



## **Acis adds value to the local community**

### **Great success for Streetforce initiative**

A successful community initiative in the Gainsborough area of Lincolnshire continues throughout this summer as Streetforce 3 swings into action. The partnership, involving housing association Acis Group, Lincolnshire Police and West Lindsey Council, aims to occupy young people in a positive and constructive way which will also benefit the community. Local youngsters work on projects which entail improving their neighbourhoods and in return they receive a reward of an activity day.

This summer, Streetforce 3 comprises of three days, two of which are work days with the final day being an activity day. The first of these took place on Friday 31 July, with the second is due on 22 August. The activity day is scheduled for 5 September.

PC Ian Shaw, Community Beat Manager for Gainsborough Uphills Neighbourhood Policing Team, explains how the first day went,

“We met up with the participants at Queensway, Gainsborough bright and early on Friday, with all the youngsters eager and ready. Queensway is a parade of shops in the heartland of the Uphills Community, with Acis flats above. They share communal gardens and yards at the rear. These gardens and yards were cleared of weeds, shrubbery overgrowth and litter by the participating children and teenagers.”

Acis Group staff were heavily involved in the day. Three housing officers and an anti-social behaviour officer all donned working clothes and got stuck in. Everyone involved worked well together, mixing in and working in partnership to get the job done. Acis also sent in their groundworks team to assist and provided £750 towards the project additional to staff time and materials.

The day's activity generated plenty of interest among the residents of the flats, who offered words of gratitude, support and encouragement. Following the work

at Queensway, the team moved on to John Jenkinson Close and Upton Walk, where work including staining fences, whitewashing walls and painting garage doors to cover graffiti was carried out. Again, the work received a similar response from members of the community.

The day was finished off with a reward of a go-karting session. The youngsters had a great time taking on the staff from Acis Group and the police to see who could get the fastest lap.

PC Shaw added,

“This was an extremely successful day for everyone involved. The youngsters were occupied constructively and had loads of fun. Everyone participating worked well with each other and the day strengthened our existing relationships and understanding. Perhaps one of the most important outcomes of the day was the reaction of the community, who were delighted that we were making an effort to improve their environment. It showed the youngsters in an extremely positive light and credit goes to them for their hard work and commitment.”

Patrick Hodgson, Community Safety Manager for Acis Group, said,

“Streetforce is an excellent community initiative which we were keen to get involved in. The results of the first day have been extremely positive for all involved. I am sure that it will build on the good relationships of all those involved and will have a positive effect and ongoing benefit to local residents.”