

Area North Committee – 27 November 2013

## 11. Area North Play Schemes - Summer 2013

*Strategic Director:* Rina Singh, Place and Performance  
*Assistant Directors* Kim Close and Helen Rutter, Communities  
*Service Manager* Charlotte Jones, Area Development Manager (North)  
*Lead Officer* Sara Kelly, Neighbourhood Development Officer (North)  
*Contact Details:* sara.kelly@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462249

### Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is provide feedback on the programme of summer holiday play schemes in Area North

### Public Interest

Holiday play schemes provide a range of fun activities for children and families. A play scheme may be for as little as one session for 2-3 hours through to several days in any one school holiday. They tend to be low cost and informal and in a rural area are often run by local volunteers from within the community they serve.

This report shows how SSDC has supported a variety of play schemes within Area North during the 2013 summer holidays.

### Recommendation

Councillors are invited to note the report and confirm on-going support to community led holiday play schemes in Area North within existing resources.

### Background

A number of play and holiday activities take place throughout South Somerset every year. Some are organised by local groups of volunteers and SSDC (through the Community Health and Leisure service) provide a programme of holiday play schemes across the district.

SSDC also supports the start-up and on-going development of community led schemes, and this is often a starting point to support further community development. Supporting existing community led schemes takes very little time, and they largely run themselves.

What volunteers tell us they need is simple to follow guidance on how to run successful schemes, support (ideas, resources) to make schemes interesting for a variety of ages, and small amounts of money to help keep schemes at as low a cost as possible. Meeting these needs can come from the local community itself, but some SSDC support to 'help local people help themselves' is highly valued. This could mean a grant, or resources / activities, or help with training.

## Area North – holiday play schemes – Summer 2013

Earlier this year the SSDC encouraged a small number of new schemes to start up (or re-start) in Area North, and reviewed the support offered to existing community led schemes.

A map is attached showing the locations of 17 play schemes days / sessions supported, which includes the SSDC schemes provided by the Community Health and Leisure Service, and community led schemes.

SSDC provided the means to book the 'play bus' (owned by Yarlington Housing Group), fully equipped for play schemes, with a play worker on board! The local volunteers took responsibility for arrangements including marketing, risk assessments, and running the scheme itself.

Feedback from the volunteers supported in Area North been incredibly positive. The approximate numbers attending were provided by each organiser, shown in the table below.

Location	Numbers attending
Stoke sub Hamdon	55
High Ham	40
Kingsbury Episcopi	35
Seavington	75
Somerton	45

**Stoke-sub-Hamdon** People attending the play day in Stoke Sub Hamdon were encouraged to take a packed lunch and have a picnic on the recreation ground. which proved popular. The Hamdons playgroup offered refreshments for sale, which acted as a small fundraising opportunity for the group.

**Seavington** - The event in Seavington was so well attended that the village hall had to be opened to allow overspill from the bus. Children attended from Dowlish Wake, Hinton St George and Misterton as well as from the village.

In **Somerton**, the Roundabout pre-school used the play day as a small fundraising opportunity by running some stalls such as tombola and lucky duck.

Feedback from local organisers confirmed that the support given offered a good balance between people doing things for themselves but with the confidence of help being available if needed.

We are also aware that in places new relationships have been and ideas for the future discussed – watch this space!

### Looking forward

- Use contacts made by CHL team at SSDC events to encourage further 'community led' in future.
- Develop a programme for 2014 again using principles of self-help where possible and ensuring that the right types of support and guidance is available at a parish level.
- Review the publication of guidance, including templates for use by play scheme volunteers.

**Financial implications**

None from this report. Support to holiday play schemes is met from existing resources to support community development in Area North.

**Council Plan Implications**

Supporting community led holiday play schemes supports the council's priority to support "communities that are healthy, self-reliant, and have individuals who are willing to help each other".

**Carbon Emissions and Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)**

None from this report.

**Equality and Diversity Implications**

Holiday play schemes provide informal leisure opportunities for children and young people. Venues used and activities provided are designed to be accessible.

**Background Papers:** None

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