



**ANNUAL EVENT
2 APRIL 2008
ST ANDREWS IN THE SQUARE**

REPORT

The second annual GoWell event was held on 2 April 2008 in St Andrew's in the Square. 109 people attended the event (out of 132 that had registered). Delegates were from a range of backgrounds with a large proportion from local community based organisations.

Format

Carol Tannahill introduced the event with a brief overview presentation. This was followed by presentations on the following:

- Community cohesion in GoWell study areas – Ade Kearns
- Community engagement and empowerment in regeneration – Louise Lawson
- The influences of housing and the neighbourhood on physical activity – Phil Mason

Introduction – Carol Tannahill

Carol outlined the format for the event and provided some background information on GoWell, including expressing appreciation for the ongoing support from the programme sponsors. She highlighted that the communications strategy includes a range of mechanisms for people to learn about GoWell and for communities to be involved, including through local meetings with LHOs and other community organisations, a series of community newsletters produced for each individual area (copies of which were available at the event), our annual events and other discussion forums, and the GoWell website.

GoWell is studying 14 different areas classified by the type of regeneration they are undergoing as follows:

- Transformational regeneration areas – Red Road, Sighthill, Shawbridge
- Local regeneration areas – Scotstoun multi-storey flats, Gorbals Riverside, St Andrews Drive
- Housing investment areas – Carntyne, Riddrie, Govan, Townhead
- Areas surrounding multi-storey flats – Scotstoun and wider Red Road
- Peripheral estates – Drumchapel and Castlemilk.

The various research components were briefly outlined and the programme timeline presented.

Community cohesion in GoWell study areas – Ade Kearns

Ade presented findings on three particular aspects of community cohesion: young people, asylum seekers and refugees (ASRs) and mixed-tenure.

Young people – are often seen as a problem. In the 2006 GoWell survey the problem cited most often by respondents was 'teenagers hanging around'. In four of our five types of area the majority of respondents cited young people hanging around as a problem, particularly in public spaces. Only housing improvement areas were an exception to this. Furthermore, three in ten people in regeneration areas and peripheral estates cited teenagers hanging around as a **serious** problem. The next two most common problems were drunken and rowdy behaviour and gang activity – both also likely to be related to young people. Youth and leisure services were however rated as 'poor' in many of the GoWell communities. So, although young people are being identified as problems, there is a recognition that provision of youth facilities should be improved.

The survey also asked if communities exercise any informal social control over their young people – for example, people were asked if they thought neighbours would intervene if there were problems with young people, such as harassing people in the street. Overall just over half thought it would happen – although in some of the areas, including some of the larger estates like Red Road and Shawbridge, the proportion was below a third. In comparison, in response to a similar question asked of communities experiencing regeneration in England, 80% thought their communities would exercise that form of social control over young people.

During wave 2 of the survey, the GoWell team will seek to carry out focus groups to explore the problems faced by young people and the problems young people present to other people. Public agencies do recognise these issues and there are a number of youth diversionary projects in place across the city to try to engage them in constructive activities. GoWell is conducting an evaluation of a number of these and this will report towards the end of 2008.

These findings pose questions for communities and practitioners:

- what are the ways to bring adults and young people together more often so that they become more aware of the problems they pose for each other?;
- how might young people be seen not just as a threat but as a resource in an area?; and
- what sort of services are needed and how should they be organised?

Asylum Seekers and Refugees (ASRs). In four of the GoWell study areas between 35-40% of people interviewed were ASRs. Following the survey, focus groups were also conducted with ASRs and local residents.

Data collected from ASRs indicated that they appreciate a number of things about their homes and their neighbourhoods including the locations, schools, churches and the contact and support from local people. They reported positive things about having Scottish friends and having helpful neighbourhoods and particularly noted that the children are mixing well and they are often surprised by this. However, they felt that they need to know *how* to mix with Scottish people more and need opportunities to do that. They also reported some hostility and complained about aggression – particularly from young people (eg blocking their way on the street, throwing things at them). In terms of mixing with other people, they appreciated the fact that they get a lot of support and interaction from living with other ASRs, however there is a desire to be more mixed in the future when areas are redeveloped. There is also a desire to live with people with a stronger orientation towards educational achievement.

In contrast, the views of the white Scottish residents who participated in the GoWell research tended to be quite negative about ASRs – including comments like ‘there are too many’ and ‘we’d be better without them’. There was resentment expressed about perceived unequal treatment, and social unease regarding the amount of foreign people on the streets. There was also comment made about negative effects on the neighbourhood in terms of image and instability, and a number of examples of culture clashes were mentioned. Some white Scottish respondents were concerned about the effects on schooling – for example through the impact of having children that don’t speak English as a first language. There was also a degree of suspicion that things would be done quicker in their neighbourhoods if ASRs weren’t there.

There were different views about the desirability of greater mixing. Some respondents felt that they wanted to keep their own culture: others that we could learn from each other and there should be more opportunities to mix.

These findings represent lived experience in rapidly diversified communities. Key questions that emerge are:

- how can community cohesion be improved?
- what degree of diversity do people want when the areas are transformed?
- what are the likely effects of current and future policies towards ASRs on the communities being studied?
- how might wider community benefits be realised from, for example, the better self-reported health and higher aspirations reported by ASRs than many white Scottish respondents.

Tenure-mixing. Levels of owner-occupation are lower in Glasgow than elsewhere, and although there is falling demand for social rented housing many people are still living in areas dominated by it. The policy aims are to increase owner-occupation and to create more mixed communities, to which families who moved away might want to return. In GoWell, questions were posed as to whether people are in favour of tenure mixing and whether it will produce stronger more cohesive communities. The GoWell focus groups found that people were generally in favour of mixing owners and renters (this view was generally from people who live in social rented housing). The expected benefits were: raising aspirations, caring more about the area, improving area reputation, removing stigma for individuals, improved lifestyles and attitudes and social capital. However, there were also some concerns that mixing might not happen across tenure types; there is still a need for social rented housing, and that this might increase again; and that rents might be higher in mixed tenure areas.

Community engagement and empowerment in regeneration – Louise Lawson

This strand of GoWell seeks to investigate how local communities are involved in the planning and implementation of major redevelopments within their areas; and to determine the extent to which this is empowering. This is part of ongoing work with GHA and is focussed on Sighthill, Shawbridge and Red Road.

The background and policy context was briefly described to set the scene. In terms of policy, there is currently a lot of emphasis on community involvement and empowerment and this is reflected in local practice. In each area a consultative group of local residents was set up to work alongside consultants, to help inform and shape regeneration proposals. Wider community engagement took place via newsletters, exhibitions, local surgeries, a freephone information line, a DVD and surveys.

The findings presented were as a result of discussions conducted between April – September 2007 with each of the consultative groups, focus groups with the wider community (two in each area), and a discussion with a residents and tenants association in one area. Louise presented findings to date under three themes as follows:

Governance and decision making

The consultative groups were recruited differently in each area: one area tried to get tenants from each of the high rise flats to form a consultative group; in another, the group was formed by the LHO committee; and in the third, a small group of community activists formed this group. There were pros and cons associated with each of these approaches.

Within the consultative groups most people felt they had a say and it was a good experience. However, when it came to what was being proposed and how they fed into development plans, many had little sense of the overall picture despite groups identifying their preferred option. The focus tended to be on housing types and layout rather than on community and facilities. Whilst many felt involved with the consultants and that they had an input at that level, they still felt they were subject to decisions being made for them, had limited influence, and didn't know how the proposals would be developed and become reality or what their future involvement would be.

Louise highlighted that these findings relate to quite an early stage in the process and there may be further opportunities for residents to be involved further down the line. There is also not complete clarity about what the next stages in the consultative processes will be and how things will progress across the board. These are complex and evolving processes.

Meeting the needs of the community

Louise highlighted that it is difficult to judge whether respondents are representative of the wider community, but that some interesting findings were emerging from those who had participated in the research.

Within the focus groups there were varying levels of knowledge of the proposals for their areas. However, when prompted, most people could recollect different aspects of the proposals and consultation process. Most had a sense that something was going to happen and remembered seeing it in a newsletter, and many had had a chance to vote or choose their preferred option and feed back their views via surveys or questionnaires.

Although a lot of people have left the areas, there are still significant numbers living in Sighthill, Red Road and Shawbridge and there is an expressed concern about short-term and more immediate issues (such as vandalism and litter) not being sorted out. Respondents felt that they need better facilities now, not just in the future.

Louise reported a lot of uncertainty about the future and a lack of awareness of timescales, allocation policies, and associated processes. There are many practical concerns, particularly from the ASRs, about issues like whether they would have to get a new GP, where children would go to school during the transition, and cost implications. The prospect of displacement also raised concerns for both ASRs and long term residents, about having to leave behind friends and meet people in the new areas.

Concerns were expressed about community cohesion too: in the present, during the transition phase, and in the future. In terms of the present, some people have moved from one block to another and this is resulting in little sense of community within the blocks. Regarding the transition phase, there is expressed concern that the area will no longer be seen as stable, and will attract homeless people, squatters and drug users. In terms of the future, there are concerns about who will live in the new areas and who will be given priority. Some of the ASRs thought it likely that there would be hostility towards them if they moved back: some long term residents felt that they should automatically have a right to a house and raised the issue of entitlement.

In summary, whilst a lot of consultation and communication has taken place and there is a sense of awareness that something is going to happen, there are a range of concerns that perhaps are not currently being addressed. These are mainly

around practical and community issues rather than housing and physical infrastructure.

Community capacity

It is still early in the process in terms of building community capacity and there is a lot of opportunity in the future to attend in a concerted way to the need for capacity-building. Capacity also depends on various factors. Areas have different starting points, histories, characteristics, networks and people. All of these factors contribute to the level of capacity that communities can build.

Processes to date have not maximised opportunities for community development, for example in relation to processes of recruitment to consultative and development groups. This raises the issue of who has a legitimate voice and whose voice really counts.

In conclusion, Louise highlighted that this is a long process with a lot of opportunity to develop community capacity more. Clarity is needed regarding what the best placed role for communities is alongside partners. It is not always clear what community engagement is about and more attention is required to ensure that there is communication about the issues that affect people. Communities want information that is honest and open and to know what it will mean for them. In light of these emerging findings, GoWell is involved in ongoing discussions with colleagues in GHA and other partner organisations to consider how approaches might be strengthened in the future.

The influences of housing and the neighbourhood on physical activity – Phil Mason

The GoWell survey asked three questions about how much physical activity is done in a typical week broken down as: 30 minutes of moderate physical exercise, 20 continuous minutes of vigorous exercise, or a walk around your neighbourhood.

Following the methods of the International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ), these three individual activities were converted into a single scale of energy used whilst doing exercise. Analysis was carried out at the level of individuals, housing type and neighbourhoods.

Individuals: Responses were analysed according to age, sex, longstanding illness or disability, employment status, educational level, living with dependent children.

- All levels of activity decrease significantly with age.
- Men tend to undertake more exercise than women: 4% more moderate exercise and 28% more vigorous exercise.
- Respondents with longstanding illness or disability do at least 40% less exercise than those without - except for moderate intensity exercise where there is only an 11% difference.
- Those currently working undertake more physical exercise of all intensities than those who are not working. This ranges from a small difference of 5% in walking round the neighbourhood to a 19% difference for vigorous exercise.
- The amount of exercise of each type increases as respondents' level of education goes up.
- Those living with one or more dependent children do slightly more vigorous exercise, walk around their neighbourhoods more, and have a slightly higher level of exercise than those without children. However, moderate exercise levels are slightly lower for those with children.

In summary, these differences broadly match our expectations. However, although individual characteristics are important they only explain a very small percentage of the total variation there is in the exercise levels.

Housing: Responses were analysed according to study area type, dwelling type, tenure and floor level.

- Levels of moderate and overall exercise are particularly low in the transformational regeneration areas and the local regeneration areas. However, respondents in regeneration areas do *vigorous* exercise more frequently than those in housing investment areas and peripheral estates, and there is no obvious explanation for this.
- Multi-storey flat (MSF) dwellers tend to do significantly less moderate exercise and walk around their neighbourhood less often, and have a lower overall exercise score, than respondents in other flats or houses. However, MSF respondents were the most likely to do vigorous exercise.
- For all measures of exercise, social renter responders tended to score lower than owner occupiers, but higher than private renters. The differences are quite small, however, indicating very subtle effects.
- Frequencies of moderate physical activity and walking, and overall levels of exercise tend to be lower the higher up a respondent lives. However, the pattern is not so clear for those respondents who live in multi-storey flats. The highest overall score is for people on the ground floor but the second highest is people living on the sixth floor or above, so this is not the simple relationship one might expect.

The different levels of exercise undertaken by respondents when classified according to characteristics of their dwellings reveal some unexpected trends. Again, a more detailed analysis shows that these characteristics are important and are associated significantly with levels of activity but only explain a small percentage of the variation of the GoWell population's exercise levels.

Neighbourhoods: Responses were analysed according to aspects of the physical environment (environmental quality and incivility); the service environment (quality of local amenities); and the social environment (social cohesion, trust and reliance and anti-social behaviour).

- The better people consider the quality of their neighbourhood environment to be, the more often they are likely to do each type of physical activity. Differences are not large, however, except for moderate exercise.
- The worse people consider the overall degree of environmental incivilities to be, the less often they are likely to do moderate activity or walk in their neighbourhood. However, they do vigorous exercise more often, the explanation for which is not immediately obvious.
- The better people consider their local amenities to be, the more often they are likely to do vigorous activity or walk in their neighbourhood. However, they do moderate exercise less often.
- The more cohesive people consider their neighbourhood to be, the more often they are likely to walk in their neighbourhood. However, they do vigorous exercise less often.
- The more people feel they can trust and rely on others in their neighbourhood, the more often they are likely to do vigorous exercise (and to a lesser extent, walk in their neighbourhood).

- The greater the degree of antisocial behaviour people perceive in their neighbourhood, the less often they are likely to do moderate exercise, although they are slightly more likely to do vigorous exercise.

The frequency and intensity of exercise undertaken by respondents show subtle but significant relationships with their perceptions of aspects of the neighbourhood. Some of these trends are contrary to our initial expectations and prompt us to examine what is going on in greater detail.

The physical activity of the GoWell population is significantly associated with a large number of personal, dwelling and neighbourhood-based characteristics. Many of these may directly contribute to determining physical activity. The associations tend to be quite small, however, and there is no “key” factor.

Discussion and question and answer session

The second half of the morning consisted of a discussion session with all delegates who were seated at round tables and an ‘expert’ panel facilitated by Phil Hanlon. The panel consisted of:

- Joan McMahon – GHA Board member and East End Community Homes LHO committee member
- Karyn McCluskey – Violence Reduction Unit
- Craig McLaren – Scottish Centre for Regeneration
- Ade Kearns – Department of Urban Studies, University of Glasgow

Phil started the session by inviting Anne Stewart, the Chair of Cassiltoun Housing Association, to share her thoughts with the room. Anne had been interviewed on radio two years ago when GoWell was launched and shared that at that time she had just been diagnosed with cancer of the throat but has received treatment and is now really well. Anne emphasised that she thinks it is your own attitude that has a lot to do with your health and wellbeing. She spoke positively about the amount of exercise that goes on in Castlemilk and described a number of examples including line dancing and a lunchtime walking project. She highlighted that they did these things over 30 years ago when the first housing associations were being set up and are part of the regeneration process, sustainability and trying to keep communities together.

Phil then asked the panel to respond to a question that a delegate had sent in advance of the event which was **‘Does regeneration have to make things worse before it gets better?’** Each of the panel responded to this question in turn and it was also revisited a number of times during the ongoing discussion.

There was an acknowledgement both from the communities and from past research that unfortunately things do tend to get worse before they get better. An example of this is the emptying of houses and flattening of land which can contribute to problems with vandalism and is a particular problem for the tenants that remain in the unimproved stock. Improvements do occur once the stock is improved and new facilities are put in but there are problems in the short-term.

There was agreement that if a place looks like it is not taken care of, then crime and disorder tend to occur. The Violence Reduction Unit has done some small case studies of young people causing problems and they identified that the constant

moving of houses is a big issue for them – they feel disconnected from communities and subsequently go on to commit crime and disorder.

On a more positive note it was suggested that we now know more about how to do it this time round. In the past there has been a lot of community fragmentation as a result of regeneration – this can be an inevitable product of the process but sometimes it is about not understanding community dynamics before you start intervening. Practitioners now understand that they need to know more about communities before making decisions.

Connected to this there was interest in what individual support can be provided to people during regeneration. GoWell has found a lot of people quite distressed and disturbed by the prospect of change and having to move – some more than once at a late stage in their lives. It was suggested there should be more individual-based support programmes alongside area-based programmes. Are there some practical things and resources that can be put in place on the ground to help with the disruption and transition while the more complex longer term things take place?

Following this, delegates were asked to spend 10 minutes at their tables reflecting on what they had heard during the morning and discussing it. They were then invited to put questions to the panel and share their experiences and opinions. The questions that were asked and issues discussed tended to fall within four main areas as follows:

- **Mixed tenure**
- **Community involvement and empowerment**
- **What is the most important aspect of regeneration to communities?**
- **Young people**

Mixed tenure

The panel were asked to respond to the emphasis being placed on mixed tenure as a solution to neighbourhood problems, and to the suggestion that perhaps it will result in displacement of problems to other parts of the city.

Joan spoke about the experience within her own neighbourhood where tenants perceive different standards are given by police depending on whether one is a home owner or social renter. People are striving for mixed tenure as they see it as the next step in the evolution of regeneration – people will start to look after properties better and those that don't will be educated in how to. However, it was highlighted there are concerns over buy to let landlords.

Craig expanded this issue of mixed-tenure to mixed communities in the full sense in terms of housing style, size and type, mixed incomes, land use etc. He felt this was essential in order to build sustainable and mixed communities which allow people the opportunity to stay within an area as their life moves on. Currently those people that can move on tend to move out of areas and leave behind those who can't. We need to ensure that those people that want to move on in life don't need to do so in terms of geography but can have a place in their community which meets their needs, as well as their aspirations.

Community involvement and empowerment

A resident from St Andrew's Drive spoke about a recent community consultation exercise. They felt that this was a very dynamic consultation as it involved hard to reach tenants and owners who don't usually get involved. There was disappointment

and resentment however that the document/recommendations that they produced were rejected. She suggested that clearer parameters should have been provided at the start of the consultation process.

There was recognition from GHA that this is extremely complex and challenging. They feel that they need to continue an honest and frank debate about what can be achieved with communities. They are very much in listening mode, want to get it right and are trying to work collaboratively and smartly in how to engage with communities. They are putting a lot of resources into this and will continue to do so.

What is the most important aspect of regeneration to communities?

The question was asked whether physical regeneration is the most important thing or whether the primary emphasis should be on sustainable jobs?

Craig felt that this is part and parcel of the regeneration process anyway. The Scottish Government recognises the fact that sustainable economic growth and sustainable jobs are an important part of regeneration. Within regeneration, employment and employment growth are seen as a key component of what makes an individual and a community successful. A lot of work is being done to ensure communities can benefit from the large scale investment occurring within and around their neighbourhoods that in the past they may not have accessed.

The *Will Glasgow Flourish?* report and Theories of Change work conducted by the ecological team with GoWell was highlighted. These illustrate that regeneration is now seen as all of these things and more – housing, physical, social, economic and cultural regeneration. Another aspect that is not really mentioned in policy documents but that many people deem important is personal regeneration – the need for human to human interaction. This was seen as central to the regeneration process.

Andy Milne highlighted that SURF seeks to bring together all the different bodies involved in regeneration. He mentioned the work being done with the Scottish Government on 'Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland', and reported that at the recent annual SURF conference there was consensus that health and wellbeing is the actual point of regeneration and not just a factor in it. Through discussions with others, this appears to be a more useful way of thinking about regeneration and moving it away from aspects such as physical activity, physical jobs and development etc. It is about how people feel in their lives in terms of the control and opportunities and choices they have which have such a profound effect on health and wellbeing.

The question was also asked whether GoWell recognises that there are more important things to people than physical regeneration. In the wave 2 survey, new measures are being introduced to better measure activity rates – not only in terms of employment but training, life long learning and voluntary and community activity. Another additional measure is people's perception of stress and control over their own lives. Although jobs are probably good for people, jobs that offer very little control can actually present very stressful situations to people.

Young people

The question was asked whether young people should be seen as the cause of community problems or the result of community problems.

Karyn highlighted that 80% of young people will live good lives, get jobs, do well at schools etc. 15% on the cusp will get involved in drugs, crime etc but will come out the other side while 5% are troubled and troublesome – a relatively small percentage. Arguably, this group is the *result* of community problems. She spoke to 15 young people last week and 14 of them had no father figures. She highlighted that gangs can provide a sense of belonging and camaraderie which could be turned to good use if it was not focused on involvement in crime.

Ade spoke about a neighbourhood renewal programme in Toronto which is focussed on 13 deprived neighbourhoods where community engagement is focused entirely around young people. Eventually the adults wanted to join in. There was recognition that there is value in valuing young people.

James Arnott stressed the importance of not losing sight of what we are trying to achieve with GoWell. At the same time as putting in place a huge regeneration exercise in Glasgow, we're also trying to understand what's happening and ensure that learning feeds into the process of regeneration. So at the same time as we are doing it, we are learning about it, understanding it and trying to make it better.

He highlighted the complexity of the regeneration process and suggested that the right way to deal with this complexity is not to set up very specific structures to do very specific things and expect somehow they'll all fit together. He suggested that a lot more work is required to understand how all of the economic and social processes fit together e.g. to understand what the social spinoffs of some of the economic changes have been in Glasgow, how some economic spinoffs might result from some of the housing changes. He stressed the need for organisations to continually revisit what it is they are trying to do, whether areas have changed, what the nature of that change has been and whether it means plans and projects need to be revised and renewed. As we are working in a very fluid situation plans need to be flexible and adaptable to reflect that.

In concluding the day, Phil highlighted that despite all the complexity and challenges, progress is being made, and this is illustrated by the diversity of organisations that attended today's event.

Feedback

All delegates received and were asked to complete a feedback sheet with the option of including their details or remaining anonymous. A total of 45 feedback sheets were received; 36 named and 9 anonymous.

The feedback sheets asked for the following:

- general comments about their experience of the event ;
- an indication as to whether they had previously attended any GoWell events;
- their view on the usefulness of the event;
- which of the issues discussed, or points made, they considered most important; and,
- suggestions on how future GoWell events could be improved.

Overall the comments and feedback were positive. However, there was a mixture of comments for each of the questions. A summary of the comments made and examples of each are provided below.

General comments about experience of the event

The overall feedback and general comments on the event were very positive. Respondents stated that it was interesting, informative, well organised and provided a good networking opportunity. The discussion session received particularly positive comments with many stating they would have liked it to be longer. A number of people also expressed interest in future findings/events. Two people commented that the question on transition support was not answered.

Examples of comments:

- 'Very good, very informative and interesting. Well organised and presented'
- 'Very good event with breadth of input and a good panel session'
- 'Well organised and presented with good mix of speakers and variety of media'
- 'Very informative – look forward to the next one!'
- 'Very important project and valuable to regularly report back to wider stakeholders'
- 'Great event! Great having so many reps under the one roof'
- 'Good networking opportunity'
- 'Thought provoking. However four presentations in procession was a bit heavy going'
- 'A bit long but not much chance to participate'
- 'Very good interaction'
- 'Good event, well orchestrated discussion'
- 'Would have liked more time to develop the discussion either in groups or plenary forums'.
- 'Nice location but very, very cold'
- 'Although the venue was interesting it was not ideal – difficult to see overheads and the room itself was not warm'
- 'Question about transition support was not addressed – what about health in the interim'

The main conflicting views were on the presentations illustrated by the below examples:

- 'Good – statistics easy to grasp and very interesting'
- 'Interesting presentations – very professionally delivered'
- 'Perhaps some of the presentations might not be that accessible or easy to decipher for some'

'Varied and interesting, although I'm not sure how relevant session on physical activity was'

'I didn't think that the presentations were as good as previous years. The points or concerns about asylum seekers and community engagement were nothing new'

Previously attended any GoWell events

The majority of people who completed a feedback form had not previously attended any GoWell events: 30 No, 14 yes, 1 didn't say.

Usefulness of the event

Almost all comments on the usefulness of the event were positive with the majority saying it was very useful, very informative, good to hear an update on findings and progress and was a good way to bring different sectors together and network. Some commented that the information would help inform their work.

Examples of comments:

'Excellent'

'Very useful'

'Very useful way of disseminating the broad findings and keeping people in the loop'

'Useful to hear about what is going on and being found across a large and very complex programme of work'

'Very useful to catch up on GoWell's work and to hear views from various sectors'

'Very useful understanding of the links between all the different strands of regeneration'

'Useful for the context of what we do. This kind of information is helpful to inform our work'

'The event provides a useful opportunity to consider lessons to be embraced for future and ongoing developments'

'Will assist in developing programmes – will take into consideration issues and research'

'Very useful to have a broad range of participants present and the end session was interesting'

'Brings people together who would not normally be in the same forum'

'Question and answer session time was very useful'

And some more critical:

'Some of the lectures were interesting. Some not as helpful. Graphs and writing not seen from the back'

'No real decisions or points of action were created but some important issues raised'

'Professionally the info provided wasn't as relevant as I had hoped. However, I live in one of the regen areas so it was interesting from a personal basis'

Most important points made or issues discussed

The points made or issues discussed that respondents highlighted as being most important were a mixture of those made in presentations and those made during the discussion session. The recurring points/issues that respondents felt were most important were around young people, mixed tenure and community engagement.

Examples of comments:

'How young people need to be involved and appreciated both in terms of consultation and as valued members of the community and regeneration'.

'Youth issues and changing attitudes'

'As I work for youth services, it was good to hear that they were given 'good press' by the panel and not demonised as they are in the media'

'Local control of regeneration'

'Personal regeneration is needed before communities are more successful'
'Community cohesion and engagement'.
'Issues around engagement and empowerment of communities'
'Engaging communities and the best way to do this'
'Consultation vs participation'
'Issues relating to mixed tenure and its impact (or otherwise) on community cohesion'.
'Questioning the benefit of mixed tenure'.
'The influence of housing and neighbourhood on physical activity'
'For me the links between environmental circumstances and levels of activity is very relevant and interesting'
'Sustainable jobs. Mixed tenure. Helping to improve the lives of young people'
'The issue of the role of employment in regeneration'
'Regeneration – pain before gain'
'People who want to move on in life shouldn't have to move on in terms of geography'
'Most of the information was something that is understood by professionals working in the area, so how will this work make a difference?'

How to improve future events

The main suggestions related to having more time for discussion and a more interactive event, keeping presentations to time, having less statistical information and keeping messages clear and simple. A couple of people also suggested that the discussion session may have benefited from being more structured and themed/focussed. A number of people commented on using a warmer venue and having a better sound system. Two people suggested having a full day event.

Examples of comments:

'Best part discussion and questions – more time for that please'
'It would be nice to have a little bit more time for the 'table' discussion as this was very interesting'
'More time for questions and discussion'
'The 'question time' segment may well have been improved if themed on specific areas of regeneration. Perhaps it would have been more useful if given more time to discuss issues. Maybe an all day event'
'A much fuller and structured discussion session'
'Round table process worked well. Very well organised. Some 'discipline' re time needs exercising in presentations'
'Keep speakers more closely to time!'
'Shorter presentations – better view of slides'
'Less in-depth statistical information. More about what was found without 'the science bit''
'Some better ways of sharing complex statistical info. Perhaps just give the big messages and simple handout of backup stats. Although not that many big messages from statistical results maybe better to just say that?'
'Less statistical based presentation and more examples'
'We were asked to bring along some young people to this event. I know they appreciated this. However, more thought needs to be given to delivering, including and helping them to grasp practitioners jargon – as they often got confused with concepts 'above them''
'More info on specific areas and naming areas'
'A greater community focus – community speaker. Greater understanding of role of the different agencies'
'Warmer venue'
'Better sound system'

'Additional information on future research (forward look)'

'How about talking about the AGENCY cohesion. GoWell is a partnership; community planning has reps from agencies – so how does all this activity fit together and become integrated so that there is visible change for people who live in the area i.e. going beyond the rhetoric of partnership'

Conclusion

The main learning points seem to be around having shorter and less statistical or in-depth presentations and drawing out the key findings and messages more. The discussion and panel session was well received and could be given more time at future events. Although the majority of respondents said the event was very well organised there were a number of negative comments about the temperature in the venue, the sound system and the difficulty seeing slides. This feedback will be used in the planning of future events.