



PRESS RELEASE

WITH PICTURE

7 AUGUST, 2007

HERITAGE RENOVATIONS TO MAKE TERRACES MORE POPULAR

The work of a renowned brick manufacturer is to form the centrepiece of an innovative £1.1m project to renovate old terraced houses and improve the local environment.

Damaged decorative brickwork and tiles on 45 houses in Knutton, Newcastle-under-Lyme, are to be restored and replaced by RENEW North Staffordshire, the housing market renewal pathfinder, under the guidance of English Heritage.

The properties are among 195 terraced houses in the John Street and Cemetery Road area that were used to showcase the work of the local brick manufacturer John Nashe Peake between 1843 and 1939.

The work to restore the distinctive façades of the properties will use bricks and materials that complement and enhance the original features. Other features such as chimney pots, doors and windows will also be restored, where appropriate.

The streets were among those identified as being of heritage value in the recent heritage characterisation study of North Staffordshire. A detailed study

of 195 properties in the John Street and Cemetery Road area then identified the 45 properties to be restored.

The improvements are in line with the Knutton and Cross Heath masterplan which was supported by the community following extensive consultation in 2005/6.

The masterplan identified Knutton village centre as being in need of support because of the poor condition and low values of its old terraced properties.

The heritage restoration will be complemented by £550,000 other work to improve the environment in the village centre of Knutton through work such as installing alleygates to deter anti-social behaviour, and creating wildlife habitats through community gardens.

Aspire Housing, RENEW's partner housing association, will contribute a further £100,000 towards small scale environmental improvements. Other partners including Staffordshire County Council and Newcastle Borough Council will also be contributing to the improvements.

Hardial Bhogal, director of RENEW North Staffordshire, said: "The terraced housing in the centre of Knutton is very distinctive, but some of the properties are not in good condition and the architectural features have been damaged over time.

"These renovations will help raise the values of individual properties and help to restore the distinctive character and identity of the Knutton area.

"It will significantly improve the quality of the environment in Knutton and complement the other improvements in this area."

Simon Tagg, leader of Newcastle Borough Council, added: "These terraced homes were once used to showcase the decorative work of the famous brick maker John Nash Peake.

“They can now be used as a showcase for the way we are using our heritage and distinctiveness as part of regeneration.”

Michael Taylor, English Heritage historic areas advisor for the West Midlands, said: "RENEW North Staffordshire is showing through this work how the distinctive heritage of terraced house can be used to contribute to regeneration.

"It is not difficult or costly to restore houses in this way - it is simply a matter of recording the types of decorative bricks in the area and then manufacturing them.

"Many of the bricks and other features have been damaged over the years and this project will restore the historic character of these houses."

Ends

Notes to editors

1. The attached photograph shows an example of the willow leaf decorative brickwork on some of the houses. This is one of four decorative brickwork styles used in the area.
2. 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.
3. 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.