6 Conclusion and Next Steps

6.1 Conclusion

This Strategy provides a new context for tackling disadvantage in Northern Ireland. Reflecting a key theme in the Programme for Government and the Secretary of State’s "Building on Progress: Priorities and Plans 2003-06" document, it aims to learn from the past and experience elsewhere to set out a more focused and coherent way forward.
It does not provide an inflexible template for the delivery of Neighbourhood Renewal, but rather sets down a broad framework of processes and relationships, objectives and outcomes that will make it happen. The outworking of this will be presented in Strategy Implementation Plans for Belfast, Londonderry and Regional Towns and Cities.

Neighbourhood Renewal provides a vehicle for engagement across Government to take forward measures to tackle disadvantage and, in the most deprived communities, provides a flexible local mechanism for statutory agencies to work together in a complementary way with each other, with other stakeholders and with local residents. In this way, public services which are critical to the quality of life in these areas can be made to work more effectively.

DSD cannot deliver on this vision alone; it will require us to work with colleagues across Government, social partners and the communities involved. Together, using existing structures and key stakeholders such as district councils and LSPs, all parts of Government must engage meaningfully with residents in the most deprived urban areas to make it a reality.

In researching and developing this Strategy, DSD has developed a large body of evidence to support a more focused approach to tackling endemic spatial deprivation. This information is presented as a series of Working Papers that support the rationale for the Strategy. The full family of supporting materials will be hosted on the DSD website www.dsdni.gov.uk The website will also host the three Strategy Implementation Plans, when completed, as well as other members of the 'People and Place' urban regeneration family of strategies.

6.2 Next Steps

The initial tasks to be undertaken at neighbourhood level are:

- to agree through local consultation the boundary of the Neighbourhood Renewal Area and the appropriate Neighbourhood Partnership Board;

- the Neighbourhood Partnership Board will analyse and prioritise specific needs and identify any weaknesses or gaps in public service delivery. They will then produce a Neighbourhood Renewal Vision Framework which will help to pull together all the agencies working in the neighbourhood; and

- the Neighbourhood Partnership Board will produce rolling three-year Neighbourhood Action Plans to implement the Vision which will contain milestones to allow progress on each neighbourhood to be monitored. Three-year plans will dovetail with Government’s public expenditure planning and implementation cycle.

Work has already begun on programmes in neighbourhoods that display many of the characteristics of the Neighbourhood Renewal approach that we have outlined in this Strategy. These are the Urban II Initiative in...
North Belfast, the 12 neighbourhoods across Northern Ireland that are receiving support from the PEACE II Programme and the Outer North area of Londonderry that has secured funding from the Executive Programme Funds. DSD will continue working on these programmes to ensure that they make an early impact and any early lessons from them will improve the impact of Neighbourhood Renewal elsewhere.

The main steps in the implementation of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy will be:

2003
- publication of Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy;
- formation of Neighbourhood Renewal Unit;
- start of an engagement process to agree implementation arrangements for Belfast, Londonderry and Regional Towns and Cities;
- first Meeting of Ministerial Group;
- first Meeting of Neighbourhood Renewal Advisory Group;
- publication of Housing Executive’s “Neighbourhood Renewal – A Housing Prospectus”;
- pathfinder Neighbourhood Renewal initiatives commence;

2004
- best Practice, Training and Support Service operational;
- publication of Implementation Plan for Londonderry;
- publication of Implementation Plan for Belfast;
- publication of Implementation Plan for Regional Towns and Cities;
- baseline Statistical Information available;
- first Neighbourhood Renewal Vision Frameworks and Action Plans approved and ready to begin delivery;

2005
- all Neighbourhood Renewal Vision Frameworks and Action Plans approved and ready to begin delivery; and
- EU funding for Peace II neighbourhoods finish, review success and distil early neighbourhood renewal lessons.