

Aylesbury New Deals for Communities (NDC) Programme



Strategic management support to the Aylesbury new deals for communities (NDC) programme.

Project Strategic management support

Key objectives

- Help rescue the NDC programme to avoid the threat of funds being withdrawn
- Provide strategic direction to help the programme get back on track.

Key results

- Establishment of a community development trust for residents to retain a 'voice'
- Funding for new social housing, social and recreational projects
- School and community based education initiatives to improve performance
- Training and employment support.

Background

Over the last eight years, the management consultancy business of Capita has provided strategic management support to the Aylesbury new deals for communities (NDC) programme, delivering transformational change through ongoing support of local social and economic projects, and developing the capacity of local residents to improve their own neighbourhood.

The Aylesbury estate is a 1972 system built estate. Located in the London Borough of Southwark it is home to 7,500 residents. It was suffering from very high deprivation indicators (poor health, low education attainment and high unemployment), a poor physical environment (overhead walkways, link bridges and dark entrances) and a high fear of crime.

In 1999, the 10 year £56.2 million Aylesbury NDC scheme was established, placing residents at the heart of decision making to improve life chances and bridge the deprivation gap. £36 million was allocated for physical renewal and £20 million for developing a social programme of interventions. In 2001 residents rejected a plan to transfer the housing stock to a housing association. There was no 'plan B'.

Overview

Capita was retained to help get the programme back on track and provide strategic direction. Government ministers had threatened to withdraw funds and the Local authority and partnership board looked to Capita's experience of 'rescuing' programmes to help the Aylesbury NDC scheme.

Short term approach

Capita's consulting business were able to provide a comprehensive physical and socio-economic solution to the problem. They began by conducting a wholesale governance review (under the direction of Lord Victor Adebawale) to bring coherent strategic management to the programme as well as reviewing internal policies and procedures. Capita also developed a series of 'quick win' projects that generated confidence amongst all players that change was on the way.

Long term approach

In the longer-term, Capita helped local residents, the local authority and government develop a credible long-term physical transformation project, whilst continuing to support social and economic projects that would improve opportunities for residents of the estate.

Capita's team of consultants supported local residents to establish a community development trust to ensure residents retain a 'voice' and influence after the NDC ends. This will ensure continued sustainable development work and social enterprise in their area. Capita produced a 'manifesto for change' signed by all parties and also:

- Helped secure an additional £11.3 million from the London Housing Board to fund new social housing
- Secured over £1 million from the Big Lottery for social and recreational projects
- Lobbied (successfully) for additional policing resources
- Developed a series of school and community based education initiatives to improve performance
- Developed sport and recreational activities to address young people's wider needs
- Developed health projects for all ages and ethnic groups
- Targeted training and employment support.

Meanwhile Capita's consulting team worked hard with the council and residents to develop a physical renewal strategy that could command widespread support. This culminated in 2005 with the council deciding on a strategy for the demolition and redevelopment of the area. Capita supported residents to ensure this plan was implemented in a way that met the vast majority of residents' aspirations.

Results and benefits

The NDC programme, once 'failing', is now one of the 'best performing', nominated for several and winning one NDC National Award. Health, employment, crime and education have all improved. For example:

- Numbers of Aylesbury pupils achieving five good GCSEs increased to 68 percent in 2008, just below the national average, from 17 percent in 1999
- Fear of crime halved between 2002 and 2006 and actually fell by 21 percent in 2008
- The proportion of working age households with no-one working decreased 7 percent between 2006 and 2008.

The masterplan for the physical regeneration was adopted in 2009. The new neighbourhood will comprise 4,200 mixed tenure homes, new schools, improved community facilities, transport links and open spaces. New homes on early sites are under construction. The scheme has overwhelming resident support.

A community development trust, that Capita's consulting business helped establish, will ensure residents continue to determine the areas future.

" I don't know what we would have done without Capita. They helped us when all seemed lost. They have helped us now stand on our own two feet. Great."

Tony Taitte, chair, NDC partnership board