

# Community Led Planning Bedfordshire

## Kempston Neighbourhood Plan

### Introduction

This neighbourhood plan concentrates on the Southfields, Chantry and Lakes Estate area of Kempston (see map overleaf). It was a pilot project with the aim of transferring the skills used to engage communities in rural areas to an urban setting.

Neighbourhoods in the southern area of Kempston were suggested by local organisations working in the locality, as it was an area where not much consultation had taken place previously.

### What is Community Led Planning?

Community Led Planning is a structured process, undertaken by local community members to create a vision for their community. The vision will encompass social, environmental, cultural and economic aspects of life, celebrating the positive and highlighting needs through the development of a detailed action plan.

#### The plan and its actions:

- Involves and includes everyone in the community.
- Maps out services and facilities currently available in the community.
- Discovers what issues and opportunities people feel need addressing.

### Support provided

Valuable support, assistance and guidance on developing your Community Led Plan is available from your county Rural Community Council (RCC). For the East of England these are Beds RCC, Cambs ACRE, RCC of Essex, CDA for Herts, Norfolk RCC and Suffolk ACRE.

#### KEY FACTS Kempston

County: **Bedfordshire**  
District: **Bedford Borough Council**  
Households in the project area: **1,200**  
Plan completed: **April 2008**



Kempston



Community fun day



Planning for Real®



# Kempston COMMUNITY LED PLAN

## The process

- In October 2007 a steering group of representatives from key organisations, led by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC), worked with Kempston Town Council and the local community to produce a plan.
- Numerous consultation events took place in February and March 2008 to encourage residents to have a say about their local area. These included likes and dislikes exercises at busy locations, Over 50's coffee morning, attendance at the local Gudwara and a series of Planning for Real® events including a family fun day at the local fire station.
- Approximately 380 residents and 80 young people participated in the consultation.
- An action planning event was held for the community and key organisations to discuss the issues raised through the consultation and the next steps to be taken.
- A Community Action Group consisting of local residents was set up to oversee the implementation of the action plan and to ensure residents' views are fed into the Town Councils Community Safety Group.

## Impact of the plan and its actions

The Community Action Group merged with the Kempston Community Safety Forum to ensure long term sustainability of the plan. Other key successes of the plan have included:

- The purchase of mobile security cameras through funding secured from the County Council.
- Implementation of a Borough wide by-law to prevent the selling of cars from Southfields Road.
- Increased partnership working between key organisations and the local community.

## Local Authority engagement

Bedford Borough Council were fully supportive and involved throughout the whole process, providing some funding and delivering on some actions. Other partners involved with the plan included the Bedfordshire Police Service, Bedfordshire and Luton Fire and Rescue Service, Bedfordshire Race Equality Council, two local housing associations, Bedfordshire Youth Service and Kempston Town Council.

### Quote from Community

"(Putting together a Community Plan has) definitely brought the area together more and if you act in a united way you achieve a lot more things."

STEERING GROUP MEMBER

### Benefit to Local Authority

"Community Led Planning provides a framework for Local Authorities to deliver under areas such as Place Shapers, Community Empowerment and Neighbourhood Leadership; as plans cover a wide range of topics such as roads, health, crime, shops and different age groups. Plans and the actions are also used as a measure of performance in staff appraisals."

BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Quote from Local Authority

"It's wonderful! I think that it is the way forward and I would like to use it more."

COMMUNITY SAFETY MANAGER,  
BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Key learning for others

When producing an urban based Community Led Plan it is important to consider the geographical area that it will cover and how local people define the boundaries of their community.



Southfields, Chantry and Lakes Estate

## Further information

This Case Study was produced by Rural Action East in collaboration with Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity as part of research undertaken into CLP on behalf of the Regional Empowerment Partnership for the East of England. We would like to thank Kempston Town Council and Bedford Borough Council for making this Case Study possible.

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