



# Media Release

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photo opportunity – see below

## **BILTON GETS FUNDING FOR LEARNER DRIVERS**

**THREE** lucky young people from Bilton have been nominated to learn to drive in a unique initiative for North Yorkshire funded through the European Community Social Fund. Harrogate Borough Council’s housing staff saw an opportunity to access funding through a global grants scheme as part of plans to provide opportunities for young people living in the Bilton area.

Working in partnership with the Council for Voluntary Service, the local police and the Chevin Housing Association, enough money has been guaranteed to put three eighteen year olds through their driving test.

Mr Glenn Burton, from Chevin Housing Association, which manages property at Bilton alongside council-owned housing, said: “We had some very good applications from young people in Bilton for what is a golden opportunity for them. Glenn Plews, the council’s area housing manager, interviewed a number of candidates but in the event, Rachel Dent, Shaun Sanderson and Lionie Briggs-Denison were chosen.

“These young people are already responsible young adults and are making a valuable contribution to their local communities. We know from their particular circumstances that their lives will be greatly enhanced by learning to drive and it will also improve their employment opportunities. There is enough money for lessons to take them to a second driving test should they fail the first time.”

Chief Inspector Chris Chelton of Harrogate Police said: “This is a wonderful opportunity. We will expect them to behave responsibly, to be self-disciplined and to take their lessons seriously. We know they are already a credit to their families, which is why they have been chosen as the first candidates. If this first scheme is a success, we will look to involve young people who may have been in trouble with us in the past, through auto crime related incidents, as a way of encouraging them to become responsible citizens.”

York and North Yorkshire Community Fund, which is a registered charity based in York, acts as agent for the European Community Social Fund and the council is hopeful that further funding will follow if this first scheme is a success. ENDS

**PHOTO OPPORTUNITY : 10.30 am Tuesday, 7 December 2004 at Jennyfields Housing Office. Rachel, Shaun and Lionie will be meeting their fully qualified driving instructor for the first time.**

**MEDIA ENQUIRIES – Contact Lynne Mee on 01423 556022 or 07884 226409.**