

# Liveability Fund

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## Factsheet

- The £89 million liveability fund is part of a £201 million package of measures to improve the local environment announced in February 2003 as part of the *Sustainable Communities: Building for the future* document.
- The £89 million fund will be a mixture of revenue and capital funding over the three years.
- This scheme will test a new approach to addressing public space issues. It will focus on improving environmental service delivery before investing in new developments and will disseminate lessons and good practice throughout the process. This should ensure parks and public spaces will be better managed and maintained and physical improvements will be more sustainable.
- Local authorities across the country were invited to submit an expression of interest for the liveability fund, demonstrating proposals for significant and sustainable improvement in the delivery of 'liveability' services. For example littering, fly-tipping, fly-posting, graffiti, abandoned vehicles, street cleansing and tackling anti-social behaviour.
- ODPM has now selected the 27 pilots (three from each of the nine English regions) and agreed a programme of service delivery improvements. **Please see the end of the fact sheet for the full list of pilots and details of their proposals.**
- Local authorities will be given initial revenue funding to encourage the reform of their service delivery arrangements to improve on-going management and maintenance of public spaces. Service reforms are then rewarded with substantial capital grants (which will range up to £3.3m) to support projects for transforming or creating new public spaces.
- The Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) will also work closely with the 27 pilots to identify lessons and good practice that can be shared with other local authorities across the country.
- The main tool for communicating progress made by the pilots, lessons learned and the difficulties encountered along the way will be via an interactive website. Information will be added on a regular basis to the liveability section of the IDeA Knowledge web site - found at [www.knowledge@idea.gov.uk](mailto:www.knowledge@idea.gov.uk). The IDeA will also disseminate good practice through a series of conferences and events.
- In addition the ODPM will be looking to learn about successful funding models and performance management arrangements that can inform possible future funding mechanisms and performance management systems.

### **Further background on the £201m package of measures to improve liveability, including the £89 million liveability fund.**

- In September 2002, the Government published 'Living Places - Cleaner, Safer, Greener', which set out its proposals to improve the quality of the urban environment. In February 2003 it subsequently published *Sustainable communities: Building for the future*, which developed these proposals and identified the resources needed to take forward a comprehensive range of measures to achieve them.
- *Sustainable communities: Building for the future* committed a total of £201m over three years (2003-2006) to transform the urban environment, by promoting a wide and varied range of initiatives:
  - £40m to assist in the environmental charity Groundwork's work with local authorities and communities to deliver environmental regeneration;

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- £30m available through the new Living Spaces scheme for direct community action to improve local liveability, especially parks and other green spaces;
- £17.75m to support CABI (the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) and establish CABI Space to champion the promotion of quality public space;
- £17m to improve the quality of urban design skills by raising standards, and widening access and knowledge across interests associated with the built environment;
- £6.75m available for the Special Grants Programme, to provide grants to voluntary and community sector organisations undertaking work relevant to the Government's urban policy objectives; and
- £89m to support research carried out for 'Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener', which identified the day to day management and maintenance of public spaces as a key area for improvement.

## **Liveability fund announcement: Quote from the Deputy Prime Minister**

Launching the document, John Prescott said:

*"There is new confidence and energy in many of our Northern towns and cities. After years of decline, people are moving back.*

*"But regeneration has to be about more than just housing. We want people to feel proud of the places where they live and be happy with what they see when they open their front door to leave their homes.*

*"For too long our parks and public spaces were left to decline and the assets that our Victorian ancestors understood so well, such as public gardens and town squares, were neglected. By investing the largest amount of funding ever for liveability, over £200m, we have begun to reverse this decline and today's announcement will benefit communities in all regions across the country."*

## **Regional breakdown of successful Pilots to be awarded funding:**

### **1) Yorkshire and the Humber:**

#### ***Sheffield City Council***

- Establishment of a joined up client group - a corporate team including representatives from housing, parks, woodlands & countryside and streetforce departments - to investigate and overcome key barriers to service delivery .
- Raising of horticultural standards across the city through a sustainable horticultural training programme.
- A programme of physical improvements ( including enhanced landscapes, provision of wildflower meadows & wetlands, and provision of youth facilities and play areas ) to 10 green space sites ( Busk Meadow, Colley, Cookson, Four Greens, Foxhill, Rec, Longley, Middlewood, Parson Cross, Parkwood Springs, Wolfe Road) across 6 neighbourhoods.
- Renewing the streetscene in selected areas of South Owlerton to include improved signage , lighting, paving, landscaping new parking arrangements.

#### ***North East Lincolnshire Council***

- Peripatetic Wardens are at the heart of North East Lincolnshire service improvements. They will operate according to DARE principles:
  - D, Detering** - a highly visible presence within project areas to deter offending in environmental crime such as littering, dog fouling, fly posting and graffiti.
  - A, Advising** - engaging with communities and businesses to provide advice on Local Authority services and strategies around environmental issues.
  - R, Re-educating** - educating the public, businesses and communities on their responsibilities for the liveability of their environment.
  - E, Enforcing** - warning offenders of littering and dog fouling legislation and in the case of non compliance issuing of a fixed penalty notice.
- Physical improvements will be made across 10 areas (Grant Thorold Park, Trinity Road Open Space, Bradley Woods, Homestead Park, Haverstoe Park, Sydney Park, Weelsby Woods, Cleethorpes Country Park, Peoples Park, Sutherland Park). These will be agreed with Friends Groups and will provide new and upgraded facilities including play areas, improvements to lighting, improved access and crime initiatives aimed at encouraging greater use of the parks and deterring acts of crime and anti social behaviour.
- Some of the improvements could include :revitalising the decorative planting and amenity grassed areas; further developing the wildlife areas to improve the biodiversity of the area; improving and developing footpaths ; installing fencing, providing appropriate CCTV operations and other security measures to reduce the fear of crime and increase confidence;

#### ***Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council***

- Further development and improved service delivery of Community First - a new approach to delivering maintenance services through community based teams responding to community priorities.

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- Physical improvement projects will tackle problems identified in Doncaster's Green Space Audit such as the need for clean well maintained green space, high quality public realm free of dog fouling and litter and improved facilities for young people. The emphasis will be on the poorest communities.
- Projects will include improvements to local woodlands and nature conservation sites, the development of Doncaster Town Moor into a centre of excellence in green space provision and the development of Town Field as a key site for sport, recreation and community facilities.

### 2) North West:

#### ***Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council***

- Improvement of Market Square in Darwen, to create a more effective public space close to the Bus Station and Town Centre.
- Creation of a new civic space at Sudell Cross in Blackburn Town Centre.
- Creation of 9 Neighbourhood Greens within the Blackburn with Darwen Housing Market Restructuring Intervention Areas , to provide access to good quality open space within densely-developed housing areas.
- Increased enforcement of environmental crime - demonstrating zero tolerance on dumping of waste and littering, by naming, shaming and penalising those responsible, and working closely with magistrates.
- Expanding the Neighbourhood Rangers programme to help clean up the worst 'grot spots'.

#### ***Bury Metropolitan Borough Council***

- Refurbishment of Clarence Park, the largest urban park in the borough to create a flagship people's modern park.
- Improvement of 13 other parks across the borough to ensure that all residents have access to good quality parks and green spaces.
- Improvements to other urban green spaces (pocket parks, recreation sites) and play areas.
- Development of borough-wide Park Ranger Service to cover all 14 parks.
- Creation of area-based 'Pride of Bury' teams that bring together responsibility for all of the care and maintenance services within their areas - a joined up approach that will deliver higher standards of cleanliness and maintenance of public spaces.

#### ***Ellesmere Port & Neston Borough Council***

- Redesign and refurbishment of 4 major connecting public spaces - Civic Square, Town Square, Rivington Square and Marina Walk/York Road - to create attractive area in Ellesmere Port Town Centre, with water features, seating, artwork, performance spaces, trees and other planting, and better segregation of pedestrians and vehicles.
- Introduction of integrated multi-service teams to maintain the town centre to significantly higher standards.

### 3) North East:

#### ***Castle Morpeth Borough Council:***

- Joined up services: The new "Four Castles Corridor Team" (4CC) will use local stakeholders and volunteers to clean up - and open up - the Wansbeck River area.

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- Combatting greenhouse effect: Create sustainable alternatives to traditional flood defences, eg ponds & wetland areas to reduce peak water flow through the town.
- Reducing crime: Establish renewable energy systems along the Wansbeck - plans to install water turbines to provide power for local lighting.

### *North Tyneside Council*

- Joined up services: The council will set up a new multi-task team to clean and maintain the historic waggonways and adjacent green spaces. The team will be highly mechanised, using multi-purpose maintenance vehicles and quad bikes with trailers to deliver a consistent and speedy service. They will also discourage anti-social behaviour and be empowered to issue fixed penalty notices.
- Rejuvenated waggonways: Urban sections will be upgraded with all-weather tarmac surfaces. Street lighting will also be installed. Rural waggonways will be treated with a semi-sealed surface suitable for all users. Their ecological and historical character will be retained. Schools will work with professionals to produce quality signage, public artwork, street furniture and interpretative materials. The rejuvenated waggonways will provide safe routes to work and school, healthy leisure opportunities and environmental regeneration.

### *The District Of Easington*

- Joined up services: Creation of a "Virtual Enforcement Officers' Team" will tackle residents' complaints in the planning enforcement, tenancy enforcement, public buildings and environmental health fields. The team will work closely with Estates' Officers and Wardens. Pooling resources in this way will result in problem sites and premises being dealt with more quickly and comprehensively.
- More attractive buildings and land: Restore pride in neighbourhoods by improving the visual appearance of derelict and redundant land and buildings. Will concentrate on those areas which comprise the bulk of the Enforcement Officers' workloads.
- Safer streets: Will result in more - and more efficient - street lighting in all public areas. In response to a 2003 residents' survey which revealed that there was a significant rise in the fear of crime when using public spaces after dark.

## **4) East Midlands:**

### *Mansfield District Council*

- Joined up services: The new Town Centre Operational Unit will bear down on nuisances like graffiti, fly posting and discarded drug-taking kit - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Grot spots will be "blitzed" three times this year. This unit will liaise closely with the new town centre Beat Officer and Community Support Officers.
- Better urban design: The Market Place will be transformed into a multi-use public space. Traditional market stalls will be replaced by collapsible versions that will open up the space for the performing arts. It will also improve pedestrian access and street cleansing efficiency.
- Night-time economy: LF will help fund additional taxi ranks and taxi shop facilities. This will disperse customers from late night premises more quickly, thus reducing the risk of violence.

### *Leicester City Council*

- Improving local democracy: The council will create a not-for-profit organisation to manage the parks and open spaces in the St George's area. It will be based on existing organisations but will draw in other currently unrepresented stakeholders like the Church, community groups and residents. The new body will be financially self-sustaining within the life of the Liveability Fund.

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- Streets for the people: Streets in St George's will cease to be vehicle-dominated. Space will be reallocated so that pedestrians dominate. A culturally-led programme of high-quality artwork, including artists-in-residence, will be implemented.
- New life for St George's churchyard: Public access to the churchyard will be increased and security for users will be improved through the removal of potential hiding places, while retaining the informal and semi-natural character of the churchyard.

### ***High Peak Borough Council***

- Urban Ranger Team: To be created using staff from Intermediate Labour Market/New Deal schemes and community volunteers. Rangers would get involved in things like provision of information, helping to maintain parks and supporting Neighbour Environmental Action Teams in areas such as litter, graffiti and dog fouling. Having a wide remit, it will comprise a seamless army of motivated volunteers. The *capital schemes* will be finalised following approval of a comprehensive master plan and design concept, but are likely to include major improvements to
- Manor & Philip Howard Parks: To include refurbished playgrounds, upgraded paths to ensure access for all and comprehensive signage linked to town centre;
- Municipal car park and market place: The market place and car park will be made more accessible to people with mobility problems and the outdoor market will be enhanced; and
- Howard Town & Wren Nest Mills: To ensure that these significant mill complexes contribute positively to the public realm, through the provision of safe and accessible public space.

### **5) West Midlands:**

**Consortium of 7 Worcestershire councils** (Worcestershire County Council, Worcester City Council, Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Redditch, Wychavon and Wyre Forest District Councils)

- Creation of new linear park along the restored Droitwich Canals.
- Regeneration of several urban parks across the county and improved access and facilities at a number of country parks.
- Creation of new and regeneration of existing green spaces - community gardens and other green spaces, allotments, nature reserves.
- Establishment of a network of local service centres providing residents - personal callers, by telephone, or by internet - with 'one-stop' access to a wide range of services provided by the 7 councils and other agencies.

### ***Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council***

Dudley's aim is to improve protect and enhance strategic parks and open spaces to form the hub of sustainable community regeneration. Their proposal has four elements:

- Deployment of Local Involvement Officers to support and assist Friends and User Groups in selected parks and green spaces to improve and develop the facilities and activities available.
- "Community Governance" - involving local communities as Champions for their parks with responsibility for managing and maintaining them through local management boards;
- Provision of horticultural training for hard to reach groups in disadvantaged areas using this also as means of delivering maintenance services in partnership with other agencies.
- Physical improvements to potentially 17 parks in the Dudley area as determined by the priorities of the local Friends and User Groups. This could include park refurbishment - tree & shrub planting, habitat creation - improved park facilities, access for the disabled.

***Coventry City Council***

- Further integration of street scene activities including development of street inspectors to address the whole street scene;
- Improved customer access to services;
- Better informed & more responsive service delivery by improving IT infrastructure to give Service Supervisors full access to real time service information;
- Physical improvements to green spaces & street scene across Coventry following local consultation - potentially including enhancing the River Sherbourne corridor, renovation and upgrading of street corner plots, creation of a new 0.3hectare green space at Weavers Green to encourage recreation play leisure community events and other local activities.

**6) Eastern Region:**

***Ipswich Borough Council - Suffolk***

- Service improvements:
  1. to develop a new Streetscene service which brings together all the operational aspects of service delivery for cleansing, waste management, parks, refuse collection, grounds maintenance, car parks, highways and enforcement; and
  2. to appoint Community Co-ordinators to expand its 'Making a Difference' programme whereby the streetscene is improved road by road, to identify community priorities and prepare action plans and to build capacity and develop civic pride within the community.
- Capital projects: Ipswich plans to introduce a number of initiatives designed to reduce maintenance, such as
  - increasing the number of litter bins,
  - using anti-graffiti treatment on communication boxes,
  - sealing paving stones to aid chewing gum removal and testing more environmentally friendly ways of controlling weeds
  - the council also proposes to create a multi-professional team of officers drawn from engineers, planning, cleansing, maintenance and housing to develop integrated solutions to streetscene problems in co-operation with local area forums -
  - examples of the type of projects envisaged include the provision of youth shelters, refurbishment of children's playgrounds and the development of 'community parks'.

***Luton Borough Council - Bedfordshire***

- Service improvements:
  1. to introduce Community Wardens to create a visible presence and encourage better use of its parks and other public spaces;
  2. to provide training to enable local people to act as Community Caretakers;
  3. to expand its successful programme of 'Environmental Action Days' whereby multi-agency teams undertake a street by street sweep to tackle problems, such as abandoned vehicles, fly-tipping and street lighting repairs; and
  4. to introduce a 7 day a week street cleansing operation.
- Capital projects:

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- Luton is proposing a linked programme of community development, consultation and planning to improve, revitalise and develop three underused parks,
- the surrounding streetscene and the town centre - proposed improvements to three of the town's parks (Bells Close Recreation Ground, Dallow Road Recreation Ground and Regis Road Recreation Ground) will provide new facilities for the town's youth and tackle anti-social behaviour,
- whilst a programme of improvements to St. George's Square, which is in the centre of the town next to the main shopping area, will create a major public space.

### ***Maldon District Council - Essex***

#### ■ Service improvements:

1. to create a new Asset Management team to better manage public spaces;
2. to undertake a comprehensive audit of all public space within the borough, in order to create an asset register which details topographical information, the position of fixtures and fittings, land and property ownership, management and maintenance regimes etc. in order to influence future development plans; and
3. to review the role of existing 'Friends of the Parks' groups in order to develop Local Public Space Forums, which will give the local community a more active role in the management and maintenance of its public space and deliver some aspects of the proposed capital projects.

#### ■ Capital projects:

1. to undertake improvements to Maldon Park;
2. to undertake improvements at Burnham Riverside Park
3. to undertake improvements at Oak Tree Recreation Ground;
4. to undertake improvements at St. George's Field; and
5. to undertake improvements at Maldon Cemetery.

## **7) London:**

### ***London Borough of Camden***

- Better management of the night time economy - including projects on Safer Travel at Night and Night Time Cafes
- Tackling anti-social behaviour including closer links between police and street wardens, and a possible Pilot Controlled Drinking Zone around Camden Town tube station.
- Integration of a range of council and other agency services to provide improved management of the area around Camden Town.
- A programme of major physical improvement schemes covering Inverness Street Market, St Martins Gardens, Hawley Road Open Space, Regents Canal, and the streets of Camden Town.

### ***London Borough of Ealing***

- Improved and integrated environmental services for Acton Town Centre, including town centre rangers.
- Creation of new "Green Town Square" linking Acton College and South Acton Estate to the town centre.

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- Develop a series of multi-purpose "pavilions" in Acton parks to provide meeting places, cafes, training and service development spaces.
- Start one of West London's first "city car clubs" in Acton and/or Ealing.
- Programme of other physical improvement schemes, providing better access and facilities in parks, improved pedestrian access to town centre, improved safety (CCTV, street lighting) schemes.

### *London Borough of Greenwich*

- Integration of enforcement activities to better co-ordinate action to deal with issues such as littering, fly-tipping, fly posting, graffiti, illegal street trading, abandoned vehicles, illegal parking that combine to create an impression of abandonment and poor environmental quality.
- A programme of physical improvement schemes directed at areas of greatest 'environmental stress', including parks, green spaces, housing, retail and small business areas of the borough.

## **8) South East:**

### *Havant Borough Council - Hampshire*

- Service improvements:
  1. to develop an urban design framework which will set borough-wide standards, and which will involve the development of a public space / streetscape strategy;
  2. to integrate and co-ordinate grounds maintenance, cleansing, engineering and vehicle maintenance operations, coupled with the piloting of a 'zoned' approach to service delivery;
  3. to reform out of hours staffing in parks and open spaces to improve safety and combat anti-social behaviour;
  4. to reform children's playground provision, inspection and maintenance regimes;
  5. to expand private investment in council infrastructure, such as roundabouts, gateway landmarks and traffic islands; and
  6. to bring together conservation agencies, 'Friends' groups, volunteers etc to create an environmental forum which can be better co-ordinated and supported.
- Capital projects:
  1. to undertake improvements to Havant town centre;
  2. to undertake improvements to Havant Park, Leigh Park and Waterlooville Recreation Ground;
  3. to undertake improvements to the Beachlands sea front;
  4. to undertake improvements to the Broadmarsh industrial estate;
  5. to undertake improvements to local shopping parades; and
  6. to install new street lighting and plant trees at the borough's gateway sites.

### *Medway District Council - Kent*

- Service improvements:
  1. to work with the local community to determine the needs and aspirations of stakeholders in improving the local streetscene in Chatham, Gillingham and Rochester;

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2. to encourage community guardianship by creating self-help actions by local residents and businesses in maintaining the local environment;
3. to create a single focus for the delivery of streetscene maintenance services; and
4. to draft 'Street Agreements' and Codes of Practice' between agencies and communities setting out a concordat of roles and responsibilities.

### ■ Capital projects:

1. to provide streetscape enhancement projects;
2. to provide community safety improvements;
3. to provide youth diversion projects;
4. to provide waste management initiatives;
5. to provide community centre improvements; and
6. to provide private space projects.

### ***Spelthorne Borough Council - Surrey***

### ■ Service improvements:

1. to create an independent 'Greenspace Forum' which will comprise representatives from the local authority (officers and councillors) the Police, young people, the local community, housing associations, youth offending team etc, to determine the provision of facilities for the borough's youth.
2. to introduce 'youth zones' in parks, which will be run by young people for young people.

### ■ Capital projects:

1. to provide a wheeled sports facility at Lammas Recreation Ground;
2. to provide a BMX facility at Short Lane Recreation Ground'
3. to provide a multi-sports facility at Littleton Lane Recreation Ground;
4. to provide a science park at Clockhouse Lane Recreation Ground;
5. to provide a healthy living centre at Forbridge Park; and
6. to provide activities for women and girls (to include those from the ethnic minorities) at Kenyton Manor Recreation Ground.

## **9) South West:**

### ***Gloucester City Council - Gloucestershire***

### ■ Service improvements:

1. to develop multi-agency partnerships led by residents in order to identify neighbourhood priorities;
2. to work with an external agency in order to develop a streetscene approach to service delivery; and
3. to work with business and community groups in order to engage the community in the stewardship of the city.

### ■ Capital projects:

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1. to revitalise Gloucester Park;
2. to undertake improvements to the city's Eastgate Street;
3. to make the Roman remains in the city centre more accessible;
4. to provide new promises for Shopmobility;
5. to undertake improvements to the main bus station;
6. to demolish boarded up shops near the bus station to create new public space;
7. to improve public toilet provision in the city;
8. to create a new 'pocket park' with facilities for the city's youth;
9. to improve the Oxbode to open out the streetscene and improve linkages;
10. to convert the St. Michael's Tower to provide an inner-city sheltered seating area;
11. to improve the safety and appearance of the city's pedestrianised area;
12. to provide additional litter bins;
13. to improve linkages to and from the city centre.

### ***West Cornwall (Kerrier District Council / Penwith District Council )***

#### ■ Service improvements:

1. to work in partnership to bring education to the heart of the management and maintenance of open space
2. to tackle crime and the fear of crime by working in partnership with the Council's Youth Offending Team and the Probation Service
3. to develop cross border working to provide improved and complementary grounds maintenance services
4. to promote the management of open spaces by a Community Trust.

#### ■ Capital projects:

- Kerrier and Penwith are proposing to undertake a comprehensive programme of consultation with local residents to determine how their parks and open spaces should be improved to meet local people's aims and aspirations
- the two councils also plan to develop centres of excellence for inter-organisational training and development, to work with the area's young people to provide facilities that more meet their particular needs and to create flexible display areas for local artists.

### ***North Dorset District Council - Dorset***

- Service improvements: North Dorset aim to create and develop the Building a local Dorset Regeneration Initiative in the Community (BALDRIC) which is a regeneration trust model that is capable of generating sufficient income to be sustainable in its own right and that will provide active management and maintenance of public space and improve delivery of services from the council and other partners and initiatives
- Capital projects: to be invested in local community partnerships or directly into the regeneration company to manage individual environmental projects.