

**General Meeting**  
Bowburn & Parkhill Community Partnership - Charity Number 1112151  
**Tuesday 17 February 2009**  
From 6.30pm to 8.30pm

**Present:** J. Anson, W. Bates, J. Blakey, S. Colquhoun, R. Cowen, N. Dixon, S. Featherstone, J. Geyer, R. Jackson, G. Kitson, J. Kushnirenko, R. Millerchip (chair till 7.10pm), Mgt Robinson, J. Shields, M. Syer, S. Thompson, R. Walsh (chair from 7.10pm)

**In Attendance:** G. Marsden, M. Ridley, Mac Williams, Geoff Woodcock

**1. Apologies for absence:** M Bell, J Blackburn, B Cockburn, P Dawe, A Gregory, K Haigh, Ian Hunter Smart, S Raine, V Richardson, Maureen Robinson, D Whittaker.

**2. Police Report:** No report for the meeting.

**3. Cape Factory Site Update – Geoff Woodcock, Esh Developments & ; Phil Brown, Sirius Remediation:**

With the help of powerpoint presentations, Geoff Woodcock gave an overall progress report since our meeting in September, on site clearance and planned developments, and Phil Brown reported on detailed decontamination issues, both answering questions from members.

(a) Geoff said that the concrete slab had been removed over the past two months and they had been surprised to find it contaminated. This has increased the volume of material that needed removal from the site. Phil added that air monitoring had continued seven or eight times a day throughout and there had never been unacceptable levels of air-borne asbestos.

Geoff said the foul and surface water drains, which left the site near Esh House and joined the drainage systems from Bowburn North Industrial Estate, had been left in place, though they would be replaced when house building commenced. Slit trenches either side of the drains ensured there was no contamination there.

Unexpectedly large settlement tanks had been found, their contents taken in their entirety to Hartlepool, and the holes filled with clay and crushed concrete.

The concrete stanchions that had supported the Cape building had been removed and each hole surveyed to ensure adequate foundations are used for housing in those locations.

The stockpile system was explained, whereby Sirius piled all materials and tested them, removing those found to be contaminated, and then Esh re-tested those that Sirius passed, sending away any that failed on the second test.

It was expected that Sirius would report the site to be clear in three or four weeks' time, after which an independent geo-technical engineering company will do further checks.

Northern Electric have agreed to underground the 66,000v power lines that currently cross the site overhead, at their own expense, after Esh had served notice on their wayleave agreement.

Despite the state of the housing market, house building will commence quickly, starting with affordable housing in the form of 10 bungalows for Durham Aged Miners HA and 39 houses for a housing association to be arranged (from Guinness Northern Counties, Home Group, Isos and Three Rivers). The Homes & Communities Agency (formerly the Housing Corporation) had offered grant aid for about 30 houses for "intermediate rent", i.e. between that normally charged by social and private landlords. Houses built with this in mind would still be marketed and if any were sold, its element of grant would carry over to build a further house.

Four timber-framed houses would be erected as show homes. These would also be part of a research & development project to test carbon-free materials.

There had been a few enquiries about the commercial land but interested companies were having difficulty at the moment raising the capital from banks.

(b) Phil explained in detail the unforeseen problems, reporting that these had caused delays. They included ducts full of oil and water; one big tank (1.5m X 45m X 25m) which was full of asbestos cement sheeting and other rubble; two 6m deep tanks which a survey seven years ago had said were only 2.5m deep, and a three-tank fuelling depot that was not identified in that survey. It had also been found that rubbish had apparently been dumped in the fields, possibly to level the ground, before the concrete was originally laid by Capes. This rubbish also had to be removed from the site.

Wet weather had also slowed things down, not least when delivering waste to the tip at Hartlepool.

Work was now progressing towards the A177. In the next two weeks, Sirius would be concentrating on removal of the stockpiles. That would mean an increase in traffic movements at that time.

**4. Masterplan Updates – Community Development Officer and Project Leader:**

**Highways:** Nothing to report.

Parkhill: Julie Anson reported that a damaged swing had been replaced and that consultation on the proposed community building would be conducted in early spring.

Heritage Room: Nothing to report.

Community Centre: Julie Anson reported that the City Council Cabinet would receive a report on 18 February, recommending (a) that the refurbishment plans be noted and supported, (b) that, of the £500,000 applied for, to help fund this refurbishment, from the Bowburn Regeneration Fund, £226,000 be approved once that amount was released by Durham Villages Regeneration Co. Ltd. (DVRC) and (c) that discussions be held with DVRC about ring-fencing the remaining £274,000. There followed some discussion about the sources of the £1.9m Regeneration Fund and the £500,000 allocated to an apprenticeship scheme, and how these had been spent. It was noted that Julie would be seeking a meeting with representatives of the Community Association during the following week, to discuss how a first phase of the refurbishment could be commenced.

Youth Centre: Mike Syer reported that an Awards for All application had now been submitted, to cover the next phase of the building's refurbishment.

Church: Julie Anson reported that contractors were being sought to construct the 4 to 5 metre high sliding doors and some possible contractors were suggested by members.

Centenary – Bowburn School: Jan Blakey reported that the next meeting would be on 2 March.

Unadopted Roads: Julie Anson reported that the application to the Regeneration Fund had not yet been submitted to the City Council Cabinet and pointed out that funding for this would only become available after the Community Association's grant had been paid in full. Ron Jackson (of Three Streets) reported that John Richardson, of Durham County Council, had told him that Council had agreed to support the shared equity scheme, so that a scheme was being looked at during the forthcoming financial year.

Park Project: (a) Julie Anson first gave a detailed report, with plans, on phase 2 of the Park project, including footpaths, lights, CCTV, cycle track, trim trail and BMX track. The path from Beaumont Close on to the recreation ground, and its history, were discussed. A nearby resident's request that this be closed was noted. However it was agreed unanimously to continue to support the path's reconstruction. It was noted that the Phase 2 works would put out to tender in March, the contract allocated in April and works expected to start in the summer. It was not yet known what the County Council's procedures were, in this respect, or how PARC and B&PCP would be involved in them. It was noted that most of the cost of this £371,000+ phase was to be covered by the Regeneration Fund, as there had been little external funding received towards it.

(b) Julie then reported the detailed costs of phase 1, which came to a total of £376,836.33, of which £139,430 had come from non-Council funding and £237,406.33 from the Regeneration Fund. This phase included the completed play park but also the landscaping work still to be done. It was noted that the latter would be done when it was dry enough, though a member doubted whether the work plan adopted would allow that to happen quickly. On being asked whether the contract was a fixed price one, i.e. whether any additional costs arising from the wet would be absorbed by the contractor, Julie replied that they would have to be.

(c) Julie then reported on phase 3, on the top park, which was the most expensive phase, including sports fields and facilities, car parking etc. The £852,020 scheme originally drawn up, however, was likely to be reduced in the light of a new Development Plan being worked out by the Bowburn Youth Football Club with the Football Association. It was believed that this would include more achievable objectives and lead to a more realistic, scaled down phase 3 development. Julie did not believe a new planning application would be required and agreed to bring details of the revised scheme to a future B&PCP meeting.

Environment and URR1: (a) URR1 – Julie Anson reported that the first phase of the Prince Charles Avenue scheme, in front of the Co-op stores, had started but already been subject to vandalism. The police had agreed to increase patrols in the area. It was anticipated that these works, costing £45,000, would be completed in seven weeks. Phase two, the car parking area etc. in front of Somals' shop and China Delight, would start immediately afterwards. Test holes in this second area had shown that an additional cost of between £5,000 and £10,000 would be incurred. This meant that it would not be possible to proceed with the scheme planned at Romaine Square in the current URR1 round. Grave concerns were expressed about the possibility of losing this project and it was agreed to invite representatives of the URR1 team to attend our next meeting, to explain the situation.

(b) Environmental improvement schemes – Julie Anson circulated plans showing schemes for which an application had been prepared for funding from the Bowburn Regeneration Fund amounting in total to £115,000. The schemes included fencing at the north-east corner of the motorway roundabout; fencing, lighting and minor repairs along the road between Broadmeadows and Hallgarth estate; work on the corner of Old Quarrington road end; footpath and lighting between Runcie Road and the community centre; footpath and lighting between Newburn Avenue and Mary Terrace; footpath and lighting between Park Avenue and the playing field; lighting along the path past Mabey’s yard, between the top and bottom of Runcie Road, and lighting in certain cul-de-sacs at Park Hill.

It was noted that the Parish Council had committed £5,000 towards the street lighting works, that the two County Councillors had agreed to contribute towards the Runcie Road-Community Centre path, that and the County Council would design and conduct all the work. However there could still be a small shortfall in funding. It was agreed to support the Regeneration Fund application for the full amount available. Julie explained that this would now be reported, along with the Three Streets unadopted roads application, to the City Council’s Officers Management Team and thence to Cabinet. (If there were no further City Council Cabinet meetings, that would be the Cabinet of the new Durham County Council.)

It was noted that Julie had already written to the City Council planners, asking if a contribution towards the cost of the “Mabey’s Lane” lights could be obtained as part of a planning permission being sought for housing on the Mabey’s yard site.

## **5. Minutes of last general meeting and matters arising: 20 January 2009**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved as a true record. The only matter arising raised as the Durham Green Business Park planning application, which had now been submitted. It was agreed that this be considered by the Trustees at their next meeting. *(Action – Trustees)*

*It being past 8.30pm, it was agreed that the meeting be closed, and that all outstanding business be referred to the Trustees’ meeting on 3 March, in order to deal with any urgent matters.*

**Date and Time of Meetings:** General Meetings are held on the **third Tuesday** of each month.

Next meeting is on **17 March 2009** at 6.30pm

Dates of future meetings in 2009: 21 Apr, 19 May, 16 Jun, 21 July