

**Minutes of the Neighbourhood Management Programme**  
**Management Board Meeting, Wed 27<sup>th</sup> May 2009**  
**9.30 a.m, Bratton Fleming Sports Hall**

**Present**

Mike Taylor – Resident, Chair  
Gary Smith – Transform Neighbourhood Manager  
Rory McDonald – Transform Deputy Manager  
Janine Whapham - Transform Project Support Officer/Administrator  
Cherif Benkanoun – Transform Neighbourhood Warden  
Pam Lang – Devon Primary Care Trust  
Sue Gear – North Devon +  
Peter Laurie – Vice Chair, Resident Bratton Fleming  
Cllr Geoff Fowler – Devon County Council  
Insp Pete Sarney - Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary  
Celia Withers – Combe Martin Resident  
Cllr Frank Pearson – Vice Chair, Ilfracombe Town Council, Resident  
Cllr Wendy Butler – Scribes, Ilfracombe Town Council, Resident

**Apologies**

Cllr David Lilley – Bratton Fleming Parish Council  
Patrick Hamilton – North Devon Voluntary Development Agency  
Cllr Yvette Gubb – North Devon Council  
Ian Hobbs – Devon County Council  
Cllr Julia Clark – Combe Martin Parish Council, Resident  
Miles Sellick – North Devon Homes  
Janet Sinclair – Jobcentre Plus  
Margaret Blundell – Ilfracombe Resident  
Cllr Janice Donovan – Ilfracombe Town Council, Resident

**1. Welcome**

**Action**

The Chair welcomed Pauline Warner, Devon County Council, Jeff Bolton, Healthier Homes North Devon, Jeremy Mann & Ian Higgins North Devon Council, Kim Ward (Phd student) and Karen Evans, Empowering Communities Programme.

**2. Housing - Gary Smith & Rory McDonald**

Gary Smith gave some background information on how housing issues were initially identified as one of the biggest problems within the Transform area but acknowledged that it was resource dependent.  
A review of the programme of works for 2008/2009 was reported on, highlighting specific actions and how they linked into the Local Area Agreement. The question was how an increase in affordable housing can be achieved and how Transform could assist with its delivery.

**Our key achievements were:**

Fuel Poverty – the trial of the air source heat pump which is an alternative fuel supply was successfully installed in a rented sector property in Bratton Fleming. This showed significant reduction in fuel costs and improved the health and wellbeing for the individual concerned.

**Healthier Homes North Devon** – J Bolton tabled a comprehensive report with case studies. Since 2005, HHND has demonstrated in making a real difference, effectively targeting the priority communities. A substantial amount of work has been carried out over the life of the 3 yr service level agreement and was aimed at vulnerable people. As shown below there have been major outputs. There are quantitative and qualitative evidence that shows HHND are making significant inroads addressing fuel poverty and achieving affordable warmth.

	<b>Total</b>	<b>North Devon</b>	<b>Ilfracombe</b>	<b>Combe Martin</b>	<b>Bratton Fleming</b>
Number of cavities and lofts filled	<b>1,193</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>4</b>
Household Fuel costs saved/ £s <sup>1</sup> per year	<b>220,000</b>	<b>220,000</b>			
Household Carbon savings <sup>1</sup> /tonnes per year	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>			
Face-to-face advice / information	<b>700</b>	<b>700</b>			
Energy Advice enquiries via free-phone number: 0800 512 012	<b>2,467</b>	<b>2,467</b>			
Micro-generation installations	<b>1</b>				<b>1</b>
Solid wall insulation installed	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	
Training sessions delivered:	<b>10</b>				
FP Awareness Course (attended)	<b>80</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>64</b>		
Money & Energy Course (attended)	<b>122</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>110</b>		
Number of measures installed in households in risk of fuel poverty <sup>2</sup>	<b>1,135</b>	<b>732</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>5</b>
Number of properties now comply with thermal component of Decent Homes Standard <sup>3</sup>	<b>72</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

1. Based on BREDEM 12: for each property type with each installed measure.

2. Households are more likely to be in fuel poverty if they are in receipt of income related benefits and their properties require insulation measures. Includes vulnerable households over 60/<18k incomes.

3. Properties receiving insulation measures that would fail DHS for Criteria d<sup>1</sup>.

**Family Energy & Benefit Support** - project had the overall aim to complement the HHND scheme by targeting families with young children and young people, located in wards where there is a high incidence of fuel poverty and low income households. Marie Fraser held drop-ins with partner agencies, gave advice

sessions for parents, carried out home visits, produced media and publications, trained families and school children by giving education on energy awareness, and money & energy courses as well as assisted with the insulation scheme. J Bolton stated that the project is now at an end with no further funding available at present. JB tabled a comprehensive report with case studies.

Warm Front – Warm Front offered a grant package of heating and insulation measures for homes where residents meet specific eligibility criteria (over 60 yrs old and on benefits, and those in receipt of certain income related benefits).

### **Jeff to give me stats**

J Bolton's key recommendations are:

- Many opportunities to strengthen the partnership exist that should be endorsed by our partners.
- HHND is delivering its outcomes in line with the existing SLA: this should be broadened out to include the added value aspects of the project
- We need to look closely at the 'real' cost implications of maintaining this level of service
- In view of its significant impact HHND should be supported to continue delivering essential energy efficiency services.
- More robust and planned consultation should be put in place with all the HHND partner organisations to steer the project for future development.

The Chair endorsed J Bolton's report stating that it was the best and most comprehensive document the board had been presented and an excellent example in partnership working. J Mann stated that he wanted to review JB's report and look at HHND's continuation. However, he was less certain that it could continue as a stand alone scheme. M Taylor stated that the board broadly endorses the principle and that it should be mainstreamed. Wendy Butler stated that the partnership working and welfare take up had been of great benefit and the indirect benefits were huge. Frank Pearson stated that he fully supported the work HHND had carried out and with the indirect service with Trans-Send referrals. It showed JB's valued relationships and partnership working. G Smith added that following the recent visit of Dr Gabriel Scally, Strategic Health Authority, he showed great interest in the air source heatpump that JB had trialed.

### **3. Update of LAA priorities – Pauline Warner, Devon County Council (see attached email report)**

PW introduced herself and advised the board that she has the new role of Environmental Manager. She stated that the range of housing issues are wide i.e homelessness prevention, improved choice, enhanced lodgings etc.

PW gave an overview of what is happening at regional level, changes to the way the region's plan is prepared, investments and priorities, the Homes and Communities Agency and the Local Area Agreement.

Members were invited to look at the Northern Peninsula Housing Market Assessment downloads on [www.dsh.org.uk](http://www.dsh.org.uk) for full reports.

### **North Devon Council update – Jeremy Mann & Ian Higgins (see attached**

#### 4. **email report**

JM stated that since December last year, the Council's Strategic Housing Service had a thorough inspection from the Audit Commission and the findings were available from April. JM said that the report was reasonably positive and sets the way forward, some areas to focus on was support for the elderly, empty properties and improved customer services. JM distributed copies of the report (this can be found on the Council's website [www.northdevon.gov.uk](http://www.northdevon.gov.uk) click on Housing and there is a 'report' link on the main page) which stated that North Devon Council is providing a 'good' two-star service that has promising prospects for improvement. The report also formally acknowledges partnership working.

Ian Higgins handed out copies of the Housing Condition Survey covering Ilfracombe, Bratton Fleming & Combe Martin, a copy attached electronically.

Their 5 key aims & objectives are:

- Improving stock conditions
- Achieve sustainable homes and communities
- Improve the balance of the housing market
- Maintain and improve intelligence
- Improve access to services for the most vulnerable groups and promote equality

M Taylor asked what the impact of second home owners had. J Mann said that higher tax and claw-back discounts is a way to address this. He stated that second homes can also have an impact on the make-up of the community.

Ian Higgins said that there was an under performance in getting empty homes back into use with 150 out of 450 in the last 6 – 9 months. There is a long term plan to reconfigure empty homes and the Council has some 'teeth' behind getting this problem resolved and can also offer increased financial initiatives.

IH stated that the landlords have been offered inclusion into the Landlord Accreditation Scheme which can give enhanced money and energy improvements but landlords have to meet certain criteria i.e relationship, acceptable behaviour, increased tenant tenure to 12 months. Tenants could also be accredited.

IH said the scheme will be launched devon wide, and is anticipated commencing July 2009 and will be slowly built up over two years to ensure its success. With budgets being reduced, monies will have to be identified. Wendy Butler suggested that IH contact Martin Gimber of North Devon Homes who may already have data and would have 'best practice' methods. She also suggested that IH could liaise in order to prevent homelessness. IH added that it was all about mainstreaming, with agencies working together.

Insp P Sarney asked J Mann what was the progress on the Empty Buildings project. J Mann advised that additional funding has been approved and this will now move forward. They have employed two additional Housing Prevention Officers and a Senior Housing Options Officer which will give a better presence. Rory McDonald stated that the Street Rep programme and PCT are forming their own management group and could add to the customer team linkage for improved customer focus. J Mann is to arrange a meeting with Street Reps and Patrick Hamilton for the voluntary sector.

#### **Empowering Communities – Karen Evans**

KE stated that Ilfracombe is identified as a priority area for delivery of new

5. affordable housing. The Affordable Housing Delivery Plan sets out the steps to be taken to do this. KE suggested that whilst the need has been identified, the community seems reluctant to have new builds beside their existing homes. KE believed it is key to hold an open community meeting and to include those currently on the waiting list for housing. A report from Barbara Venn, North Devon Council was tabled on Affordable Housing in Ilfracombe. It stated that there is a count of rough sleepers (count 2007) – 35 rough sleepers, 4 sleeping rough in Ilfracombe. There are 685 people on the housing register – with 381 people needing 1 bed accommodation, 186 people requiring 2 beds, 87 people requiring 3 beds, 27 people requiring 4 beds and 4 people requiring 5+ beds. Figures were given for Ilfracombe on Tenancies let, Second Homes, Average Income by Ward, Vulnerable households in non decent dwellings (52.2% in Ilfracombe), Average House process, Benefit Claimants Lone Parents. NDC have identified two sites in the local plan, one being the Nursery site (owned by NDC) and the other being Chambercombe Bakery which is privately owned. Landowners are prepared to sell. To assist with improving stock conditions, there will be financial assistance, grant/low interest loans (decent homes standard). K Evans said there has been no affordable housing built in Ilfracombe in the last SIX YEARS. Celia Withers was concerned about the complete lack of affordable housing in Combe Martin which causes constant family moves. She stated that this can have a detrimental affect on a child's social and educational development. With an ageing population, many families are taking on the responsibility of caring for their elderly relatives but if there is a lack of housing, there's a breakdown in community. I Higgins said that isolation for the elderly is a big problem and there is scope for larger properties to be changed to shared living (intergenerational living), joint and multiple tenancies. However, there is a block on claiming benefits etc. under this arrangement. IH felt that this type of living would be ideal to pilot and would be challenging in addressing legalistic mechanisms. Links with Pauline Warner to investigate revenue funding should be made.

**Social Prescribing** – K Evans informed the board that a number of people referred by GP's, who often are most in need and vulnerable, end up with renting from the worst landlords rather than go through a letting agency. This is due to their lack of funds. She stated that this problem is not currently being dealt with and is not likely to be addressed through the Landlord Accreditation Scheme. She added that often vulnerable tenants do not report poor living conditions as they are in fear of being evicted. Kim Ward agreed that there are some real problems with landlords and their relationships with tenants.

I Higgins added that these issues are well recognised and that some landlords are still reluctant to make improvements. Two years ago, NDC received 150 complaints, 300 were dealt with this year. There has been Council intervention and improvement notices. Pam Lang stated that tenant's tolerance levels have increased and they put up with poor living conditions because they have a lack of confidence. PL added that Trisha White who is responsible for delivering Social Prescribing, has done fantastic work. J Mann said that the health inequality issues in Ilfracombe is extreme and that the government updated the action plan for health inequalities in 2004. The original paper identified areas of work:

- Improving standards of housing
- Homelessness prevention
- Developing social capital

J Mann recommended making representation to the PCT and Devon Partnership Trust to mainstream projects such as Social Prescribing. M Taylor said that this is

an example of where evaluation is paramount to prove their worth and to mainstream.

KE/GS

Pauline Warner advised that approaches should be made through the Adult Community Service and D.S.P. There needs to be outcomes which has

- pilot delivery outcomes
- health & releasing of housing stock
- identifying those in need and do a pilot – a whole care package

G Smith asked which system should be used. J Mann said it should be evidence based and scientific as submissions are always under close scrutiny. Rory McDonald said that he would bring the matter up at the next Health Inequality, Devon Health Inequality meetings as well as DSP, Housing corporation and Government Office South West.

RMcD

### **K Evans asked for clarity under conversation affecting the housing sector??**

Celia Withers asked about planning being turned down regarding a house and building in Combe Martin being turned into flats and that Abbyfield is also selling and there will be no housing for older people that would it be suitable. Ian Higgins said they might be in support??

M Taylor thanked J Mann, I Higgins, K Ward, K Evans and J Bolton for their input to the meeting.

### **Forward Plan**

#### **6. Improve customer focus:**

- Commission research: older people, investment possibilities, more houses
- Launch Landlord Accreditation Scheme – July 2009
- Tenancy Support Scheme – North Devon Homes
- Street Representative Programme
- Mapping of Services
- Pilot shared living - intergenerational living - joint and multiple tenancies

#### Improve Strategic Approach:

- Address needs of increasing ageing population
- Migrant Workers / Diverse Groups
- Explosion of older needs – households, healthcare, shopping, meeting needs
- Fit existing stock
- Create new stock
- Engage with Primary Care Trust, Devon Partnership Trust, Devon Strategic Partnership
- Pilot releasing homes
- Housing Corporation Innovation fund ??

#### Improve Homelessness and Private Sector Housing

- Empty Homes – Empty Dwelling Management orders
- Improve value for money arrangements

### **Minutes of the last meeting**

As of the last meeting, there are now two people with initials PL – to clarify under No: 13 - Peter Laurie thanked Transform for supporting Bratton Fleming's website and domain name. **Correct page 3 and page 6 ?**

7.

### **Matters arising**

During March 2009 meeting, Ian Hobbs was going to report back on the Warden Commissioning Group progress, this will now be on the next agenda.

8.

### **Evaluation Proposal – Gary Smith (see attached email report)**

GS tabled a report on the above. Devon County Council had granted £25K to Transform to add to the salary following the vacancy of the Evaluation Officer post, in order to provide stronger evaluation of the programme, including community engagement, participation and governance.

9.

JW/IH

The overall aim is to achieve better outcomes for the area through improved services, decision-making and resident involvement. This will be achieved by:

- Improved collation and monitoring of the statistics and qualitative data that act as a narrative for the development of the Neighbourhood Management programme and informs delivery.
- Better informed proposals for community engagement and governance, with increased local ownership of priorities and responses
- Improved needs assessment and analysis of the impact of interventions
- High quality evaluation of what works well in the Transform area, together with evidenced proposals for what might be mainstreamed locally and across Devon, including business cases as appropriate.
- Assessment of service areas or other responsibilities that might be suitable for devolution to parish and town councils or other delivery bodies

More than one person will be required to deliver this project due to the different skills needed and it is proposed to use the combined resources of Transform and DCC to buy the necessary capacity and skills. Some capacity will be provided by the Strategic Intelligence Unit, some will be recruited locally and some will be sought through secondment. GS listed the areas for investigation, the approach, resources, timetable and actions. GS asked for feedback from the board.

M Taylor said this is now an urgent matter to resolve and believes it to be a reasonable approach. M Taylor asked for the board's endorsement, this was agreed.

### **4.4.2 on sheet GF missing visitors not recorded**

### **Action Sheet**

Completed: 382, 388, 389, 395, 396, 397, 400, 401

Outstanding: 378, 391, 392, 393, 398, 399, 402

10.

### **Progress on Interventions**

The POI had been sent out prior to the meeting and G Smith ran through the details - Healthier Homes North Devon, Street Management group, Housing Waiting list event, Ilfracombe's Spring Clean, Ilfracombe Seafront consultation,

11. Neighbourhood Management pilot in Bideford, Sporting Chance programme, Junior Citizens initiatives, Partners and Communities Together (PACT) process, appointment of new Warden, Conflict Management training, Walk & Talk initiative, Social Prescribing, Health Inequalities, Child Protection Training, Ilfracombe Healthy Town event bid, Regional Director of public health visit, Complex Care team, Transform for Work, Local Producers Market, Osborne Hotel programme, Childcare Event, Education local businessman's lunch, Community Resources, Evaluation of Street Pastors, Faith Group, Ilfracombe Young Advisors, 'Yoof' event Combe Martin, May Day Celebration, Young Advisors, Concrete Surfers Federation,

### **Finance**

12. Sue Gear distributed copies of the finance report. The balance sheet as at 30<sup>th</sup> April includes £56K of Skatepark funding, £25K from DCC regarding the Monitoring & Evaluation work, with a current surplus of @ £20K. Profit & loss income – North Devon Council have just been invoiced for the funding for this quarter. This financial year, the total budget is £330K, which is £57K lower than last year. On the back of the report given, are the final spend figures for the 2008/2009 financial year, which carried forward an underspend of £7162 which is due to the lack of an invoice from North Devon Homes for the Candar rent 09/10.

### **AOB**

13. Geoff Fowler informed the group that a consultation with both local business and members of the community had taken place regarding the Perfect Moment seafront proposal. The Ilfracombe Centre forum states that 53% were in favour of the plans, 40% supports it with some amendments and 6% were not in favour. For further information please refer to [www.theilfracombecentre.co.uk](http://www.theilfracombecentre.co.uk)

Insp Pete Sarney stated that he was mindful that often planning can progress quickly and asked when would the Police be invited to make comment on future plans as their input is important. He said that it is important to involve the police Architectural Liaison Officer. GF confirmed that this would happen but was not required as it was only at concept stage and a bid was going in in June. PS asked if G Smith could contact John Knowles.

Janine Whapham advised the board that Margaret Blundell has reluctantly resigned her position on the board due to her work commitments.

GS

Peter Laurie informed the board that the owner of the General Store at Bratton Fleming wants to close, which will leave the village without a shop, previously there had been 4 retails outlets. A committee has been formed under the Parish Council to look at constructing a building to house a community village shop, this will be owned by the Parish Council. PL estimated that it would cost £200,000 and asked if Transform would pay £4,000 for plans and professional fees. Wendy Butler said the shop should also be a centre of information for the community.

Frank Pearson said that that Transform would need to receive a full budget. Mike Taylor supported the request in principle once the legal status is confirmed and budget information is supplied. Celia Withers seconded the proposal and confirmed the requirement for the shop to incorporate an information service.

PL to supply the required information.

Celia Withers voiced her concern about the chaos she experienced recently in the Ilfracombe minor injuries unit. She felt this was due to the pressure of work placed on the nurses.

PL

Transform has just completed Customer Conflict Training – more training planned for customer access to services.

Pete Laurie requested that board members must be kept up to date with Transform activities, especially when they are happening in their own areas.

Wendy Butler advised members that following the redundancies at Leaderflush Shapland, she and Nancy Green were attending sessions on 1<sup>st</sup> June to offer support to the 140+ people being made redundant (many living in Ilfracombe). WB and Nancy will join other agencies such as Jobcentre Plus, North Devon Council's housing benefit etc.

Meeting closed 12.55 pm

**Next Meeting Dates @ 9.30 am**

Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2009 – Bratton Fleming Sports Hall

Wed 23<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2009 - Combe Martin Parish Hall