

DRAFT

Central Area Action Plan

April 2005

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1. Background

The Central area of Gateshead has seen many changes in recent years. Projects such as the Sage Gateshead, BALTIC and the Gateshead Millennium Bridge have achieved global recognition and provide a great opportunity for local agencies and communities to work in partnership to tackle the issues that matter most to local people, including the high levels of deprivation at neighbourhood level.

What is an area action plan?

In order to address problems at a local level more effectively, five-neighbourhood management areas based on natural groupings of communities have been identified. Neighbourhood management is central to strengthening communities. It is part of a long-term plan in Gateshead to ensure local services are co-ordinated around the needs of individual neighbourhoods and are accountable to local people.

In order to take this work forward, an Area Action plan has been developed for each of the five areas. Each Plan focuses on linking opportunities in the area with neighbourhoods in need. They demonstrate how the borough-wide objectives of the Gateshead Community Strategy are being delivered in each neighbourhood management area and what more needs to be done.

Central Area Action Plan

The Central Area Plan has been co-ordinated by the Central Area Executive Forum, which is made up of the main public sector agencies in Gateshead and is overseen by the Gateshead Strategic Partnership (GSP). Actions have been identified for the Central Area under each of the ten themes of the Community Strategy. These are:

- Develop and implement new ways to reach and engage children and young people more effectively.
- Support local people to access employment and training opportunities.
- Provide support to help more people access educational opportunities and achieve qualifications.
- Enable more people from the Central area to visit and participate in cultural activities.
- Tackle levels of crime in the area to promote public reassurance and help to secure safer communities.
- Improve the quality of housing in Central Gateshead.
- Get a better understanding of the needs of service users and carers in Central to help develop the ways in which they are supported in the future.
- Improve the general health of the population in Central by encouraging more people to give up smoking.
- Develop transport schemes that balance Central Gateshead's role as a transport hub with the needs of local residents
- Develop and implement initiatives to keep the Central area clean and attractive

The sections that follow outline each of these in more detail and identify the next steps to be taken.

Children and Young People

Children and young people who are empowered and supported to develop to their full potential and have the life skills and opportunities to play an active part in society

What are the key issues for the Central Area?

- There is a diverse population in the area including BME communities, a large Jewish Community, refugees and asylum seekers. Services for children and young people must be able to engage a diverse range of people and meet their needs.
- In September 2004 Gateshead had 712 young people on its Youth Offending Register. 22% of these are from the Central Area. 25% of young people referred to the Amber Programme are from the Central area. More work is needed to engage young offenders to help to prevent them from re-offending.
- There are problems associated with young people congregating in Central from other parts of the borough, which causes distress to local residents.
- Children and young people have low aspirations and young women in particular feel disengaged. This has implications for the future sustainability of the area.

What major work is already being done?

- Children's Centres are being established at Bensham Grove, St Chad's and one for the Jewish community called Matov. These will provide integrated services for children and their families. A Flagship Children's Centre is being planned to provide inclusive full day care for children including those with complex needs.
- The Deckham Sure Start programme works with parents and children to promote physical, intellectual and social development of pre-school children. This is a designated children's centre. The new building will be open by December 2005.
- An area based Youth Forum is being set up to consult and engage with young people.
- The Avenues Project works with residents of Bensham and offers young people routes to personal, social and educational development. Recent work includes establishing a Youth Forum for BME communities.
- Pass rates for GCSEs are improving however there are areas where pass rates need to improve further to help young people access further and higher education.

What key action will we be taking to address the main issues?

Identify new ways to reach and engage children and young people more effectively

Milestones

- Develop programmes to facilitate greater engagement with young people particularly young women including detached youth work.
- Evaluate services to ensure they are accessible, particularly to faith and community groups in particular.
- Extend cultural activities and intergenerational work in the community, including schools and voluntary groups, raising achievement, self-esteem and creativity.
- Explore opportunities to extend the Avenues Project into the town centre.
- Ensure that Children's Centres are able to meet the core offer by 2006 and promote learning within family settings.

How will we know we are making progress?

- Service satisfaction levels will improve.
- More young offenders/ those at risk of offending participating in cultural activities.
- More children and young people will be reached through consultation processes.
- Educational attainment at key stage 3 and 4.

Employment and Economy

Local people who have the skills and opportunities to access rewarding jobs in the public, private and voluntary sectors in and around Gateshead; more businesses locating, forming and growing in Gateshead

What are the key issues for the Central Area?

- Central area has high rates of unemployment that are above both the national average of 2.6% and the Gateshead average of 3.4%. Bridges ward has the second highest unemployment rate in Gateshead of 8.3%. This compounds the problems of social exclusion and isolation in low-income neighbourhoods.
- Local people lack adequate skills or qualifications to meet local business needs. This has led to problems of worklessness and benefit dependence.
- It is difficult to sustain businesses due to the reduced spending power in Central.
- There is a limited range of retail facilities in the area. The economy suffers as a result as potential customers tend to use modern outlets e.g. the Metro Centre.

What major work is already being done?

- Gateshead International Business Centre will build on the success of the International Business Centre project. Baltic Business Quarter will provide up to 7,000 jobs.
- Support and advice on return to employment is provided to a range of outreach venues including an office in Coatsworth Road.
- As a result of the regeneration work there are now a total of 910 businesses in the Central area employing 14,805 people. This is a great improvement on the position in 1994, but more still needs to be done.
- Proposals are being developed to regenerate the Town Centre. Work will expand the range of retail outlets. This will be particularly beneficial to central residents.
- Many residents have been supported into employment at BALTIC, the Sage Gateshead and the Newcastle Gateshead Hilton.
- A successful annual employment fair is held in the central area. Although this is open to a wide range of residents and visitors it is particularly accessible to people in the central area.

What key action will we taking to address the main issues?

<i>Support local people to access employment and training opportunities</i>

Milestones

- Develop working arrangements with employers to match people to jobs.
- Extend the employment and small business infrastructure by working within the community.
- Continue initiatives to work with employers and residents to identify and overcome skills shortages to tackle worklessness and benefit dependency.
- More targeted job-linkage support particularly for refugees, ethnic and faith communities.
- Ensure that Children Centre employees are able to signpost parents to employment and training opportunities.

How will we know we are making progress?

- More people taking up work.
- Unemployment levels for each ward will be closer to the national average.

Lifelong Learning

Local people who learn throughout their lives and have the life skills to realise their full potential as individuals and active citizens

What are the key issues for the Central Area?

- Educational achievement levels in Central are lower than the rest of the borough (2001 Census). Over 50% of residents have no qualifications in areas around Bensham Hospital, Lobley Hill, Carr Hill and the town centre.
- The low levels of educational attainment correspond to the high levels of unemployment in the area.
- There are also poor levels of numeracy, language and literacy in the area. Learning opportunities are needed to increase the levels of basic skills.
- There are low levels of ICT skills in the central area and there are low levels of PC ownership. This means that as more and more organisations, services and people are becoming more reliant on ICT, those unable to access PCs are at risk of becoming excluded.

What major work is already being done?

- Skills for Life Centres have been developed at Bensham Grove and Trinity Community Centre. These are equipped with a range of learning support materials including, an adult tutor and facilities to conduct national testing.
- Ongoing development of exemplary community learning facilities and projects including Bensham Grove Community Learning Centre, and the Gateshead Young Women's Project, which both received awards from the Learning and Skills Council.
- Development of ICT learning facilities across the area including at the Avenues Project and new multi-PC learning facilities in the Civic Centre.
- Development of learning facilities for people with sensory impairments including courses for deaf people at St Mark's Community Centre and the AIRS service.
- Provision of adult learning courses in Central area schools including Tyneview Primary and Kelvin Grove Primary which provide family learning programmes.

What key action will we be taking to address the main issues?

Provide support to help more people to access educational opportunities and achieve qualifications

Milestones

- Improve capacity for learning within communities through partnership working.
- Establish an Extended Schools cluster in Central Gateshead.
- Ensure that libraries, community centres and other relevant facilities have adequate ICT resources and establish baseline of users in Central Gateshead.
- Extend Skills for Life opportunities throughout Central Gateshead
- Provide new lifelong learning courses at the Civic Centre and Bensham Grove and Trinity Community Centres

How will we know we are making progress?

- More people gaining qualifications across all levels.
- More people accessing Skills for Life opportunities.
- Number of ICT access points available and the number of users will increase.
- Improvement in levels of numeracy, language and literacy
- More enrolments in adult and family learning courses

Culture

Local people who participate in a rich array of cultural and leisure opportunities, including sport

What are the key issues for the Central Area?

- There is a need to ensure that local people are able to access the major cultural facilities in Gateshead. There are excellent opportunities to support the larger scale activities at the Quays with smaller local activities.
- There is a need to enhance the range and quality of the programme of activities at a neighbourhood level. Cultural venues are mostly clustered in the Town Centre and opportunities should be created all around the Central area using a range of local venues.
- We need to ensure that cultural services are accessible and affordable for everyone.
- We need to ensure that people can access schemes and after schools activities that meet their needs and to help ensure that more groups of people are supported to become active and creative.

What major work is already being done?

- Better green spaces such as the restoration of Saltwell Park.
- Increased activities for all ages and abilities at the Leisure Centre.
- Works at Gateshead Quays for culture such as Baltic and the Sage Gateshead.
- Successful local events such as the Bensham Community Festival.
- Development of the relationships with The Sage Gateshead and the Baltic and local people in the Central Area.

What key action will we be taking to address the main issues?

Enable more people from the Central area to visit and participate in cultural activities

Milestones

- Extend the programme of cultural activities in the Central area to include more activities that promote increased tolerance, understanding and enjoyment of local cultural diversity e.g. Same Sun Festival in Saltwell Park.
- Hold focus groups particularly with community groups and young people to inform and enhance the cultural programme.
- Develop cultural programmes close to where people live using local venues such as schools and community centres.
- Introduce non-sport specific activity sessions for young people at various venues including a gym Gateshead Leisure Centre specifically for young people.
- Change the pricing structure for leisure facilities including broadening the eligibility and benefits of the Gateshead Leisure Card.

How will we know we are making progress?

- More people will use cultural venues.
- More cultural activities within the Central area as a whole.
- More people will be satisfied with the cultural opportunities available.
- More people will use the Gateshead Leisure Card.

Community Safety

Local people living and working in a safe, fear-free and tolerant community

What are the key issues for the Central Area?

- There are high levels of youth disorder, criminal damage and violence in Central, much of this taking place around the Quayside area and the town centre.
- Central has the highest core crime levels in the borough. Crime in the Town Centre accounts for 10% of all crime in Gateshead. There are high levels of shop theft, vehicle crime, alcohol related crime and arson.
- The Town Centre attracts a high number of people and the concentration of shops attracts criminal activity. It experiences begging, drug and alcohol related crime, adult disorder often associated with public houses and the quayside.
- There are problems with race hate crime and harassment towards the diverse ethnic and faith communities in the Central area. Many incidents are unreported.
- More work is needed to tackle the fear of crime and promote public reassurance.

What major work is already being done?

- Police resources have been enhanced with the appointment of a Community Inspector. There is also a dedicated Community Action Team in the area.
- Police officers have developed working relationships with Nexus and bus companies to provide a visible presence at the Interchange, with a number of arrests for anti social behaviour.
- An expanded Neighbourhood Wardens service is now in place providing a visible street presence by patrolling, dealing with anti-social behaviour.
- An Alcohol Banning Order has been introduced in the town centre and Metro system.
- The Racist Incident Monitoring Scheme has been re-launched together with revised guidelines for schools.

What key action will we be taking to address the main issues?

Tackle levels of crime in the area to promote public reassurance and help to secure safer communities

Milestones

- Monitor the town centre and metro system alcohol banning order.
- Enhance the Neighbourhood Warden Service in Central by implementing the enforcement role, targeting hot spots and develop ways of contributing to neighbourhood policing.
- Greater co-ordination between wider policing family to enhance patrolling activity and information sharing.
- Expand the Racist Incident Reporting Scheme by developing intranet reporting.
- Undertake a test purchase exercise for underage alcohol sales using volunteers in co-operation with the police.

How will we know we are making progress?

- More residents who feel safe in the Central area.
- Reduce the impact of low-level criminal damage across Central Gateshead.
- Reduced levels of core crime including violent crime, vehicle crime and burglary.
- More racist incidents reported through the intranet mechanism.
- Evaluation of the Neighbourhood Warden Scheme.
- Number of alcohol ban enforcements made in the area.

Housing

Local people who live in good quality affordable homes, which meet their needs and are located within pleasant, safe and sustainable communities.

What are the key issues for the Central Area?

- The condition of both the private and private rented sector needs to be improved, with 8.2% of dwellings in central being unfit. The borough average is 4.6%. The poor quality of the housing stock means that the area is unstable due to high turnover of tenants, anti-social behaviour and impacts on the environment. This is exacerbated by the age of the housing stock in the area.
- Flats dominate all housing sectors and are not ideal for families. Sixteen of the Council's thirty multi-storey blocks of flats are located in Central. The Housing Needs Assessment found that there is a particular need for larger family homes in Central Gateshead.

What major work has already been done?

- There are now 14 tenants and residents organisations in the Central area.
- A Private landlords support programme has been established to help landlords deal with problems that they could not deal with alone.
- Environmental improvements including some demolition at Sunderland Road.
- Most of Central is within the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder boundary, and the character of the area will see huge changes over the next 15 years.

What key action will we be taking to address the main issues?

Improve the quality and mix of housing in Central Gateshead
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Key Milestones

- Reduce the number of empty properties.
- Carry out estate and Multi-storey block inspections with tenants representatives; Identify and carry out security and environmental improvement schemes.
- Identify opportunities for developing more larger family accommodation.
- Develop the private landlord accreditation scheme in the Central area to encourage private landlords to bring their properties up to standard. Target enforcement activities at those properties, which remain in an unsuitable state.
- Encourage the further development of tenants and residents groups to help develop a sense of community and minimise population turnover.
- Work with Bridging NewcastleGateshead to identify both public and private sector housing in need of intervention.
- Investigate ways of introducing the Warm Zone initiative in Central Gateshead.

How will we know we are making progress?

- Lower rates of resident turnover.
- An increase in the value of properties in central Gateshead bringing them closer to both the borough and national averages.
- More homes that meet the decent homes standards.
- More licensed landlords in the Central area.

Social Care

Local people supported by a network of caring services appropriate to their needs and wishes

What are the key issues for the Central Area?

- Services are in the process of being modernised. This needs to continue whilst maintaining safe services, supporting people to remain independent, improving choice and empowering service users and carers to become more involved.
- Social care services need to be flexible to meet the diverse range of residents in Central Gateshead including BME groups, refugees and asylum seekers.
- About one in four people have a significant illness that has an impact on their lives (Census 2001). There are also a significant number of older people living in the area and there are a large number of claimants of disability living allowance and incapacity benefit. This increases the demand on social services provision in the area.
- A more complete picture of the requirements of service users in the Central area is needed to ensure that services are effective and targeted appropriately.

What major work is already being done?

- Extra care facilities are being developed in the Central area of Gateshead.
- 80 more extra care apartments are or will be available for single people or couples in developments at Fountain Court, St James Village.
- Work with BME, asylum seekers and refugee groups to identify needs and the best approaches to service delivery is being undertaken.
- Development of Mulgrave Villas to support dementia sufferers on a day care basis.

What key action will we be taking to address the main issues?

Get a better understanding of the needs of service users and carers in Central to help develop the ways in which they are supported in the future

Milestones

- Obtain information from CareFirst system for central area by May 2005 and benchmark this against localities.
- Identify the issues of Central Gateshead residents and use them to inform the provision of Social Care services.
- Identify and promote usage of community lounges.
- Further develop support mechanisms for carers in the community.
- Development of a plan to meet the needs of communities.

How will we know we are making progress?

- Satisfaction levels amongst social care service users living in the central area
- Improved access to social care services in the Central area.
- Increased numbers of staff attending and benefiting from training sessions.

Local people living longer and healthier lives

What are the key issues for the Central Area?

- Smoking is the most important health issue in central Gateshead because it is the single biggest cause of preventable ill health and premature death.
- There is a high concentration of health services to the North of the Central area, particularly in and around Bensham. However, the far west, south and east have no GP surgeries and limited access to pharmacy services.
- Teenage pregnancy levels in some areas of Central Gateshead are higher than the average for both the borough and the UK.
- Central Gateshead has higher numbers of BME and faith communities. Many of these groups require additional support in accessing health services.

What major work is already being done?

- NHS Smoking Cessation Service available through GP surgeries is seeing a reduction in people stopping smoking.
- New ways of improving health of people with long term illness piloted in central.
- Smoke-free environments have been implemented in Council/NHS buildings and grounds. This will be extended to Gateshead College.
- Promotion of healthy schools and smoke free schools award.
- Work by the Community Health Team and the Health Promotion Service to give advice to people who wish to stop smoking.
- Focused work targeting pregnant women to encourage them to stop smoking.

What key action will we be taking to address the main issues?

Improve the general health of the population in Central by encouraging more people to adopt healthier lifestyles.

Milestones

- Increase the tailoring of services to meet the needs of asylum seekers, refugees, BME groups and faith communities in Central Gateshead.
- Continue developing the Smoking Cessation Service, tobacco control programmes and local Public Service Agreement on smoking in pregnancy in the Central Area.
- Work with local people and communities to offer advice, information and support on healthy eating, physical activity and stress through a variety of interventions.
- Improve access to information about services available, improving health over the Internet and at public information kiosks.
- Investigate opportunities to address issues caused by uneven distribution of GP surgeries, including co-locating of services and nurse practitioners.

How will we know we are making progress?

- Fewer smokers in central area through Lifestyle Survey.
- More people in central area accessing Smoking Cessation Service, setting a quit date and stopping smoking (measured at the 4 weeks).
- More workplace and public places smoking bans.
- Lower rates of Coronary Heart Disease, respiratory diseases, and cancer.
- Improved access to health services as well as opportunities for residents in the Central area to live healthy lifestyles.

Transport

Local people and businesses who have easy access to integrated, safe and affordable transport, which supports economic growth and balances the needs of all users in a responsible way

What are the key issues for the Central Area?

- The presence of major through traffic routes, particularly around the town centre, creates physical barriers between communities within the Central area.
- It is important that adequate parking is provided to encourage visitors to the Central area. However, this must be balanced with the need to avoid adding to the congestion problems already evident, as the area is a major transport hub for the conurbation.
- There are increasing levels of car ownership in areas of traditional terraced housing, with limited or no off street parking. Many people have to park on the street, which has given rise to delays to buses, road safety/traffic management issues, obstruction of pavements through parked cars etc. These problems are exacerbated where people employed nearby also seek to park on residential streets.
- Public transportation services, particularly in the evening, are not meeting the needs and expectations of residents.

What major work is already being done?

- The preparation of travel plans aimed at minimising traffic generation and the need for car parking will have a significant impact on addressing many of the issues in central area.
- Traffic and transport issues have been incorporated as a major element in studies on the regeneration of the town centre.
- Development of a revised residents parking policy.

What key action will we be taking to address the main issues?

Develop transport schemes that balance Central Gateshead's role as a transport hub with the needs of local residents

Milestones

- Assess, as part of wider regeneration proposals, opportunities to significantly reduce the physical barriers between central communities.
- Develop parking guidance system for Quays area.
- The scope for the greater adoption of 'travel plans' for businesses, schools and other organisations will be explored with the aim of minimising traffic generation and reducing pressures on the local road network.
- Implement the Council's own travel plan and the revised residents parking policy.
- Investigate possibilities of developing community transport.

How will we know we are making progress?

- More residents parking schemes operating in the Central area and an associated increase in the numbers of properties covered by them.
- Appropriate levels of parking developed to support new developments without adding to the congestion currently experienced in Central.
- Travel plan surveys will identify numbers of people driving to work at specific locations.

Environment

Communities who live in and contribute to a clean, pollution-free, attractive and sustainable environment

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What are the key issues for the Central Area?

- The high density of population in a relatively small geographic area leads to significant problems with litter in both commercial and residential areas, particularly back lanes.
- Residents concerns about the cleanliness of the area result in many requests for additional street cleaning.
- There is a need to improve air quality is poor in places due to the high levels of traffic moving through Central.

What major work is already being done?

- Council officers visiting schools to raise environmental issues amongst children and young people.
- Close working with community groups to raise awareness of waste issues, particularly people who are new to the central area.
- Provision of additional mechanical sweeping to help keep the streets litter free.
- Additional funding secured for environmental improvements. This includes funding for the Environmental Improvement team that worked with offenders to remove graffiti and clear fly tipping sites.
- The Best Value Review of Street Scene has been completed and the recommendations arising from it will have implications for Central.

What key action will be taking to address the main issues?

Implement further initiatives to keep the Central area clean and attractive

Milestones

- Secure further funding for environmental schemes in Central Gateshead.
- Work with community groups to raise awareness of litter and waste disposal.
- Expand our enforcement initiative to cover more neighbourhoods in Central.
- Increase environmental awareness amongst residents including maximising recycling and develop a sense of local pride.
- Implement the Street Scene Best Value Review action plan in Central.
- Develop new ways of working to clean streets to resident's satisfaction.
- Identify opportunities for improving commercial centres throughout the Central area, particularly the Town Centre and Deckham high street, including investigating business sponsorship of environmental initiatives.
- Consider the introduction of an alley-gating scheme.
- Continue work with private landlords to raise awareness of environmental issues.

How will we know we are making progress?

- Reduction in the number of complaints made about litter and waste.
- Monitor BVPI 199 *"The proportion of relevant land having combined deposits of litter and detritus."* in Central. This will show environmental improvements.
- Increase in the number of compliments received about service issues monitored
- Positive feed back from ongoing consultation with local residents in Central on the condition of streets and how they feel about their local area.

12. Next Steps

This plan has outlined the main issues of concern in the central area of Gateshead. Work to tackle these issues is already underway and will continue to be developed.

By working through the priority issues as outlined in each of the themed areas, we hope to help make the central part of Gateshead a better place to live, offering local people an improved quality of life.

However, this cannot be achieved in isolation. A great deal of collaborative work is required with a range of partners, service providers and community groups. In addition, new information systems and tools will help to direct resources to the areas most in need of support.

The development of Neighbourhood Plans will flow from this Central Area action plan as key issues identified within the plan are picked up and developed at a neighbourhood level. The Area Action Plans, in turn, will evolve as the Neighbourhood Plans develop. The priority issues identified will help to shape future Community Strategies for the borough. In this way, the key issues outlined here will also be addressed at a borough level where this is appropriate.

Monitoring and Review

The Central Area Executive Forum will monitor the progress of the plan and its implementation through a regular reporting system. An annual report will be brought to the Forum and the Gateshead Strategic Partnership who have overall responsibility for the plan. The Action Plan itself will be reviewed annually. Performance indicators and targets have been identified to monitor whether the work being done is improving the lives of local people.

APPENDIX 1 - Development of Central Area Plan

How has the Central Area plan been developed?

The preparation of the Central Area Plan has been co-ordinated by the Central Area Executive Forum. The Forum is made up of the main public sector agencies in Gateshead and is overseen by the Gateshead Strategic Partnership (GSP). The Forum provides the management mechanism that joins up area and neighbourhood service delivery of different service providers around ten themed areas. The plan has been developed using information from a range of sources including local people, and is supported by information from data sources including the 2001 Census and the Vitality Index. This helps to ensure that resources are targeted in the most appropriate way, recognising that each area has different needs.

The National Context

The Government's approach to neighbourhood renewal is that no one should be disadvantaged because of where they live. Gateshead's approach is closely tied in with Central Government's aspirations for communities. The Government has developed a series of 'floor targets', that set the basic standards that everyone should be entitled to in terms of housing, health, safety, education and access to employment. The Government aims to ensure that all deprived areas achieve these targets by tackling the core problems of deprived areas, focusing resources on priority areas and giving local residents a central role in turning their neighbourhoods around.

Strategic and Local Context

The GSP brings together representatives from the community along with public, voluntary and private sector agencies. It produces the overarching framework document that shapes the future well being of the whole Borough - the Community Strategy - and is responsible for overseeing its implementation. This document sets out a vision for Gateshead:

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

It also sets out the key challenges it will address over the next three years. A number of themed partnerships support the GSP by co-ordinating measures to address the priorities of the Community Strategy.

In order to address problems at a local level more effectively, five-neighbourhood management areas based on natural groupings of communities have been identified. Neighbourhood management is central to strengthening communities. It is part of a long-term plan in Gateshead to ensure local services are co-ordinated around the needs of individual neighbourhoods and are accountable to local people. In order to take this work forward, an Area Action plan has been developed for each of the five neighbourhood management areas.

Central Area Plan

The Central Area Plan focuses on linking opportunities in the area with neighbourhoods in need. It seeks to demonstrate how the borough-wide objectives of the Community Strategy and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy are being delivered

at a local level and identifies priority issues for the central area under key themes such as Community Safety, Transport, Environment and Health and sets out the action needed to address them.

Neighbourhood Plans

The development of Neighbourhood Plans will flow from the Central Area action plan as key issues identified within the plan are picked up and developed at a neighbourhood level. Issues and concerns raised through the Neighbourhood Action Plans provide a community voice and are the building blocks for both the Area Action Plans and Gateshead Community Strategy for the borough as a whole. Communities can articulate their concerns and ideas about the services they receive through neighbourhood plans. By July 2005, there will be neighbourhood plans for Deckham, Bensham and Saltwell.

Consultation Arrangements

Local people have the opportunity to express their views and raise issues of concern to them through various channels e.g. through focus groups or through their local councillors. Community groups also meet with Area Co-ordinators to discuss issues such as community safety, housing and road safety.

An assessment of Gateshead's community infrastructure is currently being undertaken to facilitate greater involvement of local people and groups and to further develop our approach to consultation and involvement. Over the next few years, new technological developments such as the Neighbourhood Information System and service profiling will assist with this work.

APPENDIX 2 - Profile of Central Gateshead

Central Gateshead: Setting the Scene

This section profiles the central area of Gateshead and identifies some of the key issues it faces. The Central Area is made up of four wards Bridges, Lobley Hill and Bensham, Deckham, and Saltwell. It has a mixture of commercial activities, from neighbourhood centres to large industrial estates. The decline in the traditional industries in this area left vast areas of derelict, contaminated land, high unemployment and a depressed economy. Following targeted intervention through regeneration schemes this trend is beginning to be reversed.

Major Developments and Initiatives

- **Baltic Business Quarter** - 20-hectare development of a high-density urban business quarter to create 140,000 sq metres of business floor space and 5-7,000 jobs. The business quarter will include Knowledge Campus, a centre for rapid product development.
- **Gateshead International Business Centre** - 20-hectare development of a high-density urban business quarter to create 140,000 sq metres of business floor space and 5-7,000 jobs.
- **Hilton Newcastle Gateshead** - 250 bedrooms plus 500-seat conference and banqueting centre.
- **The Sage Gateshead** - Will house a 1,650-seat concert hall, a 450-seat second hall, a music education centre and a specialist information resource centre.
- **Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder 2003-2006** - This will tackle low demand in the public and private sector. Most of the Central area is within the Pathfinder boundary. The multi-million pound 15 year regeneration programme will have massive implications for residents, businesses, and services. There is a strong link between the area planning process and the Pathfinder investments.

Key Characteristics *(Source: 2001 Census and Vitality Index)*

Population

The Central area of Gateshead is home to 35,392 people or 18.5% of the population of Gateshead. 27% of Central areas population consists of children and young people aged between 0-19 years. 54% are people aged 20-59 and 19% those aged 60+.

Households

There are 15,961 households in Central. Of these, 22% contain pensioners, 12% are lone parent households (9%, have dependent children), 8% contain cohabiting couples and 27% married couples. The pensioner households are mainly concentrated around the Civic Centre, Valley Drive area, Lobley Hill, and Saltwell Park area.

Tenure

Just over half of the houses in Central area are rented. The Gateshead average is 43%. 46% are owner occupied. The average 2003 house price in Central is £65,000. This is almost a third less than the Gateshead average of £90,000. Some parts of Central have significantly low average house prices such as Sunderland Road, Kelvin Grove, East Deckham and Bensham North, which are all below £55,000.

There are high proportions of vacant properties in Central area, particularly at Sunderland Road North (which has the highest percentage in the borough at 23%), Bensham South, Kelvin Grove and Sunderland Road South.

Ethnic Origin

Of the population of the Central area, 3.5% are from Black and Minority Ethnic Groups compared to the Gateshead average of 1.6%. These groups are particularly concentrated around Saltwell Park, Shipcote Road, Durham Road, the Town Centre and the Garden Festival site. The Central area also has a high concentration of members of the Orthodox Jewish Community, which is estimated to be around 4,000 in population. Saltwell and Lobley Hill and Bensham, are home to most of the borough's refugee and asylum seeker population.

Economic Activity

- Only half of people aged 16-74 in Central are in employment, which is lower than the Gateshead average of 55%.
- 5.4% of those aged 16-74 are unemployed. 2.1% are long term unemployed. There are higher than average levels of unemployment in many parts of Central.
- Only 40% of lone parents with dependent children are in employment. This compares to the Gateshead average of 46%.

Qualifications

43% of people aged 16-74 in Central have no qualifications, which is higher than the Gateshead average of 38%. Only 11% have achieved a degree equivalent or higher.

Health

About one in four people in Central have a limiting long-term illness, whilst 14% view their own health as being poor. A large number claim disability living allowance and incapacity benefit, particularly around the Town Centre, Sunderland Road, Windmill Hills, the Racecourse Estate and Sheriff Hill areas.

Transport

Of all households in the Central area, 56% do not own a car or van, which is significantly higher than the Gateshead average of 43%. Of all people aged 16-74 in employment, 28% use public transport to get to work, the Gateshead average is 23%.

Local Services and Facilities

Central area includes Gateshead Town Centre and a number of industrial estates. It also has a significant number of Tyneside flats, terraced houses, high-density maisonettes and some tower blocks. Housing is predominantly Council estates (managed by The Gateshead Housing Company) and Housing Association estates.

Deckham area has a number of shops and services along Old Durham Road. It also contains the Elgin Centre and is home to Route 26. Lobley Hill and Bensham area contains the Civic Centre and the Bus and Metro Interchange, which has just seen a major programme of improvement works. Coatsworth Road provides shopping facilities. Central Gateshead also contains Saltwell Park, which has been successfully restored to its former Victorian splendor, and Gateshead Leisure Centre, Central Library and Shipley Art Gallery in the Southern part of the area.

Table 1 – Census Data

Population		
Total population	35,392	(191,151)
Economic Activity		
Part Time Employed	11%	(12%)
Full Time Employed	34%	(38%)
Self Employed	4%	(5%)
Unemployed	5%	(4%)
Health		
Limiting Long Term Illness	24%	(24%)
Good Health	62%	(63%)
Fairly Good Health	24%	(24%)
Not Good Health	14%	(13%)
Qualifications		
No Qualifications	43%	(38%)
Households		
Total households	15,961	(84,267)
Tenure		
Owner Occupied	46%	(58%)
Council Rented	27%	(30%)
Housing Association	9%	(5%)
Private Rented	15%	(6%)
Other	3%	(2%)
Household Composition		
Married Couple	27%	(27%)
Cohabiting Couple	8%	(8%)
Lone Parent	12%	(12%)
Single Person	25%	(25%)
Single Pensioner	16%	(16%)
All Pensioner	6%	(6%)

Source: 2001 Census N.B. Gateshead overall figures are in brackets

Table 2 - Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2004

The Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 broke down the borough into 126 areas (each containing about 1,500 residents). 34 of these areas fall into the top 10% most deprived areas in the country, of these 21 are in the Central area.

The deprivation is broken down into domains. The areas falling into the 10% most deprived are:

Domain	Area
Income	Town centre, Bensham Bank area, Avenues area, Bensham Hospital area and the area around Mount Pleasant
Employment	Most of the central area falls into the 10% most deprived, except the area around the Garden Festival site, and the Saltwell Park area
Health deprivation and disability	Most of the central area falls into the 10% most deprived, except the area around the Garden Festival site, and the Saltwell Park area
Education Skills and Training	Town Centre, area between Carr Hill and Mount Pleasant, and the Northern part of Lobley Hill
Barriers to housing and services	The northern part of Lobley Hill
Crime and disorder	Bensham Bank area, part of Deckham near Mount Pleasant, and the Sunderland Road area
Living environment	The area around the Avenues, Saltwell Road/Shipcote area.

(Source: IMD 2004 - ODPM)

APPENDIX 3 - Ward Profiles

Profiles are attached for each of the four wards that form the Central Area:

Lobley Hill and Bensham

Deckham

Saltwell

Bridges

Lobley Hill and Bensham



- The population in Lobley Hill and Bensham ward is 9,576
- 44% of people in Lobley Hill and Bensham have no qualifications
- Half of the people in Lobley Hill and Bensham own at least one car or van
- The private rented sector in Lobley Hill and Bensham is the third largest in Gateshead

Community facilities

Community centres, church halls, youth clubs	9
Places of worship	6
Primary schools	2
Secondary schools	1
Day nurseries and nursery schools	3
GP Practices	5
Dentists	4
Leisure facilities	5
Libraries	5

Gateshead Council Gazetteer

Lobley Hill and Bensham ward occupies the western slope of the valley of the river Team, and though the majority of it is to the west of Gateshead town centre, it contains the Civic Centre. The River Tyne forms the northern perimeter of the ward. The Gateshead Bus and Metro Interchange is also located within Bensham and has just seen a major programme of improvement works. Bensham includes some high-rise blocks of flats, as well as low rise semi-detached and the usual mixture of Tyneside flats and terraced housing of the late Victorian/early Edwardian periods. Coatsworth Road provides the neighbourhood shopping facilities for the ward. Residential areas include Bensham and the new Windmill Hills development. The ward has a large and diverse BME population as well as a high concentration of members of the Orthodox Jewish Community. Bensham and its neighbouring ward, Saltwell, are home to the majority of asylum seekers in Gateshead.

Deckham



- The population in Deckham ward is 9,176
- 46% of households are owner occupiers compared with 58% for Gateshead
- 43% of people in Deckham have no qualifications
- The level of car ownership in Deckham is lower than average for Gateshead
- Deckham has the third highest level of lone parents with dependent children of all wards

Community facilities

Community centres, church halls, youth clubs	9
Places of worship	4
Primary schools	2
Secondary schools	0
Day nurseries and nursery schools	1
GP Practices	1
Dentists	2
Leisure facilities	4
Libraries	0

Gateshead Council Gazetteer

Deckham is located to the south and east of Gateshead Town Centre, at its southern end straddling Old Durham Road, and eventually bounded by it, its northern edge bounded by Split Crow Road. Deckham ward has a number of shops and services along Old Durham Road. However, the ward mainly consists of housing, predominantly Gateshead Housing Company and Housing Association estates. The Elgin Centre, home to Route 26 is one of the key features of the ward.

Saltwell



- The population in Saltwell ward is 9,348
- Saltwell has the second highest level of single person households of all wards
- 39% of people in Saltwell have no qualifications
- 55% of households in Saltwell have no car or van
- Saltwell has the largest Black and Minority Ethnic population in the borough



Community facilities

Community centres, church halls, youth clubs	12
Places of worship	6
Primary schools	3
Secondary schools	0
Day nurseries and nursery schools	1
GP Practices	2
Dentists	1
Leisure facilities	5
Libraries	1

Gateshead Council Gazetteer

Saltwell ward is located just to the south of the town centre. Parts of the ward are densely populated and include a large number of traditional terraces including very high numbers of Tyneside flats in the north of the ward. To the south are located Saltwell Park, which has been successfully restored to its former Victorian splendour, and Saltwell cemetery along with Gateshead Leisure Centre, Central Library and Shipley Art Gallery.

Saltwell has a diverse population including black and minority ethnic communities and a significant proportion of the orthodox Jewish community.

Saltwell and neighbouring Lobley Hill and Bensham, are home to most of the borough's refugee and asylum seeker population.

The ward has significant levels of deprivation and has benefited, along with Bensham, from Single Regeneration Budget funding in recent years.

Bridges



- Has the smallest ward population in Gateshead at 7,292
- Has the largest proportion of the borough's single person households
- Has the highest percentage of flats
- Has the lowest number of people in Gateshead owning a car
- 47% of people aged 16 and over have no qualifications



Community facilities

Community centres, church halls, youth clubs	21
Places of worship	6
Primary schools	4
Secondary schools	2 (Jewish)
Day nurseries and nursery schools	5
GP Practices	5
Dentists	3
Leisure facilities	13
Libraries	1

Gateshead Council Gazetteer

Bridges ward is located at the heart of the Borough. It is bordered to the north by the River Tyne and contains Gateshead Town Centre. The area is served by the Metro and contains a number of industrial estates, all located on or near to the riverbank. The area has a significant number of traditional Tyneside flats and similar terraced houses along with high density maisonettes and tower blocks in the west of the ward.

The revitalisation of the riverbank is well underway and includes the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, the Sage Gateshead and the Hilton International Hotel. Other major developments in the ward include the residential development at Baltic Quay, the International Business Centre and the Knowledge Campus.