

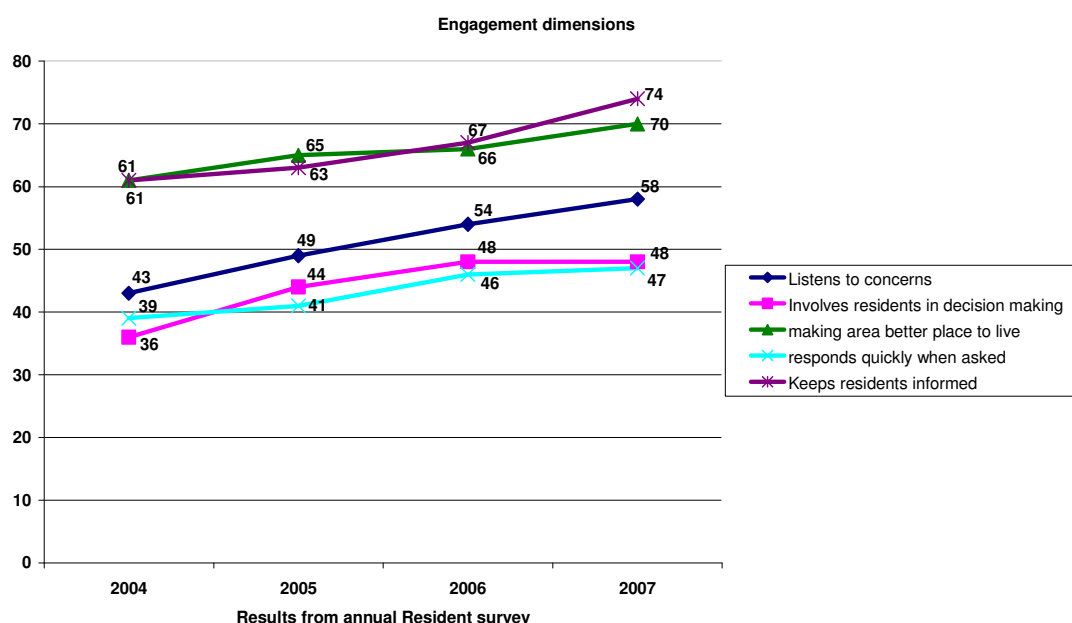
APPENDIX C

Neighbourhood Management and Area Assembly Research

Report of the Consultation Unit

In February 2008 overview and Scrutiny team asked the Consultation unit to undertake some research into the amount of knowledge that residents have and the effect that Neighbourhood Management activities have had on resident perception.

Our desk research has shown that residents have improved perceptions of being involved, being informed, listening to concerns, responding quickly when asked and making the area a better place to live since 2004 when Neighbourhood Management was launched in Haringey. (Source Annual Survey of Residents)



Further research was commissioned to identify opinions from both 'uninvolved' residents and 'involved' residents. The team undertook structured interviews with a selection of residents who have been involved with area assemblies, since that would be the prime contact with residents and with a group of randomly selected residents.

It was felt that awareness of Neighbourhood Management as a name may not be very high since their role is not to promote themselves but it would be more rational to investigate the effect of activities which they have initiated.

Findings

The findings of this research are reported in detail in the body of this report. A brief summary follows:

Overall the contact with Area Assemblies and, specifically, with Neighbourhood Management team members has been viewed as a positive approach from the council.

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Suggestions included encouraging more attendance by giving more notice for meetings and more thought about the venue and the promotion of the meetings via leaflets and invitations.

Residents at focus group sessions appear keen to receive more information local to their area. Focus group participants made many suggestions for content they would like to see included in local newsletters.

The information from the focus groups suggested that many 'uninvolved' residents have limited knowledge about activities and channels for accessing and receiving information or making complaints. By their own admission some will not read Haringey People in good time.

Some useful information about the council web site has been fed into the group reviewing that facility.

Focus group and interviews are reported in detail below.

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Resident Involvement Focus Groups Wood Green Library, Thursday 13 March 2008

The people attending this group were drawn from a list of people who originally been randomly selected for interview for the Resident Survey in November 2007. They had agreed to give their names to take part in further research. All the people who took part are residents of the borough and they were a reasonably representative cross section of age/gender/ethnicity/area of their dwelling/tenure

The focus group took place in the gallery room at Wood Green library; this being a centrally-located and accessible venue and also 'neutral' in the sense of being more of a community building, rather than a council office.

Topics Covered

- What involvement have people had to date?
- What is the nature of their Involvement?
- Have they ever attended a public meeting?
- What would help get them to public meetings?
- What's the best way for the council to give them information?

Exercise:

What information should be in a Newsletter?

Responses:

1. Have they ever attended a public meeting?

What would help get them to public meetings?

Attendees were initially asked what meetings they had attended. Answers included for CPZs, Planning re secondary schools, and community safety matters. More than half had never attended a public meeting.

Responses to the main question of what would encourage more people to attend meetings were:

Bigger venues

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Something that particularly affects me

Safety on the streets

Posters

Leaflets

Intensive coverage which also needs to be eye-catching

Provision of information is important and meetings are also a source of information.

Haringey People (12 out of 18 persons present had seen the latest issues)

Several people (c5) commented that Haringey People provided information which was out of date because it appeared too late or because the information was out of date by the time they got around to reading it.

Some people commented that it would also help to have meeting dates clearly set out on the website; with any changes updated clearly and in large font. A problem was identified in relation to venues. These appear to be subject to change with very little warning.

Area Assemblies:

Consider changing the name to something more inviting.

The name Area Assembly is a turn-off – I've never heard of Area Assemblies despite living here for 31 years.

Engender a belief that the council actually wants to hear what residents say and think.

Candidly I don't want my son to grow up in South Tottenham. The council really needs to be aware of the problems and no-go areas on the estates which interfere with deliveries of papers like the Independent and the Advertiser.

2. What's the best way for the council to keep you informed about things?

Worked in groups of 3 or 4 to come up with ideas and suggestions:

Have a suggestion area on the website

Update the web more frequently

The way the website search works is bizarre.

Have a better functioning website with improved search facilities and more regularly updated, and much more visible, key dates (this point raised by two of the small working groups)

Make the website easier to use and navigate through

E-mail alerts related to people's specified areas of interest

The website 'update me' service doesn't work I've been registered for several years and never received an email.

Area Assembly notice boards are rarely changed

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Like to point out that Black Boy Lane is kept tidy because residents complain immediately anything goes wrong. (There is a resident association)

Provide much better advance notice in Haringey people; which often lists things after the date they took place.

Have a better system for informing residents about planning applications – don't rely on Royal Mail. Consider hand delivery for some leaflets.

When using the mail, post well in advance.

Keep mailing lists fully updated

Leaflets through the door (mentioned several times)

Information/notice boards

We need leaflets to tell us what is going on locally

Information is not supplied to us in South Tottenham – why don't we get leaflets?

What else is out there that we don't know about?

Some seem not to have seen the area leaflets – these are only delivered to people who've expressed an interest.

Invitations should be sent out with council tax bills [11 out of 18 agreed with this] We would be more likely to turn up if we had these leaflets.

Have a better system for informing people about public meetings.

Use a colour coded calendar for different types/topics of meetings

Have more visible up to date information about dates and venues of public meetings – have details available in libraries as well as other forms.

Have designated areas in the libraries and use large posters

Advertise in such places as library/Shopping City/Community centre/ schools/ clinics

Post offices/ sports centres/ surgeries, and parks

Consider advertising on buses and tubes, in Post Offices, and doctors' surgeries

Also advertise on Adshels (bus shelters) and use banners across the road.

Schools were also suggested as a point to pick up information; although the point was also made that not all are parents.

Information boards are very effective.

Schools information boards

Can you assure the public that they will have both Independent & Advertiser delivered regularly?

Apex House & Customer Services make people wait too long in order to make comments – it would be a good idea to have a suggestion box within council buildings

Also the existing complaints and compliments system is too complicated and tries to focus too much on 'feedback' when people just want to complain.

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3. What sections should we have in the Area Newsletter?

Area Assemblies report progress on:

Noise issues, fly –tipping, policing, waste & recycling

SNT report (police)

New developments in your area: Retail; Housing; Leisure - include a short summary and have additional information if required.

Children's events,

School and nursery fundraising events

Public events

Upcoming meetings

Children's activities (free for low income families)

Events, activities and festivals

Date of next meeting

Planning issues – specifically details of applications, and what have been given permission.

Significant planning applications coming up

New laws and regulations

Things happening elsewhere in the borough

Homes for Haringey issues - property swaps

People's Corner – suggestions, comments, soapbox

Residents' soapbox

Residents' comments and questions page

Address to write to with suggestions, and a Freepost envelope

Local gossip for each area

Local notices e.g. on issues like forming a residents association

Examples of inspiring, community-led events and projects, e.g. street parties

Section for personal ads e.g. 'wanted'.

Local artists work displayed, cartoons

Refuse and recycling section (times and any changes)

Useful information section – GPs, councillors, council tax, benefits, CABx

The general 'aim' of the council to be stated – could be the same across each of the 7 areas.

Development updates on the regeneration of each area

Better presentation e.g. 'Have your Say about issues which affect you: Come to your Area Assembly On (date and day).... At... (time)

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4. What is the nature of your Involvement? (Post-It Stickers)

None – other than having pest Control in on one occasion

Contacting Apex House regarding council tax, housing, housing benefits, repairs, rubbish removal and meetings

I'm in touch about repairs, housing, internet, doorstep interview about council. Residents meetings also keep me informed
Questionnaires, council walk-about, community meetings, planting raised flower beds, short life coop secretary

I go to Public meetings including AGMs local to my area. I give written feedback at times. Try to read monthly newsletters; I've attended Area Assemblies Leaseholder Forums

I protested about CPZ, campaigned relentlessly until it was stopped. I went to all the meetings and sometimes councillors were present

(4) CPZ campaign meetings, Concrete factory campaign

Hornsey Library art gallery

Website

Recycling for voluntary organisations

Community Safety

Meeting with the leader at the civic centre.

Repair office.

Apex House at Seven Sisters.

Temporary Accommodation office.

Meeting re Crowland Primary School temporary buildings after a fire.

Area assemblies: making the Difference. Observing meetings including Scrutiny and Planning Panels. I represent a residents association and am a Conservation

Planning Officer with trees and parks.

Planning – secondary schools

Hornsey High St regeneration meetings

Cllr Brian Haley – environment, assembly, meetings

Doorstep survey, childcare assessment survey, campaign to protect under-5s provision. Red Gables & Stonecroft & Noel Park CC – volunteer organiser

Have your Say Haringey – secondary school Consultation

Local councillor visits at election time

Consultation meetings on parking issues

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Various school meetings

Face to Face Interviews (in-home)

Interviewees were told that the purpose of the study is to obtain a snapshot view of how Area Assemblies and associated activities. It was explained that the council is interested in how these are perceived and valued by residents who attend the sessions.

Interviews were conducted with a total of nine residents – all of who have participated in Area Assembly meetings. Names of residents, who had previously indicated their willingness to engage in discussions, consultations or other activities, were supplied to the Consultation Team who then chose a random selection to be interviewed.

A total of nine interviews have been conducted with residents in both the East (4) and West (5) regions of the borough:

- 1: Avenue Road (Crouch End)
- 2: Fortis Green (Muswell Hill)
- 3: Lancaster Road (Crouch End)
- 4: Coldfall (Muswell Hill)
- 5: Stroud Green (Muswell Hill)
- 6: Waltheof Gardens (W Hart Lane & Nthumbld Park)
- 7: Burgoyne Road (Harringay & St Ann's)
- 8: Tower Gardens Road (W Hart Lane & Nthumbld Park)
- 9: Green lanes (Harringay & St Ann's)

The interviews were conducted by Haringey Council's Consultation Team and took place during the period 13 – 20 March 2008. All interviews were tape-recorded, and responses were also entered into questionnaires. Interviewees were asked to sign the questionnaire to indicate their agreement to a recording being made. There were no objections to this request. Respondents were initially contacted to arrange suitable times and locations for the interview. Two chose to call in at River Park House for the interviews; six others requested home visits and one chose to meet at a café near Green Lanes station.

Responses to Questions

Q What lead you to first start attending Area Assemblies?

- As secretary of local residents' association, I thought it would be appropriate.

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- It was the issues that attracted me to get involved and I then subsequently started going to Area Assemblies
- I suggested a Neighbourhood Watch scheme and was then notified of the Area Assemblies by the council. I also felt it was a duty to get involved.
- I've lived here for 70 years - seen the area go down and would like to see it come back up. It depresses me. I joined to work with HVC and the Audit Committee
- They replaced the old style meetings held near the Hornsey area housing office.
- An interest in community affairs and I'm a member of the local residents association
- Just a desire to be informed about the local area and to see what contribution I could make
- I was invited to go and I was told they were very good. They also offered the chance to raise issues
- To tackle the many problems in the area and contribute to people working together to solve them - this includes police, residents, mixed communities and traders.

Q What has your level of involvement been? [Attending, Making the Difference grants]

- Mostly attend all meetings - Crouch End & Hornsey plus Muswell Hill. I report back to committee and have been involved with Making a Difference applications.
- Attending, seeing officers before the meeting part starts. They are useful for networking.
- I attend whenever I can.
- I am generally advised by letter. The last meeting was at Bruce Castle. I attend and say how I feel.
- I'm on the Tenant Participation Panel which meets monthly at the Civic Centre. I talk with Jason and Errol on an ad hoc basis to obtain advice and information.
- I am involved with Making a Difference grants and I try to get to the Area Assemblies in both Muswell Hill and Crouch End areas.
- I'm a regular attendee, and chair of panels including 'Ladder CSP'. Also put in bids under MaD to plant trees. Because max size of bid is £3k we've broken down the bid into 3 annuals.
- Attending as a resident I tend to find that AAs are overly managed by the council and residents are more likely to be expected to listen, rather than air their views. Generally, residents are outnumbered by councillors, officers and the police.
- Attending and contributing to debates and issues. I have lived here for 50 years and run a shop for 40. I spend a lot of my time at meetings and my son and daughter run the salon.

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Q How did you find out about Area Assemblies?

- I've no idea!
- Someone told me about them so I signed up and get the mailing. It works well. Often there is not enough notice (less than 2 weeks) so we need more time. This is because we often need to 'pin down' officers in advance. Venue details are invariably finalised late.
- I was notified by the council. Currently there is lack of notice by Stroud Green so details of meetings were not put in Newsletter
- By letter from Sue Grant. She invited me to the audit committee and Park Lane
- Through Home Zone and by direct notification as well as through Haringey People
- Sorry but it's lost in the mists of time!
- Can't really remember - maybe through residents group; or possibly through Haringey People - which is useful despite its focus on smiley faces and relentless good news!
- I think it was by post. Maybe it was Haringey People. I've now stopped going to them because I prefer to raise issues rather than listen to a lot of speakers.
- Because I'm already involved with groups and committees - in fact it would be very helpful to have one of your 'go anywhere' parking badges.

Q Are other people involved in the issues/projects (that you raise at meetings)

- Myself, secretary and one other - generally about 3 or 4.
- Colleagues on the association. We have lots of projects e.g. recycling initiatives to discuss. Other projects include regeneration of parks, pathways and beds etc.
- I relay AA reports to NW monthly meeting. People only tend to go if there is something topical going on - such as the proposed post office closures.
- To the extent that the main issue is a neighbour who stores 12 old bangers on his front lawn (council well aware of this but does little or nothing). Churned up grass etc gives a bad impression and lets down the neighbourhood.
- My committee colleagues. Currently we're looking at 'Intergenerational' contact between current and former pupils. There is no funding for this from MaD.
- I'm transport officer of my local association so am interested in transport issues. I've also got to know a number of councillors as a result of this.
- Yes when I am speaking on behalf of LCSP or similar and we have an agreed stance. No, if I'm giving my own opinions. Originally LCSP focused on crime issues but Safer Neighbourhoods has made a significant impact, and crime has reduced.
- In part yes. Recycling and rubbish dumping are issues now. Antisocial behaviour was a problem but Neighbourhood Management has been brilliant in sorting it out by coordinating all the agencies to take action.

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- Yes. I represent the local traders and quite a few of us go together. The trouble is that always the same people turn up at AAs to talk about the same issues they talked about last time. We need some new and a wider range of people.

Q What difference has working with them made in your area? (What is achieved?)

- Partly the ease of getting information and in part the MaD grants. There is a clear advantage of the Area Assemblies in the opportunity for two-way dialogue. Maybe we can influence the council's policy - I don't know! But it's all part of the democratic process.
- I think they've made a big difference and helped build good relationships with Neighbourhood Management.
- Information is useful. Too much self-praise by the council can be annoying. It would help if locals could be warned about parking restrictions on match days as many locals are ticketed for parking outside their houses.
- De Haven Day Centre is wonderful. Staff have wonderful manners. Children occasionally climb on the roof of the centre and/or engage in vandalism. There is excellent traffic calming arrangement at the end of the road.
- Neighbourhood Management have provided funding for the Intergenerational project. They have been really helpful.
- They are a useful channel of contact for raising issues - for those who want to make use of them. Of course, being retired, I have more time than many. Younger people don't always want to come out after a hard day's work, especially if they have a family.
- £10k from MaD made the biggest difference. This is truly a bottom-up, grass roots initiative which is owned by residents as something genuinely local.
- Neighbourhood Management have had tremendous impact on eliminating antisocial behaviour. They have also worked to set up a friendship club for elders and helped us to set up a residents' group.
- Enormous difference made by Neighbourhood management - particularly in terms of cutting crime and antisocial behaviour. Five years ago this was really bad area but all the trouble has now gone away thanks to NM. Area is also cleaner, has flower baskets and there has been no major crime incident in the last four years.

Q What do you know about the work of Neighbourhood Management?

- I'm not aware of them in terms of what their formal duties are. I do know they are the organisers of the Making a Difference projects. I also know Bob's team who run it.
- But for my projects I would know nothing about the work of NM. As an individual I would not relate AA to NM- the links are not obvious.
- NM does provide good information and I see this as joined-up thinking- the Saturday AA in Albert Recreation Ground was good – as it encouraged youth involvement.

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- I meet Bob Goldsmith regularly and the ward councillors and hear what is going on. I'm not impressed. Problems exist which managers are either unaware of or are unwilling to take action about.
- Not very much. Once they tried to close down the day centre. The dustmen do a wonderful job as does the road sweeper (he has a beard) who picks everything up in spite of the litter louts who leave fast food wrappings and empty their car ash trays
- Not a lot, really. I assume they run things like Bingo clubs for seniors.
- I've worked with managers on a Living Streets audit. I met Errol who was very helpful. Neighbourhood Management help with local issues and provide a point of liaison with the council.
- More than most I expect! Have a lot of contact with Dasos & colleagues regarding various issues ranging from lighting to dog mess. I'm a fan of NM - they are active and accessible, they get back to you. They're a good group.
- I say that their good work is not recognised enough and that they are spread too thinly for all the work they have to deal with. It is only recently that Neighbourhood Management have been organisationally linked to Area Assemblies.
- We work closely with Dasos Maliotis who is good. I report things to him - anything suspicious or dumped rubbish etc. We've achieved lots: the Clean Sweep anti graffiti work, we cleaned the railway bridge.

Q How could we make it easier for you to get involved in community projects?

- Nothing obvious - as your question comes out of the blue. Clearly AA attendees are a self-selecting group, so you are not getting a range of people attending. The last time I went, wheelchair access was not good and I couldn't use the toilet.
- MaD has certainly made a difference! This initiative has really taken off. I use AAs to get feedback on possible future projects. Relationships depend on a good chair, someone who knows the area and can foster good links. Councillors are important, too.
- I don't want it any easier! I'm involved in too many already.
- Invite us to more committee meetings and listen to grass roots views. Often our views don't seem to count. Mr Ayer is the best person - he makes sure action is taken.
- More publicity, better publicity! Muswell Hill area is often forgotten about for funding and we do wonder if we'll see any of the Better Homes money. Nothing about Coldfall on the list but we've been told to expect new kitchens and bathrooms.
- This is not an issue. Residents' association projects are often ably assisted by the council - a good example being Priory Common. My view is that the council has an important support role to play.
- I'm already fully involved.
- Actually it's not that easy. The council is supportive if it approves of the project you want to get involved in. To some extent I think they want token people - and I'm talking here about the council in general and not Neighbourhood Management. Neighbourhood management are great.

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- It's already easy. However, Enfield Area Assemblies do leaflet distribution while Haringey just sends letters to attendees only. Can Haringey do leaflets? I can help you with advertising in Turkish papers and Turkish is also spoken by Kurds and Turkish Cypriots

Q What involvement do you think you could have in the future?

- MaD projects are useful - not sure what else we could do. In part it's about helping Haringey to work more efficiently.
- Much the same - taking photos of those areas which could do with development, and then submitting proposals.
- Less and less! Often, 50% of attendees are from the council; which then claims it is well-attended. Look at the attendance sheets and strike out the names of council staff, councillors, caretakers and speakers and you'll see what I mean.
- I want to remain involved. We campaigned to save the day centre.
- The same as at present, although I have thought about joining the Homes for Haringey board and that remains a possibility.
- I haven't thought of any other role we could carry out
- I'm currently at the maximum limit - could not devote any more time.
- Our area needs a lot more money. In spite of the fact that there are few flats, it's actually an economically poor area with a high proportion of council housing.
- I need a parking permit as I'm on 9 different committees as well as a governor of CONEL

Any other points you would like to have noted?

Neighbourhood Management have been incredibly successful in making Green Lanes area virtually crime free. They got the police to arrest the two gangs, prosecute them and send them to prison. This solved what had been a major problem and one which had even got the attention of the national press.

Neighbourhood Management is a frontline service and a real ambassador for the council. They are essential to handle the many difficult residents that are encountered. Dasos goes to all meetings as do many of his colleagues. This is commitment which should be valued.

AA are a good means of providing info even though I am often in direct touch with departments. Having said this, I could easily contact a local councillor directly.

Too much time given to LBOH blowing its own trumpet - AAs should be more of an opportunity for engagement. They need a good chair who can give more time to questions from residents (some of who admittedly can't stop talking), our group can also act as focal point for putting in bids to MaD. One man has already asked us.

In the old days, Tottenham Council were brilliant. They had a man going round on a bicycle checking the state of front gardens and ensuring the tenants looked after

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them properly. The council also trimmed the hedges. The area now looks a bit neglected - several shops have closed.

Although we were told about new kitchens and bathrooms, my home has yet to be surveyed despite a letter in January advising us of a surveyor's visit

The council will often put its foot in it by actually saying it has a statutory duty to consult - thereby implying that it has no desire to consult, but is being forced to by the government.

We felt the council resented our original group because we got Home Zones money direct from the government. We had little doubt that specific councillors were being petty and vindictive.