

20 OCTOBER 2005

AP/201005

OLDHAM PARTNERSHIP ACCELERATES THROUGH TRAFFIC LIGHTS

The fantastic progress that the Oldham Partnership has made over the past 12 months has been officially recognised by Government, in their annual review of the Borough's Local Strategic Partnership.

The Government Office assessed the Oldham Partnership as being Amber-Green in their traffic light system of assessment; the second highest rating that is possible.

The review focused on the progress and the achievements of the Oldham Partnership over the past year.

It cited the opening of University Centre Oldham, the award winning Cottoning On Project, the reductions in teenage pregnancy, and the continued reduction in the levels of crime as being particularly worthy of praise.

The opening of University Centre Oldham – the first University Centre to be opened as a direct result of the work of a local partnership, and a key milestone in the Oldham Beyond vision – will see 3,000 extra students in the Borough by 2010.

The Cottoning On Project, which won the Improving Health & Reducing Inequalities Award in the North of England category, works to reduce health inequalities, for young people and black and minority ethnic women.

The statistics reinforce the achievements that have been made in teenage pregnancy and crime. Since 1998 teenage pregnancy has been reduced by 16.1 per cent in Oldham, compared to a 9.8 per cent reduction nationally and 4.3 per cent across Greater Manchester; total crime has fallen from 145.8 per 1,000 people in 2001-2 to 111.6 per 1,000 in 2004-5, with specific successes in vehicle crime, domestic burglary and robbery.

Even though the Oldham Partnership has made significant progress, there are still challenges that lie ahead.

Principal of Oldham Sixth Form College and Chair of the Oldham Partnership Executive Nick Brown said: "The Amber-Green score from Government is a recognition of the hard work that has taken place within the Oldham Partnership.

"We must now move on from this, and convert this into a programme of achievable activities that will change the lives of people in Oldham.

"The first phase of the Oldham Partnership was characterised by the need to sort out issues around communication, inclusivity, transparency, and working arrangements.

“We are now moving into the crucial second phase of the Partnership, where we must start delivering change for the people in the Borough.

“The Local Area Agreement gives us the platform to do this. It enables us to focus on the priorities for the Borough, and target resources at those communities, neighbourhoods and wards that need it the most.

“There is no lack of talent or lack of potential in Oldham. The role of the Oldham Partnership is to un-lock this talent, realise this potential, and ensure that people are proud and envious of the Borough”.

ENDS

Note to editor: For further information please contact Adam Patterson, Marketing and Communications Co-ordinator at Oldham Partnership on 0161 615 5038, or email adam.patterson@oldhampartnership.org.uk or visit www.oldhampartnership.org.uk

