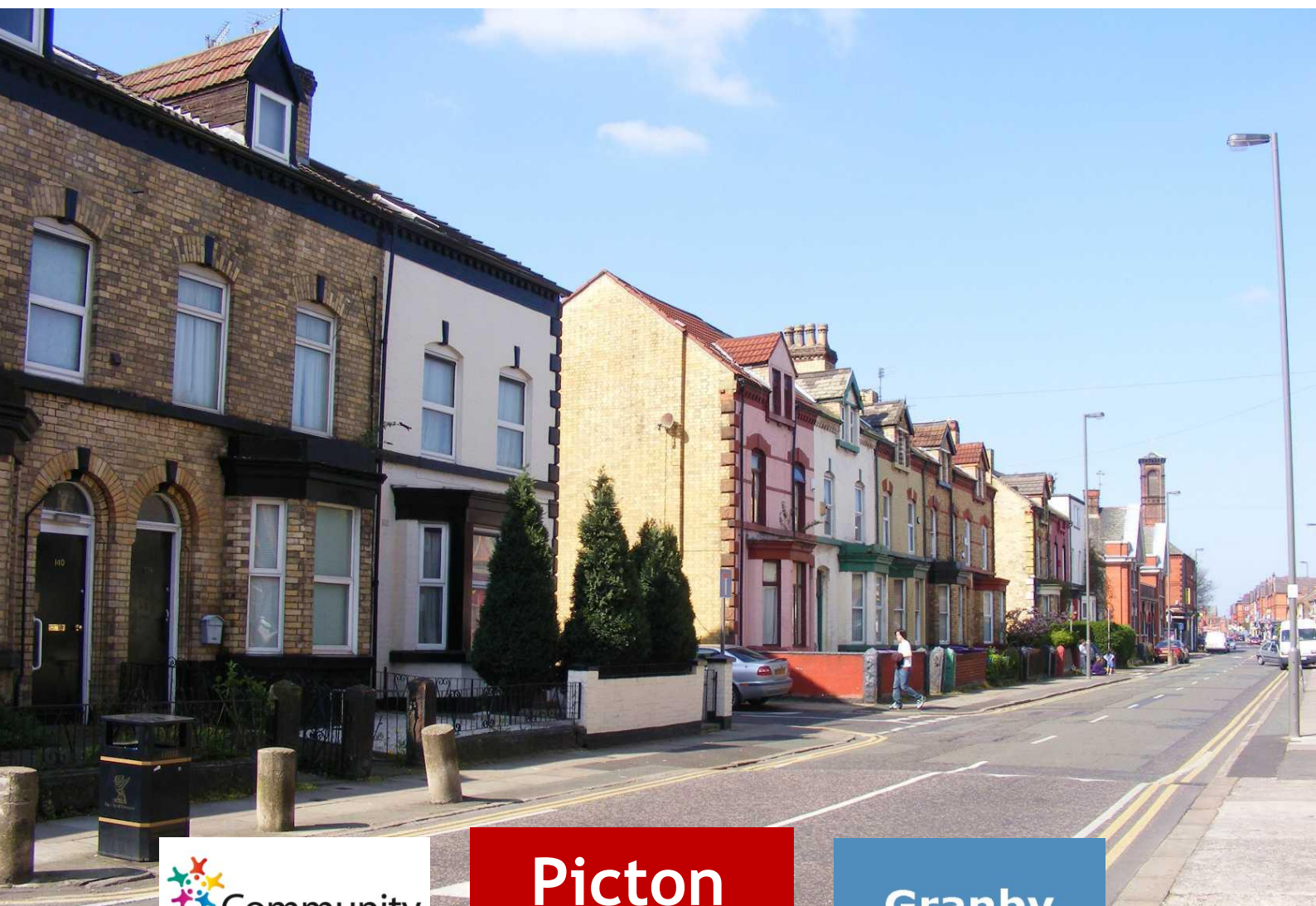


Community First Plan

Picton Ward

2013-2015



**Picton
Panel**

**Granby
Toxteth
Development Trust**

Summary

The core statistics in this section have been obtained from Liverpool City Council's Ward Profile, updated in December 2012.

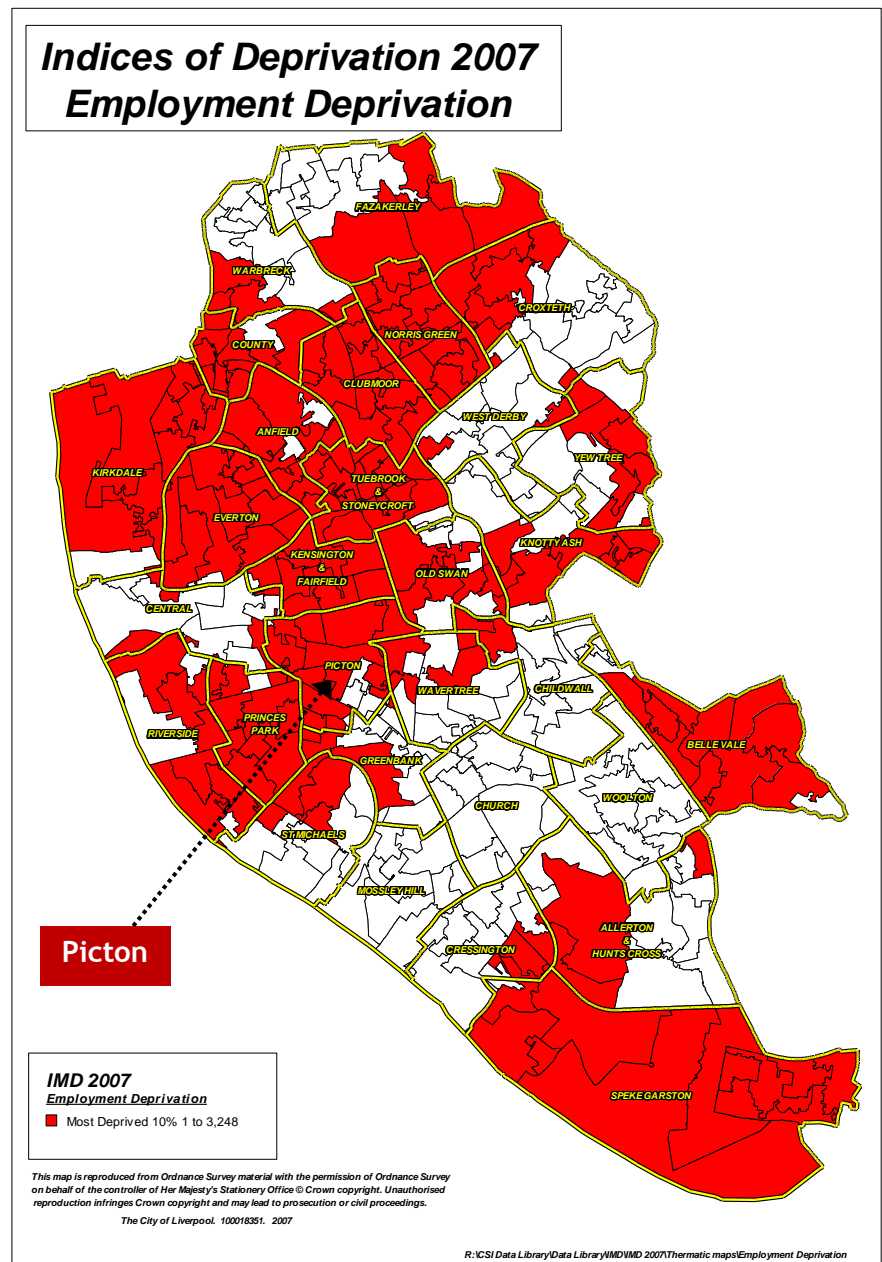
Picton ward is an inner-city ward of Liverpool. Located to the south of the city centre it is home to just over 17,000 people.

Demographics

The ward has one of the most diverse populations in the city with 22.5% of its population from BME groups. The ward's population is young and transient, with 73.9% of its population of working age compared with 68.8% for Liverpool. The area is home to many new communities in the City and is also popular with students, reflecting the high proportions of private rented accommodation.

Deprivation, Income and Child Poverty

Picton shows high levels of overall deprivation with over three quarters (76.4%) of neighbourhoods in the ward falling within the most deprived 5% of neighbourhoods nationally. At £23,800 Picton has the second lowest average household income of all Liverpool ward, with some neighbourhoods having average incomes of below £21,000. Just under half (49.3%) of all children living in Picton ward are classed as living in poverty. This is more than twice the national average. The incidence of child poverty has decreased in Picton in recent years.



Unemployment

Picton had 3,055 workless residents in August 2011. The worklessness rate (23.5%) is above the Liverpool average (21.9%) and nearly double the national rate of 12.3%. Half of the ward's workless residents (1,531) are claimants of Incapacity Benefit /Employment Support Allowance. In March 2012, Picton's JSA claimant rate was 8.6%. This is above the city wide average of 7.2% and more than double the national rate (4.1%). The ward's unemployment rate has increased significantly over the last year, reflecting the impact of the recession.

Health

Poor health is a particular issue in Picton. For 2009-11, Picton had 69% more deaths than expected when compared with England. In particular, there were 85% more cancer deaths. Picton has the lowest male life expectancy (70.8 years) of all Liverpool's wards, more than 7 years below the national average. Females have the fourth lowest life expectancy (77.5 years), almost five years below the UK.

Housing

Picton ward contains 8,432 residential properties. A third of these (31.2%) are Registered Social rented properties, which is slightly above the city average of 26.7%. The ward has one of the highest proportions of vacant properties in the city (7.8% of dwellings), which is over twice the city average of 3.5%. The vast majority of dwellings in the ward (93.7%) are in Council Tax Band "A", while house prices in Picton are significantly lower than the City average.

This raw statistical evidence provides the backdrop against which the Picton Panel, funded by Community First, set out to achieve improvements in the local area.

The Picton Panel

The Community First Panel for Picton ward is made up of:

Ivan Freeman, Pearl Mann and Vidah Owusu are all Community Organisers and are based in Picton ward. Lindsey Guy is Chief Executive of Granby Toxteth Development Trust, the community anchor organisation for the local area and based on Lodge Lane in Picton ward.

Since the Panel was established, ward councillors have expressed interest in becoming members and it was agreed in 2012 that there should be one place on the Panel for a ward councillor: there are 3 councillors and one of them attends depending on availability.

It was also agreed in 2013 that there should also be a place on the Panel for a council officer from the local Neighbourhood Team. This will better inform the Panel about other actions taking place in the local area with which applicants could link their projects.

There is a website for the Picton Panel which sets out information for applicants and keeps local people up to date with progress. The address is:

<http://pictonpanel.blogspot.co.uk>

Panel Partner

Granby Toxteth Development Trust, the Community Anchor Organisation for the local neighbourhood, offered to be the Panel Partner for the Picton Panel which means that it hosts the Panel and helps with the administration. Under the Community First rules Panel Partners are allowed to take a small amount of funding to cover their costs but GTDT has not and will not be doing this.

What Do Local People Want?

Having formed themselves into a Community First Panel, the members swiftly identified initial needs in the area. This was based on their own observations as people living or working in the area as well as the statistical evidence provided from Liverpool City Council's website and elsewhere.

The initial funding priorities were therefore:

- Projects which foster positive relationships between young people and adults and which encourage young people to make a positive contribution to the local community.
- Projects which improve the local environment, in particular which improve access to the natural environment within residential areas.
- Projects which help to encourage a more healthy lifestyle.

During the past 12 months the Panel Partner, Granby Toxteth Development Trust, working with the Panel members has conducted a number of deeper consultation activities to develop the Panel's funding priorities for year 3 onwards (April 2013 to March 2015).

Consultation

Panel Partner, Granby Toxteth Development Trust, has a wealth of experience in consulting with local people and offered this expertise to the Panel to hone the funding priorities. At the same time all individual Panel members have experience in consulting with local people at an individual level. Both GTDT and the Panel members have close working relationships with other third sector organisations in the neighbourhood as well as private sector companies. Ward councillors frequently meet Panel members and the Panel Partner in the course of their work.

Panel members and the Panel Partner are therefore ideally placed to consult on the needs and wants of local people and to synthesise these into the funding priorities.

We have tried to carry out as broad a range of consultation activities as possible. In our experience, some people may be uninterested in a given consultation event but may be more interested in a different approach. By covering a wide range of different techniques we have been able to engage as many local people as possible and to glean their opinions about the funding priorities for Community First in Picton ward.

Specific consultation activities included the following:

- **Structured 'Listenings' by the Community Organisers** directly with individual local people. Using the pioneering 'Root Solution Listening Matters' methodology, these interactions focus on drawing out what local people like about the local area as well as what they dislike. This leads to sustainable solutions rather than short term sticking plaster actions. These took place throughout the consultation period and the team of three Community Organisers have carried out approximately 200 of these 'Listenings' over the past 12 months.
- A number of **World Café events** taking place within the ward. These followed a structure which was sufficiently informal for local people to feel that they could voice their



opinions freely. The best attended of these took place on 11 December 2012 (over 110 local people attended) but several smaller, niche events were run during the consultation period.

- A **Learner Voice** event on 21 March 2013. This event, which was operated in accordance with guidance from OFSTED, sought local people's views on the learner offering the in the local area. However the topics covered were sufficiently broad that they could reasonably be used to inform the Community First process.



- **Thought Trees** displayed at GTDT and elsewhere throughout the ward. All visitors are encouraged to include their wishes about possible new or amended activities in the local area.
- **Feedback from local 'Neighbourhood Champions'** who reach deep into the community and have a specific aim of making connections with the most marginalised



- **Discussions with ward councillors** who shared opinions voiced directly to them by ward residents, businesses and organisations. These discussions were generally informal and we recognise that ward councillors are often only privy to issues which people perceive to be within the city council's jurisdiction.
- **Suggestion Box and Client Evaluations** at GTDT. A large number of local people and local businesses take up services at GTDT and their feedback is constantly sought on their experience. Whilst part of this is standardised customer service feedback, a significant part of it relates to the *relevance* of the various offerings to them as well as what additional offerings they might wish to see. From this information it is possible to glean opinions about broader preference amongst local people. We obtained feedback from approximately 300 local residents.
- **Local 'Community Pride' Events.** Despite high deprivation, people in the local area has a generally high sense of local pride. Events, often but not always facilitated by the city council, regularly take place which bring people together for a common effort. One of the longest established is Loving Lodge Lane, a series of high profile engagement days, where local residents come together in a concerted effort to help improve the local environment - litter-picking, planting hanging baskets, removing graffiti and so on. Panel members have used these gatherings to discuss local priorities directly with local residents at a time when they are focussed on local improvement.

What Do Local People Want?

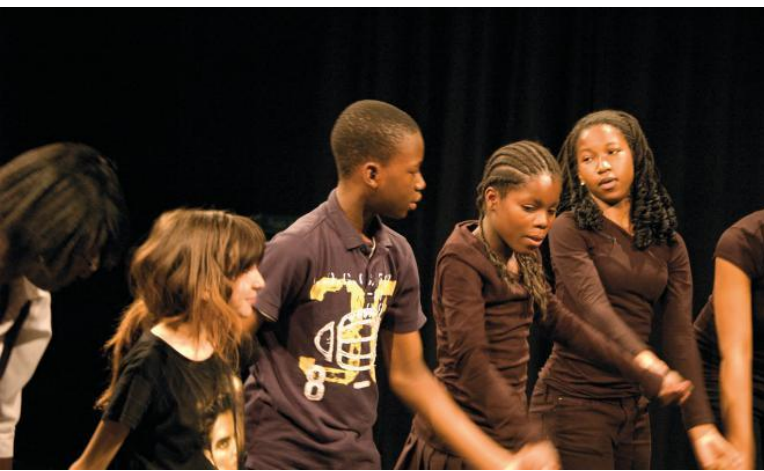
Inevitably, as with any consultation exercise, we have tried to manage the expectations of local people. Toxteth (the larger area of which Picton is part) has been subject to a huge number of local consultations, especially since the civil disturbance of the early 1980s.

One of the most common complaints amongst local people is that their opinions are frequently sought but they see no real change. However on closer inspection it seems that a large part of this problem is due to failure (by those carrying out the consultation) to manage expectations. It is for this reason that much of our consultation has been more informal - having semi-structured conversations with local people, often whilst they are engaged in some other community-based activity.

Throughout our various consultation activities there was a high degree of consensus amongst local people about what they want in their community. Reassuringly, the majority of the local people who we contacted are happy to live in the area. They use words like 'vibrant' and 'friendly' to describe the area. Despite the levels of deprivation, this is not the first thing that people want to talk about. Rather, they wanted to talk about practical ways in which living in Picton ward can be improved.

Children and Young People

There are a large number of children young people in Picton ward, in part a reflection of the larger families of people of non-European heritages, many of them recent arrivals.

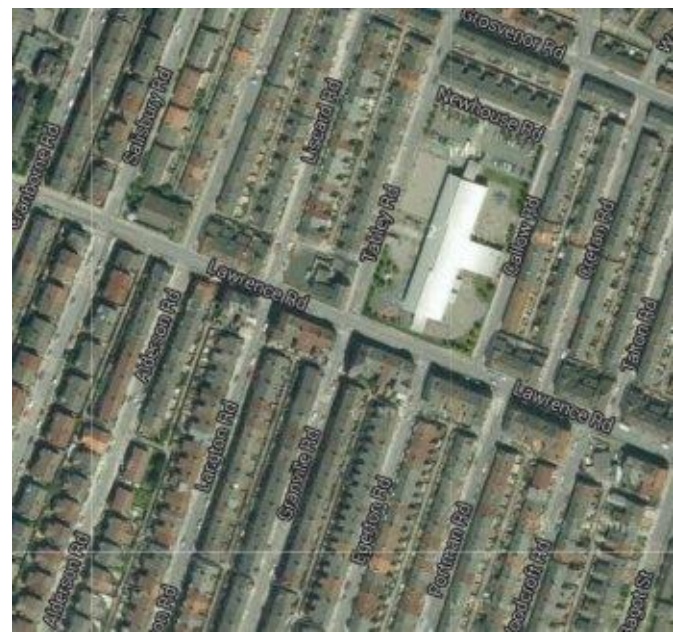


Parents and other residents are acutely aware that there is little to occupy the children during the evenings and school holidays. Many mentioned that there had previously been high profile, funded projects which ran homework clubs and holiday clubs and that these projects are no longer running. On a positive note, local people did not feel that there is a high level of antisocial behaviour amongst young people. Rather, their concern was that young people

are not being positively engaged in their community and that an opportunity is being missed.

What local people seek, therefore, is support to operate positive, volunteer-led activities for young people which will occupy them and fully engage them as members of the community.

However, we also noted that residents were wary of activities which engage with young people to the exclusion of adults. Rather than supporting young people's activities, we received a clear message that local people want to see inter-generational activities which integrate young people into the local community rather than separating them from it,



building mutual support and respect between the different age groups.

Greening the Environment

Picton is an inner-city ward with dense housing, much of it terraced. Whilst there are large areas of green space, such as parks and recreation grounds, these are usually formal and separate from the residential areas.

However, a cursory glance at a local map will show that the streets where people live in Picton are often devoid of green space. It is this issue which local people have highlighted as an area for improvement. In some parts of the ward, residents have collaborated to 'green' their surroundings. Often this involves minimal expenditure such as hanging baskets and pots in some streets, whilst others have worked together to adopt an area of vacant land and develop it as a community garden. The city council has been especially supportive of these actions, often permitting 'meanwhile use' of these pockets of land, many of which have arisen because of necessary pauses in rebuilding work. These initiatives are always volunteer-driven and often the funding gap is simply enough to purchase some tools or seeds. A small amount of funding will unlock a huge amount of community-led potential and we see this as an ideal candidate for Community First funding.

Healthy Lifestyle

Our consultation confirmed that local people are intensely family oriented and it came as no surprise that they are very upset when poor health has an impact on the family unit. One of the most common statements we encountered was that people would (for example) give up smoking 'because of the children'. We encountered numerous anecdotal examples where a parent had indeed followed through with this and improved their health, driven largely by the motive to be a better parent, or just to live longer and see more of their children as they grow up.

Health problems in Picton, as in many areas, arise from a combination of:

- Smoking - many people we spoke to wished to give up smoking but are unaware of the support available to help them achieve this.
- Poor diet, often a result of over-dependence on fast food, due to poor access to cooking facilities and poor cookery know-how.
- High alcohol intake.
- Low levels of exercise.

We found that people sometimes lacked the know-how to improve their own health and there is a need for simple projects which provide information and peer support for challenging changes in lifestyle.



Priorities

As a result of our consultation activities and events, we have agreed that the funding priorities should be:

- Projects which foster positive relationships between young people and adults and which encourage young people to make a positive contribution to the local community. Projects which only benefit young people will not be encouraged.
- Projects which improve the local environment, in particular which improve access to the natural environment within residential areas. Projects which encourage community gardens and growing initiatives will be especially encouraged
- Projects which help to encourage a more healthy lifestyle. Projects which encourage more exercise or healthy eating will be especially encouraged.

Local Volunteers

There is a strong volunteering culture in Picton and volunteering is a way of life for many people. The Panel has been able to tap into this, both for the operation of the Panel itself and also assisting the projects which it has recommended for funding.

All those who are involved in the Panel - GTDT as the community anchor, the Community Organisers, local councillors and local council workers - have access to an army of volunteers who want to make the neighbourhood a better place to live and raise families. Some volunteers have a particular interest and/or organisation with which they align themselves, but many are simply pleased to make a positive contribution to the local area as opportunities present themselves.

GTDT periodically holds community engagement events and activities such as World Cafés and these are especially useful opportunities to recruit volunteers in a more structured way.

In addition, all applicant organisations so far to the Picton Panel have had no difficulty in engaging sufficient volunteer time to produce the in kind match funding required under Community First rules.

In addition to individual volunteers, Picton also has a wealth of volunteer-led organisations (both formal and informal) which span a wide range of activities. As well as having the potential to be applicants to the Community First fund, there is also the potential for the Panel to encourage organisations to work together, for the good of the neighbourhood. Hence, Community First is acting as a catalyst for change which goes beyond the funds which it can offer.

During the next period we will actively promote volunteering in the neighbourhood so that we can benefit from even more individuals who will bring their skills and experiences to projects. We will also experiment with a 'thematic' approach to volunteer engagement. For example, during the summer of 2013 we have been successful in engaging with a number of volunteers who want to be involved with growing plants. This cluster of local people has been able to focus on particular opportunities, including a local community garden, and they work well together because they have a common goal.

In Kind Resources

One of Picton's disadvantages is a shortage of community capital and in some respects there is little that can be offered. However GTDT, as Panel Partner, has already donated in kind resources to the panel and to local projects in the form of:

- Support to applicants in improving their applications, resulting in better and more community-led projects.
- Providing a venue for Panel meetings.
- Donating the time and resources of the team of Community Organisers.
- Offering premises for meetings of volunteer-led groups in the area.

Funding Available and Other Projects

The other funding available to community organisations in Picton is limited and this is especially noticeable after the years. Two sources which support projects of a similar size to those envisaged by Community First are local councillors' funds and funds from housing associations (RSLs). We are in the process of compiling information to help applicants which will be added to the Panel's website.

Other projects operating in the area are too numerous to list. We are also concerned about potential data protection issues. However, we will be providing links on the website to other potential funders and these links, in turn, may include details of projects supported.

Adoption

This Plan was adopted at a meeting of the Panel on Tuesday 16 July 2013. At that meeting it was also agreed to formally incorporate a local councillor (on a rotating basis) and an officer from the city council's Neighbourhoods Team as members of the Panel going forward.