

## St Austell Town Council



### **Anti-Social Behaviour Group – First Year Success**

St Austell Mayor, Councillor Brian Palmer, called together representatives of a wide range of organisations recently to review the first year of operation of the town's anti-social behaviour group.

The group which comprises representatives from St Austell Town Council, Cornwall Council, Devon and Cornwall Police, St Austell BID, St Austell Chamber of Commerce, supported housing providers and support groups, White River Place shopping centre, licensees, housing organisations and the churches have met regularly over the last 12 months to better manage anti-social behaviour in St Austell with a particular focus on the town centre. As a result of this work, more arrests have been made and more actions taken against offenders. Begging in the town centre has almost been eradicated, patrols have been put in place to better manage street drinkers, CCTV cameras have been improved and a scheme of shop watch radios is being rolled out currently.

The anti-social behaviour group has been running for approximately 12 months having been convened originally by Councillors Collins and Palmer to address issues addressed by members of the public. All town centres nationally are experiencing instances of anti-social behaviour and shop lifting, often linked to alcohol and/or drug dependency. Town centre organisations such as the Association of Towns and Cities advocate encouraging agencies to work together, the use of radio and CCTV systems and encouraging members of the public and businesses to report crimes as a means of managing anti-social behaviour and shop lifting. St Austell, in common with many other towns is adopting a similar approach and is ahead of many other towns in doing so.

Inspector Ed Gard of Devon and Cornwall Police, said:

*"We really welcome this initiative and value the improved communications and joint working which has resulted from the formation of the group. Police resources are often very stretched and assistance of the community is becoming increasingly important. Police officers cannot be everywhere and we rely very heavily on the public and local community groups to help us."*

The Mayor, Councillor Brian Palmer, said:

*"I am very aware that a number of people have concerns about anti-social behaviour in our town and am very pleased that so many community groups have given their time readily to help address the issues. We will never eradicate anti-social behaviour altogether but it is really important that we do all that we can to control it."*

Cornwall Councillor, Sandra Heyward said:

*"As part of the drive to encourage young people to turn their life around, Cosgarne and the Town Council recently funded eight young people to go on the Fire and Rescue Phoenix course which has resulted in three of them wanting to continue gaining experience and qualifications by going on the Princes Trust course. I am delighted with this positive news."*

The anti-social behaviour group are planning to continue meeting on a regular basis and are examining the need to broaden the area covered to include other parts of St Austell.

END.