



New Communities

The Inaugural Engaging New and Emerging Communities Conference brought together approximately 80 participants from various sectors, including planners, faith groups, charities, developers, and community development professionals, alongside residents within new communities in Cambridgeshire. The event, organised by Urban&Civic, Cambridgeshire County Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, and Cambridge City Council, focused on fostering community in large-scale developments.

The conference addressed the crucial challenge of creating vibrant communities within new spaces, examining best practices and innovative approaches to community building. Keynote speaker Cormac Russell challenged community development professionals to empower new communities and support them to fulfil their own needs, while attendees discussed the complexities of bringing people together while navigating planning, local government, health, and education institutions.

The event included a series of workshops bringing together community representatives, community development leads, planners and key community stakeholders to discuss the importance of nurturing community ties; governance and community engagement in new communities; the voice of young people in spaces and places; and meanwhile uses of land until development comes forward.

The partners are looking to host the event annually.

“South Cambs DC recognises that in order for a new community to be a great place to live, we need to create the conditions for a thriving, resilient community with which new residents can connect.

This conference was an invaluable opportunity to hear from all those involved in creating these conditions, from planners and developers to councillors and, most importantly, local residents, to explore together how we can do this, from the very earliest stages in the planning process, continuing through construction phases and early occupations and as developments mature to form new communities.

If we can harness the energy and ideas of residents, building on their strengths, each place can develop its own distinctive character and identity where people feel a strong sense of community. I was very pleased to support this conference and would like to see the lively discussions continue as we continue on our shared journey, providing the homes people need in our district and across the county.”

Cllr Brian Milnes, Deputy Leader and Lead Cabinet Member for Environment