

PRESS RELEASE

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RESIDENTS URGED TO APPLY FOR SECURITY SCHEME

RENEW North Staffordshire has urged residents in selected regeneration areas to apply for the second phase of a £908,000 fund for security improvements in Stoke-on-Trent.

The programme to keep out burglars and stop anti-social behaviour in 2006/07 has been well received by communities in City Centre South, Middleport and Burslem.

So far, 300 properties in selected streets in these areas have been improved with work such as new window locks, new doors, and new windows.

Now a second phase of security work to a further 150 homes is underway. Many property owners and landlords in this second phase have already signed up for the free improvements, but money is still available to improve further properties.

The money will benefit people like Lilian Jones, who has had five new PVC windows and a new back door installed at her home in Price Street, Burslem.

Mrs Jones said about the scheme: "I was absolutely flabbergasted about the offer and now the improvements on my home. It's not very often that you get something for nothing.

“I have been concerned about security and this has really helped. I feel much safer at night and I’m happier about going out.

“I have been very fortunate and never experienced a burglary while living in the area. But a couple of my neighbours have and it’s good to know that they will also be protected.”

Hardial Bhogal, director of RENEW North Staffordshire, said: “Most of the £908,000 funding we secured has been allocated now, but we still need more households to sign up. If owners have had a letter inviting them for an security assessment, I urge them to get in touch.”

Mervin Smith, Stoke-on-Trent City Council portfolio holder for regeneration, said: “The security improvements have been very popular with local people. They have really appreciated the offer of help to keep their homes and neighbourhoods safe and secure.”

The security improvements are paid for by RENEW North Staffordshire and are being made in partnership with Staffordshire Police, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Beth Johnson Housing Association.

Private landlords must be members of the North Staffordshire Landlord Accreditation Scheme to benefit.

Property owners who are eligible for the work have been sent a letter or received a personal visit, but they can call RENEW North Staffordshire on 01782 232024 to check.

The eligible areas are:

- Price Street area, Burslem
- Lomas Street area, City Centre South
- Harley Street area, City Centre South
- Egerton Street area, City Centre South

- Chatham Street area, City Centre South
- Jasper Street area, City Centre South
- Hazelhurst Street area, City Centre South.

Alley gates are also being installed to stop anti-social behaviour and crime in selected alleyways.

Ends

For further information please contact:

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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.