



A local group has cleaned its beach, added bins, reduced anti social behaviour and so much more since joining forces to catch the council's attention.. and engage residents. **Jacqueline Morley** reports.

Jane Littlewood, 40, of Rossall, is the first to admit she's a woman in a hurry, one who likes to get things done. Ask Wyre Council leader Russell Forsyth who rates the residents' group she chairs as one of the best in the borough with "just the right attitude to get things done, rather than the usual 'I want, therefore I must have' approach that gets some groups a bad name.

Jane not only runs Rabbit Design, a graphic design company, but chairs Rossall Residents Association, and urges others to join forces to champion their corners of the Fylde with their respective councils, police, and other civic authorities.

Rossall's long been seen as a cinderella to neighbouring Cleveleys, where massive investment has transformed the seafront.

But the group is out to change all that. Right now they're running a campaign, Do You Feel Passionate?, targeting the whole of the Rossall Beach area, on the fringe of Cleveleys, and others who frequent it, to get involved.

Jane explains: "We felt like the forgotten area, next to Cleveleys. I think it works because we work in partnership with others, rather than just demand things. We like to meet people halfway, you do this and we do that, let's do it between us.

"We're currently looking at the state of the Prom. It won't be an immediate transformation but in the next few years the whole place should be looking much smarter and tidier!" she explains.



Community with spirit

"We aren't just about dog muck and trivial issues - if you've been following our progress you'll know that we have already moved mountains in our first year, for example the recent pavement re-surfacing was entirely down to our campaigning.

"We've been out in force with another beach clean, applied for a Neighbourhood Award, raised funds for next year's projects, and encouraged the public down to our beach for a kiting event.

"It's all been really good entertainment and a worthwhile way of having fun with like-minded people.

"We are always on the look-out for people who want to get involved.

"Everyone has a worthwhile talent that can be put to good use.

"This group will only succeed if we all pull together and help - and there's no reason why that shouldn't happen!

"That's why we're running our 'Do you feel passionate?' campaign and we are leafleting the whole of the Rossall Beach area to encourage everyone to get involved.

"We know that there are lots of like-minded people all over the area who would love to

belong to a group just like this and who feel passionate about reducing anti-social behaviour, improving the environment, and who want to belong to the community of days gone by, and all are more than welcome to come along and join in.

"Remember, there is strength in numbers." The association offers a blueprint to getting things done, the modern way.

They have dispensed with the lengthy committee meetings but tend to emphasise social gatherings, getting together in a fun, but effective way, via beach parties and barbecues, to make a difference within the community.

Secretary David Hewitt has also developed a website, which has grown from just a few pictures and text over eight pages, to more than 30 static pages, 100 more which are downloadable, and almost 200 pictures.

David adds: "There are lots of things we could introduce like a message forum for comments, offers of help and assistance or simply ask questions.

"Another possibility is a live 'webcam' so that live pictures of the beach can be viewed on any computer anywhere in the world!

"The possibilities are endless."

WORKING TOGETHER: Residents on a clean up at Rossall Beach and (left) Jane Littlewood

SUCCESS STORIES

■ **Thornton Gate** anti-social driving measures - roadworks to reposition and replace features to improve the aesthetics of the area and reduce the speed by motorists along Rossall Prom;

■ **Rossall Prom** was of concern to residents and visitors .. unlike the neighbouring new look Cleveleys seafront. Sea wall and apron, bins and benches, were generally shabby. Jane and David highlighted issues and have urged the council to prioritise action.

■ **Christmas Lights** - all the community groups in Cleveleys will come together on November 26 to celebrate the switch on of the Christmas tree lights in Cleveleys town centre, meeting at the Frank Townsend centre at 4pm b

■ **Kite Festival** - in spite of the poor summer weather for the first event this year interest was such from Fleetwood Kite Club and Hangtime Kits that another will be organised for next year.

For more information ring (01253) 854145 or visit www.rossallbeach.org.uk

jacqui.morley@blackpoolgazette.co.uk

I WAS a devotee of the London Marathon from its inception. I remember Hugh Jones - a ginger toff straight out of Chariots of Fire - won the first race in dashing style.

I, like millions of kids around the nation, got up early and watched in awe as thousands of amateur athletes joined novices taking on the ultimate road race - 26.2 miles.

The BBC, never having televised such an event before, had to try something different to keep the viewers hooked. A race which lasted two hours plus was a hard one to keep the attention span of your passing Sunday morning TV traffic.

As good as they were the dulcet tones of David Coleman and Ron Pickering needed back-up.

It came in the form of a jogging Bob Wilson who, with microphone in hand, ran alongside breathless teachers, nurses, fireman and office work-

ers, asking them all the same question "Why are you doing this?"

Cut then to the sights of Cutty Sark, The Mall, Docklands, and of course the pearly Kings and Queens.

The comical musical interlude saw bizarrely-dressed people straight out of a Victorian tap room, tapping out tunes about rolling out barrels and Mrs Brown who had knees so nice they needed to be raised in dance.

The jazz bands of those early races were all I ever imagined big city marathons had - that and thousands of spectators



TOMORROW: Look at it this way, with Jacquie Morley

Marathon Man

The build-up to Jon Rhodes's New York run



in pac-a-macs and cups of Bovril.

So throughout my preparations for this Sunday's New York Marathon I've been putting together a killer mix tape for my iPod.

Being uncommonly slow, I've done all my training on my tod. That has meant lots of compilations on the runner's friend - the modern Walkman. But it seems not only am I head-

ing into the unknown on Sunday, having never run anywhere near 26 miles, I may have to do it without the headphones.

They are, to quote the New York Runners handbook "strongly discouraged".

Given I'm running through the majority of this race in the historically rough and tough neighbourhoods of Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx I reckon

on "strongly discouraged" really does mean DON'T DO IT!

Still I shouldn't worry, I fully intend to soak up every minute of atmosphere and the on course musical accompaniment should help me beat out a pace.

I read with interest that I will enter no fewer than 17 music zones on the run through the Five Boroughs. I now have visions of the Hip Hop Zone, the Power Ballard Zone, the Simon and

Garfunkel Bridge Over Troubled Water Zone, as I cross one of New York's five bridges, and of course the Jazz Zone.

Having frequented a few jazz clubs on previous, albeit more relaxed visits to the Big Apple, I reckon New Yorkers know their jazz. Just one question do they have comedy cockneys in pearly outfits? I really hope so. That and a good taxi service when my shins pack up on mile four.

■ Jon is attempting to raise £3,000 for Marie Curie Cancer Care by running the New York Marathon. To sponsor him visit his fundraising web page www.justgiving.com/run-jonboyrun

■ Jon is being supported by the dedicated fitness team at Ribby Hall Holiday Village, Wrea Green. For more information on membership visit www.ribbyhall.co.uk

jon.rhodes@blackpoolgazette.co.uk