

REPORT TO: STOBSWELL PARTNERSHIP BOARD 26 APRIL 2006

FROM: PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR

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SUBJECT: STOBSWELL PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT 2005 - 06

SUMMARY

Stobswell is improving. House prices are rising, the time it takes to sell property is greatly reduced, most dereliction is removed and environmental improvements are making an impact, new housing is making a difference and private investment in new housing is starting. New services started in the past couple of years are now established, appreciated and well used. Importantly these are all complimentary and support each other to the benefit of the community.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Stobswell Partnership Board has been established for a year. This report summarises progress with the Stobswell Regeneration Strategy and Development Framework over the year.

1.2 A key objective of the Dundee Partnership Community Planning Building Stronger Communities Group is "to demonstrate the long term viability of inner city communities by achieving a sustainable regeneration of Stobswell". The basic task is to restore Stobswell to its previous status as Dundee's third most popular inner suburb.

1.3 The outcomes expected are:

- a a more stable neighbourhood with greater housing choice;
- b greater neighbourhood satisfaction because there is a perception of a safe neighbourhood;
- c rising property values and reduced turnover in residents, showing the neighbourhood is somewhere that people want to live; and
- d improved physical environment with no derelict land or property, improved fabric of property and a reduction in litter and unmanaged refuse.

1.4 The Fundamentals of the Strategy and Development Framework

Spatial Framework and Environmental Investment Programme:

- a remove dereliction;
- b introduce new house building to improve housing choice and tenure choice;
- c improve the quality of the tenement environment and the maintenance of the tenements;
- d improve the shopping environment of Albert Street;
- e undertake environmental and streetscape improvement; and

- f the physical work is supported by Social and Economic Programmes and a marketing strategy.

Socio - Economic Programme:

- a promote community engagement;
- b sustain community facilities;
- c develop training and employment;
- d promote improved health;
- e promote youth projects;
- f promote better property management; and
- g market the neighbourhood.

2 ACTION DURING 2005/2006

2.1 Delivery Mechanism

The partnership **officers group** including staff from Communities Scotland, Tayside NHS Trust, Hillcrest and Home in Scotland Housing Associations, Dundee City Council (Planning and Transportation, Housing, Leisure and Communities and Economic Development), the Police and on a voluntary basis representatives from the Stobswell Forum and the Stobswell Landlord's Forum has continued to meet monthly. This has helped to focus particularly on early action and funding.

Meetings have usually included a presentation from groups providing different services in the neighbourhood to determine what the remaining concerns are or if there are related actions the Partnership can undertake to enhance the service or resolve difficulties.

The Stobswell Forum, the Community Representative Structure, meets monthly and has open forums every 3 months. This remains invaluable as a means of consulting on proposals and keeping the community updated and as means of the community raising concerns.

The key to delivering the strategy is **funding**.

The local housing investment agreement between Dundee City Council and Communities Scotland continues to include Stobswell as a focus for housing association investment. **Communities Scotland** invested £964,000 of Housing Association Grant in Stobswell during 2005/06..

The **Vacant and Derelict Land Fund** has continued to be partly focussed on Stobswell with a total of £650,000 being spent here. The Scottish Executive announced a second round of the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund for 2006-8 of which Dundee's share is to be £4m. The Partnership submission includes items in Stobswell to undertake work that failed to be achieved in the 2004-6 programme and 2 other small sites that now have greater priority.

ERDF grant assistance of £335,070 was secured.

The **Council's Community Regeneration Environmental Improvement** budget dedicated to Stobswell was £75,000

Scottish Enterprise Tayside contributed an environmental budget of £94,000.

The **Communities Scotland Environmental Budget** 2005/6 for Stobswell was £99,354

Wider Action grants totalling £59,017 from Communities Scotland support the Stobswell Information Centre, the expansion of its premises and the Active Communities service initiatives. Also a Future Builders grant of £19,660 has supported the Clean Close Co.'s van purchase.

The **Community Regeneration Fund** is supporting 25 projects in Stobswell or that serve Stobswell.

3 POSITION IN 2005/2006

- 3.1 As part of the Regeneration Outcome Agreement for the city a survey has been carried out to provide a baseline position to measure community satisfaction and change. This was undertaken by consultants T L Dempster, and is only now being analysed. Survey results are available for each community regeneration area. Stobswell is part of "the Central Area" along with Hilltown and Fairmuir. For this area there were 199 respondents. The number of respondents for Stobswell itself is as yet unknown but clearly will be a very small number and it is doubtful if these responses can be relied on as representative. Generally this overall area has more favourable results than the average and than the other areas. The area is relatively stable with 62% residents having lived here for 6 years or more. It is hoped to interrogate raw data for the Stobswell area alone. This position will be reported to a later Board meeting. Fortunately there has been contact from a post graduate student from St. Andrews University undertaking a doctorate thesis based on Stobswell and community response. She is happy to share her findings with the Stobswell Partnership. When this is available in the summer it will be reported to the Board.
- 3.2 The environmental programme, including "white light", concentrating on Dura Street and streets adjacent is now complete, and along with the demolitions achieved via the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund has made a major visual impact.
- 3.3 Housing choice is improving with two more Housing Association developments being occupied and another now started, a start to a private housing development and demolition is virtually complete making way for imminent starts to two others. Although the private activity is behind the anticipated programme, that it is now getting underway and that there are now a further two planning applications suggests the investment community feels the neighbourhood must be improving. Tenure change is examined every two years because it is unlikely there will be much difference in a year. This will be reported on next year.
- 3.4 **Average prices of flats (at June 2004)** have increased responding to the improving market, but there is little improvement in the differential between Stobswell and more popular areas. The Dundee flats average selling price was £63,381 (30.7% increase on 2003) and for Stobswell £43,844 (35%). Park Avenue has now recovered to its late 1990's position with an average selling price of £26,324, so negative equity should have disappeared and the increase was 36.7% on the previous year. Baxter Park Terrace increased by 72.9% to £93,840. The differential between selling prices in Albert St and Blackness Rd has increased. This is also the case between Baldovan Terrace and Rosefield Street and Park Avenue and Peddie Street. Crucially however the time taken to sell has greatly improved which suggests increasing demand. Anecdotally the current position is better.

- 3.5 Shop vacancies are surveyed every two years. This will be reported next year. Despite there being a pipeline of six potential projects for the Facade Enhancement Grant Scheme (FEGS) grants only one has been achieved this year. The remainder of the budget was reserved for a major improvement that has not yet started, Albertay Launderette, but the difficulties might now be resolved. A start to the other interests should be made this year. Nevertheless more promotion of the scheme will be needed.
- 3.6 Primary school rolls have dropped by 3.7% and the Morgan Academy roll remains about the same as last year.
- 3.7 The various recently established services in the neighbourhood are well received and being well used. These include The Clean Close Co., The Community Wardens, The Anti Social Behaviour Team, the Environmental Wardens, Action Team for Jobs, Access to Learning, Help IT, and Dundee Healthy Living Initiative

4 SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY DURING 2005/2006

- 4.1 Derelict buildings at Erskine Street, former Tay Spinners, and Arbroath Rd Depot have been demolished. A derelict warehouse at Whalers Close has been purchased for demolition this year. At Dura Street Erskine Street four properties were secured and another 4 remain to be purchased.
- 4.2 Boundary enhancement in Dura Street, streetworks and white lighting in Forfar Road, Dura Street and Erskine Street and a small car park benefiting Manhattan Works have been completed via the **environmental programme**.
- 4.3 Seventeen **new housing** units (social rented) on two sites at Arthurstone Terrace have been completed and forty one units (social rented) have been started on a site at Victoria Street/Albert Street.
- 4.4 The **back court** at 2-4 Park Avenue has been improved as a pilot project. Owners of eight other back courts have agreed to co-operate with improvements. Four have now submitted forms but four have not translated this commitment into action, and there is a risk the funding allocated can not be carried forward. Clearly this is being pursued. No security grant work was completed. The amount of effort and dedicated staff time to achieve this has been extremely large. If continuing such a programme is seen as vital to the regeneration effort there will have to be a dedicated team and this will require additional resources.
- 4.5 In advance of the streetscape improvements at Park Avenue EuroBins have been trialled in the street in place of wheelie bins. Although only five weeks into the trial no real problems have been notified. The exception is a report of children climbing on them, but this now seems to have stopped.
- 4.6 The **Clean Close Company** (report appended) has had a remarkable year. They now have 141 tenement closes under contract, 17 of which are private rented/owner occupied. There are now eight employees all trained to SVQ standard and most formerly unemployed. While it is clearly necessary for the company to have the stability of the housing association work it is hoped that more private rented and owner occupied stock can be targeted.
- 4.7 The **Landlords Forum** has more members and is actively seeking to increase its membership further. It has a data base of 125-150 landlords that it circulates

information to. It has been invaluable in promoting the Clean Close Co and advocating good practice.

- 4.8 A **Landlords Accreditation Scheme** (Dundee wide) was formally launched in January 2006, an audience of around 120 private landlords attended. Since then 70 Private Landlords have intimated that they are interested in becoming accredited and of those four private landlords are known to have properties in the Stobswell Area. However, it is anticipated that once applications are returned more private landlords in the Stobswell area will be identified.
- 4.9 The **Facade Enhancement Grant Programme** (FEGS) has continued with one project completed, one pending and six others in the pipeline. All are in Albert Street. A planning application has been approved for a discount supermarket at Dura Street. Building is expected to start soon.
- 4.10 The **Community Safety Warden** service (report appended) has been welcomed in Stobswell. Good relationships are starting to be built that should have a stabilising influence. The wardens have reported 484 items, more than half of which have been related to rubbish. The **Anti-social Behaviour Team** (report appended) report that only 3 or 4 new cases per month are reported and this represents only approx 4.5% of all new cases in Dundee. This is encouraging. The majority of the reports relate to noise. The **Environmental warden** service is now active. There still seems to be a litter and poor wheelie bin practice so it is perhaps too early to gauge impacts here. To help improve practice Hillcrest HA has engaged an advisor who will be helping the Morgan Academy Eco Group.
- 4.11 The **Information and Advice Centre** in Arbroath Road hosts various related outreach services. Every day of the week has more than one workshop and now space is at a premium. Work has started on an extension to relieve this problem (list of outreach services attached). **Action Team for Jobs** (report appended) reports this to be one of the busiest outreaches that they visit and put that down to the relaxed atmosphere and the professional service the centre provides. They have an attendance on average of twelve customers each week at this outreach. This past year two hundred and sixty one (+ 42%) customers have been seen, of which sixty have been from minority ethnic groups (+ 130%), and sixty three have gone into jobs (-11%). Supporting this has been the **Hilltown Outreach Translation Service/Minority Ethnic Advice Link Project** (report appended) provides interpreting and advice services to Urdu/Punjabi speaking communities in the area. One hundred and twenty clients have been supported at the Arbroath Rd centre. Additionally the **Access to Learning** (engaging minority ethnic families) project also operates via the centre (report appended). Adjacent to the Information Centre is the **Help IT Project** that assists local business with developing their IT skills and needs.
- 4.12 **Dundee Healthy Living Initiative** has two workers targeting Stobswell and Hilltown. Steadily they are contacting more hard to reach people by for instance visiting pubs and persuading men to have health checks. (Report attached). **The WEB Project** is a service based in Baxter Park in Stobswell. It is a confidential service that works with young people between the ages of 10 and 24 around issues such as sexual health, drugs and alcohol, relationships or any other issues that may be facing them. Between April 2005 and April 2006 3504 young people accessed the service, either through detached work, drop-ins, 1:1 support or in education session. This is an increase of 1104 or 46%. The majority of this increase has been through detached work and drop-ins. (Report attached). **Aberlour Outreach Dundee** works with children and families affected by problematic parental substance use. It provides services across the city but also has two dedicated workers for Stobswell. Over the

last year, in Stobswell, fifteen children have received direct one to one support; seventeen families have been given indirect needs led support; seven families have had direct support with parenting issues; Aberlour Outreach has delivered six activity sessions during school holidays, (forty nine children were involved) and in partnership with other providers in the delivery of twenty eight more. **Dundee Community Health Partnership** via its Zone nursing scheme has piloted a "falls prevention" programme in the sheltered housing at Craigie Street and Martindale Gardens. A smoking cessation programme is being delivered via the Moss pharmacy. The partnering arrangement of the NHS Trust with Moss pharmacy and Hillcrest Housing Association is seen as beneficial.

- 4.13 Via the Community Regeneration Fund **Family Support** work in the area continues to expand with the work being co-ordinated by a multi-disciplinary working group. A new under 12's development worker post was created and a parents group has also just started at Glebelands school. This is part of the **Sure Start** scheme
- 4.14 A number of improvements to **community facilities** have taken place with CRF grant assistance. The Park Avenue Hall secured a grant which allowed replacement of the roof, windows and kitchen and the installation of a new disabled toilet. The Dundee International Women's Centre secured funding to move to new premises in Manhattan works. A Feasibility study also took place to explore how Arthurstone Library could be adapted to provide more community use space. Full consultation will follow the completion of initial proposals.
- 4.15 **Youth work** provision in the area has grown in the last year and one of the main success stories has been the Thursday and Friday night football sessions at the DISC. (Report appended) Up to 100 young people attended these sessions and in addition to playing football young people are provided with a range of information services. This is an excellent example of collaboration involving the youth sports team, Dundee United FC, Youth Team, Web, Community Safety Wardens and the Police. The Community liaison manager from Dundee United who runs the Stobswell football initiative reported they had chosen a team from the young people to play a match with their DUFC under 16 team. Unbelievably Stobswell won. This has resulted in the good news that two of the young people have been taken on by Dundee United under their youth programme. (Report appended)
- 4.16 **Marketing** has perhaps had the least attention. The Web Site and links to it have not been developed extensively. However a quarterly newsletter is now being published and delivered to every household, the first was issued in March. Other newsletters have been available to an e-mail database and on the web site. A DVD has been commissioned to record progress and to engage with people. A large LCD TV screen has been purchased and placed in the information centre window to display information and promotional items.

5 ACTION PROPOSED FOR 2006/2007

- 5.1 Agree to contributions to the next phase environmental budget and start the Park Avenue Streetscape project.
- 5.2 Derelict property at Whalers Close and Dura Street will be acquired and demolished for re-development. Associated environmental works will be started at Whalers Close/Langlands Street. Also the Craigie Street car park will be redeveloped to increase the number of spaces available, to benefit the Danapak factory, and to include an underground re-cycling centre

- 5.3 The three housing sites with planning consent should start, increasing the choice with new housing for sale.
- 5.4 More effort will be required with regard to promoting tenement maintenance.
- 5.5 The yard at Erskine Street should be re occupied in part by the Garden Landscape Company and the remainder offered to a local undertaker to consolidate operations.
- 5.6 The FECS programme will continue and be promoted more vigorously.
- 5.7 The commitment of owners in Park Ave will be pursued to obtain another eight back court improvements.
- 5.8 Communities Scotland Wider Action Fund will continue to support the Help IT Project, Tenemental Factoring (The Clean Close Company); Active Communities and Outreach Facility (the neighbourhood office/shop and its staffing)
- 5.9 Marketing will develop using good news stories with the starts to each new housing development; a display updating action will be placed in the window of the Hillcrest Information Office in Arbroath Road allied with development of the Stobswell Information web site.

20 April 2006

LB/RJ

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