

Planning for life after Big Local

Growing Together, Northampton



Andrea McAuliffe, Chair

Dianne Finnie, Deputy Chair

Kathryn White, Manager, Blackthorn Good Neighbours (LTO)

About us

- Five estates falling into two natural areas
- 9,067 people in 4,751 households
- First Big Local Plan (2013) based on widespread community consultation about needs and priorities
- All resident Community Partnership
- Consensus we should spread the benefit widely

In the beginning . . .

- Development of Community Partnership
- Experienced Chair, Deputy Chair and Co-ordinator
- Good relationship with LTO
- Priorities from community consultation work:
 - children and young people
 - older residents
 - protecting and enhancing the local environment
 - bringing the community together

Blackthorn Good Neighbours (LTO)

- local charitable company set up in 1998
- already working on three of our five estates
- ran local Sure Start centre from 2008 to 2014; currently runs a nursery and community centre
- moving to a more community-based approach and developing a community work programme

A play area on each estate

(top consultation priority)



Expansion of youth work



New older people's clubs



Environmental projects



Support for BGN's Nursery (covering three estates)



New Community Hub

(other two estates)



Plus . . .

- Community Grants Fund (over 60 grants to date)
- BME projects, Youth shelters, outdoor exercise equipment, dog agility trail, volunteering support . . .

* * *

- Projected spend to March 2018 = £907,069
- Expect to complete spend of £1m by March 2019 – including a liabilities fund carried forward

Towards an exit strategy

- Started thinking about this early
- Decided against setting up a separate organisation
- Values and visions shared between BGN and ourselves
- Only major difference concerned area covered

Exit strategy outline

- Put projects on a sustainable footing
- Merge with BGN
- Neighbourhood Plan
- Ensure financial legacy for merged organisation

Put projects on a sustainable footing

- Phasing out of major grants
- Replacement funding secured from Children in Need, Public Health England, Age UK, Borough Council etc
- Partnership working to give long term sustainability
- Direct fundraising to replace Big Local support
- Borough Council taking on maintenance of play areas

Merger with BGN

- Different organisations; different cultures
- Process run over approximately eighteen months
- Lots of getting to know each other and confidence building
- Frequent opportunities for reflection and second thoughts
- Established *principles* first: many key *decisions* (name, structure, roles etc) still to be taken
- Creation of Brookside Hub
- Training and other support for members as required

Working together

- Exchanging members for meetings
- Joint workshops and awayday events

leading to

- Creation of shadow Board for merged charity from this autumn

Neighbourhood Plan

- Government initiative to give residents greater say in future development of their area
- Work has been separately funded
- Overseen by Neighbourhood Forum – all Partnership members (majority!) plus Councillors, Police, voluntary sector
- Very strong community engagement evidence base
- Approved by 91% of turnout in February 2017 referendum
- Runs until 2029 so gives long term influence
- Happy to advise any other Big Local group considering this

Financial legacy

- Maintenance fund built up for play equipment etc before Council assumes responsibility
- Planned to leave a liabilities fund to merged charity from the £1m
- Anything left over from these two funds will eventually be used for development of merged charity or community grants



©GospelGifs