

Cottingley Multi Agency Group

End of project report – 9 March 2012

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the Cottingley Multi Agency project, the main achievements and the next steps.

1.2 Following a successful initiative in the Cardinals Estate last year. Ward Members requested a similar project be established in Cottingley Hall. Following discussions with Councillors, residents, the Area Support Team and partners the project was established in July 2011 under the leadership of Cllr Adam Ogilvie. Various agencies came together with a view to tackling some of the main issues on the estate in a co-ordinated way and in line with the One Council and Integrated Locality Working. The intention was to roll out the model that had been developed on the Cardinals Estate in particular to have a intensive short term intervention that focused on key issues, particularly those relating to crime and grime, to bring about a visible improvement on the estate and bringing resident involvement to the forefront of the work. The methodology included frequent environmental audits to ensure that relevant issues were being tackled quickly.

1.3 In September 2011 the Inner South Area Committee agreed funding to secure the services of the Outer South Priority Neighbourhood Worker for 2 days a week in Cottingley Hall. The worker would take a community development approach on the estate particularly to work with Tenants and Residents Association Cottingley (TRAC) to develop the organisation's capacity so as to promote a strong and cohesive community and subsequently to develop the Neighbourhood Improvement Plan for the estate.

1.4 The Multi Agency Steering Group first met in July 2011, followed by 8 subsequent meetings with its final meeting being 9 March 2012. Membership of the steering group has included representatives from:

- Tenants and Residents Association Cottingley (TRAC)
- Beeston & Holbeck Ward Councillors
- Locality Team, LCC
- Waste Management Services, LCC
- Recycling and Waste, LCC
- Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team, LCC
- Highways Maintenance, LCC
- Traffic Management, LCC
- Area Support Team, LCC
- Youth Service, LCC
- Aire Valley Homes Leeds (AVHL)
- Commercial Asset Management, LCC
- NHS Airedale, Bradford and Leeds Cluster
- Church in Cottingley
- Cottingley Primary School
- Parks & Countryside, LCC
- Sustainable Transport, LCC

2.0 Issues

2.1 The main Issues identified at the start of the project were:

- **Refuse collection & recycling:** the major problem is that most residents on the estate are on a bag collection as a result bags are taken by some residents to unofficial collection points ahead of collection day and bags are getting torn open. There are also problems with recycling – and more residents need to recycle their waste: recycling bags are not always collected and some resident use recycling bags for residual waste. It was also noted that residents had to wait six to eight weeks for bulky items to be collected.
- **Littering/flytipping:** there is regular large amounts of litter and bulky items on the estate. Hotspots include areas around the shops/pub/school precinct, ginnels, areas of long grass. The weekly litter pick cleaned only the main road around the estate, with no regularly cleaning of the internal area of the estate, footpaths etc.
- **Grounds maintenance:** there were overgrown bushes/shrubs and trees in public areas. Some tree roots are lifting and damaging footpaths.
- **Gardens:** some gardens had considerable amounts of waste in them. Some overgrown gardens were badly affecting ginnels.
- **Paths/steps:** some steps were in a dangerous condition; some paths were in a very poor condition. Some of the paths were littered and needed cleaning, some were affected by overhanging vegetation.
- **Shops/pub area:** there were concerns particularly about the poor state of cleanliness of the shops area and about the derelict pub being an eyesore and a target for vandalism.
- **Highways/traffic issues:** note enough dropped kerbs on the estate to assist people in wheelchairs; there was parking causing obstructions on various roads; lack of 'no parking' signs/lines by the bus stop outside the station; problems with traffic and parking on Cotingley Approach; parking problems associated with Leeds United match days.
- **Anti-social behaviour:** it was noted that ASB had been a problem particularly recently before the project was established, this included vandalism at the closed pub.

2.2 **Resident involvement:** It was agreed at the beginning of the project that resident involvement in all aspects of the project was essential and that residents needed support to develop the capacity to lead follow up work. As noted above, residents are been supported by the Priority Neighbourhood Worker.

2.3 **Action Plan:** an action plan has been developed for the project to tackle the main issues identified above, with short (up to six months), medium (up to 12 months) and long term actions (12 months and beyond). The steering group has monitored the action plan to ensure that agreed actions have been carried out in a co-ordinated way by the services/agencies involved.

2.4 **Publicity:** initial publicity for the project including promoting the action day (see below) was provided by a leaflet produced by West Yorkshire Police. The project has also been publicised in the newsletters which the school has produced with input from the TRAC and other agencies.

3.0 Achievements

3.1 **Action Day:** This launched the initiative on Saturday 23 September 2011 this involved a clean up of the estate together with the provision of six skips for residents to dispose of bulky items etc. Over 40 people actively participated in the clean up including staff from a range of agencies (including West Yorkshire Police, Locality Team, Aire Valley Homes, Area Support Team, Ward Councillors) and about 12 residents and also children from the School. There were three teams to cover the three zones that the estate was divided into; they were tasked with cleaning up the litter that had been

identified in audits the week before. The Action Day gained press coverage in the Morley Observer and the South Leeds Life. The clean up made a significant impact on the cleanliness of the estate.

3.2 Environmental audits: the estate was divided into three zones for the purpose of carrying out environmental audits. 18 environmental audits have been carried out. The main participants in the audits have been representatives from AVHL, the Environmental Services Locality Team, West Yorkshire Police and residents. AVHL Caretaking Team and Environmental Services Locality Team are the main services addressing the over 250 pieces of work that have been identified:

Rubbish/litter

The highest number of identified jobs related to rubbish and litter dumped on the estate in a variety of locations particularly including in ginnels, also on grassed areas and drying areas. Most of the jobs do not identify in detail the type of rubbish but the specified items include black bags, settees, cardboard, leaves, wood, bricks, concrete, mattress, stereo speakers and toys, paint tins, fish tank and a rabbit hutch! Included in this total are seven cases of light littering where litterpicking is needed to clear the problem this includes ginnels and other areas particularly including the area around the school, pub and shopping precinct.

Gardens

This includes overgrown gardens and waste in gardens which have a detrimental impact on the appearance of the area.

Footpaths/steps

Most of the identified problems with footpaths/steps have either been sorted out or have been scheduled and will be sorted out shortly or have been inspected and it has been decided that no further action is justified at present because e.g. the situation is not dangerous. Overgrown vegetation on the paths is being cutback and litter is being collected as identified on the environmental audits.

Other

A range of one-offs has been included in 'other' including some housing repair issues – lead stolen from the porch of a house, unsafe wall, collapsed wall, burnt guttering, racist graffiti, leaking down pipe, a broken window, missing gully grates, cars parked on grass, swing on a tree, street sign missing.

3.3 Recycling & refuse collection

- Replacing the current bag collection arrangements: the estate has been surveyed and outline proposals have now been produced for introducing wheeled bins for landfill waste for the approximately 60% of households that can have wheeled bins; other residents will have to take their bags to communal bins. Communal bins are to be provided for recycling waste. The proposals are being developed for introducing in a pilot area before being rolled out over the whole estate. This should resolve one of the most significant waste collection/recycling issues on the estate.
- Scheduling of street cleaning: previously street cleaning had been carried out *before* bags were collected; street cleaning has now been re-scheduled to be carried *after* bags are collected.
- Residents not getting bags: bags should now be left for residents; bags left for residents at the housing office's community room.
- There had been problems with bags left by communal bins at the multi-storey blocks but these problems have now been resolved.

3.4 Littering/flytipping

- Litterpicking: staff will be more proactive e.g. the litter picker is expected to clean areas of ginnels near the highway.
- Cleaning area around the multi storey blocks: roles have been clarified and standards have improved.
- Enforcement: a Cottingley resident was fined £300 for flytipping and the case is to be publicised in the newsletter

3.5 Grounds maintenance

- There has been a considerable improvement with overgrown shrubs cut back.
- The mapping of shrubs etc has been updated for the new grounds maintenance contractor. All areas that should be maintained under the grounds maintenance contract now get cut regularly.
- As part of the contract the contractors should do a litterpick before grasscutting, maintaining shrubs and hedges.

3.6 Gardens

- Enforcement action by AVHL (for AVHL tenants) and the Locality Team (for owner-occupiers, private sector tenants) has been taken and further enforcement is in progress.
- At least 8 gardens have been cleared, with residents responding to requests rather than needing a formal legal notice.

3.7 Paths/steps

- The environmental audits identified a number of high profile issues on paths and roads that needed to be resolved. In response to the findings from the audits a number of repairs to tackle dangerous steps, potholes on roads, repair problems with paths, replacement of barriers near the School have been carried out or will be carried out by 31st March 2012. This work has been funded through the Highways Maintenance budget.
- After inspection, some issues identified on the walkabouts were not tackled as they were deemed not to be sufficiently urgent to need immediate attention.
- A major improvement to the 'white path' linking Cottingley Drive with Cottingley Approach is currently being carried out to replace the flags with macadam. This has been funded by AVHL

3.8 Shops/pub area

Various issues were identified in the shops/pub area and a number of these have been tackled:

- **Litter:** persistent litter problems have been identified during the regular environmental audits and tackled during the action day and subsequently by the Locality Team, AVHL caretakers. Residents are also litterpicking this area twice weekly. New bins are to be provided for the shopping area funded by AVHL and the Inner South Area Committee. Children from the School had taken photographs during a walkabouts and make various suggestions about keeping the estate cleaner.
- **Cleanliness of the shops:** the cleaning of the shops area has been improved, there has been a deep clean of the area and the floor will be painted to improve its appearance and make it easier to keep clean in the future. A letter has been sent to all shopkeepers reminding them of the need to assist with trying to keep the shopping centre and surrounding area clean. New bins are to be provided in and near the shops funded by AVHL, the Inner South Area Committee and Commercial Asset Management.

- **Appearance of the shops:** the shops have been painted inside and outside to improve their appearance; the canopy is due to be painted; and there is to be improved lighting by the bus stop. This work has been funded by AVHL.
- **Anti-social behaviour:** one of the shopkeepers has been instructed not to allow teenagers access to the precinct out of hours.
- **Sphinx Public House (Cottingley Arms):** the pub has been empty since early 2009 and has been a major eyesore in the area. This was demolished towards the end of 2011 and the landscaping of the area and the provision of new paths on the site of the demolished pub is now in progress. This work is funded by Area Valley Homes and the Inner South Area Committee.

3.9 Highways/Traffic issues

A scheme to introduce some restrictions on parking on Cottingley Drive and at some bends on the estate is underway.

3.10 Anti-social behaviour/crime

- The Anti-Social Behaviour Team has spoken to the families of alleged perpetrators of hate graffiti and also sent letters about alcohol and drug abuse.
- The phone number for the anti-social behaviour team has been publicised in the initial leaflet on the estate.
- A leaflet about burglary and a light timer has been delivered to every household on the estate.

4.0 Outstanding action plan issues

A number of issues on the action plan are still to be resolved including:

4.1 Refuse collection/keeping the estate clean

- Enforcement action needs to be taken against residents throwing rubbish out of the windows of the multi storey blocks
- Responsibilities for litterpicking on the interior of the estate to be determined (including responsibilities for keeping the paths clean)
- The agreed option for introducing wheeled bins and communal bins for recycling waste and for those who cannot have wheeled bins is to be piloted on the estate; the funding and timetable for this is yet to be determined.

4.2 Roads/traffic

- Speeding cars on Dulverton Grove near school – meeting to be convened
- Enforcement action to be taken against those parking on the yellow lines.
- Long term scheme to tackle parking particularly on Cottingley Approach on match days to be developed. Ward Members to be briefed by Highways Traffic Management

4.3 Shops/pub

- Locality Team to carry out patrols (possibly joint patrols with PCSOs) re littering and dog fouling at the shops
- 'No dogs' signs to be put up
- Anti-social behaviour near the shops: shopkeepers to be encouraged to put up 'call 101' signs;

4.4 Accessibility for people with disabilities

- More dropped kerbs to be provided on estate to create pathways
- Cars parked near bus stop near station: 'no parking' signs near bus stop are needed
- Access to buses near shops: kerb to be raised or bus stop moved

Next steps

The next steps following the end of this project are:

- A Neighbourhood Improvement Plan (NIP) is to be set up to tackle a range of issues with various services and agencies including residents. The NIP will be co-ordinated by the Priority Neighbourhood Worker who is already supporting TRAC. It is expected that the NIP will consider how best to co-ordinate outstanding action plan issues.
- It is suggested that the environmental audits should continue on a fortnightly basis so that the whole estate is audited every four weeks. (Zones 1 & 2 covered at one audit, zone 3 at the following audit).
- It is suggest that the audits should be co-ordinated by AVHL, this responsibility would include maintaining the schedule of audits, and ensuring identified issues are notified to the particular service/agency responsible.
- The achievements of the project to be publicised in the next issue of the newsletter.

5.0 Conclusions

Significant progress has been made in tackling tackle issues identified in the action plan for this short-term programme with the various agencies/services working together better. The NIP which is to be set up shortly will consider how best to co-ordinate outstanding action plan issues.