

## **Thatcham Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) tackles underage drinking – February 2009**

The NAG members in Thatcham have outlined some of the good work completed over the last year 2008.

The main item we were focused on is underage drinking within the Thatcham Dispersal Order area of the town.

### **Activities:**

- NAG members have designed, produced and delivered a poster to all licensed premises across Thatcham warning of the consequence of buying alcohol for those under 18.
- The NAG has completed an informative questionnaire with young people in Thatcham, the results of which have been passed to agencies such as YOT, The Edge, Youth Services, Trading Standards and DAAT for them to take forward as an educational tool. This is a questionnaire that can be repeated on an annual basis to compare results.
- The NAG looked at Youth Facilities in Thatcham and identified the need for a cinema in the area. On the back of this, and with the full support of NAG members, the Moorside Youth Centre in Thatcham has obtained funding and installed cinema equipment in the large sports hall for use with young people of Thatcham. The inaugural film was a showing of 'Ghostbusters' on Halloween evening attended by the mayor and other dignitaries.
- The NAG identified the need for more education on alcohol and its effects within Primary Schools and with parents. The NAG is in the process of getting an outside agency, DARE, to commit to deliver a programme within the schools and are assisting Natalie Ofkants, the WBC Drugs Health Advisor to deliver a similar programme in as many schools across Thatcham as she can. Members of the NAG will assist Natalie to get a programme running in schools she is not already delivering to. The NAG are also supporting alcohol workshops for young people and parents in the area that are in the process of being set up and have offered any help needed to Natalie.

The residents of Thatcham were consulted on the three problems they were experiencing in Thatcham between November 2008 and January 2009 and 'underage drinking' in the dispersal area was highlighted as their 8<sup>th</sup> most important priority as opposed to the top priority in similar consultation conducted 18 months ago.

PC Michelle Norman, Neighbourhood Specialist Officer  
Thatcham Neighbourhood Policing Team