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Gateshead eyesore set to be transformed

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Gateshead eyesore set to be transformed

A derelict filling station on Durham Road in Gateshead is set to be transformed to offer some of the most energy-efficient homes in the North East after local residents helped to select the developer for the site.

The former filling station on Durham Road has been abandoned for some years, with its increasingly overgrown condition proving unpopular with local residents.

Five developers put together plans for the site and the Community Design Reference Group, which is made up of residents, examined each of the proposals in detail. Local company New Forest Design's proposal for nine eco-homes was then chosen as the winning plan for the site.

The homes will blend into the Victorian style of Durham Road, and offer high ceilings and large rooms. The properties will also be

highly energy-efficient, with extensive insulation and use of advanced bio-fuel heating ensuring that the lucky residents have some of the lowest fuel bills in the region. Each property's garage will also include a recharging point for an electric car.

Councillor Angela Armstrong, Cabinet Member for Housing, said:

"I am especially pleased that local people have played such an important role in bringing this development to Gateshead. The Design Reference Group is an important part of our determination to give people homes that they can be proud of and their work is proving invaluable."

Front cover: Councillor Angela Armstrong, Cabinet Member for Housing and Anne Mulroy, Director of BNG with representatives from the Community Design Reference Group on the site at Durham Road.

Anne Mulroy, Director of Bridging NewcastleGateshead (BNG), and Councillor Angela Armstrong in front of the plans for the Durham Road site



Above: The site is currently under development

Below: Visual of how the site will look in the future



Community garden wins award

Belmont Green on Enslin Street, Walker, has been given a prestigious award, beating off stiff competition in the Local Government Chronicle's Street Design Awards to win the Urban Green Space category.

The park was revamped in 2008 by a partnership of Belmont Area Residents' Association, Newcastle City Council, Bridging NewcastleGateshead, Groundwork South Tyneside and Newcastle and Walker Riverside regeneration partners.

During the revamp, up to 300 people, aged from four to 80, alongside artist Alan Vaughan, carved out individual cobbles to create a unique pathway. Four benches made from oak sleepers and engraved with ships' names -

which reflect the area's ship building, mining and rail history - have also been installed. In addition, a mosaic circle has been included and lavender planted in the park.

Executive Director of Environment and Regeneration David Slater said: "We are delighted to have won this award. It is well-deserved recognition for all the efforts and hard work of so many people who came together to create a fantastic community space."



Below: Laura Sharman of the Local Government Chronicle's Street Design Awards presents the award to Richard Barnes of Newcastle City Council in front of other partners who have been involved in the development of Belmont Green.



169 Colston Street

Derelict shop to become model of green living

A derelict shop and flat in North Benwell are set to be transformed into a model of green living.

169 Colston Street is derelict and fire damaged and Newcastle City Council has been unable to sell it due to the very poor condition of the property.

Now, a partnership led by Groundwork South Tyneside and Newcastle and Newcastle City Council, is working to make the property an environmentally-friendly family home. Renewable technology will be installed to heat and power the house, including solar panels for hot water and sun pipes to bring natural light into the house. Low-use water taps and energy efficiency appliances and white goods will also be used.

When completed the property will be made available to rent through Your Choice Homes, with Your Homes Newcastle as the managing agent and Groundwork as the landlord. As part of the tenancy agreement with whoever moves in, Groundwork will be able to access the house to monitor the renewable technologies.

Bridging NewcastleGateshead is a partner in the work alongside Groundwork South Tyneside and Newcastle, Newcastle City Council, Your Homes Newcastle, NaREC (New and Renewable Energy Centre) and contractors The Esh Group.



The interior and exterior of one of the new homes at James Street

NewcastleGateshead... Work In Progress

West Newcastle

🏠 **Riverside Dene** (formerly Cruddas Park) has been awarded £1.7 million from the Government for a pioneering eco-friendly heating system. The biomass wood-burning heating system will cut carbon emissions, reduce climate change and trim residents' fuel bills well into the future. The single 'district heating system' will be far more green and efficient than the electric heaters currently used in most of the blocks. Work is now underway to apply for planning permission and choose a contractor so that the renewed blocks can get off to a green start.

🏠 Eight large three bedroom family homes are available for sale from just £65,000 on a shared ownership basis on **James Street** in Elswick. The newly refurbished properties offer energy efficient heating systems, sun pipes to bring light in, private gardens and fitted kitchens and bathrooms. Contact Sarah Mains on 0191 273 5050.

Right: Maria Anderson, Benwell's new Neighbourhood Manager

There are homes for sale at other sites across the BNG area:

Hibernia Village, Walker:
0191 263 0210

River's Gate, Walker:
07918 734 441 (3-bed homes through shared ownership scheme, prices from £74,500)

BoKlok, Gateshead:
0800 028 3629

🏠 Maria Anderson has joined the **Benwell Neighbourhood Management** Initiative team as the Neighbourhood Manager, having worked at Boldon Neighbourhood Management project as the Neighbourhood Manager for the last four years. Maria has worked in the West End of Newcastle before in the New Deal area.



Wardens Darren and Peter with competition winners Andrea and Francel

🏠 Year six pupils from St Joseph's Primary School in Benwell are the latest set of recruits to graduate from the **junior warden scheme** this year. The pupils spent six weeks with the Benwell Neighbourhood Wardens and officers from the Pathfinder Police Team, the Arson Task Force, and ARCH, learning about community safety, environmental issues, and anti-social behaviour. An important part of the programme is when the pupils go out on patrol with the wardens, helping with reporting fly tipping, graffiti and broken street lights. At the end of the programme the pupils designed a poster showing what they have learnt throughout the six weeks. This school year, the wardens have seen 120 year six pupils' graduate from the junior warden scheme from Canning Street Primary School, Atkinson Road Primary School, and St Joseph's Primary School.

East Newcastle

🏠 White Young Green consultants have produced a draft design layout for the **Riverside South area**, stretching from Enslin Street to the boundary between Pottery Bank and Dovercourt. This has been developed with input from local residents and ward members. The draft plan is being discussed with BNG and Your Homes Newcastle to ensure key partners and funders share the vision for the area before the City's Design team produce more detailed designs.

🏠 You can drop in for a chat about what's going on in Walker Riverside at the **Walker Riverside Information Centre** on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10am – 3pm or call 0191 275 9207 to speak to a member of the team. Or find out all the latest information and developments at www.walker-riverside.co.uk

Gateshead

🏠 Residents from Bensham and Saltwell have been working with Gateshead Council to redesign **Bewick Road Park**, located in the heart of the Bensham and Saltwell regeneration area. Residents got together in July to give their views on how it could be revamped, completing questionnaires outlining their thoughts on the future of the park. In addition, local children designed and made almost 500 badges illustrating their ideas for the open space. This feedback will help to develop an improvement plan for the park.

🏠 **Gateshead Council's Neighbourhood Management Team** has received a 96% satisfaction score for its 2008/09 services. The Team, which provides a range of support for residents who are being moved from regeneration areas, helped 69 properties to be acquired in the Bensham and Saltwell, Teams and Felling neighbourhoods last year.



Improvements taking place in streets such as Newton Street

Of those supported residents who filled in a questionnaire, 96% said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the service the Team provided.

🏠 **Gateshead's Street Representatives** held their second meeting in August to discuss ways to improve their neighbourhoods. Street Representatives are residents from all walks of life who work with Gateshead Council to make sure local people's views are heard and that important information about the future of their communities is passed from the council to their neighbours. Street Representatives first met in March to discuss how they would work with the Council and to identify the issues that were important to them when it comes to improving the quality of life in their

communities. Their next meeting will look at practical projects that Street Representatives can get involved in.

🏠 Improvement works in **The Avenues and Saltwell Road** area have been a huge success. Around 180 properties from the two areas took part in the scheme and, of those residents who responded to an evaluation survey, more than 90% in each neighbourhood said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the work. In The Avenues, 91% of residents said the improvements made to their property would encourage them to stay in their home or current neighbourhood for longer. One resident said: "The Avenues have been transformed. It has now been given a new lease of life."

The Gateshead Neighbourhood Management Team



INFOCUS...

Work to manage and support the private rented sector



Mandy Reed and Claire McMullen

Private rented homes make up a big part of the housing available in NewcastleGateshead; in Newcastle alone there are 18,000 private rented households. It is important that there is good quality accommodation for people renting privately, and in Newcastle and Gateshead there are teams who support both tenants and landlords. Mandy Reed from Gateshead's Private Rented Sector Team and Claire McMullen from Newcastle's Private Rented Service answer some frequently asked questions about their work.

Q. What do your teams do?

Claire: The Private Rented Service in Newcastle aims to help landlords to provide a high quality of private rented homes, and support tenants to find good accommodation.

Mandy: The Private Rented Sector team was set up to improve

property and living conditions for residents within the private rented sector in Gateshead. We provide a range of services to both residents and landlords.

Q. What kind of help do you give to tenants?

Mandy: We offer a list of accredited homes – properties which meet certain standards – which residents can look through to find a decent private rented home. We also carry out tenant vettings – these are checks which prove to landlords that the prospective tenant is of good character. Each year we carry out 700 vettings. We also offer a rent deposit scheme.

Claire: The rent deposit scheme and tenant vetting is also available in Newcastle and it means that we will guarantee a tenant who cannot afford a deposit. In addition, we offer property lists and general housing support and advice.

Q. And what support do you give to landlords?

Claire: We provide them with advice and support about any tenancy issues they may have, including anti-social behaviour. We

carry out inspections and accreditations of their properties to make sure they are of a decent standard.

Mandy: We provide a similar supporting role in Gateshead. We also run the Gateshead Private Landlords Association (GPLA) which helps landlords in good management and selecting responsible tenants. To date, there are around 450 members of the GPLA.



Q. What can be done about poor quality private accommodation?

Claire: There are certain steps Newcastle City Council can take including meeting individual landlords to address issues of concern right through to serving notice on landlords so they have to carry out works and also taking action on nuisance behaviour.

Mandy: Gateshead Council can also take legal steps when necessary. In addition, in Sunderland Road, we have introduced Selective Licensing which requires every landlord, by law, to have a licence to rent out a property. If they don't have a licence, they risk prosecution and to date we have prosecuted three landlords and one landlord has been refused a licence.

Right: Environmental Health Officer Rachel Crosby with local landlord Tony Gladstone outside his property which has been licensed and accredited under the Sunderland Road selective licensing scheme

Claire: However, it is important to point out that the majority of landlords are committed and let and manage their properties appropriately.

Q. If landlords want to take part in BNG's improvement schemes, do they have to meet certain standards?

Claire: Yes. In Newcastle, they must sign-up to a code of practice and have their property accredited, meaning that their property meets certain standards. If landlords fail to meet these standards, they are stopped from taking part in future schemes.

Mandy: Similarly, in Gateshead, landlords have to bring their properties up to the accreditation

standard within three months of the improvements being completed on their home. And they or their managing agent must also become a member of the GPLA. If they do not do this, then the grant they have received for the work is taken back off them. In Gateshead and Newcastle, the landlord usually has to carry out additional work to that supported by BNG to meet the accreditation standards; this is at their own cost.

Q. How can I find out more?

Mandy: Visit the GPLA website at www.renting-in-gateshead.co.uk or telephone 0191 433 2893.

Claire: In Newcastle visit www.privaterentedservice.co.uk or telephone 0191 273 6103.



The funding will be used to support work such as preparing sites for development

Extra money announced for NewcastleGateshead

An extra £3.2million has been awarded to BNG. The funding, announced by John Healey, Minister for Housing and Planning, will help BNG to continue its work to improve housing quality and choice at the heart of Tyneside.

The funding, which is for the current financial year, is in addition to £28.8m housing market renewal funding, awarded to BNG for 2009-2010.

The additional money will be used on projects such as work to improve the home ownership options available to support house buyers, and development work to prepare sites for new homes.

Jim Coulter, Chair of BNG said:

“The announcement of this additional funding is very much a result of the achievements and hard work of all the partners in working with communities, improving homes and building new homes for existing and future residents. This extra funding will allow us to continue our work which is bringing long-term benefits to local neighbourhoods.”



Below and above right: The teams work with landlords, tenants and agencies to support the private rented sector



GreatPlaces

Win! Win! Win!

Want to win £100 in vouchers for the Metro Centre or Eldon Square?

To be in with a chance of winning, all you have to do is answer this question that is based on one of the stories in this edition of

GreatPlaces

What category did Belmont Green win in the Local Government Chronicle's Street Design Awards?

You can send your entries to:
michelle.playford@bridgingng.org.uk

or Freepost to:

Michelle Playford
FREEPOST RLSH-RXJZ-JRSA
Bridging NewcastleGateshead
1st Floor
Central Exchange Buildings
128 Grainger Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 5AF

All entries must be received by Friday 11th December 2009.



The Residents' Panel meets regularly

Residents' Panel

The Residents' Panel came together at the end of July to take part in a tour of the BNG area. The tour was a chance for the Panel members to see what is going on across the whole area, and they looked at new build in Walker Riverside, improvements in Bensham and Saltwell and the West End of Newcastle. The event also allowed the Panel members to ask questions of BNG officers about future work. Following the tour, the Panel members now have a broad understanding of the scale of work taking

place across the whole area, and this knowledge will help the Panel in future discussions.

The next Panel meeting will take place at the end of October and will focus on community engagement. After this, the December meeting will look at refurbishments and our work in the private rented sector.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Panel, including applying to become a member, please visit: www.bridgingng.org.uk and go to the Residents' Panel section. We are particularly keen to hear from residents in Byker, Kenton, Blakelaw and Cowgate.



Get in touch

Want to find out more about Bridging NewcastleGateshead and our work?

You can visit our website at www.bridgingng.org.uk

Alternatively you can call us on: **0191 277 2666**

or email: info@bridgingng.org.uk

If you need help with translation, please call 0191 277 2666.

如果你需要翻譯的幫助，
請致電 0191 277 2666.

لو نك تحتاج الي مساعدة في الترجمة
من فضلك اتصل بتليفون 0191 277 2666

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