

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER - DERBYSHIRE COMMUNITY COHESION STRATEGY

Introduction

Community cohesion is the glue which binds communities together. This is strengthened when people get on well together, respect each other and feel they can influence decisions in their area. It can be weakened when people feel that they do not enjoy the same life opportunities as others.

Fortunately in Derbyshire many local people have told us that community spirit is still strong. However, local people do worry that this is diminishing and recent evidence suggests that fewer people in Derbyshire feel that people from different backgrounds get on well together than in many other areas across the country.

This means that we will need to work closely together to understand more clearly why this is the case, to develop actions which enable communities in Derbyshire to get on well with each other and to tackle problems and inequalities that may exist.

This will not be easy – Derbyshire is a diverse county and the issues which divide and join our communities together are very different depending upon the communities concerned. However this work is vital if partners in the county are to meet the long term vision of the new Sustainable Community Strategy for Derbyshire 2009-2014 which is ***“for everyone in Derbyshire to enjoy a good quality of life, both now and in the future”***.

Much is already being done by agencies in the county to bring people together and to help communities become stronger – this strategy seeks to identify those areas where we need to do more and to outline actions which we will be taking to address recognised gaps over the next two years.

What is community cohesion?

Community cohesion is about working towards a society in which:

- There is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities
- The diversity of people's backgrounds is appreciated and valued
- Similar life opportunities are available to all
- Strong and positive relationships exist and are developed in the workplace, schools and the wider community.

Whilst community cohesion has been of particular importance in certain areas of the country where there have been specific issues related to race, the factors which affect cohesion in Derbyshire are much wider.

In Derbyshire, cohesive communities will be those where:

- There is a shared vision for the future and a sense of belonging
- Young people and older people get on well together and people respect each other
- People from different backgrounds, particularly those who are under represented have a voice and access to the same life opportunities, employment and services
- The gap between "the haves" and "the have nots" is reduced by tackling inequalities that exist
- People from new communities are welcomed and are able to settle and integrate.

Where are we now?

A diverse county

Derbyshire is a diverse county with strong contrasts between the rural west of the county and the urban east. The Peak District National Park covers most of north-west Derbyshire resulting in a relatively higher proportion of the county's population living within rural areas.

In 2007 Derbyshire's population stood at 758,000, forming just over 1% of England's total population. 19% of the county's population are children¹, 61% are of working age² and 20% are of retirement age³. The age profile of Derbyshire differs from that of England with slightly lower proportions of children and people of working age, but a higher proportion of people of retirement age. Although the

¹ Aged 0-15

² Females aged 16-59 and males aged 16-64

³ Females aged 60+ and males aged 65+

number of males and females are roughly similar for younger age groups in Derbyshire, there is a gender imbalance amongst older people. For every 100 males aged over 60 years, there are 118 females.

Over the next ten years, Derbyshire's population is set to increase by 8%. Whilst the number of children and people of working age are forecast to increase by small amounts, the number of people of retirement age is forecast to increase significantly by 25%. Although population growth in Derbyshire is below the national average, growth varies considerably across the county's districts ranging from 3% in Derbyshire Dales to 19% in South Derbyshire.

Derbyshire's Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population stood at 36,200 in 2006, forming 5% of the county's population. In both the county and England the BME population has a much younger age structure than the White British population.

Derbyshire has attracted relatively low numbers of international migrants registering for national insurance numbers. In 2007/8 there was an inflow of 1,730 migrants, representing just 0.3% of the UK's total. Almost a half of Derbyshire's international migrants are from Poland.

There is considerable variation across the county when it comes to deprivation levels. There are 16 local areas where deprivation levels rank amongst the worst 10% in England, most of which are in the north-east of the county. Between 2004 and 2007 there has been little change in the number of areas within the list of the 10% most deprived.

Current performance

National research indicates that community cohesion is an important factor in people's quality of life. People living in cohesive communities are more likely to have decent life chances and feel more empowered to identify and tackle issues in their communities as they arise.

Whilst there are a number of factors which can be used to determine whether or not communities are cohesive, a key measure is the extent to which people believe that their area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together – National Indicator 1 (NI1).

Derbyshire as a whole is currently not performing as well as other county council areas in the country on this measure. When asked in 2008, 74.1% of residents surveyed as part of the Place Survey believed that people from different backgrounds in their local area got on well together. This puts the county in the bottom 25% of county areas in the country. This is less than the number of people who agreed (78%) when asked a similar question as part of the BVPI Residents Survey 2006. The county's position compared to other county council areas and the downward trend in the county itself is of concern.

Figures from the Place Survey 2008 for the county also mask variations at both a district/borough level and more locally at a community level. For example 86.1%

of people in Derbyshire Dales agree that their area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well compared to 68.3% in Bolsover. At a more local level the variation is much wider, with a range between 87% in Hadfield North and 39.3% in Shirebrook East.

Initial analysis of the Place Survey also suggests that there are differences in responses from different groups of people. Further consultation with small groups of people in local communities has explored how participants respond to NI1 when asked and what they consider to be a “different background”. It has also explored what barriers to community cohesion currently exist and what could be done to facilitate cohesion in local communities.

Derbyshire is an area of high risk in terms of extremist radicalisation. There is a history of training venues in the area, particularly within High Peak, Derbyshire Dales and the Peak District National Park. There has been previous activity involving violent extremist Islamist groups in the city of Derby and links with significant violent extremist events, such as the failed suicide attack in Israel.


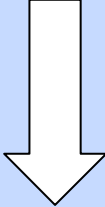
Additionally, in some areas of the county there is a support base for the BNP (British National Party) and other far right political groups. In recent years there have been BNP candidates in the District, County and General elections in Amber Valley, Erewash, South Derbyshire, Chesterfield, Bolsover and North East Derbyshire.

The partnership will need to further develop its knowledge and understanding of people’s perceptions and to assess what partners can do to build cohesion among specific groups of people and communities within the county.

Factors that influence cohesion in Derbyshire

As a first step to developing a community cohesion strategy for Derbyshire a range of information has been analysed to develop a shared understanding of cohesion in the county. Wards in Derbyshire have been ranked according to their levels of cohesiveness as measured by the extent to which residents believe people from different backgrounds get on well together.

An analysis of available information shows that there are generally a range of common factors which can be found in the most cohesive and least cohesive wards in the county.

<p>More cohesive</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher educational attainment • Higher levels of the population that are of working age (16-59/65) • Lower levels of deprivation • Lower unemployment • Higher incomes • Higher BME populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varying crime levels • Varying levels of people who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live • Higher proportions of people feeling that they are involved in decision making • Lower levels of young people not in education, employment and training (NEET).
 <p>Less cohesive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower levels of educational attainment • Higher levels of deprivation • Higher unemployment levels • Lower income levels • Higher crime levels • Lower proportions of people who feel satisfied with their local area as a place to live. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower proportions of people feeling they are involved in influencing decision making • Higher levels of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Areas in the county with more diverse populations, particularly areas with larger BME communities, tend to be more cohesive and the rate of population turnover (population churn) is also a key factor, with those communities experiencing a high rate of population change being less cohesive.

These factors are supported by the commissioned consultation recently undertaken by the county council which suggests that the following factors (which are often interrelated) influence how well people get on well together.

- **Ethnicity** – This is often the first thing people associate with constituting a ‘different background’. In some areas a diverse ethnic make up is a factor facilitating cohesion whereas in other areas of Derbyshire where BME populations are low people find it more difficult to judge how well people get on. Political views held by some and racist tendencies are thought to discourage cohesion.
- **Social background** - How people have been brought up, how they raise their children, how they treat other people and whether they are law abiding affects cohesion. Holding similar values is a key driver to cohesion and linked closely to how much money people have. This is also linked to levels of anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime which generally weaken cohesion.

- **Economic background** - Problems arise when there is a greater disparity between those that are working and those that are not due to a preference (perceived or actual) for living on benefits or unequal opportunities to work. Economic conditions and a reduction in local employment mean people must travel outside the area to work which also negatively impacts on cohesion.
- **Housing** – Different tenures have both a negative and positive impact on cohesion. People feel they have no control over social housing, where they perceive trouble-making families are placed. In addition a lack of affordable housing, exacerbated by the number of second homes, has forced younger generations out of the area.
- **Length of residency** – Areas with long-established communities and different generations of families living there appear to show greater levels of cohesion.
- **Location** – Where you live in an area, especially more diverse areas in terms of wealth and housing can influence levels of cohesion.
- **Age** – In small well-established communities different generations of people get on well and treat one another with respect but this can be a barrier to cohesion in some areas, depending on how different generations interact and perceive one another.
- **Nationality** – In some areas the arrival of immigrants has been viewed unfavourably, particularly in relation to employment opportunities (which are perceived to be given to Polish immigrants).
- **Local amenities** – Having places to meet, e.g. shops, buses enables people to have meaningful interactions and promotes cohesion.
- **Crime and the fear of crime** – This was cited as a key barrier to cohesion e.g. anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood disputes, vandalism and drugs, misuse of alcohol and general lack of parental control and respect for authority.

Key challenges

The growing elderly population in Derbyshire, the current economic downturn and increasing levels of inequality, which may widen the gap between the “haves” and the “have nots”, will present key challenges to the partnership over forthcoming years when aiming to improve the county’s position on community cohesion compared to other areas in the country.

Additionally, local support for far right views and radicalisation is a further cause for concern in Derbyshire. This will require a considered and proportionate community based response involving a range of partner organisations, including those in Derby City. Radical views have the potential to divide communities and weaken cohesion therefore partners will need to work positively within certain communities to support mainstream voices and undermine harmful ideologies.

These challenges will test the strength and resilience of communities in Derbyshire and their ability to deal with the changes that may lie ahead and

partners will need to ensure that any actions that are developed are able to deal with such challenges moving forward.

Where do we want to be?

Derbyshire's community cohesion priorities are to...	So that...
<p>Develop strong and effective leadership of community cohesion and mechanisms to ensure people's voices are heard</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners have a shared vision for Derbyshire, are clear about priorities for community cohesion and strive to make communities stronger • Local people feel that they are listened to, have a stake in what happens in their community and have the power to effect change
<p>Develop and promote a shared understanding of cohesion in the county</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners and local people know what makes a community strong and cohesive and are all working together to achieve the same goals • People have a greater understanding of other people's values, cultures and beliefs and the diversity of people living in the county is celebrated. • Younger and older people get on well together and people respect each other
<p>Address and promote community cohesion through mainstream service delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners are aware of the impact of their services and activities on community cohesion and utilise existing resources to bring local people together
<p>Develop a sense of pride and belonging and celebrate what is good about Derbyshire</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People feel part of their local community and are proud to live in Derbyshire • Derbyshire is a vibrant, welcoming place to live, work and visit with many opportunities to be involved in sporting, arts and cultural events and activities • People from new communities feel welcomed and are able to settle in the county

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to bring people from different backgrounds together are maximised • Local people know about all the positive things happening in their communities
Visibly work to tackle inequalities that exist in the county	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone has access to the same life opportunities, employment and services • The gap between the “haves” and the “have nots” is reduced
Develop and implement a prevent strategy that recognises and addresses the new challenge and threat of violent extremism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The violent extremism ideology is undermined • The environment within communities is not conducive to radicalisation

How will we get there?

We will be working over the next two years to ensure that the priorities identified in this strategy are delivered, targets are achieved and outcomes for local people improved.

Whilst much is already being done by agencies in the county to bring people together and to help communities become stronger and more cohesive, this strategy seeks to identify those areas where we need to do more. The following are actions which we will be taking to address recognised gaps:

Develop strong and effective leadership of community cohesion and mechanisms to ensure people’s voices are heard

To achieve this priority we will:

- **Appoint a community cohesion Champion for the Derbyshire Partnership Forum**
- **Develop a “Bringing people together” strategy which sets out the vision and strategic direction for community cohesion in Derbyshire**
- **Develop a community cohesion briefing pack for dissemination in partner organisations**
- **Work with elected members to develop a shared understanding of community cohesion and the key issues in their locality**
- **Continue to strengthen and promote the mechanisms currently in**

place within the county to ensure that people's voice are heard and to support the wide range of "community leaders" working locally.

Develop and promote a shared understanding of cohesion in Derbyshire

To achieve this priority we will:

- Share information, local knowledge and experience across the partnership
- Carry out additional research and consultation on the key drivers and factors influencing community cohesion in Derbyshire to increase the partnership's knowledge base
- Further develop the partnerships understanding of migration issues and the impact that this has on public services
- Establish effective mechanisms for monitoring community cohesion in the county
- Develop a community cohesion baseline for Derbyshire

Develop a sense of pride and belonging and celebrate what is good about Derbyshire

To achieve this priority we will:

- Develop and promote a "Bringing people together" campaign to identify good practice in local communities
- Maximise and support existing and new social and cultural activities which help bring local people and communities together
- Ensure that there are sufficient opportunities and places for people to meet
- Explore what additional activities can be undertaken to develop the capacity of local communities
- Develop a coordinated programme of good news stories across the partnership and work with the local media to promote positive messages specifically targeting areas where perception is poor
- Increase awareness of different cultures, backgrounds and faiths

Address and promote community cohesion through mainstream service delivery

To achieve this priority we will:

- Continue to map and promote existing activities which support the partnership's work on community cohesion
- Ensure that community cohesion is mainstreamed into strategies, plans and broader service development
- Develop multi agency operational working with key partners at a local level

Visibly work to tackle inequalities that exist in the county

To achieve this priority we will:

- Ensure that the reduction of inequalities is an overarching priority in key partner strategies and plans
- Ensure that our services target the needs of the most vulnerable people and communities

Develop and implement a prevent strategy that recognises and addresses the new challenge and threat of violent extremism

To achieve this priority we will

- Implement and deliver actions outlined in the Derbyshire Prevent Strategy Plan
- Raise awareness amongst staff and service users about the Prevent agenda and their role in identifying risk in local communities
- Work with key voluntary and community sector organisations and communities to capture local knowledge and expertise and challenge and expose the ideology that sanctions and encourages indiscriminate violence.

Measuring Success

We will measure success on developing community cohesion through performance management of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and by monitoring the following national indicators:

- NI 1 – % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
- NI 2 - % of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood
- NI 3 – Civic participation in the local area
- NI 4 - % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
- NI 5 – Overall/ general satisfaction with local area
- NI 6 – Participation in regular volunteering
- NI 35 – Building resilience to violent extremism

Partners will also consider progress against other National Indicators which may have an impact on cohesion, for example, strength of the third sector, involvement in arts, culture and sports, the amount of crime and anti-social behaviour and inequalities. The evaluation of many existing strategies and plans will also help partners to assess progress on cohesion.

Implementing the Strategy

The **Derbyshire Partnership Forum (DPF)** Board and Executive are responsible for driving this strategy forward and have been given responsibility for ensuring that progress on community cohesion is made over the next two years. The Board and Executive are supported by the DPF Community Cohesion Group which has been charged with developing specific actions and ensuring the co-operation of key partners.

This strategy is ultimately delivered by organisations working together through the Derbyshire Partnership Forum (DPF), a collection of over fifty partners, which was established in July 2000 to improve joint working in Derbyshire. These organisations recognise that by working together they can achieve more for local communities in Derbyshire than they could do alone. The Derbyshire Partnership Forum is the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for Derbyshire.

For more information

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