

Delivering a **New Deal** for Greetings Green



Annual Review
2006/07

Greets Green Partnership
is working to create real and
lasting changes to improve
the quality of life for
everyone in the area.



Introduction

Greets Green Partnership is delivering a 10 year regeneration programme under the Government's New Deal for Communities (NDC) initiative. We are managed by the Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG) which is overseen locally by Government Office for the West Midlands. Sandwell Council is our Accountable Body.

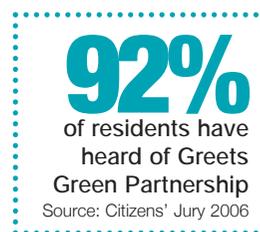
The programme started in 2000 and is designed to deliver and support a broad range of innovative and radical projects covering neighbourhood management, housing, health, education, community involvement, crime & community safety, training, jobs and business support.

Our aim is to make a real and lasting impact on the lives of the 12,400 people living in the 4,900 households that are within the Greets Green Partnership area. We are committed to giving every member of the community the opportunity to get involved in all our activities.

In 2006/07, the seventh year of our programme, Greets Green Partnership invested a total of £6,515,000 in the area. Next year we have plans to spend £7,300,000.

In this Annual Review we take a look back at our achievements this year, as well as giving a taste of what's planned for the year ahead. By working with local people and partner organisations, we are improving the quality of life for everyone in Greets Green.

For more information about the work of Greets Green Partnership, contact Brian McKinstry, Communications & PR Manager on freephone 0800 953 0215 or 0121 532 6835. Or email brian_mckinstry@sandwell.gov.uk



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Welcome

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The past year has been full of challenges but we have certainly risen to them and made major progress towards our goal of creating a better Greet's Green for everyone.

Ally Allerson, Executive Director, Greet's Green Partnership and Geoff Fisher, Chair of the Greet's Green Partnership Board.

Like many New Deal for Communities programmes, we faced the difficult task of having to revise our budget last Autumn. We turned this into an opportunity to take a close look at all areas of our work, refine our team and focus our efforts. The changes we have made mean we are now in better shape than ever to continue our work to deliver a New Deal for Greet's Green and ensure our 2010 vision becomes a reality.

Since Greet's Green Partnership started in 2000, we've funded over 340 projects which have helped transform the area in terms of community involvement, crime & community safety, housing, jobs, education and residents' health.

Some of the year's highlights include the completion in October of the brand new Greet's Green Children's Centre, next door to Ryders Green Primary School. Families with children aged under five can now access a whole range of services under one roof.

Our Crime Fighting Team has continued its excellent work. Crime rates in the area have dropped significantly, with just 19% of residents experiencing crime during the past year compared with 25% in 2004. Another major achievement is seeing the physical change that's now underway across Greet's Green. Housing sites have been cleared and we are looking forward to working with developers this year to plan the building of new, modern housing which will better meet local needs now and in the future.

Our work with local schools has been particularly successful, with our education aims and objectives being met three years ahead of target. All the local schools have significantly improved their standards. Four years ago George Salter High School was achieving a 15% pass rate at GCSE level and it's now the second highest achieving school in Sandwell with a 62% pass rate. The five primary schools have also improved enormously, with Newtown Primary becoming one of the best schools in the borough.



With so much of our education aims achieved, we've merged the lifelong learning strand with the Jobs & Enterprise Theme to create a new Jobs & Skills area. The new focus is on learning for employment and ties in with Sandwell-wide targets.

We have also created a new Community Services Theme by merging Community Empowerment with Neighbourhood Management. Getting residents involved has always been a vital part of all our work and Community Services will continue to concentrate on strengthening communities by empowering residents to challenge how services are provided and to take a leading role in how improvements are made in the future.

Greets Green has changed a lot over the past seven years. What has not changed is our commitment to raise standards and expectations and to develop an active community made up of residents who are proud to live in Greets Green, and who have the confidence to speak up and challenge what happens in their neighbourhoods.

During the year we have also made great progress in ensuring the work which Greets Green Partnership has started, will continue once the New Deal for Communities programme comes to an end in 2010. Greets Green Community Enterprises (GGCE) Ltd has been set up and the new organisation has started its work to create a range of community enterprises or businesses with a social purpose. The aim is for the social enterprises to continue some of the Partnership's work, such as helping people into jobs and developing their skills.

We welcomed Andrew Rainsford to the position of Chief Executive of GGCE and are delighted to have elected a Board of local residents and business people who will shape the work of the organisation.

We'd like to thank all staff, board members, residents and partner organisations for their hard work and help in making last year so successful and we look forward to an exciting year ahead with many new opportunities.

It's official – Greets Green Partnership has been named as one of the top performing New Deal for Communities (NDC) programmes in England.

Plus, it's the joint top performer across the six NDCs in the West Midlands region.

All NDCs around the country are regularly monitored and evaluated by Government to ensure they are making a difference to local people. One of the evaluation methods used is the performance management framework (PMF).

The results of the latest PMF gave Greets Green Partnership an 'excellent' banding – and it's one of only 14 NDCs out of 39 nationwide to achieve this highest possible level. We received the maximum score of five out of five for our health work and our achievements in reducing crime. Other areas of our work were also highly praised.

Your Board

Thirteen local residents are members of the Greets Green Partnership Board. They give all residents a voice by raising the issues that are most important to local people.

Here the Neighbourhood Reps tell us what being part of Greets Green Partnership means to them...

"We've kick-started lots of new ideas to transform the area."

Janet Sayce

**HAMBLETT'S
NORTH &**



GREETS GREEN

"We've made people feel safer by improving street lighting."

Pam Jackson



SWAN VILLAGE

"I can see the area getting better and better."

Jessica Ferguson



**HAMBLETT'S
SOUTH**

"We've introduced initiatives to improve the health and well-being of residents."

Ann Coll



**OAK HOUSE
NORTH &**

**OAK HOUSE
SOUTH**

"Our neighbourhoods are getting cleaner and safer all the time."

Fajli Bibi



LODGE AREA



"We're giving young people a voice in their community."

Amy Bahat



CARTERS GREEN

"We've raised the standards of education for all."

Laurie Spencer



WEST BROMWICH CENTRAL

All Reps are offered training and support by Jackie Owen, Representative Support Officer. The aim is to develop residents' skills and confidence so that they can continue their excellent work in the community once Greets Green Partnership comes to an end.



Elections for Neighbourhood Reps are held each year. For details, contact Jackie on freephone 0800 953 0215 or 0121 533 3191.

Community Representatives: Being part of Greets Green Partnership means...

AFRICAN/CARIBBEAN BANGLADESHI

Stan Simms



"... the area is returning to the great place it used to be."

Abdul Kahar



"...everyone in every community has a say."

INDIAN

Madhu Patel



"...the diverse communities of Greets Green are celebrated."

PAKISTANI

Munir Hussain



"...community groups are getting a helping hand."

SIKH

Gurbachan Dhinsa



"...the quality of life is improving for residents of all ages."

YEMENI

Nasr Muflahi



"...there are lots of community venues for everyone."

Professional Representatives:

The Partnership Board also includes a number of professional partners whose continued support is invaluable.

Local Authority Representatives:

Cllr G S Sidhu; Cllr Bob Badham; Steve Gregory, Executive Director Housing & Urban Form.

Public Sector Representatives:

Stewart Cutforth, Sandwell College; Steve Phillips, Sandwell Primary Care Trust; Jenny Booker, West Bromwich Job Centre; Inspector Mark Cooper, West Midlands Police.

Business Representatives:

Brian Murphy, Robinson Bros Ltd; Stuart Fell, West Bromwich Tool & Engineering; Susan Bartleet-Cross, West Bromwich Building Society.

Voluntary Sector Representative:

Reverend Deson, Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO).

Community Services

Major change is underway to give even more residents the confidence and ability to get involved in their community, to ensure that improvements continue to be made when Greets Green Partnership comes to an end in 2010.

Greets Green residents of all ages come together to have fun and meet local service providers at the Partnership's Summer and Winter Fun Days.



A brand new Community Services Theme has been created by merging Community Empowerment with Neighbourhood Management. Its aim is to strengthen communities by supporting residents to do more for their own neighbourhoods and to lead on their future development.

The Community Empowerment Team has spent several years helping to engage and empower local residents to become active members of their community. The work of the team cut across all the Partnership's theme areas as community involvement in all projects is vital.

The Neighbourhood Management Theme also focused on gaining the views of residents and consulting with them on a wide range of issues including how we bring about change to improve local services.

As these two theme areas are so closely linked, they have now been merged to create one theme which concentrates on community engagement and involvement, consultation and neighbourhood management across all theme areas. It will look at enabling local people to take control of their neighbourhoods by challenging local services and speaking out about local issues. Community Services will carry out all the consultation on behalf of the Partnership to ensure that everyone's voice is heard and

Community Fund

Local groups are getting a helping hand from the Greets Green Community Fund which provides grants to local organisations of all shapes and sizes. A specially trained panel of residents decides which organisations are successful in their bids for grants of up to £1,000. Lyng Falcons Under 15s football team and Sandwell University of the Third Age are just two of the latest groups to benefit.



local people can shape the future of their neighbourhood by monitoring and influencing change. The new Theme has a solid base to start from as Community Empowerment and Neighbourhood Management have achieved so much during the past 12 months, some of which is highlighted below.

More and more local people are becoming more involved in Greets Green, and regular surveys have shown a steady increase in the number of people who feel part of their local community.

Residents have been making their voices heard in many ways this year. They've shared their views at the 'Have Your Say' workshops and taken part in the 'Down Your Street' surgeries, the Greets Green-wide Neighbourhood Survey and the restructured Neighbourhood Forums.

Through the innovative Citizens' Jury and Family of '99 events, people of all ages have been raising issues and really shaping projects. The Citizens' Jury enabled residents to come along and vote on how well they feel the Partnership's programme is progressing, while local families were invited to discuss informally what they think about their neighbourhoods through the Family of '99 project.

71%
of residents have noticed that there are now more community events held in Greets Green
Source: Citizens' Jury 2006

Team Cleans Up

A team dedicated to making Greets Green cleaner and tidier – and keeping it that way – has made a big impact in the area. The four-strong team, who are out in Greets Green five days a week, has been made possible through the Cleaner Environment project. They've already tackled grass cutting, litter picking, removed fly-tipping and generally cleaned up the area. Residents are now getting to know the team and are letting them know where there are problems which need tackling.



On the Jury

Residents had their finger on the pulse when they took part in two high profile 'Citizens' Jury' events. Using special hand-held keypads, they voted on how well they think Greets Green Partnership's regeneration programme is progressing and were able to have their say on whether they think the area is improving.



Down Your Street

'Down your Street' surgeries are held across Greets Green to give residents a chance to talk about anything they want. The Community Services Workers put a 'GGP Ask Me' leaflet through residents' letter boxes and ask them to display it in their window if they want to highlight an issue or concern such as anti-social behaviour, traffic calming or overgrown land. The team then know where to knock the next day to discuss what action is needed, resulting in many local problems being dealt with immediately.



Community Services continued

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Many residents have been raising local issues and seeing action taken through Greet's Green Partnership's 'Down Your Street' initiative.

A major focus has been bringing communities together so that the diversity of Greet's Green is celebrated and a cohesive community is created. This was seen at the 'Celebrating Each Other' event when Greet's Green Partnership worked with Sandwell Together to bring people from different cultures together to enjoy fun, food and entertainment.

The Development Workers who work with the Indian, Pakistani and African Caribbean communities have been making a big difference and 50% of resident involvement in Greet's Green Partnership is currently from the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community.

While the Partnership has been very successful in getting groups involved, the focus will now be on developing the skills of those who are involved, to enable them to make decisions and play a bigger role in the Partnership.

The voluntary and community groups in Greet's Green continue to go from strength to strength and there are now 70 operating in the area, compared with 30 in 1999. The Community Funds

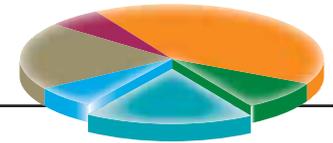
Valuing Volunteers

Community volunteers involved in the work of Greet's Green Partnership, received a helping hand when they took part in a special 15 week course. The OCN Level 3 course was designed to help the volunteers and reps involved with the Partnership learn about being a board member or a trustee of an organisation. The aim was to develop the skills of those who give their time for free so that they get the most out of volunteering.



£1,319,000

will be spent on Community Services during 2007/08

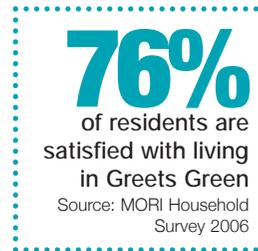


programme has really helped new groups get off the ground. People from all parts of the community enjoy celebrating together at the annual events organised by Greets Green Partnership, such as the Summer Fun Day and the Winter Festival.

These events continue to draw the crowds, enabling them to really participate in what's going on in their area, and make people feel pleased to live in Greets Green.

One of the main issues we tackled last year was the cleanliness of the streets in Greets Green. Statistics show that since 2004, the number of residents who are fed up with litter and rubbish has halved.

Major initiatives such as the Cleaner & Safer Environment Charter, which sets out the service standards residents can expect, and the Cleaner Environment project, which has introduced a team dedicated to making Greets Green cleaner and tidier, have really helped to improve the area and will continue to do so.



New Charter

The new Cleaner & Safer Environment Charter was delivered to every home in Greets Green to let residents know what standards of service they can expect to help improve their neighbourhood. Greets Green Partnership joined forces with West Midlands Police and Groundcare Services (Sandwell Council) to create the Charter which explains how crime and litter will be tackled – the two big issues which affect the quality of life for local people.



During the next 12 months, the main focus of the Community Services Team will be to:

- Encourage local people to monitor and challenge the quality of local services.
- Develop the next generation of leaders from within the Greets Green community.
- Build the capacity of community groups and voluntary organisations to ensure they become sustainable.

The Team will also focus on:

- Consulting with, and involving the community in all aspects of Greets Green Partnership's work so that residents influence how it takes shape.
- Encouraging all the different communities to work together in Greets Green.
- Giving local people the knowledge and ability to do more for their community themselves.
- Developing the newly restructured Neighbourhood Forums to enable all residents to raise local issues.
- Working with the Crime & Community Safety Theme to develop Neighbourhood Watch schemes.
- Supporting residents who become involved in the Partnership by offering training and development opportunities.
- Gaining the views of local residents on development plans for the area.

To find out how you can access the Community Services projects, contact Theme Leader, Rohit Mistry on 0121 533 3186 or email rohit_mistry@sandwell.gov.uk

Crime & Community Safety

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Crime rates and the fear of crime continued to fall significantly in Greets Green this year, making a major difference to the lives of local people – in fact there were over 500 less crimes in total.

The Greets Green Crime Fighting Team has had such an impact on reducing crime that every area of Sandwell has followed our lead and now has neighbourhood policing.

In fact, the level of crime in the area is now nearing the Sandwell Borough average, which is excellent news for residents. Local people are saying how much safer they feel in general thanks to initiatives such as the improved street lighting project, alleygating and the burglary reduction initiative. This project has offered free safety advice to residents and security work has been carried out at 800 local homes.

People are also feeling much safer at night in Greets Green. The percentage of residents who feel unsafe after dark has dropped 23% since 2002, and this feeling of safety has had an impact on people's overall health and well-being.

Having higher visibility policing in Greets Green has had a dramatic effect in the area. The Greets Green Crime Fighting Team was introduced initially as a pilot project but has proved so successful that all areas in Sandwell now have a dedicated Neighbourhood Policing Team.

Greets Green has led the way in neighbourhood policing and the team has now been mainstreamed by West Midlands Police which means that it's here to stay.

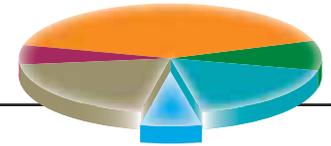
Police officers can be seen in Greets Green on foot, on bikes and in high-tech Police vehicles, enabling them to quickly respond to any incident and get results. A recent survey showed that 65% of residents have noticed increased Police foot patrols, 73% have seen increased car patrols and 62% agree there's been a greater impact on tackling anti-social behaviour.

The Crime Fighting Team has driven down crime so effectively that they won a special Quality Achievers Award from West Midlands Police for achieving the highest reduction in crime in North Sandwell during 2005/06.



£478,000

will be spent on Crime & Community Safety during 2007/08



The Greets Green Neighbourhood Wardens project came to an end in March, after funding had been extended for a further 12 months in 2006. The work they started is now being continued by the Crime Fighting Team, the introduction of dedicated Police Community Support Officers for Greets Green, the Cleaner Environment Team and Sandwell Town Enforcement Wardens.

Local people have played a key part in helping crime rates to fall. Members of the community including residents, business people and local councillors, meet and talk to the Police on a regular basis and share information which helps to prevent and combat crime. By continuing to work together, Greets Green can become an even safer place for everyone.

Light Work

Local people are feeling much safer at night now that brand new street lights have been erected in many roads. Old lampposts, some of which were 30 years old, have been replaced with new stainless steel lights which are better quality, easier to maintain and provide brighter light. Over 400 street lights are already shining bright and the fear of crime has gone down significantly. Now that Greets Green Partnership has started the project, Sandwell Council is continuing the scheme.



59%
of residents
now feel safe
after dark in
Greets Green

Source: MORI Household Survey 2006

During the next 12 months, the main focus of the Crime & Community Safety Team will be to:

- Launch a new community safety strategy which ties in with both the Sandwell and national strategies.
- Increase the number of Neighbourhood Watch schemes by providing start-up funding where needed.
- Continue to reduce youth anti-social behaviour by having extra support in hotspot areas.
- Introduce targeted initiatives to reduce crime in business areas.

To find out how you can access the Crime & Community Safety projects, contact Theme Leader, Phil Hartley on 0121 532 6885 or email phil_hartley@sandwell.gov.uk

Pedal Power

Police in Greets Green are getting on their bikes to help their fight against crime. Officers in the neighbourhood policing team are using five bicycles to help them patrol the area, including some parts that are hard to reach, such as the canal banks. Using the bikes has already led to results because they enable Police officers to get about fast where cars don't have access. The Police can now be seen out and about in the area on foot, on their bikes and in their high-profile Police cars.



Health

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Through the wide-ranging work of the Health Theme, local people are becoming more aware of their health, where to seek help and support when it is needed, and how to lead a healthier life to prevent problems in the future.

The brand new Greets Green Children's Centre provides a wide range of services and facilities, all under one roof, for local families with children aged under 5.



Health projects have been developed to tackle six priority areas - Access to Services & Information, A Healthier and Safer Older Age, Children and Families, Tackling the Major Killers, Drugs & Alcohol and Healthy Minds. The wide-ranging projects which are up and running are all helping local people to feel healthier. In fact, the percentage of people who feel their health is good or fairly good has increased from 75% in 2004 to 82% in 2006.

Partnership working with Sandwell Primary Care Trust (PCT), other local organisations and residents is key to its success. The Community Health Forum has continued to grow and get stronger, developing into a group where people can look after their own health and manage their health conditions.

There is also a group of health 'champions' in the community who are consulted on various issues and get involved in activities and initiatives. And local young people are taking action on health by becoming peer educators who discuss issues such as drugs, alcohol and sexual health. Highlights this year include the opening of the Greets Green Children's Centre at Ryders Green Primary School, the introduction of the Active Lifestyles project which is creating healthier lives for all ages and communities through lots of different sports and activities, and the continued success of the high profile Hat-trick Community

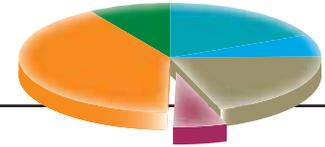
Workers Get Checked Out

More than 100 workers from companies in the Albion Road Business Improvement District (BID) had their health checked as part of a 'Carry On Working in West Brom' initiative. Greets Green Partnership and Sandwell PCT teamed up with a range of local organisations to stage the two day event which generated massive demand from local workers. They were screened for risk of heart disease, diabetes and stroke in a mobile health unit.



£420,000

will be spent on Health during 2007/08



Football project which is not only encouraging adults and children to play more football but is also training local people to become Community Coaches with accredited qualifications. The Health Theme has also been very successful this year with gaining mainstream funding for projects. This means they will continue without the need for further funding from Greets Green Partnership.

The Community Health Screening project has now become a charity with its own dedicated centre. The Fit for Life project at George Salter High School is now being rolled out across other schools in Sandwell with Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) support. The Child Home Safety project is continuing through the Children's Centre and the Healthier & Safer Older Age model is being used by various organisations as an example of best practice. Even the Neighbourhood Management team itself is now completely funded by Sandwell PCT, which is excellent news and means that the priorities of the two organisations can be more closely aligned.

Next year, health-related services will continue to be taken out to specific groups in the community, reaching many people such as manufacturing workers and BME groups, who may never have discussed health issues before.

79%
of residents find it
fairly easy to see their
GP when they need to

Source: MORI Household
Survey 2006

During the next 12 months, the main focus of the Health Theme will be to:

- Continue to make health services and information more accessible (eg through workplaces, advice services and promotion of wider health professionals such as Community Pharmacists).
- Work with the PCT and partners to ensure that health services are provided closer to home and that they reflect the real health needs of local people.
- Work closely with the Children's Centre to provide support and information for local families.
- Help to address the stigma attached to mental health and promote mental health services.
- Build upon our 'Tacking the Major Killers' programme to continue to decrease death rates from coronary heart disease and cancers.

Football Fun

The Hat-trick Community Football project, run in partnership with West Bromwich Albion FC, is getting adults and youngsters on the ball with lots of high profile footballing activities. Local youngsters have been gaining top tips from celebrity footballers and showing them off at tournaments and training opportunities organised by the project. Young people and adults have also been able to train to become Community Coaches and are now sharing their skills across the area.



Active Youngsters

You're never too young to enjoy sport – that's the message being shared through the Active 5, 6 and 7s project. The programme encourages youngsters to get more active which helps to tackle obesity and improves their chances of a healthy future.



To find out how you can access the Health projects, contact Theme Leader, Sally Sandel on 0121 612 1663 or email sally.sandel@sandwell-pct.nhs.uk

Housing & Urban Form

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During the past 12 months, major progress has been made in developing a better Greet's Green for all through the Partnership's Housing Plan. By working closely with Sandwell Council, Urban Living, RegenCo and Sandwell Homes, Greet's Green Partnership has taken a leading role in driving forward the redevelopment programme, which is gathering pace.

Homes across Greet's Green are benefiting from major improvements such as new roofs and better bathrooms and kitchens, thanks to Sandwell Homes' investment programme to bring properties up to the Decent Homes Standard by 2010.

The focus so far has been on progressing the clearance of housing sites to make way for new developments. The Housing Team has taken a personal approach to supporting local people living in the clearance areas, helping them move to new homes.

As clearance progressed, measures were introduced to keep the areas as safe and secure as possible for local people. Initiatives such as 24 hour security were introduced at Claypit Lane and Wattle Road to control anti-social behaviour and crime. The way in which Greet's Green Partnership supported the clearance process was Highly Commended by Regen WM in its Vision for Transformation Award 2006.

A total of 174 people have now been re-housed from Claypit Lane and Wattle Road, and 37 homes have been purchased on a voluntary basis from residents. Approximately half of the homes in the Edith and Chapman Street clearance area have been acquired and relocation support has been provided for residents. Plans are now progressing to develop new housing on the sites which will better meet local people's needs. Next year, new building work should begin and we look forward to the major change

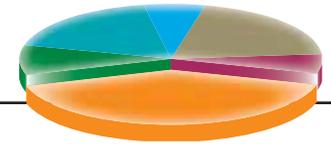
Residents Choose Improvements

Residents in Swan Village and Bridge Street are opening their front doors to a brighter and safer environment - and the changes are down to them. The environmental improvement projects were a direct result of residents raising concerns about their area and wanting action taken. Work has included new fencing, street lighting and landscaping, with residents being given the opportunity to choose the types of improvements they would like.



£2,980,000

will be spent on Housing during 2007/08



which will benefit generations to come. However, creating a better Greets Green is not just about new housing. Work has also begun on plans for The Rec on Claypit Lane to get a new lease of life based on residents' visions for a great community park.

Major environmental improvements have been carried out in Swan Village and Bridge Street to enhance the appearance of the area and make it a place where people want and choose to live.

Plus, residents have seen action taken across Greets Green through the Small Sites project. Nearly 20 different schemes have been completed, ranging from pruning trees to clearing undergrowth, and each one has been carried out in direct response to requests from residents.

Community involvement is vital in delivering the Housing Plan and residents have been influencing work right from the start and will continue to do so.

64%
of residents believe
that the activities of
Greets Green
Partnership have
improved the area as
a place to live
Source: MORI Household
Survey 2006

During the next 12 months,
the main focus of the Housing &
Urban Form Team will be to:

- Progress new development in Claypit Lane / Wattle Road to build new homes and greatly improve the housing choice available in Greets Green.
- Continue preparing the groundwork for redevelopment in the Housing Assessment Area (HAA).
- Bring in private sector developers to create new homes.
- Introduce initiatives to help people who are living in privately owned properties which don't meet the Decent Homes Standard.
- Create a steering group with resident members to shape the work of the Cleaner Environment Team.

Park Life

Ideas are being put together to give The Rec on Claypit Lane a new lease of life as Greets Green Park. Residents got together with expert advisors for a Visioning Workshop to look at ideas for how it could be turned into a place lots of people can enjoy. Recommendations from the day are being put to the Greets Green Park Steering Committee, who will consider the next stage of the process of turning The Rec into a park to be proud of.



Developers Back the Plan

Private developers are backing Greets Green's Housing Plan. They were invited to a special 'Greets Green is Changing' day where they found out about the exciting opportunities for development which will be coming up in the area as the regeneration continues. The developers who are selected will work with residents so that they can influence what is built in the future.



To find out how you can access the Housing projects, contact Ian Jennings, Marianne Monro or Dawn Harper on freephone 0800 073 0798 or email diane_odriscoll@sandwell.gov.uk.

Jobs & Skills

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Enabling local people to gain local jobs is the key aim for our brand new Jobs & Skills Theme, which has been created by merging Education & Lifelong Learning with Jobs & Enterprise.

Young people in Greets Green can now continue their studies on their doorstep right up to the age of 18 since George Salter High School launched a brand new sixth form centre.

All our education aims and objectives with local schools have been met, three years ahead of target, and a strong system is now in place to ensure that improvements will continue without the need for our intervention. This is a major achievement and has given us the opportunity to create a new Jobs & Skills area with a whole new focus.

Jobs & Skills will take a co-ordinated approach to re-skilling local people and creating local job opportunities by focusing on learning for employment. This new theme will link in with Sandwell Partnership, working towards targets which have been set for the whole of Sandwell to get more people into work.

Many residents have already developed new skills by trying out the taster sessions which Greets Green Partnership has organised. Now the focus will be on helping residents to progress from these sessions on to courses which lead to a formal qualification so that they improve their employment prospects.

The aim is to support people into achieving NVQ qualifications to enable them to develop valuable



Building Local Skills

Local builder, Sean Fay, won the 2006 Youth Builder UK / NHBC National Young Builder of the Year Award after being nominated through the Building Skills for the Community project. Sean is one of 58 local young people who have gained vital skills through the project to help them gain full-time work in the construction industry. He is now employed by Redrow Homes and has been working on their new developments.



skills. Gaining new vocational skills will increase the chances of securing employment. And once people start to earn a wage, they are no longer dependent on benefits and so their household income increases.

Giving people the best start in life so they can reach their potential has been our focus over the past few years.

Every single 3 and 4 year old in Greets Green now has access to a nursery school, compared with just 80% in 2000. Newtown Primary has become one of the best schools in the borough and all the other primary schools in the area are now performing around the borough average.

Initiatives funded by Greets Green Partnership included an Enhanced Learning Fund, which enabled individual primary schools to bid for small amounts of money to fund projects such as parenting courses to help parents support their children with their reading, and providing lunchtime support workers to interact with pupils during their lunchtime break.

85%
of residents know
there are now more
places to learn to
use computers
since the start of the
Partnership

Source: Citizens' July 2006

Learning in the Community

The Community Access Points (CAP) project, funded by Greets Green Partnership, set-up a network of CAPs at various venues across the area including all five primary schools and at George Salter High School. The team of Community Learning Workers worked with local people to get lots of activities off the ground, for example English and IT courses, play groups, library sessions and holiday activities. Local schools and community groups have now taken on the management of the CAPs so that they continue to benefit the community.



Support for Pupils

George Salter High School has taken a new look at its whole approach to language teaching and is offering extra support to all students who speak English as an additional language. The school has pupils from 33 different countries and more than a third of these don't have English as their first language. More staff have now been recruited to help students to learn English, to interpret where necessary and to offer support both in school and out of hours.



Virtual School Success

Greets Green youngsters who don't live with their families are enjoying some extra help to support them through school. Through the Looked After Children in Education (LACE) project, children who are in care or who live in foster homes in Greets Green, are making full use of a Virtual School to help them overcome the barriers they face to learning. Greets Green Partnership has loaned 11 lap tops to young people who are completing GCSE work, along with books and stationery for other looked after children.



Learning lasts a lifetime in Greets Green. Residents can sample a range of courses and sessions during Adult Learners Week and develop new skills and interests.

The Vocal Skills project was also very popular, with more than 300 pupils from all five primary schools receiving weekly vocal tuition from specialist Sandwell Youth Music staff. Each school was encouraged to create their own choir to perform in assemblies and the choirs joined together to perform in concerts at West Bromwich Town Hall. The project showed how use of the creative arts can raise motivation and standards.

George Salter High School is now the best performing secondary school in a New Deal for Communities area anywhere in the country. Exam results have improved from 16% of students achieving A*-C GCSE grades in 2003, to 62% in 2006.

A range of initiatives have helped the school to achieve these results including the Pastoral Managers who support pupils with any issues they have, and the Polish Language Support project which has seen the school rethink its whole approach to language teaching.

In September, a new sixth form also opened at the school, enabling pupils to stay on and further their education in Greets Green. And with the new Children's Centre now open, a major community learning hub has been created, offering 0-18 education in the area.



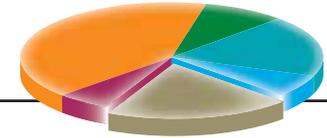
Learning for Life

From Mendhi and cookery to information technology – residents developed a host of new skills while making new friends during Adult Learners Week. A wide range of completely free taster sessions were arranged to let residents try out different activities under the banners of Skills for Employment, Skills for Life and Family Learning. As a result, some residents have gone on to continue their learning through local college courses.



£1,458,000

will be spent on Jobs & Skills during 2007/08



More adults are also choosing to continue learning. Last year, we exceeded our target for engaging local adults in learning four times over. A recent survey showed that many residents are pleased with all the lifelong learning opportunities in the local area including the new Community Access Points (CAPs) in schools and community centres, which offer a chance to learn IT and other skills.

Greets Green Partnership's Community Learning Workers made sure there were plenty of learning opportunities on the doorstep. Local schools and community groups have now taken on the management of the CAPs so that they continue to benefit the community.

Local businesses have also been supported this year. Grants were available to develop existing businesses and help start-up new ones. And the Albion BID Co. Ltd (see below) has continued its work to create a safer and better work environment.

The aim for the year ahead is for the Jobs & Skills theme to work more closely with local businesses to identify job vacancies and to ensure local people have the skills to fill these vacancies so that everyone benefits.

69%
of residents are
aware of the
increased support to
help improve basic
skills – numeracy
and literacy

Source: Citizens' Jury 2006

During the next 12 months, the main focus of the Jobs & Skills Theme will be to:

- Raise the number of local people achieving NVO Level II or above by 6%.
- Reduce the number of local 16-59 year olds on Jobseekers Allowance to within 10% of the borough average.
- Help 184 local people into paid work.
- Increase the number of households with an income of over £15,600 to within 10% of the borough average.
- Progress plans for Greets Green Partnership to support the bid for Academy Status for George Salter High School.
- Develop a new Youth Programme project which works towards mainstreaming youth work in Greets Green.

National Recognition

The Albion Business Consortium's Business Improvement District (BID) has received local and national recognition including a two page feature in Property Week. The BID covers 80 businesses who agree to pay extra rates to fund improvements such as state-of-the-art security cameras, better signage and environmental works. Greets Green Partnership was among those instrumental in getting the BID off the ground but Sandwell Council, M&T Solutions, Groundwork Black Country and the local business community all helped to make it happen so quickly.



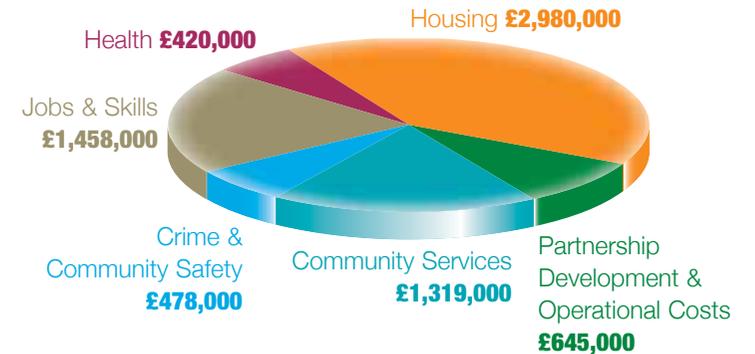
To find out how you can access the Jobs & Skills projects, contact Theme Leader, Katherine Hewitt on 0121 533 3185 or email katherine_hewitt@sandwell.gov.uk

Facts & Figures

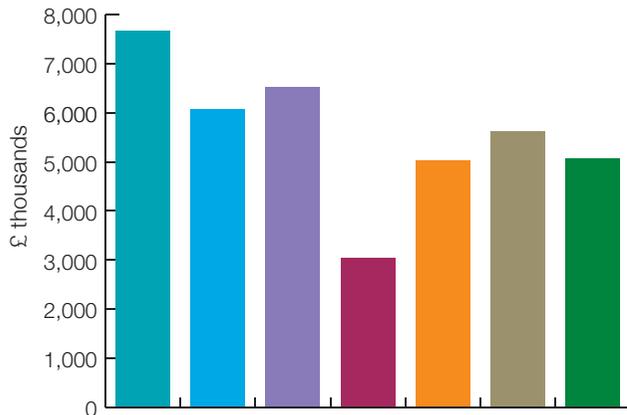
Since the start of the New Deal for Communities programme in 2000, Greets Green Partnership has invested £39,020,000 in a range of services and projects to improve the area. £6,515,000 was spent this financial year, which was the seventh year of the programme.

This expenditure has enabled us to implement the schedule of projects set out in our business plan for the year which, in turn, has enabled us to make significant progress towards our goal of creating real and lasting changes which will improve the quality of life for everyone in Greets Green.

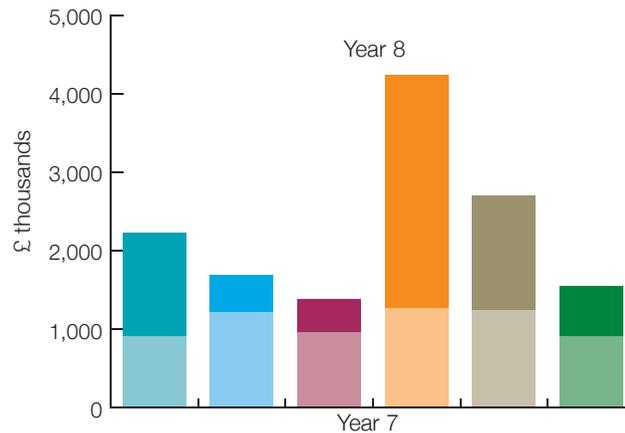
This is what we will spend during Year 8 (2007/08)



Total spend from 1st April 2000 to 31st March 2007



Comparison of spend – Year 7 and Year 8



This is what we spent during Year 7 (2006/07)



KEY

Community Empowerment (for Year 8 this theme is now part of Community Services)	Education & Lifelong Learning (for Year 8 this theme is now part of Jobs & Skills)	Housing & Urban Form	Partnership Development & Operational Costs
Crime & Community Safety	Health	Jobs & Enterprise (for Year 8 this theme is now part of Jobs & Skills)	

Getting Involved

There are lots of ways for residents to get involved with Greet's Green Partnership. See what suits you best and start making a difference to your community, meeting new people and learning new skills.

Come to Your Neighbourhood Forum

The monthly Neighbourhood Forums are for residents to raise any issues with the people who provide local services – for example West Midlands Police and the Council - and see action taken. Come along and ask questions. Look out for details in the Greet's Green Magazine or call the Partnership for dates and times.

Become a Rep

Why not give some of your spare time to represent your neighbourhood or community at Partnership Board level? We hold elections every year for new reps – look out for details in the Greet's Green Magazine.

Volunteer at Events

Our Summer and Winter Fun Days can only be a success with the help and support of lots of people. Can you help with planning the next event or helping out on the day? Give the Partnership a call to find out more.

Down Your Street

Watch out for the Community Services Workers coming down your street! They'll put a flyer through your door and, if you want them to call on you and discuss any local issues, simply display the flyer in your window.

Know any Heroes?

The Greet's Green Magazine is always looking to recognise Community Heroes. Do you know someone who helps others in the community, always has a smile or goes the extra mile for people? If so, please let the Partnership know.

Be a Champion

Various projects are looking for local residents to volunteer their time as community champions. You'll help shape the work of the project and encourage others to get involved. If you're interested in Health, Housing or other themes, please call the Partnership.

Have Your Say

You can influence which projects receive funding from Greet's Green Partnership. At the 'Have Your Say' workshops, projects are put forward for funding and residents discuss whether they should be approved or not. To find out more, call the Partnership.

Community Health Forums

These are lively informal meetings where residents discuss local health services and projects funded by the Partnership. There is always a speaker and a discussion on a certain health topic. Look out for details in the Greet's Green Magazine.

Join the Greet's Green Youth Forum

Young people can also have a say about what happens in their area. Our Youth Forum is supported by Sandwell Youth Services and is looking for more young people to get involved. Call the Partnership to find out more.



Front Cover: A major highlight of the year has been helping to raise the standards of local education. Our primary schools are all performing well, with Newtown Primary becoming one of the best schools in the borough, and George Salter High School is now the second highest achieving school in Sandwell.



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