



Nothing about the Community without the Community...

Community Development Strategy for Gateshead 2008-2011



Foreword

Welcome to Gateshead's first Community Development Strategy. Gateshead Strategic Partnership (GSP) is particularly proud of what local people already achieve within their communities and we believe that through effective co-ordination and more focussed work we can continue to support local people to make a real difference to their communities.



The GSP would like to thank Gateshead Community Network, SOTW Primary Care Trust and Gateshead Council for their commitment to developing this Strategy in partnership with local communities, the voluntary sector and our statutory partners in Gateshead Strategic Partnership. All of these groups and organisations have taken the time to share their views and contribute to developing the Community Development Framework and Strategy.

Community involvement, engagement and development underpins everything we want to achieve as a partnership and we want to work with our communities to improve the public services on offer as well as supporting communities to deliver services themselves – if there is a desire to do so.

Mick Henry

Chair of Gateshead Strategic Partnership

Whether it is through running a community group, volunteering some time to support an event or even filling in a survey on local service provision, we value the contribution made. Everyone has unique skills, experience and ideas to offer and it is vital that these are nurtured to enable people to make an important contribution to community life.

This strategy sets out our vision and values, the outcomes we want to achieve and the priority areas we will be focussing on.

Through this Strategy we will provide a co-ordinated and unified approach to working with the communities of Gateshead.

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Executive Summary

This is Gateshead's first Community Development Strategy effective from December 2008 to December 2011. It has been developed by Gateshead Strategic Partnership and will help us to deliver Vision 2030 and the Gateshead Agreement. It sets out:

- The framework for how communities and individuals will be engaged and empowered to be involved in decisions that affect their lives
- Our priorities for developing communities in Gateshead and improving the ways in which communities are involved in all aspects of decision making

Our vision for community development in Gateshead is:

“Local people are able to challenge, influence and shape decisions that affect their lives and contribute to active and sustainable communities”

To achieve this we have identified five outcomes. These outcomes underpin our vision and are of equal importance overlapping and linking to each other. We will focus our activity on these areas over the next three years.

1. Consultation, engagement and capacity building seeks to involve all sections of the community and meet the diverse needs of all residents.
2. Local people are empowered and confident that they can influence, shape and have an impact on new policies and service developments from an early stage.
3. Local people, community organisations, employees and employers who are confident and have the skills to involve and develop communities.
4. Communities that are active in identifying needs and opportunities for change and are committed to developing solutions and improving their local area.
5. Community development work is co-ordinated across Gateshead with partners sharing skills, knowledge and resources ensuring value for money for local people.

The Strategy also sets out the priorities for action within each of these themed areas. Focusing activity and targeting resources in these areas will have the greatest impact on developing and empowering local communities. A Community Development Framework was developed in consultation with residents and partners. This consultation also informed the vision and outcomes identified for action.

As we are taking a phased approach towards supporting community development the Action Plan will be developed as a working document. This will involve local people and partners and will set out in detail the next stage of implementation.



For Gateshead Strategic Partnership, progress will be monitored by the Safer, Stronger Communities and Culture Partnership. The Action Plan will be reviewed annually and the Strategy will be refreshed after three years.

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1. Introduction

This is the first Community Development Strategy for Gateshead – however this is not the start of community development in Gateshead. We have a strong history of community consultation, engagement and development. Through this strategy we will work with local people to build on this strong foundation to develop, support and nurture involvement in developing policies, planning services and delivering them.

The purpose of this strategy is to set the structure for community consultation, involvement and engagement in Gateshead over the next three years up to 2011. It aims to increase community ownership of the local area and sets out our priorities to help us to achieve this in a co-ordinated way. Through greater involvement, services will be better equipped to understand and meet the needs of the people who use them, both now and in the future.

This introduction explains why this strategy is being produced, provides an overview of what it intends to achieve and how it has been developed

Section 2 sets out the strategic, national and local contexts that this Strategy operates within and how these have influenced our priorities

Section 3 explains more about what we mean by community development, the approach taken locally and our main achievements in Gateshead.

Section 4 describes the Community Development Framework that the Strategy delivers.

Section 5 sets out our vision for community development, the outcomes we want to achieve in Gateshead and our priorities for action.

Sections 6 and 7 explain how we will use our resources to turn these priorities into action and how we will monitor our progress and make sure we achieve our vision.

Development of the Strategy

This Strategy has been developed by Gateshead Strategic Partnership (GSP). The GSP has been in place for seven years and is made up of a range of public service providers, statutory, community and voluntary and private sector organisations. Development of the Strategy has been led by the Gateshead Community Network (GCN), supported by Gateshead Council and the Primary Care Trust (PCT).



A Community Development Framework was developed with the involvement of partners from community, voluntary and statutory bodies in Gateshead and was launched in 2007. This Framework describes how community development works, the different levels of individual and community involvement and how they link and overlap. Each level is important and is highly valued. The Framework has been developed to act as a mechanism for engaging with partners to ensure that opportunities for joint commissioning are exploited and that services are joined up and tailored to the diverse and specific needs of all residents. This Strategy builds on the Framework and sets out how community development will be used and advanced, so that local people have opportunities to become involved in shaping the places where they live and work.

Theme Partnerships and Area Forums were consulted on the vision, outcomes and priorities for action. The Strategy reflects the views expressed by partners and local people. An Action Plan setting out the detailed steps towards implementation will be developed with Theme Partnerships and Area Forums. The Action Plan will be a working document that sits within the overall framework of this strategy but will be developed to respond to the needs of individual communities to ensure we can deliver our vision.

2. Strategic, National and Local Context

Strategic Context

Vision 2030 – Gateshead’s Sustainable Community Strategy

Vision 2030, produced by Gateshead Strategic Partnership in 2007, sets out an ambitious and aspirational vision for the future:

“Local people realising their full potential enjoying the best quality of life in a healthy, equal, safe, prosperous and sustainable Gateshead”

The realisation of Vision 2030 will make a difference to the local people of Gateshead and respond to issues that they have told us are important. The Community Development Strategy is a vital element needed to deliver Vision 2030, and contributes to all six Big Ideas. In particular the Strategy will contribute towards these Big Ideas:

- **‘Gateshead Volunteers’** by enabling everyone to make a recognised contribution to their community, and building capacity to ensure the sustainability of the voluntary and community sector

- **‘Creative Gateshead’** ensuring that residents know how they can get involved in decision making processes and influence services.

“By 2030, Gateshead will be an economically thriving city which is focussed on people... unlocking the potential of our local residents by giving opportunities and nurturing aspirations” (Vision 2030)

The Gateshead Agreement 2008-2011 will drive the first stage of implementation of Vision 2030. It includes some specific targets that this Strategy will help to achieve:

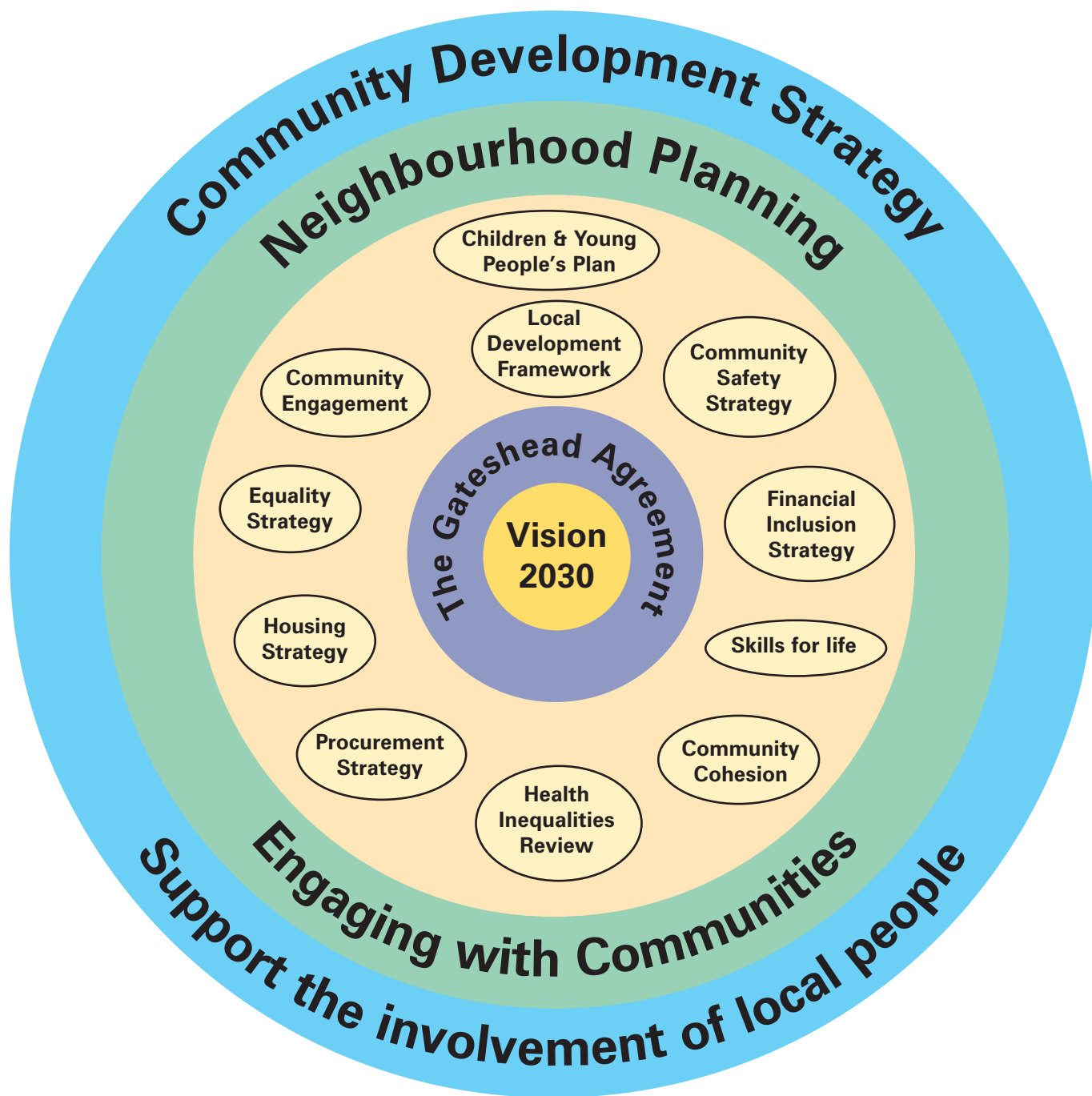
- Increase the percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
- Increase the number of local people participating in regular volunteering

The Performance and Review section contains further detail about our targets and how we will measure our success.

The Community Development Strategy brings together and threads through all service areas as we seek to consult and involve local people in the design and development of services they use. Vision 2030 and The Gateshead Agreement are at the core of partnership work, so the Community Development Strategy

will ensure communities are fully involved in the delivery of a range of strategies. The following diagram (Figure 1) describes how the Community Development Strategy is fundamental to the development and delivery of all other Gateshead Strategic Partnership strategies and plans.

Figure 1



National Context

'Strong and Prosperous Communities' and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act

In October 2007, the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act gained Royal Assent. The Act introduced a new settlement between central and local government, and between local government, its partners and its citizens legislating for many of the proposals put forward in 'Strong and Prosperous Communities'.

Strong and Prosperous Communities introduced a new 'duty to involve' to ensure that local people have greater opportunities to influence decision-making and play a part. This will come into force in April 2009 and is in addition to existing requirements to consult and involve residents. The duty requires particular public organisations to take those steps they consider appropriate to involve "representatives of local persons" ("those likely to be affected by, or interested in a particular authority function where they consider that it is appropriate to do so").

The Community Development Strategy sets out how partners will work through the Gateshead Strategic Partnership to provide information, consult with, involve and develop local representatives to help ensure that this new duty is met. It will consider capacity, capability, resources and training, looking at

innovative approaches to engagement and improving access to involvement. It also aims to create better links and a more co-ordinated approach minimising consultation fatigue and duplication. More detail on the priorities for action is outlined in section 5. The duty will mean a change in service planning in order to embed a culture of engagement and empowerment across the Partnership.

The Sustainable Communities Act 2007

The Sustainable Communities Act received Royal Assent on 23 October 2007. It aims to promote the economic, social or environmental sustainability of local communities. It introduces a process for communities to feed ideas for change through their local council who can work with communities to develop further. Ideas are sent via the Local Government Association to central government for a decision. Proposals for change could include legislative, transfer of responsibilities between public bodies, a new national policy or a change/strengthening of policy. The Act links to the Government policy of empowering local people.

The Community Empowerment White Paper

'Communities in Control: Real people, real power' - The Community Empowerment White Paper aims to generate vibrant local democracy and ensure that local political activity is seen as a worthwhile activity with strong local democratic institutions at

its heart. It also aims to pass more power to local people, so they feel that if they get involved, it will be worth their time and effort. Proposals include a new duty to promote democracy, encouraging volunteering and participatory budgeting. The White Paper announces the launch of a £70 million Community Builders scheme to support community organisations. The Community Development Strategy identifies priorities for action that will take forward the key proposals in the White Paper such as enabling more people to volunteer.

Local Context

Gateshead has a population of around 190,500, (mid year estimate Population 2006 ONS) living in over 86,000 households (mid year estimate Household 2004, ONS).

Geographically it is the largest of the five Tyne and Wear metropolitan authorities and stretches almost 13 miles along the south bank of the River Tyne and covers an area of 55 square miles.

Gateshead is a borough of contrasts, with both urban and rural communities. 18% of the population live in areas that are in the 10% most deprived areas in England whilst other areas are in the 20% least deprived in England (2007 Deprivation Index).

In 2002 Gateshead started to develop its approach to neighbourhood working. Key services were organised across five geographical

areas enabling service delivery and community involvement to be considered at a more local level. A number of techniques and projects to engage whole communities and hard to reach groups in decision making processes have been developed and tested.

More recently Area Forums have been set up to oversee service delivery in each neighbourhood management area. The Forums are made up of partner organisations and have community and voluntary sector representation. They are chaired by a Cabinet Member of the council.

Best Value Review of Service to Neighbourhoods

In 2006 the council undertook a neighbourhood level Best Value Review. Focusing on two neighbourhoods of approximately 2,000 properties each, the review looked at how well services were addressing the issues facing these neighbourhoods.

This review engaged local people in detailed debates about what works and what needs to be improved, culminating in the creation of a five year improvement plan for each neighbourhood. The learning gained through this review has informed the development of a Gateshead wide neighbourhood planning approach. Clusters of neighbourhoods in Gateshead will be engaged to create their own bespoke neighbourhood plan, which will be delivered through Area Forums.

Community Empowerment

Gateshead Council has been developing its approach to implementing the key proposals outlined in the Community Empowerment White Paper 'Communities in Control'. The Council's Corporate Vitality Advisory Group has identified seven key priorities. These are:

- (i) Proactively implement the duty to involve
- (ii) Further develop engagement mechanisms with children and young people
- (iii) Support to councillors in their civic roles e.g. through accredited training
- (iv) Embed our new approach to Overview and Scrutiny involving local people and partners where appropriate
- (v) Identify further pilot opportunities for Neighbourhood Agreements
- (vi) Participatory Budgeting - Identify opportunities and prepare options report for consideration
- (vii) Make performance information about services more accessible

These priorities have been incorporated in Section 5 'Vision, Outcomes and Priorities' of the Strategy to ensure a joined up approach to community development.

Ward Councillors as Community Champions

At a neighbourhood level, the Council has reinforced the community leadership role of ward councillors in the Constitution. This role includes:

- Being a lead advocate for local communities, articulating their views and representing those views to Cabinet to influence policy and decision-making.
- Taking a lead in identifying service needs specific to neighbourhoods in their ward and in exploring with relevant Cabinet members how those needs can be met.
- Monitoring service delivery in their ward and raising issues about performance with Cabinet members and Overview and Scrutiny Committees as appropriate.
- Taking the lead in working with local people and organisations to develop community partnerships and similar organisations.
- Carrying out casework on behalf of local residents. They will remain the first point of contact for local people who have issues about the services that are provided to them or the way their neighbourhood is run.

The outcomes and priorities identified for action in section 5 have been shaped and informed by the strategic, national and local contexts.

3. What is Community Development?

This Strategy is about improving lives. We all want to live in safe, healthy, enjoyable, friendly and cohesive communities. However, no individual, group or organisation can achieve this by themselves. We know that by working together, listening, learning and responding we can achieve so much more. Community development is both a process embarked upon, and an outcome, achieved through the involvement, commitment and drive of local people.



There are different types of communities that this strategy covers:

- Communities of interest – those who share common interests such as sport, health or education
- Geographic communities – these are communities living in the same neighbourhood
- Communities of identity – these include young people, faith and race groups

The case studies in this strategy illustrate examples of community development within each of these community types.

Involvement should enhance the experience of people living in communities.

It is a two way process based on an equal relationship between local communities and organisations that provide services. We recognise that people want to be involved in different ways and this can depend on their individual needs, skills and interests. It is important that local people can contribute in ways that suit them - whether this is being consulted on a new service or being part of a group identifying solutions to problems or even delivering them.

This Strategy sets out a number of different ways that local people will be supported and enabled to become involved in local decision making. This could include, participating in a consultation event, helping to decide how to spend particular budgets, or even volunteering to run their own community group.

Community development is a process that...

- Starts with the issues that affect local people, not focussing on organisational solutions or goals; it is therefore more likely to respond to local need
- Ensures services are designed to meet the different needs of the people that use them
- Gives people a stronger voice in decisions that affect them increasing ownership of problems and the solutions
- Enables communities to develop solutions to problems that they themselves identify
- Fosters individual talent by developing skills and helping people to reach their full potential
- Leaves a legacy helping to build cohesive and sustainable communities.



Community development is not...

Quick – It is a long term process, focussing on people and their needs. This is essential to ensure that changes are sustainable and long lasting.

A numbers game – if only five people turn up to the public meeting these are the five people you start working with – and then undertake research into how to engage the views of those that are not represented.

Partnership working – community development is the activity which enables many people to get to the partnership table in the first place.

Just consultation – community development is about consulting at all stages of decision making – from beginning through the development stage to implementation.

A cheap way of delivering services, demonstrating management efficiency or validating funding bids.

Talking with three community leaders and saying their responses reflect the views of the whole community. True community development enables many more voices to be heard.

(source: Community Development Exchange 2006 'What is Community Development?')

Community Development in Gateshead

This Strategy builds upon community development work that has taken place in Gateshead so far. There are a number of examples of community development work in action in Gateshead. Our key achievements include:

Gateshead received **Beacon Status for Positive Youth Engagement in the Democratic Process**. Work with young people as inspectors of services is advanced, young people are involved at a strategic level in meeting directly with councillors about services and as members of committees in community centres, influencing and contributing to decisions about services that affect them.

2008 was designated **Year of the Volunteer** in Gateshead, with a co-ordinated programme for promoting volunteering and voluntary action to strengthen civic engagement. Community development work is the approach that encourages people to give their time freely and give something back to the community.

As a direct result of involving and listening to residents during the **Best Value Review of Leisure**, we are improving leisure facilities (£29million will be invested through the 'Building an Active Future' programme), which will take place over the next 3 years to be complete by 2011. Researchers were commissioned to carry out a research programme to determine

what current users, non-users, staff and the public think about existing facilities and how they would like the new buildings to feel and operate, both functionally and culturally. Results from the research and additional consultation with other user groups have been used to help progress the design development of the buildings.

Community based approach to tackling health inequalities: an outcome of the health inequalities review, conducted by the Council and Primary Care Trust, was a recognition that residents and frontline workers need to be empowered to change behaviours and lifestyles. Work is taking place in Bensham and Saltwell to improve methods in engagement, resource-sharing, use of frontline staff and development of skills in the community. A plan to roll out learning to other deprived neighbourhoods and improve health-related behaviour is also in place.

It's Your Gateshead is an example of how the council is working with communities to create a better environment. Engagement with businesses is key and the council has launched the Gateshead Tidy Business Awards. One outcome is that pubs and restaurants along the Quayside have agreed to sweep outside their own properties. Other businesses are maintaining hanging baskets provided by the council.

Gateshead is piloting a Neighbourhood Agreement between service providers in a local

community in Wrekenton. The Agreement sets out what the local community will also do to ensure a Cleaner, Greener Safer Neighbourhood. The 'Cleaner, Greener & Safer' Agreement being developed covers environment and community safety issues. This has been developed with the local neighbourhood police team, the Fire & Rescue Service and The Gateshead Housing Company. Local businesses, schools, and tenants and residents associations (TARAs) have also been involved in the process. GSP supports over forty community groups in Gateshead. Just two examples are:

Swalwell Little Angels

A group of parents from Swalwell Primary School organise after-school activities for the children with support from GCN. The group has organised a number of events and have created a stimulus in the school to provide after-school activities itself.

Minyan Line Gateshead

The Jewish Community in Gateshead has developed an automated telephone information service with support from GCN. This provides up-to-date information on events in the community to help new arrivals in the community and also assists with community cohesion. GCN has supported the group to establish a constitution and given initial funding advice.

Below: Former Mayor of Gateshead Councillor Maureen Chaplin joins Peggy Beeston MBE, and Audrey Brown, current Chair of the Stoneygate Community Association, at the opening of the refurbished Stoneygate Play Park.

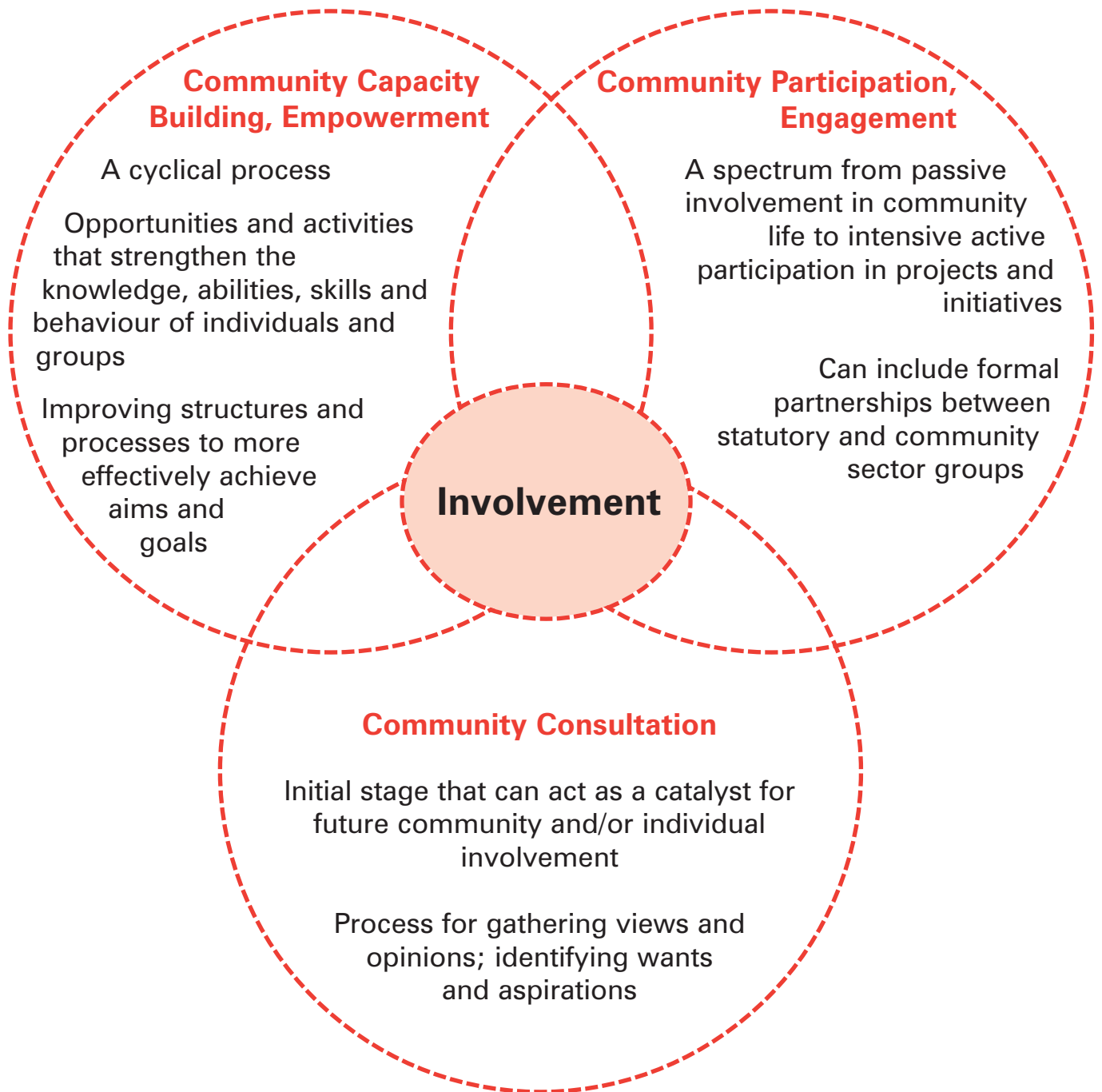


Our Values

At the core of community development are the following key underpinning values:

Inclusiveness	Include all people of all backgrounds and treat them fairly and equally regardless of race, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability
Accessibility	Remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in the issues that affect their lives
Equality of influence and involvement	All local people have an equal chance to participate in decision making and achieve shared aims
Voluntary Involvement	Local people are actively willing and able to participate in community development
Social Justice	Enable people to have greater control over the decision-making processes which affect their lives and ensure fair and equal access for all in the community
Working and learning together	Value and use the skills, knowledge, experience and diversity within communities and organisations to collectively bring about change
Self Determination	Individuals and groups have the right to identify shared issues and concerns as the starting point for collective action
Sustainable Communities	Communities and places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. Communities meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and will contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe, inclusive, well planned and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all
Community Cohesion	People from different backgrounds get on well together and respect difference and diversity

4. Community Development Framework for Gateshead



Themes of community development in the Framework

The Framework highlights three themed levels of community development in this strategy and these are elements through the priority areas for action:

Theme 1 – Community Consultation

Gathering views, opinions, needs, wants and aspirations. Consultation is often the first stage at which people become involved in community work. It can act as a catalyst for future community involvement; however it should also be valued in its own right as a tool for informing policy making and decision taking.

Theme 2 – Community Participation and Engagement

This covers the spectrum from relatively passive involvement in community life such as filling in a survey to intensive, active participation in projects or initiatives. Engagement and participation involves people having a voice through appropriate mechanisms to shape services or policies and participate in decision-making. It can be formal or informal but actively involves people, particularly from a very early stage. It also involves communities receiving feedback on results, outcomes and sharing of knowledge.

Theme 3 – Community Capacity Building, Empowerment

This is cyclical, raising aspirations and confidence, starting where people are in terms of skills, abilities and knowledge. It involves:

- Opportunities and activities that strengthen the knowledge, abilities, skills and behaviour of individuals/groups and improving structures and processes so local people can work more effectively to achieve their goals
- A facilitated process or intervention to build up skills and resources within a community or with an individual to enable greater influence
- Developing the expertise and skills of groups and individuals enabling them to reach their potential and make a difference for themselves and their community
- Leaving a 'legacy' to improve future outcomes by empowering communities to grow and respond to challenges with their new and developing skills, but with commitment from agencies to support and nurture them.

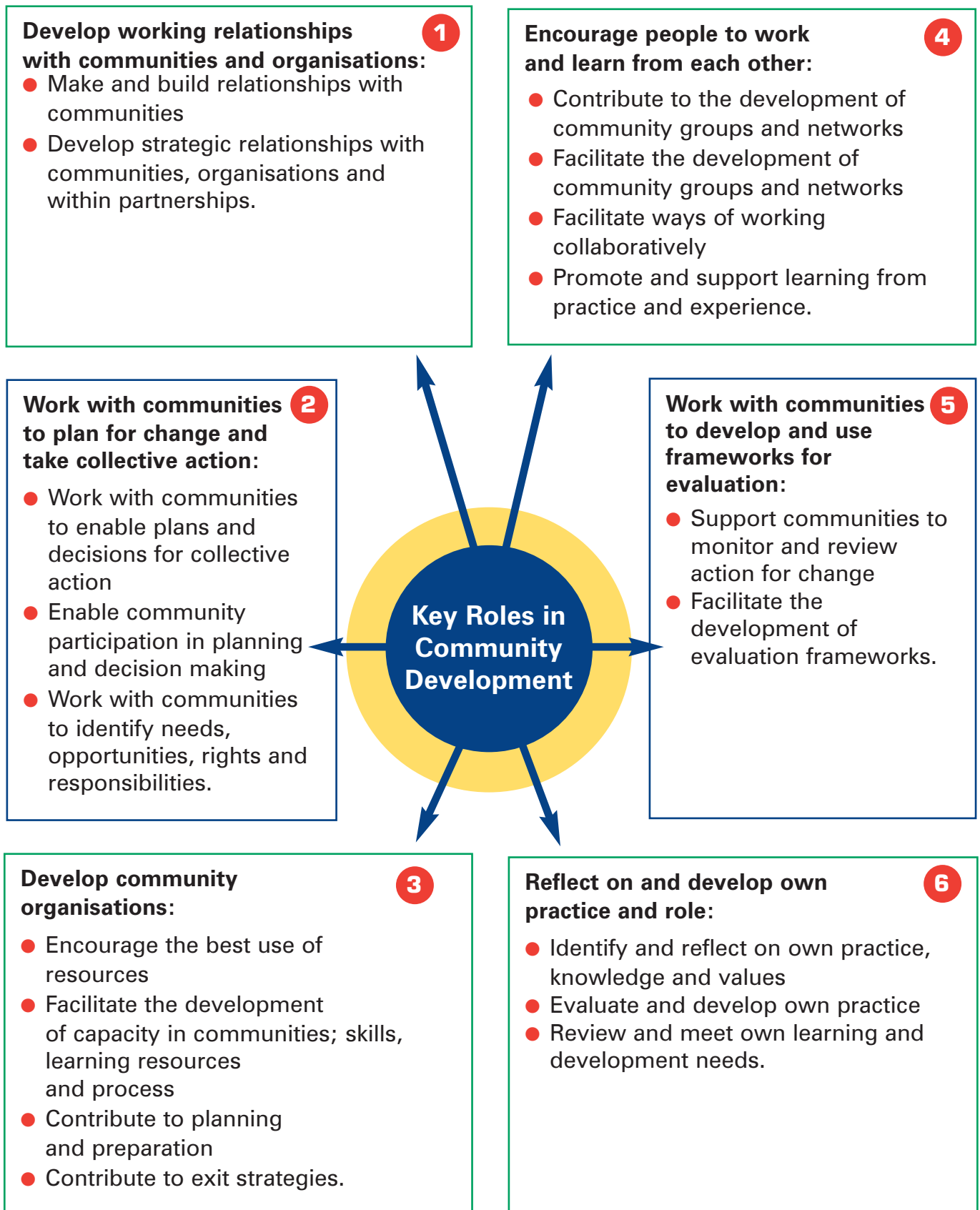
Within all of these levels the following will be considered:

- **Accessibility:** local people will be consulted in ways that consider their needs and are appropriate to their circumstances
- **Proportionality:** The extent of the engagement should be proportionate to the significance of the issue, both to local people, service providers, and to the benefits to be gained from involvement

- **Coordination:** A coordinated integrated approach should ensure relevant knowledge, expertise and experience are shared and that communities are not overwhelmed with consultation exercises
- **Timing:** service providers should consider when to inform, consult and/or involve. It should be as early as possible to ensure that service functions are shaped around the needs and aspirations of the community.

The following diagram describes the key roles needed in community development. Each role contributes to different stages in community development. The outcomes and priorities section of the strategy sets out actions that will develop each of these roles over the next three years.

Key Roles in Community Development



Note: Adapted from National Occupational Standards in Community Development Work, Federation of Community Work Training Groups

5. Vision, Outcomes and Priorities

Taking into account the Community Development Framework and Key Roles we have developed the following vision for community development:

“Local people are able to challenge, influence and shape decisions that affect their lives and contribute to active and sustainable communities”

How will we achieve this – Our Outcomes

To achieve this vision we have identified the following five outcomes. These outcomes underpin our vision and are of equal importance overlapping and linking to each other. We will focus our activity on these areas over the next three years.

1. Consultation, engagement and capacity building seeks to involve all sections of the community and meet the diverse needs of all residents.
2. Local people are empowered and confident that they can influence, shape and have an impact on new policies and service developments from an early stage.

3. Local people, community organisations, employees and employers who are confident and have the skills to involve and develop communities.
4. Communities that are active in identifying needs and opportunities for change and are committed to developing solutions and improving their local area.
5. Community development work is co-ordinated across Gateshead with partners sharing skills, knowledge and resources ensuring value for money for local people.

Outcome 1 – Consultation, engagement and capacity building seeks to involve all sections of the community and meet the diverse needs of all residents.

What do we mean?

Consultation, involvement and engagement and capacity building takes place in ways, models and circumstances that meet the diverse needs of local people and their communities.

Priorities for the next three years

- Identify the aspirations of local people through Neighbourhood Planning and influence services through Neighbourhood Action Plans
- Co-ordinate and publicise existing methods and approaches to engagement and involvement across partners so as to improve the quality of these activities across Gateshead
- Review representative groups we engage with, building a comprehensive database and ensure we are taking steps to involve all under-represented groups
- Provide further opportunities for those least engaged to give their views using a wide range of methods
- Develop the Gateshead Local Involvement Network (LINK) ensuring local people can influence and shape health and social care services in Gateshead
- Develop more opportunities for volunteering within Gateshead and encourage people to acknowledge the volunteering work that they do.

Case Study: Gateshead Cerebral Palsy Group (GCPG)

Established in November 2007 GCPG was started to provide a support group for people with cerebral palsy and their carers in Gateshead and has subsequently developed into delivering activities and sharing information. GCN provided support in the constitution of the group, establishing a management committee, as well as in action planning, bank account establishment and funding advice. In March 2008 GCPG were supported in applying to the GCN Small Grants Fund and were successful in receiving a start-up grant. As a result the group is now able to provide weekly activities for members and their carers. They are also starting up a resource library for members to access information and have linked into national bodies such as SCOPE.

This is an example of Key Role 3: Develop community organisations.

Outcome 2 – Local people are empowered and confident that they can influence, shape and have an impact on new policies and service developments from an early stage.

What do we mean?

Local people should have opportunities to be consulted and involved in the design and development of services they use. They should be supported and be able to access resources to enable them to do this.

Priorities for the next three years

- Increase the opportunities that local people have to inform all new policies and strategies through public consultation at an early stage
- Develop a Gateshead approach to Participatory Budgeting
- Raise the profile of engagement across Gateshead by making information about services and how to get involved accessible to all, enabling meaningful community involvement to take place
- Enabling the role of councillors as Community Champions
- Embed engagement approaches in planning for the physical environment for example the use of Planning for Real
- Proactively respond to the 'duty to involve'
- Build upon the principles contained within the Gateshead Compact – a voluntary agreement between Gateshead Council and the Voluntary and Community Sector in Gateshead
- Support communities to access new funding opportunities, building on the principles of the Gateshead Compact
- Work with young people to produce a comprehensive work plan to advice/ influence service provision. Develop young people as inspectors of services approach.

Case Study: UP2U

The council has piloted participatory budgeting, UP2U, where the community identified projects to improve the local environment. The pilot, held in Wrekenton, resulted in eight projects being delivered within the local community, devised and voted for by the community themselves.

The projects have created a sense of neighbourhood pride within the community and promoted new levels of cohesion particularly between young and older residents, in addition to other residents from a range of differing backgrounds.

This is an example of Key Role 2: Work with communities to plan for change and take collective action.

Outcome 3 – Local people, community organisations, employers and employees who are confident and have the skills to involve and develop communities.

What do we mean?

Local people will be able to access training and development that enables them to contribute to community life in ways that suit their needs. Employers and employees are trained and equipped to involve and support local communities as appropriate.

Priorities for the next three years

- GSP partners as employers set standards for the promotion and support of training opportunities
- Ensure that appropriate training opportunities for both staff and local people are available and accessible at the appropriate level
- Agree with partners and stakeholders a community development standard that all sign up to and meet
- Create relevant accredited training pathways in community development, citizenship and volunteering linked to national occupational standards for local people and organisations
- Develop appropriate training programmes and packages that include accredited training courses to toolkits, ensuring that they are accessible to all
- Identify any gaps in training and development and create an action plan to fill those gaps
- Encourage the use of engagement models and checklists to help service providers consult and involve the right people in the right way and on the right issues.

Case Study: Blaydon West Residents Association

Blaydon West Residents Association was established in 2005. One issue that has been an important driving factor in their success was a project to improve the unkempt appearance of the local allotment site. It was felt by residents that the poor appearance of the site was a contributing factor in the high levels of anti-social behaviour and criminal damage in their neighbourhood. The project need was supported by recorded crime figures with rates for criminal damage being 10% higher than the average rate for Gateshead.

With support from the Council's Neighbourhood Management Team the Association successfully applied for a range of funding, including a substantial capital allocation from Cleaner Safer Greener Fund (of £150,000) to make improvements to the allotment site and fully managed the projects successful delivery.

The Blaydon West Residents' Association also benefit from an association with the Living Streets Campaign having been accepted as one of five regional demonstration communities.

This is an example of Key Role 4: Encourage people to work and learn from each other.

Case Study: Health Inequalities Review – Community Engagement Pilot

Gateshead Council's Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewed Health Inequalities in the borough. The Committee recognised the importance of engaging communities and services to improve health and make a difference to inequalities in life expectancy. One of the eight priorities of the review was to pilot an approach to community engagement and health. A pilot exercise was undertaken in Bensham and Saltwell to explore ways to reach people who do not normally engage with ideas or services around their health and changes to their lifestyle.

Between May and July 2008 Gateshead Community Network staff and Gateshead Council and PCT Health Trainers engaged with local people and community groups in the area. A variety of approaches were used, including 1-1 questionnaires and focused discussion groups with existing voluntary and community groups.

A further result from this work is that several local groups have asked the Health Trainers to return to help them look at lifestyle changes. The barriers identified by residents have resulted in changes being made to some of our current approaches. The learning from this project will inform the development of future community engagement and health in other areas in Gateshead.

This is an example of Key Role 6: Reflect on, and develop own practice and role.

Outcome 4 – Communities that are active in identifying needs and opportunities for change and are committed to developing solutions and improving their local area.

What do we mean?

Community development work reflects and supports the needs identified by residents.

Priorities for the next three years

- Develop and deliver comprehensive Neighbourhood Plans across communities with local people and partners
- Develop strategic and working relationships with new and emerging communities, organisations and within partnerships
- Evaluate and develop Neighbourhood Agreements identifying further opportunities to pilot
- Explore new models for supporting the local management of community centres
- Increase the number of people involved in community groups for example 'friends of' local fire stations
- Increase resources including identifying opportunities for further asset transfer
- Identify existing community and voluntary groups and review the ways in which they are involved in policy development and service provision
- Improve the way services are commissioned to ensure that the approach is open and accessible to community and voluntary groups and that Gateshead Compact principles are adhered to
- Consider delivery of local services by local people and encourage and support social and community enterprises
- Embed the Council's new approach to scrutiny following the review of the Overview and Scrutiny function by finding new and appropriate ways to involve local people and partners.

Case Study: Community Assets Programme

Gateshead Council and the GSP are keen to explore the opportunities presented through the Community Assets programme. The council agreed to the transfer of a property to Birtley Community Partnership (BCP) on the basis that the group found funding for refurbishment of the building. The partnership submitted a bid to the Community Assets programme in November 2007, with the project title of Birtley Community Hub.

The Birtley Community Hub is one of 37 projects across England announced in the shortlist of schemes. All shortlisted organisations received 'in principle' grant offers and now have up to six months to develop detailed plans for developing their asset. Officers from the council will be working with BCP and Gateshead Voluntary Organisations Council over the coming months to submit the Capital Delivery Plan, and ensure that sustainability can be achieved once the project is up and running.

This is an example of Key Role 1: Develop working relationships with communities and organisations.

Case Study: Police work

Northumbria Police carried out a week of enforcement activity in each of the five neighbourhood areas and commissioned GCN to carry out, before this activity began, a consultation exercise with people looking at local priorities. The information from the surveys was collated and reported back to each Neighbourhood Inspector to help inform the week's action plan. Once the enforcement week's activities were completed a further six month action plan was put into place. After this period GCN will return to each of the five areas and re-survey local people again to see if their priorities and perception of the police has changed.

This is an example of Key Role 5: Work with communities to develop and use frameworks for evaluation.

Outcome 5 – Community development work is co-ordinated across Gateshead with partners sharing skills, knowledge and resources ensuring value for money for local people.

What do we mean?

Co-ordinated approach to community development – communication, tools and sharing of information at all levels, creation of database, share good practice and provide feedback, coordinate engagement activities with partners where appropriate.

Priorities for the next three years

- Ensure the Community Development Framework provides an underpinning structure for all organisations and encourages respect of the principles within the Gateshead Compact
- Co-ordinate the approach to community development establishing a partnership group to oversee this strategy ensuring engagement is joined up at an area level to reduce duplication
- Share local knowledge and intelligence through the Area Forums
- Develop a role for Area Forums to commission or co-ordinate work at a neighbourhood level between partners within the framework of this strategy
- Develop a consultation web portal which will include a database collecting all engagement activities and highlight opportunities for involvement across Gateshead
- Set up a community development practitioners network to share good practice, skills and development needs, encouraging people to work and learn from each other
- Evaluate and improve our own practice and work with communities to develop and use frameworks for evaluation through the community development practitioners network
- Identify potential for development of community pledge banks
- Increase the use of community facilities developed and managed by local people, for example the use of community rooms within fire stations.

Case Study: Geographical Best Value Review of Birtley

A Best Value Review was undertaken on the geographical area of Birtley focusing on council services provided and the views of Birtley residents about those services. As part of the methodology of the review we:

- Talked to Birtley residents to establish their views about the area and the services they receive
- Compared the level and quality of services provided in Birtley with those provided to other areas
- Challenged if the right services were being provided
- Assessed whether residents of Birtley are receiving quality and value for money from their services
- Considered what is needed to maintain communities where people want to live and work

The outcomes of the review have seen:

- Joined up service delivery for residents of Birtley
- Effective community engagement and involvement so that residents are able to influence how and which services are provided
- Increased numbers of residents who are satisfied with services
- Involvement of residents in decisions that are made about local services

This work saw members of the Birtley Community Partnership become part of the scrutiny group overseeing the process. The community has played an active role in monitoring the implementation plan that was developed as part of the Best Value Review.

This is an example of Key Role 1: Develop working relationships with communities and organisations.

6. Resource and other implications

Through this Strategy we will undertake an audit of the community development resource that we have across the Partnership to identify staffing implications for delivery of the strategy and associated funding.

Funding requirements will be largely met by existing resources. This work is part of what we do and how we work. Communities will be supported to obtain additional funding from appropriate bodies and organisations that will help to meet the needs of local communities.

7. Performance and review

Progress against the outcomes will be assessed through a series of measures including progress reports, surveys and consultation. The Strategy will directly contribute to the following targets:

Ref	Description	Source	LAA Baseline	Target 2008/09	Target 2009/10	Target 2010/11
NI 3	Civic participation in the local area	Place Survey (Q16)	NA	4% Increase on 2008/09 baseline		
NI 4	% of people who think that they can influence decisions affecting their local area	Place Survey (Q13) (Previously BVPI)	43%	44%	45%	48%
NI6	Participation in regular volunteering	Place Survey (Q15)	NA	4% Increase on 2008/09 baseline		
NI7	Thriving Third Sector	National Survey of Third Sector Organisation	NA	4% Increase on 2008/09 baseline		
Place Survey	% of people who think that their local public services act on the concerns of local residents	Place Survey (Q6d)	NA	4% Increase on 2008/09 baseline		
Place Survey	% of people who feel informed about how they can get involved in local decision-making	Place Survey (Q12c) (Previously BVPI)	54%	55%	56%	59%
Place Survey	% of people who would like to be more involved in the decisions that affect their locality	Place Survey (Q14) (Previously BVPI)	28%	29%	30%	33%

Progress made against the Strategy will be monitored by the Safer, Stronger Communities and Culture Partnership. Progress against LAA targets will be monitored by the relevant Gateshead Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Action Plan will be reviewed annually and the Strategy will be refreshed after three years.

How will we promote this Strategy?

The Strategy will be published on partner organisation's websites and will be available to download. Printed versions of the full document will be made available by partner organisations. Copies will also be distributed to community groups and organisations. The document will also be available in easy to read formats and can be translated into different languages.

Further copies are available from:

Annie Murphy – Gateshead
Community Network
anniemurphy.gcn@gvoc.org.uk
0191 478 4103

or

Sarah Woods – Gateshead Council
sarahwoods@gateshead.gov.uk
0191 433 2826



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If you would like this information in large print, Braille, on audiotape/CD or in a different language, please contact us on 0191 433 2863 or by e-mail at cohesion@gateshead.gov.uk



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