



The Sustainable Communities Act proposal form

Using this form

This form should be used to submit proposals under the Sustainable Communities Act to the LGA for short listing. Please complete all sections and then **email a copy to selector@lga.gov.uk**. These must be received by **July 31st 2009**, and you will receive confirmation that the form has been received.

Once submitted, information within this form may be made publicly available, unless you request for it to be kept private. We will treat information submitted sensitively. If you wish to attach any relevant presentations or graphs etc. please attach them separately in the email.

For questions regarding the act or the role of the Selector, please see our [FAQs](#). Any further questions can be directed to selector@lga.gov.uk.

Section 1: Proposal Summary

Proposing Authority

Under the terms of the Sustainable Communities Act, all proposals must be submitted by a local authority, or group of authorities, in England. Any group, organisation or individual may originate or develop a proposal. However all proposals will require Local Authority endorsement and submission to the Selector.

Parish councils and other organisations and agencies must seek support and formal endorsement from a proposing local authority (defined in the Act as county councils, district councils (including metropolitan, non metropolitan and unitary authorities), the common council of the city of London or the Council of the Isles of Scilly).

1.1 Lead Authority name

Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

1.2 Is this proposal submitted by this authority alone, or is it a joint proposal with other local authorities? (If joint please list authorities)

Authority alone

1.3 Who is the lead contact (s) in the authority for this proposal? Please provide email address and telephone number - *The LGA will direct any enquiries to this contact.*

Oliver Durrant oliver.durrant@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

020 8547 5190

Supporting Organisations

Whilst proposals may only be submitted by a local authority, we acknowledge that local partners and outside organisations may wish to register support for the proposal. This is entirely voluntary.

1.4 Please provide details below of supporting organisations to your proposal. Please explain if the organisation is a charity, company, unincorporated association or other body. If a charity or company please provide registration numbers. If a local partnership please explain the relationship to the Local Strategic Partnership for the area.

Summary of your proposal

Please summarise your proposal. You may wish to include:

- The main elements of your proposal
- What issues your proposal is addressing and how it will promote the sustainability of the local community
- Who is affected by this proposal and how?
- Which public bodies might be affected?
- What are the main actions needed from Government?
- What do you expect this proposal to achieve?

1.5 Please enter your summary below (word limit 1000 words)

The Royal Borough of Kingston has the fourth largest shopping centre in London as well as significant industrial areas. These businesses contribute large annual sums in taxation but Kingston receives little in return from the government to reinvest compared to other authorities.

We are proposing that Kingston should be able to keep a proportion of the business rates collected which would be ring-fenced for investment in programmes that contributed to local economic and social sustainability. There are three main areas this money would be invested in:

1. Investment in the business infrastructure (i.e. better street furniture, lighting, highways maintenance, signage, and security/safety) will bring more people into district centres in Kingston. Increased footfall in these areas would contribute to economic regeneration and viability - i.e. more people spending money in Kingston would mean that existing businesses would be strengthened, new businesses would start up and more jobs would be created.
2. The extra ring-fenced funding would also be invested in programmes that remove barriers to disadvantaged groups getting work. Groups such as disabled people, people with mental health problems, lone parents and ethnic minorities would be provided with careers advice, interview skills, CV writing, IT skills, literacy, numeracy and communication skills and childcare to support them into employment. This would further contribute to our aim to support parents and carers within disadvantaged families to lift children out of poverty.

3. In addition, the ring-fenced funding could be invested in projects supporting the formation of local groups to work for the community e.g. volunteer litter pickers provided with the necessary equipment. This would work towards protecting and improving the quality of the local environment in Kingston and would also promote community participation and involvement across the borough.

Groups affected by this proposal

- Job seekers - better prospects of finding employment in Kingston due to growth in successful businesses in Kingston.
- Disadvantaged groups - have increased chances of finding employment.
- An increase in visitor numbers and footfall would strengthen local businesses.
- Local people would benefit from improved shopping areas - better street furniture, lighting, highways maintenance, signage, security/safety etc...
- More opportunities for residents to part in social and cultural life in Kingston

Main actions needed from government

To revise the National Non Domestic Rates scheme to allow Kingston-upon-Thames to keep a proportion of the business rates it collects.

Section 2: About your proposal

The form asks a set of questions to gather as much information as possible to allow for assessment and short-listing by the Selector. A word-limit is stated for each part of the form.

We appreciate that SCA proposals will vary in range and scope, and some questions will be more relevant than others for any one proposal. Please do not feel that answers are required for every questions or that the full word limit need be used in respect of each and every question box. If you are submitting a joint proposal, please include evidence for all areas.

Impact on sustainability (*word limit 2000 words*)

2.1 Please explain how your proposal promotes sustainability as defined locally (for example in your Sustainable Communities Strategy or LAA)

Theme 2, Objective 4 of the Kingston Plan – *Sustain and share economic prosperity*, sets out how we intend to maintain a healthy and sustainable local economy through promoting physical and economic regeneration and working to increase employment and skills levels.

If we were allowed to keep a proportion of business rates in collected in Kingston this would enable us invest in business infrastructure and sustainable modes of travel and work towards increasing the number of visitors to Kingston. This would lead to an increase in VAT registered businesses

and those showing growth and would also ultimately lead to an increase in the overall employment rate in Kingston.

Allowing us to retain a proportion of business rates would enable us to increase investment in schemes that provide tailored support to groups who face barriers to employment such as disabled people, people with mental health problems, lone parents and ethnic minorities. This support would take the form of careers advice, interview skills, CV writing, IT skills, literacy, numeracy and communication skills and childcare to support them into employment. This would further contribute to our aim to support parents and carers within disadvantaged families to lift children out of relative poverty.

This proposal also supports local sustainability as set out in Objective 10, Theme 3 of the Kingston Plan – *Encourage people to take an active part in the social and cultural life of the community*. By using the extra cash to set up community groups of volunteers who would carry out activities such as litter picking or graffiti removal we would be creating opportunities for participation in events which enhance the health and quality of life for individuals and the wider community, and which contribute towards social inclusion and a sense of place in Kingston.

2.2 Over which geographic area will your proposal impact? (e.g. neighborhood, town, city, sub-region)?

Borough and surrounding areas.

2.3 Who would benefit from your proposal?

Local residents, job seekers (especially those from disadvantaged groups), local businesses and visitors to Kingston.

2.4 What steps will you take to mitigate any adverse affects on sustainability from your proposal (if relevant)?

N/A

2.5 What project, activities and changes would take place in your area if your proposal was successful?

2.6 Does your proposal involve transfers of responsibilities between public bodies in the area? If so what are these? What budgetary implications might be involved?

NO

Local authorities are required to 'have regard' to a set of specific issues when deciding whether to support SCA proposals. These are matters listed in Schedule 1 of the Act, as passed by Parliament¹. It is worth noting that the issues listed in the Act are not supposed to be exhaustive and that ideas can cover anything that promotes the sustainability of the local area.

Many of these matters may not be relevant to any one proposal. If you are submitting a joint proposal please include evidence for all areas.

2.7 Please identify which, if any, of the issues authorities are required to have regard to, are relevant to this proposal and include any data and information which you feel would be helpful in the assessment process.

- a) the provision of local services
- b) the rate of increase in the growth and marketing of organic forms of food production and the local economy
- c) the number of local jobs
- d) the increase in social inclusion, including an increase in involvement in local democracy
- e) measures to increase mutual aid and other community projects
- f) measures designed to increase community health and wellbeing
- g) the increase in social inclusion, including an increase in involvement in local democracy

Existing Barriers

¹ The Sustainable Communities Act is available here : http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2007/ukpga_20070023_en_1

(Please do not write more than 1000 words for 2.8 and 2.9)

2.8 What are the existing barriers to implementing your proposal?

Current legislation around the NNDR1 return system.

2.9 What actions are needed by Government to make your proposal possible?

Revise legislation to allow Kingston upon Thames to keep a proportion of business rates.

Part 3: Local Authority Endorsement

This section should be completed by the proposing local authority. (Under the terms of the act this means a county council in England, a district council (including metropolitan, non metropolitan and unitary authorities), a London borough council, the Common Council of the City of London or the Council of the isles of Scilly)

3.1 Have consultation requirements been met? (500 words max)

Please confirm that your authority has met the statutory requirements for consultation on this proposal, via one or more panels of local representatives and persons from under-represented groups constituted in accordance with the Act and statutory guidance as set out in [Strong Safe and Prosperous Communities](#).

You may wish to describe who has been involved in discussions and development of the proposal (e.g. council, local community organisations and residents groups, parish or town councils, local partnership bodies, local or national organisations, political parties, church and faith organisations, local businesses or chambers of commerce and others).

If you have not done so already please give brief details of relevant panel meetings.

Please note if you are submitting a joint application please provide details of consultation and local support across all areas.

In December 2008, Kingston's Executive authorised officers to make the necessary arrangements for the establishment of a community panel, designed to act as a resource for gathering local

opinions and testing out local opinions about proposals to be submitted to central government in line with the Act.

In April 2009, letters setting out the purpose and aims of the Act and inviting proposals were sent out to approximately 250 local community groups in Kingston. In addition, pages were published on the Councils website where local people could find out about the Act and make proposals.

Presentations on the Act were made at each of the Councils four Neighbourhood Committee meetings. These were attended by councillors and members of the public who were invited to make proposals.

Thirty seven proposals were received 10 from neighbourhood committees and 27 from local stakeholder groups. Of these, twenty three were discounted as they were unlikely to meet the selection criteria as set out by the LGA, principally on the grounds that they did not require a change in the law.

The remaining 14 proposals were taken to a community panel workshop on the 13th June for evaluation by a representative group of 31 Kingston residents. Ipsos MORI were chosen to set up and run the event. The panel members were asked to consider the 14 proposals and rank them according to which they thought would most improve Kingston as a place to live, basing their decisions on the LGA selector criteria – benefit, scope and viability, as well as expressing preferences during group discussions. Each member of the panel also completed a questionnaire at the end of the workshop in which they ranked the proposals according to their own personal preference. During the workshop, the 31 participants were assigned to three groups according to age t facilitate discussion and to isolate any major differences in preference between age groups in Kingston.

Following the community panel meeting, a report setting out the views of the panel was considered by the Councils Executive Committee at its meeting on the 7th July, along with the ranked list of proposals. At this meeting, the Executive selected three of the most popular proposals from the list to submit to the LGA panel.

3.2 What are the views from this consultation? You may wish to provide evidence of local support for your proposal? This might include petitions or letters of support from the public, local councillors, Members of Parliament, businesses, public bodies and agencies? Please describe this evidence below. *(The local authority submitting the proposal is likely to wish to review such material and to summarise its content. Onward submission to the Selector of all original documentation will not normally be required).*

Proposals may include a change/transfer of functions from one person to another. If this is relevant to your proposal please confirm that the duties under clause 2, subsection 3 of the act (consulting with organisations affected by a change in location of a function) have been carried out.

3.3 Please give brief details of consultation with any affected organisations

N/A

3.4 Confirmation of council support

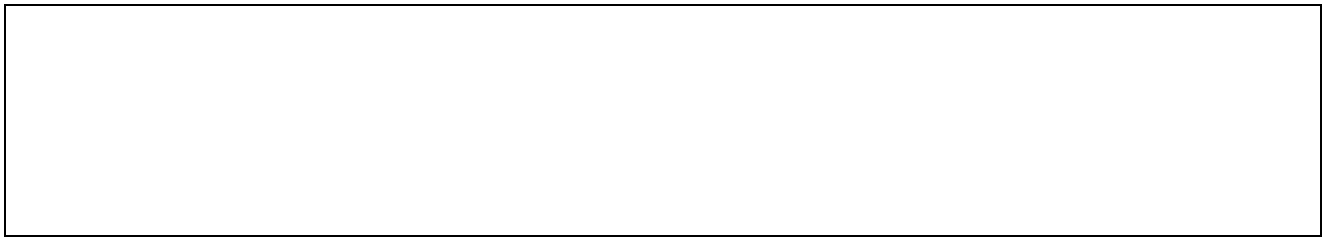
The process for formal endorsement is a matter for local discretion; however we anticipate that authorities will wish to gain political endorsement and clearance for the proposal through the relevant processes at local level. Please give details of how formal approval has been attained.

Formal approval was attained via the Councils Executive Committee. A report on the Act was considered at its meeting on the 7th July along with a list of 14 proposals which had been ranked in order importance by a panel of Kingston residents. The Executive selected three of the most popular proposals from the list to submit to the LGA panel.

3.5 General comments

This is an opportunity for the local authority to express any additional comments or views on the proposal: This may include: *(1500 words max)*

- the council's view of levels of local support for the proposal
- any local opposition or objections that the Selector should be aware of
- relevance of the proposal to the area's Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement
- outcome of any local authority discussions with agencies or public bodies affected
- potential regional/national significance of the proposal, if replicated elsewhere
- any major resource implications for the council or its local partners
- any other factors influencing viability and achievability of the proposal



Part 4: Assessment by the Selector

SCA proposals will be assessed by the LGA as Selector. This will include consideration, short listing and negotiation with the Secretary of State via the LGA Selector panel made up of councillors from the four parties represented on the LGA

The LGA Selector Panel is committed to undertaking the role in a transparent manner; as such reasons for decisions on proposals will be made available.

There will be no appeals process in relation to decisions of the Selector Panel.

4.1 Do you confirm your agreement to abide by the outcome of the Selector's assessment and decision-making processes?

Yes

4.2 Would your council, accompanied by the originators of the proposal, wish to make a short verbal presentation to the Selector Panel, should this opportunity be available?

If required

Thank you for completing this form.

Please email it to selector@lga.gov.uk by 31 July 2009.