May 2010

AIMS OF THE STAKEHOLDER FORUM
- Share information
- Engage and understand the requirements of Stakeholders
- Promote the CCG
- Build positive partnerships
- Inform the management and maintenance of the CCG
- Ensure quality and sharing good practice
- Provide feedback to the Project Management Team
- Promote and support involvement of others

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT TEAM
Kyle Alexander (Strategic Investment Board)
Michael Briggs (EBCDA)
Barry Donaldson (Castlereagh Borough Council)
Sammy Douglas (Total Surface Solutions)
Gerry Millar (Belfast City Council)
Richard O’Rawe (Chair)
Elaine Wilkinson (Department for Social Development)
Pat Aldridge (Rivers Agency)
Advisors
Emma McCracken (Central Procurement Directorate)
Tony Wilson (EBP Company Accountant)

CCG STAFF TEAM
Wendy Langham (Programme Manager)
Heather Chesney (Communications & Admin Officer)
Sean Brannigan (Community Engagement Officer)
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The Stakeholder Forum
As you will all be aware from previous Stakeholders Forum, 2010 promised to be a very significant year in terms of delivery of the Connswater Community Greenway. We have now gone out to tender for the Design and Build Contractor who will be on site by the end of the year. As the project progresses, the role of our key stakeholders will become increasingly critical to the delivery of the Connswater Community Greenway. We look forward to your continued support for and participation in the Connswater Community Greenway Project as we enter perhaps the most exciting phase of the project, actually building the new Greenway.

Many thanks to Connswater Community and Leisure for so successfully hosting February’s Stakeholders’ Forum and to ‘Shared Space’ guest speakers who assisted us in the discussions around this issue and its impact on the Greenway project.

Progress update
Project on course for construction to begin in late 2010/ early 2011 with completion by 2013.

Key Milestones; February 2010 to May 2010
- An Invitation to Tender (ITT) and associated tender documentation was issued to shortlisted Contractor Teams—14 April 2010
- Public Path Creation Orders approved by Belfast City Council
- Programme for Construction agreed—March 10
- CCG Ecologist appointed—May 10
- Community Activity Grants Programme launched—April 10
- Advertisement placed for project evaluator—April 10

Bluebell Walk and Picnic
Many thanks to everyone who participated in the third annual CCG Bluebell Walk on 1 May 2010. Meeting in Victoria Park at 11.00 am the group set off along the Connswater River towards Cregagh Glen to picnic at the historic Lisnabreeny Rath with its spectacular views over Belfast. What promised so little, given the rain at the start, turned out to be a wonderful afternoon with plenty of fresh air, laughs and craic.
Creating Genuine Shared Space along the CCG Route

Our thanks to both Dr Duncan Morrow of the Community Relations Council and Hazel Francey from Belfast City Council's Good Relations Unit who spoke so eloquently on the need to ensure that we created genuine shared space for the whole community with the Connswater Community Greenway.

Dr Morrow indicated that by creating/developing public space that is 'safer, cleaner and greener' we could ensure that we deliver space that is both used and respected by the whole community. He stated that the project will deliver benefits in terms of education, health and the economy provided that the safer, cleaner and greener model is applied.

It was particularly useful and reassuring for all of us involved with the Connswater Community Greenway to hear from highly respected and knowledgeable experts in their field that the approach adopted by the Connswater Community Greenway reflects international best practice in terms of the development of shared space. We have described below how the Connswater Community Greenway addresses each of these key themes in relation to ensuring that we deliver genuine shared space for our whole community.

Safer

The CCG have adopted a ‘safe by design’ approach in the development of the project. Working with partners in PSNI and BCC we have incorporated internationally recognised best practice and included safety measures such as improved sight lines, provision of lighting along the entire route, CCTV, Greenway wardens, defensive planting etc. In addition, this is a project that has been developed by the community for community benefit. Community involvement, ownership and participation with the project have been instrumental in the success of the project to date. Continued involvement, participation and ownership will ensure that we deliver space that is used for the right reasons as opposed to the wrong reasons and will result in a safe and welcoming environment for all.

Cleaner

One of the key outputs for the project is to clean up and remediate 5kms of river and creating 16kms of new cycle and footpaths. We have recently gone out to tender for the main contractor to build the Greenway and have specified very high quality materials for surfaces, lighting, bridges and street furniture. In addition, we have entered into a 40 year management and maintenance agreement with our partner, Belfast City Council, who will own the majority of the route and have agreed to both manage and maintain the completed Greenway. This will ensure that the high quality linear park we deliver remains a high quality linear park for at least the next 40 years.

Greener

Another key output for the Connswater Community Greenway is to re-instate a wildlife corridor from Belfast Lough to the Castlereagh Hills along the Connswater, Knock and Loop rivers. This will be achieved through both river remediation, planting and landscaping along the entire route using native plant species, creating a green corridor through east Belfast. International research has shown that there is a direct link between green space and health/wellbeing with every 10% increase in green space resulting in a reduction in health complaints for residents equivalent to 5 years of age *

*De Vries, S. Nature and health; the importance of green space

CCG Events and Activities over the previous quarter

Young Volunteers
Bulb Planting—Victoria Park, March 2010

Younger Volunteer
Community Garden Makeover—Tamar St. February 2010

Youngest Volunteer
Organic Gardening Workshop—Eden Allotments, Feb 2010
**Key tasks for the next quarter**

- **Assessment of CCG Contractor Tender Returns**—July/August
- **Appointment of Evaluator**—June
- **Public Path Creation Orders** progressed
- **Stakeholder and community engagement**—Community Activities funded by grants July/August
- **Development of Public Art plan and briefs**—June/July
- **Launch of first CCG Tourism and Heritage trail**—June
- **Meet with NI Water re Combined Sewage Outfalls** (CSO’s)
- **Treatment of Invasive Plant Species along the route**

**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.
Greenway volunteers and Stakeholders meet HRH Prince Charles
On Thursday 13 May Belfast City Council hosted a royal visit by HRH the Prince of Wales at Belfast City Hall. Prince Charles had specifically requested that he meet and talk to local people who were involved with volunteering within their communities and to find out more about what was going on across Belfast. As a result, Belfast City Council invited the Connswater Community Greenway to set up a stand and bring along local residents who have become involved in our volunteering and stakeholder programmes. This was a great opportunity to raise the profile of the CCG and also to reward some of our volunteers and stakeholders for their support as we work towards delivering the Connswater Community Greenway. With very short notice and no display stand ready it meant a nervous and hectic few days for the CCG Team preparing for the event (with the number of new hairdo’s it would appear that east Belfast Hairdressers also had a hectic few days).

The event itself involved projects such as the Ulster Hall refurbishment, the New Lyric Theatre and Titanic Signature Project along with several other BCC programmes and strategies and took the form of a drinks and canapés reception. Prince Charles circulated around the room meeting local councillors and Council officials before being introduced to each of the projects individually. The Prince took a keen interest in the Connswater Community Greenway Project particularly in relation to the environmental and community elements of the project. We hope he will come back to see the Greenway once it is constructed. Our thanks to those who attended and for their continued support for the project and apologies to those who we couldn’t invite or who couldn’t attend due to the very short notice and limited places. Hopefully this will be the first of many such events/visits as we deliver the CCG and further opportunities will present themselves for our volunteers and stakeholders over the coming years.

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.