

Ship Sharp Money Coming in for Housing Project in Great Yarmouth

A potential £5.3 million is destined for housing projects in the borough of Great Yarmouth, with another £1 million for use throughout Norfolk and Waveney.

Successful bids by Great Yarmouth Borough Council to the Government's regional housing pot are still awaiting ministerial approval.

The largest amount, £3.4 million, is destined for the Southtown Housing Improvement Project (SHIP), with another £1.9million to extend the improvements made through Secondary Holiday Area Regeneration Project (SHARP) which saw a rundown area just behind the seafront given new vitality.

Great Yarmouth Borough Council's Private Sector Housing Service Manager Alan Warnes, has also been the leading light on a successful £1 million bid from the regional housing pot to help councils throughout Norfolk offer help to vulnerable households who need to release equity to carry out work on their home.

"The SHIP money is also aimed at vulnerable households in the private sector," explained Alan. "Over two years we will be funding basic house repairs and bringing homes up to a decent standard by providing modern facilities, such as kitchens, plumbing, heating and insulation.

"We will begin talking to homeowners, including private landlords in the project areas, to establish their needs and the general condition of their properties."

The original SHARP project, completed earlier this year, saw buildings in Wellesley and Paget Roads given a new lease of life to help promote the area and improve the living accommodation of people in the area.

The project also lifted the appearance of the streetscape to make the roads more attractive with street furniture and railings, and safer with improved lighting to follow.

The scheme helped to attract in private funding which saw derelict buildings brought back into use.

Building on this success the regeneration team, led by Alan, has won £1.9 million for SHARP phase 2, which will see Camperdown and Nelson Road South receive the same kind of treatment.

"The work already carried out on the first SHARP project has been an excellent example of team work," commented Head of Community Services Mark Burns.

"It has shown what can be achieved when Team Yarmouth comes onto play. The tourist authority and the wider community worked together with councillors from both parties and staff to enhance the area and Great Yarmouth's reputation.

"I want to thank Alan and Housing Policy Service Manager Tracey Slater for having the skills and determination to deliver the original SHARP project, and to develop the bids for the new schemes."

The third project is aimed at the Government's equity release scheme which helps vulnerable home owners to realise funds on their home to help pay for repairs. Great Yarmouth Borough Council has developed procedures to deliver this and therefore Alan Warnes was chosen to lead the bid for the £1 million grant which is available to all councils in Norfolk and Waveney.

"The scheme allows a home owner to borrow against the value of their home," explained Alan. "The loan is only repayable when the property is sold.

“Being a Government scheme it has the great advantage of not putting the home owner into negative equity, as some private schemes have.”

“The original SHARP project shows how Great Yarmouth is determined to help as many residents it can enjoy a higher standard of housing,” said Councillor Bob Peck cabinet member for Community Housing.

“Two of these new schemes will aid some of our more vulnerable homeowners, while the other will again work closely with the tourist industry to make part of the secondary tourist area a more attractive place to live in and for holiday makers.”

All three schemes are due to start in April 2009.

For further information contact Private Sector Housing Service Manager Alan Warnes on 01493 846369, or Head of Community Services Mark Burns on 01493 846450.