

Urban Forum Annual Conference

3rd-4th December Leeds

The conference theme is *empowerment* and how communities can equip themselves with the skills and resources to regenerate their local areas. Through the overall empowerment theme, we will focus on three distinct strands which will run through the two days:

1. **Influencing decisions**
2. **Equalities and cohesion**
3. **Places and spaces**

We will be using a participative 'Policy Forum' process to enable delegates to shape the programme and contribute to producing a final policy report to inform Urban Forum's future policy and research work. Each strand will have a range of speakers and sessions to explore how community empowerment can be realised. Over the course of the event delegates will participate in a range of plenaries, inquiry sessions, study visits, action groups and a 'discussion café'.

3rd DECEMBER

10.00 Registration and Refreshments

10.30 **Opening Plenary**

Welcome and Introduction – **Ed Cox** *Chair, Urban Forum*

Keynote Speaker **TBC**

Professor Anne Power *London School of Economics*

Toby Blume *Chief Executive, Urban Forum*

12.00 Refreshment Break

12.15 Plenary Session – **Scene Setting**

Welcome to Leeds - **Thea Stein** *Executive Director of Economic Inclusion, Yorkshire Forward*

Introduction to the Policy Forum – explaining how the Policy Forum process will work and a chance to start planning what will happen during the conference

13.00 Lunch

14.00 **Policy Forum Action Planning (3)**

What are the issues that you think need debating? Organise your own Action Groups, design research, prepare for study visits and expert witness sessions or join one of the existing groups

Influencing Decisions – **Julian Dobson** *New Start*

Equalities and Cohesion – **Beth Longstaff** *CDX*

Places and Bases – **Dominic Murphy** *creating:excellence*

15.30 Refreshment Break and Sign-Up for Inquiry Sessions on Day Two

16.00 **Discussion Café**

Take part in one of the discussions or, if you want to, lead a discussion on a topic of your own. Conduct a survey or share your experience. Listen or talk. The choice is yours.

17.30 **End of Day One**

18.30 **Urban Forum AGM**

19.00 **Conference Reception** supported by the *Academy for Sustainable Communities*

20.00 **Conference Dinner and Disco**

4th DECEMBER

09.00 Registration and Refreshments and Sign-Up for Study Visits and Action Groups

09.30 **Inquiry Sessions** (9) A participative alternative to workshops where delegates will have the opportunity to question expert witnesses and develop their thinking

Influencing Decisions:

Lisa Parkin *Leeds Voice*

Helen Stephenson *Office of the Third Sector* and **Charles Woodd** *Communities and Local Government*

Helen Hughes *Improvement & Development Agency*

Equalities and Cohesion:

Corrina Lawrence *Feel Good Factor*

TBC

Zoe Smith *Oxfam UK*

Places and Bases:

Judith Atkinson *Bellway Homes*

Adrian Sinclair *Heads Together*

Rob Pearson *English Partnerships*

11.00 **Study Visits** (6)

Influencing Decisions:

Re'new Leeds extended school and neighbourhood management

Schools are often the hub of a local community. The Extended Schools agenda closely mirrors the Neighbourhood Management approach as it is concerned with the quality of life for children and families at the neighbourhood level. In East Leeds the to'gether Partnership, re'new and the Richmond Hill Family of Schools have recognised this link and will be driving forward both agendas in tandem. Come and hear how!

Meanwood Valley Urban Farm

With the support of Leeds City Council who owned the land and enthusiastic volunteers, some of who were recruited via Leeds Civic Trust, Meanwood Valley Urban Farm was officially opened in 1980. From humble beginnings, operating from two old caravans with bed frames providing fencing, Meanwood Valley Urban Farm has steadily grown to become a major centre for community and environmental work. The farm's education team helps thousands of school children to experience the natural environment through practical hands-on projects. From pond dipping to mini-beast hunts, there is plenty to do at Meanwood.

Equalities and Cohesion:

Feel Good Factor

This community led partnership aims to improve the health of people living in North East Leeds through improved access to opportunities for healthy living and the promotion of physical and mental well-being. The Feel Good Factor have a substantial programme of activities to encourage healthier eating, exercise, projects for young people and active community participation, using a community development approach.

The Together Partnership

Come and hear from the 'Cross Sector New Migrant Research Task Group' and a look at the work going on in Leeds to understand the number, experience and impact of new migrants. There will be a chance to visit the Polish Centre and hear about their work with new Polish migrants and the Welcome to Leeds communications strategy for new migrants and frontline staff. A chance to share information and ideas from other areas.

Places and Bases:

Armley Park

A project involving 6 pieces of common land developed or reinstated to its former glory by local residents. Originally 175 acres but now down to 5 acres, the land is important to many local people and they have recently developed a grand plan which could take 10 years to complete. There will also be a visit to Healthy Living Network Leeds for a look at the plans and then out to take a look at the land itself.

Holbeck Urban Village

Designated as an Urban Village and the focus of a multi-million pound regeneration programme, Holbeck aims to be a 'sustainable development'. Combining a mix of uses including residential, business and leisure, with healthcare, schooling, shops and cafes, together with recreational and cultural facilities. Holbeck Urban village will be the first of its kind in Leeds and aims to create a new business and residential community, focused on creative and digital media. This will be a walking tour so please bring warm clothes and a raincoat/brolly!

Action Groups (6)

To be decided at the conference (with refreshments)

13.00 Lunch

14.00 **The Policy Development Session (3)**

Pulling findings and conclusions together into reports that tell policy-makers how communities can truly be empowered

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Places and Bases – **Dominic Murphy** *creating:excellence*

15.30 Refreshment Break

15.45 Plenary – **Presenting Policy Forum Reports**

A chance to hear what each of the Policy Forums have come up with and how we will take forward their recommendations

16.30 **End of Conference**