



## Implementing LAAs

Why are Local Area Agreements (LAA) essential in building robust communities? How do LAAs link to sustainable development? How can seeing interconnections and better partnership working improve LAA implementation? These are some of the questions that we wanted to answer with the Planit-LAA learning-simulation (serious game). Planit-LAA needed to shed light on these issues, to make them relevant and 'real' and most importantly to bring partnerships together.

"This is a watershed moment for local government - here is an opportunity to recognise the uniqueness of every local area but also a challenge to make every town, city and village a place to be proud of." - Hazel Blears, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

## Complexity to Clarity

Planit-LAA was developed in partnership with Government Office Northwest for use in workshops to improve skills and knowledge and for use in team building.

Planit-LAA models the life of a community. Teams play the role of a local strategic partnership (LSP). LAA indicators are chosen from the National Indicator set. The partnership need to make the community sustainable and deliver the LAA. Win-win solutions need to be negotiated and incidents avoided. Finally, after each round, the teams are scored on their chosen indicators (LAA), Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and political issues.



Planit-LAA 'shows' how decisions impact socially, environmentally, AND economically. The learning-simulation considers the design and implementation of Local Area Agreements (LAA) and uses the 198 National Indicators. The learning-simulation has been used by Government Offices, local councils for member training (including the Learn to Deliver programme in the West Midlands), LAA awareness and target setting, and sustainability proofing.

Planit-LAA brings **clarity to a complex problem**. Delegates "experience" the real-world; where they see the 'big picture', understand cause and effect, and develop win-win solutions. Our approach makes issues real, relevant, and manageable.

## Proven Learning Approach

Blending the best of traditional and interactive learning, the approach has been used in over 300 workshops; successfully training more than 4,000 people.

Recent uses of Planit-LAA:

- **Essex County Council** - LAA implementation: cause & effect and reality proofing.
- **Wirral MBC** - Embedding sustainability into the LAA.
- **Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils** - Target setting for the LAA Indicators.
- **Bolton MBC** - Action planning for the implementation of LAA.
- **Cumbria County Council** - Increase awareness of the new LAA and indicators.
- **West Cumbria Partnership** -Stakeholder engagement including community and voluntary sector involvement.



"The richness of the experience was in the discussions, as we went through the purchases and the strategic rationale for the decisions made"



## Key Objectives:

- Increasing awareness of LAA2 and the up to 35 + 16 indicators from the National Set.
- Understanding the issues in terms of cause and effect rather than silo perspective.
- Broadening the design input into the LAA and strengthening partnership working.
- Sustainability proofing of the LAA and improving target setting.
- Improving the implementation of LAA and sustainable communities.
- Improving generic (Egan) skills required for sustainable communities

## Real World Improvements

With clarity comes real world improvements. Evaluation of our programmes highlight improvements in 3 areas, which translate into **improved decisions**.

- **Strategic Thinking** – Understanding the key driver and needs. Does a particular decision help us get closer to our goal?
- **Joined-up Thinking** – Understanding cause and effect provides perspective, reduces the chance of perverse outcomes, and increases the likelihood of win-wins.
- **Collaborative Working** – Working with stakeholder groups and partners improves decision-making by allowing organisations to benefit from the 'wisdom of the crowd'.

**"It encouraged cross team working, common thinking, forward planning and strategic planning"**

- We have helped authorities embed sustainable development into their Community Strategy.
- We have broadened the design input into the LAA .
- We have helped authorities with target setting for their chosen indicators.

## Who Might Benefit from a Planit-LAA Workshop

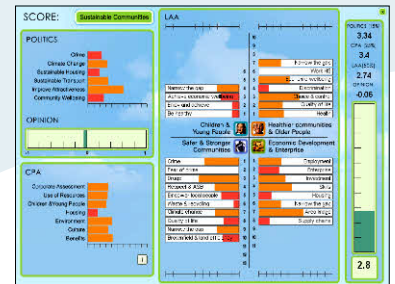
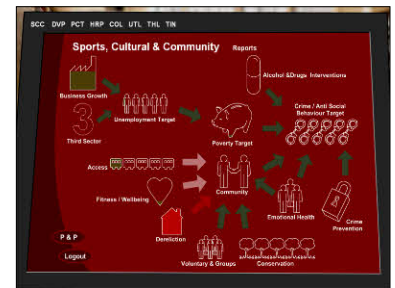
- Local Partnership / thematic groups (indicator & target setting and sustainability proofing).
- Neighbourhood and community groups (engagement and consultation).
- Local Strategic Partnerships (implementation of the LAA).
- Local Authority (implementation of the LAA).
- Members who have an LAA scrutiny role.
- Government Office (internal staff training).

**Do you want an innovative approach to Local Area Agreement training?**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Contact Mary Dees t. 0161 427 8684 e. mdees@pixelfountain.co.uk  
For more on learning-simulations visit: [www.pixelfountain.co.uk](http://www.pixelfountain.co.uk)



Over 99% of delegates who rated our workshops good or very good. Long term evaluation has identified better collaboration and decision-making; leading to significant savings.



... and let learning ripple *through* your organisation