

Building Stronger Communities in Hertfordshire



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Foreword

Communities in Hertfordshire, whether by place or by interest, have a long and proud history of getting on well together, and people having a sense of belonging.

Nevertheless evidence tells us that we have challenges to address, and that in some parts of the county people feel less happy about how they get along with their neighbours. Like all areas there are pockets of deprivation across the county, and responsibilities in respect of equalities.

Maintaining a society where this sense of belonging prevails is very important to me as Chair of the Countywide Local Strategic Partnership, and I know that all partners share that desire. It carries with it a big responsibility.

Major agencies in the fields of safety, education, health, economic activity and housing, play key roles in response to the fundamental needs of communities and families

Whilst I know that lead agencies will get on with their jobs in response to needs, success in building stronger communities requires a much broader effort. Our record of good partnership work, investment in good relationships between agencies, and a vibrant voluntary and community sector provide us with the ingredients for continued success. The Safer and Stronger Communities partnership has a key role in bringing this together.

My vision for Hertfordshire, which this strategy is designed to encompass, is for all people feel comfortable, are able to engage as they wish, can focus on common interest and have a respect for diversity.

A strong community for all is fundamental. I commend this strategy as the cornerstone for a whole range of countywide and community based responses as set out in the action plan. I will take a keen interest in evaluating its success.

Robert Gordon
Chair of Hertfordshire Forward

1. Introduction

1.1 What is Community Cohesion?

Cohesion describes the ability of communities to live and grow in harmony together. It lies at the heart of safe, strong and prosperous places to live. The Department of Communities and Local Government¹ has set out a vision of an integrated and cohesive community based on three foundations:

- People from different backgrounds having similar life opportunities
- People knowing their rights and responsibilities
- People trusting one another and trusting local institutions to act fairly.

And three key ways of living together:

- A shared future vision and sense of belonging
- A focus on what new and existing communities have in common, alongside a recognition of the value of diversity
- Strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds.

1.2 The National Context

Community Cohesion has emerged as a key policy agenda for local strategic partnerships, and especially for local government over the last few years. The Cantle report in 2001 highlighted the need for local authorities to ensure communities are brought together and that good relations are promoted in order to prevent isolation and the development of “parallel lives”.²

In 2000 the Local Government Act gave local authorities a duty to promote social, economic and environmental well-being in their area, and the opportunity to take a more active role in shaping their local communities. The 2007 White Paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities” reinforces the importance of this role by encouraging local authorities and partner agencies to work together in strengthening communities so that people get along better. Furthermore, as of September 2007, all maintained schools have a statutory duty to promote community cohesion.

In recent years a range of factors have posed significant challenges to our communities. Nationally, increased levels of immigration, instances of religious radicalisation, growing support of far right politics and feelings of injustice due to the banking crisis, are amongst the many issues affecting how communities work and feel. Although these issues are not widespread in Hertfordshire, they can influence how people feel about neighbourhood belonging and perceptions of people around them.

¹ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/898656.pdf>

² Independent Review Team (2001) (Cantle Report) : *A report of the Independent Review Team, chaired by Ted Cantle*, London: Home Office

1.3 Why do we need a Community Cohesion Strategy in Hertfordshire?

Hertfordshire Forward has recognised the need for a strategic approach to maintain and strengthen community cohesion. In the 2009 Place Based Survey, 81% of the residents surveyed stated that they get along well with others³. This is much higher than the national average of 76.4%, suggesting that Hertfordshire's overall score is good, and that residents perceive the county as a relatively cohesive area. However there are variations in this perception with individual district scores ranging from 71.8% to 86.5%, and widely varying results on a ward by ward basis.

Whilst the survey shows that the county has no significant cohesion issues, it does highlight lower scores from residents in areas of relative deprivation. Indeed, the expected increase in future growth levels across the county, and further demographic and social change, may affect future cohesion levels. Therefore we should not take the high county levels of community cohesion we currently enjoy for granted. This Strategy will ask Hertfordshire Forward partners to work together with local communities in securing fair and equal opportunities for all, to ensure the continued health and strength of Hertfordshire's communities.

1.4 How has the strategy been developed in Hertfordshire?

Following a cohesion workshop in December 2008, a Community Cohesion Strategy Group was formed to develop the strategy. The Group consists of:

- Representatives from all ten district councils.
- Representatives from the Black and Minority Ethnic community.
- A representative of the Faith sector.
- Representatives from Hertfordshire County Council.
- A representative from Hertfordshire Infrastructure Consortium (Voluntary and Community Sector).
- A representative from the Housing Associations.
- A representative from the Police constabulary.
- A representative from the Primary Care Trusts.
- Representatives from Schools.
- Representative from CSF.

To inform development of the Strategy, the Group used the views, evidence and experience discussed at the workshop, alongside a detailed evidence base prepared by HCC staff.

2. Vision and Values

2.1 Ingredients for success

³ Please see Appendix 1 for table containing Place Based Survey NI1 scores

Community cohesion has a vital role to play in maintaining strong neighbourhoods. Whilst community cohesion is a multi faceted agenda, there are a range of factors that when implemented together strengthen our communities.

Building Inclusive Communities-connecting to fair services

Addressing inequality, and tackling deprivation and economic disadvantage within Hertfordshire, is key to ensuring that all our residents feel they can participate in society. By focussing on reducing inequalities and ensuring fair access to services, we can help our residents feel that they have similar life chances and that their contribution is valued and recognised. This strategy will focus on embedding equal access to services across all partner agencies, encompassing the work of the 'Hertfordshire Works' economic partnership. This economic partnership aims to provide economic opportunities for those in need and build on the opportunities of the 2012 Olympics. It will also provide support to ensure new and emerging communities can integrate, have the opportunity to attend English language classes and become economically independent.

Developing Confident Citizens - contributing to community life:

Citizen engagement and community participation have a role in developing cohesive communities by bringing people together to address shared issues and ease social tensions. Giving people a voice and mechanism to get involved builds a sense of belonging, and encouraging citizens to actively participate can foster a feeling of good neighbourliness, develop a culture of caring and build community spirit and confidence. This strategy will focus on encouraging volunteering and community activity, support and develop the democratic leadership role of councillor's and increase youth participation across the county.

Promoting Good Relations - challenging behaviours and attitudes

Developing meaningful interaction between different groups has been shown to encourage positive community relations. Projects that facilitate interaction between individuals and groups of different backgrounds can increase trust and foster tolerance. This strategy will focus on building communities that are founded on tolerance and respect, ensure that negative behaviours such as discrimination, bullying and racism are challenged and address issues of community tension.

Respecting Diverse Culture and Heritage - developing shared values

Developing an understanding and respect for culture, heritage and diversity contributes significantly to developing cohesive communities through generating a sense of togetherness and shared values. This strategy will focus on the promotion of cultural events and heritage initiatives such as the Cultural Olympiad, developing inter-faith forums, encouraging the use of open spaces and community facilities and building on the cohesion duty of Hertfordshire schools.

2.2 Strategic vision

Hertfordshire's strategic vision reflects the key factors mentioned above that give rise to success in achieving community cohesion.

Hertfordshire Forward aims to see a county where:

- Individuals can access fair services, and have equal economic opportunity.
- Individuals confidently contribute to each other, communities and public services through active citizenship, participation in volunteering and local decision-making.
- Individuals and communities are empowered to challenge negative behaviours and attitudes and promote good community relations.
- Individuals understand, and respect diversity within our communities.

These overarching aims will be expressed across four strategic themes later in the document.

2.3 Strategic priorities for a cohesive Hertfordshire

Deprivation has been identified nationally as a key factor that can contribute to a lack of community cohesion. People in deprived areas often feel that they do not get along well with others from different backgrounds. Poverty and inequality can lead to tensions between different groups over access to limited resources. While Hertfordshire is a place where most people have a good standard of living, there are pockets of deprivation in all districts across the county. In Hertfordshire, results from the Place Based Survey show a high correlation between deprivation and lower scores of cohesion. Tackling inequality and deprivation is therefore one of the main priorities to address within Hertfordshire. Below we outline this and other priorities for the county.

Countywide priorities

- Ensure economic opportunity and fair access to services for all residents.
- Encourage confident citizenship of all residents through volunteering and community participation.
- Tackle negative behaviour and perceptions.
- Develop interaction amongst diverse communities to promote understanding and respect for culture and diversity.

3. The Hertfordshire Context

3.1 About Hertfordshire

Location and Links

Hertfordshire is located in the East of England region to the north of London. It has easy access to London through good public transport links and is crossed

by the A1(M), M1 and the M25, as well as being flanked by three major airports, Heathrow, Luton and Stansted.

Population Growth

Hertfordshire has a population of over one million people. Of these 22.8% are aged 18 years and under, 56.6% aged 18-59 years and 20.6% are aged over 60 years⁴. Projected population growth figures suggest that the overall population will rise by 18.4% from 2006-2031 with a huge rise expected in those aged 80 plus. This population growth could pose a challenge to community cohesion with competition for resources and increased demands for services.

Diversity

The ethnicity of the majority of residents in Hertfordshire is white. However the county is quite diverse and some areas have a higher proportion of ethnic minorities.

- 6% of Hertfordshire residents are from a White Non-British background.
- 4% of residents are from an Asian or Asian British background.
- 2% from a Black or Black British background.
- 2% from a mixed ethnic background.

The most common non-English languages spoken in schools are: Urdu, Bengali, Polish, Gujarati, Punjabi, Turkish, French, Tamil, Portuguese and Pahari.

According to the 2001 census:

- 70.2% of Hertfordshire residents said they were Christian
- 17.1% said that they had no religion
- 1.7% said they were Muslim
- 1.6% said they were Jewish
- 0.4% said they were Sikh
- 0.3% said they were Buddhist

Some parts of the county have quite distinct demographic differences. For example, 11% of Hertsmere residents are Jewish and 6.1% of Watford residents are Muslim.

Within schools, racist incidents fell in 2007-08 by approximately 8%, from 1387 to 1275 incidents. Recorded bullying in primary schools is at its lowest level for four years, but bullying incidents in secondary schools are increasing. However the Ofsted TellUs3 survey indicates that Hertfordshire pupils have less fear of bullying in school than pupils in other counties.

According to the 2001 Census, 27.5% of households categorised themselves as containing one or more people with a limiting long-term illness (56.1% of who were aged 60 and above). In August 2008, there were almost 33,000 people in Hertfordshire receiving Disability Living Allowance. The 2007 school

⁴ Resident Population Estimates by Broad Age Band, Mid 2007, ONS

census determined that 6.3% of school age children in Hertfordshire are registered as having a learning difficulty or disability.

With such diversity across the county we must ensure that all residents in our communities feel valued, have equal opportunities and are empowered to participate in community life. We need to ensure our communities see the strength of this diversity through shared interaction, understanding and a shared sense of belonging.

Housing, Jobs and Skills

Hertfordshire is generally an affluent county. Home-ownership is higher than the national average and gross annual income is approximately 19% higher than the national average. However, there are issues of housing affordability for many residents, and pockets of deprivation in each of Hertfordshire's ten districts.

Employment rates in Hertfordshire are generally good compared to most of the country. Working age employment was 78.8% for the 12 months ending in June 2008 compared to the national rate of 74.4%. However In July 2009, the proportion of adults claiming unemployment benefits stood at 3.0% - the highest since May 1997. While this is still much lower than the UK average, the recession has had an impact on many individuals and families across the county.

The 2001 Census shows that approximately 25% of Hertfordshire's workers commute daily from outside the county, while 30.3% of Hertfordshire residents work outside of the county (mostly in London). We must help these residents to feel part of the wider community by encouraging them to participate in neighbourhoods, towns and cities through active citizenship initiatives, volunteering and local-decision making.

The skills and qualifications of Hertfordshire residents are good, with the county being ranked 10th out of the 53 National Learning and Skills Council areas. In Hertfordshire 77% of young people are qualified to Level 2, which is the highest level in the region and significantly higher than the national average of 70%. However, there are still over 200,000 adults in Hertfordshire who are not qualified to Level 2 and in 2007 approximately 9% of working age residents held no qualifications (annual population survey 2007).

Whilst most children in Hertfordshire do well in school there is also significant underachievement for certain vulnerable and ethnic minority groups. However, the achievement gap has narrowed in recent years, and is continuing to narrow through focussed work of the Hertfordshire Children's Trust Partnership. Hertfordshire also has significant numbers of children living in poverty. All partners see this as a crucial issue which must be addressed in order to secure a better future for all Hertfordshire residents.

Crime and Safety

Hertfordshire is a safe place to live, work and visit with relatively low crime rates and decreasing fire rates. During 2008/09, incidences of Primary Fires

decreased by 33% and Vehicle Fires decreased by 29%, in comparison to 2005/06⁵. However, the 2008-09 Place Based Survey shows that perceptions of crime, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse are disproportionately high compared to the actual incidence of crime. Reassurance to address residents fears and concerns is a top priority within Hertfordshire and all partners must work together to ensure people feel safe and secure within their neighbourhoods.

3.2 District level priorities and issues

Hertfordshire is the second most densely populated county in the country. The mix of new towns, market towns and rural villages and its proximity to London makes Hertfordshire truly unique. There is no one Hertfordshire-wide “identity.” Hertfordshire benefits from the distinctive identities of its towns, villages and rural areas. We need to ensure local community cohesion issues are addressed with local solutions. We describe the local context for each district and their identified priorities for community cohesion below

Broxbourne:

- Broxbourne borough is located in the south east of the county along the Lee Valley and consists of towns, villages and well-wooded countryside. It is within close proximity to London and the M25 and therefore a significant number of residents commute to jobs within and around London.
- Life expectancy is generally high throughout the borough; however there is some variation within and across the district.
- The borough is an area of contrasts containing some of the most affluent parts of Hertfordshire and some of the most deprived. Indeed it has the highest number of lower super output areas (LSOA's, geographical areas with 1000-1500 residents) in the county that are in the 30% most deprived nationally and has 7 out of 20 of the county's most deprived LSOA's.
- As of July 2009 the unemployment claimant count was 3.5%.
- Broxbourne has the poorest skills profile in the county.
- The largest non-UK national populations within the borough are Polish, Lithuanian and Indian. Broxbourne also has significant Turkish and Italian communities.
- Due to its location the borough experiences high levels of short term residents and high levels of pupil movement in some schools;
- Broxbourne is a very safe borough but has experienced the highest rate of vehicle crime in the county in 2008 and a higher than county average of

⁵ HFRS Annual Report 2008-09

anti-social behaviour in 2008. Fear of crime is higher than the County average.

Broxbourne's Priorities

- Develop initiatives to foster togetherness, and an increased feeling of belonging.
- Increase active citizenship and awareness of services and facilities.
- Tackle lack of understanding between generations.

Dacorum:

- Dacorum borough is located in the west of the county and is a mix of urban and rural communities, including the new town of Hemel Hempstead.
- Life expectancy is generally high throughout the district; however there is some variation within and across the district.
- Dacorum comprises both areas of affluence and deprivation. Indeed 3 out of its 27 wards are in the 50% most deprived in the country.
- As of July 2009 the unemployment claimant count was 3.3%.
- The largest non-UK national populations within the borough are Polish, Indian and Pakistani.
- Some parts of the borough have a higher proportion of BME residents, particularly from the Muslim community.
- Dacorum is a very safe borough but has experienced rates of vehicle crime above the Hertfordshire average.

Dacorum's Priorities

- Tackle inter-generational issues and integration of youth communities.
- Engage with ethnic minorities, particularly Muslim women and children, to improve integration.
- Increase community participation and engagement to determine local priorities through neighbourhood action
- Tackle deprivation and ensure that potentially excluded communities have the opportunity to be involved

East Hertfordshire:

- East Hertfordshire District is an attractive, generally affluent area consisting of five market towns and over 100 rural settlements located within proximity of London.
- East Hertfordshire has the lowest population density in the county with extensive tracts of agricultural land together with open spaces both within and around the market towns. This core character shapes much of the economic, environmental and social opportunities and challenges for the district.
- Life expectancy is generally high; however there is some variation within and across the district.
- East Hertfordshire is generally an affluent district and has no lower super output areas (LSOA's, geographical areas with 1000-1500 residents) ranked in the 30% most deprived nationally, however this is not a cause for complacency as some people still experience inequalities.
- As of July 2009 the unemployment claimant count was 2.4%.
- East Hertfordshire has recently welcomed a number of new and emerging communities, particularly from Eastern Europe.
- The largest non-UK national populations within the district are Polish, Italian and Spanish.
- East Hertfordshire has the lowest rates of children with a disability in the county and lowest rates of people receiving Disability Living Allowance.

Crime

- East Hertfordshire has a generally low level of crime and is one of the safest districts in the county; however there are some crime hotspots.

East Hertfordshire's Priorities

- Safeguard and enhance the unique mix of rural and urban communities with sustainable economic and social opportunities for all.

Hertsmere:

- Hertsmere is geographically located on the northern boundary of Greater London. Consequently it has evolved as an area for overspill development and an option for London residents who aspire to "move to the countryside."
- Life expectancy is generally high; however there is some variation within and across the district.
- In general it is an affluent district but with some small pockets of deprivation. Indeed Hertsmere contains one of the county's four most deprived wards in Cowley Hill.

- As of July 2009 the unemployment claimant count was 2.9%.
- Hertsmere is the second most ethnically diverse district in Hertfordshire, and is home to 60% of the county's Jewish population. According to 2007 figures 25.7% of school age children were from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.
- The largest non-UK national populations within the district are Polish, Slovak and Indian.
- Hertsmere has the highest rate of racist incidents per school although schools in Hertsmere are particularly proactive in tackling and addressing racism with low tolerance policies. Hate crime in Hertsmere has decreased by 10.5% compared to last year even though the detection rate has increased by 3.7%.

Hertsmere's Priorities

- Increase awareness and understanding of new and emerging cultures within the Borough and develop BME forums and focus groups.
- Increase opportunities for people with disabilities to engage in community life.
- Increase active citizenship and ensure that members of potentially marginalised or excluded communities have the opportunity to take part.

North Hertfordshire:

- North Herts District is a culturally diverse district in the north of the county, containing four main settlements, including the world's first garden City (Letchworth) and many rural communities, served by 36 parish and town councils, and parish meetings. Whilst one of ten Herts districts, it alone covers approximately 23% of the county.
- The district has good transport links to London, the midlands and the North and therefore a significant number of residents commute to jobs elsewhere.
- Life expectancy is generally high throughout the district, however there is significant variation within and across the district with some lower super output areas varying markedly from other areas in the same ward.
- In general it is an affluent district but with some small pockets of deprivation. The needs of those areas often being more marked by the proximity to the affluent wards nearby.
- There is a wide variation in lifestyles for older people within the district. Results from the IDAOPI index (Income Deprivation Affecting Older People) determined that parts of North Herts have greater than 40% of the over 60 population living in income deprivation, in particular within Hitchin

Oughton ward. However in contrast there are areas that are within the top 95% least income deprived in England.

- As of July 2009 the unemployment claimant count was 3.1%.
- North Herts has a significant Sikh population. Indeed the majority of the county's Sikh residents live in the Hitchin area.
- The largest non-UK national populations within the district are Polish, Indian and French.
- North Herts had the second highest rate of racist incidents in schools in 2007/08.
- North Herts has a low rate of overall crime and is one of the safest districts in the county, however there are some hotspots.

North Hertfordshire's Priorities

- Increase local jobs and training, targeting opportunities for vulnerable groups and young people.
- Engage residents effectively.
- Encourage citizenship and belonging through volunteering and community activities.

St Albans City and District

- St Albans City and District is an affluent area, with a strong historic identity and a vibrant and well-connected community. There are excellent transport links into London which means the district has a large proportion of residents who commute into London.
- The district has one of the highest total life expectancies in the county, but there is significant variation within and across the district with some lower super output areas (LSOA's, geographical areas with 1000-1500 residents) varying markedly from other areas in the same ward.
- As of July 2009 the unemployment claimant count was 2.1%.
- The district is generally very affluent but there are pockets of deprivation and inequalities in some wards across the district.
- There is a need for affordable housing in the district as the average house price is over double the national average. This must be balanced against protecting the unique character of the area and surrounding green belt.
- St Albans has the highest proportion of residents qualified to NVQ level 4 and above and one of the best skills profiles in the country, ranking 4th out of 408 districts nationally.

- St Albans has one of the highest rates of racist incidents in schools and one of the higher rates of bullying in schools in the county.
- The District has a significant Black and Minority Ethnic Population and is home to approximately 13% of the county's residents of Asian and Asian British background.
- Perceptions of anti-social behaviour issues have improved in recent years including litter, drugs, and young people hanging around. Indeed perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem fell from 27% in 2006/07 to 19% in 2008/09, reflecting some of the best results of the Herts districts.

St Albans' Priorities

- Safeguard the unique character of the district and the Greenbelt and balance with providing affordable housing and effective infrastructure.
- Reduce inequalities particularly in the most deprived areas.
- Increase affordable housing.

Stevenage:

- Stevenage was the first designated New Town designed to provide homes and jobs for people after the Second World War. Set in the Hertfordshire countryside, it was intended to be a self contained community, consisting of self sufficient neighbourhoods interspersed with plenty of green spaces. The town has grown to a population of 80,000 people, providing 40,000 jobs and 35,000 dwellings.
- Stevenage has one of the largest employment areas in Hertfordshire, with a mixed workforce and is ranked 191 out of 354 English districts on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. There are some differences at ward level, with inequalities in health, skills and educational attainment.
- Stevenage has a higher than average number of young people and a fairly high rate of teenage pregnancy compared to some other parts of the county.
- Stevenage is identified in the East of England Regional Spatial Strategy (adopted May 2008) as a 'Key Centre for Development and Change', for regional employment and housing growth. Since 2001 Stevenage has achieved the highest rate of affordable housing across the county.
- Local partnerships are developing a comprehensive health agenda to tackle the three main health inequalities in Stevenage, obesity, alcohol and smoking.

Stevenage's Priorities

- Improving financial inclusion

- Addressing inequalities in health, skills, educational attainment and jobs in the most deprived wards.
- Improving education results and levels of aspiration for young people and addressing negative perceptions of young people.
- Promote contact and understanding between and within the BME communities and other communities and faiths and celebrate diversity within our community.
- Tackle offences that are motivated by prejudice or hate including race, homophobia, transphobia, faith, sectarian prejudice or prejudice towards disabled people.
- Stevenage will be reviewing these priorities in the coming year as we refresh our Sustainable Community Strategy.

Three Rivers:

- Three Rivers is located in the south west of the county, and consists of nine key settlements and other rural locations.
- The district has quite high life expectancy however there is significant variation across the district.
- As of July 2009 unemployment claimant count was 2.4%.
- While generally affluent there are some pockets of deprivation. Indeed the district has the most deprived lower super output area (geographical areas with 1000-1500 residents) in the county in Northwick ward and there are a number of other wards which feature comparatively high on the national index of multiple deprivation.
- Access to affordable housing is a key priority, with the District having some of the highest housing prices in the county.
- Differences in household income have been identified as the greatest cause of inequality in the district.
- The district has a significant Black and Minority Ethnic population (12.9% in 2001 Census) concentrated in several affluent ward areas where the figure rises to 39.6%.
- Three Rivers has the lowest rate of crime and youth offending in the county. However, whilst being one of the safest districts in the region, there are hotspots of crime, anti-social behaviour, and fear of crime.

Three Rivers' Priorities

- Develop community engagement and activities to promote shared understanding between communities in targeted areas.

- Increase affordable housing.
- Ensure local access to services relating to literacy, mental health problems, disabilities, and drug and alcohol problems in areas of high deprivation.

Watford

- Watford is predominantly an urban borough located in the southwest of the county. It has excellent transport links to London, surrounding areas, the midlands and the North-west, which means many people commute to and from the borough.
- The borough has a high density of population and has a long history of welcoming a range of diverse communities.
- Watford has one of the lowest total life expectancies compared to the other districts and contains the wards with the lowest life expectancy (Holywell ward) and the ward with the second highest life expectancy (Park ward).
- As of July 2009 unemployment claimant count was 3.5%.
- While generally affluent there are some pockets of deprivation. Indeed the borough has 5 of the 20 most deprived lower super output areas (geographical areas with 1000-1500 residents) in the county.
- Approximately 24% of residents classify themselves in ethnic groups other than White British and the borough has one of the highest percentages of Pakistani populations of any district in the country. This correlates with the borough having the majority of Hertfordshire's Muslim population. Indeed Muslim residents make up 6.1% of the population of Watford.
- Watford has recently welcomed a number of new and emerging communities, particularly from Eastern Europe and now has a significant Polish community. In 2007/08 it had the second highest rate of non UK National Insurance registrations in the county.
- Watford has the highest proportion of disabled residents in the county and one of the highest proportions of children with a disability.
- In 2008 Watford had the highest number of race incidents with 3 per 1000 head of population and the highest rate of anti-social behaviour, which is chiefly due to its role as a regional centre for shopping and nightlife that attracts huge visitors each week.

Watford's Priorities

- Investigate why older people are less satisfied with Watford as a place to live.

- Support and encourage civic activities and events that promote belonging.

Welwyn Hatfield

- Welwyn Hatfield is a mixture of towns and several rural or semi-rural communities located in mid-Hertfordshire. There are good rail and road connections with London which means that many people commute from the borough into London.
- The presence of the University means the borough has a high student population, which brings different influences to the Borough.
- As of July 2009 the unemployment claimant count was 2.9%.
- The borough has a high proportion of working age residents with no qualifications according to the Annual Population Survey and the highest rate of year 11 students not progressing into Education, Employment or Training.
- While generally affluent, there are some pockets of deprivation in the borough. Indeed it has one of the county's most deprived lower super output areas (geographical areas with 1000-1500 residents) in the region in Hatfield central ward
- Life expectancy in Welwyn Hatfield is good at 78.3 years for males and 82.8 years for females
- There are significant migrant and BME communities with Polish, Pakistani and Chinese being the largest non-UK national populations in the borough. Indeed one quarter of the county's Chinese residents live in Welwyn Hatfield.
- In 2007/08 Welwyn Hatfield received the most National Insurance registrations from UK Non-nationals in the county.
- In 2008 Welwyn Hatfield had the fourth highest rate of anti-social behaviour in the county with a rate above the county average.

Welwyn Hatfield's Priorities

- Ensure ethnic minority communities are effectively engaged and able to integrate and participate in community life.
- Ensure access to adult education facilities for BME groups, to improve employability.
- Raise aspirations and narrow the achievement gap of certain groups of BME and vulnerable children and young people in Welwyn Hatfield schools

4. The Strategy

Each of the priorities identified at a countywide and local level will be addressed across the four themes of the strategy:

- Building Inclusive Communities in Hertfordshire
- Developing Confident Citizens in Hertfordshire
- Promoting Good Relations in Hertfordshire
- Respecting diverse culture and heritage

Each theme will have a number of aims and objectives and include several case studies to highlight examples of good practice. An action plan will be produced to translate aims and objectives from each of the four themes into countywide actions.

4.1 Building Inclusive Communities in Hertfordshire

In order to build cohesive communities it is important for people to feel they have equal life chances, fair access to services and the opportunity to contribute to society. However some people can feel socially excluded, isolated or unable to take part, placing them at a disadvantage within their local community.

People may struggle to access employment and may be disadvantaged by a lack of qualifications or skills, by a disability, learning difficulty, or due to mental health issues. People on lower incomes are more likely to be denied opportunities to engage with others or access services; they may feel excluded from their community and may find it more difficult to enjoy a sense of achievement and purpose. Others may find their opportunities to connect are limited by poor health, language barriers, cultural barriers, lack of confidence, transport and mobility problems, or isolation in the home. Younger people and older people can become disconnected from their own age groups and from the wider community through lack of opportunity to interact, and inability to access services, especially in rural areas. The economic downturn has heightened this sense of social exclusion for some individuals and communities. Hertfordshire Forward partners are therefore working to ensure public services are fair, accessible and transparent for all residents irrespective of their background.

We believe that tackling issues related to social exclusion and deprivation is the key to building and sustaining stronger and more inclusive communities. In response to these needs and the challenges presented by the recession, the new economic partnership for Hertfordshire - 'Hertfordshire Works' is developing an economic strategy for the county that will address deprivation and inequalities. Hertfordshire Works will work with a range of private and third sector partners to increase employment opportunities and economic participation for disadvantaged communities, support the regeneration of town centres in some areas, improve skill levels of those farthest from the workforce and maximise the economic opportunities provided by the 2012 Olympics.

The ability to speak a common language is vital to ensure integration and understanding between all communities. The ability to speak English gives people the opportunity to economically support themselves and their families, engage more widely in the community and to access services. We are therefore working to identify priorities and develop a local area action plan to target ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes to those most in need. We aim to see a Hertfordshire where no-one feels disadvantaged or isolated, everyone has connections within their local community, and everyone sees that their contribution is valued and recognised.

Many statutory bodies are already working hard to achieve equality of opportunity for Hertfordshire residents. This strategy intends to build on existing good work. In addition initial funding has been allocated to establish a Hertfordshire Equalities Council (HEC). This pioneering project will be the first equalities council with a remit to address the potential for discrimination, and existing discrimination, across all six equalities strands - Race, Faith, Gender, Age, Disability and Sexual Orientation. As well as providing casework the council will inform diverse communities of their rights in the workplace and home, provide advice and scrutiny to statutory bodies and undertake targeted community development work. HEC will be a champion for all minorities, and as such will play a key role in strengthening cohesion across the county.

Schools also play a key role in achieving equal opportunities for young people. Schools focus on securing high levels of educational attainment for all pupils irrespective of background or belief. Furthermore schools offer targeted support for pupils for who English is an additional language, in order to ensure their achievement. The broad work of schools contributes to reducing the variation in outcomes for different groups, and removing barriers to access and participation. We would like to see the role of schools strengthened to ensure our future generations have equal opportunities and the chance to achieve their potential.

Aims/Objectives

- Ensure all partners have up-to-date demographic information on Hertfordshire's communities.
- Ensure opportunities for jobs and skills training for those who are economically disadvantaged.
- Tackle deprivation and child poverty across Hertfordshire.
- Ensure fair and equal access to services.
- Provide information and support to promote integration of new and established communities.

Case Studies⁶

Welwyn Hatfield Polish Community Forum was founded in 2007 in Hatfield, through partnership working between Polish members of the Hatfield community, key voluntary and community groups, and statutory partners. Drop in sessions have been set up where Polish people with different needs can

⁶ For more Stronger Communities case studies please contact karen.griffiths@hertscc.gov.uk

seek advice and help. These sessions included setting up businesses with the Hatfield Housing Manger, CAB, and Business Link and supporting the transfer of overseas qualifications with TransQual. A partnership with North Hertfordshire College has been established to deliver four English language classes in Hatfield. Similar courses will be introduced in Stevenage and Watford. Currently 38 students have undertaken the classes and are awaiting their results. These activities have helped people to improve their confidence and self esteem. This in turn has had a positive impact on community cohesion and participation. It has also encouraged people into volunteering, enabling them to improve their employability. For more information please contact Michal Siewniak, Strategic Development Officer, MENTER, michal@menter.org.uk.

Hitchin Sikh Activity Programme was developed by the Fire Service to ensure better engagement with the Sikh community, to understand their needs better and improve access to services. Before this, no Home Fire Safety Checks had been carried out in Hitchin for members of this community. A series of fire safety talks were given to a wide ranging audience from the Sikh community with the help of a translator in various community locations across Hitchin. A Sikh culture awareness training day at the Gurdwara was held for Fire Service and East of England Ambulance Service employees . This involved a presentation, time for questions and an interactive session, finishing with a meal of traditional Sikh food. The programme has enabled the Fire Service to now understand the culture of this community better. This has led to improved communication and relationships and the breaking down of cultural barriers, which in the past have left this community group at higher risk of fire. By understanding the community better, the Fire Service became aware that some, in particular older, members of the community felt uncomfortable with the thought of fire crews in their homes. This led to a panel of Sikh volunteers being established who assist with translation and accompany crews into homes to carry out Home Fire Safety Checks. For more information please contact John McGrinder, Crew Commander, Herts Fire and Rescue Services, 01462 666 800.

4.2 Developing Confident Citizens in Hertfordshire

A sense of community is at the heart of developing stronger and more cohesive neighbourhoods. We want all Hertfordshire's residents to feel proud to live here and able to enjoy a sense of community spirit.

Councillors have a key role to play in building cohesive communities at a local level. They have a responsibility through the Local Government Act 2000 to act as Community Leaders and promote the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of their local area. We want to continue to support and develop the role of councillors to engage effectively with their communities and address the breadth of issues that affect people's lives. [*This text may be amended shortly to reflect firming up of Herts local agenda*]

Whilst councillors have a leadership role, all individuals can effectively contribute to building community spirit through things like volunteering, helping each other out and taking part in community groups and events. There are many formal volunteering opportunities already available in Hertfordshire with voluntary and community groups, school governorships and roles as lay magistrates; and also many informal opportunities to help neighbours and those around us. Many Hertfordshire residents already give their time and skills, and are working to make a real difference in their local area. However, more people should be made aware of the benefits of taking part in community activities and volunteering.

Schools play an important role in supporting community cohesion by shaping the views and values of young people, and preparing them for life in the wider community. The importance of this role is reflected in the fact that all maintained schools have a statutory duty to promote cohesion through the curriculum and extended activities. Schools develop an ethos of community participation in young people. School councils can give young people an effective voice and involvement in decisions that affect their school governance and organisation. Many schools also have programmes that support young people to become involved in volunteering and community activities, providing beneficial insight into the value of participation. We would like to see the role of schools in community participation extended, and will support schools in meeting their statutory duty. All schools in Hertfordshire will have the choice and opportunity to work towards a community cohesion quality mark, to ensure key cohesion principles are embedded at all levels.

All Hertfordshire Forward partners can provide support and encouragement for people to engage. They can make opportunities available for residents to have a positive influence within their community, and ensure that their contribution is recognised and valued. Citizen engagement is at the centre of healthy and vibrant communities and local people should be empowered to understand and take part in democratic processes and local decision-making. We aim to see a Hertfordshire where all citizens recognise and understand their potential to be a champion for their local community. We will continue to develop Hertfordshire as a place where residents who are active in their communities are celebrated, championed and supported to develop a better quality of community life for all.

Aims/Objectives

- Maintain the environment for a strong and vibrant Third sector in Hertfordshire.
- Increase local volunteering.
- Support the Community leadership role of Councillors.
- Increase the number of people who feel empowered to participate in local civic issues.
- Support schools to enable young people to contribute to their communities, and ensure schools meet their cohesion duty.

Case Studies⁷

Pride of Stevenage Awards celebrate and reward the efforts of Stevenage people and organisations who residents feel have made a difference. The awards are presented each October at the Mayor's Civic Reception to formally show appreciation to unsung heroes within the community who work tirelessly to make life better and easier in their neighbourhoods and throughout the town. There are six award categories that recognise contributions made by individuals and organisations to the health, employment prospects, businesses, street scene and general well-being of the community, through projects, personal achievements and volunteering.

Onside project

St Albans City & District Council and Dacorum Borough Council worked with a variety of partners (including Watford Community Sports & Education Trust and Watford Football club) to develop and support a project that engages young people (aged 8-16 years) with local community projects, for which they have responsibility. The Onside project started in June 2008 to provide opportunities that encourage community cohesion and good citizenship, provide training and employment opportunities and promote the benefits of active participation and healthy living. The project is now delivering a three year programme of activities across six sites in St Albans and four sites in Dacorum, and includes weekly football and coaching sessions, street dance, DJ workshops, creative arts, self defence, yoga and gym workouts. Some young people will also be able to gain a certificate in coaching. Some matches will be organised to provide opportunities for young people from areas and estates within the project to play against each other. This interaction should enable young people from different backgrounds to break down barriers and foster a shared understanding. For more information please contact Richard Shwe, Head of Culture & Community Development, St Albans City and District Council, Richard.Shwe@stalbans.gov.uk

St Albans Sensory Garden is a project which was developed for Clarence Park following multimedia community consultation. Through that consultation the project team, comprising Green Heart Partnership working with St Albans City & District Council officers, identified a gap in the park's facilities - a quiet area for people from all backgrounds to sit and enjoy the park. Having identified an under used area of the park, the Sensory Garden project was developed to create a shared space for diverse groups within the community. Design, consultation and

⁷ For more Stronger Communities case studies please contact karen.griffiths@hertscc.gov.uk

publicity have helped to produce a garden with a sense of community ownership. Plants have been specifically chosen to impact on the senses of touch - soft flowers; smell - lavenders and mints; taste - herbs; hearing - movement of grasses and bamboos; and sight - colours and shapes. For more information please contact Richard Shwe, Head of Culture & Community Development, St Albans City and District Council, Richard.Shwe@stalbans.gov.uk

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4.3 Promoting Good Relations in Hertfordshire

A strong and cohesive community is one where we can appreciate others, even though there may be differences of belief, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, gender or ability. In Hertfordshire we aim to be a place where diversity is valued, people are respected regardless of their personal background or cultural heritage, and are sufficiently confident to express their own identity free from prejudice.

Lack of, or an inaccurate, understanding about others can act as a barrier to the development of strong and inclusive communities. Our understanding of the views of others can often be based on selective or misinformed reports and generalisations based on one-off experiences. In the worst cases, it can lead to prejudice, discrimination or extremist views. Within Hertfordshire these issues occur infrequently in comparison to other areas, but we cannot be complacent. We have a responsibility to promote tolerance and respect for everyone and to challenge extremist ideologies.

Developing an understanding of those who are different to us can help breakdown stereotypes, reduce fear of the unknown, prevent tension and enable improvements in public services. Many voluntary and community groups play an important role in providing education on diversity and championing respect and tolerance. Furthermore, they and other public sector partners offer many programmes of inter-generational activity where young and old people can interact and learn to understand each other. This can help to combat generational tensions and ensure young and old people get along well together. Schools provide an important forum for young people to address issues of respect and tolerance. Schools have many strategies in place to tackle bullying and discrimination. Young people are taught about respect and tolerance. They are encouraged to challenge prejudice and stereotyping through the curriculum

Neighbourhoods where extremist views are minimised are more likely to be places where people have more confidence, feel secure and get along better with others. Nationally, funding has been allocated by the Government to prevent violent extremism by building challenge and resilience at the community level, and supporting integration of all communities. Whilst Hertfordshire does not have major problems with violent extremism, it is important that all partners work together proactively to ensure such issues do not arise. Hertfordshire Forward partners including the Police, Hertfordshire County Council, the District Councils and the Voluntary and Community sector are therefore working together to share knowledge, develop a strategic approach to this agenda and to expand community mediation services. Dialogue built on shared knowledge can foster understanding, tackle ignorance and remove the potential for conflict.

Everyone can play a role in challenging negative perceptions of individuals and groups, correcting misinformation and standing up to discrimination and prejudice, but people may also need support to do this. By working together to promote good community relations we will ensure that Hertfordshire remains a safe and happy place for people to live.

Aims/Objectives:

- Ensure people feel safer in their homes and neighbourhoods.
- Ensure people know their rights
- Monitor and address community tensions.
- Support schools to promote good community relations and address negative behaviours and attitudes.
- Increase opportunities for different groups to get along well.

Case Studies⁸

Mediation Herts

Mediation Hertfordshire was founded in 1998 as an independent voluntary organisation, to provide mediation and dispute resolution services to residents and tenants who are in dispute with their neighbours. Volunteer mediators help the disputing parties to negotiate an informal agreement. This creates the opportunity for conflict to be resolved by the parties themselves, avoiding prolonged and bitter disputes that require police involvement, or court and legal proceedings. Mediation is also a learning process, helping those involved to develop constructive communication skills. Mediation Hertfordshire achieved the Community Legal Service Quality Mark in February 2007. It works predominantly with Hertfordshire residents who live in areas of relative deprivation and experience a number of social issues that affect their ability to play a full part in their communities. Mediation Herts therefore, plays a key role in providing a preventative service for communities facing challenging circumstances, encourages tolerance amongst communities, encourages volunteering, creates a safer neighbourhood and promotes social justice. For more information please contact Maria Kraithman, Manager Mediation Herts, maria@mediationherts.org.uk. Also see www.mediationherts.org.uk.

Safer Herts Campaign

A multi-agency campaign to spread the word that Hertfordshire really is a safe place to live has received a Silver PRide Award from the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR). The campaign ran throughout May, June and July 2008 and involved all the county's local authorities, health, fire and rescue and police, together with HertsWatch and other voluntary organisations. "Safer Herts" was an intensive campaign aimed at providing reassurance to people who live, work or visit the county. Key messages highlighted reductions in overall crime and were promoted in local newspapers, on radio stations, websites and at events. A successful poster campaign was also run on the back of nearly 100 buses across the county. A survey conducted in August (2008) confirmed significant reductions in perceptions of teenagers hanging around on the streets and environmental crimes, such as vandalism and graffiti. County Executive Member for Community Safety and Police Authority Vice-Chair, Councillor Richard Smith, said: "All too often people's perception of local crime and disorder does not reflect reality because it is often influenced by local and national media and even storylines in TV soaps. Hertfordshire is a relatively safe county and the 'Safer Herts' campaign was designed to get that message across." For further

⁸ For more Stronger Communities case studies please contact karen.griffiths@hertscc.gov.uk

information contact Sally Patient, Hertfordshire Police Authority, on 01992 555624 or email sally.patient.hpa@herts.pnn.police.uk

Intergenerational work in Dacorum

In March 2009, Adeyfield School in Hemel Hempstead invited five charities to pitch ideas for projects to over 100 year 7 students, as part of their citizenship programme. One of the projects selected by the students was put forward by Age Concern Dacorum, who wanted to give their day care clients a trip to the sea-side. The students worked together to organise a day trip to Clacton for 88 older people, volunteers and staff. This involved everything from speaking to clients about where they wished to go, researching the location as to the locality of shops, toilets, restaurants and disabled access to pricing up coaches and seeking funding to buy refreshments. The students took the initiative to contact local restaurants to secure a discount for the day care clients and created laminated cards to present on arrival. The day was a great success, with much enjoyment had by the day care clients. The project created an increased awareness among the young people of the needs of older people, and the benefits to be gained from supporting others in the community. For more information please contact Age Concern Dacorum careservices_manager@ageconcerndacorum.org.uk

4.4 Respecting Hertfordshire's Diverse Culture and Heritage

Hertfordshire has been welcoming people from all over the world for hundreds of years and continues to welcome new residents, with the county shaped and influenced by its unique history. The diversity within the county enriches life in the community for everybody, creating opportunities to share and enjoy many unique traditions, festivals, foods, music and beliefs.

Hertfordshire hosts a variety of sports and cultural events that celebrate both heritage and pride of place. People from many different backgrounds take part in these events which bring communities together and create a shared sense of respect and belonging. The 2010 Cultural Olympiad is one such event that will provide a unique platform to bring diverse people and communities together. It will build on the spirit of the 2012 Olympics to encourage increased cultural participation, create a sense of fun amongst our residents and improve quality of life. Furthermore participation in the Arts provides a fantastic opportunity to interact with diverse communities. There are many arts programmes currently underway across the county that build community cohesion. We would like to build on the great work of these programmes which bring people together, foster understanding and develop community pride.

Schools provide an important space for interaction of pupils from different backgrounds, and the use of facilities for the wider community to come together. Schools' approach to teaching enables young people to learn to understand others, build on common values and respect diversity. Many schools have curriculum based activities to enrich understanding of others through cross-cultural projects in the community, school-twinning and debates on issues of identity and diversity.

Sports plays a key role in generating cohesive communities, with sports participation being a powerful forum to bring people from different backgrounds together and enable them to work towards achieving common goals. In Hertfordshire we aim to build on the opportunity of the county hosting the 2012 Olympics events at the White Water Canoe Centre by seeing participation in sport increase to maximise interaction, and promote healthy individuals and healthy communities. The legacy benefits to be gained from the Olympics for local communities will be substantial. It will be crucial that partners work together to deliver this once in a lifetime opportunity.

Hertfordshire should be a place that recognises, values, and respects the backgrounds and beliefs of all. We want people to be proud of the county in which they live, and feel at home. A deeper understanding of diversity encourages a greater sense of togetherness and belonging. We would like to encourage communities to celebrate their commonalities as well as respecting difference in an inclusive and positive way. We aspire to make better use of community facilities and open spaces to bring people together and learn from one other. Understanding the heritage of our communities highlights what we have in common: mutual respect and a shared future.

Aims/Objectives

- Increase participation in cultural, arts and heritage events.

- Increase interaction between diverse faith communities.
- Support schools to increase young people's understanding of diversity, culture and heritage.
- Support participation of our communities in sports and build on the legacy of the Olympics.
- Maintain the unique quality of life in Hertfordshire.

Case Studies⁹

Kaleidoscope Festival is a community event which is organised by Welwyn Hatfield Ethnic Minority Group. There are a variety of information stalls, dance and music, art and craft, food from around the world, activities for children and young people, and more. The event aims to bring together the people of Welwyn Hatfield to celebrate the area's rich cultural diversity, and promote a shared sense of belonging by providing a friendly and relaxed opportunity for people to learn from and about each other. This event supports communication, interaction and engagement between all sections of the community, particularly between local black and minority ethnic (BME) citizens and service providers. It provides an opportunity for local people to make a positive contribution towards their community by acting as volunteers, exhibitors or performers. The festival has taken place each July since 2003 at Stanborough Park, Welwyn Garden City. Attendance on the day averages 10,000 over the six hours it is open to the public, with over one hundred different organisations (local as well as national) taking part as stall-holders. For more details about the day, including how to take part, please visit the festival's website – www.kalfest.org.uk

'**Who do we think we are week**' is a national annual event targeted at young people within schools. This year Bishop's Hatfield Girls School in Hatfield decided to give the week a much higher profile to, amongst other things, support the growing agenda around diversity and to provide opportunities for the pupils to meet people from different cultures, religions and belief systems. The usual school timetable for Key Stage 3 pupils was collapsed and staff from across the departments worked together to organise a week of activities including a Roman History and Culture workshop, a Holocaust awareness morning (including visits from 2 Holocaust survivors) and a visit to a London synagogue. A highlight of the week was a film day for year 9 pupils, who had the opportunity to interview a wide range of people about their beliefs and interests, including local pensioners on their memories of the war, and members of the Welwyn-Hatfield Inter-faith forum on why religion is important to them. The resulting film material will be used as a resource in Religious Education lessons. The week enabled students to explore their feelings about their own identity in the context of their local community and beyond. They developed their knowledge and understanding of religion and culture and began to realise that whilst 'difference is important' there is much that is shared and valued. Next year the school plan to involve the sixth form in running and helping with activities, and to expand partnerships with the local and wider community. For further information about WDWTWA contact Andrew Underwood aunderwood@bishophatfield.herts.sch.uk or Sue Carter scarter@bishophatfield.herts.sch.uk. Also see www.wdwtwa.org.uk

⁹ For more Stronger Communities case studies please contact karen.griffiths@hertscc.gov.uk

World Arts Platform (WAP) is a two year multicultural arts programme which is supported financially by Arts Council England, East, HCC Arts Development, Hertfordshire Music Service and the District & Borough Councils. WAP will organise mini projects in the districts as well as two countywide projects. One of these 'Write from the Heart' is a creative writing project for people whose second language is English. The other countywide project involves the Music Service, and will see musicians from a range of multicultural and art form backgrounds work with musical groups across the county. Other elements of WAP include 'Turkish Delights,' a play based on Turkish fairy tales, written by a young Turkish playwright/director living in Waltham Cross. Performances are currently planned in Broxbourne schools but it is hoped it will tour the county more generally. If you would like more information about the World Arts Platform then please look at the website www.worldartsplatform.org.uk .

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5. How will the strategy be delivered and monitored?

There will be a detailed action plan to meet the aims of this strategy. This plan will be produced by the Community Cohesion Strategy Group and will be overseen at a strategic level by the county-wide Safer and Stronger Communities thematic partnership.

To ensure we deliver effectively against our aims and objectives, it is important to monitor and evaluate our community cohesion work. No single indicator can truly address the complexity of this agenda. We will need a mixture of soft and hard measures to inform us of our progress and maintain a comprehensive picture of community cohesion across the county.

6. How we will measure success?

Hertfordshire Forward's community cohesion work will be evaluated under the New Performance Framework for Local Government's cohesion related measure NI1¹⁰ which is a target within the county-wide Local Area Agreement. This indicator measures:

- % who agree that their local area is a place in where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

There are also other National Indicators which impact indirectly on the community cohesion agenda and delivery of the work. These include:

- NI 2: *% who feel they belong to their immediate neighbourhood.*
- NI 3: *% who have been involved in decisions that affect the local area in the past 12 months.*
- NI 4: *% who agree they can influence decisions in their local area.*
- NI 6: *% who have given unpaid help at least once per month over the last 12 months.*
- NI 7: *thriving third sector.*
- NI 22: *% who agree that in their local area parents take enough responsibility for the behaviour of their children.*
- NI 23: *% who think there is a problem with people not treating each other with respect and consideration in their local area.*
- NI 140: *% who would say that they have been treated with respect and consideration by local public services in the last year.*
- NI21 *Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police*

We will develop specific targets and measures for our community cohesion Action Plan which will be agreed by all key partners to achieve our desired outcomes below.

Building Inclusive Communities: What success will look like?

- Services will be fair and people will feel they have equal life chances.
- The instances of deprivation and child poverty in the county will be reduced.

¹⁰ Please see Appendix 1 for NI1 Place based Survey scores

- The number of training and skills opportunities will increase.
- New communities will feel supported to integrate.

Developing Confident Citizens: What success will look like?

- The number of volunteers and volunteering opportunities will increase across the county.
- The Community leadership role of members will be strengthened.
- Schools will achieve good outcomes for Community Cohesion when inspected and/or will have a range of effective strategies in place to promote Community Cohesion.
- More people will feel they can influence local decisions.
- Participation in sport will increase.

Promoting Good Relations: What success will look like?

- People will feel empowered and supported to tackle inequality, prejudice and extremism.
- Schools will instil an understanding of good relations in children and young people.
- Instances of community tension negative behaviours and extremism will be reduced.
- People will feel safe and comfortable in their neighbourhoods.
- People will know their rights

Respecting Diverse Culture and Heritage: What success will look like?

- There will be increased participation in cultural, heritage and diversity events and programmes.
- There will be increased interaction between people from diverse communities.
- Schools will excel in respecting our diverse culture and heritage and demonstrate outstanding provision in Community Cohesion.
- Community facilities and open spaces will be widely used by diverse groups.
- More people will feel they get along well with others from different backgrounds to their own.

Action Plan: Building Inclusive Communities in Hertfordshire

Aim and Actions	Lead	Timescale	Monitor
<p>Aim: Ensure all partners have up-to-date demographic information on Hertfordshire's communities</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement programme to share information and intelligence amongst partners • Encourage all partners to share good practice on Community Cohesion and develop guidance/case studies on web. 	<p>HCC</p> <p>HCC</p>	<p>March 2010</p> <p>Mid 2010</p>	
<p>Aim: Ensure opportunities for jobs and skills training for those that are economically disadvantaged.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Economic Participation programme (Speak to J. Pryor) • Continue narrowing the gap of underachieving pupils and groups in schools and early year settings • Implement work of Hertfordshire Adult and Family Learning Service to target learners in the most deprived wards 	<p>HCC John Pryor</p> <p>HCC/Schools Maggie Woods</p>	<p>2011</p> <p>Ongoing from 2009</p>	<p>The % of NEET's.</p> <p>Rate of educational achievement for BME groups</p>
<p>Aim: Tackle deprivation and child poverty across Hertfordshire.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Think Families Programme within Children Centres 	<p>HCTP/HCC Julia</p> <p>Wright?</p> <p>HCC/HCTP/Youth</p> <p>HCC</p>		<p>NI116-proportion of children in poverty</p> <p>NI153-Working age people on out of work benefits in the worst</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement work of Money Advice Unit to raise financial awareness of parents • Implement actions from CYPP Priority 11 (Children and young people thrive in spite of poverty) • Implement work of Economic Participation programme to address deprivation (speak to J Pryor) 	Connexions Andrew Simmons HCC John Pryor		performing neighbourhoods
<p>Aim: Ensure fair and equal access to services</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to ensure all public services are equally accessible to and meet the needs of local communities • Ensure all public agencies achieve at least level 2 of the Equalities framework for local government and Police adopt NPIA Equality standard • Support the development of the Hertfordshire Equalities Council • Ensure local people understand how to access services 	HCC Herts Network Diversity HCC/Police/PCT HCC/PCT/Districts	By 2012 March 2010	Achieve by 2012 Work programme in place by end 2010
<p>Aim: Provide information and support to promote integration of new and established communities.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all partners work together to better address the needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities and service provision is properly planned. 	HCC Norbert McCabe & Laurence Chester	By end 2010	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop migration partnership to respond to new and emerging needs of migrant communities 	HCC/Districts/VCS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adequate provision of English as a second language (ESOL) classes 	HCC Jane Rouse	By 2010	

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Action Plan: Developing Confident Citizens in Hertfordshire

Aim and Actions	Lead	Timescale	Monitor
<p>Aim: Maintain the environment for a strong and vibrant Third sector in Hertfordshire</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop cross-sector group to look at Third sector issues • Develop an NI7 action plan to develop a thriving Third Sector • Promote locality budgets scheme amongst VCS 	<p>HCC Andrew Burt</p> <p>HCC Andrew Burt</p>	<p>2010</p>	<p>Increase in NI7 score</p>
<p>Aim: Increase local volunteering.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Hertfordshire's Volunteering strategy to promote volunteering amongst all residents • Support development of a time banking pilot 	<p>Volunteering Herts/HCC</p> <p>Karyn Jones HCC/PCT</p>	<p>Strategy by 2010</p>	<p>70% of population to volunteer at least once a year by 2021</p>
<p>Aim: Support the Community leadership role of Councillors.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all Members understand Community Cohesion and address disadvantage and inequalities as part of their leadership role • Ensure Members feel confident to listen to and hear the voice of their communities • Develop locality budgets scheme 	<p>HCC/Districts</p> <p>Stewart Martin/HCC</p> <p>HCC/Geoff Brown</p>		

<p>Aim: Increase the number of people who feel empowered to participate in local civic issues.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower our communities through development of Community Leadership skills in Take Part programme • Encourage understanding of democratic process and benefit of participation • Ensure effective networks of community leaders in localities 	<p>HCC Stewart Martin/Nicola Kilvington Stevenage BC/ Rebecca Dunsmore Hertsmere BC</p> <p>Dave Roberts HCC</p> <p>Martin South HCC</p>		
<p>Aim: Support schools in enabling young people to contribute to communities and ensure schools meet their cohesion duty.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement youth participation initiatives • Support the development of a Community Cohesion Quality mark for schools • Develop guidance for schools in meeting their cohesion duty 	<p>HCC</p> <p>HCC Carole Connolly</p> <p>HCC</p>	<p>End 2010</p> <p>2010</p> <p>2010</p>	

Action Plan: Promoting Good Relations in Hertfordshire

Aim and Actions	Lead	Timescale	Monitor
<p>Aim: Ensure people feel safer in their homes and neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the fear and perception of crime • Tackle negative perceptions of our communities and develop myth busting activities 	<p>HCC Gary Ray/Police Roger Barrett</p> <p>HCC</p>		
<p>Aim: Ensure people know their rights</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure residents are signposted to organisations and umbrella groups that can offer them support 			
<p>Aim: Monitor and address community tensions.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a system to share early information on emerging tensions and ensure partners are proactive to address early issues • Ensure Community Cohesion issues and tensions are built into work of Herts Resilience • Support Hertfordshire Equalities Council to develop Community Mediation programme 	<p>Police/Roger Barrett</p>	<p>End 2010</p>	
<p>Aim: Support schools to promote good community relations and address negative behaviours and attitudes.</p>			

<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support work of schools Anti-bullying strategy • Develop 'Who do you think you are week' across schools to promote understanding and dialogue • Ensure citizenship curriculum address respect • Support schools to develop intergenerational activities 	<p>HCC Karin Hutchinson</p> <p>HCC</p> <p>HCC</p> <p>HCC</p>		<p>Incidents of bullying in schools decrease</p>
<p>Aim: Increase opportunities for different groups to get along well.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase opportunities for intergenerational interaction through Active Together programme • Develop locally focussed NI1 action plans • Ensure that the wider and migrant communities get along well and implement myth busting exercises • Address concerns of residents about Gypsy and Traveller communities and implement Myth busting exercises 	<p>Karyn Jones PCT/HCC</p> <p>District LSP's</p> <p>Migration Partnership</p> <p>HCC</p>		

Action Plan: Respecting Hertfordshire's Diverse Culture and Heritage

Aim and Actions	Lead	Timescale	Monitor
<p>Aim: Increase participation in cultural, arts and heritage events.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop 'Big Idea' Cultural Olympiad programme and promote participation • Support the development of the World Arts Platform programme • Provide opportunities for young people to engage in cultural experiences through Engaging Young Minds and Hidden Histories projects • Create a sense of pride in Hertfordshire's character through 'Out of Sight, Out of Mind' project • Develop sense of local belonging through 'Making Memories' project 	<p>HACO/HCC Hawkins Annie</p> <p>HACO/HCC Hawkins Annie</p> <p>HCC</p> <p>HCC Daphne Knott</p> <p>HCC HALS</p>	<p>2010</p> <p>2010</p> <p>2010-2011</p>	
<p>Aim: Increase interaction between diverse faith communities.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support SACRE in development of a youth inter faith council • Support development of inter faith groups across the county and a countywide interfaith forum to promote dialogue and understanding 	<p>HCC Naomi</p> <p>Rose/SACRE</p> <p>HCC/Districts</p>	<p>End 2010</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and develop opportunities for interaction between faith and non-faith communities (Big Lunch/ Inter faith Week) 	HCC		
<p>Aim: Support schools to increase young people's understanding of diversity, culture and heritage.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure cultural and diversity education is reflected in school assembly programme and curriculum Encourage school twinning initiatives 			
<p>Aim: Support participation of our communities in sports and build on the legacy of the Olympics</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Olympics in Hertfordshire and encourage participation in sport and wellbeing Develop community archives project in Broxbourne to document effect of Olympics 	John Fuller HCC HACO		NI8 Increased participation in sport
<p>Aim: Maintain the unique quality of life in Hertfordshire</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure growth is properly planned to safeguard the environment Ensure we maintain the quality of parks and open spaces so people can enjoy the environment Encourage use of community facilities and open spaces 			

Appendix 1: Place Based Survey NI1 scores

Area	NI1 Average	NI1 Range
County	81.2% Average	86.5%-71.9%
Broxbourne	71.9% Average	84.5%-60.8%
Dacorum	81.2% Average	92.9%-61.3%
East Herts	81.8% Average	94.5%-58.2%
Hertsmere	80.7% Average	94.3%-61.3%
North Herts	86.5% Average	97.4%-57.2%
St Albans	85.3% Average	94.1%-69.3%
Stevenage	80.2% Average	91%-70.7%
Three Rivers	83.1% Average	98%-44.2%
Watford	77.5% Average	84.1%-59.4%
Welwyn Hatfield	78.9% Average	95.2%-52.1%