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Contacts: Communications Team – 01977 724654/5

What's the word on the street about ASB?

A coalition of local authorities was out in force on the streets of the Peacock Estate in Wakefield this week to gather anonymous reports from residents about anti-social behaviour (ASB).

The visit, which was carried out by Wakefield and District Housing (WDH), West Yorkshire Police, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and Wakefield Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team, gave residents the chance to report on nuisance behaviour and criminal activity without the need to offer personal details.

Letters including phone numbers for residents to report instances of anti-social behaviour were also delivered along with leaflets on fire safety, should they wish to report information over the phone or at a later date.

PC Bernie Caulfield, Tenancy Support Officer for WDH, says the aim of the visit was to reassure residents that reports of anti-social behaviour are being investigated and that they can support the drive to prevent crime by using the information given to them.

"Visiting the residents face-to-face and being out and about on the estate shows that we take anti-social behaviour very seriously," says Bernie. "We want people to know that they can come to us regarding the issues that concern them most, and we can act on their information."

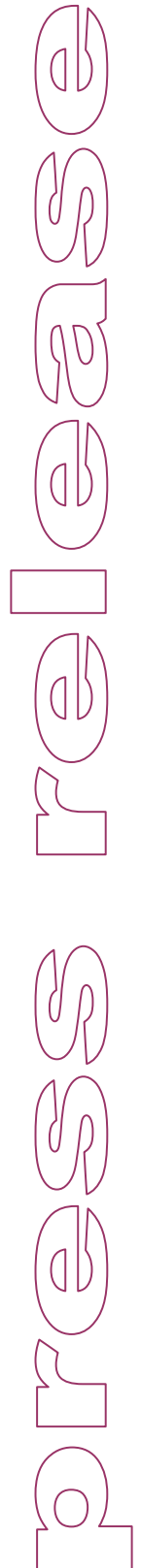
"We've not just spoken to residents - we've also been in touch with the owners of local off-licences about repercussions of selling alcohol to under-18s."

"It's not a heavy-handed operation by any means. We're working with the families and kids as part of an ongoing commitment to prevent anti-social behaviour from happening."

The visit also aimed to identify and remove any rubbish and graffiti from the streets, which led to a rather unusual discovery.

"While walking the streets we noticed a large trampoline that had been left on a grass verge," says Bernie. "We were able to report this to the WDH Impact Team, who removed it within the hour."

Local resident Basil Wood, who has lived on the Peacock estate for over 35 years, believes the visit will have a positive effect on the neighbourhood and help to reduce anti-social behaviour.



“It’s alright talking about it and writing about it, but what people want is a visual presence,” says Mr Wood. “I think it’s important that people can see action – that is what will have the biggest impact.



“I think visits like this can make the difference.”

ENDS

Notes To News Editors

1. Photo caption: WDH Estate Officer Julie Shales, WDH Tenancy Support Officer Bernie Caulfield and Donna Wagner from the Wakefield Fire Service Arson Team at the visit to the Peacock Estate in Wakefield.
2. WDH was established in April 2005 and became the largest single transfer housing organisation in the country when it took ownership of homes from Wakefield Council. It manages 31,000 properties occupied by 100,000 tenants and has a workforce of over 1,400 people, making it one of the largest local employers. WDH became the first housing organisation in the north, and the third in the UK to achieve the top rating of three stars from the Audit Commission in October 2007. The rating was awarded in particular for WDH’s progress in delivering major repairs, the range of ways tenants can access services, and the high standards of customer care. WDH were also commended for their clear focus on delivering value for money services, catering for vulnerable people and impacting on the regeneration of the area.
3. WDH has been awarded Silver Band status by Sustainable Homes Index For Tomorrow (SHIFT), which recognises housing organisations’ environmental sustainability and commitment to preventing climate change.

