

# Success for police's new sex offender programme

A GROUND-BREAKING scheme where members of the community volunteer to work with sex offenders in Conwy and Denbighshire has achieved a 100 per cent success rate.

The aim of the Circles of Support and Accountability (COSA) programme is to keep the community safe and since it started in North Wales in 2007 none of the offenders taking part has gone on to re-offend.

The project, which operates across all six counties, and has 100 volunteers, pairs an offender with a team of trained volunteers who meet weekly and offer counselling, support and guidance on reintegrating into community life.

North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner Winston Roddick CB QC has agreed a £30,000 funding boost for the pioneering programme calling its work "invaluable."

Clive Wolfendale, chief executive of the charity CAIS, which delivers the COSA scheme, said: "Upon release sex offenders are likely to be isolated and re-located from family and past friends."

"With no social connections or bedrock to make a go of life the prospect of them re-offending becomes more likely and presents a very real danger to society."

"COSA addresses that in a practical way, putting the individual together with a team of volunteers to support them through rehabilitation."

One volunteer said: "I am under no illusions, these are extremely serious crimes we are talking about, but we cannot simply isolate offenders when they are released from prison and think that the problem will go away. We have to keep society safe and the best way to do that is to take a frontline approach."

## Podcast project at the heart of the community

A COMMUNITY podcast has been launched by members of a social media enterprise.

The project - Conwy Community Podcast - has been created by members of TAPE Community Music and Film in Old Colwyn and has three episodes online, on iTunes and pod bean.

Episodes feature interviews with PC Robert Newton-Miller, diversity officer for North Wales Police, Conwy County Council chief executive Iwan Davies and ITV Wales presenter Rob Shelley.

Steve Swindon, CEO of TAPE Community Music and Film, said: "The project is supporting a number of folks to gain some great experience and be hands on with all aspects of the work."

To hear the episodes, visit [www.tapemusicandfilm.podbean.com/](http://www.tapemusicandfilm.podbean.com/) or [itunes.apple.com/gb/podcast/conwy-community-podcast/id1084677114](https://itunes.apple.com/gb/podcast/conwy-community-podcast/id1084677114)



■ Craig Dallas, Rob Shelley, Sheila Moores and Deborah Lomas. Picture provided by Steve Swindon, TAPE.

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## RSPCA launch appeal after dog lost in woods

THE RSPCA has launched an urgent appeal to trace the owners of a dog found wandering through a wood near Colwyn Bay.

The female dog, showed signs of neglect, had an ulcerated tumour, was underweight and had overgrown nails, when found by a member of the public at Coed Bryndansi, Llanelian-y-n-Rhos on April 16.

She was in such a poor state of health a vet decided the best thing to do was to put her to sleep.

RSPCA inspector Kia Thomas said: "We are very keen to know how she came to be in the woods and where her owners are."

"You can call our inspectorate line in confidence on 0300 123 80182.