

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE



Tuesday, 3 May 2011

at 2.00 pm

in Committee Room C, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond responsible for Community Safety and Housing will consider the following items.

1. KEY DECISIONS

- 1.1 Dyke House/Stranton/Grange Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP) Update
(Final For Endorsement) – *Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)*

2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 2.1 Throston Community Forum – *Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)*

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

No items

4. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS

No items

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
3 May 2011



Report of: Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)

SUBJECT: DYKE HOUSE/STRANTON/GRANGE
NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION PLAN (NAP)
UPDATE (FINAL FOR ENDORSEMENT)

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek endorsement of the Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP) update for the Dyke House/Stranton/Grange area (**Appendix 1**).

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report describes the background to NAPs with a specific focus on the Plan for Dyke House/Stranton/Grange. It outlines the comprehensive consultation process undertaken to develop the Plan from the initial community consultation event to the consultation process on the draft NAP, all of which have enabled the final version to be produced. It also draws the Portfolio Holder's attention to the revised format of the document, which differs from previous NAP documents considered by the Community Safety and Housing Portfolio Holder. Finally, the report highlights the implementation procedure along with the financial implications of the NAP and, a consideration of the possible risks associated with the NAP process once endorsement has been sought from relevant partners.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

NAPs fall within the remit of the Community Safety and Housing Portfolio Holder since the responsibilities of the Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder were reallocated. Once the Plan has been endorsed, it will continue to have an impact on service delivery and will potentially influence future funding opportunities in the Dyke House/Stranton/Grange NAP area.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Key decision (test ii applies). Forward Plan reference number RN 32/10.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Endorsement has been sought from the Dyke House/Stranton/Grange Neighbourhood Partnership.

A report is also to be taken to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), in May, to seek endorsement of the Plan.

6. DECISION REQUIRED

The Community Safety and Housing Portfolio Holder is requested to endorse the NAP Update for the Dyke House/Stranton/Grange area.

Report of: Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)

Subject: DYKE HOUSE/STRANTON/GRANGE
NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION PLAN (NAP)
UPDATE (FINAL FOR ENDORSEMENT)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek endorsement of the Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP) update for the Dyke House/Stranton/Grange area. A copy of the full plan is attached as **Appendix 1**. A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has also been undertaken on the Plan at the draft stage.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 NAPs are the local elements of Hartlepool's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (NRS) and are used to inform and improve service delivery within the priority neighbourhoods identified in the NRS. The Strategy forms part of the Community Strategy; Hartlepool's Ambition, which provides a strategic policy framework for the Borough.
- 2.2 The Dyke House/Stranton/Grange NAP was initially prepared in 2002 and later updated in 2006. It was agreed in June 2009 that the Plan needed to be updated again due to the significant changes the area had faced, particularly in terms of Housing Market Renewal (HMR), as the Plan would recognise this and also identify the new challenges of stabilising the areas adjoining HMR sites. It was also felt that even though the area had undergone substantial change and improvement, there are still evident deprivation gaps in particular theme areas, namely community safety, education and unemployment as well as service issues around levels of resident satisfaction.

3. CONSULTATION AND PROGRESS TO DATE

- 3.1 Work commenced on developing the NAP for the Dyke House/Stranton/Grange area in October 2009 with a Halloween Event, at which over 600 people attended. At the event, local people were asked to take part in a survey, to begin to identify what the concerns and issues people in the neighbourhood may have.

- 3.2 Since holding the event, £42,200 was secured from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) through the Connecting Communities Programme (the Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder noted a report on the Connecting Communities Programme, in February 2010).
- 3.3 The additional funding provided opportunities to deliver a number of programmes and initiatives in the locality. This has included the successful Connect2 programme, delivered by the Borough Council's Economic Development Team. It was a voluntary programme designed to target and support young people (aged 16-24 years) who were not engaged with any mainstream services and are NEET (not in education, employment or training) specifically from the Dyke House/Stranton/Grange area. Each young person on the programme was allocated a personal mentor who was able to provide motivation and one-to-one support to assist them on their path to education, employment or training, through identifying key barriers and seeking the support required for the young person from relevant organisations.
- 3.4 A training package for Hartlepool Borough Council Youth Workers, delivered by Equality North East, has also been supported for those working in Dyke House/Stranton/Grange, to enable workers to become more confident in challenging views, perceptions and behaviours, particularly in relation to extremist views and cultural awareness, to ultimately support children and young people in promoting community cohesion.
- 3.5 A group of young volunteers has also worked with Safe in Tees Valley (SinTV) to organise and plan an event that took place in August 2010 for young people (aged between 5 and 17 years) in the Brougham Centre, attached to Brougham Primary School. The event was a 'Multicultural Youth Village', which had an art and media focus, and provided children, young people and the wider community the opportunity to take part in activities relating to culture, beliefs and lifestyles through music, dance, arts and crafts etc. SinTV also worked, in conjunction with Barnardos, and young people to develop and prepare artwork focussed around cultural diversity and raising awareness of different cultures, to showcase on the day. A number of local service providers were also in attendance offering information, support advice and guidance, as well as promoting opportunities for young people.
- 3.6 The funding has also been used to intensify the consultation process, offering further opportunities, and increased capacity, to enable consultation events to focus on some of the key issues being identified by residents, for example, a consultation exercise was undertaken alongside a Financial Inclusion Roadshow, in conjunction with the Financial Inclusion Partnership. The additional funding also enabled new methods and techniques to be tested, to assist with

engaging residents from across the area that perhaps would not normally get involved in the consultation process.

- 3.7 A further community event in Spring 2010 was held as part of the process, with again around 600 people in attendance. A range of opportunities to consult with local people were available, for all generations. Service providers were also in attendance offering information, advice and guidance around the health, housing, crime prevention, debt, employment/unemployment/worklessness agendas. Targeted survey work, door to door, has also been undertaken across the area.
- 3.8 Findings from other work undertaken independently, as part of the Connecting Communities Programme, has also been used in the preparation of the Plan. This includes the study undertaken by The Campaign Company on Communications and Local Civic Leadership activity, the Workers Educational Association (WEA), contracted by the Community Development Foundation (CDF) to deliver training for Community Champions, and a Regional Peer for Connecting Communities, contracted by the Leadership Centre, who provided a Local Civic Pride training session.
- 3.9 Whilst consultation with residents was ongoing, service providers through their Theme Partnership were asked to prepare a Theme Assessment to inform the development of the NAP. Theme Partnerships have, where possible, utilised available neighbourhood statistics and sought to involve as many partners as possible in developing the assessment for their Theme. Each Theme Assessment received set out to gain a broad understanding of existing local service provision, to establish gaps in current provision from the service provider's perspective, to identify what service providers feel are the key priorities for the Dyke House/Stranton/Grange area and to highlight any opportunities for future development.
- 3.10 Following agreement of the draft for consultation from the Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder, a second round of consultation was undertaken. This ensured that the document provides a real understanding of the issues affecting the quality of life of local people and ensures the issues identified are still current given the time elapsed since commencing with the consultation on the Plan. The second round of consultation also ensured that the views and comments received have been incorporated and accurately reflected in the document. Comments were requested from the Dyke House/Stranton/Grange Neighbourhood Partnership, which has been kept informed of progress on a regular basis. Two coffee mornings were held in the area in Wharton Annexe and Chatham House to provide residents with the opportunity to speak with Community Regeneration Officers about their concerns and priorities. These were publicised by a flyer delivered to every household in advance. This flyer also

provided an opportunity for residents to highlight their top five priorities and feedback any issues that might not have been included. 212 responses from across the area have been received to-date and have been incorporated into the finalised document. A further 8 week online consultation has also been undertaken, with the draft Plan also being considered by a number of Residents' Associations active in the area.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE HARTLEPOOL COMPACT

- 4.1 The Plan preparation process for the draft Dyke House/Stranton/Grange NAP has been undertaken in line with the Codes of good practice within the Hartlepool Compact. In particular, all consultation that has been conducted to develop the NAP complies with the principles of the Consultation and Policy Code, for example consultation with residents and providers was established at an early stage in the development of the draft NAP, and two 8 week consultation periods were timetabled during development.

5. THE FORMAT OF THE PLAN

- 5.1 As identified in paragraph 2.1, NAPs are used to deliver the NRS at a local level and therefore follow the same 8 Themes of the Community Strategy; Hartlepool's Ambition.
- 5.2 The format of the document differs from any NAP that has been developed previously. The Portfolio Holder is asked to endorse the new format. The NAP has been attached as **Appendix 1** for information.
- 5.3 The final version will be placed on the Hartlepool Partnership and Hartlepool Borough Council's websites for future reference.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1 Action Plans will be prepared each year to take forward this NAP. To date these have been developed with residents, Ward Councillors and local community/voluntary organisations who form part of the Dyke House/Stranton/Grange Neighbourhood Partnership. The Action Plans identify priorities from the NAP to be tackled throughout the year.
- 6.2 The implementation of this Action Plan has been overseen by Hartlepool Borough Council's North Neighbourhood Manager, who has worked with service providers and existing local groups to develop specific schemes that have helped to improve the quality of life of residents in the Dyke House/Stranton/Grange neighbourhood.

- 6.3 The Action Plan has been monitored locally and progress has been reported to the Hartlepool Partnership's Performance Management Group and Theme Partnerships. An annual report for 2010/11 is soon to be produced.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISK

- 7.1 The monies allocated to the Dyke House/Stranton/Grange NAP from the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) ceased at the end of March 2011, however, it is anticipated that the NAP will continue to be influential in the future allocation of resources despite this. The NAP provides a strategic analysis of the current needs and priorities of the community and the gaps in current service provision, which could be tackled should any new funding streams emerge. Impact upon priorities is expected to be made by using more efficiently and effectively existing mainstream resources on the more disadvantaged areas and alternative funding sources. This will coincide with a continuous improvement to services by all partners, which often only involves a series of small adjustments and more efficient co-ordination of activity.
- 7.2 There are currently no substantial risks in the NAP implementation process as the Neighbourhood Management framework is already well established, although it should be noted that this is currently under review, with the impact on the NAP structure not yet known. There is, however, a particular risk associated with securing resources in the future, to assist in addressing the priorities in the Plan, which needs to be highlighted. The Dyke House/Stranton/Grange Neighbourhood Partnership and the relevant officers will, however, be continually working in partnership with other service providers/organisations to ensure that every funding opportunity is utilised. The NAP Officers Group continues to consider and review NAP delivery, looking at ways of strengthening processes and activity, including how Participatory Budgeting will be continued in the future.

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 The Community Safety and Housing Portfolio Holder is requested to endorse the NAP Update for the Dyke House/Stranton/Grange area, subject to endorsement from the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in May 2011.

9. CONTACT OFFICER

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DYKE HOUSE, STRANTON and GRANGE NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION PLAN (NAP):

Final Version – April 2011



Text extracts can be made available in Braille, talking tapes and large print, on request. If you would like information in another language or format, please ask us. ☎ (01429) 523598.

إذا أردت المعلومات بلغة أخرى أو بطريقة أخرى، نرجو أن تطلب ذلك منا.
☎ (01429) 523598. (Arabic)

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।
☎ (01429) 523598. (Bengali)

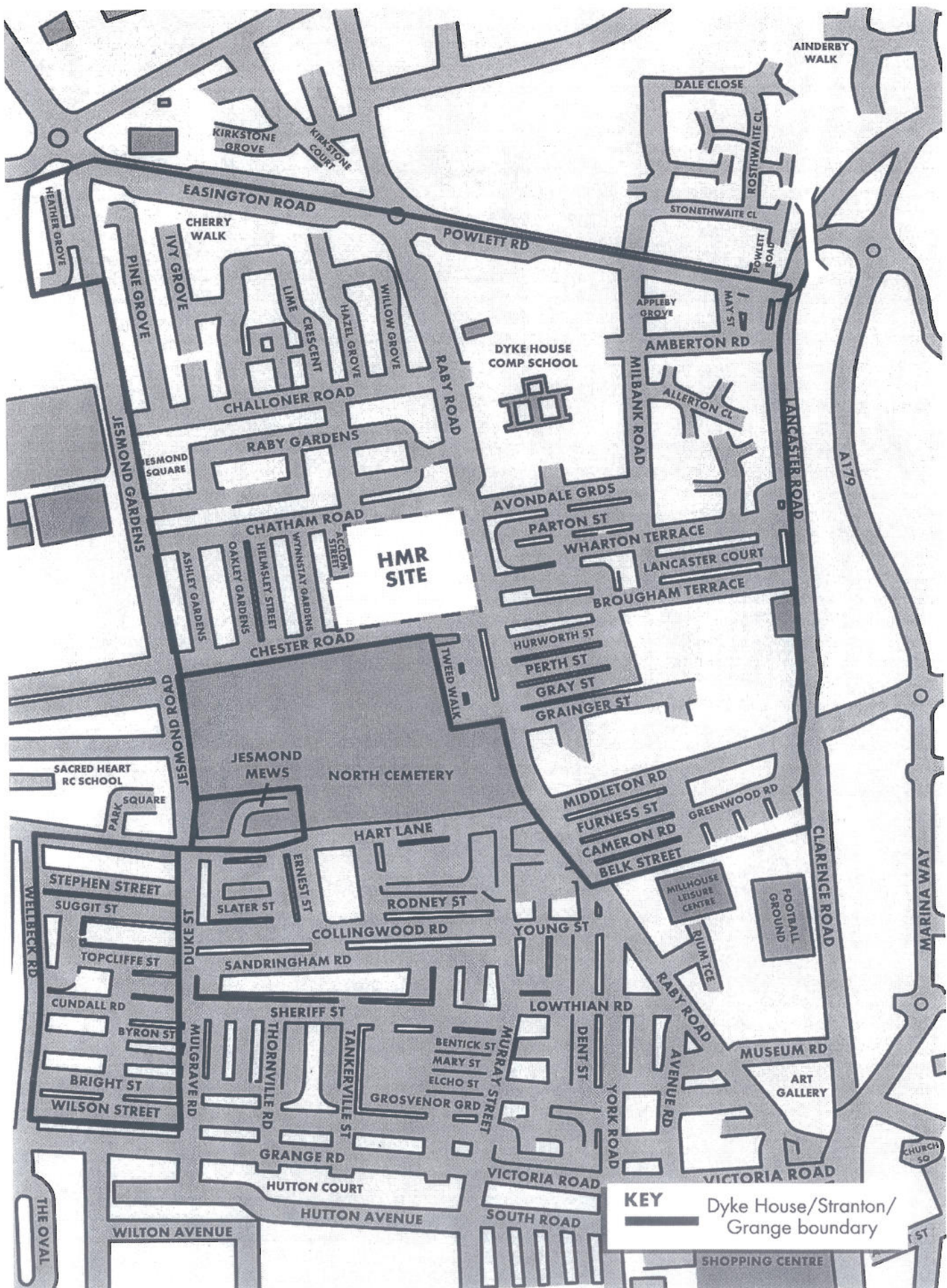
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☎ (01429) 523598. (Kurdish)

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔
☎ (01429) 523598. (Urdu)

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☎ (01429) 523598. (Hindi)

Jeżeli chciałoby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać.
☎ (01429) 523598. (Polish)

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。
☎ (01429) 523598. (Cantonese)



Foreword

The aim of this plan is to establish what the issues are in the area and to look at what can be done to improve the neighbourhood for the people who live and work here. The information in the plan has been given to us through consultation with local people, your Ward Councillors and community organisations and service providers.

The preparation of the plan is only part of the process. We need your help to achieve the aims of the plan by coming together and telling us how you would like to see your community change. There are lots of exciting things happening in the area at the moment, particularly the new housing being built and the improvements to the surrounding areas, and the facilities that will soon be available at the new Dyke House School. By working together and building on these existing strengths we can make the community a better place for everyone.

We know there is some ongoing work, which is looking at changing the Ward boundaries in Hartlepool. This is likely to have an impact on the boundary of which this plan covers. If you want more information on this please get in touch with Tracy who will let you know the current situation – her contact details are on the back page of this plan.



Karen Oliver, Neighbourhood Manager (North), Hartlepool Borough Council.

Dyke House, Stranton and Grange – a plan for the area

This plan

This plan is about the important issues in Dyke House, Stranton and Grange. The Council has written it so we can decide what the most important issues are in your area, and work together to make things better.

Before we wrote the plan, we spoke to hundreds of people living in the area. We ran fun days where people could tell us what they thought was important, and we talked to people from the area in discussion groups. We also talked to the organisations that work in the area – like the Police, charities and schools.



Tell us what you think

We would like to hear from you if you live or work in this area. If you have ideas about how we can make the area better, or if you would like to get involved in activities in the area, please contact Tracy Rowe at the Council. You can call her on 01429 523281 or email her on tracy.rowe@hartlepool.gov.uk.

What is in the plan

We have broken the plan into sections as follows:

- **Jobs and the economy** – including unemployment and money
- **Learning and skills** – for adults and children
- **Health** – including diet, smoking and how people feel emotionally and physically
- **Crime and safety** – including anti-social behaviour and the Police
- **Environment** – how people feel about the area and what it looks like
- **Housing** – the houses and the people who live in them
- **Culture and leisure** – including parks, libraries and children's play areas
- **Communities** – how well people get on together

In each section, we have given some information about the area and then said what we want to do to make it better.

Jobs and the economy

"Some people around here have never worked. We want more jobs for local people. We would like some of those jobs in our traditional industries, but we know that might not be possible. We would like more skilled jobs. People round here don't have much money, and some get into debt - it can be really hard bringing up a family. They need help to make ends meet."



Important facts

- Nearly half the people who live here are not working. This is much higher than in the rest of the country.
- People living here tend to have less money than average.

Good things about the area

- The shops at Raby Road and Chatham Road provide job opportunities for local people.
- There are people in Brougham Annexe who can help with finding a job or getting on to a training course. The Annexe has been smartened up and made bigger at the back so lots more can happen in there for the community.
- Hartlepool Enterprise Centre in Brougham Terrace helps new businesses get started.
- The area is close to the town centre, where there are more opportunities for people to work and get training.

Bad things about the area

- Many big companies have shut down since the 1960s. Garlands has closed and Corus briefly shut down, and many people lost their jobs. Some of these have found it difficult to get new jobs because they do not have the right skills and they are not very confident.
- The financial problems in the whole country have had a particularly bad effect here.

What we want to do

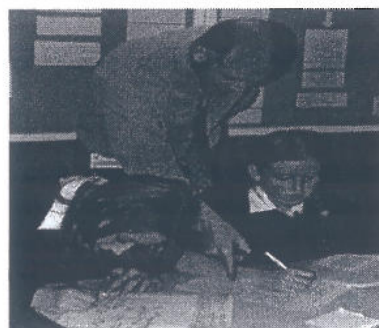
We want to have more local people in good jobs. At the Council we can't create jobs by ourselves, but we can help local people get the jobs that are available, and support people who want to set up new businesses.

Working with local people and other organisations in the area, we will:

- Help people find courses or volunteer roles, especially where they will help them find jobs.
- Make it easier for young people to do work experience, so they can learn about what work is like.
- Help families where people haven't worked for a long time.
- Tell more people about the support we give to new businesses and self employed people.
- Help people who have got into debt.

Learning and skills

"Too many people round here didn't do well at school. Too many kids leave school without qualifications, so they just end up hanging around and drinking. Some people have got good skills, but the jobs aren't there for them any more. If there were more things for people to do, they would be more likely to do the training. Then they will get the jobs that are created."



Important facts

- One out of three people in the area don't have any qualifications. This is much higher than in the rest of the country.
- One out of four people in the area want to improve their maths and their spelling.
- About one out of ten people aged 16 to 18 are not studying or working. This is twice as high as in the rest of the country.
- Schools in the area are getting better, but pupils here don't do as well as pupils in the rest of Hartlepool.

Good things about the area

- Dyke House School is getting new and improved buildings to make it a better place to learn. Some school building programmes have been cancelled because the government has less money, but this one is still going ahead.
- GCSE results for local pupils are getting better.

Bad things about the area

- Although there are quite a lot of courses available, people often don't know about them or don't choose to use them.
- A lot of adults don't have qualifications or don't have the right skills for work. In particular, a lot of people struggle with computers, and there isn't much training available.

What we want to do

We want to make sure local people can get the training and qualifications they need. This includes supporting children at school, young people at college or university, and adults who want to improve their skills.



We are going to:

- Make sure the different organisations which provide training work together and link up their work.
- Improve information and publicity about training, so people know what is available.
- Run new courses for adults in writing, maths and computers.
- Learn more about why some 16-18 year olds are not working or studying, and find new ways to help them.

Health

"We have a strong community spirit here. But a lot of people round here are unhappy, and some are depressed. People round here like to smoke and drink, and some take drugs to have a good time. This can cause problems. Far too many people get sick, and then they can't get the services they need. It is great when the young people get involved in sports. Lots of them don't want to, but it does give them a better chance to get on."



Important facts

- Less than half the people living in this area say their health has been good this year. This is much lower than in the rest of the country.
- Nearly half the people living in the area smoke regularly.
- One out of five residents live with someone with a mental health problem (anxiety, nervous problems, depression or stress). We are worried that this problem might be getting worse.

Good things about the area

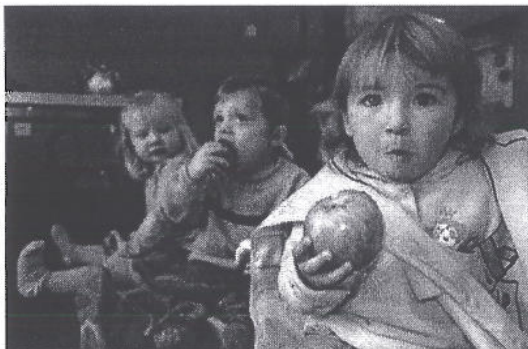
- Many people say there is a strong community spirit. Some people are involved in local community groups, and these tend to be very enthusiastic about what they do.
- The Street League at the Grayfields Sports Pavilion gives people a chance to play sport and improve their health.

Bad things about the area

- There are no doctors' surgeries, dentists or pharmacies in the area.
- There are not many activities for people who want to improve their health – for example, exercise classes.

What we want to do

We want to encourage people to live healthy lifestyles. Where people have health problems, we want to make it easier for them to get the right help.



We are going to:

- Help people be healthier by encouraging them to stop smoking and take more exercise.
- Increase people's confidence to change their lives.
- Work with the Police and other organisations to reduce drug and alcohol abuse (see next section).

Crime and safety

"We are pleased that the Police and PCSOs are seen around here a lot, but they need to be here more at night. There is too much crime, too many people hanging around taking drugs and drinking. It is too easy for young people to get drunk under-age and we need to do something to stop it. But it is getting better, and it is getting safer to be out at night or to walk through the cemetery after dark. We are worried that the area is changing, and the Council and Police need to act quickly if problem families move into the area."

Important facts

- Crime in this area is often higher than in the rest of Hartlepool, although there are areas where it is more of a problem.
- One in three residents think that crowds and gangs are a problem.
- One in three residents don't feel safe walking alone in the area at night. This is much higher than the average for the country.
- Most residents think that under-18s misusing alcohol is a problem, and about one in three think drugs are a problem.

Good things about the area

- Most people think the Police are doing a good job, and there are PCSOs based in the area.
- There are improvements to the local cemetery and to some of the streets around Wharton Terrace.
- There are some good activities available for young people which can keep them off the street in the evening.

Bad things about the area

- Some people who have lived in the area for a long time feel worried about 'undesirables' moving in and making the area less safe.
- People don't always report crime because they are worried about what will happen to them if they do.
- In the early mornings and late evenings there are not usually any Police in the area.
- People speeding through some streets.

What we want to do

We want to make the area feel safer for the people living here. In particular, we want to reduce drug dealing and alcohol problems, as these are some of the things that make people feel unsafe.

We will work with local residents and the Police to:

- Tackle underage drinking and drug abuse, and encourage people to report problems.
- Provide more activities for young people.
- Improve the area around North Cemetery, working with the Friends of North Cemetery.
- Promote the good things about the area, so people don't just hear bad news stories.

Environment

"We like living here, but some people don't have enough pride in our area, and don't look after it properly. Some places look a mess. We are proud of our area and our homes, but there are too many boarded up houses. Not enough is done when people don't keep their gardens tidy, and more needs to be done to stop people dropping litter or to make them clean up their dog mess - it spoils how it looks round here. Dropping litter isn't clever, and round the school can look really bad after lunchtime. There should be more open space and parks for us to use."



Important facts

- Most people like living in the area, but there are more people who don't like living here than in the rest of the country.
- About one in five people say there are not enough parks in the area, or that the ones we have are not good enough.
- One in four people say there is a problem with dogs and dog mess.

Good things about the area

- We have improved the streetscene in Wharton Terrace, Mapleton Road, Parton Street and St Oswald's Street. Lots of work has also been done to North Cemetery to make it a nicer and safer place.
- We have planted new trees in the area.

Bad things about the area

- There is a major problem with litter, dog mess, graffiti and broken windows.
- Too many properties are run down and boarded up.
- There is not enough street lighting, particularly around The Copse and Chester Road.
- Parking is a problem, particularly in the terraced streets.
- Some of the roads are in poor condition.

What we want to do

We want the area to be greener, cleaner and safer. If this happens, we hope that it will mean people feel happier about living here.



In particular, we will work with residents to:

- Improve the appearance of the area, especially litter, dog mess, vandalism and run-down buildings.
- Improve street lighting.
- Protect our parks and green spaces. Where green spaces are not owned by the Council, we will find the owners and ask them to tidy them up.

Housing



"We want this to be a good place to live. We have a good community here, and look after each other as neighbours. We want better homes, but we don't want to lose our community spirit, and we want things done quickly. Old houses are boarded up for too long. I like my new home, it has a much better kitchen and bathroom and is easier to keep warm. I am pleased that they are building social housing so that my children will be able to stay round here. But they need to do more to stop anti-social behaviour and to make sure that private landlords care as much about the area as we do. We want new residents to be part of our community, and to look after their places and the area."

Important facts

- One in three people in the area live in social housing (rented from Housing Hartlepool or another social landlord). This is much higher than the national average.
- One out of six people has lived in their home for less than a year.
- Just over half the people living here are 'very satisfied' with their home.

Good things about the area

- Lots of new homes are being built in the area. Some older houses that people don't want to live in are being knocked down. Most of the people we have spoken to think this is a good idea.
- We are building a better mix of homes for different types of families in the area, so people don't have to live in places that are not suitable for them.
- There are less boarded up homes – where houses are empty, we are making sure they don't deteriorate.

Bad things about the area

- Some people don't believe that the new housing in the area will make much difference, and we haven't always been very good at telling people about changes in the area.
- Some people are worried about the new residents who are moving into the area, especially in private rented houses. There are problems with some private landlords who don't look after houses properly.
- People can't always get the type of house they want in the area.

What we want to do

Housing is the most important issue in this area at the moment, and we want to get it right. We know that some people like the changes that are happening and others don't. Where new houses are built, we want to make sure they improve people's lives while keeping the good things about the area.

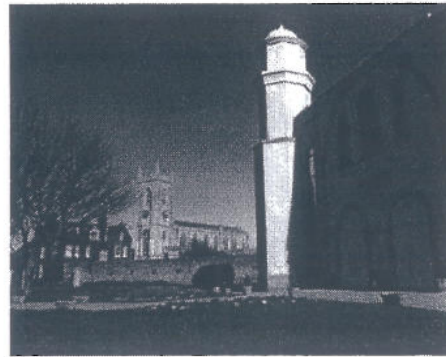


Working with housing providers, local businesses and residents, we will:

- Work to make sure that the sense of community in the area is not damaged by the changes to housing.
- Make sure that when people move house, there aren't any problems.
- Improve the variety of homes available to people, so everyone can live somewhere suitable for their family and their needs.
- Improve the way we communicate with people about changes to housing.

Culture and leisure

"We want more to do round here. There isn't enough round here for us, and the parks and play areas are not good enough for our children to use. Some things are just too far away from here, and are too hard to get to. People don't make enough use of the things that are on offer. They would be better doing that than hanging around."



Important facts

- People are less happy with libraries, art galleries and museums than in the rest of Hartlepool.
- One out of three residents are not happy about the parks in the area, and over half are not happy about children's play areas.
- About one out of three residents have used local sports clubs this year, but a lot of people think they could be improved.

Good things about the area

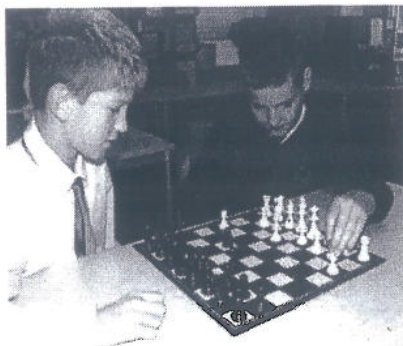
- There are good activities at Grayfields Leisure Centre, and at Mill House Leisure Centre (which is a bit further away).
- There are community venues for people to run activities at The Annexe, Brougham Centre, Avondale Centre, Chatham House and St Oswald's Church Hall.
- The redevelopment of Dyke House School will help us run more activities for local people.

Bad things about the area

- There is not much grassed open space in the area and it is hard for people to get to larger parks and green spaces.
- People often don't know about the activities that are available in the area, including clubs, youth groups, sports teams and libraries.

What we want to do

We want people to enjoy living in the area. To do this, we want to further improve the green spaces, especially for children. We want to encourage more people to play sports and be part of clubs and activities.



We are going to:

- Work with The Annexe to improve library services in the area.
- Try to find funding to improve children's play areas. The Council doesn't have much money at the moment, but we are looking at other ways we can get funding for this.
- Improve publicity for activities, sports, clubs and community venues, so more people can use them.

The community

"We have a good community round here. It has changed a lot and it is much better than it used to be. But not enough people do things, and it can be hard for new people moving here to get involved and fit in. We need everyone to pull together. Some people don't want enough for our community – but we are proud of what we have, and want to make it better than it is now for everyone who lives round here. And we need the Council and Police to help us when people don't want to do the right things around here."

Important facts

- Most people who live here are happy with their quality of life, but this is still lower than in the rest of the country.
- About one in three people say this is an area where people from different backgrounds get on well together. This is a lot lower than in the rest of the country.
- Less than one in ten people have been volunteers in the area in the last three years. This is lower than in the rest of the country.

Good things about the area

- People look out for each other in this area.
- Schools, Children's Centres and SureStart services are good.
- The local Residents' Associations are doing good work in the area.

Bad things about the area

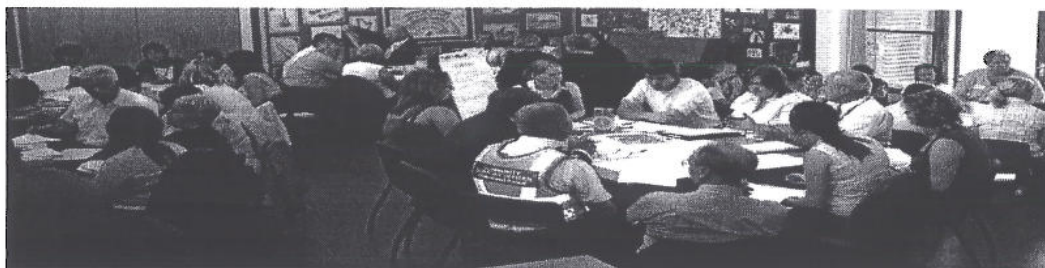
- People who have lived in the area for a long time feel that it is going downhill, and that people now feel less proud to live here.
- There are problems with anti-social behaviour, especially drug use, and problems with empty properties.
- People from outside the area think it has a bad reputation.

What we want to do

We want to make sure everyone feels at home in this area and that people get on well with their neighbours and feel part of the community. The area has changed quite a lot recently, and we want to make sure this doesn't mean we lose the good things about it.

We need to work with everyone who lives here to make this happen. In particular, we are going to:

- Run activities which help people get to know their neighbours.
- Support people who want to volunteer in the area, including running training courses where this is helpful.
- Encourage people moving into the area to get involved in their community – for example by volunteering or joining Residents' Associations.
- Work with young people to run the activities that they really want.



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COMMUNITY SAFETY AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
3 May 2011



Report of: Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)

Subject: THROSTON COMMUNITY FORUM

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To outline a proposal with regards to the future of the Throston Community Forum, and seek endorsement of this approach.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report describes the background to the development of the Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP) for Throston and a brief outline of how the Plan was prepared. It provides an overview of the current position and proposes three recommendations.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

NAPs fall within the remit of the Community Safety and Housing Portfolio Holder since the responsibilities of the Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder were reallocated.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key decision.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

A report was considered by the NAP Officers Group in March 2011, which outlined the possible options for the future of NAP related activity in Throston. The proposal is to be taken to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), as well as the Community Safety and Housing Portfolio Holder, for endorsement.

6. DECISION REQUIRED

The Community Safety and Housing Portfolio Holder is requested to endorse the proposed plan of action regarding the future of the Throston Community Forum.

Report of: Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)

Subject: THROSTON COMMUNITY FORUM

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To outline a proposal with regards to the future of the Throston Community Forum, and seek endorsement of this approach.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Throston was added as a priority neighbourhood to the Neighbourhood Renewal (NR) area when the combined Community Strategy 'Hartlepool's Ambition' and NR Strategy was prepared in 2008. Although the 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) did not place Throston in the bottom 10% overall, in the key areas of employment, health, deprivation and disability it was within the bottom 10% nationally. As these are key priorities for the Hartlepool Partnership it was agreed that Throston should be included as a priority neighbourhood in the NR Strategy.

3. NAP DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 In September 2008, consultation sessions began to develop the Throston Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP). NAPs identify the main issues affecting the quality of life of residents and incorporate specific actions designed to address the needs of the local neighbourhood. This consultation process culminated in the publication of the Throston NAP in June 2009.

4. NAP IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 To accompany the development of the NAP a local Community Forum was formed in September 2009 to meet on a quarterly basis. A key function of the group was to commission local initiatives, using contributions from the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF), based around the NAP themes of 'Health and Wellbeing', 'Jobs and the Economy' and 'Lifelong Learning and Skills'.

5. SUMMARY OF CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 Historically, it has been difficult to engage residents from the Throston area. With this in mind, additional resource was put into the process at the very beginning to begin to overcome this, but since the creation of the Throston Community Forum overall attendance numbers have been consistently low. Unlike other NAP orientated community groups in Hartlepool, there has been no core collection of regular attendees around which the future of the Forum could be built. Over the past two financial years attendee numbers have been at their highest during the project commissioning periods where residents have sought to secure assistance for schemes that they are associated with.
- 5.2 Whilst there have been a number of successful projects and schemes commissioned in Throston over the past two years, it must be recognised that this has been an uphill struggle with regards to the involvement of residents in the process. Consequently, with all WNF funding in Throston now fully utilised, the future of the area's NAP, and the associated Community Forum has needed to be considered, with time taken to look at what lessons have been learnt from the approach taken in Throston.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 With resources limited and no funding available to the area for the foreseeable future the most feasible plan of action would be to:
- i) Cease the continuation of the Community Forum in its entirety.
 - ii) Council officers continue work around fulfilling the key objectives of the Throston NAP, with a primary focus on 'Health and Wellbeing', 'Jobs and the Economy' and 'Lifelong Learning and Skills', but this would be done so without the involvement of a dedicated Forum.
 - iii) In the long term, look at amalgamating the Throston area with another NAP Forum in the north of Hartlepool. Throston would be added to the Forum's agenda and any issues openly discussed, providing a method of accountability. It must be acknowledged though that this option does present a number of logistical issues with regards to making this proposal work on a practical level. In addition, with the review of NAPs and local boundaries currently being carried out, it is felt that any decisions regarding this option should be withheld until the completion of these investigations.

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