

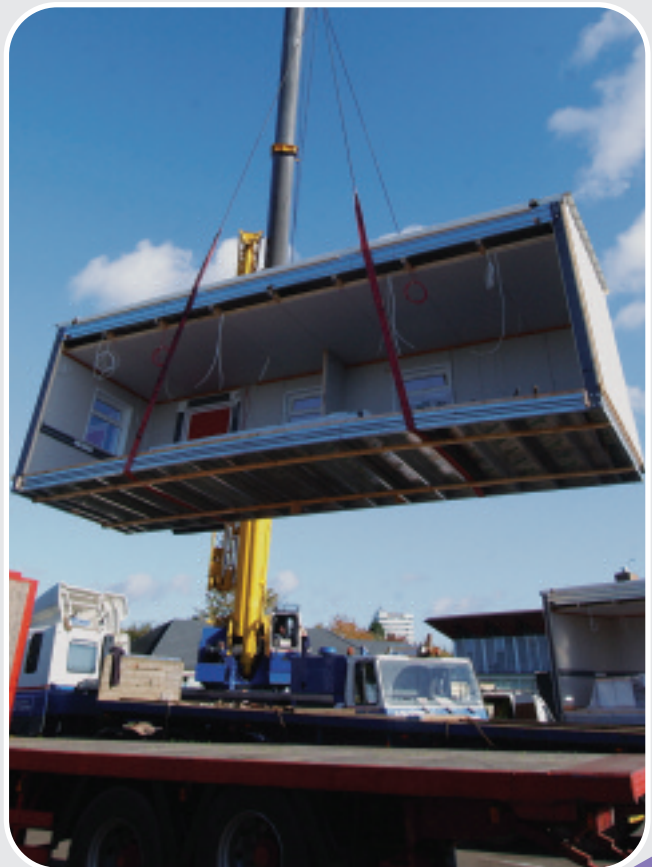
MAKING IT EASIER TO KEEP LEARNING

FUNDED BY: Greets Green Partnership provided funding for the Community Access Points (CAPs) project, including a CAPs Manager and team of Community Learning Workers, for two years until August 2006. The responsibility for the CAPs has now been given to management groups at each centre.

PROJECT BACKGROUND: Part of the original vision for Greets Green was to provide centres where local residents could engage in education and lifelong learning activities. Greets Green Partnership and the Local Education Authority were keen to involve residents in the decision making, so they asked community arts organisation, The Public, to carry out a survey to find out where and how residents wanted to learn and what facilities were already available.

A total of 1,200 people were involved in the consultation which revealed that not only was there a need for some new facilities but also that residents wanted to have access to people who could offer help and support. This resulted in a rethinking of the original plan and led to the creation of a small team of workers as well as some new buildings. CAPs were placed in both schools and in some local community centres.

At the same time as the project developed, the Government produced a paper called 'Extended Schools: Access to Opportunities and Services For All' which includes the vision that by 2010



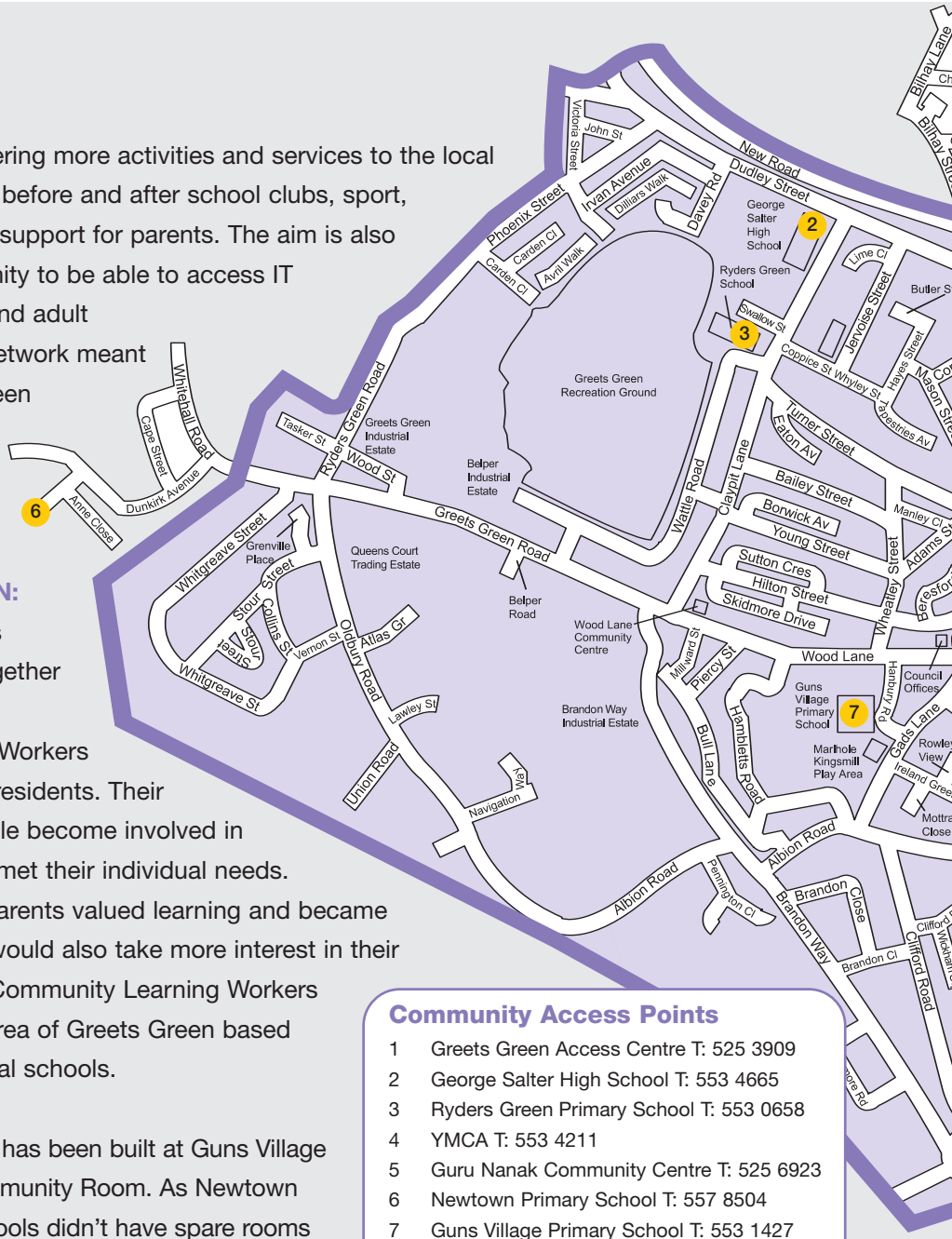
The CAPs at Newtown and Lyng primary schools were craned-in as new, purpose-built units.

all schools will be offering more activities and services to the local community, including before and after school clubs, sport, homework clubs and support for parents. The aim is also for the wider community to be able to access IT facilities, sport, arts and adult learning. The CAPs network meant that all the Greet's Green schools were well placed to support this new programme.

PROJECT IN ACTION:

A CAPs Manager was appointed in 2004 together with a small team of Community Learning Workers which included local residents. Their role was to help people become involved in learning in ways that met their individual needs. It was hoped that if parents valued learning and became involved again, they would also take more interest in their child's learning. The Community Learning Workers were each given an area of Greet's Green based around one of the local schools.

A new primary school has been built at Guns Village which includes a Community Room. As Newtown and Lyng primary schools didn't have spare rooms to use for the CAPs, brand new purpose-built units were literally dropped into place. Cranes placed units with ready-glazed windows and doors on site, and



Community Access Points

- 1 Greet's Green Access Centre T: 525 3909
- 2 George Salter High School T: 553 4665
- 3 Ryders Green Primary School T: 553 0658
- 4 YMCA T: 553 4211
- 5 Guru Nanak Community Centre T: 525 6923
- 6 Newtown Primary School T: 557 8504
- 7 Guns Village Primary School T: 553 1427
- 8 Lodge Primary School T: 553 2389
- 9 Sandwell Womens Enterprise Development Agency (SWEDA) T: 525 2558
- 10 Lyng Primary School T: 553 1480



CAPs Project Manger, Stinder Johl (left) with some of the Community Learning Workers.





Building work to create one school for Guns Village included the creation of a new community room.

then a brick skin was built around them. Lodge primary school had two spare classrooms that were refurbished as community facilities complete with access for disabled people. These rooms can now be used without opening the school. A new Children's Centre is nearing completion at Ryders Green primary school while George Salter High School is working on a co-operative partnership with Greets Green Partnership and four other local primary schools as part of the Extended Schools scheme.

ACHIEVEMENTS: The Community Learning Workers have set up regular courses at the CAPs including IT drop-in sessions, English courses, yoga and sewing. They've welcomed groups to use the facilities for a range of activities including breakfast clubs, after school clubs, mother & toddler groups. They've pointed residents in the right direction for any training or education needs they have, and looked into setting up new courses at the CAPs if there were no existing ones running. The workers also encouraged parents to be more involved in their children's school life.

Over the two year lifetime of the project, Community Learning Workers also supported events such as Family Learning Week and Adult Learners' Week and worked on a number of projects including setting up swimming lessons, running library sessions at schools during the Summer holidays, researching into the background of nursery rhymes, supporting the 'Buddies' project at Lodge Primary and setting up a number of ESOL classes, which have proved to be extremely popular.



Keeping Buzzie

Elaine Beckett has been running the Buzzie Bees mother and toddler group at the Newtown primary CAP since it opened. She used to run a similar group in mobile classrooms at the school but the new facilities are so much better.

She's now been able to attract more people who've gained support by going to the group. Elaine said: "The facilities are absolutely brilliant. We used to get about eight children - now we get 17. A lot of feedback I get from parents is that it's hard when you're on your own and don't know anybody. The group really helps."



Little Learners

Karen Groom and Nazem Begum run Lyng Little Learners, a pre-school children playgroup, which meets every Thursday morning in the CAP at Lyng primary. Karen said: "We were based in the school originally, then we moved into this new facility. We're no longer infringing on the school and feeling we're in the way. The facilities are better with access to kitchens and we have toast and tea and coffee. At the moment the committee's trying to get more people to use the CAP." Karen's now contacting local groups to encourage them to use the great new facilities.

For more information about the CAPs project, call Roger Cunningham, Education Theme Leader at Greets Green Partnership on 0121 533 3184.

Greets Green Partnership was awarded £56 million in 2000 to deliver a 10 year regeneration programme under the Government's New Deal for Communities (NDC) initiative. It has funded more than 100 projects throughout the area, covering community empowerment, crime & community safety, education & lifelong learning, health, housing & urban form, jobs & enterprise and neighbourhood management. The Partnership area, which is adjacent to West Bromwich Town Centre, is home to just over 12,400 residents living in 4,900 households.

To find out more, call Greets Green Partnership on freephone 0800 953 0215.

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