

Report To: Community and Leisure Committee

Date: 29 Sept 2025

Contact Officer: Mark Jones Engagement Officer

Title: Engagement Review

1. **Background/Purpose**

Review of community engagement events so far since the appointment of the Engagement Officer with a look forward to proposed events.

2. **Detail**

2.1 **Engagement review**

Litter Pickers

Our new initiative *Love Where You Learn* litter picker boards for school playgrounds/class rooms will be distributed to the three schools who requested them:

1. Tregoze Primary
2. Hazelwood Primary
3. Oliver Tompkins

Pop-Ups

The Engagement Officer and Operations Manager have visited village centres over the past few months on a weekly basis. We visit a different centre every week usually between 11am and 1pm (deemed as the best time for now). The response from the members of the public who have engaged (and there have been many) has overall been very positive.

Most of the queries have been aimed at Swindon Borough Council services e.g. tree maintenance, roads, pavements etc.

Many people are complimentary of the work of the Parish, including the floral planters, grass cutting etc.). Many conversations involve signposting and awareness raising.

A survey to reflect how people feel about living in the parish and the role of the parish council is also conducted alongside opportunities to volunteer.

The Pop-Ups are planned to continue weekly until the weather becomes too inclement.

Fetes

Before the school holidays, the Parish team attended three school fetes with the gazebo and tractor where possible. These were held at Oliver Tompkins, Hazelwood Academy and Lydiard Tregoze Primary Schools. The

Splat the Rat game and the sunflower seeds give-aways were very popular attractions.

Battle of Ellendun display

Cllr Graham Philpot had support from the Parish Council for the Friends of Lydiard Park exhibition which launched on Friday 19 September at The Coach House, Lydiard Park. The support included:

- £2000 Parish grant
- liaison with Wroughton Parish Council – who are also marking this 1200th anniversary.
- liaison with Friends of Lydiard for the launch with an invitation for the media to attend (Swindon Advertiser and The Link Magazine attended)

Little Libraries

The first little library was launched, located by Peatmoor Lake. Local media, BBC Radio Wiltshire attended and the Swindon Advertiser followed it up with an article. The library appears to be working well with stock being updated and exchanged. Five new residents have stepped forward to host and should soon be proud recipients of new libraries.

Memory café

Initial conversations about the setting up of a dementia friendly café in the Parish are underway. Shaw Village Holy Trinity Church and the Link Centre have offered a free space for six months as has The Link Centre. Work will continue to establish the structure and format.

Knife Bins

Following on from a previous commitment from Swindon Police to support a knife surrender bin, this is no longer an option. However, the Parish Council has purchased a bin directly at a cost of around £450, and a location at the rear of the Link Centre has been agreed subject to its manufacture and delivery. The Police will support the publicity and will commit to monitoring and emptying the bin. A potential arrangement with Freshbrook Church and the nearby Volvo garage is underway.

3. Financial and Budget Considerations

- 3.1 The primary costs for engagement to date are the staff resources to create and develop projects. Early conversations with partners are seeking to utilise wider resources to jointly support future projects.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That this Committee notes the engagement activities proposed in this report.