

Renewing YOUR area

Six months on!

It's nearly six months since the Cliftonville West Renewal Area was launched and it's been a busy time for the Renewal Area team who are working to improve the area.

We've met with local community groups, organisations, businesses, residents and community leaders and have a good idea of the problems that we need to tackle here over the next few years.

We were awarded £391,000 from the Regional Housing Board, some of which has been spent in Cliftonville West, on grants to help improve the appearance of properties and tackle more extensive work, such as dampness, structural repairs and improving the means of escape in the event of fire.

Grants

Since the Renewal Area was launched in May, more than 40 people have applied for grants to help improve the appearance and standard of their properties. So far, 22 of these applications have been approved for a range of improvements, including new windows, repairs to roofs, guttering and balconies and re-painting of house fronts.

Sam Bryant from Warwick Road is one of the first to have work completed thanks to the grant scheme. The front of her house has been repainted, window frames have been repainted and the French doors at the back of her house have been replaced, giving the family more security. And Sam's pleased with the work that's been done. "I've had some lovely comments from neighbours and how smart and clean the house looks now. The work has made a big difference - we feel more secure thanks to the new French doors. A lot of people have asked me about the grants and don't seem to think



In need of repair – Sam's property before work started.

that they can apply for them. That's not the case at all. The grants are available to everyone and it's been very nice to have the help from the Council to improve things."



Work gets underway...



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And the finished product

Bringing the money in

You may have read about £3.7 million of funding coming to the area. The situation is that the Council is currently bidding for this from the Government's Safer Stronger Communities Fund and if we are successful, the focus will be Cliftonville West and Margate Central. Included in that would be Dane Park. We are putting together plans for how the money could be spent and the bid will be submitted by February of next year and will then be considered by central government.

If we are successful in our bid, the money would be for four years starting in April 2006 and the funding would be reviewed after the first two years. We'll keep you posted in forthcoming newsletter about of this bid.

Don't rubbish YOUR streets

Dumped rubbish and litter make our streets dirty. Follow the three R's when putting out your rubbish for collection:

R Right place ... at the front of your property
R Right day ... Tuesday
R Right time ... by 6am

It's easy to get it right, but get it wrong and it could cost you a £50 Fixed Penalty Notice.

Call 01843 577 115
www.thanet.gov.uk/waste

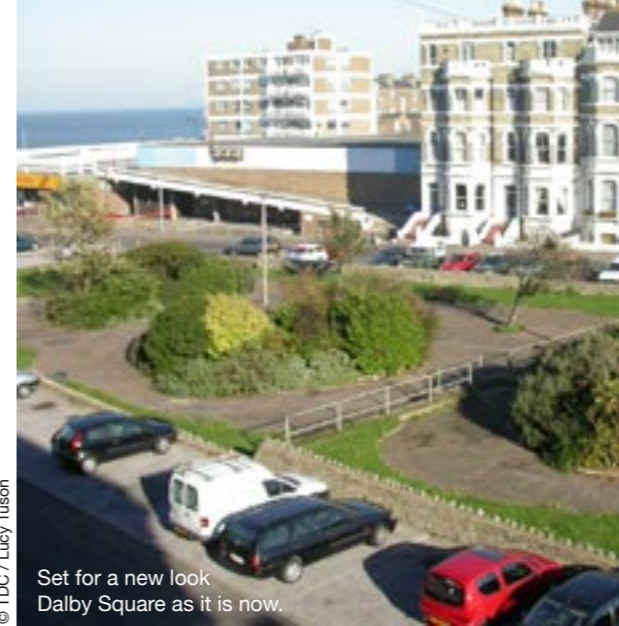
Right day, right time, right place

That's the name of a new campaign to crack down on the problem of dumped rubbish.

Colourful leaflets have been delivered to letting agents and properties in Zion Place, Ethelbert Road, Athelstan Road and Dalby Square, explaining the right day – Tuesday, right time – before 6.00 in the morning and the right place – at the front

of your property – to put out your domestic landfill waste for collection.

The message is that there's no need to dump rubbish, as there's a weekly collection from your home. The campaign is the latest stage of the Council's Environmental Action Programme (EAP), which is working to improve the appearance of the area.



© TDC / Lucy Tuson

Set for a new look Dalby Square as it is now.



Dalby Square

The new year should bring a new start for Dalby Square. Proposals to improve the area were put forward by the Dalby Square Group and are being funded by the New Opportunity Fund, Living Spaces and Sure Start Margate.

The plans will see the square being re-landscaped to include new paths, grassed areas, plants and trees. There'll also be a play area, underground recycling point, parking and improved lighting.

New life for Newgate Gap

A new project is aiming to liven up Newgate Gap with mosaics and graffiti art.

The Alternative Curriculum Project (ACP), which works with students who've been permanently excluded from schools, is working in partnership with the Thanet Community Development Trust on the new project.

The idea is to tackle the problem of graffiti in the area by first cleaning it up and then working with local artists to get some graffiti art into the tunnels.

Scott Dumigan says... "By getting the kids involved, they're taking ownership of the problem and they can take pride in what they've achieved."



Meet the team!



We introduced you to David Chaplin, the Council's Housing Services Manager and Carla Wenham, Renewal Area Manager in the last issue of the newsletter.

Since then, they've been joined by a third member of the team, Renewal Area Officer, Dave Farmer. Dave has worked in local government, dealing with private sector housing, for more than 20 years. Having lived in Thanet for over 30 years, so he knows the Cliftonville West area well. He's

the person you'll see out and about in the area. He's now based at 82 Northdown Road, home of the Thanet Community Development Trust, which is open Monday to Friday. If a member of the Renewal Area team isn't available, then someone from the Trust will be able to help you.

Dave can also be contacted on either 01843 23 11 09 or 01843 577 407 or you can e-mail him at dave.farmer@thanet.gov.uk

Summer surgeries

Before Dave moved into 82 Northdown Road, he held a number of surgeries there, at the Hotel Fulwood in Surrey Road and at Age Concern in Zion Place.

Around 45 people came along to ask questions about the grants which are available and find out what's planned for the area over the next few years.

www.thanet.gov.uk/renewalarea

You asked – we're doing it...



© TDC / Cheryl Pendery

Helping to cut crime and litter – new alleygates.

Although it's early days for the Renewal Area, there are already some projects that you've asked for which are underway. Here are some examples:

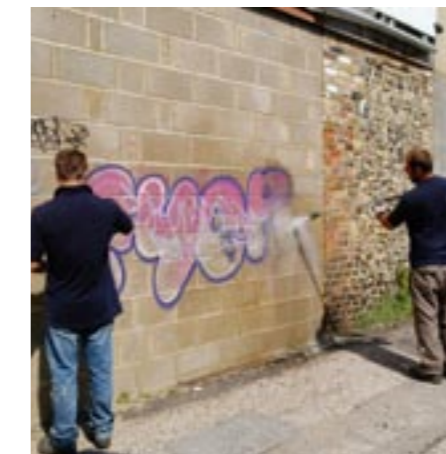
Evergreen hollies will be planted around the Trinity Square car park to shield it from local residents. It comes after people living nearby were asked about the plans and gave them 100% backing.

A recent clean-up in Cliftonville West saw three tonnes of rubbish collected. The clean up was part of the ongoing Operation Cubit Environmental Action Days, which blitz problems like abandoned and untaxed cars,

graffiti, dumped rubbish and litter.

New litter bins have been put in along Northdown Road, paving slabs have been replaced and street lights painted to improve the appearance of the area. It's all part of the Council's Environmental Action Programme – watch out for more happening over the next few months! And if you see a problem on the street that needs tackling, like broken paving, damaged benches or vandalised litter bins, then call the Streetline on 577 777.

Three alleygating schemes are being installed – one off Ethelbert Crescent and two off Surrey and Warwick Roads. Each scheme has been started by the local residents, but to get alleygates installed, you need 100% support from local people. To find out more, contact the Renewal Area scheme. Front garden walls and railings have been upgraded in Gordon Road. The project's been taken forward by the local Residents' Association.



Dumped rubbish & graffiti removal team. Clearing up Cliftonville.



© TDC / Valerie Cameron

Healthy eats

Do you want to find out more about healthy eating and food hygiene and then teach others about it?

That's the aim of Thanet Community Food Training Project, which looks at how to keep food safe and how and why we should eat healthily. The course is practical and offers the chance to gain a nationally recognised qualification at the end of the course. Once you've learnt the skills, you can pass them on to others by setting up your own healthy eating course. Running from Tuesday 17



© TDC / East Kent NHS

January for six weeks until 28 February between 9.30 and 1.00, the project is being held at Court Stairs in Ramsgate, with childcare provided. Transport can be provided or they could cover your costs of getting there, so there's no reason not to find out more.

If you want to find out more or take part, call Nicola Wilson on 01843 577 601.

Improving homes



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Examples of the poor housing conditions that the new Housing Act is aiming to tackle.

New laws coming into effect from 2006 are aiming to tackle the problem of homes that pose a health and safety risk to those who live there.

The new Housing Act identifies 29 different hazards in the home, including damp and mould growth, excess cold, electrical hazards, structural collapse, drainage and sanitation, the likelihood of falls and entry by intruders.

If the conditions are bad enough that they are considered a danger to the tenant, then the Council will have increased enforcement powers under the Housing Act to immediately close a property or even demolish it. The Housing Act will also introduce a new licensing system for all houses in multiple occupation (HMO's) that are three stories or more and are occupied by five or more people.



It's estimated that around 220 HMO's will need a licence. This aims to tackle absentee landlords, who rent out poor quality and sometimes dangerous properties. Owners or agents will have to apply for a licence and their properties will be inspected for health and safety within five years. Owners of any unlicensed properties may face a fine of up to £20,000. For more information about the new Housing Act, contact 01843 577437

Let's keep crime down!

Figures show that Cliftonville West has one of the highest rates of burglaries at flats – but it doesn't have to be that way. We can all work together to keep crime down.

Here are some simple tips on how to keep your home safe from the Thanet Community Safety Partnership:

- ✓ Make sure that your home has a proper lock fitted to the front door when you move in. If not, ask your landlord to fit one.
- ✓ Don't leave the front or back door to your block of flats open. If you do, then anyone can just walk straight in.
- ✓ Think about fitting window locks, especially if you're on the ground floor. Your landlord may be prepared to do this for you.
- ✓ Don't give to your flat key to anyone, unless you really know and trust them.
- ✓ Pick up your post straight away in case there are credit cards in there – if a thief gets hold of them, they could steal your identity!



Are you getting the benefit?

There's now a simple way to find out whether you're getting the benefits that you're entitled to. The Kent Benefits Partnership was launched last year and has already helped 2,000 pensioners claim an extra £2 million in benefits. Now the Partnership is expanding to support everyone. To find out if you could be eligible for Council Tax or Housing Benefit, call the Kent Benefit Partnership advice line on 0845 345 0310.