



Friday 6th November 2009

Celebrating 10 years of building safer communities together

P.R.I.D.E. graffiti initiative launched in Northern Devon

A new graffiti clean up operation is being launched today (Friday 6th November) to help combat and eradicate graffiti hot spots across North Devon and Torridge Districts. Launched as part of national 'Not in My Neighbourhood Week'* (2nd-6th Nov 2009) the new scheme 'P.R.I.D.E. – Positive Response Improving Devon Environment' will involve a range of clean up activities including graffiti and chewing gum removal. The scheme gets underway today with a graffiti removal day in Barnstaple.

Torridge District Council is also targeting graffiti removal this week using their Environmental Green Team and unpaid workers from the Devon and Cornwall Probation Area to target areas in East-the-Water. East-the-Water Primary School pupils will also be helping this team identify grot spots in the area.

Safer North Devon partners, including the Devon and Cornwall Probation Area, Torridge and North Devon Council, Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service and Devon and Cornwall Police Service worked closely together to secure the £26,000 needed to buy a specialist graffiti removal machine which will be part of an array of tools used to tackle environmental crime.

“The graffiti removal machine will be used by supervised offenders on Community Payback who have been convicted of a range of offences which may include graffiti offences or criminal damage,” said Simon Perkins, Devon and Cornwall Probation Area. “The public will see justice undertaken and offenders putting something positive back into the communities they have offended against.”

“I am particularly pleased to see the offenders getting involved in the clean up operation as I firmly believe they should be made to pay back to the community for the crimes they have committed,” said Councillor Pat Barker, North Devon Council Lead Member for Environmental Health and Protection. “The P.R.I.D.E. campaign will also significantly increase community confidence, helping us to tackle environmental crime and to make a positive difference within the community”.

Graffiti acts as a signal giving the impression that an area suffers more crime than is the case, for example, the broken window syndrome whereby if an area is left in a poor state it leads to anti-social behaviour. If graffiti is removed the area feels less neglected and is then less likely to attract new graffiti.



People will then feel the area is a clean and safe place to live, work and visit and are reassured that crime is being tackled. Removing graffiti also sends out a clear message that environmental crime will not be tolerated in our neighbourhoods.

Ray Webster, Head of Environmental Health and Public Protection, Torridge District Council said: "Cleaning up graffiti improves the appearance of the District and helps develop and regenerate local communities. The presence of graffiti can increase the fear of crime, undermine local investment in regeneration and downgrade the appearance of an area."

"We have been working with our partners for over ten years to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in North Devon and Torridge," said Safer North Devon Manager Amanda Palmer. "The P.R.I.D.E. project is an excellent example of how we work together and it will really make a positive difference to our local communities. If anyone sees graffiti in their neighbourhood please contact their local council and we can take steps to remove it."

Have you spotted some graffiti? If so contact North Devon Council on 01271 374776 or Torridge District Council on 01237 428734.

*Not in My Neighbourhood Week

Is a Government run initiative to give local crime reduction agencies, police forces and partners an opportunity to highlight the work they do.

P.R.I.D.E. Project

Working in partnership with Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue, the machine will also be used for remedial clear up activities following fire damage and loaned to various Youth Offending Teams and other specialist Community Safety Partnership organisations to ensure maximum use and best economic benefit.

Safer North Devon

Is based at Barnstaple Police Station and was set up 10 years ago to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour across North Devon and Torridge. Safer North Devon works jointly with eight other partner agencies including: Devon County Council, Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service, North Devon Council, Devon Primary Care Trust, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, Devon and Cornwall Police Authority, Torridge District Council and Devon and Cornwall Probation Area.

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