



Partner organisations gather to officially open Halton Community Centre. Representatives of Cosmopolitan Housing Association, Kinetics, Hardcastle & Hogarth, The Lodge Residents Group and Cllrs Alan and Joan Lowe, watch resident group volunteer Pat Baynham (front left) and Richard Smith of WREN (front right) as they cut the ribbon.

Local community centre opens its doors after a £74,000 makeover

Residents in Runcorn were celebrating last week as their local community centre reopened after undergoing a £74,000 refurbishment.

Halton Lodge Community Centre on Whitchurch Way, Runcorn, is used most evenings by a range of local groups including a bingo group, youth group and a drama club for children with learning difficulties. The refurbishment means it can now remain open during the day from 9am until 10pm providing a resource to even more local groups and individuals.

Volunteers from **The Lodge Community Group**, succeeded in securing the funding they needed to refurbish the Centre which was in urgent need of a new roof, new windows, and better security to enable it to fully serve the local community.

The works were made possible thanks to a grant of **£50,000**, the largest of its kind available, from **Waste Recycling Group Ltd**, administered by **WREN** through the **Landfill Communities Fund**.

Additional funding of **£16,000** has come from **Cosmopolitan Housing Association** and **Halton Borough Council Area Forum**, which has provided **£8,000** and from The Lodge Community Group themselves.

The combined funding has provided the centre with a completely new roof, new windows, new lighting, re-wiring, new floors, a new kitchen area and improved security including new external shutters. The improvement works were carried out by **Kinetics Group** and overseen by Cosmopolitan Housing Association, which owns the building.

Kristine Karaski, Regeneration Officer at Cosmopolitan Housing Association said: "It has been great to be a part of this project which has seen members of the

community work together to provide a fantastic resource for the people of Halton Lodge. It is fantastic to finally see the improvements to the community centre finished and we look forward to increasing the services available to all. The members of The Lodge Community Group have worked so hard to make this happen and they deserve every success."

Jane Higgins, Chair of the Lodge Community Group said: "This WREN funded project has turned an underused local facility into a hopefully soon to be thriving local community centre. All volunteers and The Lodge Community Group, have devoted time and effort into making a welcoming and all encompassing facility for the people of Halton Lodge. Plans for activities and events are already underway and any ideas would be welcomed at this point. The group wishes to thank all of those involved in this refurbishment with special thanks to WREN, Kris and Julie from Cosmopolitan and Jon Nelson from Trafford Hall."

Cosmopolitan H.A. is a housing association that provides over 2,000 social housing properties across the North West of England. It is a progressive and dynamic organisation with a clear vision for the future which sees it as 'an increasingly well respected and growing housing association with a reputation for delivering quality and excellence to a diverse range of service users'.

- The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) is a voluntary scheme which enables landfill operators to contribute some of the tax raised on the disposal of waste in landfill to Environmental Bodies (EBs) who can then fund community, heritage and environmental projects which comply with the Landfill Tax Regulations.

During the past 12 years over £755m has been spent on more than 24,000 projects helping to improve the environment in which we live.

- Waste Recycling Group Limited (WRG), a leading UK waste management and energy recovery company, is part of Fomento de Construcciones y Contratas (FCC) the international construction and services group (www.fcc.es). FCC in the UK comprises WRG and Focsa Services (UK) Ltd. Focused on delivering integrated waste management and energy recovery solutions to meet national, regional and local needs, WRG operates facilities for the reception, recycling and disposal of waste, including a network of waste transfer and recycling centres and a regional network of landfill sites.

WRG donates the LCF tax credits that are generated by its operations to Waste Recycling Environmental Ltd (WREN), in order to add value to the environmental and social infrastructure of the communities around landfill sites.

- WREN is the UK's largest Distributive Environmental Body allocating funds donated by WRG under the Landfill Communities Fund. WREN works with local groups and organisations to ensure that those projects funded provide value for money and benefit the maximum number of people.

Through the Landfill Communities Fund WREN has funded over 4,800 projects since 1988 contributing over £117m in funding.

Organisations and community groups requiring funding for beneficial projects should visit www.wren.org.uk or contact WREN on 01953 717165