

26th October 2006

Community shows North Staffordshire its big 'art

Photo and interview opportunity:

Monday 29th October 2007 at 3pm

Wellington Street Community Centre, Dresden Street,

Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 3QG

Place Space and Identity is an innovative arts programme that was launched last month by RENEW North Staffordshire and Arts Council England, West Midlands. The project that is managed locally by B Arts will launch the first of 13 projects on Monday 29th October, as artist Rachel Grant takes visitors on an extraordinary journey around the Wellington Road area of Hanley.

Textile artist, Rachel Grant has created 15 stitched and mixed media panels which have been inspired by the history of the Wellington Road area, located within the RENEW pathfinder. Each of the panels uses fragmented marks, patterns, images and text that have been sourced in part from the local community and they are displayed throughout the area on the external walls and gables of empty properties.

On Monday 29th October Rachel Grant is inviting people to come and join her in an exciting and fascinating walk around the area's intriguing back alleys and streets to explore and discover the beautifully crafted panels. The walk will start at 3pm from Wellington Street Community Centre, Dresden Street, Hanley. For those unable to attend the official launch, maps are available from the community centre every weekday from 10am – 4pm and people are encouraged to explore the area for themselves.

Hardial Bhogal, director of RENEW North Staffordshire is excited by the innovative project, he says; "Place Space and Identity will provide a variety of opportunities for

local people to get involved with local artists to respond to the social, economic and environmental changes taking place in their area.

“We want to encourage people to get involved in the regeneration of North Staffordshire. Art is another way of doing that”

Anyone who is interested in either joining the tour or exploring the area for themselves should contact Rachel Grant on 07866 155827 or visit the community centre on Dresden St. Hanley, between 10am and 4pm for more information.

- ENDS -

Media contact:

Alex Abbotts T. 01782 234988 or E. alex.abbotts@civic1.stoke.gov.uk

Interview opportunities with:

- Local residents
- Rachel Grant, the artist
- Representatives from RENEW North Staffordshire

Notes to editors

1. **Place Space & Identity** is an Arts Council West Midlands led project funded by Arts Council and Renew with partnership support from Stoke City Council. placespaceidentity.net
2. For more information on *Place Space & Identity* contact B Arts 01782 717326 info@pandaemonium.biz or Rachel Hartley at Arts Council England, West Midlands 0121 631 5762 rachel.hartley@artscouncil.org.uk
3. **Arts Council England** works to get great art to more people in more places. We develop and promote the arts across England, acting as an independent body at arm's length from government. Between 2006 and 2008, we will invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and the National Lottery in supporting the arts. This is the bedrock of support for the arts in England. We believe that the arts have the power to change lives and communities,

and to create opportunities for people throughout the country.

4. Between 2006 and 2008, Arts Council England has six priorities:
 - a. taking part in the arts
 - b. children and young people
 - c. the creative economy
 - d. vibrant communities
 - e. internationalism
 - f. celebrating diversity

5. **The Sustainable Communities Plan** (2003) provided the Government with a framework for a major programme of action that will, over the next two decades, address the pressing issues of communities across England. One key area of the plan was the creation of Pathfinder market renewal areas with the aim to improve the housing situation by 2010. North Staffordshire is one of nine Pathfinder areas across England.

6. **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.

7. 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