



# **HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICE**

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**2009 /2010**

# WEST LANCASHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

## HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2009/ 2010

This is the eighth Annual Health Promotion Report produced by West Lancashire Borough Council and incorporates examples of work that the Health Promotion Service has been engaged in over the last year. The key initiatives of work undertaken by the Health Promotion Officer and/ or her colleagues in the Commercial Safety Team have included issues about food safety, personal hygiene, healthy eating and accident prevention.

The aim of the Health Promotion Service is to promote and improve the health and wellbeing of the people of West Lancashire through the provision of education, training, resources, workshops etc and supporting both local and national priorities and campaigns for health improvement within the borough.

The work of the Health Promotion Service generally consists of the following:

- Working in partnership with a range of individuals, groups or organisations from the public, private and voluntary sector to promote and improve health.
- To initiate, co-ordinate, manage or support health promotion activities throughout West Lancashire.
- Promote the provision of a diverse range of training opportunities to local businesses.
- Providing support to organisations and practitioners who have a health promoting role.
- To produce resources to aid health promotion in different settings.
- To raise awareness and increase knowledge of various national and local health issues and campaigns in order to maximise their impact.

### **Hand Washing Initiative**

During 2009 Environmental Health Officers visited open farms in West Lancashire to ensure that they were following current guidelines and were doing everything reasonably practicable to control the risk of visitors and staff contracting *Escherichia coli* 0157.

E.coli 0157 is a bacterium that lives in the gut of animals, including cattle, sheep, deer and goats. E.coli 0157 illness can occur when germs from animals are transferred to the mouth for example when food is eaten with unwashed, contaminated hands. The risk of being infected with E.coli 0157 can be reduced by good personal hygiene.

In October 2009 Officers from the Council's Commercial Safety Team were involved in a health promotion initiative at Farmer Ted's Tourist site. As part of the hand washing campaign officers provided an eye catching display and spoke to visitors about the importance of washing their hands, especially after being in contact with animals. Visitors had the opportunity to use the hand inspection cabinet which very visually showed whether they had washed their hands properly. Attractive information packs on farm safety were provided to visitors including stickers, other goodies and the leaflet 'Farm visits and E. coli 0157 Advice for the public'.

Over 200 people visited and / or participated in the hand washing activity. Positive feedback was received about the hand washing initiative which was described as an interesting and fun way to engage children in the importance of personal hygiene. Parents/ guardians also appreciated the resources provided at the event.

As part of its work programme, the Council is continuing to offer all open farms in West Lancashire the opportunity to hold a hand washing event in 2010.

The hand washing event was highly publicised by the media creating more awareness of what people can do to avoid infection from animals when visiting farms.



From left of photo: Pamela Williams, Senior Environmental Health Officer. Councillor Andrew Fowler, Portfolio Holder for Community Services and Health with employees of Farmer Ted and Proprietor of Farmer Ted's Mr Mark Edwards.

## **West Lancashire Occupational Health and Safety Group**

An equally important part of the work of the Commercial Safety Team relates to health education and promotion through the provision of advice and support to businesses.

During 2009 West Lancashire Borough Council's Commercial Safety Team Health and Safety Officer set up a new Occupational Health and Safety Group in partnership with a collective of local businesses. The aim of the group is to help employees protect the health, safety and welfare of people working in West Lancashire and to promote good practice.

The Group now meets four times a year to keep up to-date with health and safety legislation, raise awareness of health and safety issues, and provide support and to share ideas.

In the last financial year the Group has had presentations from the Council, the Health and Safety Executive, NHS Central Lancashire, Lancashire Fire and Rescue and local businesses. These well received presentations covered a wide range of health topics e.g. fire risk assessments, moving goods safely, working at height, smoking cessation and health and safety systems.

## **Commercial Safety Newsletter**

The Council's Commercial Safety Team which includes the Health Promotion Service has again circulated a yearly newsletter to all businesses in West Lancashire. The newsletter contains articles on health and safety, food safety and health promotion. Some examples of articles in this year's newsletter have included infection control, National Food Safety Week, gas safety and information about the Shattered Lives Campaign which aims to reduce the costs of slips, trips and falls. The newsletter provides an important means of creating awareness and keeping businesses up to-date with legal requirements, resources and guidance available, health education campaigns, award schemes and the availability of training courses.



## National Food Safety Week

In June 2009 the focus of National Food Safety Week was on people over the age of 60 and the need for the correct storage and handling of food in the home. In support of the event the Council's Health Promotion Officer and Student Environmental Health Officer staffed a display at the Wellbeing Centre, Moorgate, Ormskirk and answered questions on food safety. Media coverage was received to publicise the event.



The reason for focusing on this client group was because there has been an increase in the UK generally of cases of Listeria among the over 60s. Listeria is the main cause of food poisoning deaths in England and Wales.

Listeriosis is an infection that is usually contracted by eating food that has been contaminated by a type of bacteria called *Listeria monocytogenes*. *Listeria monocytogenes* is commonly known as Listeria. Listeria is a rare but potentially life-threatening disease. Eating contaminated food can result in nausea, flu-like symptoms, fever, blood poisoning or meningitis. The types of food most contaminated with listeria are meat and vegetable pates, unpasteurized cheeses, cold cuts of meat, smoked fish or ready to eat prepacked cooked and chilled foods

Further support of the initiative was given in March 2010 when a Senior Environmental Health Officer gave a presentation on *Listeria monocytogenes* to wardens of sheltered housing accommodation in West Lancashire. The basis of the presentation was to inform wardens about the food safety campaign to be delivered to older people commencing in April 2010 regarding the correct storage and handling of food in the home.

The campaign will consist of the Health Promotion Officer giving talks or providing a staffed display on food safety so older residents can obtain advice and information on what they can do to reduce the risk of food poisoning:

The information will focus on

- Keeping fridges at the correct temperature
- Following the storage instructions on the label
- Use food by its use by date.
- General tips on good hygiene concentrating on the 4Cs cleaning, cooking, cooling of food and preventing cross- contamination.



## Provision of Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) Training Courses

Officers from the Commercial Safety Team, including the Health Promotion Officer, organised and delivered 4 of the CIEH Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering Courses in the last financial year. Thirty eight people attended and successfully completed the course.

Positive feedback has been received from people attending the courses. Examples of comments received by officers were:

“Course was very interesting”

“The tutors were always willing to answer questions and expand further on issues”

“Learnt a lot”

“Activities helped to reinforce what we had learnt”

The Health Promotion Officer successfully completed the RSPH Diploma in Nutrition and Health Qualification in September 2009. The Officer is now registered to teach the CIEH Level 2 Award in Healthier Food and Special Diets in the next financial year.



The Council can also provide to businesses and organisations the CIEH Level 2 Award in Health and Safety in the Workplace and the CIEH Certificate in Stress Awareness.



The provision of this range of health and safety, food safety courses provides a valuable resource for local businesses, organisations and individuals.

#### **Recipe 4 Health**

West Lancashire Borough Council has been working in partnership with Lancashire County Council Trading Standards Department to promote the Recipe 4 Health Award Scheme.

The award scheme is free of charge and is designed to promote food safety, healthy eating and encourage establishments to adopt practices and measures to help protect the environment.

Successful businesses receive an award and can promote themselves via the Recipe 4 Health Food Business Award Scheme. Winners of the award also receive free publicity on the council's websites.



The premises that received the award during the period April 1<sup>st</sup> 2009 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010) in West Lancashire were:

- High Wray Residential Care Home, Ormskirk
- Rufford Old Hall Tea Room
- Whittles Farm Restaurant, Tarleton

## Healthy eating

As part of the Council's healthy eating campaign the Health Promotion Officer provided primary schools with the opportunity for their Key Stage 1 classes to learn about healthy eating in a fun and interesting way. A tremendous response was received by schools and fifty three healthy eating talks were provided. Each lesson consisted of a lively discussion, the use of interesting visual aids, poems and a physical activity game. Teaching resources were also provided to eat primary school teacher to utilise with their class.



Very positive feedback was received from teachers about the healthy eating campaign. Some of the following comments were received:

“Children really enjoyed the physical and descriptive activity”

“Useful resources, children really liked the fruit and vegetable toys “

“Talk fitted in perfectly with what we are doing on health in the school curriculum”

“The children enjoyed the session, involvement was good (lots of hands up) and they really enjoyed the ‘5 a day ‘game.’”

“Excellent. She was aware of putting her talk to the age of the children and the resources she used and the sheets she left will be very helpful in our work on growing plants.”

“The lesson was varied and fun”



## Hand Washing Campaign

Participation in a Hand Washing Campaign was also offered to local primary schools. Again the response was very positive and a hand washing workshop was delivered to 40 Key Stage 2 in primary schools across the borough.

The purpose of the hand washing workshops was to teach children how to wash their hands properly and the importance of correct hand washing in the prevention and control of infectious diseases

The campaign involved the use of the hand inspection cabinet which worked on the following basis:-

- The hand inspection cabinet contains a special UV light. Some lotion is applied to an individual's hands. The hands are then placed in the cabinet. The areas of the hand where the lotion was applied will fluoresce under the UV light.
- Each individual will then wash and dry their hands and then place their hands back under the UV light. If the hands have been washed correctly by the individual then the lotion will have been removed. If there is any remaining lotion on the hands this will show any flaws in the hand washing method.

The workshops also comprised of a discussion and a range of class room work activities.

The workshops were highly successful and teachers were appreciative of the laminated hand washing posters to reinforce the hygiene message. The workshops were also relevant as hand washing was particularly topical in view of media attention on Swine Flu and E.coli 0157.



## **Other talks**

The Health Promotion Officer also responded to a variety of further requests for talks. In primary schools six hand washing talks were given to Key Stage 1 classes, one hand washing talk to a nursery class, one farm safety talk to Key Stage 2 and one healthy eating talk to Key Stage 2.

A talk on food safety was given to mothers of young children by a Senior Environmental Health Officer in Ormskirk. Food safety packs were provided to parents. The talk was requested by Moorgate Children's Centre.

**If you are interested in receiving a talk on a specific health issue or you would like to work in partnership on developing a particular project please contact West Lancashire Borough Council's Health Education and Promotion Officer on 01695 585253.**