

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE



Friday 20 May 2011

at 10.00 am

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

No items

2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

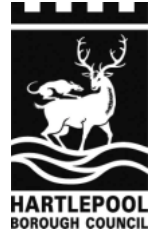
- 2.1 Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan 2011-2012 – *Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)*
- 2.2 Church Street and Seaton Carew Conservation Area Management Plans – *Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)*
- 2.3 Tackling empty homes – Baden Street improvement scheme – *Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)*

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

No items

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
20 May 2011



Report of: Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)

Subject: ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACTION PLAN
2011-2012

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To make the Portfolio Holder aware of forthcoming developments in the field of anti-social behaviour and seek approval of an action plan pending new legislation.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report gives an overview of forthcoming changes in legislation and guidance to registered social landlords in the field of anti-social behaviour with an action plan offered to prepare for these changes.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

Community Safety issue

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non- Key (for information only)

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Portfolio Holder

6. DECISION REQUIRED

To approve the action plan.

Report of: Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)

Subject: ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACTION PLAN
2011-2012

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To make the Portfolio Holder aware of forthcoming developments in the field of anti-social behaviour and seek approval of an action plan pending new legislation.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Coalition Government announced in July 2010 that there was to be a review of the tools and powers available to deal with anti-social behaviour.

2.2 The Portfolio Holder was informed on 29th March 2011 of the publication paper. "More Effective Responses to Anti-social behaviour" in February 2011. Following the end of the consultation period, in May 2011 it is anticipated that new legislation will be introduced, ending the availability of a range of powers, including the Anti-social Behaviour Order, and replacing them with a smaller number of powers. This document, along with the "Breaking the Cycle" consultation document, herald a more victim centred approach to the Criminal Justice System, with increased emphasis on restorative solutions.

2.3 The New Tools and Powers are anticipated to be in place from May 2012.

2.4 Running alongside these changes is the review to the Respect Standard of Housing Management, which is a voluntary code setting out how Registered Social Landlords are expected to manage anti-social behaviour in the properties they manage. This code is now being revised with the working title "A.S.B. Service Commitments" which and will, following the demise of the Tenant Services Agency, be managed by the Chartered Institute of Housing.

2.5 In addition to legislative changes the Anti-social Behaviour Unit is now, as a result of coalition cuts, required to operate with access to fewer resources. In particular, the Service Level Agreement with the Unite mediation service to deliver mediation free of charge for all Hartlepool residents has come to an end. The ending of the Working Neighbourhood Fund (WNF) has meant for this service that the FAST

(Families Accessing Support Team) is no longer operational and the COOL project has been drastically reduced and now operates from only three schools.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 In the light of the issues above below is an action plan to be pursued by the Anti-social Behaviour unit with partners to prepare for the changes to come is proposed below.

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Desired Outcome</u>	<u>Planned Action</u>	<u>Time-scale</u>
Ending of Contract with the UNITE mediation service.	Some form of mediation is available in appropriate cases.	Arrange training for some officers and volunteers within Hartlepool and seek reciprocal agreements with RSLs and ASBUs in the Tees Valley to provide this service	October 2011
Reduction in provision of support and diversionary services	That the reduction does not result in an increase in complaints of anti-social behaviour by young people	To optimise use of remaining services, e.g. ensure that the Safe In Tees Valley Assertive Outreach is delivered effectively linking with existing services for referrals and deployed in conjunction with up to date information from partners. Continually seek out additional funding opportunities for delivery of outreach and diversionary services	November 2011
Resident desire for greatest emphasis on ensuring parents take responsibility for their children	The parents of those responsible for anti-social behaviour attend parenting classes.	Formalise links with the parenting strategy, and seek parenting orders where appropriate.	March 2012
Currently little emphasis on restorative approach to anti-social behaviour	That restorative elements are considered at every stage.	That anti-social behaviour policies and procedures of all partners are reviewed with a view to developing a restorative approach.	September 2011

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Desired Outcome</u>	<u>Planned Action</u>	<u>Time-scale</u>
Some Registered Social Landlords do less than others to deal with anti-social behaviour in the properties they own or manage	That all partners take a consistent approach and use all the tools and powers at their disposal in a manner consistent with the outcomes sought by the Safer Hartlepool Partnership.	That an agreement on minimum standards is finalised with all partners (Housing Hartlepool are already to the minimum standards announced by the Home Office in 2010).	October 2011
Perception by some members of the BME community that reporting incidents puts them at risk.	Increased Confidence in reporting incidents	Link with the Cohesion Framework Strategy and ensure that positive results of cases involving the BME are made known.	December 2011
Perennial increase in ASB over the Summer Months	Co-ordinated campaign to counter the increase.	Link with FISH (Families Information Service for Hartlepool) to ensure that available activities are promoted through the SHP. Promote parental responsibility through the Summer holidays- e.g. through articles for residents Newsletters. Ensure that those delivering outreach work are aware of these services and divert young people to them.	
Young People are under-represented as users of the services of the ASBU	Increased reports from young people	Continue the work of the Young Victims Steering group	March 2012

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 The Portfolio Holder is asked to approve the action plan.

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Consultation document - More Effective responses to Anti-social behaviour

Consultation document – Breaking the Cycle

Consultation document - A.S.B. Service commitments

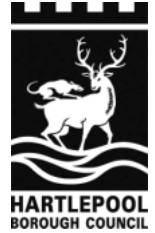
Report to Community Safety and Housing Portfolio 29th March 2011

6. CONTACT OFFICER

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COMMUNITY SAFETY AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
20 May 2011



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

Subject: CHURCH STREET AND SEATON CAREW
CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT
PLANS

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek Portfolio Holder approval of two conservation area Management Plans for Church Street and Seaton Carew Conservation Areas.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report outlines the background to the Management Plans. It summarises the public consultation that was carried out and the responses to this. These responses have been incorporated into the documents prepared by officers who carried out physical surveys alongside looking at existing strategies. A summary of the final Objectives and Actions for each Management Plan is appended to this report.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

Conservation falls within this Portfolio.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non – key decision.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Portfolio Holder on 20 May 2011.

6. DECISION REQUIRED

That the Portfolio Holder notes the response to the public consultation for Seaton Carew and Church Street Management Plans and agrees to the Action Plans in **Appendices 2 and 4** of this report.

Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

Subject: CHURCH STREET AND SEATON CAREW
CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT
PLANS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Portfolio Holder approval of two conservation area Management Plans for Church Street and Seaton Carew Conservation Areas.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 English Heritage in their advice to local authorities' in their publication "Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas" (February 2006) indicate that an appraisal of a conservation area needs a set of policies, strategies and actions identified to actively manage change in a conservation area. Change in a conservation area is inevitable and the purpose of a management plan is to direct this change in such a way that it strengthens rather than undermines the conservation areas special quality.
- 2.2 Existing national legislation and policy advice in the form of the "Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990" and "Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment" with its supporting Practice Guide from English Heritage provide guidance on how to manage development in conservation areas. Many of these national policies are translated locally to Hartlepool via the Local Development Framework (previously the Hartlepool Local Plan) which provides specific policies to manage listed buildings and conservation areas. However every conservation area has development issues more or less specific to that area which a Conservation Area Management Plan is intended to identify.
- 2.3 Management plans have been compiled for Church Street and Seaton Carew Conservation Areas. The consultation on each of these areas was carried out simultaneously at the beginning of March.

3. CONSULTATION

3.1 The methods of consultation used in both areas were as follows:

- Leaflets were delivered to all buildings within the conservation areas which included a feedback form.
- Information on the consultation was provided on the Council's website.
- Local amenity societies and interested parties were consulted including the Conservation Area Advisory Committee.
- Multiple leaflets were left in key public buildings within the conservation area such as Seaton Carew Library and The Art Gallery at Church Square, along with boxes to collect any representations made.
- A press release was produced.

3.2 Outlined below in the following two sections of this report are the responses to the consultation.

4. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON SEATON CAREW MANAGEMENT PLAN

4.1 The response to the consultation in Seaton Carew is outlined in **Appendix 1** of this report. 160 leaflets were delivered to properties located in the conservation area and 15 responses were received (9%).

4.2 The feedback on the questionnaire indicates that there is support for the production of guidance on 'Building Maintenance' in the conservation area with 12 out of the 15 respondents highlighting this. Production of such guidance was not explicitly outlined in the document and it is proposed that an 'Action' to carry out such works is included within the management plan. This guidance could include information on painting properties and typical colours used on traditional buildings. This would meet the interest specified in question 3 of the survey in which 73% of residents suggested that a range of colours would be useful to bring about a more co-ordinated approach to the conservation area. There are no financial provisions in the form of grants for the maintenance of properties however the issuing of such guidance may assist owners with the development of maintenance programmes for their properties thereby reducing some of the long-term maintenance costs.

4.3 A majority of the respondents (73%) also indicated that they would like to see special controls introduced into the conservation area to cover advertisements. Prior to introducing such a measure further consultation would be required alongside the production of guidance indicating suitable styles of advertisements for the conservation area.

- 4.4 The general comments section of the questionnaire shows that there is a high level of interest in the Longscar Centre and the future of this building. Whilst it is not located inside the conservation area, the impact that residents feel that the building has on the area is clear. The building was not specifically referenced in the Management Plan document as it is outside the boundary of the area. It is, however, apparent from the responses that the influence of this building should be more explicitly outlined in the Management Plan. It is proposed that a new section is introduced into the plan, outlining the impact of the building on the conservation area and the actions that are being taken to address this.
- 4.5 The other issues that are raised in the general comments such as signage and shop fronts are already addressed within the Management Plan documents.
- 4.6 There are a number of issues that are highlighted that are not covered in a document such as this. They include parking, opening times of the park, and cleanliness of the streets. Details of these will be passed on to the relevant section in the authority to enable action to be taken where appropriate.
- 4.7 The Management Plan has been amended to reflect the response to the consultation. In summary the final document covers the following key issues in Seaton Carew Conservation Area:
- Building maintenance - The Management Plan proposes negotiation through the development control process and, where necessary, the use of statutory powers to encourage good maintenance within the area.
 - Alterations to buildings – The Plan proposes discouraging alterations and additions to properties that are unsympathetic to the character of the area.
 - Alterations to shop fronts including roller shutters and signage – It is proposed that guidance is produced on shop fronts and advertisements along side using controls available through the Development Control process to control changes to commercial premises.
 - Vacant Buildings – This section has been included in light of the comments from residents. It proposes that the Council will use statutory powers where appropriate to bring buildings back into use and give favourable consideration to a wide range of uses to bring buildings back into beneficial use.
 - Development opportunities – This section supports existing strategies addressing potential development in and around the

conservation area. It highlights the need for development within the area to be of an appropriate character and appearance to the conservation area.

- The street environment – Both trees and street furniture are addressed in the document. It highlights the need for the use of appropriate materials when looking at the streetscene and reinforces the positive role in which trees can play in the environment.

4.8 A table summarising the objectives and actions arising from each key issue in the plan can be seen in **Appendix 2**.

5. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON CHURCH STREET MANAGEMENT PLAN

5.1 The response to the consultation is outlined in **Appendix 3** of this report. 138 leaflets were delivered to properties in Church Street Conservation Area and 10 responses were received (7%).

5.2 Building maintenance was indicated to be a key issue in the conservation area by 50% of respondents. There is a specific action included within the Management Plan to address this proposing the production of a guidance document to advise owners of best practice in maintaining their properties alongside a proposal to investigate the potential for future grant funding.

5.3 The proposal to have a range of colours to choose from to bring about a more co-ordinated approach in the conservation area was not strongly supported with four responses agreeing with this proposal but four other responses suggesting that they would not want this or were not sure. There was only slightly more support for additional controls on signage in the area with five respondents supporting this but three who did not or were not sure. Any changes or additional controls relating to both of these topics would be subject to further consultation in the conservation area.

5.4 General comments highlighted parking, as a big issue within the conservation area. Parking restrictions are not included in the Management Plan document but the comments will be passed on to the Highways section for consideration.

5.5 Other remarks included the variety of uses within the area and the dependence on the night time economy. In the section on 'Vacant and under used buildings, the plan states that 'The Council will give favourable consideration to a wider range of uses than might normally be appropriate to help bring otherwise vacant buildings back into beneficial use, providing these do not adversely affect the architectural character or setting of the buildings or amenity of nearby properties.' It

is difficult to channel a variety of uses into one area however it is hoped that by including such sentiments in the document this will go some way to adding to the uses on offer in the area.

5.6 The document has been amended to reflect the comments made in the public consultation. In summary the final document covers the following key issues in Church Street Conservation Area:

- Vacant and under used buildings – Similar to the Seaton Carew Management Plan this section proposes that the Council will use statutory powers where appropriate to bring buildings back into use and give favourable consideration to a wide range of uses to bring buildings back into beneficial use..
- Building maintenance - The Management Plan proposes negotiation through the development control process and investigating the potential for grant funding for building maintenance.
- The installation of roller shutters to shop fronts and business advertising – As with Seaton Carew Conservation Area it is proposed that guidance is produced to assist properties owners and occupiers when looking at alterations and additions to their premises.
- Maintenance of the street environment – The Management Plan proposes that any replacement of hard landscaping and street furniture is carried out on a like for like basis where appropriate and where resources are available.

5.7 A table summarising the objectives and actions arising from the plan can be seen in **Appendix 4**. Those issues that are not covered in the Management Plan will be referred to the relevant council section to be addressed where possible.

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MANAGEMENT PLANS

6.1 The Management Plans will be implemented through existing working practices. Where the production of guidance is suggested this is likely to be in the form of generic guidance which would apply to all eight conservation areas.

7. RECOMMENDATION

7.1 That the Portfolio Holder notes the response to the public consultation for Seaton Carew and Church Street Management Plans and agrees to the Action Plans in **Appendix 2** and **4** of this report.

8. CONTACT OFFICER

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APPENDIX 1**Feedback on Seaton Carew Management Plan****160 Leaflets delivered to properties in Seaton Carew Conservation Area
15 Response were received (9%)**

1. We think the five main issues in the conservation area are building maintenance, alterations to buildings, shop fronts, development opportunities and the street environment. Can you tell us one issue you think is important?

Suggestions included:

- Street cleanliness after refuse collection
- Dog fouling of pavements
- Parking on pavements

2 The maintenance plan suggests producing guidance on a number of issues. Can you tick one box to indicate which one of these would be most useful to you?

- | | |
|------------------------------|----|
| • Building maintenance | 12 |
| • Alterations to shop fronts | 1 |
| • Signage on buildings | 1 |

3. Having a range of colours to choose from can bring about a more co-ordinated approach and enhance the character of an area. Would you like to see this in Seaton Carew Conservation Area?

- | | |
|------------|----|
| • Yes | 11 |
| • No | 3 |
| • Not sure | 0 |

4. Signage on business premises can have a big impact on the look of a street. Would you like to see special controls introduced into the conservation area to regulate the type of signage that can be used?

- | | |
|------------|----|
| • Yes | 11 |
| • No | 3 |
| • Not sure | 0 |

General Comments on Seaton Carew Management Plan

Comment	Response
<p>Certain properties in the Seaton Carew front street area feel that a gable end of a property is a free advertising site. I refer you to the 8 foot by 8 foot sign on the gable end of 'Number 2 The Front'. Planning permission was given for a Florist sign there, now that has had a wedding photography advert tacked over top of it, already looking shabby.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Action in the document proposes the production of a guidance document on signage.</p>
<p>Massive proliferation of signboards and 6 foot high Ice-cream cones effectively blocking the pavement for less-well able people in wheelchairs who need wide access.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Action as above.</p>
<p>Chewing gum on the pavements outside the arcades.</p>	<p>Comments noted and passed to appropriate section</p>
<p>Betting shop on station Lane causing parking issues.</p>	<p>Property is outside the conservation area. The comments noted and will be passed on to the Highways section for action if appropriate.</p>
<p>Dilapidated buildings, compulsory purchase the Longscar Centre and level it.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Document amended to include reference to the vacant Longscar Centre and other documents addressing this site.</p>

Comment	Response
<p>Move the yellow lines that were put down for the Tall Ships</p> <p>Badly unkempt buildings (i.e. The Longscar).</p>	<p>Comments noted and passed on the appropriate officers.</p> <p>Comments noted. Document amended to include reference to the vacant Longscar Centre and other documents addressing this site.</p>
<p>Demolish the hideous eyesore called 'Longscar Centre' For many years this building has spoilt Seaton's Centre. All the good work to improve Seaton's appearance is demeaned by its dereliction.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Document amended to include reference to the vacant Longscar Centre and other documents addressing this site.</p>
<p>Some assistance from the Council would be nice in maintaining these high cost buildings.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Action included in document to produce guidance on maintenance.</p>
<p>We think all the suggestions made are fantastic, the only major problem building that need to be regenerated or demolished is the so called Longscar Hall it is a disgrace to our areas.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Document amended to include reference to the vacant Longscar Centre and other documents addressing this site.</p>
<p>People in conservation areas pay a price/premium at time of purchase of property. Having done so they do not then wish to be dictated to by 'Council' as to how they must spend their money on maintaining or decorating their property.</p> <p>Council should concentrate on their role of street cleanliness, pavement safety (no vehicle parking), level pavement surfaces and highway pothole maintenance, street lightly, speed limit, parks and flower beds.</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>Comments noted and passed on to Highways section for consideration.</p>

Comment	Response
I am about to paint my front door a bright colour, perhaps red, therefore I would not want to be restricted to specific colours.	Comments noted.
My main concern is that the conservation area very cleverly misses out the old Longscar Hall/Coasters building so whilst the document states 'Seaton Carew has no long term vacant properties either commercial or residential which would affect the character and integrity of the conservation area', which as that building is not included in the conservation area would make this statement fairly accurate, surely having a building in such a state of disrepair right on the doorstep of a conservation does impact on the 'character and integrity'? I appreciate that there is probably good reasoning as to why this has been done but perhaps it would have been helpful to include an explanation with regards to this especially as the building is such a blot on the landscape and explain what is being done to deal with it?	Comments noted. Document amended to include reference to the vacant Longscar Centre and other documents addressing this site.
I do not agree necessarily with proposal 3. A requirement to contact the Council regarding repainting of Article 4 Properties already exists in previously issued info. I certainly do not agree with a co-ordinated systematic approach if this means one side of The Green should be all in black and white for instance.	Comments noted.
Allow later opening times in the park.	Comments noted. The Park is not in the conservation area, the comments will be passed on to the appropriate section.
Allow later opening times in the park.	Comments noted. The Park is not in the conservation area, the comments will be passed on to the appropriate section.
Could something be done to 'enforce' some movement on the repair or demolition of the old 'Longscar Hall' building which lets the whole front down.	Comments noted. Document amended to include reference to the vacant Longscar Centre and other documents addressing this site.

Comment	Response
<p>The 'blot on the landscape' is of course the Longscar Complex which detracts from what should be a desirable and attractive seaside resort. Similarly the property on the corner from Bees (which previously sold ice cream) - is another eyesore in such a prominent position. We hope that the Council will use all of its powers to compel the owners to do something about these properties.</p> <p>Owners of businesses should be encouraged to use traditional shop fronts – unfortunately some of the more brash seaside pursuits do not sit right in the conservation area.</p> <p>The desire for the retention/re-instatement of traditional materials for street surfaces and the use of like-for-like materials where necessary is to be commended.</p> <p>Pleased that the planting of new and replacement trees will be encouraged. Great care needs to be taken in planting of new trees to ensure they complement and enhance the build environment. A successful and attractive townscape comes when both natural and man made elements are seen as one being mutually supportive.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Document amended to include reference to the vacant Longscar Centre and other documents addressing this site. Reference also made in the document to other vacant buildings in the area and appropriate actions proposed to address the problem.</p> <p>Comments noted.</p> <p>Comments noted.</p> <p>Comments noted.</p>
<p>The building which used to be the Longscar Hall is a total disgrace. Its appearance lets down the rest of the area. Something needs to be done as soon as possible.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Document amended to include reference to the vacant Longscar Centre and other documents addressing this site.</p>

Comment	Response
<p>We think the Council have missed the point with reference to Seaton Carew front and shop signage. They should be focusing their efforts on the buildings that are an eyesore and bring shame on the council for allowing this; Coasters pub, Notrianis, Arcadia, Pizza shop, 50 The Front. The owners of these premises need to be approached, rather than businesses that try to maintain their premises with pride and no help from HBC.</p>	<p>Comments noted. The Document will be amended to include reference to the vacant Longscar Centre and other vacant buildings. The document addresses inappropriate shop fronts and signage.</p>
<p>There should be hanging baskets along The Front and Christmas decorations to coincide with Firework Display.</p>	<p>Comments noted and will be passed to relevant officers.</p>

APPENDIX 2

Summary of Seaton Carew Conservation Area Management Plan

Objective	Action
1. Building Maintenance: To continue to maintain and enhance the properties in the Seaton Carew Conservation Area	<p>1. The council will negotiate through the development control process and / or make use of its statutory powers to institute urgent works and repairs notices to protect listed buildings or unlisted buildings that contribute positively to the special character of a conservation area in cases where building within the conservation area are shown to be under threat as a result of poor maintenance.</p> <p>2. The Council will accept proposals for the appropriate repair of the buildings in Seaton Carew if the designs are sympathetic to the existing architectural detail, style and proportion of the existing building.</p> <p>3. The Council will produce guidance documents regarding the maintenance of buildings in conservation areas.</p>
2. Alterations to buildings: To ensure the preservation of the architectural integrity of properties in Seaton Carew Conservation Area	<p>1. The council will discourage the introduction of any roofing materials that are unsympathetic to the character of the existing area.</p> <p>2. The council will discourage any proposals that seek to introduce inappropriate or oversized windows i.e. none sash, Victorian Canted and Edwardian square windows.</p> <p>3. The council will discourage all applications to clad buildings with materials that are not appropriate to the appearance of the conservation area or that will negatively affect the appearance of any group of buildings within the conservation area.</p>
3. Shop fronts: To secure the preservation, restoration or improvement, as appropriate, of shop frontages in Seaton Carew Conservation Area.	<p>1. The Council will produce a document to inform owners of the preferred shop front and signage designs within the conservation area.</p> <p>2. The council will encourage the reinstatement or repair of original doors, windows and any features that reflect the original features of the area.</p>

Objective	Action
<p>4. Advertising on Shop fronts:</p> <p>To encourage the use of traditional signage on commercial properties in Seaton Carew Conservation Area</p>	1. The Council will produce guidance documents regarding appropriate forms of shop front advertising.
	2. The Council will exercise control over the display of advertisements in Seaton Carew Conservation Area to ensure that signs are designed and located to respect the character and appearance of the host building and historic street scene.
	3. The Council will consider making a direction under regulation 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of advertisements) Regulations 1992 to control advertisements within the Seaton Carew Conservation Area.
<p>5. Vacant properties:</p> <p>To secure the occupation and restoration, where necessary, of vacant buildings in and adjacent to the Seaton Carew Conservation Area.</p>	1. The Council will investigate the use of statutory powers where appropriate to bring buildings back into use and encourage owners to keep them in a good state of repair.
	2. The Council will give favourable consideration to a wider range of uses than might normally be appropriate to help bring otherwise vacant buildings back into beneficial use, providing these do not adversely affect the architectural character or setting of the buildings or amenity of nearby properties.
<p>6. Development Opportunities:</p> <p>To ensure that all new developments are appropriate to the character and appearance of Seaton Carew Conservation Area.</p>	1. The Council will expect any application for planning permission for development within the conservation area to include full details of the proposal.
	2. The Council will expect any proposal for a development within the conservation area to be supported by a Design Statement, which should include a full analysis of the surrounding area.
	3. The Council will encourage proposals for future developments in the conservation area that compliment and reinforce the existing character. Proposals should respond to the surrounding development in terms of scale, height, massing, alignment and materials. All proposals should enhance the character of the conservation area.

Objective	Action
7. The Street Environment To maintain and enhance the public realm of Seaton Carew Conservation Area.	1. The Council will ensure the retention / reinstatement of traditional paving and hard landscaping where appropriate.
	2. The Council will encourage like-for-like replacement, in appropriate materials where damage to street surface occurs.
	3. The Council will ensure the good maintenance of street furniture, and, where replacement is required that they are an appropriate design.
8. Trees To manage the tree coverage in and around Seaton Carew Conservation Area.	1. The council will encourage the planting of new and replacement trees where appropriate within the Conservation Area and outside the Area where these support the setting of the conservation area.

APPENDIX 3**Feedback on Church Street Management Plan****138 Leaflets delivered to properties in Church Street Conservation Area
10 Response were received (7%)**

1. We think the five main issues in the conservation area are building maintenance, alterations to buildings, shop fronts, development opportunities and the street environment. Can you tell us one issue you think is important?

Suggestions included:

- Vandalism
- Graffiti
- Petty crime to property

2 The maintenance plan suggests producing guidance on a number of issues. Can you tick one box to indicate which one of these would be most useful to you?

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| • Building maintenance | 5 |
| • Alterations to shop fronts | 0 |
| • Signage on buildings | 1 |

3. Having a range of colours to choose from can bring about a more co-ordinated approach and enhance the character of an area. Would you like to see this in Seaton Carew Conservation Area?

- | | |
|------------|---|
| • Yes | 4 |
| • No | 3 |
| • Not sure | 1 |

4. Signage on business premises can have a big impact on the look of a street. Would you like to see special controls introduced into the conservation area to regulate the type of signage that can be used?

- | | |
|------------|---|
| • Yes | 5 |
| • No | 1 |
| • Not sure | 2 |

General Comments on Church Street Management Plan

Comment	Response
All Church Street Parking Bays need to be longer with a minimum one hour free stay. Also the works 'Taxi' removed from road surfaces as they frighten off our day time customers. Purge illegal yellow lines.	Comments noted and will be passed on to relevant officer.
To help businesses survive and thus afford to maintain business premises parking availability is important. Some restrictions on colours and signage is desirable but it depends on how limiting the actual controls are. Would grants be available if a colour change is needed when painting is due?	Comments noted and will be passed on to relevant officer. Comments noted. Issue of grants is addressed in the plan.
Backlight signs should be refused. The use of bright pinks and yellows for paintwork in the area makes nonsense of the conservation area.	Comments noted. The plan includes a proposal to provide guidance on signage and shop front design which should address this issue.
The introduction of parking fees in the area has impacted on the businesses resulting in a reduction in trade with a knock on effect on employment. Scarborough Street was a busy street up until a few years ago but now a permit system is in operation there are a lot of vacant premises/ There is only one bay on the west side of Tower Street allocated for free parking for an hour, nothing on the east side which should be addressed. The area should be car/traffic friendly as the units in Church street are not viable for most businesses without this.	Comments noted and will be passed on to the relevant officer.

Comment	Response
The main problem in this area is the vacant premises, which hopefully may be partially addressed by the Council's offer of grants.	Comment noted. Vacant and under-used premises addressed in the plan.
The objective to improve shop fronts and cut down on shutters is desirable but it must be difficult for owners to rely on CCTV then to enclose premises. It has been good to see premises have a different use than formerly but obviously there is a downside.	Comments noted. The plan includes a proposal to provide guidance on signage and shop front design which will address issues of security.
There is an over-reliance on the night time economy, which if it were to collapse would put the conservation area a grave risk.	Comments noted. The plan will be amended to reflect this.
The provision of small grants to decorate and carry out minor repairs is an improvement.	Comments noted.
Agree with the desire to encourage traditional signage to retain the character of the area.	Comments noted.
Litter remains a problem, especially at weekends	Comments noted and will be passed to the relevant officer.
Better seating in the Church Square area would be of use. The area is currently underused. Replacement of litter bins long overdue currently bins in poor state, possibly benches outside the Art Gallery.	Comments noted and will be passed to the relevant officer.
The area looks attractive but dead. Do not impose controls which would prevent some rebirth. Real towns are not uniform.	Comments noted.

APPENDIX 4

Summary of Church Street Conservation Area Management Plan

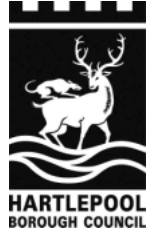
Objective	Action
<p>1. Vacant and under used buildings:</p> <p>To secure the occupation and restoration, where necessary, of vacant buildings within the Church Street Conservation Area</p>	1. The Council will investigate the use of statutory powers where appropriate to bring buildings back into use and encourage owners to keep them in a good state of repair.
	2. The Council will give favourable consideration to a wider range of uses than might normally be appropriate to help bring otherwise vacant buildings back into beneficial use, providing these do not adversely affect the architectural character or setting of the buildings or amenity of nearby properties.
	3. The Council will investigate grant budget to encourage empty properties to be re-occupied.
<p>2. Building Maintenance:</p> <p>To continue to maintain and enhance the properties in the Church Street Conservation Area.</p>	1. The council will produce guidance documents to advise owners of best practice in maintaining their properties.
	2. The council will investigate the potential for grant funding for building maintenance aimed at encouraging decoration of buildings.
<p>3. Shop fronts:</p> <p>To secure the preservation, restoration or improvement, as appropriate, of shop frontages in Church Street Conservation Area.</p>	1. The Council will produce a document to inform owners of the preferred shop front and signage designs within the conservation area.
	2. The council will encourage the reinstatement or repair of original doors, windows and any features that reflect the original features of the area.
	3. The council will take enforcement action against unauthorised change of use or removal of a shop front where there is a negative impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Objective	Action
<p>4. Advertising on Shop fronts:</p> <p>To encourage the use of traditional signage on commercial properties in Church Street Conservation Area</p>	1. The Council will produce guidance documents regarding appropriate forms of shop front advertising.
	2. The council will exercise control over the display of advertisements in Church Street Conservation Area to ensure that signs are designed and located to respect the character and appearance of the host building and historic street scene.
	3. The council will consider making a direction under regulation 7 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of advertisements) Regulations 1992 to control advertisements within the Church Street Conservation Area.
<p>5. Street Environment:</p> <p>To maintain and enhance the public realm of Church Street Conservation Area</p>	1. The council will encourage the retention/reinstatement of traditional paving and hard landscaping.
	2. The council will encourage like-for-like replacement in appropriate materials where damage to street surface occurs.
	3. Where wholesale replacement is required the council will co-ordinate with appropriate sections to ensure consistency and quality of alternative materials.
	4. The council will encourage good maintenance of street furniture, and, where replacement is required that they are of an appropriate design.
	5. The council will encourage the reduction of clutter including signage and street furniture, where appropriate.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder

20 May 2011



Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

Subject: TACKLING EMPTY HOMES - BADEN STREET
IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To outline a pilot proposal for tackling empty homes in Baden Street that if successful could be applied to other areas in the town and to seek endorsement for that approach.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report provides the context for tackling empty properties in Hartlepool. It describes the background to the development of regeneration proposals for Baden Street and seeks endorsement to implement the proposal with the use of Council funds.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

Housing and related matters fall within the remit of the Portfolio Holder.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non – key decision (capital funding has been previously approved)

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Portfolio Holder only.

6. DECISION REQUIRED

Portfolio Holder is requested to:

- (i) Endorse the outline project proposals and to commit in principle the use of capital resources outlined in section 5;

Report of: Assistant Director (Regeneration and Planning)

Subject: TACKLING EMPTY HOMES - BADEN STREET
IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To outline a pilot proposal for tackling empty homes in Baden Street that if successful could be applied to other areas in the town and to seek endorsement for that approach

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council through the Empty Home Strategy (2010-2015) is committed to adopting real measures to bring empty properties back into use as part of its overall strategic housing approach. The Strategy aims to bring private sector homes back into use, acknowledging concerns of the community regarding empty homes and the issues related to the image of the town. As well as improving the appearance and liveability of affected areas, dealing with empty properties also increases the supply of housing in the town.
- 2.2 Areas of low demand have primarily been dealt with through Housing Market Renewal and regeneration activity however reductions in Central Government funding has meant it has become increasingly difficult to deal with these areas in the same way. Alternative approaches are therefore required to deal with these issues that are less resource intensive but result in the same long term positive outcomes. It is proposed therefore to pilot an alternative approach to dealing with low demand in Baden Street, which if successful could be applied to similar areas across the town.
- 2.2 Baden Street is currently experiencing very low levels of housing demand. There are 45 properties in Baden Street and currently there are 22 properties which are empty. 43 of the properties are in the private rented sector. The condition of these properties is also generally very poor. These circumstances have led to a downward spiral of confidence in the street, and a declining reputation that in turn reinforces the low demand for housing in the area.
- 2.3 The problem is exacerbated further by the empty houses themselves becoming a target for theft, vandalism and anti-social behaviour increasing the spiral of decline. These conditions seem to be concentrated in Baden Street with neighbouring Streets relatively unaffected by the acute problems. Left unchecked however the

problems in Baden Street will intensify and there is a fear that the problems may spread to neighbouring streets.

- 2.4 Through public meetings, local residents have clearly indicated that urgent action is needed. In 2009/10 the Safer Hartlepool Strategic Assessment identified Baden Street as a priority area that was experiencing multiple crime and anti-social behaviour problems. Baden Street has also been identified as a key priority within the housing section of the Town Centre Communities Neighbourhood Action Plan and has been prioritised annually. The Central Area Joint Action Group (JAG) was charged with formulating and implementing an action plan to address the issues. This has resulted in a high level of co-ordinated activity in the area across a range of agencies including the Police, Probation, Anti Social Behaviour Unit, Victim Support, Fire Service, NHS etc. The JAG however recognised that this approach is resource intensive and leads only to short term solutions. A more comprehensive approach is required that addresses the underlying causes of the problems in Baden Street, which is low demand and an over reliance on the private rented sector and the related problems this brings.
- 2.5 The longer term proposals for Baden Street therefore need to focus on the issues of low demand, tackling absentee landlords that have poor track records of maintenance and responsiveness to tenant concerns, bringing empty properties back into use and improving the appearance of the street.
- 2.6 Further survey work in 2010 revealed that current residents have concerns about how the street is managed, and maintained. Support with ongoing tenancies was also highlighted as being desirable. The traffic levels in the street are repeatedly highlighted as an ongoing issue that adds to the low demand for housing in Baden Street and deters families from locating there.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 From the previous public meeting in Baden Street a resident steering group comprising residents, local ward members and the Police has been established to generate ideas and solutions to the identified problems.
- 3.2 Resources are going to be required to fund whatever solutions are suggested to address the problems in Baden Street. Clearly resources available for dealing with these type of issues in the current economic climate and against the backdrop of Council budget reductions are limited.

- 3.3 The Council and partners have a very good track record in delivering change in areas of low housing demand including successful schemes at Trinity Court and Headway. This model of regeneration i.e purchase (by agreement or CPO) and redevelopment is effective but is very resource intensive. It is estimated that the cost of delivering this type of scheme in Baden Street would cost approximately £2.5-£3m to deal with 45 properties. Funding for housing market renewal has also been significantly reduced and the remaining funding is committed to delivering schemes that have already started.
- 3.4 To successfully address the range of issues in Baden Street therefore a project is required that fits within a budget that is affordable, is sustainable and will result in long term stability.
- 3.5 To address the issues therefore a multi faceted approach is suggested whilst work is ongoing to establish the final details, the following key elements will be essential:

- i) **A landlord incentive scheme** – Improving the condition of the existing properties internally and externally is critical in order to attract new tenants to Baden Street. An incentive scheme is therefore proposed to encourage investment in individual properties. A grant/loan scheme is being developed to encourage investment. Discussions with landlords and agents have indicated that there is appetite for investment if there are incentives so to do. Detailed survey work through the Council's inspection team is required to provide details of the nature and scope of works required. This information will then influence the final shape of the grants/loans scheme. It is suggested that there is an initial focus on the empty properties and owner occupiers with a view to addressing tenanted properties later, subject to the availability of funding.

Landlords have identified that during the period of time when any works are carried out, there will need to be security measures in place to protect properties from potential attack and theft.

It is also clear that landlords are unlikely to invest without the confidence of a tenant and the security of income.

- ii) **Tenant Support** – A key element of any successful scheme will be the introduction of new tenants into Baden Street. From a landlord's perspective this will provide reassurance the investment they have made is protected and a return is made through rental incomes. It will also protect the HBC funding invested in the street. In addition it would also mean that through the careful introduction of the right tenants, the foundations for a stable community can be built up in the street. Given the current

reputation of the street this element of the scheme will require that there are a range of incentives to encourage new tenants to locate there. The Council and partner organisations already have established services that can provide intensive 'on the ground', tenant support to help new tenants to become established. Current tenant waiting lists will be interrogated to begin to try and identify people who may be interested and direct discussions will take place to see if people can be incentivised to take a tenancy in Baden Street in newly refurbished accommodation.

A whole range of support could be offered including, assisting new tenants in setting up utilities, assessment of furniture requirements and provision of furniture, helping to ensure rents are paid on time and arrears are managed, providing benefit advice, ensuring properties have the essential safety gas and electricity checks in place, ensuring effective responses to anti social behaviour and working with all other partner organisations etc. This can be provided through utilising a mixture of HBC and Housing Hartlepool's existing provision.

- (iii) **Security** – The resident working group has identified that some form of established police presence in Baden Street would help to reduce criminal activity in the street and reassure law abiding tenants that measures are in place to improve the street. Work is being done therefore to test the feasibility of the Police and other partner organisations negotiating the use of an existing property to establish a base that can be used as a 'community hub' by the various organisations. An assessment is underway to establish what works are required to accommodate the Police and others and the associated cost.

Discussions have also taken place with security firms to determine what additional security could be provided during the period of refurbishment works. This will provide reassurance to landlords that their improved properties will be protected prior to new residents moving in and also to building contractors during the course of the works.

- (iv) **Existing Problem Tenants and Landlords** – To complement the positive aspects of the improvement works it will be important to address those that do not cooperate or who are falling below the standards expected. All possible enforcement actions will be considered once the scheme is launched to tackle uncooperative landlords.
- (iv) **Communication Strategy** – An important element of the approach will be to communicate proposals and progress to all of the residents in Baden Street and the wider Burn Valley area. It is proposed to use existing communication avenues including

the local residents association, Town Centre Communities Forum, Council newsletters, leaflets, websites, and press releases.

- (v) **Environmental Improvements** – To complement the investment expected through the landlord incentive element of the scheme, some investment is also required to improve the streetscape, road layout and pedestrian access on the street. Currently the levels of traffic are high as the street is used as a cut through. This is another negative attribute to the street that restricts residential demand. Following the launch of the incentive scheme and the successful implementation it is proposed that options around improving the streetscape are explored and consulted upon.

The design of the scheme will need to ensure that the impact of the vehicle movements are kept to a minimum and all options around the design solution should be explored and consulted on prior to implementation, including the possibility of one way traffic.

The scheme will also attempt to introduce appropriate planting to the area that will help to soften the environment but not encourage criminal or anti social behaviour and exacerbate litter problems.

A design solution with a low cost, long term maintenance requirement will be preferred. A scheme that could be maintained by a future Tenant Management Organisation or residents group will be considered.

Careful consideration will also be given to the timing of the environmental improvements; these will only be implemented if there is interest, demand and uptake in the property incentive scheme. A stand alone environmental scheme would have little long term affect on the problems in Baden Street. This element will be a second phase of the overall package and subject to further funding becoming available.

The back alleyways associated with the two sides of Baden Street will also be considered through resident consultation to determine how these spaces could be improved, made safe for family use, and provide some protected amenity space for new residents.

- (v) **Deliverability** - As with any grant or incentive scheme, generating and maintaining momentum will be critical. A single point of contact that is available and accessible will help to ensure the scheme is successful.

It will be important to ensure that as this scheme is developed that it links fully with all the partner organisations/stakeholders and groups operating in the area that are striving to improve Baden Street. For example activities of groups such as the Town Centre Communities Forum, who have recently funded coverings for down pipes and guttering to all properties in Baden Street need to be fully integrated in to this scheme. Close working relationships with the Police and Neighbourhood Management teams will also be critical.

It will be important that the scheme is responsive and enough flexibility is built in, to ensure that it can respond to the problems in Baden Street. The inevitable complexities of the particular private circumstances of tenants, landlords and contractors will mean that there will need to be a responsive nature to this scheme, to ensure that the maximum benefits are delivered and value for money is achieved.

In addition to the specific project activity it is critical these interventions are supported by the ongoing intensive neighbourhood management and monitoring activity.

4. COSTS AND TIMESCALES

<u>Use</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>How calculated</u>	<u>Which agency to fund (if relevant)</u>
Landlord Incentives Scheme	£120,000	Calculated on the basis of the 22 currently empty properties and owner occupiers, each accessing £5000 through the incentive scheme. (note: this figure could change depending on results of property surveys).	HBC
Security/Police Presence	£25,000	Estimated on anticipated security costs and works needed to provide accommodation for police and partners.	HBC
Supporting Tenants	£25,000	Costs of staff time to actively support people to retain tenancies, and prevent displacement. A dedicated resource to actively work with tenants in all aspects of independent living contracted through a Service Level	HBC/Housing Hartlepool

<u>Use</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>How calculated</u>	<u>Which agency to fund (if relevant)</u>
		Agreement.	
Environmental Improvements*	£200,000	Estimated cost based on previous schemes in similar areas. Further design work, and consultation is required.	HBC
Grants for tenanted properties**	£105,000	Up to £5,000 grants for home owners and tenanted properties.	HBC
Total	£475,000		HBC

*Notes - *&** These elements of the proposals will form subsequent phases of the Baden Street Improvement Scheme.*

All of these costs are indicative, further work is required to establish final costs.

- 4.1 Project development work is ongoing, however it is expected that if the project proposal is agreed then the following timetable can be implemented:

Portfolio Approval	May 2011
Develop marketing information for Incentive Scheme	May 2011
Continue detailed property surveys	May 2011
Actively begin promotion of incentive scheme	June 2011
First application to the scheme received	Aug 2011

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 Currently £215,000 funding has been identified to support the costs associated with the Baden Street scheme. This funding has been identified from HBC unsupported corporate prudential borrowing. Given the shortfall in available funding against the indicative costs, it is proposed that a phased approach is implemented.
- 5.2 At this stage it is intended that this resource will be used to fund the landlord incentive scheme, security, and tenant support elements of the overall programme. Any remaining funding will then be targeted towards the tenanted properties. There will be no commitments made beyond the scope of the approved budget, which will form a discrete phase of works. Any outstanding work areas not completed will be subject to securing further funding.

6. RECOMMENDATION

Portfolio Holder is requested to:

- (i) Endorse the outline project proposals and to commit in principle the use of capital resources outlined in section 5.

7. CONTACT OFFICER

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