



GRASSROOTS



Welcome to Grass Roots – a fresh new ezine from United Futures

Aimed at United Utilities and Groundwork employees, and stakeholders across the North West, the publication is an ideal way of keeping up-to-date with news from this exciting regeneration programme.

If you'd like to know more, please get in touch.

Martin Howarth
Partnership Manager, United Futures
Tel: 0161 237 3200
Email: martin.howarth@groundwork.org.uk

What is United Futures?

United Futures is an imaginative regeneration programme run by United Utilities and environmental charity Groundwork.

The programme funds and delivers vital community schemes across the North West. Investment is focused in neighbourhoods where United Utilities is delivering major capital programmes.

For schemes to qualify for support, they must make a positive and lasting difference to local people and the local environment.

To date, United Futures has delivered 74 bespoke projects, unlocked more than £3m, and improved more than 71,000 square metres of land – the equivalent of 10 Wembley football pitches!

Turning on the investment tap

Neighbourhoods across the North West can look forward to a greener, cleaner and healthier future, thanks to United Futures.

United Utilities has committed £300k to the flagship regeneration programme for the 2009/10 financial year – spelling great news for scores of worthwhile community schemes.

Over the last 18 months, United Futures has delivered more than 70 local projects, from a subway renovation in Salford to a Victorian community garden in Wigan.

The latest funding pledge is expected to unlock more than a million pounds for local projects, thanks to match funding from other sources, such as the National Lottery and local authorities.

Martin Howarth, Partnership Manager for United Futures said: "The funding commitment means the programme can continue full steam ahead, which is great news for local communities.

"We have some exciting initiatives in the pipeline, which will improve the quality of life for thousands of people."

Employees at United Utilities will have plenty of



Contents

[click on the page number]

- 2 Crowning glory for bowling club ...
Children put art and soul into Gorton reservoir
- 3 Creating a buzz in the park ... We care 'allot'!
- 4 Beating a path to nature ... 'Natural' playground lets children's imaginations soar
- 5 Green dream for Crewe housing estate ...
Subway goes from gloom to bloom
- 6 A flood of support in Carlisle ...
What the papers say
- 7/8 Print-friendly pages

chance to muck in, by taking part in volunteer days across the region.

■ If you fancy getting your hands dirty this year, please contact Jan Potter at United Utilities.

Tel: 01925 237018 or email

jan.potter@uuplc.co.uk

Crowning glory for bowling club

A Widnes sports club that has made crown green bowls trendy and accessible for young people is to receive a cash boost to improve its facilities.

Moorfield Sports and Social Club's junior bowling team has taken the image of the sport from flat caps and pipes to baseball caps and baggy jeans. It boasts more than 30 members aged 6 to 16 – with many more clamouring to join.

Pledge

United Futures has pledged £20,000 to revive the bowling green at Crow Wood Community Gardens on Bancroft Road, which has been in disuse for a number of years.

Joe Argent, one of the team's coaches said: "The sport is getting really popular among young people in the area and we simply can't keep up with demand.

"This project will provide a second, high quality green, which will allow us to involve even more young people and adults in the area in this fabulous game."



Children put art and soul into Gorton reservoir

Primary school students have been helping to transform Gorton reservoir into an art-lovers' paradise.

Children from three local primary schools worked with a professional artist to dream up designs for a series of new sculptures at the reservoir complex near Debdale Park.

The £60,000 project, funded by United Futures, will see stunning artwork installed at the reservoir in the next few months, inspired by the wildlife and history of the area.

United Utilities, which owns and maintains the reservoir, has spent the past 15 months improving the reservoir site with new 'spillways' to capture overflow water.

Jim Tresnan from United Utilities said: "Our engineers have been a permanent fixture at the reservoir for more than a year now, and we felt this project was the perfect way to hand the site back to local people. We're hoping that the sculptures will become a real talking point, and will inspire many more people to make use of the site."



Creating a buzz in the park

An oak tree has come alive at Reddish Vale Country Park in Stockport, taking on the form of a mysterious bearded man.

The jaw-dropping wooden sculpture is the handiwork of Tim Burgess, a champion chainsaw carver from Tatton Park, Cheshire. The 2 metre high figure, fashioned from an oak log, was commissioned by United Futures to encourage lapsed visitors to rediscover the park.

The leaf-draped sculpture, dubbed the 'green man', can be found at the Exeter Road entrance to the park. The site has also been brightened up with a colourful new floor mural, designed by children at Westmorland Primary School, and new signage featuring designs from young people at Brinnington Youth Centre.

Tim said: "The sculpture took me around two days to complete and visitors seem to be very taken with the results. I hope that the 'green man' will be a local talking point for many years to come."

We care allot!

An allotment site in Gorton is enjoying green shoots of recovery, thanks to the efforts of water giant United Utilities.

Fourteen hardy volunteers from the company teamed up with environmental charity Groundwork to clear derelict plots at Gorton Reservoir Allotments, Alston Road.

Wrestling with weeds

Volunteers spent a day wrestling with weeds, hacking at hedges and tackling tenacious trees. The team's efforts will ensure that the newly pristine plots can now be rented out to the local community.

Elaine Billington from United Utilities said: "It was back-breaking work, but we all thoroughly enjoyed getting muddy, to help this allotment site bloom.

"Seeing just how much we had achieved at the end of the day really helped to take the mind off those blisters and aching limbs!"



Beating a path to nature

Residents in the Halton View area of Widnes are enjoying a route to rural tranquillity, thanks to the efforts of a hardy group of volunteers.

United Utilities employees helped to rejuvenate an overgrown and neglected path near the Mersey Valley Reprocessing Centre at Shell Green. The path connects a major housing estate to the Spike Island Nature Reserve and the Sankey Canal.

Volunteers

Volunteers rolled up their sleeves to relay the 200 metre path in recycled stone. The move will help to improve the health of local children and adults, by encouraging them to explore the scenic

splendour on their doorsteps.

Paul Sellars from United Utilities said: "We were keen to give something back to the local community, and this project was an ideal opportunity.

Direct route

"The path is a direct route to some wonderful walks, and is sure to help local people to enjoy the great outdoors."



'Natural' playground lets children's imaginations soar

A groundbreaking 'natural' playground is to set to bring wonder to break time at Rochdale's Newhey Community Primary School.

The play area, which will be created on an unused patch of land within the school grounds, will use tunnels, climbing rocks, den areas, balancing beams, grass mounds and an orchard to encourage the children to play creatively.

Work on the wonderland will begin in February

this year. Funding for the imaginative £28,500 scheme has come courtesy of United Futures, with additional cash from the National Lottery.

United Utilities has been working at the nearby Piethorne and Wickenhall Water Treatment Works to boost water quality – and was keen to help the school realise its vision. The company even plans to add a water theme to the play area, by using redundant pipes.

Catherine Charnock from United Utilities said: "Our contractor, KMI+, has been working in the Newhey area over the last two years, and we have got to know the students and the teachers well. We felt that the playground was a wonderful project, and are delighted that we can help to bring the plans to life. It will be a fantastic resource for pupils, and for the wider community."



Subway goes from gloom to bloom

A community in Salford is celebrating light at the end of the tunnel for a once gloomy subway.

United Utilities stepped in to revamp the 'no go' subway at Gilda Brook Road, after completing a major sewer improvement scheme in the area. New lighting, a clean-up operation and the creation of a welcoming community woodland at the entrance all helped to improve the site.

David Lees, Chairman of the local residents' association said of the United Futures funded scheme: "We're thrilled with the way the project has turned out. It's gone from being a no-go area to a lovely community space which we can all take pride in."

Green dream for Crewe housing estate

A housing estate in the West End of Crewe has been turned into a green and pleasant land, thanks to a funding boost from United Futures.

The Derby Docks estate, which has suffered from persistent problems with fly tipping and littering, has gained new secure recycling and rubbish collection points, new fencing and pathways, tree planting and public seating areas.

The scheme was funded by United Futures and

Wulvern Housing Association, which owns the estate.

Cathy Ratcliffe from the water company said: "The investment has allowed tenants to take real pride in their estate, by tackling litter problems, encouraging recycling and making public spaces more secure and attractive."



A flood of support in Carlisle

When United Utilities launched a major two-year flood prevention initiative in Carlisle in 2008, project managers turned to United Futures to build relations with disrupted local communities.

The multi-million pound sewer expansion scheme is helping to prevent a recurrence of the extreme flooding experienced by the city in 2005, when 3,000 properties were submerged by water.

The programme of work has seen United Utilities' engineers become a regular fixture in the Warwick Road and Willowholme areas of the city.

By delivering a wide-ranging programme of community support, United Futures has been able to secure goodwill from inconvenienced communities.

Support has included a small grants scheme to help community groups; education work with local schools; a pledge to create of two new multi-use games areas, and a £25,000 cash boost for the popular Greystone Community Centre.

Caroline Brumwell from United Utilities explained: "Our engineers have been a permanent fixture in Carlisle for several months, and will continue to be



highly visible throughout 2009. It's a huge scheme, and an element of disruption is inevitable.

"United Futures has allowed us to get more closely involved in local community

life, which has been really important in building public goodwill and trust. This is helping the smooth delivery of the programme."

Later this year, work will begin on a brand new youth centre for Greystone Community Centre, thanks to £25,000 from United Futures. Greystone became the hub of the flood relief effort in the city in 2005, providing food and shelter for those displaced from their homes.

Caroline said: "We can't think of a more deserving local cause. The community centre is right at the heart of neighbourhood life, and provided a lifeline for local people during the floods. We're thrilled that we can help out."

■ If you would like to know more about United Futures work in Carlisle, please email Caroline Brumwell at caroline.brumwell@uuplc.co.uk or Eve Sadler at eve.sadler@groundwork.org.uk

What the papers say... **United Futures has been making headlines across the North West. In recent months, we have appeared in:**

- **Manchester Evening News** and **Salford Advertiser**, who covered our programme to renovate a gloomy local subway.
- **The Chester Chronicle**, **Nantwich Guardian**, **Crewe Chronicle** and **Ellesmere Port Pioneer**, who all reported on the launch of a new Cheshire eco-schools challenge.
- **Utility Week**, who featured United Futures in an in-depth piece on corporate social responsibility.
- **Carlisle News and Star** and the **Cumberland News**, who reported on our community grants programme for neighbourhood initiatives in the city, the creation of new play areas, and our funding pledge for Greystone Community Centre.
- **Stoke Sentinel**, who devoted a front page article to our rejuvenation programme for the Derby Docks estate.
- **Wigan Evening Post**, who reported on plans for a sensory garden at Oakfield School.
- **Lancashire Telegraph**, who ran a piece on a make-over given to the site of giant storm water tank at Knuzden Brook.
- **Rochdale Observer**, who reported on a landscaping project at Piethorne Reservoir.

Aimed at United Utilities and Groundwork employees, and stakeholders across the North West, the publication is an ideal way of keeping up-to-date with news from this exciting regeneration programme.

If you'd like to know more, please get in touch.

Martin Howarth

Partnership Manager, United Futures

Tel: 0161 237 3200

Email: martin.howarth@groundwork.org.uk

Turning on the investment tap

Neighbourhoods across the North West can look forward to a greener, cleaner and healthier future, thanks to United Futures.

United Utilities has committed £300k to the flagship regeneration programme for the 2009/10 financial year – spelling great news for scores of worthwhile community schemes.

Over the last 18 months, United Futures has delivered more than 70 local projects, from a subway renovation in Salford to a Victorian community garden in Wigan.

The latest funding pledge is expected to unlock more than a million pounds for local projects, thanks to match funding from other sources, such as the National Lottery and local authorities.

Martin Howarth, Partnership Manager for United Futures said: "The funding commitment means the programme can continue full steam ahead, which is great news for local communities.

"We have some exciting initiatives in the pipeline, which will improve the quality of life for thousands of people."

Employees at United Utilities will have plenty of chance to muck in, by taking part in volunteer days across the region.

- If you fancy getting your hands dirty this year, please contact Jan Potter at United Utilities. Tel: 01925 237018 or email jan.potter@uuplc.co.uk

Crowning glory for bowling club

A Widnes sports club that has made crown green bowls trendy and accessible for young people is to receive a cash boost to improve its facilities.

Moorfield Sports and Social Club's junior bowling team has taken the image of the sport from flat caps and pipes to baseball caps and baggy jeans. It boasts more than 30 members aged 6 to 16 – with many more clamouring to join.

United Futures has pledged £20,000 to revive the bowling green at Crow Wood Community Gardens on Bancroft Road, which has been in disuse for a number of years.

Joe Argent, one of the team's coaches said: "The sport is getting really popular among young people in the area and we simply can't keep up with demand.

"This project will provide a second, high quality green, which will allow us to involve even more young people and adults in the area in this fabulous game."

Children put art and soul into Gorton reservoir

Primary school students have been helping to transform Gorton reservoir into an art-lovers' paradise.

Children from three local primary schools worked with a professional artist to dream up designs for a series of new sculptures at the reservoir complex near Debdale Park.

The £60,000 project, funded by United Futures, will see stunning artwork installed at the reservoir in the next few months, inspired by the wildlife and history of the area.

United Utilities, which owns and maintains the reservoir, has spent the past 15 months improving the reservoir site with new 'spillways' to capture overflow water.

Jim Tresnan from United Utilities said: "Our engineers have been a permanent fixture at the reservoir for more than a year now, and we felt this project was the perfect way to hand the site back to local people. We're hoping that the sculptures will become a real talking point, and will inspire many more people to make use of the site."

Creating a buzz in the park

An oak tree has come alive at Reddish Vale Country Park in Stockport, taking on the form of a mysterious bearded man.

The jaw-dropping wooden sculpture is the handiwork of Tim Burgess, a champion chainsaw carver from Tatton Park, Cheshire. The 2 metre high figure, fashioned from an oak log, was commissioned by United Futures to encourage lapsed visitors to rediscover the park.

The leaf-draped sculpture, dubbed the 'green man', can be found at the Exeter Road entrance to the park. The site has also been brightened up with a colourful new floor mural, designed by children at Westmorland Primary School, and new signage featuring designs from young people at Brinnington Youth Centre.

Tim said: "The sculpture took me around two days to complete and visitors seem to be very taken with the results. I hope that the 'green man' will be a local talking point for many years to come."

What is United Futures?

United Futures is an imaginative regeneration programme run by United Utilities and environmental charity Groundwork.

The programme funds and delivers vital community schemes across the North West. Investment is focused in neighbourhoods where United Utilities is delivering major capital programmes.

For schemes to qualify for support, they must make a positive and lasting difference to local people and the local environment.

To date, United Futures has delivered 74 bespoke projects, unlocked more than £3m, and improved more than 71,000 square metres of land – the equivalent of 10 Wembley football pitches!

We care allot!

An allotment site in Gorton is enjoying green shoots of recovery, thanks to the efforts of water giant United Utilities.

Fourteen hardy volunteers from the company teamed up with environmental charity Groundwork to clear derelict plots at Gorton Reservoir Allotments, Alston Road.

Volunteers spent a day wrestling with weeds, hacking at hedges and tackling tenacious trees. The team's efforts will ensure that the newly pristine plots can now be rented out to the local community.

Elaine Billington from United Utilities said: "It was back-breaking work, but we all thoroughly enjoyed getting muddy, to help this allotment site bloom.

"Seeing just how much we had achieved at the end of the day really helped to take the mind off those blisters and aching limbs!"

Beating a path to nature

Residents in the Halton View area of Widnes are enjoying a route to rural tranquillity, thanks to the efforts of a hardy group of volunteers.

United Utilities employees helped to rejuvenate an overgrown and neglected path near the Mersey Valley Reprocessing Centre at Shell Green. The path connects a major housing estate to the Spike Island Nature Reserve and the Sankey Canal.

Volunteers rolled up their sleeves to relay the 200 metre path in recycled stone. The move will help to improve the

health of local children and adults, by encouraging them to explore the scenic splendour on their doorsteps.

Paul Sellars from United Utilities said: "We were keen to give something back to the local community, and this project was an ideal opportunity.

"The path is a direct route to some wonderful walks, and is sure to help local people to enjoy the great outdoors."

'Natural' playground lets children's imaginations soar

A groundbreaking 'natural' playground is to set to bring wonder to break time at Rochdale's Newhey Community Primary School.

The play area, which will be created on an unused patch of land within the school grounds, will use tunnels, climbing rocks, den areas, balancing beams, grass mounds and an orchard to encourage the children to play creatively.

Work on the wonderland will begin in February this year. Funding for the imaginative £28,500 scheme has come courtesy of United Futures, with additional cash from the National Lottery.

United Utilities has been working at the nearby Piethorne and Wickenhall Water Treatment Works to boost water quality – and was keen to help the school realise its vision. The company even plans to add a water theme to the play area, by using redundant pipes.

Catherine Charnock from United Utilities said: "Our contractor, KMI+, has been working in the Newhey area over the last two years, and we have got to know the students and the teachers well. We felt that the playground was a wonderful project, and are delighted that we can help to bring the plans to life. It will be a fantastic resource for pupils, and for the wider community."

Green dream for Crewe housing estate

A housing estate in the West End of Crewe has been turned into a green and pleasant land, thanks to a funding boost from United Futures.

The Derby Docks estate, which has suffered from persistent problems with fly tipping and littering, has gained new secure recycling and rubbish collection points, new fencing and pathways, tree planting and public seating areas.

The scheme was funded by United Futures and Wulvern Housing Association, which owns the estate.

Cathy Ratcliffe from the water company said: "The investment has allowed tenants to take real pride in their estate, by tackling litter problems, encouraging recycling and making public spaces more secure and attractive."

What the papers say...

United Futures has been making headlines across the North West. In recent months, we have appeared in:

- Manchester Evening News and Salford Advertiser, who covered our programme to renovate a gloomy local subway.
- The Chester Chronicle, Nantwich Guardian, Crewe Chronicle and Ellesmere Port Pioneer, who all reported on the launch of a new Cheshire eco-schools challenge.
- Utility Week, who featured United Futures in an in-depth piece on corporate social responsibility.
- Carlisle News and Star and the Cumberland News, who reported on our community grants programme for neighbourhood initiatives in the city, the creation of new play areas, and our funding pledge for Greystone Community Centre.
- Stoke Sentinel, who devoted a front page article to our rejuvenation programme for the Derby Docks estate.
- Wigan Evening Post, who reported on plans for a sensory garden at Oakfield School.
- Lancashire Telegraph, who ran a piece on a make-over given to the site of giant storm water tank at Knuzden Brook.
- Rochdale Observer, who reported on a landscaping project at Piethorne Reservoir.

A flood of support in Carlisle

When United Utilities launched a major two-year flood prevention initiative in Carlisle in 2008, project managers turned to United Futures to build relations with disrupted local communities.

The multi-million pound sewer expansion scheme is helping to prevent a recurrence of the extreme flooding experienced by the city in 2005, when 3,000 properties were submerged by water.

The programme of work has seen United Utilities' engineers become a regular fixture in the Warwick Road and Willowholme areas of the city.

By delivering a wide-ranging programme of community

support, United Futures has been able to secure goodwill from inconvenienced communities.

Support has included a small grants scheme to help community groups; education work with local schools; a pledge to create of two new multi-use games areas, and a £25,000 cash boost for the popular Greystone Community Centre.

Caroline Brumwell from United Utilities explained: "Our engineers have been a permanent fixture in Carlisle for several months, and will continue to be highly visible throughout 2009. It's a huge scheme, and an element of disruption is inevitable.

"United Futures has allowed us to get more closely involved in local community life, which has been really important in building public goodwill and trust. This is helping the smooth delivery of the programme."

Later this year, work will begin on a brand new youth centre for Greystone Community Centre, thanks to £25,000 from United Futures. Greystone became the hub of the flood relief effort in the city in 2005, providing food and shelter for those displaced from their homes.

Caroline said: "We can't think of a more deserving local cause. The community centre is right at the heart of neighbourhood life, and provided a lifeline for local people during the floods. We're thrilled that we can help out."

■ If you would like to know more about United Futures work in Carlisle, please email Caroline Brumwell at caroline.brumwell@uuplc.co.uk or Eve Sadler at eve.sadler@groundwork.org.uk

Subway goes from gloom to bloom

A community in Salford is celebrating light at the end of the tunnel for a once gloomy subway.

United Utilities stepped in to revamp the 'no go' subway at Gilda Brook Road, after completing a major sewer improvement scheme in the area. New lighting, a clean-up operation and the creation of a welcoming community woodland at the entrance all helped to improve the site.

David Lees, Chairman of the local residents' association said of the United Futures funded scheme: "We're thrilled with the way the project has turned out. It's gone from being a no-go area to a lovely community space which we can all take pride in."

For more information, contact Martin Howarth, Partnership Manager, United Futures
Tel: 0161 237 3200 Email: martin.howarth@groundwork.org.uk

