

Working to bring people together

A COMMUNITY association has been working hard to keep Sandal people connected, informed and united.

In the past few years Sandal Community Association has helped to get several social groups off the ground that have made a real difference in the area.

They also helped to organise this year's diamond jubilee celebrations at West Yorkshire Sports and Social Club, and have raised money for charities in the past through ceilidhs and a handbag auction.

But chairwoman Gail Stephenson explained that in recent years the association has become a central source of information, keeping hundreds of people up to date with local issues.

She said: "It's important to us that we keep people informed about what's happening in the area.

"We're completely focused on the community in terms of looking at social and local issues, from traffic problems to anything people think is important.

"We send out e-mails about issues like crime and any activities we are doing, and feel it helps to make people feel more secure."

The group founded the Friends of Sandal Castle, Sandal Gardening Club and most recently the Sandal Strollers, a casual walking group.

And Ms Stephenson said organising social events was important in bringing people together.

She said: "These groups are quite self-sufficient now and have



COMMUNITY: Members of Sandal Community Association.

their own memberships.

"We've run ceilidhs, auctions and cheese and wine nights.

"With the jubilee event we didn't quite break even, but we feel it's important to encourage events like these."

The association has also organised litter picks and this year installed new hanging baskets on Barnsley Road and Standbridge Lane.

To find out more, visit www.sandal.org.uk

Protecting our community

A SPORTS and social club has been at the heart of the Sandal community for many years.

West Yorkshire Sports & Social Club is a cherished meeting place for many community groups including football and rugby teams, cricket teams and a bowling club.

And for around 20 years local people have been fighting to protect the site, which has been allocated for housing in the council's Local Development Framework (LDF).

Sandal Community Association chairwoman Gail Stephenson said

one of the main reasons the group formed was to try and protect the site.

She said: "The venue is so important to people.

"As well as being the home to numerous sports teams, during the week it runs art clubs and dance classes. Every day there's a community activity happening at the club.

"It's one of the few functioning spaces that we have in Sandal and is such an asset to the community."

If the site is developed as part of the LDF, the council would have a

responsibility to make sure that facilities are provided elsewhere.

Ms Stephenson added: "We work with the council and try to host as many events as we can at the club to make sure that it remains viable.

"We're keeping an eye on it and making sure people are informed. If there does end up being a development we need to make sure it's not undesirable, causing traffic problems.

"And we want to make sure that good facilities are provided elsewhere."

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If you then contact us and pro-

vide us with four tokens (like the one below) and proof of address we'll give you £100. Simple.

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