

# Sustainable Community Strategy

Building  
Communities  
Together  
2008



east dorset  
community  
partnership

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# Introduction

Chairman of the Partnership, Sir Ronald Stuart Paul

The first Community Strategy for East Dorset was developed in 2004. This strategy is a living concept, and must react to change, both locally and nationally. It requires us to reconsider our priorities and take a longer-term view on how we plan to tackle the issues identified by the residents living in our diverse communities.

## **What's changed?**

Since 2004:

- we have achieved many of our original goals for the District;
- the District's communities have continued and will continue to grow and change;
- the first Local Area Agreement for Dorset is now in place and the second is due to be launched in April 2008;
- the Government has placed a stronger emphasis on tackling global impacts such as climate change;
- the Government has reinforced its commitment to giving citizens more say in shaping local services.

It is now time to develop a new Sustainable Community Strategy with a vision for the District that takes account of these issues, whilst addressing the identified local priorities that affect all our communities.

The new Community Strategy for East Dorset aims to promote the well-being of everyone in our district. The concept of well-being covers economic improvement, social progress, better health, housing and maintaining and improving the quality of our natural environment. Our Strategy uses this sustainable communities approach to achieve a better quality of life for everyone.

The Community Strategy is an opportunity for everyone to be involved in the future development of East Dorset. We can focus our efforts on what is important to people who live in, work in and visit the District and to help them make a positive contribution to change.

By working together on shared objectives, our communities will achieve greater impact and success than each organisation would achieve working in isolation.

# Why a 'Sustainable' Community Strategy?

Sustainability has become a key issue for everyone. The Government has rightly decided that every strategy or plan at every level must focus on sustainability.

Therefore, in all our decision making and action planning the partnership must ask the following questions.

In carrying out our actions and decision making processes are we:

- ensuring that our actions and decisions are balanced and take account of social, environmental and economic impacts?
- meeting the needs of existing and future generations?
- aware of the diverse and local needs of communities and circumstances which bring about those needs?
- making efficient use of resources?
- being environmentally sensitive?
- promoting well designed and built infrastructures?
- ensuring communities are active, inclusive and safe?
- ensuring communities are well connected with efficient transport?
- ensuring communities are thriving?
- ensuring communities are well served?
- sure our actions are fair for everyone?

Rather than separate sustainability, we believe that it touches every area of the strategy and as a result, we have embedded sustainability as a golden thread running through the whole strategy.



# The Legal Position

By virtue of section 1(a) of the Local Government Act 2000, the duty to prepare a Community Strategy applied to County Councils, Unitary Councils, District Councils and London Borough Councils.

Sustainability was introduced to community strategies in 2005 and the purpose of a Sustainable Community Strategy is to set the overall strategic direction and long term vision for the economic, social and environmental well-being of a local area. The Local Government White Paper, Strong and Prosperous Communities 2006 sets out that a Sustainable Community Strategy must provide a 'vehicle for considering and deciding how to address difficult and cross cutting issues such as the economic direction of an area, cohesion, social exclusion and climate change'.

Once prepared, the Sustainable Community Strategy must be agreed at Full Council in accordance with the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations 2000/2853.

# Setting the Scene

East Dorset covers an area of just under 35,000 hectares (137 square miles) and is seen by both residents and visitors as a lovely place to live or visit. The area is varied, ranging from the southern slopes of the downlands of Cranborne Chase, an area of outstanding natural beauty, to the lowland Dorset Heaths and as well as benefiting local residents it also provides access to recreation space and the countryside for the neighbouring urban areas of Bournemouth and Poole.

The District is predominantly rural with a large urban population concentrated in the towns and villages in the south and east of the District. There are four large settlements, the historic market town of Wimborne Minster (a major tourist attraction), Ferndown (one of the largest towns in Dorset) and Verwood (the latest to achieve town status following sustained growth) and the village of Corfe Mullen.

The District has grown rapidly from a population of 51,500 in 1971 to 83,800 in 2001, an increase of 63% in 30 years. The age profile is increasingly towards the older groups, with 32% being over 60 in 2001, compared with the national figure of 21%. The main population centres in the south and east of the district functionally form part of the South East Dorset conurbation.

East Dorset has a high proportion of privately owned housing: 85% of households are in owner occupied dwellings compared with 73% regionally and 69% nationally. External demand is virtually inexhaustible and there is a continuing pressure for new build. The change in the age structure of the population has led to an increasing need for smaller dwellings. Affordable housing is a major issue, particularly amongst the young.

The economy of the District is predictably focused in the more built up areas with about 28,000 jobs provided. In 2001 18,700 residents commuted out of the District to work while 11,800 commute in, resulting in a net loss of some 6,800 commuters. While unemployment is particularly low at less than 1%, being under half the national rate, the structure of the economy has a dependency on relatively small companies with a low proportion of the more productive knowledge based companies. These factors explain that the Gross Value Added (GVA) for East Dorset, which measures the contribution to the economy of each individual producer, is less than for Dorset County as a whole. A relatively high proportion of the local workforce, 20% is employed in manufacturing, compared with only 14% nationally. Average wages for those employed in the District are considerably lower than those who live here but work outside of the district.

The District has a high car ownership level with only 12% of households not having a car compared with 27% nationally. This has contributed to an inadequate public transport system.

The provision of strong and safe communities, served by high quality cultural facilities and an environment with low pollution levels contributes positively towards maintaining the health of the population. Nationally, East Dorset is one of the safest places in the country to live.



# Strategy Development

In developing this strategy it has been important to recognise and understand where it fits within the wider community planning process. The Local Government Act 2000 placed a duty on every local authority to prepare a community strategy which promotes and improves the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area and contributes to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom.

The recently published Community Strategy for Dorset 2007-2016 'Shaping our Future,' maps out priorities for the County as a whole. The strategy identifies the following challenges:

- more affordable and appropriate housing;
- the development of Dorset's economy;
- improved access to services, employment and leisure;
- safeguarding Dorset's environment;
- meeting Dorset's demographic challenge;
- developing Thriving Communities
- delivering a legacy from the 2012 Olympic Games.

The strategy says of the East Dorset area that it has:

- high population growth and development around several major towns;
- close links with nearby conurbation of Bournemouth and Poole;
- easy access to Hampshire and the south-east.

And that its key issues are:

- improving access to services and facilities for young people in the local towns and conurbation;
- affordable housing for young people and key workers;
- balancing development pressures with the need to protect sites of environmental importance.

Since the publication of the current partnership strategy, seven Parish Plans across the District have been developed and launched with the support of the partnership namely Alderholt, Corfe Mullen, Holt, St Leonards and St Ives, Sturminster Marshall, West Moors and most recently Sixpenny Handley. The Parish Plan for Colehill is underway and due for completion in 2008. Plans for Cranborne and West Parley are in the early stages of development and should be launched in 2008. It is hoped that work on at least one town plan will start in 2008.

Each one of the completed plans has been developed following extensive community consultation with very high participation levels. Parish Plans paint a fascinating picture of life within East Dorset and demonstrate residents' concerns, issues and vision for their local neighbourhood. This strategy has, therefore, been based around the identified county (Dorset Strategic Partnership) and local (Town and Parish Plans) issues. In this way the Sustainable Community Strategy for East Dorset will truly reflect the grass roots community opinion of those living and working within East Dorset.

The completed Parish Plans have identified the following cross cutting themes:

- crime and safety including anti-social behaviour and speeding traffic; public transport and highway issues;
- sustaining education provision at a local level;
- access to good health care;
- improvement of recreation facilities;
- housing development;
- work and recreational opportunities for young people;
- protection of the environment;
- a place where young people want to and can afford to live and work.

In addition and parallel to this work, detailed ongoing engagement has been taking place with the East Dorset's business community.

This includes the Ferndown & Uddens and Verwood Area business forums and the East Dorset Business Club. The four main common issues which have been identified by these elements of the business community are:

- recruitment of suitably skilled staff in the light of the anticipated changes in demography
- accessibility
- availability of training to improve the skills of existing staff
- availability of modern premises





# The Challenge Ahead

This Sustainable Community Strategy must be seen as a living and evolving document. In its development an account has been taken of both regional and county-wide challenges, as well as important local issues generated at the heart of our local communities.

The work of any community partnership, whether at county, district, town or parish level, is to add value to the economic, social and environmental well-being of those living in the area, which the strategy covers. This strategy will have little value if the work it generates is not co-ordinated with and linked to the work of other community partnerships, other statutory agencies and importantly district, town and parish councils plans. The challenge ahead for the partnership through this document is to act as a conduit ensuring that issues are identified and action is taken to resolve those issues by the most appropriate agencies or partnerships.

# Our Vision for East Dorset

The aspirations of residents and businesses in East Dorset are very similar to those of every community in Dorset and these are reflected in the vision of the partnership.

By 2015, East Dorset will be:

- a healthy place to live and work;
- a place where enterprise is valued and encouraged where we invest in the future through skills and training;
- a safe community where residents do not fear crime;
- a strong community with a thriving well supported voluntary sector;
- an enjoyable place to live and visit where culture and leisure is valued;
- a district that supports and enhances its environment, and;
- a community in which all development is sustainable and carbon emissions are reduced.



# Objectives and Focus

The delivery of the vision will be through ten strategic objectives in which the partnership will seek to:

1. Actively Engage with the Community
2. Support to sustain and grow the Economy
3. Develop and support the Voluntary and Community Sector
4. Develop Sustainable Communities and Decent Homes
5. Improve Housing, Health and Well-Being
6. Promote Learning for All
7. Protect and enhance the Environment
8. Reduce the Fear of Crime
9. Reduce Traffic Volumes and Speed
10. Stimulate Culture and Leisure Activities

We will for the first time focus our attention on making a difference to the sections of the community most affected by the majority of these. We will call these Priority Groups.

Table 1

Strategic Objectives				
Actively Engage with the Community	Support to sustain and grow the Economy	Develop and support the Voluntary and Community Sector	Develop Sustainable Communities and Decent Homes	Improve Housing, Health and Well-Being
Promote learning for All	Protect and Enhance the Environment	Reduce the Fear of Crime	Reduce Traffic Volumes and Speed	Stimulating Culture and Leisure Activities
Priority Groups				
Children & Young People		Disadvantage and Isolation		
Strategic Challenges				
Declining facilities in villages		Lack of affordable Housing		
Poor access to main areas		Pressure for new housing and development in a high quality rural environment		

# Priority Groups

## **Children and Young People**

Older people are often thought of as making up the vast majority of the population in the District and on the whole are well catered for in the provision of services and activities. Older people actually make up around 32% of the population with children and young people accounting for 21%. Consequently children and young people tend to be thought of as a minority and the very real issues that they face in East Dorset have received relatively little attention. These include poor transport links, limited delivery of activities and services where they live and a lack of vocational training opportunities. They are faced with growing up in an area with expensive and often unavailable housing, combined with limited employment with low wages, which if unaddressed will lead to an exodus of our young people. It is for these reasons that we have chosen children and young people as one of our Priority Groups.

The Every Child Matters Plan, the Government's vision for children's services, was published in September 2003. The reshaping of children's services has come about as a result of research carried out with children and young people who felt the following outcomes were important to their well-being in childhood and later life:

- (a) be healthy
- (b) stay safe
- (c) enjoy and achieve
- (d) make a positive contribution
- (e) achieve economic well-being

The Community Partnership, and particularly its Themed Action Groups (TAGS) have roles and responsibilities in ensuring the delivery of these positive outcomes for Children. For example the Housing TAG, by ensuring the Decent Homes Standard is achieved, can help to see an enhancement in the health and life chances of children by improving the standard of housing and preventing homelessness.

EDALE can work to ensure children and families benefit from access to local leisure centres, art, crèche and playgroup facilities, museums, theatres, holidays and out of school schemes, parks and open spaces.

The Traffic and Transport TAG can ensure that road safety schemes are child friendly.

The Health TAG can encourage the promotion of healthy lifestyles for children, particularly in relation to food hygiene and nutrition and to ensure education and health providers, work in partnership to reduce health inequalities and promote health improvement.

Finally, the Community Safety TAG can help to ensure that children are safe from harm and that their actions do not cause harm to others

Key strategic actions relating to Children and Young People are included in each thematic section of the strategy.

## **People affected by Disadvantage and / or Isolation**

Disadvantage and isolation affects many people and communities within the District. It ranges from the obvious areas suffering from poor housing and low incomes, to picture postcard villages suffering with a lack of essential services and poor transport links. The majority of the population may not experience these issues but for those people that do, they can have serious consequences. Tackling these inequalities is essential and that is why Disadvantage and Isolation is included as a priority group.

Leigh Park in Wimborne, Heatherlands in Ferndown and Three Legged Cross are three neighbourhoods that face economic deprivation and disadvantages. All three areas have a high proportion of social housing and share above average unemployment, below average household income and lower educational achievement.

The rural areas north of Wimborne, towards Sixpenny Handley are filled with beautiful countryside scenes and picturesque country villages. However, if you look beyond the obvious you will find communities that face poor and low levels of service. For example, poor public transport, access to health and social care services is difficult, village shops and post offices are closing and there are limited recreational facilities for young people and the elderly. This can often lead to people feeling isolated and unsupported.

**The Housing TAG** can work to improve the opportunity for good quality social housing and seek to ensure that local people have the opportunity to live within their own local communities.

**East Dorset Arts Leisure Entertainment Forum (EDALE)** can work to ensure that leisure and recreational pursuits are available within local communities and that those living in those communities have the opportunity to help deliver those opportunities.

**The Environment TAG** can work to ensure the natural environment is maintained and enhanced with improved access and the community involved in managing local sites.

**The Traffic and Transport TAG** can look to develop better public transport links to deprived areas and reduce isolation in rural areas.

**The Health TAG** can work to encourage healthy and active lifestyles are adopted by families and that there is local access to health related services.

**The Crime and Safety TAG** can work to reduce the levels of anti-social behaviour and to reduce the fear of crime.

Key strategic actions relating to these areas of deprivation and disadvantage are included in each thematic section of the strategy.

# Strategic Challenges

This strategy links with a number of other strategies promising a better life for local people with the challenge to deliver results not just talk. Focusing attention on children and young people and deprivation and isolation is a start in targeting resources at where we can make a difference. However, many of the objectives and objectives contained in this strategy are linked in some way and there are some overarching issues that need dealing with in order to achieve change. We have identified the following strategic issues that we will focus resources on to affect change.

- **Declining facilities in villages**

Many villages and smaller settlements have lost, or are facing losing, key local services and facilities. These include public services such as libraries and commercial concerns including village shops and post offices.

- **Poor access to urban areas and large settlements**

The decline in local facilities in rural areas increases the need for good transport links and access to the larger settlements where services, employment, cultural, learning and leisure opportunities are available.

- **Pressure for new housing and development**

Our well protected and environmentally important countryside is under threat from new housing and development and we must ensure that the impact from this is kept to a minimum. Besides the obvious issue of protecting our countryside we need to find a balance as we require new housing to help address the strategic challenge of a lack of affordable housing and additional land may be required for new businesses in the future.

- **Lack of affordable Housing**

It is evident that the District needs more affordable housing. There is a need for additional homes to rent and also to buy. Skilled workers needed to fill key positions often cannot afford to move to the area, young people face an uncertain future when their only option is to move to an area where they can find housing and families can't afford to live in our towns and villages.



# Strategic Objectives

## *A healthy place to live and work*

### Health

A healthy community is a central part of East Dorset's vision for 2015. Our vision is that local people will have access to a high standard of care and support services, regardless of where they live in the District.

The Parish Plans have shown that access to local health care provision especially dentistry is a key issue for local residents. Prescription services are also highlighted as an issue in some villages and towns. Consultation with young people identified that they want improved access to sports and leisure facilities as well as more support, advice and guidance on a range of issues including eating disorders and smoking cessation.

#### **General Action Point**

Support work which brings health care to local communities and ensures transport links are provided to access district health services

#### **Children and Young Peoples Action Point**

Support the work of agencies which seek to address childhood obesity levels, inactivity by the young and poor lifestyle choices

#### **Disadvantage and Isolation Action Point**

Support smoking cessation initiatives in areas of deprivation where rates are higher

Provide support to families and individuals to engage with service providers through projects such as Homestart

### Social Care

East Dorset has a large elderly population and the need for quality social care is increasing and is likely to continue to do so in the future. The Voluntary and Community sector work closely with the statutory agencies to provide much of the care and support needed but there is constant financial pressure on the sector and a general lack of grant funding. This will need to be addressed in order to provide the sector with the stability to plan ahead for the increased demand forecast.

There are also difficulties in recruiting qualified and suitable staff for care and support posts. Low unemployment in the District and high housing costs are real barriers to recruitment as well as skills shortage of qualified workers. Initiatives, including those undertaken by Partners In Care to address recruitment and improving the skills in the sector, are important and already beginning to make an impact. We will work to support them.

#### **General Action Point**

Ensure older residents have the access to social care facilities and services that fits their specific needs

Assist employers to develop age management policies and strategies

#### **Children and Young Peoples Action Point**

Promote health and social care as a good career choice for young people by encouraging agencies to improve employment benefits

*An enjoyable place to live and visit where culture and leisure is valued*

## Culture and Leisure

East Dorset is a great place to enjoy your leisure time and cultural activities. There is a wide range of facilities, attractions and events, activities available across the District. Examples include Moors Valley Country Park, QE Leisure Centre, the Barrington and Tivoli theatres and the newly constructed Verwood Hub. The Community Partnership has joined forces with the East Dorset Arts Leisure Entertainment Forum (EDALE) in order to better promote the opportunities available and to share good practice across the sector. There will be a need to continue to provide new and improved facilities across the District in order to serve the growing number of new homes planned for the area whilst recognising the provision of cultural and leisure facilities within the Bournemouth and Poole Conurbation.

### **Children and Young Peoples Action Points**

Encourage statutory and voluntary agencies to organise activities for Children and Young People both in term time and especially in school holidays

Encourage statutory and voluntary agencies to meet identified shortfalls in play provision, skate parks, youth shelters and multi use games areas

Support programmes which help Children and Young People learn to play naturally within their own environment

### **Disadvantage and Isolation Action Point**

Encourage the provision of opportunities that are based around structured family activities to help build family relationships

Encourage greater provision of an 'Access to Leisure' scheme for low income families to all cultural venues and services

Promote greater use of mobile youth facilities in rural areas

*A place where enterprise is valued and encouraged where we invest in the future through skills and training*

## Support to sustain and grow the Economy

While the economy in East Dorset has demonstrated growth over the past decades its underlying structure means that it must be considered as susceptible to global and local forces of change. As with most other economies it is not self contained and functionally forms part of the South East Dorset conurbation. While unemployment is low so is productivity. Household income is above average but those of the local workforce are much lower. We are home to one of the largest industrial estates in the sub region and have a large manufacturing base, blue chip companies such as Flight Refueling, as well as a large service industry. Despite this, most jobs are in very small firms with an under representation in knowledge based businesses. Direct access is available to London and the South East via the A31 and M27, although the capacity of the A31, particularly the Canford Bottom roundabout, can increase journeys' times to the south and west. The development of Bournemouth Airport may enhance the transport connections and open up further international possibilities. Local communities have raised concerns about this development and are worried about increased noise levels and pollution as well as traffic congestion.

This strategy does not set the vision for the economy as that is already taken care of through various other agencies and strategies, including "Raising the Game". This work will be further developed by the emerging Multi Area Agreement that covers the whole of Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole but will have an initial focus on the conurbation. It is seeking to reinforce the view that the economy and prosperity are important and to add the community dimension. Analysis of the Parish Plans show that local people are very concerned about issues close to home including the long term viability of local shops especially Post



Offices. Such as West Moors have targeted the opening of specific shops including a greengrocers and a hardware store. The development of local industry and business also features.

Trying to recruit a skilled workforce is one of the challenges that businesses face in East Dorset. This is likely to become harder in future years and addressing the skills gap will be a key issue. Although there are specialist further and higher education establishments in Bournemouth and Poole there is a very limited range of opportunities within East Dorset. There is also some difficulty in accessing adult education and lifelong learning opportunities in the rural areas of East Dorset.

Social Enterprises are beginning to emerge across Dorset and could play a greater role in the local economy whilst also providing community benefit. This may include community run local shops and services and they could, in future, deliver statutory services under contract. The partnership will seek to encourage their development in East Dorset.

#### **General Action Points**

Recognise the role of appropriate new local businesses and shops to reduce travel distances and to stimulate the local economy  
Support the development of Social Enterprises

#### **Children and Young Peoples Action Points**

Provide local opportunities for school children to gain good quality work experience within their local communities

#### **Disadvantage and Isolation Action Point**

Support the promotion of community well-being through use of Credit Unions and other co-operative initiatives

## Traffic and Transport

The most common issue that has surfaced across all of the completed Parish Plans is that of speeding traffic. Local people are really concerned by this issue and have suggested the greater use of preventative methods and enforcement. Projects identified include improved road signs and markings, changes to road layouts and junctions, increased police presence and use of Speed Indicator Devices. Some parishes would also like to explore the development of community speed watches and residents' speed pledges.

As well as the speed of traffic, residents are also concerned with the volume of traffic which continues to increase across the District. This affects both our towns and villages and is set to increase as people living in the rural villages, towns and parishes remain reliant on their cars. The Parish Plans also show that residents would like to see an increase in cycle ways and routes, along with improved footpaths and pavements.

Public transport remains a vital link for many people and the demand responsive service introduced recently has improved the service available to parts of the District. If any progress is to be made in reducing carbon emissions and cutting the number of car journeys taken in the District then further improvements to public transport are essential. This is also vital in reducing isolation especially in rural areas.

Many of the Parish Plans have also highlighted the lack of safe cycle routes and paths and these should be developed where possible. The obvious benefits include reducing car journeys and CO2 emissions and improving health and fitness.

#### **General Action Point**

Support measures which seek to reduce speeding traffic and dangerous driving  
Support initiatives which reduce reliance of car travel by encouraging alternative modes of transport  
Support the creation of and improvement of cycle and footpath networks  
Continue to support and see an extension to the flexible demand response bus service

**Children and Young Peoples  
Action Point**

Support schemes which makes public transport more affordable for young people

Continue to support and extend the range of projects such as the 'Scooter Scheme' which helps young people access training and employment opportunities

**Disadvantage and Isolation  
Action Point**

Support the development of car sharing schemes, particularly for rural areas

**Disadvantage and Isolation Action Point:**

Support the engagement of communities in learning activities targeted to meet specifically identified outcomes that benefit more deprived communities

**A safe community where residents do not fear crime**

## Safer Communities

East Dorset is one of the safest places to live and work in the whole of the UK. The reasons for this are varied but undoubtedly the effective Partnership working between the Police, Local Authority, Voluntary Sector and Community Partnership has played an important role. This partnership takes the shape of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), which now operates across the whole of Eastern Dorset.

It is the function of this Partnership not to replicate the work of the CDRP but rather to seek to reinforce its aims, goals and vision for a safer Dorset.

The main issues of concern that have arisen from the Parish Plans have been traffic offences, mainly speeding traffic. This has been explored in the Traffic and Transport section. Other issues raised focus mainly on young people and Anti-Social Behaviour and a lack of visible policing aside from the introduction of Safer Neighbourhood Police teams. Whilst actual crime is at such a low level, the fear of crime remains high. There are various reasons for this including the high percentage of elderly people who live locally, misunderstanding of other people's lifestyles (e.g. young people like to sit on street corners), and the negative media coverage.

**General Action Point**

Continue to promote and support community safety initiatives and activities such as Neighbourhood and other Watch Schemes  
Support the work of the Dorset Police in the implementation of their Safer Neighbourhoods Plan particularly through the Partners and Community Together (PACT) process

Promote and support the introduction of community speed pledge schemes across the District

## Promoting Learning for All

People learn - formally or informally - for many different reasons, such as for intellectual stimulation, the desire to gain qualifications or learn new skills. They may be motivated to do so simply for their own sake or to increase employment prospects; or simply the enduring human urge to deepen knowledge of existing interests and explore new ones. People's attitude to education also varies widely, from reluctant learners to avid students. Individuals also learn in many different ways, including: conventional instruction; self-directed learning; learning through doing; and learning by observing and taking part in social groups. Effective promotion of education and learning has to take full account of this diversity of residents' needs, attitudes and ways of learning.

**General Action Point:**

Support initiatives which stimulate informal learning opportunities across a range of subjects and issues

Work with our partners to promote accessible and effective learning opportunities for all sections of the community

Provide training and support for voluntary and community groups through the Building Communities Programme

Support the development of opportunities to improve workability skills to address local employment needs

**Children and Young Peoples  
Action Point**

Promote and support formal educational goals for Children and Young People and support adult education services, especially related to basic skills development

**Children and Young Peoples  
Action Point**

Encourage work and initiatives that seeks to improve intergeneration relationships

Recognise that Children and Young people also are fearful of crime and to support initiatives which allow them to feel safe

Support multi-agency initiatives including diversionary projects which seek to address and reduce unacceptable behaviour of and by young people

**Disadvantage and Isolation Action Point**

Develop Neighbourhood Management on the Heatherlands Estate, Ferndown

***A strong community with a thriving well supported voluntary sector***

## Develop and Support the Voluntary Sector

A strong community is based around self sufficiency, mutual care, consideration and support for one another. The Voluntary sector comprises a wide range of charitable and voluntary organisations and provides a substantial amount of services, facilities and opportunities for local people and communities across East Dorset and is one of the reasons why our communities are as strong as they are. Some examples include lunch and social clubs for elderly residents, preschools and parent and toddler groups, youth clubs, support groups, sports and social clubs and community centres.

Every Parish Plan has explored the range of community facilities in its locality and it is clear that local people really value the services operated by the voluntary sector and not only want these maintained, but expanded. For those working and volunteering, simply maintaining these services is a challenge. Voluntary Groups are facing increasingly tight financial restrictions including reductions in grant funding and increases in utility bills and insurance costs. The number of new and willing volunteers is reducing and managing them is becoming more complicated.

Supporting the sector during this time is vitally important and the Community

Partnership will seek to develop further support for local groups and projects including setting up a support network for the sector and ensuring the sector has representation at Community Partnership meetings. A review is currently being undertaken across Dorset looking at the support available, what is needed and the findings of the review will be considered by the Community Partnership when available.

**General Action Point**

Encourage the development of Voluntary and Community sector and actively support groups in the provision of a wide range of services and activities in their local communities

Establish a new Stronger Communities group

**Children and Young Peoples Action Point**

Encourage schemes which promote the engagement of Children and Young people into voluntary and community work

**Disadvantage and Isolation Action Point**

Increase the capacity of local people living in areas of disadvantage to develop and deliver local community projects

***A community in which all development is sustainable and carbon emissions are reduced***

## Sustainable Planning

The Local Development Framework (LDF) is the new system of planning which replaces the existing Local Planning process. Community planning is intended to be at the heart of the LDF process and needs to remain so. Indeed the Government specifies that the LDF should be the spatial expression of Sustainable Community Strategies. The Community Partnership will, therefore, play an active role in the development of the LDF to ensure that views and the vision of the community are listened to. We will therefore introduce a new Spatial Planning Group to co-ordinate the Partnerships response and to advise on the development of the LDF especially the core strategy. This group will also ensure that strategic issues developed in the LDF are considered by the Partnership.

**General Action Point**

Actively influence the Local Development Framework (LDF) and ensure the work of the partnership through the Town and Parish Planning and public consultation is fed into LDF development process

Establish a new Spatial Planning Group

**Children and Young Peoples Action Point:**

Ensure the views and ideas of Children and Young People are well documented within the LDF review process

**Disadvantage and Isolation Action Point**

Ensure the special needs of deprived areas are well documented within the LDF review process

**A district that supports and enhances its environment**

## Protecting and enhancing the Environment

It is clear that the residents of East Dorset value their natural environment. They enjoy significant areas of countryside with 17 designated areas including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Nature Reserves, Heathland and Woodland. These areas are well managed to ensure their habitats remain a haven for the rich biodiversity that exists there. Every survey undertaken, whether it is by a Parish Plan Group or a national agency, shows that residents want to see the countryside protected from housing development. The natural beauty of the area is one of the main reasons that people move into the District.

Protecting the environment and countryside appears relatively straightforward until you find that a similarly high proportion of residents are worried about the lack of affordable housing for local needs. The District's housing needs for the next 20 years will be determined by the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and the recently published panel report recommends 6400 new homes will be required and this will have significant impact on the District. Many communities are very concerned about the implications for their locality. Whilst the Partnership understands that it cannot influence the results of the RSS

it is concerned about the implications of the RSS and its implementation. The new Spatial Planning Group will have a key role in ensuring that any new homes address in particular the need for affordable housing and are developed and built with adequate community facilities and associated infrastructure so that there is minimal impact on the environment and quality of life of existing communities

There is also increasing concern about global issues, and in particular, our impact on climate change. All communities have a role to play in tackling global issues and every action we take to reduce our impact can make a difference.

The Parish Plans demonstrate support for improved recycling facilities and waste reduction across the District. Communities are concerned about access to waste recycling facilities, the rising cost of disposing of trade waste and an increase in fly tipping as a result.

**General Action Points**

Support initiatives that protect the most fragile environments but allow greater access to and the use of more robust areas

Develop and encourage initiatives that raise awareness amongst residents about respecting their countryside and biodiversity so that they can be enjoyed by future generations

To support initiatives which encourage energy efficiency

**Children and Young Peoples Action Point**

Enable children and young people to use their local countryside for play and leisure in a sustainable way

Support initiatives that provide educational opportunities for children and young people to learn about the countryside and environment

**Disadvantage and Isolation Action Point**

Encourage volunteer involvement in countryside management and development of local sites in areas of deprivation



# Housing

The availability of affordable housing is an issue that all Parish Plans and have raised and this is a common priority across the County. There is a need for additional homes to rent and also to buy. Skilled workers needed to fill key positions often cannot afford to move to the area, young people face an uncertain future when their only option is to move to an area where they can find housing and families can't afford to live in our towns and villages.

Indeed affordable homes for local people is a particular point raised in all the Parish Plans and other surveys. As much as people want to preserve their town and villages there is general acceptance and recognition that local people need affordable homes in their locality. In fact many of the communities that object to widespread development would welcome small development of affordable homes to buy and rent that were "ring fenced" for local people in need. There is, however, still no easy solution to this but it is an area in which more work will need to be done to identify sites that may offer this possibility.

It is nationally recognised that it is preferable to house people close to their existing sources of support and places of familiarity. Traditionally in the past people entering into social housing were told where they would be living. It was not uncommon for families to be moved to the other side of a district removing them from all their support systems, which led to all sorts of problems. In order to achieve this we will need to work closely with the LDF and look at use of land, planning policy regarding affordable homes and allocations and lettings policies.

In addition the increased use of energy efficient building materials can have an impact in reducing East Dorset's carbon footprint and should be encouraged

## **General Action Point**

- Encourage the providing of social housing for people in their local area
- Ensure sufficient affordable and social housing is planned for in the LDF
- Introduce energy efficient building standards

## **Children and Young Peoples Action Point**

- Support the provision of increased affordable housing opportunities for young people in order that they can have the same opportunities to live and work within their own local communities

## **Disadvantage and Isolation Action Point**

- Support initiatives which seek to prevent homelessness and improve services to the homeless
- Support initiatives which seek to ensure families are appropriately housed near to services they require
- Support services which assist people to stay in their own homes

# Local Community Planning

Work to develop the community planning is increasingly being seen as a positive process in expanding people's interest in the way their communities are managed and developed. Completed parish plans have shown that the public support the community planning principle. We will work to encourage the remaining parishes to undertake plans in the coming years and will continue to offer support to those that do. We will encourage Parish Plan Groups to review and update their plans as required and will seek their views when updating our strategies and plans.

Local Community Planning is not restricted to Parish Plans and there are several other valid forms of local community planning. There are Town Plans which are based around a town and include a wider economic view than parish plans and neighbourhood plans which focus on a smaller geographical area.

## **General Action Point**

The Partnership will continue to support the development of community plans in all their forms and will support where appropriate, their findings

The Partnership will work with Town and Parish Councils and Town Parish Planning Groups to ensure, wherever possible, that aspirations and future community needs are jointly agreed and implemented

## **Children and Young Peoples Action Point**

Ensure that the views of children and young people are sought and that they are involved in the development of local community plans

## **Disadvantage and Isolation Action Point**

Encourage and support the most disadvantage communities to undertake community planning exercise



# Delivery Mechanism for Strategy

The Government recognises the value of Partnership Working and they are committed to encouraging more effective partnerships. As a result they are making it a legal duty for statutory agencies and bodies to co-operate with their Local Community Partnership. As a result we will be formalising partnership working arrangements in 2008 with the introduction of partnership agreements. These will set out the roles and responsibilities of partners and agree levels of support.

From April 2008 the Partnership will produce an annual delivery plan setting out its objectives and projects planned for the next 12 months. This will allow the partnership to focus delivery on agreed priorities and progress will be reported back to the partnership each year. The partnership's steering board will be making the key strategic decisions regarding the delivery plan and will then commission projects and allocate funding. It is therefore essential that the board membership effectively represents the key stakeholders and we will review membership on an annual basis.

The Partnership is made up of individual and organisational members and delivers the strategy through a number of different groups and bodies. It is likely that there will be changes made to these groups during the lifetime of this strategy and the need to address particular challenges and issues. As a result we will be introducing in 2008 a new Spatial Planning group to address the LDF issues along with a Stronger Communities group to give a voice to the voluntary and community sector. We will also introduce start and finish task forces that the board will commission to design and deliver projects or tackle important cross cutting issues.

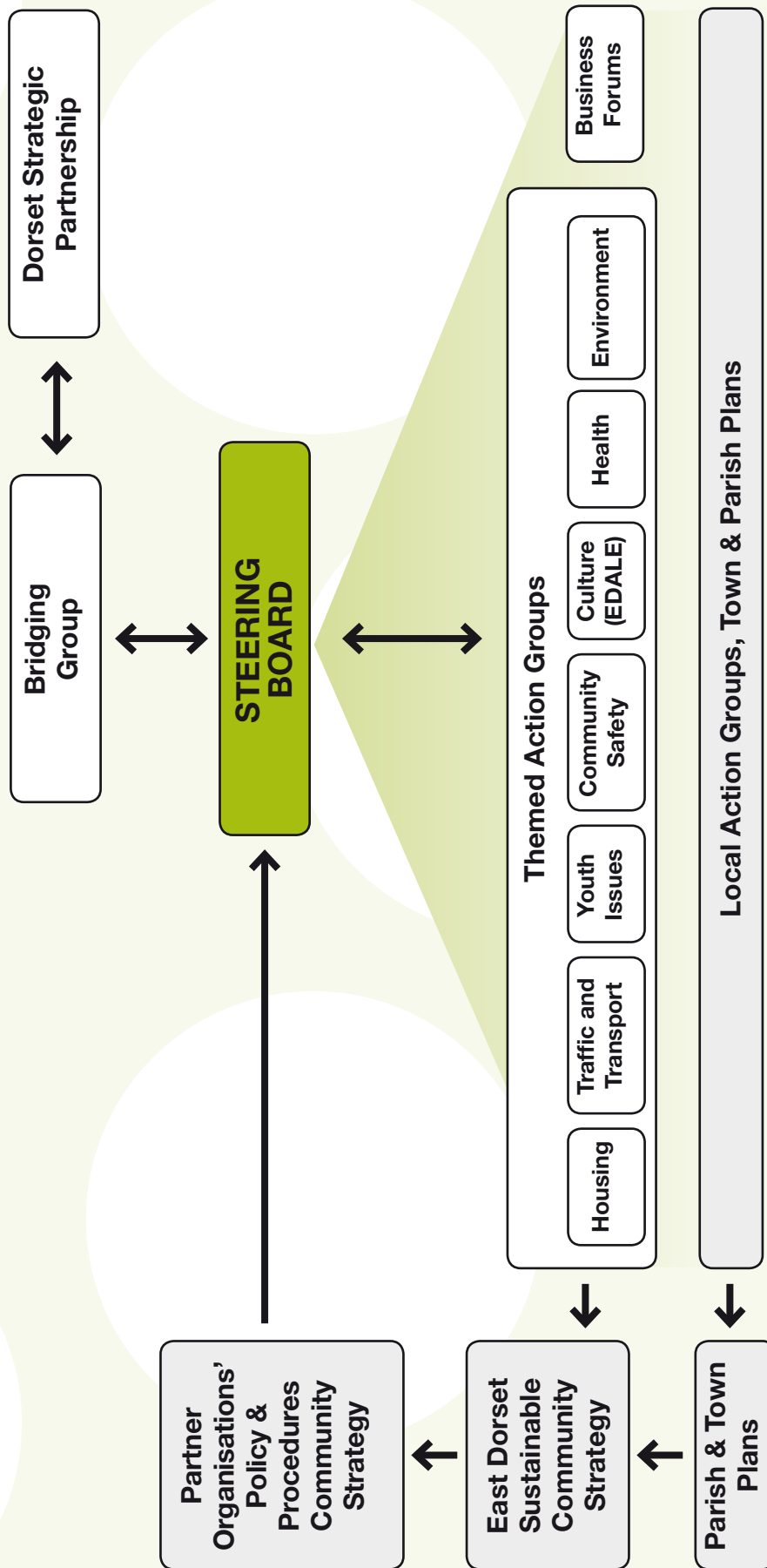
Table 2 details the current delivery mechanism for the community planning process. This Partnership has a strategically important role in that it must encourage 'grass roots' participation in community planning through the Town and Parish planning process, analyze the information gathered and ensure that local actions are dealt with locally. Those issues which, collectively, are best dealt with at County or regional level 'championed' through the Dorset Strategic Partnership Theme Groups and Bridging Group to the main Strategic Partnership Board.

Equally the Partnership must act as a conduit to ensure that information of a national, regional and county level is fed down to local decision makers in order that their decisions are not solely made from a local perspective.

## **General Action Point:**

- The Partnership will, through the work of its Local Action Groups (LAGs), Themed Action Groups (TAGs) and Town and Parish Planning Groups, continue to support the implementation of local community initiatives
- The Partnership will, through its representation on the Bridging Group and main Board of the Dorset Strategic Partnership, act as a 'champion' for local community initiatives which are best dealt with at a regional, or county level
- Review membership of the partnership's steering board

# The East Dorset Model - Table 3





## Summary of Key Action Points - Table 2

Subject Area	General Action Point	Disadvantage and Isolation Action Point	Children & Young Peoples Action Point
<b>Health</b>	Support work which brings health care to local communities and ensure transport links are provided to access district health services	Support smoking cessation initiatives in areas of deprivation where rates are higher  Provide support to families and individuals to engage with service providers through projects such as Homestart	Support the work of agencies which seek to address childhood obesity levels, inactivity by the young and poor lifestyle choices
<b>Social Care</b>	Ensure older residents have the access to social care facilities and services that fits their specific needs  Assist Employers to develop age management policies and strategies		Promote health and social care as a good career choice for young people by encouraging agencies to improve employment benefits
<b>Culture and Leisure</b>		Encourage the provision of opportunities that are based around structured family activities to help build family relationships  Encourage greater provision of an 'Access to Leisure' scheme for low income families to all cultural venues and services  Promote greater use of mobile youth facilities in rural areas	Encourage statutory and voluntary agencies to organise activities for Children and Young People both in term time and especially in school holidays  Encourage statutory and voluntary agencies to meet identified shortfalls in play provision, skate parks, youth shelters and multi use games areas  Support programmes which help Children and Young People learn to play naturally within their own environment
<b>Developing a Prosperous Economy</b>	Recognise the role of appropriate new local businesses and shops to reduce travel distances and to stimulate the local economy  Support the development of Social Enterprises	Promote community well-being through use of Credit Unions and other co-operative initiatives	Provide local opportunities for school children to gain good quality work experience within their local communities
<b>Traffic and Transport</b>	Support measures which seek to reduce speeding traffic and dangerous driving  Support initiatives which reduce reliance of car travel by encouraging alternative modes of transport  Support the creation of and improvement of cycle and footpath networks  Continue to support and see an extension to the flexible demand response bus service	Support the development of car sharing schemes particularly for rural areas	Support schemes which make public transport more affordable for young people  Continue to support the extent range of projects such as the 'Scooter Scheme' which help young people access training and employment opportunities

Subject Area	General Action Point	Disadvantage and Isolation Action Point	Children & Young Peoples Action Point
<b>Promoting Learning for All</b>	<p>Support initiatives which stimulate informal learning opportunities across a range of subjects and issues</p> <p>Work with our partners to promote accessible and effective learning opportunities for all sections of the community</p> <p>Provide training and support for voluntary and community groups through the Building Communities Programme</p> <p>Support the development of opportunities to improve workability skills to address local employment needs</p>	<p>Support the engagement of communities in learning activities targeted to meet specifically identified outcomes that benefit more deprived communities</p>	<p>Promote and support formal educational goals for Children and Young People and support adult education services, especially related to basic skills development</p>
<b>Safer Communities</b>	<p>Continue to promote and support community safety initiatives and activities such as Neighbourhood and other Watch Schemes</p> <p>Support the work of the Dorset Police in the implementation of their Safer Neighbourhoods Plan particularly through the Partners And Community Together (PACT) process</p> <p>Promote and support the introduction of community speed pledge schemes across the District</p>	<p>Develop Neighbourhood Management on Heatherlands Estate, Ferndown</p>	<p>Encourage work and initiatives that seeks to improve intergeneration relationships</p> <p>Recognise that Children and Young people also are fearful of crime and to support initiatives which allow them to feel safe</p> <p>Support multi agency initiatives including diversionary projects which seek to address and reduce unacceptable behaviour of and by young people</p>
<b>Stronger Communities</b>	<p>Encourage the development of Voluntary and Community sector and actively support groups in the provision of a wide range of services and activities in their local communities</p> <p>Establish a new Stronger Communities group</p>	<p>Increase the capacity of local people living in areas of disadvantage to develop and deliver local community projects</p>	<p>Encourage schemes which promote the engagement of Children and Young people into voluntary and community work</p>
<b>Sustainable Planning</b>	<p>Actively influence the Local Development Framework (LDF) and ensure the work of the partnership through the Town and Parish Planning and public consultation is fed into LDF development process</p> <p>Establish a new Spatial Planning Group</p>	<p>Ensure the special needs of disadvantaged areas are well documented within the LDF review process</p>	<p>Ensure the views and ideas of Children and Young People are well documented within the LDF review process</p>



Subject Area	General Action Point	Disadvantage and Isolation Action Point	Children & Young Peoples Action Point
<b>Protecting and Enhancing the Environment</b>	<p>Support initiatives that protect the most fragile environments but allow greater access to and use of more robust areas</p> <p>Develop and encourage initiatives that raise awareness amongst residents about respecting their countryside and biodiversity so that they can be enjoyed by future generations</p> <p>To support initiatives which encourage energy efficiency</p>	<p>Encourage volunteer involvement in countryside management and development of local sites in areas of disadvantage</p>	<p>Enable children and young people to use their local countryside for play and leisure in a sustainable way</p>
<b>Housing and Development</b>	<p>Encourage the provision of social housing for people in their local area</p> <p>Ensure sufficient affordable and social housing is planned for in the LDF</p> <p>Introduce energy efficient and sustainable building standards</p>	<p>Support initiatives which seek to prevent homelessness and improve services to the homeless</p> <p>Support initiatives which seek to ensure families are appropriately housed near to services they require</p> <p>Support services which assist people to stay in their own homes</p>	<p>Support the provision of increased affordable housing opportunities for young people in order that they can have the same opportunities to live and work within their own local communities</p>
<b>Local Community Planning</b>	<p>The Partnership will continue to support the development of community plans in all their forms and, where appropriate, will support where appropriate their findings</p> <p>The Partnership will work with Town and Parish Councils and Town Parish Planning Groups to ensure wherever possible that aspirations and future community needs are jointly agreed and implemented</p>	<p>Encourage and support the most disadvantage communities to undertake community planning exercise</p>	<p>Ensure that the views of children and young people are consulted and involved in the development of local community plans</p>
<b>Delivery Mechanism</b>	<p>The Partnership will through the work of its Local Action Groups (LAGs), Themed Action Groups (TAGs) and Town and Parish Planning Groups continue to support the implementation of local community initiatives</p> <p>The Partnership will through its representation on the Bridging Group and main Board of the Dorset Strategic Partnership act as a 'champion' for local community initiatives which are best dealt with at a regional or county level</p> <p>Review membership of the Partnership's Steering Board</p>		

