

# Annex A

## Definition and Components of Sustainable Communities



### Components: in full

*Sustainable communities embody the principles of sustainable development.*

*They:*

- ▶ *balance and integrate the social, economic and environmental components of their community*
- ▶ *meet the needs of existing and future generations*
- ▶ *respect the needs of other communities in the wider region or internationally also to make their communities sustainable.*

*Sustainable communities are diverse, reflecting their local circumstances. There is no standard template to fit them all. But they should be:*

**(1) ACTIVE, INCLUSIVE AND SAFE** – *fair, tolerant and cohesive with a strong local culture and other shared community activities*

*Sustainable communities offer:*

- ▶ *a sense of community identity and belonging*
- ▶ *tolerance, respect and engagement with people from different cultures, background and beliefs*
- ▶ *friendly, co-operative and helpful behaviour in neighbourhoods*
- ▶ *opportunities for cultural, leisure, community, sport and other activities, including for children and young people*
- ▶ *low levels of crime, drugs and anti-social behaviour with visible, effective and community-friendly policing*
- ▶ *social inclusion and good life chances for all*

**(2) WELL RUN** – *with effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership*

*Sustainable communities enjoy:*

- ▶ *representative, accountable governance systems which both facilitate strategic, visionary leadership and enable inclusive, active and effective participation by individuals and organisations*
- ▶ *effective engagement with the community at neighbourhood level, including capacity building to develop the community's skills, knowledge and confidence*
- ▶ *strong, informed and effective partnerships that lead by example (e.g. government, business, community)*

- ▶ a strong, inclusive, community and voluntary sector
- ▶ a sense of civic values, responsibility and pride

**(3) ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE** – *providing places for people to live that are considerate of the environment*

Sustainable communities:

- ▶ actively seek to minimise climate change, including through energy efficiency and the use of renewables
- ▶ protect the environment, by minimising pollution on land, in water and in the air
- ▶ minimise waste and dispose of it in accordance with current good practice
- ▶ make efficient use of natural resources, encouraging sustainable production and consumption
- ▶ protect and improve bio-diversity (e.g. wildlife habitats)
- ▶ enable a lifestyle that minimises negative environmental impact and enhances positive impacts (e.g. by creating opportunities for walking and cycling, and reducing noise pollution and dependence on cars)
- ▶ create cleaner, safer and greener neighbourhoods (e.g. by reducing litter and graffiti, and maintaining pleasant public spaces)

**(4) WELL DESIGNED AND BUILT** – *featuring a quality built and natural environment*

Sustainable communities offer:

- ▶ a sense of place (e.g. a place with a positive 'feeling' for people and local distinctiveness)
- ▶ user-friendly public and green spaces with facilities for everyone including children and older people
- ▶ sufficient range, diversity, affordability and accessibility of housing within a balanced housing market
- ▶ appropriate size, scale, density, design and layout, including mixed-use development, that complement the distinctive local character of the community
- ▶ high quality, mixed-use, durable, flexible and adaptable buildings, using sustainable construction materials
- ▶ buildings and public spaces which promote health and are designed to reduce crime and make people feel safe
- ▶ accessibility of jobs, key services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling

**(5) WELL CONNECTED** – *with good transport services and communication linking people to jobs, schools, health and other services*

Sustainable communities offer:

- ▶ transport facilities, including public transport, that help people travel within and between communities and reduce dependence on cars
- ▶ facilities to encourage safe local walking and cycling
- ▶ an appropriate level of local parking facilities in line with local plans to manage road traffic demand
- ▶ widely available and effective telecommunications and Internet access
- ▶ good access to regional, national and international communications networks

**(6) THRIVING** – *with a flourishing and diverse local economy*

Sustainable communities feature:

- ▶ a wide range of jobs and training opportunities
- ▶ sufficient suitable land and buildings to support economic prosperity and change
- ▶ dynamic job and business creation, with benefits for the local community
- ▶ a strong business community with links into the wider economy
- ▶ economically viable and attractive town centres

**(7) WELL SERVED** – *with public, private, community and voluntary services that are appropriate to people's needs and accessible to all*

Sustainable communities have:

- ▶ well-performing local schools, further and higher education institutions, and other opportunities for life-long learning
- ▶ high quality local health care and social services, integrated where possible with other services
- ▶ high quality services for families and children (including early years child care)
- ▶ a good range of affordable public, community, voluntary and private services (e.g. retail, fresh food, commercial, utilities, information and advice) which are accessible to the whole community
- ▶ service providers who think and act long term and beyond their own immediate geographical and interest boundaries, and who involve users and local residents in shaping their policy and practice

**(8) FAIR FOR EVERYONE** – *including those in other communities, now and in the future*

Sustainable communities:

- ▶ recognise individuals' rights and responsibilities
- ▶ respect the rights and aspirations of others (both neighbouring communities, and across the wider world) also to be sustainable
- ▶ have due regard for the needs of future generations in current decisions and actions