



## Media Release

3 March 2010

### Hats On For Rowner's Regeneration

Jonathan Shaw MP, Regional Minister for the South East and five young Rowner residents were guests of honour to witness the start of the Rowner Regeneration project. The £145 million Rowner Renewal project is set to transform the Precinct and surrounding areas of Rowner over the next seven years.

Demolition of the first houses – number 6 and 7 Winchester Court began today in front of around 40 specially invited guests all donning Rowner Renewal hard hats and high viz vests. Before the regeneration event the Minister had also met people who have secured jobs in Rowner through the Government's Future Jobs Fund.

The children, representing the future of Rowner, were winners in Rowner Renewal's recent Site Safety Poster competition and were very proud to see their winning posters printed high on the new construction site hoardings.

Phase One of the project has now officially begun on the first 219 new homes. Up to 700 new homes will replace 500 properties and there is a re-provision of retail and community facilities, as well as the creation of local employment and training opportunities. Tesco is the chosen retailer for Phase Two of the project and will be providing up to 225 new jobs. Taylor Wimpey the construction partner has also pledged to fund five new construction apprenticeships throughout the lifetime of the project.

South East Regional Minister Jonathan Shaw said:

"This is a momentous day for Rowner; the demolition heralds an exciting new beginning for the community. I congratulate all those who have made this significant regeneration project possible; it is a fine example of the public and private sectors working in partnership with local residents, for the benefit of the community, to build a stronger future.

"The Government is committed to investment in housing; we know having a stable, secure place to call home is one of the most important things for individuals and families. This project will deliver that, as well as jobs and training. It is a win-win situation."

**More/**

**Hazel Warwick, Spokesperson for the Rowner Renewal Partnership and Group Development Director of Portsmouth Housing Association** responded by thanking the minister and said:

“We are delighted that the Minister for the South East could witness this historic occasion and see for himself the project in detail and our plans for the future. However our shining stars are the children and future generation of Rowner – this is why we are all here. Well done to Ashleigh, Tegan, Dylan, Frances and Ayesha for their success in the poster competition but also thank you for being our special guests of honour by representing the future of Rowner and taking part in our event today.”

**Cllr Mark Hook, Leader of Gosport Borough Council :**

“This is great news for the people of Gosport. The talking stops and the work starts with this, the demolition of houses in what will be the first stage of the biggest transformation the Borough has seen in many, many years. The long awaited new houses, new lifestyle that the people of Gosport have waited patiently for is beginning, and after being involved in the project since the outset I am delighted to see the work commence.”

**Kevin Bourner, Head of Area at the Homes and Communities Agency, commented:**

“Today is an important step in the renewal of the Rowner Estate and marks the first phase of redevelopment that will transform this area. I am delighted that the HCA has been able to provide over £10m in funding to date and offer support and expertise to our partners for one of the most important regeneration projects across the south east of England.”

**Nigel Holland, Southern Counties MD for Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd said:**

“Regeneration projects such as this can often be fraught with difficulties, but in the case of the Rowner Estate the commitment of all those involved to make this happen has been tremendous. Not least has been the determination of the people of Rowner to see their dream become a reality and Taylor Wimpey is proud to be part of that process both today and for the rest of the project.”

**Cllr Colin Davidovitz, Executive Member of Hampshire County Council said:**

“This is a great day for the people of Rowner who can now see a tangible start to better housing and a safer, more secure community. We are proud to support this project and together we look forward to the first residents moving in.”

**Cllr Sean Woodward, Chairman of PUSH (Partnership for Urban South Hampshire) added:**

“PUSH is very pleased to have played a significant part in bringing the regeneration of Rowner, long anticipated by local residents, to fruition. I wish the project and people well.”

**ENDS**

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[www.rownerrenewal.com](http://www.rownerrenewal.com) for further background information.

#### NOTE TO EDITORS:

#### **Jonathan Shaw MP, Regional Minister for the South East**

During his time with Kent County Council, Jonathan worked in child protection, adoption, fostering and children leaving care. Jonathan became local councillor in 1993 representing the areas of Luton and Wayfield in Chatham on Rochester City Council. In 1997 Jonathan became the MP for Chatham and Aylesford.

After completing a course in social care and working as a care assistant for adults with learning disabilities, Jonathan qualified as a social worker in 1990.

After attending local state schools his first job was as a fruit picker on Kent farms.

Jonathan was born in Aylesford in 1966 and is married with two school age children. The family live in Snodland.

**The Rowner Renewal Safety Poster Competition** was launched in December during site safety awareness talks at Siskin Infant School, Siskin Junior School and The Youthy in Rowner.

#### WINNERS:

##### **Siskin Infants** (age 3-7):

The winner of this category was Frances Weston (6) and the Runner Up was Dylan Corbin (5).

##### **Siskin Junior** (age 7-11)

The winner of this category was Ashleigh Charrington (10) and the Runner Up Tegan Oliver (8)

##### **The Youthy** (age 12-16)

There was only one winner in this category and this was Ayesha McLelland (15) a student at Brune Park Community College.

All the winning designs will be printed in large format and mounted onto The Rowner Renewal Partnership site hoardings when work begins shortly. In addition the winner from each of the three age groups received a £50 Argos gift card and the runner ups received a £25 Argos gift card.

### **The Rowner Renewal Partnership:**

All of the members of the Rowner Renewal Partnership are leaders in community regeneration and providers of quality homes:-

**The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)** is the single, national housing and regeneration agency for England. We bring together English Partnerships, investment functions of the Housing Corporation, and the Academy for Sustainable Communities, with major delivery programmes of Communities and Local Government.

Our role is to create opportunity for people to live in high quality, sustainable places. We provide funding for affordable housing, bring land back into productive use and improve quality of life by raising standards for the physical and social environment.

**Gosport Borough Council** is the accountable body for the citizens of Gosport and speaks on behalf of the whole community. The redevelopment of the Rowner Village is a significant priority for the Council. They wish to work closely with their residents to ensure that within Rowner a cohesive and sustainable community is maintained. The Council has long supported community development and projects in Rowner and has assembled the team to get things done.

**Hampshire County Council** has played a key leadership role in facilitating the Partnership. It has committed specialist project management and financial support and secured the political will, at regional and national levels, for the regeneration of Rowner. It is the accountable body for the citizens of Hampshire and takes the strategic view for long term benefit. On the project their responsibilities include issues affecting roads, transport and regeneration.

**Portsmouth Housing Association** is a respected local association with a strong track record of success in community development and regeneration. PHA is a member of First Wessex Housing Group and manages 1400 homes in Gosport of mixed tenure for rent and shared ownership. It has a significant stake in Rowner and is a well respected landlord, well placed to manage the outcomes of the regeneration.

**Taylor Wimpey UK** is a part of [Taylor Wimpey plc](http://www.taylorwimpey.co.uk). As well as operating in the UK, Taylor Wimpey plc builds homes in North America, Spain and Gibraltar. It aims to be the homebuilder of choice for customers, employees, shareholders and for the communities in which it operates. Taylor Wimpey builds a range of properties across the UK, from one bedroom apartments and starter homes up to large detached family houses. For further information please visit [www.taylorwimpey.co.uk](http://www.taylorwimpey.co.uk)