



ST ALBANS
& DISTRICT
STRATEGIC
PARTNERSHIP

'Inspire & Involve... something for everyone'

Community Conference Report 2011



Rothamsted Conference Centre, Harpenden

Thursday 5th November 2011

Inspire & Involve... something for everyone

Engaging and inspiring the community was the theme of this year's annual Community Conference. The event entitled "Inspire and Involve...something for everybody", aimed to:

- Listen to the emerging issues from communities across the District
- Celebrate the Partnership's achievements over the last 12 months
- Inspire residents and organisations to get involved in decisions and projects at a local level

Cllr Julian Daly, Leader of St Albans City and District Council and Chair of the St Albans and District Strategic Partnership opened the event, highlighting the purpose of the conference as well as some of the Partnership's key achievements over the past 12 months. He commented: "It has been a successful year for the Partnership. Over 28 community led projects and 12 larger scale projects are underway."



The guest speaker was David Clarke, an International Blind Footballer who has represented Great Britain and England's blind football team on 131 occasions, scoring a total of 124 goals (as of November 2011). He has won the European Championship's "Golden Boot" five times, represented Great Britain and England at the 2008 Paralympic Games and hopes to do so again at London 2012. David is a person who embodies the concept of "positive mental attitude". He not only meets and overcomes personal challenges everyday, but also puts something back into his community by coaching children's football at Harpenden Colts and has developed a successful career in banking.

During his speech David outlined the importance of communities coming together to identify common issues and working collaboratively to address them. He encouraged delegates to express their views to influence local issues, but also to allow themselves to be influenced by listening to the views of others. David concluded that local people can be the 'catalyst for change' and encouraged them to "step off the sidelines and get involved."

Following David's speech was the 'Active Listening' session. All 108 delegates were invited to take part in small discussion groups to identify emerging issues within the District, such as the local economic situation and opportunities for young people. Issues highlighted in this session will be used to shape the work of the Strategic Partnership over the coming year.

The afternoon saw the launch of the Partnership's "Getting Involved" programme, which aims to engage and encourage local people to take part in projects and events within their community. The programme, which is being led by the St Albans Centre for Voluntary Services, will support local people by raising awareness and promotion of community leadership roles, help to build up people's confidence to enter these roles and provide supported workshops to enable individuals to access the information and skills required.

Active Listening Session - feedback

Using the themed partnership's working groups as a basis, the Active Listening session provided delegates with the opportunity to give their views on what they believed to be the key issues within the District.

Economic Sustainability

Unemployment was highlighted as one of the key issues facing the District during the Economic Sustainability discussions, particularly among young people and disadvantaged groups.

The participants highlighted the need to provide more employment and training opportunities and support for young people and vulnerable members of society. Suggestions for achieving this included:

- More training and support for people between jobs
- More support from businesses and organisations, such as apprenticeship and internship opportunities
- Using volunteering as a way to develop young people's skills
- More flexibility around courses at Colleges and Universities. Plus the spare capacity that young people at Oaklands experience when on a full time course.
- Better information and sign posting around courses, careers etc.
- Provide 'real life' case studies and examples of young people that have found employment.
- Utilise Local Services Hub as drop in centre for young people
- More employment opportunities for people completing treatment for drug/alcohol misuse – lack of ways back into the community

Further to the issues around unemployment the group cited developing local businesses as another key area of concern, in particular the need to provide extra support to existing businesses within the District, whilst encouraging further growth and entrepreneurship.

Young People

The lack of employment opportunities was also one of the most prevalent themes during the Young People discussions. Key suggestions captured around this issue included:

- More options and initiatives, such as apprentice schemes, work experience and internships
- More training schemes and voluntary opportunities to help young people develop their skills
- Clearer information and career advice for young people, e.g. providing alternatives to college and university
- More support for young people to feel valued, e.g. community groups, youth clubs
- Providing case studies and examples of different routes (such as college, apprenticeships etc.) into work
- Encourage businesses to work more closely with schools

Other key themes captured included providing better access to information (via drop in centres), more facilities and activities and coordinated work between youth organisations, better youth engagement, providing opportunities to entrust young people with more responsibility (such as through trustee roles and steering groups) and doing more to

challenge national stereotypes, with a particular focus on improving intergenerational relations between the young and the elderly.

Community Safety

Delegates in the Community Safety discussions highlighted traffic and road safety as one of their key concerns within the District. The levels of congestion, speeding, roadside parking and poor driving standards were identified as the key issues which contribute to poor road safety within the District.

Providing more support, training and ways back into society for young people and people recovering from drug and alcohol misuse was identified as an area that needed more resources and provision.

The remaining comments and suggestions were fairly varied and related to a number of community safety related issues. The key areas of improvement identified were:

- More mediation services
- More Intergenerational projects to challenge stereotypes
- Address the issue of crimes not being reported – enable victims to feel confident to report
- Drop in centre for young people
- More focus on tackling cyber crime
- More police presence in city centre – e.g. police on horseback
- Adjustments made to street lighting – safety issues for pedestrians when lights go off at night
- Doing more to challenge negative stereotypes, especially young people. Positive messages

Environment

Delegates in the Environmental Sustainability discussions expressed genuine concern for a wide range of environmental issues in the District. Air quality, traffic congestion and the Districts high carbon footprint came out as key environmental concerns of the group. Several suggestions for tackling this issue were identified, which included:

- More sustainable transport/green travel promotion
- Improvements to roads and troublesome junctions
- Increased virtual working to reduce commuting
- Timing traffic lights to improve traffic flow
- Size restrictions on vehicles in city centre
- Better signage to direct larger vehicles – e.g. to avoid narrow roads
- Reduction of empty buses – better coordination
- Investigation into ways to stop people using St Albans as a cut through to M1 / M25

Other issues raised included encouraging businesses and organisations to adopt greener approaches, promoting energy efficiency, improving both management of green spaces and education about conservation issues, more flexibility with bin collections and continuing work on education and raising awareness around sustainability.

The group highlighted the need to integrate sustainability work into the other SP partnerships to achieve these targets, with a particular focus on health and wellbeing (air quality and pollution and it's affect on people's health) and economic sustainability (targeting businesses to adopt greener approaches). To ensure that sustainability is integrated in this

way, they suggested that an environmental champion should be present on all other partnerships, or on relevant projects.

Health and Wellbeing

A range of health related issues were identified during the health and wellbeing discussions, these included:

- Ways back into work for people following substance misuse
- Closure of day services – expansion of organisation capacity issues
- More provision to bridge the generation gap
- More clubs and meeting points needed for young people and seniors
- General health and nutrition advice for teenagers from poorer backgrounds
- Focus on prevention and helping individuals take control of their own health empowerment
- More mental health awareness
- Raise awareness of the effect that the cuts can have in improving health and well being
- Lots of change at the moment in health and social services worlds. Don't always seem possible but does create opportunities to make some positive changes we want. E.g. Mental health, care of elderly, homeless health

In relation to the above points, several visitors highlighted the lack of coordination between different services and organisations as a key emerging issue. Delegates gave the following examples of where better coordination is needed, which included:

- Providing more focus on health and social care for people with complex disabilities (or with more than one disability). In this instance usually more than one organisation is involved and a lack of coordination can lead to delays and disruptions.
- Better coordination and response from wheelchair repair companies – lack of flexibility and options provided for the user.
- Raising awareness from local transport providers for people who are disabled, e.g. drivers not securing wheelchairs properly, moving off too fast etc.

Inclusion & Inequalities

Doing more to tackle isolation and exclusion was one of the key themes identified during the Inclusion and Inequalities discussions. The group identified several key issues to address in this area:

- Providing more opportunities for people to connect with one another
- More information for harder to reach communities – contacts, organisations etc – to ensure people know what services are accessible to them and what that they are entitled too.
- Helping disadvantaged people to help themselves by raising their self-esteem and making them feel more valuable to the community
- Ensuring local services are sufficiently tailored for BME groups in the community

Further issues included raising awareness and reducing the stigma around mental health, providing more opportunities for older and disadvantaged people within the community and doing more to connect older and younger generations.

Looking ahead – a new partnership framework

Following a review of the Strategic Partnership a new Framework has been developed which aims to streamline the partnership structures and provide a more flexible and responsive way forward for partnership working across the District.

Principles of the new framework:

- streamlined partnership structures
- task and finish approach to addressing priorities
- better use of online systems for networking and information sharing
- a flexible and responsive way forward for partnership working across the District

Executive and four theme partnerships

- Community Safety
- Economic Sustainability
- Inclusion & Inequalities
- Health & Well-Being

The Executive group and each of the themed partnerships play a specific role within the new framework.

The Executive sets the strategic direction and articulates a shared vision, it takes responsibility for downward feedback and action from individual agencies and it brings the views of wider stakeholders to the partnership.

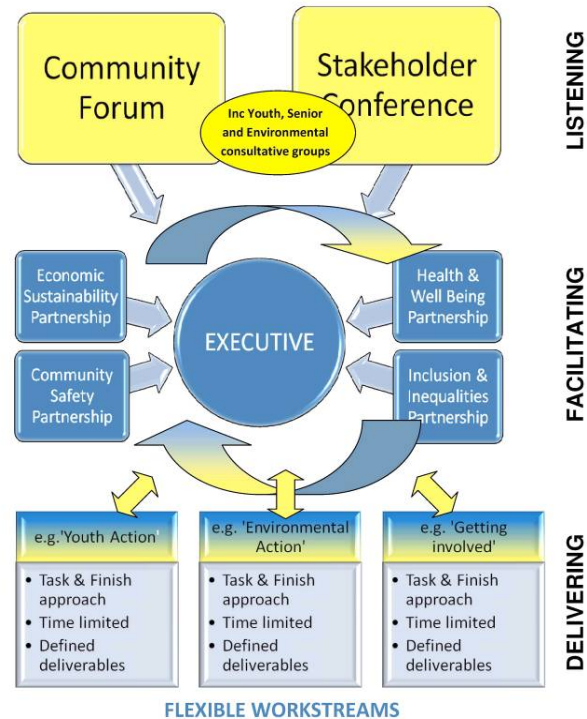
The Community Safety Partnership's role is to reduce, prevent and detect acquisitive crime offences and incidents of anti social behaviour. It engages with communities to provide reassurance and information.

The Economic Sustainability partnership champions economic development and works to create a diverse and sustainable economy for the District.

The Inclusion and Inequalities is a new partnership that has been developed as a result of the review. This partnership will identify needs and issues relating to Equalities, cohesion, Diversity and Social Inclusion and develop creative solutions to address them. It will also champion positive change across communities and organisations.

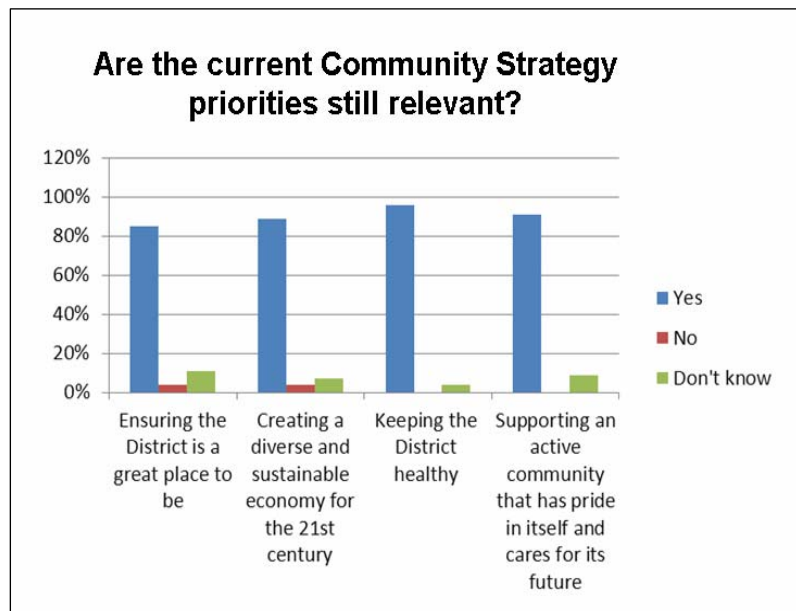
The Health and Wellbeing Partnership aims to ensure that the promotion and delivery of health and wellbeing services locally reflect the needs of the community.

The Community Conference remains an integral part of the new framework and in particular the views gathered through the Active Listening session will be utilised to shape the annual work programmes of each themed partnership.



What's Next?

The current Sustainable Community strategy was revised in June 2009 and the focus to date has been on 4 key priorities and 7 targeted gap areas. The intention is to utilise the feedback received from the active listening session to revisit the strategy in 2012 to see if the priorities are still relevant or identify whether it needs to be refreshed.



The conference evaluation form was used to capture delegate's views of the community strategy. The table below gives details of the responses given.

Based on this feedback it is evident that the current priorities are still believed to be relevant. However there are many new local and national developments and emerging themes that have occurred and need to be addressed and captured within a refreshed delivery plan.

The process for achieving this will include:

- Feeding emerging issues into the relevant themed partnerships
- Gathering data / intelligence in order to understand the issues and inform the stakeholder event
- Set out a targeted work plan for 2012
- Identify relevant task and finish work required
- Delivering agreed outcomes

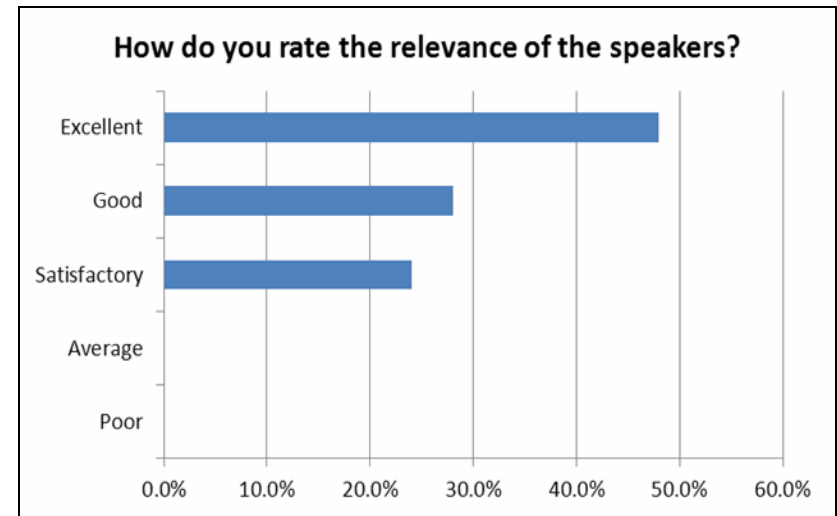
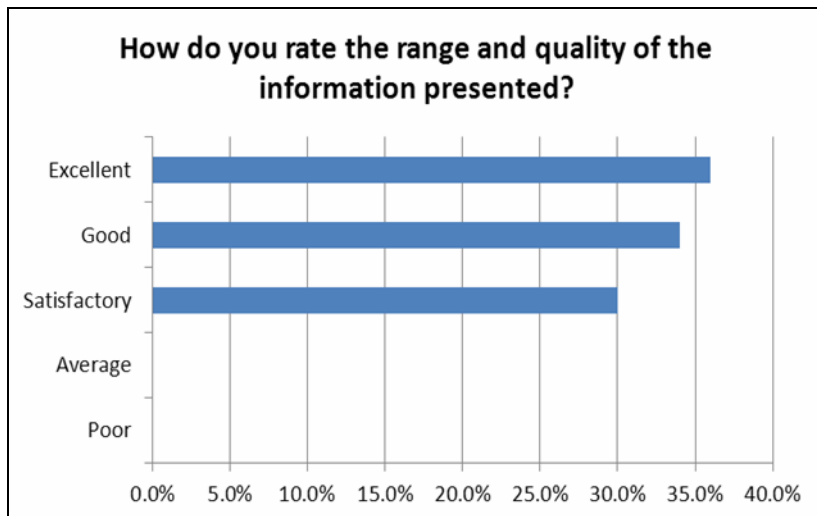
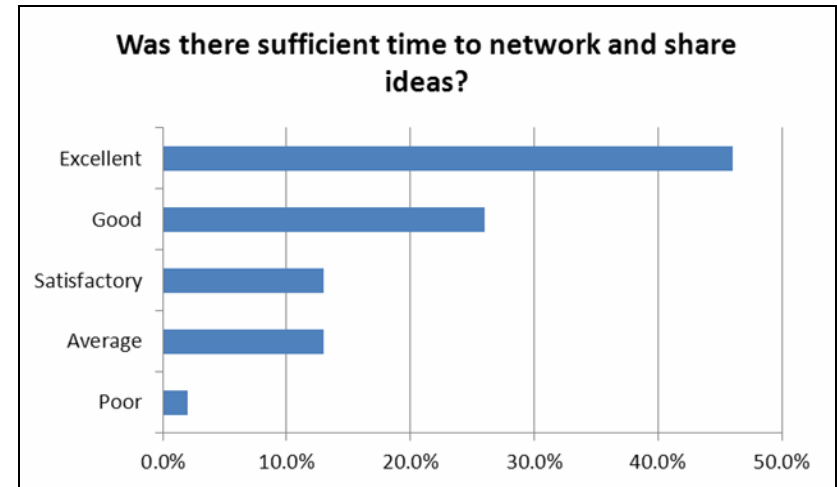
Draft process for refresh

Action	How	Timescale
Work with partners to agree the short and long term timescales	Interactive session at the Community Conference Discussions with existing partnerships	December 2011
Conduct a review of the existing priorities and gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of focus groups • Annual stakeholder forum • General consultation with partners and community groups 	January – March 2012
Updated Community Strategy delivered	Circulation through existing networks and conference delegate list	Summer 2012

Evaluation

50% of delegates completed an evaluation form. Below are the results from each of the questions.

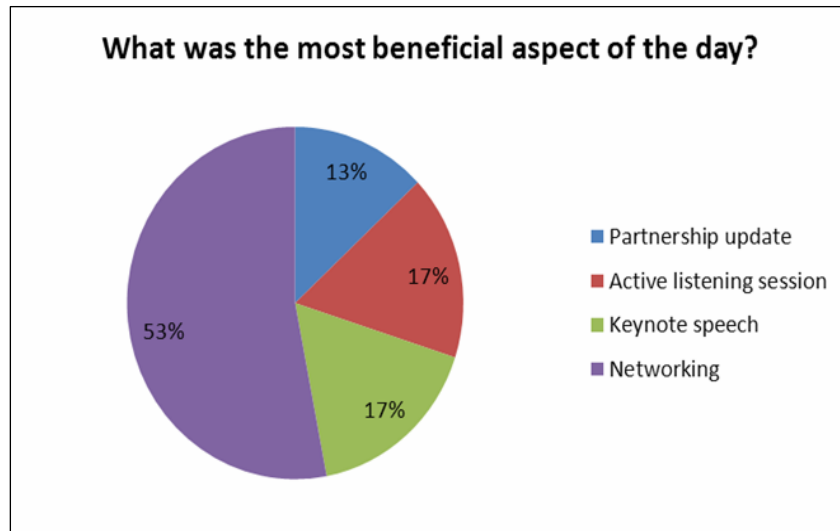
Event Content and Objectives



Event Administration

Have you any comments about how the conference was organised?

The vast majority of comments received were extremely positive in regards to both the venue and organisation of the event. A few individual comments highlighted the noise levels during some of the breakout sessions, the lack of an auditory commentary over the Annual Report presentation and poor signage as areas of improvement.



(left) 53% of delegates found the opportunity to network as the most beneficial aspect of that day. Sharing ideas and issues, meeting new people and being made aware of the different organisations both present and not present were cited by delegates as being the most useful aspects of the networking sessions.

Event Feedback

The vast majority of comments (91%) were of a positive nature

“Very useful update and networking opportunities”

“Interesting and inspiring”

“A valuable, worthwhile day”

“Informative, encouraging and engaging”

“A good opportunity for all areas of the St Albans community”

But there were also some useful comments for future planning:

“Too little detail”

“Need more small group sessions”

“So many organisations – need them to be coordinated”

“Proof of successful outcomes will show it has been worthwhile”

“Is this sufficiently inspirational (or academic)?”

Delegate List

Surname	First Name	Organisation
Adams	Sandy	St Albans District Citizens Advice Bureau
Allen	John	Harperbury Bowls Club
Allen	Dr Mark	St Albans & Harpenden Locality Group
Andrews	Cllr. David	Hertfordshire County Council
Antram	Peter	RSPB St Albans Local Group
Askhan	Jo	St. Albans Arts, Sport & Health
Ayres	Sonia	
Ayres	Dr David	
Bagshaw	John	Harpenden Town Council
Baker	Anthony	St Albans District Credit Union
Bell	Cllr John	St Albans District Association of Local Councils
Bird	Andrew	Hertfordshire Pass
Bird	Sue	St Albans and District Access Group
Bishop	Paul	Herts Action on Disability
Blake	Hilary	Bowmansgreen Primary School, London Colney
Blake	James	St Albans City & District Council
Boffey	Dr Stephen	University of Hertfordshire
Bolton	Lyn	Jersey Farm Day Care Centre
Bongo	Saverio	St Albans Executive Forum
Brown	Trevor	Herts Fire & Rescue Service
Brown	Sally	Turning Point
Burrow	Stephanie	Oaklands College
Carter	Susan	Health & Community Services Herts, County Council
Cast	Steve	Advantage NFP, Redbourn Business Systems
Cecil	Jamie	University of Hertfordshire
Chapman	Arthur	St Albans District Credit Union
Charles	Matt	St Albans Art, Sport and Health
Cheevers	Carl	St Albans City & District Council
Chitty	Neil	Bethany Community Church
Clark	Cllr Gill	Wheathampstead Parish Council
Clarke	David	Guest Speaker - Paralympian and Local business leader
Copsey	Scott	University of Hertfordshire
Cox	Alan	Harpenden Seniors Forum
Cronshaw	Laura	St Albans City and District Centre for Voluntary Service
Cross	Justin	Cathedral Administrator and Clerk to the Chapter
Daly	Cllr Julian	St Albans City & District Council
Dawson	Hilary	Buskin
deVall	Simonne	St Albans City & District Council
di Lieto	Rocco	St Albans Racial Equality Council (SAREC)
Donald	Cllr Robert	St Albans City & District Council
Dooher	Dermot	St Albans City & District Council
Douglas	Leanne	St Albans City & District Council
Ellis	Cllr Michael	Harpenden Town Council
Farmer	Cllr Rosemary	Harpenden Town Council
Fawzi	Mohamed	Youth Connexions
Field	Joanne	Churches Together in St Albans
Flowers	Lesley	Local resident
Gaskell	Fiona	Harpenden Seniors Forum
Glover	Clive	Verulam Community Radio
Goodwin	Daniel	St Albans City & District Council

Surname	First Name	Organisation
Green	Jon	St Albans City & District Council
Hall	Marva	St Albans District Credit Union
Hancock	Zoe	Oaklands College
Hann	Richard	Hertfordshire Constabulary
Hart	Michelle	St Albans City and District Centre for Voluntary Service
Haynes	Linda	Harpenden Town Council
Henrys	Wendy	St Albans City and District Centre for Voluntary Service
Hilbrow	Mel	St Albans Enterprise Agency
Holland	Ian	St Albans City & District Council
Holman	Barbara	Access to Living
Horne	Rosie	Harpenden Society
Howlett	Jo	St Albans City & District Council
Hutchings	Tim	Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce
James	Louise	Jubilee Centre
James	Stephen	Rothamsted Research
Kent	Cllr Pat	Harpenden Town Council
Kospanos	Vasileios	Advantage NFP, Redbourn Business Systems
Lane	Graham	Economic Sustainability Partnership St Albans District Chamber of Commerce
Leach	Cllr Martin	St Albans City & District Council
Loveland	Helen	Harpenden Helping Hand
Mackay	Sarah	Buskin
Macphee	Martyn	St Albans Mencap
Maher	Jo	Vista St. Albans C/C
Manning	Ricky	St Albans City & District Council
Martin	Jo	St Albans Abbey
Metcalf	John	St Albans Cycle Campaign
Metcalfe	Colin	St Albans District Credit Union
Mikkelsen	Lottie	The Regency Training Foundation
Moore	Mike	The Voice' of St Albans & Harpenden
Mortimer	Penny	CVS Dragons' Apprentice Challenge
Murray	Jenni	Bowmansgreen Local Partnership
Newton	Kate	St Albans City and District Centre for Voluntary Service
Newton Davies	John	
Norman	Angela	Harpenden Town Council
Olive	Daniel	Youth Councillor
O'Malley	Patricia	The Regency Training Foundation
Parker	Jane	St Albans City & District Council
Patterson	Sally	Home-Start St Albans
Peacock	Shannon	Turning Point
Peak	Kenneth	London Colney Village Concern
Pearce	Jane	St Albans City & District Council
Prestwich	James	Hightown Praetorian & Churches Housing Assn.
Reidy	Jane	St Albans & Harpenden Friendship Scheme
Richards	Yvette	North Hertfordshire Homes
Richardson	Mo	Older People's Drama Group
Roper	Pearl	New Testament Church of God
Roskilly	Jane	Active St Albans
Sands	Paul	Redbourn Recreation Centre
Sharpe	Libby	Harpenden Mencap
Shwe	Richard	St Albans City & District Council
Skelt	Ian	St Albans City & District Council

Surname	First Name	Organisation
Smith	Paul	Harpenden Town Council
Smith	Tony	Hertfordshire Constabulary
Smith	Rob	Hertfordshire County Council
Stagg	Maria	St Albans City & District Council
Stapleton	Celine	New Testament Church of God
Suslak	Julia	Star Scope
Swendell	Cllr Tony	St Albans City & District Council
Taylor	Ashleigh	University of Hertfordshire
Thomas	Richard	Harpenden Society
Turner	Joanne	St Albans City & District Council
Vincent	Cllr Caroline	Harpenden Town Council
Walden	Benjie	Hertfordshire Police Authority
Wallis	Susan	Hightown Praetorian & Churches Housing Assn.
Warren	Julia	Wheathampstead Parish Council
Weaver	Cllr Michael	Town Mayor, Harpenden Town Council
Welch	Barry	Redbourn Care Group
White	Debbi	St Albans City & District Council
White	Alexandra	University of Hertfordshire
Wray	David	St Albans City Youth
Wren	Jeff	Oaklands College
Wright	Peter	NHS Herts
Young	Disa	Home-Start St Albans