

Project Report: Building Stronger Communities

This report is intended to be an informal summary and evaluation of the Building Stronger Communities Project. A copy of this report will be sent to Community Engagement Empowerment and Cohesion group members, the Safer Stronger Communities block lead, Inspire East, Building Capacity East, IdeA, Hertfordshire County Council and the Department for Communities and Local Government

Introduction

In March 2007 Dacorum Borough Council appointed a Stronger Communities Development Officer to deliver the Building Stronger Communities Project across Hertfordshire¹. The project ran from March 2007 - March 2008, addressing the following targets (non-reward) of the Safer & Stronger Communities block of the Local Area Agreement² (LAA):

- Increase the percentage of people surveyed who are satisfied with the opportunities for participation in local decision-making provided by their Council by 2% by 2009.
- Increase the percentage of people surveyed who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area by 2% by 2009.
- Increase the percentage of people surveyed who feel their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together by 2% by 2009.

The initial lead for these targets was Jacquie Campbell, Director of Communities, Customers & Housing, Dacorum Borough Council. This has since changed to Daniel Zammit, Chief Executive, Dacorum Borough Council,

The remit and outcomes of the Building Stronger Communities project were developed from suggestions made during workshops at a conference about the Hertfordshire Local Area Agreement. To develop the project a steering group called the Community Engagement, Empowerment and Cohesion (CEEC) group developed the specific project outcomes. The initial core project team included:

- Dacorum Borough Council
- Watford Borough Council
- Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils
- East Hertfordshire District Council
- Broxbourne Borough Council
- Stevenage Borough Council
- Three Rivers District Council
- Broxbourne Borough Council
- Hertfordshire Constabulary

¹ For more information about Hertfordshire see appendix 1

² For more information see appendix 2

Key actions/outcomes

- Writing and producing *Engage*, a guide about community engagement that looks at practical ways of engaging the community. Its purpose to help council officers, elected Members (Councillors) and communities in Hertfordshire ensure that community engagement is meaningful and useful. The guide explores techniques for engaging people including consultation, which it explores in detail.
- Producing a documentary to encourage better consultation with young people. The 3Style Festival of Achievement reached over 500 young people, used music, arts and media performed by young people for young people to reach a diverse audience and engage those who may not access other engagement routes. A documentary was produced to showcase this as an example of empowering young people to organise, run, evaluate and be an active, engaged part of a large-scale community event.
- Create a web based portal to host the guide and DVD/case study – see www.hertslink.org/engage
- Organising, hosting and facilitating an event for over 230 people. This event welcomed a fantastic range of people, from residents to chief executives, and provided a useful conference to increase people's knowledge about engagement, empowerment, cohesion and issues surrounding them all such as policy, techniques for engagement, personal skills etc.
- To build a network of practitioners across the region to share good practice and act as mentors in developing stronger communities.
- To support projects that are involved with engagement, empowerment or cohesion across Hertfordshire and share information and best practice.
- Inform people about LAA, its meaning, the targets and relevance.

Statistics

During September 2007 Opinion Research Survey (ORS) undertook the LAA survey for the perception indicators in Hertfordshire Safer Stronger Communities block. ORS interviewed a total of 1,628 residents' aged 16+ in randomly selected output areas (OAs) across Hertfordshire. The Survey was designed to produce results that are representative of the population of Hertfordshire and to replicate the previous surveys so that results are comparable. All OAs within the County were sorted by ward, with individual sampling points then selected at random. Within each OA, the interviewer quotas were set to reflect the population profile of that neighbourhood by age, gender, working status and ethnicity using the 2001 Census data. The survey included an additional booster sample of people from Minority Ethnic Groups as it was felt that these people would not be represented in statistically robust numbers in the main survey. Wherever a sample is taken, there will always be a degree of uncertainty about what the true characteristics of the population. This level of uncertainty can usually be quantified and this is known as the Confidence Interval. Government Office East required a confidence interval of 2% on the LAA Survey and the original sample size of 1177 surveys did not meet this confidence interval.

An interim survey was carried out in September 2007 to track progress on all Safer and Stronger Communities block targets. For a table of results of baseline and interim survey please see appendix 6.

Finance/resource information

These are non-reward LAA targets and do not attract pump-priming funding. Therefore any actions/outcomes for this project either had to use existing resources or external funding would be needed. Realising the pressures on existing resources, Dacorum Borough Council, on behalf of the CEEC group, gained £27,500 funding from Building Capacity East (BCE) – for more info on BCE please see appendix 3. Dacorum Borough Council covered all staff related costs (including management) which totalled £39,950. For a breakdown of expenditure please see appendix 4.

Impact

From the outset, the CEEC group recognised that there is a great deal of work happening across the county in relation to community engagement, empowerment and cohesion. There are many public, private and voluntary sector services contributing to this work across Hertfordshire. It became evident at the start of the project that any outcome needed to reflect the work already going on and not duplicate it.

When the Stronger Communities Development Officer (Natalie Webb) was appointed, a great deal of work went into finding out who were the key movers and shakers across Hertfordshire. The officer established robust relationships very quickly. Spending time getting to know each area and some of the key people/organisations was vital to the overall success of the project. A picture began to be built about existing good practice across Hertfordshire with a portfolio of projects collated to provide case studies and evidence later down the line for both the guide and other resources. The bulk of the 12month project was dedicated to producing the resources and continually involving people and projects in order that the resources could 'come to life' once finished.

Since completion of the resources, much positive feedback has been received and the steering group, funders and wider network of practitioners in Hertfordshire seem to agree that the project has had a positive effect and fulfilled the original objectives.

"I've just looked through the *Engage* folder and I wanted to tell you how fantastic it is. I'm really impressed - it's a great piece of work and really does live up to everything we hoped for when we first started out." Jacquie Campbell, Director of Communities, Customers & Housing, Dacorum Borough Council.

"BCE contributed £27,500 to this project and have been very pleased with the way the project has fulfilled the requirements of sharing the learning and tools within Hertfordshire and across the region. There has been good engagement

with partners and the toolkit will be widely available as a useful resource for the future. “ John Campbell, Chief Executive North Herts District Council on behalf of BCE

When writing the guide, it was essential to capture real life and accurate information, so practitioners and community members were contacted and asked to support the writing/production of information - for example by sharing experiences and expertise of engaging with specific groups or using particular engagement methods. An example of this is the information about how to engage with Gypsy and Traveller communities. In order to produce accurate and real, advice, Natalie sought the help of Paula Loft, co-ordinator of the Community Development Agency for Hertfordshire Playbus³ and Christine Houghton, an assistant on the playbus but also a Traveller. Natalie helped out on the playbus for a session to get a brief insight into the community and then with Paula and Christine agreed some tips for engaging with this community. “Hi Natalie, We have just seen the help section that you put together on interacting with the Gypsy and Traveller community and were both impressed! Well done, it was a pleasure to have you join us on the bus! Paula and Christine”

The branding of Engage (including the logo, fresh and modern feel to the guide, website) has ensured that the project could make a mark on Hertfordshire. The event was excellent in drawing people together to advise them of the resources now available and discuss all issues further. Approximately 230 people attended the event, their feedback included in appendix 5.

The website acts as a forum for providing these resources beyond the lifetime of the project. Within the first two weeks of being live, the website had 238 visits, with 56 people downloading the pdf of the guide.

Challenges/learning

- A lack of additional funding – gaining half the original bid for Building Capacity East funding enabled us to deliver however Dacorum Borough Council had to cover all staff costs.
- A lack of capacity or change in circumstance diminished ability of project team to deliver – throughout the project key players have left the project group, this has left the CEEC group somewhat diminished but the project has still been delivered successfully
- Lack of reward affects commitment of authorities to deliver on them – this has been apparent throughout the project with different levels of commitment from each district perhaps caused by no reward.
- Danger that by focusing on increase by 2% and working with border line community reps/individuals could increase their feeling of influence, this may merely increase the distance between those engaged and those not, those who feel they influence and those who don't - the guide has focussed on general engagement not relating to whether communities/residents are or are not already engaged.

³ The Community Development Agency (CDA for Herts) playbus provides a bridge between Traveller Sites and pre-school, nursery and infant provision in the community.

- It is hard to develop a broader sense of community in already isolated/fragmented communities or with those who are harder to reach – The guide also provides information on how to engage with specific communities
- Concern over wording of targets, perception based, e.g. different perceptions of what “different backgrounds” means. Perceptions of phrase will affect the answers given - Local perception can be influenced by national and international events and may not accurately reflect the local position.
- No real statistical understanding for each area – the survey that was undertaken was of so few residents that the confidence level is too low for drilling down to district/ward level so we have no real knowledge of geographically where to target resources
- Difficulty in judging progress made on public perception across the districts – Surveys are not held often enough to give clear trends and the results only measure perception
- Potential lack of opportunity/structure for community/individuals to get involved with decision making –residents are often unclear as to when and how they can influence decisions – to some extent, this is also affected by the politics of local authorities
- Limited to what we can do because lack of resources yet this is a mandatory target – financial commitment from BCE and Dacorum Borough Council however no financial commitment beyond 12months of Building Stronger Communities Project
- The support of steering group has been key to the success of the project – where districts have played a part in CEEC group this provided a good route in to local authorities. This also shows patchy levels of commitment with some district having virtually no involvement with the project despite continuous efforts to involve
- Different levels of ‘buy in’ from partners at different times in project – the event drew together many different agencies who are now ready to become involved
- A gap between policy/strategy and delivery – of particular concern is the lack of understanding about engagement (people often misinterpret consultation and engagement as meaning the same thing)
- Real need for a ‘culture’ of community engagement to be developed – organisational change needed to accommodate this
- Challenge of new/emerging communities and lack of statistical knowledge on numbers of the specific groups that exist in Hertfordshire (more so in some areas than others)
- How will we drive forward the use of the guide? – The project had a shelf life of 12 months. There is no action plan in place to ensure that the resources are continually promoted other than reliance on authorities and other agencies/attendees at event to promote it
- A need to develop the empowerment side of the project in line with recent policy – There is much further work that could build on the success of the Building Stronger Communities Project

- Support of key members of CEEC group and support of the Dacorum Borough Council Communications Officer, Luisa Clarke, was essential to the success for the project
- Two tier structure being a barrier to effective and consistent engagement with the community – there is a need for closer liaison between authorities to ensure that understanding and delivery of engagement, empowerment & cohesion is consistent and effective

Reporting lines:

The CEEC group is currently on hold – it was agreed that the group would re-meet once there was a greater understanding of the way forward after the Building Stronger Communities Project.

The chair, vice chair and Stronger Communities Development Officer continue to sit on the Stronger Communities sub-group, which reports to Safer Stronger Performance Group via Daniel Zammit.

Continuation of project:

The following suggestions were made at the *Engage* event for the continuation of the project:

- Please continue with an empowerment event
- Anything just continue the good work
- Natalie clearly a great source of information hope that the role will continue as a resource to all local authorities
- Natalie to work as a consultant to delegates visiting in workplace to help us do our jobs better
- Very good project, could you do an annual seminar for training purposes using existing resources?
- The good practice should be spread nation-wide
- Some kind of event for all areas
- Take a few themes from project and follow then to use as future encouragement
- More funding to start implementing actions in the toolkit
- Perhaps set up work groups to share information for example, e-mail work groups/networks
- More funding – this project should continuously receive money to keep going
- Anyway of keeping the project going
- More advertising and getting councils to buy in more
- Go out to councils and do direct work with Councillors
- Got to different areas and explore different element for? engagement focussing on local areas
- Give specific advise to community groups
- Definitely think it should carry on, I think Natalie's done a fantastic job and there's something strong and positive coming for all of this. There needs to be

a key person to bring all of this together. Someone people can contact for information and advice.

- I just hope existing structures will continue
- This is a really good thing and it has just scratched the surface of a potential audience for this. It should be rolled out further
- More people would benefit from attending a similar event
- This can't be the end of it! Be good to find out how different organisations have taken it forward
- It would be useful to have a forum/exchange for best practice
- I'd like to hear about success stories from using the toolkit and difficulties including how these are overcome
- Find out how and where people have used the guide, be interested to have some feedback in a years time

The following people expressed an interest for being involved of a future project:

- Indira Biswas- Benbow, Hertfordshire Adult Learning Partnership , 01727737532, indira.biswas-benbow@oaklands.ac.uk
- Carrie Smith, Stevenage Homes, Carrie.smith@stevenagehomes.org.uk
- Sue Baxter, Welwyn Hatfield District Council, s.baxter@welhat.gov.uk
- Heather Aylward, Hertfordshire PCT, heather.aylward@herts-pcts.nhs.uk
- K Clare, Welwyn Hatfield District Council, k.clare@welhat.gov.uk
- Rob Devereux, Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue Service, rob.devereux@hertsc.gov.uk
- Mrs J L Hacker, Hertfordshire resident, 66 Exchange Road, Stevenage, SG1 1LZ
- Gemma O'Flaherty, Senior Tenant Services Officer, gemma.oflahery@hpcha.org.uk
- Kelly McLeod, Watford Borough Council, kelly.mcleod@watford.gov.uk
- Sherry Robinson, Groundwork Hertfordshire, sherry.robinson@groundwork.org.uk
- Robin Webb, YMCA, robin.webb@ymcacentralherts.org.uk
- Fay Muir, Broxbourne CVS, fay@cvsbeh.org.uk
- Bert Pawle, Harpenden Town Council, 01582 768278
- Clare Sulch, Music of the World co-ordinator, Rhythms of the World, Hitchin, claresulch@yahoo.com

Appendix 1: More about Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire stretches from Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire in the north to the outskirts of London in the south. It borders Buckinghamshire in the west and Essex in the east and is one of six counties in the East of England. There are ten districts and boroughs, with a mixture of small and medium sized towns, villages and hamlets.

Hertfordshire enjoys a high quality environment, including the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the west and north, river valleys in the south and a concentration of nationally important woodlands in the south- East. Over 70% of the county is covered by green belt and over 84% by other planning and environmental policies. Historic buildings and landscapes make a significant contribution to the county's character. Both the natural and built environment are subject to pressures, however, particularly from development and congestion linked to levels of traffic.

Hertfordshire is a prosperous county, with a population of over one million and one of the strongest economies in the UK. The economy is built on several sectors, including financial and business services, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals, electronics, film and media and IT.

There are several major transport and communication routes running through the county, with more than 4 million car journeys every day and 29 million bus passengers a year. In line with national trends fewer people use buses every year, but initiatives are in place to tackle this.

High standards of living and low levels of unemployment, coupled with a rich mix of rural and urban environments, add to the attraction of life in the county. Our residents are generally well-educated, computer literate and relatively well-paid. In 2005, the mean average annual earnings of Hertfordshire resident employees were over £32,000 - the highest in the East of England.

Hertfordshire benefits from the social, cultural and economic advantages of easy access to London. It has high standards of living and low levels of unemployment, coupled with a rich mix of urban and rural environments. Levels of deprivation across Hertfordshire are low, reflecting the county's position as one of the major economic drivers within the East of England region. The county is the least deprived of the six counties in the region and ranked 12th amongst the 149 counties and unitary authorities across England. However, these statistics hide some pockets of significant hardship, and we are working to ensure that all residents have equal access to services.

Hertfordshire has one of the lowest crime rates in the country but low-level crime such as vandalism and graffiti, coupled with the fear of crime, leaves people

feeling unsafe. Appointing more Police Community Support Officers, many funded by the Hertfordshire County Council, has combated this problem.

At 11.1%, the proportion of ethnic minority residents in Hertfordshire is lower than the national average, but they are highly concentrated in areas like Watford and Hitchin.

The mixture of urban and rural environment makes it harder to support the development of sustainable and affordable housing. Growth in small rural communities, the renewal and regeneration needs of urban areas, protecting the environment and green belt land are also critical parts of any balanced development. The need for better roads, public transport, health and schools puts extra pressure on resources like the water supply and other utilities.

Appendix 2: More about the Hertfordshire LAA

Local Area Agreements (LAAs) are a new way of working between central and local government designed to promote partnership working and deliver new improved services, focusing on the things that matter most to local people. LAAs set out a contract between central and local government to deliver on a range of targets aimed at improving performance, over a 3 year period. Some of these targets have a 'performance reward grant' (PRG) attached, making them 'stretch' targets and especially challenging to meet.

Hertfordshire's LAA 2006 -2009 agreed to deliver on 79 targets, 31 of these are 'stretch' targets, which will attract a financial reward if we are successful. The potential value of this reward in Hertfordshire is in excess of £27million.

The LAA is divided into 4 blocks

- Children and Young People
- Economic Development and Enterprise
- Healthy Communities and Older People
- Safer and Stronger Communities

The Safer and Stronger Communities block of the LAA has three strands: safer communities, cleaner and greener communities and stronger communities. Various organisations and partnerships across the county work on these three agendas, but for LAA purposes these are brought together under the Chief Officer Group on Crime and Disorder.

The targets that the Building Stronger Communities Project worked towards come under outcome C: Communities are empowered to have a greater voice and influence over local decision-making and the delivery of services, and there is an increased sense of belonging and citizenship.

The sub outcome is C10: Communities are empowered to have a greater voice and influence over local decision-making, and there is an increased sense of community cohesion.

The specific targets are:

- Increase the percentage of people surveyed who are satisfied with the opportunities for participation in local decision-making provided by their Council by 2% by 2009.
- Increase the percentage of people surveyed who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area by 2% by 2009.
- Increase the percentage of people surveyed who feel their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together by 2% by 2009.

Appendix 3: More about Building Capacity East Improvement Partnership

Building Capacity East (BCE) is the Improvement Partnership for the East of England, established in 2005 under the governance arrangements of the Local Government Panel of EERA.

The overall remit of the Partnership is to support the improvement needs of all sixty local and fire and rescue authorities in the East of England and to utilise the Capacity Building Fund accordingly.

The Partnership comprises:

- A Regional Improvement and Efficiency Panel of Local Authority members
- An Executive Group of Chief Executives, a Chief Fire Officer together with representatives of partner agencies - the Audit Commission, EERA, GO East, IDeA and the Regional Centre of Excellence
- The Regional Improvement and Efficiency Panel (formerly the BCE Member Panel) became a formal Panel of EERA in July 2007. Further details of this Panel, including papers for meetings can be found under BCE Panel (link on RHS of this page).

The Executive Group by a Local Authority Chief Executive. Eight Chief Executives now sit on the Group. They have been chosen by the County Groupings of Chief Executives and so all geographical areas of the region are represented, as are all types of authority. The Fire and Rescue services are also represented by a Chief Officer who has been nominated by all fire authorities in the region.

The Partnership developed an Improvement Strategy and received funding from the then ODPM and LGA of £6.2m for 2005-2008.

The Partnership is now implementing the key aims of the Strategy and has offered various initiatives and funding to authorities. Click on Menu of Support (LHS of this page) to see what initiatives have been developed and what support you can access.

Future

Following the national decision as set out in the White Paper, the Regional Improvement Partnership (BCE) and the Regional Centre of Excellence - East (RCE) are to merge to form a single partnership. This will become the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) and will come into effect from 1st April 2008 and will be hosted at the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA). The size and structure of this new partnership are yet to be decided but it will be governed by the existing EERA Regional Improvement and Efficiency Panel of 21 members and an Executive Advisory Group.

Appendix 4: Breakdown of expenditure

| Stronger Communities Finance Spreadsheet | |
|--|-------------------|
| <i>Income: £27,500 from Building Capacity East</i> | |
| Project | Amount |
| DVD | £4,545.45 |
| Launch event | £8,815.80 |
| Website | £425.00 |
| Event/Conference/training costs | £760.00 |
| Toolkit | £11,370.00 |
| Awards (money reserved for applications for awards) | £500.00 |
| | |
| <i>Total spent</i> | <i>£26,416.25</i> |
| <i>Total available</i> | <i>£27,500</i> |
| <i>Money for any continuation of project/contingency</i> | <i>£1083.75</i> |

Dacorum Borough Council covered all staff and management costs totalling:
£39,950

Appendix 5: Feedback from Engage event 22nd January 2008

Engage feedback

Did you have a favourite part/s of the event? If so, what was it and why was it a favourite?

| | |
|---|----|
| Networking | 12 |
| Workshops | 11 |
| Personal skills workshop | 10 |
| Engage - a good information source/guide | 5 |
| Children and young people workshop | 2 |
| DVD case study | 2 |
| All | 2 |
| Very useful especially the calibre of the speakers & delegates | 1 |
| I think Natalie's done an absolutely fantastic job bringing this all together | 1 |
| Introduction by Natalie was fantastic | 1 |
| Really nicely laid out | 1 |
| Lots of interesting elements to the day | 1 |
| I liked plenary sessions that introduced event, both portrayed professionalism and enthusiasm and understanding of audience | 1 |
| Personal skills workshop - super, excellent coach | 1 |
| Caroline Tapster talk, all embracing | 1 |
| The toolkit will be very useful | 1 |
| Learning about ways to engage the community | 1 |
| Natalie - excellent work! | 1 |
| Enjoyed first speaker - Natalie Webb | 1 |
| The sashes | 1 |
| The guide - new thing to show people | 1 |
| Made some valuable contacts and shared some good ideas | 1 |

Was this event useful to you? If not what could we have done to have made it more useful?

| | |
|-----|----|
| No | 1 |
| Yes | 32 |

Possible Improvements:

- More representation from ethnic minority communities
- More one-to-one discussions but not enough time
- Disappointed that a number of colleagues could've been here but weren't
- The pace in general was good, nice to have a mixture of things to do and information
- More time in workshops would've been good
- Need to be more specific with who we're contacting and who we're aiming things for
- More time in between sessions for more networking
- Sense of rushing from one thing to another, may be more time to slow down a bit but then there never is time to do that
- Large workshop in theatre difficult to hear Sally & Julia without microphones

- I'd like to have seen the film at the end earlier on as it was lively and different
- Some of the workshops not run as workshops but as teachings
- Should've had larger labels for name tags
- I'd have liked a delegate list when I got here
- Workshops needed to be more hands on helping us use tools in the pack
- I found the chief executives speech not particularly targeted, I didn't feel that she was talking to me
- Wanted more from the workshops

Positive comments:

- Surpassed my expectations and did help me to get a broad overview of the whole issue of engagement and I think most, if not all, of the really important issues were address
- Timings were very good
- Really well managed perfect timings for workshops
- Thoroughly enjoyed it
- Really good day lots of enthusiasm from group leaders and presenters which gave it an extra lift and made it more fun
- Really good networking exercise
- It's been really really good

Please rate how useful you think it will be to you on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is not at all useful and 10 is very useful

| | |
|---------|---|
| 1 | 0 |
| 2 | 0 |
| 3 | 0 |
| 4 | 1 |
| 5 | 1 |
| 6 | 4 |
| 7 | 5 |
| 8 | 6 |
| 9 | 1 |
| 10 | 2 |
| Average | 7 |

How would you rate the day overall on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is poor and 10 is excellent?

| | |
|---------|---|
| 1 | 0 |
| 2 | 0 |
| 3 | 0 |
| 4 | 0 |
| 5 | 3 |
| 6 | 3 |
| 7 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 |
| 9 | 8 |
| 10 | 3 |
| 11! | 1 |
| Average | 8 |

Other comments:

- Helpdesk ladies were fabulous, very helpful and understanding
- Very good content to day
- Many thanks for the conference this week. I picked up some useful information to use at a local level
- This is to thank Natalie both for a v useful event and an excellent support document.
- The conference was a good initiative and you used the opportunity well.
- Natalie - I enjoyed the day and particularly your lively presentation, which made a very pleasant change!
- Natalie, I would just like to congratulate you and all the people involved in making the 22nd such a great success.
- Hi Natalie - good to meet up and well done for a well organised and varied event to promote Engage
- Many thanks for arranging a great conference yesterday - I found it extremely useful.
- Well Done Natalie, thank you for organising a brilliant day, great contacts, speakers and event!
- Dear Natalie - Just to thank you for organising a fantastic day yesterday. It was very useful and clearly very well organised.
- Natalie, Congratulations to you and your team for an excellent event which was very well organised.
- Dear Natalie, Congratulations on such a well organised event. Your personal commitment and enthusiasm for this agenda and the project as a whole was instrumental in helping make yesterday such a resounding success - well done.
- WELL DONE! It was a really good event
- A good handful of people weren't registering for afternoon workshops as they said they had to leave at lunchtime.
- I hope you are very proud of a well run, brilliantly constructed effective event
- Workshops could have been longer - an hour would've been perfect
- We would like to congratulate you on the conference yesterday it was excellent.
- I've just looked through the Engage folder and I wanted to tell you how fantastic it is. I'm really impressed - it's a great piece of work
- The event you organised was absolutely fantastic! We would recommend you to ANYONE!
- It's been a really good thing Natalie Webb has organised this well. The way she has presented the day is fantastic she has a really engaging style
- The 11am workshop on empowerment in the Acorn suite would have scored higher had it been more like a workshop rather than another presentation.
- The personal skills workshop did not suit the theatre style venue
- I thought your presentation and Mandy's were both professional and useful – certainly to me: a good 8 or 9. I wish there had been time to comment on the content, though: I had about 20 points that I would like to have made, and I had no opportunity subsequently either.

The guide:

- Really useful, looks good, it's fantastic, it's brilliant, really easy to use be a really good resource
- Tried and tested guidance in there to help me with my job
- Really well done, will take it back and share information, just flicking through looks really good hands on hints and tips, a practical guide that shows you how to start things off
- Very well put together and want to have a good read - the case studies look interesting, I keep looking for a magic template but it doesn't exist
- Seems an expensive document
- Really good looking forward to reading it though properly, be a catalyst for more work I will be involved in give me some ideas

- What I've seen looks really good
- I haven't looked in detail but I will do and I'm excited about what in there I'm sure t will be very useful, I'll take it back to the lunch room and put it on the table so people can't ignore it! It will be useful to my colleagues and me.
- Perhaps could've done with an executive summary as it is quite long
- We'll use it as a resource pack as away of engaging. Lot of good tools and case studies
- Really useful tools working with community groups and an opportunities to talk and learn more about engagement
- Give me ideas and tools to use
- Good to have this document and I'll be taking a copy to my town Clark
- We do need to engage better with our residents and this will definitely be a good way forward
- It will be of use for me to disseminate this information to people not here
- Initial thought - looks expensive to be produced but then spending time thinking about it I'm more enthusiastic and want to share it with other people
- Glossy, lots of nice pictures, going to read it when I get home. I'm sure it will be a very useful resource for me.

Appendix 6: Results of baseline and interim LAA survey

| Question description | Baseline Survey Results | Results Dec 2007 |
|---|-------------------------|------------------|
| Q.1 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities for participation in local decision-making provided by your council | Satisfied: 41% | 45% |
| Q.2 Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area? | Agree: 32% | 31% |
| Q3. Do you agree or disagree that this local area is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together? | Agree: 74% | 71% |
| Q.4 Thinking about your local area, how much of a problem do you think are teenagers hanging around on the streets? | A problem: 46% | 34% |
| Q.5 Thinking about your local area, how much of a problem do you think are vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles? | A problem: 41% | 29% |
| Q.6 Thinking about your local area, how much of a problem do you think are people being drunk or rowdy in public places? | A problem: 31% | 21% |
| Q.7 How safe or unsafe do you feel after dark whilst outside in your local area? | Safe: 66% | 67% |
| Q.8 In the last year have you taken part in any formal volunteering? | Yes: 30% | 18% |