

Kensington Regeneration
Community Engagement and Development





Kensington Regeneration was one of 39 New Deal for Community (NDC) schemes in England. Launched in 2000, it had a grant of £62 million for a ten year comprehensive regeneration programme. Half the grant was for housing and environmental renewal. This practice sheet is one of a series focusing on different aspects of the NDC programme. It draws material from the EIUA independent end-of-scheme evaluation commissioned by Kensington Regeneration.

One of the principles of the New Deal for Communities programme was that local communities were to be at the heart of the renewal process. Given the diversity of the Kensington NDC area, the changes taking place in the local population, the deep-seated nature of the problems faced, the comprehensiveness of the NDC programme and the other housing and development activities happening concurrently in the area, this was a significant task.

Key points

- Five distinct neighbourhoods were identified within the Kensington NDC area. As well as tailoring the programme to their different needs, community representation was largely organised on the basis of these neighbourhoods. There was quite a lot of territorialism within and between them, which increased the scope for competing concerns and priorities. A challenge for community Board members was to combine speaking for their neighbourhood with adopting an overall strategic approach.
- It was important to adapt the engagement structures and community support measures as appropriate as the programme progressed, whilst not being preoccupied with process issues at the expense of delivering the regeneration.
- Community engagement had to be allied with community development in order to build a community better able to play a stronger role in future regeneration. This meant developing the capacity and confidence of individuals, increasing the number and range of people participating in local organisations, promoting a more cohesive community, helping towards the sustainability of local organisations and strengthening the local infrastructure.

- An important role of KNDC was to provide arenas and structures to bring together local residents and service deliverers and help to pave the way towards a culture of collaboration. This could entail a steep learning curve on both sides: for residents to come to terms with issues such as budgets, planning procedures and competing priorities; for public sector bodies to be open to challenge and the perspectives of service users; for both to shift from confrontation to joint working and responsibility.
- Kensington became a more diverse community during the course of the NDC programme. Responding to this meant tackling community cohesion issues and boosting local capability to deal with diversity issues, for example, in schools, youth organisations and amongst health providers as well as supporting and building the organisational strengths of BME groups.
- A good communications strategy was critical to the programme, not only taking account of the different information needs of different stakeholders, but also recognising the wider roles that the strategy could play: conveying the importance and values of the programme and using events to affirm participants and strengthen community ties.

Background

Community engagement was a key principle of NDC. Local communities were to be at the heart of the renewal process. NDC went further than previous regeneration schemes not only in requiring a governance system that takes into account the dynamics of the community and develops structures that are accessible and relevant to the local area, but also in seeking a different sort of relationship between agencies and local communities. Another central tenet was to achieve strategic transformation. These two came together in Kensington not just in the main programme areas (housing and the environment, education, employment and enterprise, community safety and health), but also in terms of leaving behind a community better able to play a meaningful role in future regeneration and in community life more broadly.

Inclusive governance

Kensington Regeneration Board included 2 representatives from each of the five neighbourhoods within the NDC area, 2 local voluntary sector representatives and 2 BME representatives. This breadth of representation was also built into the wider partnership structures of committees and task groups. As well as being hugely time consuming for the individuals involved, it is not an easy role. Community representatives can be the people most exposed to questioning and complaints from other residents. They had to be very knowledgeable about the programme and be prepared to take ownership of it through good and bad times.

The organisation of representation on the basis of the five neighbourhoods in the NDC area had advantages and disadvantages. It showed that the differences across the area were taken seriously and it meant that there were people to answer questions. On the other hand, it may have led to a more partisan approach by some representatives and encouraged continuing competitiveness.

One neighbourhood disengaged for some time as a result of the influence exerted by one person. Contact was resumed after mediation but, apart from the break in representation, the incident engendered some negativity towards the neighbourhood concerned from the other community Board members. It illustrated the significance of individuals and underlined the risk of representatives exploiting their role in a damaging way. Community

representatives need to know and trust one another. NDC social events were valuable in strengthening these personal relationships so that people could work together more effectively.

There has been a good gender balance among the community Board members, but the spread was more restricted in terms of age and tenure. Most were middle aged or older and all were owner occupiers. Although early on there were places for young people's representatives, this did not work well partly because they were rather over-awed at meetings and partly because there was no wider infrastructure for linking up with their contemporaries and gaining a mandate to speak on others' behalf.

The wider partnership structures – committees and task groups – have been a means of widening involvement for local people, organisations and public sector agencies and strengthening relationships between residents and service deliverers. On the whole, agencies participated well although it was evident that some were more attuned to engagement than others. It was more difficult to sustain when organisations were going through internal reorganisation or had a change in personnel. On the other hand, where the approach fitted well with an agency's own philosophy – such as the emphasis of Merseyside Police on neighbourhood policing – the NDC structures provided a good framework for partnership working.



The challenge of engagement

The 'community' is not the same as the Community Sector, so that communication, consultation and involvement cannot be confined to community groups even though they may be an effective bridge to many people and a good basis for organised activity. Community consultation, engagement and action were variously organised around:

- *area concerns*, such as housing and environmental conditions;
- *group concerns* such as those of BME communities, young people or people with disabilities;
- *thematic interests* such as training and employment or health.

The NDC Communications Strategy was also an important facet.

As the regeneration programme developed, the involvement structures and provision of community support also evolved. Public meetings early in the programme tended to be dominated by those with some sort of axe to grind. Much more effective for consultation and involvement were panels based in each of the five neighbourhoods. Later Neighbourhood Planning Groups (NPGs) were set up to deal specifically with housing issues. Kensington Regeneration also employed community outreach/development workers to enable community groups to develop their capacity and influence the regeneration process. Again the precise arrangements evolved as the programme progressed.

In 2004, *Neighbourhood Assemblies* were set up as vehicles for:

- NDC and partner agencies to inform and consult local people and promote community participation especially in relation to neighbourhood management;
- Community Board members to report back from the Board to the wider community and receive feedback from the community in a structured way.

The Assemblies' terms of reference stated that they would: assess their own Community Investment Fund bids against agreed criteria; act as an advocate for their respective areas and the KNDC area; work with agencies to ensure neighbourhood services reflect local needs and are appropriate and of sufficient quality. Attendance varied across neighbourhoods and according to the immediacy of issues – especially housing – at any given time. However, the Assemblies have been an effective arena for residents to “let off steam” and challenge officials and consultants. They have been well attended by local councillors, LCC officers, C7 and the Police as well as the NDC Team.

A *Community Investment Fund* was set up in December 2000 to provide small grants up to £5,000 for community-led initiatives that contribute to the NDC outcomes. Its administration changed as support structures changed but disbursement of the now renamed Community Chest Fund was always substantially influenced by community representatives whilst meeting its criteria:



- to encourage greater involvement of excluded and marginalised communities;
- to encourage greater involvement in local community activities;
- to improve the management of local community activities and organisations;
- to help community groups improve their neighbourhood;
- to support other VCS activities that can contribute to regeneration.

An average of 55 groups apply for grants each year.

Promoting community cohesion

As the NDC Delivery Plan was based on 1991 Census figures, it did not take into account changes in the population profile during the 1990s, which continued after 2000. The importance of looking seriously at Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) issues quickly became apparent. When asylum seekers began to move in, managing the process and helping them to settle was impeded by the lack of communication from the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) and, because they were housed by private sector landlords, there was no central source of information. In 2003, NDC appointed a BME Outreach Worker and, following several feasibility studies, a BME Strategy was commissioned. A number of projects supported by NDC within the thematic programmes (such as lifelong learning, employment and health) addressed the needs of BME groups new to the area, but the outreach work focused on cross-cutting issues.

In 2004, the idea of a 'Kensington Equality Zone' was adopted with a view to working towards 5% BME members in representation, volunteering and staff across the partnership *and* a community positive about its diversity by 2010. A Project Worker supported the BME work in the middle years of the programme. Later, two LCC positive action posts with the French African and Chinese communities were created.

Strands of activity have included:

- Supporting the emergence of a BME infrastructure. In 2003, the NDC area had just one BME organisation. In 2009, there are about 13 BME groups and other multi-cultural organisations. The main groups are Chinese, Black African and Polish.
- A cultural calendar with events throughout the year; such as New Year celebrations, festivals and Holocaust Memorial Day.
- Multi-cultural sporting events.
- Workshops for teachers.
- Equality Zone workshops.
- Work on BME health issues.

Constant themes throughout the diversity work have been capacity building, promoting understanding and countering discrimination within BME and non-BME communities. Capacity building includes developing the organisational strengths of BME groups, but also the local capability to deal with diversity issues, for example, in schools, youth organisations and amongst health providers. The cultural and sporting events all contribute to different groups getting to know one another and working together and overcoming the prejudice that is more likely to arise if people do not meet and mix with one another.

A place for young people

Many strands of NDC activity touch on young people through the thematic programmes and the Lifelong Learning paper discussed the NDC role in relation to young people from the cradle, through schooling and out-of-school activities to university and employment. Although a key target group in any regeneration programme, negative views about young people have often been a significant barrier to their inclusion. If they are seen as the problem rather than as part of the solution, there is a danger that the focus is on 'fixing' them rather than listening to their concerns and engaging them in the regeneration process. NDC adopted various, though sometimes piecemeal, ways of engaging them and fostering more positive attitudes towards them.

For a time there was, a Youth Outreach Worker, who established close links with existing youth service providers. Throughout the programme, NDC also supported other projects that closely engaged young people in their planning and delivery; for example, the Yellow House, a Kensington multi-media arts project; Metal an arts and inclusion project; 20 Stories High drama project; Da Boyz Theatre Project. Recently, *Kids in Kenny* magazine has been produced by young people for young people. NDC also funded MUGA, a project where young people worked with an architect to design their own the multi-activity games area.

Developing community infrastructure

A range of NDC-supported activities have served to strengthen the local community in a number of ways. Promoting involvement in voluntary/community activities helps individuals as well as local groups. There has also been support to voluntary and community organisations, for example through training courses and/or assistance with development plans. However, one of the key NDC legacies will be new community organisations. HEAT (the Health Energy Advice Team) was first set up in March 2001 as a six month pilot project funded by LCC and the PCT to provide an advice and support service to members of the community facing fuel poverty. HEAT staff quickly became aware of other serious problems and needs in the area, especially for welfare rights guidance, help with fire safety and security issues in people's homes. This led to HEAT applying for NDC funding. By 2003, the organisation had become a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity in 2003 with a board of trustees. HEAT has since expanded its portfolio of activities and works with a wide range of partners. It now delivers:

- *Winter Survival* – developed in response to the high number of winter illnesses and deaths in Kensington.

- *Kensington Community Assistance Project* – financial guidance for vulnerable residents living through housing change.
- *Kensington Access to Training and Employment* – employability for refugees and people with long-term illness or disability.
- *Kensington Domestic Abuse Service* – a seamless service for victims and website aimed at teenagers witnessing or experiencing domestic violence.
- *Kensington Family Support Group* – peer support and counselling to the families of narcotic drug abusers.

HEAT's mini one-stop-shop service has improved the social, economic and domestic circumstances of many residents through:

- alleviating fuel poverty;
- helping vulnerable residents through complex benefit claim processes;
- maximising incomes of residents through referrals to training courses to enhance their employability;
- helping people into secure employment;
- support to victims of domestic abuse and the families of drug or alcohol abusers.



HEAT has also become an effective community resource by acting as the accountable body for a number of service and volunteering projects. Its embeddedness in the local community is vital: its strong multi-ethnic/multi-lingual volunteer base reflects the local community and is key to engaging harder-to-reach groups. Strong partnerships with a wide range of agencies have been important for service development alongside HEAT's more intensive support tailored to local needs.

NDC funding was crucial to the establishment of HEAT, enabling it to survive after the pilot phase and develop its subsequent activities and track record, which then enabled it to access funding from a wider range of sources.

Spreading the word

KNDC increasingly recognised the importance of communication and the different roles a Communications Strategy could play. Good communication was particularly important in Kensington because of the dominance of housing in the programme. This meant that individuals had a very personal stake in it, but also different neighbourhoods and groups had different interests. Expectations about the programme and how quickly it could be implemented were often unrealistic. Keeping the local community informed was just as important during lulls in activity as when there was progress to report because any news vacuum would quickly be filled by speculation and misinformation.

The strategy was designed to take account of the range of potential audiences, to use appropriately inclusive methods and to encourage greater understanding, acceptance and involvement. It aimed to improve the quality, consistency and distribution of information, to promote the neighbourhood itself, bring tenants and home owners together and put the neighbourhood back into neighbourhood by getting people communicating. It was steered by a Communications Committee. The public relations and design contracts were put out to competitive tender and won by Kenyon Fraser and Kaleidoscope. A Communications Officer post was established to manage and co-ordinate activities and promote skills.



At the end of 2002, Kensington Regeneration started to produce a bi-monthly newsletter not only including information about NDC activities and events, but also featuring local stories, a community notice board, useful telephone numbers and inviting letters and ideas. Initially a glossy publication, it was later produced newspaper-style. It goes to every household and copies are put in the library and around local projects and community centres.

Branding has also been important. The *New Thinking New Kensington* logo has been used on all printed material and communications in order to establish NDC's public identity and convey the message that innovative thinking and new solutions would drive the programme. Incorporating distinctive colours for the five neighbourhoods signalled inclusiveness and diversity and the branding was later developed for specific areas of activity. More recently, the strapline was adapted to convey the progress of the programme: '*Deliverington*'; '*Achievington*'. Other forms of communication were the NDC website and media coverage.

In addition to the organised communications activities, there was early recognition of the importance and potential effectiveness of using Community Board members and others as sources of information and ambassadors. They can 'reach parts' that more formal paper-based or web-based communication means fail to reach, provide a faster response and sometimes carry more credibility. Board and committee members as well as staff, therefore, have had the opportunity to undertake communications training.

Reaching a wider range of people

A number of comparatively small projects were designed to reach a wider range of people and give the KNDC name positive connotations. These included events, competitions and opportunities for residents to nominate their friends and neighbours for some sort of recognition; for example:

- *Kensington Community Fun Days*, giving local groups an opportunity to raise funds and agencies an informal way of making contact with local people.
- *Community Oscars*, recognising local residents' contribution to the community.
- *Jobs event* – bringing employers and training providers together to target people in the NDC area.
- *Christmas Cracker Project* – residents nominated people to receive a hamper at Christmas.
- *Kettle twinning* – an art project for the 2004 Liverpool Biennial Art Festival, launched at the Fun Day.

Apart from their other benefits, Fun Days and other events have been important attempts to mitigate the effects of the break up of former neighbourhoods through the housing programme.

Linking the past with the present

Another dimension of the Communications Strategy has been connecting what is currently happening in Kensington and the history of the people in the area. A number of events and associated leaflets have served to value the past, such as:

- a memorial service was held at St Cyprian's Church for all who died in bombing in World War II;
- An event marking the association of the Beatles with Kensington;
- The visit of former pupils of Kensington Primary School – some now grandparents – to see the old school Bell Tower installed in the grounds of the Life Bank;
- *Kensington Remembers* used the memories of people living locally of different sorts of terrors they had lived through to make connections between the experiences of different racial and religious groups and build bridges between these groups today.

This paper has looked at the way the NDC approach has helped to develop a stronger community. KNDC has:

- enabled many individual residents to grow in skills and confidence;
- brought greater understanding across diverse groups;
- helped community groups build their capacity and develop more robust management structures;
- assisted the development of local organisations and infrastructure;
- built structures of engagement and promoted a culture of engagement in relation to mainstream agencies.

Kensington Regeneration
Community Safety



Kensington Regeneration was one of 39 New Deal for Community (NDC) schemes in England. Launched in 2000, it had a grant of £62 million for a ten year comprehensive regeneration programme. Half the grant was for housing and environmental renewal. This practice sheet is one of a series focusing on different aspects of the NDC programme. It draws material from the EIUA independent end-of-scheme evaluation commissioned by Kensington Regeneration.

At the start of the NDC programme, crime and fear of crime were the main concerns for local people. As well as high rates of burglary compared with the Liverpool average, there was a high incidence of violent offences, criminal damage, prostitution and drug-trafficking. Property related crimes, such as arson and vandalism, were major problems that were exacerbated by the poor state of the local housing and environment.

Key points

- The Kensington Regeneration community programme spanned physical measures to create a more secure local environment and projects targeted both groups at risk of offending and ones at risk of being victims of crime.
- Closer partnership working was key to the approach: both across public agencies and between them and local people and businesses. The involvement of stakeholders enabled better identification of problems and better targeted interventions.
- Contextual changes during the course of the NDC programme required keeping the strategy under constant review and revising it as appropriate. This was exemplified by the switching of attention on anti-social behaviour to different neighbourhoods as appropriate.
- Merseyside Police were particularly active partners. The NDC approach fitted well with the philosophy of neighbourhood policing and, beyond that, local people were impressed by the commitment of individual officers. The effectiveness of the collaboration underlined the importance of building up residents' trust.
- The programme has been sensitive to the need to pay attention to fear of crime as well as crime itself but there has also been recognition that the real risk of crime does not necessarily justify the levels of anxiety and that, therefore, it is important to set statistical analysis alongside local perceptions.



- The overall integration of the NDC strategy meant that other dimensions of the programme, in particular, housing and environment and neighbourhood services, also addressed community safety issues through increased security measures during the clearance and construction programme and through environmental improvements.

What was the problem?

Crime and fear of crime were the main concerns of local people at the start of the NDC programme. Compared with the city average, there was twice the recorded incidence of drug-trafficking, violence and criminal damage offences and four times as many burglaries from homes. Vandalism, squatting and arson were major problems. Unlit back alleys aided crime and prostitution. As a result, a high proportion of residents were afraid to go out after dark.

During the course of the NDC programme, changed circumstances led to increased potential for certain sorts of offence and concerns amongst residents. Delays over the clearance programme meant large numbers of boarded up houses were interspersed with still occupied ones. Many residents, especially older ones felt more insecure and reluctant to go out especially at night.

Another significant contextual factor was the demographic change in the area as a result of the arrival of new and widely varying national groups, often insecure and living in overcrowded and unfit

housing. Enabling them to settle in called for considerable sensitivity on the part of agencies including the Police.

An overview of the programme

A key goal of the NDC programme was to create a safer community and one in which local people felt safe. Many of the priorities in the programme matched those of Citysafe, Liverpool's Community Safety Partnership and KNDC's initiatives have been actively supported by local residents and Merseyside Police. Examples of what has been done include:

- the Police on the Beat Team;
- the installation of 54 CCTV cameras;
- 1,400 personal attack alarms and 450 carbon monoxide alarms distributed to local people;
- 340 alleyways had gates fitted;
- target hardening;
- grants for security measures;
- Business Crime Alert;
- supporting the Youth Inclusion Project and other youth crime prevention initiatives;
- Cube-it: a scheme to address the problem of the number of abandoned cars in the area.



Increased dialogue

Much of the effectiveness of the Kensington Regeneration approach to community safety is attributed to the increased partnership working in particular through the Community Safety Task Group, but the Police were very committed to participating in NDC at Board level and through other NDC engagement structures. The Police and local residents have developed good personal relationships and greater mutual trust. Community representatives are on first name terms with the Police. In addition, other organisations have worked closely with the Police, such as Community 7 (C7).

- Local information about the best locations for schemes such as alleygating and CCTV cameras helped towards reducing crime.
- Sharing information and experience enabled anti-social behaviour, such as dog fouling, abandoned cars, under-age drinking, to be tackled more effectively and the community has had a platform for reporting 'crime hotspots' directly to key officers from the relevant agencies.
- Referrals and signposting between agencies worked better – partly because partners got to know one another formally and informally and became more aware of their respective roles and responsibilities.

Police on the Beat

Kensington Regeneration set up the NDC Police Team in January 2001 over and above the mainstream provision in order to increase the police presence and activity in the area. The Team is seen as exemplifying good practice, reflected in the drop in crime figures with no evidence of it being displaced to neighbouring areas. It has won numerous national awards not for Police work alone, but also the way they collaborate with other agencies and the community. It has resulted in:

- higher visibility of the police and identifiable officers whom people recognise and know by name;
- greater accessibility through residents' groups, better relationships, more trust and more sharing of local intelligence;
- quicker response times;
- more effective co-ordination and information sharing with other organisations to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

Figures supplied by the police not only show a reduction in offences but also exemplify the scale of savings that can accrue both to the Police and to the local community by such reductions. Between 2006/07 and 2007/08 this amounted to estimated savings of £385,000 to the Police budget and over £5 million for the wider community.

ASONE

A specific example of effective collaborative working is the ASONE project, which started in Fairfield in response to the high level of concern about anti-social behaviour (ASB) amongst residents. It is a partnership between local community, KNDC, Merseyside Police, C7, LCC, Merseyside Fire Service, NACRO and Business Crime Direct. The activities of partners include:

- challenging misbehaviour on the street;
- outreach work with young people and diversionary activities;
- advice and guidance; action on void properties;
- action on fly-tipping and graffiti.

In May 2005, the ASONE Project moved to Kensington Fields after local people there complained of intimidating and unruly gangs. For a limited period the area was made a 'designated zone' under Section 30 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, giving Police the power to break up groups of two or more, send under-16s home and arrest anyone ignoring their instructions. There has been work with local schools and measures to avoid predictable problems; for example, taking young people on a visit to Deeside Leisure on Mischief Night, when nuisance activities had been experienced in the past.

Kensington Crime Alert Project

A project developed in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses in 2003 brought a more co-ordinated approach to target hardening for non-domestic property. KNDC began to fund a dedicated Business Crime Direct Officer for the NDC area. A third partner with the Police and Community Wardens, the Officer provided services for retailers and businesses:

- radios and pagers were provided to local shops for a radio watch scheme so that they could be in touch and alert one another about potential problems;
- security assessments;
- giving information about target hardening grants.

The focus has been on issues including ASB, the environment, drug dealing and vehicle nuisance. Three month action plans each identify 3 priorities in which there is regular reporting back. This 'template' has been adopted by LCC for the Your Community Matters meetings.

Kensington Crime Alert, like many projects, was particularly effective because of the commitment and expertise of the person running it. Smaller shops still have anti-social behaviour problems even though the environment for business is generally much better. Business Crime Direct has worked with the Fire Brigade to deal with issues such as hate crime. After a short time, the project extended to include public sector buildings. Local primary schools had

been experiencing frequent break-ins and thefts, for example, of computers. The Project Co-ordinator worked with schools on the security of their buildings and introduced Smartwater. As a result, the number of problems dropped considerably and in 2007/08 there were no recorded burglaries in Kensington schools.

LINX

A project that spanned community safety and health was concerned with the street workers in the area. The LINX Project worked with the local community to minimise the adverse effects of street sex work and worked with the street workers themselves on health, drugs and housing issues both by helping them to access existing services and enhancing the capacity of agencies to meet their needs. The project staff also collected information from sex workers about potentially dangerous individuals, which could be shared with other sex workers, agencies and the Police.



Youth Inclusion Project (YIP)

The YIP is one of about 70 such schemes nationwide, but was the only one in Liverpool until one was established in Anfield in 2007. It has been co-funded by KNDC and the Youth Justice Board. It works with 50 young people aged 13-16 years identified by the Police, Social Services, the LEA, the Youth Offending Team, the local community and YIP staff as being most at risk of offending. Many are excluded from school and barred from local youth clubs because of behavioural problems. The project offers diversionary activities, such as sport and outdoor pursuits, and personal and social education. It also tries to link its participants up with post-16 training and employment opportunities and advice. A Junior YIP funded by the Children's Fund was set up in 2003 to work with 9-12 year olds, many of them siblings of the YIP young people.

Other interventions not strictly within the community safety programme have nevertheless also had an impact on safety and on people's feelings of safety. The Community Wardens have been important in being a visible presence on the streets to deter anti-social behaviour as have, the Clean Team, in enabling a quick response to issues such as fly-tipping and graffiti. The Living through Change

programme helped to support residents through the housing clearance and construction programme by providing security for void properties and target hardening for vulnerable occupied ones. Improvements to the street scene, such as new street lighting and removal of waste ground, have created a more 'friendly' local environment.

As well as a significant fall in recorded offences in Kensington during the period for which the figures were obtainable, the Kensington position improved relative to Liverpool as a whole. For example, by 2006/07, burglaries were only 21% higher than the city average. Although community safety worries remained high, the 2008 MORI Household Survey showed a reduction since 2002. Experience of crime had also gone down. There remained a contrast between concern and experience: for example, 55% were still worried about a break-in but only 4% had experienced one in the previous 2 years.

Although the additional funding for the Police Team will no longer be available after NDC ends, the Community Wardens will remain and Merseyside Police and other agencies in the area are keen for the Community Safety Task Group to continue in order to sustain the benefits deriving from their partnership with the local community.

Kensington Regeneration
Environmental and Neighbourhood Services





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At the start of the NDC programme, Kensington had significant problems of crime, anti-social behaviour and environmental degradation. In addition to housing, environmental and community safety measures, Kensington Regeneration focused upon neighbourhood management as a means of addressing these issues and ameliorating conditions in the areas during the housing market renewal programme.

Key points

- Kensington Regeneration was able to undertake more intensive and targeted work over and above the City Council's neighbourhood management service.
- The Community Wardens Scheme was a key to providing a responsive service and a bridge between residents and mainstream agencies.
- Part of the reasoning behind the Wardens Scheme was that promoting community safety and dealing with environmental issues would impact positively on housing demand.
- Visibility was important if the Wardens were to provide reassurance to residents and serve to deter crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Involving local residents in deciding upon and monitoring these interventions was more likely to engender local pride in the area which, in turn, could make the gains more sustainable.
- Environmental improvement was one of the prerequisites of making Kensington more attractive to both residents and businesses. Not only has there been improvement over the period of the NDC initiative, but also some of the upset that could have been caused by the protracted clearance programme has been avoided.

What was the problem?

The first household survey conducted as part of the National Evaluation of NDCs identified problems that might potentially worry local residents and asked respondents about them. More than half the Kensington respondents identified the following as problems:

- litter and rubbish in the streets;
- run down or boarded up properties;
- the speed and volume of traffic;
- vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property;
- household burglary;
- car crime;
- teenagers hanging around in the streets;
- drug dealing and use;
- disturbance from crowds and gangs or hooliganism.

The Kensington responses were more negative than the NDC aggregate in almost every category. The perceptions expressed in the survey indicated extensive and entrenched anti-social behaviour and community safety problems. A main goal of KNDC was to resolve these problems and change perceptions. One route towards a better neighbourhood was developing more responsive neighbourhood services.

Neighbourhood Management

Although a city-wide approach to neighbourhood management was introduced in Liverpool, the small size of the NDC area made it possible to undertake more intensive work. There was a particular need for support in neighbourhoods scheduled for demolition, where houses were being purchased and boarded up, but other parts of the NDC area also suffered problems such as fly-tipping.

NDC's neighbourhood management activity has been influenced by the problems identified by residents and the anticipated issues associated with demolition and construction. Initiatives included:

- Community skips;
- Community Clean-ups;
- HMRI team co-ordinated approach to clearing empty properties;
- Sewer baiting;
- Extra litter bins;
- Environmental Hit Team for activities such as removal of fly-tipping, tackling blighted properties and land, regular upkeep of problematic 'grot spots', removal of urgent graffiti, minor environmental services for vulnerable residents;
- Parks Officers;
- Prosecution Team: providing witness statements and now being trained as professional witnesses;
- environmental day-to-day – weekly reports on outstanding overdue jobs.

Community Wardens

The idea of having Neighbourhood or Community Wardens emerged quite early in the NDC programme because of the problems of crime, liveability and the poor quality of public space in the area. The scheme arose from pressure from residents. Although the community representatives initially wanted KNDC to employ the Wardens directly, it was agreed that it was more appropriate and more promising in terms of future sustainability for the community-based housing association, Community Seven (C7) to manage them. The scheme began in 2003 with KNDC revenue funding agreed for the next seven years.

The stated purpose of the scheme was to *“provide a highly visible, uniformed, semi-official presence in residential and public areas, and high crime areas with the aim of reducing crime and fear of crime; deterring anti-social behaviour; fostering social inclusion; supporting vulnerable people and caring for the environment.”* They were to:

- promote community safety and work in partnership with LCC, Kensington Clean Team and Green Apprentices to assist with environmental improvements, for example reducing litter, fly-tipping, graffiti and dog fouling.
- engage with local schools and forge links with young people, working on initiatives that promote community safety and improve the environment.
- provide a link between local residents and key agencies, such as the local authority and the Police.

Their role was to:

- provide a visible street presence to deter anti-social behaviour and foster feelings of security for vulnerable residents.
- respond to reported incidents of anti-social behaviour and liaise with Liverpool Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (LASBU) on appropriate action.
- respond to incidents of fly-tipping, graffiti and environmental vandalism, to improve environmental sites and work in partnership with Kensington Green Apprentices.
- report void properties and ensure the maintenance of void properties to a high specification.
- liaise with residents on issues concerning the environment or ‘street scene’.
- report and seek to improve blighted and eyesore areas of land.
- develop effective relationships with tenants and residents’ groups to disseminate information and ensure more effective service delivery in line with residents’ wishes.

Unlike Community Support Officers, they have no powers beyond those of any citizen, but they have been able to act as the ‘eyes and ears’ of the community and, because they are data protection signatories, they have data sharing agreements with the Police. There has been particularly close collaboration over anti-social behaviour, the issue that local people said had most effect on their lives.



As well as reporting and dealing directly with incidents, they have been able to support and advise individuals under stress because of crime or anti-social behaviour, visit vulnerable people and give crime prevention advice. The Wardens also work with the LASBU officer seconded to C7 who deals with incidents through to court appearances, including witness protection.

The Wardens carry out their role by:

- monitoring void properties, ensuring they are secure, free from fly-tipping and infestation.
- responding to complaints of vandalism and graffiti on properties.
- reporting and monitoring the improvement of blighted and eyesore areas of land.
- working in partnership with environmental health officers to ensure private owners undertake remedial works on properties that are creating problems for the community.
- promoting initiatives that raise awareness of housing and environmental improvements in Kensington.
- working with the C7 Voids Officer to ensure that all the empty properties awaiting demolition are secured.

The Environmental Health Officers within the Eastern Link Neighbourhood Management Team and in Liverpool City Council (LCC) are key partners for wider environmental issues and they are the route to the contractors who carry out work for LCC. The Wardens maintain a searchable computer database that allows outstanding jobs to be tracked and the type and frequency of problems to be monitored and the speed of response by the responsible agencies to be analysed.

The Wardens' work also has health dimensions: physical health improvement through the removal of 'grot spots' and mental health benefits through the reduction of stress for vulnerable people. Close working with residents' groups helped towards good relationships with older people. Visits to schools and using the Walking Bus have enabled links to be made with children and their parents. In addition they have worked with the KNDC BME Outreach Worker to get to know BME groups.

Success for the Wardens means:

- preventing an escalation of problems by early intervention;
- reducing the opportunities for crime;
- changing behaviour to avoid problems arising.

This last should mean fewer causes for complaints over time although people are also more likely to report issues if they think it will result in action being taken.



Clean Team

In response to residents' requests to tackle 'grot spots' and remove fly-tipped rubbish, KNDC first used Diggers, an existing social enterprise and then the Groundwork Green Apprentices. However, in June 2005, the C7 Neighbourhood Manager created the Clean Team. The team of five staff support LCC staff by helping to clear sites where properties have come down, maintaining open spaces and responding to dumping on roads and footpaths. Numerous plots of waste land round the area have now become well maintained green spaces. The Clean Team can generally respond more quickly to urgent complaints. Within the first few months, they had collected enough rubbish to fill 820 large skips and had removed nearly 1,900 dumped tyres and more than 700 items of furniture. Community clean-ups were also instigated with the help of Liverpool's Environmental Task Force.

Neighbourhood Services Task Group

Good links with local people have been key to the success of the Wardens and the Clean Team. There has been a deliberate attempt to make the Wardens visible and familiar figures in their readily recognisable uniforms so that residents could feel comfortable in approaching them to report specific incidents or problems. They have attended Neighbourhood Assemblies as a means of 'taking the temperature' of local concerns. However, it has also been important to have a more organised way of identifying problems and determining priorities with partners and community representatives and the Neighbourhood Services Task Group has served this purpose very effectively.

Kensington Regeneration
The Housing and Environment Programme





Kensington Regeneration was one of 39 New Deal for Community (NDC) schemes in England. Launched in 2000, it had a grant of £62 million for a ten year comprehensive regeneration programme. Half the grant was for housing and environmental renewal. This practice sheet is one of a series focusing on different aspects of the NDC programme. It draws material from the EIUA independent end-of-scheme evaluation commissioned by Kensington Regeneration.

Kensington Regeneration (KNDC) faced problems of unfit housing, high turnover, very low market values and fragmented housing ownership and management. Residents were dissatisfied with repair and maintenance services and unhappy about the environmental degradation. The challenge was to create a sustainable housing market, ensure good management of the stock and the wider environment and gain the confidence of both owner occupiers and people choosing to rent. Meeting this challenge would take fifteen years helped by the ten year NDC programme.

Key points

- The NDC programme was assisted by, but also complicated by, the advent of the Housing Market Renewal Initiative and the Edge Lane Development Scheme.
- It was important both to cater for the different needs of owner occupiers, social housing tenants and people in privately rented accommodation and to identify and respond to the particular circumstances of individual neighbourhoods within the NDC area.
- Maintaining affordability for home owners was essential so that residents did not either want or need to move out of the area. Kensington Regeneration took special measures through its Property Investment Fund to bridge the affordability gap for owner occupiers.
- Prior to the NDC programme, multiple RSLs were operating in the area, but strategic and consistent management of the social housing was especially vital during the housing market restructuring. This was achieved by stock swaps and the creation of a community-based housing association.
- Partnership working across Kensington Regeneration, Community Seven, Liverpool City Council and the (then) Housing Corporation. This then needed to extend to close collaboration with the Housing Market Renewal Initiative and Liverpool Land Development Company.
- Residents across all tenures needed different sorts of support during housing market restructuring. The Living through Change approach recognised the problems that can arise during a clearance programme. It encompassed a range of interventions including security for void properties, target hardening for occupied ones, enhanced environmental action, relocation assistance and financial advice.
- Even without the delays encountered in some of the developments in Kensington, a housing programme can take time to progress because of issues of site assembly and preparation. This, and the significance of housing to individual residents,

makes it very important to keep local people informed and to give them opportunities for participation in the programme. Local involvement through task and project groups in Kensington was key to ensuring that as far as possible both the developments and the support measures were tailored to local needs.

Context

The NDC area is situated in the Eastern Approaches Zone, one of six designated for Liverpool's housing strategy. This zone contained the largest number of terraced houses (83%) and pre-1919 housing. In addition to serious problems of physical decline in the housing stock, there were other significant challenges:

- levels of unfit housing across all tenures.
- high turnover.
- the lowest property values in Liverpool.
- an over-supply of private rented accommodation.
- high numbers of benefit dependent tenants.
- fragmented ownership and management of social housing.

Kensington Regeneration adopted a neighbourhood approach and identified five neighbourhoods that were *"distinguished by community perception, physical barriers and neighbourhood character"*. Each was analysed in terms of the quality of the public environment, stock condition, open space, sites, access and linkage as well as the percentage of voids and turnover rates. The amount of territorialism within and between them increased the scope for competing concerns and priorities.

Vision

Kensington Regeneration Board's aimed *"to create a sustainable local housing market, which retains the confidence of owner-occupiers and people who choose to rent. The housing stock and the wider environment will be well managed and will be a source of pride for local people and a welcoming environment for this important gateway to Liverpool."*

¹ This vision was to be delivered over a fifteen year period with the assistance of the ten year NDC programme. The housing priorities were to:

- increase the diversity of tenure and levels of owner occupation;
- reduce the numbers of residents moving out of the area;
- remove all unfit housing and demolish as selectively required.

Rationalising housing management

Community 7 (C7), a community-based housing association and subsidiary of Riverside Housing was set up. This together with stock swaps overcame the fragmentation of the ownership and management of social housing in Kensington. In 2004, following a ballot amongst tenants, C7 took over the management of the Liverpool City Council stock in the area.

KNDC and C7 have worked closely together. They drew up a joint commissioning agreement and developed a joint approach with LCC and the Housing Corporation. About fifty key properties were bought through C7 in batches from auctions for site assembly using NDC funding. This was done in a pepper potting

¹ Kensington Regeneration Housing Delivery Proposal, January 2001

way prior to HMRI money being available in anticipation of the need for demolition. These have now been or are being transferred to LCC and money for them returned to KNDC. C7 is investing about £20m in Kensington for renovation as well as building or acquiring new homes. All C7 properties not facing clearance are being improved so that they meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard.

A voluntary Landlord Accreditation Scheme in Kensington served as a pilot for the city and action was taken to deal with privately owned, insecure, vacant properties in disrepair. Typically this involved entering premises, removing fly-tipping and graffiti, and securing properties. A compulsory registration scheme for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) led to enforcement action wherever possible on properties not maintained and not meeting the requisite planning and housing regulations for HMOs.

Developing the Blueprint

In 2003, a review of progress on the housing programme pointed to two main barriers in delivery: no single body was in the lead and there was no clear ownership of the strategy. The three key organisations, LCC, KNDC and C7 also lacked capacity. A joint review of the strategy and programme in October 2003 provided both a route map and a mandate for activity. Inner City Solutions prepared a Blueprint that underpinned the whole programme. As well as the overall report, it comprised:

1. Housing Implementation Strategy identifying housing sites, providing development briefs and outline costs;

2. Environmental Audit and Strategy identifying potential improvement schemes;
3. Urban Design Guide setting out design guidance criteria for use by developers and LCC planning officers;
4. Community Consultation record of the aspirations of the community gathered during the preparation of the Blueprint.

It was supported by the Retail Strategy and the Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment (NRA).

Options for change in each of the five NDC neighbourhoods were agreed after local consultation including exhibitions and briefings attended by architects and others who could explain the proposals.

A Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment was required to provide an evidence base to define clearance areas. This lasted from Summer 2003 until January 2005 and covered 5,000 dwellings. It proposed the demolition of 715 homes in central Edge Hill but this was far more than would have been either affordable or acceptable to the community or LCC.

The HMRI programme in Kensington was expected to last for 10 years and include the demolition of approximately 900 houses. Bellway Homes, the lead developer, was to build modern homes with gardens and parking facilities, with 400 proposed on the cleared sites, and further new build developments proposed in nearby locations. These new homes were to provide greater choice of type and size. A refurbishment programme in the sustainable neighbourhoods was to improve the front elevations



of dwellings and the environment around them. At the same time, Community 7 was to invest in vacant properties, bringing them back into use for sale or rent to residents affected by clearance as well as carrying out extensive refurbishment to existing properties.

Edge Lane Development

One challenge in Kensington was to achieve full integration with the Liverpool Land Development Company plans for developing Edge Lane which included a new highway and creating a large new junction at Holt Road. Phase 1, a £350m scheme for the section between Botanic Road and Hall Lane, entailed demolishing 500 properties. A small number of residents protested about the compulsory purchase orders in February 2006 and successive hearings and appeals lasted until March 2009. The extremely costly delay left local residents experiencing personal uncertainty about their future plans and living in the midst of blight for a very long period. Another consequence was that by 2009 the housing and investment market was far less favourable than in 2006, making new developments far harder to get off the ground.

New build

Where new build sites could go ahead, site acquisition and preparation was often a lengthy and complex process and entailed spend without immediately visible results. New build schemes include:

- student accommodation in Laurel Road converted into 58 independent living apartments.

- 171 homes in Gilead Street ranging from three and five storey apartment blocks to two storey houses and including homes for sale, rent and shared ownership.
- 80 Bellway homes on Lomond Road/Grampian Road; a mix of two bedroom bungalows and apartments, two and three bedroom mews houses and three bedroom detached houses, of different storey heights grouped around a green square.
- 42 Bellway properties in the first phase of the Tunnel Road development.

Bridging the gap

Retaining residents in the areas was a major priority for Kensington Regeneration so that maintaining affordability for home owners was essential. The strict rules around valuation for CPOs and the low valuation of the properties created a gap between what owners would receive and the purchase price of new homes.

LCC already had plans in place to use a Property Appreciation Loan (PAL) to help owners facing compulsory purchase orders (CPOs). However by the time the Tunnel Road houses came to market, the originally quoted prices had risen by between 10% and 19%. Feeling the PAL was insufficient to bridge the larger affordability gap, KNDC planned a larger subsidy loan (SL); together, these make up the Kensington Property Investment Fund (KPIF) support packages (Box 1) crucial to enabling Kensington residents to remain in the area as full home owners. So far, 35 households moving from central Edge Hill



have accessed the loans. KNDC is now setting aside £2m for 2009/10 to assist remaining home owners – again probably about 35 – to move from their old terraced houses to new Bellway homes.

Apart from its benefit to residents, KPIF has been a catalyst for the housing redevelopment process, by ensuring that residents were willing to move from their old properties. Without it, they would have had to consider shared ownership or social renting options which would have made them very uneasy, especially as many older residents had already paid off their mortgages. Solutions other than full ownership could have resulted in considerable delay and disruption.

Kensington Property Investment Fund (KPIF) comprises:

1. Property Appreciation Loan forms part of the wider LCC/HMRI equity loan provided to home owners facing CPOs. They can borrow up to £35,000 (plus an additional discretionary amount up to £10,000). Kensington residents who move within Kensington or within 0.5km of the NDC area boundary can access the KNDC funding pot, whereas in other HMRI areas the pot is provided by the Council or HMRI. PAL is to be repaid to the funder on the death of the home owner or sale of the property. The amount paid back equates to the percentage of the value of the property represented by the PAL when borrowed. Any KNDC funding repaid in this way will return to Kensington Regeneration's successor body.

2. Subsidy Loan is a grant additional to the PAL unique to Kensington Regeneration residents moving into the phase 1 housing development on Tunnel Road to bridge the gap between the first quoted and the actual prices. The amount therefore relates to the difference according to the size and price of the property: £17,995 for a 3-bedroomed house, £9,995 for a 2-bedroomed bungalow and £8,995 for a 2-bedroomed standard house. Once received, the loan goes down in value by 10% each year and is written off after ten years, unless the owner dies or sells their house before then.

As well as financial assistance, other sorts of support have been given to residents across all tenures during clearance through Living through Change.

Living through Change

A range of supportive interventions in relation to residents, properties and the environment:

- security for void properties;
- target hardening for occupied vulnerable properties;
- combating anti-social behaviour;
- enhanced environmental action;
- handyperson schemes;
- relocation assistance officers;
- moving and settling-in schemes;
- financial advisory services.

Housing and environmental improvement

The goal in relation to the local environment was to overcome the overwhelmingly negative image of the area by improving the streetscape, creating attractive shopping areas, removing dereliction, bringing vacant sites back into use and creating good open spaces. Extensive housing and environmental improvements have gone hand in hand throughout the NDC area except for parts affected by the development scheme. Examples of environmental work include:

- enveloping treatment;
- over 4 miles of boundary walls involving over 700 properties;
- stripping heritage area properties back to their original brickwork, restoring their low walls and railings and retaining features such as the Victorian-style lighting;
- trees and other planting;
- installation of new street lighting;
- traffic management measures;
- restoration of Botanic Gardens;
- Birchfield Park including a multi-use games area;
- St Sebastian's Garden Project made 432 square metres of waste ground into a garden for the whole community;
- development of the Kensington campus to link a number of key facilities.

Retail Strategy

Kensington retail strategy aimed to support current and future provision and, in particular, revitalise the Wavertree Road and Kensington/Prescot Road shopping centres. Shops along Wavertree Road were acquired ready for demolition as part of the central Edge Hill development. Fourteen blocks in Kensington Fields and units near key development sites have been enveloped. Since then, the vacancy rate has gone down. 100% NDC funding for improvements to frontages along Kensington, Prescot Road and Edge Lane were subject to clawback arrangements so that a percentage could be reclaimed if the property was sold within five years.

Neighbourhood Centre

The original NDC delivery plan included the idea of a civic centre for neighbourhood services and other services. However, delays in assembling the site,

which was in multiple ownership, and the indecision and drop-out of potential occupiers changed the scheme and the nature of the legacy. It is now a two phase project. Phase 1 now comprises:

- a fire station, which will also have community rooms such as a gym;
- Iceland as the anchor store;
- 6 other retail units for which occupiers have yet to be found;
- 29 flats, including the refurbishment of listed buildings that are already on the site.

Phase 2 is a housing scheme that will not take place until the housing market picks up.

Local involvement has been key to the housing and environment programme. KNDC supported local residents in setting up a Housing Focus and Issues Group in central Edge Hill which provided an arena for local people to talk with the partners involved in the clearance schemes. Its role included:

- working with Bellway to ensure that the new homes being built would be suitable for the mixture of the young families and older, disabled residents being displaced. Bellway worked with residents in planning the scheme; the site was mapped and people were able to select their plots, which enabled neighbours to stay together and therefore helped towards retaining a sense of community.
- shaping the Living Through Change programme.
- helped to find new solutions for dealing with problems associated with the clearance phase.
- developed the idea of the Kensington Community Assistance Project to secure practical help and support for people feeling vulnerable when left surrounded by vacant and 'tinned up' properties.
- helped to formulate the policy for the Kensington Property Investment Fund.

A Housing Focus and Issues Group for Holt Road managed to get the issue settled about whether parts would have to be cleared. As a result, the area was declared sustainable.

In Kensington Fields, local residents had an Urban Design Group to develop an urban design strategy which was followed to strip the properties back to their original brickwork, restore their low walls and railings and retain heritage features such as the Victorian-style lighting.

Kensington Regeneration
Lifelong Learning



Kensington Regeneration was one of 39 New Deal for Community (NDC) schemes in England. Launched in 2000, it had a grant of £62 million for a ten year comprehensive regeneration programme. Half the grant was for housing and environmental renewal. This practice sheet is one of a series focusing on different aspects of the NDC programme. It draws material from the EIUA independent end-of-scheme evaluation commissioned by Kensington Regeneration.

At the start of the NDC programme, there were significant issues concerning the attendance and attainment of children and young people in Kensington. Absence and exclusions were very high. High proportions of adults had no qualifications, less than half the national average were staying at school post-17 years and very few adults undertook training. An underlying challenge was to create a culture of achievement in schools and the wider community.

Key points

- Kensington Regeneration adopted a cradle-to-grave approach, spanning pre-school provision, work with schools and youth organisations, promoting further and higher education and encouraging community learning both for personal development and improved employability.
- Key to Kensington Regeneration's approach was collaboration with other agencies in the area, most notably the Excite EAZ. KNDC added value by enabling it to extend its work to the Roman Catholic schools in the NDC area and by funding special projects across all the schools.
- Projects such as Music for Life not only excited children but also engaged their parents.
- Although education has been a main government priority since 1997 partly because of its role in tackling disadvantage, there has often been uncertainty both about how schools' core responsibilities best fit alongside their wider involvement in neighbourhood issues and about the types of interventions in schools that can be supported by regeneration funding. The activities in Kensington have gone a long way towards making connections that could contribute to improved schools' performance and maximise their impact on broader regeneration goals.



- The same way of working was evident in relation to community learning and employability projects, in which the emphasis was on outreach, making provision more accessible for residents, bringing it to the heart of the area, and tailoring it to meet local needs.
- The facilitation role of Kensington Regeneration was also shown in the behind-the-scenes work towards securing a new secondary school for the area and enabling local organisations to develop greater capacity and become more sustainable.
- Capital projects served to make for more attractive and welcoming learning environments and, together with the other measures, helped to increase the importance of education and training amongst local people.

What was the problem?

In 2000, there were issues both about the attainment of children and young people in Kensington and about secondary school provision. There were four primary schools in the area, but no secondary schools. One of the primary schools was taken into special measures in February 2000 and, although the other three had received good OFSTED reports in 1998/9 and one was a beacon school, their average results were consistently up to 20% lower than the city level for key stage 1. They were 15% lower than the national level for key stage 2. The proportion of children with special needs was twice that of the city; the level of unauthorised absence three times the city average and authorised absence was twelve times the national level. In 1998/2000, Kensington schools excluded an average of nearly 10 pupils compared with an average of less than 2 for the city. In part, the figures reflected the transience of the local population.

Other issues surfaced during the NDC programme. Demographic change in the area meant that the schools had to cater for high proportions of children with English as their second language. Although the school heads saw this as a positive opportunity to enhance the cultural experiences of their pupils and their families, it brought new challenges.

The 2001 Census showed that 45% of 16-74 years olds in Kensington had no qualifications compared with 29% nationally. Only a quarter of Kensington residents had GCSEs, 10% A levels and 5% degrees.



Only one third entered higher or further education and less than half the national average were staying at school post-17 years. Four times the city average of school leavers – 16.8% – were uncontactable. Only one in ten adults undertook training.

Key themes

The NDC Lifelong Learning programme had various strands:

- *Support for early years development and parental support* – working with Sure Start and Early Years Development Partnership programmes to implement a package of measures as part of an integrated approach to early education, childcare and health and family support services.
- *Raising levels of attainment and attendance* – working closely with the EXCITE EAZ and the Excellence in Liverpool programme strands such as Learning Mentors and Beacon Schools as well as being a partner in the development of the Kensington Academy.
- *Out of school* – activities to promote engagement with the educational process, improve attainment and reduce the incidence of anti-social behaviour.
- *Family and learning support* – providing a focus for lifelong learning in the area through a new Family and Lifelong Learning Centre.
- *Promoting adult and community learning* – working with partners and community bodies to support practical steps to promote a culture of learning.

Altogether, the emphasis was on working with a wide range of partners and seeking primarily to complement mainstream delivery.

Building for early years

There have been capital as well as revenue projects:

- Funding a zoned play area and a new, safe pathway into the school for the new Kensington Infant and Junior School.
- Contributing £1 million towards the imaginatively designed Life Bank in Brae Street, which opened in January 2005 to house the Sure Start initiative and became the children's and family learning centre for the area.
- Investing £0.5 million in the Field of Dreams Nursery in the grounds of St Sebastian's Catholic Primary School.
- Funding a parents' room and fitness suite in Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School.
- Funding a range of security measures (smoke alarms and Smartwater) in the schools, which led to a significant reduction in break-ins and vandalism.
- Funding St Sebastian's Walking to School and School Zone and a new music centre.

EXCITE Education Action Zone began in September 2000 working with 14 schools in Kensington, Dovecot and Old Swan. Its priorities were to improve pupils' attainment standards, attendance and behaviour. KNDC recognised that it would have been counter-productive to attempt to work independently and decided to work through EXCITE.

First, c. £46,000 per year was provided to enable EXCITE to extend to the two Roman Catholic primary schools in the area. Second, NDC funded specific projects that could supplement EXCITE's work across all the Kensington primary schools, such as:

- the *Music for Life* Project – now seen as an example of national good practice.
- *Christmas in the Curriculum* – to combat higher levels of absenteeism prior to Christmas and address the multi-cultural aspects of Christmas.
- a *£75,000 laptop programme* providing state-of-the-art ICT equipment backed by intensive teaching support.
- *INSET training* for staff especially relating to cultural diversity.
- *Boosted Learning in Kensington* (BLINK) – a package of support for activities for parents, including shared reading, holiday clubs, 'help your child with maths' schemes and 'dads and lads' clubs.

These activities in Kensington have gone a long way towards contributing to improved performance measured by the schools' key success measures and maximising their impact on broader regeneration goals. The NDC way of working was appreciated. The Director of the EAZ and the KNDC officers together brought understanding of the educational and the local context, but left the control and initiative with the school staff.

One outcome was much closer working between the head teachers. 'Heads Together' meetings led to increased trust and joint commitment and less competitiveness, which laid a good foundation for the extended schools policy approach and the skill set required for schools to fulfil this wider remit.

A new secondary school

What became the Academy of St Francis of Assisi was a flagship project for KNDC. There was local demand for a secondary school although the numbers within the area itself scarcely justified it. KNDC Board Chair, the Bishop of Liverpool, set the process in motion. After that, KNDC played a vital but low profile facilitation role. The Academy opened in September 2005. In 2007, it was England's highest rated value added Academy and the top value added school in the city.

Out of school

NDC funding has gone towards a number of projects that aim to prevent children and young people becoming involved in anti-social behaviour and to enhance their aspirations and skills. Prospects 2000 provides outward bound residential training and personal development for local young people. Also funded were return to learn courses at local youth and community centres and arts, drama, sports and leisure activities mounted by organisations such as Metal and the Yellow House.

Encouraging entry to higher education

Kensington Community Bursary Project was set up in August 2003 with the aim of increasing participation in higher education by residents in the NDC area. The project gives a non-repayable annual £1,250 bursary for 3 years to eligible students on full-time undergraduate degree courses on condition that they do 40 hours voluntary work in local community groups or schools for the benefit of the NDC community. It has been delivered by Merseyside Network for Change, but steered by a group comprising community representatives and officers from key agencies. The Bursary Project is valuable in reducing the amount of anticipated debt on graduation; providing work experience relevant to career choice and/or personal development; bringing community benefit through the placements; and the students serve as role models for participation in higher education.



Community learning

One of the most significant NDC legacies in the area is likely to be Kensington Community Learning Centre (KCLC), established at the end of 2000. At first, it focused on IT skills but progressed to offering a much wider range of courses designed to improve employability.

Without KNDC funding, KCLC would not exist. Its work programme and location bring significant added value. It has had particular success in reaching groups such as lone parents and members of BME communities.

It is offering services that would not otherwise be available in the area. It offers courses from two awarding bodies and has Open College Network approved centre status and actively participates in University for Industry initiatives. KCLC has won several awards. It is providing a base for others to make their provision more accessible to Kensington residents and its position in the community enables it to link closely with other NDC projects that can signpost people to take advantage of the Centre's services.

NDC funding has supported further community learning activities, for instance, helping to equip computer suites in other centres in the area.

Responding to the much increased demand for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses from BME groups coming into the area was important. In 2006, KNDC undertook an area review

of ESOL which underlined the number and range of the countries of origin. One of the challenges was to find enough venues within the area; another was the capacity to meet the peaks and troughs in demand from different national/language groups.

Skills for Life

The findings of the Moser Report were the catalyst for the Kensington Skills for Life Programme, which connects basic skills with employability. This means both that the importance of literacy and numeracy is emphasised in relation to routes into work and that some basic courses have vocational elements, such as social care, security or retail. KNDC aimed not to supplant existing providers but to work with organisations such as the Learning and Skills Council, the local authority and Connexions to add value by encouraging better co-ordination. The NDC programme targets long-term unemployed residents and those that find it harder to access mainstream services. There has been a stress on removing barriers in the way of people taking up opportunities. For example, KNDC has paid childcare costs. Another defining characteristic has been flexibility and trying to ensure that provision is tailored to people's needs. This is exemplified by persuading providers to adapt the balance of different course elements rather than all students having to have a set number of weeks devoted to basic skills before moving onto the vocational content, irrespective of the standard they have already reached.

Kensington Regeneration
Unemployment, Employment and Enterprise





Kensington Regeneration was one of 39 New Deal for Community (NDC) schemes in England. Launched in 2000, it had a grant of £62 million for a ten year comprehensive regeneration programme. Half the grant was for housing and environmental renewal. This practice sheet is one of a series focusing on different aspects of the NDC programme. It draws material from the EIUA independent end-of-scheme evaluation commissioned by Kensington Regeneration.

At the outset, the NDC area had very high unemployment, very low skill levels and a high proportion of those working were in low paid work. Although well situated in relation to city centre employment and Wavertree Technology Park, there was a mismatch between the skills available locally and those required by businesses.

Key Points

- The main focus of the programme was on enhancing the employability of local people and making more opportunities open to them by developing links with other programme areas and other developments in the locality.
- The Transitional Employment Programme (TEP) is a good example of NDC making best use of city-wide provision whilst targeting Kensington residents. Kensington TEP has been more flexible and inclusive than the standard model. It has worked with a broader age range, recruitment to the programme has been less prescriptive and it

has paid higher wages. Good practice lessons relate to aspects of the TEP 'offer' and relationships with both participants and employers.

- Supporting people to move from unemployment into work required a comprehensive package of support, tackling barriers such as childcare costs and ensuring that clients are aware of the help available for the transition from benefits to work.
- The wider NDC programme included improving the retail sector in Kensington. In addition, this dimension of the programme sought to make closer links between employers and local residents through Jobs Boost and the Business Leaders' Group while the Dream High project was designed to counter the low levels of self-employment.
- The strengths of the NDC approach have derived particularly from the targeting, emphasis on outreach and provision tailored to clients' needs. For much of the lifetime of NDC the economic climate has been favourable. However, the NDC strategy of tackling employability issues, such as basic skills, becomes even more important in an economic downturn in order for local residents to be able to compete in the labour market.

What was the problem?

In 2000, male unemployment in Kensington was nearly 20%, that is, 30% above the city level. Only about 40% of the working age population were in paid employment and employment tended to mean low paid work with few if any prospects. Women often had multiple part-time posts. Although near to the city centre and to employers, such as Marconi and Littlewoods (both since closed), the two Universities, the Royal Liverpool University Hospital and companies on Wavertree Technology Park, the perception amongst local people was that 'local firms do not employ us'. Businesses identified a mismatch between their needs and skills available locally. In addition to the high percentage with no qualifications, poor self esteem was seen as a problem. Self employment rates were very low.

The NDC approach

Three themes underpinned Kensington Regeneration's approach to employment and enterprise:

- securing benefits for local residents and businesses: jobs, income and economic activity arising from the improved economic performance of the sub-region.
- developing links with other programme areas, (e.g. environment, health and construction) to maximise training and employment opportunities for residents.
- ensuring that an integrated programme of support was available that met local needs.

The elements of the programme included:

- Employability, income maximisation and pre-recruitment support;
- Recruitment support through Jobs Boost;
- A dedicated Guidance Officer for KNDC residents within the JET;
- Transitional Employment Measures;
- Supporting On-Call for the training of Kensington residents in call centre work and targeting employment for them;
- Vocational and customised training including a volunteering programme to provide accredited work experience for hard-to-reach young people and a pre-apprenticeship programme of sector-focused support for hard-to-reach 16s-24s.

Outreach

Outreach has been a strong theme. As well as specific events, it has been 'written into' many projects with NDC funding being used for more local advisors.

Partnering the Jobs, Education and Training (JET) service has been vital to the NDC's employment programme. KNDC paid for a dedicated worker to focus on Kensington residents. Capital support for the JET Team to have a base in Kensington shopping centre adjacent to the Kensington Community Learning Centre also exemplified the effort to make provision easily accessible. JET guidance, counselling and one-to-one service was critical to delivering outputs, which have always exceeded the targets. An important ingredient is that JET staff are trusted in the area and can play the honest broker role that is essential to working alongside local people.

KNDC benefited from other aspects of their partnership with JET in ways that are less easily quantified. The shared approach brings greater critical mass. Through being part of a city-wide service, JET has the wider links and access to information about potential opportunities that make integration with other activities more feasible. Focusing on activities that support other strategies in the city and contribute to their priorities was a key principle.

NDC funded other outreach projects such as Kensington Access to Training and Employment (KATE) and Streets Ahead.

- KATE is designed to help two main groups improve their employability skills and return to work: those with long-term illness or disability and refugees. They are able to access job-specific training and personal skills development, in-work benefit calculations and assistance with benefit claims.
- Streets Ahead is a multi-agency outreach project making contact and working with unemployed people in a targeted programme of liaison, advice and guidance. It aims to reach those who have not made use of other forms of support and help them identify their needs in relation to benefits, finance, childcare, employment and training.



Transitional Employment Programme

Kensington Regeneration branded its employability programme *New Futures*. At first, it supported a number of Intermediate Labour Market (ILMs) such as a Health ILM providing training in community-based health care for unemployed residents. However, an evaluation indicated that shorter placements than these 12 month ones were sufficient for assessing job readiness. For that reason, a switch was made to the Transitional Employment Programme (TEP).

The principles of KNDC's Transitional Employment Programme are:

- targeting the hardest to help, who often have multiple barriers to work;
- being client focused and having a local emphasis;
- providing an integrated approach that ensures linkages with, and optimises the use of, other labour market programmes and regeneration initiatives;
- achieving added value by supporting interventions that provide genuinely additional routes into employment;
- providing additional and continued support to ensure that the job found is suitable and sustainable;
- supporting the development of a strong delivery infrastructure and building capacity through partnership working.

TEP is now run for Kensington Regeneration by LCC's Employment Programmes Team, but NDC set out to market it more strongly and achieve greater impact in Kensington by:

- using the Streets Ahead team to knock on doors and get people to events;
- leaflet drops;
- open days with employers at the Job Bank delivered in conjunction with the JET.

Experience has underlined the importance of:

- active marketing and outreach.
- engaging with people on their own ground where they feel comfortable.
- offering a quick turn-around between initial contact and induction to reduce drop-out.
- developing a good understanding of each participant's motives for joining to increase outcomes and minimise drop-out.
- helping people understand the financial benefits including the help available for the transition from benefits to work.
- using 'graduates' of the programme as mentors.
- offering additional training if appropriate during the placement to widen the choice of jobs.
- paying the rate for the job – not just the minimum wage – to increase participants' willingness to enter work.



- ensuring providers are always accessible to participants during placements.
- ensuring employers' needs are met and they receive a good professional service.

The TEP has been good value for money with a unit cost per output of £4,691 compared with the unit costs of £12-14,000 for similar initiatives in other parts of the country. However, it is not a scheme that can succeed with large numbers of people. As the target group are long-term unemployed or have never worked, it can be necessary to overcome demotivation and low self-esteem. It may require more intensive training input either to overcome low basic skills or to provide ESOL. Inevitably, too, the number of placements available with guaranteed employment is dependent on the economic climate and there are already signs that the current downturn is reducing the number of openings. At one stage, over 80% of recruits were going into jobs. Although this has now fallen to about 65%, this remains a high proportion compared with other schemes. The LSC/LCC Routeways initiative is now providing TEP activity for Kensington, which should also ensure its future sustainability.

Jobs Boost

NDC aimed to have a planned approach to new job opportunities for local residents, working closely with the JET. In the Jobs Boost recruitment support scheme, although a wage subsidy for employers was adopted at first, it was later dropped in favour of:

- early intelligence about potential opportunities;
- making local people aware of these opportunities, for example, through Job Open Days;
- establishing a relationship with the employer and providing customised training.

Examples where Jobs Boost has enabled Kensington residents to obtain work or apprenticeships are: St Francis of Assisi Academy; Edge Lane development; Liverpool One; Wavertree Technology Park; Tesco; Whiston Hospital.

Raising incomes

One of NDC's outcome targets was to increase average household incomes. Employment is one route to achieving this as is raising awareness about benefit entitlement, but NDC funding has also gone towards strengthening Edge Hill and District Credit Union, which can act as a post office with benefits paid into it and the capacity to pay standing orders. It now has over 1,000 members and over 400 young savers.

Enterprise

On the whole, KNDC's employment and enterprise interventions have focused on employability, although other parts of the NDC programme also encompassed improvements to the retail environment. A specific business-focused project supported by NDC was *Dream High*, based on the American Sirolli Institute model of enterprise facilitation. It is designed to inspire bottom-up economic development especially in disadvantaged communities. It aims to assist people with a dream either to start a business or improve or safeguard an existing one. It has very low overheads because apart from the one member of staff, everyone donates their time and expertise. Dream High has led to two other Sirolli-model projects covering other parts of Liverpool.

The Business Leaders' Group (BLG) grew out of tentative efforts to engage local companies, first by Parks Options and later by Kensington Regeneration. The BLG was set up in 2004 as a lobby group for businesses in the area and to inform them about available support. It now reaches about 400 employers in and around the NDC area. There are no subscriptions: just being present in the area gives entitlement to membership. One of the main drivers of the BLG is a private sector member of the KNDC Board and he has helped towards trying to secure more jobs for local people. A survey of firms in Wavertree Technology Park every eighteen months suggests that the percentage of local people employed is growing.

