

Nottingham charity leaders to act as 'voice of the people' on neighbourhood issues

Local people are all set to have a greater say in how their neighbourhoods are developed, as a local charity boss, Ruth Greenberg, Chief Officer of the Radford-based Partnership Council, is appointed as a 'link' between leading city organisations and local people - together with Dr Beata Polanowska from the charity Signpost to Polish Success.

Ruth and Beata have been chosen as 'third sector advocates' and invited to join One Nottingham's Neighbourhood Nottingham Theme Partnership, which was set up to help transform Nottingham's neighbourhoods.

The Nottingham Neighbourhood Theme Partnership comprises relevant representatives from city organisations including Nottingham City Council, the police, Nottingham City Homes, NHS Nottingham City and the voluntary and community sector so they can work together to improve neighbourhoods more effectively, in a focused way.

Acting Chief Executive of One Nottingham, Nigel Cooke, explains:

"The third sector - or voluntary and community sector - plays a crucial role in delivering services to the communities of Nottingham. It has a huge amount of knowledge about the issues facing communities and innovative ideas for improving things.

We already work closely with the sector but by appointing people like Ruth as advocates we will be able to tap into and benefit from that knowledge in a very hands-on way.

The Partnership Council works with neighbourhoods very closely, on a day-to-day basis, so someone like Ruth is perfectly placed to voice the views of local people. Plus of course, she will be able to help us put the work we're doing into action at the very heart of communities."

Ruth says:

"As a small neighbourhood charity we work very closely with local people and believe very strongly in making sure that they can influence the decisions that are made on their behalf, in this case, about where they live.

Being chosen as a third sector advocate will enable me to make sure that local people's views are heard and that neighbourhoods are improved in the way that local people want. It's a very exciting role and I'm looking forward to it."

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The Partnership Council provides a range of services to local people such as a skills share scheme and volunteering opportunities but more importantly it gives neighbourhoods the support they need to plan their own activities.

For example, it's supported a residents' group in Forest Fields to run a range of activities for children and young people and to plant hundreds of free hanging baskets to brighten up the area. Plus it's helped a residents' group in Sherwood Rise to hold its own neighbourhood festival for families.

Ruth was chosen as an advocate because of her wide-ranging experience in the voluntary and community sector, including experience of working in partnership with organisations like Nottingham City Council.

At present, the Partnership Council is leading a project to improve the Forest Recreation Ground on Gregory Boulevard, in partnership with Nottingham City Council, the Castle Cavendish Foundation and Friends of the Forest - a group made up of local people. It was the views of local people that inspired the project in the first place and their involvement in developing the funding bid has resulted in the project being awarded around £5 million by the Heritage Lottery and Big Lottery funds.

**To find out more please call Ruth on 0115 970 8200
or email ruth@partnershipcouncil.co.uk**

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