



## **Better Community Engagement:**

**Development of a learning programme  
to support and improve practice  
in engaging with communities**

## **INFORMATION PACK**

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## 1. Background information

In April 2008 the Scottish Government (SG) and Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) issued a joint statement of commitment to community empowerment. In that statement community empowerment was defined as:

*“a process where people work together to make change happen in their communities by having more power and influence over what matters to them.”*

Since issuing the statement the Government and CoSLA, working with the third sector (e.g. community & voluntary sectors), have been developing a community empowerment action plan. The plan covers several broad areas of work including:

- Highlighting examples of community empowerment;
- Providing direct capacity building investment to community groups;
- Investing in an integrated programme to develop skills, learning and networking in relation to community empowerment and engagement;
- Developing support to help communities own assets;
- Investing in improved support for community capacity building;
- Working with Audit Scotland to agree how to assess progress on empowerment.

As part of the investment in an integrated programme to develop skills, learning and networking in relation to community empowerment and engagement, learning materials and programmes based on the Better Community Engagement Framework will be developed, to meet the needs of those delivering community engagement in local areas. This will bring national coherence and ensure quality in training and learning around community engagement practice across Scotland.

[“Better Community Engagement: A Framework for Learning”](#) (Learning Connections, Communities Scotland, 2007) sets out a framework of competencies designed to enable the planning of learning in community engagement. The framework was developed to build the capacity of practitioners in community engagement and complements the [National Standards for Community Engagement](#) (Communities Scotland, 2005) and [The Learning in Regeneration Skills Pack](#), (Scottish Centre for Regeneration, Communities Scotland, 2005) by focusing on the key area of community engagement and providing a resource specifically for curriculum development. As part of the Scottish Government’s investment, we want to develop a range of learning materials based on the *Better Community Engagement Framework*.

As outlined in *Better Community Engagement: A Framework for Learning*, the main purpose of community engagement practice is “to develop, influence and promote policy and implement practice which engages communities as partners in change”. Nine primary elements which contribute to achieving this purpose were identified. These cover foundation elements and developmental elements.

## Foundation elements

- recognising diversity and designing inclusive ways of working
- enabling communities to access resources and deliver services
- working in partnership with agencies, organisations and communities
- involving communities in planning services

## Developmental elements

- negotiating with communities and partners
- addressing conflicts and supporting change
- using participatory evaluation
- being a leader and encouraging leadership
- supporting people and organisations to learn together

In addition, the framework set out the core skills and competencies that are relevant to community engagement practice including communication skills, process skills and planning and evaluation skills.

The framework as a whole represents a statement of high level and diverse competencies that would enable effective practice across the range of types and contexts for community engagement. We want to use the framework to support a programme of work that will contribute to building the capacity of the public services workforce by:

- developing, implementing and evaluating models for effectively improving competencies and skills in community engagement
- building an evidence base for further development

## **2. Project Aims**

The aims of this project are to:

- establish one or more working models of effective learning for community engagement across Scotland
- evidence how structured learning could impact or improve community engagement practice
- provide an evidence base for future development of learning for community engagement

## **3. Project Delivery Model**

The model for delivery of this project is a national development programme which will operate through a small number of local demonstration projects. There will be distinctive, but closely linked, national and local roles in developing and delivering learning materials and programmes.

At a local level, to better enable strategic development of the local demonstration project, it is expected that there will be input from local stakeholder organisations such as, the Community Planning Partnership, Community Health Partnership or Community Learning and Development Partnership. It is expected that such partnerships would have a sponsorship role, to support development of the local demonstration project. This would facilitate shared ownership of the project aims.

To support national level involvement in the project, an Advisory Group will be established, with representation from relevant stakeholders. The Advisory Group will provide advice and support to the strategic development of the project.

The project will involve:

- development of training programmes and materials
- working with local stakeholder organisations to plan, develop and oversee the local demonstration projects
- supporting the delivery of learning, working with local learning providers
- establishing a range of delivery models across the local demonstration projects
- evaluating the progress and impact of all aspects of the project
- disseminating learning and conclusions by a range of appropriate methods to stakeholders across Scotland in order to inform and stimulate learning, leading to improved practice in community engagement

## **4. Local Demonstration Projects**

### **4.1 What are they?**

It is anticipated that the Local Demonstration Projects will include local partnerships, agencies or projects, who currently provide community engagement training for staff, who would be interested in working with us to develop a range of learning products and tools, specific to their local needs, but that could be used or adapted for use on a national basis.

The number of local demonstration projects participating will be limited to between 6 and 10. We are keen to ensure as wide a representation as possible, for example, to cover:

- A mix of urban and rural areas;
- A mix of big urban and smaller urban;
- Whole partnership approaches and smaller scale, more local work;
- A third sector, community-led piece of work;
- Perhaps some multi agency work and some single agency work

## 4.2 Expectations of Local Demonstration Projects

Whatever the focus of community engagement of the proposed project, the successful Contractor will ensure that work taken forward as part of the overall project:

- provides experience that will contribute substantially to continued improvement of learning to support community engagement across Scotland
- promotes and enables continuing development of learning for community engagement in the Community Planning Partnership area concerned
- contributes to tackling the inequalities in Scottish society, through improving community engagement to enable people to have more influence over decisions and services that affect them

## 5 Equalities

No-one should be denied opportunities because of their race or ethnicity, their disability, their gender or sexual orientation, their age or religion. This principle underpins all the work of the Scottish Government and is particularly important for the Better Community Engagement Framework. Equalities practice is an essential requirement for the implementation of the Framework and for the development of learning materials.

## 6 What the programme involves

### 6.1 Identifying and establishing local demonstration projects

It is expected that between 6 and 10 local demonstration projects will participate in this programme. Expressions of interest are now being sought and projects should complete the attached Expression of Interest Form (Section 7) and return it by **Friday 27 March**.

Successful projects will be notified by Friday 8 May. They will meet with the contractor within 8 weeks of the contract start date – estimated to be 13<sup>th</sup> April.

The local demonstration project will work with the contractor, to establish and develop an action plan including, as a minimum:

- Aims and objectives
- Targets and key deliverables
- Schedule of activity, including meetings with local demonstration projects
- Roles and responsibilities of the Contractor and the local demonstration project

## **6.2 Advisory Group**

An Advisory Group for this project will be established, by the Scottish Government, with representation from relevant stakeholders, to offer advice and support for this project. It is expected that this group would meet twice a year, until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011. The appointed contractor will provide an update to the Advisory Group at these meetings. This update includes a presentation on the progress of the work and a short written report for each local demonstration project.

## **6.3 Shared ownership**

Engagement, shared ownership and partnership working with stakeholders at both local and national levels, will be crucial to the success of this project. At a local level, this will involve working with the local demonstration projects and local stakeholders, such as the local Community Planning Partnership. At a national level, engagement with umbrella organisations, such as CoSLA will be essential.

The appointed contractor will draft a communications brief which provides an outline of the project and provides specific details on the local demonstration projects. The brief will be provided to both local and national stakeholders.

Working with the appointed contractor, the local demonstration projects, will develop and implement a plan for local level engagement with relevant stakeholders and training providers, to ensure shared ownership of the programme at local level. It is essential that local stakeholders are included in the project from the beginning.

It is essential that national stakeholders are kept up to date with progress on this project, including CoSLA, relevant voluntary sector intermediaries, the Improvement Service and other national groupings with a particular role in supporting community engagement, such as the Community Development Alliance Scotland (CDAS) and Community Learning and Development Managers Scotland (CLDMS).

A national engagement plan will be developed by the Scottish Government and the appointed contractor, to ensure shared ownership of the project with these national stakeholder organisations.

The Scottish Government will lead in engaging with the national stakeholders, issuing communications, arranging meetings and 2 national level events, and providing secretariat as required. This is to ensure that they are kept up to date with progress on this project and kept abreast of wider community engagement and community empowerment policies.

## **6.4 Development of learning and training materials**

The appointed contractor, in conjunction with the local demonstration project, will liaise with relevant local partners and develop learning and training materials for each local demonstration project which will be based on the *Better Community Engagement* framework.

It is expected that this will include as a minimum:

- Conducting a needs analysis, working with the local demonstration project and their stakeholders to:
  - assess the existing range of training and learning materials and the current knowledge and skills of users
  - identify learning and/or training needs
- Develop learning and training materials, building on existing resources in use locally, where appropriate, and working in partnership with local training providers to develop these
- Ensure that training providers liaise with the local demonstration project and with local stakeholders to ensure the appropriateness of materials and programmes.

## **6.5 Delivery of learning and training programmes**

The appointed contractor will work with training providers and local stakeholders to develop and implement a plan to facilitate the delivery of learning and training programmes for each local demonstration project. This plan may include assisting the local partners to develop learning programmes or utilise existing tools and materials, and signposting to other organisations and services available.

## **6.6 Sustainable learning for community engagement**

Based on the needs analysis and development of learning and training materials outlined above, the appointed contractor, working with the local demonstration project, will develop a plan to build local capacity to support learning for community engagement to ensure that learning for community engagement continues within the local demonstration project areas on a sustainable basis, beyond the duration of the contract period.

## **6.7 Monitoring and evaluation**

A two-tier monitoring and evaluation process will be conducted by the appointed contractor: one for the programme as a whole, and one for each local demonstration project.

## **6.8 Final report**

The Contractor will produce and deliver a written final report on the programme which includes findings, conclusions and learning from the experience. This report will be issued to all stakeholders with an interest and responsibilities in community planning, community engagement and community learning practice, Community Learning and Development Partnerships and learning and training providers.



## 7. Further information and expression of interest

For further information, please contact Wendy-Louise Smith:

By e-mail at [WendyLouise.Smith@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:WendyLouise.Smith@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

or

By telephone on 0141 605 4186

If you would like to participate as a local demonstration project for this programme, please complete the Expression of Interest Form and return it to Wendy-Louise Smith by **Friday 27 March**:

By e-mail at [WendyLouise.Smith@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:WendyLouise.Smith@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

Or print it off and return it to the following address:

Community Engagement  
Housing and Regeneration Directorate  
Scottish Government  
58 Waterloo Street  
Glasgow  
G2 7DA



**Better Community Engagement:  
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practice in engaging with communities**

**PILOT PROJECT  
Expression of Interest Form**

**Section 1: Contact details**

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Organisation:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Telephone number:</b>	
<b>E-mail:</b>	

**Section 2: Current community engagement training and resources**

Please tell us what community engagement training and resources you are currently providing, or have access to:

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Housing and Regeneration Directorate  
Regeneration Division

T: 0141-305 4186 F: 0141-305 4170  
E:  
communityengagement@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

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### **Section 3: Maximising the effectiveness of community engagement**

Please tell us what gaps or needs in skills/training/learning you believe need to be addressed, in order to maximise the effectiveness of your community engagement:

### **Section 4: Partners**

Who are the partners you would expect to participate in learning and training activities:

## **Section 5: Delivery of training and learning**

Who are the partners you would expect to contribute to the delivery of training and learning in community engagement:

## **Section 6: Benefits of participating as a pilot project**

What benefits are you looking to achieve, through participating as a pilot project?

Please return completed forms by Friday 27 March to:

Wendy-Louise Smith

By e-mail at: [communityengagement@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:communityengagement@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

Or by post to:

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Housing and Regeneration Directorate  
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58 Waterloo Street  
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