

Horsham District Community Partnership ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Wednesday 24th March 2010, 4.30pm – 8.00pm
Billingshurst Village Hall, Roman Way, Billingshurst, West Sussex

THREE pupils from Slinfold CE Primary School were the stars of the show at a Horsham conference exploring how we can all help tackle climate change.

Hannah Haines, Will Carver and Daniel Butler - along with their head teacher Jacky Lamb - outlined to a packed meeting at Billingshurst Village Hall the work their school was carrying out to improve the local environment and the green flag they have secured.

Their extraordinarily successful efforts are part of West Sussex County Council's Engauge Project - launched last October to help measure and improve sustainability in all schools.

The conference was a special feature of the annual meeting of the Horsham District Community Partnership, whose independent chairman Gary Shipton is also Editor In Chief of the County Times group of newspapers.

After their presentation, Mr Shipton invited the three pupils to write up their presentation to share with other schools through the columns of the County Times - and their article will appear in a future edition of the newspaper.

The meeting was in two halves. The second, dealing with climate change, also included excellent presentations from Wendy Benson, senior advisor on climate change at the county council; Tony Jackson and Peter Ingledew who outlined the environmental work of Henfield Community Partnership and the Greening Henfield project; and Robert Nye, leader of Horsham District Council - who explained the authority's Climate Change Strategy, which was published last June.

In the first half of the event, the community partnership updated the meeting on the considerable strides being made to implement its strategy to improve the quality of life for everyone living in the Horsham district.

There were presentations from Dr Jackie Johnston, Dr Ann Corkery, Natalie Brahma-Pearl, and Dr David Holmes who each explained the goals their groups were seeking to achieve in the next year - ranging from improving health and community safety to enhancing transport. The chief executive of Horsham District Council Tom Crowley spoke about the way forward and how the partnership could build on its current work.

Mr Shipton said amongst the public there remained considerable controversy surrounding the issue of climate change - but he believed that even those who doubted some of the scientific argument shared the collective goals of using the planet's natural resources as wisely as possible, maximising recycling and minimising waste and the need for landfill, and reducing energy needs and carbon emissions, if only to cut energy costs.

He hoped that a special feature written by Slinfold School would inspire other schools to write about their environmental work and might prove a springboard for annual 'green awards' in the district, with the support of HDC.

He also urged everyone who attended the meeting to send the County Times - in no more than 30 words - one example of something they or their organisation was doing to improve the environment. The contributions would all be published. It was an invitation he extended to

all readers of the paper - and 30 word articles should be e-mailed to ct.letters@sussexnewspapers.co.uk

The Horsham District Community Partnership has representatives from across the community - from statutory bodies like councils, police, NHS, colleges and schools, to community and voluntary organisations and local businesses. Its board members are all volunteers and the work is non-party political. The goal is to improve the quality of life for everyone living and working in the district at minimum cost to the taxpayer by encouraging all partners to work together in a concerted and cohesive way.