

Neighbourhood Renewal

Newsletter

Issue One

May 2006

Welcome to the first edition of the Neighbourhood Renewal Newsletter, which will bring you up to date with all that is happening within DSD's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. It is our intention to issue 4 Newsletters per year and we would appreciate your views and comments on what we aim to be a very informative and customer focused newsletter. Our target audience spans the whole of Northern Ireland, as approximately 289,000 people are located within the identified Neighbourhood Renewal Areas. Our aim is to keep everyone informed as the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy continues to roll out in Northern Ireland. We hope you find it useful.

Background

In June 2003, Government published "People and Place; A Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal" This strategy is about bringing together the work of all Government Departments in partnership with local people to tackle disadvantage and deprivation across all aspects of everyday life.

A key element of the strategy is the establishment of Neighbourhood Partnerships in each Neighbourhood Renewal area as the vehicle for local planning and implementation.

How do we identify the disadvantaged areas?

Urban Neighbourhood Renewal areas across Northern Ireland are being targeted because they are within the top 10% of those

neighbourhoods suffering the highest levels of multiple deprivation and disadvantage. The individual boundaries and population size have been agreed, following consultation with the communities concerned, to ensure neighbourhoods are of a workable size and make sense to the people who live there. The Noble Multiple Deprivation Measure was used to identify the communities suffering the worst levels of deprivation across Northern Ireland. This means that approximately 1 person in 6 of the population will be targeted.

What is a Neighbourhood Partnership?

Each Neighbourhood Partnership brings together key interests in the area. In addition to the community itself the Partnership includes statutory and public service planners, providers and funders of services in the area as well as political representatives and those with business

Continued overleaf

interests. A Neighbourhood Partnership will play an important role in the Neighbourhood Renewal area. Its first role is to develop a vision for the neighbourhood, this will be done with the active involvement of local people so that each neighbourhood has an agreed picture of how they want their neighbourhood to look and feel in the future. Visions will look ahead across a 7 to 10 year period. The Partnership will then focus on identifying priorities and actions needed to make this vision a reality. This will be done through the development of action plans covering up to 3 years. So far 24 Neighbourhood Partnerships have been established throughout Northern Ireland, with 10 in the Greater Belfast area, 6 in the North West and a further 8 throughout the rest of the province.

How is Neighbourhood Renewal Delivered?

Neighbourhood Renewal is based on a community planning approach focused on improved public services. To deliver this, a joined up approach must be adopted by Government Departments, statutory bodies and other service providers to ensure better co-ordinated, targeted and where appropriate better tailored delivery of services in areas of deprivation. It is believed that as the community will identify the strengths and weaknesses of public service provision, delivery will become more responsive to the needs of the residents in the Neighbourhood Renewal areas. Many of the key service providers will be represented on the Neighbourhood Partnerships.

DSD's 3 Development Offices are the principal co-ordinators for the implementation and delivery of the strategy at community level.

- **Belfast Regeneration Office**
Belfast Regeneration Office, based at James House at the Gasworks Business Park has responsibility for the implementation of Neighbourhood Renewal in the Neighbourhood Renewal areas in Greater Belfast.
- **Regional Development Office**
Regional Development Office, also based at James House is responsible for the implementation of Neighbourhood Renewal in the Neighbourhood Renewal Areas in towns and cities across Northern Ireland.
- **North West Development Office**
The North West Development Office's remit covers the implementation of Neighbourhood Renewal in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas in the North West of the province.
- **Neighbourhood Renewal Unit** has responsibility for Neighbourhood Renewal Policy and co-ordinates and promotes a joined up approach in relation to the Government's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. The unit also provides advice and guidance on all aspects of Neighbourhood Renewal, and is responsible for reporting progress to Ministers.

What has been happening in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas?

At the time of production, some 24 Neighbourhood Partnerships have been established and are working to develop the long term vision and priorities for their areas. Work is continuing in the other 10 Neighbourhood Renewal areas and partnerships will be established in these areas very soon.

A Word from the Statutory Bodies: Strong Support for Neighbourhood Renewal from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive

The Housing Executive is committed to supporting the Department's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy for Northern Ireland.

There are strong connections between the Neighbourhood Renewal agenda and the work of the Housing Executive. While the vast majority of social housing estates in towns and cities in Northern Ireland are safe and healthy environments, at the same time the most disadvantaged individuals and communities are still more likely to be found in areas in which the Housing Executive has a statutory responsibility either as a landlord or as an agent of physical renewal.

The ongoing drive to improve housing conditions has been a cornerstone of renewal throughout Northern Ireland, and in many instances, housing investment has been the key to stimulating the confidence and momentum necessary for the success of wider regeneration initiatives. For example, in Kilcooley the Housing Executive has been working with the Kilcooley Community Forum and other statutory agencies to regenerate the estate through a physical improvement strategy and a range of social and community initiatives.

Housing is therefore viewed as making a vital contribution to the Strategy. The Housing Executive is already represented on nearly all of the Neighbourhood Partnerships, and on behalf of the Department, has been taking the lead in working with the communities and our local partners in delivering Neighbourhood Renewal in several small 'pockets' of deprivation.

The Housing Executive has also developed - and will be publishing later this year - a Neighbourhood Renewal Housing Prospectus which:

- demonstrates the ways in which housing can support the Strategy through work to improve housing and environmental conditions, address market failure, promote sustainable mixed tenure communities, and support community cohesion, community safety and community development;
- sets out a Neighbourhood Renewal programme for the Housing Executive and its partners for the short to medium term.

Neighbourhood Renewal in Action

Belfast

Multi Purpose Sports Ground For Sandy Row/Greater Village

The Multi Purpose sports ground and resource centre at the Sandy Row / Greater Village areas is an example of what can be done with time, effort and vision. Social Development Minister David Hanson has unveiled plans for a £650,000 funding package for a new multi purpose sports ground on a site beside the Charter Youth Club. The project has received support from the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) and Belfast City Council. The funding, received under the Neighbourhood Renewal Phase II programme includes the proposed development of a vacant site at the end of Blythe Street in Sandy Row providing an astroturf pitch (incorporating three 5 a-side pitches or one larger pitch) along with a changing facility. This will immediately help enhance the visual aspects of the Sandy Row area and provide access to sports and recreation opportunities.



Minister for Social Development, David Hanson



Artists impression of the proposed playing fields and resource centre at Blythe Street, Belfast

SHANKILL COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

Belfast Regeneration Office has invested over £165,000 into a multi-sports facility for the Lawnbrook Estate in the Shankill area. The investment is supported by £67,500 from the NI Housing Executive and £15,000 from the Creating Common Ground Consortium. Belfast City Council has agreed to adopt and maintain the facility when it is completed.

The project is being promoted by Shankill Community Initiative, an entirely voluntary organisation which provides services for over 180 young people. This organisation incorporates Ashmore Youth Club, a drop in centre open 5 nights a week and the Ashmore/Cranmore Residents Association. They organise cross community events, community safety initiatives and provide programmes on drug awareness, sexual health, and IT.

Local residents identified a multi - sports/play facility as the top priority for the redevelopment of vacant land between the Shankill Road and the peace wall at Cupar Way. The proposed facility will help alleviate boredom in turn reducing the problem of anti social behaviour. It will also reduce tension, build confidence and skills and provide opportunities for mixing with new groups of people. It has the added benefit of improving mental and physical health, and academic performance. This facility will be invaluable to volunteers working in the area with young people and will encourage personal development and team building.

Turning this piece of derelict land into a well-used community facility will enhance the local area and provide a social focus for the community, encouraging participation and ownership.

Colin Fights Back!

On the outskirts of Greater West Belfast, and within the Lisburn Council area lies the Colin Neighbourhood. The Neighbourhood Manager is Jim Carlin, who moved to work in Colin on secondment from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. The Colin Neighbourhood Initiative (later to become known as the Colin Neighbourhood Partnership) was set up in September 2003 and has been very successful in proactively bringing Government Departments and other organisations together for the benefit of the community. The Colin Neighbourhood Partnership has identified the needs and priorities of the area's residents and has engaged Government Departments to set about the realisation of these needs. Colin has difficult issues to address, including high levels of car crime, third generation unemployment and anti social behaviour including drug, alcohol and solvent abuse. The community feels that improvements are principally required in health and social service provision and play and recreation areas for children. These complex issues present a huge challenge to Jim and his team in tackling the problems to raise the quality of life within the Colin Community.



*Jim Carlin,
Colin Neighbourhood
Manager*

Recently Jim discussed his experiences in the Colin Neighbourhood Partnership since he joined in 2004.

Q What do you believe have been the successes and disappointments since your arrival in Colin Neighbourhood Partnership?

A I think we have been successful in getting more groups and organisations involved, there are almost 100 different organisations participating in the working sub groups.

I see the speed at getting things up and running as an obstacle, it took longer than envisaged to set up the office, but it was important to establish a structure and we are now beginning to make progress.

Q So you think your work is having a direct effect on the area and its people?

A Yes, we are making in roads and it is acknowledged by people in the partnership that things are starting to move. The partnership is beginning to see greater community involvement.

Q What are your ambitions for Colin?

A We have plans for a major health and sports facility for the Colin area and I would like to see it progressed significantly before my time with the Colin Neighbourhood Partnership ends in August 2006.

Other recent successes that have put Neighbourhood Renewal on the map

FOOTPRINTS WOMEN'S CENTRE GETS A HELPING HAND

The Footprints Women's Centre, established in 1989 by a small group of women living in Poleglass, West Belfast, received a cash boost of almost £188,000 from the Department for Social Development's (DSD's) Belfast Regeneration Office. The money will go towards supporting 10 jobs and help to develop a range of services provided at the centre. These services include training, education, child care and health. When the Minister visited the centre in December, he commented on the important job being done by the centre in regenerating the community through a strong self help ethos and a commitment to empower local women.



Some of the children who will benefit from the funding received for the Footprints Women's Centre

EXTENSION OF OASIS CENTRE OPENED BY MINISTER

An East Belfast community organisation has expanded with support from the Department for Social Development and the International Fund for Ireland.

The Oasis Centre provides a range of much needed services to people living in Ballymacarett, Island, Woodstock and The Mount. These include training; childcare; a nearly new children's clothes shop; a coffee shop; a cross community scheme for teenagers and befriending programmes for older and disabled people.

UPPER ANDERSONSTOWN COMMUNITY FORUM GETS HELP

The Upper Andersonstown Community Forum has received support from the Department for Social Development's Belfast Regeneration Office to maintain essential services in West Belfast.



Frank Duffy, Director of BRO takes a lesson in moulding play dough

The support will secure the positions of the Director and Co-ordinator, maintain important community activity and help the Forum to implement a 10-year strategy to tackle poverty and disadvantage in the Greater Andersonstown, Glen Road and Lenadoon areas through local community development. These initiatives include childcare facilities, youth training schemes, computer skills, numeracy and literacy programmes, health and fitness advice and helping local people return to the workplace.

LOCAL PEOPLE ARE BEING HELPED TO HELP THEMSELVES IN ARDOYNE

Funding provided to the Greater Ballysillan and Upper Ardoyne areas has facilitated activities including skills building and leadership programmes, community relations training, an after-schools initiative, helping people to become job ready and restorative assistance panel training.

During a recent visit to the Upper Ardoyne the Minister said: **"One of the key objectives of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy is to develop confident communities that are able and committed to improving the quality of life in their areas"**.

Regional Towns and Cities

BALLYKEEL CHIPS ARE GOOD FOR YOU



Local children enjoying CHIPS

Ballykeel is located on the outskirts of Ballymena Co Antrim. In March 2005, a pilot exercise funded by Neighbourhood Renewal was set up to run CHIPS (Child High Intensity Playcare Services). It started with 16 children and 3 fully qualified staff and was managed by a local committee. By September 2005 the number of children using the

services had increased to 24 and the numbers had trebled to 48 by January 2006, necessitating an increase in staff to 5. CHIPS encourage discipline with a strict dress code and good behaviour rules.

This is testimony to the endeavour and determination of the local people to improve services to the community and in turn provide essential services to the children of the community. As a result of the success of the pilot exercise, 5 part time jobs have been created, improved community relations have been noted, the children's behaviour has improved significantly and importantly, there has been great support provided to parents– allowing them an opportunity to pursue jobs or training whilst their children are being well catered for with CHIPS!

Another successful outcome is that planning permission has been sought for a purpose built unit in the nearby community business complex where CHIPS hopes to relocate.



Some of the children and staff who have benefited from CHIPS

Craigavon Neighbourhood Partnerships Residential in the Slieve Donard Hotel

Craigavon Borough Council area is home to three Neighbourhood Partnerships based in Brownlow, Lurgan and North West Portadown. Since September 2005 the three Neighbourhood Partnerships have been holding their own monthly meetings and working towards establishing Vision Frameworks and Action Plans for their respective areas. It was clear that similar issues were affecting people in the different areas and a number of groups had already developed local projects to try and address some of these issues. The Department and the Council thought that this was a good opportunity for the Partnerships to meet for some training, network with each other and promote good relations across the Council area. The community representatives from the three Partnerships along with members of the statutory organisations met in Newcastle for a presentation from Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency on the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Site. The groups stayed together in the evening for a meal and a highly competitive quiz. The following day a training audit was examined followed by a presentation by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit on the visioning process. The three Partnerships then commenced examining the visioning process for their own areas. The event was considered a success both by the organisers and the participants. One delegate commented on how 'the different groups had felt relaxed in each others company and able to discuss difficult issues with each other that were usually skirted around to avoid offending anyone'. The three Partnerships are keen to arrange future training events together in order to build on this event and further cement relationship.

Springhill Park Community Development Association

Springhill Park Community Development Association in Strabane has received funding to employ a Regeneration Manager and an Administrator. The funding will also go towards associated running costs.

This project will provide over 100 placements giving training towards NVOs in administration, IT, Childcare, Horticulture and Call Centre Handling. This in turn will increase the employability of the participants. It's not all work though, as outdoor activities have been provided to allow young people and children the opportunities to come together thus improving their social skills.



Junior club members on a trip with the Summer Scheme to the Dunlewey Centre in Letterkenny

The North West

How the Outer North Partnership have developed their Action Plan

The Outer North Neighbourhood Partnership represents approximately 15,000 people in a



Some local people who witnessed the Neighbourhood Renewal mural being unveiled in Outer North Derry

Neighbourhood Renewal area in Derry. Before developing their Neighbourhood Vision Framework and Action Plan, they embarked on a detailed consultation

exercise. This exercise was led by the Greater Shantallow Area Partnership supported by members of the Neighbourhood Partnership. Every household within the area was sent a leaflet explaining Neighbourhood Renewal and how residents can become involved. Posters were distributed throughout the area and the development of a website has allowed people from other areas to log on and follow the progress being made. The most innovative idea however has been the production of a large mural and the development of a DVD highlighting the problems and issues within the Outer North. Regular meetings have also been held throughout the area involving key stakeholders including community, voluntary and statutory sectors.

Hillcrest House – Internet Tools for Schools – Homework Club

Hillcrest House, situated in a disadvantaged area of Derry has received support through the Neighbourhood Renewal Investment Fund towards their Homework Club. This is great news for the children, as it allows the organisation to employ two Homework Club Assistants, it will allow the children to train on software packages and receive a hot meal. The funding means that the children can also participate in cross community trips, which will allow interaction with their peers from across the religious divide. It will also help them learn in a structured environment and enhance their IT skills as well as emphasising the importance of healthy eating.



Child gets helping hand from Homework Club Assistant

Derry to get transport for locals

Derry's Resource Centre has been awarded



Resource centre Derry

funding towards the salaries of 2 drivers to provide accessible transport for some of the most marginalised

members of the Outer North Community and beyond. This is an additional service provided by the Resource Centre Derry and will make it easier for the elderly and disabled people of the area to get to Day Care at the Resource Centre as well as medical services and other appointments.

This much needed transport will help alleviate the loneliness and boredom suffered by many elderly and disabled people. It will also provide transport for 25 children per day to take them to and from crèche or playschool facilities where a hot meal is provided.



Resource Centre Community Bus which has helped to bring the elderly and vulnerable members of the Derry community to day care at the resource Centre

And Finally

Further editions of 'Neighbourhood Renewal Newsletter' will be issued highlighting progress with the establishment of Neighbourhood Partnerships and delivering messages from the Statutory Bodies who are required to work closely with communities in the delivery of Neighbourhood Renewal.

Neighbourhood Renewal Unit would welcome your comments and are interested in answering your questions and hearing about any features that you feel would raise awareness of your Neighbourhood Renewal Area.

If you have any comments or would like to see your project featured in the next edition of Neighbourhood Renewal Unit Newsletter, please get in touch with Therese Pollock, Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, Level 3, The Lighthouse Building, Gasworks Business Park, Ormeau Road, Belfast.

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