

National Empowerment Partnership

Building the National Picture



What is empowerment?

Communities **being given** and **having** the confidence, skills and power to influence their conditions through what public bodies do with or for them.

Community **engagement** is the process whereby public bodies reach out to communities to create empowerment opportunities.

Why a National Empowerment Partnership?

- Local Government White Paper (Oct 2006) outlines commitment to empower local communities
- Central-local improvement and efficiency strategy to improve public services
- New indicator to measure how well people feel they can influence decision making
- Much activity to empower communities, often unmeasured, underappreciated and of variable quality



National Consortium – original members

- Community Development Foundation
- Community Development Exchange
- Community Sector Coalition
- Involve
- The Young Foundation
- Academy for Sustainable Communities
- Federation for Community Development Learning
- Urban Forum
- IdeA
- Take Part National Network
- Community Alliance

Overall tasks of the programme

- Support people in influencing the way their public services are delivered
- Build consortia of key regional players from different sectors, including public bodies, to make sure there is an improvement in the way the public sector engages local people
- Capture evidence to build a 'Quality Assurance Framework' – to show the impact of empowerment initiatives, and community development work, across the region

What is happening already in the region?

Civic Pioneers

- Action learning network
- Sharing ideas on how empowering communities can support policy development
- Develop skills in engagement among councillors, staff and community organisations
- Committed to support the development of community organisations
- Committed to involve local people in policy discussion and implementation
- Plymouth and South Somerset Pioneers for South West



Guide Neighbourhoods

- Resident-led neighbourhood organisations
- Peer-to-peer learning to tackle similar issues
- Pembroke Estate in Plymouth
GN for South West



Quirk Review Demonstration Programme

- Quirk Review deals with transfer of public assets to local communities
- Pilot areas to receive tailored advice and consultancy support on asset transfer
- Partnerships between local authorities and third sector organisations will receive support on asset transfer strategy and pilot projects
- Devon and Restormel are pilot areas in South West



Neighbourhood Management Initiatives

- Aim: improved, more responsive public services
- Service providers and local communities working in partnership
- Small organisations, with board of local people and service providers
- 35 Pathfinders initially funded by CLG – include 3 in the South West (in Bournemouth, Gloucester and North Devon)
- Over 300 more funded mainly through Local Authorities and Local Strategic Partnerships
- Learning network convened to share best practice across neighbourhoods

Young Advisors

- 15-21 year olds trained and employed as consultants
- guide local authorities, housing associations and other local partners about what it is like for a young person to live, work, learn and play in their neighbourhood
- Speak out for young people
- Pilot schemes in Bristol and North Devon



Participatory Budgeting

- Communities make decisions about how to use local funds to meet local priorities
- Ministerial commitment to ensure every neighbourhood has a pb scheme in 5 years' time
- Possible pilot in Wiltshire – other examples across the region?



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