

# The Village is now an Urban Renewal Area

To be taken forward in consultation with the local community

# ITS OFFICIAL! .....**THE VILLAGE** IS NOW AN URBAN RENEWAL AREA

## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER



"When I visited the Village, I saw for myself just how poor some of the accommodation was, and I was determined to do something about it. I am delighted that we have now reached this important milestone and that the long awaited regeneration can now proceed. I do not underestimate the operational difficulties that will arise as a result of the redevelopment and I want to wish everyone the very best as this work progresses.

I know the Housing Executive will work closely with the community and its representatives to ensure that the regeneration is sensitive to everyone's needs. The key point is that the wait is over: work is now starting and everyone needs to work together to make this a success. This is what the people of the Village deserve."

*Margaret Ritchie*

**Margaret Ritchie MLA,  
Minister for Social Development,  
May 2008**

The Village area of South Belfast has now been officially declared an "Urban Renewal Area". This means that over the next 10 years, unfit housing in the Village area will either be demolished and replaced or retained and much improved.

The Housing Executive will be leading this out in partnership with the local community and people will be contacted shortly with an Advice and Guidance leaflet explaining the next steps and how they may be affected. One or more Housing Associations plus private developers will be doing most of the work on the ground.



## REGENERATION - A PRIORITY

The regeneration of the Village which has some of the most unfit housing in Northern Ireland - has been something local residents have campaigned for over a period of many years. There were numerous plans, consultations and appraisals without any firm outcome.

Social Development Minister Margaret Ritchie visited the area, met with local



representatives and declared it a priority. Once she had her housing budget finalised she announced that the process would get underway immediately.

She allocated an immediate £7m and secured Department of Finance and Personnel approval for the regeneration project.

The final piece of the jigsaw has now been put in place with the declaration of the Village as an Urban Renewal Area. This will give the Housing Executive essential powers to get the vesting/demolition and regeneration underway.



## It's up to the Housing Executive and the local community now!

The Housing Executive will have lead responsibility for all operational aspects of the Village regeneration. The organisation has vast experience of urban regeneration in Belfast and appreciates the importance of working closely with the local community.

The Housing Executive will be distributing information shortly about the regeneration process and meeting with all the residents. The Housing Executive will be supported by one or more Housing Associations in carrying out the work. Regeneration can sometimes be a lengthy, difficult process which can be slowed down by disagreement or legal actions.

So there is a need for patience! Nonetheless, the Housing Executive and Housing Associations, working closely with local people, can deliver a very successful outcome.