Government is actively leading and funding the physical regeneration of town and village centres across the Isle of Man to deliver real benefits to people who live, work and visit. This publication provides an update on the progress being achieved.
The day-to-day work of Regeneration has been led by Linda McCauley, who is based in the Council of Ministers Division, and Derek Sewell from the Department of Infrastructure.

Linda and Derek have worked closely with each local Regeneration Committee, the Chief Ministers Group and the designers and engineers working on the projects. They have recently been joined by Steven Stanley who is taking over the management of the town centre regeneration schemes whilst Linda moves to look at the regeneration of major sites across the Island.

This work is essential in helping to achieve the Government’s priority of stimulating economic growth.

The regeneration team includes officers spread throughout Government including the arts, heritage, engineers, designers and finance officers.

However, they don’t just work on regeneration. Derek is the Highways Network Planning Manager and his day to day job involves road safety, highway planning and project management, while Linda oversees a range of projects involving sites outside the regeneration zones.

The work has been focused on three phases. Firstly, to establish the foundations by setting up six Local Regeneration Committees, asking the communities about regeneration priorities and agreeing six regeneration masterplans.

Secondly, to undertake detailed design for the pilot and main projects, consult on these and obtain planning approval where required.

Finally, to start the construction work.

In three short years, the foundations have been completed, the detailed designs and planning approvals have been either completed or well underway in all six regeneration areas and construction has been completed on two pilots in Douglas and Ramsey, the main Ramsey project is under construction and all the remaining areas should commence this year.

Linda said: ‘Working with the local communities of Commissioners and Businesses has been very rewarding. Each area has really thought through what will make their town or village work better both for locals and as accessible visitor destinations. We have had plenty of lively discussions but everyone is focused on making more of their centres.’

**Helping to create the ‘Wow factor’**

The regeneration work has spurred local areas into organising events and marketing themselves. Castletown in partnership with Manx National Heritage had a very successful Christmas event when Castletown was relaunched as ‘Tinsel Town’.

Ramsey organised a Children in Need Christmas lantern parade which brought locals and visitors into the town on a night when they might otherwise have stayed at home.

Douglas arranged a European Food and Craft Fair — This event was specifically designed to generate footfall in Douglas town centre in the run up to Christmas. Events such as this generate an overall economic benefit to businesses in the surrounding area.

This proved to be the case in Douglas with the majority of businesses reporting increased footfall and turnover during the period of the event.

In addition, many of those who reported a neutral impact on their own businesses recognised the value of these sorts of events to the town centre overall. The town centre regeneration scheme in Douglas is specifically including sites for street trading activity to take place by ensuring sufficient space between street furniture and facilities such as electricity supplies.

Douglas also had a Christmas Ice Sculpture — The initiative arose from public consultation workshops which were part of the early design process for the town centre, a recurrent theme was that every visit to Douglas was the same, everyone always knew what to expect and consequently were bored by the experience.

As a result, one important objective of the event programme has been to provide visitors with something unexpected or unusual. Subjective objectives like this can sometimes be hard to measure. However, judging by the ‘Ooohs’ and ‘Wows’ heard in Regent Street that day, this event certainly achieved this objective.

**Meet the Regen team …**

![Image of Linda McCauley, Steven Stanley and Derek Sewell]

The regeneration team is supported by officers spread throughout Government including the arts, heritage, engineers, designers and finance officers.

Meet the Regen team ...

Everyone is focused on making more of their town and village centres — Regeneration Manager Linda McCauley

REGENERATION TEAM: Linda McCauley (left), Steven Stanley (centre) and Derek Sewell
Government is actively leading and funding the physical regeneration of our town and village centres across the Isle of Man to deliver real benefits to people who live, work and visit.

Our towns and villages are recognised as important focal points of everyday life, as well as providers of local jobs. They are a visible indicator of how well or how badly, our economy is doing.

Government realised in 2009 that our town and village centres were looking a little shabby and often lacked a focal point or heart for socialising. The bus and coach stops serving the centres were not always in the best condition or in the best place for people to access the shops and leisure facilities. The pavements were narrow and uneven and the lighting was outdated and expensive to run.

The Government agreed to inject £8m into our village and town centres to make them look more inviting, be a great place to shop, have other things going on, be distinctive and become places for socialising and for entertainment — more than just retail centres.

The Chief Ministers Regeneration Steering Group oversees the regeneration work across the Island. The Chief Minister, Allan Bell together with the Treasury Minister, Eddie Teare, Economic Minister, John Shimmin and Infrastructure Minister, David Cretney are focused on making our centres look better and be able to support and help to grow the local economies.

They see that having vibrant, thriving and accessible centres builds confidence in the Island as a resilient and resourceful country. The quality of the regeneration workmanship will demonstrate that we are a country which is an international business centre with a flair for innovation.

Chief Minister, Allan Bell said: 'Local Regeneration Committees were established in Douglas, Ramsey, Laxey, Peel, Castletown and the South West (Port Erin and Port St Mary) with local people from the business community and from the local authorities. They are all chaired by a member of Tynwald and have local MHKs too. In fact, they are unique in bringing together local and national politicians and local businesses. The focus of the Committees has been to consult with the community, draw up a regeneration zone and a Master Plan for regeneration for their areas'.

Six Masterplans, one for each of the Regeneration Zones, have been agreed by the Chief Ministers Group. The Regeneration Masterplans set out the priority projects for each centre. These developments are intended to build on the strengths of the town or village and act as catalysts for future growth and investment. The key aim of the Masterplans is to use the regeneration funding to provide physical improvements to the centres to take them forward over the next decade.

Chairman of Laxey Regeneration Committee, Steve Ronan said: 'The Laxey Committee has worked really hard to consult with the community and work up plans for an improved coach park to welcome visitors to Laxey and direct them to the various attractions. We have also prioritised the creation of a village square at the Rose Gardens, as a focal point for those arriving by coach or tram and linking in better with the retail area. We want to make more of our attractions and link them up so visitors from on and off Island will feel welcomed, enjoy their visit and stay longer. This helps and supports the local economy.'
The first phase of the regeneration of Castletown’s town centre is now a step closer with the pilot project having received planning approval.

Works to George Lane can now go ahead and will see this important link to the main square enhanced with new paving, lighting and street furniture. An improved coach stop area is also included with the aim of giving visitors a good first impression when they arrive.

The pilot project will lead the way for further enhancements to the town centre all aimed at supporting the current visitor offer of Castletown, generating further economic investment and encouraging people to spend more time in the historic town.

The Castletown Regeneration Committee, which has been the driving force behind the scheme, is conscious that any changes to the town will be around for a long time and therefore realises the importance of getting it right. For this reason, the Committee is currently reviewing the proposals for the next phases of regeneration to check that the aspirations of the community will be met in a manner which gives value for money.

Richard Ronan MHK, who chairs the Castletown Regeneration Committee, commented: ‘As someone who has lived in the town all of my life, the most important thing about regenerating our town to me, is to ensure that the whole community benefits by sharing responsibility for the success of our regeneration projects.

‘We are one of the most visited towns on the Island already, and collectively we need to ensure that visitors stay and embrace the whole town not just attractions or events.’

He added: ‘Local businesses, the towns
Continued on page 5
Work started in 2012 to help improve sections of the promenade in Port Erin

Work started on the first regeneration scheme along the Port Erin Promenade in September 2012.

The villages of Port Erin and Port St Mary made an historic move when they agreed to work together on regeneration. A great deal of discussion and thought has gone into their plans for the two areas and finally a vision for what was needed to regenerate the South West emerged.

The Committee realised early on in their deliberations that whilst the two villages had many attractions from retail to beaches, glens and harbours; they were mainly a summer or good weather destination.

The villages needed to become more year round destinations, to make their retail areas look more attractive and to join up the lower beach in Port Erin with

Exciting concepts and ideas

commissioners, community leaders, and residents all have important roles in the towns plans. Above all we all wish to ensure that any plans implemented and investments made, are in the long term interests of our town and its people, whilst ensuring sustained growth and increased prosperity.’

The overall aim is to make the most of Castletown’s existing assets such as the Castle, harbour, shopping streets and historic buildings, all of which already generate impressive visitor numbers.

The key is to enhance these in a manner which will stand the test of time whilst also introducing new attractions where possible.

The work carried out so far has generated an exciting range of concepts and ideas ranging from smaller scale improvement works through to more ambitious schemes.

The Committee is keen to encourage applications for funding towards works which will assist in the regeneration of Castletown.

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Projects supported in Castletown by the Regeneration Fund:
Castle Rushen precincts – concepts design
20 Malew Street – repairs and painting
Parking Study
Castletown Station – signage and paint
Shoprite, Arbory Street, painting and lighting

A great deal of discussion and thought has gone into their plans for the two areas and finally a vision for what was needed to regenerate the South West emerged.

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The villages needed to become more year round destinations, to make their retail areas look more attractive and to join up the lower beach in Port Erin with

Villages working together on a vision for the future

Work started in 2012 to help improve sections of the promenade in Port Erin

Continued on page 6
the retail area and the Port St Mary shops with Chapel beach and the harbour. These challenges have proved difficult to achieve but the local businesses and the commissions have worked hard with the local MHKs to prioritise environmental improvements schemes. The regeneration Master Plan has four main elements:

- Create a gateway to Port Erin at the Railway station by improving the Station and making it the public transport hub for the south west. Trains and busses will arrive and depart from an attractive building with cafe and toilet facilities, the public space in front and to the side of the building leading to the Transport Museum will be greatly enhanced through paving, public art and seating. The Gateway directly links the visitors to the retail area and also to the beach.
  - Environmental improvements to Port Erin’s lower promenade to provide a better and safer visitor experience. This is a small regeneration scheme with limited funding from the Fund to enable Department of Infrastructure to build wider, quality pavements, new crossings and provide an area for cafe culture. This work started in September 2012.
  - Improvements to the retail heart of Port St Mary through street works along Bay View Road of paving, landscaping, street furniture and public art. The improvements will direct visitors to the village and provide a more welcoming approach to the retail area, making it more of a destination.
  - Pedestrian and vehicular signage improvements together with public art installations will encourage visitors to enter the villages rather than to bypass them for the more publicised attractions such the Cregneash and the Sound.

The Port St Mary and Port Erin Commissioners and the local businesses have really taken on regeneration and undertaken complimentary events and works such as the Port Erin Fireworks night and the Port St Mary revamp of the Town Hall making it fit for a wide range of events and creating a community heart to the village.

Local business man and member of the South West Regeneration Committee, Steve George said: ‘We established the Port Erin Traders Association which is local businesses working together to make more of our area.

He added: ‘Whilst it is great to have new pavements, lighting and street furniture, we have got to provide shops that look inviting and events to attract visitors.’

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Projects supported in Port Erin and Port St Mary by the Regeneration Fund:
Tower Building, Strand Road, Port Erin – Painting work and repairs
17 Station Road, Port Erin – windows and painting
Thompson Travel, 39 Strand Road, Port Erin
Heritage Trail, Port St Mary
Flag Poles and Christmas Tree sockets around retail units, Port Erin
Marina House, Bay View Road, Port St Mary – Windows

Phil Gawne MHK chairs the South West Regeneration Committee which is supporting projects to improve the visual appearance of public areas and commercial properties in Port Erin and Port St Mary.

Major improvements in the pipeline for South West
Excitement building as capital starts to take shape

An update from David Cretney MHK, Chairman of the Douglas Regeneration Committee

Anyone who has seen the transformation of upper and lower Nelson Street and Wellington Street will no doubt share my excitement at what is now a modern, high quality pedestrian link from Shaw’s Brow down to the main retail area of Douglas.

This initial phase of regeneration has been completed on schedule and the results speak for themselves. Gone is the tired, dreary surfacing, replaced by quality materials which are now complimented by new lighting and street furniture.

A few finishing touches are still to be added but I believe what has been achieved demonstrates just how important investment in our town and village centres is.

It is now time to turn to the most important phase of the works. Most would agree that the main shopping street in Douglas has a rundown appearance, offers limited places for shoppers to sit and does not adequately support our retailers.

In its current state it does not reflect the excellent economic environment that the Island has to offer.

The Douglas Regeneration Committee believes that a quality public realm is essential to a successful town centre. We want to support existing businesses and attract new investment.

The Island is faring better than many of its competitors in terms of town centre vitality but we cannot rest on our laurels. We must take this opportunity to raise our game in order to ensure future economic success.

The next phase will cover the main shopping streets along with the linkages to the Promenade. The existing poor quality surfacing will be replaced with granite sets, access for pedestrians will be enhanced, seating areas will be integrated and planting will be introduced. Meanwhile, complimentary signage and information boards will improve the legibility of the town centre.

The regeneration scheme will bring a uniform quality to our shopping streets, provide for the community and make our town centre more attractive and fit for purpose. Visitors will see that Douglas is a vibrant, cosmopolitan Capital with much to offer, whilst residents will feel proud of their environment.

The road to success will inevitably bring with it some disruption to normal everyday life. However this will be relatively short-term and the

Creating a high quality public realm is essential to a successful town centre

— Douglas Chairman David Cretney MHK
Some exciting new looks are planned for Douglas

Improvements will result in new economic benefits

I believe that the regeneration of Douglas is essential if we are to achieve long-term economic success. It will bring challenges but by working together we can deliver meaningful and lasting change.

DOUGLAS

work schedule will seek to minimise upheaval and will avoid the busy Christmas period.

The project team will work with businesses to ensure that the works happen as quickly as possible with the minimum level of interruption to retailers.

Lessons learned from the pilot scheme tell us that communication is key and to that end the project team will endeavour to keep businesses up to date and as always we welcome your feedback.

As well as focussing on the improvements to our streets, the Regeneration Fund is also providing assistance to shop keepers who wish to improve the condition and appearance of their buildings in order to attract customers and strengthen their long term viability.

This ongoing investment means that Strand Street and its linkages will be a more attractive place for people to visit which in turn will bring economic benefits to businesses.

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New paving has helped to transform Wellington Street into an attractive access route into the heart of the Douglas retail zone, while wooden fencing and planters improved the appearance of Douglas bus area in Lord Street.
An overview of the next Douglas project

**DOUGLAS**

The resurfacing of Strand Street and its connecting streets is long overdue. The surface is a mixture of outdated, poor quality materials which undermine the appearance of the area.

The proposed scheme will bring the town centre into the 21st Century and will make it a much more attractive place to visit.

Unfortunately, the slab which sits below the surface is in very poor condition and requires replacement before resurfacing can take place.

At the same time the Service Providers are taking the opportunity either to upgrade their existing service and/or make provision for the future with new ducting/supplies.

These factors add to the cost and timescale of the works but are essential in ensuring that the new surfacing will be a long lasting investment.

We are hoping to commence works in March 2013 working up to mid November 2013. Works will commence again in January 2014, after Christmas, and will run until the end of October 2014, breaking again for Christmas.

**Main issues affecting the regeneration works in Douglas:**

- Busy thoroughfares which are pedestrianised for most of the day;
- Underground services require replacement;
- The streets are relatively narrow;
- The existing underground slab requires replacement;
- Access needs to be maintained during the works;
- Delivery and service vehicles require supervision by designated banksmen.

Similarly, in January 2015 works will restart with a planned end date of the end of October 2015. We will be using two work gangs, working 15 hour shifts, 6 days per week (excluding Saturdays) in order to speed the project up as much as possible.

During the period of the works, shopkeepers or owners of buildings in the area are asked to enquire about whether any improvements to their buildings, particularly involving scaffolding will need to be scheduled around the regeneration works.

**Nelson Street with street furniture inspired by Archibald Knox designs**

Polishing one of the jewels in the Isle of Man’s crown

**LAXEY**

Laxey is one of the jewels in the Isle of Man’s crown.

It has so many attractions ranging from the iconic Wheel, to the bustling tram station and down to the marvellous beach that the first difficult job for the Laxey Regeneration Committee was to work out what needed to be done to make more of the attractions and where should be the priorities.

The Committee was not daunted by the task but set out consulting widely and focused on making more of what was there to try and persuade people to stay longer and explore more of the village. The consultation took some time but eventually, the regeneration masterplan was complete with four priorities.

- Create a bigger, more attractive square in the centre of the retail area creating a heart for Laxey. The Square needs to link the tram station which brings lots of visitors to Laxey with the retail area and the Coach stop. This proposal is working well with the Department of Community Culture’s and Leisure’s plans to improve the Tram Station.
- Improve the Coach Park at the end of Mines Road so that coach passengers feel
welcomed and know they have arrived at a quality destination. The Coach Park needs to have information about the many attractions and a safe way to alight from the coaches. This proposal is working together with the Tourism Division in Department of Economic Development who are reviewing the destinations for visitors.

- Improve the paving from the Coach park to the Rose Garden and the main bridge so that pedestrians can feel safe and able to explore the various parts of Laxey.
- Install new pedestrian signage and public art to help people find their way to the various attractions and give them interesting things to look at on the way and in the vicinity.

Good progress is being made on the four priorities.

A link bus was introduced on a trial basis in 2012 to provide a hop-on hop-off service between attractions. Detailed designs have been completed for the Square and the Coach park and planning approval has been given. This took a little longer than expected because of the need to work with heritage bodies. An application for regeneration funding is expected soon and work should commence in the autumn. Four artists are looking at public art installations for the village which make the most of the industrial heritage and the links with water and sport which are part of Laxey’s culture.

Richard Henthorn is a business member of the Laxey Committee; he has been actively involved in driving the work forward.

Richard said: ‘The regeneration of Laxey is a work in progress, it is taking a long time because we have tried to involve locals and we have had to work through the planning process for approvals for the Tram Station and Square. This year should see some work on the ground and it will hopefully be good for supporting the retailers and businesses in Laxey.’

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Projects supported in Laxey:
Laxey and Lonan Heritage Trust – new canopy, window and outside seating area
Alexander Buildings, 37 New Road – Painting
27-29 New Road – Repairs and Painting
39 New Road – Awnings
43 New Road – Painting and Facia
Maylroie House – Painting
Whitehouse Buildings – Painting and repairs
Whitehouse Close – Painting and repairs
Projects aim to make the most of Peel’s assets

Peel’s regeneration is underway with the Department of Infrastructure’s improvements in Derby Road and Athol Street.

These works, which are not funded by the Regeneration Fund, involve the replacement of worn out and uneven pavements and kerbs with new paving in rose pink paving blocks which blend well with the predominant sandstone of Peel.

In addition, the carriageway in Derby Road has been reconstructed to enable the replacement of a water main.

The Peel Regeneration Committee has been fully supportive of these works because they will complement their planned regeneration projects.

After consulting with the public, the Peel Committee wanted to make more of the retail area around Michael Street.

Tim Crookall, who chairs the Peel Committee said: ‘It is clear that lots more people are visiting Peel especially the Marina and the Promenade but they are usually staying on the Quayside, along the front or on the beach. The extra visitors are great for Peel but they are not wandering up the various streets and lanes into the shopping area. We need them there to support the local retailers.’

Looking at the regeneration projects, the Committee prioritised them to lead people to the retail centre and to make them feel that they had arrived somewhere. The projects are:

- Market Place, part Douglas Street, part Michael Street environmental improvements which will involve new paving, lighting, public art, making parking more attractive and convenient including bicycle parking.

- Derby Road is the pilot project and will commence later this year. The environmental improvements to the lower part of the road will be linked by new quality paving around the bus stop, a new surface treatment to the road, new seating, lighting and a new Bus stopping area especially designed to make waiting for the bus and getting on and off a more pleasurable experience for visitors and residents alike.

- The Department of

Continued on page 12
Infrastructure will be undertaking an improvement to the pavements and roadway between the Marine Hotel and the promenade kiosk, to improve safety and try to lead visitors up the routes into Orry Lane and Michael Street.
  • Signage and Public Art are really important for Peel so that visitors can find their way from the bus stop into the shops and from the Marina and the Prom up into the town. The road signage has already been improved but new pedestrian signs will be installed as part of each project. Art has played a big part in Peel culture and three artists have been commissioned to undertake public art work around the town.

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New signage and artwork will feature in improvements

PEEL

Tim Crookall MHK, Chair of the Peel Committee

The use of vibrant colours help to give the town a lift

Transforming the heart of Ramsey’s central retail area

RAMSEY

The New Year will mean a new look for Ramsey thanks to the ongoing regeneration work which is improving the appearance of the town centre.

The project is progressing well with the area surrounding the Post Office nearing completion. High quality materials have been used in a design which emphasises the importance of this central area of the town.

The scheme includes a new hard landscaped area to the front of the Post Office which will provide space for people to meet and sit. Lighting is being used extensively to add to the character of the area.

Finishing touches including new benches, bins and signage are being installed which will complete the transformation to a high quality public space.

The next section of the works in this area will be the intersections which link Parliament Street to Court Row and Market Hill. These works will be undertaken early in 2013 and will take approximately four weeks to complete.

During this time, the area will be closed to vehicular traffic but pedestrian access will be maintained. The small

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The initial phase of work in Ramsey centred on improving the street surfaces in The Lanes
The Isle of Man is a quality business centre and needs the infrastructure to match — Ramsey Chairman Allan Bell MHK

Better environments help to raise community pride

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area where water has been pooling will also be rectified at this time.

The works are affected by periods of low temperature and heavy rainfall however during such inclement weather the team continue by installing street furniture, lighting and planting.

The works have been carefully managed in order to ensure that key milestones were met, including the opening up of the War Memorial in time for Remembrance Day and the Christmas lights ‘switch on’ on 16 November.

Chris Blatcher, Chairman of the Ramsey Chamber of Commerce said: ‘We are very excited that the works are coming to fruition. The project team has worked very hard and the results are very impressive and we were particularly pleased that the Christmas lights were able to be switched on earlier than originally planned.

‘The comments received from customers with regard to the work that has been finished to date have been very positive and we look forward to seeing the benefits of the regeneration works on retail trade in Ramsey.’

Chief Minister and Ramsey MHK Allan Bell commented: ‘The improvements to this part of Ramsey demonstrate why the regeneration of our town and village centres is so important. An enhanced public environment raises community pride, encourages new investment and supports the message that the Isle of Man is a quality business centre with the infrastructure to match.’

The key aims of the regeneration scheme are to improve the appearance of the Island’s towns and village centres, support existing local businesses and to encourage new economic investment.

Around 150 projects in seven towns and villages have already benefited from funding, or have applied for grant assistance. Several more bids are in the pipeline.

Ramsey is showing the benefits of regeneration

Work has helped to transform the area around the Ramsey Courthouse
Businesses ranging from shops, cafes, estate agents, pubs and travel agents have been successful in securing funding from Regeneration to improve their premises.

Coffee Republic on Victoria Street, Douglas applied for and received regeneration funding towards the cost of a new folding, glass shop front to make the most of its position on the busy Victoria Street pavement. The shop front was installed and ready for the opening of the business.

Proprietors, Jason Lowe and Paul Mellor said: 'We were absolutely delighted to receive regeneration funding for the new Coffee Republic coffee shop.

'Launching a new business is always worrying and there is no doubt that the offer of funding made all the difference in terms of making this business a success. Our customers love the specially designed windows which make the most of our location and the Victoria Street pavement.'

Ramsey has had the largest number of regeneration applications for funding and many of the shops in and around Parliament Street have been painted, had new roofs, new guttering and new shop fronts.

The improvement to the look of the shopping street is really noticeable. Mrs Norma Homer, who owns the building occupied by 'Sam Harvey' Hairdressers and Beauty salon on Parliament Street said: 'Ramsey was looking very down at heel two years ago but the regeneration money has helped businesses to improve.

'We have used local tradesmen and they have transformed our premises making the building look more modern and welcoming.

Guidance for those seeking funding

If you own or lease a property within or abutting a designated regeneration area then it may be eligible for regeneration funding to improve the external appearance of the property.

Improvements can include painting, new signs, lighting, renewing guttering, scaffolding, roof and window repairs but the improvements must be to the outside of the property and they should not be undertaken before an application is submitted and agreed.

There are some additional criteria for eligibility such as the property must be of a commercial nature, have public access and you must try to obtain 3 quotes for each aspect of the work.

In order to assist you in making an application to the fund an Information and Guidance for applicants booklet and an application form is available online at www.gov.im/ded/Regeneration/

If you are considering submitting a regeneration application, then you are advised to contact the Regeneration Manager, Steven Stanley (687371 or steven.stanley3@cso.gov.im) who can help with the completion of the form and advise on the level of financial assistance you may wish to seek.