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CHP initiative for Halloween community safety

RESIDENTS in north-west Chelmsford have nothing to fear this Halloween as Chelmer Housing Partnership (CHP) continues its community initiative to provide a safe haven for the young and old.

Started in 2007 for residents of CHP's sheltered scheme, Tasman Court, the initiative provides a refuge for elderly residents who are worried about staying at home during 'trick or treat' night. This year, elderly residents from north-west Chelmsford are invited and will be provided with a fish and chip supper – funded by the Chelmer Residents N1 Area Forum, the Active Families project, and in conjunction with the Home Office as part of the Safer Chelmsford Scheme.

While Essex Police will be patrolling between 8.30pm to midnight – the time when most antisocial behaviour takes place – refreshments (courtesy of Chelmsford Star) will sustain young people from the area who will teach the local residents how to play a Nintendo Wii.

Malin Blom, CHP's Neighbourhood Engagement Co-ordinator, said: "We're encouraged by the young people's eagerness to participate and the fact that they have demonstrated a real understanding of how frightening innocent-intentioned pranks can be to the elderly, especially those living alone. Most of the young people have pledged to voluntarily assist with this Halloween project. It demonstrates CHP's commitment to forging working community partnerships throughout Chelmsford to help break down inter-generational barriers."

CHP is working in partnership with Essex Fire Service and Essex Police whose community support officers have attended school assemblies to teach children about 'trick or treat' safety.

Sgt Jan Bloomfield of Essex Police commented: "We are keen to support the government's 'Every Child Matters' agenda which aims to keep young people safe. Part of this includes educating them about when a prank turns into a criminal or antisocial activity."

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EDITOR'S NOTES:

- For more information, plus photos (available Monday 3rd November 2008), please contact Victoria Norton, PR & Marketing Manager: E-mail: victoria.norton@chelmerhp.org.uk tel: (01245) 613111 / 07872 398015.
- For more details about Chelmer Housing Partnership please visit: chelmerhp.org.uk.