

### Where can I find out more?

Locally: from your Community Planning Co-ordinator (contact your local authority). A list is also available at: [www.communityplanning.org.uk](http://www.communityplanning.org.uk)

Nationally: from Scotland's Community Planning Website: [www.communityplanning.org.uk](http://www.communityplanning.org.uk), which also provides links to a variety of guidance and practice notes

### Other sources of information

The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)  
Rosebery House  
9 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5EZ  
Tel: 0131 479 9200  
(Guide to 2003 Act:  
[www.cosla.gov.uk/attachments/parliament/2003actguide.pdf](http://www.cosla.gov.uk/attachments/parliament/2003actguide.pdf))

The Scottish Executive Community Planning Team can be contacted at:  
[community.planning@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:community.planning@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) and on  
Tel: 0131 244 0420

Community Planning: Statutory Guidance:  
[www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/localgov/cpsg-00.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/localgov/cpsg-00.asp)

### For general regeneration issues:

Scottish Centre for Regeneration  
Festival Business Centre  
150 Brand Street, Glasgow G51 1DH  
Tel: 0141 419 1690  
Email: [scr@communitiescotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:scr@communitiescotland.gsi.gov.uk)  
SCR Learning Point 1 Making it meaningful: involving communities in community planning  
[www.scr.communitiescotland.gov.uk](http://www.scr.communitiescotland.gov.uk)

### For issues relating to community engagement:

Community Engagement team  
Thistle House  
91 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh EH12 5HE  
Tel: 0131 313 0044  
[www.communitiescotland.gov.uk](http://www.communitiescotland.gov.uk)

### What are FAQ sheets?

**These are short guides to help you improve your understanding of important issues in community regeneration. They give you a quick and easy introduction to some of the main Scottish Executive policies and explain what they mean in practice.**

### What is community planning?

A process which helps organisations such as councils, the National Health Service (NHS) and many others to work together with their local community to plan and deliver better services and promote the well-being of communities. In Scotland each local authority has been given the lead role in its own area. They must bring the great variety of organisations that influence the future of the area together into a partnership. This partnership aims to develop a shared vision of the priorities facing the area and of the contributions that each partner can make to achieving those priorities.

### Is it all about drawing up a community plan?

No – in fact, there is no requirement for a plan to be produced. The continuing process of working together is the most important thing. There will probably be a strategy document or a community plan that sets out the vision and priorities to help people work together. But the decisions taken in developing, implementing and reviewing this are at least as important as the actual document.

A community plan is not the same as the local authority's own overall plan or that of any other partner. It is also not the type of plan that planning

departments produce for land use and development purposes. It should be consistent, however, with these plans.

### Who is involved?

Local authorities, NHS Boards, Communities Scotland, local enterprise companies from the Scottish or Highlands and Islands Enterprise networks, police and fire authorities and regional transport partnerships all have a duty under law to be the core partners. Arrangements should be in place to involve local communities and their representatives as well as the local voluntary sector. Many other partners may be involved with equal status, depending on local choices – for example, colleges and universities, business representatives, Jobcentre Plus, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Scottish Water.

### Do they have to do it?

The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 says that core partners must be involved and sets out the general purpose of community planning. It also requires Scottish Ministers to promote and encourage community planning. But the local partners in each area are wholly responsible for the process itself.



## How is it organised?

This is for people to decide locally. Each Community Planning Partnership brings together senior representatives from its various partners. A wide variety of subgroups on different themes and other forums may report to them. Some areas have set up arrangements for each neighbourhood to develop a local community plan. In a few cases joint forums have been established with neighbouring local authority areas to discuss shared issues. Each partnership has a chair and a person who acts as community planning coordinator.

## What issues are covered?

Local need and especially the needs and wishes of local communities should be central to deciding the priorities. So each plan varies. But they are likely to cover a broad range, including economy, health, regeneration, environment, transport, safety, educational and cultural issues. Some may set out strategies to meet the needs of particular sections of the population such as young or elderly people. All should have a strategy for the further development of community engagement. One of the main aims is to enable the delivery of better, more responsive public services. But the proposed ways of dealing with issues can draw on the resources of any of the partners, in the public, private or voluntary sectors.

## What's so new about it?

Community Planning was already taking shape in all Scottish local authorities in the late 1990s. It built on previous best practice in partnership working and community engagement. But these had not always been given the central role in the work of the agencies involved that they now must have.

## Do we really need more partnerships?

One of the key aims of community planning is to co-ordinate other initiatives and partnerships by giving them a clear link to a common strategy and a consistent place to report to. This should reduce the number of existing partnerships and avoid the temptation to set up more.

## For example?

Amongst others, community learning and development partnerships, drug and alcohol action teams, community safety partnerships and local economic forums. These should all have clear links to community planning. Joint health improvement plans are expected to play an important part in community plans.

## Is the community really going to be involved?

It is a statutory requirement that the process should involve consultation and cooperation with community bodies. Arrangements might be made for community representatives to take part at board level. But the wider community should also be consulted, and people should be involved in a range of ways in thematic and local forums.

## Will this just be a one-off consultation exercise?

If it is, it will not work. One of the purposes of community planning should be to develop stronger community engagement for the future, both to feed in to future plans and to strengthen community involvement in services and in improving the quality of life for all.

## Which sections of the community will be involved?

There is no single formula that will ensure effective community involvement.

Different approaches will be taken in different areas, but both geographical communities and 'communities of interest' must be taken into account. There will almost certainly be a role for local community groups and probably for community councils. 'Communities of interest' could be represented by a wide range of voluntary organisations, including groups promoting equalities.

## I'm most interested in my own neighbourhood.

### How can it help the community there?

- First by setting a wider framework for tackling issues that matter locally and getting the commitment of key agencies to this.
- Second by allowing the development of local or neighbourhood community plans, if that is the approach taken.
- Third by giving a high priority to action to meet the learning and development needs of local groups through Community Learning and Development strategies.

## Isn't this just another talking shop?

Community planning discussion is inevitably often at an abstract 'strategic' level, and it can be difficult to see where the 'meat' is. But very senior people get involved, and do not do so for nothing. Partnerships are trying to ensure that there is a practical plan for immediate action related to each theme. Working together, organisations which see different sides of the same problem in their work can often identify the root of the problem and make progress in solving it, rather than treating the symptoms.

## What has this to do with regeneration?

Drawing up a local regeneration strategy and putting it into practice is a major responsibility of each Community Planning Partnership. They must draw up a Regeneration Outcome Agreement for improving life in disadvantaged areas and dealing with other issues that contribute to social and economic disadvantage (see FAQs: Community Regeneration).

