

## **REGENERATION OF UPPER HORFIELD ESTATE, BRISTOL**

**Start: January 2003**

**Completion Date: December 2008**

**Major Regeneration Partnership between Bristol Community Housing Foundation, Bovis Homes and Bristol City Council**

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### **1. Background**

Built in 1926 the Upper Horfield estate in north Bristol was one of the first council estates in the country built within the post first world war period. Always a popular place to live it wasn't until the 600 pre fabricated 'Parkinson' houses on the estate started to show signs of 'concrete cancer' that the estate started to fall into decline. The 2001 census showed high levels of long term illness, high levels of youth unemployment, poor housing conditions and a very high level of lone parent families across the estate. Bristol City Council concluded that piecemeal improvements would not work and established the private/public Horfield Partnership to oversee and complete the redevelopment and regeneration of the estate.



**Some of the old homes on estate before demolition in 2005.**

When completed in 2008 the redevelopment of the Upper Horfield estate in North Bristol will provide over 1000 new homes for rent and sale. This major project is being developed on land provided by Bristol City Council. Bovis Homes are the developers and development partners and Bristol Community Housing Foundation is the housing association providing and managing the social housing.



**New BCHF homes on the estate.**

A joint project team between Bovis Homes, BCC and BCHF was established at the outset to coordinate the regeneration programme. Throughout the 5 year project an average of 3 families move from existing properties into new homes each week.

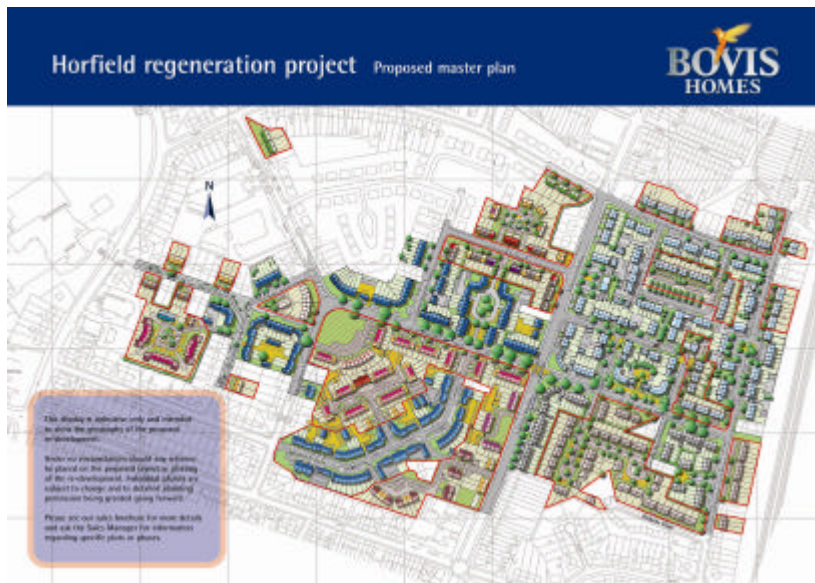
The social housing within the scheme is funded via the contribution of free land from BCC and a loan to BCHF from the Royal Bank of Scotland. The whole regeneration project will take five years, and is currently just over half way completed.

## **2. Best Practice, Outcomes and Lessons Learnt**

- **Joint Project Team**

Setting up a joint project team with Planners, Highways, Housing Association, Developer and Designers during the pre-planning application stage helped the process of agreeing parameters for final application, information required, design codes and the negotiation of Section 106 etc. The project team met monthly during design process and a sub-group of the design project team met with community, tenants and councillors for them to feed into the design process. There was real potential for discussion about the design and planning issues not just between the developer and BCHF but also

between council officers themselves. This was particularly relevant with regards to highways issues.



The master plan for the redevelopment

Detailed Planning for Phases 3 and 4 for 500 plus new homes was achieved under delegated authority with no objections, in nine months.

- **Design and Management Issues**

For each phase BCHF held an Open Day for all local residents, councillors etc to view existing houses and talk to BCHF about their own properties, design likes and dislikes. There were also resident 'drop ins' on the detailed design, home zones etc.

The design of the layout and housing has been tenure blind for all the new homes with no block of more than 50 properties to be of any one tenure.

The whole 45 acre site has been designed around the Home Zone principle. BCHF have sponsored a mini home zone in the local school playground to help local children learn about the new road layout and road safety.



The mini home zone in the school playground

BCHF and Bovis Homes have jointly employed a community caretaker to look after all the common spaces. He is employed by the Foundation but reports also to Bovis Homes about any problems on the estate. He is also able to keep an eye on instances of anti-social behaviour.

Bovis Homes have also funded new CCTV cameras for the local PC Community Beat Manager as well as new cycles for the Beat Managers.

A multi-agency team has been established in the area by BCC and BCHF to look at the needs of new residents for key services to enable them to plan accordingly, eg GP's, schools, for the increasing population and also to offset any issues around community conflict caused by a large increase in number of new residents.

### **3. Lessons Learnt**

- Project team approach dependent on motivation and commitment of all parties to commit time and expertise, often very dependent on personalities involved and vulnerable to changes in personnel.
- Developments of large mixed tenure estates do require intensive housing management and input and resources from developers and developing RSL at senior level throughout.
- Impact of 'buy-to-let' not being thought through at inception of the project.
- Intensive housing management required in terms of decanting arrangements and allocations of new properties.
- Changes in personnel in Planning and Highways Dept has lead to lack of consistency in approach to issues around design and planning issues generally.
- Thought and design approach to home zones in a UK setting is still at early stages and particular need to look at the impact of home zones on the way people live now and the management and maintenance of landscaping within the streets.
- Inducing Home Zones into areas where people have no experience of them means that meaningful consultation and participation in design is very difficult. Residents (and professionals) really don't know what they're getting.

**Oona Goldsworthy  
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May 2006.**