

## Local Strategic Partnerships - What do they do?

LSPs bring together the main public service providers, business, the voluntary and community sector and members of the local community. They provide a single forum where decisions can be made, eliminating the need for separate bodies, partnerships and time wasting meetings.

They aim to ensure the best use of public resources, both mainstream funding and additional funding, and to involve a wide range of people in decision making about the priorities in their area.

While there are LSPs in all parts of the country, those in the 88 local authority areas with the worst levels of deprivation were given the responsibility to draw up and implement a local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy in consultation with their local communities.

*In the East Midlands Ashfield, Bolsover, Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, Mansfield and Nottingham were all identified as having particularly high levels of deprivation - they became Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.*

## Neighbourhood Renewal - What's it for?

The Government's Neighbourhood Renewal (NR) Strategy aims to ensure that nobody is disadvantaged by where they live. The national strategy has two main goals:

- To improve standards of living and public service delivery in the NR areas to the national average – floor targets lay down continually rising standards for health, education, community safety, employment and the environment
- To ensure that local communities are able to influence and lead the renewal process.

The Strategy recognises that it is only possible to turn around areas that have been starved of adequate funding for decades by mobilising the whole range of mainstream public sector resources.

In these areas, additional help has been made available through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) to help tackle deprivation in the most deprived wards.

The allocation of NRF is being decided in each area through a commissioning process to ensure that the funds are focussed on locally agreed priorities. NRF funding will continue to be available until at least 2008 although, at the time of writing, its allocation in the East Midlands has not been finalised.



*Parachute games at the Village Learning Store, Derby*

## What's in it for schools?

Schools bear the brunt of crime, poor housing and unemployment, so anything that strengthens communities and restores their vitality has a positive impact in the classroom. Many schools in the NR areas have already benefited from the physical and social regeneration of the local community; less vandalism, a cleaner and brighter environment and greater involvement of adults and parents in their own and their children's learning. Working with community groups, parents and local agencies like Sure Start and Primary Care Trusts has helped many schools to tackle problems which they previously faced alone.

Some schools have benefited directly from additional resources allocated through the NRF, allowing them to kick start activities, many of which have since been mainstreamed.

Inside, we illustrate some of the benefits to schools in your area.

## How can schools help to regenerate their communities?

There is no doubt that the most important thing schools can do to turn their community around is to improve the attainment of their pupils. Good schools are the bedrock of improving communities. But schools can provide other local benefits and act as a community resource for learning and community development.

The knock-on effects for children's learning are great. Better educated parents are better able to help their children's learning, to take part in the running of the school, while schools that open up for community use are often less affected by vandalism.