



NEWS RELEASE  
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## Starters orders for Neil's housing renewal role

Tees Valley businessman Neil Etherington is under starters orders for a 'race against time' to deal with massive housing problems in communities in the Tees Valley

Neil has agreed to take on the chairmanship of Tees Valley Living (TVL), the organisation responsible for housing market renewal in the five authorities across the Tees Valley. His new part-time responsibilities will run alongside his day job of Chief Executive of the popular racecourse at Redcar.

Neil's appointment, which was unanimously approved by the TVL board of directors, will see him undertaking around two days work each month representing the interests of TVL locally, but also with regional and national organisations, including Government ministers and top civil servants.

He takes over as chair from Alison Thain, Chief Executive of the Tees Valley Housing Group, who was TVL's first chair and oversaw the launch of the organisation and has seen through the development of housing market renewal strategy to the point of implementation.

Commenting on his new role Neil said: "As someone who has a lifelong commitment to this area, I want to see all sections of the community having access to modern and high quality homes.

"I know from my involvement over many years in working to attract new jobs and investment to the area that housing is probably the single most important element in providing the kind of lifestyle which enables us to retain - and attract - the people we need to help drive forward our economic regeneration.

"The challenge for TVL is to develop and deliver a housing renewal strategy which meets the needs of all parts of the Tees Valley. I am especially pleased to be taking up my role at a time when we have just gained support from the North East Housing Board for an investment programme totalling £36million over the next two years.

“Confirmation of that package will hopefully receive Government approval in the very near future and we will be able to get on with the critically important job of dealing with failing housing markets in a few months time.”

Neil, who is 48, is a native of Stockton and has spent much of his working life in the North East. He started his career at Wallsend-based Dunlop, where he was involved with both industrial relations and export sales. Then he moved to the CBI in Newcastle, returning to Tees Valley to become Chief Executive of Teesside Tomorrow in 1992.

In 1996 he became the first (and only) Chief Executive of Tees Valley Development Company - the award winning inward investment agency established by the five Tees Valley local authorities - before becoming Strategic Investment and Marketing Director with Tees Valley Regeneration.

Last June his career took an interesting course when he joined the Redcar Racecourse Company as Chief Executive giving him the unique opportunity to combine his business experience and skills with his passion for horse racing.