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NEWS RELEASE

Housing Minister visits Chevin's Wombwell site

On Monday 1st February 2010, Housing Minister John Healey saw work begin at the Park Street development in Wombwell, Nr Barnsley which is back in action thanks to the Government's Kickstart programme.

The development had been at a standstill due to market conditions and would likely have remained so without Government help. Chevin Housing Association received approval from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) for Kickstart funding (£3.575million) to redevelop the former depot at Park Street. The bid was supported by Barnsley Council's Housing Strategy Team and is being delivered in partnership with the developer Gladedale Group via its subsidiaries Ben Bailey Partnerships and Ben Bailey Homes.

A total of 74 new homes are planned to be built of which 49 will be available for affordable rent and 13 for intermediate rent through Chevin Housing. Ben Bailey Homes will own the remaining 12 homes with 6 being offered to the market for private sale and 6 being assisted by the HCA's Home Buy Direct Scheme. Government investment in the Barnsley housing sector since June 2009 totals more than £21million.

Mr Healey met trainees Chris McGreavy from Rotherham and Ben Bowen from Barnsley, two apprentices employed by Ben Bailey Homes and heard about how they are finding their training and what the apprentices who are set to be working at Park Street can expect.

Housing Minister John Healey said: "The power of Government investment is building the homes this country needs and supporting the construction industry at a time when it needs it most. Park Street was stalled by the recession but workers are back on site today to build over 70 new homes.

"This Kickstart cash is getting construction workers back on site and supporting the training of a new generation of builders. With Government investment since June at over £2.8billion, what I've seen today illustrates how this boost for house-building is getting Britain back to work."

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Steve Close, Group Chief Executive, Chevin Housing Group said “Chevin is delighted to be partnering with Barnsley Council and Gladedale on the redevelopment of the Park Street site in Wombwell. The scheme has been planned for some time but was hit by the credit crunch. The kickstart money provided by the Homes and Communities agency has given Gladedale the confidence to proceed and we look forward to the complete redevelopment of the site and some excellent new homes for rent and sale in Wombwell.

Warren Thompson, Regional Director, Ben Bailey Partnerships Ltd, said: “We very much welcome the fact that the Homes & Communities Agency's Kickstart scheme has allowed us to recommence building at Park Street and we look forward to work progressing on site. Ben Bailey Homes has been building homes in the area for many years and we will work closely with the community, Barnsley Council and Chevin Housing Association to bring further well designed, affordable homes to Wombwell.”

Photographed: Housing Minister John Healey with apprentices Chris McGreavy and Ben Bowen.