

Local Wellbeing Conference

Neighbourhoods, community empowerment and wellbeing

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Neighbourhoods provide the organising base for families

- Physical space and structure for social relations
- Services – schools, doctors, shops, open spaces
- Social networks
 - family, neighbours, friends, familiar faces
- Springboard for work
 - transport, information, contacts, education
- Wider participation
 - activities, responsibilities, protest, support

Community as more informal, intimate sense of belonging

- 90% of families say community matters
- Families find it in “familiar faces”, knowing neighbours, trust, “community spirit”
- Undermined by “strangers”, “over-rapid change”, disruptions e.g. regeneration
- Supported by common, supervised spaces
- Fun activities need organising and help

Participation and involvement

- Only certain way for external agencies to know what will work
- Vital for bringing families together
- Helps create a sense of community
- Transforms people's sense of place
- Can be very empowering and uplifting
- “Token” representation depressing
- Influencing decisions changes dynamics

Problem of disempowerment

- Too few channels of involvement
- Sense of no control or influence
- Negative external environment
- “Rough” behaviour clears streets
- Weak social controls damage relationships

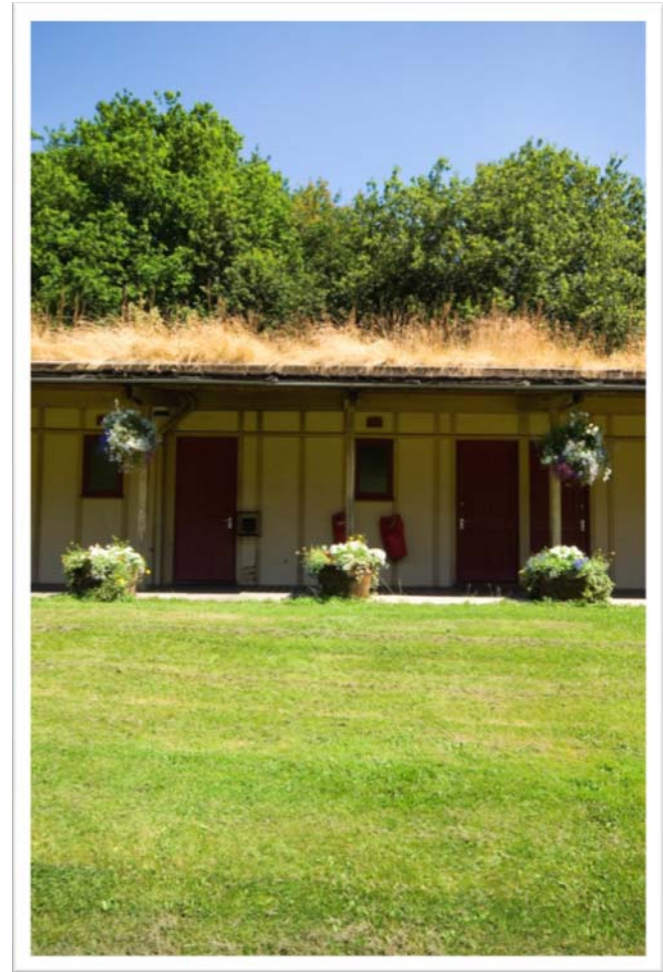
Why we set up the National Communities Resource Centre

- Local environments are linked to wider problems
- Changing sense of direction is vital
- Universal human instinct for problem-solving
- Local people “live” local problems
- “Activists” want to tackle problems
- Bringing people together transforms capacity
- Taking people away frees up learning
- Training and support open doors

What makes quality of life in low-income areas?

- a) Assessing Neighbourhood Renewal
- b) Reinvestment and upgrading
- c) Neighbourhood policing and wardens
- d) Managing open spaces and streets
- e) Car-taming – pedestrian priority, buses
- f) Group activities / events
- g) School-parent links, Sure Start
- h) Exclusion / inclusion / brokering / hand-holding
- i) Things improve with effort

Trafford Hall, National Communities Resource Centre



Trafford Hall, National Communities Resource Centre



Neighbourhood wardens



Brindley Place, Birmingham

