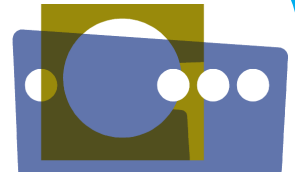


# Community Planning

Newsheet 6 (February 2012)

Community  
Places



Welcome to the sixth edition of our Briefing Newsheet on Community Planning. This edition provides an overview of the key principles of Community Planning as outlined by the Environment Minister, the draft Programme for Government 2011 - 2015 and an update on the progress of local community plans.

## Key Principles of Community Planning Announced

The key principles of Community Planning, announced by the Environment Minister, Alex Attwood at a conference in January 2012 in Belfast will include:



- Duty on Councils to lead and facilitate Community Planning process;
- Duty on Statutory agencies to participate in and support Community Planning process;
- Duty on Departments to have regard to Community Plans;
- Meaningful participation and engagement;
- Statutory Guidance which will be flexible;
- Clear Statutory links between Community Planning and Spatial (land use) Planning.

The Minister also highlighted the importance of Area Development Plans delivering the land use priorities of Community Plans and consolidated the commitment of the Department of Environment to move forward with the transfer of Land Use Planning to local Councils.

## Taking Forward Community Planning

In terms of the time frame for Community Planning, the Environment Minister confirmed that Community Planning will be introduced in legislation in 2015 - however consideration would be given to further developing the foundations for Community Planning ahead of this date if a case was presented to the Minister.

In the interim period, the Department of Environment are finalising details for the introduction of measures to take forward the Reform of Local Government. This includes a series of meetings to be undertaken by the Environment Minister with local councils.

The first of these meetings was held with the 'Voluntary Transition Committee' for Newry and Mourne and Down Councils. At the meeting the Minister announced that "he will be shortly writing to councils about restoring all the Voluntary Transition Committees to allow work to begin in the council groupings. This will help pave the way for the appointment of the Statutory Transition Committees and Shadow Councils in due course, which will facilitate the process for the new Councils being established in April 2015."

## draft Programme for Government 2011 - 2015

The Northern Ireland Executive agreed a draft Programme for Government in November 2011 and is currently out for consultation until 22 February 2012. The draft Programme for Government includes key actions for the



Northern Ireland Executive to take forward to deliver ‘a vibrant economy which can transform our society while dealing with the deprivation and poverty’.

As part of our response to the consultation we are recommending the inclusion of a number of key milestones relating to Local Government Reform and Community Planning:

Milestone	Time frame
Capacity Building Programme to enable communities to understand and prepare for changes	2013 - 2014 2014 - 2015
Pre-consultation on draft Community Planning Statutory Guidance	2012 - 2013
Consultation with shadow councils and community stakeholders	2013 - 2014
Introduction of statutory guidance alongside establishment of new councils in 2015	2014 - 2015

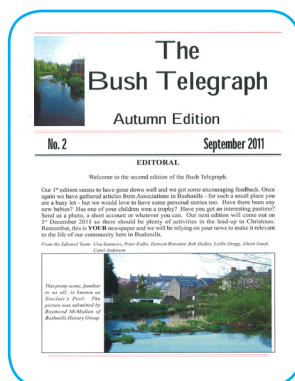
We will also be making a number of recommendations relating to Planning Reform, including bringing forward the introduction of a Statement of Community Involvement and introducing third party right of appeal. If you would like more information please contact Community Places on 028 9023 9444 or by email at [info@communityplaces.info](mailto:info@communityplaces.info)

## Community Planning - The Future is Local Update

With the support of Community Places, local communities, voluntary organisations and statutory agencies continue to be active in developing a Local Community Plan for their area. An update of this work is detailed below:

### Bushmills Village Plan

Great progress has been made on a number of actions included in the Village Plan. The Bush Telegraph Newsheet provides groups in the area with the opportunity



to promote their activities and events and keeps residents informed of what is happening in the village.

The Brighter Bushmills Project is seeking to provide a face lift to the derelict buildings along the Main Street in the Village by using artwork. The project has secured funding through the Rural Development Programme’s Village Renewal Measure.

### De Wind Drive/Cherryvalley Community Plan

Progress has been made in the area with the development of ‘Ginney’s Way’ and a Wildflower Meadow. The Residents’ Association, together with statutory agencies and voluntary organisations are now working toward developing a community facility for the area. The ‘Muckers’ area is due to undergo improvements in the Spring with a kickabout area and the bus service continues to provide a valuable resource for local residents.



### Braniel Community Plan

Community and local Voluntary groups within the Braniel area together with local elected representatives, Castlereagh Borough Council and the Housing Executive have developed a Local Community Plan for the area.

One of the key projects taken forward through the local plan is the development of a shared sports and community facility. Braniel Community Association and Braniel Primary School have made a joint application to Castlereagh Borough Council for the provision of a facility and are now working with council officers on plans and identifying funding.

## BIG Lottery Fund - Community Planning Pilots

In 2010 the Big Lottery Fund selected, through a tendered process, three pilot projects to explore Community Planning and the role of the community and voluntary sector. An overview of the three pilots are outlined below.

### Belfast Community Planning Pilot

The Belfast Pilot presented its 'Belfast Community Planning Model' at a major conference in the City Hall on 19 January 2012. The 214 participants from all sectors received a commitment from the council to further work on developing Community Planning across the city through delivery of the new Model.

Other inputs included an address by the Minister of Environment on the key principles of Community Planning (see page one), an insight into the Toolkit for Community Planning which Community Places is developing and details of the capacity building course provided by the University of Ulster, Jordanstown on behalf of the Pilot. A report on the achievements of the pilot was launched at the conference and is available at [www.belfastcity.gov.uk/communityplanning](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/communityplanning)

### Omagh and Fermanagh Community Planning Pilot

The Pilot across Omagh and Fermanagh Council areas was managed by the Rural Development Council. Its final event was a conference in Killadeas on 16 January 2012. Entitled "Engaging Communities - the potential and pitfalls of Community Planning" it included two contributions from Scotland. The Community Planning Manager in Falkirk Council spoke realistically about the value and practical challenges of Community Planning at both local authority and local area levels. He described it "as a long term journey with short term steps".

The second Scottish input was from the Co-ordinator of Oxfam's Poverty Programme who presented an analysis of the weaknesses of Community Planning and other initiatives in building true community engagement. The Rural Development Council is now completing its work on developing a resource-kit on Community

Planning for Community and Voluntary groups across the two council areas. For more details of the Pilot visit [www.engageni.com](http://www.engageni.com).

### Derry - Strabane Community Planning Pilot

The Derry - Strabane Pilot has now completed its two Local Area Community Plans for the Waterside and Glenelly Electoral Areas. It will also shortly be publishing the report of its research into the 'Barriers to Participation'.

An innovative outcome of the Pilot is the development of a Public Maps Gallery ([www.derrycity.gov.uk/maps](http://www.derrycity.gov.uk/maps)) which provides public access to searchable maps of a wide range of facilities and services across the two council areas and NISRA deprivation statistics. The Gallery also enables users to design their own tailored maps using the information on the site.

If you want to know more about the Community Planning Pilots contact Louise on 028 9023 9444 or [louise@communityplaces.info](mailto:louise@communityplaces.info)

## Community Planning Toolkit

Community Places are working on developing a web based Community Planning Toolkit, as part of the Big Lottery Fund's Pilot Programme.

The Toolkit will provide an opportunity for those working within a community planning process to access information and resources and focuses on four main elements of Community Planning:

- Community Engagement;
- Working Together;
- Outcomes Approach; and
- Achieving Alignment.



For more information on the Community Planning Toolkit contact Louise on 028 9023 9444 or [louise@communityplaces.info](mailto:louise@communityplaces.info)

## Upcoming Events

### Voices of Minorities Conference

Community Places, together with The Rainbow Project, Community Foundation for Northern Ireland and the Equality Commission are hosting a conference on Friday, 27 April 2012 at Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Oxford Island, Craigavon.

The conference will explore how local Councils and communities can ensure that marginalised groups have any opportunity to participate fully in the Community Planning process.

For more information please contact Annie on 028 9023 9444 or [annie@communityplaces.info](mailto:annie@communityplaces.info)

### Free Training on Planning Reform

Community Places is hosting a number of Free Training sessions on the reforms of the Planning System. The sessions will be held on:

- Wednesday, 8 February 2012      2.30 - 4.30 pm      Cromore Halt, Portstewart
- Wednesday, 15 February 2012      2.30 - 4.30 pm      Leisure Centre, Newcastle

If you would like more information or to book a place please contact Elaine on 028 9023 9444 or [elaine@communityplaces.info](mailto:elaine@communityplaces.info)

### Community Planning Information Pack

The Community Planning Information Pack continues to be a useful reference tool for agencies and community groups alike. The pack is updated on a regular basis and is available on our website [www.communityplaces.info](http://www.communityplaces.info)

### Support Available from Us

Our Supporting Communities in Community Planning Project is providing information and capacity building on Community Planning, RPA structures and Local Government Reform and developing Local Community Plans which focus on community issues and provide models for the future.

If you like to know more about how we can work with your community, please contact Annie on 028 9023 9444 or [annie@communityplaces.info](mailto:annie@communityplaces.info)



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