



UPDATE HOUSING

JANUARY 2005

Changes are underway!

Radical regeneration set to transform Greets Green

We've talked about it and now we're doing it! Greets Green Partnership has secured an initial £5 million funding from Urban Living, a major Government programme which will improve the housing market in parts of Sandwell and Birmingham. This means we can move ahead with our ambitious Housing Plan, which will address both new housing developments and services in Greets Green.

The background

Each time we've asked residents what their main concerns are, more often than not they talk about the quality of local housing and the lack of choice. For some, this means having their out of date kitchen improved or their leaking roof repaired, while others are concerned about more fundamental issues such as the size of their house.

That's why Greets Green Partnership commissioned independent consultants, Ernst & Young to produce options for change. A massive consultation programme was then undertaken throughout the area to look at how the major issue of housing for the future could be tackled.

Every single household in Greets Green – almost 5,000 homes – was invited to share in the extensive consultation programme which kicked off in the Summer of 2003. Many residents shared their views, ideas and comments about the area's housing and what they'd like to see in the future at our Housing Fayre, drop in events and on board the consultation bus.

Out of the four options for change, residents gave a resounding 'yes' to radical regeneration involving the major redevelopment of a number of sites. You said: 'Stop talking about it, just get on and do it.' And so we are!



Sandwell Council's Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport Councillor Bob Badham (front) on site at the new Trident Homes Scheme in Wood Lane.

TRANSFORMATION

No doubt, you'll have heard about the change planned in Wattle Road, Claypit Lane and Coppice Street, but this is just a small part of our much bigger Housing Plan for the whole of Greets Green. We've started focusing on clearance first because you told us you wanted to see action taken. This clearance shows that we're already beginning to deliver our Housing Plan.

You also told us: 'It's no good building new houses in the area if you don't tackle the other problems as well such as anti-social behaviour'. You're right. And so the Housing Plan we've created is not just about bricks and mortar and about changing homes, it's a much broader plan which looks to transform the whole area by improving the local environment and delivering better services.

Work has already started to make Greets Green a place that people want and choose to live in. We're transforming the area so that future generations can grow up in a safe, clean and green environment. Our aim is to make Greets Green a better place for everyone to live.

Whilst the Housing Plan will benefit the whole of Greet's Green, four areas have been identified for action. They are:

1 COPPICE STREET / MEADOWS SCHOOL

The majority of this site is taken up with the derelict school. However, the school alone wouldn't provide a big enough area for development. That's why the low rise flats, which were built in the 1960s, have also been included in the clearance plan. This will create an area of land on which homes can be developed to provide much greater choice for local people.

JOINTLY 184 PROPERTIES AFFECTED

2 CLAYPIT LANE / WATTLE ROAD

This area is being transformed to provide affordable, quality housing for local people and to tackle local problems such as the fly tipping and anti-social behaviour in the two alleyways between Claypit Lane and Wattle Road, and the congestion problems on Wattle Road. The Rec will also be opened up to make it more accessible. We plan to build on part of the current Rec, but reclaim other land on Claypit Lane as park land so that the actual size of the Rec remains the same.

3 HOUSING ASSESSMENT AREA (HAA) - SURROUNDING EDITH STREET & CHAPMAN STREET

The HAA has a large number of pre 1919 terrace type properties with narrow alleyways that have been found to be 'unfit'. Following a detailed assessment and extensive consultation with the residents of the area the Council considers demolition under the Housing Act to be the best course of action. Homes within the area that are 'fit' are included in the proposals to create a suitable area for redevelopment. The final decision on these proposals will be made in the early part of 2005 by the relevant Cabinet Members.

210 PROPERTIES AFFECTED



HOUSING CHOICE

We know that there are not many different types of property in Greet's Green and that traditionally the choice has only been to buy or rent. So, what's changing? Through our Housing Plan we're promoting a range of new choices. The first two of these are The Courtyard and the Trident Homes Scheme.



TRIDENT HOMES SCHEME, WOOD LANE

This modern development, which is situated right opposite Wood Lane Community Centre, comprises a mix of 20 houses and apartments. 6 are shared ownership (part buy, part rent) and 14 are rented by Trident Housing Association. The first residents are looking to move in at the end of February 2005.

4 THE FORMER ALBION HOUSE SITE ON RICHARD STREET SOUTH

This site is already clear and ready for development. It's where Albion House used to be before it was demolished and is a good piece of land which is not currently being used.

**NO
PROPERTIES
AFFECTED**



THE COURTYARD, WOOD LANE

These lifestyle apartments offer high quality, modern accommodation for the over 50s. They have been developed by Black Country Housing Association with support from Greets Green Partnership who funded additional door security and the extension of the roadway. There are a total of 33 two bedroom apartments, 17 of which are shared ownership (part buy, part rent) and 16 are rented. The first residents have already moved in to The Courtyard.

PART BUY, PART RENT? What does it mean to me?

Want to own your own home but can't find a way onto the property ladder?

Why not consider shared ownership / part buy, part rent?

To find out more, call the Greets Green Partnership Housing Team on freephone **0800 073 0798**.

OUR HOUSING PLAN

The four partners working together on the Housing Plan - Greets Green Partnership, Sandwell Homes, Sandwell Council and Urban Living – are each helping to fund it, creating a total investment of more than £80 million.

Greets Green Partnership is funding 20 per cent of the Plan and has committed £12.8 million to be spent across five key areas:-

1. Improving Housing Choice

New housing, which better meets local people's needs, will be created. Housing choice will be improved because new developments will include affordable, quality housing. There will be a mix of private and shared ownership homes, plus homes to rent from Sandwell Homes and from housing associations.

2. Delivering Quality Services

Creating communities is not just about homes, it's about having the right services on the doorstep too. We're already developing improvements in local services such as health centres, community centres, job opportunities and education, and we're tackling anti-social behaviour.

3. Transforming the Local Environment

The Housing Plan looks at the whole built environment, not just housing. A lot of work has already been done to improve the area such as putting up fencing, gating alleyways and tidying up open spaces.

4. Developing Partnerships

It's important to develop strong partnerships to transform Greets Green. The four partners who have come together to deliver the Housing Plan will be working with a whole range of organisations and individuals for the benefit of Greets Green.

5. Achieving Decent Homes in Both Public & Private Sectors

We'll be working to bring all homes up to the Government's Decent Homes Standard. This applies to both public and private sector housing.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

We're the Greet's Green Partnership Housing Team and we're working closely with Sandwell Homes Neighbourhood Office, Sandwell Council and Urban Living to help and support all local people as the Housing Plan becomes a reality. If you have any concerns, questions or just want to chat about what's happening, please give us a call. If we don't have all the answers ourselves, we'll be able to find someone who does.

Call us on
0800 073 0798



MARIANNE MONRO

Community Consultation Manager

Marianne leads and co-ordinates the Housing Team and ensures that the community is informed about, and involved in, the development and implementation of the Housing Plan. She is always looking for new innovative ways to involve the community.

IAN JENNINGS

Housing Renewal Officer

Ian is the Housing Renewal Officer. He looks at new initiatives and new approaches to housing regeneration for Greet's Green and explores various opportunities to make sure that the Housing Plan moves forward.

PAT CASHMORE & ABDUL MONIM KHAN

Community Participation Workers

Pat and Abdul's role is to involve tenants and residents in the decision making process of housing issues. They oversee the Housing Forum

and link into the Housing Panel and the Neighbourhood Renewal Task Group.

CHRISTINE DAVIS (not pictured)

Community Participation Officer (part-time)

Christine co-ordinates and supports housing for young people and works with youth groups.

TARA THOMAS

Administration Officer

Tara co-ordinates meetings and deals with day-to-day office management issues. She provides administrative support to the Housing Team.

DIANE O'DRISCOLL

Receptionist

Diane is the receptionist and will usually be the first voice you hear on the end of the phone when you call the team. She is responsible for all aspects of reception work and provides administrative support for the team.



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