Local Assemblies – February 2013 report
• Local Assemblies: an update

• Key results from borough-wide survey 2012

• Questions

• Discussion around assemblies going forward

Outline of presentation
• Average attendance per meeting: 73 (2011-12); 87 (2012-13)
• Total meeting attendance: 4990 people (2011-12)
• Participation outside of meetings: 7627 people (2011-12)
• Total participation in and outside of meetings was 12,671 (2011-12) = 4.7% of the population
• Number of ‘newcomers’: 36% (2011-12); 40% (2012-13)
• BME attendance: 37% (2011-12)
• LGBT attendance: 5%
• Young people attendance: 5% (2011-12)
• Disabled people attendance: 12% (2011-12)
• Live 75% / work 20% / learn 5%
• 65% felt they could influence decisions
• 90% felt they learnt more about local issues
• 85% felt included and able to give their viewpoint
• 73% of people’s expectations were met
• 99% would attend another meeting
In 2011/12 we successfully enabled more people than ever to get involved with their Local Assembly. For the first time, participation outside the more formal Assembly meetings was larger than at the meetings. This helped ensure people from a wider range of backgrounds got the opportunity to be involved and shape the future of their area.

- Telegraph Hill, Honor Oak estate survey and stakeholder group
- Brockley quiz night
- Downham Interagency
- Evelyn youth partnership
- New Cross, Winslade estate coffee morning
- Grove Park Jubilee party
- Ladywell walkabout with LVIG
• Attendance at assembly meetings
• Ring-fencing of Assembly Funding for young people
• Engagement and participation outside of meetings
• Use of social media
• Specific young people’s campaigns launched through assemblies

CASE STUDY: SFHYF youth survey
Around 700 young people aged 11–17 from schools/youth clubs in Forest Hill, Perry Vale and Sydenham wards were asked their views on the area; i.e. what they like/dislike and what they do in their free time. The information will enable the three assemblies to allocate funding based upon need with good evidence to support this. In addition, the survey identified that crime is a concern for many young people with a fear of gangs being particularly prevalent. Operation Trident will be attending two assembly-led events aimed at tackling this fear amongst our young people.

CASE STUDY: Brockley youth forum
The Brockley Assembly Youth Forum was formed in 2011 and met several times to discuss local issues; as well visiting the GLA. The forum was re-launched in autumn 2012 with an event that had a safer skating theme with lots of other activities. The forum then met again to discuss ideas that had been put forward to spend the £5k that was ring fenced for young people and assemblies officers are working with them to develop these into deliverable projects. It is hoped that someone from the forum will eventually sit on the coordinating group as a young person’s representative.

Engaging young people
• Trader walkabouts
• Trader newsletters and circulars
• Support new traders associations, e.g. Lee Green & Forest Hill
• Trader databases

CASE STUDY: Sydenham Town Centre Steering Group. The assembly priority of ‘vibrant high street’ is developed and delivered through this group made up of traders and stakeholders. Projects worked on include community toilet scheme; late night shopping days; enforcement of illegal forecourt trading; and introducing a radio scheme.

CASE STUDY: Kirkdale Village Trader’s Association, Forest Hill. This group has been instrumental in revitalising this isolated part of the ward. The assembly has supported them with funding and a platform to promote their work. “We have found the assemblies to be very informative about what is happening in the locale, a great place to network and a chance to get funding for our own projects is always welcome!” Jenny Holland, Wooster & Stock estate agents

Engaging traders
Influencing decisions

- Assemblies continue to have option to present issues of concern to Mayor & Cabinet
- Assemblies work with statutory agencies to influence change and make improvements to services
- Assembly action plans influence service development

CASE STUDY: Parking

In Lee Green one of the top issues in the area was concerns around parking and CPZs. Following discussions at assembly meetings a working group was set up and developed a report that was presented to Mayor & Cabinet. This was instrumental in triggering a borough wide review of parking.

CASE STUDY: Planning concerns

A number of issues relating to planning are raised regularly at assemblies, e.g. take away shops and closure of pubs. Local Assemblies and Planning to run two consultation events with coordinating group members to allow them to influence the ‘Local Plan’ which will guide what will get planning permission. In New Cross ward there was concern that the Surrey Quays development would not benefit local people and so a local labour target of 50% was negotiated.

Delivering the action plan: achievements
Community led action

• Assemblies encourage volunteering and community involvement
• Assemblies enable the community to work together to address issues identified by the local residents
• Assemblies provide a platform to start a campaign or garner support

Assemblies help to seed fund projects that bring in further funding and volunteer time

CASE STUDY: Whitefoot community clean-ups

Local residents and pupils from Conisborough College came together to organise a Big Tidy Up. In 2011 they cleaned Castillon Road and the alleyway at the back of Goldsmiths Community Centre, and in 2012 Beachborough Gardens.

CASE STUDY: Volunteer led projects

In Catford South local residents have joined forces to instigate improvements themselves. For example they have started a snow wardens scheme whereby they have a group of volunteers who look after grit bins and clear streets when it snows. They have also arranged community events, noticeboards, and other improvements.

Delivering the action plan: achievements
• 2011-12 total fund of £337,500, each assembly had £18,750

• This included £3,750 Cllr discretionary element – around half the wards kept this separate to main fund

• Approx 200 projects, average spend £1850 per project, 40% of projects were £1000 or under

• Different approaches to spend – small grants participatory budgeting & strategic commissioning

• 2011-12, £400k ‘match funding’ realised, as well many hours of volunteering
Keeping assemblies fresh …

• Different meeting formats
• Working groups, e.g. Lee Green parking group
• Crofton Park neighbourhood forum
• Events and festivals
• Utilising skills within the community – food sponsorship; graphic designers

Assembly arrangements
New promotional communications launched in 2012

• **Film** showcasing assemblies and what they have achieved, using voices of those involved in the assemblies

• **‘What could you achieve?’** campaign; showing what individuals can achieve through their assembly and encourage others to get involved. Included website, JC Decaux sites, postcards.

• Blackheath Olympic **Big Screen** – comedy theatre with Teatro Vivo, ‘Lewisham Amateur Athletic Association Sports Day’. Promotion of the assemblies in a fun and creative way.

• **Social Media**. Session with coordinating groups to network and share ideas and learning; with dedicated support for assemblies that want to develop something.

• **Assembly webpage** - 3177 hits to front page in 2011-12.
"The assembly has been invaluable to TfL for the Kender Triangle scheme; provided a forum to channel feedback in a helpful way and speak directly with those affected." Simon Mouncey, TfL

="There was a very warm welcome and a good atmosphere. As this was my first assembly I didn’t know what to expect but it was a good meeting.” Perry Vale resident, March 2012

="Very interesting assembly, giving us a chance to meet our neighbours in the community.” Blackheath resident, July 2011

="I was very impressed by the fact that empowering a community and promoting cohesion is not just an ideal, but also results in a stronger community.” Kyoko Yoshimoto, Japan Local Government Centre (participant on Intercultural Cities study tour to Lewisham, 2012)

="From attending several assemblies, it seems to me that thought is given to the planning of each one. Its not just a routine event.” Forest Hill resident, August 2011

="The Local Assembly’s help was very apparent and much appreciated in assisting the Open Futures Project to launch in Bellingham. Through your guidance we were able to access the right funding channels and it also helped inspire this project. Sergeant Christopher Ellen, Bellingham Safer Neighbourhood Team

Feedback about assemblies
• Borough wide survey to
  - find out more in depth feedback from people who attend what they think about assemblies
  - find out from those who don’t attend what might encourage them to get involved

• Survey was open October – December 2012

• Advertised through various channels, e.g. Lewisham Life, Positive Ageing Council, Young Citizens Panel, twitter, schools, assembly door to door letters and at Assembly meetings

• 256 responses

• Responses from all wards in borough

• 2/3rd responders attended assemblies, 1/3rd never attended
• Why people never attended
  ➢ 31% never heard / 39% practical reasons / 30% doesn’t meet their needs
• For those that don’t attend 65% would like to give views through online means
• Main reason people attend meetings is to find out information about local area (23%); followed by wanting to influence what happens in area (19%)
• % of people who agreed or strongly agreed the assembly helped them to:
  ➢ influence decisions 80%
  ➢ build good relationships between local people 86%
  ➢ get to know others in the local area 84%
  ➢ feel they belonged to the local community 83%
  ➢ bring people from different backgrounds together 81%
  ➢ get more involved in their local area 59%
  ➢ Make a difference in their local area 80%

Assembly survey – key results
Around half of people say they get enough information about what their assembly has achieved. Lewisham Life, email and at assembly meetings were most popular ways to be kept updated.

When asked what their top three priorities for delivery of assemblies were, responders said the most important was ‘support for local groups’, followed by ‘assembly fund’ and ‘formal meetings’.

![Bar chart showing priorities for delivery of assemblies, with 'support for local groups' being the highest priority, followed by 'assembly fund' and 'formal meetings'.]
Questions

Q&A
The assembly programme over the next few years …

• What do the committee feel the main purpose of the assemblies programme is?

• Bearing in mind reduced resources in times of austerity, does the committee have thoughts on how to best maximise the capacity and resources of the community to work with us to deliver assemblies; and therefore where to focus council resources.

Looking forward
Tasks undertaken by Assembly Coordinators

Assembly meeting preparations
Publicity, newsletters

Engagement, outside participation, face to face

Youth forums
Reporting
Contact lists

Research, analysis

Assembly Fund management
Community meetings, e.g. TRAs

Assembly Fund monitoring

Action Plan coordination and delivery
Liaison with partner organisations

Cllr and assembly chair support
Case work, signposting, point of contact for Council

Assembly tasks
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