



## Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Renewing the Routes Update
Date:	14 January 2009
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### Relevant Background Information

This report provides an update on the general progress of the Renewing the Routes programme and seeks endorsement of proposed amendments to identified projects within the agreed action plans.

The modification to the projects programme relates to the proposed reallocation of approved funding as a response to changed circumstances in respect of an environmental improvement project and a built heritage project. The projects at Wiltons Funeral Parlour and for tree planting, which were approved as part of the Crumlin Road Integrated Development Fund (IDF) plan, are no longer feasible within the funding timescales.

### Key Issues

#### Shankill Road

The main emphasis for the regeneration on Shankill Road remains the commercial frontage improvements. Over sixty premises have now taken part in the scheme, with a further 50 businesses in line to benefit in the New Year. The block-by-block approach means that businesses and residents can immediately see a significant impact from the improvements works along on the road, with enhanced, bright and attractive places to work and shop.

The ongoing complementary activity has seen the completion of additional public realm improvements, funded by Belfast Regeneration Office (BRO), at the Agnes Street and Lanark Way key junctions. This work, coordinated by the Unit on behalf of BRO, is

continuing in the Woodvale Park area with improved pedestrian crossings and additional resurfacing. The project will also include feature embellishments to street lighting alongside the installation of several pedestrian benches, with the work being completed by February 2009.

Completed IDF funded projects include bespoke railings and granite entrance features at West Belfast Orange Hall, floodlighting to Woodvale Methodist Church and high quality railings at West Kirk Presbyterian Church. Projects delivered in partnership with other Council departments include floral baskets, tourism signage and lighting to the Woodvale Park 'Family Tree' sculpture.

Early 2009 will see works on site to restore Shankill Rest Garden's listed perimeter wall, the cleaning of the stonework to Shankill Library and landscaping at Woodvale Presbyterian Church. Once restored it is proposed that the Shankill Rest Garden wall will be lit by recessed up-lighting, this project is currently at the design stage.

#### Upper Springfield Road

The designs are now being finalised for an environmental project to improve the road frontage and reclaim an area of green space from anti-social behaviour and misuse at Springhill Park 'funnel'. Renewing the Routes, Parks & Leisure and Groundwork NI have worked with the local community over the last year and works are scheduled to begin on site in January 2009. New railings, paths, landscaping, planting and future artworks from the community will bring this green space back into use in time for the summer.

Commercial improvements have now been designed to complement previous schemes in the area and will be presented to owners/occupiers for final approval in February 2009 with work scheduled to commence in March 2009. DRD Roads Service has approved the installation of street lighting embellishments for installation in the new year.

An artist is currently being appointed to make a feature of the highly visible wall on this main arterial road at the JP Corry Ltd, near the entrance to Sliabh Dubh estate. The artist will work with the residents to produce a mosaic style piece on Industrial Heritage, Natural Environment or Families & Stories. The piece will be installed by April 2009.

Planting and boundary improvements are due to take place at Whiterock Orange Hall in January 2009. Additional complementary public realm and landscaping works at other local sites are also at the design stage.

Completed projects include a new Panoramic Viewpoint at Monagh Road and a major public realm scheme at the main junction of Springfield Rd and Whiterock Road.

#### Crumlin Road

Phase 1, commercial improvements to six properties at Lower Crumlin Road, is almost complete and should be fully completed by early January 2009. The second phase of the commercial improvements at Glenbank is also nearing completion, anticipated for mid-January. It is anticipated that the third phase of the Crumlin Road commercial improvements, covering 24 properties at the Ardoyne shops, will commence at the end of January, subject to the agreement of the individual owners.

The project to refurbish the Belfast Orange Hall has commenced on-site at Clifton Street with works that include blocking up of ground floor windows, removal of high cage and augmentation of boundary railings.

Draft proposals have been developed for landscaping schemes in Lower Crumlin (Oldpark/Clifton Park Avenue junction) and Glenbank alongside public realm proposals at the Carlisle Circus and Ardoyne roundabouts. Detailed public consultation has taken place at Lower Crumlin where final agreement has been attained and at Ardoyne Roundabout where it is expected to have final agreement early in the new year.

#### Update Antrim Road & York Road / North Queen Street

The additional projects, linked to the Urban II uplift in funding, including the installation of tourism signage, hanging baskets, flower trees and feature lighting have been completed and other projects including street lighting embellishments and gable wall improvements will be implemented in early 2009. The commercial improvements to four additional properties on these routes will be completed by end of January 2009.

#### Falls Update

The first phase of the Lower Falls commercial improvement to 23 properties is nearing completion, with a further 44 properties on site as part of the second phase (lower Springfield Road). The consultations in respect of a further 40 properties (Phase III - mid Falls) are currently underway, with an anticipated start date for the phased construction planned for the end of January 2009.

In conjunction with the Iveagh Residents' Group and local residents on Broadway, the "Soffits and Sills" project was successfully completed at the end of November 2008. The soffits and sills of each residential property were painted to provide a simple but effective environmental enhancement for this busy thoroughfare.

Electrical work is currently underway on Carnegie Library for the illumination of the building and prominent façade which is planned to be launched on completion in mid-January 2009. Final concept lighting design drawings are currently undergoing consultation with St Mary's University College and construction work is scheduled for the end of January 2009. Designs are also being finalised for International Wall for a projected start date in February 2009.

The refurbishment works to the designated category B1 listed railings at the St Comgall's site is due to commence at the end of January 2009. A conservation architect has also been appointed to carry out investigatory works at the entrance of Milltown Cemetery.

The work to the entrance of Falls Park is in progress with all re-pointing elements already completed. Specialist refurbishment /repairs to the stonework will be carried out in January 2009 including reinstating the ornate finials on the pillars. Willowbank Youth Club Environmental Scheme has also been programmed for commencement in early 2009.

The second stage selection process for the appointment of the artist for the Gaeltacht Quarter art piece, "An Ceilirudah/ Celebration" will convene at the end of January 2009.

#### Programme Variations

Members are asked to approve the proposed variations resulting from the continued review of activity and refinement of the final project implementation for the renewing the routes programme. The variations proposed are in respect of two previously agreed projects for Wilton's Funeral Parlour boundary enhancements and Tree Planting.

### Wilton's Funeral Parlour

The potential for boundary enhancements to the external brick and sandstone wall at the historic archway at Wilton's Funeral Parlour/ Brian Barret property was identified under the built heritage theme. During the further detailed developmental activity it was established that there is increasing uncertainty in relation to future development plans for both properties. This uncertainty and the potential for significant changes combined with the more limited environmental works budget has contributed to a situation where it is no longer feasible to develop detailed proposals for the property.

### Tree Planting

The Belfast Regeneration Office is currently working alongside the Council's Parks & Leisure Department to deliver an enhanced tree planting scheme for the Crumlin Road. This additional funding for what had been an approved project will have the effect of releasing Renewing the Routes Integrated Development Fund resources for additional works in the Crumlin Road area.

In order to progress the continued implementation of the programme it is proposed that consideration be given to the reallocation of a combined budget of £40,000 towards additional environmental improvement works across the Crumlin Road area, specifically street lighting projects that could benefit the entire length of the route.

### **Resource Implications**

There are no additional financial implications arising from the reallocation.

### **Recommendations**

Members are requested to:

- Note the updates set out within the report; and
- Approve the reallocations of the previously agreed budgets of £10,000 in respect of the Wilton Funeral Parlour property and £30,000 for tree planting towards an enhanced street lighting scheme and feature lighting for buildings of heritage and architectural merit.

### **Abbreviations**

IDF	Integrated Development Fund
BRO	Belfast regeneration Office
DRD	Department of Regional Development