



# Community Planning

Newsheet I (May 2008)

## Welcome

This is the first in a series of new Briefing Newsheets on Community Planning. It is published by Community Places 'Supporting Communities in Community Planning Project'.

This first edition provides the background to the Review of Public Administration, the recent announcements on the new council numbers and the transfer of powers to local government. It also outlines what Community Planning entails and how our Supporting Communities in Community Planning Project is assisting and advising groups through this process.

## Community Places

Community Places (formerly Community Technical Aid) was established in 1984 and employs planners and development staff to assist disadvantaged and excluded communities to:

- improve their areas;
- prepare community plans and strategies;
- respond to planning and development proposals in their areas;
- present their views on major planning consultation initiatives; and
- develop community facilities.

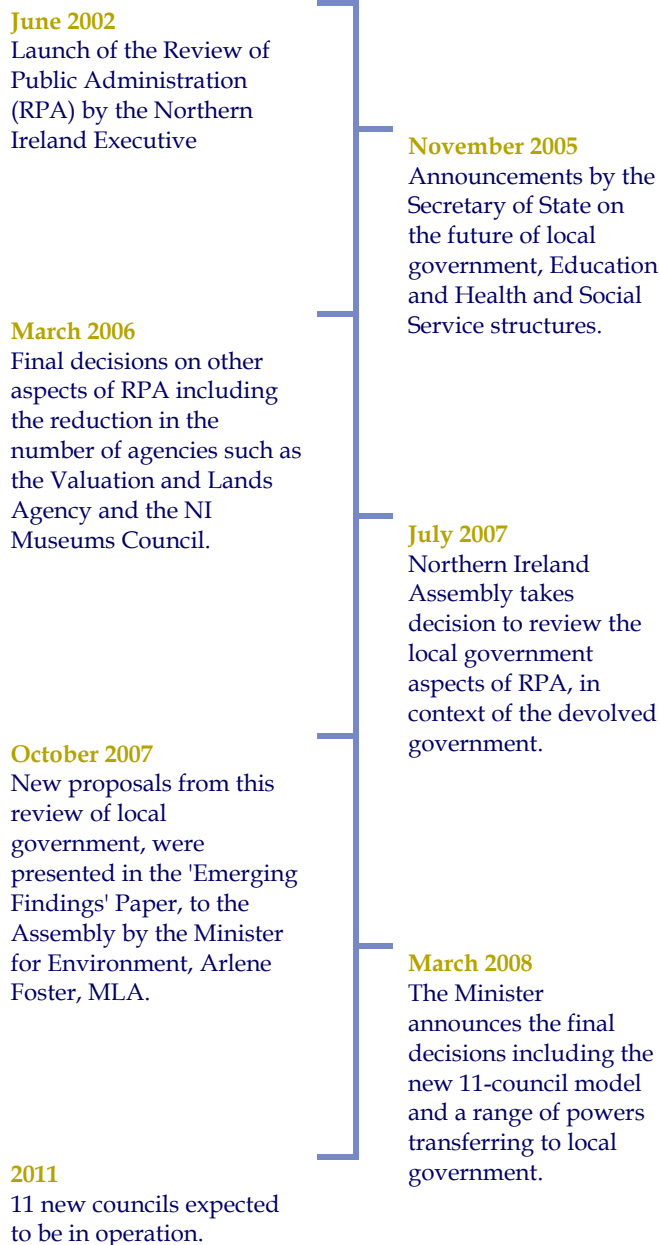


## Review of Public Administration

The Review of Public Administration (RPA) was established to examine the arrangements for the administration and delivery of public services in Northern Ireland.

The review encompassed over 150 bodies, including the 26 district councils, the Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts and the Education and Library Boards. The following timeline gives an overview of the process.

### Review of Public Administration - Timeline



## Review of the Local Government Aspects of RPA - The Decisions

### New Councils

Arlene Foster, the Minister leading the Review of the local government aspects of RPA, announced in March 2008, that the 26 current councils would merge to form 11 new councils in 2011.

The map below outlines the general amalgamation of existing councils into the new 11-council model, with the final decisions on the exact boundaries to be taken by the Boundary Commissioner - an appointment to this role is expected by July 2008.



11-Council model for Northern Ireland

### Transfer of Powers

The new councils will have an increased number of powers that will transfer from central government departments.

Decisions on the details and timing of transfers are yet to be finalised, however the areas of power that the new councils will have responsibility for, in 2011, will include:

#### Department for Social Development

- Regeneration (including Neighbourhood Renewal)
- Urban Development Grants
- Some community development programmes
- Support for local voluntary and community sectors

Some Northern Ireland Housing Executive functions including

- Registration of Houses in Multiple Occupation

- Repair and demolition notices
- Travellers' Transit sites

A greater role in local aspects of

- Economic Development
- Tourism
- Arts, Sports and Leisure

Planning Service

- Planning Applications and Enforcement

Roads Service

- Streetscaping
- Town/City Centre Environmental Improvements
- Street Lighting
- Off-street Parking
- Permits for events on local roads

Together with a new additional role of Community Planning.

## Community Planning

### What is Community Planning?

In addition to an increase in powers such as those outlined above, new councils will also have a new power of Community Planning.

According to the Scottish Executive's definition, Community Planning is a "process whereby the public services in the area of a local authority are planned and provided after consultation and (ongoing) co-operation among all public bodies and with community bodies".

The Scottish example is important as many key characteristics from this model will form the foundation of a Community Planning process here. In the recent announcements, Minister Arlene Foster MLA, highlighted some of these key features, including:

- a statutory requirement on Councils to engage local communities and the public,
- a statutory duty on public bodies, including Health Trusts, PSNI and Education Boards to participate in and support the process, and
- agencies working in partnership with groups to respond to local needs.

## What and Who Will It Involve?

The 11 new councils will have a responsibility to prepare Community Plans for the co-ordination of public and community services across their areas. These will be further supported by a range of local community plans.

The Community Plans will involve the councils, public bodies and the community working in partnership to:

- identify needs across the council area;
- undertake public and community consultation;
- agree priorities for action;
- monitor and evaluate implementation; and
- report on progress to the public.



Scrabo Community Planning Workshop

With the new councils not expected to be in place until 2011, it is likely that several pilot schemes will be introduced to begin the process of Community Planning. It is hoped that new statutory guidelines on how to undertake community consultation will also be developed from these pilots.

An evaluation of these pilots together with research from existing community planning models in England, Wales, Republic of Ireland and specifically Scotland, will provide good practices on the process and structures of Community Planning.

Although Community Planning is a relatively new concept here, there have been examples here of similar collaboration between statutory agencies, voluntary organisations and the local community in the past.

While varying success was achieved through these methods, it is important to learn from them and to build on the partnerships and relationships that have already been established.

A good example of Community Planning in Scotland is the Dundee Community Plan. It was prepared through a process of community engagement which included the development of nine local community plans across the city. Below is a summary document from the Dundee Central Area's Local Community Plan.

Summary of a Local Community Plan in Dundee

In terms of the impact of Community Planning in Scotland, a recent Scottish Audit Report found that the process was building partnerships, involving communities and responding in more joined-up ways to new issues and needs.

More information on Community Planning in Dundee can be found on the Dundee Partnership's website

[www.dundeepartnership.co.uk](http://www.dundeepartnership.co.uk)

## Supporting Communities in Community Planning Project

The main focus of the Project is to work with both disadvantaged and black and minority ethnic communities by providing:

- capacity building workshops to develop knowledge and skills;
- mentoring and support on the production of Local Community Plans;
- advice and information on new structures of public bodies; and
- networking opportunities and sharing of good practice.

The Project has provided a number of Information Events and Workshops in collaboration with networks including Craigavon Community Network, Coleraine Rural and Urban Network and East Belfast Community Development Agency and preparations are under way for the development of a local Community Plan in the Ards area.



Craigavon Community Planning Workshop

A conference on Community Planning was also held in conjunction with NICVA and RCN and several future events are planned in the coming months with the assistance of local networks.

The Supporting Communities in Community Planning Project is funded through the Big Lottery Fund's Reaching Communities Northern Ireland Programme and will run for five years.

## How to Get Involved

The Community Planning Support Worker is Annie Clarke, who will be supported by other Community Places staff in delivering the project aims.

If your organisation would like to participate in the project or receive more information, please contact Annie on 028 9023 9444 or by email at [annie@communityplaces.info](mailto:annie@communityplaces.info)

To ensure that our Newsheet Briefings are as informative as possible, we would welcome your feedback and suggestions on aspects of Community Planning and the RPA which are of interest to you or other community and voluntary groups.

### Useful Websites

Community Places  
[www.communityplaces.info](http://www.communityplaces.info)

DOE: Lead Department on Local Government  
[www.doeni.gov.uk/index/local\\_government](http://www.doeni.gov.uk/index/local_government)

England  
[www.communityplanning.net](http://www.communityplanning.net)

Northern Ireland Assembly  
[www.niassembly.gov.uk](http://www.niassembly.gov.uk)

Republic of Ireland  
[www.cdb.ie](http://www.cdb.ie)

Review of Public Administration in NI  
[www.rpani.gov.uk](http://www.rpani.gov.uk)

Scotland  
[www.improvementservice.org.uk/community-planning](http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/community-planning)

[www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk](http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk)

Wales  
[www.wales.gov.uk/topics/localgovernment/partnership/commstrategies](http://www.wales.gov.uk/topics/localgovernment/partnership/commstrategies)



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# Community Planning

## Newsheet 2 (September 2008)

### Welcome

Welcome to the second edition of our Briefing Newsheet on Community Planning.

The topics in this edition include the role of the newly appointed Local Government Boundaries Commissioner for Northern Ireland, the establishment of the RPA Strategic Leadership Board and the Policy Development Panels and the background to and examples of the Power of Well-being.

If you have any topics that you would like to see included in future Newsheets please get in contact with Annie Clarke on 028 9023 9444 or by email at [annie@communityplaces.info](mailto:annie@communityplaces.info)

### Local Community Plan for Scrabo Estate

Work on preparing the Project's first Local Community Plan is well under way. Working closely with the Ards Community Network we facilitated a very productive workshop on developing a Community Plan for the Scrabo Estate in Newtownards. Participants included the Scrabo Residents' Association and local agencies such as the Housing Executive, Ards Borough Council, Youth Service, South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and the PSNI. A follow-up event was held in August 2008 and the Community Plan for the Scrabo Estate is progressing well.

### Capacity Building in the North West

The North West Workshop attracted a cross spread of participants from the community and voluntary sector and the discussions proved useful in determining the way forward for the sector in terms of Community Planning in the North West.



A number of future events are being organised in the North Down Area and in the Killyleagh/Comber Area.

### Local Government Boundaries Commissioner

Mr Dick MacKenzie has been appointed as the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner for Northern Ireland. His main role will be to make recommendations to the Department of the Environment regarding:

- boundaries of the 11 new districts;
- names of the 11 new districts;
- number and boundaries of the wards within the new districts; and
- names of these new wards.

For up-to-date information on the role of the Boundaries Commissioner and his assessors, please visit [www.lgbc-ni.org](http://www.lgbc-ni.org)

### RPA Strategic Leadership Board and Policy Development Panels

#### Strategic Leadership Board

The Strategic Leadership Board was established to drive forward the Review of Public Administration's implementation process. The board consists of ten political representatives and is chaired by the Minister of the Environment, Sammy Wilson MLA. The Strategic Leadership Board will provide the lead for the Policy Development Panels.

#### Policy Development Panels

The three panels will develop policies on a range of issues including Governance, Transfer of Functions, Budgets and Community Planning. The panels will consist of ten members drawn from the political parties. The Panel dealing with Community Planning is chaired by Cllr Joanne Bunting and is advised by Liam Hannaway, Chief Executive of Banbridge District Council.

## Power of Well-being

### What does the Power of Well-being mean?

In announcing the new powers for councils the Minister said they will also have a Power of Well-being which will allow them to “take any action that is not already the responsibility of another agency, linked with the community plan, to improve the well-being of the local community or local area”.

Through examining the examples of the power in England, Wales and Scotland we can get an idea of how the power is applied, who can use it and what the benefits of a similar power here would be.

In England and Wales, every local authority has the power to do anything that it considers is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of any one or more of the following:

- the economic well-being of the area;
- the social well-being of the area;
- the environmental well-being of the area.

This is similar in Scotland where it is referred to as the Power to Advance Well-being. The following case study highlights how the Power has been applied in England.

### Wakefield, England

The Well-being Power was used in Wakefield to purchase houses on an estate in rapid decline. This ensured speedy clearance of the area while giving reasonable recompense to residents and owners, rather than going through the lengthy and costly vesting process.

The estate – which was split equally between owner-occupied, housing association-owned and private landlord-owned residences – was overwhelmed by anti-social behaviour and drug-related problems resulting in many unfit or vacant homes and reduced value of the remaining habitable houses.

The Council was keen to acquire and demolish the houses and rehouse the remaining occupants. The rationale was that use of the Well-being Power would facilitate action relatively quickly and effectively. Without this power it was difficult to see how any action could be taken quickly enough.

Agreements were made with the housing association which agreed to demolish its properties and re-house the tenants. Where a property was privately owned and abandoned the landlord was given £3,000 to give over rights to the property to the council. There were criteria for the people living in the estate. If they kept their home in good order the local authority would give them full market price plus recompense for disturbance and re-location.

([www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/formativeevaluation](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/formativeevaluation)).

## Community Planning and Your Community

If your group would like to know more about Community Planning or receive more information on the project, please contact Annie Clarke on 028 9023 9444 or by email at [annie@communityplaces.info](mailto:annie@communityplaces.info) Annie will also be happy to talk to you about capacity building for the groups in your area.

## Future Events

### Planning, the Law and the Community Event

This event seeks to assist groups and individuals in successfully engaging with the planning system and gaining access to environmental justice.

The event will be held at **NICVA**, Duncairn Gardens, Belfast on **Thursday, 25 September 2008 from 2.30 pm to 6.00 pm**. If you wish to attend, please contact Community Places for a booking form.



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# Community Planning

## Newsheet 3 (February 2009)

Welcome to our third edition of the Briefing Newsheet on Community Planning. This edition provides updates on Local Government Reform, a background to the new Transition Committees and highlights key activities and events undertaken through the our Supporting Communities in Community Planning Project.

### Community Planning Information Pack

As part of the Supporting Communities in Community Planning Project, we have produced a Community Planning Information Pack. The pack provides information on a range of topics including the Review of Public Administration, Local Government Reforms, Community Planning and details of special funding project areas and support networks that local groups can avail of.

The pack will be distributed to participants at the project workshops and will be available to view on our new website, once it is launched.



### Challenges of Community Planning at a Local Level – Stormont Event

Over 100 people attended an event at Stormont in October 2008 organised by us in association with the Community Development Networks Forum and NICVA. The event brought together community, statutory and elected representatives from across the region to learn about and discuss the challenges of Community Planning at a local level. The guest speakers on the day were Stephen Peover - Department of Environment Permanent Secretary, Cllr Francie Molloy MLA, Liam Hannaway - Chief Executive of Banbridge District Council and Cathy Rice - Chair of the Community Development Networks Forum.

The main points discussed throughout the conference were that this is a time of great change for all sectors and that it is important

that groups start preparing for Community Planning and the reforms now, rather than waiting for others to do so.

### First Local Community Plan

We have completed the first Local Community Plan in the region since the RPA changes were first announced. The Plan is for the Scrabo Estate in Newtownards and provides a model for the introduction of Community Planning across the new Council area covering Ards and North Down.

Working closely with the Ards Community Network we facilitated a series of planning workshops for the Scrabo Residents' Association, Ards Borough Council, NIHE, South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, Investing for Health, PSNI and DSD Areas at Risk Programme. Through these workshops the partners agreed and prioritised issues for short and medium term action. Many of these are well under way through two working groups set up by all the partners.

The Scrabo Local Community Plan will be launched soon and more information on it is available from our Community Planning Support Worker, Annie Clarke.

### Update on Local Government Reform

An overall consultation paper on the proposed Reform of Local Government is expected to be presented to the Executive in March 2009, with expectations that it will go out for public consultation in April 2009. Within this paper will be a section on the proposals for Community Planning.

The Department of Environment is looking at rolling out Community Planning through the Transition Committees in the 11 new Councils on a voluntary basis, with an expected start date of late 2009. Statutory agencies will be expected to participate. This process will be monitored by the Regional Transition Co-ordinating Group, which will oversee the work of the Transition Committees (see overleaf).



Primary legislation for Community Planning will be developed in 2010 and will include a duty on Councils, Agencies and Departments to participate in the Community Planning process and will list those organisations.

### Transition Committees and Management Teams

There are 11 Transition Committees, one for each of the proposed new Council Clusters. The membership of each committee includes elected representatives from the existing councils within a cluster together with the Chief Executives. The primary role of the Transition Committee is to take the key decisions necessary to ensure that there are 11 effective Councils in place by April 2011. Each Transition Committee will receive £150,000 per annum and is required to liaise with local stakeholders and take account of their views.

The Transition Management Teams will include Chief Executives from the existing councils within a cluster and Senior Officers from transferor Agencies and Departments. They will have responsibility for the ongoing operational management of the transition at the local level and will work under the direction of the Transition Committee.

### Upcoming Events

#### North Down and Ards Communities Preparing for Change

The North Down and Ards Community Networks are holding a joint networking and planning event for community, statutory and elected representatives from across the new council cluster of Ards and North Down.

The event will highlight the role and responsibilities of the new super council and provide an opportunity for groups from Ards and North Down Borough Councils to network and prepare for the introduction of Community Planning.

### Community Places Website – Going Live

Community Places is currently working on a new website for the organisation. The website will 'go live' over the coming months, allowing you to view up-to-date information on Community Planning.

### Big Thinking – on Community Planning

The Big Lottery Fund is currently running a consultation - Big-thinking - on its strategic framework for 2009–2015. There are five Northern Ireland-specific questions, one of which asks how can BIG funding best support Community Planning? We would encourage you to participate in the consultation and in particular, think about what resources would support you in engaging in the Community Planning process. Suggestions include assisting local communities in developing:

- better models of community engagement;
- networking opportunities and communication links with groups within their council cluster; and
- local ideas for Community Planning.

The consultation is open until 27 February 2009 and is available at [www.big-thinking.org.uk](http://www.big-thinking.org.uk) or by contacting the Big Lottery Fund on 028 9055 1455 for more information.

### Support Available from Us

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

If you want to know more about how we can work with your community, please contact Annie Clarke on 028 90239444 or by email at [annie@communityplaces.info](mailto:annie@communityplaces.info)



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# Community Planning

## Newsheet 4 (June 2010)

Welcome to the fourth edition of our Briefing Newsheet on Community Planning. This edition provides an overview of the role of Community Planning at a local level, updates on Local Government Reform, an introduction to the Big Lottery Fund's Community Planning Pilot Projects and highlights key activities and events undertaken through our Supporting Communities in Community Planning Project.

### Community Planning – The Future is Local

Community Planning is a crucial element in how local community and voluntary groups, statutory agencies and councils can work together to achieve improved services for all. At a time of increasing financial constraints and dwindling budgets, the role of Community Planning has never been more important.

We believe that the future of Community Planning lies at a local level. Local communities, voluntary organisations and statutory agencies now have an opportunity to both shape and implement Community Planning.

With the support of Community Places, local communities have already been active in developing Community Plans within their areas. The value of these Community Planning processes cannot be underestimated and progress achieved includes:

#### Scrabo (Newtownards):

- A new Community House which is the focus for all local activities and for joint working between the community, agencies and councils;
- Community Newsletter launched;
- Preparation of an Areas at Risk

- Programme to address training needs, personal development skills and improve access to services;
- Housing and environmental improvements completed including landscaping schemes and recycling opportunities;
- Youth and health improvement programmes; and
- Establishment of a Monday (Men's) Club.

#### Bushmills:

- Improved community infrastructure within the Village Forum and communications with statutory agencies, council and elected representatives;
- Proposals agreed for activities and services which will make important contributions to the quality of life of local residents;
- Improved communication with local residents, visitors and agencies.
- Agreement on improvements to Millennium Park and Hamill Park; and
- Plans for a new Tourist Information Centre and a sports pavilion.



### **Legahory and Burnside (Craigavon):**

- Improved relationships between the Community Association, statutory agencies and the council;
- Environmental improvements through: the demolition of unsafe housing, landscaping and tree planting schemes and general clean ups; and
- Focus on long-term future for the area, as well as meeting the everyday needs of the local community.

### **Cherryvalley/De Wind (Comber):**

- Newly established joint working links between the Residents' Association, statutory agencies and the council;
- Focus on the key issues which need addressed in the area including activities for local residents, dealing with anti-social behaviour and provision of transport; and
- Environmental improvements, landscaping, clean-ups, safety works and the development of a wildflower garden within the area.

The progress illustrated above reinforces the need for a Community Planning approach and how, regardless of the uncertainty at a NI Executive level, local communities together with local statutory agencies and councils can take the lead in implementing Community Planning and shaping it for the future.

### **Big Lottery Fund – Support for Pilot Projects and Learning**

In recognition of the need to support the involvement of community and voluntary groups in Community Planning the Big Lottery Fund has decided to fund three pilot Community Plans and a learning project. This learning project will draw on the experiences of the pilots to develop a toolkit for Community Planning which would support the genuine engagement of the community and voluntary sector in future Community Planning processes.

### **Community Planning - Key Activities and Events**

#### **Ards and North Down Communities - Networking and Planning for Change**

Over the past 12 months the local community networks of North Down, Ards and East Down have come together, facilitated by Community Places, in organising a series of events to highlight the changes within local government and the opportunities for the community and statutory sectors and councils to work together through Community Planning processes. These events have built networking between groups and agencies across the council boundaries, developed participants' understanding of community planning and provide information on developments associated with Local Government Reform.

#### **Community Planning - The New Council, Communities and Agencies Working Together – Causeway Coast and Glens District Council**

A similar event to those held in North Down and Ards was organised by Ballymoney Community Resource Centre, Coleraine Rural and Urban Network, North Antrim Community Network and Limavady Community Development Agency in collaboration with Community Places.

The event provided participants with an opportunity to learn about the changes proposed for the new Causeway Coast and Glens Council from the Chief Executive of Limavady Borough Council, Mr Liam Flanigan. The participants also heard from



the experiences of Mr Bryan Poole, Manager for Council of Voluntary Service, Fife in relation to the Community Planning process in Fife.

### **Towards 2011 and Beyond: 'communities, councils and agencies working together for our future'**

This very successful regional conference was held in the Tullylagan Hotel, Cookstown. It explored how relationships between councils, statutory agencies and communities can best be developed and identified how Community Development and Engagement can contribute to the Community Planning process.



These discussions were supported through examples of good practice of communities, councils and agencies working together including:

- Coleraine Borough Council's relationship and service level agreements with Coleraine Rural and Urban Network;
- the Southern Health Trust and its role with Community Network Craigavon in co-chairing the Craigavon and Banbridge Community Forum; and
- Ards Borough Council and the work been undertaken with Ards Community Network in developing a Local Community Planning process in the Ards Borough.

## **Update on Local Government Reform**

The NI Executive has taken the decision **not** to progress with Local Government Reform in May 2011.

It is unclear at this stage what the alternative options are, however what is clear is that the council elections which will be held in May 2011 will be based on the existing 26 council model.

The current provision of public services represents a labyrinth of district and sub regional bodies rather than a coherent delivery mechanism for public services. What we are left with, as one contributor to a regional newspaper outlines, are:

- 35 district offices (Housing);
- 11 regional offices (Agriculture);
- 10 veterinary offices (Agriculture);
- Eight divisional and sub divisional offices (Planning);
- Four regional divisions (Roads);
- One big board (in theory) and five smaller ones, at the same time (Education);
- Seven districts (PSNI);
- Four areas (Fire and Rescue);
- 12 A&E hospitals (Health);
- 26 district councils (Local Government).

## Voluntary Transition Committees

The 11 voluntary Transition Committees continue to meet on a regular basis; however the delay in the approval of the Local Government Boundaries Order 2010 has prevented the establishment of statutory Transition Committees. A Transition Change Manager has been appointed by each of the Transition Committees to oversee the transition period in their area. The Transition Change Managers, outlined below can be contacted at the relevant council offices:

- Mr Stephen Finlay - Antrim and Newtownabbey Transition Committee
- Mr Eamonn Kelly - Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Transition Committee
- Mr Kevin Heaney - Belfast Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
- Mr David Jackson - Causeway Coast and Glens Transition Committee
- Ms Ellen Cavanagh - Derry City and Strabane Transition Committee
- Ms Kim McLaughlin - Fermanagh and Omagh Transition Committee
- Mr Richard Jackson - Lisburn City and Castlereagh Transition Committee
- Mrs J Fulton - Mid and East Antrim Transition Committee
- Mr Jim McKenzie - Mid Ulster Transition Committee
- Mr Jonathon McBride - Newry, Mourne and Down Transition Committee
- Mr Andrew Scott - North Down and Ards Transition Committee

## 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, the new RPA structures and on developing Local Community Plans which focus on community issues and provide models for the future. If you want to know more about how we can work with your community, please contact **Annie Clarke** on **90239444** or by email at [annie@communityplaces.info](mailto:annie@communityplaces.info)



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# Community Planning

Newsheet 5 April 2011

Community  
Places



Welcome to the fifth edition of our Briefing Newsheet on Community Planning. This edition provides an overview of the recent Local Government Reform proposals on Community Planning; an update on the progress of some local community plans; and includes details of the Somme Centre Event which saw the launch of the Working Together Report.

## Local Government Reform and Community Planning

There has been a great deal of uncertainty and delay surrounding local government reform and the implementation of the RPA which was first launched in 2002. Although there has been no progress towards an 11 council model and the transfer of functions to them the recent policy proposals are welcomed and maintain some momentum towards reform.

The latest policy proposals for the reform of local government were launched for public consultation by the Minister of the Environment Edwin Poots on 30 November 2010. The proposals set out governance arrangements for new councils and cover a range of issues including: the introduction of Community Planning responsibilities and a power of well-being; ethical standards and checks and balances to ensure fair and transparent decision-making.

Over 80 people attended our recent information workshops in Cookstown and Belfast which were organised in conjunction with RCN and NICVA to raise awareness of the proposals and encourage participants to respond to the consultation process.

## Council-led Community Planning

The proposals set out a council-led and facilitated community planning process which will not be overly prescriptive enabling local councils to act

flexibly to meet local needs. The proposals state that councils will be:

- “Expected to consult and co-operate with all bodies responsible for providing public services;
- Expected to engage with the community, other bodies and individuals in planning the provision of public services;
- Required to publish, review and amend community plans to reflect changes in their area;
- Required to publish reports on community planning including public service improvements. The content, frequency and form of these reports will be specified by the Department.”

## Government Departments and Public Bodies

It is proposed that government departments should be required to “promote” community planning and “have regard to” community plans. Other public bodies will be required to “participate in and assist” community planning. The Department intends to produce detailed guidance to support Councils to deliver effective community planning.



## Power of Well-Being

The Department proposes that Councils should have a new power of well-being to respond to issues that may be identified through Community Planning. The proposed power of well-being will allow Councils to take forward actions which are not already the responsibility of another agency (unless given permission) to promote or improve the well-being of their area. A council would not be able to use the power of well-being for anything it is unable to do as a result of other legal restrictions. The Department intends to issue detailed guidance which councils would be required to have regard to in carrying out their power of well-being.

## Ethical Standards and Code of Conduct

A new ethical standards regime is proposed for local government which would include a compulsory code of conduct for councillors and supporting mechanisms for investigation, adjudication and appeals.

For further information see our Local Government Reform and Community Planning Policy Proposals Briefing Paper and Consultation Response available on our website.

## Community Planning - The Future is Local Update

With the support of Community Places, local communities, voluntary organisations and statutory agencies have been continuing to shape and implement Community Planning. An update of this work is detailed below.

### Braniel Community Plan

Braniel Community Association and local community and church groups are working together with Castlereaigh Borough Council and the Housing Executive, facilitated by

Community Places, to develop a Community Plan for the area. Local residents have recently completed community surveys to identify the needs of people in the area.



### Bushmills Community Plan

The Bushmills Community Plan was launched in June 2010 and the Bushmills Village Forum is making progress towards many of the actions set out in the plan. These include, developing a handbook of existing groups in the area, a community newsletter and planning environmental improvements.



## De Wind Drive/Cherryvalley Plan

The De Wind Drive/Cherryvalley Area Local Plan was launched in January 2011. The plan was produced through collaboration between local residents, statutory and voluntary organisations. Progress has already been made in the area with plans for a new landscaping scheme and wildflower meadow.



## Communities Planning for Change

More than 80 representatives from local communities throughout the Ards, Down and North Down council areas and local politicians gathered in the Somme Centre in January 2011 to examine how to best support communities in the future. This was the fourth in a series of community planning and networking conferences organised by Ards Development Bureau, East Down Rural Community Network and North Down Community Network, in partnership with Community Places. The conference saw the launch of "Working Together" which details how the three support networks will co-ordinate their efforts to benefit community development for people throughout the three council areas.

The new strategy sets out joint aims and actions for work in partnership with Government, local councils and funding bodies to deliver an efficient community development support service.



At the event, an overview of the joint strategy was presented and was well received. Information was also presented about Peace III funding and current Down Rural Area Partnership funding. In addition, groups provided feedback on what priorities they feel emerging funding programmes should focus on over the next few years.



## 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 want to know more about how we can work with your community, please contact Louise or Elaine on 028 9023 9444 or by email at [info@communityplaces.info](mailto:info@communityplaces.info)

## BIG Lottery Fund - Community Planning Pilots

The three Big Lottery Funded Community Planning Pilots (Belfast, led by Belfast City Council; Derry/Londonderry and Strabane, led by Derry City Council and Strabane District Council; and Fermanagh and Omagh, led by the Rural Development Council) are progressing well. Two of the pilots have recently appointed Project Officers and all of the pilots will be taking forward community engagement activities over the forthcoming months. 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)



**LOTTERY FUNDED**

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