The Stakeholder Forum

As you will all be aware from previous Stakeholder Forums, 2010 promised to be a very significant year in terms of delivery of the Connswater Community Greenway. Tender documentation has now been assessed from the six shortlisted Contractor Teams and the Contractor will be announced in October with work due to commence in November 2010. As the project progresses, the role of our key stakeholders will become increasingly critical in the delivery of the Connswater Community Greenway. We look forward to your continued support for and participation in the project as we enter perhaps the most exciting phase of the project, actually building the new Greenway.

Many thanks to Pastor Roy Johnston of Beersbridge Road Elim Pentecostal Church for hosting June’s Stakeholders’ Forum and to our guest speakers who assisted us with the launch of the first CCG Trails Booklet.

Progress update

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

Key Milestones; June to September 2010

- Launch of CCG Trails Booklet— 18 June 2010
- Public Path Creation Orders progressed by Belfast City Council
- CCG Construction Tenders received—9 July 2010
- CCG Construction Tender Assessment—July/August 2010
- CCG Evaluator appointed—June 2010
- Filming along entire CCG route —June—September 2010
- Milestone 3 review carried out—September 2010

Disabled Ramblers NI

On Sunday 29th August 2010 approximately 25 disabled ramblers took to the Connswater Community Greenway and Comber Greenway for a ramble and picnic. The ramble was hugely successful and enjoyable with Shopmobility, the parent organisation for Disabled Ramblers NI, indicating that it was their best attended ramble to date. Participants in the ramble provided valuable feedback on design issues affecting people with access problems which will inform the CCG design.
CCG Trails Booklet Launched

The Stakeholders Forum on 18th June 2010 saw the launch of the first Connswater Community Greenway Trails Booklet.

This booklet is the first in a series aimed at local residents, visitors and tourists and is designed to allow residents and visitors alike to find points of cultural, industrial, historical or environmental significance along the Connswater Community Greenway route.

The Trails booklet provides a guide to the history and wildlife of the Connswater, Knock and Loop rivers. From Victoria Park to Cregagh Glen and from CS Lewis to Van Morrison the booklet tells the stories of some of east Belfast’s most famous people and places.

With 9.3 million visitors to Northern Ireland in 2009, the tourism industry represents a significant opportunity for economic regeneration across Northern Ireland. East Belfast has played a significant role in the history and development of both Belfast and Northern Ireland and can rightly lay claim to some of Northern Ireland’s most iconic images, people and places. The CCG Trails booklets represent an opportunity for east Belfast to celebrate its rich heritage and attract visitors and tourists to east Belfast, benefiting local businesses and supporting investment in the area.

We are keen to expand the Greenway trails with more information and local stories and would love to hear from anyone with a story to tell or a photograph to share. Perhaps you have a story about a place in east Belfast or a memory about a well known local character. If so, please contact Heather on 028 9046 7925 or e-mail heather@eastbelfastpartnership.org.

Northern Ireland Council for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (NICRAS) visit CCG

On Monday 23rd August 2010 the CCG hosted a visit from members of NICRAS. One of the key aims of the Connswater Community Greenway is the creation of genuine shared space for the whole community and visits such as this represent an opportunity to ensure we get input and feedback from all sections of our community.
Key tasks for the next quarter

- **Revise structure for CCG/FAS construction phase**—Oct 10
- **Appointment of Contractor Team**—Oct 10
- **Construction commences** - Nov/Dec 10
- **Land Assembly and Public Path Creation Orders** progressed
- **Stakeholder and community engagement** - Further public meetings and community activities along the CCG route
- **Community Garden** sites identified and approved
- **Treatment of Invasive Species** along the route
- **Lobby for funding for East Belfast Flood Alleviation Scheme**

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.

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**Community Activity Grants**

**Carew II Family and Training Centre** delivered a family fun day for parents and children in their pre and afterschools programme. The event was held in Victoria Park with a range of games, activities and a picnic ensuring that everyone enjoyed what turned out to be a fabulous sunny day.

**Clarawood Community Association**, as part of the July Festival, organised a Greenway themed treasure hunt around Millennium Park. With a number of prizes and large numbers attending the festival the treasure hunt attracted all age groups.

The CCG Team are keen to support activities in east Belfast that attract people to the CCG route and help raise awareness of the Connswater Community Greenway. The Big Lottery Fund have allocated part of their Living Landmarks grant to support community led activities along the CCG route and anyone with any ideas for events or activities along the route should contact Sean Brannigan, CCG Community Engagement Officer to discuss how we can support you or your organisation in delivering events or activities.

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**PARC Study (Physical Activity on the Rejuvenated Connswater) Update**

Researchers from Queen’s University Belfast (QUB) and a team of 16 volunteers from east Belfast recently completed survey work at key points along the CCG route. Surveying took place throughout the week commencing 2nd August 2010 and involved volunteers measuring usage of the parks and pathways along the CCG route at set times throughout the day for a week. This information will help set a baseline figure for use of our parks and green spaces prior to the construction of the CCG and enable QUB to determine the impact that the greenway has on the use of these areas for physical activity. The survey will be repeated in February 2011 and again in 2014.

Many thanks to all the volunteers for their dedication and commitment to this survey work which could not have been completed without them. We will be looking for more volunteers if you would be willing to take part!

Whilst the data has not yet been fully collated and analysed, initial interpretation of the data is that our parks are not being fully utilised. One of the key aims of the CCG is to increase usage of our parks and open spaces and this surveying will assist in measuring how we are achieving our goals.

Any community organisation, employer or local school interested in becoming involved with the PARC study should contact either Sean Brannigan of CCG Team, Dr Ruth Hunter (QUB) through the Connswater Community Greenway office or Dr Mark Tully (PARC study director) of QUB to register an interest. Dr Tully can be contacted at telephone number 075 3037 0168 or e-mail m.tully@qub.ac.uk.

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- **Multi Agency Team**
  - Co-ordination with other key projects progressed within the Connswater Community Greenway area.
Greenway Santa Cycle

Following the success of last year’s sponsored Santa Cycle when in excess of 250 cyclists in Santa outfits participated, the second annual Greenway Santa Cycle – Bowel Cancer UK will take place on Sunday 5th December 2010.

Meeting in Titanic Quarter at 11.00 am we are hoping to have at least 500 cycling Santas of all ages and abilities participate in the Santa cycle along the Comber Greenway to Andrews Memorial School in Comber. This year the organisation of the event will be assisted by Duke of Edinburgh Award students from Ashfield Girls School.

The event is the brainchild of local ICT Sales professional, mother and bowel cancer survivor Rosi Kirker from Bangor who wants to raise awareness of this deadly disease and to support the work of Bowel Cancer UK. All sponsorship will go directly to Bowel Cancer UK to support their work in raising awareness of and educating people about the need for early detection and prevention of this disease.

The 2009 Santa Cycle was, as the pictures show, a hugely successful event with everyone from children to grandparents getting involved. We anticipate this year’s event attracting even more cycling Santa’s. So dust off the Santa suit, oil up your bikes and put the date in your diary. To register for this year’s event you can contact the Connswater Community Greenway team on 90467925 or e-mail greenway@eastbelfastpartnership.org. Registration documents and sponsorship forms will be available in October.

This year Rosi aims to set a new world record for the largest number of cycling Santas and we will be registering the event with the Guinness Book of World Records. Please become a record breaker and support the 2010 Greenway Santa Cycle by registering for and participating in this record breaking family event.

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@eastbelfastpartnership.org