesday 6th July 2010, 7.30pm in Bishopmill Hall.

Bishopmill Village Hall: At a recent committee meeting it was agreed that the Community Support Unit would provide support on the following aspects:

- Promotion / advertising of hall
- Hall energy efficiency issues

City & Royal Burgh of Elgin Community Council: The Community Support Unit has actively got involved with a number of developmental tasks with the community council. Current priorities are:

- developing and supporting a youth committee
- support to raise awareness and understanding of the Community Council and its role
- providing support and guidance to further develop partnership links with other Community Planning Partners and professionals
- responding to requests via Community Council meetings

Waulkmill Residents Association: The Community Support has provided and continues to provide support to this newly established community action group. Recent input has assisted in the drafting of a constitution, community newsletter, membership guidance / forms, developing working relationships with a variety of professionals to address identified community issues and support to facilitate community meetings. Future tasks include appropriate training for office bearers, developing a community action plan and promotional / marketing plan.

Elgin Ear (Community Engagement Pilot Project between Elgin Community Council, Elgin North Area Forum and Elgin South Area Forum): The Community Support Unit has had a key role in supporting the development of this pilot initiative. Key achievements have been linking the project with appropriate professionals and partners to achieve their outcomes such as Elgin Academy Technical Department. Training has also been delivered to the Elgin Ear Steering Group. Ongoing support is provided in terms of the promotion, implementation and evaluation of the project.

Ongoing correspondence continues with community groups such as Spynie Hall and Elgin City Football Club in terms of funding and training opportunities. Community Support Unit staff are also aligned to specific tasks at the request of management such as currently providing support to lunch clubs.

Elgin South Area Forum: The Community Support Unit is currently assisting the forum with the following:

- reviewing the Forum's action plan to ensure it reflects current priorities
- developing membership of the forum to ensure it is representative of the community
- developing relationships and partnership working with Elgin North Area Forum
- developing and implementing a promotional strategy to assist in raising the profile of the Forum
- varying meeting venues and developing themed meetings with guest speakers from partner organisations

- responding to community issues, as appropriate, when raised at meetings
Elgin South Area Forum also has representatives who attend meetings of the Older People's Reference Group, Moray Forum and Urban Freedom Group where views are fed in and brought back to the Forum.

The next meeting of Elgin South Area Forum is scheduled for Tuesday 20th July 2010 at New Elgin and Ashgrove Public Hall at 7pm.

Linkwood Residents Association

The Community Support Unit has and continues to provide support to this community action group. Recent support includes assisting in drafting a constitution, facilitating community meetings, advice and guidance relating to developing working relationships with a variety of agencies to address identified community issues. Future support will be afforded in relation to office bearer training and further development of an action plan.

Young Dookiteers

The Community Support Unit has provided support by facilitating contact with Active Schools staff, providing support to develop a constitution and have same formally adopted and assisted in identifying and securing much needed storage space. An outstanding support need of providing Child Protection training for young volunteers will be provided by Community Learning and Development (Youth)

New Elgin & Ashgrove Public Hall

At a recent committee meeting it was agreed that the Community Support Unit would meet with members of the publicity sub group to provide support in relation to the promotion/advertising of the hall with a view to increasing daytime usage.

Bilbohall Tenants Forum

At a recent committee meeting it was agreed that the Community Support Unit would meet with office bearers to provide support in developing promotional material with a view to increasing tenant participation in the forum.

Birnie Village Hall

Following attendance at the recent Annual General Meeting Community Support staff met with a committee member to provide support and guidance in relation to promotion/advertising of the hall with a view to increasing daytime and weekend usage.

We hope you have found this update useful and informative, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you require any further information.