

Sunderland Reducing Re-offending Beacon Event 9th December 2008

In March 2008, Sunderland was awarded Beacon status. The Beacon Award is the pinnacle of award schemes for local authorities and their partners. It is different to other award schemes in that it not only rewards innovation or success in a particular area, it also encourages local authorities to develop best practice and share that best practice with others.

On 9th December 2008, Sunderland hosted a one day event which gave delegates the opportunity to share learning on the theme reducing reoffending.

The day opened with key note speeches from Dave Smith, Chief Executive of Sunderland City Council and Frances Done, Chair of the YJB. The plenary session also included an overview of the Sunderland strategy for reducing re-offending highlighting key areas of innovation and outcome achievements.



Frances Done, Chair of YJB (middle), Councillor Pat Smith (right), Barbara Blyth (left)

Delegates had a choice of eight workshops to attend facilitated by a variety of partners including Safer Sunderland Partnership, YOS, Northumbria Probation Service, the Youth Justice Board and Wearside Women in Need. The workshops covered a range of youth and adult themes related to reducing re-offending, such as Domestic Violence, Restorative Justice and Adult Prescribing. Exhibition stands supported the workshops and plenary sessions. These included our Beacon Legacy Products (examples of the resources developed by young people in Sunderland), Crime Prevention (Northumbria Police), Unpaid Work (Northumbria Probation Service) and

Reducing Youth Custody (Sunderland YOS).



'Beacon Legacy Products' exhibition stand

Safer Sunderland Partnership TV, showing some of the innovation and specialist projects in Sunderland was broadcast on various screens around the venue and also on a large screen located outside of the conference venue.

Towards the end of the day delegates were given the opportunity to put questions to a panel made up of various partners including the YOS, Northumbria Probation Service, Safer Communities Team and Northumbria Police. The panel was lead by Keith Moore, Deputy Director of Children's Services.



Panel 'Question and Answer' Session

The conference was well attended by colleagues from all over the country. The feedback from the conference was overwhelmingly positive, over 93% of delegates agreed that the conference was productive/constructive, and over 88% stating that the conference was a worthwhile investment of their time. More than two thirds of the delegates agreed that the conference had given them new ways to reduce reoffending.