

INITIAL REPORT TO BOLDON NEWTOWN PARTNERSHIP GROUP - January 2007

This report will inform the members of the Boldon Newtown Partnership Group of progress to date on the Neighbourhood Action Plan and the work of the Neighbourhood Management Team.

The Neighbourhood Management Team has had all four members of staff in place since the end of October 2006. The staff team comprises of:

- Maria Anderson Neighbourhood Manager
- Sharon Charlton Community Development Worker
- Stephen Thompson Environmental Improvement Officer
- Mark Burrell Neighbourhood Management Assistant

The team moved into the newly refurbished village hall at the end of November and organised the launch of the building on 7th December. There was an official opening ceremony conducted by the deputy Mayors, and attended by Cllr Allison Strike members of the Boldon Newtown Residents Association and a range of partners and agencies. The event included an open day from 2.00pm to 7.00pm to give local residents an opportunity to view the improvements to the hall. There was also an opportunity for residents to see plans and choose preferred options for proposed environmental projects. These projects will be funded through the Cleaner Safer Greener Initiative with match funding from the Supported Communities Fund from Home Housing.

A partnership away day was organised by the team in Nov 2006 at the Friendly Hotel in Boldon. The day was attended by members of the partnership group which included local resident representatives. The theme of the day was to look at ways to make the partnership group more effective to drive forward the Neighbourhood Action Plan.

The office base at the village hall is set up and all equipment is in place. Financial and budget monitoring systems have been compiled by the Neighbourhood Management Assistant. Quarterly financial returns showing spend and budget management are reported to South Tyneside Council's NRF monitoring team and Home Housing's Finance Team. To date project spend is on target.

The Neighbourhood Action Plan covers six areas which need to be addressed if it is to improve the quality of life of local people and enhance the physical environment of Boldon Newtown. The themes are:

- Employment, Learning and Advice
- Crime and Community Safety
- Housing and Environment
- Improving Health
- Creating a Positive Environment for Children and Young People
- Community Engagement and Involvement

1. EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING

- i) Aim: to develop a range of services, initiatives and projects to increase the number of residents taking up employment and learning opportunities.
- ii) Target: To reduce unemployment to 21% by 2008
- iii) Baseline: Worklessness rate 25%- November 2005
- iv) No local employment related services - January 2005

Actions to date:

- v) An employment and learning thematic group has been developed and to date has met on four occasions. The Neighbourhood Management Team co-ordinates and facilitates this group. The group is made up of partners from Groundwork, Working Links, South Tyneside College, Job Centre Plus, Economic Development (STC), Stride, TEN, Children's Centre, Adult and Community Learning (STC) and Boldon Community Association. The next stage will be to support local residents to take part in the group.
- vi) Beginning in January 2007 drop in services were established. Working links and Groundwork operate a service to assist people back into employment and training Tuesday 11.30 - 2.00pm. Training and Enterprise Network. (TEN) provide job search and employment and training information on Monday afternoon 1.00pm - 3.00pm. On Friday morning Connexions provides a drop in service to assist young people with career options and training. The last Tuesday of each month Tedco operate a drop in session to provide support to anyone interested in setting up their own business. There is also a Welfare Rights drop in service which takes place every Wednesday morning at the village Hall. The sessions are proving to be quite well used. The Neighbourhood Management Team and the Boldon Detached project will promote the services to maximise their use by local people.

- vii) Sixty residents have filled in questionnaires to inform us of their needs in relation to employment and learning. Further consultation will take place during the February half term activities. This information will then be used to provide courses and information on employment opportunities and specific courses tailored to meet the needs of Boldon Newtown residents.
- viii) The Neighbourhood Management Team has secured funding from the Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities. This will provide courses in canoeing at Boldon CA, a 'Time for Me' course and computer courses using mobile laptops at the village hall provided by Adult and Community Learning.

2. CRIME AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

Aim: Create a community where people feel safe and crime levels are at or below those across the borough.

Target:

- i) Reduce burglary to dwellings to or below borough average
- ii) Reduce Criminal damage to or below borough average
- iii) Reduce Youth disorder to or below borough average
- iv) Reduce violence against the person to or below the borough average

Baseline:

- v) Northumbria Police 2004/2005
- vi) Burglary to dwellings - 20 per 1000 dwellings - borough average - 11.5 per 1000 dwellings
- vii) Criminal damage - 49 per 1000 population - borough average - 36 per 1000 population
- viii) Youth Disorder - 91 per 1000 population - borough average - 44 per 1000 population
- ix) Violence against the person 26.68 per 1000 population - borough average - 14.8 per 1000 population.

Actions to date

- x) Police camera installed in the grounds of the Children's Centre 13/11/06. Kevin Thompson from Community Safety Team is taking the lead to explore the possibility of installing a CCTV camera which will be monitored at Barrington Street Control Centre, South Shields. Kevin Thompson to report findings to Boldon Newtown Partnership Group on Monday January 29th 2007.

- xi) The Community Safety Team has explored the possibility of an alley - gating scheme to the backs of Arnold Street and North Road and Charles Street. Feedback to be presented to the Boldon Newtown Partnership board in January 2007.
- xii) The Neighbourhood Manager is in the process of establishing a local inter-agency group made up of partners from the Police, South Tyneside Homes, Detached Youth Project, DAT, Community Wardens, Community Development Worker (NMI), Children's Centre and the Housing Officer (Home Housing). The purpose of this group is to help address anti-social behaviour and criminal damage and provide support and diversionary activities.
- xiii) Target Hardening Scheme carried out in Charles and Arnold Street - Report of take up and success rate to be reported to Partnership Group in January 2007

3. HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT THEME

Aims:

To improve the built environment and appearance of the estate in consultation with residents.

To Increase percentage of owner occupied properties

To improve housing management across all tenures.

Target:

- i) To increase residents satisfaction with environmental appearance of estate by 25% by March 2008
- ii) To reduce the number of empty properties across all tenure types by 25% by April 2008
- iii) Number of empty properties to be established
Residents dissatisfied with environmental appearance - 44%

Actions to date

- iv) Properties in 1-16 John Street due for demolition, mid February 2007. Properties in Charles street 96 - 188 (even side only) to be purchased by South Tyneside Council from Home Housing for demolition later in 2007.
- v) Planning application submitted for redevelopment site, development brief drawn up and put out to tender. Preferred developer chosen, September/October 2007.

- vi) There will be 7 properties up for voluntary sale in Charles Street (6 flats and 1 house). A number of void properties have undergone repairs and will soon be available for rent from Home Housing.
- vii) Decorative window boards to be fitted early February to the backs of Charles Street empty properties due for demolition. Young people working with the Boldon Detached Project and the Environmental Improvement Officer have produced their own designs which will be used on the boards. Fencing will be fitted to the backs of these properties until they are demolished to discourage fly tipping and secure the area. Decorative boards will also be fitted to the remaining empty properties which are not to be demolished in Charles and Arnold Street.
- viii) £156,000 secured from the Cleaner Safer, Greener initiative to be spent in Boldon Newtown. £78,000 this financial year and £78,000 next financial year. Public consultation was carried out in August 2006 and December 2006 to give local people an opportunity to (a) choose the categories for project spend and (b) to view designs for environmental projects and to choose their preferred options and locations.
- ix) The Neighbourhood Manager, Environmental Improvement Officer and Officers from STC are in the process of developing environmental projects. These projects will be presented to the Partnership meeting in January for discussion and approval.
- x) A Private Rented Landlords Accreditation Scheme has been developed to service Boldon Newtown and the Rekendyke area. The Private Rented Accreditation Officer will update the Partnership on progress at the January meeting.
- xi) The Environmental Improvement Officer covers the area on a daily basis to monitor and report refuse problems. A group has been developed, which meets on a fortnightly basis to carry out a walk about on the estate. The group comprises of officers from Home Housing, South Tyneside Council, South Tyneside Homes and the Environmental Improvement Officer, who co-ordinates the group and lists the action points to be followed up.
- xii) The Environmental Improvement Officer and the Boldon Detached Project will work with young people during the February half term break to clean up the surrounding grassed areas around the river Don.
- xiii) Smaller environmental projects are currently being developed with local schools around designing bird boxes and sand stone work.
- xiv) Funding has been secured from the Supporting Communities Fund (Home Housing), the Neighbourhood Management budget and the LIF (decision due in February) to employ a community gardener for 15 hours to work in the Boldon community garden. The worker will be employed through Groundwork and work with the Neighbourhood

Management team to co-ordinate groups using the garden and develop environmental projects.

4. IMPROVING HEALTH THEME

Initial Challenges

To understand the wider health needs of the community

To ascertain the health needs of specific age and gender groups within

Boldon Newtown

To develop a comprehensive health improvement action plan to address these needs

Actions to Date

- i) Health Thematic Group established led by the Choosing Health Team. The group is made up of health professionals working in a variety of disciplines, the Neighbourhood Manager, Area Partnership Co-ordinator (STC), The Children's Centre Manager, Boldon Detached Project Manager, The Community Association Centre Manager, Drug Action Team (Youth Issues Officer)
- ii) A sub group will meet in early February to discuss the most appropriate ways to ascertain the health needs of specific groups of people in a variety of health categories. This will involve a range of health professionals, the Neighbourhood Management Team and Youth Workers taking part in workshops and information sharing. The outcome of these sessions will form a brief as to what type of questions that need to be asked and the best way to approach a range of different age groups. This will form the basis for research to produce a comprehensive health needs assessment of residents in Boldon Newtown

5. CREATING A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE THEME

Aim:

To develop a range of activities that meets the needs of children and young people in Boldon Newtown.

Actions to Date

i) A Children and Young People Thematic Group has been established and met on four occasions.

ii) A research project is to be carried out to ascertain the needs of young people in Boldon Newtown. Boldon Detached Project is taking the lead working with the Youth Parliament and will update the partnership on progress at the January meeting.

iii) The Community Development Worker in the Neighbourhood Management Team is currently in the process of establishing a weekly local arts and crafts club in the village hall for 5 - 8 year olds, parents will be involved.

iv) The community park on New Road has received planning permission. The exact date for the initial phase of the work to begin has not been finalised. Further funding bids will have to be submitted and funding secured before a phased approach of the work on the facilities can begin.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT THEME

Aim:

To ensure residents are fully engaged and informed in the ongoing regeneration of Boldon Newtown.

Target:

Increase satisfaction with opportunities to get involved in decision making to 85% by March 2008 - two new community groups created by March 2008

Baseline:

82.5% of respondents to household survey satisfied with opportunities to get involved in decision making - 1 active community group in Boldon Newtown.

Action to Date

- i) First quarterly newsletter produced in November 2006 by the Neighbourhood Management Team and delivered to all households in Boldon Newtown. Next newsletter being prepared to go out in February 2007
- ii) Open day held in Village Hall on December 7th to consult with residents on proposed environmental projects through the Cleaner Safer Greener initiative.
- iii) A range of community engagement activities have taken place and further events are being developed by the community development worker in the Neighbourhood Management Team. There was a pantomime in the village hall in December which was very successful and enjoyed by 90 local people. Christmas environmental crafts took

place in the village hall over two days with 77 people attending. This included children from the local primary schools and young people from Boldon Newtown

- iv) An events group has been established, with the community development worker working closely with parents/grandparents of young children to plan events and activities for under 13's during half term breaks and summer holidays. A range of exciting activities will take place for this age group in the February half term, including an educational trip to the Centre For Life in Newcastle, various activities in the village hall including, circus skills, mask making, face painting and jewellery making.
- v) Community Development Worker liaising with Ann Hodgson (Youth Arts Officer) to provide arts sessions for 10 - 16 year olds in the village hall. Provisionally to begin in March.
- vi) Weekly under 13's fitness/football project is taking place in the Village Hall. From 6.00 - 8.00 pm
- vii) A programme of activities will be developed for the Easter and Summer Holidays.

Summary

This is the first report to the Boldon Neighbourhood Partnership Group. It is proposed to produce this report quarterly. The frequency, format and the content of these reports can be subject to change at the request of members of the Boldon Newtown Partnership Group.

Maria Anderson
Neighbourhood Manager
Boldon Newtown

23rd January 2007