

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(i) Introduction

The publication of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy marks both the end of a long process of extensive research, review and consultation and the beginning of the process of implementation. This document is the first of several that will collectively map out the approach to urban regeneration and Neighbourhood Renewal. Collectively, these strategies will be known as 'People and Place' to emphasise their inter-related nature and common themes.

(ii) Learning the Lessons

All the evidence of the past 30 years confirms there are some key issues that must be addressed if we are to really tackle the problems of multiple deprivation in urban areas. There is a need to focus limited resources in more effective ways; to co-ordinate action to reduce inequalities within and between urban communities; and generally to promote social inclusion. There is also a need to make a long term commitment to areas, working with them in an empowering partnership based approach to tackle problems, such as community division, in order to deliver results that make a real difference to people's lives.

(iii) Strategic Objectives

To tackle the complex, multi-dimensional nature of deprivation in an integrated way, Neighbourhood Renewal will have four interlinking strategic objectives:

- **Community Renewal** - to develop confident communities that are able and committed to improving the quality of life in the most deprived neighbourhoods;
- **Economic Renewal** - to develop economic activity in the most deprived neighbourhoods and connect them to the wider urban economy;

- **Social Renewal** - to improve social conditions for the people who live in the most deprived neighbourhoods through better co-ordinated public services and the creation of safer environments; and
- **Physical Renewal** - to help create attractive, safe, sustainable environments in the most deprived neighbourhoods.

(iv) Key Elements

This Strategy will target the worst disadvantage to make a real difference. Therefore, using the Noble Index we will target those neighbourhoods that are within the worst 10% urban wards as measured by the Multiple Deprivation Measure and the worst 10% Enumeration Districts as measured by the Economic Deprivation Measure to create **Neighbourhood Renewal Areas**. **Neighbourhood Partnership Boards** representative of the key political, statutory, community, voluntary and private sectors will be identified in each Neighbourhood Renewal Area to oversee delivery.

A long-term programme based approach is required and, therefore, Neighbourhood Renewal will roll out over a 7-10 year period. A **Neighbourhood Vision Framework** will be developed which sets down the aspirations for each of the Neighbourhood Renewal Areas for this period.

Neighbourhood Action Plans containing integrated community, social, economic and physical programmes for a 3 year period will be developed and delivered.

Local people must be engaged and empowered to drive forward regeneration and renewal in their areas. Therefore, we must

ensure that capacity building programmes are put in place to enable local people to participate meaningfully. In support of this, integration of communities must be encouraged and segregation discouraged. Efforts must be made to maximise the impact of all resources to ensure that public services, which are the foundation for regeneration, are as effective as possible and that genuine partnerships are developed between the public services and the local neighbourhoods who rely on them.

It will also be important to be clear about what works and to be able to identify the impact of the renewal programmes, replicate success and not duplicate failure. Therefore, baseline information will be developed for each Neighbourhood Renewal Area so that progress can be measured from a definitive starting position. Best practice will be disseminated between neighbourhoods and to other areas.

This Strategy sets a framework for Northern Ireland. Following its publication, implementation plans will be created for Belfast, Londonderry and Regional Towns and Cities. A Ministerial Group will monitor progress and provide strategic direction.

(v) **Resourcing**

Government Departments, agencies and public bodies spend substantial amounts of money and effort on activities to meet the needs of deprived communities. Much more must be done to ensure that this funding is used effectively and is spent in a more integrated and co-ordinated way so that it makes a bigger impact. Effective and responsive mainstream service delivery is the foundation for Neighbourhood Renewal. To supplement

that funding, the Department for Social Development intends to utilise some of its existing urban regeneration expenditure and allocate it to support Neighbourhood Renewal. DSD will also endeavour to secure further funds for Neighbourhood Renewal.

(vi) **Measuring Success**

Neighbourhood Renewal will tackle deprivation by better integrating the work of all Government Departments and agencies. Targets for Neighbourhood Renewal at a regional level will be based on those already included in new TSN Action Plans, Public Service Agreements and Service Delivery Agreements. If additional targets are needed, these will be agreed at the Ministerial Group and monitored by Departments in the normal way.

(vii) **Conclusion and Next Steps**

This Strategy provides a new context for tackling disadvantage in Northern Ireland; a key theme in the Programme for Government (PfG) and the Secretary of State's document *Building on Progress: Priorities and Plans 2003-06*. The Strategy learns from the lessons of the past and experience elsewhere to set out a more focused and coherent way forward.

DSD cannot deliver on this vision alone; it will require us to work with colleagues across Government, social partners and the communities involved. Together, using existing structures and key stakeholders such as district councils and LSPs, all parts of Government must engage meaningfully with people from the most deprived urban areas to make it a reality.