

HALTON VOLUNTARY ACTION SAFER HOMES PROJECT

Key deliverables:

200 homes in the Halton area will have property security improved by:

- The training of volunteers to carry out in-home security checks and identification of actions to make homes safer
- Carrying out home security surveys
- Referrals to other agencies to fit home security equipment as necessary
- Producing and distributing security improvement material

HVA's Involvement:

HVA recruited 11 groups via voluntary sector meetings & events, Halton radio, word of mouth, via capacity building and advertising in the Newsletter. Each group had to produce two volunteers for the training in Safer Homes and then carry out a maximum of 40 Safer Homes' surveys. HVA arranged for CRB checks for those who did not already have one in place.

HVA in consultation with Halton Community Safety team, Safer Homes' trainer and the internet compiled a survey form that would be suitable for use in this field. Once the survey was carried out the top copy would be put into a pack for the householder that contained promotional leaflets and Safer Homes booklets.

A Safer Homes' Trainer was recruited and HVA put on two separate day courses which the volunteers could attend. These volunteers then went out into the community and through their group's activities and contacts they recruited the local householder for the survey. Each group was allowed a maximum of 40 surveys. Each householder to be given a Smartwater Kit so that marking the contents of their homes can aid to reducing the risks of burglary.

The Survey forms are numbered and signed by the householder and the surveyor. Copies are kept with HVA so they know exactly which householder has had a survey. The survey shows the checking procedures and also the recommendations to the householder where home safety improvements could be made. Referrals to the Age Concern Handyperson project are noted on the survey forms and then passed on by HVA to Age Concern. A record of Smartwater Kits issued is kept by HVA.

The final part is a small survey that is carried out by the volunteer surveyor which is returned to HVA and recorded on a master. This will be used by the Safer Homes Project to measure the impact of the programme.

The scheme has proved so popular that we are anticipating that we shall exceed the 200 homes surveyed. At the beginning of February we had already achieved 170 homes. Halton Safer Partnership

Has readily provided, information and back up as required. Our groups have been invited to attend Safer Homes events.

By the end of the project each group will have earned £500 (for attending the training) plus £30.00 for each survey, releasing a potential earning of £1700.00 per voluntary group. This is unrestricted funding for the benefit of the group and its activity.

This project has ticked many boxes:

It is a project with a difference that has cascaded down from HVA to the individual householder and everyone has derived a benefit of some kind. The group has benefited financially, the volunteer surveyor has been trained to the standard of a professional, developing an awareness for safer homes where the householder has benefited from advice and Smartwater.

Partnership working - HVA working with Community Safety Team, Neighborhood Management
Age Concern, British Red Cross, Smartwater.

It has been a project that involves local community groups with the local residents of Halton.

The impact will be that many more homes (more than 200) will be more secure.

Pam Young
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