

Community asset ownership gets further boost

03 December 2007: Hazel Blears announces extension of the Advancing Assets for Communities programme providing further opportunities for communities across England to run their own community building.

Communities Secretary, Hazel Blears, last week announced the extension of the Advancing Assets for Communities programme providing further opportunities for communities across England to run their own community building. The Development Trusts Association (DTA) will continue to lead the consortium providing consultancy support to local authorities and community groups involved.

The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) is to provide funding towards consultancy support for projects in 60 local authority areas over the next two years. This follows on from existing projects in 20 areas that were announced in July this year.

The DTA and its partners in the consortium are already working with projects from the 20 local authority areas that were selected to take part in the initial pilot programme aimed at demonstrating how local authorities and community-led third sector organisations can be supported to develop joint plans for asset transfer in line with the recommendations of the Quirk Review. These projects include some remarkable examples of how community groups can use local buildings to provide a range of services and facilities that benefit local people including the provision of meeting space for local groups; affordable housing; training centres; work space for social enterprises and more.

14 local authority areas have already been selected for the second round of asset transfer projects, they were selected from among those who submitted expressions of interest in June 2007, they are:

London Borough of Bexley, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Leicester City Council, Newark and Sherwood District Council, West Lindsey District Council, North Hertfordshire District Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Taunton Deane District Council, Hull City Council, Durham County Council, Newcastle-upon-Tyne City Council, Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council, Portsmouth City Council and Allerdale Borough Council.

CLG in collaboration with the DTA and the Local Government Association will shortly be issuing a further invitation to all local authorities to take part in the programme.

As part of the DTA's continuing work to support the development of community owned assets they have published two new guides to assist third sector organisations who are looking to develop their own asset. Community Share and Bond Issues: The sharpest tool in the box provides a concise guide to using share and bond issues as a source of funding for asset transfer projects, and The Green Asset Guide: help with improving the environmental performance of built assets provides a summary explanation of some of the approaches that organisations can take to ensure the environmental sustainability of their community asset.

[Find out more](#) about the second round of the "Advancing Assets for Communities" programme.

[Download the DTA Press Release as a pdf.](#)