London Assembly Planning and Housing Committee
Beyond Consultation: The Role of Neighbourhood Plans in Supporting Local Involvement in Planning

Community involvement in neighbourhood planning Stakeholder consultation event – 7 October 2011

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LONDONASSEMBLY

LONDON CIVIC FORUM

Community involvement in neighbourhood planning Stakeholder consultation event

Friday 7 October 2011 9.30 – 1.15pm

London's Living Room, City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA

The London Civic Forum is funded by **LONDON COUNCILS**

Event information Pack

INTRODUCTION
AGENDA
DELEGATE LIST
BACKGROUND PAPER
FURTHER READING – WEBLINKS

INTRODUCTION

The Planning and Housing Committee is looking at how greater community involvement in neighbourhood planning can be achieved and what improvements in procedures might support it.

This review seeks to investigate opportunities for London's communities to develop their own plans reflecting local priorities and remain involved with the implementation of those plans and planning decisions. It will assess how neighbourhood planning can operate within the unique regional and borough planning system in London and how strategic and local objectives match up.

The Committee is looking to use available data from a variety of stakeholders and make use of different ways of engagement. This is to ensure that the widest possible range of views is collected and represented and that local communities are engaged with the review.

This event seeks to give different stakeholder groups the opportunity to discuss their experiences and ideas with each other and for the London Assembly to hear first hand about the challenges and potential ways forward.

A number of key questions will be discussed in small groups bringing together both local communities, boroughs, planning practitioners and non-governmental organisations. Note takers will capture the content and results of the discussions including suggested issues for the Committee to take forward in future meetings.

Community involvement in neighbourhood planning

AGENDA

9:00 – 9:30	**Refreshments and registration**
9:30 – 10:00	Welcome from Jenny Jones AM, Chair of the London Assembly Planning & Housing Committee
	Introduction to key issues for Localism in London from Bermondsey Neighbourhood Forum/LB Southwark (Frontrunner scheme) – John Paul Maytum
10:00 – 11:15	First round of group discussions of two key questions and short presentation at the end from each table of agreed key points.
	A nominated facilitator will help guide the discussion at each table.
	Staff from the London Civic Forums and the London Assembly Secretariat will take notes at each table in order to feed into the Committee's investigation

Questions:

1. *What resources and framework do community groups need if community led planning is to work?*
2. *How can boroughs, developers and employers support community led planning?*

11:15 – 11:30	**Break**
11:30 – 12:45	Second round of group discussions of two further key questions and short presentation at the end from each table of agreed key points.

Questions:

3. *What would make a good neighbourhood plan?*
4. *How do neighbourhood plans fit in with the Mayor's London Plan and Local Development Frameworks?*

12:45 – 13:15	General Discussion / Q&A
13:15	**End of event**

Please note that an external GLA site visit is taking place during the morning. A group of visitors may briefly enter the room or be seen walking outside the windows on the terrace.

DELEGATE LIST

No	First name	Last name	Organisation	Role/Title
1	Hely	Evans	various	volunteer
2	Alison	Eardley	Action for Market Towns	Policy Manager
3	Allison H	Borden	Planning Aid for London	Community Planning Team Leader
4	Andrew	Lainton	Planning Consultant	Planning Consultant
5	Ben	Stephenson	South Bank Employers' Group	Head of Policy and Business Development
6	Celia	Cronin	Balfour Street Housing Project Ltd	Volunteer
7	Cllr. Saima	Mahmud	LB Waltham Forest	Councillor
8	Conor	Moloney	BioRegional	Neighbourhood Planning Team
9	Denise	Bingham	Action Estate TRA	Chairperson
10	Eileen	Conn	Peckham Vision	Volunteer
11	Eleanor	Besley	Sustrans	Policy Adviser
12	John	Pearce	LB Redbridge	Head of Planning Policy and Environment
13	Freda	Fineberg	LB Redbridge	Secretary to Chief Planning and Regeneration Officer
14	James	Skinner		
15	Jane	Briginshaw	Homes and Communities Agency	Head of Design and Sustainability
16	Jon	Herbert	SKM Colin Buchanan	Associate
17	Liza	Fior	muf architecture/art LLP	Architect
18	Maggy	Meade-King	The Highgate Society	volunteer
19	Marie	Bernard		
20	Melanie	Tighe	Waterloo Community Development Group	Assistant Director
21	Michael	Edwards	Kings Cross Community Group	Volunteer
22	Michael	Owens	Global Cities	Strategy Director
23	Michael	Kohn	Slider Studios	Director
24	Michael	Parkes		volunteer
25	Mital	Patel	Wards Corner Coaltion	Volunteer
26	Naomi	Luhde-Thompson	FoE	Planning Campaigner
27	Neil	Milligan	LB Merton	Building and Development Control Manager
28	Pauline	Rowe		
29	Peter	Eversden	London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies	volunteer
30	Richard	Crutchley	Open City	Joint Head of Advocacy and Enabling
31	Richard	Lee	Just Space	Coordinator
32	Rosemarie	MacQueen	LB Westminster	Strategic Director Built Environment
33	Saif	Osmani	Friends of Queens Market	volunteer
34	Sharon	Leighton	LB Haringey	Policy Officer
35	Sharon	Matthew	Community Matters	London Regional Coordinator
36	Shilpa	Shah	Friends of the Earth	Rights and Justice Team
37	Sophia	de Sousa	The Glass House	Chief Executive
38	Steve	McAdam	Fluid Design	Director
39	Jenny	Marshall	Camargue Pr	Director
40	Phiroza	Gan	HARROW AGENDA 21	Volunteer
41	Chris	Brown	Igloo	Director
42	Andrea	Hofling	Viva Vauxhall Residents Association	
43	Tim	Bell		
44	tbc	tbc	LB Newham	tbc
45	Simon	Bevan	LB Southwark	Head of Planning and Transport
46	Sally	Blomfield	LB Sutton	Strategic Planner
47	Nicky	Gavron	London Assembly	Assembly Member & Deputy Chair of the Planning and Housing Committee
48	Andrew	Boff	London Assembly	Assembly Member
49	Tony	Arbour	London Assembly	Assembly Member
50	Navin	Shah	London Assembly	Assembly Member
51				
52				

Subject: Proposal for a Review of Community Involvement in Planning in London	
Report to: Planning and Housing Committee	
Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat	**Date: 6 July 2011**
This report will be considered in public	

1. Summary

1.1 This report sets out for the Committee the proposed scope and term of reference for a review of how London's local communities can be involved in the planning system.

2. Recommendations

2.1 **That the Committee agrees to carry out a review of community involvement in planning in London with terms of reference as outlined at paragraph 4.1.**

3. Background

3.1 The Localism Bill's proposals on neighbourhood planning will provide a statutory framework through which Community Led Plans (or Neighbourhood Plans) can meet local aspirations.

3.2 For London, a key issue will be the balance between its strategic position as a global city at the heart of the UK economy and the local concerns of its residents and diverse communities.[1]

3.3 The Committee will review whether the new opportunities and procedures for community involvement in the planning system beyond simple consultation will be effective in London and what, if any, improvements need to be made.

4. Issues for Consideration

4.1 It is proposed that the Committee agrees to carry out a review of community involvement in planning in London with the following term of reference:

- To review existing opportunities and challenges for community involvement in planning in London and possible future solutions that could enable all Londoners to get involved both in plan and policy making and in the control of development.

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[1] http://www.futureoflondon.org.uk/2011/05/06/localism-in-london-3

City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA
Enquiries: 020 7983 4100 minicom: 020 7983 4458 www.london.gov.uk

4.2   A paper containing background information on the issues to be reviewed, the proposed focus of the review, term of reference and key questions to be answered by the review is attached to this report as **Appendix 1**.

5.   Legal Implications

5.1   The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in the report.

6.   Financial Implications

6.1   There are no financial implications arising from this review.

List of appendices to this report:

Appendix 1: Proposed review of community involvement in planning in London

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers: None
Contact Officer: Alexandra Beer, Assistant Scrutiny Manager Telephone: 020 7983 4947 E-mail: alexandra.beer@london.gov.uk

LONDONASSEMBLY

Review of community involvement in planning in London

Planning and Housing Committee

Introduction

The London Assembly's Planning and Housing Committee will announce its intention to review **how London's local communities can be involved in the planning system** on 6 July 2011.

Key Issues

The reforms set out in the Coalition Government's Localism Bill seek to *"give communities a far greater sense of ownership over decisions that make a big difference to their quality of life. They will allow for the exercise of genuine power at a local level; and put the ideals of the Big Society at the very heart of planning"*.[2]

The Localism Bill's proposals on neighbourhood planning will provide a statutory framework through which Community Led Plans (or Neighbourhood Plans) can meet local aspirations.

For London a key issue will be the balance between its strategic position as a global city at the heart of the UK economy and the local concerns of its residents and diverse communities.[3]

The Committee will review whether the new opportunities and procedures for community involvement in the planning system beyond simple consultation will be effective in London and what, if any, improvements need to be made.

Aims of the review

The review will investigate opportunities for London's communities to develop their own plans which reflect local priorities and to remain involved with the implementation of those plans and planning decisions. It will assess how well neighbourhood planning can operate within the unique hierarchy of planning that operates in London – both at regional and borough level – and how strategic and local objectives match up.

The term of reference for this review is:

- To review existing opportunities and challenges for community involvement in planning in London and possible future solutions that could enable all Londoners to get involved both in plan and policy making and in the control of development.

This paper provides information on the background to the review, the issues we will consider and details of how you can contribute.

[2] The Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Minister for Decentralisation, on 'Participation in planning', 30 November 2010
[3] http://www.futureoflondon.org.uk/2011/05/06/localism-in-london-3

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Review of community involvement in planning in London

## Planning and Housing Committee

Background

It is the intention of the Localism Bill to offer all communities the ability to prepare their own plans and policies that will shape the way their neighbourhood will develop in the future. This bottom-up approach where the local community takes a lead role is in contrast to the current approach of involvement through consultation.

While this is not a new idea – many places in the UK have been delivering community-led solutions for years - local planning authorities will now have a formal duty to provide advice and assistance in developing proposals for plans or orders. The Government believes that the proposals will improve public engagement in the planning process and make it more accessible to a wider range of people.

Neighbourhood planning proposals

Local neighbourhoods will have to get organised in a 'Neighborhood Forum' and define the boundaries of their neighbourhood. They can then create Neighbourhood Plans and define specific developments or types of development which will have automatic planning permission without the need for any application to the local authority (through a 'Neighbourhood Development Order'). The council can adopt a Neighbourhood Plan after it has been successfully passed by a local referendum.[4]

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[4] http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1788684

Planning policy framework in London
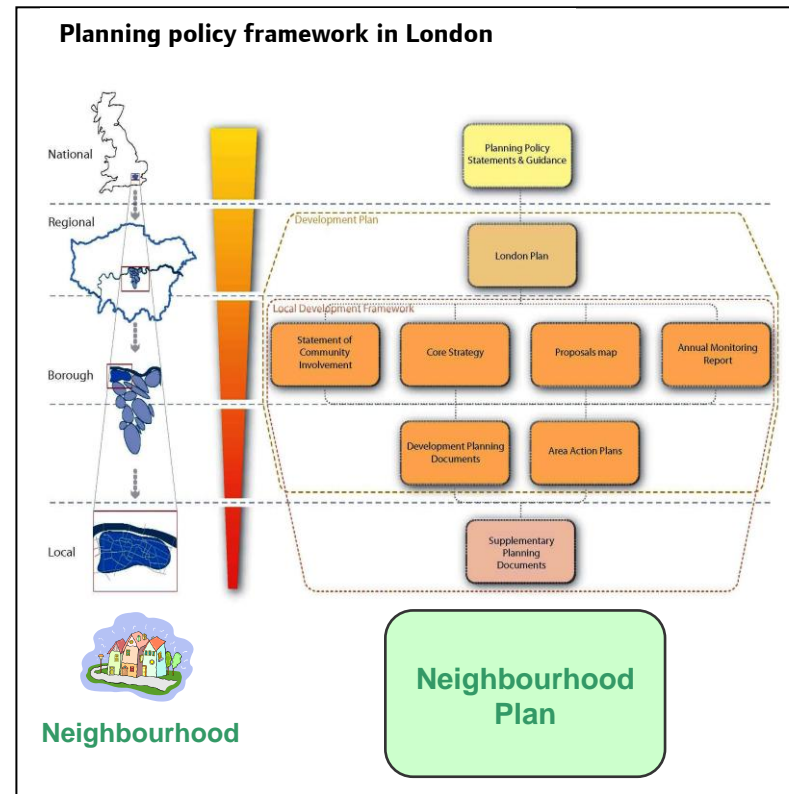
Putting 'Localism' into a London context

London is unique in that it has a strong regional planning function which has not been affected by the Government's decision to abolish Regional bodies.

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Review of community involvement in planning in London

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It is likely, therefore, that the Localism Agenda will play out differently in London compared to the rest of the country, and as such, the challenges it presents require specifically tailored policy solutions.

A number of Local Authority-led "frontrunner" projects in England have received government funding to help communities to trial Neighbourhood Planning. The London 'frontrunners' currently include the Bermondsey & Bankside neighbourhood forum, the Bankside business neighbourhood forum (both in Southwark) and the Hackbridge neighbourhood forum in Sutton. There are also a number of independent community planning initiatives, for example the Chatsworth Road Traders & Residents Association in Hackney.

Details of the review

The review will initially review a number of local case studies. We would like to hear from local groups, individuals and organisations involved in drawing up a neighbourhood plan or thinking of doing so. We are particularly keen to hear about communities that are working independently or in cooperation with local planning departments on developing ideas and policies. We would welcome case studies from outside London too.

The review will then look ahead assessing how community-led and neighbourhood planning may unfold in London, seeking new ideas and different approaches local people (or boroughs)

could consider in order get involved in neighbourhood planning more effectively. This may also cover issues relating to funding, implementation and ongoing community involvement beyond the adoption of plans.

The Committee will also seek to investigate whether the Mayor and local authorities in London are geared-up to help and allow communities to lead on planning in their local areas and how they plan on undertaking this or are already doing it.

Questions for the review

During the review the Committee will seek to answer the following key questions:

- How will neighbourhood planning work in London? What new approaches are needed to reflect London's unique situation?

- What impact will the proposals have on local involvement in planning?

- To what extent will local people be able to realise their development priorities through Neighbourhood Plans?

- How will neighbourhood planning relate to Borough-wide and London-wide levels of planning? What support is needed for local communities to understand and take into account the wider planning framework?

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Planning and Housing Committee

The Committee will be using available data from a variety of stakeholder and pursue different ways of engagement. This is to ensure that the widest possible range of views is collected and represented and that the public and local communities are engaged with the review. Technology and new media will be used to create a forum for discussion among a diverse group of participants around matters relevant to the review. Details of how to get involved in the discussion will be made available on the Assembly's website in due course.

The Committee wishes to gather the views of a wide range of stakeholders. Contributors may include:

- all London boroughs and CLG
- civic societies, local fora, development trusts, neighbourhood groups and other community organisations
- residents and business associations
- planners, architects and urban designers
- academics and researchers
- developers
- professional bodies e.g. RTPI, RIBA, RICS, POS or TCPA

- advising, enabling, or facilitating services or charities, e.g. Planning Aid, The Princes Trust, AMT, CABE, LGG/PAS, Civic Voice or Locality
- interested members of the public

How to contribute to the review

The Committee is also inviting written views and information to its review. Submissions should aim to address the questions outlined above, and any other issues you consider important for the review.

To share your views, please send submissions to Alexandra Beer, London Assembly, City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA, or alexandra.beer@london.gov.uk. Please phone 020 7983 4947 with any queries.

The Committee will also conduct two hearings with invited guests, which members of the public are welcome to observe. The first of these will be held at City Hall, 10am on 18 October 2011. Details of any subsequent hearings will be announced later.

About the Committee

The Planning and Housing Committee monitors the way the Mayor delivers on two of London's most important issues – planning the future of the capital and housing its

Review of community involvement in planning in London

Planning and Housing Committee

people – in order to ensure his proposals serve the future needs of Londoners. Its Members are:

- Jenny Jones (Chair)
- Nicky Gavron (Deputy Chair)
- Tony Arbour
- Kit Malthouse
- Andrew Boff
- Steve O'Connell
- Navin Shah
- Mike Tuffrey

Further information about the Committee's work can be found at:
http://www.london.gov.uk/moderngov/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=158

FURTHER READING – WEBLINKS

Please see below links for further information on the Localism Bill, briefing papers, guidance and toolkits and community organisations involved in neighbourhood planning:

http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/localism.html
http://www.communities.gov.uk/localgovernment/decentralisation/localismbill/
http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/neighbourhoodplanningvanguards/
http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/localismplainenglishguide

http://www.betterbankside.co.uk/brf/brf-news-and-events/2321
http://yourbermondsey.org/
http://www.pdt.org.uk/

http://justspace2010.wordpress.com/
http://www.london.gov.uk/publication/londonplan

http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/briefing_notes/localism_bill_explained.pdf
http://www.foe.co.uk/news/localism_bill_update_31079.html
http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/fair_future/press_for_change/your_voice_your_plan_30306.html
http://www.urbanforum.org.uk/briefings/neighbourhood-planning-questions-and-answers
http://www.urbanforum.org.uk/briefings/localism-bill-amendments-briefing

http://towns.org.uk/2011/03/24/the-localism-ladder-delivering-community-led-planning-and-solutions/
http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/our-work/CABE/Localism-and-planning/Neighbourhood-planning-toolkits-and-guidance/

http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/inyourarea/neighbourhood/
http://www.neighbourhoodplanning.info
http://www.rtpi.org.uk/download/11953/Localism-Bill-RTPI-Briefing-Paper-Neighbourhood-Planning.pdf
http://www.london-first.co.uk/documents/Localism_Bill_Neighbourhood_Planning_Brief.pdf

Community involvement in neighbourhood planning Stakeholder consultation event – 7 October 2011

Notes of main items discussed on table 1 (TC)

Participants:

- Jenny Bates, Friends of the Earth
- Jonathan Rosenberg, West Ken & Gibbs Green
- Michael Ball, Waterloo Community Dev. Gr
- Jon Herbert, SKM Colin Buchanan
- Cllr. Saima Mahmud, LB Waltham Forest
- Stewart Murray, LB Redbridge

Table 1 Part one (Q1 and Q2)

1. What resources and framework do community groups need if community led planning is to work?

Local people need small expenses to cover simple needs like printing leaflets, access to photocopier, space for meetings and perhaps even shared office space, etc.

The framework needs to…

- Ensure a collaborative approach to any planning policy (i.e. including the rest of the LDF) well before consultation starts
- Lay out parameters set in stone by the London Plan and any adopted borough policies and make clear what remains up for debate
- Challenge local community to come up with solutions working with council officers to devise plans deliver on e.g. new homes needed. People on the table generally agreed with the comment that "people are only NIMBYs because they have no power, if they were given more control and trusted they will consider strategic aspects"
- Have clear definitions of sustainability and equalities at their heart to protect e.g. local minorities and the environment

2. How can boroughs, developers and employers support community led planning?

The role of local councils…

- General feeling that local authority consultations take for granted that word gets out, for example community notices in local papers often aren't seen, especially in blocks of flats where the papers are rarely delivered to every door
- They seem to be gatekeepers for NP – signing off on setting up a forum, the area they cover, complying with the LDF, etc.

- Local authorities lack the resources to implement their own statutory plans let along support community-led plans, so this will need to be part of a new way of working rather than an additional burden

- Is it possible to reverse the assumption that NP can do what it wants so long as it complies with the LDF? One proposal was that councils should only have policies specific to a local area that come through a NP process.

- Problem arises where local authority and sometimes also the GLA committed to a policy or project that local people oppose, e.g. estate demolition or new waste plant. If community involvement is only allowed at the neighbourhood level then these London/borough-wide strategic decisions will create acrimony and undermine NPs, so there was general agreement that local communities should be able to challenge strategic assumptions and to be challenged themselves to take them on board and come up with a solution

The problem with engaging a wide part of the population…

- People need time and stable life to engage

- Good ward councillors can act as champions, activating networks of people who wouldn't necessarily think they are interested in planning, e.g. youth groups, parents groups, etc. – this could give backbench ward councillors much more clout and revitalise interest in local democracy

- ALMOs and RSLs have their own neighbourhood structures that could be engaged

- The key is building trust amongst participants with face-to-face meetings

- The process needs to activate local people, they are the biggest resource with local knowledge and a surprising range of skills and experience so local authorities should be investing in the capacity of their local community to engage

- Councils need to learn how to use social media to reach younger people

Table 1 Part two (Q3 and Q4)

3.   What would make a good neighbourhood plan?

The first principle is democracy…

- Local people should have final say (within parameters set by LP etc.)

- Local businesses should be involved in discussions but shouldn't have a say e.g. in a vote, developers should be involved but shouldn't have any say whatsoever

- Must also reach out to and involve people outside the immediate area, though they wouldn't get a vote

- Given that areas like the Park Royal Op Area are principally comprised of businesses, they aren't suitable for NPs which should be resident-led, but those businesses should have greater involvement in relevant LP and LDF policies affecting the area

- NP areas shouldn't overlap

4.   How do neighbourhood plans fit in with the Mayor's London Plan and Local Development Frameworks?

Some options…

- All Op Areas should be dropped from the LP because, being a development plan, it precludes the possibility for neighbourhood plans to overturn and develop different approaches, OR…

- All OAPFs should be developed as neighbourhood plans, given the budgets for these tend to be several times larger than any of the NP pilots it should be possible to fund the NP element by taking a different approach to the whole thing rather than needing extra money

- Aim to only have genuinely local LDF policies that come from neighbourhood plans, OR

- Local authority could look to communities to develop neighbourhood plans as building blocks that make up the basis of the LDF

Notes of main items discussed on table 2 (DL)

Participants:

- Shilpa Shah (Friends of the Earth)
- Claire Victory (LB Newham)
- Mital Patel (Wards Corner Coalition)
- Richard Crutchley (Open City)
- Hermine Sanson (GLA)
- Phiroza Gan (Harrow Agenda 21) - present for questions 3 and 4 only
- Rosemary MacQueen (City of Westminster) - present for questions 1 and 2 only.
- Pauline Rowe (Friends of Queen's Market Newham) - present for questions 3 and 4 only

NBH = Neighbourhood

LA = Local Authority

Q1: What resources and framework do community groups need if community led planning is to work?

Q2: How can boroughs, developers and employers support community led planning?

Q3: What would make a good neighbourhood plan?

Q4: How do neighbourhood plans fit with the Mayor's London Plan and Local Development Frameworks?

Table 2 Part one (Q1 and Q2)

- NPPF = top down planning: community led plans have to be positive and pro-development; protection of independent shops?
- Finding "communities" in the first place is difficult
- Boroughs reluctant to get into community planning when there is so much uncertainty in planning policy
- Boroughs not ready to develop agenda <u>with</u> community; they want to run the agenda
- Example: New Deal for communities embarked on top down process, with consultants. Community reacted to say "let's do something else" but community group was accused of not representing the community
- Paternistic view of council that community group didn't have resources to carry through their vision
- Example Queen's market (LB Newham): Application for major development approved by council but called in by Mayor of London. Developer pulled out so council now has a clean slate to work with community, residents and market traders. A lot of distrust between different parties resulting from original development proposals; council to focus on design and place-making

- Engagement with residents across whole borough

- Issue regarding the attitude of "but that is council policy"

- Rigid response from council to consultation, requiring responses an inflexible way

- Community group became an applicant; council so much more supportive of development than community groups: "We will deliver regeneration to the High Street" (Cabinet member for regeneration) but this could also come from within (not recognised)

- Developers have money but people have knowledge and live in the area. There should be a partnership

- A plan for the whole borough - how is economic regeneration achieved across a borough when there are different communities to deal with?

- Consultation and engagement cost money that boroughs don't have

- It's good to have conflicting views in a community and a group, it helps a plan become better when they are resolved

- Communities are never seen as a resource. Communities are not just made up of residents but businesses and employees.

- Resources are needed: to publicise, to have places to meet, eg school halls, to have the council work jointly - "not plotting the downfall of the council".

- Mediation to bridge the gap between communities and the boroughs; i.e. Glass House and Open House (Open Cities) can do this, eg brokering discussions between groups with different languages, jargon, expectations

- Argument has often been the viability of schemes; councils often end up having to choose a development scheme because it is not easy to prove other schemes are viable

- Recognition wanted from council of legitimacy of community groups

- Boroughs are finding it difficult to get residents interested in general planning issues. Could piggy-back onto NBH forum events. Some boroughs have little in the way of community groups

- Decisions are made behind closed doors between council developers and established community groups

- Different agenda between council planning and property departments; councils equalities teams shut out of planning work

- Issue of commercial confidentiality in pre-application discussions

Table 2 Part two (Q3 and Q4)

Q3:

- A plan has to fit the criteria as defined

- What is a NBH and who defines it?

- Community forum can follow electoral ward boundaries or define their own

- Need to define what you want the plan to achieve

- Issue of NBHs that lie across borough boundaries

- A good NBH plan shows that it understands the area as it is now and the people who live there

- What is the value of terms such as 'churn' to describe transition? Does this have to be negative?

- Being acceptable when it meets reality, based on the needs of NBHs and show how conflicting interests are handled

- How to avoid marginalisation of some voices or the needs of population that doesn't stay in the area long term?

- Need to provide skills to people about economic and other issues related to planning → skills audit

- Strategic objectives in line with planning context

- Clarify what format NBH plan needs to have – formal land use plan or just an articulation of what people want to see

- There can be a social costs of ignoring the community (i.e. the riots)

- A local group's priority will not be growth, it will be social and economic well-being

- Any community plan will be the product of a small group of particularly motivated people

- Uncertainty that NBH plans will deliver what people want - will actions follow the adoption of plans?

- Trying to do something like this with no resources isn't going to work

- Wouldn't want to do a plan just out of fear that someone else will produce a plan you don't agree with

- Will NBH plans impact on CIL?

- If you involve a development in resourcing community planning, what is the nature of that relationship? Transparency?

Q4:

- The question should rather be 'How do higher level plans fit with NBH plans and with what the communities want?'

Notes of main items discussed on table 3 (PW)

Participants:

- Celia Cronin, Balfour Street Housing Project
- Eleanor Besley, Sustrans
- Sophia de Sousa, The Glass House
- Jenny Marshal, Camargue PR
- John Paul Maytum, Bermondsey Community Forum
- Neil Milligan, LB Merton
- Paul Watling, London Assembly

Table 3 Part one (Q1 and Q2)

Q1. What resources and framework do community groups need if community led planning is to work?

Q2. How can boroughs, developers and employers support community led planning?

A key issue is one of engaging the local community. A still harder question is involving the "silent majority" – who may or may not wish to be engaged. People may need something to react to; a structure of potential issues rather than a blank piece of paper; an idea of potential developments looming on the horizon. "They need to be able to see a threat to react to it" - so they can start to formulate views about how they want to see the shape of their area in the future.

There needs to be an open and ongoing dialogue with all the interested parties. This should happen from the start of the process. Early involvement is key.

For example, on the Heygate estate, the redevelopment plans threw up a range of opportunities and threats for how the community might develop – with differing visions proposed from developers, local authority and community.

Leaders are needed – enthusiastic people who can identify and develop networks. If leaders come from outside the established locally elected system then there may be questions of legitimacy and representation. The need for community leaders is understandable if people are not relating to the current forms of engagement – there may be little trust in either the local authority or the developer. Conversely, there are questions about who are these community leaders representing and what visions are they promoting?

The community needs access to resources if it is to be able to play an effective and meaningful role in the process. Localism should imply access to local resources. People need the information to understand what the proposals are – and the potential impacts. "Plain English" summaries would be helpful.

Resources can include many things including well-funded community planning advice centres; provision of information from the local authority and developers (and access to expertise to analyse this if needed).

The local authority is clearly in a good place to offer support – and it is easier to support a local forum if there are clear plans or proposals in place. However local trust is needed to make best use of available resources.

In the current climate, the local authority is cutting back in terms of staffing and making grants available. Developers are seen as a legitimate source of funding – but there is often little interest in providing the opportunity for the local community to potentially resist their own proposals. Other funding may be available through trust funds or other independently sponsored champions (e.g. CABE, Transition Network etc.) – but these are under financial pressure too.

There has to be a recognition that unless there is a neighbourhood plan in place the "default" planning position reverts to either the borough plan or the proposals in the National Planning Policy Framework. So there is a need for a local approach if local priorities are to be realised in the future.

Even if funding is available (e.g. Frontrunner funding) what would happen if a large number of neighbourhoods decided to submit plans? How would they receive financial or officer support from the local authority? "Where is the funding for neighbourhood planning?" "Should the community be given the funding directly rather than through the local authority?"

Short of producing their own full neighbourhood plans, what other options are there for the community to get engaged? Examples might include community produced planning briefs for small sites outside those already identified for borough/strategic planning priorities.

Focussing on digital communication may offer a solution for wider engagement or dissemination of information.

Access to local authority asset registers may provide a starting point/a spark for the local community to identify potential opportunities. But these registers are often incomplete or even non-existent. In the worst cases asset disposals may just be seen as "off loading" problems to the community.

If there is a "positive" effect from public spending cuts, it might be in the form of the increasing availability of people with planning and development skills (e.g. ex RDA or local authority staff) who might have time to get involved.

Sharing the experiences of successful community groups might be an effective way of transferring knowledge and building confidence in newer local groups – "as a support mechanism or offering a conduit for motivation".

Table 3 Part two (Q3 and Q4)

Q3. What would make a good neighbourhood plan?

Q4. How do neighbourhood plans fit in with the Mayor's London Plan and Local
     Development Frameworks?

Before we can discuss "what would make a good neighbourhood plan" it is worth
taking, as the starting point, a realisation that the planning framework seems more
complicated than at any time in the last 15 years or so. There is too much
documentation involved (e.g. the suite of Local Development Framework documents).
We need clarity in the information, documentation and background that is necessary to
get meaningfully involved in the process.

One approach would be to make a plan's focus on "outcomes" – the plan would need to
make a difference and to be seen to make a difference in development reflecting better
what local people want for their area. It might comprise the following elements:

- A clear and shared vision about what it is trying to achieve – what are the common
  themes and provide the opportunity for people to mobilise around agreed issues; In
  effect, a set of key principles
- It needs to recognise the "baseline fundamentals" of an area;
- It needs to set out the "fine grain" of an area in relation to what is not covered by
  other statutory plan levels;
- It needs to be realistic – otherwise it will not be deliverable;
- It must embody a process of ongoing dialogue with all the partners; and
- It should enable some kind of decision-making process.

Other characteristics might include the ability for the replication of the process across
the city and compliance with LDF and London Plan policy.

It might be advantageous to start with consideration of the "quality of place" – what
features of the local neighbourhood need retaining and what ones improved by bringing
in new elements. A good plan would be able to compensate or "give back to the
community" something that might be lost or threatened by the implementation of
"higher level" plans.

> **Comment [JPM1]:** For me the really important point was about deal-making.
> We can encourage people to accept development (rather than being totally resistant) if they can be seen to be getting something out of the process.
> I think this fits in with your notes here.

A good plan would explore new options, other than those presented by the
professionals, options generated through some kind of "collective brainstorming".

It needs to provide opportunities for people new to the area to input their views on how
an area should develop – not just those who were involved at the beginning of the
process.

There may be scope to latch on to policies in the London Plan (e.g. air quality neutral
development) that might act as a catalyst. This might be a way of addressing the
question "an Opportunity Area is an opportunity for who?"

It needs to be able to deal with smaller, yet important issues, not covered by the more
strategic LDF or the London Plan policies.

Notes of main items discussed on table 4 (AW)

Participants – not recorded

Table 4 Part one (Q1 and Q2)

What resources and framework do community groups need if community led planning is to work ?

- Education is something - and excitement and interesting - how to get people having that discussion
- People don't realise that they can have an impact until later – it needs to be inclusive
- Information and help in a helpline as people don't have a clear idea of what a NP is
- Need to be explain the 'rules of the game' and having a clear structure
- Ability to formalise a relationship with local authority
- Councillors need to be very involved
- Monitoring resources and not leaving that to community7
- Having finances to support plans and experts that can understand and translate
- Having an expert that can go back to community and teach
- Need to listen to people on the ground
- Developing a NP needs a lot of time and consultations
- Newham – Local action groups
- Coin street community group has been a success

Issues

- Local authority is always changing and we need to build a relation ship with them but LAs are losing departments and staff have no knowledge of local area
- LAs will have to say yes to to NP and then send it off
- Very vague and needs to be tested
- Neighbourhoods are cross borough and this can cause problems with communication
- There is no rationale for where a borough starts and ends
- Having visions - not for where shops go but what kind of shops
- Councillor has to look to the well being of the whole borough
- Transparency – a person in the council to report information – dedicated and accessible information and motivating people to work with their community
- More resources such as engineers and architects
- Conflicts of interest in the community (such as a mosque), urban conflicts, different ideas – how do you deal with conflicts of interest
- Employers forum
- Why does council want just housing?

- The London plan is more important because it ensures that the national cant make all plans
- Power struggles between LAs and communities – relationship needs to be improved – there is a disconnect
- Land value taxation
- Under occupancy is an issue
- In London Plan affordable space permanent - only for new developments
- Sometimes local people want things that are rubbish
- LAs are very squeezed for staff and funding
- There is a lot of corruption

Table 4 Part two (Q3 and Q4)

What would make a good plan?
- Resolve conflicts with community
- Define scope
- Consult with local communities
- If local businesses are involved will there conflicts of interests?
- Have to have an LA or an important body to make sure everyone is happy
- If a bid gets turned down it goes to the back of the queue and it is a firs come first served policy
- Realistic aspirations
- Neighbourhood forums don't want to produce NPs
- Cant have a plan that doesn't promote development
- No guidance on how the forum works
- What makes a NP is not what is in it but how it is created
- Objectively it is the responsibility of the council
- Review of constitution is done every 12 months
- LA is to be the arbitrator of decisions
- Government is lifting the red tape but still has control

Blue Print
- Good representative with knowledge and care
- Consultation on what people would like to improved
- Consolidate what people think in the area
- London plan would have conform to the NP
- Mayor is imposed by central government and still has to ensure that London grows by a certain amount
- Conflict resolution - Complement each other

Notes of main items discussed on table 5 (DMcG)

Participants – not recorded

LA = Local Authority

NP = Neighbourhood Plan

Table 5 Part one (Q1 and Q2)

We need to look at why people get involved? It needs to be appealing e.g. a lot of people living in B&Bs where planning is important, there is a need to look at the micro level so planning needs to talk to where it affects different people e.g. overcrowding and then build on that, it needs to engage where it specifically affects people. Important to communicate matters that affect people on the ground

I was involved a few years in development of local market. Although 70% of groups who used the market were from ethnic minority groups there was little involvement in the process and they should have been asked to respond in their own language

Development needs to respond to local need or else it creates disillusionment and disempowerment as they need to feel they can engage

The biggest issue is trust e.g. ASDA development in Queens Market –strategically that might come back in planning system

Need to be able to understand and influence planning system

There are NPs coming forward who are struggling with the issues – LAs don't want to be the parent, telling groups what they need to do but one group has a core of 8 and is not incorporated and supporting group takes time and money

There are also issues with people who want to re fight past battles

Localism bill may have given communities this right but the hackbridge area is primed for development and the NPPF has a presumption in favour of development

So we have communities versus NPPF

It is challenging to provide resources when LAs planning department have fewer resources themselves but the community rightly expects LAs to support them

There are also issues when people cannot see what the built environment could be like and necessary to have core of professional so that they can put together a plan that people can react and therefore have a more pointed discussion

Need for resources

- Need platform for people to input e.g. major issue is privatisation, affordable housing
- May be too late when applications are already approved
- Existing planning forums may get some funding (£250) but no funding for paying for expertise or training conferences so end up paying out of your own pocket - in relation to expertise it is important that it is independent
- LAs need to provide end of the phone line support and information
- Influence through elected members and other community groups but may have different priorities

- LAs could support groups find funding and expertise e.g. they employ traffic engineers who may not be independent but LAs do also hold lists of experts they have worked with before but do acknowledge these are not cheap
- Communities may be best served by independent intermediary, a community engagement specialist
- However LAs could advise n forming legal entity and direct groups to sources of funding
- Forums rely on individual good will and some small support but eventually they will need more e.g. premises
- Re past battles – there is a need to put issues to bed and for LAs/corporates to admit and learn from past mistakes
- Design process – when in design process you need to understand how the community works and what community space is – e.g. there was a difference between developers and LAs understanding of what a market is (in square footage) and the local communities who use it
- There are existing strategies and policies in place to provide support e.g. statement of community involvement - do LAs use these?
- LA does have consultation strategy and principles requirement for developers, a checklist of consultation will be carried out
- Hackney for example put a lot of resources into its consultation around 2012 – it funded forums which met regularly and then lobbied and campaigned based on issues raised by the communities involved
- Sutton started with very visionary programmes and went beyond statutory gov requirements on consultation to engage with groups but are now running out of groups because of changing demographics and loss of groups
- Officers do attend meetings or will meet with people at their offices
- However it is frustrating for those who have submitted responses but then don't hear anything back - LAs will meet with reps on a case by case basis and if there are questions re their response which needs to be clarified
- People don't understand the underlying process behind consultation options so feel that process is fixed as they haven't been provided with the full information and assessment

Equality
- Access issues – we have formal relationship with local group and have large database but do not have resources to gather information
- There needs to be more information in local press in plain English alongside the statutory notices
- There needs to be open meetings and consultation needs to happen before the decisions have been made

What is experience of objecting to proposals?

- Were successful in having one turned down but the process is hard as it is time consuming, quite technical so needs huge effort and therefore very difficult to do for every application
- Need to start where people are, not be afraid of historical context, need changes in communication and redefining what involvement and engagement really are

Table 5 Part one (Q3 and Q4)

What is a good neighbourhood plan?

Buy in from the community but with professionals from within the group suggesting areas and proposals

There may be benefits to some developments for local communities

Need to empower communities to shape their communities, understand constraints of planning system so forewarned is fore armed

Will NPs engage as major developments?

Area doesn't have huge pop and has lot of green and industrial land and borough have a lot of ideas for retaining industrial space but communities ideas will shape that but will mean large amount of new residents

How do you decided neighbourhood area?

Sutton has already identified a sustainable area but is up to the forum to decide

People lose interest if they do not see progress – who has the energy to carry on?

Community forums need to ask are you representative of your community?

LA has a duty to cooperate but it up to the community the area and the issues it wants to focus on

Danger of diffusion of interest - NP presumes that people are actively involved

Can foresee enormous problems and the reason for frontrunners is to learn from their mistakes

- Burden on community
- Need money for the process
- Need high referendum turnout so need to have everyone on board before youstart
- Area of change that needs an NP and not an area that wants an np
- Needs to be a Community development process and champions and if these aren't there then you need to build it
- What happens with transient communities who do not feel they have a stake in the community?
- NPPF can trump anything
- Developers could set up their own NP
- Economic/business np need only look at economics but community led plan need to take into account social, economic and environmental

What is the structure for a good NP?

What is the process for a good NP?

- Meet the educational deficit in communities
- Expertise needed e.g. designers who can articulate what the community is saying
- Core strategy only ever intends high strategic thinking
- Needs a facilitator
- Building relationships is important as we all are all trying (planners and community) to achieve the same thing

What are the first steps?

- Tour and walk around with community and think about the parameters
- Time – what is the community for?
- Use of facilitator
- Demystify and explain intentions
- Deciding small plans under SPDs
- LA direct more resources towards engaging communities and making extra effort to most disengaged – identify space available

Inclusiveness

- Resource intensive but various departments across the LA can talk to different parts of the community
- Planning officers need an education
- Need to talk about what people are interested in
- Communities of place and communities of interest so need representation of the area
- Community has a responsibility in formal constitution of neighbourhood forum
- Need profile for neighbourhood because there can be misunderstanding between what LAs/developers see as community structures and what the local people see as community structures
- If there isn't community development officers then you need trusted mediator

Content

- Need neighbourhood strategic partnership to ensure the plan covers health, environmental culture etc
- How can community do that much work even with frontrunner funding e.g. to do formal assessments of needs – FoE has raised issues with the bill does not make provision for assessments
- Where is the evidence for the plan – all good plans need evidence – part is community evidence – the London plan and LDFs are holistic
- Nps may have only 1 or 2 issues so might not need to be holistic – but even one issue can have wide ranging impact
- Has to be risk assessed

- Employment needs – people need to think about local employment so need to be able to think strategically, not just locally and with principles
- Sustainable design
- Which takes precedence - np could choose to go beyond LDFs but must conform with strategic elements
- Do these documents support NPs? E.g. London Plan on lifetime nighbouthoods, so London plan could offer supportive framework for NPs
- Re LDFs there are still some policies within LDFs to be developed and these could be used to offer a support framework
- Got to share common vision
- Needs to be about what you value about the area, what and how to change
- Core strategy is not static document and can be amended to reflect the NP
- People think in different ways about space so NP needs to be visionary

Core to process
- Community is client
- Time
- Independent facilitators
- Access to expertise
- Proper understanding of area/issues
- Identify champions

Structure
- Aggregate plans with spf
- Developers involvement but with no vote
- All LDFs should have nps

Notes of main items discussed on table 6 (AB)

Participants:

- Michael Edwards, Kings Cross Railway Lands Group & Just Space & UCL
- Chris Brown, Igloo
- Jim Humphris, KXDF
- Maggy Meade-King, The Highgate Society
- Peter Eversden, London Forum
- Mark Poulter, Putney Society
- Pauline Adenwalla, Canada Water Campaign
- Andrew Boff, London Assembly Member

NBH = Neighbourhood

LA = Local Authority

BID=Business Improvement District

Table 6 Part one (Q1 and Q2)

Q1: What resources and framework do community groups need if community led planning is to work?

Money/Funding

Is money available for NBH initiatives? LB Haringey has not designated any money. Highgate Society are trying to get Councillors to encourage this

Process of setting up a NBH forum requires expenses, time and energy → where will resources come from?

Cash is certainly needed, especially for admin support, which is essential to build a foundation for any forum but difficult to get funding for

Could set up community funds, i.e. with money from landlords, occupiers, local residents and businesses, for long term endowment

Skills and networking

It is difficult to create and keep up a group when there is no existing network. In that case a facilitator would be helpful.

Q2: How can boroughs, developers and employers support community led planning?

Cross Borough working

Highgate Society area covers both Camden & Haringey boroughs and has tried to get the LAs to work together (some streets are in Islington and Barnet but only a few); hard to encourage cross Borough exchange

→ but the Localism Bill requires it from LAs

Role of boroughs/LAs

LAs do not want to lose the power of making decisions and control what's happening.

Boroughs don't want to engage or acknowledge that it has to be an ongoing process, not project/time specific

LA now has a duty to cooperate & support → more details from government needed on what that means, especially in light of constant cuts, i.e. in the planning teams

King's Cross (Camden "Place Shaping") plan includes many Actions but no detail in who should implement them and how.

Bill need regulations for implementations, MPs should be lobbied on that.

Competency of LA planners not always up to speed/scratch

There is a role for universities, staff and students → capabilities for community involvement

Students should be taught (and LA planners be reminded) to take into account all relevant development plans in officers' reports not just the LDF or Local Plan which would also influence Councillors in their decision making at Planning Committees. London Plan often ignored.

Engagement and consultation

Real estate professionals should engage more in their local areas.

Pre application discussions between communities and developers are essential (not consultation after scheme is designed) → but LA's will charge for pre app discussions/advice

Participation often constrained by time, transport, childcare, money, language etc – Also skills of the retired

Often local groups exist but not well known/networked, i.e. youth centres, meals on wheels, etc. Core Strategy consultation could bring them together and they could contribute their specific knowledge and raise their issues (Cohesion)

However, those groups are often already stretched – are they prepared/able to contribute to planning issues?

Clarity is needed on when the points of interaction/intervention are

Should we encourage BIDs? They can engage with a local community in a defined area. It is hard to engage or get organised with a large number of small businesses in an area

Example Canada Water

Canada Water has a very transient population, many buy-to-let flats. Would like to engage people regarding a broad vision for the area but they often move on. How to maintain interest and knowledge for such a vision over longer period of time, also maintain a local skills base.

People experience discouragement from engagement, i.e. through NPPF proposals

In Canada Water developers provide money for consultation exercises.

Public enquiry for AAP area covered 25000 people → always the same 10 people who engage with the process who have time and motivation. How to ensure they represent the views of the entire community.

<u>Example Chatsworth Road</u>

Engaging the NBH –– survey to establish basics:

- Age & type of shops
- Who uses them
- Who are the local groups
- Easy to follow structure and coverage

→ Routemap to NBH plan needed

NBH Plan making and objectives

Frontrunners schemes were privileged as no referendum was needed to accept the chosen Forum which would be needed for any future NBH Fora (so would take longer and be more expensive to get started). They also had the advantage of Council involvement/support from the start.

<u>Example Brentford AAP</u>

The Brentford Society & Community Forum, LB Hounslow, found some retired planners in the area who helped produce an AAP (as there was none for the area). Collective skills from the local area were put together.

The council was initially sceptical but then sought to adopt the plan. However, a range of amendments were made by the Council before adoption and the original plan was felt by many to have been of better quality that the adopted version.

<u>Example Kings Cross 'Place Making' Plan</u>

1 year ago the Draft non-statutory Kings Cross Place Making Plan was published by Camden → today it is still in draft form; lots of Council resources were used and still no sufficient result. How would a local group be able to replicate similar work without a major struggle? Kings Cross plan is not a development plan document (DPD) because it spans topics outside the scope of planning acts; the adjoining borough of Islington were not involved in its creation

<u>Example Putney Society objectives</u>

Putney Society (PS) members could be seen as NIMBY's but they are in favour of development – only where it is sympathetic to the area. Not all NBH Forums are NIMBY's but want only a certain type of quality of development

PS is concerned about proposed large site developments. Local office market and employment is declining, replaced by flats and restaurants → risk of becoming a dormitory town? Added transport pressures

PS is a large society with a mix of members. Feel that their voice is not heard by LB Wandsworth. There are no huge development opportunities in the PS area. PS seek a better balance and mix of uses as they notice a slow change of the current make up.

If these changes are supported by the LDF, a NBH plan that proposed something different would not be in conformity and would not be adopted. In that case PS could influence the LDF through the consultation phases instead.

However, LAs should get time to finalise LDFs (align them with NPPF). NBH Plans have the potential to make NBHs better places.

Summary of Table 6 Part one (Q1 and Q2)

- Routemap for NBH Plans → to be applied proactive LAs needed
- Funding for admin resource and skills base important → could be shared between areas (directly to groups not LAs); some funding and assistance needed to get started → then it is up to motivated members to keep going
- What is the "leverage to "make" boroughs provide support and funding? London Assembly to find that lever
- The urban parish council route could make the group less dependent on LAs because these councils can raise a 'precept' - levvy on top of Council Tax.

Table 6 Part two (Q3 and Q4)

Q3: What would make a good neighbourhood plan?

Size and definition of a NBH

Granularity of NBH? Parish? Ward/Councillor level? What is a "sufficient" NBH size/definition?

Not one size fits all. Can it be too big? or too small? Boroughs need more advice

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Survey at the table – what is the size/population of your NBH/Society area?

CB/Bermondsey: 20,000

AB/Hackney Wick: 500

ME/JH/Kings Cross Central: 67 acres, population 0 and 60,000 within 1 km

PA/Canada Water: 25,000-30,000, no exact boundaries

MP/Putney Society: 40-45,000, covers 3 wards and happened to follow the old Putney parish boundaries

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Wards don't respect communities, a road on a map are not the reality of connections, uses and daily life. Wards are not good boundaries; Hounslow area meetings worked well by inviting neighbouring ward councillors (area committees)

Format of NBH Plans

Do NBH Plans have to look like Local Plans just smaller? No. There are other ways to express a local vision and ideas. Also need to keep the cost down. A NBH might not be too worried about the details of potential future planning applications. Where there are more resources are needed → urban parish council route may be better in those cases (funding)

If NBH plans are not similar to an LDF plan, less weight might be attached to them. Design & quality should be paramount; taste and quality are not the same thing

LAs should embody Localism proposals in LDFs → NBH plans not always be needed. If local societies' voice was heard and incorporated they would often be satisfied (i.e. Putney Society). In those cases a NBH Plan could be 1-2 A4 pages of text?

People should ask: What's wrong with my local plan? How does it affect my area? Is it sound? Has it been signed off yet? To assure themselves nothing else is needed. But if it is might want to think of a NBH Plan.

If people spot a hole in the Local development plan, they could also ask for an AAP but still work in parallel at NBH level to sort out any micro issues (if resources for both are there)

Micro issue - Preferred types of shops

No micro issues, no NBH plan needed; i.e. public toilets or drinking fountains (London Plan allows for that, has a policy) → concept of lifetime neighbourhoods

Note London Assembly's work on small shops; NBH plan could pick up on lack of protection and deal with it → Micro issues could include a "local use class order" for one street (i.e. % of types of shops, or to keep chains out)

But NBH plan can not change the current use classes available: a change in the Localism Bill or other law would surely be needed to enable this kind of local refinement to use classes.

Local plan can designate secondary shopping centres and include a percentage that limits certain use classes, i.e. coffee shops or hot take aways. A NBH Plan could possibly define this further with percentages for types of shops

The London Plan does not pay attention to small shopping parades. Local borough plans often designate (and protect) small parades or scattered shops; many fail to do so.

Berkeley Homes have kept small retailers in their development schemes. If this was specified in a NBH Plan, S106 and CIL could be influenced through it.

If a NBH wanted to have or keep a post office, how can you do it? Relies on commitment from developers/landlords. It is not possible to define units down to that detail, only Use classes (cannot set out for it to be a post office, Tesco or Starbucks)

Example (LBHF) where a Tesco was only allowed in the High Street if it included/kept a post office (via S106). Things like this could be set out in NBH plans in advance.

Viability issues – residential development might be needed to keep shops alive by adding customers

What about enforcement? NBH Plans should be adopted (in theory; LA can use CPO and planning powers) A NBH development order can be set up if more details needed

List of community assets useful – what about key development sites? There is a right to bid so must be careful if putting a site forward as could be outbid. Best value of land trumps S103; NBH plan has power if adopted

1. There is a proposal for changes to the Use Class Order (in regard to restricting changes of use, conversions, use class for pubs and post offices)

2. Another proposal (the government's current one) is to open up/relax the UCO, to make changes easier and enable growth of housing

→ Those two approaches are very incompatible

If the Core Strategy lacks detail, a NBH setting up a plan could go back to review the Sustainable Community Strategy to add details to the NBH plan.

How can a plan create actions or a duty to do what the plan says? How to make it happen? Does it really give more power to local groups? How to get a developer to build what is proposed in the plan.

If all people see is a bit of paper and no results they might become disengaged or cynical regarding the idea of NBH planning.

There is the option of early engagement with potential local developers during NBH Plan making to get them on board/find compromise

Can you force landlords to find suitable shop occupiers in line with proposals instead of converting shops to other uses? Maybe by accepting a lower rent if necessary?

Developers should fit out shop fronts and interiors straight away so there is no obvious intention to convert; there should be no relaxation of what is adopted in NBH plans or conditions or Agreements.

Developers are not always good at designing retail units which lowers the chances of finding suitable occupiers (i.e. lack of storage space or staff toilets). This could be required in the NBH plan or Local Development Order.

Q4: How do neighbourhood plans fit with the Mayor's London Plan and Local Development Frameworks?

NPPF – what about a dispute between NBH plan and LDF? Localism Bill states the NBH Plan must be in line with the LDF (general conformity with above plans). NPPF mentions a dispute → this is thought to mean a specific detail or unforeseen issue that may occur

How to get NBH Plans approved when LDFs are already struggling to get adopted (due to lack of staff, time and inspectors for public enquiry process)

How should a NBH Plan fit with other plans → mostly bottom up but some bottom down influencing, i.e. housing targets, should be tailored into NBH Plan.

NBH Plan to overlap with site specific policies and allocations or "Places" (LBTH)

Communication is essential; there must be a conversation about plans and policies

A good NBH Plan should influence the Local Plan/LDF, i.e. via the cycle of updates and reviews. AAP could absorb one or several NBH Plans.

Borough level targets for housing, affordable housing, social housing etc are usually not mapped out to neighbourhood level in LDF – unsure which NBHs and NBH plans will provide/accommodate it

Summary of Table 6 Part one (Q3 and Q4)

- Consider the scale of NBHs – is there a minimum size i.e. 10,000 or less or more?
- What content does a NBH plan need as a minimum – should be flexible depending on the purpose
- Cover more local issues that are not sufficiently covered in higher level plans
- Consider which powers could be used to do things, i.e. a 'local' use class order to define and regulate micro issues → this is a conflict with the Government's deregulation ideas
- CPO may be important
- Lifetime neighbourhoods concept should be at the heart of NBH planning

Notes of main items discussed on table 7 (KR)

Participants – not recorded

NP = Neighbourhood Plan

Table 7 Part one (Q1 and Q2)

Resources needed

- Local expertise. architects, planners, social expertise
- Technical expertise –planning aid, FoE
- Resource finder for this expertise
- Knowledge of planning frameworks
- Street level community development processes: techniques of engagement e.g. getting people to take pictures of what they love/digital methods
- Funds
- A community development worker to help to produce a document that could sit alongside the local plans – a mini supplementary plan
- An inventory of buildings – snapshot

Challenge

- How can we produce a NP if there is the pressure from developers for development which is presumed allowed – by ensuring the NP is written in a form that can be linked to a strategy
- But sometimes higher level plans can be constrained eg the London Plan
- How can you orchestrate the tension between strategy and local requirements
- Also a challenge is getting people engaged at the different levels

Support needed

- The role of ward councillor in engaging people in what they like/ what are the concerns
- Together with expert support (from a community development worker with planning expertise) – council staff not equipped because they are caught between developers and community
- The role of the on line NP forums
- Need someone who can bring a collaborative approach to the process – cant look at things in an adversarial way
- Challenges – might not be representative group – how to get it a more representative group and not usual suspects
- Getting the silent majority views – how?
- Don't engage people through a bureaucratic process – needs to be broader and more collaborative
- Local groups - should they be chaired by someone trained in community development

- Community development qualification / or by non accredited
- Need training to nurture the silent majority
- Code of conduct for activists, council staff
- Fund in borough to support NPlanning or develop code of conduct and training

Table 7 Part two (Q3 and Q4)

What would make a good NP?

Plan needs to

- Clearly define what its scope is, its boundaries and what topics it covers
- Be able to show it reflects dos and don'ts of local residents (including equalities groups)
- Define what actions need to take place/implementation
- Demonstrate how it agrees and or conflicts with existing plans re those areas and potential conflict
- Got to be a living document/continually revised
- Lay out its success criteria and monitoring procedures
- Needs to be written in plain English
- Easily usable by a wide range of people
- Is the documentation that resolves the conflicts between local and borough/london plans
- Needs to have general support and also to have taken into consideration the needs of targeted groups eg equalities groups - this needs to be recorded in the plan

How do they fit with London Plan and LDFs

- Consensus that NP does fit with LP and LDFs otherwise it can be published – should highlight conflict resolution has taken place
- At same time NPs be an instrument to influence the LP as living document? Iterative process and top down – bottom up
- Need a statement from London Plan and LDF as to whether they are the documents NP plans should conform to
- The iterative process of reconciling and refining NPs with LP and LDFs needs to be constructed – who will do this – needs multi level involvement
- Process of interaction need not be mechanistic - LP/LDF conformity is a fluid process and can be interpreted at the Neighbourhood level
- Need new process of tension resolution locally to ensure that NP do not conflict with LDFs – but may not be able to do this – should say how you have taken steps to involve those that are normally excluded
- A requirement to support and train people amongst planners, communities and planners to minimize confrontation and maximize collaboration in order to maximise involvement, especially in strategic issues and break things down to a meaningful level