

Planning Aid in Action: Future of Rotherham Workshop

Background

Rotherham is one of the worst 20% deprived local authorities nationally, with a mix of inner urban, outer estate and former mining areas suffering deprivation. Planning Aid England was asked to organise a workshop in partnership with Rotherfed (the Rotherham Federation of Tenants and Residents) around the Rotherham Draft Core Strategy and Sites/ Policies Issues & Options document.

This was an opportunity for TARA reps, drawn pre-dominantly from areas within the worst 20% IMD, to find out about the two documents/the consultation and to have an input into strategic and detailed planmaking for their areas. The event was attended by 17 TARA reps and the Rotherfed manager.

Planning Aid England partnered on this event with RMBC Community Engagement who led on event format/programme and provided a scribe; RMBC Planning who led on content to be covered, provided a speaker and technical support in the workshops; and Rotherfed who provided venue, refreshments and promoted the event to its membership across the Rotherham area.

Quotes from participants:

“Plain clear talking”

“Enjoyed all information and finding out what will affect us personally – thank you”

“Good to see the maps and have queries explained on a one to one”

“I found out things I wasn’t aware of”

Quotes from volunteers:

“I particularly enjoyed learning about the geography of Rotherham- somewhere that I've not previously visited.”

“Overall it was a good event as usual.”

Planning Aid’s support included:-

- Partnering with Rotherham MBC Planning & Community Engagement to design a format for the workshop and liaising with Rotherfed on the promotion of the event.
- Leading on the event, presenting an introduction to Planning Aid, facilitating and scribing a series of policy and map-based proposal workshops and closing the event.
- Writing up the workshop notes and delivering them to RMBC Planning.

The event involved four volunteers, two of whom facilitated workshop sessions with the other two scribing. Both scribes typed up notes from their sessions. Volunteers contributed a total of 30 hours to this project/event.

What was the outcome of the project?

A full record of residents views, as expressed in the workshops, was submitted to RMBC and accepted as duly made representations on the two Local Development Framework (LDF) documents being consulted on.

The impact that these will have on the Core Strategy & Policies/Sites documents will only be known once RMBC has assimilated all comments received and produced its consultation statement and next stage LDF documents – this is expected to be sometime in early 2012.

More generally, residents had their awareness and knowledge levels regarding the LDF and the local implications raised.