



Stronger Communities Partnership Board
2009/10 End of Year Report

Introduction

The Board's terms of reference outline the aim and objectives, as well as the membership of the board. The terms of reference and membership have been the subject of a major review in 2009-10 in order to ensure that the aims and objectives reflect current needs and priorities and that the board is engaging with a broad range of participants.

Strategic aims & objectives

The aim of the Stronger Communities Partnership is to support Lewisham's LSP to work together in partnership across all sectors, alongside the borough's diverse communities to help deliver prosperity and opportunity for all. Our ambition is to build stronger relationships within and between communities and their public institutions and increase the sense of ownership people have of their neighbourhoods. The Partnership's ambitions contribute to all of the six priority outcomes contained in Sustainable Community Strategy but most specifically to *Empowered and Responsible: where people can be actively involved in their local area and contribute to supportive communities*. The objectives of this outcome are expressed as:

- Empower citizens in their local area and responsive to those who live there.
- Promote Volunteering and the activity of voluntary and community organisations.
- Champion diversity and the contribution everyone makes to the borough's quality of life.

These objectives are underpinned by the following Local Area Agreement targets for which the Stronger Communities Partnership is responsible for:

- Increase the percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together
- Increase the percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
- Increase participation in regular volunteering
- Improve the environment for a thriving third sector
- Increase use of public libraries
- Increase engagement in the arts

To achieve these outcomes the Partnership will focus on developing community capacity and cultural vitality, promoting inclusion, and building trust among and between Lewisham's communities. In the process, we will promote equity and fairness. The third sector plays a key role in the delivery of services to local people and has provided innovative and effective methods of reaching those excluded from

mainstream services. The aims and objectives of the Partnership therefore address inequalities in the borough at a fundamental level, placing neighbourhoods and their diverse communities at the heart of service delivery.

Membership:

Membership of the partnership should be open and flexible, reflecting the changing nature of the partnerships objectives for the borough and allowing the partnership to recruit new members as necessary. It is appropriate that VAL and Lewisham Council should play a leading role in the partnership. The partnership is currently chaired by Martin Howie, Director of Voluntary Action Lewisham

Current membership is as follows:

Alfred	Banya	Lewisham PCT
Gavin	Barlow	The Albany
Aileen	Buckton	LBL, Exec Director Community Services
Father Paul	Butler	Mayor of Lewisham's Faith Advisor
Liz	Dart	LBL, Community Services
Delena	Davison	Sage Trust
Pat	Fordham	Phoenix Community Housing
Martin	Howie	Voluntary Action Lewisham
Sandra	Jones	LBL, Community Sector Unit
Kay	Kelleher	Volunteer Centre Lewisham
Miriam	Long	Lewisham LINK
Jim	Mallory	Lewisham Time Bank Network
Carol	Mew	Lewisham Disability Coalition
David	Michael	Mayor's Advisor on Community Cohesion
Abi	Odusanwo	Lewisham Ethnic Minority Partnership
Graham	Price	Met Police Partnership Team
Denise	Smith	Campaign for Independent Living in Lewisham
Adele	Stevens	Lewisham Homes
Brian	Wagenbach	Voluntary Action Lewisham

The recent review of membership identified the need to broaden involvement in order to achieve the aims and objectives of the partnership. The results of this review are currently being implemented and in addition to the current membership will result in representation being identified from the following sectors:

- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
- Arts
- Sport
- Older people
- Youth
- Social enterprise
- Information & Advice
- Local Assemblies

Secretariat

Officers within the Community Services directorate provide secretariat support for the partnership - organising agendas and minutes with the approval of the Chair. The LAA Lead Officer takes responsibility for providing information on the performance and activities of projects funded through the LAA.

Summary of progress

The work of the Stronger Communities Partnership Board has contributed to a number of *Shaping our future* priority outcomes over the last year in a variety of ways.

These are:

Ambitious and achieving – where people are inspired and supported to fulfil their potential.

- The Volunteer Strategy Steering Group has continued to promote and develop the role of volunteers within the borough. Targeted WNF funding has supported the Pathways to Employment project which provides opportunities and wider support to individuals to use volunteering as a means of developing skills and experience to help them find employment

- In response to the increase in numbers of volunteers coming forward, Volunteer Centre Lewisham has received Working Neighbourhood Funding to initiate a new project working across sectors to develop new volunteer opportunities.
- The board has taken the lead in developing cross cutting work around community cohesion. An action plan has been produced and approved by the LSP. The action plan which will support the development of priorities across the range of partnership boards
- Local Assemblies have seen a 5% increase (to 82%) in the number of participants who say that activities helped them to get on well together.

Safer

- In response to concerns being raised about safety at community events the council's Events Team has set up an Events Safety Advisory Group to advise on proposals for major events.

Empowered and responsible – where people can be actively involved in their local area and contribute to supportive communities.

- Local Assemblies have worked in each ward across the borough, providing opportunities for people to identify local priorities and deliver improvements. A total of £1,080, 000, allocated from the Mayor's Fund and the Localities Fund has been utilised by Local Assemblies to support work around these priorities. 200 coordinating group volunteers regularly volunteer their time to take part in the assembly process. The Local Assemblies programme has also extended it's reach by mobilising volunteers beyond the regular meetings
- Lewisham Timebank Network has provided development support to 5 time banks across the borough and has produced a Time Bank Strategy outlining the ongoing opportunities for using the time bank model as a community development tool
- Voluntary Action Lewisham took the lead in consulting and developing work around 3rd Sector representation on the LSP and thematic partnership boards. This has resulted in new processes being developed and implemented.
- . Support was provided to 27 streets and garden parties as part of the Big Lunch project. National Big Lunch organisers said that Lewisham was one of the boroughs with the highest uptake

Healthy, active and enjoyable – where people can actively participate in maintaining and improving their health and well-being

- The board has contributed to the development of a Lewisham Cultural Strategy, outlining the role that culture can play in improving people's quality of life
- A successful Lewisham People Day took place with over 1000 local performers showcasing their talent.
- The Bike and Kite festival encouraged people to make use of Blackheath and try out bike, kite and sporting opportunities. The event also helps to promote Lewisham's tourism and business opportunities and highlights the accessibility of the Borough as a place to live, work and learn.

Dynamic and prosperous – where people are part of vibrant localities and town centres well-connected to London and beyond

- The Community Sector Unit has played a key role in the development of a strategy, action plan and programme of activities around the support of social enterprise in the borough.
- A multi agency approach has been taken to developing 3rd sector commissioning guidelines which were launched in March 2010.

Update on delivery

Working Neighbourhood Fund (WNF)

There are currently five WNF projects directly reporting to the Stronger Communities Partnership Board. With the exception of Environment for a Thriving Third Sector project, all projects are all fully operational and with quarterly financial and project delivery monitoring being carried out. All projects are working to target and achieving agreed outputs. These five projects are:

Project	Lead Agency	Allocation (2009-11)	Project Outline	Link to LAA Outcomes/Indicators
Neighbourhood Engagement	Voluntary Action Lewisham	£125,500	Funding to support key work alongside the Local Assemblies programme: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supporting links between voluntary & community organisations and Local Assemblies 2. Supporting and facilitating neighbourhood collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI 1 - Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together • NI 4 - Percentage of people who feel they can influence decision making
Volunteering Pathways to Employment	Volunteer Centre Lewisham	£80,000	To support the development of a Pathways to Employment Project designed to support people in developing skills for employment, training and education through volunteering.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI 151 - Overall employment rate, • NI 153 - Working age people claiming out of work benefits, • NI 7 - Environment for a thriving third sector
Developing Volunteer	Volunteer Centre	117,500	By providing advice, training and support to Lewisham voluntary and community organisations, the project will complement the existing WNF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI 151 - Overall employment rate,

Project	Lead Agency	Allocation (2009-11)	Project Outline	Link to LAA Outcomes/Indicators
Opportunities	Lewisham		project which seeks to support individuals who are struggling to find the skills and experience required to secure paid employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI 153 - Working age people claiming out of work benefits, • NI 7 - Environment for a thriving third sector
Community Cohesion	Community Cohesion Steering Group	315,000	Implementation of the Community Cohesion Action Plan	NI 1 - % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together
Environment for a Thriving Third Sector	Community Sector Unit	103,000	To assist with the resilience of the third sector through capacity building, particularly in encouraging voluntary and community organisation to adopt entrepreneurial approaches. The project will also play a key role in developing the 'Environment for a thriving third sector' action plan agreed by the Stronger Communities Partnership Board.	NI7 – Environment for a thriving third sector

LAA Performance

Indicator	2008/9 target	2008/9 performance	2009/10 target	2010/11 target	Comments
NI 1 Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area *	N/A	78.2%	N/A	82.2%	Please see performance report circulated separately or on LSP website
NI 4 Percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality	N/A	37.5%	N/A	41.5%	
NI 7 Environment for a thriving third sector	N/A	24.4%	N/A	30.4%	
NI 6 Participation in regular volunteering	N/A	17.8%	N/A	21%	
NI 11 Engagement in the arts	N/A	51.4%	52.9%	54.4%	
NI 5 Overall / general satisfaction with local area	N/A	72.5%	N/A	76.5%	

Key Activities for 2010/2011

Activity over the next year will be focussed on supporting residents and businesses to deal with the economic downturn. Strategies and plans are being reviewed and developed to address the additional challenges the current economic downturn presents. Key activities already being developed include the below:

- The board will continue to play a key role in promoting and monitoring community cohesion through the work of the Community Cohesion Working group and its action plan.
- The board will continue to review the effectiveness of the Local Assemblies programme
- The board will continue to contribute to and monitor the Councils Comprehensive Engagement Strategy
- The board will take a lead in reviewing the role of the third sector in the light of new Government priorities and the current economic climate
- The effectiveness of the new arrangements around Third Sector representation will be monitored by the board
- The Volunteer Strategy Steering Group will undertake a major refresh of the strategy, leading to a new action plan to be launched in 2011
- The board will continue to monitor the two local LAA targets around arts & libraries
- The board will continue to review the community use of council premises such as schools, day centres, libraries etc
- Individual delivery plans for each LAA indicator will be reviewed regularly

Contributions from the LSP

The LSP board and partnership boards can support the work of the Stronger Communities Partnership Board in the following ways.

- The boards work on Third Sector representation will continue to involve consultation with the LSP and other boards and will influence the way that representation at these bodies works.
- Effective implementation of the Community Cohesion Action Plan will require support from across the range of partnership boards.