

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

Meeting:	Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel
Date:	20 September 2004
Subject:	Provision for Children and Young People in Wealdstone
Key decision:	No
Responsible Chief Officer:	Executive Director (People First)
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning and Portfolio Holder for Social Care
Status:	Part 1
Wards:	Wealdstone
Enclosures:	Appendix 1

1. Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Members of Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel with an overview of out of school provision for children and young people in Wealdstone

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To note the report and comment accordingly.

REASON:

This report has been drawn up in response to a request from Members of the panel for information about out of school provision for children and young people in Wealdstone

3. Consultation with Ward Councillors

- 3.1. Ward Councillors are represented on the Panel

4. Policy Context

- 4.1. The Cabinet at its meeting in July 2002 introduced the New Harrow Project with a strong emphasis on local area-based services. This report provides information about out of school provision for children and young people in Wealdstone and is relevant to the development of area-based working.

5. Relevance to Corporate Priorities

5.1. This Plan relates to the following Corporate Priorities

- To promote Harrow as a centre of lifelong learning
- To strengthen Harrow's local communities
- To develop a prosperous and sustainable economy in Harrow
- To improve the quality of health and social care in Harrow

6. Background Information

6.1. Members of Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel, at their meeting held on 5 July 2004, requested a report be prepared for their September meeting on out of school provision for children and young people in Wealdstone and any obvious gaps in provision.

6.2. The report has been prepared from information supplied by Officers from the Sports Development Unit, Arts Development Unit, Parks Services and the Youth and Connexions Service.

6.3. The information presented in this report is based on information known to the respective services. For example information about groups has been derived from the Sports and Leisure Audit Database or the Directory of Registered Youth Organisations. To some extent these will have been self-selecting and there will be groups operating within Wealdstone which may have chosen not to register within an official directory – there is no information, for example, about faith based provision for children and young people; nor has this exercise attempted to capture the level of activity taking place within schools.

7. Out of School Provision for Children and Young People in Wealdstone

7.1. Harrow Leisure Centre, Grant Road Youth Centre and Wealdstone Library are located within the Wealdstone Ward. These provide a range of services direct to children and young people, but also serve as a venue for clubs, community and voluntary groups working with children and young people. The Youth Centre and the Library are due to relocate to new premises in the centre of Wealdstone by the end of this year, and these will offer enhanced facilities to the local community.

7.2. Appendix 1 contains details of those clubs, community and voluntary groups known to be providing activities and services on a regular basis to children and young people in Wealdstone. There are 30 groups in total (including Grant Road Youth Centre) and full details can be found in the Appendix. Broadly these groups can be categorised as follows:

- Sports Groups – 13 in total covering a range of sports including badminton, boxing, gymnastics, swimming, and scuba diving;
- Arts Groups – 5 in total covering literature and dance primarily;
- Uniformed Organisations – 6 Scout groups in total covering the range of scouting from Beavers to Explorer Scouts;
- Cultural Groups – 4 in total reflecting some of the diverse nature of Harrow;
- Youth Groups – 4 in total including Grant Road Youth Centre and Harrow Young Person's Centre.

- 7.3. There are a small number of Community Groups which also facilitate/provide activities and events on an occasional basis which involve children and young people. These include Wealdstone Active Community and Wealdstone Arts Society. In addition the Sangat Centre is located within the Ward and offers various activities, including Asian Dance for children and young people with disabilities.
- 7.4. After school clubs operate at Grant Road Youth Centre and Whitefriars First and Middle School. Holiday Playschemes operate at Harrow Teachers' Centre.
- 7.5. Byron Recreation Ground provides a large open space which is a focal point for young people to meet and offers facilities for football, tennis, basketball, and bowling. 4 football clubs use this as their home base, Football in the Community (Watford Football Club) run sessions for girls and boys. In addition there is a skate park and a children's play area. The Recreation Ground also serves as a venue for an activity week delivered by a local church in the first week of the Summer holidays, and is also used by the Youth and Connexions Service as a venue for "youth work in the park". The only other green space in Wealdstone is Weald Village which has a set of football uprights for informal use by children and young people. This Open Space is relatively small and surrounded by residential property. Consultation with the Weald Village Residents and Tenants Association has identified a need for improvement towards a village green type environment rather than a formal multi-sports facility
- 7.6. From the information gathered for this report it would appear that Wealdstone has a wide range of relevant provision for children and young people, covering weekday evenings and weekends. A limited amount of the provision is targeted at children and young people with disabilities, and some provision would appear to be targeted at some of Harrow's Black and Minority Ethnic communities.
- 7.7. There are however some caveats to this. It is unclear to what extent children and young people who live within the Ward take up the opportunity offered by these groups and organisations. Nor is it clear to what extent this take up reflects the diversity of the local community. Facilities such as Harrow Leisure Centre are a Borough-wide resource and therefore draw their customer base from a much wider geographical area.
- 7.8. There are some gaps, if not in provision, at least in the information held/known about groups operating within Wealdstone. For example there appear to be no Guiding Units or Boys/Girl Brigade Units operating. Similarly provision in the Arts seems to be concentrated on a limited range of art forms and does not offer any opportunities for drama or creative arts, although these might form part of the general programme of activities offered at Grant Road Youth Centre and by other groups. It is also evident that some of the groups only operate within term-time and therefore it is reasonable to assume that there is less provision available to children and young people during holiday periods.
- 7.9. The Youth and Connexions Service, Children's Fund are working with Harrow Association of Voluntary Service to develop an infrastructure to provide more effective support to voluntary youth organisations in Harrow. This may then be the vehicle by which we can gather and disseminate more extensive information about provision for children and young people in Harrow.

8. Consultation

- 8.1. None

9. **Finance Observations**

9.1. None

10. **Legal Observations**

10.1. None

11. **Conclusion**

11.1. This report has not attempted to compare Wealdstone with other wards in Harrow so it is not possible to make any conclusions about the level of provision within the Ward in comparison to the levels of similar provision in other Wards. Certainly facilities such as Harrow Leisure Centre, Grant Road Youth Centre (one of only three youth centres) and Harrow Young Person's Centre are not present in other Wards. Indeed the Youth and Connexions Service has no physical presence in any of the 7 Wards which form the East Strategic Area. It does, therefore, seem reasonable to conclude that there is a good range of provision for children and young people in Wealdstone, although there is potential for further development and improvement of the range of opportunities offered. It should also be noted that this report has not attempted to ascertain the extent to which children and young people from Wealdstone access provision in other parts of Harrow.

12. **Background Papers**

12.1. None

13. **Author**

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