Sure Start Redcar Coast & Dormanstown is a Round 5c Programme and as such received approval in September 2002.

A considerable amount of consultation with local parents was conducted throughout the development period of the Delivery Plan. Subsequently, information obtained from consultation informed the Delivery Plan.

Consultation Events during this period included:

- Redcar Town Centre consultation event utilising the East Cleveland Playbus.
- Christmas consultation event
- Parent consultation lunches at all local primary schools
- Parent consultation at Toddler Groups and Health Visitor led baby clinics
- Trips to Eureka in Halifax and a local farm
- Parents Pamper day
- Visit to Parents Network Event at Sure Start East Cleveland
- Ongoing consultation through Early Services i.e. Story Sacks sessions and Home Start

Parents were actively involved in the Steering Group that supported and informed the development of the Delivery Plan.

Consultation at this stage was approached using two questionnaires, one which asked parents to indicate their preference for services and one which requested that they provide information on existing services plus identifying their preferred location for Sure Start buildings.

Specific themes emerged throughout the consultation process and are summarised as follows:

- A lack of play activities for children in particular a need for crèche provision allowing parents the opportunity to pursue other things or simply have a break
- The need for more locally based health advice sessions
- The need for accessible Citizens Advice sessions
- A lack of play facilities for under 4’s in local parks
- Not enough accessible training opportunities for parents when childcare is an issue

Whilst parent consultation is ongoing and will inform the direction of the Programme, the above findings have already resulted in:

- 4 creche sessions per week at our newly launched venue-St. Peters Church, accommodating 10 children per session
• Stay and Play session once a week at Dormanstown
• The development of a 40 place Neighbourhood Nursery at the Dormanstown Sure Start building
• Several trips and family fun events
• Parent and Toddler swimming sessions
• Library sessions using Story Sacks
• A breast feeding support group facilitated by a health visitor and a lactation consultant. A range of locally based health advice sessions will be available as buildings are completed
• Early Years Counselling Service
• Two Citizens Advice sessions per week
• Installation of play equipment into Zetland Park
• A range of training opportunities which reflect the needs and requests of parents, and have crèche provision

The Capital Strategy for the Programme has developed in accordance with parent views on location of buildings. They are actively involved in all decision making regarding Sure Start buildings.

The Parents Network provides a forum to consult regularly with parents and their views are fed into Management Group and acted upon accordingly.

All Sure Start activities and events are evaluated by individual team members. The Programme Manager, Play Development Co-ordinator, Community Development Co-ordinator, Family Resource Worker and Speech and Language Therapy Assistant are scheduled to attend an evaluation training event facilitated by the University of Teesside.

The 4 Sure Start Programmes in Redcar and Cleveland have commissioned the University of Teesside Research Department to evaluate individual programmes and this work will commence in May 2003.

The findings from consultation and evaluation since approval will inform a planning day in September 2003 to set targets for Quarters 3 and 4.

Strategic Manager
Redcar and East Cleveland Programmes
Julie Connors

Email: Surestart.ec@ukonline.co.