
DRAFT 3

The Sustainable Community Strategy for Chester-le-Street

Updated for 2006 - 2016



www.districtpartnership.org.uk

Contents	page
1. The Sustainable Community Strategy	3
2. Our vision and priorities for the District	4
3. How we have identified the vision and priorities	6
4. How we will deliver this strategy	7
5. Our principles	8
6. Involving communities in shaping the strategy and its delivery	9
7. The District of Chester-le-Street today – an overview	11
8. Our priorities in summary	12
9. Our priorities in detail	
Priority 1 - page 14	
Priority 2 - page 16	
Priority 3 - page 18	
Priority 4 - page 19	
Priority 5 - page 21	
Priority 6 – page 22	
Priority 7 – page 24	
Priority 8 – page 26	
Priority 9 – page 28	
Priority 10 – page 29	
10. The District Partnership – the Local Strategic Partnership for the District	31
11. Membership of the District Partnership	32
12. How to contact us	33

1. The Sustainable Community Strategy

Sustainable communities

This strategy sets out a framework for improving the quality of life for residents and visitors to our district by creating sustainable, cohesive and inclusive communities. Building sustainable communities is a core theme running through this strategy. Sustainable communities are characterised by many things, but fundamentally require that our neighbourhoods are places where people want to live and work, which are safe and clean and with local access to good quality services and where business can thrive.

Social inclusion

This strategy is a clear statement of the importance we place on creating strong and inclusive communities. We value the diversity of our communities and aim to positively include all communities in the life and opportunities of the district, whatever their ethnicity, sexual orientation or physical abilities. Through the work of the District Partnership we will strengthen and develop social and community networks that help build cohesive communities.

Background to the strategy

Community Strategies and Local Strategic Partnerships were originally introduced by the Local Government Act 2000. The aim was to bring together the public sector with local communities and the voluntary and private sectors to work to better co-ordinate and deliver local services that meet peoples needs. In 2002 our Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) – the District Partnership – was established and in 2004 the first Community Strategy was published. Since then much has been achieved by partners working together – we have sought to explain our achievements in local publications and on our website.

The sustainable community strategy

Sustainable Community Strategies are now required by the Government, and the change that this represents includes a requirement for more evidence of local needs and on the value added to other local plans such as land use plans (the Local Development Framework). The strategy must also be robust enough to set the agenda for the Local Area Agreement – below.

In establishing the vision and priorities for the strategy we have undertaken a series of stakeholder consultation events with communities and organisations across the District. Community and voluntary sector involvement through the mechanisms and structures of the District Partnership and throughout the updating of the strategy, together with a strengthened evidence base, ensures that the strategy continues to be outward focused on meeting community needs and priorities.

This document represents an updating and strengthening of the targets that we originally set ourselves to deliver the vision for the district – a vision which we believe remains a clear and strong statement of the future for the District and its communities (see pages 4/5).

Local Area Agreement for County Durham

In County Durham a Local Area Agreement (LAA) has been negotiated by local authorities and partners across all Districts in the County and the Government to identify priorities for action in communities. The District Partnership is carrying out an important role in LAA and in the delivery of its outcome objectives. The Action Plan accompanying this strategy sets out the contributions the strategy makes to the LAA.

2. Our vision and priorities for the District

There are four aspects to the vision:

- **A strong, sustainable and diverse economic base**
- **Inclusive communities**
- **Excellent communication networks**
- **An attractive and protected environment**

A strong, sustainable and diverse economic base

The quality of life offered in the North East is attracting people and business to this region, and Chester-le-Street to be part of this success. The District's excellent location, facilities and communication links will be capitalised on to develop new opportunities in manufacturing and distribution, in information and communication technology and in tourism and leisure. We will make the best from the opportunities presented by the Northern Way and the Regional Spatial Strategy and the development of city-regions.

Our priorities are to:

- Support local business and create opportunities for new and innovative businesses
- Develop Chester-le-Street as a thriving commercial centre
- Develop a tourism and leisure based economy building on the unique cultural heritage of the District

Inclusive communities

Through the work of the District Partnership we will strengthen and develop social and community networks that help build cohesive communities. We want all those living in our communities to benefit from the changes we expect our communities will experience over the next ten years. We aim to build sustainable communities with neighbourhoods in which people want to live and work, which are safe and clean and with local access to good quality services. The contribution of culture and leisure to the well being of communities is as important as improvements to health, learning, employment and other local services for all sections of the community.

Our priorities are to:

- Promote sustainable communities through better quality and access to, and greater choice and improved efficiency, in housing in neighbourhoods across the district

- Make the District a safer place to live, work and visit; to further reduce crime and disorder and to increase public reassurance
- Maximise and promote lifelong learning opportunities as a contribution to the economic, social and environmental well being of our communities
- Improve the health and well being of communities across the district; tackle health inequalities in; and improve access to and quality of health and social care services
- Champion the development and promotion of culture, leisure, sport and the arts in contributing to the well being residents and local communities

Excellent communication networks

Chester-le-Street will become a key hub in the regional transport network and we will develop new and environmentally friendly modes of transport. As the communication of ideas and information is becoming as vital as the movement of people, virtual and electronic communication will play a full role in the revitalisation of the District. By 2016 each community will have access to information technology networks through local hubs or centres.

Our priority is to:

- Improve transport to ensure better access, greater choice, higher quality and more sustainable local provision

Objectives to improve local access to services and improved communication through ICT and community facilities are also identified – see priority 4, pg 19.

An attractive and protected environment

We will develop a clean and attractive environment that will visibly add to the quality of life for all of our communities. Complementing this we aim to foster a positive image of the District reflecting its unique character and heritage that will be recognised by visitors and locals alike. The District will become known for innovative approaches to sustainable development and for protecting the environment for future generations.

Our priority is to:

- Manage the built and natural environment to promote biodiversity whilst creating greener, cleaner more sustainable communities

3. How we have identified our vision and our priorities

There are three aspects of the work of the District Partnership that are combined to determine priorities for the strategy and to define its targets:

- Involvement of multi-agency stakeholder groups – our Policy Groups
- Community involvement and consultation
- Collating data and evidence of community needs

Policy Groups

There are seven Policy Groups bringing together the public, private, community and voluntary sector to explore the issues, which need to be addressed. Policy Groups assess evidence, take account of local needs and community priorities, as well as Government targets and define the detailed objectives and targets for delivery:

- Environment, Housing and Planning
- Community Safety (the statutory Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership)
- Economic Regeneration
- Health Improvement
- Life-Long Learning
- Culture and Creativity Policy Group
- Children and Young People's Planning Group (statutory group forming part of the Children's Services Authority established on 1 April 2006)

Community involvement and consultation

Community involvement and consultation through resident, tenant groups, other community and advisory groups and so on in the development of the strategy and its delivery are varied and are explored in Section 6.

Collating data and evidence of community needs

Data from a range of sources is used including:

- the Office of National Statistics based on the 2001 Census,
- Neighbourhood Statistics
- 2005 Residents Opinion Survey
- Floor Targets interactive
- Local Authority Profiles, Government Office for North East
- Chester-le-Street Housing Needs Survey and Stock Conditions Survey
- Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Local Area Labour Force Survey
- Department of Health
- Department for Education and Science
- NOMIS
- County Durham Observatory

4. How we will deliver this strategy - a framework for action

Long term vision with short-term actions

The Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the long term vision and key priorities for our District for 2006 – 2016. The strategy has an Action Plan which identifies the shorter-term targets and actions which we will achieve focusing on the period 2006 – 2010. Actions will be delivered by the lead agencies identified and in partnership with members of the identified Policy Group.

If you would like to see the detailed Action Plan – contact us or visit our website – see page 34.

A focus on partnership objectives

The strategy focuses on objectives that can only be delivered through partnership working through – focusing on the ‘added value’ that partnership working brings.

Objectives established by Policy Groups are derived from the key issues identified by stakeholders, based on evidence, national targets and local needs, and informed community representatives and voluntary organisations involved.

The Action Plan identifies the current position indicating the evidence, giving the baseline and source of the priority (where the priority has come from), to inform the targets that are set and against which progress will be monitored.

Targets and Actions

This Action Plan identifies short-term targets and actions for the period 2006 – 2010. Each target is a desired outcome against which we will be monitored, and the actions are those steps we will be taking.

Our previous strategy - published in 2004 - contained a larger number of objectives, targets and actions. This strategy has been updated to ensure we are more focused on a smaller number of key areas that we want to make a difference to. Our targets are ‘Smart’ – that means they are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound. Each target has a unique reference number and our Performance Monitoring system will produce regular reports on progress.

Who will deliver and by when

The Action Plan is clear about by when targets are to be met, and a lead agency is identified so that it is clear who is principally responsible for achieving the target – even though there are likely to be several partner organisations involved in its delivery.

Outcome indicators

For each of the Strategy’s Priorities an Outcome Indicator is identified – a nationally recognised ‘Quality of Life’ indicator, or if more appropriate, a Local Indicator – to help us measure the progress we are making on the Priority.

Performance monitoring

Both the Action Plan targets and Quality of Life (or Local) Indicators will be monitored and reported on every six months; they will also be reviewed annually to take account of progress made and to identify next steps.

Local Area Agreement

The Action Plan also identifies where local actions are contributing to the Local Area Agreement outcomes and targets for County Durham 2006-2009.

5. Our Principles

Social inclusion

Through the work of the District Partnership we will strengthen and develop social and community networks that help build cohesive communities. This strategy is a clear statement of the importance we place on creating strong and inclusive communities. We value the diversity of our communities and aim to positively include all communities in the life and opportunities of the district, whatever their ethnicity, sexual orientation or physical abilities.

Environmental sustainability

We will promote biodiversity, and seek to improve and protect the natural and built environment, conserve energy and reduce pollution, for the benefit of present and future generations.

Work in partnership to deliver effective, efficient and modern public services

We will work with our partners to improve public services by sharing responsibility, resources and information, and by exploring opportunities for innovation in service delivery.

Our priorities link to and influence other local, regional and national strategies and plans

This strategy links to a large number of local, regional and national plans and strategies - in particular the:

- Local Area Agreement for County Durham
- Regional Economic Strategy
- Regional Spatial Strategy
- Local Development Framework for the district
- Chester-le-Street District Council's Housing Strategy
- Durham and Chester-le-Street Primary Care Trust's Health Improvement and Modernisation Plan 2003-2008 and Choosing Health Action Plan
- County Vision of the County Durham Strategic Partnership
- The Government's Sustainable Communities Plan

6. Involving communities in shaping the strategy and its delivery

In seeking to create strong and inclusive communities we will work to empower communities to engage with processes of planning and delivering local services. There are many different ways in which the views of residents, local businesses, visitors and others inform the development and delivery of this strategy and of plans, which support it.

Some of the ways for community engagement with the District Partnership and its Community Strategy:

The Children and Young People's Participation Project - young people aiming to improve local services

The District Partnership helped establish an award-winning project involving young people from across the District to bring about change in the services provided for them. The group has been exploring issues of concern to them and raising these directly with the organisations and individuals in Chester-le-Street who can help to make changes.

The District Partnership initiated the project in autumn of 2004 with funding from the Children's Fund specifically to work with 5-13 year olds. In March 2006 the young people received an award for their achievements from the High Sheriff of Durham at a ceremony at Durham Castle.

The District Partnership Steering Group invited the group to bring their ideas for discussion at its July 2005 board meeting. Having spent time building their confidence and honing their ideas they were keen to do this and eight young people discussed their ideas with senior representatives of the major public bodies serving the District. This was a positive experience for all involved and following this several agencies have been working with the group to work to address some of the issues raised.



**The project group
discussing issues**

Since then the young people have been working with the Chester-le-Street District Council on several projects. One aimed at improving the cleanliness of local play areas and green spaces, they have worked on the location of litter bins and exploring

the process of how this happens from funding to completion. In addition the group has chosen and advised on play equipment to be installed at the Riverside Park.

The group has also undertaken a programme with Durham Constabulary to find out more about how the police operate and how decisions are made, as part of this they have been able to visit Chester-le-Street Police Station and Aykley Heads Communications Department.

Community Partnerships

Community Partnerships were established to enhance community engagement with the District Partnership. They achieve a flow of information and a dialogue between members and representatives of resident and community groups and providers of public services. A network of community partnership representatives are supported to play an integral part in the work of the District Partnership by raising community issues of strategic importance with the partner organisations.

Residents and Tenant Associations

Resident and Tenant Associations across the district are assisted and supported to engage with local public bodies and others delivering services where they live and with the District Partnership. They engage with their geographic communities and seek to address local quality of life issues by liaising with organisations directly and through their nominated representatives on Community Partnerships

Local Advisory Groups

Established and led by Durham and Chester-le-Street Primary Care Trust, Local Advisory Groups (LAGs) are a mechanism for engaging with the public and patients on the provision of primary care services. LAG representatives also sit on the Health Improvement Policy Group.

Voluntary and Community Sector Forum

To engage with the diverse network of voluntary and community organisations in the District, Chester-le-Street and District Council for Voluntary Service lead the Voluntary and Community Sector Forum enabling dialogue and a flow of information between the District Partnership and its public sector partners. A network of voluntary sector representatives is supported to be part of the work of the District Partnership and its Policy Groups.

7. The District of Chester-le-Street today – an overview

Chester-le-Street benefits from an outstanding natural environment, and its geographic location places it at the heart of North East.

With schools that have among the best examination results in County Durham, a range of quality and choice in housing, low unemployment and levels of crime well below county, regional and national levels, the district offers an excellent quality of life for its residents.

The major successes of the Riverside Cricket Ground - a Test Match ground and home of Durham County Cricket Club – has placed the district firmly on the regional and national sporting map. Other recent sports developments includes the building of an indoor cricket centre and re-location of the Durham County Football Association to the Riverside Sports Complex.

A major programme of improvements to the Town Centre will act as a catalyst for local economic activity and includes major works of public art, and the revitalisation of the Town's historic market place.

The heritage of the district will also help drive its economic prosperity. The town of Chester-le-Street has a long history - it was here that the Bible was first translated into English. Once the site of Concangium, a Roman fort, and, during the Anglo Saxon period, the resting-place of St Cuthbert's body and the Lindisfarne Gospels – in 2005 a copy was acquired as a permanent attraction for the District by its local Heritage Group.

As an ex-coalfield area this aspect of the District's life is recalled in the North of England Open Air Museum at Beamish - an important heritage leisure facility in the district.

The population of the district has risen 3.4% over the past 20 years compared to a North East average of a 2.8% fall and this trend is expected to continue with further overall population growth of 2.8% anticipated by 2021. The proportion of those aged over 65 will increase from 16% to 24% over this period and a doubling of those aged over 80 years from 3.5% to 6.3%

The district has a small but well established ethnic minority population – the largest group in the district is Chinese at 0.3% of the district's population.

The district is less deprived than many others in the County and region - 6 neighbourhoods (Super Output Areas – ODPM) are ranked within the 20% most deprived in the country and 4 are ranked least deprived. Half of children live in families that are described as 'income deprived'

8. Our Priorities – in summary

A strong, sustainable and diverse economic base

Priority 1: Support local business and create opportunities for new and innovative businesses

Priority 2: Develop Chester-le-Street as a thriving commercial centre

Priority 3: Develop a tourism and leisure based economy building on the unique cultural heritage of the District.

Inclusive communities

Priority 4: Promote sustainable communities through better quality and access to, and greater choice and improved efficiency, in housing in neighbourhoods across the district.

Priority 5: Make the District a safer place to live, work and visit; to further reduce crime and disorder and to increase public reassurance.

Priority 6: Maximise and promote lifelong learning opportunities as a contribution to the economic, social and environmental well being of our communities.

Priority 7: Improve the health and well being of communities across the district; tackle health inequalities; and improve access to and quality of health and social care services

Priority 8: Champion the development and promotion of culture, leisure, sport and the arts in contributing to the well being of residents and local communities

Excellent communication networks

Priority 9: Improve transport to ensure better access, greater choice, higher quality and more sustainable local provision.
See also Priority 4 & Priority 6 for E Government and improving access to services through ICT and community facilities.

An attractive and protected environment

Priority 10: Manage the built and natural environment to promote biodiversity whilst creating greener, cleaner more sustainable communities

9. Our Priorities – in detail

- 9.1** Priority 1 – Page 14
- 9.2** Priority 2 – Page 16
- 9.3** Priority 3 – Page 18
- 9.4** Priority 4 – Page 19
- 9.5** Priority 5 – Page 21
- 9.6** Priority 6 – Page 22
- 9.7** Priority 7 – Page 24
- 9.8** Priority 8 – Page 26
- 9.9** Priority 9 – Page 28
- 9.10** Priority 10 – Page 29

9.1

Priority 1: Support local business and create opportunities for new and innovative businesses

The District's excellent location, facilities and communication links present opportunities for the expansion of businesses and services in manufacturing and distribution and in information and communication technology. The largest sector of employment in Chester-le-Street is distribution, hotels and restaurants at 30%. This is 5% larger than England and nearly 8% higher than the North East. The next largest employment sector is public administration, education and health at 25.7%.

Small and medium sized enterprises characterise the district economy – in 2004 there were 555 enterprises in the district employing 0-4 persons, yet many of these businesses fail to make it past their fifth birthday with 51% failing after four years. There are low rates of business start-up. The VAT registration rate – a guide to business start-ups - was 17.3 in 2003, below the North East rate of 22.6 and the England rate of 41.8 per 10,000 adult populations.

32% of people aged 16-74 have no qualifications and a quarter of adults in Chester-le-Street have poor literacy and numeracy. This is higher than the national average, but lower than most other districts in County Durham.

Economic activity is high - for the period April 04 to March 05 there were 80.1% (27,100) economically active people in Chester-le-Street – higher than for the North East and Great Britain. The area is characterised by residents commuting outside the District for work – 70% of those economically active do so.

The unemployment 'claimant' count was 1.5% in 2004, significantly below the North East rate of 2.8%. Percentage of people claiming benefits in Chester-le-Street at the age of 18-24 is 36.7% - this is higher than in the North East and nationally. The percentage of people claiming benefits aged 25-49 (47.3%) and 50 and over (15.6%) is less than in the North East and nationally.

Our objectives:

- **Produce an economic development and regeneration strategy for the District**
- **Maximise engagement of the business sector with the work of the Local Strategic Partnership**
- **Provide an attractive and appropriate environment to encourage more businesses to locate to the district**
- **Increase the number of new businesses in the District**

How we will measure progress

There is a detailed Action Plan for the delivery of our objectives that will be monitored and reported on every six months. If you would like to see a copy of the Action Plan contact us or visit our website – see page 33. In addition, outcomes for the district will be measured against the following indicators:

- Quality of Life indicator 11: The percentage of working-age population that is in employment.
- Quality of Life Indicator 13: a) The total number of VAT registered businesses in the area at the end of the year; b) the percentage change in the number of VAT registered businesses
- Economic Regeneration Performance Indicators (Audit Commission) 12: Proportion of Super Output Areas (SOAs) in the District that rank within the most deprived 20% in the country.

9.2

Priority 2: Develop Chester-le-Street as a thriving commercial centre

Chester-le-Street town is the civic heart of the District and its potential will be harnessed in order for it to lead and foster sustainable, economic and social development across the District. New and ambitious developments are taking place – that will take Chester-le-Street towards one of the most exciting periods in its history. The New Heart project addresses every aspect of life in the town and places accessibility at the forefront of its plans. It will create a safe, commercially vibrant and physically attractive Town Centre where people want to live, work, learn shop and socialise, and of which local people can be proud.

It will include a modern and revitalised market and the creation of new gateway sites, the creation of a new civic square, public art and a redeveloped Mechanics Institute as a centre for lifelong learning and community enterprise.

The project will strengthen Chester-le-Street as the economic hub of the local economy, encouraging local retail choice and thus retaining wealth within the district. The District Partnership sees this as part of a wider process for improvement of centres throughout the District – the development of Community Hearts - to retain commercial activity and wealth in the face of a drain of resources to commercial centres elsewhere.

This strategy recognises the importance of improving communications and access for the outlying settlements in the District to ensure that they benefit from the economic and social development of Chester-le-Street Town Centre.

Our objectives:

- **Promoting and developing the Town Centre**
- **Improving the quality of the town's market and its identity**
- **Identifying potential development site(s) for hotel(s) and other types of visitor and business accomodation in the District**
- **Improving on the current attractiveness of the environment for business and visitors**
- **Evaluating opportunities to develop identities for specific areas within the town**
- **Ensuring that the planning of transport and public access supports the economy of the Town Centre and the District**

How we will measure progress

There is a detailed Action Plan for the delivery of our objectives that will be monitored and reported on every six months. If you would like to see a copy of the Action Plan contact us or visit our website – see page 33. In addition, outcomes for the district will be measured against the following indicators:

- Economic Regeneration Performance Indicators (Audit Commission):
- ECR13a): Visits (measured by pedestrian footfall) to the town centre.
- ECR14a): i) Number of retail ground floor units not being used as a proportion of total number of ground floor businesses
ii) Percentage change since last year.

9.3

Priority 3: Develop a tourism and leisure based economy building on the unique cultural heritage of the District

The District's excellent sporting and its historic character will be capitalised on to develop new opportunities in tourism and leisure attracting visitors to the District and contributing to the success of the region.

The largest sector of employment in Chester-le-Street is distribution, hotels and restaurants at 30%. We aim to develop this sector further capitalising on the District's distinct local heritage and its location at the heart of the North East – close to the world heritage site of Durham Cathedral and the conurbation of Tyne and Wear, an internationally renowned centre for the arts.

The District is an ex-coalfield area and this aspect of local life is recalled in the North of England Open Air Museum at Beamish – a regionally and nationally important part of the heritage leisure industry. In 2005 a copy the Lindisfarne Gospels was acquired as a permanent attraction for the District commemorating it as a resting-place of St Cuthbert's body and the gospels.

With the continued success of the Riverside Cricket Ground - a Test Match ground and home of Durham County Cricket Club - the district is now firmly situated on the regional and national sporting map.

Our objectives:

- **Undertake marketing research and development for the District to enable it to capitalise on tourism opportunities, linked to its history and market town identity**
- **Increase visitor numbers within the District**
- **Identify how best tourists and visitors to the District can be made aware of tourist information**
- **Develop a human resource base within the District to support visitor needs**

How we will measure progress

There is a detailed Action Plan for the delivery of our objectives that will be monitored and reported on every six months. If you would like to see a copy of the Action Plan contact us or visit our website – see page 33. In addition, outcomes for the district will be measured against the following indicators:

- Quality of Life indicator 10: The percentage of residents who think that their local area, over the past three years that the following have got better or stayed the same: b) cultural facilities; d) sport and leisure facilities.
- Economic Regeneration Performance Indicator (Audit Commission): ECR 15a) Day visitors per annum.

9.4

Priority 4: Promote sustainable communities through better quality and access to, and greater choice and improved efficiency in, housing in neighbourhoods across the district

The provision of housing in the District will be carefully managed ensuring there is a balanced and affordable provision in communities where people want to live. Housing-led neighbourhood regeneration initiatives in locations including Pelton Fell, Grange Villa and Sacriston will help achieve sustainable communities. This will be supported by improved access to services ensuring communities are in touch with the services they need: modern information technology provides opportunities for the use of local networks and community facilities to provide local access. This can be achieved through the development of neighbourhood 'one-stop-shop' facilities, for example the pilot work on Community Hubs in Grange Villa, and plans for the Learning and Enterprise Centre at the Mechanics Institute in Chester-le-Street town centre. Opportunities to re-configure the cross agency provision of services locally through a 'Neighbourhood Services' approach will also help to achieve this outcome.

There are 22,851 dwellings in the District and 76% are privately owned, with 4,383 Council owned dwellings – this has declined from a figure of 5,367 in 2002 due mainly to house sales and demolition. The condition of public and private housing stock in the District is generally good, with rates of unsatisfactory and non-decent housing below national and regional averages. 22% of Council Housing stock does not meet Decent Homes Standard and it is a requirement for all Council Housing to achieve this standard by 2010, and a method of achieving this may be to transfer its stock to another social housing landlord.

The District has experienced significant house price inflation in recent years. Together with a large forecast increase in single person households through older people living longer and other demographic factors leading to an expected sustained future demand for affordable housing.

Conditions for vulnerable households is a key consideration as there is a shortfall in affordable dwellings of 400 per year and around a fifth of households in the District are unable to achieve indoor temperatures during the winter period sufficient to maintain their health and well being, due to both poor housing as well as low household income.

Our objectives:

- **Improving housing conditions**
- **Promote sustainability and energy efficiency in residential dwellings to achieve affordable warmth**
- **Providing housing services which meet the needs of vulnerable people**
- **Creating communities where people want to live through housing-led neighbourhood regeneration schemes**

- **Supporting neighbourhood regeneration by improving access to services ensuring communities are in touch with the services they need**
- **Supporting neighbourhood regeneration through involving communities in the development and delivery of services**
- **Help reduce child poverty**

How we will measure progress

There is a detailed Action Plan for the delivery of our objectives that will be monitored and reported on every six months. If you would like to see a copy of the Action Plan contact us or visit our website – see page 33. In addition, outcomes for the district will be measured against the following indicators:

- Quality of Life indicator 40: The percentage of housing that is unfit Decent Homes Standard BVPI (Proportion of Council homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard).
- Quality of Life indicator 39: The percentage of residents who think that people sleeping rough on the streets or in other public places is a big or fairly big problem in their local area.
- Quality of Life indicator 37: Affordable dwellings as a percentage of all new housing completions.
- Best Value Performance Indicator 63: Energy efficiency of domestic council dwellings extending to all tenures.

9.5

Priority 5: Make the District a safer place to live, work and visit; to further reduce crime and disorder and to increase public reassurance

Crime rates in the District are low and generally falling but fear of crime and anti-social behaviour is a major concern for residents. Rates of burglary, vehicle crime and robberies are significantly lower than regional and national averages and over the period 2001-2004 burglaries fell by 35% and vehicle crime by over 40%, however criminal damage is rising and accounts for 32% of all recorded crime.

A focus of the cross-agency Crime and Disorder and Substance Misuse strategy 2005-2008 is to increase public reassurance and tackle anti-social behaviour in the District in line with priorities identified in the Crime and Disorder Audit 2004, and Residents Opinion Survey 2005.

Our objectives:

- **Reducing crime**
- **Increase public reassurance and tackle anti-social behaviour**
- **Reduce drug, substance and alcohol misuse, and the adverse impacts on individuals and communities**
- **Improve the quality of domestic violence services**
- **Increase confidence among minority groups in reporting hate crime**

How we will measure progress

There is a detailed Action Plan for the delivery of our objectives that will be monitored and reported on every six months. If you would like to see a copy of the Action Plan contact us or visit our website – see page 33. In addition, outcomes for the district will be measured against the following indicators:

- Quality of Life Indicator 5: The percentage of residents surveyed who said they feel 'fairly safe' or 'very safe' outside a) during the day; b) after dark.
- Quality of Life Indicator 7: The percentage of residents who think that a) vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles; b) people using or dealing drugs; and c) people being rowdy or drunk in public places is a very big or fairly big problem in their local area.

9.6

Priority 6: Maximise and promote lifelong learning opportunities as a contribution to the economic, social and environmental well being of our communities

Schools in the District are generally of a very good standard. GCSE attainment is above the County, regional and national averages with school leavers achieving grades A*-C increasing by 43% over the period 1997 to 2004. However 32% of people aged 16-74 have no qualifications and a quarter of adults in Chester-le-Street have poor literacy and numeracy. This is higher than the national average but lower than most other districts in County Durham. The Incapacity Benefit rate in the District is 10% in line with regional figures – this represents some 3,700 people, there were over 600 claimant of Jobseekers Allowance in December 2005, and in addition there are 150 young people 14-19 not in education, training and employment.

There is a significant need for more investment to support learning opportunities for all, including those not in education, training and employment, and in particular those from disadvantaged backgrounds to make more accessible first steps learning, vocational learning and Skills for Life training. Such learning provision with associated provision of childcare facilities will encourage assist access and uptake. Such an approach is consistent with the creation of local 'community hubs' and the current e-government drive for improved local access to a wide range of public services.

Alternative learning opportunities for young people 14-19 years are being provided through partnership arrangements between schools, colleges and work-based training providers and the Connexions Service. Local libraries provide facilities for lifelong learning opportunities and working in partnership with Education in the Community provide the Skills for Life 'On Line Test ' to enable local residents to achieve a level 2 qualification in literacy and numeracy and also offer English for Speakers of other Languages.

We also recognise the need to work with employers to be encourage them to see the value of enhancing the skills of their workforce through Skills for Life qualifications and for professional development.

Our objectives:

- **To continue to improve educational attainment in schools**
- **To support the implementation of the extended schools agenda by encouraging greater take up of Family Learning opportunities**
- **Reduction in the number of young people aged 14-19 years in education, employment or training**
- **Encouraging and facilitating wider participation in parental learning, adult community learning, family learning, Skills for Life in English and Maths and vocational learning, with progression routes to and beyond level 2 qualifications. To support those seeking routes out of worklessness.**

- **Raising number of residents working in small and medium sized enterprises (SME's) achieving an NVQ Level 2 for the first time and seek to identify 30 SME's where Level 4 Skills are required to meet professional development requirements.**

How we will measure progress

There is a detailed Action Plan for the delivery of our objectives that will be monitored and reported on every six months. If you would like to see a copy of the Action Plan contact us or visit our website – see page 33. In addition, outcomes for the district will be measured against the following indicators:

- Quality of Life Indicator 20: The proportion of working –age population qualified to an NVQ level 2 or equivalent qualification; NVQ Level 4 or equivalent
- Quality of Life Indicator 19: The proportion of young people (16-24 year olds) in full-time education or employment
- National Floor Targets for Education at Key Stages 2, 3 and 4
- Local Indicator: Reduction in the Skills for Life need within the adult population of the district from 25% to 15% between 2006 and 2016
- Local Indicator: Provision of learning opportunities in community venues where people from different backgrounds can learn together
- Local Indicator: Reduction in the numbers of young people 14- 19 years not in education, employment or training in the district

9.7

Priority 7: Improve the health and well being of communities across the district; tackle health inequalities; and improve access to and quality of health and social care services

The overall health of the health of residents of the District is better than the North East region but worse than the national average. The Census 2001 shows that 21.5% of the population of Chester-le-Street have a limiting lifelong illness, compared to 22.7% in the North East. 11.6% of people's health is described as 'not good' in Chester-le-Street, compared to 12% in the North East.

Mortality rates from circulatory disease and cancer are higher than national rates but lower than regionally and life expectancy at birth for women in Chester-le-Street has risen from 78.8 to 79.6 years from 1994/96 to 2002/04. The rise in men was higher from 72.7 to 75.8 years.

In 2001 – 2003 there were 36.8 conceptions for 15 – 17 year olds per 1000 population in Chester-le-Street. This figure has remained steady over recent years, and is lower than in the North East and England.

Because there are a range of underlying causes of poor health – solutions must be found in a range of agencies working together. Poverty, unemployment, housing conditions, educational underachievement, lifestyles and access to services are major factor and so health and social care providers in the statutory and voluntary sector, along with a range of other agencies including housing and leisure providers are working together to promote better physical, emotional and psychological health of residents by addressing these underlying causes of poor health and by joining up service provision across agencies.

Our objectives:

- **Reduce homelessness amongst 16 and 17 year olds**
- **Reduce winter mortality**
- **Increase regular adult participation in physical activity**
- **Reducing smoking**
- **Tackle adult health improvement by promotion of healthy workplaces**
- **Reduction in inequality of health outcomes for children by increasing support for families**
- **Reduce obesity among young people**
- **Improve access to mental health services for young people at risk of re-offending**
- **Increase the percentage of carers receiving a break services or direct carer service following assessment**

- **Reduce the admission rate to hospital for alcohol related conditions**
- **Improve sexual health and reduce teenage conceptions**

How we will measure progress

There is a detailed Action Plan for the delivery of our objectives that will be monitored and reported on every six months. If you would like to see a copy of the Action Plan contact us or visit our website – see page 33. In addition, outcomes for the district will be measured against the following indicators:

- Quality of Life Indicator 31 – Age standardised mortality rates a) cancers; b) circulatory diseases; respiratory diseases
- Local Indicator: Reduce overall mortality rate from Heart Disease and Cancer and reduce the gap between the least deprived and most deprived 20% of Super Output Areas
- Quality of Life Indicator 32 – Infant mortality
- Quality of Life Indicator 33 – Life expectancy at birth (male and female)
- Local Indicator: Reduce the gap for life expectancy between the least deprived and most deprived 20% of Super Output Areas
- Quality of Life Indicator 34 – The percentage of households with one or more person with a limiting long-term illness
- Quality of Life Indicator 35 – Teenage pregnancy, conceptions under 18 years, per 1,000 females aged 15-17

9.8

Priority 8: Champion the development and promotion of culture, leisure, sport and the arts in contributing to the well being of residents and local communities

Opportunities to promote and better co-ordinate culture and creativity activities and the enjoyment of leisure, sport and the arts provided by different organisations across the District is a key priority for the strategy.

There is a need to improve access to, and the affordability of, existing facilities much of which are in need of significant investment and a range of options will be explored to find solutions. The limitations to accessing some services for those living in certain parts of the District, and in particular among young people, are recognised and will be addressed, as there is a significant contribution that can be made to the regeneration of our communities. This priority will help address the need for enhanced activities for young people and teenagers identified as a top five priority for improvement in the 2005 Resident Opinions Survey.

Our objectives:

- **Promote cultural and creativity activities in the District**
- **Support local groups/clubs to develop culture and creative activities through grant-aid and other advice and support**
- **To provide a culture/heritage facility in Chester-le-Street**
- **Improve the provision of sports, cultural and leisure facilities**
- **Improve provision and co-ordination of, arts activities across the District**
- **Adopt a strategic approach to the development of culture**
- **Adopt a more innovative approach to Leisure, Culture and sport service and facility procurement and delivery in Chester-le-Street**
- **Explore the development of the Riverside Sports Complex into a regional sporting hub**
- **To establish a Chester-le-Street annual Summer Festival**
- **To establish a programme of Cultural events to celebrate diversity in Chester-le-Street**

How we will measure progress

There is a detailed Action Plan for the delivery of our objectives that will be monitored and reported on every six months. If you would like to see a copy of the Action Plan contact us or visit our website – see page 33. In addition, outcomes for the district will be measured against the following indicators:

- Quality of Life indicator 10: The percentage of residents who think that for their local area, over the past three years the following have got better or stayed the same: b) cultural activities d) sport and leisure facilities
- Local indicator: The percentage of people satisfied with the level of Culture, Leisure, Sport and Arts activities in Chester-le-Street.
- The percentage increase in the number of people who have participated in Culture, Leisure, Sport and Arts activities in Chester-le-Street.

9.9

Priority 9: Improve transport to ensure better access, greater choice, higher quality and more sustainable local provision

An effective integrated transport infrastructure will contribute to the prosperity of all our communities improving accessibility to jobs, leisure and other services. We aim to ensure that environmental benefits are also being achieved from more sustainable modes of transport.

Access to key destinations from Chester-le-Street town centre by road, rail and bus is generally good and this is a key focus of the Local Transport Plan. Further improvements to the railway station and access to rail network are planned. However, as the District is characterised by small settlements outside of the Town Centre with low levels of public transport provision our communities will require some imaginative solutions including community transport, good access to public footpaths and promotion of cycling. 41.6% of responses to the 2005 Residents Opinion Survey indicated that road and pavement repairs were a top five priority for improvement.

64% of people in Chester-le-Street travel to work by car or van, which is higher than the national average of 59%. and 9.05% travel as a car or van passenger. 6.65% of people travel to work on foot and 7.77% of people work at home in Chester-le-Street.

Our objectives:

- **To improve provision of, and access to, public transport services to key destinations**
- **To promote a sustainable transport infrastructure and reduce road traffic**
- **To develop and publicise an Integrated transport network throughout the district**

How we will measure progress

There is a detailed Action Plan for the delivery of our objectives that will be monitored and reported on every six months. If you would like to see a copy of the Action Plan contact us or visit our website – see page 33. In addition, outcomes for the district will be measured against the following indicators:

- Quality of Life indicator 40: The percentage of the resident population who travel to work a) by private motor vehicle; b) by public transport; c) on foot or cycle
- Quality of Life indicator 44: The percentage of residents who think that for their local area, over the past three years, that a) public transport has got better or stayed the same; b) the level of traffic congestion has got better or stayed the same

9.10

Priority 10: Manage the built and natural environment to promote biodiversity whilst creating greener, cleaner more sustainable communities

To create sustainable communities it is necessary to improve the quality of life for the people through the careful development of the built environment as well as our green spaces and to conserve our natural resources and promote biodiversity. 42.8% of responses to the 2005 Resident Opinion Survey indicated that clean streets were a top five priority for improvement whilst satisfaction with parks and open spaces has improved.

The proportion of new homes built on previously developed land in the district is 61.5% compared to 55.2% in the North East and 70.2% nationally and the Chester-le-Street Urban Capacity Study identifies several Brownfield areas in the district which are available for future development. There are two conservation areas in the district, Plawsworth and Chester-le-Street Town Centre and there are 63 listed buildings in the district.

Most of the rivers in Chester-le-Street are of Fairly Good quality or above. The two rivers with the worst quality are Herrington Burn and Lumley Park Burn. There is one SSSI (site of special scientific interest) in Chester-le-Street, at Waldrige Fell. There are 25 SNCI's (Site of Nature Conservation Importance) and two sites of Area of High Landscape Value. There are 3 Local Nature Reserves in Chester-le-Street.

Chester-le-Street District has a kerbside recycling scheme and the amount of household waste recycled in 2004/05 was 12.54%. The amount of household waste collected per head was 419.4KG (BV84). Both these figures compare favourably to the national and regional averages.

Our objectives:

- **To apply principles of sustainability in all new developments in the District conserving and enhancing the distinct local built heritage. Where possible green space provision should be a requirement of development proposals**
- **To promote sustainable development to maintain and revitalise the built and natural environment**
- **To promote and maximise the benefits of open space for our community and endeavour to provide access for all, by supporting projects such as Connections and the Valley's. Where possible green space provision should be a requirement of development proposals**
- **To provide clean local environments by effective area management**
- **To enhance bio-diversity and habitat creation**
- **To minimise the use of natural resources and promote recycling and alternative energy use**

How we will measure progress

There is a detailed Action Plan for the delivery of our objectives that will be monitored and reported on every six months. If you would like to see a copy of the Action Plan contact us or visit our website – see page 33. In addition, outcomes for the district will be measured against the following indicators:

- Quality of Life indicator: 10 The percentage of residents who think that for their local area, over the past three years the following have got better or stayed the same e) parks and open spaces
- Quality of Life indicator 22: The proportion of development land that is derelict
- Quality of Life indicator 29: The volume of household waste collected and the proportion recycled

10. The District Partnership - Local Strategic Partnership for the District of Chester-le-Street

Community Strategies and Local Strategic Partnerships were originally introduced by the Local Government Act 2000. The District Partnership – the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for the district - was originally established in November 2002. It is a voluntary partnership that brings together decision makers, communities and organisations in a network, to work with each other to define and deliver local priorities.

The District Partnership has developed a structure to suit the circumstances of the District. There are seven District-wide theme groups bring together key strategic organisations and other agencies, and community and voluntary sector representatives, to work to deliver better local services. These groups are:

- Environment, Housing and Planning

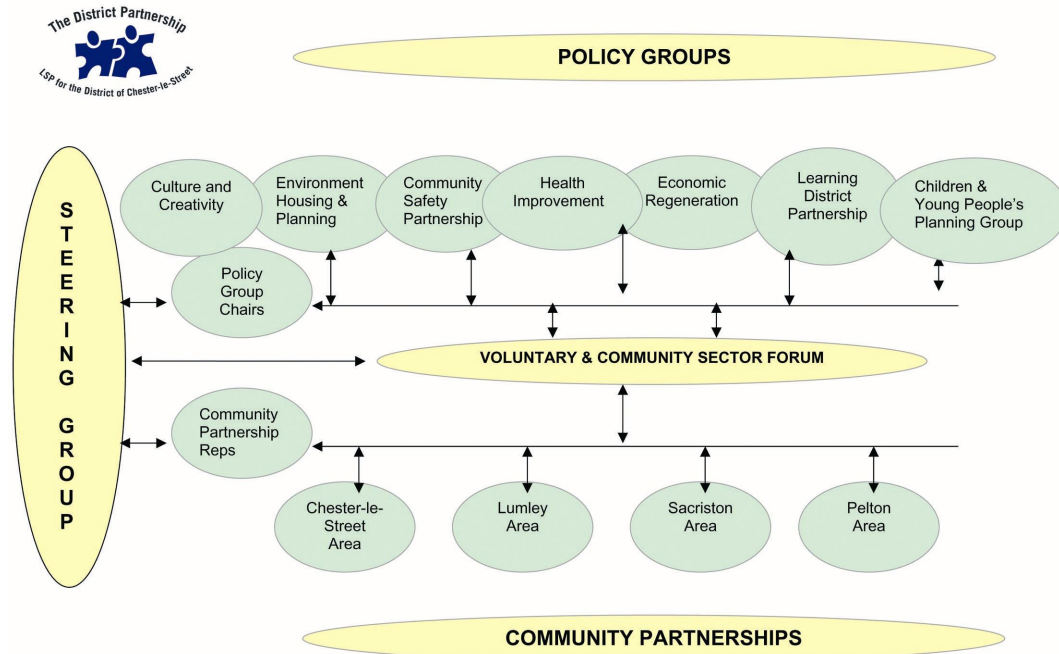
- Community Safety
- Economic Regeneration
- Health Improvement
- Life-Long Learning
- Culture and Creativity
- Children and Young People

Engagement with residents and local communities takes place through a range of mechanisms with the aim of providing an opportunity to discuss services directly with providers and to input into the work of the District Partnership. In addition, Community Partnerships have been established to ensure district-wide engagement:

- Town Centre area
- Lumley area (Resident Groups)
- Sacriston area
- Pelton area

A Community and Voluntary Sector Forum enables the sector to engage effectively with the District Partnership.

District Partnership structure:



11. Membership of the District Partnership

The main decision making body of the District Partnership is the Steering Group and has the following membership in 2006:

District Councillor - Cllr Linda Ebbatson (chair)

County Councillor - Cllr Brian Walker

District Council Officer - Roy Templeman, Chief Executive (with Corporate Management responsibility)

County Council Officer – Linda Walker

Voluntary and Community Sector representatives - Belinda Lewis – Chief Officer, Chester-le-Street & District Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) and Volunteer Bureau; Anne Rutherford, LSP Co-ordinator, CVS.

Business Sector representative - Sue Parkinson, Business Development Executive, Chester-le-Street and Durham Enterprise Agency

Minority Ethnic communities representative - Tony Lindsay, Acting Director, Darlington and Durham Race Equality Council

Community Representatives – Edna Stokoe and Elaine Stockton

Chairs of Policy Groups:

- **Environment, Housing & Planning** - Julie Form
- **Community Safety Partnership** - Keith Wanley
- **Health Improvement Group** - Tricia Cresswell
- **Economic Regeneration Group** - Chris Jukes
- **Learning District Partnership** - Brian Ebbatson
- **Children & Young Peoples Planning Group** - Tricia Cresswell
- **Culture & Creativity** - Tony Galloway

Durham Constabulary – Eric Suddes, Chief Superintendent

Durham Police Authority - Anne Wright, Chair

County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service – David Turnbull, Station Officer

County Durham & Darlington Fire Authority - Joe Knox

Primary Care Trust - Tricia Cresswell, Director of Public Health

Learning and Skills Council – Iain Wishart

Churches Together - Rev Paul Worsnop

Town & Parish Council – David Wright, County Durham Association of Town and Parish Councils

Officer Support:

District Council - Jeremy Brock, Community Strategy Adviser

Durham County Council – Janet Lester, Community Support Team

Government Office for the North East - David Hutchinson

If you wish to contact any of the members of the District Partnership Steering Group – contact us – page 33



12. How to Contact Us

If you would like further information about this strategy or the District Partnership, please contact:

The District Partnership,
c/o Jeremy Brock,
Community Strategy Adviser,
Strategy Team,
Chester-le-Street District Council,
Civic Centre,
Newcastle Road,
Chester-le-Street,
Co Durham,
DH3 3UT.

Phone: 0191 387 2042/2405 or fax: 0191 387 2026

E-Mail: partnership@chester-le-street.gov.uk

Visit our website:

www.districtpartnership.org.uk

If you would like a copy of this information in another language, large print, Braille or audio please contact the number below:

Si usted requiere este documento en otros idiomas, favor de llamar al
0191 387 2025

Si vous voudriez ce document dans un autre langue, contactez s'il vous plaît le centre administratif à l'adresse cidessus ou téléphonez **0191 387 2025**

If you would like help communicating with us in your language, we can arrange for an interpreter to help



Minicom
0191 387 2080

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਕਰਵਾਉਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰਕੇ ਪੂਰੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦਿਓ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਰਾਬਤਾ ਕਰੀਏ।

0191 387 2025

इस दस्तावेज़ का अनुवाद यदि आपको अपनी भाषा में चाहिये तो कृपया निम्नलिखित नंबर डायल करके संपर्क के लिये अपना संपूर्ण विवरण दें।

0191 387 2025

如欲要求把本文件翻譯成中文，請撥以下電話，向我們提供你的詳細聯絡資料。 **0191 387 2025**

اس دستاویز کا ترجمہ اگر آپ کو اپنی زبان میں درکار ہو تو برائے مہربانی مندرجہ ذیل نمبر ڈائل کر کے رابطے کے لیے اپنی مکمل تفصیل دیجئے۔
0191 387 2025

A copy of this strategy is available is available from our website:
www.districtpartnership.org.uk

(This document has been produced on recycled paper)



This document has been produced by the District Partnership Team at Chester-le-Street District Council on behalf of the District Partnership - the Local Strategic Partnership for the district of Chester-le-Street.