

Planning Aid in Action: Crouch Hill Community Park Association

Background

Crouch Hill Park is Metropolitan Open Land. The 'Capital Ring' Greenway crosses the school site and it is surrounded by a nature reserve. Ashmount School (a Private Finance Initiative funded "Building Schools for the Future") was granted consent (with conditions) to demolish the existing school and to build a new school in a different area of the park.

Residents were concerned with the impacts the demolition of the existing school, and vacation of that site, would have on community safety, crime prevention, access enhancement, loss of local community facilities and open space. Planning Aid for London was approached by local Islington residents to provide guidance and support.

Other partners within this initiative were:-

- Crouch Hill Community Park Association (CHCPA), Tenants and Residents Association [TRA], Housing Coop and other local representatives and residents
- Residents of Islington and Haringey, North London
- Ward Councillors from Islington and Haringey, North London
- Homes for Islington Community Service and Development Officer



Planning Aid's support included:-

- Bringing residents together to form an unincorporated association, Crouch Hill Community Park Association (CHCPA).
- Assisting with the formulation of a *Community Access and Management Plan [CMP]* for the vacant site in consultation with local amenity groups, residents and Local Councillors from neighbouring Haringey.
- Supporting local meetings for residents to give feedback on the school proposal and the Draft CMP which was then opened for public consultation.

The two volunteers were involved recognised that a range of concerns could be addressed through neighbourhood planning. This aligned with the new Council 'Ward Partnerships' initiative. PAL volunteers spoke about the opportunities neighbourhood planning would provide to local people, including the chance to plan for integrated development and to make a better, more inclusive neighbourhood.

What was the outcome of the project?

Following the volunteers meeting with Place Shaping and Planning Officers, a *Draft Planning Brief* for the current Ashmount School site was unveiled at the Ward Partnership meeting.

The *Draft Planning Brief* for the current Ashmount School site and the option to start a neighbourhood planning effort for the local area are both on the agenda for the next Ward Partnership meeting. PAL volunteers continue their work with residents to prepare for this. A 'placecheck' type exercise may include a supplementary question, aiming to identify 'early wins' for improvements, where sufficient interest is proven.