

Appendix 2.2

The Bridge New Deal for Communities

Draft Community Empowerment Plan



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INTRODUCTION

The Bridge New Deal for Communities (NDC) area is a rich source of energy, creativity and talent. The communities are made up of people with rich and diverse backgrounds who each have something to contribute to making the NDC area flourish. One of the roles of the NDC has been to put communities at the heart of its programme and help work together to regenerate the NDC area.

The Bridge NDC is committed to supporting its communities to do things for themselves - community empowerment; Where communities are empowered we would expect to see a range of benefits: local democracy boosted; increased confidence and skills among local people; higher numbers of people volunteering in their communities; and more satisfaction with quality of life in a local neighbourhood. Better community engagement leads to the delivery of better, more responsive services.

In the past few years, the government has placed increasing emphasis on how local communities must be engaged in all aspects of local public service activity and has put in place a number of national policies urging local authorities and other public bodies to do better on empowerment.

- The Local Government White Paper 2006 – “Strong and Prosperous Communities.”
- Department of Health Guidance “Real Involvement” on the 2006 NHS Act.
- The “Duty to inform, consult and involve local people” - Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- The Sustainable Communities Act 2007.
- The White Paper, “Our Health Our Care Our Say”, and “Putting People First”, the concordat between Central and Local Government.

The Department Communities and Local Government (CLG) has published its Action Plan for Community Empowerment, which sets out the steps it is taking, working across government and in partnership with others, towards three key outcomes:

1. Greater participation and engagement in democracy
2. Changes in attitudes towards community empowerment
3. Improved public services and quality of life

What is community empowerment? – the national context

The Government defines community empowerment as 'the giving of confidence, skills and powers to communities to shape and influence what public bodies do for or with them'. The Government believes that community empowerment can contribute to a number of results or outcomes:

- Improved quality of services
- Greater community cohesion and social inclusion
- Thriving democracy; and
- Enhanced community capacity and learning.

This is quite a specific definition of empowerment. A broader definition is provided in a very useful guide produced by Community Development Exchange and the National Empowerment Partnership. This argues that an empowered community is one which is:

- confident
- inclusive
- organised
- co-operative
- influential

Community empowerment is a highly complex process to achieve and requires the active understanding and commitment from a wide number of stakeholders to achieve it. It is a slow, gradual process which involves continual learning and the constant building of a community's capacity to take on more - there is no finite end point in the process of community empowerment.

What is community empowerment? – the local context

The Haringey Strategic Partnership (HSP) is committed to making sure that people in Haringey can have their say, are listened to, and are involved in making decisions. The HSP is a partnership of local public agencies, community groups and businesses working together to improve public services and address the key issues in the borough

The HSP's aim is to improve public services in the borough through partnership working. They are doing this is through **Haringey's Community Engagement Framework**. The Framework includes clear principles for HSP organisations to use when carrying out community engagement in Haringey. These are to:-

- Work in partnership to join up engagement activities
- Engage when it will make a difference
- Engage with all communities
- Build capacity of communities
- Communicate results of engagement activities

Haringey's Local Area Agreement also clearly demonstrates the HSP's commitment to community engagement. It contains the following indicators, which will allow ongoing measurement and monitoring of community empowerment in the NDC area:

- NI1: % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
- NI4: % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
- NI6: Participation in regular volunteering
- NI7: Environment for a thriving third sector
- NI21: Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police – proxy % of people who feel well informed about what the council is doing to tackle anti-social behaviour
- NI140: Fair treatment by local services - proxy to what extent does your local council treat all types of people fairly

Who is the Plan for?

The NDC Community Empowerment Plan is intended for all agencies that have an interest in the Bridge New Deal for Communities Area, the NDC Partnership Board and for all the communities of the NDC area.

There are a number of ways in which communities can become more empowered:

- By more effective engagement as service users;
- By taking a more active part in the controlling structures of organisations that provide services;
- By taking direct control of resources – budgets, housing, community buildings, land and so on;
- By being more actively involved in democratic processes.

This Plan sets the strategy for a sustained long term involvement of local communities in influencing and shaping policy which will have an impact in their local area (the NDC area). They cover the key areas of health, social care and well being, neighbourhood services, education, employment and enterprise, all of which will be affected positively by empowered and engaged communities.

It is closely linked to **Haringey's Community Engagement Framework** and takes account of local needs and lessons learnt from the NDC experience. It sets out a number of new and existing practical actions which the NDC is working on and which underpins the process of community empowerment, these actions are designed to help partners and local communities of the NDC area to be involved in influencing and decision making processes over the coming years.

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Activity	Partner Organisations	Evidence of Commitment	Sustainability timescale	Beneficiaries
Greater involvement in service development and delivery by local communities	LB Haringey, Haringey LSP, HAVCO, Haringey Community LiNK, Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust, NHS Haringey, The Metropolitan Police, The Bridge Renewal Trust, and NDC Partnership Board.	Alignment with Haringey Community Engagement Framework. Participation in Haringey Community LiNK meetings Participation in user consultation groups and focussed meetings	Ongoing	Local partners, local communities
Training and support for NDC resident Board members	NDC Partnership Board, Bridge Renewal Trust and HAVCO	Training for resident board members has started, this will continue until 2010. It is envisaged that the successor body (The Bridge Renewal Trust) will continue to work with HAVCO to train and capacity build resident board members	Ongoing until March 2011	Local partners, local communities
Greater involvement in taking up civic roles such as school governors, non executive directors and councillors	LB Haringey, Haringey LSP, HAVCO, Haringey Community LiNK, Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust, NHS Haringey, The Metropolitan Police, The Bridge Renewal Trust, and NDC Partnership Board.	Alignment with Haringey Community Engagement Framework and Haringey Civic Engagement Agenda Information on NDC website and newsletters	Ongoing	Local partners, local communities
Improved	LB Haringey, Haringey	Alignment with Haringey Community	Ongoing	Local partners,

communication and information provision by service providers	LSP, HAVCO, Haringey Community LiNK, Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust, NHS Haringey, The Metropolitan Police, The Bridge Renewal Trust, and NDC Partnership Board.	Engagement Framework		local communities
Greater involvement in local statutory partnership boards	LB Haringey, Haringey LSP, HAVCO, Haringey Community LiNK, Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust, NHS Haringey, The Metropolitan Police, The Bridge Renewal Trust, and NDC Partnership Board.	Alignment with Haringey Community Engagement Framework Alignment with LAAs Engaged with Haringey Community LiNK	Ongoing	Local partners, local communities
Promotion of role of Young Advisors within mainstream service providers	LB Haringey, Haringey LSP, HAVCO, Haringey Community LiNK, Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust, NHS Haringey, The Metropolitan Police, The Bridge Renewal Trust, and NDC Partnership Board.		Ongoing	Local partners, local communities