

objective pursued by growth coalitions, we will not see local communities intimately engaging with the mainstream economy, realising the benefits of this sustainable approach to local regeneration and economic development.

The idea is that what is good for the wellbeing of local communities – education and skills, a good environment, health, community cohesion, infrastructure etc – is good for business. It is that, along with the opportunity to ‘bend’ substantial levels of public expenditure in an area, which engages the private sector in the local area and assists local public service providers.

Growth coalitions look to construct one local body, led by the local authority and bringing together all the public service delivery partners and others to address community wellbeing – whatever that might mean for each area.

Who needs to be involved?

Those who need to be involved include the variety of local partners in the public, voluntary and community, and private sectors concerned with wellbeing, whether or not they lead on the delivery of mainstream services or special initiatives.

What can it do that other partnerships can't?

The growth coalition process can strengthen the local strategic partnership, fostering joined-up action and future-proofed activities under the umbrella of an overarching objective.

How do we get one going?

- initiate a process of appraising existing policies, programmes, organisational remits and structures
- provide learning opportunities for all through workshop settings
- take the agenda forward by designing or reviewing and establishing a locally suitable, tailored body – whatever it might be called
- identify and develop a programme of next steps through an action workshop

Who's already doing similar work?

This process, or elements of it in a variety of guises, is already under way in a range of locations. Telford and Wrekin, the pilot ‘single pot’ local area agreement authority, is considering a growth coalition in place of a local public service board.

Independently and as an associate consultant with the Improvement and Development Agency, I have been taking a number of other authorities through the process.

What lessons are being learned?

Local authorities and their partners are learning from the growth coalitions project how to realise substantial and significant outcomes for the communities they serve. They are well positioned to future-proof their activities, to the extent that resultant actions and practice are leading national policy.

Growth coalitions and smart local government

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is now considering expanding local area agreements to take in the full range of services delivered by councils and their partners. In that context growth coalitions also make a contribution to discussions regarding the future of local government. Hence the term ‘smart local government’, coined as the growth coalitions project develops, represents the corporate objectives of the local authority and a focus for its actions.

Adam Fineberg is a policy and regeneration consultant who has spent the past two and a half years developing the growth coalitions project. He also works with local authorities and their partners advising on local area agreements and recently presented evidence to the Strategy Unit's review of deprived areas.



career ladder



Dianne Frances is neighbourhood renewal co-ordinator at Hartcliffe and Withywood Community Partnership in Bristol. She returned to education as a mature student after bringing up three children and worked in the community and voluntary sector in Hull before heading to the south west.

Most important lesson learned?

Making the simple complex is easy; making the complex simple is creativity.

Any advice to others starting out in regeneration? Training and education should complement life experience, not replace it.

Most useful training course/seminar/workshop? Probably the best general one was the diploma in managing change. A group of us used to meet and debate and argue about every

issue related to the sector. But Common Purpose in Hull was the best one that related specifically to my area of work at that time.

Most useful resource for information or personal development? The web and talking to others.

Career highs and lows? Low:

Redundancy because of a hostile political situation but I bounced back. High: being offered a job I like in a different city so that I could move to be nearer my family.

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Diary

Buildings by design

Practical course for groups involved in planning, designing and building a community facility
Venue: Cheshire
4-6 May
Details: www.theglasshouse.org.uk

Changing communities

Conference focused on community regeneration in the south east
Venue: Winchester
7 May
Details: Carla Zanetti, 01962 827545

International regeneration – what can we learn?

Two-day event organised by Bura/Department for Social Development
Venue: Londonderry
9-10 May
Details: 020 7539 4030

Explore social enterprise in Leicester

Three-day training event
Venue: Leicester
9-11 May
Details: 0116 225 4067, exsel@can-online.com

Business involvement in schools – barriers, challenges, opportunities

Social Market Foundation seminar

Don't miss out

Credit where it's due – regeneration and financial inclusion

This Bura/CDFA conference will consider the potential links between initiatives aimed at alleviating financial exclusion and those tackling neighbourhood renewal. Speakers include Brian Pomeroy, chair of the financial inclusion task force, and Andrew Robinson, head of community development banking for Natwest and Royal Bank of Scotland.
Venue: London
3 May
Details: 020 7539 4030

Venue: London
10 May
Details: 020 7227 4401

Consultative selling

Caf workshop for charities on how to work with corporate partners
11 May, London; 5 July, Birmingham
Details: 01732 520074, www.cafonline.org

Local area agreements

Seminar reviewing LAAs and how they could be improved
Venue: London
12 May
Details: www.cppseminars.org.uk

The economic dividend from walking and investing in the walking environment

Living Streets seminar
Venue: Cheltenham
13 May
Details: philip@livingstreets.org.uk

Finding the right balance

Annual event for NCVO's sustainable funding project
Venue: London
17 May
Details: Michelle Edmundson, 020 7520 2519, michelle.edmundson@ncvo-vol.org.uk

Equality and diversity

Series of seminars
17 May, Edinburgh; 24 May, Leicester; 1 June, Ipswich; 7 June, Cardiff; 16 June, Plymouth; 21 June, Leeds; 14 September, Glasgow; 4 October, Birmingham; 12 October, Brighton; 20 October, Sheffield; 1 November, Newcastle; 8 November, Southampton
Details: 0151 726 2162, diversity@evensis.com

The word on the street

Urban Design Group director Ron Cowan presents radical proposals for urbanism
Venue: London
18 May
Details: udsl@udg.org.uk