



# Lambeth Communities First

*Building Active Communities and Neighbourhoods*

2007 – 2010

**Ambition**

***Lambeth will be judged as excellent by its communities and partners in improving people's lives through strong, safe and cohesive neighbourhoods, where people are proud to live, work, learn, play and prosper.***

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## **1.0 Safe, Strong, Diverse and Proud**

Government has laid down a challenge that a modern, forward thinking Council can only claim to be truly representative if it actually engages with and works alongside the diverse neighbourhoods and communities it seeks to serve, as well as working collaboratively with its partners. We agree.

The Government's Strong & Prosperous Communities agenda is challenging for all of us. As well as calling for strong communities, it requires responsive services and empowered, engaged communities where people feel safe. We want the citizens of Lambeth through their active citizenship, communities, neighbourhoods and ultimately the ballot box to help shape Lambeth. We also feel that Lambeth has previously built its engagement methods around its own interests and comfort zone rather than you.

Between November 2006 and March 2007 we embarked upon a consultation exercise to share our ideas with you. We held over 70 meetings across Lambeth with a variety of citizens, voluntary organisations, community forums, tenant groups and resident associations and members of Lambeth First including the Primary Care Trust and Lambeth Police. The end result is Communities First.

We believe Councils remain vital institutions, but we should never take their complex role for granted. As institutions they will only remain relevant if councils like Lambeth work more creatively and flexibly to meet the needs of our diverse neighbourhoods and communities.

Our diversity is our strength and Communities First is about you, your neighbourhood, your community and your borough. It's about being proud to live, work and learn in Lambeth. It's about celebrating that we are all Lambeth.



**Councillor Mark Bennett**  
**Cabinet Member**  
**Safer Communities**



**Councillor Lorna Campbell**  
**Deputy Cabinet Member**  
**Safer Communities**

## 2.0 Summary of Outcomes

### Community Voice Strategy

The Council's Community Voice Strategy guides community engagement activities across the Council and has the following vision: ***'Local people are empowered to participate in shaping their communities through enhanced community leadership and greater civic participation'***

The Community Voice strategy is designed around the four key outcomes of:

- Inform:** Increased satisfaction with services, a strengthened reputation, and more citizens considering the council is 'doing a good job'
- Consult:** Citizens actively engaged in consultation on the planning and delivery of local services (being consulted on pre-defined options)
- Involve:** Greater trust in community leaders; greater citizen involvement in civic life
- Devolve:** Increased satisfaction with local services, improved skills base for people running devolved services, local control of some services

### Communities First

Lambeth Communities First flows from the Council's Community Voice Strategy and concerns itself primarily with the **Involve** and **Devolve** aspects of the strategy. Communities First will forge new relationships between local people, their communities, neighbourhoods and their Council. It has a challenging ambition:

***Lambeth will be judged as excellent by its communities and partners in improving people's lives through strong, safe and cohesive neighbourhoods, where people are proud to live, work, learn, play and prosper***

Communities First contains actions which the Council will either deliver directly, or will collaborate with partners to develop and deliver. Overall these actions and associated projects will secure the outcomes outlined above leading to the Council being recognised as:

- A better partner to the third sector, including our voluntary & community sectors partners.
- Building active communities & neighbourhoods
- Strengthening the role of ward councillors as community leaders
- Developing skills, behaviours and an information base for those working in a community and neighbourhood setting.



## 3.0 Introduction

### **Together As One**

Derrick Anderson,  
Chief Executive  
London Borough of Lambeth

***Lambeth will be judged as excellent by its communities and partners in improving people's lives through strong, safe and cohesive neighbourhoods, where people are proud to live, work, learn, play and prosper.***

As a Lambeth resident you have a right to hold the providers of public services to account, as well as being able to influence and be involved in their delivery. You also have a right to contribute to the shaping of your neighbourhood and Lambeth as a whole.

Rights, of course, carry with them responsibilities and active citizenship is not an abstract notion that simply places responsibilities upon the providers of public services. Change only happens when people decide to get involved, to make demands, to challenge or volunteer. Active citizenship provides the glue that creates cohesion within our community.

Often with good intentions, councils want to provide services to neighbourhoods and communities, instead of working alongside them; facilitating, supporting and encouraging locally managed solutions and services. The Communities First programme is about providing better services with neighbourhoods and communities, hand in hand and in partnership with you.

Communities First will provide opportunities for you to have a greater stake in how your neighbourhood is managed. For that reason, we have spent a considerable amount of time talking and listening to voluntary, community, faith, resident and tenant groups in this borough. We listened to the experiences of working with the Council and the messages that came back were loud and clear. We will share these messages with our partners and work with them through Lambeth First to address what we have heard.

We all know change does not happen overnight. It takes commitment and hard work. It requires us to work together, with determination to harness all the resources available to us in Lambeth. Change starts first and foremost with you and me. I'm committed to this agenda.

## 4.0 The Lambeth Landscape

4.1 The London Borough of Lambeth is a place of notable contrasts and is renowned for its cultural diversity. With a population of over 260,000, the citizens of Lambeth make up the largest resident community of all the Inner London boroughs (female 51% - male 49%). The information included in this section provides an overview of Lambeth people.

### Our Core Communities

4.2 Since 1991 the community of Lambeth has grown by 20,000 and with an estimated 25% annual change within our overall population we have a significant transient community, as well as long established communities.

### Ethnicity

4.3 62.5% of our citizens declare themselves 'White British', or 'Irish' which is below the Inner London (65.7%) and England (91%) average. The largest ethnic group is Black Caribbean (12.1%), followed by Black African (11.6%) and Other Black (2.1%).

Group	Lambeth	Inner London Average	Across England Average
Black groups	26%	17%	2.3%
Asian	4.6%	10.6%	4.6%
Mixed ethnic groups	4.8%	4%	1.4%

4.5 Many of our Black African communities are concentrated in the north of Lambeth, whilst Black Caribbean communities tend to be concentrated in and around the Brixton area, particularly Vassall and Coldharbour wards and also Gipsy Hill, Knights Hill and Streatham South wards.

4.6 The highest concentration of 'White British' people can be found in and around the Clapham, Streatham and Norwood wards, whilst lower concentrations can be found in the Coldharbour, Stockwell and Oval areas. Over recent years there has been a significant increase in the numbers of Portuguese (1.47%) and South American (1.39%) speaking communities which have almost doubled since 1991.

4.7 There are also notable increases in the Somalian and East European communities (particularly Polish), especially in and around Streatham.

## **Age**

- 4.8 Lambeth is also a young community, with 45% of the population aged between 20 and 39. This compares to 35.6% for London and 28.3% nationally. The Lambeth community has a lower proportion of people over 50 years old (20%) compared to 33% nationally and 27% for Greater London.
- 4.9 The age profile of many economically deprived wards is also younger than across Lambeth as a whole. 19.2% of the Lambeth's population is aged below 16 years compared to 24.8% in Coldharbour ward, 23.4% in Stockwell, 22.1% in Vassall and 21.5% in Gypsy Hill. The inner London average is 18.8%.

## **Disability**

- 4.10 Around 40,000 Lambeth citizens identify themselves as having a disability and the 7.38% claim rate for Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance within the community of Lambeth (2004) is above the England and London averages (7% and 6.56% respectively).

## **Sexual Orientation**

- 4.11 5-10% of citizens identify themselves as being from the lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) communities. Following research undertaken during 2006 this baseline figure rises to 20% in areas like Brixton, Clapham and Waterloo.

## **Carers**

- 4.12 An estimated 30,000 Lambeth citizens spend significant amounts of their time caring for a disabled or sick relative, partner or friend.

## **Families**

- 4.13 Lambeth has the highest number of people in England who define themselves as single (55.8%) and the second lowest rate of marriage or remarriage in the UK (28.3%). With 37.9% of households occupied by a single person, Lambeth has one of the highest proportions of lone parent families in London (48%) with a dependent child. Over 70,000 Lambeth households are made up of married couples and 28,595 cohabiting couples. Approximately 1,300 Lambeth households consist of same sex couples and their families.

## Faith

4.14 Lambeth has the highest count in the country of 'non-religion' (21.7%) and 'religion not stated' (10.9%). The breakdown of those who identify themselves with a particular faith is:

Religion	%
Christianity	58.5
Muslim	5.4
Hindus	1.3
Buddhists	0.9
Jewish	0.5
Sikh	0.25

## Our Core Neighbourhoods

4.15 Government has developed the concept of areas of consistent size and boundary and these are known as Super Output Areas. There are three layers of SOAs. Super Output Areas (**SOA**) now provides reporting of small area statistics and replaced the electoral ward as the standard unit for presenting local information. The population and geographical difference between electoral wards resulted in pockets of deprivation being missed when developing local strategies. There are 177 Super Output Areas in Lambeth and the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation Data identifies Lambeth as the 7<sup>th</sup> most deprived Borough in London (out of 33) and the 13<sup>th</sup> most deprived in England (out of 354).

Layer	Description
Lower Layer	Minimum population 1000
Middle Layer	Minimum population 5000
Upper Layer	To be determined: Minimum population 25,000

## Crime Deprivation

4.16 The Index of Multiple Deprivation identifies crime as a significant problem for neighbourhoods and communities in Lambeth. Of Lambeth's 177 SOAs over 27% (47) are within the top 5% in England with the worst crime scores, and a further 17% fall within the top 10%. Bishops ward is the only ward with respect to crime not to have any SOAs within the top 5% or 10% in England. Clusters of crime are most notable within Brixton Town Centre where just over 50% (23 SOAs) of the area's 44 SOAs are in the top 5% and a further 9 SOAs are in the top 10% of SOAs in England. Coldharbour and Ferndale wards have particularly high levels of crime deprivation.

4.17 Vassall ward and Streatham Hill also have clusters of crime deprivation. 5 out of the Vassall ward SOAs are in the top 5% in England while, Streatham Hill has 3 of its 9 SOAs in the top 5% and a further 3 SOAs in the top 10%. Through successful partnership working between local communities, Lambeth Police and Lambeth Council, a downward trend in reported crime is being reported.

## **Living Environment Deprivation**

- 4.18 Environment deprivation is particularly prevalent within Stockwell and Clapham Town Centre where just below 70% (30 out of 39) of SOAs are within the top 5% or 10% of the most environmentally deprived SOA's in England. In the Stockwell ward 7 of its 9 SOAs are in the top 5%.
- 4.19 Brixton has the second main concentration of living environment deprivation with 30% (13 out of 44) of the SOAs in the top 5% and a further 16% in the top 10% of SOAs in England. Coldharbour (5 SOAs in top 5%) and Ferndale (3 SOAs in top 5%) have the highest levels of environmental deprivation.

## **Income Deprivation**

- 4.20 Around 6% (11 out of 177) of Lambeth's SOAs are within the top 5% of the most income deprived SOAs in England and 14% (24 SOAs) are within the top 10%. There is a clustering of income deprivation within Brixton (6 SOAs in the top 5% and a further 10 in top 10%). Income deprivation is notable within Coldharbour ward (3 of the areas 10 SOAs are in the top 5% and a further 5 are in the top 10%).
- 4.21 In Tulse Hill ward 2 SOAs are in the top 5% and an additional 2 in the top 10%. Vassall ward also has a concentration of income deprivation with 2 of the ward's 9 SOAs in the top 5% and a further 2 in the top 10% of most income deprived SOAs in England.

## **Income Deprivation Affecting Children**

- 4.22 Over 35% (64 SOAs) are either within the top 5% or 10% of most income deprived in relation to households with children in SOAs in England. Brixton in particular has very high levels of income deprivation in relation to children with just under 30% (13) of the ward SOAs in the top 5% most deprived SOAs in England and a further 32% (14) are in the top 10% most deprived.
- 4.23 Wards with the highest level of income deprivation in relation to children across England include Coldharbour (5 of its 10 SOAs are in the top 5% and a further 3 in the top 10%) and Tulse Hill (4 of the wards 9 SOAs are in the top 5% and an additional 2 in the top 10%). Larkhall also has high levels of income deprivation in relation to children; 3 of the wards 8 SOAs are in the top 5%.

## **Income Deprivation Affecting Older People**

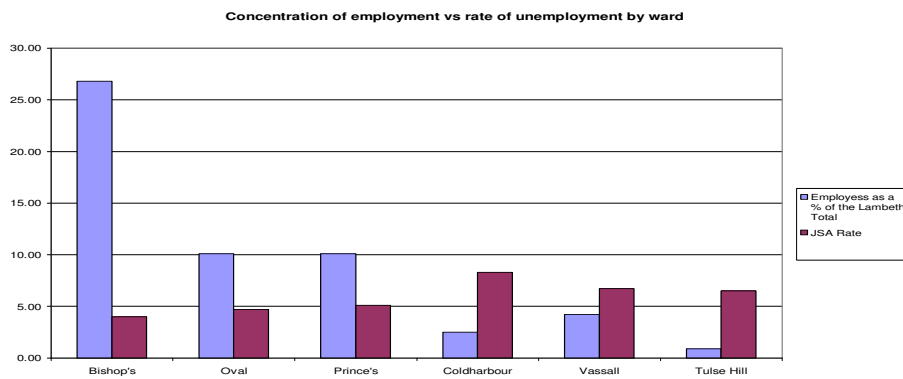
- 4.24 Around 11% (19) SOAs in Lambeth are within the top 5% of SOAs in England for income deprivation affecting older people and an additional 19% (34) SOAs are within the top 10%.

4.25 Income deprivation affecting older people is concentrated within Brixton, Stockwell and Clapham. In Brixton around 20% (9) of SOAs are in top 5% and a further 20% (9) in the top 10% of SOAs in England. The highest concentrations are within Coldharbour (5 SOAs in top 5% and an additional 5 in top 10%) and Ferndale wards (4 SOAs in the top 5% and an additional 1 in the top 10%).

4.26 In Clapham and Stockwell 5 of the area's 43 SOAs are in the top 5% SOAs in England and a further 9 in the top 10%. Larkhall ward with 2 SOAs in the top 5% and 5 in the top 10%, and Clapham Town (2 SOAs in the top 5% and an additional 1 in the top 10%) have the highest levels.

### Employed & Unemployed

4.27 Approximately 45% of those in employment reside within 3 of the boroughs 21 wards (Bishop's, Oval and Prince's). Also over 25% of all businesses in Lambeth are located in these same three wards. Only 7.6% of the boroughs employees are located in Coldharbour, Tulse Hill, and Vassall wards. These wards also have the highest rates of unemployment in the borough.



### Qualifications

4.28 Wards with the highest proportions of residents with no qualifications include Princes (25.17%) Gipsy Hill (24.98%) Vassall (24.04%) and Coldharbour (23.5%). The wards with the lowest proportion of residents with a degree or above qualification include Streatham South (31.8%), Gipsy Hill (32.7%), Knight's Hill (33.5%) Vassall (33.83%), Coldharbour (34.38%) and Prince's (37.1%).

4.29 Over 78% of respondents surveyed in Coldharbour only had entry-level skills in numeracy (below a low level GCSE grade) followed by 76% in Vassall and 72% in Stockwell. This is compared to 48% in London, 41% in the South East, and 21% nationally. Inevitably such low levels has a profoundly detrimental impact on the prospects for these poorly qualified job seekers.

## 5.0 Building from Experience

5.1 Lambeth has a range of activities, projects and initiatives in place to enable the engagement of its core communities and neighbourhoods, which provide a platform to build upon. One of the keys to delivering improvements is to provide integration and co-ordination between local activities, whilst creating a learning environment where best practice can be shared.

### Safer Neighbourhood Panels

5.2 There are 21 Safer Neighbourhood Panels in Lambeth, which are coterminous with the 21 electoral wards within the borough with the following general aim: ***To improve people's lives through safe, strong and cohesive neighbourhoods, where people are proud to live, work, learn and prosper.***

5.3 The Panels are made up of local people who live and/or work in the area or are involved in community work or business and have a close connection with the neighbourhood. Their primary role is to provide direction and local advice on community safety matters and establish the priorities for the ward following the results of community consultation and research. The Panels also act as the 'eyes and ears on the ground' for the Safer Lambeth Partnership and provide the vital link between local priority setting and strategic planning.

### Neighbourhood Watch

5.4 Lambeth has a network of Neighbourhood Watches that promote the principle of being a good neighbour and caring about the local community. The Metropolitan Police Service in Lambeth have a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator who provides support and information to local co-ordinators through :

- Borough-wide newsletter
- Implementation of a two-way communication system of regular, practical information
- Increasing the number of Neighbourhood Watches
- Introduction of new schemes and initiatives to Neighbourhood Watches, with training opportunities for local co-ordinators.

### "Friends of Groups"

5.5 The purpose of the "Friend of Groups" is to extend local community influence and control over the delivery of local parks, green spaces and library services. The membership of 'Friends of Groups' tends to include local community activists, ward councillors and officers from the Council.

## **Operation Freshview**

- 5.6 Launched in September 2006 Operation Freshview is a partnership bringing together Lambeth Council and external partners, including Veolia, Metropolitan Police Service and Transport for London to combine and focus their resources in the Lambeth wards of Coldharbour, Princes, Herne Hill, Oval and Vassall for one day each month.
- 5.7 The aim of the project is to:
- Educate residents about council services and find out their opinions
  - Inform residents about partners' products and services
  - Help to improve community safety and reduce the fear of crime
  - Help to improve your local environment
- 5.8 The operations can cover a wide range of activities for example:
- Information stalls
  - Targeted area clean ups
  - Free bulky waste removals for residents in selected streets
  - Home safety checks and smoke detector fitting
  - Inspections of businesses
  - Building control inspections
  - Arrests by police
  - Removal of Nuisance Vehicles
  - Street lighting fixed and obstructions cleared
  - Engaging with people who beg, sleep rough or are involved in sex work and directing them to the most appropriate welfare services

## **Resident involvement**

- 5.9 The Council aims to make it as easy as possible for residents in Lambeth Council housing to influence decisions that affect the housing service that they receive as individuals and collectively.
- 5.10 The purpose of the resident participation teams is:
- To promote, develop and sustain a vibrant and viable group of residents' organisations that are effective and representative, with a greater quantity of coverage that encompasses traditionally excluded groups.
  - To make the structure for involvement more representative by encouraging a greater diversity of resident involvement in housing management that enables choice, quality and equality, including young people and people with special needs.

- To devolve decision-making to a grass-roots level through the development of consultation mechanisms that provide a strong voice for residents to contribute to the development of the department's policy framework, thereby continually improving our customer driven service to deliver better homes through effective consultation.

### **Tenant Management Organisations (TMO)**

- 5.11 A TMO is a means by which council tenants and leaseholders can collectively take on responsibility for managing their homes. The resident members of the TMO create an independent legal body and usually elect a tenant-led management committee to run the organisations.
- 5.12 TMOs currently manage over 7,800 properties excluding freeholders and this is 19% of all Lambeth stock. The oldest TMO in Lambeth is Wellington Mills, which was set up 30 years ago. Most of the other TMOs were set up between 1995 and 2000 following the introduction of the Right to Manage in 1994. Blenheim Gardens (2001), Waltham TMO (2003) and Myatts Field North TMO (2004) were the last TMOs to be set up in Lambeth.

### **Community Forums**

- 5.13 There is a range of community forums spread across the borough based around geographical neighbourhoods, town centres and equalities groups. Some of these forums, especially those based at town centre level have evolved with direct support and investment from the council, whilst others are totally independent.

### **Development Trusts**

- 5.14 Development and neighbourhood trusts are community owned and led, cultivate local enterprise, build from an asset base and seek to secure community prosperity. A network of Development/Neighbourhood Trusts exists across the borough, such as Coin Street Community Builders, High Trees Development Trust, Stockwell Partnership, Waterloo Community Development Trust and Lambeth Somali Development Partnership. They are at various stages of development and capacity.

### **Clapham Park Project**

- 5.15 The Clapham Park Project Board, in its Business Plan for 2006-2007, set itself the objective of determining its Forward Strategy. This is now taking shape. While there is still three years of the New Deal for Communities programme to run, it is essential to put in place measures that can support a forward strategy well before the end of the programme's life.

5.16 A programme of work has commenced with the support of a Neighbourhood Renewal Advisor and workshops will be held with residents, staff, and Board and Theme group members. Future priorities for the Clapham Park area include the development of community and local commercial facilities as envisaged in the Masterplan. In addition, complementary activities will include:

- A new model of Neighbourhood Management – the ability for local people to influence service providers, particularly around environmental, housing and community safety issues.
- A Timebank, Volunteering Scheme, Community Chest and Healthy Living Projects which promote social cohesion

### **The Health and Social Care Voluntary and Community Sector Forum**

5.17 The Health and Social Care Voluntary and Community Sector Forum provides an opportunity for staff from Lambeth Adults' and Community Services, Lambeth PCT, other health trusts and voluntary and community organisations to come together to discuss issues of common interest, share knowledge and experience and identify areas of good practice.

5.18 The forum also gives the voluntary and community sector an opportunity to be involved at an early stage in the development and implementation of new policies or service changes and provides the voluntary and community sector with information on changes to the council's funding opportunities and plans for service commissioning. It also plays a role in encouraging smaller organisations to get more involved in service delivery and promotes opportunities for networking and joint working between local voluntary and community organisations

### **Community Legal Services Partnership**

5.19 The Community Legal Services Partnership (CLSP) was set up to ensure that local people have access to a network of quality assured information, advice and representation services, based on their needs and supported by coordinated funding. The objectives of the Community Legal Service Partnership are to act as an expert resource on advice issues for Lambeth, seeking to ensure that local strategic bodies which have a responsibility for advice provision are aware of these issues and respond to them in order that information, advice and representation services can be improved. The Partnership has a membership from the larger advice services providers, local solicitors specialising in social welfare law, the Legal Services Commission and Adults' and Community Services who manage the contracts with the advice providers.

### **Advice Services Forum**

5.20 This Forum has been recently established with the support of Advice UK. It has a membership covering the wider advice community in the borough, including community organisations that provide advice as part of a range of other activities. It focuses on practical issues to do with advice, including developing referral processes, and sharing good practice on advice provision. Information from frontline advice provision feeds into the more strategic remit of the Community Legal Services Partnership. The Forum is co-ordinated by representatives from three advice agencies, with the support of Advice UK and Adults' and Community Services.

### **Domestic Violence Forum**

5.21 Representatives attend Lambeth's Domestic Violence Forum from a range of voluntary and statutory agencies in the borough. It is chaired by a voluntary organisation working with domestic violence issues and is co-ordinated by the borough's domestic violence co-ordinator. The Chair of the Forum is a member of the Domestic Violence Strategic Group. The Forum meets every six weeks and includes presentations and information sharing.

### **Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership**

5.22 The work of the Children and Young People's Partnership is focused on a number of shared strategic priorities that will drive continued improvement for children and young people in Lambeth. The Partnership will be accountable for the delivery of the plan that sets out proposals for integrating services, joint funding of services through pooling of resources, joint commissioning arrangements, sustaining partnership working, raising standards, and safeguarding children and young people.

5.23 The 2007-2010 Plan is used to ensure that service planning takes place across the partnership. The Children and Young People's Strategic Board also acts as the borough's Children's Trust Board and is made up of representatives from the Council, Third Sector, Health, Social Care, Children and Young People's Service, Housing and Police.

### **Children's Centres and Extended Schools**

5.24 By April 2008 ten new Children's Centres will be developed in Lambeth. By 2008, every ward will receive support and services from a Children's Centre. Children's Centres are the key delivery mechanism for integrated children's services for under 5s and will bring together a range of services including integrated education and childcare, family support, access to health services and links with Jobcentre Plus.

5.25 By 2008 all schools are to provide access to a range of extended services. This will result in raising the standards of pupil motivation, aspiration, achievement and behaviour and contribute to a wider range of other government targets including childcare, children's services, community cohesion, neighbourhood renewal, adult learning, child poverty, health inequalities and crime reduction.

### **Stockwell URBAN II**

5.26 The URBAN and Stockwell Partnership experiences of area-based commissioning, delivery, community engagement and partnership working are very much at one with this idea of neighbourhood management. We are working with the partnership and URBAN Board to map out the key priorities for the forward strategy from 2008 onwards.

### **Stamford Street Neighbourhood Centre**

5.27 This is a new neighbourhood centre designed by Haworth Tompkins Architects for a derelict site between Stamford Street SE1 and the gardens of Iroko Housing Co-operative and managed by Coin St Community Builders completing in September 2007. Included within the structures are:

- Family and children's centre
- Learning and enterprise support centre
- Community cafe and space for social events and meetings
- Offices for staff working for Coin Street Centre Trust, Coin Street Community Builders and Coram Family
- Retail/restaurant unit, rented on a commercial basis

### **Annie McCall**

5.28 This 2000m<sup>2</sup> site in the heart of Stockwell, London SW8 contains a mix of medical and social heritage, which has local and national significance. It provides an example of neighbourhood working through which life is given back into underused or redundant buildings to deliver a vibrant, exciting and architecturally inspiring scheme, based on sound principles of social, financial and environmental sustainability but with particular emphasis on the site's historic and social significance as the first maternity hospital run entirely by women;

- The local significance and heritage value of the principal building and its potential as a successful and sustainable arts and cultural centre with both local and national status
- The potential to deliver local managed public space and community facilities.

## 6.0 Drivers for Change

- 6.1 Local councils are facing enormous change in the wake of Government policies concerning their future role. The London Borough of Lambeth wishes to be at the forefront of these changes, positively contributing and shaping the agenda rather than simply being subject to imposed change.
- 6.2 The traditional role of councils directly delivering services has been decreasing for many years, whilst its community leadership duties have been increasing. This community leadership role was enshrined in law through the Local Government Act 2000 and places a duty on councils to tackle the wider social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the area in partnership. The council recognises that all the drivers for change listed below strive for common outcomes:
- Local communities being provided with a greater say in, and more power to influence, the way in which services are delivered.
  - Council's being leaders of 'place' by working collaboratively with our communities and neighbourhoods.
  - The Council being more directly accountable and responsive to the local communities and neighbourhoods it serves.

### The Strong and Prosperous Communities Agenda

- 6.3 In future the existing method of measuring the success of an area like Lambeth will not be solely down to an audit inspection concerning the delivery of public services. The health and vibrancy of the local area will also be assessed with a growing emphasis being placed upon the steps taken to ensure the maximum possible citizen participation (including voluntary and community sectors and businesses) in decision making and service delivery.
- 6.4 One of the key tests of achieving excellence at future inspections will be how much citizens are:
- Informed about services and performance issues.
  - Consulted about the manner in which services are delivered.
  - Involved in the design, delivery and assessment of services.
  - Empowered to deliver services devolved to them.
- 6.5 The Strong and Prosperous Communities agenda places neighbourhood working high on the agenda and recognises that poverty and social exclusion tends to cluster in particular neighbourhoods and communities. This is evidenced in Lambeth through the information we have collated in our super output areas.

## Lambeth First: Community Engagement Framework

6.6 Lambeth First is the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for the London Borough of Lambeth. Lambeth First is a non-statutory, multi-agency partnership; its catchment area matches the boundaries of Lambeth Council. The purpose of Lambeth First is to bring together, at a local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors allowing different initiatives and services to support one another so that they can work together more effectively. The Lambeth First Community Engagement Framework comprises:

- A toolkit for effective engagement
- An evaluation framework
- An annual action plan

6.7 This Framework aims to get partners (of which the Council is one) to work together to build on successful engagement already happening and create new ways of involving people.

## Council Priority Outcomes

6.8 At the heart of the Council's priority outcomes is the notion of reconnecting the Council with its communities and neighbourhoods.

- Delivering high quality services that focus on individuals' needs and represent value for money
- Tackling inequality and social exclusion, and
- Engaging more closely with Lambeth's citizens so that people's needs are listened to and acted upon

## Communities First – Consultation Outcome

6.9 Between November 2006 and March 2007 over seventy Communities First consultation meetings and focus group sessions took place across Lambeth with local community forums, strategic partnerships, tenant & resident groups, 3<sup>rd</sup> sector groups, Lambeth First, Departmental Leadership Teams, equalities and communities of interest groups. Feedback from the Communities First consultation period was clustered under six themes:

<b>Theme 1</b>	Community engagement
<b>Theme 2</b>	Role of the Ward Councillor
<b>Theme 3</b>	Area working
<b>Theme 4</b>	Neighbourhood working
<b>Theme 5</b>	Working with the voluntary and community sectors
<b>Theme 6</b>	Skills and behaviours

- 6.10 Those who participated in the consultation process for Communities First recognised the ‘*Lambeth legacy*’ of tensions between the council and its community based partners needed to come to an end and the time was right to move on.

### Future Lambeth

- 6.11 The Future Lambeth Regeneration Delivery Plan provides a vision of Lambeth following major physical investment and developments across the Borough over the last few years. The Plan acts as a tool to support capital investment programmes in schools, social housing and health facilities that will bring major physical changes in neighbourhoods across Lambeth. The delivery of the Future Lambeth programme will have a significant impact upon the physical environment of communities and neighbourhoods in Lambeth.

### Reports, Studies and Audits

- 6.12 Over the past five years, several reports, audits and studies have been undertaken, which have helped to shape Communities First, including:

- Better Support for the Voluntary and Community Sectors undertaken by the Council following the Comprehensive Performance Assessment.
- The Office of Public Management report into the review of social service voluntary sector tendering
- The capacity of the voluntary and community sector to deliver services was commissioned by Lambeth First
- Assessment of the Lambeth Supporting People beacon status application 2006 – Increasing voluntary and community sector delivery

“General relationships between the Council and VCS are weak, with many participants also describing the relationship as difficult, strained, and can lead to hostility.” *Better Support for the voluntary and community sectors, Colin Buchanan Associates, 2004*

- 6.13 A common feature within these reports, studies and audits is recognition for improvement in the working relationships between the Council and the local voluntary and community sectors.

### Lambeth ChangeUp

- 6.14 The ChangeUp programme is a Home Office initiative that sets out what is required in terms of investment in voluntary and community sector infrastructure support in England. Lambeth Voluntary Action Council was commissioned to prepare the Lambeth Change Up Plan (Local Infrastructure Plan), which was developed through partnership including Lambeth Council, the Primary Care Trust, frontline voluntary organisations and Black and Minority Ethnic Groups in the Borough.

6.15 The desired outcome of the ChangeUp Programme is *'to ensure that by 2014 the needs of frontline voluntary and community organisations will be met by support that is available nationwide, is efficient, offers excellent provision to all, promotes diversity and is sustainable. This will be done on a local, sub-regional and regional basis.'*

6.16 The Lambeth ChangeUp Plan aims to address the key capacity needs of frontline voluntary and community sector organisations. Key to this will be improvements to infrastructure by developing voluntary and community sector frontline organisations to fulfil their full potential by tackling:

- Performance improvement
- Workforce development and leadership
- Information and communications technology
- Governance
- Recruiting and developing volunteers
- Funding voluntary and community sector activity

6.17 The following issues are identified within the Lambeth ChangeUp programme:

**Funding** - whilst the Council does make funding available for many voluntary and community sector organisations, particularly small and BME organisations awareness of these opportunities is patchy and access for some groups is difficult or they may have specific needs such as development that do not necessarily fall within historical programmes. Funding for other emerging groups such as social enterprises also needs to be developed.

**Volunteering** - Lambeth is one of the few London boroughs with no current volunteering centre and further support is needed to develop volunteering initiatives in the borough. The ChangeUp Programme could underpin the development of a new volunteer centre in Lambeth, together with other funding sources and can be driven through using partnership support.

**Support for BME & small groups** - particularly those who work at neighbourhood level or in key sectors, for example groups who work with young people or in the health & social care field.

**Financial Management Initiatives** - although there is a cross borough project running already within Lambeth (The Accountability Project), this service needs to be supported and developed to ensure it can accommodate the varied needs of local organisations.

**Developing 2<sup>nd</sup> tier infrastructure organisations** - in common with many other London boroughs there is a need to develop second tier organisations. In Lambeth there are very few functioning second tier organisations and there is a need to develop capacity building programmes to support and develop their work.

**Premises** - another key issue that is particularly acute in inner London. Lambeth also has issues here, around both the availability of premises and also the costs involved in maintaining premises.

**Governance Issues** - there are many small voluntary and community sector organisations in Lambeth and a wide range of support is needed to accommodate the specific needs of individual organisations.

### **Local Election Turn Out**

6.18 Whilst there was a small improvement in overall turnout at the last local election (30.43%) only three wards recorded turn out either above, or in line with the national average of 37% (Streatham South, Thornton and Thurlow Park).

6.19 The electoral wards of Herne Hill, Vassall, Streatham Hill, Knights Hill, Clapham Town, Stockwell, Clapham Common, Gypsy Hill and Princes all had turnouts in the low 30% range. The wards with the lowest turnout at the last two elections include Coldharbour, Ferndale, Tulse Hill, Brixton Hill, Larkhall, Streatham Wells, Oval, St. Leonards and Bishops, all of which have recorded turn out below 30% at the last two local elections.

6.20 The marginal improvement in electoral turn out at the last local elections in Lambeth does not mask the reality of declining involvement in local representative democracy.

### **Independence, Wellbeing and Prevention**

6.21 Projected changes in Lambeth's population, neighbourhoods and communities illustrates that people are living longer, but are unlikely to be part of a close knit family providing support to them. The impact of these demographic challenges will be people having a longer working life followed by an increase in costs for the provision of care and support services.

6.22 These two factors will have an impact upon communities, neighbourhoods and the economy of Lambeth. New ways to deliver care and support services, which utilise wider community resources within neighbourhoods, will need to be developed. The building of strong and active neighbourhoods will be an integral part of the prevention agenda in Lambeth that will tackle social isolation, promote active citizenship and greater opportunities to volunteer.

6.23 Partnering with third sector groups, to develop new and innovative models for meeting needs within a neighbourhood and community setting, will create a preventative approach that will allow for early and targeted interventions. This will also defer access into more costly intensive care services.

### **Extended Schools**

6.24 Schools are normally located at the heart of the community and are critical resources for the neighbourhood. By 2008 the Lambeth extended schools programme will be offering:

- High quality childcare provided on the school site or through other local providers, with supervised transfer arrangements where appropriate, available 8am – 6pm all year round
- A varied menu of study support such as homework clubs, catch up provision, gifted and talented provision, sport, music tuition, dance and drama, arts and crafts, special interest clubs, visits to museums and galleries, learning a foreign language, volunteering and enterprise activities.
- Parenting support including information sessions for parents at key transition points; parenting programmes run with the support of other children's services and family learning sessions to allow children to learn with their parents
- Swift and easy referral to a wide range of specialist services such as speech therapy, child and adolescent mental health services, family support services, sexual health services. Some services could be delivered on school sites.
- Providing wider community access to ICT, sports and arts facilities including adult learning

## 7.0 Communities First

### Ambition Statement

***Lambeth will be judged as excellent by its communities and partners in improving people's lives through strong, safe and cohesive neighbourhoods, where people are proud to live, work, learn, play and prosper***

7.1 The Communities First ambition statement has been developed following consultation across Lambeth. The statement provides a positive, yet challenging focus point for those wanting Lambeth to be truly recognised for improving people's lives through its strong, safe and cohesive neighbourhoods.

### Community Cohesion

7.2 Community cohesion refers to the level of confidence, harmony and tolerance that exists between different residents, cultures and communities to co-exist together in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect. Community cohesion involves:

- A common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities.
- Appreciating and positively valuing the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances.
- Citizens from different backgrounds having equality of work and life opportunities.
- Strong and positive relationships being developed between people from different backgrounds within communities and neighbourhoods.

7.3 Community cohesion cannot be simply built around systems, policies and processes within an organisation. It is dependent upon the skills, values, confidence, behaviours and the opportunities people have to exchange and learn about their differences and diversity. Maintaining community cohesion requires leadership and proactively working with partners and communities. In turn, this requires the building of strong social networks within our communities that will contribute towards a variety of outcomes including economic growth, educational attainment and positive impact on better health. The dimensions underpinning successful community cohesion within Communities First include:

- Views about the local neighbourhood and community (e.g. satisfaction with living in the neighbourhood, fear of crime, etc).
- Civic engagement (e.g. propensity to vote, take action on local and national issues).
- Social networks and support (e.g. contact with friends and relatives)
- Social participation (e.g. involvement in groups and voluntary activities).
- Reciprocal trust (e.g. trusting other people, trust in the public services).

7.4 The concept of community cohesion will inform all aspects of Communities First, which is built around four outcomes for the council. Each outcome includes actions that the council will take responsibility to either address directly or work with its partners to achieve.

- Being a better partner to the voluntary and community sector
- Building active communities and neighbourhoods
- Strengthening the role of ward councillors as community leaders
- Developing our skills, behaviours and information base

**a) Being a Better Partner to the Local Voluntary and Community Sectors**

*“We need a mature working relationship with the Council. You will always get people who can’t let go of the past, but most people want to work together for a better Lambeth. Its time to draw the line.”*

Communities First Consultation Meeting

7.5 The Council recognises that the Third Sector consists of a wide range of non governmental and value driven groups and organisations that principally reinvests surpluses or raises funds to further social, environmental and cultural objectives in Lambeth. These diverse groups and organisations include community groups, voluntary organisations, faith and equalities groups, charities, social enterprises, co-operatives, mutuals and housing associations. The Council embraces the critical role third sector groups and organisations play in our communities and neighbourhoods and realises the sector:

- Has the experience to deliver quality services effectively, flexibly and in an innovative way.
- Is able to reach out, connect and help the most disadvantaged and disconnected people within our neighbourhoods and communities.
- Has the ability to stimulate new and ethical markets in deprived neighbourhoods.
- Generates jobs and prepares people for work.
- Does not simply exist to fill gaps in public services, or to deliver commissioned services.
- Is independent and its lobbying role is an important element of democratic life in Lambeth.
- Brings its own resources and expertise to the delivery of the Communities First ambition.
- Levers substantial funding into Lambeth.
- Are often the eyes and ears of many communities and neighbourhoods and help deliver community cohesion, active citizenship and volunteering opportunities.

## Community Capacity Building Plan

7.6 Capacity building is a process that ensures Lambeth has the skills, knowledge, structures and resources to deliver the Communities First programme. All those involved with working within a community and neighbourhood setting will require some form of capacity building, it is as relevant to the public sector, as to voluntary and community sectors.

Type	Explanation
Organisational capacity building	The general needs of a particular organisation to grow and achieve full potential
Technical capacity building	The need for an existing organisation to develop new skills and knowledge to run a new service.
Infrastructure capacity building	The provision of generalist support, advice and representation.
Community capacity building.	Structures and resources to enable communities to engage effectively.
Individual capacity	People having the skills and behaviours to work within a community and neighbourhood setting.

7.7 The Communities First programme recognises five different types of capacity building. The Strong and Prosperous Communities White Paper rightly places capacity building as a cross partnership responsibility ***‘Better support for community capacity building by encouraging public bodies who fund capacity building and service providers to work together to strengthen the ability of those least able to engage with public bodies at present.’***

7.8 A community capacity building plan needs to be developed through Lambeth First, which involves all partners and is aligned to the objectives of the Local Area Agreement and Community Strategy.

### Action:

**The Council will work with partners through Lambeth First to develop a Community Capacity Building Plan.**

## The Lambeth Compact

7.9 The Lambeth Compact sets out how organisations in Lambeth want to work together. Its value comes from the commitment of organisations that sign up to it to work together and there is clear procedure for solving disagreements. The Compact is a statement of principles that organisations agree to and if an organisation does not meet these commitments it can be held responsible for their actions. The principles of the Compact need to be embedded across the Council and within each service department. The Council also contributes towards the costs of the employment of a Lambeth Compact Development Officer.

**Action:**

- a) **The Council will embed the Compact principles across all service departments and meet its LAA commitments by ensuring each department has a Compact Champion.**
- b) **The Council will contribute towards the funding of the Lambeth Compact Development Worker.**

### **Lambeth Voluntary Action Council**

7.10 The council is committed to maintaining and developing a strong and independent local development agency for third sector organisations in Lambeth, which is able to provide capacity building and representation for the sector. The Council recognises Lambeth Voluntary Action Council (LVAC) as the strategic voice of the voluntary and community sector in Lambeth. There is a need to strengthen the relationship between the Council and LVAC, especially on matters concerning the strategic relationship between the Council and the local voluntary and community sectors.

**Action:**

- a) **The Council will contribute towards the cost of delivering LVAC's capacity building/representation services/core costs.**
- b) **The Council will establish quarterly 'joint' meetings between LVAC and the Council to consider issues impacting upon the strategic relationship between the Council and the local voluntary and community sectors.**

### **Local Area Agreement (LAA) Strategic Commissioning**

7.11 A strategic commissioning process over time will open up new opportunities for third sector organisations to collaborate in the delivery of community services. The Council will be a key partner in developing the LAA strategic commissioning framework. The strategic commissioning cycle gives equal importance to the ongoing assessment of needs, the design of service, the securing of appropriate services, monitoring and evaluation.

**Action:**

**The Council will work with partners through Lambeth First to develop a Local Area Agreement Commissioning Plan.**

## Community Buildings and Assets

- 7.12 Access to premises is critical to a vibrant and healthy third sector, but the council recognises that it will never be in a position to meet the premises demands of the third sector in the borough. The council's voluntary & community sector premises policy agreed in 2003 provides a framework for the provision of premises that are owned by the council and occupied by third sector groups. The council's current policy is complementary to many of the findings of the 'Making Assets Work' Report - The Quirk Review of Community Management and Ownership of Public Assets (2007).
- 7.13 Lambeth Council has used public asset transfers as a policy instrument for empowering communities to develop locally managed services. This is normally undertaken when benefits of community management outweigh risks and the transfer assists resources coming to Lambeth, which the Council cannot access, i.e. certain types of lottery and trust funding. The Quirk Review has raised some fundamental and challenging issues, which need to be considered as part of a wider review of the current policy:
- a) Generally community groups and social enterprises are seriously under-capitalised.
  - b) The term 'public' asset from a community perspective means all assets within the locality and not just those owned by the Council.
  - c) Relationships and confidence between local authorities and their local voluntary and community sector partners are subject to great change.
  - d) Councils need to sell assets to finance investment programmes.
  - e) It is not sensible to engineer changes in policies for communities and councils through blueprints, but instead provide "recipes".
- 7.14 Following the publication of the Quirk Review, the Government has announced the establishment of the Community Asset Fund, which will be managed through the Big Lottery Fund. Initially valued at £30 million the fund will support partnerships between local authorities and community led, third sector organisations, to enable communities to have a greater stake in the buildings they use.

### **Action:**

**The Council will review its current voluntary and community sector premises policy with its partners to ensure Lambeth is best placed to take advantage of new government funding regimes.**

## Flagship 'Partnership' Projects

7.15 A flagship 'partnership' project is a joint piece of work between the council and a third sector organisation and aims to deliver a specific project that is based on shared objectives. The council and third sector partner will '*partner up*' expertise, knowledge and where possible resources to create a new way of developing a community service. The overall concept of such a 'fourth-sector' partnership project is to forge new ways of working, build confidence and develop creative solutions in tackling community needs.

### Action:

- a) **The Council will assist Black Cultural Archives with their plans to redevelop Raleigh Hall, Brixton in to a Black Cultural Heritage Centre.**
- b) **The Council will assist the consortia involving Woodlawn's Trustees and Age Concern Lambeth to develop an Older Person's Resource Centre, within the context of the Sure Start for Older People programme.**

## The Lambeth Community Fund

7.16 Neighbourhood groups and forums are vital to the wellbeing of Lambeth's communities, as well as providing a base for active citizenship to grow. Established third sector organisations are more likely to be in a position to take on a contractual relationship, whilst small neighbourhood groups are often at a fragile state of development to enter into contractual obligations. There are also groups that may not want to be commissioned to deliver services either directly or through a consortia arrangement, but still provide valuable neighbourhood services.

7.17 The Lambeth Community Fund provides access to a small development fund, which supports neighbourhood groups through their early stages of development. This fund enables risk taking to take place, new services to emerge and creative solutions to be found to deep-rooted problems, as well as bringing new voices to the table to secure community cohesion. In Lambeth a small number of traditional grant-funding pots are still operational, which are managed by the council, Lambeth First and independent trusts. This often means duplication for small groups in the application, monitoring and administration process for relatively small allocations. These processes can be time consuming for small groups.

### Action:

**The Council will work with partners to undertake an assessment on the benefits, or not of unifying small grant funding under single management, including the external management options.**

## **b) Building Active Communities and Neighbourhoods**

7.18 Effective and accountable local government requires an informed and engaged community, which votes in elections, participates in decision making and works with service providers in designing, delivering and monitoring services. Community engagement is the process that works alongside representative democracy to deliver greater engagement in civic life. People tend to live across various communities simultaneously, including:

- **Geographical communities** – where people live in a particular neighbourhood, or area.
- **Communities of interest** – people who share a particular interest, such as friends of a local park, etc.
- **Communities of identity** – people who share a particular characteristic, or experience such as people from ethnic groups, young people, LGBT people, older people, disabled people.
- **Communities of faith** – people whom share a common religious belief, or come together in inter or multi-faith forums.

7.19 Community engagement provides opportunities where local residents are able to achieve things for themselves by defining the problems they face and tackle them either in partnership, or take direct control of situations. Cohesive communities and neighbourhoods, who are able to work together to address issues effecting them, are more likely to have the confidence to work alongside the Council and its partners.

7.20 The council acknowledges that involvement in voluntary and community sector groups often provides the initial platform to broader engagement with public service providers like the council. The building of active communities and neighbourhoods, with their informed and engaged citizens, in turn strengthens the role of the Council as a democratic institution.

### **Defining Area Working**

7.21 The term 'area working' describes the process of working with key stakeholders and communities within a geographical area that includes more than one electoral ward. A pre-requisite for successful area working is that it is built upon the principle of strong and engaged neighbourhoods. Examples of area working are:

- Town Centres (Streatham, Norwood, Brixton, as examples)
- The three Metropolitan Police Service sub commands of North, Central and South Lambeth.

7.22 The strength of working on an area basis is that it provides an opportunity to bring key stakeholders together to prioritise and plan more strategically on issues such as transportation, education, leisure, health, major development sites, etc. Whilst these issues remain relevant to neighbourhoods they also require the bigger picture to be seen.

### **Civic Assemblies**

7.23 Civic Assemblies will offer the opportunity to bring together a wide range of stakeholders within the area to assess issues that has an impact beyond the immediate neighbourhood or ward. The Civic Assembly model could provide a type of mini-local strategic partnership, but with an increased emphasis upon community engagement links to Lambeth First.

### **Areas**

7.24 The operational areas of assemblies will need to be developed around ward clusters for administrative purposes only and it will be a matter of local identity that will determine which assembly meeting local people and groups want to attend and participate in. The operational clusters are as follows:

Bishops Ward Princes Ward Oval Ward	Stockwell Ward Vassall Ward Larkhall Ward
Clapham Town Ward Clapham Common Thornton Ward Ferndale Ward	Coldharbour Ward Herne Hill Ward Brixton Hill Ward Tulse Hill Ward
Thurlow Ward Knights Hill Ward Gypsy Hill Ward	Streatham Hill Ward Streatham Wells Ward St. Leonards Ward Streatham South Ward

### **Terms of Reference**

7.25 The terms of reference for Civic Assemblies are as follows:

1. To consider matters that impact upon the cohesion and quality of community life for those living, working and learning within the area.
2. To help determine area priorities and seek to influence the development of the strategic plans for the borough.
3. To provide an opportunity for dissemination of information, exchange of community information, networking and sharing of good practice between neighbourhood groups within the area.
4. To receive and consider presentations and feed back of views upon proposed policies and community services within the area.

5. To provide an opportunity to ask questions of those providing community service within the area and receive a formal answer.
- 7.26 **Membership:** Membership will be open to all neighbourhood groups, tenants groups, community forums, school governors, safer neighbourhood panels, voluntary and community groups, public service provider, individual residents, faith groups, businesses and ward councillors.
- 7.27 **Meetings and Events:** Civic Assemblies will meet up to twice per year, with one of these meetings being an annual assembly conference that will be designed to attract the broadest possible involvement from the local community. An alternative medium for annual area assemblies (other than a traditional meeting format) will be utilised such as an open day, family fun day, or linked to an established annual event like a local festival.

#### **Action**

**Working through Lambeth First the Council will develop the concept of Civic Assemblies.**

### **Defining Neighbourhood Working**

- 7.28 Council sponsored community engagement in Lambeth has traditionally focused on 'area' structures. A key weakness of area working is that it often fails to take into account the subtlety of strong neighbourhood identity, especially if artificial area boundaries are created and resourced without due consideration to neighbourhood structures. The concept of neighbourhood working provides an opportunity to connect more closely with local residents, involve them in the shaping of their neighbourhood, as well as creating new opportunities to tackle problems in a more creative and inclusive way.
- 7.29 Developing a Lambeth approach to neighbourhood working will require clarity on outcomes, time and resources and given the diversity of Lambeth it will also require different models of delivery.
- 7.30 The Council cannot develop this agenda alone; it must be done in partnership through Lambeth First. Government policy is placing increased emphasis on neighbourhood working and as outlined in the 'Building from Experience' section of Communities First, there are already several neighbourhood initiatives in Lambeth.
- 7.31 As well as working in partnership the key to developing a Lambeth definition for neighbourhood working will be to build and learn from existing activities to create an environment where different models can be introduced and valued. In turn this will enable partners to focus on the key outcomes for neighbourhood working in Lambeth.

**Action:**

**The Council will work with partners through Lambeth First to commission a study into defining neighbourhood working and contribute towards the piloting of neighbourhood working in Lambeth.**

**Capacity Building Safer Neighbourhood Panels**

*'We are encouraging the development of local charters that set out agreements about standards in the local area. We are encouraging local authorities to give their councillors small budgets to deal with local problems and we are encouraging more local authorities to adopt the principles of neighbourhood management and join up with neighbourhood policing teams. In addition we want to increase opportunities for local communities to take on the management or ownership of local facilities and assets.'*

**The Strong and Prosperous Communities White Paper**

- 7.32 The Police and Justice Act 2006, section 19, extends the remit of local authorities to scrutinise the functioning of the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. The swift introduction of Safer Neighbourhood Panels within Lambeth has resulted in different standards in governance, capacity, as well as buy-in from partners and communities across Lambeth. Within the context Safer Neighbourhood Panels must be viewed as being in an evolutionary phase of their development.
- 7.33 The achievements by some Safer Neighbourhood Panels over a short period of time through the dedication and hard work of volunteers, Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Lambeth Community Safety Officers will act as the building block for their next phase of evolution, which, depending upon the capacity and desire of individual Safer Neighbourhood Panels could include:
1. A baseline constitution that provides minimum standards for panels to develop from, including advice on how to recruit new members.
  2. Support with reaching out to wider and traditionally excluded communities.
  3. Developing the capacity of the Panel to link into broader agendas concerning the quality of life of the local community.
  4. Ongoing training support.

**Action:**

**The Council will work alongside the Metropolitan Police Service and Safer Neighbourhood Panels to develop and deliver a capacity building plan for Safer Neighbourhood Panels.**

**Active Citizenship & Volunteering**

- 7.34 The vibrancy of democratic community life depends upon residents possessing the interest and capacity to influence issues that affect their lives, communities and neighbourhoods. This can only take place when citizens and the Council are effectively engaged together to address issues as they arrive. Without active citizenship and volunteering community engagement is an empty vessel. The Council recognises volunteering as an important expression of citizenship and an essential component of a living democracy. Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy by an individual for the benefit of society and the community and it can take many forms. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern for financial gain.
- 7.35 A good citizen is someone who volunteers, who cares, who helps and an active citizen is someone who takes the initiative and works for change. Communities First encourages the widest possible involvement in both active citizenship and volunteering. The Council understands that involvement in community forums, groups and the voluntary sector often acts as a springboard for broader engagement into civic life and that this in turn strengthens the Council's community leadership duty for the Borough. The Council also understands that active citizenship and volunteering need to be supported and nurtured.
- 7.36 Community forums, single issue campaign groups, resident and tenant associations, community of interest groups, etc. are vital for fostering and facilitating active citizenship within Lambeth. These types of groups, forums and networks provide the lifeblood for civic engagement to take place and create the infrastructure to enable local people to get involved, be informed and influence what is happening in their communities.
- 7.37 How these groups, forums and networks structure themselves is for the community to determine. They will inevitably cross ward or even borough boundaries. In many cases these types of groups, forums and networks simply require access to a small grant fund to maintain their activities, as well as advice with governance arrangements.
- 7.38 Lambeth is the only inner London Borough that does not have a Volunteer Development Centre. The delivery of Communities First requires Lambeth to have an accredited Volunteer Development Centre, which promotes volunteering in the borough and brokers placements for local residents into volunteering opportunities.

**Action:**

- a) **The Council will complete a review of the criteria for the Lambeth Community Fund to ensure community and neighbourhood forums are able to apply for funding to support active citizenship.**
- b) **The Council will support Lambeth Voluntary Action Council with their proposals to open a Volunteer Centre in Lambeth by contributing towards the development costs, funding and premises of a centre in Lambeth.**

### **Faith in Lambeth**

7.39 Lambeth is home to all the world religions. The role 'faith' plays in regeneration and building community cohesion is critical, as demonstrated when Lambeth was subjected to failed terrorist attacks. It was faith communities in Lambeth that were at the forefront of providing reassurance and demonstrating community resilience.

7.40 Critically this has been overlooked in the past, but this is changing. The Council will work alongside and across all faith communities in Lambeth to ensure that we build upon the role they already play to ensure they are an integral part of building strong cohesive neighbourhoods and communities. We realise that our faith led groups provide an essential link between local assets and leadership. Our faith communities are well placed to reach out to those who have been traditionally excluded and can provide advice, guidance, information and training that is sensitive to faith and cultural differences.

**Action:**

- a) **The Council will work with Lambeth's faith groups to facilitate the development of an independent borough wide Lambeth Multi-Faith Forum.**
- b) **The Council work with partners from the Multi-Faith Forum to prepare a Faith in Lambeth Action Plan.**

### **Together As One Plans**

7.41 Together as One Plans are specifically designed to tackle the issues impacting upon a particular community of interest. They are community led action plans that forge partnerships with service providers and seek to influence the delivery of mainstream services to ensure the community in question is not forgotten. A Together as One Plan is designed around identified needs and structured around the core outcomes of Local Area Agreement.

#### **Action**

- a) **The Council will work with interested parties from the Muslim communities to prepare a *Together As One* plan with Lambeth's Muslim Communities in 2007-08.**
- b) **The Council will work with interested parties from the LGBT communities to prepare a *Together As One* plan with Lambeth's LGBT communities in 2008-2009.**
- c) **The Council will work with interested people and groups who declare themselves as disabled in the preparation of a *Together As One* plan in 2009-10.**

### **Capacity Building Friends of Groups**

7.42 Friends of groups are made up of local residents who work alongside ward councillors and council officers and contribute to the shaping, design and delivery of local parks services and green spaces. The emerging Lambeth Parks and Green Spaces Strategy will explore with the Lambeth Parks Forum and individual 'Friends of Groups' approaches in order to extend the role and influence of 'Friends of Groups' in the design and delivery of these services. To enable this to be further developed will require capacity building with 'Friends of Groups', including:

- A baseline constitution that provides minimum standards for panels to develop from, including advice on how to recruit new members.
- Support with reaching out to wider and traditionally excluded communities.
- Developing the capacity of the Panel to link into broader agendas concerning the quality of life of the local community.
- Ongoing training support.

#### **Action**

**Upon publication of the Lambeth Parks and Green Spaces strategy the Council will develop a capacity building plan in partnership with Lambeth Parks Forum that will support Friend of Groups to further develop their role and influence over the design and delivery of services.**

## c) Strengthening the Role of Ward Councillors as Community Leaders

7.43 Councillors collectively are responsible for setting the strategic direction and priorities of the Council, as individual ward councillors they are also community leaders for the ward they have been elected to serve and are pivotal to local democracy. Ward Councillors connect the Council, which is often seen as remote from local neighbourhoods. The Local Government Act 2000 enshrines in law the councillors community leadership role, which requires them to look beyond immediate service delivery to the wider social, economic and environmental issues affecting the ward and borough as a whole.

### Defining the Role

7.44 Whilst community groups, forums and panels may claim representation through their membership, they cannot claim legitimate mandate through universal suffrage. In Lambeth there are 21 electoral wards across Lambeth, which return 63 ward councillors through elections to serve on Lambeth Council for a four-year period. Communities First promotes the concept of the ward councillor as *outward* looking towards the community rather than *inward* looking towards the Council. Within this context the ward councillor should be a democratic beacon, setting standards of integrity, ensuring all voices and interests have an opportunity to be heard and acted upon. Their tasks as community leaders will include:

- Advocate on matters of concern.
- Arbitrate between diverse and often conflicting ward priorities.
- Facilitate solutions to local priorities and challenges.
- Act as the local convenor, bringing appropriate people, groups and organisations together.
- Influence the strategies, resources and priorities of service providers to tackle ward priorities.
- Lead the local reinvigoration of participation in the civic life and the democratic process.

7.45 How a ward councillor performs these duties is very much determined by their capacity, commitment and ultimately the judgement on their performance is one for the ballot box. Communities First identifies an effective ward councillor as being:

#### **Representative**

- Putting their constituents' interests first and considering all cases and issues brought to their attention.
- Reaching out and seeking opinions from those who are not traditionally engaged in civic life.

### **A Leader**

- Providing leadership for the ward and championing the interests of their constituents
- Working with others to ensure local priorities are addressed to the ward becoming a safer and stronger place to live.

### **Responsible**

- As a member of the Council, balance the interests of the ward with the interests of the borough as a whole.
- Promoting political beliefs and values in a way that will not damage the democratic fabric of the borough in the eyes of local residents.

## **Ward Purse**

- 7.46 To assist ward councillors to carry out their community leadership role more effectively a small capital fund (ward purse) will be established for each ward (£13,500 of capital per ward). The ward purse may be utilised to tackle issues that have been identified following consultation with local communities. Management of the ward fund will be delegated to a named council officer who will be responsible for convening a meeting of the three ward councillors to determine priorities and prepare a ward plan for the spending of the fund.

### **Action**

**Guidance for the ward purse will be developed and circulated to all ward councillors.**

## **Ward Councillor and Safer Neighbourhood Panels**

- 7.47 The Police and Justice Act 2006 places ward councillors under a duty to respond to a "community call for action" from anybody living or working in the area which they represent, on a matter concerning crime and disorder (including anti-social behaviour and behaviour adversely affecting the environment) or substance abuse in that area.
- 7.48 The ward councillor's response must indicate what (if any) action he or she proposes to take to resolve the matter. The ward councillor may refer any such matter to the local authority's crime and disorder committee for consideration. The ward councillor might be expected to do this when reasonable steps to resolve the problem through more informal means have been taken but have failed.
- 7.49 Communities First requires ward councillors to actively participate in the Safer Neighbourhood Panels within the wards they represent on the Council, as part of their community leadership duties. Communities First promotes the following involvement for the ward councillor engagement in Safer Neighbourhood Panels:

1. To act as an advocate for the panel by checking progress against local priorities and reporting progress back to panel meetings.
2. Not to chair meetings of the panel.

**Action**

**Ward councillors to be formally invited to participate in meetings of Safer Neighbourhood Panels within the wards they represent on the Council.**

**Community Call for Action**

7.50 The Community Calls for Action (CCfA) concept is designed to enable local people to raise issues of major concern with the support of the local ward councillors. The CCfA process supplements other existing ways in which the public can engage with the Council and partner's once existing processes have been exhausted. CCfAs are currently considered at a special meeting of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee to enable the Council to engage in a more efficient and transparent way. CCfA are currently in a process of evolution and with their development the council approach to CCfAs will need to be developed.

**Action**

**An assessment of the Council's current CCfA process will be undertaken and findings reported to Council to assist their further development.**

**d) Building Skills, Behaviors and the Information Base**

**Skills & Behaviours**

7.51 So often it is not what we do, but how we do it that determines how success is viewed by our communities and neighbourhoods. Whilst technology will play an increasing part the reliance on face to face working with our communities and neighbourhoods will be a critical factor for our future success.

7.52 We all spend a large proportion of our time seeking to influence other people, yet it is one of the least developed areas in our work; but being 'mindful' of our behaviour when working in partnership can be extremely difficult and challenging. All groups that involve people have patterns of behaviour and rituals and many of these rituals are unwritten. The experience (reality or perception) for many of our communities and neighbourhoods when seeking to work with the public sector is:

- One or two 'powerful' people or organisations setting agendas, which do not cover the real issues.
- Important discussions taking place in corridors and private meetings outside of real meetings.

- Discussions leading to no effective action.
- A lack of trust and confidence in practical community and neighbourhood working skills.
- Professional status being used to belittle community activists.

7.53 The Egan review into skills for sustainable communities outlines this clearly, *“There is a vital link between responsibilities and processes. Successful delivery of sustainable communities is skilled and knowledgeable people, working together for a common goal. World class companies know the difference between success and failure lies in the skill level of the people they employ; we believe this is equally true for sustainable communities.”*

### Lambeth Local Leaders Programme

7.54 Regardless of the sector we work within we all need to take responsibility for the way we collaborate and seek to influence one another. Nowhere is this more critical than within a neighbourhood and community setting. A Local Leaders development programme would help build the skills and behaviours to deliver more effective neighbourhood working in Lambeth. Based on the feedback from the Communities First consultation period a Lambeth Local Leaders Programme would need to develop the level of emotional intelligence:

- Getting the right people involved
- Listening, facilitating and engaging skills
- Creating inclusive agendas
- Designing creative meetings
- Managing conversation to create inclusive dialogue
- Ensuring action & accountability

### Building Our Emotional Intelligence

7.55 The skills framework for working within a community and neighbourhood setting contains a number of competencies:

Competencies	What	How
Personal	<b>Self awareness</b> Knowing internal resources and intuitions	Recognising own emotions and their effect
		Knowing own strength and limits
		A strong sense of self worth and capabilities
	<b>Self regulation</b> Managing impulses and resources	Keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check
		Maintaining standards of honesty and integrity
		Taking responsibility for personal performance
		Flexibility in handling change
		Being comfortable with novel ideas, approaches and new information
	<b>Motivation</b> Emotional tendencies that	Striving to improve or meet a standard of excellence

	guide and facilitate	Aligning with goals of a partnership, group, or organisation
		Readiness to act on opportunities
		Persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks
Social	<b>Empathy</b> Awareness of other peoples feelings and concerns	Senses other peoples' feelings and perspectives and taking an active interest in their concerns
		Sensing their development needs and bolstering their abilities
		Anticipating, recognising and meeting customer needs
		Cultivating opportunities through diversity, different people and cultures
		Reading group emotions and power relationships
	<b>Social skills</b> Adeptness at facilitating inclusion from others	Wielding effective tactics for persuasion
		Listening openly and sending convincing messages
		Negotiating and resolving disagreements
		Inspiring and guiding individuals and groups
		Initiating or managing change
		Nurturing instrumental relationships
		Working with others towards shared goals
Creating group synergy in pursuing collective objectives		

### Action

**Working with members of the Lambeth First (Active Communities & Neighbourhood Board) to develop a pilot Local Leadership Programme targeted at people who need to work within a community and neighbourhood setting.**

## Employee Volunteering

7.56 A further way of developing closer connectivity between the Council and its communities and neighbourhoods is through the prospect of employees of the Council volunteering within local community and voluntary sector groups. The prospect of an employee volunteering scheme would also contribute the proposed development of a Community Capacity Building Plan and be developed across all partners.

### Action

**The Council will complete a study into the feasibility of an employee-volunteering scheme for Council employees.**

## Information base

7.57 The provision of community information and intelligence on resources is critical to the delivery of area/neighbourhood working, joint working and community engagement. The Council's GIFTS system is currently being updated to map and profile local resources, organisations and services within each ward. When fully operational the system will be able to provide borough, area and ward information on:

- Contract management
- Organisational details
- Service profile
- Investments (cash, buildings and in kind support)
- Where required, monitoring information

### **Action**

**The Council will develop the GIFTS contact management system to enable 21 ward profiles to be generated on local community resources and work with partners to open up access to the database.**

**The council recognises the current Information Communications Technology challenges of the VCS in Lambeth and will work with partners to address these challenges through capacity building to ensure the full benefits of the Gifts system are realised**