

Tees Valley Living

Better homes for a brighter future

NEWS RELEASE

TEES VALLEY SET FOR £50MILLION HOUSING RENEWAL BOOST

A Government announcement today means that over £50million is to be invested over the next three years in improving the standard of housing in the Tees Valley.

The announcement by Housing Minister Iain Wright that the area is to receive £35million under the Housing Market Renewal programme—on top of money already allocated by the Regional Housing Board—was welcomed by Neil Etherington, Chair of Tees Valley Living, as ‘a major step forward in providing the quality of homes which our local residents deserve—and which will attract people to come and live and work in the Tees Valley.’

Of the £35million allocation £13million will be made available to Tees Valley Living in the coming financial year with £12million and £10million for the subsequent two years.

The announcement marks a significant success for Tees Valley—the agency set up in 2003 to lead and co-ordinate the drive to improve housing in the area—and Mr Etherington says they will now be able to move forward with major flagship schemes.

He explained “What this demonstrates is that our efforts over recent years to persuade Government of the need for major housing investment in our area—especially many of our older urban communities—have borne fruit and that we are a strong coherent partnership that delivers.

“Having over £50million available will enable us, working with our local authorities and other partners, to deliver projects which will genuinely transform those parts of central Middlesbrough, central Hartlepool, central Stockton and the South Bank area most in need of help.

“I am certainly not going to pretend that we can solve all the challenges within three years—we have always known that our task is likely to take up to 15 years—but we can make a tremendous difference in improving the quality of life for many thousands of people.”

Added Jim Johnson, Director of Tees Valley Living “We were undoubtedly disappointed when the Housing Market Renewal programme was announced in 2002 the Tees Valley was not included amongst the key ‘Pathfinder’ areas to be targeted for major investment.

“However, today’s announcement—including our funding alongside the Pathfinders--shows that our campaign for proper recognition has succeeded. We now have to meet the challenge of delivering the ambitious programme we have developed in order to ensure that the Government maintains its support after 2011.”

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NOTE FOR EDITORS: for further information please contact Peter Dodson, telephone 07753 910536