

PRESS RELEASE

26 NOVEMBER 2007

Photocall: A community clean up day on Tuesday, 27 November, will be led by Paul Jolley, beginning at 9am

CARETAKER WILL SUPPORT COMMUNITY DURING CLEARANCE

A new caretaker has been appointed to help to look after a community where clearance is taking place under the RENEW North Staffordshire programme.

Paul Jolley will be introduced to the community in Lower Milehouse at a clean up day being held by Aspire Housing and Newcastle Borough Council's Street Scene service on Tuesday, 27 November.

He will work in the Lower Milehouse estate where 166 houses are being cleared over the coming two years to make way for a much better choice of new homes.

The clearance has led to issues such as fly-tipping, vandalism and overgrown gardens at the empty properties. Although the area is cleaned regularly, the problems have continued.

Paul will help residents who have not yet moved out and residents whose homes are not being cleared to keep their neighbourhood clean and tidy.

Paul has been taken on by Aspire Housing, RENEW's partner housing association in the Knutton, Cross Heath and Lower Milehouse area, using RENEW funding.

His duties will include disposing of rubbish, cutting hedges, removing graffiti and general maintenance of the empty houses. He will work with the local community and be able to respond to their concerns and reports of incidents quickly.

Hardial Bhogal, director of RENEW North Staffordshire, said: "The caretaker will be a great help for local residents in the Lower Milehouse area.

"Paul will help look after the area at a time of change, provide reassurance and support local people."

Councillor Robin Studd, Newcastle Borough Council portfolio holder for regeneration and planning, said: "There have been problems in the past with vandalism and fly tipping that has made the area look untidy and neglected. The caretaker will help tidy the area and prevent future problems."

Dan Gray, commercial manager at Aspire Housing, said: "We are very pleased to have taken on Paul as the neighbourhood caretaker. We will ensure he is fully supported and has the necessary resources to manage the streets where clearance is taking place.

"We want to work with the local residents to keep their neighbourhood clean and tidy, so that it is a pleasant place to live while the clearance is taking place. They will have someone to turn to who will be able to look after their local area."

Ends

Photocall: Tuesday, November 27 at 9am, Social Service Centre, Wilmot Drive, Lower Milehouse. Start of the Knutton and Cross Heath area clean up event. Paul Jolley will lead the community clean-up day and get to know local residents.

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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@civic1.stoke.gov.uk. Further information can be found on the website: www.renewnorthstaffs.gov.uk.