

PRESS RELEASE

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20 May 2008

Rain doesn't stop crowds at Kingstanding Family Fun Day!

Over 800 Kingstanding residents braved the rain on Saturday 17th May to enjoy a range of fun activities, bag some bargains and find out about training and learning opportunities, at the Family Fun Day which took place on Wheeldon Recreation Ground from 10.30am - 2.00pm.

The event was organised in celebration of Adult Learners week (17-23 May) by the Kingstanding and Oscott Events Group - a partnership of Kingstanding community organisations including ENTA (Employment Needs Training Agency), Kingstanding Community Developments, Sutton Coldfield College, RAIK (Raising Achievements in Kingstanding), Birmingham Adult Education Services and Kingstanding Library.

Kevin Hayes, ENTA's CEO, and Robyn Riggans, 2007 adult learner of the year, officially opened the Fun Day, in the presence of Kingstanding councillors Catherine Grundy and Peter Kane who then took time to speak with stall holders and members of the public.

Robyn, who lives in Perry Common, spoke to the listening crowd about how she got involved with adult learning when she moved to Birmingham with a young child in 2006. She has since taken a wide range of courses from Paediatric First Aid and Food Hygiene to Fork Lift Truck driving and Manual Handling. She achieved an NVQ in Business Administration while working as a volunteer and is currently taking the European Computer Driving Licence. Robyn said "I would encourage anyone to have a go at adult learning, don't be afraid to start small and build on your successes. You can get out and meet people, as well as gaining skills and confidence to help you get a job".

Kevin Hayes, ENTA's chief executive said "This event was a fantastic chance for local residents to come together and find out about courses and training opportunities open to them. ENTA offers courses at different levels such as Preparing for Employment for adults and Entry to Employment for 16-18 years olds as well as vocational courses, NVQs and help with basic skills. Above all we offer a friendly and supportive atmosphere and help overcoming barriers".

Younger children enjoyed the bouncy castle and having their faces transformed by painted flowers and animals. Firemen from Perry Barr Fire Station provided fire safety information and the queue of children waiting to sit in the Fire Engine to get a taste of a career as a fireman showed their popularity. The multi talented DJ created a party atmosphere as well as balloon art flowers, hats and animals for the children!

Four local youngsters who heard about the event through Perry Common J & I school, chose to miss their usual Saturday ballroom and latin dance classes to enjoy the Fun Day. Simon Thompson wasn't put off by the weather saying he most enjoyed "the bouncy castle slide when its wet!" and sisters Charlie Rose, Maisie and Leyla May Hicks said they "would like to see a live dance performance at next years Fun Day"!

Teenagers Russell Stanton, Josh Cameron and Josh Lynn who had spotted the event while walking past, enjoyed a lively game of football with Sergeant Rachel Crump from the Kingstanding Neighbourhood Team which they said was 'brilliant'.

Kingstanding couple Bob and Shirley Harding read about the Fun Day in the Observer and said "It is good to see something going on. We really like the friendly atmosphere and the good mix of activities".

Michelle Poole, Employment Development Officer from Birmingham Disability Employment services - who had a stall in the marquee, praised the event and said "This face to face opportunity to link with the local community is much better than a leaflet through the door. It has been really beneficial and we have signed up a number of people with disabilities whom we aim to help back into work".

Organiser Keith Airey from Kingstanding Community Developments said "Despite the weather, everyone really enjoyed themselves; it was really great seeing lots of families out together, teenagers playing in the football cage, children discovering the Fire Engine or playing on the Bouncy Castle. It is a truly community event and lots of people have come up to me since expressing their delight that such an event like the Fun day had been put on and they would like more. Planning will start soon for next year's Fun Day that will be bigger and brighter than ever!"

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Editors Notes

1) ENTA has been working across Birmingham since 1977 providing learning opportunities, training, information, advice and guidance to help people think about and prepare for paid employment.

As a Community Interest Company (CIC) ENTA is a not-for-profit organisation working in the community, for the benefit of the community. The work of ENTA fulfils our vision of enabling all people to achieve their potential, no matter what barriers they have faced in education, employment or training.

ENTA has 3 bases in Birmingham City Centre (head office, main training academy and IT training centre) plus 2 bases in the community on the Kingstanding Wyrley Birch Estate (Lakeside Children's and Family Learning Centre and a nearby Community Learning Centre)

**Contact Charlotte Light (PR) for further information, images, interviews or comments
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