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## **Bringing home the bacon for residents**

Residents hungry for change in the North East of Coventry could have something new on the menu following a visit from one of the UK's leading housing experts.

Jon Rouse, chief executive of the Housing Corporation, the government agency which funds and regulates Registered Social Landlords, had a taste of the initiative's success as he visited the area for a flying visit this week.

He visited the flagship project under the invitation of the partners involved in the £360 million regeneration of Wood End, Henley Green and Deedmore. Those regenerating the area are Whitefriars Housing Group, Coventry City Council, Coventry New Deal for Communities and a developer consortium of Bovis, Keepmoat and Persimmon Homes.

As well as tucking into his breakfast Jon Rouse, along with senior colleagues, heard from representatives from all partners as to how the scheme was progressing and spoke to Roger Tipton, New Deal for Communities resident chairman, to gain an understanding of how local people view the project.

Jon said: "Regeneration projects such as this are vital to the future of our cities - and the welfare of residents. For too long we have had areas blighted by crime and deprivation. Projects such as this one, which bring together people from all walks of life and help to create thriving communities, are a real step towards tackling the problems raised by residents.

"By building a mix of homes for affordable rent, shared ownership and private sale we can offer current and future residents a sustainable, mixed community with a wealth of quality facilities and services. Most importantly, this is underpinned by a clear strategy to tackle economic and health issues."

The 10-to-15-year programme will provide 3,500 new homes, 1,000 of which will be for social housing. A thriving community hub including a new leisure and neighbourhood centre, shops, a community park and local play areas will also be created.

New roads, community buildings, communal play areas and green spaces are all included in the proposals and more than £10 million will be spent in the area to improve public open spaces.

Howard Farrand, chief executive of Whitefriars Housing Group, said: "It is a credit to Coventry and our regeneration project that one of the government's top housing professionals has recognised our success in working with the community, partners and the private sector, to create a genuine mixed and sustainable community.

"The Housing Corporation and English Partnership are shaping the future of all our cities and it is a reflection of the progress and people here in the north east of Coventry that Jon took time out to visit us today."

In a further accolade to the large-scale community redevelopment, the Coventry NDC area has been selected as a Central Government Mixed Communities Pilot Project, which puts community sustainability through housing densities, tenures and household mixes high on the political agenda. It is expected that - like the visit from Jon Rouse - the Mixed Communities status will draw national attention to this part of Coventry.

**Ends**

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