

**Vela Improvement People**

**Project group 1**

**“Impact of the regeneration of Belle Vue”**

(Report: April 2014)

1. **Background**

Mark Dutton, the Head of Regeneration of Vela Group put forward a proposal in October for a VIP project looking at the following:

1. Review and evaluation of the resident relocation process on Belle Vue estate in Hartlepool following its regeneration
2. Impact assessment of same scheme in terms of the views and perceptions of occupiers of new properties and those in adjacent areas of Belle Vue

The Belle Vue area has been subject to extensive consultation and regeneration over the past ten years, due to the poor condition of the properties and the high cost of bringing them up to Decent Homes standard.

Initial consultation was started by “New Deal for Communities” over 4 years from 2001-2005, and it went to ballot three times over that period. Housing Hartlepool then took over the consultation following stock transfer and finally £8M of investment was agreed with the subsequent demolition of 130 properties and 97 new build properties on the same site.

There were a number of large extended families in Belle Vue at the time, and local opposition was high given the established nature of the local community. Residents in the properties to be demolished were informed they could move back to the area once the new build properties were in place.

Residents were involved extensively in the consultation processes over the years. A Homeloss payment of £4,500 was given to each tenant, as well as a disturbance allowance which covered reconnection of telephone, white goods installation etc… Extensive support was provided by the regeneration team during the rehousing process and checks were put in place for vulnerable tenants to ensure they were properly supported and not poorly advised or influenced by others

In total 130 properties were demolished and a satisfaction survey was done in person within 2 months of people moving. Demand for HH properties available at the time to move into was often high with often 5-10 people after the same property. In total 44 people were rehoused in HH properties.

1. **Project group**

VIP – Ann Carter (Housing Hartlepool tenant )

VIP – Brian Binns (Housing Hartlepool tenant)

VIP – Liz Torley (Hartlepool resident and involved customer)

VIP – Michael Spencer (Tristar Homes tenant)

VIP – Anthony Simms (Tristar Homes tenant)

Mark Dutton (Head of Regeneration)

Nigel Budd (Regeneration Manager)

Jonathan Cannon (Customer Involvement officer)

Trina Featherstone (Regeneration officer)

1. **Methodology**

The approach to the project was as follows;

* Presentation by the Head of Regeneration outlining the background to the Belle Vue regeneration scheme giving an overview of the regeneration team and their function. This included looking at some of the regeneration schemes carried out by Housing Hartlepool, including before and after pictures.
* A site visit to the area with the Regeneration team walking round the estate and its location within the surrounding area.
* A number of meetings to agree the methodology and information required from the people being consulted
* Surveying of the groups of people affected by the regeneration. An introductory letter **(see Appendix 3)** was sent with the surveys **(see Appendices 1 and 2)** to the groups in section 3 below and a chance to be entered into a £25 prize draw for those who completed the surveys.
* Focus groups consulting with the new residents **(See Appendix 4)** for covering letter), residents living in the surrounding area and local community groups. A £10 shopping voucher was offered to people taking part in the focus groups.
* Gathering of statistical data from the surveys and qualitative feedback from surveys and focus groups, collated by VIPs and officers.
* Draft report produced and presented to Head of Regeneration for comments (this report)
* Final report produced and circulated to officers and involved customers.
* Report placed on website and sent to those who took part in the focus groups.

The timeline for the above events can be seen in **Appendix 5.**

1. **People to be consulted**

The project agreed to focus on the following groups of people;

Tenants who moved and stayed put

The numbers of people who fall into this category are high (over 80) and the customers in question have moved to a variety of locations and landlord types (including other Housing Hartlepool properties) so it was agreed a survey was most appropriate. The survey focussed only on the 44 tenants who relocated into Housing Hartlepool properties.

New residents

We agreed that we would send a survey to each of the 97 new households and invite them to a focus group in the local community centre opposite the scheme. Due to the low numbers of households who moved from the original properties and moved back into the new ones (3) we considered a focus group of these people specifically but instead opted to invite them to the focus group for all new residents

Residents and community groups from the surrounding area

This covered properties in the Belle Vue area, which includes some other Housing Associations as well as private rented and home-owners. It was agreed to consult the local residents using a number of methods ;

* Survey of 150 properties in the surrounding area
* Surveys left in the Belle Vue Community centre
* Surveys left in the local Belle Vue Social club opposite the new regeneration scheme
* Focus group with the Belle Vue Residents Association
* Focus group with the “Friends of Belle Vue” group which support activities for the young people on the estate
1. **Surveys**

The surveys sent out were different according to the people being consulted, and copies can be found in Appendices 1 and 2. A covering letter was sent explaining the nature of the surveys and the fact it was being done by tenants **(see Appendices 3 and 4)**. To gather the views of local residents generally, 150 surveys were hand delivered to properties surrounding the new development.

The café and drop in facilities at the local Belle Vue centre and the social club is well attended on a regular basis by local residents and others from across the town, so surveys were left there for people attending the centre to fill in. There are also a number of voluntary sector organisations based in the centre and training sessions for local people are often held there.

1. **Focus groups**

There were four focus groups held ;

* Residents from the new properties – this was held in the Belle Vue centre and was attended by three residents. The focus group was run by three of the VIPs with no staff present
* Meeting with “Friends of Belle Vue” – this was held with 10 residents from the local area and was run by two VIPs with no member of staff present
* An ad hoc consultation was also held in the community centre one lunchtime by the VIPs with visitors to the centre.
* Meeting with Belle Vue Residents Association” – this was attended by two VIPs with the Regeneration officer present (usual attendance)
1. **Survey findings**

Unfortunately no surveys were returned from the 44 households who moved from the old properties into Housing Hartlepool properties. While this is disappointing, given the length of time since the move, it is not perhaps surprising. As a result the project focuses on the two remaining groups of people, namely the “new” residents and residents from the “surrounding area”.

The findings from both the surveys of the new residents (6) and people from the surrounding areas (26) are listed below with some of the comments made in response to each question. The statistical data from the surveys can be found in Appendices 6 and 7.

**Question 1. Describe the Belle Vue area as it was before the regeneration took place**

Run down

Lots of burglaries

Drug users

Kids hanging about

Boarded up properties

Scruffy

Fighting and trouble at the weekends

Gardens were messy and unattended

Private landlords put people off moving into the area

Part central

Not safe to walk about especially at night

And on a more positive note…..

Friendly

Community spirit was good

Neighbours looked after each other

**Question 2. If you feel the area has changed please describe Belle Vue as it is now**

Clean, modern and tidy, lot better

Dramatic improvement

Nicer and quiet

Improved the area immensely

Major improvement even Borrowdale

Not so many kids hanging about

Smart and posher

ASB improved since people moved out

Looks more residential

And not so positive…..

Only done half a job

Still have drug addicts

People don’t mix or speak

Some cant speak English

No community spirit

New build tenants are from out of the area

Not approachable cant speak English

New properties are stuck in the middle of two communities

Lot of rubbish lately

Properties in Borrowdale still need improving

**Questions 3 and 4** on the surveys asked people to score the area as it was before and after the regeneration took place. People were asked to score on a scale of 1-10 their perceptions across the following five areas (where 1 is “not very good” and 10 is “extremely good”);

* Quality of the Housing Hartlepool properties
* Safe as a place to live
* Physical spaces eg streets, green areas
* Access to local facilities eg shops, doctors
* Anti-social behaviour
* Strength of community spirit

The results of the surveys can be found below and in detail in **Appendices 6 and 7**, however in summary;

* 26 surveys were received from surrounding area residents
* 6 surveys were received form new residents (6% of total properties)

While it is disappointing that only 6 surveys were received from new residents, a further attempt to carry out phone surveys was carried out in January however from the 20 households called only 1 more responded. More thought could be given how to gather more views from new residents in the future (see recommendations)

The scores for the 26 surveys received from residents in the surrounding area are shown below

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Quality | Safe | Physical | Facilities | ASB | Spirit |
| Av. before | 3.95 | 3.77 | 3.55 | 6.91 | 3.59 | 5.95 |
| Av. after | 7.62 | 6.96 | 6.46 | 7.65 | 6.42 | 5.69 |
| Difference | 3.67 | 3.19 | 2.91 | 0.74 | 2.83 | -0.26 |
| %age | 93% | 84% | 82% | 11% | 79% | -4% |

It can be clearly seen that in nearly all areas there has been a significant increase in the scoring of these areas, with quality of housing, safe as a place to live, ASB and physical spaces scoring most highly. This shows in a very positive note the affect the regeneration of Belle Vue has had for most people living in the surrounding area. The access to facilities has not improved significantly, and the sense of community spirit shows a slight decrease of only 4%. Some of these findings are explored in more detail in the sections on the focus groups below.

The scores for the 6 surveys received from new residents are shown below;

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Quality | Safe | Physical | Facilities | ASB | Spirit |
| Av. start | 9.40 | 7.20 | 7.80 | 9.20 | 4.80 | 4.80 |
| Av. after | 9.40 | 7.60 | 8.60 | 8.40 | 5.80 | 5.60 |
| Difference | 0.00 | 0.40 | 0.80 | -0.80 | 1.00 | 0.80 |
| %age | 0% | 6% | 10% | -9% | 21% | 17% |

The above scores given by the new residents comparing their views when they moved into their new property and at the time of the survey. It can be seen that there are slight increases in scores for ASB, sense of community spirit and the physical spaces on the estate, however the scores for ASB and Community spirit are still low (5.8 and 5.6 respectively). Again more substantive feedback can be gleaned from the focus group feedback below in section ??

**Question 5.Did the demolition and building of the new houses cause any problems for you personally ?**

Most of the responses given were a clear “no”…..

No, removed most of our problems

No, but all of Belle Vue should have been developed

Access to the Belle Vue centre was limited

Kids playing on the building site

Belle Vue café did a roaring trade with the builders

A small number of negative comments too…..

Lot of dust over windows and cars

Noisy and dirty

Rats !

Split families up

Big impact on the social club, less business now and no compensation

**Question 6.Would you recommend Belle Vue as a place to live ?**

Of the 26 responses, 25 said yes they would and only 5 said no they wouldn’t

Some of the additional comments were….

Should have a Community Police officer on from 12-6

Local authority should do more to enhance the other areas of Belle Vue

Still get a lot of noise late evening/early morning

Bottom end bad, top end good

New builds look lovely

I have lived in this area for 44 years, it was a good place to live when I moved here, still needs more work to improve it but slowly improving

Should have happened years ago

Seem to be a lot of short term lets with younger people

“I admire the police and community police helpers who walk around the area. Positive steps have been taken to upgrade and renew Belle Vue area, for which I myself are grateful for”

“I have lived here 35 years so have seen the good and bad over the years. I think we are now back to how it used to be in our street in particular (Patterdale Street). We all know we can ask a favour and I have welcomed the new people personally and have told them if there are any problems just ask me or any neighbour”

“The new houses are nice for the area. If you were looking for a place to make you feel welcome this is not the area. The children, especially some of the younger ones swear a lot and it is disgusting to hear. In the summer if you sit in the garden you cannot sit out for long or you would get high from the smell of drugs”

“The Belle Vue area now I am very pleased to say is marvellous. The new houses are great it has improved the area immensely. I am that confident in the area that when I have sold my property (due to financial problems I am having) I am very willing to rent a property from Vela and very confident I will be happy to live once again in the Belle Vue area”

1. **Focus group key findings**

**1.Feedback from the “Friends of Belle Vue” meeting- December 4th**

On private landlord properties……”Lot of strangers from different parts of the town, seem to get the riff-raff, not checked”

“There are three separate communities, the ones in the Guinness houses at the top, the new ones in the middle and the people from the bottom end, they don’t mix at all”

“The centre has a huge role to play, god help us if it wasn’t here”

The new residents use the youth club (their kids) but the parents don’t get involved, they just drop them off or send them over, but they don’t come in”

“We’re having a Christmas party on the 20th December, where the adults have to come too with their kids so that might help”

“ASB not a huge problem at all and the community policing has helped a lot”

Has the buying of the properties from the private landlords been a success ?........”yes buy more, and inform the locals when you’re doing this”

“Why not have some coffee mornings or surgeries where local people can just drop in for advice ?”

“Knocking on peoples’ doors is better than using leaflets, get better feedback when you talk to people”

**2. Feedback from the focus group of 3 new residents – 25th November**

(Two who are a couple one who lives in a bungalow)

**What made you want to move?**

For a brand new house!

For a bungalow

**What was Belle Vue like when you moved in & what had you heard?**

A definite improvement

Belle Vue had a bad reputation

**Was the moving in process straightforward, what did you have to do?**

No explanation on how things work

Lack of info on solar panels, (still no clue about them!)

We were told there would be problems (and they were NOT joking!)

**How did you find the property when you moved in? Were there any problems?**

Toilet not connected toilet matter came through the ceiling!

No window in bathroom (bungalow)

Solar panels faulty not fitted right!

Doors & windows…. don’t get me started on them! Angry!

On-going mould problem

Extractor fan not big enough

Paint coming off radiators (they blamed us for it!)

Radiators rusty

Repairs taking too long

Having to have window open all day

**Has living here saved you any money?**

No saving on living cost

I pay £45 more per week here

Solar panels a little help

Water meter costing a lot more!

**Did you feel welcomed by the community?**

Had the feeling of being welcome

A very good community spirit

**Do you use the local facilities?**

The club the gym the local shops

**What are the ASB issues?**

Fighting going on outside club

Car getting vandalised

Crowds of kids, kids from other areas too

Cars flying around corners

Clubs car park not being used, parking outside houses instead

Parking noise from club goers

Fights from club people falling on and damaging cars

Getting egged!

**What is good about living in Belle Vue?**

It has all changed and is now the best part of the town!

Easy distance for the club, gym, town, shops, transport

I am happy with the area

**What is not so good?**

Paedophile (convicted) around the corner (Borrowdale Street)

Car damage

Borrowdale Street spoils it

Getting scared about speaking out

Kids finally getting use to road noise

**Would you recommend Belle Vue to an outsider?**

Yes (by all)

**Please tell us the number one bad and number one good thing about Belle Vue**

Bad = Anti-Social Behaviour

Good = the Community Spirit

**3.Feedback from the ad hoc focus group in Belle Vue Community Centre – 19th November**

This focus group took place during a visit to the centre with a number of residents during one lunchtime in the community café. Eight local residents gave the VIPs their views over a coffee

“I liked it when it was a ‘mess’ but I also like it now”

“It would have been alright before demolition if the Council had looked after it”

“It used to be very neighbourly just waiting to see the difference now”

“Yes we like it now just as we did before”

“It is good because of the CPO’s, but now they are taking them away!”

“Tenants cannot do what they want to their homes, compared to the home owners”

“Belle Vue had a bad reputation, but that is now changing”

“If we need anything, we just see Bob & Ronnie” (community centre staff)

“The houses are lovely, all seem to keep their homes right”

“I would love to have one of those houses, but I thought you had to buy them?”

“It’s a big improvement!”

“I lived over the Headland but I much prefer living here”

“I live in an Endeavour home, but would move into one of these in a flash!”

“Here it has easy access to the town and amenities; I have all good to say about it and nothing bad!”

“We don’t live here, wish we did! But we are too old to move now”

1. **Recommendations**

It can be seen from the feedback from both the surveys and the focus groups that the regeneration has had an important impact on the local community. Some of the positive comments relating to the improvement of the area are glowing in their praise while some state that more needs to be done to parts of the area not regenerated.

Issues relating to the properties themselves are important to residents and the overall sustainability of our investment. Some of the recommendations that follow outline the concerns raised by new residents in how to run their homes and report repairs in the months following their moving in.

The issue of integrating the new residents into the community was a central theme for many of the local residents and businesses and the recommendations that follow support this. We recommend;

1. Housing Hartlepool provide face-to-face support to all new tenants over the first three months to make sure they understand how the internal systems work eg heating system, water meters, ventilation and solar panels. The follow up visits by housing officers need to include a visit by an experienced professional who can give advice on how to use these systems to ensure residents are making best use of the technology in order to deliver saving to these households.
2. The issue of retention repair works and day-to-day repairs needs to be thoroughly explained to all residents to avoid confusion over who to go to for repairs and snagging issues over the first twelve months
3. All new residents should receive appropriate and easy-to-understand information in their Welcome Pack regarding for example, use of internal systems, local facilities, the Community Centre, youth services, doctors and refuse collection times.
4. During the first twelve months housing surgeries should take place to encourage people to liaise with Housing Hartlepool where residents can access information about repairs/snagging issues and be signposted to the appropriate agencies.
5. Housing Hartlepool liaise with the Salaam Centre to improve links and communication channels with the large number of ethnic minorities living in the new homes. This arose as it was realised that 16 out of the 96 properties have been let/sold to households from Eastern European origin, and on the back of comments from the local people regarding the lack of integration of these households into the community
6. Housing Hartlepool promote the Belle Vue Community Centre via our website and Facebook pages. The centre is clearly a hub of community activity and while efforts are being made by organisations in the centre to connect with the “new” local community in our properties, this would be a good way to informally keep residents informed about what they are doing locally such as community events, Fun Days and activities for children and young people.
7. More information could be made available to the local community that the new properties do have properties available for social rent. It was generally felt the properties were for sale only and Housing Hartlepool could generate interest in this area and a healthier demand across the town.
8. New developments in the future need to make clear any new lettings policy which applies to the new build properties that replace the ones being demolished. A number of comments were received from residents in the surrounding area that people had been told they could move back into the new builds, but who, when the time came, were informed that you had to be working to access them.
9. Housing Hartlepool are looking to continue to buy more properties locally from private landlords, this was welcomed by residents, and they asked more be done to promote this to the private landlords and that local residents are informed of when these properties become available for rent. It was felt the buying of such properties by Housing Hartlepool should continue.
10. Due to the increasing important role being played by the Belle Vue Community Centre it was felt more could be done by the relevant Housing Hartlepool staff to forge positive links with the centre and encourage new residents to take part in the activities on offer. The idea of a housing surgery could take place in the centre, for example.
11. It was felt that Housing Hartlepool could support the centre financially or in kind (printing costs for example) to enable to centre to advertise their activities to the new residents, maybe through the use of flyers or invites to engage them within their community more.

**Appendix 1 (survey to new residents) NB box sizes reduced**

**Belle Vue regeneration survey**

**We are a group of involved tenants from Housing Hartlepool who are carrying out a survey of residents who have moved into the new properties built by Housing Hartlepool (part of the Vela Group) a few years ago. As you are one of these people we would appreciate your views on the area and how it has changed since you moved into the area.**

**It is only a short survey and will only take a couple of minutes. Those who fill in and return this form will be entered into the £25 Christmas shopping voucher draw. To enter the draw we need the following details. The draw will take place on Monday 9th December and we will contact you if you have won. Good luck !!**

**Name: ……………………………………….**

**Address: ……………………………………..**

**Phone number: …………………………….**

1. **Describe the Belle Vue area as it was when you moved into your property**
2. **If you feel the area has changed please describe Belle Vue as it is now**
3. **Please tick the boxes below to give your views on Belle Vue as it was when you moved into your property, on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is “not very good….” and 10 is “extremely good…..”**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scale** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** |
| Quality of housing  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Safe as a place to live  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Physical spaces eg streets, green areas |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Access to local facilities eg shops, doctors |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Anti-social behaviour |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sense of community spirit |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. **Please tick the boxes below to give your views on Belle Vue as it is now, on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is “not very good….” and 10 is “extremely good…..”**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scale** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** |
| Quality of housing  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Safe as a place to live  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Physical spaces eg streets, green areas |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Access to local facilities eg shops, doctors |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Anti-social behaviour |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sense of community spirit |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. **Did the demolition and building of the new houses cause any problems for you personally ?**
2. **Would you recommend Belle Vue as a place to live in the town now ?**

yes no

If you have any comments on why you answered the question above please let us know below

**Thank you for your time in completing this**

 **good luck in the prize draw !!**

**Appendix 2 (survey to surrounding area residents) NB box sizes reduced**

**Belle Vue regeneration survey**

**We are a group of involved tenants from Housing Hartlepool who are** **carrying out a survey of local people from Belle Vue and from Hartlepool to find out your views on whether you feel Belle Vue as an area has improved, since the new Housing Hartlepool properties were built two years ago.**

**It is only a short survey and will only take a couple of minutes. Those who fill it in and return this form will be entered into the £25 Christmas shopping voucher draw. To enter the draw we need the following details. The draw will take place on Monday 9th December and we will contact you if you have won. Good luck !!**

**Name: ……………………………………….**

**Address: ……………………………………..**

**Phone number: …………………………….**

1. **How would you describe the Belle Vue area as it was before the new houses were built ?**
2. **How would you describe the Belle Vue area as it is now ?**
3. **Please tick the boxes below to give your views on Belle Vue as it was before the new houses were built, on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is “not very good….” and 10 is “extremely good…..”**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scale** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** |
| Quality of housing  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Safe as a place to live  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Physical spaces eg streets, green areas |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Access to local facilities eg shops, doctors |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Anti-social behaviour |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sense of community spirit |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. **Please tick the boxes below to give your views on Belle Vue as it is now, on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is “not very good….” and 10 is “extremely good…..”**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scale** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** |
| Quality of housing  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Safe as a place to live  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Physical spaces eg streets, green areas |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Access to local facilities eg shops, doctors |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Anti-social behaviour |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sense of community spirit |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. **Did the demolition and building of the new houses cause any problems for you personally ?**
2. **Would you recommend Belle Vue as a place to live in the town now ? (please circle your answer)**

yes no

If you have any comments on the above question let us know below

***Thank you for your time in completing this, good luck in the prize draw !!***

**Appendix 3 (covering letter accompanying surveys for new residents)**

Dear

**Our involved customers would like to speak with you, and you will receive a £10 shopping voucher!**

At Housing Hartlepool (part of the Vela Group) we are always trying to improve the services we provide, and we thought who better to ask than you about what your experience with us was like.

To be able to do this independently we have trained a group of customers who are interested in getting your views and experiences, good or bad, and in doing so help us do even better. One project they are looking at is the regeneration of the Belle Vue area and as you have moved into one of these properties we would like your feedback.

You can do this by filling in the survey that came with this letter and/or attend a focus group we are holding (maximum of 12 customers). If you fill in the survey you will be entered into a £25 prize draw (closing date Friday 6th December), but if you attend the focus group you will receive a £10 shopping voucher as well. The first 12 people who volunteer will form the focus group.

The focus group will be held in the Belle Vue Centre on Monday 25th November between 5-6pm and will be run by three of the customers mentioned above. If you would like to attend the focus group please ring Janice Remington from the Customer Involvement team on 01429 525489 or e mail her on janice.remington@velagroup.co.uk

The information you provide will be treated in utmost confidence and only used to improve our services generally. Your name and details will not be shared with anyone, however some of your comments may be used anonymously in reports.

**Yours sincerely**

**Appendix 4**

**Our involved customers would like to speak with you, and you could win a £25 Christmas voucher !**

At Housing Hartlepool (part of the Vela Group) we are always trying to improve the services we provide. To be able to do this independently we have trained a group of customers who are interested in getting your views and experiences, good or bad, and in doing so help us do even better.

One project they are looking at is the regeneration of the Belle Vue area and as you were affected by this, living close by, we would like your feedback on how things have been for you.

You can do this by filling in the survey that came with this letter for which you will be entered into the prize draw. Please return the survey in the envelope provided by Friday 6th December. The draw will be held on Monday 9th December and we will contact you if you have won.

The information you provide will be treated in utmost confidence and only used to improve our services generally. Your name and details will not be shared with anyone, however some of your comments may be used anonymously in reports.

**Yours sincerely**

**Appendix 5 (timeline of events)**

**Timeline**

4th October:

VIP meeting outlining the project and visit to the Belle Vue area

18th October:

VIP meeting agreeing the approach and methodology

24th October:

VIP meeting producing the questions for the surveys and focus groups.

8th November:

VIP meeting agreeing the timescales for the different approaches and administrative tasks. Also agreed who would carry out the focus groups

19th November:

Surveys posted to new residents and local area residents by VIPs and staff. Ad hoc focus group with visitors in the community centre by VIPs

25th November:

Focus group held by VIPs with residents from the new properties

4th December:

Focus group held with “Friends of Belle Vue” by VIPs

5th December:

Focus group held with Belle Vue Residents Association by VIPs

6th December:

Closing date for surveys

10th December:

Winners of surveys notified.

13th December:

Meeting of VIPs to draft report and produce key finding from all the above

10th February:

Second meeting of VIPs to agree report content, recommendations and who would present the report to managers

17th February:

VIPs present draft report to the project group and relevant managers

8th April

Mark Dutton presents action plan to the VIPs and sign off of final report

**Appendix 6 (Data from questions from surrounding area residents – “before” scores in blue, “after scores” in green)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| survey | Quality | Safe | Space | facilities | ASB | Spirit | Quality | Safe | Space | facilities | ASB | Spirit |
| 1 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 8 |
| 2 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 10 | 8 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 6 |
| 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 5 |
| 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 10 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 1 |
| 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 7 | 8 |
| 6 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 7 | 10 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 7 |
| 8 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 9 | 6 |
| 9 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 10 | 1 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 7 | 10 |
| 10 |   |   |   |   |   |   | 9 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 |   |   |   |   |   |   | 7 | 10 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 8 |
| 12 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 9 | 10 |
| 13 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| 14 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 6 |
| 15 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 8 |
| 16 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 9 |
| 17 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 2 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 8 | 10 |
| 18 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 10 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 10 | 4 | 4 |
| 19 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| 20 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 4 |
| 21 |   |   |   |   |   |   | 6 | 9 | 8 | 10 | 9 |   |
| 22 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 5 |
| 23 |   | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| 24 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 9 | 1 |
| 25 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 10 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 1 |
| 26 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 4 |
| total | 83 | 83 | 78 | 152 | 79 | 131 | 198 | 181 | 168 | 199 | 167 | 148 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| av before | 3.95 | 3.77 | 3.55 | 6.91 | 3.59 | 5.95 | 7.62 | 6.96 | 6.46 | 7.65 | 6.42 | 5.69 |
| av after | 7.62 | 6.96 | 6.46 | 7.65 | 6.42 | 5.69 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| difference | 3.67 | 3.19 | 2.91 | 0.74 | 2.83 | -0.26 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| %age | 93 | 84 | 82 | 11 | 79 | -4 |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Appendix 7 (Statistical data from questions from new residents - “before” scores in blue, “after scores” in green)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| survey | Quality | Safe | Space | facilities | ASB | Spirit | Quality | Safe | Space | facilities | ASB | Spirit |
| 1 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 9 | 3 | 1 |
| 3 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 7 | 7 | 10 | 7 | 7 | 10 | 7 | 7 |
| 4 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 7 | 5 |
| 5 | 10 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 7 |
| 6 | 10 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 6 | 6 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 7 | 8 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| total | 47 | 36 | 39 | 46 | 24 | 24 | 47 | 38 | 43 | 42 | 29 | 28 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| av before | 9.40 | 7.20 | 7.80 | 9.20 | 4.80 | 4.80 | 9.40 | 7.60 | 8.60 | 8.40 | 5.80 | 5.60 |
| av after | 9.40 | 7.60 | 8.60 | 8.40 | 5.80 | 5.60 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| difference | 0.00 | 0.40 | 0.80 | -0.80 | 1.00 | 0.80 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| %age | 0 | 6 | 10 | -9 | 21 | 17 |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Regeneration of Belle Vue - Action Plan**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Recommendation** | **Response** | **Accountable Officer** | **Deadline**  |
| **1.**Housing Hartlepool provide face-to-face support to all new tenants over the first three months to make sure they understand how the internal systems work e.g. heating system, water meters, ventilation and solar panels. The follow up visits by housing officers need to include a visit by an experienced professional who can give advice on how to use these systems to ensure residents are making best use of the technology in order to deliver saving to these households. | Acknowledged this as very interesting and valuable customer feedback – to be followed up with **Land & Construction** and **Operations Teams** so that appropriate advice, information and assistance is provided to new customers at more than just sign-up, but whenever they need it, especially around new technologies, e.g. solar panels, impact on household bills and feed-in tariff implications (if any). | Mark Dutton | 31.7.14 |
| **2.**The issue of retention repair works and day-to-day repairs needs to be thoroughly explained to all residents to avoid confusion over who to go to for repairs and snagging issues over the first twelve months | Acknowledged this again as very interesting and informative customer feedback – to be followed up with **Land & Construction** and **Operations** **Teams** so that appropriate advice, information and assistance is provided to new customers at sign-up. Checks to be made with **Contact Teams** to ensure up to date schedules of properties in defects periods are provided and refreshed as appropriate. | Mark Dutton | 31.7.14 |
| **3.**All new residents should receive appropriate and easy-to-understand information in their Welcome Pack regarding for example, use of internal systems, local facilities, the Community Centre, youth services, doctors and refuse collection times. | It is acknowledged that the quality of Welcome Packs and information provided can be variable across the Group’s landlords, and that this is a cross-cutting corporate issue that is currently being dealt with elsewhere.  | Norma Ironside | 30.9.14 |
| **4.**During the first twelve months housing surgeries should take place to encourage people to liaise with Housing Hartlepool where residents can access information about repairs/snagging issues and be signposted to the appropriate agencies. | Agreed – although it was noted that surgeries have been provided at Belle Vue and other estates historically, and sometimes have been scrapped because they weren’t utilised by residents and it was therefore felt that housing staff were wasting valuable time. Requires localised consultations and further review. | Nigel Budd | 31.7.14 |
| **5.** Housing Hartlepool liaise with the Salaam Centre to improve links and communication channels with the large number of ethnic minorities living in the new homes. This arose as it was realised that 16 out of the 96 properties have been let/sold to households from Eastern European origin, and on the back of comments from the local people regarding the lack of integration of these households into the community | Agreed that this was an excellent suggestion, and it will be followed up accordingly. | Nigel Budd | 31.7.14 |
| **6.** Housing Hartlepool promote the Belle Vue Community Centre via our website and Facebook pages. The centre is clearly a hub of community activity and while efforts are being made by organisations in the centre to connect with the “new” local community in our properties, this would be a good way to informally keep residents informed about what they are doing locally such as community events, Fun Days and activities for children and young people. | Agreed that this was another excellent suggestion, and it will be followed up accordingly. | TBC | 31.7.14 |
| **7.** More information could be made available to the local community that the new properties do have properties available for social rent. It was generally felt the properties were for sale only and Housing Hartlepool could generate interest in this area and a healthier demand across the town. | Agreed that especially in new estates that had been deliberately developed along the lines of a ‘tenure-blind’ model this could present as an issue. Agreed to liaise with **Sales & Operations** teams around ensuring appropriate publicity and communication is made around new build estates. | Nigel Budd | 31.7.14 |
| **8.** New developments in the future need to make clear any new lettings policy which applies to the new build properties that replace the ones being demolished. A number of comments were received from residents in the surrounding area that people had been told they could move back into the new builds, but who, when the time came, were informed that you had to be working to access them. | This is not completely accurate, although it is correct that there was a local lettings policy in place for first time lets of the new properties in Belle Vue. This is a complex area and without going into the detail here requires further analysis and subsequent debate with Operations Teams and others at a corporate level. Agreed that it was important to have this debate as part of taking forward our very considerable future development and new build programme. | Mark Dutton | 31.3.15 |
| **9.** Housing Hartlepool are looking to continue to buy more properties locally from private landlords, this was welcomed by residents, and they asked more be done to promote this to the private landlords and that local residents are informed of when these properties become available for rent. It was felt the buying of such properties by Housing Hartlepool should continue. | This feedback is welcomed as a vindication of Housing Hartlepool focusing its private sector Empty Homes Programme and associated neighbourhood management initiatives around key regeneration priorities, e.g. Belle Vue. We will commit to a bid into the current HCA Affordable Homes Programme 2015-18 bidding round for some additional resource to help continue this activity, including in the Belle Vue area. | Mark Dutton | 30.6.14 |
| **10.** Due to the increasing important role being played by the Belle Vue Community Centre it was felt more could be done by the relevant Housing Hartlepool staff to forge positive links with the centre and encourage new residents to take part in the activities on offer. The idea of a housing surgery could take place in the centre, for example. | We do, and have historically, had very strong links with the Belle Vue Community Centre. The spirit of the recommendation is welcomed, and we will continue to try and support the centre in a range of ways, for example the Section 106 financial contribution previously made as part of delivering the regeneration plans, and using the Centre’s facilities for events and meetings when possible/appropriate, including housing surgeries. | Nigel Budd | 31.3.15 |
| **11.**It was felt that Housing Hartlepool could support the centre financially or in kind (printing costs for example) to enable to centre to advertise their activities to the new residents, maybe through the use of flyers or invites to engage them within their community more. | As above. | Nigel Budd | 31.3.15 |