

SMTF Learning Notes

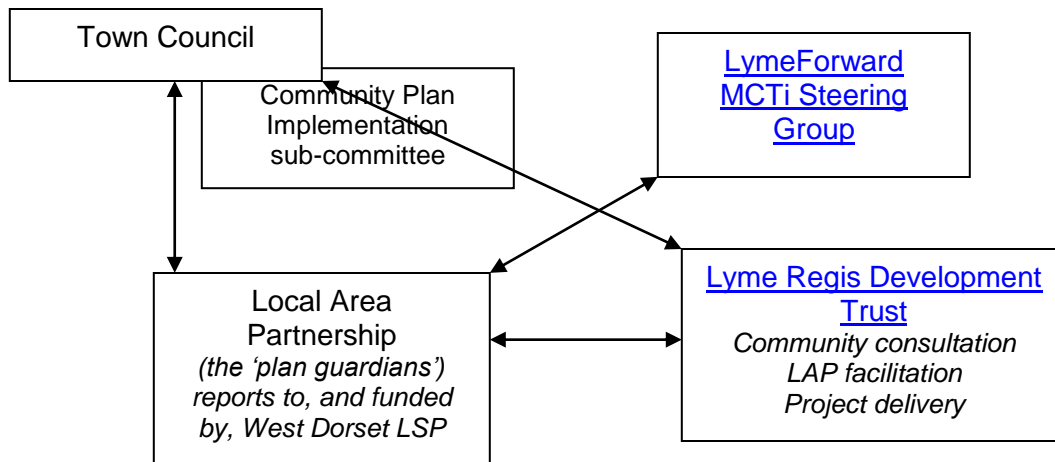
Visit to Lyme Regis for Dorset Towns Forum event, 13th July 2009

First meeting of Dorset Towns Forum. Hosted by [Lyme Regis Development Trust](#) (LRDT). Matt Day and Carol Goodall of SMTF attended.

Visit looked at LRDT - history/context of community planning in Lyme, how LRDT fits with key partners in the town and current and planned projects.

Planning for Real process in 1998; gave Identified Projects. Town Council supported these but didn't have capacity to lead. Development Trust created in response – an independent, charitable body focusing on project delivery and fundraising. Town went through MCTi process from 05-07 (Community Plan called [LymeForward](#)). The Town Council has also set up a subcommittee to consider how the Town Council engages with/takes part in projects in the Community Plan.

Current organisations working together in Lyme;



Staff – a 0.6 fulltime equivalent development worker and a fulltime Chief Executive. Trustees and volunteers.

Funding – LRDT receives funding from; Local Area Partnership for facilitating their meetings and consultations; an Esmee Fairburn grant; income from St. Michaels Business Centre (former school bought from West Dorset DC), now home to Lymenet (community learning centre) and several business tenants. Like many, they are struggling with current funding environment.

Many projects bring in funding of course – Fossil Festival is developing (third year) – see beautiful website at <http://www.evolutionrocks.net/> WHO status – 'Jurassic Coast' - being utilised for this. Link with Natural History Museum for Festival and developing an Earth Sciences Study Centre. 'Inspirations' youth cafe and advice centre.

Lyme only has 5000 inhabitants but attracts 'useful' people to retire there; including a former Saatchi and Saatchi marketing man, now advising LRDT. However, LRDT struggles with retaining volunteers (due to burnout).

Visit showed that with a will to make it work (ie supportive people in the key organisations inc West Dorset LSP), the outcomes of community planning and ongoing engagement can be achieved. Having a 'Community Anchor' organisation such as LRDT as a key part of the regeneration scene has worked for them – offers effective project delivery but has also retained a strong link to wider community through facilitating consultations and presence on LAP and good working relations with partners.

Matt Day
10th August 2009