

Eco-friendly group inundated with calls

A NEW Sutton community group dedicated to becoming eco friendly have been inundated with calls from residents who want to get green.

EcoSutton have recently set up in the town and are hoping to inspire people in the community to work together to make the town more sustainable. To launch their mission the group screened a film about Findhorn, a fully-sustainable village in Scotland.

The event was such a hit that EcoSutton are having to show it again.

Dawn Blakeway, from the group, said: "It just shows there's a real appetite for this in Sutton."

The Findhorn film is being shown again at the Cancer Support Centre, Midland Drive, Sutton Coldfield on February 2 from 7pm.

A second film about how Cuba coped when its oil supplies were cut off is being shown at Wylde Green Library, Emscote Drive on February 8.

For information or to book a place call Anita on 0121 354 3394 or, alternatively, emailing anita.bridges@blueyonder.co.uk.

Undiscovered talent get a chance to shine

UNDISCOVERED stars in Sutton could get the chance to shine thanks to a talent search led by a town centre store.

Milkshake shack ShakeAway has launched its own record label, and wants talented residents to produce a video of themselves performing. The winner will get the chance to spend the day in a recording studio and to work with top-class producers. A panel of experts – including the 'voice' of the X Factor, Peter Dickson – will be judging.

Visit www.shakeaway.com/records for more details or send a video or drop off your CD to the ShakeAway store at 84 Parade. The closing date is Friday, February 18.

Got a story to tell?

Call: 0121 355 6061
 Email: observer.editorial@cintamworth.co.uk



FIGHTING FIT: An ex-serviceman from Sutton is helping children in the area improve their fitness and confidence through martial arts.

Dan Berry, aged 28, a former Reconnaissance soldier with The Royal Green Jackets and a Balkans veteran, has become a British Military Martial Arts (BMMA) instructor.

He has developed a programme for children aged between four and 12 to talk about social issues such as stranger danger, staying safe, anti-bullying and the benefits of keeping themselves healthy.

As well as running twice-weekly sessions at New Oscott Primary, he will also be visiting schools in the area to run his sessions.

"I'm overjoyed at being asked to head up the new BMMA Sutton Coldfield Academy," said Dan.

"BMMA is already thought of as being the best martial arts academies in the country and I

intend to make this one stand out from the crowd.

"As both martial arts instructors and former soldiers we provide a very strong positive role model to young people who take heed of what we are saying.

"This is a place where people of all ages and abilities can come to socialise, keep healthy, achieve more than they ever thought possible and be part of an amazing experience learning a range of martial arts."

The sessions at New Oscott Primary take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6pm to 8pm.

Anybody interested can contact Dan on 07943-265-240. email bmmasuttoncoldfield@yahoo.co.uk or visit the website at www.britishmilitarymartialarts.co.uk

Pictured left, with Dan are New Oscott Primary School headteacher Linda Whitfield and seven-year-old pupils Kayleigh Roper and Callum Farmer.

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School that was failing has turned around in just two years, says report

By Amy Bowen
 News Reporter

AN ERDINGTON school that was taken under council control because of its poor results has completely reversed its fortunes within two years, an Ofsted inspection revealed this week.

Inspectors who visited Stockland Green School in November gave it a glowing report, judging it to be 'good' and rapidly improving with 'outstanding' features.

The news comes two years after the school was made a National Challenge school, which applied to establishments where the number of pupils gaining five GCSEs was no higher than 30 per cent.

The school received a funding boost and a federation was set up with Arthur Terry School in Sutton, sharing staff and governors from the school under the guidance of Arthur Terry head, Chris Stone.

Since then GCSE results have tripled as the school has gone from strength to strength.

Inspectors noted that "strong senior leadership is ensuring that well thought out



Left: Neil Wallace, associate headteacher at Stockland Green, welcomes news of the school's turnaround.



Chris Stone, of Arthur Terry school, has also leant his expertise to Stockland Green, after the schools linked up

Neil Wallace, who has been in the role of associate headteacher since Easter 2009, said: "We are delighted with this excellent report.

"It's a testament to the hard work of the staff and students and is fully deserved.

"The federation with Arthur Terry School has helped raise standards and contributed to the successful inspection.

"There is a lot of hard work that goes on behind the scenes which parents and students don't always get to see.

"However, the future direction of the school is in the best possible hands."

strategies for improvement are having a positive impact."

They said that the school is "improving rapidly", that teaching had improved significantly and that students' attitudes and behaviour were impressive.

Inspectors also noted that in terms of governance, partnerships and equality, the school was outstanding.

However, inspectors warned the school still needs to improve pupil attainment and take into account the use of assessments to support learning.

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