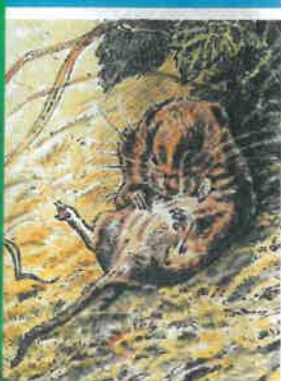




westpark

At the heart of a new community

Issue 2 Summer 2003



Bussey & Armstrong Projects

**COMMUNITY VILLAGE • 700 NEW HOMES • 33 ACRE PARKLAND
SPORTING AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

WEST PARK COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

Welcome to the second issue of "West Park" the community magazine to keep you informed of the exciting new developments at Faverdale, Darlington.

A lot has happened since the first edition in Autumn 2002. The reclamation and landscaping of the former factory site are nearing completion and around 46,000 trees have recently been planted. The new access road and roundabouts on West Auckland Road to serve the new hospital and homes are now completed.

Construction of the new Priority Services hospital recently began on site and is due to open in late 2004. Bellway Homes, our partner house builder, have started the first homes which will be marketed during Summer 2003, and finally the sculptures on the new park land are now being installed. These are the first phase of the Art Strategy for the site and will provide a link to the elements of the completed development.

We are presently working with Darlington Borough Council to enable a new primary school to be built alongside the community village which will incorporate shops, pub, a doctors surgery and village hall for which a planning application has recently been submitted.

We hope the magazine will keep you up to-date with the latest developments.

For more information telephone us on 01325 365785 or you can e-mail us at info@busseyarmstrong.co.uk or visit our web site at

www.busseyarmstrong.co.uk



Planting the final tree!



MANAGING FOR WILDLIFE



The task to transform West Park into a place rich with wildlife as well as offering excellent opportunities for outdoor recreation is gathering pace with the planting of 7 acres of wild flower meadow and 14 acres of native woodland. This is being followed by the establishment of semi aquatic planting along west beck and around the ponds being created in the north west of the site.

But planting a site in a wildlife friendly manner is only the first stage. The success of the site as a place for wildlife to flourish depends on its future maintenance and a

detailed management plan is being worked out the aim of which will be to see the establishment of a high level of biodiversity that will make visits to the park ever more rich and varied.

For example, the new woodland will have a very limited understory whereas with the introduction of a mix of classic woodland plants such as blue bell, wood sorrel and wild garlic the woods will rapidly take on a much more established feel.

The maintenance of areas of clear water in west beck will ensure that the water voles have a good chance of reinforcing their presence here, and by keeping a close eye on the wild flower meadows the cutting regimes can be adapted to ensure the rich variety of an English wild flower meadow is maintained and improved.



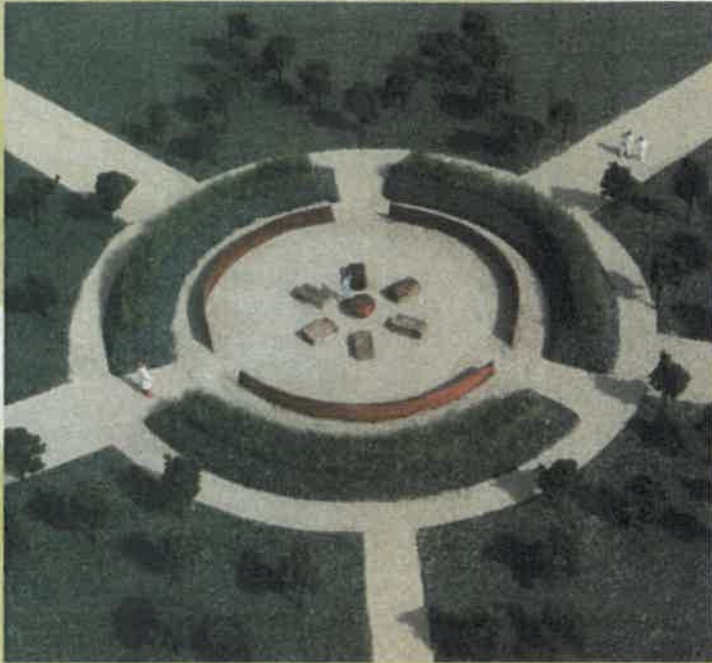
All in all the site can be seen as an important element in Darlington's strategy to improve its levels of biodiversity across the board and with it improve the quality of people's lives as the towns green lungs breath deeply once more.

For more information please feel free to contact Rob George, Countryside and Rights of Way Officer on 01325 388648.

CARING, SHARING, DARING

DARLINGTON WEST PARK

POETRY PLAN AND ARTS STRATEGY



The West Park poetry plan, written by WN Herbert, is now being turned into sculpture and functional features across the new park.

Sculptor David Paton is making sculpture for the site by carving a series of images that are being cast in iron and set within 3 sets of 27 tonne Catcastle stone blocks cut by Dunhouse Quarry. In addition David has produced models for the central area of the park that will include seating and a giant ring of poetry.

Blacksmith Brian Russell is producing park entrances and footbridges that will also carry the poet's words in forged steel and creatively link the new park amenity to the other parts of the West Park development.

Future plans for the Poetry Plan include ideas to incorporate poetry within the new hospital and school

buildings as well as proposals to incorporate poetry within the street names of the new housing.

It is hoped that all visitors to the new park will engage with the unique artworks and through WN Herbert's words will be intrigued to discover something of the areas cultural, industrial and natural history.



Writing West Park



In the last issue of this magazine we featured New Writing North's plans to develop a creative writing project in schools inspired by West Park. Since then New Writing North the writing development agency for the region has devised an ambitious project involving six Darlington schools. Pupils will be working with professional radio producers, playwrights, poets, musicians, novelists and documentary makers from September.

Haughton School will develop a radio broadcast which will be aired throughout Darlington and will feature soap operas, documentaries, poetry, stories and music all written and devised by the pupils with professional guidance. At Beaumont Hill EBD (emotional and behavioural difficulties) unit, pupils will work with a poet to create public poetry which will be seen throughout the school. At Mount Pleasant Primary a film-maker and a poet will encourage the children to make their own poetry films.

Three other schools including Alderman Leach Primary which is being rebuilt as part of the West Park plan will also be hosting a writer's residency as will Branksome Comprehensive School and Whinfield Juniors.

All the work will be inspired by the West Park site, the pupils will be looking back at its remarkable history: the legacy of the Peases Family and figures such as Armstrong and Stephenson, and travelling to the future to imagine what Darlington will be like in the year 2050. The West Park site also has its own distinctive flora and fauna inherited from its industrial past, as well as a global agricultural legacy. West Park offers a rich resource for creative writing projects which can be applied across curricula from English and Drama to Citizenship, Geography and Biology.

The West Park development already features a strong creative writing strand. Two years ago Tony Cooper

the Director of Bussey and Armstrong commissioned poet Bill Herbert to put together a 'poetry plan' for the site. Projects in each of the schools involved will begin with a site visit and talk led by developer Tony Cooper and poet Bill Herbert.

All the work generated will be celebrated at the 'West Park Festival' which will take place in Darlington in May 2004.

The project has been supported by Creative Partnerships Tees Valley, Bussey and Armstrong Projects, Arts and Business and Darlington Borough Council.



Work Starts On New Mental Health Unit

County Durham and Darlington **NHS**
Priority Services NHS Trust

Balfour Beatty

Norwich Union Public Private Partnership Fund



Construction work has started on the £20 million mental health unit at West Park, the first new hospital to be built for the public sector in Darlington for 30 years. Darlington MP Alan Milburn got behind the controls of a JCB to cut the first turf on the new unit, which is designed to feel more like a hotel than a hospital, offering the privacy and comfort of single en-suite bedrooms.

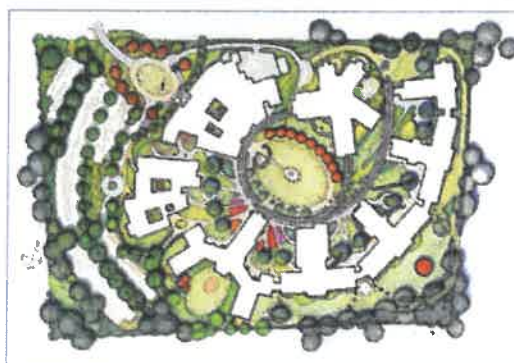
The state-of-the art development will cover 9.5 acres of the town's West Park and is the culmination of more than two years planning by health officials, users and interest groups.

Key features include:

- 60 ground floor bedrooms for adults aged 16 to 65, three of the bedrooms are for mothers with babies
- 24 beds for people aged over 65, 15 special needs beds, ten intensive care beds and a seven bed recovery unit in the form of a bungalow
- separate facilities for men and women
- a 25 place older persons day hospital and a 24 place adult acute day hospital
- outpatient, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and psychology facilities
- a two storey entrance block featuring education centre for staff training, administration department and consultant's offices and on-call facilities for medical staff
- a shop, coffee bar and dining room
- a multi-faith prayer room
- parking for 170 cars

One in four people will suffer from some form of mental illness at some time in their life making it a more common problem than coronary heart disease and cancer. The West Park project, which will be next door to a 40 acre park, will replace outdated facilities at the Pierremont Unit next to Darlington Memorial Hospital, the Beaumont Ward and Faverdale Unit, and the Gables Unit at Sedgfield.

County Durham and Darlington Priority Services NHS Trust chief executive Sandy Taylor said: "West Park will put us at the forefront of care. Environment and design are central in the treatment of people with mental health problems and the new hospital will provide the perfect surroundings for service users, their families and staff."



Above left
Service user representatives join members of the mental health Trust to celebrate the official start on-site. (From left to right) Dennis Haithwaite, Alan Milburn MP, Trust chairman-Jo Turnbull, Trust chief executive-Sandy Taylor, Michael Nicholson and Kathy Burrage

PFI project manager David Eley said great care had gone into the design of the facility and there had been extensive consultation with users, their families, MIND and the local community. "Users have been involved in the design for at least two years," he said. "They were able to help us with a variety of practical issues we would not have thought about."

From the minute visitors enter the site by bus or car they will approach a development that looks more like a hotel than a hospital. The site will be beautifully landscaped, the entrance will have the feel of a hotel lobby. Access to all parts of the hospital will be from a circular corridor around a central courtyard and each ward will have its own therapy garden.

"Design has a vital part to play in therapy," Mr Eley said. "Colours are also important and we have chosen bricks and tiles carefully to give the unit a domestic atmosphere. The architects, Nightingale Associates, have been working very closely with clinical staff."

The hospital is an integral part of a major development at the former Darchem site, which will also include hundreds of houses built by Darlington builders Bussey and Armstrong and Bellway Homes.

Financed privately by developer Norwich Union Public Private Partnership Fund it will take Balfour Beatty Construction one and a half years to build and will be leased for the next 30 years by County Durham and Darlington Priority Services NHS Trust.

The trust will provide clinical care, cleaning and portering services, the PFI company will look after building and ground maintenance.

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The Tees Forest Lends a Green Hand



Land services volunteers working on a public right-of-way in Darlington

The Tees Forest, as a partner of Darlington Borough Council is playing a leading role in delivering the community woodland element of the West Park Development. Much of the planting has now been completed on the 8.6 hectare site, as the woodland areas are marked out and fenced off for the purpose of protecting the young trees.

The plan for this important Gateway site is to develop it with a community focus for the benefit of

local residents and to provide facilities for informal recreation. These will exist in the form of connecting cycle routes, a BMX type track as well as laid out walks, meadow areas and sculptures. Future developments may also include a countryside centre and climbing facility.

From The Tees Forest perspective the site will be a major feature on the western approach to the town, which in years to come will provide

a prominent wooded landscape for the people of the town to enjoy.

The Tees Forest Development Company's aim is "to facilitate the creation and management of the many wooded environments within the area of the Tees and Great North Forests, for the benefit of the community." After six years the Company remains faithful to those aims but is to change its name to the North East Community Forests Development Company (NECFDC), which reflects its new role in supporting Community Forestry within the entire North East of England.

The Company was the first Community Forest Development Company in England and it has maintained its reputation for innovation since that date. One aspect of this is the newly created Land Services Company providing environmental improvements within local communities. It also provides a training and skills development base for trainees under the New Deal programme delivering environmental and community benefits.

Within this context the Land services Company is seeking to work with Darlington Council and play its part in helping manage the West Park site. It has already been successful in securing a contract to manage many of the wildlife and nature conservation sites within the borough as well as the maintenance of the rights of way network.

In involving local communities in many aspects of the work undertaken by The Tees Forest the Land Services arm is keen to engage local volunteers to work on conservation and land management projects within Darlington. "We are seeking to take on people of any age who have an interest in the environment or maybe anyone who just likes to work outdoors on valuable wildlife conservation projects" says NECFDC Manager Neil Marson.

Anyone interested in getting involved should contact Darlington Project Manager Malcolm Thompson on 01325 484949.



TEES FOREST
DEVELOPMENT COMPANY



The Tees Forest Development Company's aim is to facilitate the creation and management of the many environments within the area of the Tees Forest for the benefit to the community. The Tees Forest is a partnership committed to realising the vision of a new multipurpose Forest in the Tees Valley

For further information on the Company contact:
Neil Marson, Company manager on

Tel: 01642 300718 Fax: 01642 300715

VISUAL AND PUBLIC ART, DARLINGTON

Since the establishment of a new post of Visual & Public Arts Officer for Darlington, taken up by Wendy Scott in December 2002, the priority has been to ensure that the planned exhibition programmes are delivered to a continued professional standard at The Myles Meehan Gallery and the alternative exhibition spaces at Darlington Arts Centre.

Wendy is directly involved in an advisory capacity in all public arts projects developing in Darlington. Her remit is to identify opportunity within Darlington and to advocate the benefits of involving artists at the onset of projects to bring a unique and creative perspective.

This new full time post at Darlington is to work strategically within local government and across the Tees Valley to identify opportunity for the visual and public arts through partnership projects and Tees Valley initiatives and to connect directly with Arts Council priorities and policies.

Through West Park Wendy is working with New Writing North and Creative Partnerships on an

exciting education programme planned to start in September, involving a filmmaker, a sound artist and a poet / writer stemming from the artwork and poetry that has already been commissioned at West Park. The result of this partnership will be an exhibition of artwork at The Myles Meehan Gallery at Darlington Arts Centre by children involved in the project.



David Paton inspects the first sculpture being installed

Picture supplied courtesy of Newsquest, Northeast

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