

Evaluation of the Guide Neighbourhood Programme – The Seedley & Langworthy Perspective – A Summary Report

Background information

Seedley & Langworthy Trust (SALT) & Guide Neighbourhood Status

The Trust became a Guide Neighbourhood in January 2006. Funded through the Home Office, the Guide Neighbourhood programme is a national programme offering advice and support to neighbourhoods preparing to improve their area.

The aim of the programme is to make it easier for residents of areas undergoing regeneration and renewal to transform their neighbourhood for the benefit of all the community.

Experienced residents who have first hand experience in transforming their neighbourhood act as 'resident guides' encouraging and inspiring residents from other areas so that they too can be the key to successful and sustainable regeneration and renewal.

Key Evaluation Themes

The evaluation sought to provide an insight into the experiences of SALT having been selected as a Guide Neighbourhood in January 2006. The key themes of the evaluation were to explore:-

- Resident guide perspectives of the programme
- The organisational impact of the programme on SALT

Methodology

The intention of this evaluation was to gather an insight into the Guide Neighbourhood programme from a local perspective, highlighting how it's impacted on SALT and the resident guides who've supported its delivery.

Resident guide perspectives of the programme - Interviews with resident guides

The evaluator conducted individual, semi-structured interviews with each of the resident guides (7 in total), the key themes and questions adopted are shown below:-

Community Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How long have you been involved in/with community activity in Seedley & Langworthy?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How and what made you become involved?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who encouraged and supported you to become more involved?
How would you describe your experiences as a result of becoming more involved?

Levels of involvement in the GN programme
What's been your involvement in the GN programme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How've you supported the programme? (Locally)

Reflecting on the experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you describe the experience of having supported the GN programme?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there anything you've learned from being involved in the programme that may help support you/or your community in the future?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would you recommend to others to become involved in this or similar programmes?

The organisational impact of the programme on SALT

Evaluator utilised recent desk-top information provided by SALT's Guide Neighbourhood Programme Co-ordinator in the form of an exit interview with a member of the National evaluation team to assess organisational impact.

Findings – resident guide perspectives – (from interviews with 7 resident guides)

Community Activity	Findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How long have you been involved in/with community activity in Seedley & Langworthy? 	On average 3 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How and what made you become involved? 	<p>Key triggers – linked into the area's cleaner, greener safer agenda.</p> <p>Examples (guides provided support with the development of/and maintenance of ;)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alleygating schemes • Community gardens • In-Bloom (community involvement gardening project) <p>(also)</p> <p>Training & development Accessing local training courses provided by SALT & Salford CVS.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who encouraged and supported you to become more involved? 	<p>Key support mechanisms – in particular, through SALT's Resident Involvement Officer (also);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regeneration team (Seedley & Langworthy) • Learning manager (Salford CVS)
How would you describe your experiences as a result of becoming more involved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging • Satisfying • Rewarding • Enjoyable • Frustrating

Levels of involvement in the GN programme	Findings
What's been your involvement in the GN programme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting SALT host a number of visits from other neighbourhoods • Attending conferences/seminar/networking events • Attended organised visits to other neighbourhoods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How've you supported the programme? (Locally) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing information, experiences and best practice • Providing opportunities for visitors to see first hand the work/planning that goes into community engagement projects • Tour of alleygates, community gardens and opportunities to meet other residents • Discussion of ways to tackle nuisance/anti-social behaviour

Reflecting on the experience	Findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you describe the experience of having supported the GN programme? 	<p>Positive – a) rewarding – opportunities to share information and experiences. Satisfying to see & hear positive reactions from visitors.</p> <p>b) informative – visits to other neighbourhoods, been “eye-opening” to see their approach.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there anything you've learned from being involved in the programme that may help support you/or your community in the future? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) to be more pro-active surrounding funding and fundraising opportunities – explore possibilities 2) undertaking visits to other neighbourhoods – certain parallels with Salford – transferable knowledge & information 3) networking aspect proved useful 4) became more confident as the programme progressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would you recommend to others to become involved in this or similar programmes? 	<p>Generally yes – positive learning experience</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) see this role as crucial in encouraging involvement/engagement 2) reinforces the messages of becoming & staying involved 3) however – a question of balance with other commitments

The organisational impact of the programme on SALT

(taken from GN EXIT INTERVIEW between SALT's Programme Coordinator and a member of the National Evaluation Team)

From an organisational perspective, there appears to have been a number of positive impacts. The programme has assisted in developing:-

Staff capacity & expertise – Through using Guide Neighbourhood Funding to lever in some ERDF funding to employ a part-time office co-ordinator and to house the city council's neighbourhood development officer. The latter, has encouraged greater linkages with the local neighbourhood management structures.

Raising the profile of the organisation – Being part of a Home-Office/DCLG funded project. It's almost like being given recognition for the work of the organisation and the added value it delivers.

Building relationships with other organisations – either through hosting visits from other neighbourhoods or working with and supporting other neighbourhoods more intensively through the Seedcorn Funding.

Raised confidence & skills – of both SALT staff involved in the programme and the resident guides themselves. As the programme developed both parties became more confident and experienced in delivering different elements of the programme.

Greater awareness and linkages to the National Policy Agenda – During the course of the programme the Trust has worked hard to link in more effectively with national strategies such as the Respect Agenda – attending the recent Respect launch and working with the resident guides to push the agenda forward locally.

Concluding remarks

The Guide Neighbourhood programme has generally provided a positive learning experience for Seedley and Langworthy – from a resident guide perspective in terms of building skills and confidence and allowing information and experience sharing to take place.

From an organisational perspective SALT has gained a greater insight into the experiences of other organisations involved in community-based regeneration and how they can seek to be more engaged in the national policy agenda.

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