

how to build...

a local action partnership

Newcastle-under-Lyme

checklist:

- Locality Action Partnerships (LAP) are about residents being able to make decisions that effect the neighbourhoods they live in... but they only work if the right strategic people are on board. So make sure local politicians and the right strategic managers are signed up at the earliest opportunity.
- To find the right resident representatives map the community infrastructure for the geographic area to be covered by the LAP and invite the representatives from the existing community groups, associations, clubs etc. that you find.
- As you get everybody signed up make sure they are clear about the objectives of the LAP and the roles and responsibilities of the different people involved. That way confusion and unrealistic expectations can be avoided. If necessary offer induction training to achieve this.
- Move quickly to agree an action plan for the partnership. This will give the partnership purpose and direction. It will also help the LAP remain focused and thereby avoid being overwhelmed by the range of potential priorities.
- Putting politicians, partners and residents in the same room can create difficulties and tension particularly regarding the different priorities of different groups. One way to overcome this is to use statistical data as evidence to balance personal views and opinions.
- The most important person in the partnership is the Chair. Make sure the person selected is someone with the motivation, the skills and the time to do the job. Also make sure they have the necessary admin support to plan meetings, take minutes, send out invites etc.

jargon buster

Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs) are a mechanism for allowing residents to set the priorities for action in their own neighbourhoods.

To enable this to happen LAPs bring together, at a neighbourhood level, elected members, residents, mainstream services (such as the Police) and other key local stakeholders (such as Housing Associations).

Top Tips

How to judge a good LAP:

1. Does the Chair control meetings well?
2. Do LAP decisions lead to actions?
3. Are the important partners attending meetings?
4. Is the agenda focused?
5. Has the purpose of the LAP and your role been clearly explained to you?
6. Is the LAP discussing local priorities?

case study

where it worked

Newcastle-under-Lyme

In October 2008, the Newcastle Partnership identified that to enable service providers to focus their efforts more closely on the varying needs of different communities that a new way of working would need to be developed.

The partnership recognised its crucial role in bringing agencies and communities together to improve the local area and to ensure that decision-making meets the priorities of both parties, balanced with evidence based need. Locality Action Partnerships (LAPs) emerged from the previous Community Safety Locality Action Groups and utilised the principles of Neighbourhood Management (following on from the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder).

The LAPs were set up to assist in providing effective joint working within localities to enable more decisions to be made at a local level with the involvement of the residents and the communities that they affect.

Eleven LAPs are in operation of each of the ten areas and include Borough Councillors, County Councillors, Parish Councillors, Town Councillors, relevant officers from both Borough and County Councils, local community groups, residents, community and voluntary organisations, Staffordshire Police, Staffordshire Fire & Rescue and other relevant partners.

Area profiles were developed for each of the groups and following

on from this, action plans were developed to address the identified priorities.

These priorities linked to the Sustainable Community Strategy. Each of the LAP groups were allocated £5,000 to spend on activities that aimed to deliver projects against the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities.

The frequency of meetings is between 4-8 weeks and the meetings are chaired by a variety of community representatives and councillors.

There is also a LAP chairs group that meets 6-8 weeks.

The LAPs mainly focus on operational activity, where an issue is identified, the groups work together to look at interventions to address the issues.

Interventions have included community pride events, community clear ups and community safety days, pension service information sessions, debt advice, young people's projects, intergenerational projects, purchase of equipment, health awareness and community payback schemes.

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