

PROPOSED CUTS IN GOVERNMENT SPENDING

The new Government has announced that it is to reduce funding to a number of national programmes, including the Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Programme. HMR provides the money for the current regeneration projects in West Accrington and is required for implementing projects from the East Accrington masterplan.

The amount of money the Government is providing for the national HMR programme this year is expected to be reduced by at least 20%, but whether this will apply evenly to all the HMR areas in England has not been made clear yet. The future of HMR beyond 2010/11 is also unclear.

Until the Council knows how much money will be available to Hyndburn it is not possible to make decisions about HMR regeneration projects in both West and East Accrington, although we are preparing projects ready for when the amount of funding has been confirmed.

The Government has announced that there will be an Emergency Budget on 22 June. At that time the Council expects to learn more about how this year's HMR allocation will be affected.

The Chief Executive of Regenerate Pennine Lancashire (formerly Elevate), supported by the Council's Managing Director, is putting the case to the Government that Pennine Lancashire still requires major regeneration investment and that reducing it by such a large amount as 20% could undo much of the progress already made and delay much-needed regeneration activity. Pennine Lancashire was recently categorised by the Homes & Communities Agency as being an area most in need of continuing public investment, together with three other pathfinder areas.

We will provide more information as soon as the position is clearer.

SELECTIVE LANDLORD LICENSING

The Council's Selective Landlord Licensing Scheme is now being implemented. The aim of the scheme is to improve the standards of management of privately rented property and thus also to improve its image. Below is an extract from the rules of the scheme.

- Within the designated area, any owner who wishes to let a property must have a licence for every dwelling let.
- The designated area covers West Accrington, Church, Peel, East Accrington, Woodnook, and the area around the Victoria Hospital.
- The scheme will last for five years and comes into operation on 1st October 2010. By then a licence must have been issued or an application made to the Council.
- Each licence is specific to a particular dwelling and licence holder.
- Licence holders must be "fit and proper persons" which means that the Council will take account of any convictions for offences in respect of managing property.
- Licence holders must manage their tenancies effectively, taking all possible actions to prevent and deal with any evidenced criminal or anti-social behaviour by their tenants.
- Licensed properties must be maintained in a safe hazard-free condition with repairs carried out properly and quickly, and periodic gas and electricity safety checks.
- Licences have to be renewed annually.
- The licence fee for a dwelling is £100 per annum, or (for 2010/11) £95 if the application is received before 31st August 2010.
- The licence fee will be reviewed annually.
- The penalty for not having a licence is a fine of up to £20,000

Please note that this is only a very brief summary of the scheme.

Full details are available from the Council tel. (01254) 380619 or 380238.

WEST ACCRINGTON AREA MANAGEMENT

Environmental Top Five

The public decided - we asked at the first open meeting what small-but-important environmental improvements people would like to see in West Accrington.

We agreed on a Top 5 which included the Church Street Garden, the Lupin Road Community Garden and the Henry Street notice board.



Here are before and after pictures of some of these places

Snooker Youngsters win Regional Award

YNOT Snooker Youth Club won the regional POP (Problem Oriented Partnerships) Award on 21st April. The judges gave us excellent feedback on the project and were really impressed with the partnership work going on in Hyndburn.

The Paul Hunter snooker youth club has been running for just over a year now and is going extremely well. The snooker club has secured almost £10,000 in funding, including £2352 from the Youth Opportunity Fund, thanks to a group of young people from the snooker club writing their own funding bid and making a presentation to the Board.

The club was also featured on BBC2's Snooker Grand Prix for the second time on 9th October last year.

Drama Group — "The Knock-On Effect"

Neighbourhood Management and partners YOT, LCC and the police recently worked with local young people to devise a piece of theatre showing how bullying, knife crime, exam stress, teenage pregnancy etc. are perceived and how alcohol and drugs affect these issues.

Workshops involving 13-16 year olds were arranged, to focus on these subjects, what their effect is and what the consequences could be and have been.

Afterwards the young people gave a performance open to the community. This was filmed and will be used as a training resource for all local agencies involved with young people.

Preserving Heritage for the Future

A recent Open Day attracted volunteers willing to be interviewed for the Preserving Asian Heritage Project. This aims to record the stories of the first Asian people to come to Hyndburn in the 1950's and 60's.

The volunteers will be asked about their first memories of Hyndburn when they arrived, as well as about what life was like back in the land of their birth. Eventually a book will be produced from the anecdotes and recollections of the volunteers. Universities in Leeds and Essex will store the material in their archives for posterity.



Volunteers "signing up" to share their memories