



PRESS RELEASE

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MINISTER URGED TO CONTINUE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE'S REGENERATION

Baroness Andrews, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, has been urged to continue the success of the housing market renewal programme in North Staffordshire.

She was given the message during a visit organised by Joan Walley, MP for Stoke-on-Trent North, and RENEW North Staffordshire, the housing market renewal pathfinder.

Baroness Andrews was taken on a coach tour to see how RENEW North Staffordshire is working in partnership with other agencies and local people to help breathe new life into run-down neighbourhoods, including City Waterside, Burslem and Middleport.

Baroness Andrews then met Stoke-on-Trent elected mayor, Mark Meredith, RENEW North Staffordshire chair Peter Bounds, and other officials at the Burslem School of Art.

The event was aimed at helping to inform the Government about success of regeneration in North Staffordshire, and the continuing challenges the area faces. Baroness Andrews was also briefed about the creation of the new

North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership, which is leading economic and social regeneration.

Baroness Andrews was urged to continue the Government's support for RENEW North Staffordshire in its coming bid for funding in the period 2008/11.

Peter Bounds, chair of RENEW North Staffordshire, said: "We were very pleased to welcome Lady Andrews to Stoke-on-Trent to show her some of the successes of RENEW North Staffordshire.

"We showed her how there is now a sense of optimism in places like City Waterside and in Burslem town centre, where older homes are being renovated and new residents are moving into new homes.

"However, we also showed her the many challenges that continue to be faced by North Staffordshire. We made it clear that we need the Government's continued support for our strategy to revitalise the economy and the housing market."

Mark Meredith, elected mayor of Stoke-on-Trent, said: "We were pleased to show Baroness Andrews some of the excellent progress we are making by using Government investment.

"We also told her how we have brought all regeneration programmes together in the new North Staffordshire Regeneration Partnership. This will help us to create new, skilled jobs, and to regenerate our city centre, towns and neighbourhoods."

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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.