Residents of the Whyke Estate have been working together with various agencies to make a real difference in their local community.

Five years ago, Councillor Alan Chaplin helped the local residents to form a community association – and since then there has been no looking back. The site was built post war for Council housing, and in the past, has experienced anti-social behaviour. But thanks to the local community working together with local agencies, anti-social behaviour has reduced, and improvements have been made to the area.

The Whyke Estate Community Association (WECA) has been working with Chichester District Council, Martlet Homes, Sussex Police and West Sussex County Council to develop a master plan for the estate. This has included an architect running several design days for residents and children, to find out what they want for their estate in the future. Over the past two years, improvements have included seating, footpaths, a cycleway, road safety measures, boundary fencing and additional tree planting. Community and Junior Wardens have also been introduced, and activities such as football in the Community have been making a real difference to the young people in the area.

In February, Junior Community Wardens and residents planted an avenue of trees. Fourteen trees were planted along the footpath and cycleway that run across the green at Hay Road. This is part of an ongoing project between the District Council and WECA to improve the green, and represents part of £71,000 earmarked by the District Council for improvements to the estate.

Improved entrances at each end of the new footpath and cycleway have recently been completed. These include seats with designs by children from the nearby Kingsham School etched onto them. Hedgerows have also been planted on the green. Councillor Alan Chaplin, believes all of these activities are making a real difference.

The Whyke Estate is changing for the better. Through finding out what matters to local residents and working with them to solve problems, everyone is making a difference. By getting the children to design logos for the new benches, they are taking ownership of them and will ensure that they are looked after.

‘With the Football in the Community Scheme, we saw the shopkeepers handing out free drinks. This is all because everyone is enthusiastic about the activities that are taking place. Another example of this is when residents joined the Community Wardens collecting litter. Thirty bags of litter were removed in a day!’

I give a lot of credit to the people who live there and what they have achieved. Recently, Nigel Coren, the Headteacher of Kingsham School, said to me that he has witnessed a positive transformation on the Whyke Estate over the last few years.’

The future looks bright for Whyke. Future plans include trying to develop a community building, which could house changing rooms for the football teams. The residents will continue to work with their partners to ensure the estate is a great place to live.
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