

SAFER STREETS FUNDING FOR NINEFIELDS, WALTHAM ABBEY

A successful bid for government cash to fund a ground-breaking community project in Waltham Abbey's Ninefields estate has been approved.

£338,000 Safer Streets funding, boosted by £169,000 match funding from Epping Forest District Council was announced in September.

The two-year project aims to improve the environment, safety and health and wellbeing of residents living on the Ninefields estate.

YOU SAID

A survey with residents during the pandemic raised concerns about the local environment, lack of amenities for young people and perception of drug taking and antisocial behaviour on the estate.

As a result, the Council's Community Resilience, Property and Housing, Culture and Wellbeing teams, got together with the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner, to make the bid to the Home Office.

WE DID

Youth activities

The estate already benefitted from a Tuesday Youth Club run by the Waltham Abbey church. The Safer Streets project has funded an additional night every Thursday from September 2022. The Youth Clubs which are based at the Hazlewood Children's Centre offer up to 25 young people the opportunity to participate in a range of activities including games, arts, sport, educational life skill programmes and cookery.

The Safer Streets funding is commissioning a Youth Bus to attend the estate, particularly during school holidays to carry out outreach work with young people on Friday evenings between March – September 2023.

In March 2023, a theatre company will be presenting 'Broadcast Junior' to the primary schools in the area for years 5 and 6. 'Broadcast Junior' is an interactive workshop which provides advice around the use of social media, meeting people alone, TikTok dares and other challenges that young people might face from their exposure to technology and social media. Parents will also be invited to attend separate events to equip parents with the tools needed to support their children with these issues.

It is proposed to provide two roadshows, #consequences and Stop & Think for King Harold School students. These roadshows will tackle relevant issues that young people face and the consequences around their actions, such as gang culture, drugs, and anti-social behaviour. Stop and Think is a roadshow to improve the relationship between young people and the police.

Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing

In November, a 'Stay Safe and Well this Winter' event was held at the Town Hall, Waltham Abbey. Many partner organisations attended the event such as, Police, Fire, Ambulance, NHS, Foodbank, Places Leisure and St. Clare Hospice. Covid vaccinations and health checks were also offered. A theatre company presented 'School for Scammers', to the 70 attendees, which was an interactive performance to raise awareness of scamming methods.

We are hoping to offer young people self-defence sessions as part of the funding. Crimestopper Zones were launched on the estate in October 2022, to encourage residents to report crime anonymously.

A series of awareness raising events around Hate Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour have been held, as well as weapon sweeps and estate walkabouts with partners. These will continue to be held over the lifetime of the project

The environment

A series of Domestic Household Waste Amnesty days to reduce fly tipping in the area, will be held on 4 Saturdays across December and January. Households will be able to dispose of small electric items, textiles, furniture and white goods for free (proof of address will be required).

A series of campaigns will be run across the two years to raise awareness and combat a variety of environmental crimes including, fly tipping and dog fouling. This will include improved signage and evenings of action, to check for unauthorised waste carriers and fly tippers.

We will arrange leaflet drops to all residents on the estate to raise awareness of how to dispose of waste responsibly.

We will also install and / or make improvements to some of the bin stores to help prevent fly tipping, reduce the risk of arson, and improve the appearance of the estate.

Mobile CCTV cameras will be placed in known hot spot areas to combat fly tipping and anti-social behaviour. A permanent CCTV system will be placed around a new play area and multi-use games area.

We are presently looking at how we can design out anti-social behaviour on the large green space central to the estate. Subject to a positive consultation, we will be looking to thin out / reduce some of the hedgerows and lift some of the trees behind Skarnings, Stanford, Tillingham and Read Courts to increase natural surveillance, thereby deterring criminal activity through making potential offenders more visible.

Estate enhancements

During previous public consultation, residents told us that they would like:

- a new play area for aged 5–12-year-olds (funded by a combination of funding from the More than Bricks and Mortar funding estate enhancement scheme and UK Prosperity funding)
- a multi-use games area to include a range of sporting activities for the whole family (funded by a combination of More than Bricks and Mortar funding and UK Prosperity funding)
- Wayfinder signs to help people to navigate around the estate (funded from the More than Bricks and Mortar estate enhancement scheme)
- 'Welcome to Ninefields' signs to create a sense of place (funded from the More than Bricks and Mortar estate enhancement scheme)

HOW CAN RESIDENTS GET INVOLVED?

You can get involved in many ways, as little or as much as you wish, based on your interests, time available and communication preferences:

- become a Court / Road Champion*
- respond to consultations (will be advertised on social media and EFDC website)
- keep informed through the council's website
- keep your eye out for posters (on noticeboards around the estate, Waltham Abbey social media pages and the EFDC Get Involved Facebook page) (www.facebook.com/efdcgetinvolved)
- Email us at ninefieldssaferstreets@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
- Write to us at Civic Offices, High Street, Epping, Essex CM16 4BZ
- Phone us on 01992 564000 and ask for the Community Safety team who are leading on this project

*What is a Court / Road Champion?

The main role of a Court / Road Champion is to provide a direct link between the community and the Council, passing on important information to their neighbours about the project and similarly allowing communications and observations to be passed back to the Council. As a Court Champion you will attend update meetings, may participate in estate walks and discuss options and ideas as experts living on the estate.

Do I need any training?

No training is necessary, just a willingness to be a good neighbour and an appetite to work with the Council.

How much time will I need to commit?

You could give as much or as little time as you are willing and able to give.

What's in it for me?

You will play an active role in shaping the direction of the project, help create a place where people want to live and meet other residents in a relaxed atmosphere. We currently have 25 residents who have signed up to be Court / Road Champions from across the estate, but we

don't yet have representation from every Court / Road on Ninefields. If you feel that this is an opportunity for you, please contact us ninefieldssafestreeets@eppingforestdc.gov.uk stating the Court or Road you live in.