The Stakeholder Forum

A very happy New Year to all our Stakeholders and thank you all for your support over the past year. 2010 promises to be a very busy year for the Connswater Community Greenway with the appointment of the Design and Build Contractor and work commencing on site later in the year so hopefully the Stakeholders Forum will continue to be both relevant and well supported.

Many thanks to Walkway Community Centre for hosting the last Stakeholders Forum in October 2009. Once again we were delighted with the numbers attending and with the level of participation in the Forum shown by our stakeholders.

We look forward to working with you all in the coming year and would like to thank you for your continued support for and participation in the CCG Stakeholders Forum, the next of which will take place on Friday 5 February in Connswater Community Centre.

Progress update

Project still on course for construction to begin in 2010 with completion by 2013.

Key Milestones; October 2009 to January 2010

- Pre Qualification Questionnaire advertised in European Journal and expressions of interest received and scored.
- Social Clauses agreed for inclusion in tender documentation.
- Baseline Ecology Report approved by Planning Service and stage 1 Ecological Management Plan completed.
- Revised CCG design completed.
- Monitoring and Evaluation Framework agreed for CCG

Useful Contact Details

Our last Stakeholders Forum focused primarily on Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) issues associated with the CCG. Given the interest generated by these topics we have, below, listed useful contact details and the CCG Team, BCC and PSNI would encourage everyone to report any incidences of ASB they witness immediately.

Willowfield and Strandtown PSNI; - Tel … 08456008000

BCC Anti-Social Behaviour (Parks) - E-mail; ASB@belfastcity.gov.uk

BCC Community Safety Unit - E-mail; communitiesafety@belfastcity.gov.uk

BCC Community Safety Co-ordinator (East Belfast) Tel… 90320202 ext...3316
The Connswater Community Greenway—Safe by Design

One of the key objectives of the Connswater Community Greenway is to develop a safe, accessible and attractive linear park for the people of our communities to enjoy. We are, therefore, trying to utilise best practice design out crime models to ensure that the CCG delivers a physical environment that encourages people to utilise our public spaces and paths for the right reasons and discourages people from using the CCG for the wrong reasons. In similar projects worldwide, the introduction of appropriate lighting, development of sight lines, removal of dense high level shrubbery, introduction of defensive planting, increased usage and a sense of community ownership have all been shown to have a positive impact on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. The Connswater Community Greenway will be utilising all of these to try and ensure that the design of the Greenway reflects current thinking in relation to both safety and accessibility.

The Connswater Community Greenway project will not, by itself, resolve all community issues regarding Anti Social Behaviour. We can only ensure that the design of the CCG reflects current best practice thinking. We do, however, have both statutory and community partners who are committed to addressing community safety and ASB issues along the CCG route. BCC have been and will continue to be heavily involved in the development and delivery of the CCG. They are targeting substantial resources at addressing these issues across Belfast and have developed a range of responses, in partnership with key stakeholders such as PSNI and community organisations, to ensure that they have the commitment, resources, policies and expertise in place to address community concerns surrounding community safety/anti-social behaviour, particularly in the parks and public spaces.

In addition to the design solutions being developed through the CCG and the work on the ground being delivered by Belfast City Council and PSNI, community organisations in the area are also delivering programmes that are having a significant impact on addressing issues such as anti-social behaviour in our parks. The Street by Street Programme delivered by a team of volunteers and staff from East Belfast Alternatives and Walkway Community Association is one such programme that, according to residents living adjacent to the areas in which they work, has delivered a marked improvement in levels of anti-social behaviour.

Integrated Volunteer Training and Activity Programme launched.

Conservation Volunteers NI and the Connswater Community Greenway Team have developed a number of volunteering taster sessions for local residents running from November 09 to March 2010. In partnership with Belfast City Council and the National Trust the programme has been designed to give local residents the opportunity to get out into our green spaces and get involved in planting and maintenance of our public spaces in a fun way.

This programme represents a wonderful opportunity for local people to develop their ecological, horticultural and environmental skills on their own doorsteps and also to play an active role in delivering the largest community led environmental scheme in Northern Ireland. Upcoming events include;

16 January 2010 Organic Gardening for Beginners
6 February 2010 Community Garden restoration (TBC)
13 March 2010 Gorse Clearance, Cregagh Glen
27 March 2010 Wildflower Planting, Victoria Park

Anyone wishing to find out more or become more involved should contact Sean Brannigan, Community Engagement Officer, at 90467930 or e-mail sean@eastbelfast.com
PARC Study Launched (Physical Activity on the Rejuvenated Connswater)
The Connswater Community Greenway represents a significant opportunity for the community in east Belfast in terms of addressing the health inequalities experienced in the area. Provision of cycling and footpaths and the increased connectivity being delivered through the project has the potential to significantly increase physical activity in the local community, changing lifestyles and improving health and wellbeing. Research has shown that there is a great potential to improve health and reduce obesity and the risk of serious conditions such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease by taking some form of exercise every day.

Having secured funding independently Queen’s University, in collaboration with East Belfast Partnership and key local community organisations, will be carrying out a study into the impact of this new urban Greenway on the physical activity, health and wellbeing of the local community. In addition they will be assisting in the development of new initiatives to encourage the local community to become more active.

The new initiatives will be developed by local community organisations/groups with the help of researchers from Queen’s University and will be designed specifically to meet the needs of the local community. These interventions/initiatives are likely to include walking schemes and school or workplace based activities.

In short the PARC study aims to assess the impact of a range of community based interventions, including the provision of a linear Greenway, to promote and sustain change in physical activity and to determine the cost effectiveness of these interventions.

The main focus of the research will be 2 face-to-face surveys with 950 people living in east Belfast. One survey will be conducted in 2010 and the second in 2013/4, to coincide with the beginning and end of the Greenway construction. This will enable Queen’s researchers to measure levels of physical activity in east Belfast and the effect the Greenway has on the lifestyles of the local residents.

As well as informing policy on future redevelopments, we anticipate that the project will have direct benefits in the local area through the creation of new opportunities for residents to become more physically active.

Any community organisation, employer or local school interested in becoming involved with the PARC study should contact either Sean Brannigan of CCG Team or Dr Mark Tully (PARC study director) of QUB to register an interest. Dr Tully can be contacted at telephone number 90204299 or e-mail m.tully@qub.ac.uk.

Key tasks for the next quarter
- **Full Tender Documentation** to be issued to select list of Contractors
- **Public Path Creation Order** progressed by BCC along parts of the CCG route to ensure a continuous route.
- Design development by Rivers Agency completed on **Flood Alleviation Scheme**.
- **Stakeholder and community engagement across East Belfast**.
- **Agreement of Social Clauses** for inclusion within final CCG contract.
- **PARC Study (Physical Activity on the Rejuvenated Connswater)** baseline study commences.
- **Re-open Community Activity Grants Programme**

Ongoing Activities
- **Land Assembly**
  - Being undertaken by BCC in accordance with agreed programme and budget
- **Flood Alleviation**
  - Working with Rivers Agency to address flooding in the CCG area on the Connswater, Knock and Loop Rivers.
- **Invasive Species**
  - Ongoing work with BCC to manage invasive species in the CCG area.
- **Multi Agency Team**
  - Co-ordination with other key projects progressed within the Connswater Community Greenway area including the proposed Connsbank Junction into Titanic Quarter and the East Belfast Rapid Transport System.
CCG Monitoring and Evaluation Framework agreed.
The Connswater Community Greenway represents a huge investment in East Belfast and it is, therefore, imperative that we are in a position to determine whether or not the project actually delivers the benefits to the people of east Belfast that we anticipate it will.

To ensure that we achieve the outcomes and objectives that have been set for the project, East Belfast Partnership appointed Full Circle consultants and set up a Project Team of key individuals to develop a framework to monitor and evaluate the Connswater Community Greenway Project. Our particular thanks must go to the project team who supported the work of Full Circle and helped ensure we had a meaningful monitoring and evaluation framework.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework has been completed and the original project objectives established at the early stages of project development have now been refined into the following key, overarching objectives;

1. To improve the environment in the CCG area by developing the CCG in line with the agreed design programme;
2. To promote physical activity to improve health and wellbeing in the CCG area;
3. To encourage participation in the CCG Project by the community and by schools and colleges using the CCG as a resource;
4. To contribute to the economic regeneration of East Belfast through investment, employment and tourism.

Under these four key objectives there are a number of other more specific and measureable objectives, the monitoring and evaluation of which should enable the Connswater Community Greenway to achieve the four key objectives recorded above.

Should anyone wish further information in relation to the objectives or Performance Indicators associated with these objectives please contact Heather at 90467925 or e-mail heather@eastbelfast.com

Find out more

With 41,000 people living along the CCG route and with the Greenway passing through business parks etc… this is a project that will have a huge impact on local residents, schools, communities and businesses. It is also a community led project and we are, therefore, keen to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to learn more about the project and to become involved with its development and delivery. You may have ideas about what you would like to see along the CCG route, you may have concerns about some of the proposals or you may wish to become involved through volunteering, community adoption schemes or special interest groups such as cycling, orienteering etc…

To ensure that the project achieves its full potential we are keen to talk to individuals or groups and describe and explain what the project is about and what we hope it can achieve. We want to hear your thoughts, ideas and concerns and we want your help in delivering a project that the whole of east Belfast can be proud of.

If you want to find out more or feel you have something to contribute to the project please contact our Community Engagement Officer, Sean Brannigan, at the address and telephone number below. Alternatively you can e-mail sean@eastbelfast.com.