

**Press Release**

**March 1<sup>st</sup> 2011**

## **HOUSING CUTS ON AGENDA DURING GOVERNMENT VISIT**

THE future delivery of housing and regeneration schemes across Tees Valley was under discussion when a senior civil servant visited the area.

Henry Cleary OBE, who heads the Department for Communities and Local Government's Pathfinder Unit, was in Tees Valley to hear about the progress made to tackle some of the area's housing problems which has seen the demolition of over 2,700 homes and more than 1,400 new properties built.

During his meeting with representatives from Tees Valley Unlimited and the local authorities, Mr Cleary was also told about the challenges in completing the programme as a result of Government funding cuts.

The Tees Valley Living Pathfinder programme was awarded funding in 2006 to tackle housing problems in areas including Gresham in Middlesbrough, Parkfield in Stockton, Central Hartlepool and South Bank in Redcar and Cleveland. However, the programme requires a minimum of £45m for it to be completed.

Angela Lockwood, Chairman of Tees Valley Living, said: "It's unfortunate that half of the funding secured to improve our housing offer is unlikely to come our way. So much good work has been done but we're only part way through the programme and many parts of Tees Valley will suffer as a result.

"Our job now is to look at what can be done to ensure some of our most deprived communities – amongst the most deprived in the country – are not left to continue to live in such unsatisfactory conditions."

The Tees Valley Living Pathfinder Programme was a 15-year scheme tasked with acquiring and demolishing some of the five boroughs' most deprived homes, replacing them with more modern properties as part of the overall regeneration of each area.

Councillor Charlie Rooney, Middlesbrough's Executive Member for Regeneration, said:  
"I am glad that the Government is looking into the impact of withdrawing the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder programme. Many Tees Valley residents have been left with huge uncertainty by the Government's retreat from the programme and now need clarity for the future.

"The local authorities in Tees Valley are working hard on ensuring that each scheme can be concluded and we need Government to take a responsible approach to working with us. We hope that this visit will help in getting successful outcomes to our bids for the resources to complete each of the projects."

Tees Valley Unlimited, which is leading the Local Enterprise Partnership on behalf of the area, will continue to provide a strategic lead on housing and is looking at routes to secure the necessary finance.

Stephen Catchpole, Managing Director, said: "Having a housing market that meets the requirements of its residents is one of the essential factors in an area's economic success so together with our partners we will continue to do everything we can to support it."

**For more information contact Leanne English, PR Manager at Tees Valley Unlimited, on 01642 632013, 07725 602824 or email [leanne.english@teesvalleyunlimited.gov.uk](mailto:leanne.english@teesvalleyunlimited.gov.uk).**

#### **NOTE FOR EDITORS:**

**Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU)** is a partnership between the five Tees Valley Councils, regional regeneration bodies and business leaders to drive forward the future development of the Tees Valley economy.

Further information on TVU activities can be accessed via the following  
**URL: <http://www.teesvalleyunlimited.gov.uk>**