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Green light for green spaces

Residents in Wood End, Manor Farm, Henley Green and Deedmore came to a workshop on all things green, as part of ongoing work to consult them about the £360m redevelopment scheme taking place in their New Deal for Communities area.

Members of the Regeneration Action Team attended a special workshop on green spaces and informal play to help them to influence the outline plans for the redevelopment set to be submitted to Coventry City Council next year. The Regeneration Action Team is a committed group of around 16 people from across the four estates.

Representatives from Bovis, Keepmoat and Persimmon, the developers drawing up the vision for the area, were joined by Sally Giles, from Coventry City Council, Mark Yates from New Deal for Communities and Whitefriars' Lynn Wassell, project director for the partnership.

Those attending discussed how green space in the area is a great asset, how it is used in the area now and its potential use for the area's long-term future. Residents were also invited to outline what they'd like to see in the area.

Ideas put forward by local people included cycle tracks, butterfly and bat boxes, football pitches and informal play areas made of natural materials which fit in with the surrounding green space.

The proposed scheme, spearheaded by Whitefriars Housing Group, Coventry City Council and Coventry NDC, will see some 3,500 homes built, new roads, community buildings, shops and communal play areas. Several million pounds will be spent in the area by the developers to improve public open spaces

Sandra Smith and Janet Barrett were two residents that took part. Both live in Wood End and are long standing members of the Regeneration Action Team. The friends welcomed the chance to have their say on the use of green space in the area.

Speaking on behalf of the pair, Janet said: "It was a really good opportunity to put forward our ideas on the best use of green areas and play provision. We are keen to see wildlife attracted back to the area and more native trees. We are now looking at play in a completely different way.

"It is great to be listened to and the information provided was really interesting. There were many good ideas discussed that are now being brought to life."

Lynn Wassell, project director for the partnership, said: "It was fantastic to see residents from across the four areas working together to discuss what they want to see from the redevelopment scheme.

"Even though redevelopment will start in some parts of the estates before others, this outline planning application will ultimately affect all areas, which is why it is important that all residents get involved, regardless of which phase of redevelopment they fit into.

"This is the first of several workshops which will give residents the chance to provide input into the planning process. There will also be events for the whole community to have their say. The importance of local knowledge and understanding of what this and the next generation want and need from the area cannot be underestimated which is why it's so important as many people as possible engage with the work of the developers to ensure their vision is communicated."

Whitefriars' residents with questions about the scheme or their home can contact Whitefriars on 024 7658 7066 or pop into the Coventry NDC office, Hillmorton Road, Wood End.

Ends

**For further information please contact Michelle Hallmark at The Bridge Group
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