



12 April 2006

CHAMBER TO BOOST REGENERATION SUPPLY CHAIN

North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NSCCI) is helping businesses in the region to win contracts as part of a planned £3 billion regeneration programme.

The Chamber is to take on a new role in directing companies to local suppliers. This will ensure that North Staffordshire companies benefit from the business opportunities that will come from the RENEW North Staffordshire programme to renew older housing and build thousands of new homes.

The Chamber and its professional services network **finest** have already worked closely together with RENEW North Staffordshire to help local businesses to become members of RENEW's services panels. These cover housebuilders, housing associations, contractors and professional services.

Many local firms have been appointed to these panels and will now be able to bid for contracts let by RENEW North Staffordshire. However, there will be other opportunities to bid for work in other ways – for instance direct from housebuilders.

NSCCI chief executive Bryan Carnes said: "There will be many opportunities for business in the region to win contracts as part of the regeneration of North Staffordshire.

“Already many local firms have got a place on the service provider panels, but that is just a first step. We now want to support them as they bid for specific contracts.

“If firms did not win a place on the panels they will still be able to bid for work as part of the supply chain for the larger companies such as the national housebuilding or contracting firms.”

In future the Chamber will act as a “portal” to companies who are members of the provider panel, or who have other areas of expertise. This way a full local supply chain can be provided to the national companies who will be investing in North Staffordshire over the coming decade.

There will also be opportunities for companies to invest in North Staffordshire by taking advantage of the local supply chain and local labour.

As a first example a breakfast seminar is to be held for building societies and banks on Friday, May 5. This will explore how the financial institutions can help provide loan finance for relocations and home improvements. It will also consider the large scale redevelopment of parts of North Staffordshire and how these could be financed.

finest co-ordinator Ian McLaughlan added: “Already many professional services firms have benefited from training and advice to get onto the provider panels. We now want to provide them with further support so they can win contracts.

“There will also be many other opportunities for other firms, such as the financial sector, to get involved.”

Hardial Bhogal, director of RENEW North Staffordshire, said: “We have appointed many local firms to our suppliers panels and we now want to ensure they get the support they need as they bid for contracts.

“We also want to help direct the national companies who will be investing in North Staffordshire to the local supply chain. This will bring significant benefits to local companies and as a result to local people.”

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Notes to editors

1. RENEW North Staffordshire is the housing market renewal pathfinder for Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Biddulph East. Our aim is to help make North Staffordshire a thriving, diverse conurbation where people want to live, work, invest and study. We do this by working with communities and partners to:
 - balance housing supply and demand
 - retain and attract population
 - provide quality housing that meets the aspirations of existing and new residents
 - transform the environment and make the best of our heritage and green space
 - support economic regeneration.
2. The RENEW North Staffordshire team can be contacted by the public on 01782 232024 or renew@stoke.gov.uk. Further information can be found on the website: www.renewnorthstaffs.gov.uk.