

## East Lothian Community Engagement Strategy

June 2010 - June 2013



Working together, sharing decisions, improving services

# Welcome

*to East Lothian Community Planning Partnership's Community Engagement Strategy. Community engagement is about encouraging and enabling individuals and communities to work together with service providers like East Lothian Council and NHS Lothian to shape services that meet communities' needs. It is part of the community planning process.*



## How to get involved in Community Planning:

- ✿ Be a part of a local area forum
- ✿ As a member of a partnership group linking to the Single Outcome Agreement theme groups
- ✿ Find out more in Appendix 2 on page 9 or go our website at: [www.communityplanning.org.uk](http://www.communityplanning.org.uk)

## What is Community Planning?

Community Planning is about the organisations that deliver services and the communities who use or are affected by them, working together to improve the ways that services are planned, coordinated and carried out. The East Lothian Community Planning Partnership is responsible for community planning in East Lothian. Their role is to work together to deliver services in a way that:

- makes the best use of resources
- meets the needs of communities and individuals
- promotes the well-being of people in East Lothian.

*There are many good examples in East Lothian of communities and service providers working together to improve their services.*

The East Lothian Community Planning Partnership wants to:

- build on what has been learned so far
- share these experiences
- strengthen the ways we work together.

We want the ways we work together to be based on:

- listening
- inclusiveness
- openness
- honesty
- dialogue
- shared decision making
- sharing information.

## Why have a Community Engagement Strategy?

This strategy will help us improve the way people who provide services work with people and communities. It will enable and encourage people to share in making decisions on the services they use or those that affect them. In this way services can truly meet people's needs.

## Who is the Strategy for?

- Organisations, departments and staff who provide services. It will help us to learn more about community engagement and improve the way we work with different groups of people
- Councillors who work with service providers and communities and have influence over the way services are provided
- Community leaders and groups who are interested in influencing the way service providers work and the steps we can take together.

## How is the Partnership supporting Community Engagement?

### Promoting equality and diversity

The Partnership funds and develops the work of the East Lothian Diversity Network, which brings together individuals, community organisations and groups that are interested in equality and diversity issues locally.

### Promoting meaningful engagement with communities

We have carried out training on the National Standards for Community Engagement with community planning partners, local groups and communities.

### Building capacity

The East Lothian Learning Partnership Community Capacity Building Forum brings together a range of public and voluntary sector partners. Their role is to develop initiatives and share good practice in engagement, consultation and community empowerment by providing training and other support.

### Training partners to consult effectively

Community Learning and Development and Children's Services delivered training to multi-agency staff on 'How well do we consult, engage and involve children and young people?'

### Planning at a local level

We have begun to implement a Local Community Planning Framework in the Musselburgh and Dunbar council ward areas, after testing local community planning arrangements in the Fa'side and the Preston, Seton, Gosford wards.

### Providing leadership and support for community engagement

We have established a 'strategic level community engagement' post, which is joint-funded by East Lothian Community Planning Partnership and East Lothian Community Health Partnership. This post has the remit to lead on the implementation of the Community Engagement Strategy Action Plan.

### Promoting VOiCE

We have trained people to use the Visioning Outcomes in Community Engagement (VOiCE) tool. This includes training on the National Standards for Community Engagement for staff, volunteers and community activists across partner organisations.

### Set up a community engagement group

We set up a Community Engagement Group to oversee the implementation of the Community Engagement Strategy and Action Plan.

### Set up VAEL

We supported the establishment of Voluntary Action East Lothian (VAEL), a new interface that has been set up to ensure there is better engagement with the Third sector in Community Planning processes.

## What is Community Engagement?

Community engagement is the process of involving communities in planning, development and management of services such as health, education and housing.

It may also involve other issues which concern us all, or it may be about tackling the problems of a neighbourhood or of a particular group of people, such as crime, drug misuse, lack of culturally appropriate services or lack of play facilities for children and young people.

Community engagement takes many shapes and forms. It can involve simple exercises in consultation, through to the formation of multi-agency partnerships with community representation at the centre.

Underlying effective community engagement is the commitment of service providers and planners to listen to those for whom services are being planned and based on these views and needs make changes in the services.

**Adapted from the Community Engagement 'How to Guide', Communities Scotland**

Community engagement is an essential part of community planning. The Partnership has agreed to adopt the National Standards for Community Engagement (NSCE) introduced by the Scottish Government to improve the way that organisations engage with people and communities. For more information about the National Standards for Community Engagement see Appendix 1 on page 8.

## What is VOiCE? - Visionary Outcomes in Community Engagement

VOiCE is a planning and recording software tool designed to assist individuals and organisations to design and deliver effective community engagement. VOiCE has been developed by Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) on behalf of the Scottish Government.

VOiCE will support you to:

- plan community engagement and service-user participation
- monitor and record the process
- evaluate the outcomes.

For more information, go to:  
[www.voicescotland.org.uk](http://www.voicescotland.org.uk)



## What do we want to achieve?

We want people and communities to be fully engaged in deciding how services are provided through the community planning process.

When people and communities are part of the community planning process:

- services can truly meet the needs of the people who use them or are affected by them
- we can achieve the outcomes in East Lothian's Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2009. For further information see contact details in Appendix 2 on page 9
- everyone involved can get a lot more out of working together – gaining new skills and knowledge, feeling useful and valued in our work and our communities, embracing and celebrating diversity.

## What are our priorities?

We have identified the following priority areas for action to help us achieve this way of working together.

We want to:

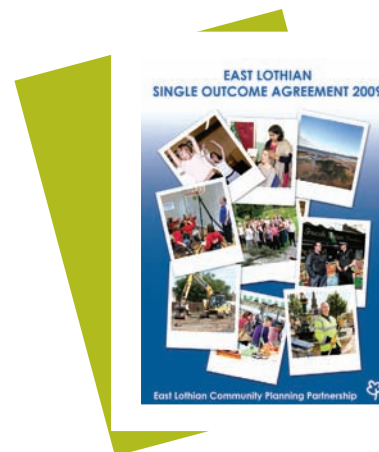
- strengthen and extend community planning, so that people can get involved wherever and however is best for them, so that they can contribute in different ways
- increase the involvement of all communities, particularly children and young people, disabled people and those from different ethnic and other under-represented groups in community planning. This will be done at local level and deal with subjects that they are interested in. This will make sure that different experiences, needs and views are taken into account in services that everyone uses
- build the capacity of management, staff, community leaders, groups and individuals in community engagement so that everyone has the confidence, skills, knowledge and resources to work together as equal partners
- increase the coordination of our efforts in community engagement – sharing experiences, knowledge, skills, resources and funds so that we can support each other, learn from our experiences and celebrate our successes.

## How does this Strategy relate to the East Lothian Single Outcome Agreement 2009?

East Lothian Community Planning Partnership (ELCPP) works to deliver the priorities and outcomes identified in the East Lothian Single Outcome Agreement 2009 (SOA) as agreed in consultation with local communities.

The SOA is an agreement between the ELCPP and the Scottish Government. The purpose of the SOA is to identify areas for improvement and to deliver better outcomes for the people of East Lothian and Scotland, through specific commitments made by community planning partners and the Scottish Government.

Community engagement is central to a community planning way of working. Please note that the SOA is currently being updated for 2011.



## How the Partnership intends to promote community engagement

- Improve the capacity and skills of members of partner organisations so that minority and seldom heard groups are more involved in community planning
- Extend capacity building work with communities and individuals with an emphasis on minority and seldom heard groups to build their confidence and skills so that they can participate in community planning
- Support the development of the Diversity Network to encourage and assist partners to engage with minority groups to ensure their voice is heard
- Develop the Community Planning Partnership Annual Forum as a key event for building joint working and skills and bringing together service providers and a range of communities
- We will establish an East Lothian section on the new Visioning Outcomes in Community Engagement (VOiCE) online tool that is accessible to partner organisations and groups within East Lothian so that knowledge and experience can be shared.
- Use the VOiCE software to improve planning and evaluation of community engagement activities, - and how this information is used by the organisations and groups involved in developing services.
- Develop a competency- based community engagement training package for Community Planning Partners
- Share skills and resources through a community engagement network and information resources bank that can be accessed on the community planning website.

## Delivering community engagement – about the Community Engagement Action Plan

The Community Engagement Action Plan shows what the Partnership will do to improve community engagement so that people and communities within East Lothian are fully engaged in determining the way services are provided through community planning processes. The action plan has set specific community engagement outcomes that identify the way we will meet the priorities identified within this strategy.

These are that:

- all communities within East Lothian are more involved in the community planning processes that are relevant to them
- partners have increased capacity to deliver effective community engagement that meets the national standards
- there is increased use and sharing of effective practice in community engagement across the Community Planning Partnership.

The Community Engagement Strategy and Action Plan have been produced by the East Lothian Community Planning Community Engagement Group. For information on membership of the Community Engagement Group see Appendix 2 on page 9.

If you want to know more about how we going to deliver this strategy, please see the Community Engagement Action Plan that is a supplementary document. The Action Plan is available at [www.eastlothiancommunityplanning.org.uk/engagement](http://www.eastlothiancommunityplanning.org.uk/engagement) or see contact details on back cover.



Courtesy of Scottish Participatory Initiatives



# APPENDIX 1

## National Standards for Community Engagement (summary)

### The Ten Standards

#### 1. Involvement

We will identify and involve the people and organisations who have an interest in the focus of the engagement

#### 2. Support

We will identify and overcome any barriers to involvement.

#### 3. Planning

We will gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use this evidence to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and the actions to be taken.

#### 4. Methods

We will agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose

#### 5. Working Together

We will agree and use clear procedures that enable the participants to work with one another effectively and efficiently.

#### 6. Sharing Information

We will ensure that necessary information is communicated between the participants

#### 7. Working with Others

We will work effectively with others with an interest in the engagement.

#### 8. Improvement

We will develop actively the skills, knowledge and confidence of all the participants.

#### 9. Feedback

We will feed back the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected.

#### 10. Monitoring and Evaluation

We will monitor and evaluate whether the engagement achieves its purposes and meets the national standards for community engagement.

For further information on the National Standards for Community Engagement and associated materials visit Scottish Community Development Centre at:  
[www.scdc.org.uk/national-standards-community-engagement/](http://www.scdc.org.uk/national-standards-community-engagement/)

## APPENDIX 2

### More information about the East Lothian Community Planning Partnership

The East Lothian Community Planning Partnership (ELCPP) is responsible for community planning in East Lothian. ELCPP is a broad based partnership of agencies and organisations from the public, voluntary, private and community sectors that have come together to deliver services.

The ELCPP board sets the strategic direction and oversees the implementation of East Lothian's SOA, including the work of the Community Engagement Group. Look at the East Lothian Community Planning structure diagram on the page opposite to see how this is organised.

Look online at: [www.eastlothian.communityplanning.org.uk](http://www.eastlothian.communityplanning.org.uk) to find out more about East Lothian Community Planning and our current SOA.

#### Membership of the Community Engagement Group:

East Lothian Council  
East Lothian Community Care Forum  
East Lothian Community Health Partnership  
East Lothian Community Planning Partnership  
East Lothian Diversity Network  
East Lothian Voluntary Organisation Network (ELVON)/  
Voluntary Action East Lothian (VAEL)  
Lothian Borders Police  
Lothian and Borders Fire & Rescue Service  
Sustaining Dunbar  
Volunteer Development East Lothian (VDEL) / Voluntary Action East Lothian (VAEL)

#### Minutes and papers only

East Lothian Association of Community Councils  
East Lothian Tenants and Residents Panel (ELTRP)  
Social Enterprise East Lothian / Voluntary Action East Lothian (VAEL)

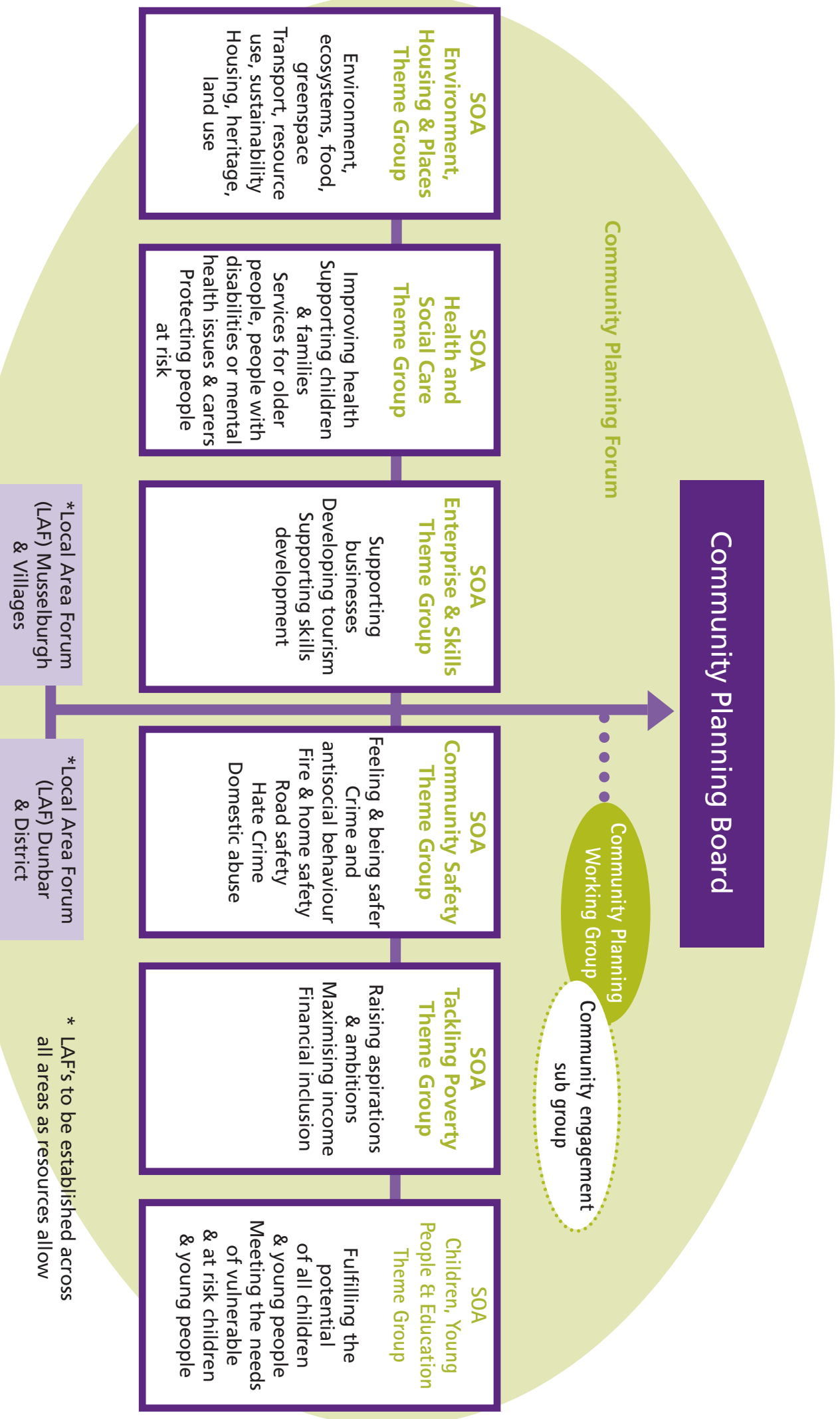
### Voluntary Action East Lothian (VAEL)


Volunteer Centre East Lothian (VCEL), East Lothian Voluntary Organisations Network (ELVON) and Social Enterprise in East Lothian (SEEL) have formed VAEL to create a representative relationship between the third sector in East Lothian and the Community Planning Partnership. This offers the opportunity to strengthen and increase participation of the third sector in Community Planning, and ensure a stronger voice of the sector in decision-making.

Go to [www.voluntaryactioneastlothian.org.uk](http://www.voluntaryactioneastlothian.org.uk) to find out more.

East Lothian's Community Engagement Strategy and Action Plan can be downloaded from the community planning website at:  
[www.eastlothiancommunityplanning.org.uk/engagement](http://www.eastlothiancommunityplanning.org.uk/engagement).  
For further information please see contact details on the back cover.

# East Lothian Community Planning Structure





Versions of this leaflet are available on request on audiotape, in Braille, large print or your own language.

☎ Phone 01620 827199

For comments or further information on the Community Engagement Strategy and action plan please contact:

Meriel Deans, Public & Community Involvement Co-ordinator

☎ 0131 536 8025 or ✉ [meriel.deans@nhs.net](mailto:meriel.deans@nhs.net)

or write to us at:

East Lothian Community Planning Partnership  
East Lothian Council  
John Muir House  
Brewery Park  
Haddinton  
East Lothian  
EH3 1HA