

SCHOOLS OUT

AUTUMN 2010

Young people have their say

The first 'Have Your Say' Day with young people in the Thames Valley was held in Witney in May.

Seventy secondary school students in West Oxfordshire were invited to voice their opinions on important community safety issues. The team of 10 students from Woodgreen School won the competition for presenting the best idea to the other attendees.

Schools Officer PC Simon Collins said: "The day began with the screening of a short speech from local MP and Prime Minister David Cameron. He spoke about how important it is for young people to have their voices heard in their community.

"This was then followed by a range of talks covering key elements of the West Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership's work, which includes neighbourhood policing, drugs and alcohol, environmental crime and anti-social behaviour.

"After the presentations, the schools were asked to decide how they would spend £20,000 in their local area. Working in groups they chose their top issue

and produced a leaflet and poster to support it, before presenting their project idea to everyone.

"The winning school was Woodgreen, closely followed by Chipping Norton and Bartholomew Schools, but we were extremely impressed with all the ideas proposed."

Thames Valley Police Chief Constable Sara Thornton attended on the day to talk with the students and answer some of their questions about community safety. The students also filled in short surveys which revealed 97% feel that Oxfordshire is a safe place to live but 77% felt there is a lack of youth facilities available in the county.

The Community Safety Partnership will be following up on several ideas produced from the day and will work closely with the schools involved.



PC Simon Collins

Safer Schools Partnership Officer

How long have you been in post and what does your job involve?

I've been a schools officer since December 2005. I support all the schools in West Oxfordshire. I try to challenge offending behaviour by using education instead of enforcement but this isn't always possible.

I deliver lessons relating to the police and unacceptable behaviour, working alongside the schools to:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being

The use of education rather than enforcement is essential to engage with young people - this method is also better as they don't have a criminal record later on in life.

What work are you doing to tackle underage drinking and anti social behaviour?

We carry out regular patrols to tackle 'hot spots' with youth related issues. Anyone underage found with alcohol in a public place will have the drink seized and their parents/guardians called to collect them. They'll also have to go to an alcohol education workshop.

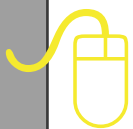
Do you work with any other agencies in your role and how does this help?

I work with educational social workers, drugs/alcohol workers, and behaviour support teams. Working with a variety of agencies and sharing information helps me to protect young people.

If a student was interested in becoming a police officer, how could they get started?

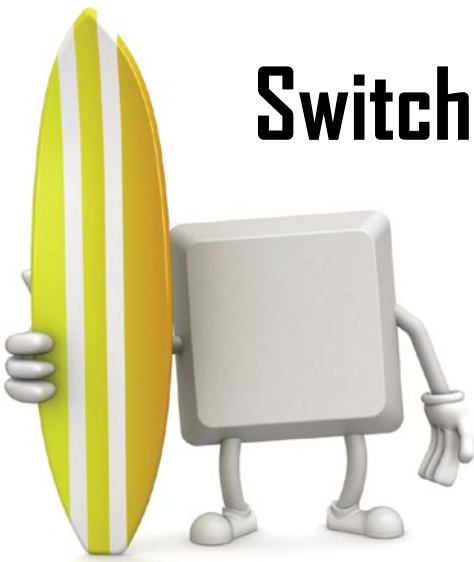
I'd recommend they study hard at school and achieve their full potential. I'd encourage them to get involved in schemes such as the Duke of Edinburgh award which offer great opportunities for personal development and community involvement.

The entry age for the police is 18 but you must be able to demonstrate maturity and confidence.



If you'd like to interview a police officer for the next issue of this newsletter please email Simon at: simon.collins@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Switch onto safer surfing...



The internet is a great place to find out information and stay in touch with friends but you shouldn't trust everything you read and everyone you meet online.

Here are some quick tips for staying safe and where you can get help:

- It's so easy to post online. But remember to think carefully before posting anything, even if it you delete the item later on, someone else may have saved it and could re-post it.
- People you meet online may not be who they say they are. Never arrange to meet anyone you've met online on your own. Always tell a trusted adult who can come with you.
- If someone is being inappropriate, perhaps saying sexual things to you or asking you to do things you feel are wrong, then report it to CEOP [www.ceop.police.uk/report-abuse]. You won't get in trouble and you don't have to put up with this behaviour online.

For more information on how to play it safe online visit:
www.thinkuknow.co.uk/11_16



GOING LOCAL

During the 'Young Peoples Have Your Say Day', many of the students said they didn't know about any activities taking place locally.

The following websites have details of leisure activities, youth facilities and volunteering and job opportunities in Oxfordshire.



West Oxfordshire District Council
www.westoxon.gov.uk/leisure

Activities Info
www.activitiesoxfordshire.info

Connexions
www.spired.com/connexions

Vinvolved Oxfordshire
www.vinvolvedox.org.uk

National Youth Agency
www.nya.org.uk

This publication is brought to you by West Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership.

Please call 01993 861640 if you would like a copy of Schools Out in another format.

If you have any comments or queries about Schools Out, please contact the editor on 01993 861640 or email community.services@westoxon.gov.uk

West Oxfordshire
COMMUNITY SAFETY
Partnership



Did you know your school is signed up to School Watch?

...and as such, all students are part of the School Watch scheme.

All schools in West Oxfordshire have signed up to the police run scheme to receive crime alerts via email. These range from information on incidents concerning schools to crime reduction advice.

The scheme covers protection of students and staff, parents and premises. Signs should be displayed prominently on the grounds and stickers are available.

If you notice anyone acting suspiciously in or near your school grounds then let a member of staff know immediately and they can contact the police if necessary. Try not to bring any valuables to school with you, but if you do so, ensure they are kept securely in your locker or zipped up in your bag.



On yer bike!

If you value your bike then make sure it's been security stamped or risk losing it!

Over the last 12 months there were 123 bike thefts in West Oxfordshire, 76 of these were from the Witney and Eynsham areas.

Many of us lock up our bike whilst out and about, but most of these thefts have been from peoples' gardens where bikes can be left leaning against a wall or unlocked in a shed.

Your bike should be locked up whenever you're not using it and you're encouraged to get your bike security marked. This helps the police to return it to you if it is stolen and recovered.

To take advantage of free bike marking, either take your bike along to Dentons Cycle Shop in Witney High Street or contact your local police community support officer who will happily do it for you. Call them on 0845 8 505 505 or pop into the police station.



When you have finished
with this please recycle it