

**VIABLE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES FOR HOUSING
ESTATES IN REGENERATION AREAS:
OPTIONS FOR COMMUNITY BASED STRUCTURES TO
FACILITATE ENHANCED COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION,
INVOLVEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP WITH STATUTORY
ORGANISATIONS**

Draft Report and Proposed Development Programme

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Background and Context | 3 |
| 2. The Experience from Other Regeneration Experiences..... | 4 |
| 2.1 Overview | 4 |
| 2.2 What's the Point? Making the Case for Local Involvement | 5 |
| 2.3 What is Understood by Estate Management?..... | 8 |
| 2.4 Getting it Right: Examples and 'Rules' for Good Practice | 9 |
| 2.5 Avoiding Getting it Wrong: Weaknesses and Threats | 16 |
| 2.6 Monitoring and Reviewing Participation in Estate Management | 19 |
| 2.7. Conclusions on Themes and Issues Emerging..... | 21 |
| 3. Implications for Moving Forward in Limerick | 22 |
| 3.1 Stakeholders' Survey Results | 24 |
| 3.2 Summary of Issues Emerging: Strengths, Shortcomings and Challenges | 29 |
| 3.3 Priority Action Areas Identified | 30 |
| Supporting Active Involvement and Effective Partnership: | 32 |
| 4. Conclusions: Proposals for 'Community Viability Programme'..... | 33 |
| 4.1 Summary of Issues Emerging | 33 |
| 4.2 Proposed 'Sustainability' Programme..... | 36 |
| References and Resources:..... | 45 |

1. Background and Context

PAUL Partnership and the Limerick Regeneration Agency, in consultation with Limerick City Council, have been collaborating with a view to investigating options for enhancing and developing viable long term community structures for the management of housing estates (private and public) in regeneration areas. The aim has been to identify workable mechanisms to nurture and encourage the democratic participation and involvement of residents in the ongoing decisions that affect their daily lives.

The longer term aim is about strengthening community structures: enabling residents to undertake a greater degree of responsibility in the management of estates in Limerick post Regeneration.

Nexus was contracted to carry out a research and consultation exercise, the results of which are intended to inform planning and decision-making about estate management and community involvement. It is hoped that results from the exercise will contribute in particular to:

- Acknowledging and making visible current strengths and assets associated with tenants, residents and other community-based organisations.
- Establishing outstanding needs of organisations with regard to their viable participation in regeneration, management of their own areas, and continuous development into the future (What resources, skills, kind of information etc might be needed?)
- Mapping out, through direct engagement with key statutory agencies and mainstream service providers, those specific areas of planning, management and development where community engagement is desirable and possible.
- Making explicit the structures, procedures and protocols that need to be established to maximise local organisational strengths, address local organisational development needs and maximise the benefit to be achieved through community-statutory co-operation.
- Most importantly of all, achieving consensus and clarity on all these needs and proposals amongst the actors involved.

The research and consultation process comprised the following elements:

1. A review of experience and lessons emerging, in relation to maximising the potential benefit from community involvement in estate management elsewhere.
2. A survey of relevant Limerick-based community organisations, residents associations, programmes and projects: seeking input and feedback on perceived challenges associated with building sustainable involvement; as well as what may be needed to address some of these challenges.
3. A Community Representative Focus Group: offering the opportunity for community representatives to review results from the community survey, and

to consider possible implications in terms of building and supporting effective participation.

4. Discussions with representatives of key agencies, organisations and projects (covering both community and statutory interests): exploring the potential for practical and realisable initiatives. Here constraints as well as opportunities were considered, in an effort to move towards workable recommendations that both address needs, and are perceived as being possible.
5. A Joint Stakeholder Workshop: facilitated in a way that allowed all relevant stakeholders in the process (community-based and statutory) to consider a draft “*Programme for Community Viability*”.
6. Writing up of this programme: based on consensus emerging on its key elements (respective roles, responsibilities, resource implications etc).

The research process was overseen by a Steering Group comprising representatives of Limerick Regeneration Agency, PAUL Partnership, the Regeneration Community Consultative Forum, and Limerick City Council.

2. Planning for Viable Management Structures: The Experience from Other Regeneration Experiences

Focus for the first part of the research process was on identifying and reviewing relevant information and documentation from on community involvement in estate management. A particular focus here was on estate management within the context of urban regeneration, taking into account:

1. Documented experience from elsewhere: what are the issues to be considered in planning for viable and sustainable estate management in the context of regeneration?
2. Structures and procedures that are now in place to facilitate community and resident involvement in the management of estates in Limerick regeneration areas.

2.1 Overview

Estate management has provided the focus for a considerable volume of research, chronologies and argued opinion: particularly in all of those instances where regeneration processes have been documented. All are based on attempts to explain or assist a model of management that is built on partnership: whereby local residents are enabled to become jointly responsible, with local authorities and other agencies, for managing their housing estates and related services.

Insofar as these documented instances can contribute to identifying key issues and challenges for Limerick, they can be summarised under four broad headings:

1. Efforts to describe and demonstrate *the rationale for participation* by the community in estate management: why involve local residents? What are the

advantages that could be expected if full involvement is facilitated – especially in those areas where regeneration is planned or underway?

2. Some research and analyses that set out to *define or describe* what is meant by resident or community participation. What are the key elements that need to exist for effective community involvement in management to be realised in regeneration?
3. A series of proposals and suggestions that aim to define what is *good practice* in community participation in managing regeneration: What needs to be done if effective and sustainable involvement is to be assured? This body of literature also provides some pointers as to what is needed to ensure good practice is adhered to.
4. A further set of critical research findings that point out the *weaknesses, failings and threats* which need to be considered when planning for community and resident involvement in planning and managing estates.
5. Proposals and resources that aim to provide assistance with *monitoring, reviewing and evaluating community participation*: how can you be sure that it is happening and that it is effective?

Some examples are presented and discussed below under each of these headings. All Irish literature and research cited has been produced by regeneration projects that are Dublin based. The majority of the remainder is UK-based: not surprisingly given British Government policy emphasis on community involvement as part of the ‘National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal’. Other citations are from experiences in New Zealand, Australia, Canada and Norway. All examples cited are referenced at the end of the document – together with links to on-line reports and resources where available.

Discussion of the themes emerging is followed by an attempt to summarise overall implications for the current situation in Limerick.

2.2 What’s the Point? Making the Case for Local Involvement

Community participation, and the involvement of residents in estate management, is seen as central to successful regeneration in almost all projects where regeneration is being planned and/or implemented. In the British experience, Evans points out that participation by the community has become:

“Part of orthodox thinking in the burgeoning literature on research and good practice in regeneration over the years since New Labour came to power” (Mel Evans, 2009).

The UK Government's ‘National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal’ placed great importance on local communities “playing a central role in securing a better quality of life for themselves.”

In looking in more detail at the potential benefits of local or community participation, Alan Gilchrist (Community Development Foundation UK, 2000) asks the questions: *Why is community participation important? What are the benefits? Why bother?*

In responding to these questions, he proposes a number of grounds on which the rationale for local involvement is built:

1. *Ethical grounds* – arguing that it is ‘only fair’ to involve people in decisions which are going to affect, possibly even transform, their lives.
2. *Democratic aspects* – the fact that public money is being spent, there is a need for accountability; and that participation makes a contribution to strengthening civil society and active citizenship.
3. *Policy and funding requirements* – in that the existence of partnership, community-led initiatives, capacity-building and integrated approaches are required to be monitored in Britain (through ‘Quality of Life’ indicators).
4. *Economic grounds* – some programmes have seen the Voluntary sector as being important in regeneration as both employer and purchaser of goods. Their full involvement in the process should therefore have economic benefits for the community.
5. *Social welfare* – the fact that vibrant local networks and opportunities to be active in collective activities result in ‘better physical and mental health, reduced crime and fear of crime, happier people, more effective ways of dealing with shared problems and conflicts.’

Analyses supported by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation draw together some of the more positive results from projects where communities are more centrally involved, or where a partnership approach to estate management has been adopted. Research has shown that ‘good practice in this field of work’ can lead to:

- Communities having a fresh perspective, often being able to see the problems or challenges in new ways.
- Resident involvement helping to deliver programs which more accurately target local needs.
- The resulting projects being more ‘acceptable’ to the local community.
- Program outputs which have been designed with input from local residents being more likely to last longer because communities feel ‘ownership’ of them.
- The constructive involvement of communities in urban regeneration helping to build local organizational skills, making it easier to develop strong successor organizations.
- Successful community involvement helping to revitalize democracy.

Equally strong arguments are put forward in terms of long-term benefits of participation, or contribution to sustainability of community and social fabric. Chapman and Kirk (2001) argue that community involvement is an integral part of the regeneration process; and that creating strong, sustainable and cohesive communities

implies that the 'community voice' needs to be at the very centre of decision-making processes.

More specifically, building the capacity of communities in the regeneration process contributes to the creation of 'social capital' in the longer term:

“Community capacity building supports individuals, community groups and community organisations through the development of skills, knowledge and expertise to manage and continue the development process. The literature highlights the importance of ‘Social Capital’ to community development. If undertaken in a systematic and structured way, capacity building activity not only improves the regeneration process and the long-term sustainability of an area or neighbourhood but acts as a catalyst to engender stronger social ties, trust and responsibility, while enhancing the whole social fabric of the community.” (Chapman and Kirk, 2001)

Findings from literature review, case studies and surveys in New Zealand show strong evidence that participation in regeneration and redevelopment has enhanced the wellbeing of marginalised communities. According to (Ricketts 2008), four aspects of community wellbeing stand out as being most significantly enhanced by participatory processes in the New Zealand experience. These are:

- An increased empowerment
- Enhanced vision-making and advocacy capabilities
- An increased collective action
- An enhanced sense of pride, belonging and connectedness to community.

A review of similar experiences in Australia (Arthurson 2003) focuses on the negative consequences likely if community involvement is not facilitated (and this is particularly true of disadvantaged area and socially excluded groupings):

“Without active involvement of residents in regeneration, policy measures are likely to fail and in doing so reinforce any existing sense of political powerlessness in disadvantaged communities”

A review of regeneration experiences in Sydney (Australia) places considerable emphasis on the need for practitioners and organisations to 'fully acknowledge the need to utilise the existing assets in the community to create a project which, rather than change the existing environment, complement it'.

The principle of 'complementing' the local community environment becomes even more important in the context of ensuring longer term sustainability and viability in regeneration:

“Regeneration projects always have a lifespan and organisations will inevitably leave the estate once this is complete. Therefore it is important for organisations to mobilise the community and build leadership so that the benefits of these programs can be sustained in the future.”(Axian, 2008)

2.3 What is Understood by Estate Management?

While there is ample evidence of a widespread consensus on the need for a participative approach (and its potential benefits) there is much less agreement on what is actually meant by this model of estate management.

Again from the Australian experience, Arthurson (2003) makes the point that:

“Much of the rhetoric used in neighbourhood regeneration projects of ‘rights and obligations’ and ‘sustainability’ is not well defined and is sometimes implemented in contradictory ways. In applying these terms, the housing authorities and their regeneration partners need to elucidate the principles they are promoting”
(Arthurson, 2003)

The New Zealand Ministry of Social Policy, in reviewing models of community-government partnerships identified a similar confusion in definition. They found it difficult to measure the effectiveness of such partnership in achieving goals because of ‘hazy definitions of community and partnership’; as well as a lack of details on ‘partnership structures, roles of partner agencies, objectives, and outcomes achieved’. (New Zealand Ministry of Social Policy, 2000)

Similar problems were raised by Robina Goodlad (University of Glasgow) in reviewing lessons to emerge from efforts to develop effective participation in UK-based regeneration projects:

“Participation can cause confusion, because of the ambiguity of the language and the unexpected outcomes and events that may occur: there is a need for clarity as far as possible by public agencies about what they are offering, how far they aim to go and what they mean by ‘participation’.”

Where there are attempts to define participation by community in management, they tend to concentrate on the *level* of engagement: especially emphasising the need to build structures that go beyond collecting opinions and allow for involvement in decision-making. A Handbook developed by the EU LUDA project, for example proposes:

“Participation should not be limited to the ‘rule of law’, but go beyond consultation by actively engaging and involving stakeholders in the process of making urban regeneration sustainable”.

Yorkshire and Humber Regional Development Agency produced ‘benchmarks for communities and public policy makers to assess the extent to which community participation is taking place’. In this, it was asserted that community participation can be defined or ‘identified’ as having four core dimensions:

- *Influence*: This is about ensuring that participation leads to real influence over what happens in regeneration schemes at both a strategic and operational level.
- *Inclusivity*: This is about valuing diversity and addressing inequality in order to ensure inclusive and equal participation. This may mean targeting specific groups and taking positive action.

- *Communication*: This is about implementing clear information processes, transparent and accessible policies and procedures.
- *Capacity*: This is about developing the understanding, skills and knowledge of all partners; and the organisational capacity of communities and public agencies.

A similar attempt to describe core elements of effective participation was made by Burn et al (Rowntree Foundation, 2004). They identified the need to ‘acknowledge and make explicit the premises on which community participation policies are based’. In doing so, they discount the notion that all residents need to be directly involved, and put forward the premise that community interests can be represented as long as representative structures are adequate. They put forward three principles:

1. More direct participation by citizens in decision making is the only credible basis on which democratic renewal will take place. But all citizens do not need to be equally involved for this participation to be legitimate.
2. Elites of various kinds have always been vitally important in creating social change.
3. Elites are only undemocratic if they are disconnected from processes by which they can be influenced and held to account by the communities they purport to serve.

The points appear to be verified from the experience of community involved in regeneration of Fatima Mansions in Dublin. Documenting the experience, Fatima Groups United places considerable emphasis on what is termed a ‘Guiding Coalition’ that should be put together locally if participation is to be effective. This should include:

1. Competent leadership
2. Expertise
3. Credibility
4. Position Power: the authority to take decisions.

2.4 Getting it Right: Examples and ‘Rules’ for Good Practice

Lessons captured from the experience of community’s participating in regeneration processes are many and varied. In some cases, they have been put together by researchers or evaluators acting in an independent capacity. In others they are compiled by community interests themselves. In all cases, the intention is to document what made the difference for the better: what are the things that should be done, and what are the procedures that need to be in place if community involvement is to be effective and sustainable? Some examples of these ‘rules’ to guide good practice around community engagement are presented below.

Advice from Outside Ireland:

Pete Duncan and Sally Thompson (JRF 2000) reviewed the experience of community involvement in UK regeneration projects. What they identified as the requirements for more effective community participation is summarised below:

Duncan and Thomas: Effective Participation Requirements (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2000)

- A strategic approach to strengthening the existing network of intermediary agencies involved in neighbourhood regeneration. Regional Development Agencies could play a key role in this.
- New forms of local management, with a strong emphasis on community development and an enhanced role for community development workers.
- Significant shifts in institutional cultures, with a core commitment to community involvement reflected in recruitment, training, service delivery, evaluation and sanctioning procedures.
- Targeted funding for the neighbourhoods identified by the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, with priority given to under-performing regions and communities on the margins.
- In particular, the researchers propose establishing a 'Neighbourhood Empowerment Fund', to enable local communities to articulate their own priorities for regeneration at the earliest possible stage and to undertake a range of small-scale community initiatives.

Identified as important in establishing 'new forms of local management' was the role of workers in the community:

"Community development workers could be a key resource within these teams, helping communities identify priorities, developing action plans, establishing consultative procedures and developing and implementing capacity building plans" (Duncan and Thompson, 2000).

It was also seen as being important that communities become involved early in the planning and development process: so that they are 'in the driving seat'. Such an early involvement has been shown to be beneficial in building up confidence, understanding and capacity.

To be effective, community involvement needs support from the highest levels in organisations. There needs to be 'access to key decision-makers at both strategic and operational levels'.

Perceived as key to successful engagement by the community in regeneration management structures was the need for measures to 'help shift the balance of power from professionals to residents'. These include procedures for representation, establishment of community need and building capacity (with capacity building being seen as a requirement for statutory agencies as well as community representatives) – see below.

Duncan and Thomas: "Shifting the Balance of Power" (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2000)

- Written contracts between communities and regeneration agencies, spelling out the relationships, roles and responsibilities involved and subject to regular review.
- Ensuring that community representatives chair and have the majority of places on Neighbourhood Management boards.

- Encouraging community-led consultation and community planning, such as door-to-door surveys and community planning events.
- Paying residents for community development work.
- Supporting capacity building projects identified by community itself.
- Training for officers and professionals provided by the community.
- The development of community consortia and networking, bringing together community groups with common interests.
- Locating more professionals in communities, giving them everyday experience of problems.
- Introducing community champions or entrepreneurs, to pump prime the capacity building process and provide leverage for communities.

Findings and recommendations of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation review were echoed in a subsequent review by Chapman and Kirk (2001), also concentrating on UK-based regeneration experience. Of significant importance were recommendations in relation to community needs assessment and to training for all stakeholders. The report recommended that there should be:

- Development of advice for undertaking community participation audits and local training and information needs analyses. A key element should be the involvement of communities as researchers, analysing their own needs and developing their own strategies
- Analysis of the training needs of regeneration stakeholders and professionals working with communities, including benchmarking of current training provision offered by professional bodies, supplemented by a good practice note on building the capacity of professionals in community regeneration.

There are some similarities, in terms of identifying good practice and critical success factors, when the experience in New Zealand is considered. The New Zealand Ministry of Social Policy supported a study to identify factors that were critical if community/government partnerships were to succeed in regeneration projects. The factors identified are summarised below.

New Zealand Ministry of Social Policy: “Critical Factors in Successful Community/Government Regeneration Partnerships” (2000)

- Involving a broad section of the community, including the projects’ target participants, ensuring there are sufficient ongoing resources
- Having realistic time-frames (i.e. three to ten years)
- Employing a skilled, full-time, paid coordinator
- Demonstrating commitment from a senior level within all partner organisations
- Building and nurturing shared vision and trust
- Establishing shared, clear, tangible, flexible, and realistic objectives based on assessed needs
- Developing a clear and flexible strategy for achieving these objectives
- Supporting community partners to play a full role and valuing their contribution
- Adopting knowledge-based and learning-based frameworks (i.e. integrating findings of existing research, and other partnerships’ experience into processes

and projects, as well as evaluating and learning from own experience on an ongoing basis)

- Having organisational structures that support the partnership (i.e. ensuring support by the macro-environment (e.g. legislation and government policy)
- Maintaining a balance between flexibility and formal structures.

Robina Goodlad, University of Glasgow, identifies a number of lessons to emerge from efforts to develop effective participation in UK-based regeneration projects. On the positive side these were about:

University of Glasgow “Lessons from Effective Community Involvement in Regeneration” (1999)

- Participation by residents presents a challenge to the traditions of public service and to the skills and qualities of politicians and public servants: there is a need for training and support for them as well as for residents
- Participation consumes resources and the need for and availability of resources to support it requires planning: time, material, skills and expertise are required
- Different parties will have different agendas: all need reasons to participate so restricting the agenda to the issues the public servants want discussed can have a demotivating effect
- Participation is a learning experience and people will learn by doing: this can be enhanced through the provision of opportunities for exchange and reflection
- Public agencies need to show they acknowledge the concerns and issues that others want to raise and if possible respond in tangible ways that build confidence and trust
- Participation should start far enough back in the planning and policy process to allow meaningful participation to take place but this is advice that cannot always be taken, given the duration of most policy processes; it is better to start participation late than not at all but the stage in the process needs to be made clear
- Persevere: do not give up - it may require tenacity and time to build the trust that is required to sustain participation.

A Handbook developed by the EU LUDA (Reference?) project provides a similar list of recommendations for effective stakeholder engagement and involvement:

EU LUDA Programme: “A community-based approach to sustainable urban regeneration” (2006)

- When initiating sustainable urban regeneration proposals, it is necessary for the community to find ways to broaden the stakeholder base and ensure a systematic approach to capacity-building is adopted
- The stakeholders supporting the regeneration process should play a full and effective role in the decision-making process
- The decision-making process should be as inclusive as possible, so that no interest group is alienated from the channels of communication
- There should be engagement and involvement of stakeholders at the earliest stage to ensure proposals focus on their needs and on developing the social

- capital required to sustain them throughout the duration of the urban regeneration
- Building robust organisational structures with the capacity to sustain stakeholders interests requires a major investment from the civic authorities responsible for governing partnerships
 - Partnerships also need a clear leadership structure and local government is the most appropriate body to offer this
 - This process of participation should be seen as part of a democratic renewal that allows cities to set out the values, norms and rules for combating urban distress and in developing an environment capable of making the urban regeneration process sustainable
 - Such participation should not be limited to the 'rule of law', but go beyond consultation by actively engaging and involving stakeholders in the process of making urban regeneration sustainable
 - Futures workshops should be adopted as a vital component of this development
 - This engagement and involvement should include web-based approaches and use the interactive resources available for such e-participation
 - Such participation should use advanced methods for assessing the sustainability of urban regeneration and develop the decision support systems required for such purposes.

From experience in the United States, Naparstek et al introduced the concept of '*community building*', based on a set of principles that were shared in:

“Initiatives that successfully help residents out of poverty permanently and strengthen public housing communities to create an environment supportive of lasting independence” (Naparstek et al 1997)

Seen as being central to successful *community building* activities was the need to:

- Involve residents in setting goals and shaping strategies to achieve them.
- Begin each community's strategy with an inventory of its assets.
- Involve communities of manageable size.
- Tailor unique strategies for any given neighborhood.
- Remain holistic in outlook and integrative in character.
- Address initiatives in a manner that reinforces community values and builds social and human capital.
- Develop creative partnerships with institutions based outside the community.

Suggestions from the Irish Experience:

The experience in Ireland has been more frequently described through representatives of community organisations in areas undergoing regeneration.

The Tenants First Organisation, representative of Tenants and related community associations in Dublin, published a Guide to Regeneration for Communities. A number of supports, aimed at ensuring community participation as a central stakeholder, were identified. These are represented below.

Tenants First Dublin: “Guide to Regeneration for Communities” (2006)

- Consultation should not take place after the decision has been made: independent community consultation should take place from day one
- The community must be adequately resourced and have decision-making powers
- Tenants and residents must be paid for childcare costs to attend meetings
- Tenants and residents need access to their own independent experts – e.g. architects, planners, legal advisers, etc.
- Put together a plan to get funding
- A capacity building programme needs to commence before any engagement with the regeneration process. This means local activists and development groups working together, but it also means demanding external support to gear up for the challenges of participating in a major planning and development project.
- Open and honest discussion is vital between the residents and City Council officials
- The community must have proper input into any proposals, plans or ideas for their estates at every stage in the process
- Agendas and minutes for meetings should be agreed in advance
- Communities need resources for local newsletters to keep residents informed of all developments
- Formal best-practice guidelines from other areas should be adopted and honoured. This includes consultation, communication and independent financial resources
- Keep your own independent space; keep asking questions

Tenants and community representatives involved in the Fatima regeneration process put forward proposals to guide the establishment of the structure through which regeneration decisions should be mediated or negotiated (see below).

Fatima Groups United: “Principles to Inform Establishment of Joint Management Body” (2008)

- Agreed terms of reference for the body, indicating what the scope of its deliberations is.
- Adequate decision-making power. The body should have clear agreed authority to take necessary decisions and those who need to be present to effect this must be present.
- Independent chairing. There must be some mechanism for guaranteeing that all voices are equal around the table. This can perhaps best be achieved by an independent chair with authority to bind all parties to agreements made. A legal framework for the group can also assist this.
- Independent or joint minute taking for both sides. The recording of decisions and the close tracking of their implementation is especially in the interest of the community group who most desire change.
- Adequate community representation. The community should be free to choose its own representation in its best interests.
- Support systems for community representatives. These might include an advisory panel to assist representatives in strategising, technical expertise to

explain the complexities of the issues involved, training in negotiating skills or other relevant matters.

Dublin Canal community Partnership indicate six ‘learnings’ connected with the establishment of local development consortia, as follows:

Dublin Canal Community Partnership: “Community Learnings from Regeneration” (2008)

- Include community representation and consultation in a real way
- Use regeneration as a ‘regenerator’ – resource communities to participate
- Agree independent formal structures to oversee regeneration.
- Engage in good and honest practice.
- Demand excellence
- Build local unity and external support through communications.

In reviewing the status and prospects for Estate Management development in Fingal county, Bergin (2007) makes distinctions between different ‘layers’ of estate management, with:

1. The first layer being the most visible and immediate – the issues encountered at first hand by residents on an ongoing basis, such as cleanliness, order, security and housing maintenance and repairs.
2. The second layer includes the other community, voluntary, local authority and health board activity that are locally based, and provide services outside the basic and mainline services.
3. The third comprises the major welfare and public services such as education, employment and training, health and income support. Each of these services is nationally funded and organised. But they are delivered locally.

A comprehensive and effective system of estate management must have the capacity to provide links with all these layers: especially in the context of regeneration, where co-ordinated local delivery of services is critical. But the first layer, incorporating the most immediate and visible issues in the estate, remains the most fundamental and critical in building up confidence and positive engagement by residents.

Finally, the Department of Environment and Local Government developed guidelines for local authorities in Ireland aiming to promote effective forms of estate management. These were aimed at promoting good practice in housing management, and at enabling tenant participation in housing estate management.

These guidelines (and indicators associated with them) can be categorised under four main headings. These are aspects of estate management strategy that:

1. Allow for clear working definitions, policy foundations and support functions to be established.
2. Promote and enable the structured involvement of tenant representative associations and organisations as key partners in the EM process.
3. Ensure community relevance: by enhancing understanding of needs locally; and by facilitating community involvement with and via EM structures.
4. Establish and maintain structures and procedures for both ongoing implementation and ongoing review of EM strategy.

A detailed breakdown of indicators used under each of these headings is provided in Section 3: the guidelines were used in designing the questionnaire in the stakeholder survey part of this research.

2.5 Avoiding Getting it Wrong: Weaknesses and Threats

Research and documentation on regeneration here and elsewhere also provides pointers to dangers and threats in organising resident and community participation in estate management: the ‘What not to Do’.

Duncan and Thomas (2000) looked at how community ‘capacity building’ was being delivered within neighbourhood regeneration programmes in the U.K. They identified a number of problems with practice as they then found it. Many agencies, at national, regional and local level, were actively involved in resourcing community ‘capacity building’. However:

Duncan and Thomas: “Problems with Practice re UK Community Participation in Regeneration” (2000)

- Application of community participation principles in regeneration programmes rarely take into account local variations: different challenges and needs for different communities.
- Few statutory agency staff had the expertise and/or capacity to advise and support community-led programmes.
- Locally, local authority structures tended to replicate the departmentalism and political imperatives of central government. Because most regeneration programmes are led by local authorities, the relationship between the authority and local communities tended to reflect these institutional structures and approaches. Even where there is a strong commitment to involving the community, there may be little understanding of how to achieve it.

The same study found that these unresolved problems cause difficulties for communities, especially:

- Some communities were suffering from consultation and research ‘fatigue’. Residents often viewed consultation as too little, too late and as having little if any visible impact.
- Timescales dictated by programmes were too short for communities to work to.
- Roles and responsibilities were rarely clearly established.
- Councillors, officers and professionals tended to dominate boards and chair meetings.

They further concluded that community development workers were often a community’s main link with programmes, but that they were in increasingly short supply. The research found some evidence that the number of community development workers has declined steadily over the past 10 years, despite the increasing policy emphasis on community involvement.

Furthermore, community development workers were often employed by the statutory agencies leading programmes. In such cases, they identified lack the status, low levels of senior management backing or infrastructure support as barriers to community workers attempting to assert community interests.

Review of community participation in regeneration by the New Zealand Ministry of Social Policy (cited previously) also pointed to a number of risks and pitfalls in this context. These are summarised below.

New Zealand Ministry of Social Policy: “Risks and Pitfalls to be Avoided re Community Participation in Regeneration” (2000)

- There may be a lack of clarity between partners about what the partnership can realistically be expected to achieve, and in what time-frame
- Communities may be disillusioned if expectations are raised and not met
- Vulnerable communities (particularly their leaders, activists, and community organisations) may experience burn-out if too many requirements are placed on them, or if the partnership is not sufficiently resourced
- Government partners may find it difficult to adapt to the needs of community partners and may limit community input to service delivery rather than to broader policy issues
- There may be difficulty reconciling the government partners’ need for formal accountability with the need to share power with the community partners
- The community partners may not be accountable to the community itself, thereby depriving the partnership of its democratic legitimacy.

In the Netherlands, according to de Zeeuw (2005) the government agenda was ‘to convince residents to become active citizens, take responsibility for themselves, and live according to certain norms and values’.

A study by de Zeeuw established that residents who were involved in regeneration processes had clearly internalised this rhetoric. He also shows, however, that local government was able to ‘push’ a certain way of thinking through the participation process, by being able to control participation structures.

The very critical conclusion is that Local Authority officers retained ‘control over what is discussed and they decide when and how much participation is appropriate’. This could result in residents being sidelined from the more contentious decisions and programmes.

A more recent commentator on the Norwegian situation (Jones, 2011) was even more critical in his analysis of the balance of power in partnership structures; and on the negative effects this can have:

“The meteoric rise of ‘participation’ in urban policy is premised upon the supposed benefits it brings in terms of added project ‘efficiency’, ‘sustainability’ and even ‘empowerment’ of participants. Yet, even as participation appears to reach its very zenith, it comes under heightened criticism from a growing chorus of observers. Some critics have suggested, for example, that ‘participation’, and contemporary urban regeneration’s preferred institutional vehicle for it, ‘partnership’, can have a capacity for tyrannical decision-making”. (Jones, Norway, 2011)

For some, it is the *cost* of participation that represents its own threat. Rist (2000), analysing the situation in the UK, identified these costs as being both financial and political. Whether support for participation is seen as costing too much money or political influence, Rist points to the danger created by caution on the part of those responsible for managing regeneration:

“Another reason is the potential costs associated with participation whether it is financial or political. These costs can especially be prevalent in large scale developments and regeneration programs. This exhibition of caution towards public participation can lead to inadequate participatory processes, further creating a ‘breeding ground’ for conflict between partners and local communities (Rist, 2000 in Denzin, N & Lincoln, Y (eds)).

The University of Glasgow review (cited earlier), as well as providing proposals in relation to good practice, also identified a series of problem areas or things to be avoided when establishing community participation mechanism and procedures (See below).

University of Glasgow “Things to Watch out for in Establishing Procedures for Community Involvement in Regeneration” (1999)

- No double standards should be applied, for example in commenting on the representativeness or accountability of community representatives; if community ‘representatives’ are demonstrably unrepresentative there are supportive measures that may be offered to assist them to be more representative or alternative ways of gaining community views can be found
- Some participation exercises have foundered because residents have not been kept in touch with developments, including ‘non-developments’; to build and sustain trust it is crucial to keep in regular contact even when the news to convey is that there is no news; in addition it is crucial to respond to the community’s views and especially important to explain why requests are not being met
- Participation often leads to disappointment as well as surprise: some of the disappointment arises from unreasonable expectations about, for example, the number of people to expect to attend a public meeting but other disappointments have less obvious origins and may need to be used as positively as possible as learning experiences
- Participation rarely fails to provide surprises: it can lead to outcomes that could not have been anticipated, particularly if it is successful at achieving dialogue; participants may place unexpected items on the agenda and together participants may come up with unexpected recommendations or conclusions

Finally, there can be dangers for personal health and wellbeing associated with ‘getting it wrong’. Research published by RENEW Northwest (Lancashire, UK) suggests that community participation can actually increase stress. It provides details of community activists working under unrelenting pressure: isolated, without supervision, coping with local conflict, without time off - and without pay:

“By definition, these activists are themselves already under considerable stress from the constant grind of life in an area of deprivation. Their

community involvement then often results in them giving hours of emotional support to other group members, who may have been struggling all their lives with poor facilities and living conditions, and sometimes addictions, abuse and even violence.”

The research concludes that it is vital for everyone in all projects - organisers as well as participants - to be clear about what kind of participation they are looking for; and especially to ensure adequate support and resources are in place for members of the community who are actively involved.

2.6 Knowing its Happening: Monitoring and Reviewing Participation in Estate Management

Just as there is almost universal consensus on the potential benefits of resident involvement in estate management (albeit less agreement on what is meant by this), there is also almost universal agreement on the need for ongoing review and evaluation of that involvement.

Probably the most comprehensive guide to what is required in an effective evaluation process of participation in estate management is provided through the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Development Agency in Britain. This has been developed under the four key dimensions of participation already referred to. These are:

- Influence
- Inclusivity
- Communication
- Capacity

The ‘tool kit’ they have developed provided measurements and benchmarks; and is intended to be an aid in ‘analysing weaknesses, suggestions for best practice and a framework for improvement’.

Benchmarks and key questions in the framework are represented below under the four ‘dimension’ headings.

Tool Kit for Evaluating Community Participation in Regeneration (Yorkshire and Humber Regional Development Agency)

| <i>Dimension of Community Involvement</i> | <i>Benchmarks and Key Questions for Ongoing Measurement</i> |
|---|---|
| Influence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The community is recognised and valued as an equal partner at all stages of the process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>How are community agendas reflected in day to day decision-making?</i> ○ <i>Are community members made to feel valued as equal partners?</i> ○ There is meaningful community representation on all decision making bodies from initiation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>How are communities represented on decision making groups?</i> ○ <i>How are decision making processes enabling communities to be heard and to influence?</i> ○ <i>How have communities determined decision making agendas from the preparatory stage through to the forward strategy?</i> ○ All community members have the opportunity to participate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>How are you supporting community networks/structures through which all communities can contribute to decision making?</i> ○ <i>What creative/flexible approaches have you developed to engage members of</i> |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| | <p><i>all communities?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>What are the range of opportunities through which community members can influence decisions?</i> ○ Communities have access to and control over resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>In what ways do regeneration workers and decision makers make themselves accessible to community members?</i> ○ <i>How is community control of resources being increased?</i> ○ Evaluation of regeneration partnerships incorporates a community agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>How are you ensuring community ownership of evaluation processes?</i> |
| Inclusivity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The diversity of local communities and interests are reflected at all levels of the regeneration process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>What steps are you taking to ensure that all communities can be involved with and influence regeneration strategy and activity?</i> ○ <i>What actions are you taking to ensure that representation by all partner agencies and staff composition reflect the gender balance and ethnic diversity of the geographical area?</i> ○ Equal opportunities policies are in place and implemented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>What support and training is offered to the development of equal opportunities policies and anti-discriminatory practice?</i> ○ <i>How are you monitoring and reviewing practice in relation to equal opportunities?</i> ○ Unpaid workers/volunteer activists are valued: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>How do you support and resource unpaid workers and voluntary activists?</i> ○ <i>What opportunities do you provide for their personal development and career progression?</i> |
| Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A two-way information strategy is developed and implemented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>How do you ensure that information is clear and accessible and reaches all communities in time for it to be acted upon?</i> ○ <i>How are those involved in regeneration informed about the communities with whom they are working?</i> ○ Programme and project procedures are clear and accessible: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>What steps are you taking to ensure that scheme procedures facilitate community participation rather than act as a barrier?</i> |
| Capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communities are resourced to participate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>What resources are provided for the development of community led networks and community groups?</i> ○ <i>What support is provided for community members and community representatives?</i> ○ <i>What strategy is in place to support community led sustainability?</i> ○ Understanding, knowledge and skills are developed to support partnership working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>How are you ensuring that all partners (including senior people from the public and private sectors), develop the understanding, knowledge and skills to work in partnership and engage with communities?</i> ○ <i>What training is provided and who is participating in both the delivery and learning?</i> |

The Goldsmith College study (2000) also recommended that community participation should be subjected to an auditing process that should: “echo the monitoring of 'hard outputs' and the financial accountability of major public spending programmes”. The study piloted 'Audit Tools' for area regeneration programmes - which could be used by communities themselves. Community representatives expressed their interest in using these as part of an obligatory system of monitoring community participation.

While reviewing participation is generally accepted as a good idea, some criticism is also in evidence. Burns et al (2004) make comparative analysis of frameworks and tools designed to measure and evaluate community participation. This kind of focus on ongoing evaluation they see as important, but often neglected:

“Institutions have to go through months of inspections to show that their management and financial systems work effectively, but if they can show that they have a statement which supports community participation, that is usually taken to mean that they are doing it – and the truth is they rarely are.”

Some criticism is also evident in relation to the adequacy of current methods and approaches to the task of reviewing participation. Dunacan and Thomas (2000) for example, conclude that current methods of evaluating the effectiveness of community involvement and capacity building are also not always appropriate. Some lack rigour and fail to identify poor practice. Furthermore, communities are not always involved in evaluation procedures.

They conclude that a more diverse approach to evaluating both the quantity and the quality of community involvement is needed. This would ‘draw local communities more closely into the evaluative procedures at various stages, including bid preparation, delivery plan and succession strategy’.

2.7. Conclusions on Themes and Issues Emerging

A number of conclusions in relation to community participation in estate management and regeneration can be drawn from the documented experience examined in both Ireland and elsewhere. These are presented in summary form below: before going on to consider what the implications are for effective planning in Limerick.

1. There is a widespread consensus, in evidence, on the assumption that community participation in estate management – especially in a regeneration context - is a *good idea*. It has underpinned government policy and approach to regeneration both here and elsewhere (notably in the UK where it became a mainstay of urban renewal policy). Convincing reasons put forward for effective community participation are not confined to the more obvious ethical ones (whereby those living in a rapidly changing environment have the right to some avenue for influencing those changes). Other advantages have been highlighted which are linked to potential economic, social even health benefits. Most importantly, effective community involvement and ‘ownership’ of a change process has been linked to greatly increased prospects for sustainability and long-term viability of regeneration in both physical and social terms.
2. Widespread support for community involvement, however, is not matched by clarity of *what is meant by it*. Several studies, in very different settings, have drawn attention to the potential for very different understandings or definitions of participation to emerge. Where any degree of consensus does emerge, it is on the assertion that participation of the community needs to mean more than asking for the community’s opinion: that the process of involvement needs to be understood as a much more fundamental part of the decision-making

process. There is a need to be clear about, and to be able to communicate, both the rationale for participation and what is meant by it in each individual regeneration case.

3. There is an abundance in the literature of advice on what needs to happen if participation and involvement is to be effective. These guidelines – or references to *good practice* – are provided by both community stakeholders (who already have experience of estate management and the regeneration process) or by academics and researchers who have been responsible for recording or reviewing these experiences. A number of issues are key, however, to all pieces of advice offered. For example:
 - Effective participation will not happen through arranging meetings: it needs to be structured, planned and supported.
 - A particularly important part of that support is about ensuring real and changing community needs are being understood and communicated: and that ‘representatives’ are enabled to develop the necessary skills to understand and communicate local needs.
 - Longer term management needs must also be addressed (in terms of decision-making and organisational skills) on the part of those representing the community.
 - Training and capacity-building is a two-way process: residents need to learn about new ways of working, but so also do officials and professionals.
4. There is an equally extensive body of literature that offers advice on what not to do if you want to have effective participation. Again these *threats and pitfalls* come from both direct community experience as well as from independent academics and researchers. They are wide and varied, but some of the more important ones are about:
 - The need to avoid replicating structures and procedures that are already in place for particular agencies: even if they are the easiest to instigate and seem like the most obvious.
 - The need to avoid exclusion through communication: whether this is due to procedures that do not allow for accurate information to be made available at the right time; or because language or terminology creates a barrier to understanding.
 - The need to avoid exclusion in a broader sense: the needs of particular communities can be ignored if a ‘one-size-fits-all’ attitude is adopted; but equally, the needs of particular groups in communities can be ignored if a positive approach to inclusion is not adopted.
5. It is not sufficient to establish structures and procedures to ensure participation: even if these are adequately supported and follow established good practice. Regeneration and estate management is an ongoing and evolving process: structures and procedures need to be continuously reviewed to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and achieve their objectives in relation to meaningful and effective participation. Several very useful frameworks have been produced that can assist with this task.

3. Implications for Moving Forward in Limerick

A strategic framework for the development of estate management in Limerick city was established, following on from the report “Managing in Partnership” (published in 1999). The research and framework development were completed through the collaboration of Limerick City Council, the PAUL Partnership and members of local community groups with an involvement in estate management.¹

This process ultimately led to the establishment and funding of community based estate management projects in local authority estates, together with the formation of the *City Wide Estate Management Forum* and the *Estate Management Network*.

In terms of their stated goals in achieving effective housing management and the promotion of social inclusion, *Limerick City Council* identifies support for estate management and tenant participation as key strategies to achieve those goals. Responsibility for estate management in the Council is located within the Housing Department, though functions of other departments are also relevant to estate management issues raised by local groups and residents. Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) are employed through Limerick City Council to facilitate implementation of estate management strategy. The brief of CLOs, according to the local authority, is: “*to liaise with local estate management groups on environmental and local development issues that affect the quality of life of residents in those areas, to assist in the establishment and development of residents’ associations, to assist in progressing community initiatives and to attend meetings on request.*”

A review and report by Patricia Conboy (October 2005) provided a very useful insight into how the framework had operated in the interim period: from the perspective of residents and relevant authorities. The report makes a number of recommendations: based on an analysis of good practice, outstanding needs and the continued relevance of structures and procedures.

Many of the recommendations contained in this review address issues and challenges that have been identified elsewhere, including many cited here. They include reference, for example, to the need for clear delineation of roles and responsibilities; structured supports for workers and representatives; procedures for management of information sharing; agreement on clear lines of responsibility and structures; and increased clarity in defining what is meant by ‘estate management’.

In addition to these, attention was drawn to a further set of issues and challenges for which recommendations could not be made at that time.

Some progress has been made – both on recommendations contained in the 2005 review and on outstanding challenges identified. The more recent research undertaken to inform this report was seen as an opportunity to reach an informed understanding of developments in the meantime: as well as to define current needs and expectations in relation to structured community/resident involvement in estate management in Limerick Regeneration Areas

¹ Norris, M. (1999), *Managing in Partnership, Developing Estate Management in Limerick City, Assessment of progress to date – recommendations for future progress*, Limerick : PAUL Partnership and Limerick Corporation.

3.1 Stakeholders' Survey Results

An online survey was designed to capture the experience and perceptions of community and residents groups involved in the estate management process at present. Design of the survey was informed by issues emerging from literature review (above) as well as by discussion amongst steering group members about priority themes and issues to be explored.

In particular, questions in the survey were informed significantly by guidelines to Local Authorities issued by the Department of Environment and Local Government. These were aimed at promoting good practice in housing management, and at enabling tenant participation in housing estate management.

These guidelines (and indicators associated with them) can be categorised under four main headings. These are aspects of estate management strategy that:

1. Allow for clear working definitions, policy foundations and support functions to be established.
2. Promote and enable the structured involvement of tenant representative associations and organisations as key partners in the estate management process.
3. Ensure community relevance: by enhancing understanding of needs locally; and by facilitating community involvement with and via EM structures.
4. Establish and maintain structures and procedures for both ongoing implementation and ongoing review of EM strategy.

Ten organisations responded to the online survey. These were:

Our Lady of Lourdes Community Services Group
O'Malley Keyes Residents Group
Carew & Kincora Estate Management
Ballinacurra Weston/Prospect Residents Forum
PAUL Partnership
Moyross Residents Forum
Moyross Community Enterprise Centre Ltd
Limerick Southside Ltd
Limerick Regeneration agencies
Southill Community Services Board Ltd

In the case of half of the organisations responding, a group discussion was arranged to allow for collective input into the survey. In the remaining cases, an individual response was made, on behalf of the organisation.

A summary of survey findings is presented below, under the four 'functional' headings contained in Departmental Guidelines.

Defining, Promoting and Supporting Estate Management:

The Table overleaf summarises the assessment of respondents in relation to the first set of guidelines: that is those indicators that signify good practice in relation to defining, promoting and supporting estate management. Respondents were asked to assess the extent to which these key elements were being provided to an adequate extent within existing Estate Management arrangements in Limerick.

| Good Practice Guideline | % Rating this as Poorly Provided or Completely Absent | % Rating this as Fairly Well or Adequately Provided for |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Local Authority policy to guide tenant participation in housing estate management is in place and is understood by tenants</i> | 90 | 10 |
| <i>A formal and written estate management agreement is in existence</i> | 90 | 10 |
| <i>Local Authority officials are designated clear and specific responsibility for enabling tenant participation in estate management</i> | 100 | 0 |
| <i>There are adequate resources to fund the day-to-day running costs of estate management activities</i> | 90 | 10 |
| <i>There are adequate resources to fund other local development activities that are important for estate management</i> | 67 | 33 |
| <i>Space (for meeting and organising activities) is adequately provided for</i> | 0 | 100 |

All respondents considered that there is not sufficiently clarity in designated responsibilities amongst local authority officials. there was almost unanimous agreement that there are serious deficiencies in relation to policy guiding tenant participation, formal written agreements, and resources to fund day-to-day running costs of EM activities.

There was total agreement that space for meeting and organising activities was well provided for.

On the positive side, there were acknowledgements that:

- ‘Some’ stakeholders understand estate management and see its value
- Local knowledge about EM by residents in some areas is very strong
- There is very active engagement of committee members, with the EM Officer, in agreeing annual work plans
- The local estate management officer is ‘visible and accessible’

However, for some respondents:

- There is still a lack of clarity and understanding amongst some agencies/stakeholders about what is meant by estate management
- ‘Very little EM work’ is agreed on by both parties; allowing each to ‘work from different ethos’
- There is a ‘lack of real buy-in’ from the local authority

- It can appear that there is ‘no interest in community needs’ from particular agencies
- Staff turnover in some agencies can be high. This can lead to a loss of ‘knowledge, competencies, and supports’

Enabling and Ensuring Tenant Organisation Involvement in EM:

| Good Practice Guideline | % Rating this as Poorly Provided or Completely Absent | % Rating this as Fairly Well or Adequately Provided for |
|--|---|---|
| <i>Adequate and effective tenant induction programmes and strategies are in place</i> | 100 | 0 |
| <i>There are adequate resources to fund training and development of tenants participating in estate management</i> | 90 | 10 |
| <i>Procedures to define local involvement and representation in estate management are balanced and democratic</i> | 68 | 22 |
| <i>Participants in estate management are provided with information on relevant aspects of tenant participation</i> | 63 | 37 |
| <i>Participants in estate management have adequate skills in basic committee functioning</i> | 33 | 67 |

The most serious perceived deficiencies in terms of facilitating formal tenant involvement were in relation to the absence of adequate and effective tenant induction programmes; as well as in the inadequacy of resources to fund training and development of tenants participating. Most agreed, on the other hand, that procedures to define local involvement are balanced and democratic; with the majority also feeling that EM participants are provided with relevant information.

Considerable advantages were identified in the extent to which:

- Great capacity building exists through the work of the estate management officer and the local CDP
- Training has been provided to representatives on Residents Forum on group participation
- Many participants built up strong competencies over years from ongoing engagement with senior officials and from their involvement in key decision making
- In the main, the people involved have a genuine interest in their area and in representing their community

The greatest challenges and barriers, however, were cited in relation to:

- Residents have to spend a long time on the groups before they become confident enough to take part in discussions
- In some cases, the person charged with supporting the community doesn't have the sufficient capacity themselves
- Groups only find out when there is a problem. Ongoing information should be more forthcoming

- Residents have no say or input in letting of houses by the local authority and/or private landlords
- Information is lost by the time it reaches the relevant people who make the decisions that really affect the community
- Sometimes officials are constrained by data protection from sharing information which tenants deem important

Ensuring Community Relevance and Participation:

| Good Practice Guideline | % Rating this as Poorly Provided or Completely Absent | % Rating this as Fairly Well or Adequately Provided for |
|---|---|---|
| <i>There are adequate procedures for surveying the satisfaction of tenants regarding the quality of housing and other local authority services</i> | 100 | 0 |
| <i>Adequate information is provided to tenants on housing and other local authority services</i> | 90 | 10 |
| <i>There is sufficient knowledge about local needs and challenges (community profile) to inform effective estate management strategy</i> | 50 | 50 |
| <i>Adequate mechanisms and procedures are in place to ensure effective and regular feedback from estate management representatives to local tenants</i> | 45 | 55 |

There was almost unanimous agreement on the perception that procedures to measure tenant satisfaction, as well as the provision of information to tenants on local authority services, is currently inadequate or missing. Opinion was split (depending on the community of origin for responses) as to the adequacy of procedures to assess local needs and to feed back developments in EM to local tenants.

On the positive side, current strengths were recognised in relation to:

- The regeneration process having put strong structures in place to promote resident and community group involvement
- Estate management workers know the communities very well and vice versa. In the main, they have a genuine interest in their communities.

However, some factors were seen as working against effective involvement of local residents. For example:

- While the estate management workers are very much embedded in the community, there is a risk to this too, in that they could be too close to the issues at hand
- It can appear that there is 'no interest' in community needs from agencies; a lack of willingness to acknowledge community needs
- There is almost no opportunity for residents to contribute to informed debate
- There is a 'huge' range of need in the community, and all of this cannot be addressed by one committee
- Residents can expect 'instant solutions' to problems, and sometimes do not 'fully know how the system works'.

- There can be a high level of frustration from residents when there is ‘no response’, or when they see that the results of consultation is being ‘ignored’.
- Uncertainty as to the future can make residents reluctant to engage
- A lot of time is required from volunteers, and those affected may not have time to engage
- The particular environment in some regeneration areas can result in intimidation etc, providing a further disincentive to engage.
- In some cases, the person statutorily charged with supporting the community doesn't have ‘the sufficient capacity’ themselves.

Adequacy of Structures and Procedures to Ensure Ongoing Development and Review:

| Good Practice Guideline | % Rating this as Poorly Provided or Completely Absent | % Rating this as Fairly Well or Adequately Provided for |
|---|---|---|
| <i>Tenant Associations and other relevant associations have formal and written constitutions governing their activities</i> | 33 | 67 |
| <i>Local meetings are managed in an open and transparent fashion; communication with the Local Authority is clear and frank</i> | 78 | 22 |
| <i>Structures and procedures established are flexible enough to respond to new community needs and challenges as they emerge.</i> | 56 | 44 |
| <i>Progress in reaching objectives in estate management is adequately evaluated and reviewed</i> | 78 | 22 |
| <i>All relevant stakeholders have sufficient involvement in ongoing review of the estate management process</i> | 89 | 11 |
| <i>The level and nature of tenant involvement in estate management is adequately monitored</i> | 79 | 21 |

Again, there were significant differences in responses from different areas as to satisfaction with various structural and procedural elements that allow for ongoing implementation and review of the EM process. There was a relatively high level of satisfaction with the existence of written constitutions governing local procedures; a largely negative assessment of procedures to ensure ongoing participative review; and very much divided perceptions on the flexibility of structures and procedures.

On the positive side, there was acknowledgment that:

- Estate management projects and workers are fairly well established
- There is a well structured and involved estate management committee operating in most areas
- Residents have a democratic forum onto which they are nominated
- Communities have regular access to senior officials and good structures to maintain this are in place
- In the main, there is commitment by estate management projects to undertake review and evaluation, and they have done so in the past
- Some Residents Fora make sure that the work programme is reviewed regularly, and that ‘the right people’ are involved

- All parties are open to review.

On the other hand, ongoing effectiveness and efficiency was seen to be hampered by the fact that:

- Some areas not fully represented
- Access for local EM participants to established estate management offices, which in some cases were seen to be under-resourced
- There can be a lack of consistency (regarding roles and functions) amongst EM workers across the different communities
- There can be suspicion and lack of openness within and between some groups
- There is a danger of ‘openness to takeovers’ and the development of community factions
- For some, the procedures governing how representation comes about are seen as inadequate.

And effective ongoing review was seen as being more difficult to achieve due to:

- All relevant stakeholders not having sufficient involvement in ongoing reviews
- The ‘primary stakeholder’ being the one who determines whether results from review are taken on board and used to influence future EM developments
- A lack of consistency regarding agency responses to reviews and evaluations, particularly in relation to implementation of recommendations.
- Lack of operational planning: very little measurement of outcomes against objectives
- Not enough resources being available to have independent evaluations carried out.

3.2 Summary of Issues Emerging: Strengths, Shortcomings and Challenges

It is useful to classify issues raised in the survey under the following headings:

1. Those issues where there was an acknowledgement (amongst the majority of organisations responding) of *strengths or positive assets* associated with the current EM system. This was the case in relation to:
 - *Participants in estate management having adequate skills in basic committee functioning,*
 - *Space (for meeting and organising activities) being adequately provided for,*
 - *Adequate mechanisms and procedures being in place to ensure effective and regular feedback from estate management representatives to local tenants; and*
 - *Tenant Associations and other relevant associations having formal and written constitutions governing their activities.*
2. Those issues or functions which the vast majority of respondents described as *deficiencies or shortcomings* in relation to the EM system in current operation. The most significant of these were in relation to:

- *Local Authority policy to guide tenant participation in housing estate management not being in place and understood by tenants*
 - *The absence of a formal and written estate management agreement*
 - *Local Authority officials not being designated clear and specific responsibility for enabling tenant participation in estate management*
 - *Inadequate resources to fund the day-to-day running costs of estate management activities*
 - *Inadequate and/or ineffective tenant induction programmes and strategies*
 - *Inadequate resources to fund training and development of tenants participating in estate management*
 - *Inadequate procedures for surveying the satisfaction of tenants regarding the quality of housing and other local authority services*
 - *Inadequate information is provided to tenants on housing and other local authority services*
 - *Absence of procedures to ensure that all relevant stakeholders have sufficient involvement in ongoing review of the estate management process*
3. Those issues and functions ***where opinion was divided***, and where different assessments were being made in relation to different geographic areas. This was the case in relation to:
- *Whether or not procedures to define local involvement and representation in estate management are balanced and democratic. (They were adjudged to be balanced and democratic in Moyross and Carew/Kincora, for example, but not in Our Lady of Lourdes community or in Southill).*
 - *Whether or not participants in estate management are provided with information on relevant aspects of tenant participation (where the reverse is the case: information provision is seen as inadequate by Moyross stakeholders responding; but fairly well provided for by Our Lady of Lourdes respondents)*
 - *Whether or not participants in estate management have adequate skills in basic committee functioning (where skills deficits were seen as being an issue by O'Malley Keyes Residents Group, Carew & Kincora Estate Management, Limerick Southside and Southill Community Services Board Ltd; but not by Our Lady of Lourdes Community Services Group, Moyross Residents Forum or Moyross Community Enterprise Centre)*
 - *Whether or not there is sufficient knowledge about local needs and challenges (community profile) to inform effective estate management strategy*
 - *Whether or not adequate mechanisms and procedures are in place to ensure effective and regular feedback from estate management representatives to local tenants*
 - *Whether or not progress in reaching objectives in estate management is adequately evaluated and reviewed*
 - *Whether or not the level and nature of tenant involvement in estate management is adequately monitored*

3.3 Priority Action Areas Identified

Respondents were asked to name those areas or issues which should be addressed within the context of EM development strategy: “What needs to happen to improve the situation: to build on strengths and/or to address shortcomings?”

Clear Policy, Shared Understanding and Collective commitment to Estate Management:

A significant number of comments are indicative of the need to clarify what is meant by Estate Management, and to ensure that this same understanding is shared and taken on board by all stakeholders involved:

“There is a need for clearly defined roles: beyond defining estate management worker roles”

“A common vision and understanding of what is meant by EM; a model of what we mean by EM that is understood and agreed by all”

“All parties need to respect each other, value the commitment of residents, and work towards an agreed vision for the community”

“Buy in from all agencies working in the area, as well as local government, is needed”

“Agreements on policy and approach requires in- depth discussions by all involved: when agreement is reached, all parties must commit”

Defining statements need to include an explanation of what the rationale for Estate Management is: who should benefit, for example:

“There should be recognition that the estate management exists firstly to serve the community, not the agencies”

A common understanding of estate management should incorporate agreement on the principles or values guiding the approach. For example:

“Equal responsibility and sharing the response to problems”

“Honesty: meeting the people where they are at”

The approach, or guiding policy, should be communicated beyond the core stakeholder organisations involved in Estate Management:

“More transparency in relation to current housing strategy and policy in the community”

“Communities themselves need to be clear on the possibilities and limitations of estate management”

It was also seen as important that understanding of this approach, and commitment to it, should be a structural one in the organisational or agency sense (and not dependent upon individual staff members).

“Agencies need to have a structural commitment to estate management, so that the commitment to it doesn't disappear when a staff member moves on.”

“Adequately resourced estate management unit within the local authority”

Supporting Active Involvement and Effective Partnership:

Following on from establishment of a clear, shared and committed understanding, a further set of comments were about actions to support the process as defined. The first, and most apparent, of these was about ensuring that those new to the EM process are given the opportunity to develop their own *understanding* and competence; but also ensuring that *knowledge* about estate management processes and purposes is continuously updated for those participating in it:

“Proper induction for all new members”

“Clearer information on how the system works”

“More support to EM community officers and volunteer residents in encouraging residents and groups to have a better understanding of the role EM plays in the community and its benefits”

Secondly, it was argued that partnerships would be strengthened through improved communications. This was the case in relation to all partners involved (both statutory and community-based) and should bring benefits in terms of strengthening capacity, as well as uniformity of approach:

“All groups need to share resources, information and trust to ensure they meet the challenges emerging”

“Better communication structures”

“More communication from the statutory bodies in relation to the plans for the area even if they are subject to funding”

“Communication and coordination of work-plans for estate management groups across the city”

“Core task teams set up involving a small number of key people from all the stakeholders: group should share all information involving the community. It must be small enough to ensure confidentiality”

Thirdly, the need for establishing and maintaining high levels of competence amongst stakeholders was identified: especially in relation to skills needed to maintain successful estate management in communities. This includes the capacity to manage and to organise; but also the capacity to access resources:

“Better resources need to be put into providing training and support for EM groups”

“Meet skills needs re i) facilitation of community groups, and ii) project management skills”

“Enable estate management projects to garner resources to address estate management issues, i.e., they are not sufficiently linked in with the other resources in the community”

Increasing Capacity for Needs Assessment, Planning and Ongoing Review:

Finally, a considerable number of comments addressed the need for effective measures to ensure that planning of EM is based on an understanding of local

community needs, and that there is the capacity to review progress towards stated objectives:

“Strengthening of communities to enable them to identify and decide on needs, to be able to express them as a unified community”

“Community and statutory workers need to be performance managed against targets which are reviewed in a transparent manner.”

“All stakeholders should have an equal input to outcomes of evaluation and reports”

“Resources need to be in place to gather the learning”

“Ongoing review and evaluation should be built into the structure. All parties must be committed to taking on recommendations, and they must be willing to change in response to review and evaluation”

4. Conclusions and Recommendations: Proposals for ‘Community Viability Programme’

The main purpose of this research and consultation exercise was to identify priorities for appropriate actions that would serve to enhance prospects for viable and sustainable estate management structures and processes. Proposals are set out below in this context, taking into account:

- Findings from the review of good practice and lessons emerging from elsewhere
- Strengths of the current system in Limerick: as identified by survey respondents and discussions with key stakeholders
- Outstanding needs to be addressed, also as identified through the survey and related consultations.

4.1 Summary of Issues Emerging

The *review of research and documentation* from relevant developments elsewhere resulted in several conclusions:

1. There is no one approach to Estate Management: no one accepted meaning for the term that would allow for direct comparisons to be made across areas. Even in Ireland, as pointed out by Bergin in a review undertaken in Fingal County², it can be shown that there are at least four models in operation.

Of these four, it is very clear that the approach adopted and supported in Limerick can be described as the ‘participatory’ model. The main focus in this approach is on the maximisation of tenant and resident participation in management. A pivotal element of this model, aiming as it does to localise

² *Managing to do better – a review of estate management practice in Fingal County*; Report for Fingal Cohesion Group, Emmet Bergin, September 2007 (See Literature review for report link)

planning and decision-making structures, is the layer of community-based organisations that are representative of tenant and resident interests. These organisations are at the centre of the participatory model, in that ultimate success depends upon their capacity to, on the one hand, interact meaningfully and effectively with the local authority and other relevant statutory bodies. But it also depends, on the other hand, on the capacity of these same organisations to ‘represent’ the communities in which they are based: in terms both of understanding and reflecting local needs; as well as through ensuring local people remain informed and knowledgeable about events as they unfold.

Developing estate management structures and approaches on this basis has made sense, and led to benefits in Limerick. It has been made possible, to a large extent, by the existence of strong local organisational infrastructure in the first place; and by the strengthening of this base through local partnership-linked supports and programmes.

2. There is a widespread and evidenced consensus on the assumption that such community participation in estate management is a ‘good idea’. This is especially true in areas where urban regeneration is underway or is being planned. It has underpinned government policy and approach to regeneration both here and elsewhere (notably in the UK where it became a mainstay of urban renewal policy). Convincing reasons put forward for effective community participation are not confined to the more obvious ethical ones (whereby those living in a rapidly changing environment have the right to some avenue for influencing those changes). Other advantages have been highlighted which are linked to potential economic, social even health benefits. Most importantly, effective community involvement and ‘ownership’ of a change process has been linked to greatly increased prospects for sustainability and long-term viability of regeneration in both physical and social terms.
3. Widespread support for community involvement, however, is not matched by clarity of *what is meant by it*. Several studies, in very different settings, have drawn attention to the potential for very different understandings or definitions of participation to emerge. Where any degree of consensus does emerge, it is on the assertion that participation by the community needs to mean more than asking for the community’s opinion: that the process of involvement needs to be understood as a much more fundamental part of the decision-making process. There is a need to be clear about, and to be able to communicate, both the rationale for participation and what is meant by it in each individual case.
4. There is an abundance of advice in the literature on what needs to happen if participation and involvement is to be effective. These guidelines – or references to good practice – are provided by both community stakeholders (many of whom have already had experience of a regeneration process) or by academics and researchers who have been responsible for recording or reviewing these experiences. A number of issues are key, however, to all pieces of advice offered. For example:
 - Effective participation will not happen through arranging meetings: it needs to be structured, planned and supported.

- A particularly important part of that support is about ensuring real and changing community needs are being understood and communicated: and that ‘representatives’ are enabled to develop the necessary skills to understand and communicate local needs.
 - Longer term management needs must also be addressed (in terms of decision-making and organisational skills) on the part of those representing the community.
 - Training and capacity-building is a two-way process: residents need to learn about new ways of working, but so also do officials and professionals.
5. There is an equally extensive body of literature that offers advice on what *not* to do if you want to have effective participation. Again these threats and pitfalls come from both direct community experience as well as from independent academics and researchers. They are wide and varied, but some of the more important ones are about:
- The need to avoid replicating structures and procedures that are already in place for particular agencies: even if they are the easiest to instigate and seem like the most obvious.
 - The need to avoid exclusion through communication: whether this is due to procedures that do not allow for accurate information to be made available at the right time; or because language or terminology creates a barrier to understanding.
 - The need to avoid exclusion in a broader sense: the needs of particular communities can be ignored if a ‘one-size-fits-all’ attitude is adopted; but equally, the needs of particular groups in communities can be ignored if a positive approach to inclusion is not adopted.
6. It is not sufficient to establish structures and procedures to ensure participation: even if these are adequately supported and follow established good practice. Development of estates is an ongoing and evolving process, and this is particularly true in the context of regeneration. Structures and procedures therefore need to be continuously reviewed to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and achieve their objectives in relation to meaningful and effective participation. Several very useful frameworks have been produced that can assist with this task. These are summarised and referenced in the literature review section of the report.

Many of these issues, expressed as either strengths or shortcomings, were echoed by responses of Residents Groups to the online survey administered as part of this research process. In summary:

- Particular *strengths* of the current estate management system were acknowledged in relation to tenants and other associations being formally established and recognised; local capacities built up in relation to organisational skills; and adequate space and facilities for organisation and participation being provided.
- *Weaknesses or shortcomings* in relation to the absence of a clear shared understanding of what estate management means or how particular roles

should be defined; shortage of resources for training, development and other activities; low levels of consultation with, or information provision to, tenants regarding local authority service delivery; the absence of a clear approach to tenant 'induction' into estate management; and difficulties in involving all stakeholders in review of estate management.

- A whole range of other challenges that were seen as '*unevenly provided*': strong in some areas yet weak in others. These included the existence of democratic procedures governing participation; adequate skills and competence levels; access to relevant and timely information; knowledge about local needs; effective ways of reporting back to the community; and ongoing review of participation in estate management.

4.2 Proposed 'Sustainability' Programme

It is proposed that there should be three sets of measures, making up a programme aimed at strengthening and ensuring longer term viability of estate management structures and procedures. These are:

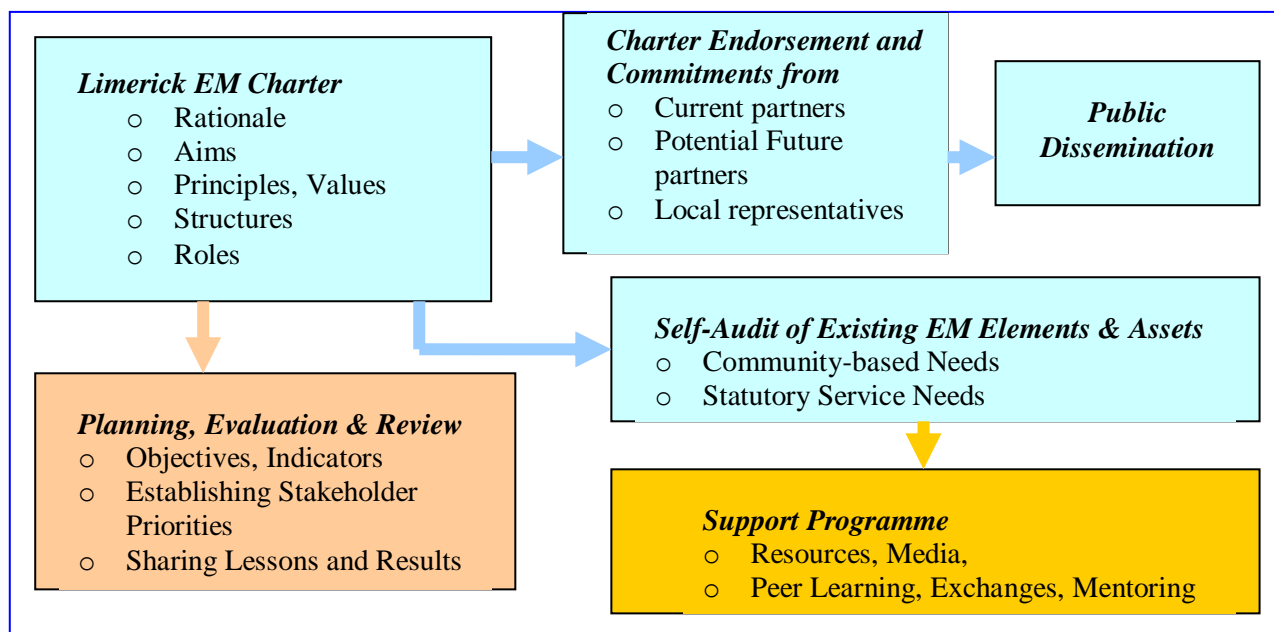
1. Development and application of an *agreed charter*, whereby:
 - Consensus is reached on the defining elements of the Estate Management model for Limerick City. This should be comprehensive: providing clarity on the rationale underpinning the approach; aims and objectives; guiding principles and values; protocols governing partnership relations; structures in place and to be developed; stakeholder roles and functions.
 - This is formally endorsed by all relevant stakeholders (present and potential future); these include all relevant statutory services, as well as local representatives who should also be introduced to, and asked to endorse, the charter.
 - The charter is made publicly available: produced and disseminated in ways that make the core meaning and content understandable: from core stakeholders to general public.
 - A 'self-audit' of all existing elements structures is carried out: 'self-administered' in the sense that all current stakeholders will be assisted in making an assessment of their own position. The aim here will be to reach an understanding of the baseline position regarding various structures, assets and arrangements in respect of their capacity to fully deliver on the EM charter. The audit should apply to all stakeholders (statutory as well as community) and results will allow for supports to be targeted on needs identified.

2. Secondly, putting in place a structured *support programme*. Design and content of this should be informed by results from the organisational audit: targeted at those areas where there is an identified need to increase competences or capacities to fully implement aspects of the EM charter. Supports should not be restricted to a traditional training format, but should incorporate a range of innovate and participatory approaches to learning and capacity building. Examples of these are:
 - Production of easily accessible 'resource packs', drawing on examples of good practice, task-focused guidelines, illustrated examples etc.

- Peer learning and mutual support initiatives: whereby stakeholder groupings can learn from each other in a mutually supportive environment. This approach could be especially appropriate where cross-sectoral learning is the objective (community-based stakeholders learning about the statutory or official environment; and statutory officials learning about needs and challenges in the community environment). Arrangements for ‘mentoring’ could also be considered in appropriate circumstances,
 - The development and ongoing maintenance of communication (making use of online as well more traditional media) to share information and knowledge about developments in estate management and the broader regeneration agenda, share good practice and report on progress towards implementation of the EM charter.
 - Targeted exchanges: whereby the opportunity for ‘on-site’ learning from other situations is created and facilitated. These could be internal (learning from other communities or agencies in Limerick) as well as exchanges involving relevant situations and stakeholders from elsewhere. These opportunities, in all cases, should be identified in the context of addressing specific issues or challenges associated with implantation of the agreed charter. As such they should have specific learning objectives and targets, with progress and achievements assessed in relation to learning objectives.
3. Development and implementation of a system for *ongoing planning and review*. This should allow for the active participation of all stakeholders in a structured process of assessment, allowing for understanding about achievements (or lack of progress) to inform decisions about future directions. The process should involve:
- Agreement on a set of key objectives: allowing for an explicit statement of hoped-for outcomes in relation to effective and sustainable estate management.
 - Development of indicators under each of these objectives: specifically naming those developments, or things that should be happening, if objectives are being successfully achieved.
 - Means by which each stakeholder grouping can establish their own priorities and targets within the context of broader EM objectives. This should be done on a yearly basis, taking into account particular challenges, needs and constraints identified in the community, or for the agency.
 - Means by which each stakeholder can then report on their own progress in reaching objectives, as well as capturing the more qualitative lessons or insights into how progress was made or otherwise.
 - A facility for sharing information on progress, results, outcomes, lessons and successful approaches. This should allow for each stakeholder to share with their own ‘constituency’ (Residents associations with their community; statutory agencies with other staff and services) on an ongoing basis. It should also allow for accumulated and ongoing sharing of information and learning amongst and across all stakeholder groupings.

- Annual assessment of results and lessons (involving all stakeholders), feeding directly into planning and agreement of priorities for the coming year.

The three elements are summarised in diagrammatic form below.



The support programme should be very much determined by stakeholders identifying their own needs (in relation to the agreed charter). Initial more detailed proposals can be made, however, on both other elements. These are outlined below: firstly in terms of a suggested charter; and, secondly, in terms of evaluation/planning elements and framework.

Towards a Limerick EM Charter:

In broad terms, the charter should very clearly indicate, with reference to Estate Management:

1. What it is; what it covers and what the overall model looks like
2. Why it is being developed and supported (rationale)
3. Where is it being developed (specifying areas and links with regeneration)
4. What the 'internal' objectives are: what will be created and sustained in communities?
5. What the 'external' objectives are: what will be the outcomes and the benefits if successful – for whom?
6. What are the principles and values informing our approach
7. Who are the people involved: stakeholders, with their roles and functions
8. How these stakeholders interact: overall framework and structures
9. How these stakeholders are supported and informed
10. How progress is measured, lessons are captured and experience is shared.

The following are opening suggestions as to what might be contained in each of the sections above: allowing for alternative or additional description to be added.

| Section/Question: | Suggested Text |
|--|--|
| 1. What is meant by estate Management in Limerick City? | <p>The purpose of the estate management programme is to maximise the extent to which residents in local authority estates, in partnership with Limerick City Council and other relevant stakeholders, can take responsibility for decision-making and managing developments and services within their own communities.</p> <p>The most immediate of these services relate to management of environmental services, accommodation standards, local facilities and amenities. The longer term vision, however, is for estate management to be the centre of planning and delivery of all local services and development programmes (including those linked to health, education, employment, childcare, transport, crime and justice etc.)</p> <p>The approach adopted to EM in Limerick has been built on existing strengths: involving a range of community-based organisations and committed statutory agencies within an active and collaborative partnership context.</p> |
| 2. Why is EM being promoted? (rationale) | <p>There is solid evidence to support the contention that full participation by residents and tenants in managing their own estates can have significant benefits. These include economic as well as social benefits; and can contribute directly to the long-term sustainability and viability of communities.</p> |
| 3. Where is EM in place? | <p>Established estate management structures and procedures are in place in five Limerick communities (Name). These areas are designated as part of the planned regeneration programme, and effective participatory estate management is seen as being of central importance to prospects for successful and sustainable development into the future.</p> |
| 4. What is being aimed for in terms of EM capacities and structures? | <p>The ultimate aim of the EM programme is that viable and self-sustainable organisations and mechanisms will exist in all these areas. To be sustainable they will need to have developed the capacity for ongoing liaison with local authority and other relevant agencies and service providers; for continuous interaction with community and local needs assessment; for informed decision-making; and for day-to-day management and supervision of service functions.</p> <p>It is also essential that statutory agencies and services participating in EM will have the capacity for sustainable involvement. This will entail a capacity within agencies for understanding of community needs as they evolve; an orientation towards sharing of resources and information; a willingness of staff to co-operate across functions and services; and openness to engagement in critical review.</p> |
| 5. What is being aimed for in terms of outcomes and benefits for communities and services? | <p>Success of the EM programme will be judged ultimately by the extent to which it contributes positively to the living conditions, quality of life, wellbeing, development and progression of tenants and residents. There will be social and economic, as well as personal and family, benefits. Successful estate management will contribute directly to healthier, safer, more cohesive, inclusive, more family-friendly and more community-friendly environments. It will make communities sustainable and more viable: increasing opportunities, while at the same time decreasing the need for resource allocation linked to crisis interventions.</p> |
| 6. What are the shared principles and values guiding the EM programme? | <p>In developing, implementing and supporting the EM programme, all central stakeholders and partners are committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Open sharing of information by partners that can assist other partners to understand challenges and respond effectively to needs. ○ Ensuring that all forms of communication are designed and delivered in an inclusive way: facilitating access to all (wider community as well as specific stakeholders) ○ Learning from each other: on the understanding that each set of stakeholders in the EM process has much to contribute to other stakeholders and much to learn from other stakeholders. ○ An acknowledgement that particular competencies and capacities are required to enable each stakeholder grouping to effectively fulfil its function with the overall EM programme. (These include communication, needs assessment, management |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>and reporting skills)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Being open to critical review and ongoing self-reflection. It is seen as being important to identify points of learning, to openly acknowledge progress or lack of progress; and to share good practice based on this learning |
| 7. Who are the Stakeholders involved? | <p>There are three 'layers' of stakeholder participation in the overall EM programme:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Firstly, tenants and residents living in estates. For EM to work, there needs to be involvement from the general community: contributing to an ongoing understanding of local needs and challenges; being informed on ongoing developments in EM; and making an input into decision-making and future planning. 2. Secondly, key statutory agencies whose brief is important for the delivery of services and programmes in local areas. Central to this is the local authority (Limerick County Council in this case). Also important is Limerick Regeneration Ltd., with responsibility for ...; and the PAUL Partnership, which has played a central role in Participation by core partners is being extended to facilitate the active involvement of other mainstream service providers (for example policing services, education providers, childcare providers, health service providers etc) 3. Thirdly, a number of organisations that provide the vital link between both these stakeholder levels (ie between community and mainstream services/programmes). |
| 8. How do these stakeholders interact? – description of structures and processes | <p>Five locally based representative committees have been established. Attached to each of these is a Community Officer etc....Key functions are about establishing community needs, representing resident interests, liaising with statutory agencies; reporting and communicating ongoing developments; disseminating relevant information etc</p> <p>A Regeneration Consultative Forum provides the platform for organisations from each are to co-ordinate, share...etc. Limerick City Council, who are responsible for....</p> <p>Limerick Regeneration Ltd, who are responsible for....</p> |
| 9. How are these stakeholders supported and informed | <p>A central support unit have been created to provide ongoing assistance to all stakeholders involved. As well as dedicated training initiatives, this unit is involved in producing practical resources and guides, facilitating peer learning, exchanges of good practice, learning networks etc.</p> |
| 10. How is progress measured and lessons captured? | <p>A central part of the EM programme is the ongoing system of internal evaluation and planning. All stakeholder groupings are actively involved, on an ongoing basis, in setting their own targets, reporting progress, identifying and sharing learning points or lessons.</p> <p>Results from this process are used at overall programme level to inform planning (and refocusing of efforts and resources where required)</p> |

Evaluation and Planning Framework:

The basis, or starting point, for a comprehensive review system is agreement on objectives and indicators.

Suggestions are made below in relation to these: distinguishing, in the first instance, between outcome and impact objectives.

- *Outcome objectives* refer to the goals or expectations directly associated with estate management: What estate management, if effective, might expect to contribute to immediate stakeholders (communities, local organisations, agencies involved).
- *Impact objectives* refer to wider, more long-term or ‘knock-on’ effects of EM outcomes. What the benefits might be in terms of impact on higher level trends like crime levels? maintenance budgets? Standards of physical or mental health? Etc

Only illustrative examples of some of these are given below: full discussion and feedback would be necessary to complete.

| Possible EM Outcome Objectives | Potential Indicators |
|--|--|
| To increase involvement of individual tenants and residents in activities and decisions connected with managing their estate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased tenant association member numbers ○ Increased numbers involved in other local groups ○ More individual contributions to local needs assessment activities and debates ○ Increased involvement for different groupings (eg, women, men, young people, lone parents, older people, ethnic minorities etc) ○ Increased number of projects planned and carried out collectively ○ Increased numbers of local residents involved in these activities |
| To improve living and housing conditions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved maintenance standards ○ |
| To improve physical environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Better-maintained open spaces |
| To improve public utilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enhanced public access ways ○ Improved and more appropriate lighting ○ etc |
| To enhance physical health and wellbeing of local residents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ |
| To enhance mental health and wellbeing of local residents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ |
| To target resources in those directions where improvements are most needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Changes in local authority budgetary allocations ○ etc |
| To increased levels of safety and security in estates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reductions in levels of abut-social behaviour etc ○ etc |
| To encourage new developments initiated by joint community efforts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New community meeting facilities established ○ New youth clubs established ○ Etc |
| To increase local pride and positive public profile of areas are estates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instances of more positive media coverage ○ People more open about acknowledging address ○ etc |
| To establish basis for long-term viability and survival of local community structures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community organisations access independent resources/financing etc ○ New community organisations formed and supported |
| To ensure that mainstream agencies and services take on more participative approach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Information from agencies is more easily accessible and understandable ○ Frontline service staff more knowledgeable about local needs |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Policy changes ○ Etc |
| To increase effectiveness of inter-agency co-operation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Joint initiatives leading to increased service access ○ Joint initiatives leading to improved individual circumstances/opportunities ○ Etc |

| Possible EM Impact Objectives | Potential Indicators (longer term) |
|--|---|
| To Contribute to Reduction in Crime Levels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anti-social behaviour reductions ○ Drug use reduction ○ Higher detection rates |
| To contribute to increased opportunities for educational progression | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lower early school leaving rates ○ Higher level access increases ○ etc |
| To contribute to increased opportunities for employment progression | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ increased employment and enterprise set-ups in estates ○ decreased numbers on live register ○ etc |
| To contribute to savings in social costs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduction in crisis intervention (re mental health, family welfare, drug use etc) ○ Etc |

All stakeholders should have the opportunity to:

- Draw up targets and agree priorities for their own area of operation: corresponding to all agreed objectives and indicators.
- Record (allowing for wider stakeholder input) progress in reaching targets, as well as lessons emerging from efforts.
- Make conclusions on overall outcomes, and revise plans/priorities on the basis of these.
- Report on outcomes and learning: on an annual basis to the entire EM programme; and on an ongoing (monthly?) basis to local and agency-based management meetings.

Allowing for this facility will enable the programme to engage in structured and reformed review on a yearly basis: demonstrating programmes results and setting annual programme priorities. More substantive data relating to impact indicators can also be collected at a programme level.

This kind of ongoing planning and evaluation system can be designed to suit the needs of stakeholders.

Implementation Structures and Timing

It is proposed that an EM Development Group is established to further the three main elements of the Viability Plan. The group should include representation from:

- Limerick Regeneration Ltd.
- PAUL Partnership
- Limerick City Council

- Each of the five Residents Fora

The Table overleaf provides details of tasks and actions to be overseen by the Development Group. One or more partners will be nominated to take responsibility for the carrying out of different activity strands, within the time line agreed.

***Summary of Tasks, Responsibilities and time Lines Associated with EM
Development Programme***

| Programme | Tasks/Actions | Implementation, Lead Partner | Time Line: |
|------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Charter Development | Collect Partner and Stakeholder Feedback | PAUL | By Mid Feb '12 |
| | Agree Final Version | All | By End Feb '12 |
| | Endorsement by Current Subscribers | Residents Forums, PAUL, LR, LCC | During Mar '12 |
| | Endorsement by Wider Agencies and Representatives | HSE, Gardai, Schools, Public Reps etc | April-May '12 |
| | Creating Publicity materials and public dissemination | LR and LCC | Summer '12 |
| Development Support Programme | Self-audit of Existing Organisations using Charter Headings (Stat & vol) | LR with contracted independent assistance | Apr- May '12 |
| | Drawing up Development Support Programme, based on audit results | PAUL | By end May '12 |
| | Implementation of Development Support Programme | PAUL, with contracted trainers as required | June '12 onwards |
| EM Stakeholder Planning and Review | Design of Planning and Review Framework/Software | PAUL with contracted independent assistance | By end of March '12 |
| | Agreement on Outcome and Impact Indicators | As above | By end May '12 |
| | Support and Training for Local Stakeholders Inputting into System | As above | Summer '12 |
| | Completion of first Area-Based Plans: Establishing Yearly Priorities | As above | Area Plans for 2013 completed by early Dec '12 |
| | Completion of Area-based Reviews: assessing progress against Yearly Priorities set | As above | First Annual Reviews by early Dec '13. Yearly planning and review cycles completed subsequently |

References and Resources:

Active Partners: Benchmarking Community Participation in Regeneration; Yorkshire & Humber Regional Development Agency; March 2000:

http://www.cdse.org.uk/eDocStore/doc.php?doc_id=30&action=inline

Reflecting realities: Participants' Perspectives on Integrated Communities and Sustainable Development; Jean Anastacio, Ben Gidley, Lorraine Hart, Michael Keith, Marjorie Mayo and Ute Kowarzik, 31 July 2000

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/community-participants-perspectives-involvement-area-regeneration-programmes-0>

The Real Guide to Regeneration for Communities, Tenants First, Dublin, 2006

<http://www.limerickregeneration.org/RealRegenerationGuide.pdf>

Regeneration: public good or private profit, John Bissett, 2008

http://www.limerickregeneration.org/Regeneration_Learnings_&_Insights.pdf

Things Can Be Different! The Transformation of Fatima Mansion, Peter Dorman, Community Action Network, 2008

http://www.limerickregeneration.org/Things_Can_Be_Different.pdf

Community Participation – Who Benefits? Paul Skidmore, Kirsten Bound and Hannah Lownsbrough, 2006

<http://www.limerickregeneration.org/community-network-governance%5B1%5D.pdf>

Regeneration: Learnings & Insight: common-sense lessons on regeneration and development for local authorities and development consortiums. Dublin's Canal Community Partnership, 2009

http://www.limerickregeneration.org/Regeneration_Learnings_&_Insights.pdf

Social Exclusion, Regeneration and Citizen Participation, Robina Goodlad, Department of Urban Studies, University of Glasgow, 1999

http://www.shnc.org/Goodlad_SocialExclusion.pdf

LUDA E-compendium: Handbook E3: A community-based approach to sustainable urban regeneration, EU Fifth Framework Programme Handbook,

http://www.luda-project.net/compendium/pdf/hbe3_060206.pdf

Community Planning.Net: Web Based Directory Outlining Principles and Steps for Effective Involvement of Residents in the Planning Process. Royal Institute of Town Planning (RTPI)

<http://www.communityplanning.net>

Health hazard: Community participation is a good thing. Correct? Not when it burns out the participants, Carolyn Kagan, RENEW Northwest, UK, 2006.

<http://www.compsy.org.uk/stress.html>

Making Community Participation Meaningful: A Handbook for Development and Assessment, Danny Burns, Frances Heywood, Marilyn Taylor, Pete Wilde and Mandy Wilson, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, UK, 2004.

<http://www.allindiary.org/pool/resources/community-participation-development.pdf>

Resourcing community involvement in neighbourhood regeneration: Pete Duncan and Sally Thomas, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2000.

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/resourcing-community-involvement-neighbourhood-regeneration>

Community involvement in regeneration programmes – developing effective and sustainable strategies: Alison Gilchrist, Community Development Foundation Contribution to URBAN conference, Bristol (October 19th 2000)

<http://www.bristolurban.org.uk/conference/AGilchristnotes.doc>

Neighbourhood regeneration in Australia: facilitating community involvement. Arthurson, Kathy, Urban Policy and Research v.21 no.4 Dec 2003: 357-371

Lessons for Community Capacity Building: A Summary of Research Evidence; Michael Chapman and Karryn Kirk, School of Planning and Housing, Edinburgh College of Art/Heriot-Watt University, July 2001

<http://www.scie-socialcareonline.org.uk/repository/fulltext/scothomes30.pdf>

Participation in place-making: Enhancing the wellbeing of marginalised communities in Aotearoa/New Zealand: Andrea Ricketts, Victoria University of Wellington New Zealand 2008

<http://www.chranz.co.nz/pdfs/a-ricketts-participation-in-place-making.pdf>

Models of Community Government Partnership and their Roles in Achieving Welfare Goals: Ministry of Social Policy, New Zealand, 2000

<http://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/archive/2000-reportgovtpartnerships.pdf>

Resident participation: framing the vision for community regeneration: Arthurson, Kathy, Australian Planning Institute, 2003

<http://researchbank.swinburne.edu.au/vital/access/manager/Repository/swin:12295>

Unpacking Rationales for Community Participation in Urban Regeneration in the Netherlands; Charissa de Zeeuw, Cities Research Centre, University of the West of England, 2005

<http://aesop2005.scix.net/data/papers/att/642.fullTextPrint.pdf>

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PUBLIC HOUSING URBAN REGENERATION: Case studies from Birmingham and Sydney; Anita Axian, 2008

http://www.fbe.unsw.edu.au/schools_and_engagement/resources/notes/5A2_52.pdf

Influencing the policy process with qualitative research, Rist, RC 2000, in NK Denzin & YS Lincoln, (eds), Handbook of Qualitative Research, Sage, Thousand Oaks, pp. 1001-17.

Who is for Community Participation? Who is Community Participation for? Exploring the well-being potential for involvement in regeneration; Mel Evans, Middlesex University, 2009
www.brad.ac.uk/acad/.../Regeneration/.../Mel_Evans_Full_paper_080403.p...

Urban Regeneration's Poisoned Chalice: Is There an Impasse in (Community) Participation-based Policy?; Peris S. Jones, Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, University of Oslo, 2011
<http://usj.sagepub.com/content/40/3/581.abstract>

Good Practice in Housing Management: Guidelines for Local Authorities; Enabling Tenant Participation in Housing Estate Management. Department of Environment and Local Government; Dublin, October 2001
<http://www.housing.ie/fileupload/Publications/GoodPractice-Tenant-Participation.pdf>

Managing to do better – a review of estate management practice in Fingal County: Report for Fingal Cohesion Group, Emmet Bergin, September 2007

Community Building in Public Housing: Ties That Bind People and Their Communities, Arthur J. Naparstek, Dennis Dooley and Robin Smith, The Urban Institute/Aspen Systems Corporation, April 1997