Community Outreach Website Development for Lewisham Strategic Partnership
IQP Report

Sponsoring Agency: Lewisham Strategic Partnership
Submitted to:
      Project Advisors: Paul W. Davis and Kevin A. Clements, WPI Professors
      Onsite Liaison: Maarten Schram

Submitted by:

_____
Tara Barden

_____
Griffin Bryant

_____
Emily J. Pikor

_____
Steven Tufo

Date: 27 February 2004

Abstract

The Lewisham Strategic Partnership had identified a need for improving their internal and external communication. A website was identified as an effective means of increasing the success of the organisation. Interviews and surveys were conducted to determine the features, content, and expected effectiveness of the LSP website. Based on the information gathered, the group designed and constructed a website. For the people that do not use the internet, other possible solutions have been suggested.

Executive Summary

The Lewisham Strategic Partnership (LSP), based in the London Borough of Lewisham, is a community outreach program organised by the government. It is comprised of public, private, and community/voluntary sectors. The partnership's main goals are to improve social, economic, and environmental conditions for those who live, work, and study in Lewisham. The LSP was seeking to improve communication within the organisation and to establish communication with the borough's population. Communication with the public is an essential aspect for outreach programs that benefit from receiving input from the community. So far, the LSP has not attempted to contact the public. The LSP's primary objectives for this project were to enable its members and their organisations to communicate with each other and to allow the members' constituencies to be part of the renewal of Lewisham.

The main goal of this project was to provide the LSP with an effective means of communicating internally and externally. The objectives of our research were to explore community outreach programs, methods of such programs, and methods for the public to become active participants and contributors to these programs. By investigating this specific problem, we examined the larger social issue of outreach programs reaching and mobilizing their communities. More specifically, we looked at the effective methods for doing so.

Since the LSP Communication Task Group suggested a website, our attention was focused on that. We established the needs of the board members and their separate organisations in terms of communicating internally and externally. This was

accomplished by conducting interviews with ten of the LSP's board members and staff as well as three representatives from the Lewisham Community Network. The questions asked provided information about: the goals of the organisation each member represents; what methods of communication they currently use and how effective they are; and what features they would like to see on an LSP website. This information helped us to identify possible communication gaps between the LSP, its organisations, and the public. The interviews verified that a website for internal communication was necessary. The interviewees also gave their input on the design and features that should be on the site.

Information was also needed from the community to understand the needs and expectations of the people. We conducted a survey of 152 people who work, live or study in Lewisham to determine the following: how effective a website would be in reaching the public; what information the public expects from such a site; and other possible means of communication separate from the internet. We distributed the written questionnaires by asking people at specific locations, giving them out at community meetings, and by leaving the surveys at places where people would have time to fill them out, such as doctor's and dentist's offices. From the information gathered from our convenience sample, we drew conclusions about the effectiveness of an LSP website for reaching the people in the borough.

The LSP expressed to us their need for a solution to communicate internally and externally. Having conducted the interviews and surveys mentioned above, we had a solid understanding of a solution for improving communication within the LSP and with the public. A website is an effective means for improving internal communication within the LSP. On the other hand, a website is only effective in reaching part of the population.

Therefore, we offered other means of external communication such as leaflets and

newsletters for the LSP to reach the population that does not use the internet. Since the

website needs to be regularly maintained we have also suggested that the LSP have a

webmaster on staff that can do this weekly for a few hours. The LSP website is an

essential means for internal communication and an important first step in communicating

with the public.

Table of Contents

List of Tables, Charts and Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction

Community outreach programs are set forth by an organisation, either private, voluntary, or governmental, in order to improve the quality of life in an area. A major challenge for community outreach programs is establishing effective communication. These programs need to be able to communicate within their organisation and with their targeted communities, along with the public returning feedback to them. Responses from the public are needed in order for a community outreach program to be able to gauge its success. The organisation needs to know what the community expects them to accomplish and what the community will do to help.

One such community outreach program that is having difficulties fulfilling these needs is the Lewisham Strategic Partnership (LSP), which is based in the London Borough of Lewisham. The LSP is comprised of a board of 20 representatives from the public, private, and community/voluntary sectors. These members represent a wide variety of organisations and groups in the Lewisham community. The partnership's main goals are to improve social, economic, and environmental conditions within the borough. Communicating with the public is something the LSP had planned to accomplish with the help of the website.

Several factors, however, needed consideration before proceeding. Within the LSP, all members, except one, can communicate via the internet. The one member who does not communicate via the internet uses a fax machine instead. The LSP contracted a company, Regenesys, to research Internet availability statistics for Lewisham (Regenesys, 2003, See Appendix C). Regenesys found that, within the Lewisham

community, 62% have used the internet, while 56% have a personal computer at home. Forty-seven percent of the population of Lewisham has internet access at home. Therefore, 15% of the population have used the internet but do not have access at home. This means that this 15% have gone elsewhere to access it. From this information, we learned that alternative means of communication along with a website needed to be considered.

There are other means of communication that have been used by organisations in contacting a larger audience. All means of communication needed to be considered in order to make sure the majority of the population is reached. Since Lewisham is a very diverse borough, a method used to interact with the public must take into account what percentage of the population will utilize it. We researched umbrella outreach organisations in the Worcester County area to better understand how they operate and communicate. Such organisations include the Worcester Smart Growth Forum, the Regional Environmental Council, and the United Way of Central Massachusetts.

The LSP had identified three main objectives: 1) enable several very different borough-wide entities to communicate, relate, understand and grow together; 2) enable the constituencies of each entity to be actively part of the growing process; and 3) enable that organisation to communicate and grow as part of a changing capital and a new 'city' that is developing on the east side of London. The LSP had limited and infrequent contact with the community but showed a strong desire for external contact. Finding out what the LSP board members prefer aided the group in creating a solution for internal communication.

The main goal was to propose a beneficial means of internal and external communication for the Lewisham Strategic Partnership. The group anticipated that a website would be an effective means of communication within the LSP and with the public. All but one of the LSP board members and staff used the internet, so accessibility was not an issue for them. The group was aware that less than half the borough had access to internet at home, leaving part of the population without the ability to gather information from a website. Therefore, the group provided the LSP with an analysis of how useful the website will be. Additionally, we provided the LSP with other methods of communication to take into consideration that similar organisations have had success with.

Chapter 2: Background

2.1   Introduction

Communication is a key factor in how an organisation, such as a community outreach program, performs its mission. This chapter discusses outreach programs, the challenges they face in communicating with their constituencies, and the importance of communication. The Lewisham Strategic Partnership (LSP), Worcester Smart Growth Forum (based in America), and the United Way of Central Massachusetts (also based in America) were reviewed to see the means by which interaction with the public can be improved.

2.2   Overview of Community Outreach

Community outreach programs are developed all over the world to get communities involved in making their areas more economically sound. These programs are designed to renew low income and underdeveloped sections, improving the surroundings for the people who live, work, and study in them. In <u>Private Means Public Ends</u>, Barry J. Carroll (1987) talks about community involvement being the foundation of society.   A society "seeks stability and improved human welfare," (p. 1) in order for it to function properly. Most of the community outreach programs are funded and started by the government and accept donations from a variety of sources. "Federal and state governments have long played an influential role in the development of the voluntary private sectors, the not-for-profit corporations such as colleges, foundations, churches,

and charities, which provide numerous social and cultural services to our citizens" (p. 2). Because of these organisations, communities can grow and prosper.

In order for communities to thrive economically, the people of the community need to get involved. "The main contributions of small towners to community renewal is their reality test of the feasibility and acceptability of proposed action. After all, they must pay the cost and live with the results," (Swanson, 1979, p. 30). If the community members do not take any action, they must live and deal with their situation because they know their failure to respond is the cause for it. People have to recognize that if there is a problem something must be done to solve it.

The general role for a community outreach program is to provide a variety of services to a particular community. The wide range of available operations these programs have may begin with the physical appearance of the community and even branch to provide mental counselling for a community. The Lewisham Strategic Partnership (LSP) is an organisation made up of representatives from many different corporations and community groups. This coordinating organisation works together with its members for the betterment of the entire Borough of Lewisham.

2.3   The Borough of Lewisham

The following statistics should present a general idea of the cities and urban areas in which the LSP is currently operating. The Borough of Lewisham has a population of about 250,000 residents. Lewisham has a very diverse population. "Thirty percent of the population and 50% of pupils in Lewisham schools are from ethnic minority communities. On the whole, the borough does not have the extreme contrasts of poverty and wealth that some other London boroughs have" (London Government Online, 2003,

Geographic). According to the 2001 census, about 55% of the population in Lewisham is over 30 years of age while 21.1% of the population is under 16 years of age (Neighbourhood Renewal, 2003, Statistics). The diversity of the borough is important for the LSP in considering the range of social and economic status to determine how projects and funding will be allocated.

Comparing Lewisham to a local county like Worcester is beneficial in order to get a better understanding of the population division we dealt with in London. The population of Worcester County from the U.S. Census Bureau Online from the 2001 census is 762,207 (2001, p. 1). Like Lewisham 25.6 % of the population in Worcester County is under the age of 18 and 13.0% of the population are 65 years of age or older. Unlike Lewisham on the other hand 89.6% of the population is white. The percent of people in poverty in Lewisham in 1999 was 9.2%, which is higher than it should be compared to other boroughs within London (p. 2). These demographics about Worcester Country and the Borough of Lewisham will give a good background to the areas the organisations are working with.

2.3.1 Lewisham Strategic Partnership

The Lewisham Strategic Partnership is the sponsor of this project and is a community outreach program currently struggling with getting its community involved in its work. The LSP has taken only small steps out into the public eye thus far and is looking to greatly improve its communication with the people of Lewisham. The organisation of the LSP, the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and Regenesys Ltd. are three important aspects to comprehend what the LSP has done so far, and what they hope to accomplish.

2.3.1.1   Organisation of the LSP

Understanding the organisation of the LSP and the means of communication which are currently in place are important to improve LSP communication. The LSP has 20 board members who are representatives of different sector groups including local authority, community safety, business sector, higher education, etc (Lewisham Strategic Partnership, 2003). These members hold their positions for 12 months and then can be re-appointed. These board members need to communicate with each other effectively for the LSP to be successful. They have expressed the possibility of a website as a means to augment their communication channel among the board members of the LSP.

The Government has insisted that the community be involved in the development and implementation of the strategies developed by the LSP (Lewisham Community Network, 2003). To achieve this, the LSP must communicate with the public effectively. This led to the development of a Lewisham Community Network which has its own set of goals (Lewisham Community Network, 2003). It was necessary to understand these goals, so that the proper means of reaching out to the public can be chosen. The stated goals that the network will:

- bring the voluntary and community sector together to share information and views
- elect and support five representatives onto the Lewisham LSP
- carry out research and consultation to identify local communities' needs
- support the development of the Community Strategy and the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy
- manage the Community Empowerment Fund – Government funding to support voluntary- and community-sector involvement in the LSP's work
- do outreach work to involve as many groups as possible

(Lewisham Community Network, 2003)

2.3.1.2 Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy

Two years ago, the Government of the United Kingdom launched its Neighbourhood Renewal agenda (Lewisham Strategic Partnership, 2003). This agenda was aimed at creating new partnerships which worked to improve the country's most underprivileged areas. The Government has identified four parts of Lewisham in particular, Downham, Bellingham, Evelyn, and Grinling Gibbons, as particularly needy areas for renewal. The Lewisham Strategic Partnership (LSP) is one of these "new partnerships" bringing together the public, private, and voluntary/community sectors to develop and carry out local services. The LSP has developed a Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy that is funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and is aimed at improving the most deprived areas of Lewisham, namely the four areas mentioned above.

The Lewisham Strategic Partnership has also been responsible for developing the Lewisham Community Strategy, a ten year strategy which will identify local needs and set priorities for service delivery across the whole of the borough (Lewisham Strategic Partnership, 2003). The LSP has been developing this Community Strategy for two years and continues to improve and build upon it. As of right now the LSP has identified 11 priorities of the Community Strategy (Lewisham Strategic Partnership, 2003). It is important to understand both the goals of the LSP and their programs so a means of communication can be chosen accordingly.

Improve the well-being of the people of Lewisham

- Make Lewisham a safer place and reduce crime.
- Sustain and improve the health and well being of local people.
- Raise educational attainment, skill levels and employability
- Foster enterprise and business growth including the creative industries

- Develop cultural vitality by building on Lewisham's distinctive cultures and diversity
- Secure sustainable regeneration of Lewisham as a place - its housing,

Transport and environment

- Reduce welfare dependency, promote independence and increase the life chances of vulnerable members of the community.
- Develop and engage local communities.
- Help local communities to support themselves, act independently and participate in providing services and wider support to the borough.

Improve public sector performance and delivery

- Design diversity into local institutions and design out discrimination, ensuring equity in service delivery.
- Improve the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of local public services; optimise investment in infrastructure; and improve the management of assets. (LSP, 2003)

2.3.1.3   Regenesys Ltd.

Regenesys Ltd. (Regenesys Ltd., 2003, p1) is a London-based consulting company whose aims include supporting local strategic partnerships, aiding the development of community networks, and encouraging urban renewal. In September 2001, as part of the Connected Community Framework for Action Study, Regenesys developed a database of public access internet locations within the Borough of Lewisham. In April 2003 this information was reviewed and updated by Regenesys. This information is included as an appendix of this report.

Currently, the database is comprised of approximately 70 connected locations within Lewisham. The majority of these internet access points fall into two categories: libraries and internet cafes. Other sites include non-profit organisation centres, youth groups, and colleges. Locations of public telephones with internet access capabilities are included in the report as well, but it is presumed that these would be primarily suited to e-mail and not web browsing.

Thus far, this updated information has been disseminated solely to those who have requested it, which includes the LSP. The information is available to the LSP in pdf format, in an excel spreadsheet, in an access database, and on the Regenesys website. Presumably, the website link is a private one as it does not yet appear to be available to the public. Eventually, however, Regenesys would like the LSP, or one of the other organisations that this information is available to, to make the report public, preferably online. This would require first that all locations represented in the report give consent to have their information to be publicly known.

As far as the LSP is concerned, this report demonstrates that the people of Lewisham can seek out internet access if so inclined. The LSP has already gathered data that suggest less than half of its population has internet access at home. Research would be needed to determine how likely the public would be to use internet access points outside of their own home to access an LSP website.

2.4   Outreach Organisation's Need for Reaching the Public

To better understand the Lewisham Strategic Partnership, the problems it faces in reaching out to the public, and the best means by which it may do so is to study similar organisations. Such outreach programs exist in the city of Worcester, MA, including the Worcester Smart Growth Forum, the Regional Environmental Council, and the Central Massachusetts United Way.

2.4.1 Worcester Smart Growth Forum

The Smart Growth Network (SGN), (Smart Growth Online, 2003) is set-up like the Lewisham Strategic Partnership in the sense that in "1996, the U.S. Environmental

Protection Agency joined with several non-profit organisations to form the SGN," (p. 1).

This organisation was formed in response to the community's needs. The goals of this

network are to "boost the economy, protect the environment, and enhance community

vitality," (p. 1). The SGN was formed for the betterment of the communities in need, and

the only way it is going to work effectively is if the community is involved.

> Smart growth invests time, attention, and resources in restoring
> community and vitality to centre cities and older suburbs. There is no
> one-size-fits-all solution. Successful communities do tend to have one
> thing in common. This vision is that they have expectations and values for
> their community. The community themselves want a better place to live
> and this reflects their values.
> (Smart Growth Online, Overview, 2003, p.1).

Understanding the Worcester Smart Growth Forum and how it operates will help better

understand how the LSP works as an umbrella organisation.

2.4.2 Regional Environmental Council

The Regional Environment Council (REC, 2003) is a non-profit organisation,

founded in 1971 in Worcester, Massachusetts. It is a community outreach program with

very similar goals to the LSP, such as improving the quality of life and building a strong,

healthy community. The REC has been successful in working to achieve its goals for 32

years. It has four main areas where it concentrates its effort to accomplish its goals.

- Coordinating programs that bring community members together while addressing urban environmental problems.
- Empowering and encouraging neighbourhood residents to take on environmental leadership roles in their communities.
- Providing events and forums for environmental education and networking to Worcester residents.
- Advocating at the local and state levels for environmentally and socially sound decisions regarding issues such as open space, solid waste disposal, waterways, air pollution, and clean energy. (REC, 2003)

The REC does most of its work in inner-city areas which are often the home of minority and/or low income residents. This is very similar to the situation the LSP is working with. The REC works with a variety of partners, including neighbourhood groups, youth programs, local businesses, affordable housing advocates, community health organisations, and faith based organisations. A connection can be made to the way the LSP works in bringing many organisations together for a common goal. Knowledge about how the REC works will be very valuable in helping to understand how to improve the LSP.

2.4.3 United Way of Central Massachusetts

The United Way of Central Massachusetts (UWCM), (United Way of Central Massachusetts Online, 2003) is an umbrella organisation for numerous specific community groups. The United Way's main purpose is, "To build stronger, healthier communities by inspiring people to help one another, developing financial and human resources and fostering innovative solutions to problems," (p. 1). This is achieved through such programs as affordable housing, Boys & Girls Club, centres for rape victims, health and human services, etc. The UWCM has a website that has contact information listed on their website for hundreds of different organisations that help the community.

As with any organisation, including the Lewisham Strategic Partnership, they wish to make their community a safe, prosperous, and beautiful place to live. In order for the UWCM to improve the quality of life in the greater Worcester area, information provided on United Way of Central Massachusetts Online (2003) focuses on specific problems and needs of the people in the community. The UWCM designed the

Community Assessment Project to get a better understanding of what those specific needs are. Since the population of the state of Massachusetts is constantly changing the UWCM must keep up with the fluctuation in population and diversity. The organisation must carry out research to comprehend the needs of the people with the aim of addressing and allocating resources appropriately. Through this assessment they have been able to appoint the appropriate leadership to organise and help the community.

The concepts of the project were found on the website of the United Way:

> The Community Assessment Project will occur in three parts:
> - production of a Community Indicators Report, which will outline key measurements of the quality of life in our area;
> - development of an action plan that focuses our efforts on several critical issues;
> - and implementation and evaluation of the impact of our interventions.
>   (United Way of Central Massachusetts Online, 2003)

The Community Indicators Report was published in the fall of 2001. The action plan and funds distribution went into effect in July 2002. The implementation and evaluation phase of the project is still in process and could take the next 3-5 years to be completed.

"The membership of this task force has been designed to include organisations with the potential interest and resources to collaborate in the action planning and implementation phases of the Community Assessment Project," (United Way of Central Massachusetts Online, 2003).

Community Indicators are quantitative figures that assess the economic, social, health and well being of a community. These community indicators need to be analysed in perspective to be able to fins a solution for problems that arise.

After the task force analysed the information they gathered, the organisation came to an agreement that 3 main issues were to be focused on:

1. Ensuring children's readiness for school.
2. Creating brighter futures for young people.
3. Promoting affordable housing for families.
                    (United Way of Central Massachusetts Online, 2003).

UWCM has many partner agencies that provide direct service in the Worcester area. Children's mental health consultants from *You, Inc.* work together with the *Worcester Community Action Head Start* program to concentrate on child behaviour and interact directly with families, when appropriate, to facilitate long-term therapy as needed.

There are services that are specific to potential abuse and neglect in families. Help lines and programs associated with UWCM are there for guidance and assistance. A growing concern for the mental health of children in central Massachusetts needs to be considered. A solution to this matter is to place children in an environment that will either help treat or prevent mental illnesses.

The Smart Growth Forum, Regional Environmental Council and the United Way of Central Massachusetts are all umbrella organisations that direct many smaller establishments for the improvement of their society. These community development groups can be examined to recognize and learn different techniques for communication.

2.5   Means of Communication

In "A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal" (New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal, 2003, p.1), a report on London's National Strategy Action Plan, three steps for involving the community in the local strategic partnership are included. They are: 1) outreach to the community to create awareness that its views are wanted and that it has the power to directly affect the partnership; 2) means for gathering

public opinion; and 3) procedures for electing community members to the partnership and training and support for these members. For the scope of this project, objectives one and two are the focus.

Mr. Maarten Schram, project liaison from the LSP, said that they have only interacted with the public in a limited capacity. The main measure taken to date has been stalls at community meetings where information sheets were handed out. In December 2003, the LSP will hold a conference for residents for the first time. Advertisement for the event will take the form of mailed fliers, posters, and an official press release. Mr. Schram has indicated that the LSP has just recently felt comfortable stepping into the public eye, so there has been only limited contact with the population thus far. In the future, the LSP would like to see both a website and a newsletter, so that they can release information to the public. A website would also allow the LSP to receive feedback about its programs from the public. Such a website has been given little consideration, but Schram feels its potential needs to be explored further. A newsletter has been considered but has not been organised with any seriousness.

Should the LSP want to explore more traditional ways of reaching the public, there are many options. (And Thou Shalt Honor Action Guide for Community Organisers, 2003, p1) And Thou Shalt Honor is an outreach program for caregivers for the elderly. In its "Action Guide for Community Organisers," the program lists many ways to spread the message of a non-profit organisation. They recommend: press releases which reporters can follow up on to write their own articles about the organisation; publishing community notices in newspapers to inform the public of upcoming meetings and events; writing letters to the editors about the organisation in

relation to the problems it is trying to solve; putting out public service announcements on local radio stations; having bulletins run on local community access television channels; and having fliers sent through mail or posted in libraries, supermarkets, and local businesses. No true, quantifiable measure of the effect of these methods on mobilizing the public to an organisations' cause has been developed to our knowledge. A separate study would have to be conducted within Lewisham to measure how effective these communication methods would be in spreading the word about the LSP. However, all of these are likely to succeed in some manner due to the simple truism that the more people a non-profit reaches, the faster the non-profit organisations' message spreads.

And Thou Shalt Honor (And Thou Shalt Honor Action Guide for Community Organisers, 2003, p1) also advocates the use of a website and an electronic newsletter sent through e-mail. Using print media to spread a message is a good tactic, but print media cannot receive public feedback. Community meetings are the main forum for receiving such feedback, but a website is a unique tool that can both spread the message of a non-profit and gather feedback. Of course, there are many obstacles to creating an effective website (What use is the Internet to mission-based organisations, 2003, p. 1). From the organisation's end, there is both the cost and work involved in creating and launching the website. Then there is also the continuing cost and effort of maintaining that website. An internet site is not a resource which can be created once and left alone, particularly if feedback is to be gathered from it. A website can promote an organisation and its programs, but if feedback channels are open then it can also have failures by the posting of negative public comments. From the user's end, there is the question of

internet access availability. It is also a significant task to create interest and draw users to such a website.

2.5.1 Worcester Smart Growth Forum

The Smart Growth's main means of communication is the internet with a web-based catalogue of the Smart Growth itself (Smart Growth Online, 2003). This "tool is designed to advance public understanding of smart growth and how growth can improve community liveability," (p. 1) which has a wealth of information within a wide range of topics. On the website itself there is a whole section on resources that any company or community can use. These resources contain specific case studies, suggestions on how to improve your community, and many other resources that are useful in dealing with community development. This is a good composite of information for communities and people who have access to the internet. However, not everyone is connected to the internet and/or knows how to use the internet.

For people who are not familiar with the website, the SGN also holds conferences throughout the nation that helps increase people's awareness of the organisation. These conferences can also make people aware that volunteers are always welcomed. Right now the LSP has not gotten involved with the community to that extent and these are some things that may be considered to improve the interaction with its citizens. A website would reach some of the community, but not all.

In an interview with Jean Supel from the Worcester Smart Growth Forum, the group was able to find out how the organisation operates and communicates. Ms. Supel is a very knowledgeable individual with a lot of experience with the voluntary sector of the organisation. In discussing methods used to contact the public, Ms. Supel said that

the Worcester Smart Growth Forum has not yet attempted to get in contact with the public as a whole. They are experiencing enough trouble trying to contact the smaller organisations that reaching the public is out of the question. They selectively choose potential members to participate. They research individuals in specific target areas that they would like to have actively involved in the organisation. They communicate with these people one on one, not through email or any other impersonal fashion.

When Ms. Supel was asked about what advice she would give to a company that is trying to improve their internal and external communication, she said that "Internally a web site is definitely a good idea; to be able to post information, have discussion boards, etc. But externally a website might be too much to tackle, trying to spread the use of internet among all ages," (Interview with Jean Supel, Appendix N).

There were a lot of comments and ideas that Ms. Supel gave the group to consider. She said that the closest parallel to the LSP's objective can be found with political participation; how voters educate themselves, write letters to senators and so on. It will be up to the community to motivate themselves to want to learn about the LSP and contact them.

2.5.2 United Way of Central Massachusetts

Community members that wish to become involved with or would like the assistance of the United Way can find the names, email addresses and phone numbers of the Campaign Coordinators and Board of Directors so that they may be contacted. The primary means of communication for the public to respond to the UWCM are through email and telephone. A member of the community can call the general phone number or email the organisation with a broader question, comment or suggestion. Residents can

also call the bilingual Information Specialists 24 hours a day to help search for the right organisation for their needs. There is a list of 100 Health and Human Service agencies where people can call or email the *First Call For Help Directory* to find the correct program out of over 400 in the greater Worcester area.

The United Way of Central Massachusetts has helped 154,725 people in the Greater Worcester County. Out of those people, 118,130 were in the city of Worcester alone. Looking back at the demographics of Worcester County, the UWCM helped more than 20% of their residents. This is a significant percentage of the population that has been able to get in touch with the United Way. That does not even include the members of the community that donate their time and money to serving the United Way. The message of the UWCM has been effectively spread to the people of Worcester County.

Using the United Way as a bench mark for how a successful community outreach organisation operates will help in understanding what is effective for getting the people of the community involved. Community involvement is important for their own improvement, or else little will be accomplished.

2.5.3 Comparison of Organisations

Both the organisations UWCM & SGF utilize a website to provide valuable resources and information for the public. They currently have many forms of reaching the public as well as the public reaching back to them. The Smart Growth Forum is able to send newsletters by email as well as regular mail to their members. The Worcester Smart Growth Forum uses person to person contact to recruit members of their organisation. The United Way of Central Massachusetts has various forms of contact for

the public including email, postal mail, telephone and person to person. As proven with these two successful organisations, there is not one single answer to communicating with the public. All of the techniques combined will allow for the most effective way of reaching the people.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1   Introduction

Our goal for this project was to achieve the three general purposes described by the LSP. 1) Enable several borough wide entities to communicate, relate, understand and grow together. 2) Enable the constituencies of each entity to be actively part of the growing process. 3) Enable that network to communicate and grow together as part of a changing capital in a new 'city' that is developing on the east side of London. The LSP decided that these goals should be accomplished through the use of a website. Following our background research, we agreed that a website would help facilitate internal communication and information flow. For external communication, a website will not reach the entire population but it is an important first step. A website has been created along with a list of other means of allowing the community access to the same information without the use of the internet. We interviewed the LSP board members and staff and gathered information from the people of Lewisham which allowed us to understand: what features and content should be present on the site; how effective this website will be for the LSP; and what other means of communication the LSP can use to reach the people of Lewisham.

3.2   Identifying the Needs of the LSP Board Members

Our first step was to establish the needs of the board members and their separate organisations in terms of communicating internally and externally. For internal communication, we learned about the board members' current means of interaction with other board members and their organisations. We asked what improvements they were

looking for regarding communication with the LSP and the other board members. We also needed to know what features they wanted on the LSP website in order to communicate with the LSP and the other organisations involved. Our external communication questions focused on what each board member and his or her organisation wants to make accessible to the public. This information helped us to identify communication gaps between the LSP, its member organisations, and the public. It also helped us identify the primary issues and information to be communicated.

To gather information regarding the LSP's needs for internal and external communication, we conducted interviews with the LSP board members and staff. Some of the interviews were conducted individually while some were done in groups. When interviewing an LSP board member, we introduced ourselves and explained why their responses would provide us with valuable information. The interviews were designed to be about an hour long. Two people asked the majority of the questions while two recorded the responses. Sometimes the recorders asked questions to clarify the responses. The types of questions we asked focused on the goals of the member's organisation, current means of communication used to interact with other board members and the public, the effectiveness of those methods, and what features they would be interested in seeing in a LSP website. The interview questions are fully listed in Appendix D.

The information gathered from the interviews gave us specific information on what is essential to have on the LSP website. Since the website also has a section for the public to access, more information was needed from the community to know: what they

would expect to find on the website; what will grab their attention; and what will get them interested in becoming involved with the LSP.

3.3   Understanding the Expectations of the People of Lewisham

It was important to understand the public's perspective as well as the board members'.   Since the public that will be accessing the external side it must be tailored to their expectations and needs. We needed to find out several different pieces of information.   First, we wanted to know how familiar the public is with community development programs in Lewisham and if they had heard of or had any desire to get involved in these programs. We discovered roughly how many people would use such a website and what features the public would be most interested in seeing on that site. We also explored other means by which the public could give feedback to the LSP.

Our primary idea for gathering this information involved using surveys. A survey was administered in three ways. 1) We conducted a convenience sample by asking people at specific locations such as libraries and other public internet access points to fill out our survey. 2) We dropped off and collected surveys at places where people have to wait, such as the doctor's and dentist's offices. We asked the receptionist/secretary if they could assist our group in handing the survey out to people who check in. If that was not possible, surveys and a return folder were left on a table in the waiting area. 3) We attended community meetings to ask people who were present to take time to fill out our survey. We set aside four weeks to gather information from the public. Questions focused on knowledge of community outreach and development programs in Lewisham, interest in getting involved with improving the community, desire to use a website for

learning more about similar programs, and ideas for features for such a website. A full survey can be found in Appendix E.

Understanding what the LSP wants through the use of interviews and obtaining the public's opinion directly through surveys guided our group in forming solutions for the LSP. Through the specific methods described in this section we obtained information which allowed us to create the specific website features that will be effective in augmenting communication internally and externally. It was also necessary to make sure the final solution was one the public and the board members would respond to favourably. While acquiring this understanding, we had to record data systematically in order to be able to analyse it properly.

3.4 Analysis of Data

The interview responses from the LSP board members could not be quantitatively analysed. Instead, the information was evaluated using the key concepts and ideas provided by the organisation representatives. General information was grouped to establish patterns in the responses. This identified the most prominent needs of the organisations. The surveys with the public gave us both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data from the surveys was put into spreadsheets and graphs were created to show trends in the borough. Each survey was analysed to make sure that the responses were consistent. When a survey showed inconsistencies, it illustrated to us that the reader did not understand the questions being asked, and was therefore noted. This information gave us guidelines for what was necessary on an LSP website. The survey responses also gave us an idea of the public's awareness of community organisations and whether there

is interest in improving their borough. The data from the interviews and surveys was

instrumental in determining how effective a website is as an internal and external

solution. It also provided us with other potential means of communication for the LSP.

Chapter 4: Data/Results

4.1 Introduction

We conducted interviews and collected surveys in order to understand the needs of the LSP and the public. Since the website will be used for both internal and external communication we interviewed the LSP board and staff members to gather their opinions about the site. Surveys were conducted to get a sense of the internet usage in the borough and what the public would look for on a community organisation website. Community meetings were attended to administer surveys and obtain contact persons to interview.

4.2 Interviews with LSP Staff and Board Members

In our interviews with the LSP staff and board members, our questions focused on communication issues within the LSP, communicating to the public, and the expectations for the content of the website. Refer to Appendix D to see a full list of interview questions. Depending on the interviewee, minor adjustments were made to some of the questions either prior to the interview or at the moment asked. If information about a question had already been gathered from a member of the same organisation, the question was not repeated.

4.2.1 Summary of Persons Interviewed

We interviewed people from various organisations and sectors throughout the borough. Shown below is a table containing the interviewees, the sector and organisation they represent, the date, time and place the interview occurred, and the purpose of the interview.

Table 4.1 Summary of Interviewees

Interviewees	Sector Represented	Organisation Represented	Date Interviewed	Reason for Interview
Alan Horton	Communication Task Group	Metropolitan Police Department	January 19th, 2004. 12h00-13h00 Lewisham Town Hall	He is on the subgroup who thought of the website as a solution.
Lewisham Community Network	Matthew Scott Brian Wagenbach John Bovenizer	Lewisham Community Network	January 23rd, 2004. 11h00 Home of Ray Hall	They work for the LCN, which is a large umbrella organisation in Lewisham
Maarten Schram & Lisa Bandari	LSP Team	Lewisham Strategic Partnership	January 28th, 2004. 10h00-11h00 Lewisham Town Hall	Employees of the LSP will have most information on the organisation itself
Des Malone	LSP Board Member	Deputy Chair of the Deptford Green School (Community Sector)	January 29th, 2004. 9h00-10h00 Deptford Green School	Vice Chair of LSP, Chair of Communication Task Group
Archie Torrance & Annett Wightman	LSP Board Members	Metropolitan Police Department	February 4th, 2004. 9h00 LPD	They are representatives who are active on the LSP board.
Cllr. Katy Donnelly & Cllr. Mike Holder	LSP Board Members - London Borough of Lewisham	Lewisham Council	February 4th, 2004. 11h30 Lewisham Town Hall	They are council representatives who are active on the LSP board.
Father Paul Butler	LSP Board Member – Community Sector	The Communities of Downham and Bellingham	February 4th, 2004. 12h30 Lewisham Town Hall	He is a community representative who is active on the LSP board.
Cllr. Gavin Moore	LSP Board Member - London Borough of Lewisham	Deputy Mayor of Lewisham, Lewisham Council	February 16th, 2004. 10h00	He is a council representative who is active on the LSP board.

4.2.2 Responses to Questions about Internal Communication

The first part of the interviews focused on the different aspects of internal communication. The first questions asked were aimed towards learning about how the partner organisations communicate internally and any problems they had encountered. We inquired about how, how often, and for what reasons the partner organisations communicate with the LSP. All members use telephone, e-mail, face to face contact, fax, and forums to communicate with the LSP. The board members and staff have a meeting every six weeks to raise issues of importance and to allocate funding. Individual board members communicate with other selected board members because they have common goals and objectives. Their organisations are working toward improving similar themes in the community such as education, environment, housing, health care, etc. Although there are strong communication ties between members with similar interests, the communication among all board members is considerably weaker.

Questions concerning communication problems encountered among the board members and staff were also included in the interviews. Nine out of 10 interviewees said that board members do not have close relationships with one another. There is a high turnover rate with board members, so members are continually spending time learning about a new organisation and its representative. Eight out of 10 mentioned that LSP documents are not easily accessible because the process to retrieve an older document is inefficient. Six out of 10 feel that most members probably do not read their e-mail. Board members and staff e-mail boxes are flooded with large document attachments that the members are not likely to print on their own.

Eight out of the 10 interviewed have an effective intranet website for their organisation. The main purposes of their internal websites are to contain document repositories and contact information directories. Based on their experiences with their organisations' internal sites, we asked what elements they would like included on the LSP website. The main features desired by the interviewees for the internal side of the LSP website can be seen in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Internal Website Features Desired by Interviewees

Feature	# In Favour	% of Interviewees
Document Posting	9	90
Discussion Board	7	70
Events Calendar	6	60
E-mail/Telephone Directory	6	60
Personal Profiles	4	40

All the features mentioned are important to the site, but document posting was the most requested part. This will eliminate the need for e-mails with large attachments. A discussion board will be an integral part of document posting so that suggestions can be made on the documents that are posted. The personal profiles were not mentioned as frequently, but will still be useful in creating more personal relationships among the board members.

4.2.3 Responses to Questions about External Communication

With the interviews, we were able to collect data on the methods that are currently being used by the LSP members' organisations to communicate with the public. These methods are shown below in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Methods of External Communication Used by the LSP Members' Organisations

Methods of External Communication	# of Interviewees that use this Method	% of Interviewees
Open Forums	13	100
Website	8	63
Newsletters	3	23
Community Fairs	3	23
Mailings	3	23

We discovered the purpose and effectiveness of the partner organisations' websites in communicating with the public. The Lewisham Community Network has a website but mentioned that it is not a useful tool for reaching out because it is not regularly updated (Appendix G). Mr. Alan Horton also mentioned that the Lewisham Police Department's website is not effective because it is also is not updated regularly and does not contain enough information (Appendix F). On the other hand, the Lewisham Council's website is regularly updated and has a wealth of useful information. According to Cllr. Katy Donnelly and Cllr. Mike Holder, who both work for the Lewisham Council, their website is effective for providing resources to the people (Appendix K).

With our interviews we also gathered recommendations and expectations on what content and features should be on the LSP website relating to external communication. The most common features are compiled in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 External Website Features

Features	Interviews (13 total)	%
Regular Updates	12	92
Easy Navigation	12	92
Minutes of Meetings	12	92

Projects and Funding	11	85
Members and Their Organisations	10	77
Feedback Page	10	77
Contact Information	9	69
General Information About Organisation	8	62
Objectives the Organisation	8	62
Local Events	7	54
Mission Statement	7	54
Goals of Organisation	7	54
Links	7	54
How to Become Involved	3	23
Photos	2	15
Search/Help Finder	2	15
Language Translation	2	15

4.3   Gaining the Views of the Public through Surveying

In surveying the public, our questions focused on interest in community development organisations, internet usage, and features people look for on organisational websites. We did a convenience sample of 152 people and, since Lewisham has a population of about 250,000 people, the validity of our data is as follows:

- 50/50 Split

- 90 % Confidence Level

- 152 Surveys Yields 6.97% Error

(All survey data can be found in Appendix N)

4.3.1   Community Awareness

The survey contained questions about respondents' favourite thing about the borough, current involvement in community renewal and development, and desire to be involved. The favourite things about the borough are mentioned below in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Favourite Thing About the Borough

Favourite Thing about the Borough	# of Times Mentioned	% of Surveyed
Libraries	15	10
Diversity	13	9
Transportation	13	9
Shopping	13	9
The People	12	8
Location	12	8
Parks	9	6
Churches	6	4
Leisure Centres	6	4
Calm & Clean	5	3
Blackheath Village	5	3
College	4	3
Variety of Activities	3	2
Cinema	3	2
Affordability	2	1

The LSP Communication Task Group wanted us to integrate the uniqueness of the borough into the website. So we included the most commonly mentioned favourite things about borough in the website. This will engage the people with the website. The location and the transportation to Central London were other favourites, which can be incorporated into the site with links to Central London sites. Interest in shopping areas, parks, churches and libraries, encouraged us to add photos of these things to the website.

We needed to know if there would be a desire to visit the LSP website among the public. Any knowledge of community or voluntary organisations led to possible conclusions about the effectiveness of the website. If the public is interested in these types of organisations then they may have an interest in the LSP. The information from this data is seen in Chart 4.1.

Chart 4.1 Knowledge of Community and Voluntary Organisations

Awareness of Community or Voluntary Organizations
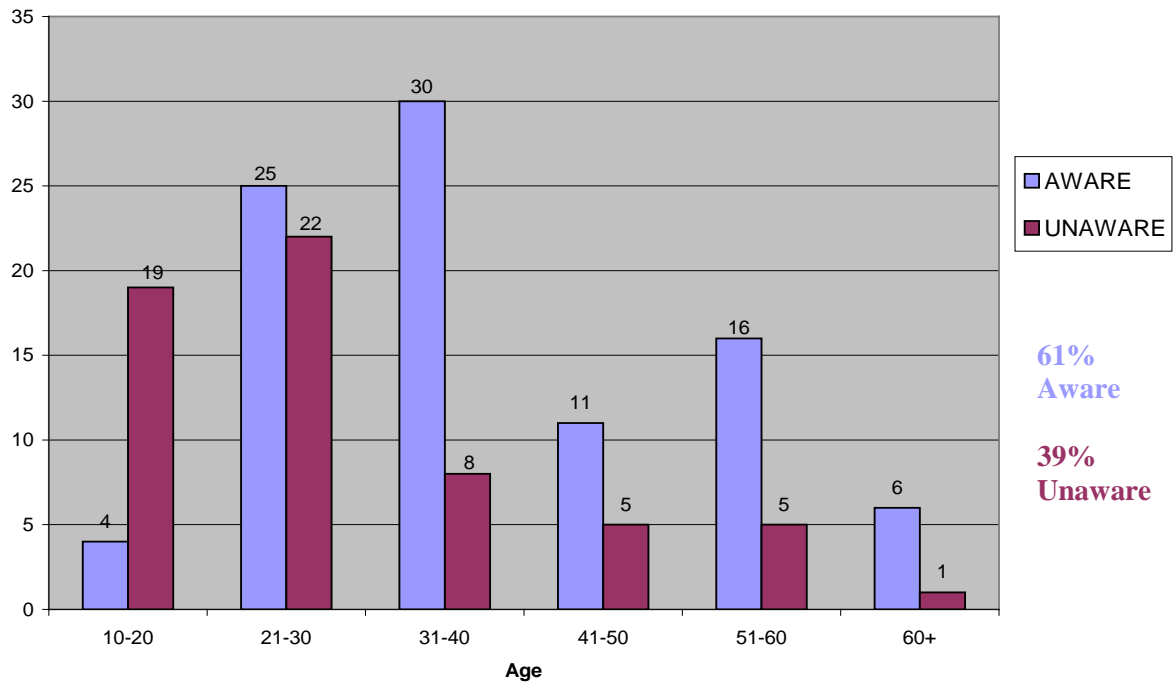
The younger people surveyed (age range 10-20) were less aware of community organisations. From 21-30 years, the awareness was just over half, whereas the people over 31 years of age were more aware of similar types of organisations. Out of the 152 people surveyed 61% have knowledge of an organisation, and 39% do not know of any.

The next survey question asked the people who are not aware of community or voluntary organisations if they would like to get involved in or learn more about them. The results are shown below in Chart 4.2.

Chart 4.2 Interest in Participating in Community/Voluntary Organisations

Interest in Participating in Community Development
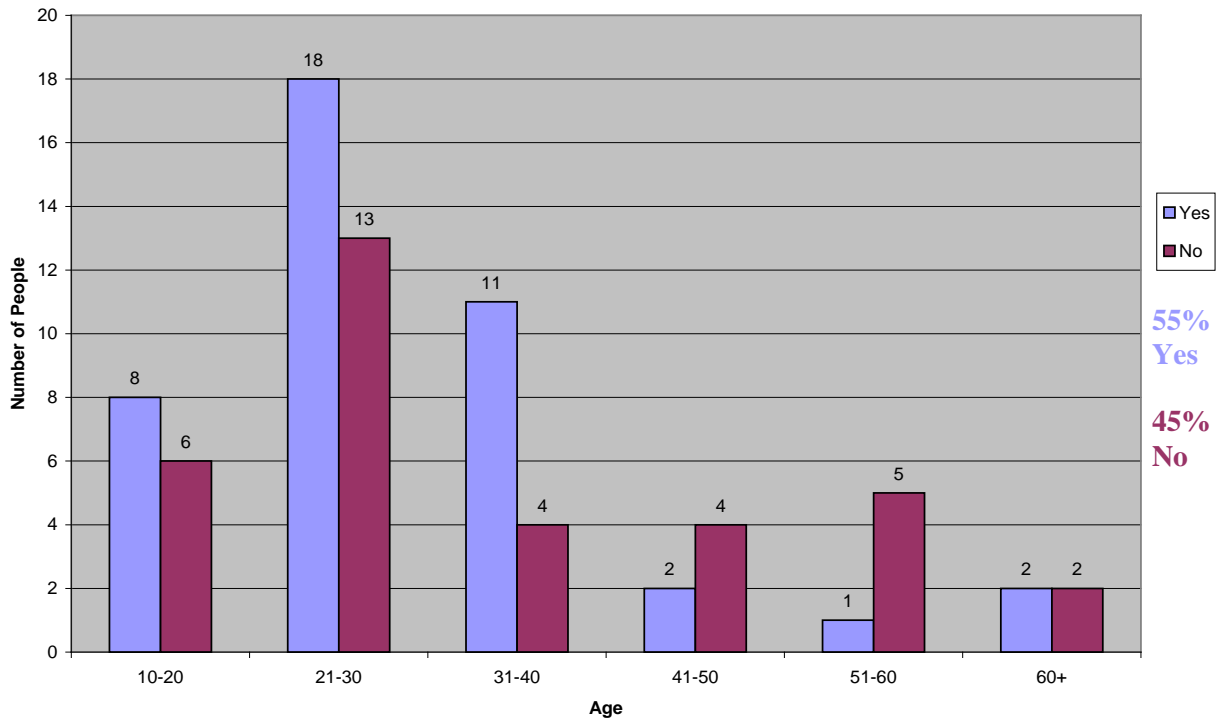
There was more of an interest in participating in community and voluntary programs in the age range of 10-40. The remaining age ranges did not show as favourable of a response for participation in the community. Overall 55% of the people were interested in participating while 45% had no desire.

4.3.2 Internet

The survey also contained questions about how often people use the internet and for what reasons. The results on whether people use the internet or not are shown below in Chart 4.3:

Chart 4.3 Internet Use
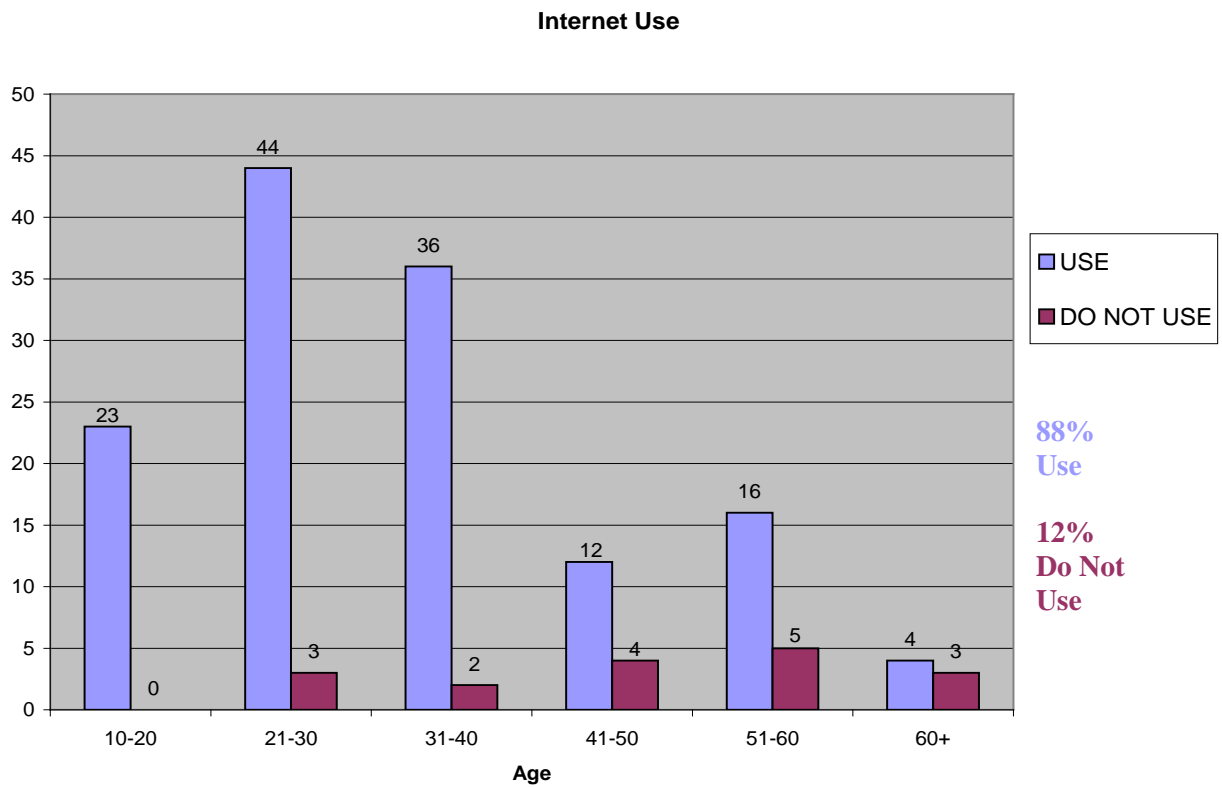
Internet Use

More people in the younger generations (10-40 years) use the internet.   The

group decided that the frequency of usage would also be an indicator of the likelihood of

visiting the LSP website. Shown below in Chart 4.4 are the results of how often the

internet is used by the community.

Chart 4.4 How Often the Internet is Used

How Often Internet is Used
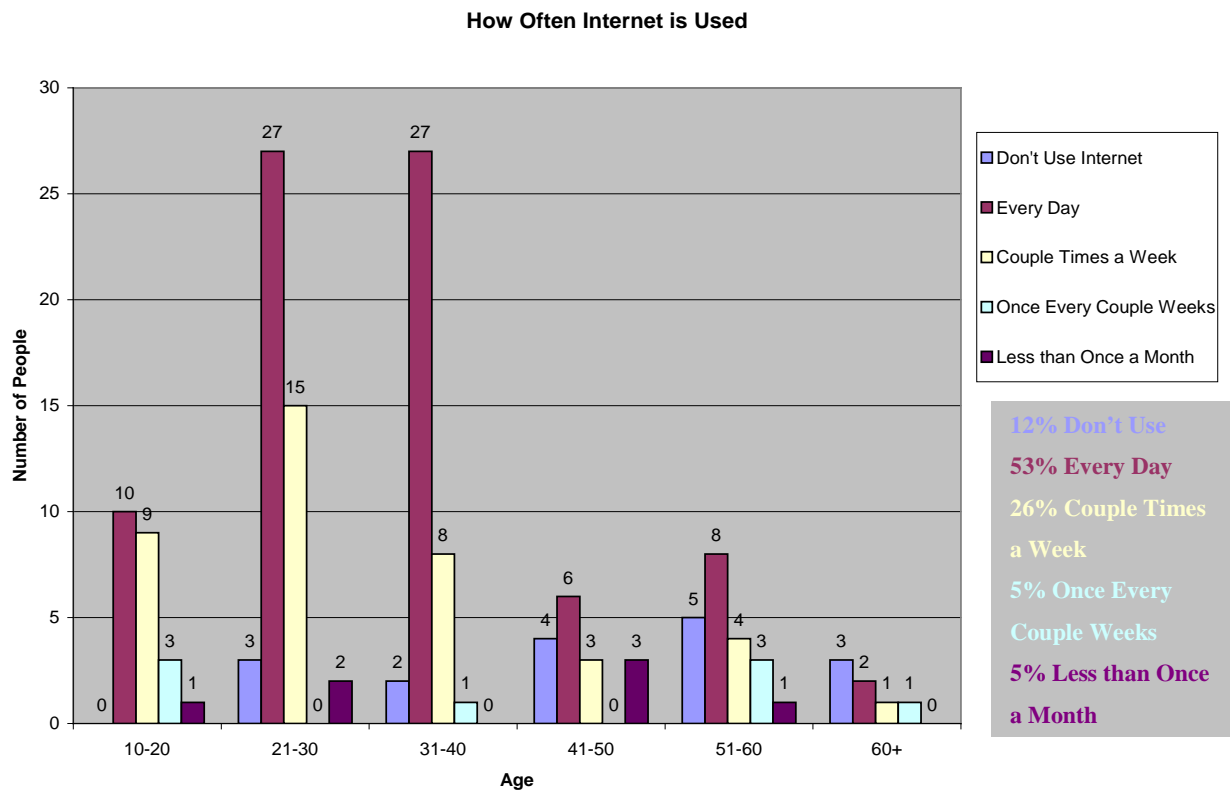
The age groups from 10-40 years showed the most amount of internet use while the older generations use the internet less regularly. Fifty-three percent of the people surveyed use the internet every day. While 12% do not use the internet at all. The more frequently people use the internet, the higher the chance of the user accessing the LSP website.

The individuals surveyed also provided their expectations for information and features that would be on a community organisation website. The most popular responses are shown below in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Public's Desire for Website Features

Features	# Responded	%
Projects and Funding	29	19
Contact Information	20	13
General Information About Organisation	20	13
Local Events	19	12.5
Goals of Organisation	9	6
Objectives the Organisation	9	6
How to Become Involved	8	6
Easy Navigation	7	5
Links	7	5
Members and Their Organisations	7	5
Regular Updates	7	5
Photos	4	3
Mission Statement	2	1
Feedback Page	2	1
Minutes of Meetings	2	1

The most requested items for the website are: what types of projects are being done; where the funding is going; contact information and local events.

In order to see what interests the public when using the internet, we had an open ended survey question about what people use the internet for. The results are shown in table 4.7:

Table 4.7 Why Public Uses the Internet

Reasons for Using the Internet	# of Responses	% of Responses
Research	42	28
E-mail	41	27
Work	25	16
School Work	24	16
General Information	23	15
Leisure	18	12
News	13	9
Shopping	10	7
Job Searching	7	5
Vacation	6	4

Banking	5	3
Music	4	3
Flights	4	3
Chat	2	1
Sports	2	1

The most common response for the reasons why people use the internet is for research. E-mailing was the second most frequent item that the surveyed individuals use the internet for.

We wanted to know how the people who are involved in community organisations learned about them and became involved. With this information, we can suggest possible alternatives for the LSP to provide the same information that is on the website to the people who may not look to the internet as the first source of researching.

Table 4.8 Means of Finding Out About a Community Organisation

Means of Information	# Responded (out of 92 involved)	%
Through Work	18	20
The Church	10	11
Family/Friends	8	9
Word of Mouth	4	4
Helped Organise it	4	4
Leaflets	3	3
By Asking/Personal Research	3	3
From Council Members	2	2
Library	2	2
Tenants Association	2	2
Community Action Groups	2	2
Invitation	2	2

The most common method of finding out about community organisations was through work. The second most common method was through church. Since the favourable responses were through work and through church, the LSP should look into advertising at such locations.

Chapter 5: Analysis

5.1 Introduction

Based on information gained from interviews and surveys we were able to identify features and content for the website, estimate the effectiveness of such a site, and point out other possible means of communicating with the public. The interviews with the LSP board members and staff enabled us to determine their individual needs and the needs of the organisation as a whole. These included both a necessity to improve their internal communication and to improve their communication with the people of Lewisham. We also distributed surveys to gather ideas from the public. Analysis of the data collected from these interviews and surveys allowed us to decide on a list of features that an effective website should have. Further analysis of our data allowed us to also determine what these features will accomplish for the LSP and how the website as a whole will help the LSP. Since our research has also found limitations in what a website can accomplish, we have drafted several recommendations for other ways in which the LSP can reach the public.

5.2 What Features and Content Should Appear on the LSP Website and Why

During the research phase of our project, we hypothesized that the internal side of an LSP website could include features such as document posting, a discussion board, and a searchable e-mail/telephone directory. Data collected confirmed that these features will be effective. Through our interviews there was enough interest in an events calendar system that we decided to implement it as well (Table 4.2). Our prior research did not

yield many ideas for the external side, but interviews and surveys have identified a significant list of content and features that should appear on the public side.

5.2.1   Features for Internal Communication

One of the first features we identified is document posting. Nine out of 10 LSP members interviewed wanted documents and meeting minutes on the website. Both can be accomplished with a posting centre (Table 4.2). This would work as follows: once an LSP member is logged into the internal side of the site and has navigated to the document posting centre, the LSP member will see a list of documents currently available. If they would like to post their own document, they will be taken to a form where they can select the document from its location on their computer. They will then provide a short description for the file along with permissions. The permissions will determine who can view this document, whether it's LSP members only or both the LSP and the public.

An events calendar was requested by eight of the 10 interviewees and would work somewhat similarly to the document centre (Table 4.2). When a member is logged in, they will be able to view a calendar with events listed by day. Each event will have a short description. The member will be able to see all the events for the current month and they can look at both previous and coming months. If a member would like to submit a new event, they will be taken to a form where they can put in the date, time, name, location, and description of their event. They will then choose if this event should be viewed by members, the public, or both.

Seven out of 10 members said they liked the idea of a discussion board for member use only (Table 4.2). This section of the internal side shows all messages currently posted. A member can then choose to reply to any posted message, or they can

post their own new topic. New topics will be separated from replies for ease of viewing.

In a message, the member will only have to enter the subject and text they wish to appear.

When posted, the message will show the member's name and the date posted.

Six of 10 members said they would like a searchable e-mail/telephone directory

(Table 4.2). Our initial research indicated that this would be helpful for internal

communication and the interview responses confirm that. Therefore, we have included a

section on the internal side where members can enter a contact's name and receive the

details back. They can also add new members' names, telephones, and e-mail addresses

to the database.

5.2.2 Features for External Communication

The most important element of the external side is the information that is

presented to the public about the LSP. Seven out of 12 members interviewed thought that

the public side should have the LSP's mission statement, its goals, its objectives, and any

other pertinent information (Table 4.3). The texts of these elements were provided by

Mr. Maarten Schram and were displayed clearly and effectively on the main pages of the

external side. Additionally, when asked what features the public would want to see on a

community development organisation's website; approximately 13% of the people

surveyed said general information would be helpful (Table 4.6). We suspect this number

is relatively low due to general information being such an obvious choice for a website.

Nine out of 12 interviewed said the external side should have information about

the LSP members and their partner organisations (Table 4.4). Since the survey did not

mention the LSP specifically, survey responses were about community organisations in

general. Though the public did not mention partners, about 13% of the public said they would like to see contact details for a community organisation (Table 4.6). As a result, the site has a section of the LSP members that includes general information, contact details, and links to partners' websites. Members can have control over their own details from the internal side using a simple web form.

Eleven out of 13 interviewed said they wanted information about LSP projects and funding on the external side (Table 4.4). About 19% of the people surveyed also expressed interest in this (Table 4.6). Since the LSP attempts to organise funding for many organisations, we feel there is significant interest in the matter of projects and funding. If this information were present, perhaps it would serve as a strong draw for people to visit the site. Some basic, general information will be provided by Mr. Schram. Also, documents about projects and funding can be displayed to the public if a member so chooses when their document is uploaded at the internal side posting centre.

Seven out of 13 members interviewed and about 13% of the people surveyed expressed interest in news about local events (Table 4.4 and 4.6). Just as the internal side has a calendar of events, so will the public side. Information can be posted to this side from the members' area only.

We feel a calendar is a great idea because it serves two purposes. First, it informs people about LSP events that they can attend to learn more. Secondly, it gives people a reason to keep checking the site, so that they can stay abreast of current events in their community. If people keep checking the site, this will facilitate the success of the website.

Low percentages of respondents mentioned a section containing information about getting involved in the community and with the LSP. However, it will not hinder the site to have some information on this. The more people that can be mobilized into helping Lewisham, the better success community development projects will have.

Finally, the site will have general features that are common to most sites. These include photos, a site map, links, and translation services. Photos help to humanize the site and give it character, while the other features assist a user in finding the information they are looking for. If a site is easy to use and navigate, then people will return to use it again.

5.3 Effectiveness of an LSP Website

5.3.1 Improving Internal Communication

We have determined that a website will be effective in improving internal communication for the LSP. We have learned from the interviews that a place for people involved in the LSP to share documents is essential for improving the communication within. Almost all of the LSP members and staff interviewed expressed strong interest in a document posting area, and stated that they would use it often. This response shows that there is the necessary amount of interest in a document posting area for success. Cllr. Katy Donnelly and Cllr. Mike Holder said that people will not be bringing laptops to meetings to take minutes, and hard copies of documents will still be needed (Appendix K). In respect to this issue, the area for document posting on the website will make it easy to find the needed documents to print out before each meeting or when someone wants an extra copy, of the same or different document, for future reference. Father Paul

Butler said document posting on the internal site is a good idea, and also suggested access to the document drafting process (Appendix L). He said that being able to see the progress of documents and to be able to make comments would be helpful. Here, the document repository would allow him, or other LSP members, to access a posted draft of a document and then post their comments on the draft. The latest version can then be posted for further commentary and revision.

Another issue raised during the interviews is that many people do not even get important documents through e-mail because their e-mail box is so cluttered. Mr. Schram also told us that some people do not receive e-mails with large attachments because their e-mail boxes cannot handle the file size. With all the documents posted on the web, any LSP member will be able to get documents they need without searching their computers or contacting Ms. Kirstie Haines, on the LSP staff, for another copy. The document posting area is crucial in improving the communication within the LSP through the implementation of a website.

In our interviews we heard from most of the LSP members that an events calendar would be useful to have on the site. We have learned that an events calendar will be helpful in improving the communication among LSP staff and board members. Father Paul Butler stated that sometimes there is a miscommunication of event dates and times. He feels that this creates a communication gap among members of the LSP (Appendix L). The events calendar will solve this problem. Everyone involved in the LSP will be able to see exactly what is planned and when, so that all can be present. With more people attending the meetings, relationships and communication will increase.

Almost every LSP member said they most often communicate with other LSP members by telephone. But they also said this happens only with some of the members, not all of them. This is because they do not have a close enough relationship with people to call them, or they do not know their phone number. To solve this problem, personal profiles of each LSP board and staff member are up on the website. Also a directory of e-mail addresses and telephone numbers is included. Through the use of these features LSP members can get to know the other members better, and have access to their contact information so they can communicate more often. A website is a very good place to have a contact information list and personal profiles because it can be easily updated and is easily accessible. Personal profiles and a contact list will be very effective features of the LSP website in facilitating communication among its members.

Through the information gathered from the interviews we have implemented a discussion board for board members and staff of the LSP to help improve internal communication. Des Malone, Alan Horton, Paul Butler, Archie Torrance, and the representatives from the Lewisham Community Network all had reservations about a discussion board that would be available to the general public (Appendices I, F, L, J respectively). They suggested instead a discussion board just for the LSP members and staff. They feel that such an internal discussion board would be extremely useful for communication. The LSP members could go to the board and post their daily events and news, comments on current documents, and issues that other members need to know about or a variety of other useful types of information. For the public, we have a feedback page where they are able to find contact information to e-mail their comments to. This will assist in external communication between the LSP and the public.

5.3.2   Reaching Out to the Public

From our surveys, 88% of the people use the internet while the other 12% do not (Chart 4.3). From this we conclude that internet access is not a major obstacle for the website's success. The website is an initial step for the LSP to reach out to the community. From the surveys we also found that there is an interest among the public to become involved with community organisations. Fifty-five percent of the people surveyed who are not currently active are interested in becoming involved (Chart 4.2). The LSP will have to make their website known to the general public in order for people who are interested to go there. We found in our surveying that there is both an interest in community organisations and that most people in Lewisham use the internet. Therefore, with proper advertising of the site, we feel that the public will be interested in an LSP site and in the organisation itself.

5.4   Other Methods for Communicating With the Public

After considering the information gained from interviewing, we know that a website is only one part of the solution for reaching out to the public. Mr. Malone sees websites as a good first step. "Everybody's going on the web. 50% of the people in Lewisham are connected at home. We're hoping the public internet access points and distribution of them gives access to the rest of the 50%," (Appendix I). The website is not going to reach the entire population; it will reach the people who use the internet and who are interested in finding out more about the LSP. For people that are aware of community and voluntary organisations, we found out how they had heard of them. In our interviews, we found that many organisations are using open forums, fairs,

newsletters, and mailings. These may be useful options, in addition to a website, that the LSP should explore for reaching the public. In our surveying, we found that many people have learned about community development organisations through information from their workplace (20%), their churches (11%), from family and friends (9%), leaflets (3%), libraries (2%), and from community action groups (2%) (Table 4.8). We suggest that the LSP use leaflets and present their information at workplaces, schools, libraries and community meetings in order to be most effective in reaching out. For the population that does not use the internet, the LSP should have these other options to get them involved.

Chapter 6: Results and Conclusions

6.1 Website Results

In the previous section we discussed features and content of the LSP website. This section contains screen shots and an explanation of the LSP website. The URL is http://lewishamstrategicparternship.org.uk; the front page of the LSP website is shown below in figure 6.1a:

Figure 6.1a Front Page of LSP Website
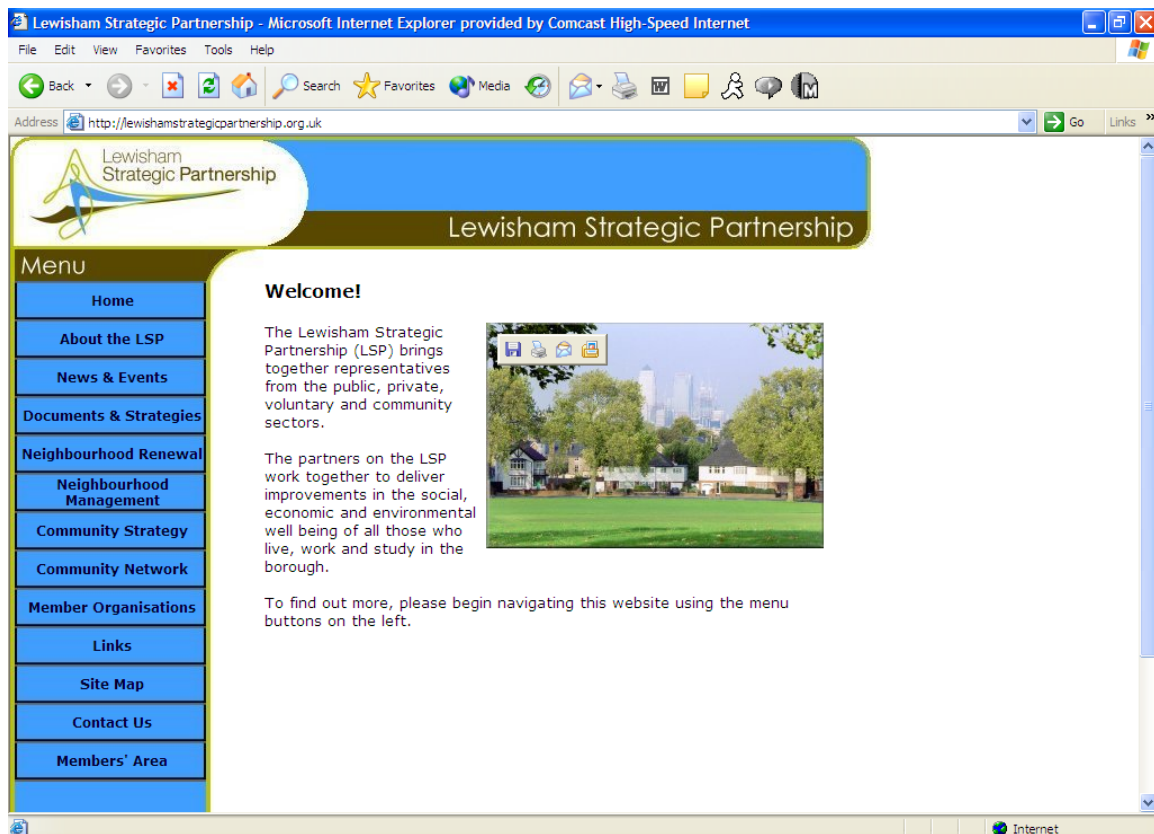
The LSP logo is located in the top left corner, and the three colours are shown through out the website. The menu navigation buttons are on the left and the content appears in the middle of the page when you click on one of them. When you put your

cursor over a menu button a description of the section appears on the top of the page

(above Lewisham Strategic Partnership). Figure 6.1b shows the external side of the site

where there is a list the members and their organisation. The organisations are linked to

their own sites.

Figure 6.1b Members and Their Organisations
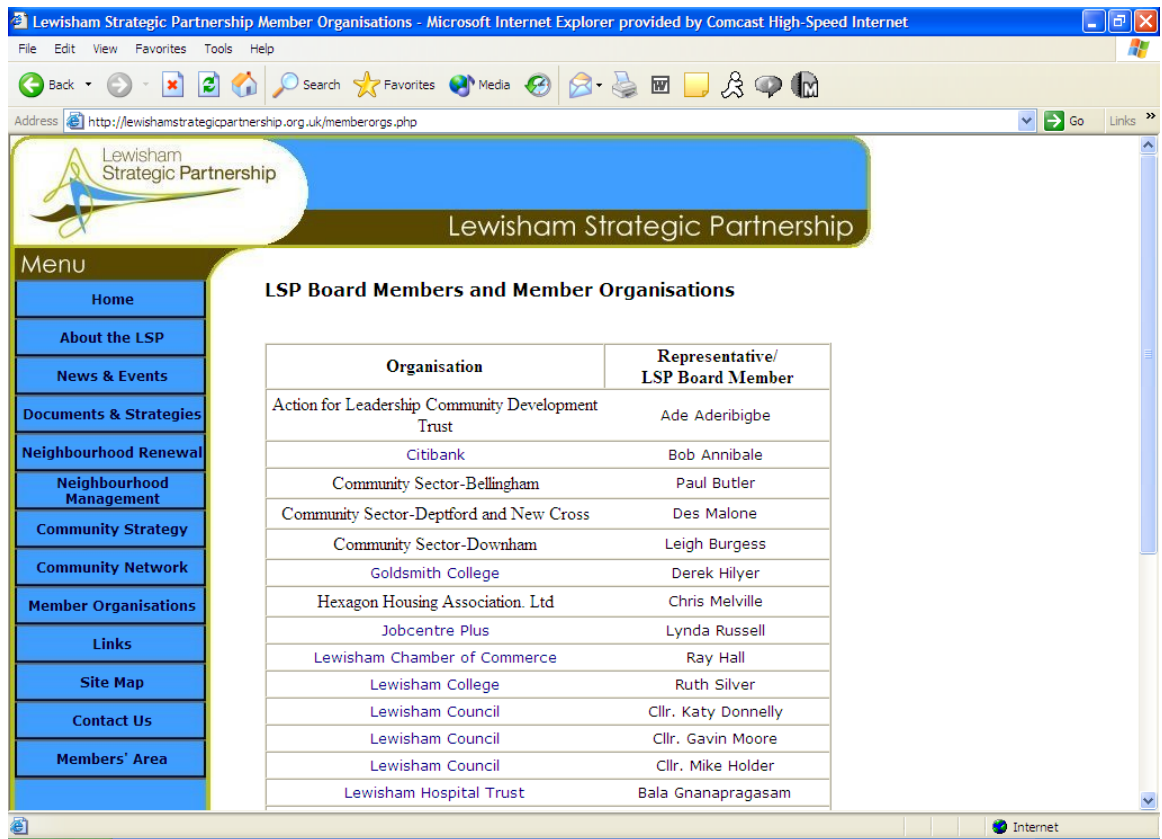
To make the site more attractive to the public we added pictures to different parts

of the site. Seen in Figure 6.1c is the Neighbourhood Renewal page where you can see a

picture of a church in Blackheath.

Figure 6.1c Neighbourhood Renewal Page
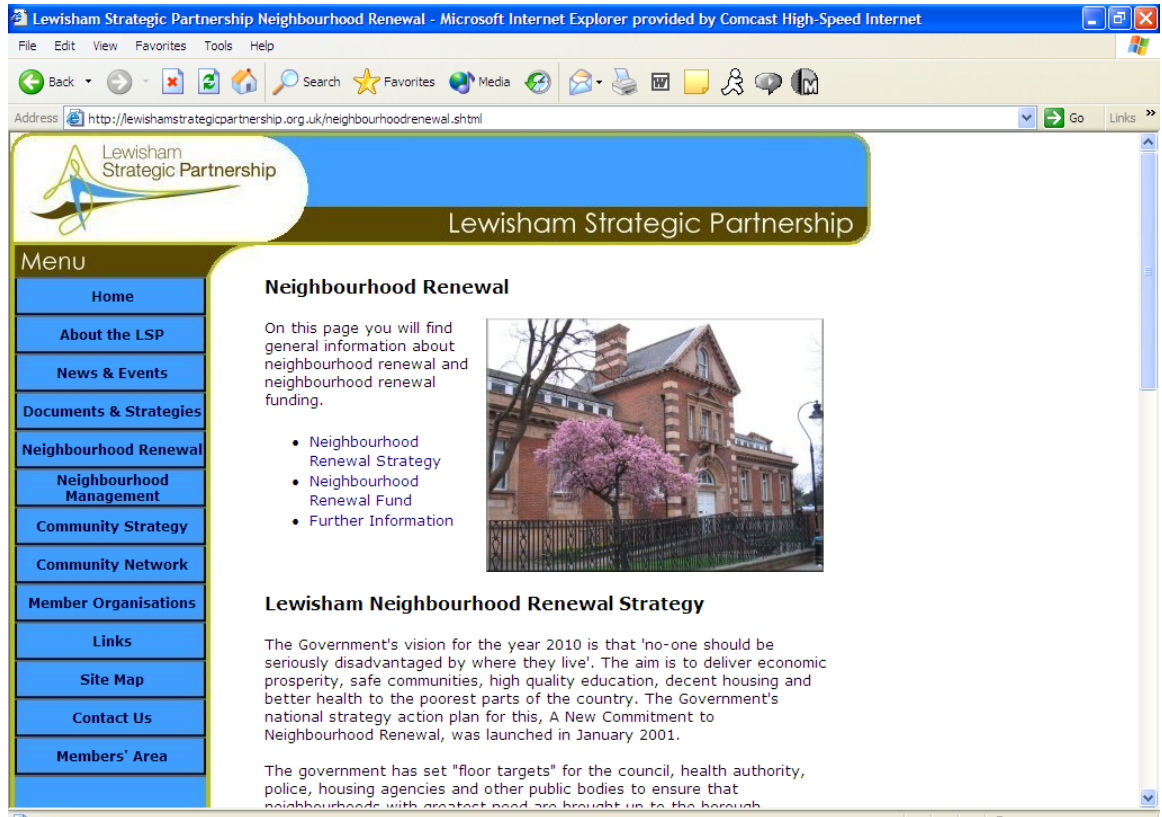
For the internal side of the website, you click on the "Member's Area" button on the front page and you will be brought to the login page. The login page is shown below in Figure 6.2:

Figure 6.2: LSP Member Login Page
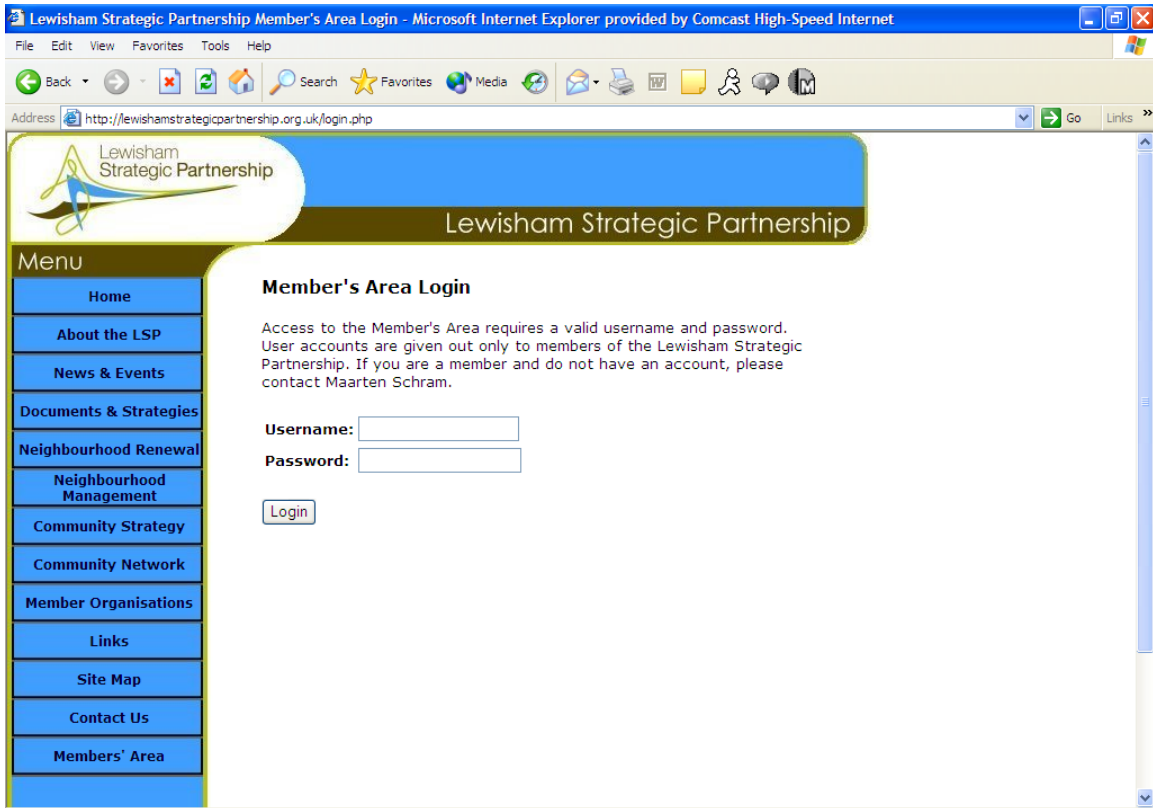
Each member will be assigned a username with a default password which can later be changed by the member.

Once you are logged in to the member section you will be brought to the Member's Area Page which is shown in Figure 6.3:

Figure 6.3: LSP Member's Area Page
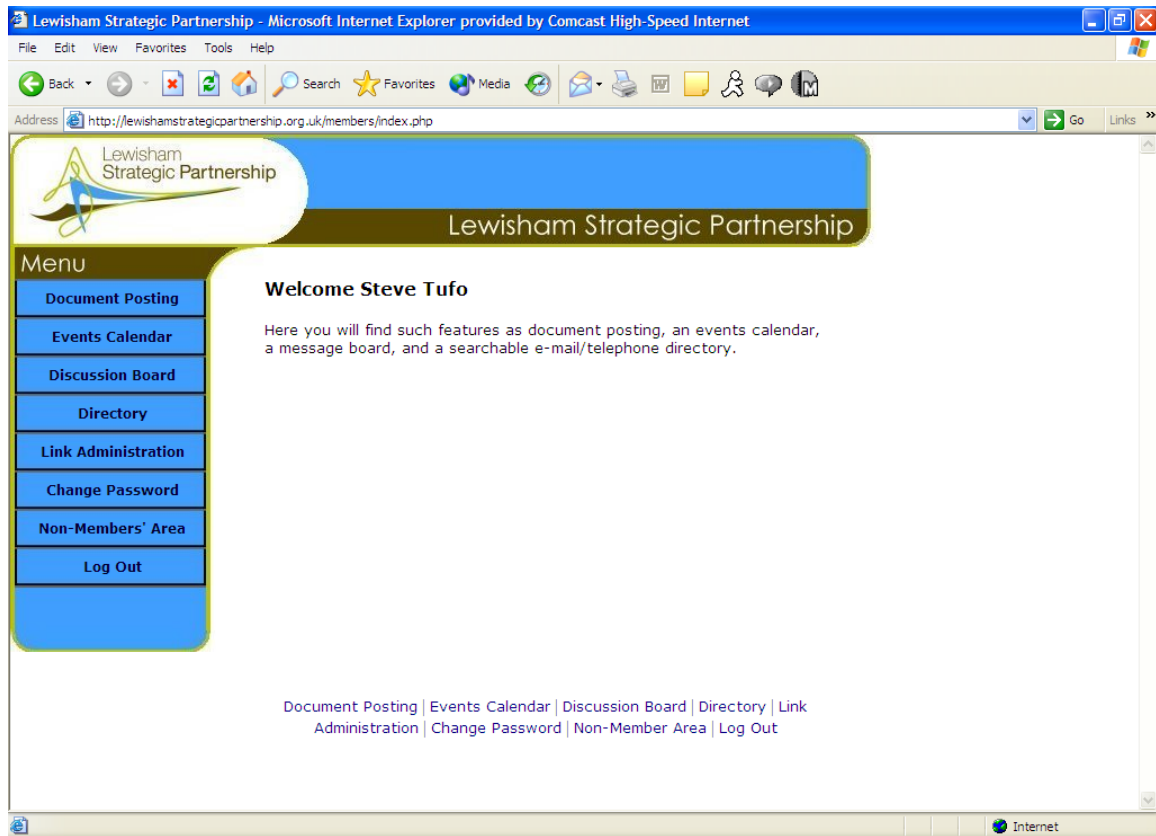
At the top of this page there is a welcome note to the member, this way the member knows that they are logged into their account. The menu buttons are different in this site, and can only be viewed by the member. The menu button "Non-Member's Area" can be accessed while logged into the internal side of the website. It simply brings you back to the main page of the website without logging the member out. The document posting area is shown below in Figure 6.4:

Figure 6.4: Document Posting
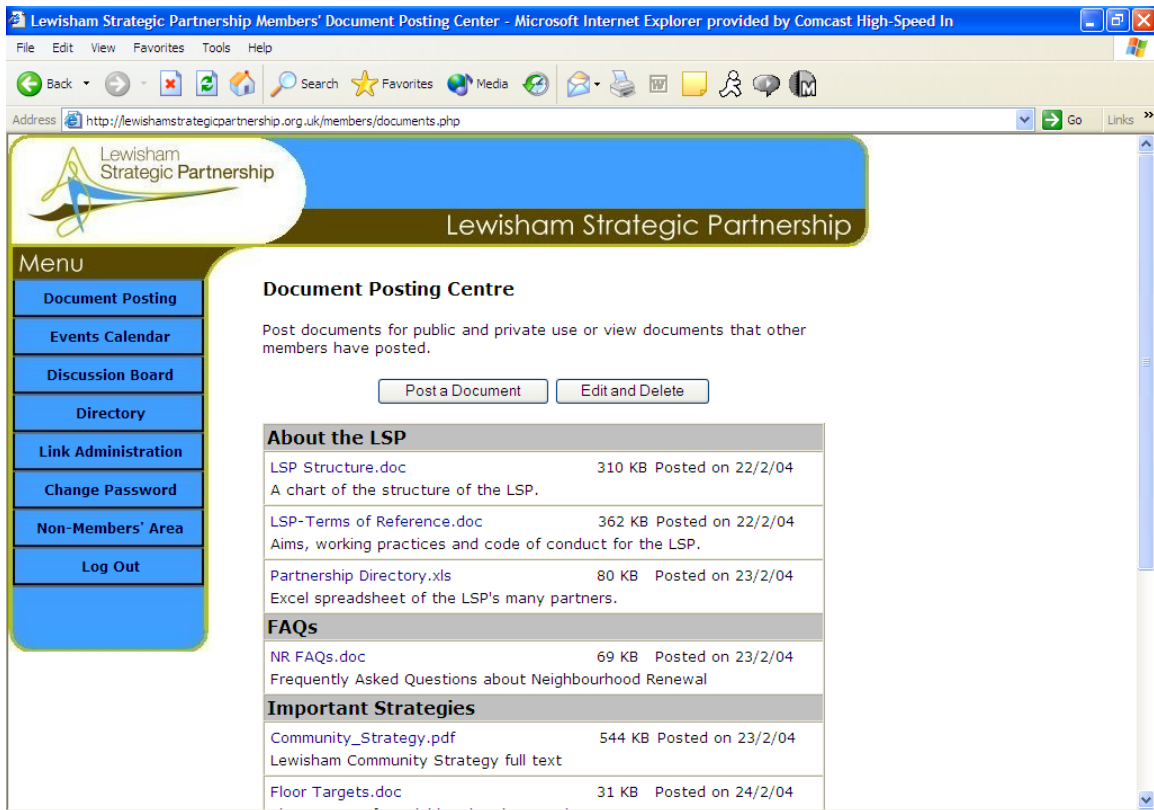
Here members are allowed to post documents and make them viewable either to members only, the public, or both. Members will also be allowed to post their own news and events and make them either viewable to members only, the public, or both. This section is shown below in Figure 6.5a:

Figure 6.5a: News and Events Calendar
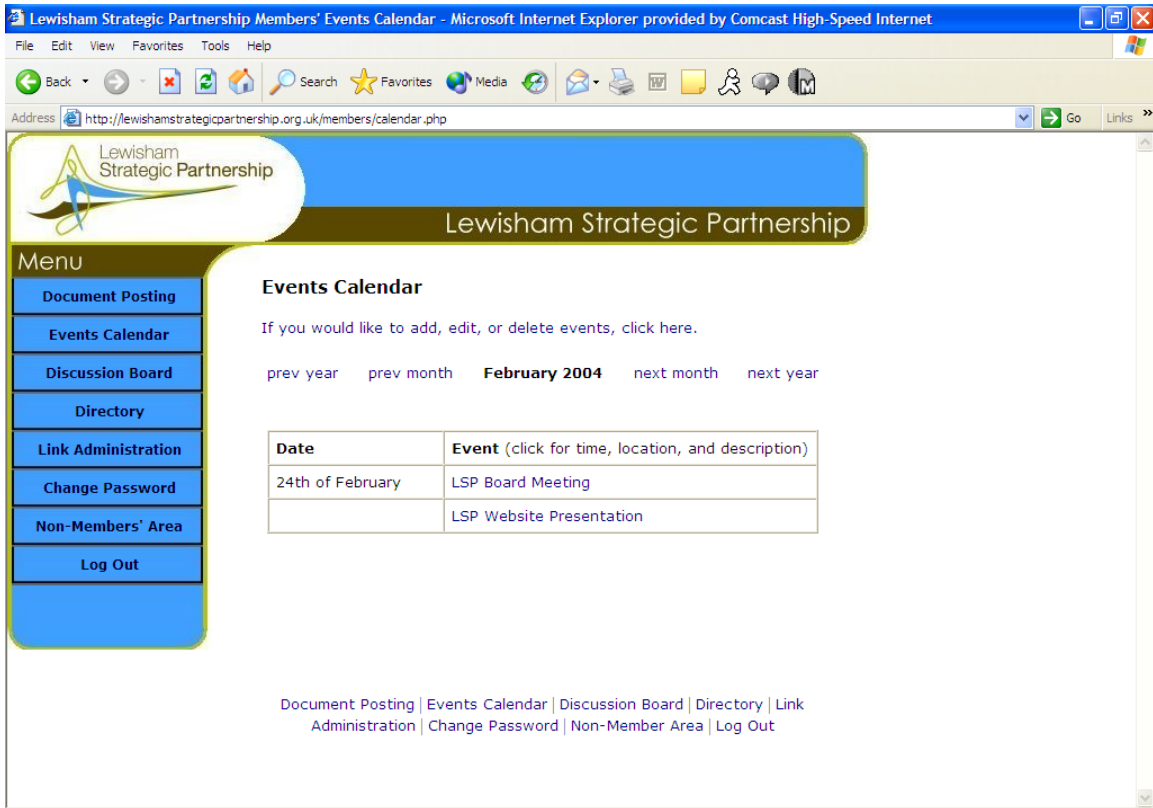
You can simply click on the name of the event and it will bring you to a description of it. In Figure 6.5b you see the event "LSP Website Presentation" with the description.

Figure 6.5b: Events Calendar Description
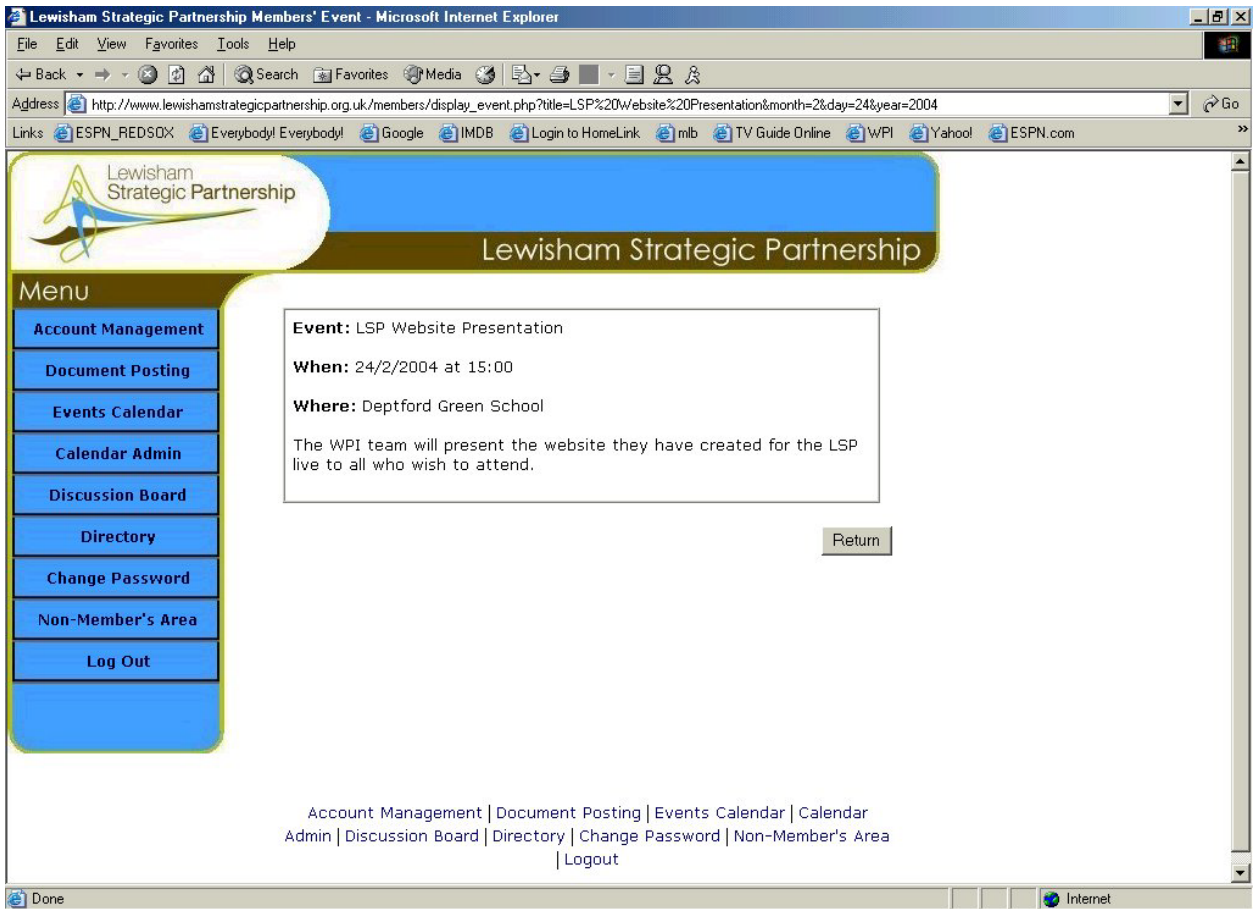
The members will also have a discussion board where they will be able to post

announcements for members to view. Shown in Figure 6.6a is the discussion board

section.

Figure 6.6a: LSP Member and Staff Discussion Board
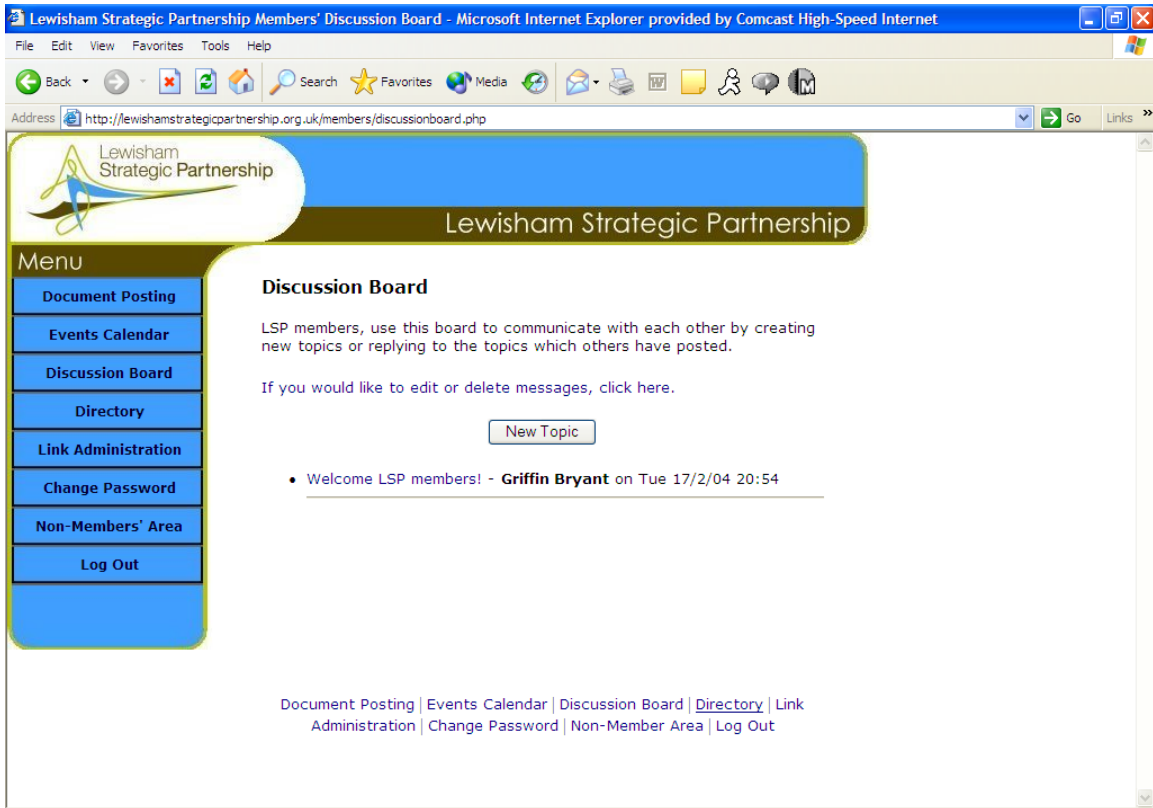
As you can see you can add a new topic and respond to a topic already posted. In Figure 6.6b you can see the page where you see details of the message posted.

Figure 6.6b: Posting a Message on the Discussion Board
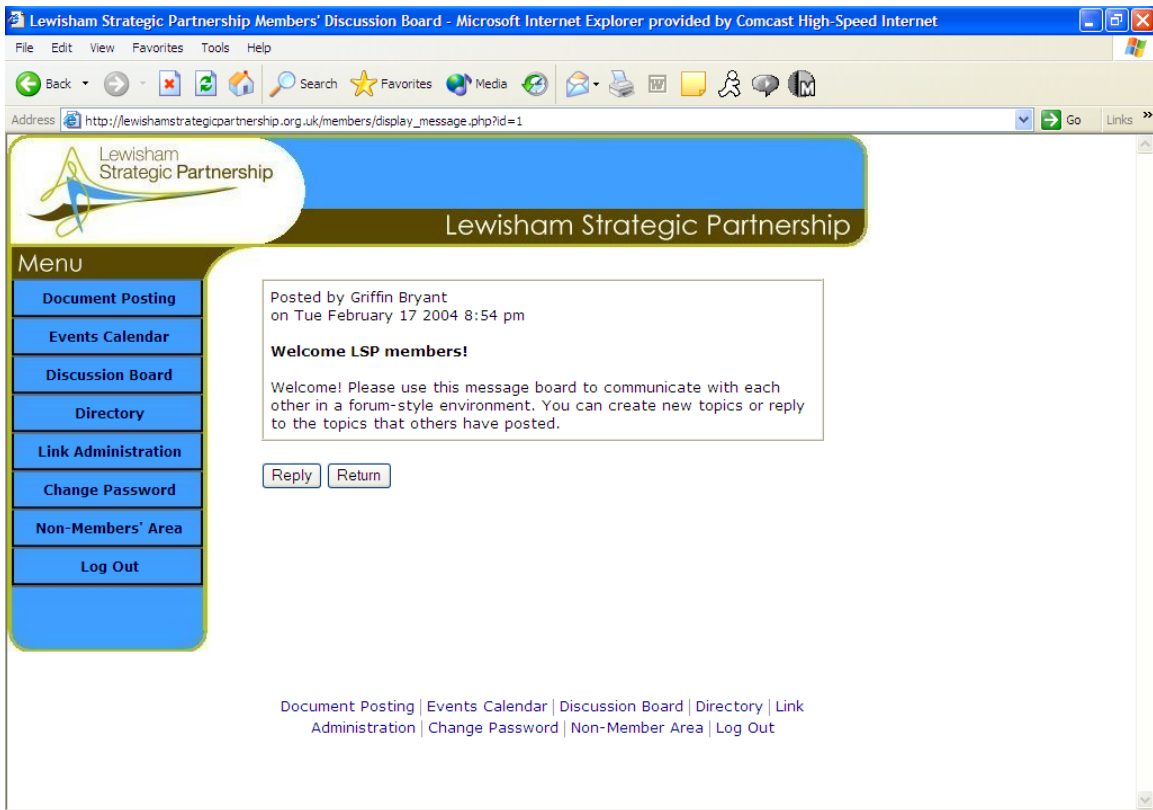
Members can add and delete discussion board postings whenever they choose.

The LSP members and staff will also have access to an e-mail/telephone directory. This

is shown below in figure 6.7:

Figure 6.7: Member and Staff Directory

The directory is organised in alphabetical order by last name. There is also an administrative section where new accounts can be made and existing accounts can be modified. Basically the administrator has control over all the accounts. This is shown in Figure 6.8:

Figure 6.8: LSP Administration Page
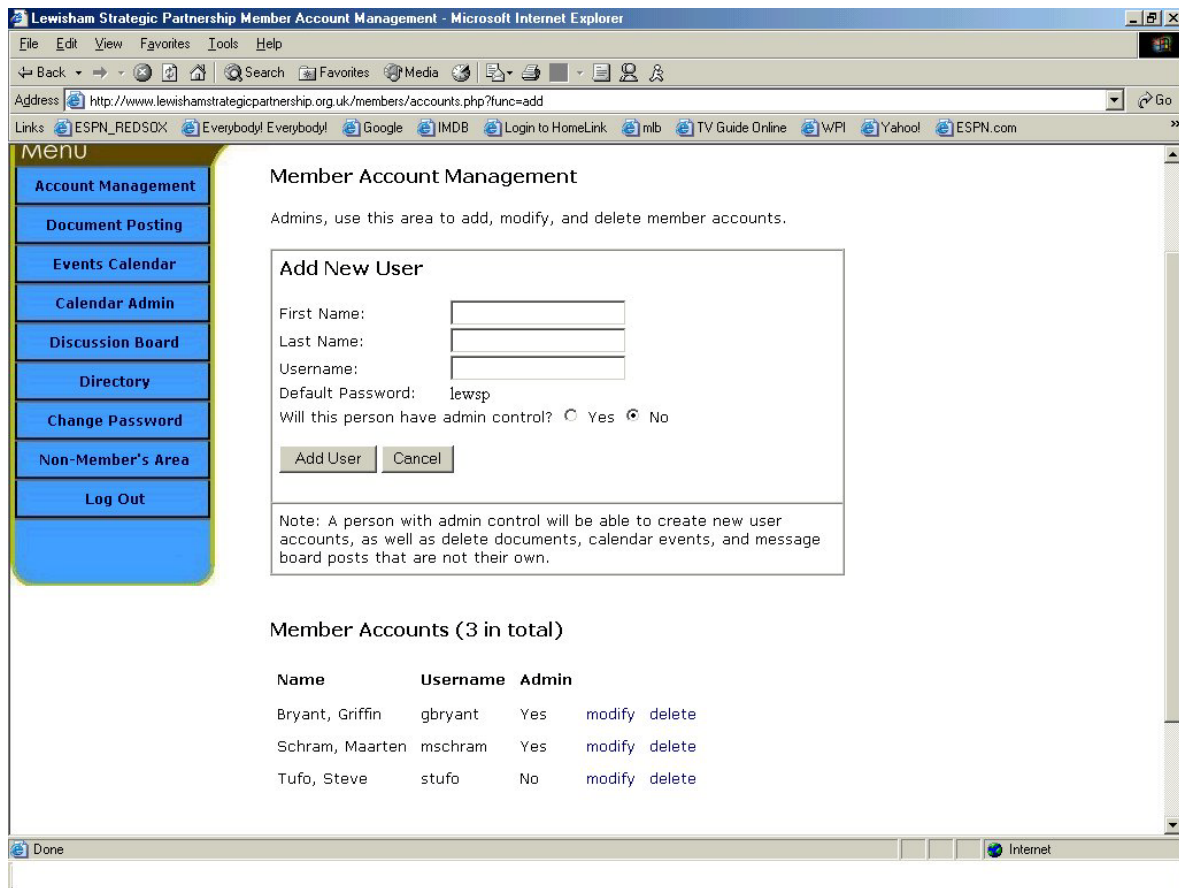
At the top of the page there is a place to click to make a new account. The administrator can also give other members admin control. This page also shows all current member accounts.

Members will be given a default password and have the option of changing their password (it is a button on the menu bar on the left of the member section pages). Shown in Figure 6.9 is the screen you are taken to when you click on the "change password" button.
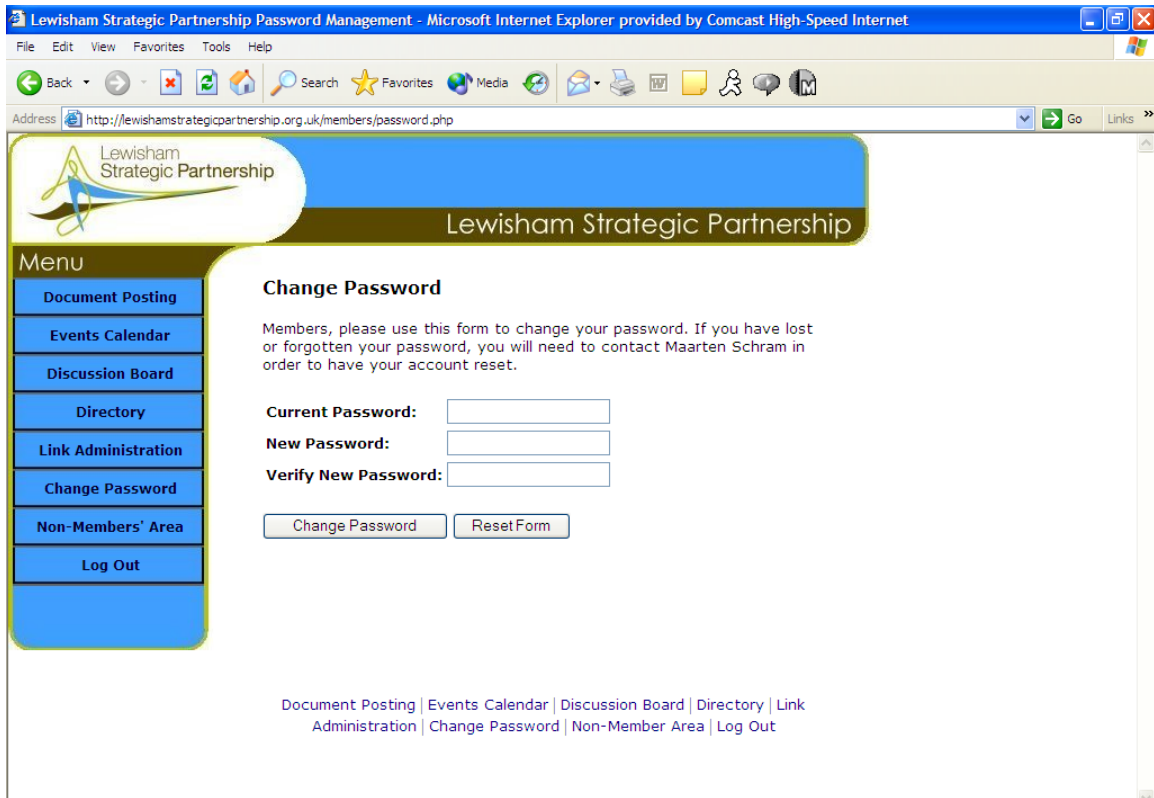
To change the password, the original password must be entered, along with the new password twice to ensure it is correct. Members can also add links to the website with the link administration menu button. This page is shown below in Figure 6.10.

Figure 6.10 Web Link Administration
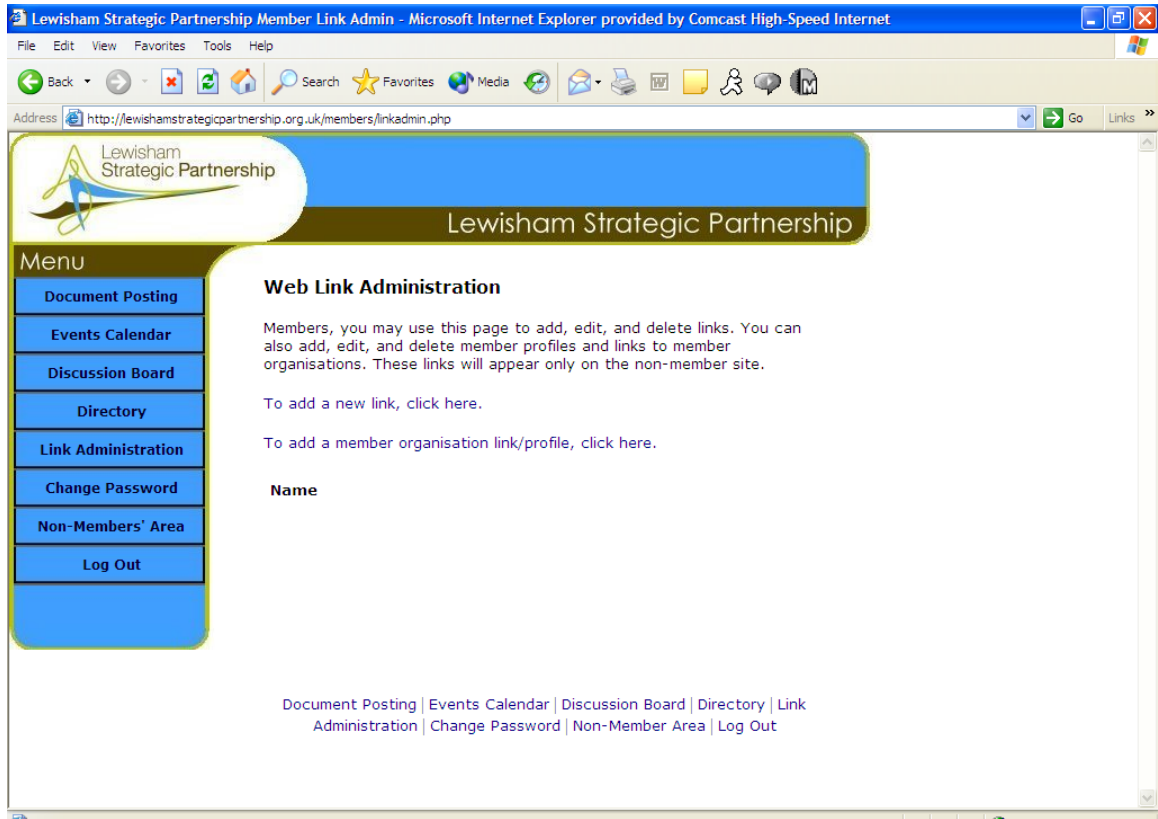
The LSP website is user friendly because the font is legible, the colouring is subtle, the design is simple, and the navigation is easy.   We felt it necessary to give the LSP a user guide for this website in case any questions aroused in the future. This guide can be found in Appendix P.

6.2 Conclusions and Recommendations

From the analysis of the data and information collected, we have determined what features and content are necessary to have on the LSP website. We have also determined the expected effectiveness, potential limitations, and maintenance requirements of the website. The LSP knows that a website will not solve all the problems experienced by the members, but it will be effective in improving the communication within the organisation. It is also an effective way to make information about the LSP available to the public, which is an essential step in getting the people of Lewisham involved.

For the internal side of the website, we took into consideration all the features suggested by the board members and staff, as well as other features that are commonly used on other websites. A document repository that all LSP members and staff can access will solve many of the communication problems the LSP has been experiencing. Some of these problems are people not receiving important documents through e-mail and people not having any say in the document drafting process. An events calendar will improve communication by making it easy for everyone to know exactly when meetings and events are. Some LSP members were missing meetings because they were not informed that the meeting had been moved to a different date.

Many LSP members interviewed said they most often communicate with other LSP members through telephone, but only with a select few. A list of all the LSP members' contact information will aid in communication among them by making it easy to call or e-mail any member. A discussion board where the LSP staff and board members can post their daily events, news, or business concerns will also improve internal communication by providing another medium for direct communication. With

the incorporation of these identified features, a website will be largely effective in improving communication within the LSP.

The information gained from both the interviews and surveys assisted us in identifying important features and content for the external side of the website. We determined that general information about the LSP, its goals and objectives, and the mission statement are all important to have on the website. This is so people who visit the site can learn more about the LSP. A section that describes the LSP members and the organisations they represent will let people know who is involved. A list of current and proposed projects will show what the LSP is doing for the community, which was a common survey response for expected content. A section including upcoming events and how someone can become involved will make it easier and more encouraging for people to participate. Finally, a section with links to partner organisation websites or other important places will make it easy for people visiting the site to learn more about what is happening in their community and with those organisations. From information gathered from our surveys, discussed in the results and analysis chapters, and from the information provided to us by Regensys, we can conclude with confidence that an LSP website will be viewed by the community.

Since 12% of the people we surveyed do not use the internet and 50% of the people in Lewisham do not have internet access at home, the LSP should have alternative means of allowing those people access to the same information that is provided on the website. Other community groups we encountered use open forums, mailings, and newsletters to reach the public. Also, in our surveying we found that many people have found out about community development organisations through their workplace, their

children's schools, community action groups, and friends and family. We suggest that the LSP consider mailing newsletters and printing leaflets to leave at workplaces and schools as a part of their public outreach strategy.

To ensure up to date information on the LSP website, there needs to be a person who can spend no more than 5 hours per week updating the events calendar, adding news events, and making any changes to existing information, such as a change in contact information. The website is designed so that the LSP can use it and keep all the information current without hiring a programmer. However, if the LSP wishes to create additional portions and features of the website they will need to contract a web-developer to do so.

Also, it is important that the LSP advertise this site. The address of the site should be included on all print material, surveys, etc. that are sent out to the public. The address should also be announced at board meetings and other LSP events. Finally, the LSP should make an effort to have related websites link to their site. The LSP can then link their site back to those sites. Additionally, it would be a good idea for the LSP Support Team to be aggressive in getting the board members to populate the site. We believe that if the board members put in the effort to use the site, the website will be a success. Through analysis of data collected by surveying and interviewing, we have designed a website that will be effective in improving communication within the LSP and externally with the public.

Works Cited

And Thou Shalt Honor: Community Outreach Action Guide. (2003). Information
retrieved from the World Wide Web on 11-17-03,
http://www.thoushalthonor.org/outreach/actionguide.pdf

Carroll, Barry J., Conant, Ralph W. Easton, Thomas A. (Eds). (1987) *Private Means
Public Ends, Private Business in Social Service Delivery*. New York: Praeger.

Lewisham Community Network. (2003). Information retrieved from the World Wide
Web on 11-17-03, http://www.lewishamcommunitynetwork.org.uk

Lewisham Strategic Partnership. (2003). Information retrieved from the World Wide
Web on 11-17-03, http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/StrategicPartnership/index.asp

London Government. (2003). Information retrieved from the World Wide Web on
11-17-03, (http://www.go
london.gov.uk/geographic_working/thames_gateway/boroughs/lewisham.asp

Regenesys Ltd. (2003). Information retrieved from the World Wide Web on 11-17-03,
http://www.regenesys.co.uk

Regional Environmental Council. (2003). Information retrieved from the World Wide
Web on 11-17-03, http://www.recworcester.org

Rosenbloom, R.S., Marris, R. (Eds). (1969). *Social Innovation in the City: New
Enterprises for Community Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University
Press.

Smart Growth Online. (2003). Information retrieved from the World Wide Web on
11-17-03, http://www.smartgrowth.org/dfault.asp

United Way of Massachusetts. (2003). Information retrieved from the World Wide Web
on 11-18-03, http://www.unitedwaycm.com/index.html

U.S. Census Bureau (2001). Information retrieved from World Wide Web on 12-8-03,
http://www.census.gov/

What use is the Internet to mission-based organisations? (2003). Information retrieved
from the World Wide Web on 11-17-03, http://www.coyotecom.com/online.html

Appendix A: Mission and Background of Sponsoring Agency

The Lewisham Strategic Partnership (LSP) was created two years ago when the United Kingdom started its Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, which is a plan to improve certain areas of Lewisham. Downham, Bellingham, Evelyn, and Grinling Gibbons have been identified as areas that need the most attention. The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy's aim is to assure that no one in Lewisham is "seriously disadvantaged by where they live." The LSP named delivering "economic prosperity, safe communities, high quality education, decent housing and better health" as specific goals of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. The Lewisham Strategic Partnership (LSP) is a new partnership bringing together the public, private, and voluntary/community sectors to develop and carry out these local services. They are funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund; this budget is of unknown size. They serve the public and the organisations that are represented in the LSP, and are supported by the United Kingdom Government. The LSP hopes to accomplish their goals of community improvement and development by 2010.

The Lewisham Strategic Partnership has also been responsible for developing the Lewisham Community Strategy, a ten year strategy which will identify local needs and set priorities for service delivery across the whole of the borough. The LSP has been developing this Community Strategy for two years and continues to improve and build upon it. As of right now the LSP has identified 11 priorities of the Community Strategy: 1) Make Lewisham a safer place and reduce crime. 2) Sustain and improve the health and well being of local people. 3) Raise educational attainment, skill levels and

employability. 4) Foster enterprise and business growth including the creative industries.
5) Develop cultural vitality by building on Lewisham's distinctive cultures and diversity.
6) Secure sustainable regeneration of Lewisham as a place - its housing. 7) Reduce
welfare dependency, promote independence and increase the life chances of vulnerable
members of the community. 8) Develop and engage local communities. 9) Help local
communities to support themselves, act independently and participate in providing
services and wider support to the borough. 10) Design diversity into local institutions and
design out discrimination, ensuring equity in service delivery. 11) Improve the
effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of local public services; optimise investment
in infrastructure; and improve the management of assets.

Community involvement has proved to be a large factor in the success of
community outreach programs like the LSP. The Government of the United Kingdom
has recognized this and has insisted that the community be involved in the development
and implementation of the strategies held by the LSP. To achieve this, the LSP must
communicate with the public effectively. This has led to the development of a Lewisham
Community Network which has its own set of goals aimed at getting the community
involved it its improvement. Things the Lewisham Community Network have set their
sites on accomplishing include: bringing the voluntary and community sector together to
share information, electing and supporting five representatives into the LSP, carrying out
research and consultation to identify local communities' needs, supporting the
development of the Community Strategy and the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy,
managing the Community Empowerment Fund – Government funding to support

voluntary- and community-sector involvement in the LSP's work, doing outreach work to involve as many groups as possible.

The LSP has 20 board members who are representatives of different sector groups including local authority, community safety, business sector, higher education, etc. These members hold their positions for 12 months and then can be re-appointed. The current 20 board members and their respective organisations are:

Steve Bullock	Mayor for Lewisham (Chair)
Ade Aderibigbe	Action for Leadership Community Development Trust
Bob Annibale	Citibank
Leigh Burgess	Community Sector - Downham
Paul Butler	Community Sector - Bellingham
Malcolm Cleroux	Lewisham Mental Health Foundation
Cllr. Katy Donnelly	London Borough of Lewisham
Yvonne Folkes	London East Learning & Skills Council
Asquith Gibbes	Lewisham PCCG
Bala Gnanapragasam	Lewisham Hospital Trust
Ray Hall	Lewisham Chamber of Commerce
Derek Hilyer	Goldsmith College
Cllr. Mike Holder	London Borough of Lewisham
Brian Lymbery	Lewisham Primary Care Trust
Des Malone	Community Sector - Deptford + New Cross
Chris Melville	Hezagon Housing Association Ltd
Cllr. Gavin Moore	London Borough of Lewisham
Edward Ogunmuyiwa	Lewisham Voluntary Sector Training Network
Lynda Russell	Jobcentre Plus
Ruth Silver	Lewisham College
Supt. Archie Torrance	Metropolitan Police

These representatives theoretically strive to involve their organisations in the goals of the LSP and bring the community and neighbourhood renewal strategies into practice through their organisations.

Appendix B: What is an IQP

Worcester Polytechnic Institute's (WPI) Interactive Qualifying Project (IQP), much like WPI's Major Qualifying Project (MQP), is designed to prepare its students for the professional world. The intentions of both are that such project work will give its students a major advantage over students from other colleges when the transition from education to the working world is made. The MQP, however, lies solely in the student's major field of study and emphasizes technical expertise, whereas the IQP may not necessarily be in a student's major. Rather, the IQP asks the student to understand and use the concepts and methods of the social sciences.

This focus on the social sciences is important because it forces the student to look beyond merely becoming skilled in a field of engineering. Through the IQP, a student should begin to see how his or her career will affect not just himself or herself, but the larger society that he or she is a part of. The IQP provides a unique, and valuable, opportunity to elevate education beyond becoming a technical expert. WPI's graduates should be not only technically proficient, but also conscious of how they can use their skill sets to affect the world around them.

Therefore, an IQP project itself should try to explore some social issue, especially as it may relate to some aspect of science or technology. IQP's are flexible; students can complete an IQP on campus or they may go abroad, and an IQP may lie in the student's field of study or it may not. The outcome of each IQP will be unique and the objectives of individual projects will be determined by the project sponsor, the faculty advisor or advisors, and the students themselves. The definition, then, of an IQP is broad, but it should be interdisciplinary, it should tackle some issue in society, and it should provide

the student with a connection between his or her education and the society in which he or she exists in.

This project fits the above description well. The Lewisham Strategic Partnership is a cross-sector outreach program with representatives from the public, private, and community/voluntary sectors. Each representative of each sector is therefore already impacting his or her society in some way. So, this provides a great opportunity for us to be able to see firsthand how all three sectors play a part in the world around them.

The social issue is how an outreach program can access and mobilize its population, thereby fostering a mutually beneficial relationship in which both sides can improve the community together. The technology to be explored is a website, along with other communication technologies, so this project relates internet technology to the social issue of reaching and getting feedback from a community. We can explore what websites are capable of accomplishing and what factors make them most effective. Exploring these factors will require conducting interviews and surveys and using other such social science techniques and concepts.

Completing this project will require us to not just understand the technology of websites and the internet, but also social science ideas and methods. The goal of the project will be to use technology to solve, or at least aid, a real-world social issue. Through doing this, the members of our group will understand how technology affects society, and vice versa, and how they may one day use the technology of their own fields to work on other social issues. Therefore, by the definition of an IQP above, this project is clearly a good candidate to be an Interactive Qualifying Project.

Appendix C: Regenesys Facilities List

See attached Excel file.

Appendix D: Interview Questions

- What is the organisation that you represent?

- What are the goals of your organisation?

- How often do you communicate with your organisation?

    o What methods of communication are used?

- Have you encountered any problems in communicating with the LSP?

- How is your organisation involved with the LSP?

- Why is your organisation involved with the LSP?

- How does your organisation benefit from being a part of the LSP?

- How often do you personally communicate with the LSP?

    o Are there other members of your organisation that communicate with the LSP?

    o For what reasons?

    o How do they communicate?

- Does your organisation have a website?

    o If so, what is the purpose of the website?

    o Is it effective? How?

- How effective do you think a website would be for the communication between your organisation, the LSP and other organisations?

- What are your expectations for the LSP website?

- What do you think of a public discussion board on the LSP website?

- Is there anyone you would recommend that is involved with other community organisations or your own that you feel we would benefit from interviewing?

- Do you have any further comments or questions?

Appendix E: Survey Questions

Please take a few moments to fill out this survey. Only the information you provide will be used. Do not put your name on this survey. You are ensured complete confidentiality.

1. How old are you?

    10-20   21-30   31-40   41-50   51-60   60+

2. How long have you lived, worked, or studied in the Borough of Lewisham?

3. What is your favourite thing about the borough?

4. Do you know of any community or voluntary organisations?

    Yes   No

5. Have you taken part in any programs or activities to improve the community?

    Yes   No

6. If yes, how did you hear about or become involved in the program or activity?

7. If you answered No to question 5, do you have any interest in participating in community improvement programs or activities?

    Yes   No

8. Do you use the internet?

    Yes   No

    a. If yes, how often do you use it? (please circle one)

    Every Day   A couple times a week   Once every couple weeks   Less than once a month

    b. What do you use it for?

9. What is your favourite website?

10. If you were to access a website for a community development, or voluntary, organisations, what information and features would you expect to find?

Thank you for taking the time to fill out our survey and helping us with our University Project.

Appendix F: Interview with Alan Horton

Interview with Alan Horton of the Lewisham Police Department
Date: January 19TH, 2004 12:00 Civic Suit 7, Town Hall, Lewisham
Interviewers: Tara Barden with general questions
Griffin Bryant with technical questions
Secretaries: Emily Pikor and Steven Tufo

The WPI-LSP team interviewed Alan Horton of the Lewisham Police Department who is part of the LSP Communication Task Force. The Communication Task Force is a subgroup of the LSP team. Alan Horton is not an actual board member of the LSP; he has substituted for Archie Torrance on a couple of occasions. Mr. Torrance is the official board member of the LSP who represents the Lewisham Police Department.

The Communication Task Force is the group who came up with the idea for the website as a possible solution for spreading information.

The goal of the Lewisham Police Department is to provide public safety and prevent and detect crime in the borough. The department is in charge of the borough of Lewisham but also has to keep in contact with the Central Police Department of Greater London. The LPD communicates on a daily basis with the Central Police Department and communicates many times a day within the local department. The methods they use to communicate internally are through email, which is being used more frequently, but its effectiveness is still in question. Mr. Horton can send out an email to the 600 officers in the force, but he is not confident that they opened the emails, understood them or taken any action on them. The department also uses meetings to communicate to their officers along with certain policies and procedures that everyone must adhere to. They also use

face to face communication but of course not everyone is in the same place at the same time. The police force has 4 separate locations throughout the borough.

Mr. Horton has personally not experienced any problems with communicating to the LSP. He usually sends information to Maarten Schram to have forwarded out to the rest of the board members, although they only need to send information to the entire board maybe twice a month. They communicate more regularly with individual board members on specific projects. Archie Torrance and Annett Wightman also communicate with the LSP board members. Mrs. Wightman has also substituted on the board for Mr. Torrance. They communicate with the LSP for reasons such as the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy by either phone, email or face to face.

The LPD does have a website that is not very developed. It has just office hours of the stations, their locations and phone numbers. A member of the staff is working on further developing the website to include more information. There is an internal section of the website only accessible to the staff concerning information relating to Lewisham, finance etc.

Alan Horton would like to see that the LSP has its own website that clearly shows it is a separate organisation and the public should communicate and deal with it separately, not with each of the separate board members.

What should be on the website according to Mr. Horton is information about the LSP, its objectives, mission, the members that are a part of it and what bodies they represent. He would like to see links to each of these separate organisations' websites. A separate page for document posting allowed for viewing by the public, but only posted by the board members. A feedback page might be a possibility, but it might be a nightmare

to deal with people who disagree with what the LSP is doing. Someone would need to delegate and filter the site so that nothing offensive or abusive is posted.

Mr. Horton was more than willing to provide us with further people to get in touch with that could help us further in understanding the people of Lewisham and what should be included in the website. He suggested the woman who is currently working on updating their local website, and the other board members can probably get us in touch with community leaders and government organisations and also the person who set up the LSP and why they wanted it.

Some other comments and suggestions in general to our group were that the website is about giving information to the people. We should think about the possible language barrier, that English is not the only language spoken in the borough. We might want to take into consideration having important information in different languages, not necessarily the whole page. And also, the more information we put on this website the more difficult it will be to maintain. He would like to see something clear that sets the organisation as a body, what it's doing, and an agenda for the future and its constituents; something catchy but not overwhelming.

Appendix G: Interview with Lewisham Community Network Representatives

Interview with Matthew Scott, Brian Wagenbach and John Bovenizer of the Lewisham Community Network.
January 23, 2004 11:00AM
Chairs: Emily and Steve
Secretaries: Tara and Griffin

The meeting began with introduction; Steve let the Community Network representatives know a little about our project and why we are working for the LSP. The Lewisham Community Network is an umbrella organisation that has over 400 members. They are responsible for all community organisation groups and payroll for some of these community groups. The Network is also responsible for the Neighbourhood Renewal Agenda and making sure people are aware of it and understand what it is. If someone wanted to set up a new organisation this is the group he would go to.

When asked what type of communication methods the organisation uses currently to communicate they mentioned newsletters, mailings, telephone, website and personal networking. Networking is one of the biggest ways the group gets their organisation know. They also mentioned that engaging the public is one of their main issues due to the fact that the people who usually come to open forums and open meetings are members of their organisation or are members of other organisations. They don't get many people just walking in to find out what is going on which is what they are trying to address that this year.   They said that it might be tough to get a lot of people to fill out surveys because people feel all surveyed out. They said that any assistance directed back to them to get the community involved would be great. They told us that if we find a way

to communicate better with the public to let them know. We received a lot of information from this group on what to put on the website rather than information on how to engage the people of Lewisham.

The Community Network is directly related to the LSP because it elects 25% of the board members into the LSP. They represent the voluntary sector on the LSP board, so the Community Network has a big influence on the LSP and vice versus.

The Community Network as a whole usually communicates with the LSP on a monthly basis, and individually about once a week or so. But there are some members that they don't communicate with the LSP at all. They feel that the members of the LSP don't really have a relationship with each other therefore the communication isn't as good as it should be. They really don't know each other well enough. This part of internal communication is one of the areas they feel the LSP lacks.

The community network has a website but it definitely is not kept up to date like it should be. They use the website to reach out to the public but it was never largely launched. They have a discussion board but the public's suggestions do not often get taken into consideration. The interviewees said that the technical coordinator doesn't listen to any suggestion to better the site. This suggests they are also having some internal communication problems.

So when we talked about things the Community Network would like to see on a website Matthew suggested the four main things that the LSP is about. These include the Renewal Strategy, Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, Public Sector Agreement and Bending Mainstream Funding. The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy is aimed at eliminating poverty. The Public Agreement deals with the government and council and

the Bending Mainstream Funding looks at public spending and public services, like gross income and where all the money is going. Matthew also suggested an events calendar for meetings of all different organisations. There is a big issue between the government and the public because the public thinks that the government is trying to tell them how to live their life. When in actuality the government is trying to let the people know how to improve their lives and it is up to them to take charge and make a change. The Community Network mentioned community empowerment as something to consider for the website. Since the public doesn't know what the LSP is they suggested having person profiles on the website so the public can feel comfortable with the organisation. There are over a 100 strategies in the borough and it was suggested maybe having a list of them on the website. John also suggested that we list the projects going on and who is running them and funding them. He said that we should concentrate on who has been funded and what they're doing and how it links with the community strategy.

We also asked their opinions on a public discussion board on the LSP website. Brain really thinks that this would be a great idea for both external and internal use to introduce a communication flow. The main job of the LSP is to communicate with the people and to let them know what is going on. There may be too many public requests to respond to, but the public's voices need to be heard. Both the public and the LSP need to understand each other. It was suggested that the communication task group could work on keeping the discussion board up.

We ended the meeting with John letting us know that he would give us some contacts that he feels we should talk to. We also found out about a couple of meetings

that are taking place so we can get a better feel for the community as a whole. We are

going to go to an open forum on Monday with Brian from 12-2.

Appendix H: Interview with Maarten Schram and Lisa Bandari

Interview with Maarten Schram and Lisa Bandari employed by the LSP
Wednesday January 28, 2004. 10:00 am.
Lewisham Town Hall

Maarten Schram and Lisa Bandari are both employed by the LSP and therefore only represent the LSP. Lisa and Maarten communicate with the LSP on a daily basis through e-mail as much as possible, telephone, fax, and by sending out hard copies. We also wanted to find out if there are problems that have occurred when communicating within the LSP. Mr. Schram replied, "Yes, some people don't read e-mail. There are lots of attachments and therefore they don't arrive because people's mailboxes are too full. There was also a problem with e-mail not being sent."

Since we already know that the LSP doesn't have a website we went on to question about contents and effectiveness of an LSP website. Ms. Bandari said that an internal website would be effective because "members can find contact info and documents. People would feel like information is more out in the open. Since some people don't get attachments because hotmail accounts are too full, a website can hold these larger documents so everyone can receive them."

The features that should be put on the website were agreed both by Mr. Schram and Ms. Bandari. These features included what the LSP does, mission statement, photos (if possible), profiles of particular organisations that interact with the LSP and the people involved,   board papers open to public, like the board meetings, current events, links to website to inform people about funding, link to fill out the LSP survey, information about meetings, times, and contact info. A system for adding meeting data and

documents, a way to track hits and where they are coming from were some more features that were suggested.

A public discussion board has been a key issue on whether or not to add it to the site. Mr. Schram said "if a moderator was present, ok, but who will be that moderator? For feedback, people could contact the LSP directly. It might take too much time to have someone moderate it so feedback should just be a link to my email."

At this meeting we also gave the LSP a list of things we needed from them to go on the website. Since they are the head of the partnership they have all the documents needed and other things. Such as the logo, mission statement and member's profiles.

Appendix I: Interview with Des Malone

Interview with Mr. Des Malone, Deputy Chair of Deptford Green School
Date: January 29th, 2004. 9:00 am, Deptford Green School.
Interviewees: Steven Tufo and Griffin Bryant
Secretaries: Emily Pikor and Tara Barden

Mr. Malone was elected as a vice chair of LSP, nominated him back to New Cross Gate regeneration board in Britain.   There is no official education representative on the LSP, but since Mr. Malone works in the education system in Lewisham, he speaks more strongly for educational funding. He was elected as a community and voluntary representative for the Deptford community Forum; an organisation with about 400 members. There are 400 voluntary and community sector groups around New Cross or New Cross Gate. Mr. Malone was elected by this group. These groups work with the elderly and refugees for example. Central government money was spread to local communities to deal with that funding, but it was deemed inefficient. The government then tried to target money into smaller areas, the ones that are most deprived. Because of this, it has been most focused on Deptford and New Cross. The NDC (New Deal for Communities Board) has L5 million to spend on 2,500 houses.

The Deptford Community Forum has bimonthly meetings of full forum. The NDC has a meeting twice a week. He also meets with the Chair's Education Theme Group once every six weeks. And he also meets with the Chair's Appraisal Panel to discuss funding for groups who have projects/programs that need money for them. These meetings are the main means of communication for the organisations he is involved with.

The LSP is a table people (board members), the group began to gather two years ago and the learning together was painful process for first year. Each organisation would

communicate with the people around the partnership since most of the board members don't know much about the police department or health services. Each partner has tried to educate the rest about their group/problems. They are now finally at a place where they can communicate with proper vocabulary and understand each other. The biggest employer is the Lewisham Council and then the University Hospital. During the meetings officers have to talk with other officers but it needs to be kept in order. "If people in LSP table don't communicate well with each other how are they going to communicate to the people? ICT communication is absolutely key and integral to involving the community."

The Deptford Green School does have a website which Mr. Malone is very pleased with. It is interactive and simple to use. He hopes that the LSP website will meet the same expectations as the Deptford Green site. The LSP site should be, "expandable and accessible. It needs to be easy to update etc. It has to be visually good. It also needs to be accurate. It should cater to people with low literacy levels; English is not necessarily their first language. It should have pointers and help lines, if you can't find this - go here." The site has to be, "owned and identified with the LSP, but has to engage with the community." It needs consider the language barrier and the clicking should be accessible.

When asked about a public discussion board Mr. Malone responded, "I would like to see one in the future. Allow the space to make it open to people for giving feedback." An internal discussion board for the LSP board members he felt was a good idea. Mr. Malone's final comments in the interview were, "You don't necessarily have to get consensus on website. I'd rather have something a bit adventurous, a bit daring –

innovation and excitement. We don't want a Mini Mouse solution that that won't make a ripple in the water."

Appendix J: Interview with Archie Torrance and Annette Wightman

Interview with Archie Torrance, Borough Commander of Lewisham and
Annette Wightman, Superintendent of the Lewisham Police Department
February 4, 2004 9:00AM Lewisham High Street Police Department

Since the LSP has only been around for 2 years Mr. Torrance still thinks it is too early to connect with other organisations. The LSP is in its early years and stages, "it is like a marriage, you have to work at it." They are looking at the management aspect for the LSP this year. "Continuity is helpful with having an organisation succeed". People don't get to know who runs what because people are moved around from post to post frequently.

Communication in the police department has already been established through Alan Horton. When asked how often do you communicate with board members: Mr. Torrance said "I communicate with them all the time because of the contacts that I have with them. The members know the board members really well, so he was able to contact them." Mr. Torrance said that these relationships "break the barriers." If they have problems they can contact the police to help them out. Mr. Torrance said "People that I don't have personal relationship I will either get my secretary to contact them, maybe through e-mail, or go through Annette Wightman and Alan Horton to see if they might know them."

When asked about the LSP website Mr. Torrance said "it will help the communication between members because it will be able to give everyone a background to what each member brings to the table. The website could do this instead of having to go through this at the meetings."

The meeting minutes that are posted on the web are going to have large regulations. Look through the metro police authority to see how this will affect the documents that are going to be posted.

We know that the Lewisham Police Department has a website because of the interview with Alan Horton. According to Mr. Torrance "it only has our address on it, so don't look at it." They are at the initial stages at the design of the website. They want to keep in simple. The website is to get a "window to the world" for the Lewisham community (Mr. Torrance).

We asked Ms. Whitman what she thinks should go on the LSP website. She replied with "the LSP website should be simple and actually you need to decide who is going to be their market audience. The public wants to know who the players are and who they represent. What will Mr. and Ms. Joe Public want to know about the LSP? How it affects them and what are their plans for the future. Get it snazzy and make it look attractive". Mr. Torrance said that the website should show "what is it there for and how will it influence them" when referring to the LSP.

We also asked Mr. Torrance and Ms. Wightman what they would like to see on the internal side of the website as well. Mr. Torrance answered this question with a "message board would be good and I really like the idea of document posting. The police department would like to be able to post their documents to receive feedback from the board members". Ms. Wightman said "we could post the documents instead of having to present it at the meetings". "A question and answer page would be better than a discussion board because if multiple people have the same questions it can be answered in with one response".

When asked how effective Ms. Wightman feels the website will be in reaching the public she replied, "Not everyone has the internet so it won't reach everyone. There is deprivation here and a lot of people will not have computers, but there are internet café if people want to look". Mr. Torrance replied to Ms. Wightman's response by saying that "there are renovation programs that might be bringing in more computers and IT access to the elderly and deprived areas. Don't assume that this is the best way to get out to the public because some people will never use the internet".

At the end of the interview we asked if they had any other suggestions and Mr. Torrance mentioned that the 10 priorities of the LSP should be on the website with something of what is happening in each of them. Therefore, the public and the members can see what is going on. The LSP isn't sharing the good work with the members and the public.

Appendix K: Interview with Cllr Katy Donnelly and Cllr Mike Holder

Interview with Katy Donnelly & Mike Holder of the Lewisham Council
Date: February 4th, 2004. 11:30 am, Lewisham Town Hall.
Interviewers: Steven Tufo and Griffin Bryant
Secretaries: Emily Pikor and Tara Barden

The WPI-LSP team interviewed Cllr. Katy Donnelly and Cllr. Mike Holder of the Lewisham Council. They are councillors that are board members on the LSP. Cllr. Donnelly works in child care and services while Cllr. Holder works in adult care and services. They hold positions on the board of the LSP because of core services they provide to the borough; education and health services.

The Lewisham Council provides an abundance of services to the community. There are a whole range of documents that cover each of the programs and strategies. The Best Value Performance Plan is an umbrella for a whole bunch of strategies. Some of these documents can be found on the Lewisham Council website. The council website is geared for anyone to go to for information. It also has an intranet portion, although it is not the most user-friendly. It's an on going process to make it more useable. There is not a set document management system, so it is always out of date and hard to find anything useful. Although the council has a separate internal section to their website, they more often use the telephone than email or the website to communicate on a daily basis.

When asked how often they personally communicate with the LSP or its board members, Mike responded "some of them I talk to every day, but some I don't talk to at all. The LSP is supposed to be an overreaching organisation for the borough, but it hasn't gotten together too well." Getting papers out has not been accessible; any partnership

documents are not regularly available. If they need to get contact information they would need to ring up Ms. Kirstie Haines. Although they probably would not want to get in touch with the board members that they do not normally contact. The memberships change so frequently that the contact information changes. It would be nice to have an up to date list of who is on it.

Cllr. Donnelly and Cllr. Holder are involved with the LSP board members that will most benefit their programs. There is an attempt to have bi-lateral communication to work on such things as child care and health. They communicate regularly with PCT, but not really with anyone else. Ms. Kirstie Haines is the central person for members to get in contact with other members. The information people want to send out has to be put through an order; it either goes to Mr. Maarten Scrham or Ms. Kirstie Haines, and then it gets sent out.

Cllr. Donnelly and Cllr. Holder do not have high expectations for the LSP website. Cllr. Donnelly said "I have my doubts. It would be useful internally; we work in an environment where we get stupid amounts of paper, when you just want to throw things out. So having a means of accessing something older, having the confidence in a system that'll provide it would be nice. But in terms of communicating to the members, I'd pick up the phone. People have so many emails that it's not effective anymore. There isn't a means of accessing web documents in a meeting, so we still need paper documents." Cllr. Holder felt a similar way. "There is still a need for papers in meetings. People are still interested in planning, it needs to be kept up to date or else nobody will use it. There's no use to a website if it's not hourly or at least every day." Cllr. Donnelly admitted, "I'm confused about what the point of having a Lewisham portal

website. I can see that organisations will be able to access it, but what is the ordinary person going to do with it? I feel there would be a very small minority that would be searching for the LSP." Cllr. Holder continued, "If you wanted to find about college courses or hospital services, you wouldn't look at the LSP website, you'd go to the website of the college or call the hospital. I'm yet to be convinced that the public needs to know about the LSP." Cllr. Donnelly elaborated more about the website; "It may be that the LSP will want a communication strategy to get the people back who were in the board that are no longer concerned with it. If they have a program that will get those people back and interested in what the LSP is doing. In terms of news about the area, it'd be repeating what's already out there. Will the LSP website be the one portal that let's people go everywhere from there? You've got community - voluntary sectors and business and public sectors on the board, it's hard to see who wouldn't be included in the Lewisham portal."

The LSP needs to be concerned with what type of information the people would be looking for. "I think there are things that'll make our lives a lot easier, but I don't think [the LSP website] would be my entry point. I think there are some things that people should have access to and some things they shouldn't. Thinking very clearly about information to the public, what questions would they be asking that they need to find information from – would the LSP provide it? Don't assume that they'd be looking for the LSP," (Cllr. Katy Donnelly, 2-4-04). The information on the LSP website needs to accommodate the types of questions that the people will be asking themselves if it wants to be effective. Cllr. Donnelly commented on the technology issue in Lewisham, "I think there's a legitimate reason for having [an LSP website] to access the documents

and information about it, but we need to recognise that at this point in time, websites

aren't the first call to nature, but for future generations it might."

Appendix L: Interview with Father Paul Butler

Interview with Father Paul Butler, LSP Board Member
Date: February 4th, 2004. 12:30 am, Lewisham Town Hall.
Interviewers: Griffin Bryant & Emily Pikor
Secretaries: Steven Tufo and Tara Barden

Father Paul represents Bellingham community in the LSP, but effectively both Bellingham and Downham because he occupies the shared seat for the two wards. Bellingham and Downham are two of the four poorest areas; the other two have another shared seat. He feels that his role in the LSP is a team role. He makes sure everything going on works, asks difficult questions, and shouts out about things that need attention. His key aim is to ensure that neighbourhood renewal is affecting the people that need is most. Father Paul is also involved in the neighbourhood management panel and Bellingham interagency forum.

One of the problems in communicating with the LSP that Father Paul described was that sometimes information is not shared that should be. Sometimes he has not been told about meetings that have taken place; the LSP must make sure that kind of information is put out. Also he would like to see more access to setting the agenda for the other board members. He feels this will create a feel of more democracy in the LSP. Transparency of information is good. Some people on the board are used to not sharing information. One thing Father Paul said was "People in power never share it lightly."

Father Paul has some suggestions for the LSP website. People need to know that it exists, all partners need to have links to it, and it has to look good in order to attract people. The majority of population has no idea of the LSP. People need to know about the decisions being made. It would be good if the people could contact the LSP with

ideas or concerns but it does not happen often as of right now. So a way for people to contact the officers of the LSP is key. Also more global information needs to be available.

The LSP doesn't have a clear identity for many people involved with it, especially those who joined halfway through or later. He thinks that these days, people need to get online. It is definitely a good idea; people use the internet more than anything to find things out. And although access to technology is not universal, it is becoming more and more common.

There should be a secure part for members and officers only, with a message board. But the website itself needs to be available to the public or the LSP will remain a mystery. Document posting on the internal site is a good idea, also access to the drafting of documents. Being able to see where things are at and make comments would be helpful. As far as a message board for the general public, Father Paul thought that a contact system would be better. Some control of access would be necessary, or some information being posted would not be good for community life.

Appendix M: Interview with Cllr. Gavin Moore

Interview with Cllr Gavin Moore, Deputy Mayor of Lewisham, LSP Board Member
Date: February 16th, 2004. 11:00 am, Lewisham Town Hall.
Interviewer: Emily Pikor
Secretaries: Tara Barden

The interview started off asking Cllr. Gavin Moore what were his responsibilities and duties as Deputy Mayor of Lewisham. Cllr. Moore replied that he reports to the Mayor and advises officers. Cllr. Moore is responsible for planning, transport, housing investment, consumer protection and economic development. Cllr. Moore's responsibilities within the council are the Council's constitution and performance management.

Cllr. Moore uses e-mail, face-to-face contact, mailings twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and the telephone to communicate within the Council. Cllr. Moore is also the leader of the majority Labour Group. The Labour Group meets once a month, which is a very formal meeting, and he has face-to-face communication with other Members in between those times.

The only problem Cllr. Moore has encountered with communicating with the LSP is getting a hold of some of the members via officers. Cllr. Moore goes through Kirstie Haines because she is here (Lewisham Town Hall) most of the time, if he needs to get a hold of another LSP member. But outside of the meetings (every 6 weeks) he doesn't usually communicate directly with other LSP members. The only LSP members he communicates with on a regular basis are the three other Council representatives on the LSP board due to the fact that he works with them.

When asked about the effectiveness of the LSP website Cllr. Moore did not think it will help so much with internal communication. He thinks that if the LSP has a launch which advertised the website it might reach out to the public. He also mentioned that the LSP should bear in mind that the public is used to going to the Council, police or hospital if service issues arise, and would therefore have limited use for an LSP site.

We started talking about the actual LSP website and wanted to find out what Cllr. Moore's ideas about features for the website. He suggested minutes, meeting times and places, contact information about the board members, links to other organisations, general information about the LSP, objectives of the LSP, all the LSP documents like NHR and Community Strategy, and what LSP funded projects are taking place.

Finally we asked Cllr. Moore if he had any comments or anything else to add and he did not have anything else to add.

Appendix N: Interview with Jean Supel

Interview with Jean Supel of The Worcester Smart Growth Forum.
A summary of the information received.
November 24 at 2:00pm, WPI Campus Center.
Tara Barden interviewed.
Emily Pikor recorded notes.

The Worcester Smart Growth Forum (WSGF) has been around for about 2 years. There are no sponsors and no headquarters for the organisation. The leaders are all volunteers. There are 15 active members, and 30 members are on the mailing list. 28 of these members use email to receive the newsletter, and 2 receive it by regular mail.

The organisation has not attempted to get in contact with the public as a whole, but selectively chooses potential members to participate. They research individuals in specific target areas that they would like to have actively involved in the organisation. They communicate with these people one on one, not through email or any other impersonal means. These target areas include environmental and business sponsors.

Problems encountered in communication lie within people bringing their own agendas, and are unwilling to discuss other topics. The group looses focus with these side-tracked agendas. Communication needs to be focused on the redefinition of the group – what it needs to do in terms of Smart Growth advocacy. The organisation is having a hard enough time communicating with the members themselves, much less trying to communicate with the general public.

The organisation has 2 committees, one for administration and one for education and projects. The administration takes care of recruiting new members, training and informing them of the goals of the organisation. The education and projects committee is

not fully functional yet because they are still in the process of training quite a few new members.

Jean felt that effectiveness of the organisation did not necessarily rely on whether the community was involved or not. It depends on what the purposes of the organisation are. If it is mainly focused on legislation, a smaller group would be able to come to decisions quickly and more easily than if 100 people were trying to decide on one thing.

When asked what advice she would give to a company that is trying to improve their internal and external communication, she said that internally a website is definitely a good idea; to be able to post information, have discussion boards etc. But externally a website might be too much to tackle, trying to spread the use of internet among all ages.

There were a lot of comments and ideas that Jean gave us to consider. She said that the closest parallel to the LSP's objective can be found with political participation; how voters educate themselves, write letters to senators etc. It will be up to the community to motivate themselves to want to learn about the LSP and contact them. She suggested that we find out information about the community such as, do people want to use the internet? Who uses it and for what reasons. And also to conduct a 2-prong survey that will compare the interests of the organisations versus the interests of the community.

Jean provided us with a few examples of organisations that perform community outreach services, such as the Lutheran and Catholic churches. She recommend we sit in on a Mayor's Community on Brownfields meeting to see first hand an example of sub-committees, how they are task oriented and types of sponsored projects to get people in

the organisation. As we wrapped up our interview, Jean said she would be happy to

provide us with any contact information we were looking for.

Appendix O: Survey Data

See attached CD

Appendix P: LSP Website User Manual

The web address of the LSP website is http://lewishamstrategicpartnership.org.uk.
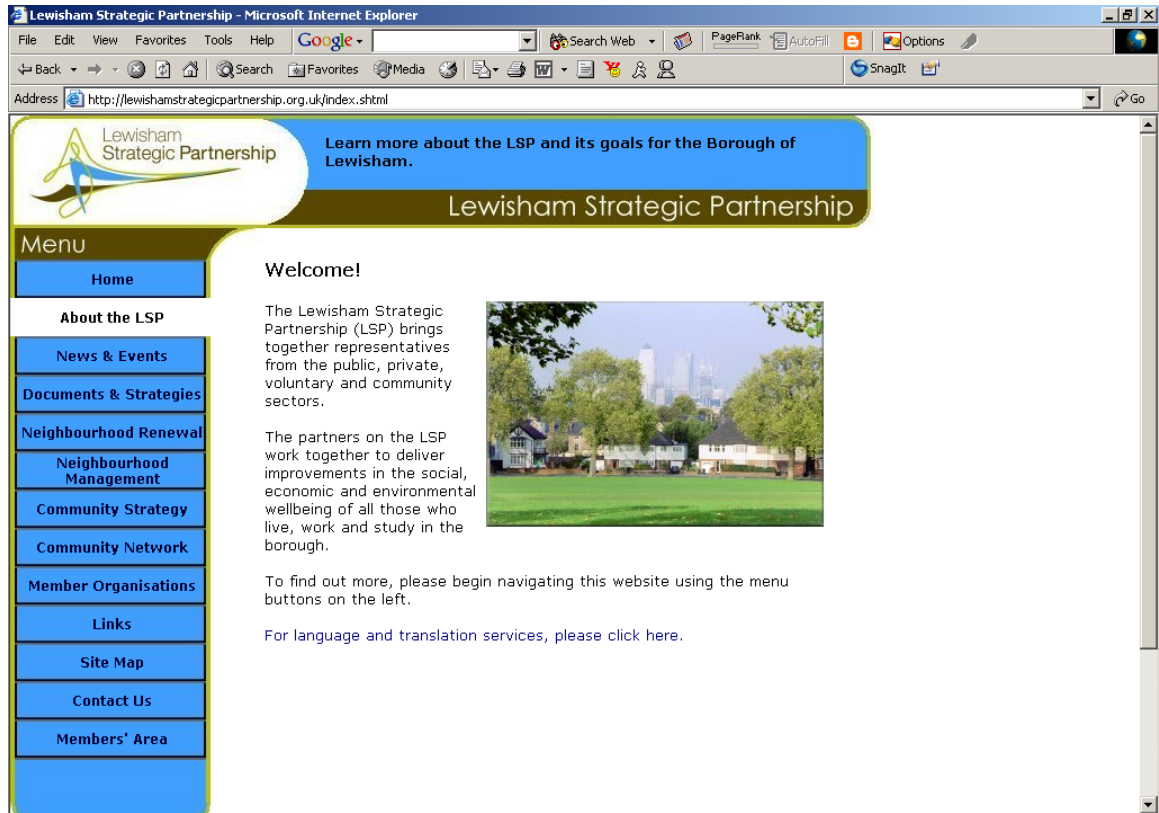
This is the front page, the first thing you will see when you come to the website. The navigation menu is on the left side. When you put your mouse pointer over the menu buttons they will become white and text will appear at the top of the screen explaining the link.

This is the about the LSP page with general information about the LSP.
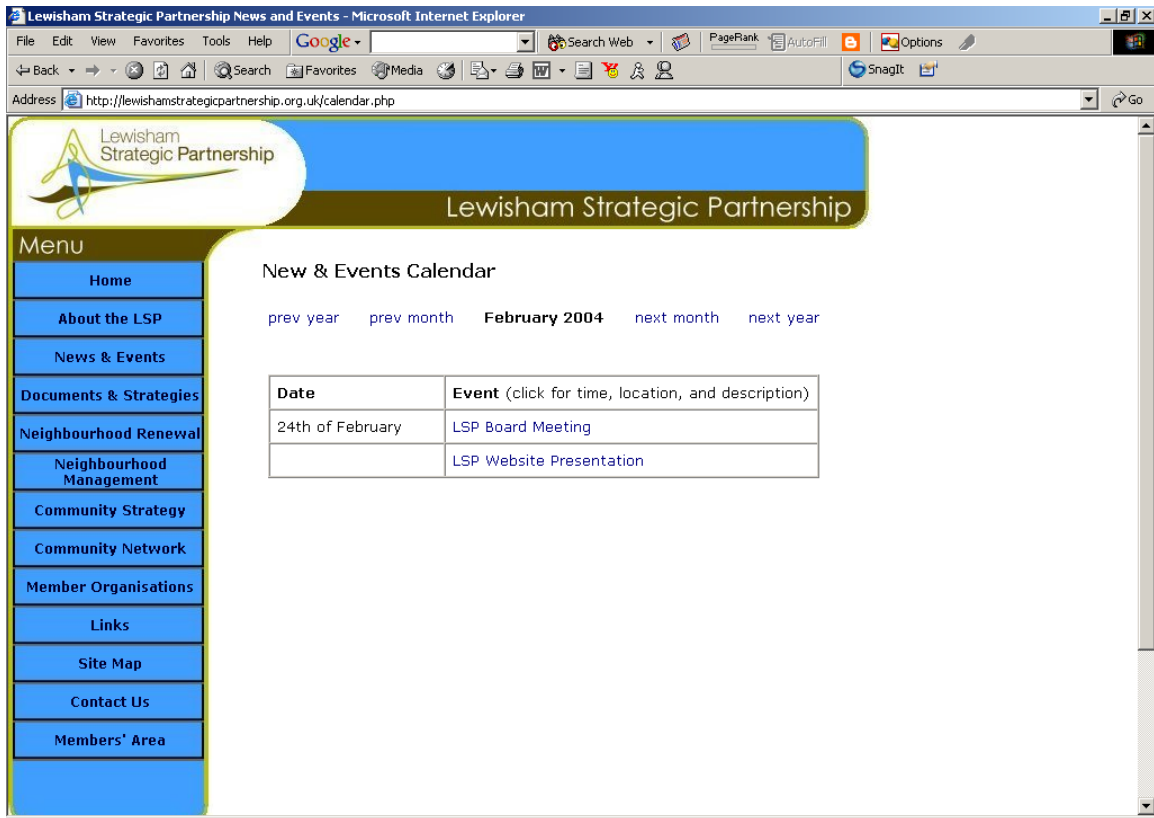
This is the events calendar which can be viewed by everyone who comes to the site. If you click next month, you will be able to see the events posted for next month.
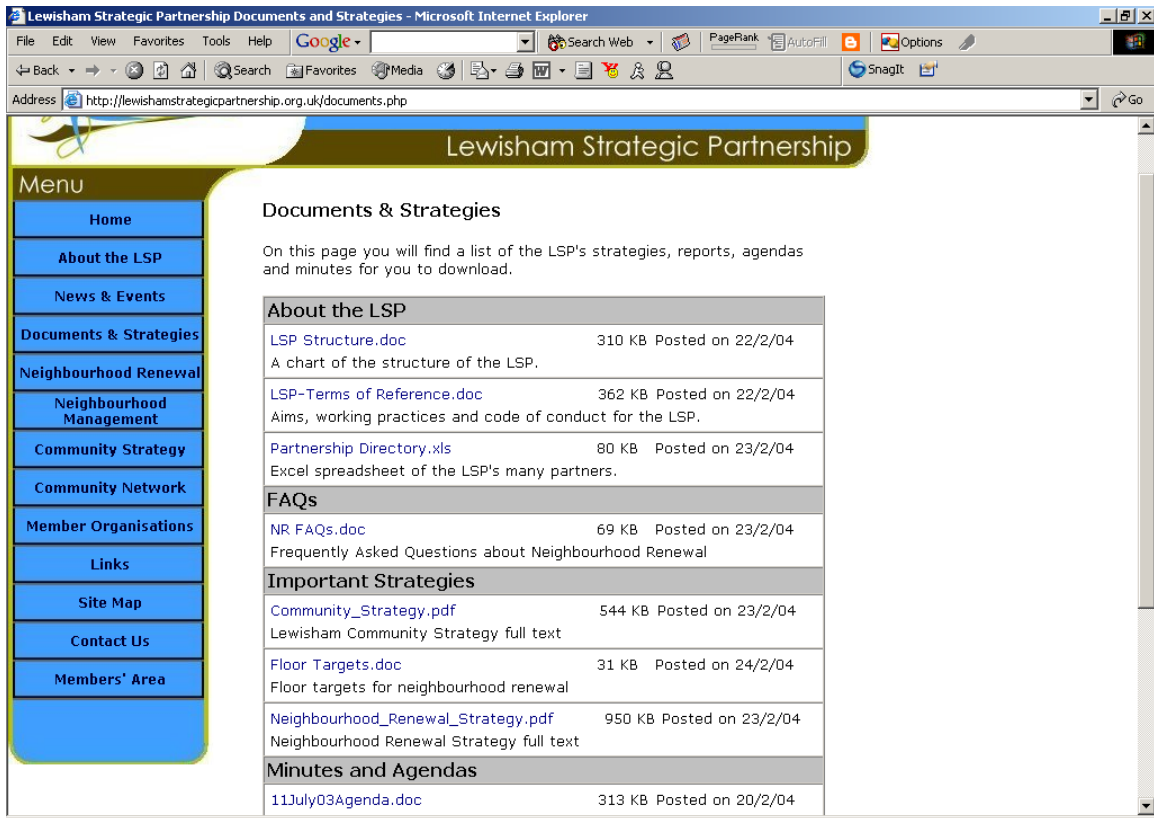
This is the documents and strategies area where all the documents that have been chosen to be available to everyone can be downloaded.

This is the neighbourhood renewal page with information about neighbourhood renewal in general and the Lewisham Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

This is the page with information about neighbourhood management.

This is the page with information about the Lewisham Community Strategy.

This is the page with information about the Lewisham Community Network.

This page has each LSP board member and a link to their organisations.
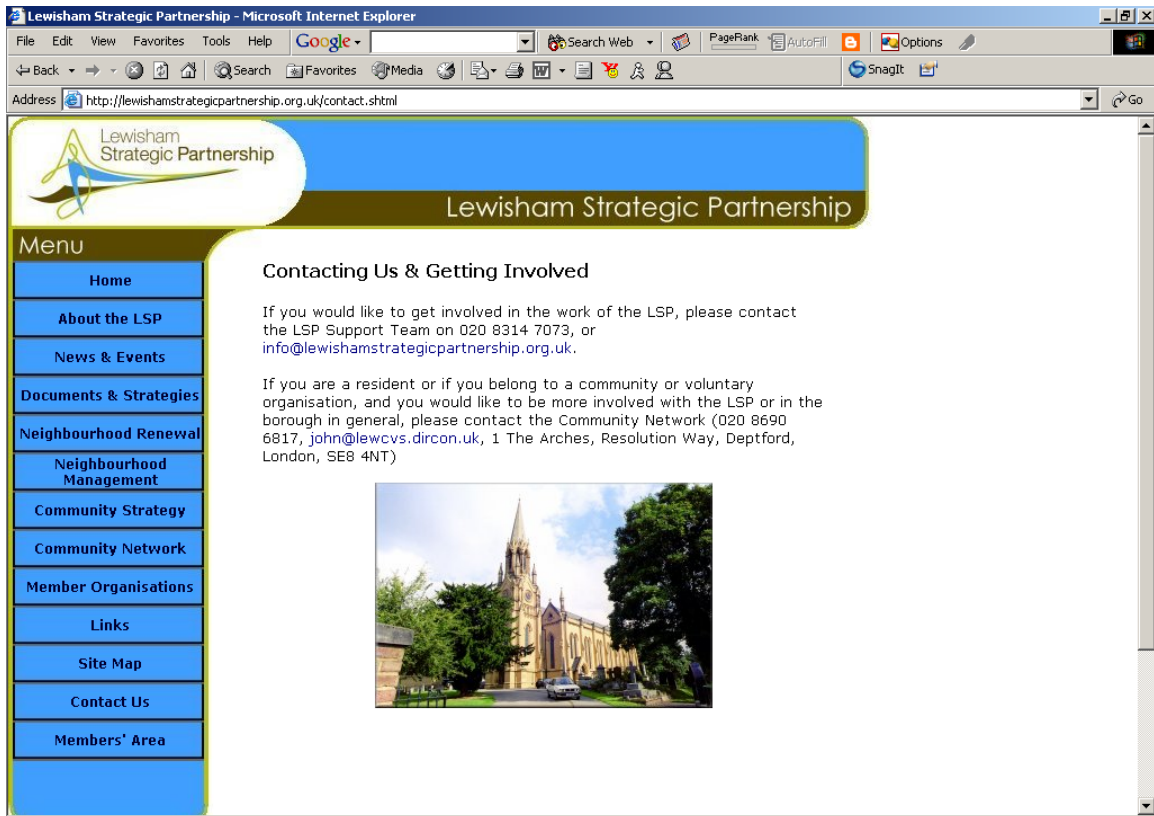
This is where people visiting the site can contact the LSP support team if they want to get involved.
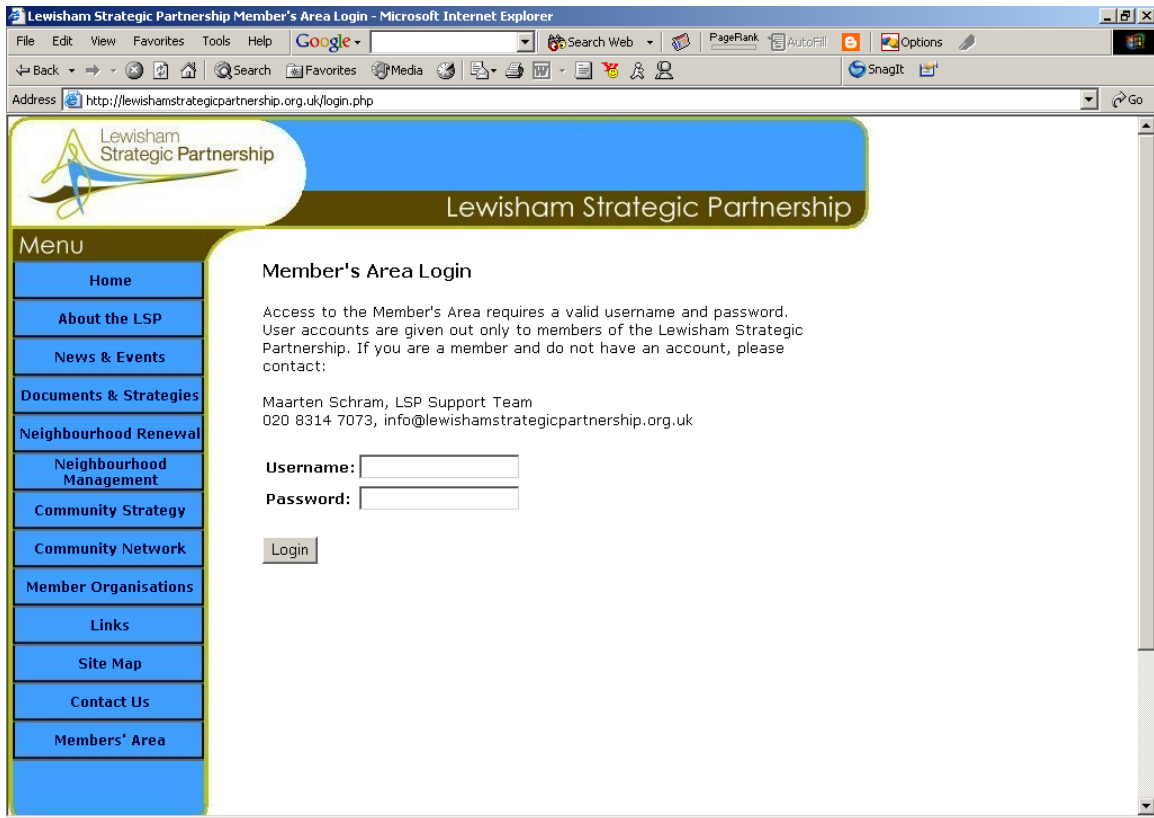
This is where LSP members can log in with their username and password to access the members' area of the site. If you need a password contact Maarten Schram to set one up.
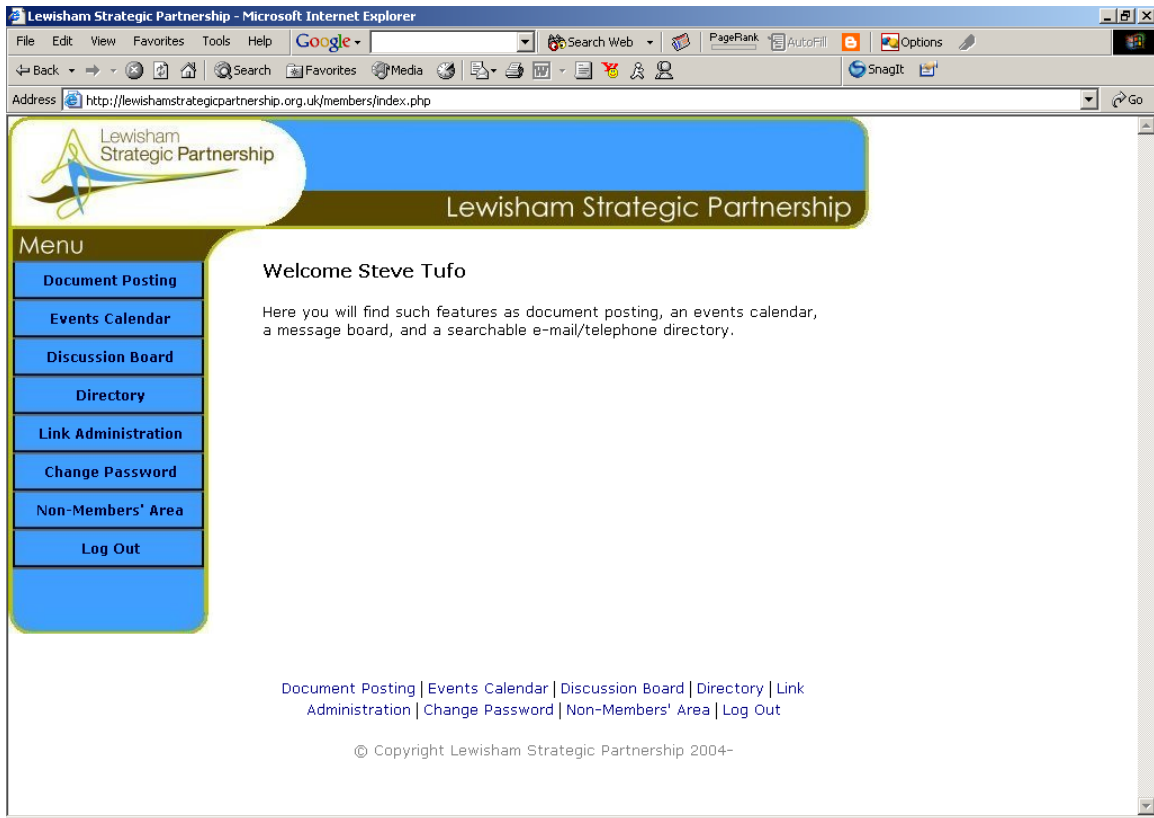
This is the main page for the members' site. The menu navigation is in the same place as the non-members area but the buttons are different.
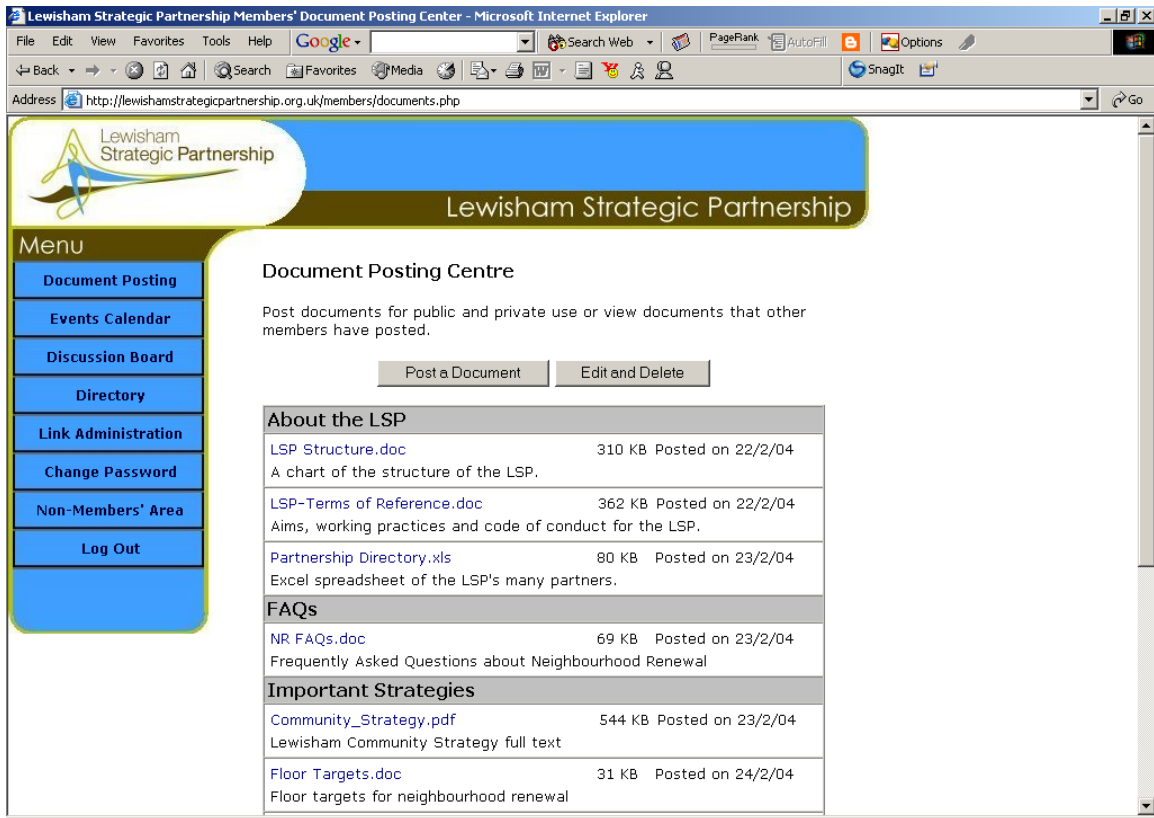
This is the document posting area where members can post a document by clicking the "post a document" button and modify documents they have posted. To download a document, click on its name in the list.

This is the same events calendar that is on the non-members side of the site, but here members can click on the link at the top to add r delete events from the calendar.
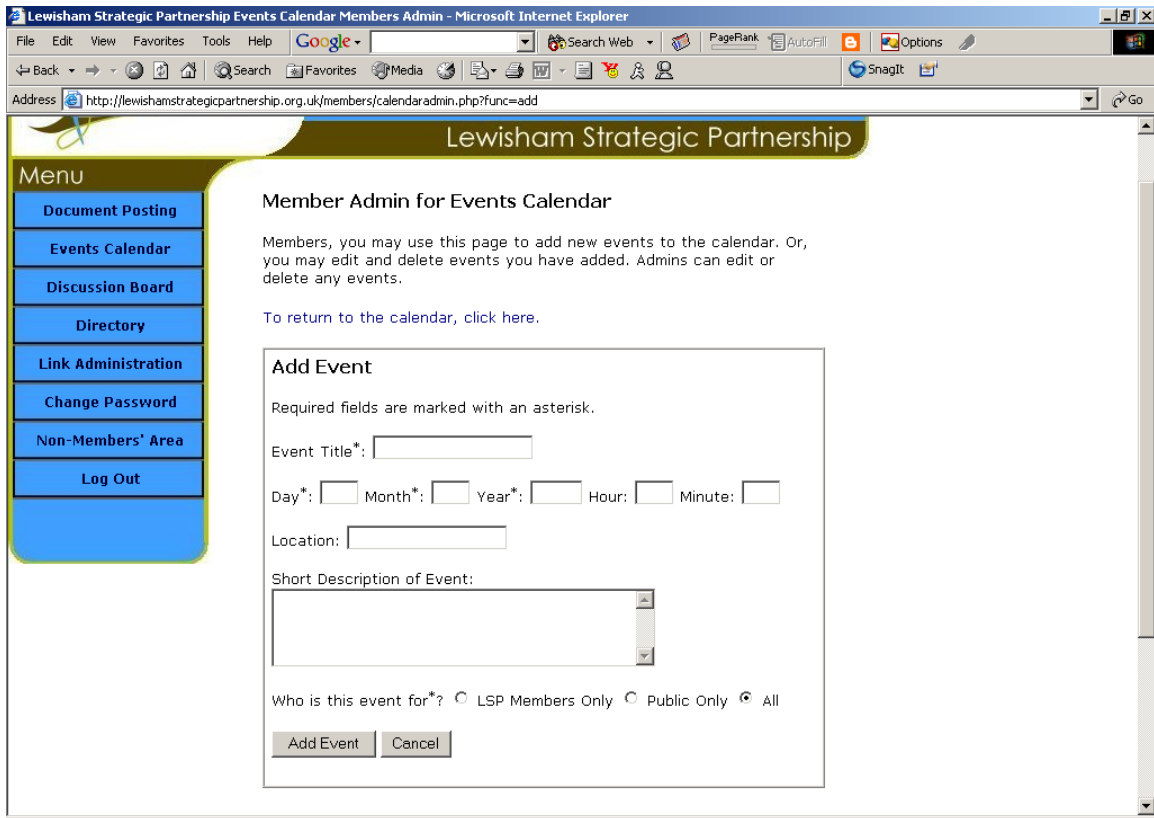
This is the form to add an event. Just add the appropriate information in the boxes, such as event title, location, and a description of the event. The added event will then appear on the calendar for all to view.
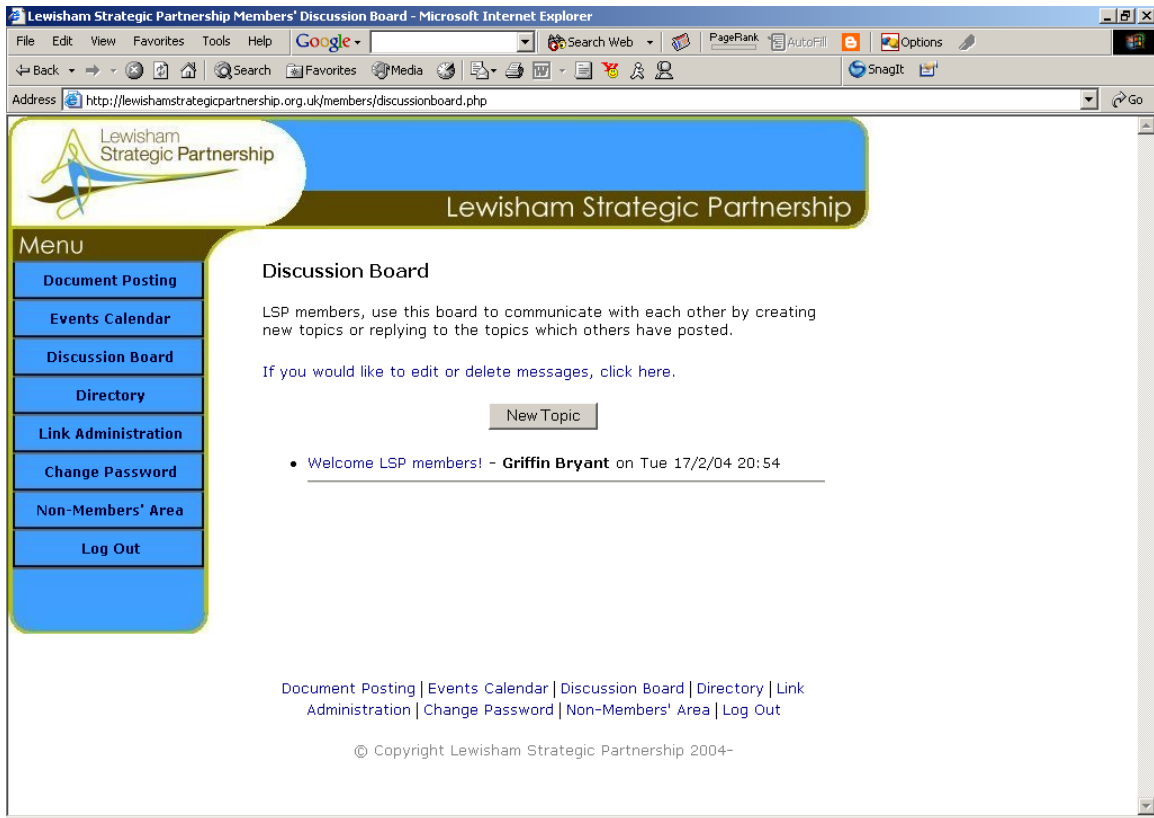
This is the discussion board where LSP members can view all the comments posted by other members by clicking on them. To post a new topic click the "new topic" button.
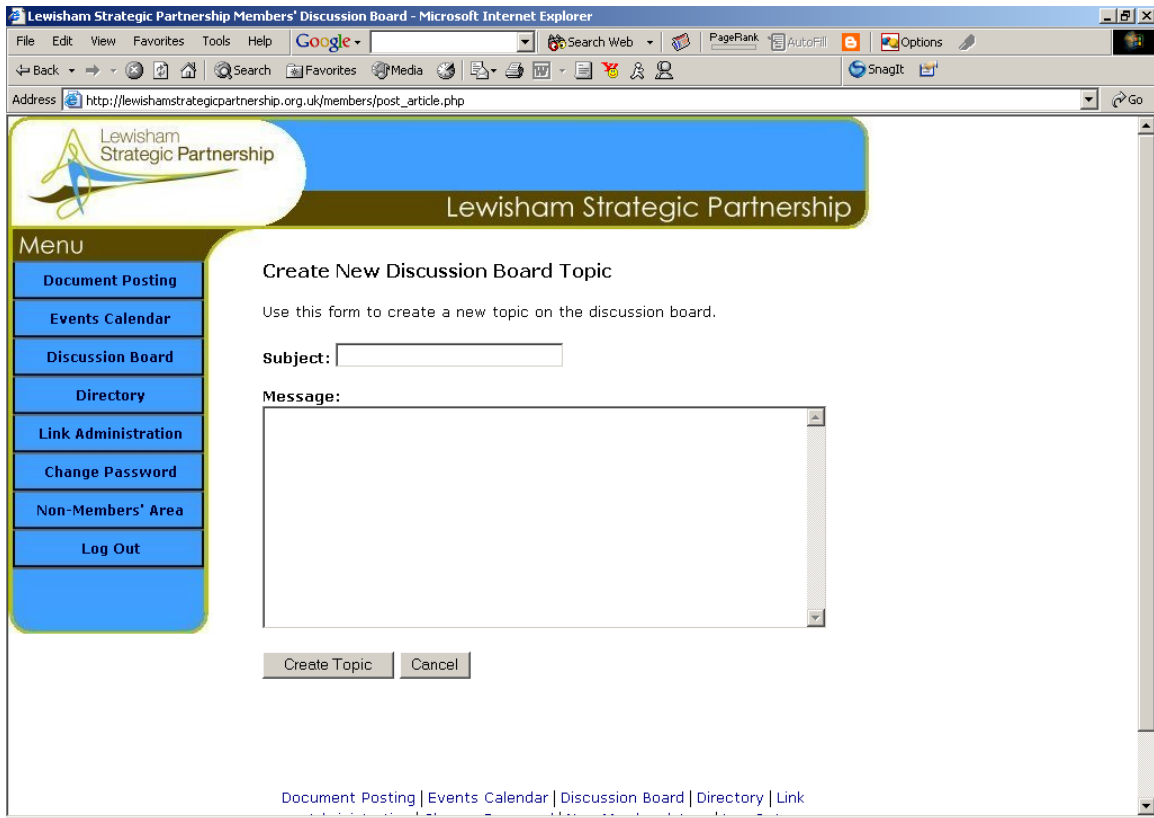
This is the page that appears when the new topic button is clicked. You can enter a subject and the text of your message and click "create topic" to add your message.
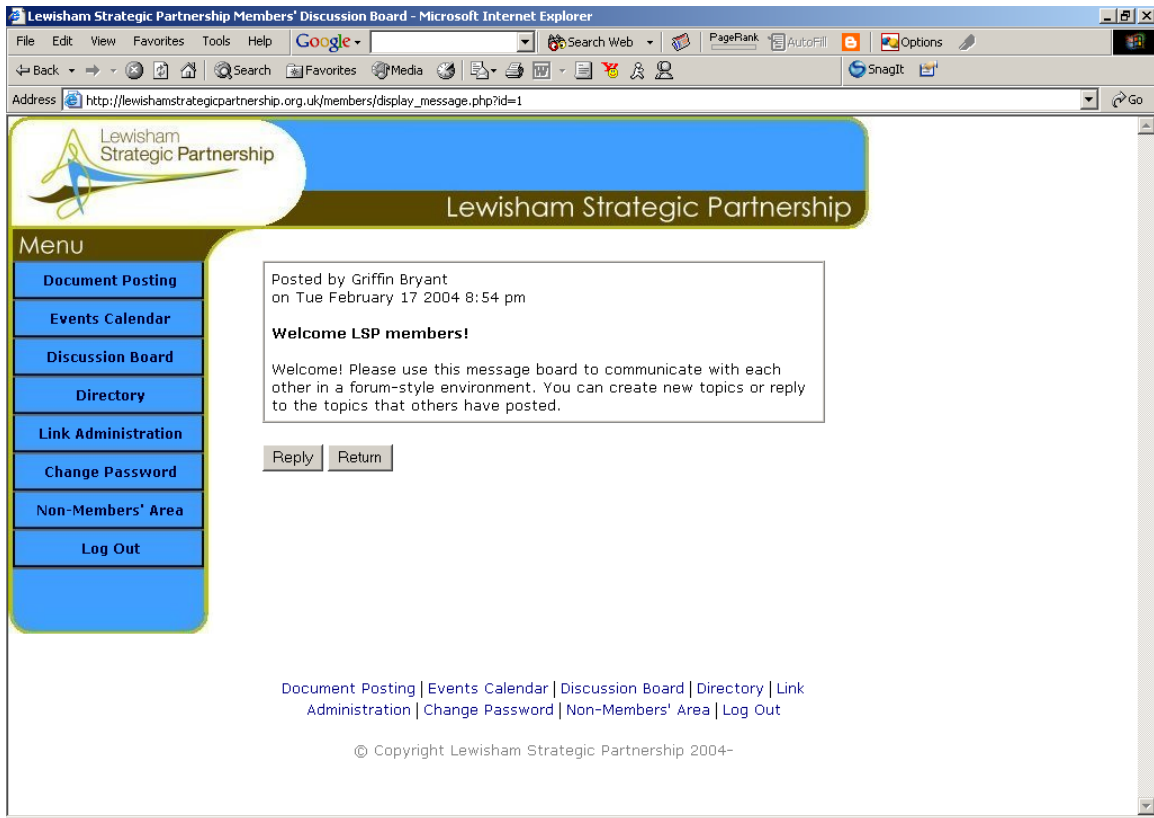
This is what you will see when you click on a message. Below the text of the message is the "reply" button which can be used to post another message in reply to this one.

This is the e-mail/telephone directory with contact information for all members. If you want to edit or add your contact information, click the link on the top. To e-mail a member, simply click on their name.
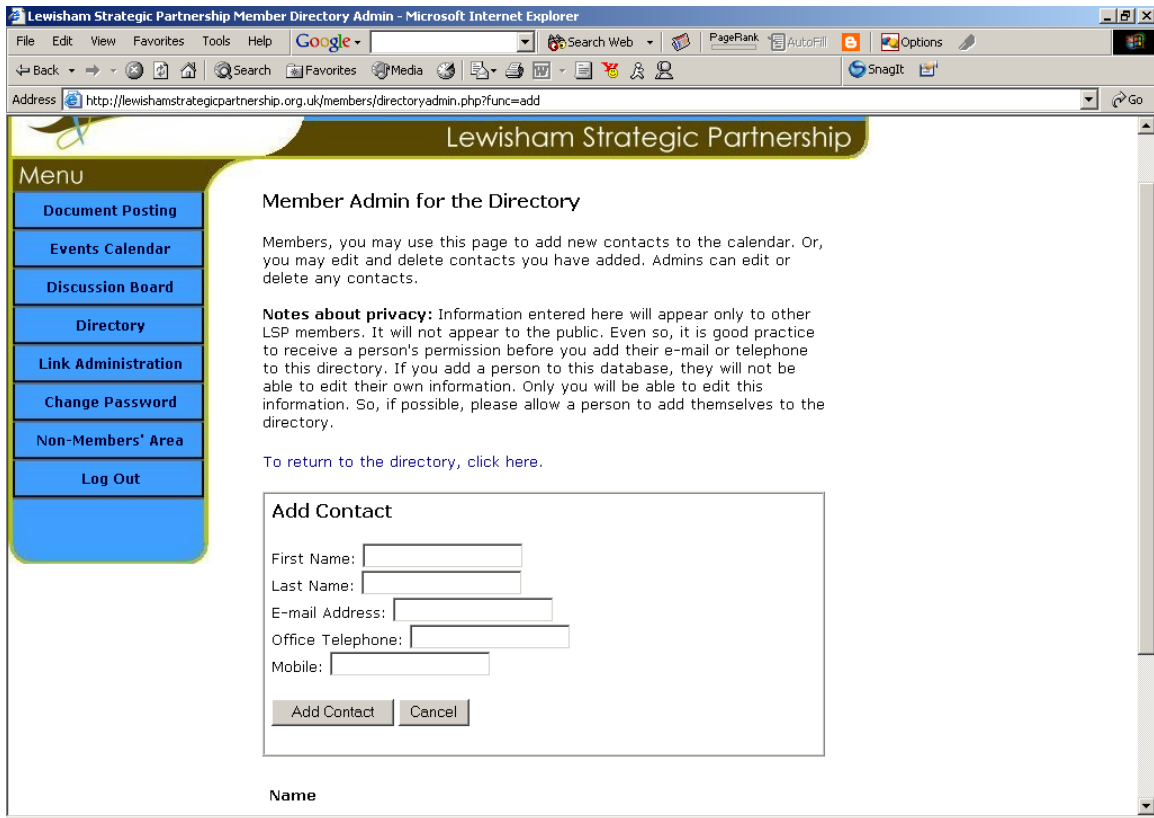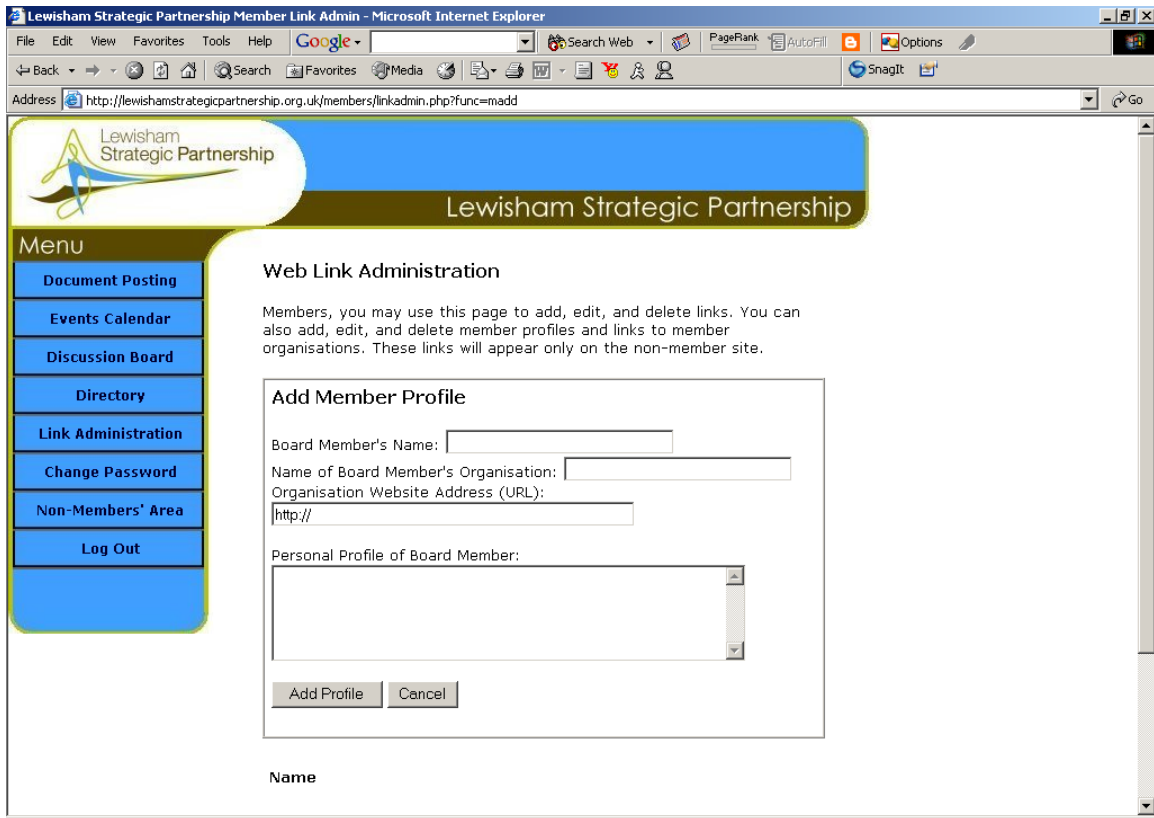
This is the form to add contact information. Fill your contact information into the appropriate text box.
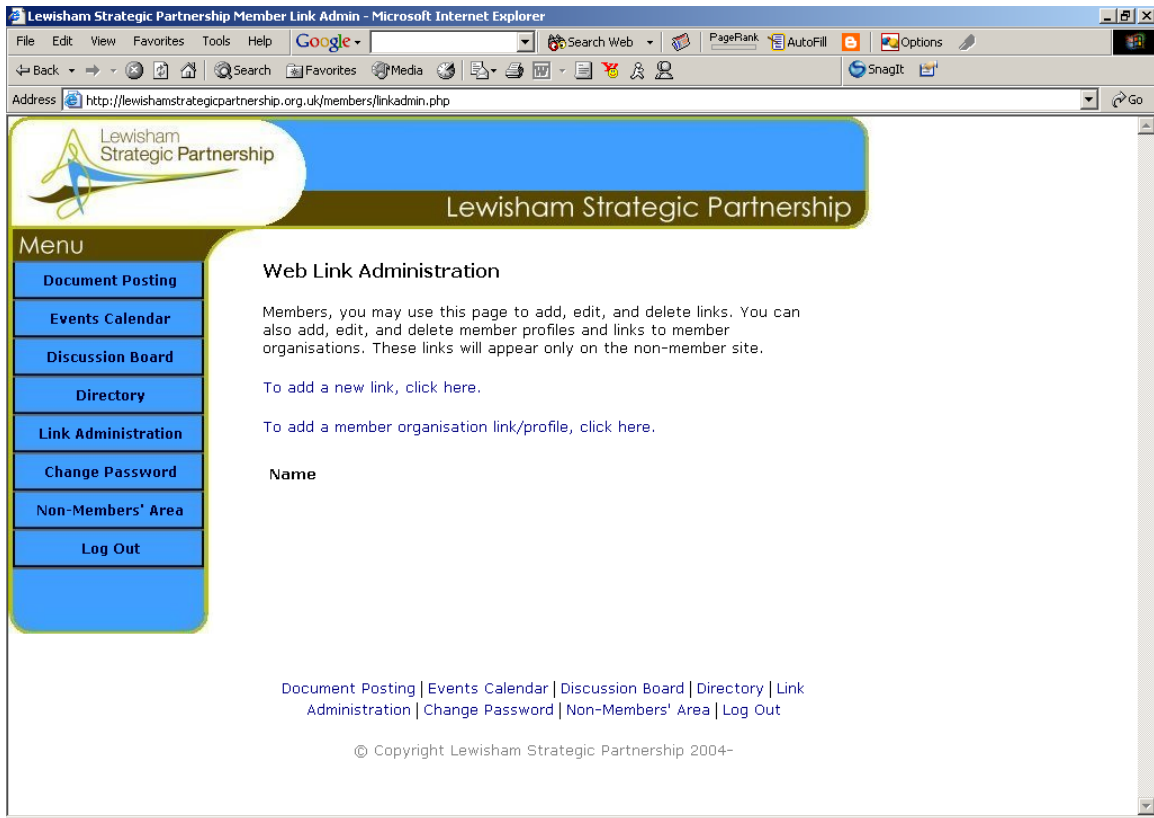
This is where members can add, edit, or delete links to other websites. To add a new link to the "links" section of the non-members site click the first link. To add a member organisation link click the second link.
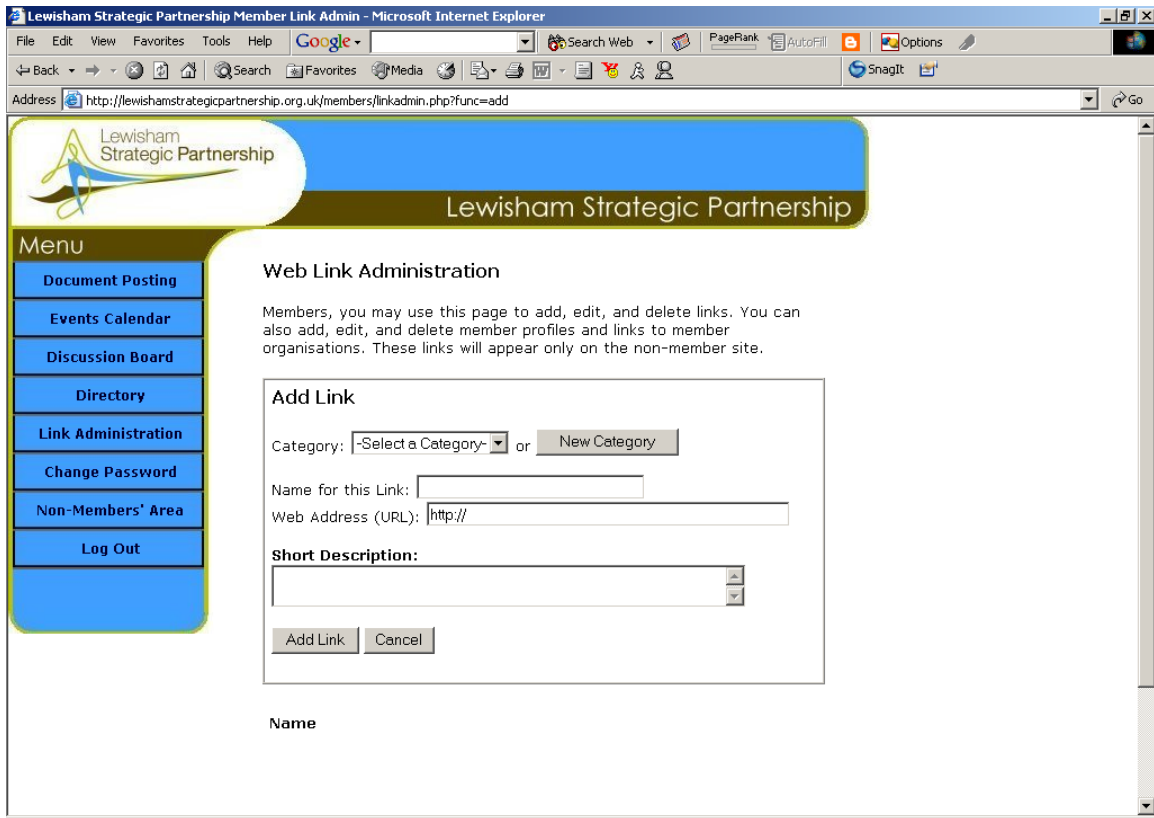
This is the form to add a new link to the "links" section.

This is the form to add a member organisation link.
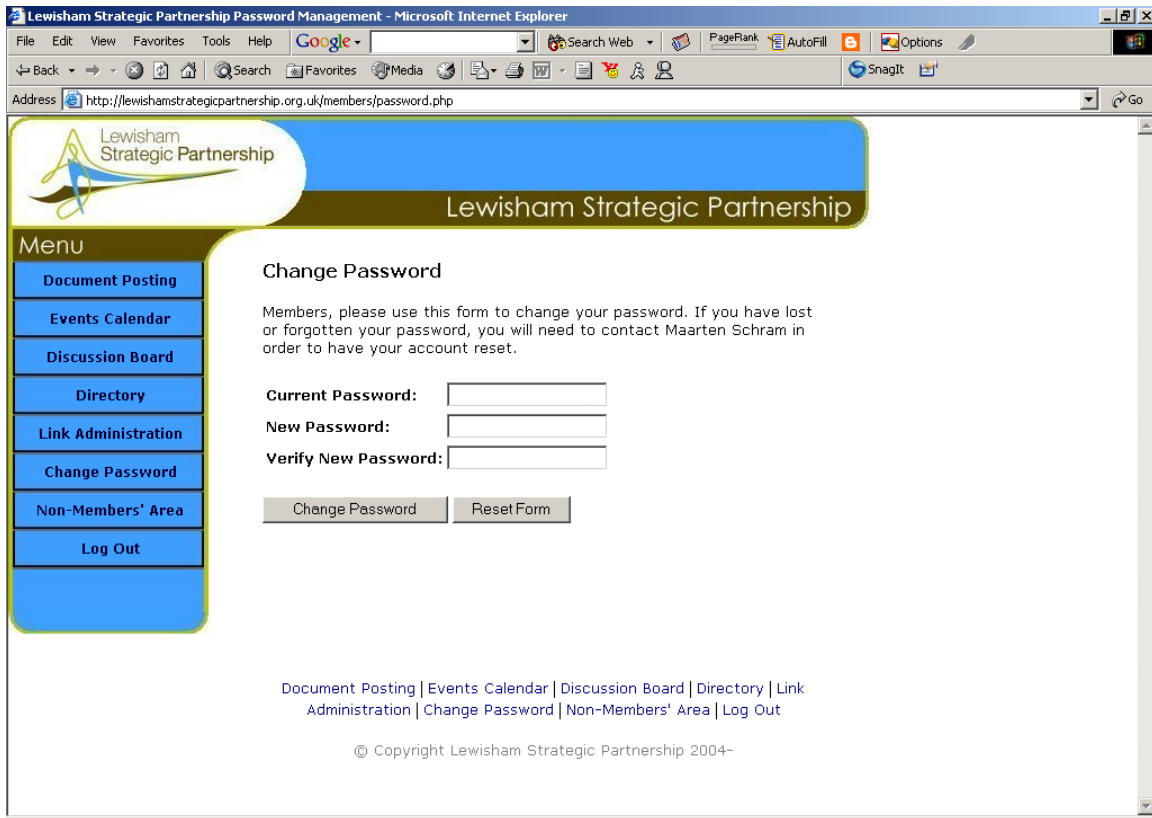
This is the form to change your password. Type your old password in, then your new password, and confirm your new password by typing it again in the next box.

To return to the non-members' area, click the "Non-Members'" area button below the "Change Password" button. To log your account out click the "Log Out" button. If any problems that are not covered in this user manual occur please contact Maarten Schram for assistance.