



# Community Conversation



## Ward Update - Wallsend

2 March 2015

### 1. Advance Information

Before the event council service areas were asked to provide an update on their activities in the ward:

#### 1.1 Regeneration

**Swans site redevelopment** – The enterprise zone of Swans aims to provide advanced manufacturing units for export-led businesses linked to the offshore and renewable industry. The Authority is working with its partners (Kier and Capita) to redevelop the site with the aim of bringing jobs and training to the local workforce. Work is well underway on the Quay edge repairs and the road and utility infrastructure across the site.

**Swans Centre for Innovation** – Two floors of the existing offices on the Swans site are being refurbished to provide office space (mainly but not exclusively) for feeder businesses linked with offshore and renewable industries. The centre is being marketed and it will open in September 2015.

**Phase 2 of the Wallsend town centre redevelopment** – The demolished Hedley Place/York Drive site to the rear of The Forum shopping centre is due to be redeveloped as a supermarket (Aldi) and fast food drive through restaurant (Burger King) with associated car parking. Planning approval was granted for the proposal on the 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015 and work is expected to start on site in March 2015.

#### 1.2 Housing

Work is due to begin in March 2015 to build 41 new affordable homes following demolition of the old police Station and the Temporary accommodation Unit at Alexandra Street. The scheme is due to be completed in April 2016.

A further 56 affordable homes will be built in Wallsend ward between 2014-16, including 8 at Church Bank, 15 at The Covers, 1 in Vine Street, 1 in Victoria Avenue, 3 in Richardson Avenue, 1 in Durham Street, 20 in Warwick Road and 7 at Star House.

The refurbishment of Carville House is due to begin in 2015/16 as part of the North Tyneside Living public Finance Initiative.

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Victim and witness support group, successfully launched on 25 February. 16 volunteers will provide an enhanced support service to victims and witnesses of anti-social behaviour. The safer estates team will co-ordinate the project.

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## 1.3 Highways

- £3.9m is being spent on resurfacing and maintenance across the borough with major schemes including:
  - Major schemes at
    - A193 Wallsend Road bridge renewal – Commencing April 2015
    - A191 corridor improvements
    - A1056 corridor improvements

There are no other programmed highways works for Wallsend during February-April 2015.

**Better co-ordination of utility works:** There are over 4,000 utility works on the borough's roads each year and companies currently only need to inform the council of their intention to carry out works.

Now they need to book time on the network by obtaining a permit in advance from the streetworks team. The same rules apply to the council, as well as partners and agents acting on its behalf.

The team can choose to grant the permit, decline the request, or apply a range of conditions ranging from limiting the amount of road space used to the times the work must take place. This will give greater control and co-ordination of highway activities, minimising unnecessary delays.

North Tyneside Council is the first local authority in the region to operate a permit system for the management of activities on the public highway.

The permit fee ranges from £30 to £148, depending on the scale of works and whether the roads are deemed as strategic routes or traffic sensitive.

Organisations seeking to carry out major works, classed as 11 working days or more, will need to give three months notice. For standard works, lasting four to 10 working days, 10 working days notice is required while minor works, lasting up to three working days, three working days' notice is needed.

Where emergency works are needed, roadworks can be introduced without permission but notification must be given within two hours.

## 1.4 Waiting & Permit Parking Restriction Requests

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The table below provides a status update on all requests for waiting and parking restrictions in Wallsend ward received before 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014. Requests received since 1 April 2014 are being logged separately and will be dealt with in the 2015/16 financial year:

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Street Name	Location	Reported Issue	Proposed Restriction	Current Status
Back of High Street East	Access to Diamond House Car park	Obstructive parking.	Waiting restrictions	Legal orders being drafted.
High Street West	Vicinity of 101 High Street West and KFC	Obstructive parking.	Waiting restrictions/loading bay/disabled bay	Consultation with members
Kings Road South	Vicinity of the park	Obstructive parking associated with park	Waiting restrictions	Legal orders being drafted

## 1.5 Environment

All of the Ward's **play sites** have recently passed an Annual Independent Safety Inspection. The inspection is carried out for North Tyneside Council, by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, to comply with European safety standards for play.

At **Wallsend Parks**, Sustrans will be installing a new cycle hub in Richardson Dees Park as part of their GoSmarter Cycle Scheme in April. The 'Bike Shed' will include a large storage space for free-to-hire bikes as well as a small meeting / workshop room. The Bike Shed will act as a base for a wide ranging programme of free Sustrans activities throughout the year.

The park's Verandah Café has re-opened on partial hours after a winter closure period. A new volunteer group is taking shape every Wednesday, led by the Park Wardens. So far a group of 6 volunteers have committed to regular attendance and have helped with areas such as hedge planting, tree thinning and path edging. The volunteers are also assisting the Friends of Wallsend Parks to maintain the Forgotten Orchard project. The park is supporting a range of other

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volunteer groups/work placements throughout the year. These include weekly visits from 6x Duke of Edinburgh Award students from Atkinson House School, 8 children attending Percy Main Primary's 'Eco-Club' after school group, 2x students from Newcastle Askham Bryan Horticultural College & a work placement from Owen Pugh Ltd.

Following requests from local residents, 10x additional seats are being installed in Richardson Dees Park and Wallsend Hall Grounds.

**Grounds maintenance** has nearly completed their winter works programme, this has included edging works, bedding maintenance, shrub pruning and hedge cutting. Biodiversity areas are being increased across the borough, incorporating bee friendly planting and establishing swathed grass areas. This will enable an increase in wild flowers to support the associated wildlife including butterflies and bees. Wallsend Parks Aboretum and Wallsend Burn form two of the sites for this approach.

**New team:** estate caretakers and local environmental services team members are becoming one team to ensure a more co-ordinated approach to service delivery in estates.

## 2. Information stalls

The following information stalls were available at the community conversation:

- Cofely
- Care and Connect
- Flood Ready, Flood Safe
- Age UK
- The Bay Food Bank
- Active North Tyneside
- Libraries, Community Centres and Tourist Information
- Cameo (mental health peer support group)

## 3. Issues discussed at the Community Conversation

Ward councillors discussed the following concerns with residents: the timetable for construction of the new supermarket next to the Forum shopping centre; the impact of new housing developments (especially on Station Road next to the Rising Sun Country Park) as proposed in the local plan; and the accessibility of the council's on-line complaint forms due to the font size. One resident suggested that a future community conversation consider the provision of litter bins in the ward.

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