

Preparing a Community Strategic Plan:
BRANDING HAYLE



The way in which an area presents itself is a key element in any regeneration process



Background

Hayle Area Forum was granted funding under the central government programme 'Market and Coastal Towns Initiative' to develop a community-led strategic plan for the regeneration of Hayle and the hinterland parishes of Gwinear-Gwithian and St Erth. The partnership steering group that was set up by the Forum for this purpose is known as *Revitalise! Hayle Coast and Country*.

The Revitalise! Steering Group consists of representatives from the Hayle Area Forum, town and parish councils and local community groups. The Steering Group is supported by officers of Penwith District Council and two local people employed part-time as Community Agents.

The process of developing the Community Strategic Plan consists of the following elements:

Community consultations
Parish surveys and parish plans
Reviewing existing regeneration plans and initiatives
Community Healthcheck
Targeted consultations and presentations
Consultants report

Community consultations

Community consultations were carried out in 2004 in Hayle and in 2005 in Hayle, Gwinear-Gwithian and St Erth. These consultations are used, alongside the Healthcheck, to inform the vision for the 20 year future of the area and to determine priority actions for the Community Strategic Plan. In addition to extensive street surveys, Revitalise! also undertook a number of focused events:

- Tourism and Culture project development workshop
- Environment project development workshop
- Business Breakfast
- Stakeholder agencies meeting
- Hayle Youth conference
- Hayle Chamber of Commerce presentation
- Hayle Town Council presentation
- Hayle Area Forum presentation

Hannah Reynolds Associates (HRA) were commissioned by *Revitalise! Hayle Coast and Country* to carry out consultations of Hayle residents and visitors during July and August 2005, as part of the process of assisting the community to develop their Community Strategic Plan. A parish survey and parish plan were prepared in Gwinear-Gwithian in 2004, and St Erth finished a parish appraisal in 2005. The following consultations summary incorporates the strategic issues in the parishes with the key issues identified in Hayle consultations.

The consultation of local people in Hayle, carried out in 2004, identified the following priorities:

- Revitalise the harbour
- Sports/leisure / learning centre
- Town centre- improve shops / things to do in evenings / town buildings
- Better access to beach and better facilities on beach
- Affordable and social housing
- Decent jobs / business support and training
- Protect the towans
- Improve public transport

The Hayle 2005 consultations aimed to:

- Build upon previous consultations, rather than duplicate them
- Identify both short term priorities and a long term vision for Hayle
- Inform local people about Revitalise! Hayle Coast and Country and refresh interest in the regeneration processes in the area

Top priorities of local people interviewed in Hayle in 2005 echo those from the Hayle public consultation in 2004. Local people have a vision of Hayle which has:

- a revitalised harbour
- more and better quality shops, restaurants and cafes
- improved town buildings
- a town centre and better focal point for the town

Interviews in Hayle show that people are keen for the *development of the harbour*. They see it as bringing jobs, houses and increased prosperity to the area. A significant number of people commented however, that it is important that thought is given to the social, educational and community facilities and services which will be necessary to sustain such development in the town.

Hayle people see Hayle as continuing to be predominantly a tourism area, ideally placed as a touring and service centre for West Cornwall, with beautiful beaches and other environmental assets such as the Estuary and Copperhouse Pool, plus a significant, yet currently under-promoted heritage of foundry and mining. They want to create distinctiveness *for the town, based on its heritage and environmental assets* which will bring in new segments of the tourism market – walkers and ramblers, birdwatchers, artists, watersports enthusiasts.

Many people do not want the character of the area to change fundamentally. They value its history, its community spirit and the friendliness of local people but, as one person commented, “don’t make the Hayle area a shrine to its heritage”.

There were many people who commented on the need for a *mining and foundry museum* in the town – a wet-weather facility to bring in tourists and day visitors. But many local people want improvements to the shopping and restaurants offer in Hayle – and *improved leisure and sports facilities*, too. Hayle and the surrounding parishes see an opportunity to use the asset of the superb beaches the area has to offer to create a *watersports centre*, but they also want other leisure and community facilities– particularly playing fields, covered swimming pool, parks and more meeting space. One of the most frequently-made comments from the Hayle consultations with reference to cultural and leisure opportunities was the need for the cinema building to be re-furbished – and used again as a *working cinema*.

Local people see these community and leisure facilities as forming part of a *social and community infrastructure* that will support physical developments in the town.

Providing *housing that local people can afford* was a key issue for local people in the Hayle consultation of 2004, but this year’s consultation showed local people to be more ambivalent in their responses. In the parishes, particularly, some people in the Gwinear ward feel that their community is already saturated with social housing, and in Connor Downs affordable housing for longer term rent is needed. In Hayle young people expressed the need for *flats on short term and long term rents* – but at affordable prices.

The lack of physical integration between the Foundry and the Copperhouse ends of Hayle was a matter of concern in a significant number of comments, as was the *lack of integration between Hayle town and the beaches*. Some of the solutions offered by local people during the consultation were strategic and long term. For example, comments included the creation of a new town centre for Hayle and some public and accessible transport *shuttle service* to link together the town and the beach.

The Economy section of the Healthcheck highlights the need for a *skills development strategy* for the area and for local employment opportunities, particularly in Hayle itself. Local people feel that the development of the harbour area gives opportunities for jobs for local people. They would therefore like to see instigated a policy of *training and employing local labour* in new developments planned for Hayle in particular.

Transport is a key difficulty identified in all of the consultations – Gwinear-Gwithian, St Erth and Hayle. Lack of integration and poor timings of rail and bus transport, infrequent services and lack of community transport were the issues most often mentioned.

Community Healthcheck

A detailed statistical survey of the economic, environmental, social and community, and transport and access issues was carried out in spring 2005. This is a valuable foundation document for the development of the plan and is useful to compare the aspirational- what people want for Hayle- with the reality; and to identify a series of projects to address identified concerns.

The following key issues have been identified in the Healthcheck:

Economy

- The Hayle area is less economically active, and with substantially higher percentage of unemployed people than Gwinear-Gwithian or St Erth, or national average
- The workforce is more unskilled than national average, with lower levels of vocational and management / professional qualifications
- The area is reliant upon tourism and the majority of businesses in the area have some connection to tourism, but businesses are not maximising the potential benefits – no in-depth, up to date visitor survey for the area, lack of understanding about Hayle's market positioning, inadequate promotion, the need to increase the quality of tourism offer - especially shopping, restaurants and range of accommodation

Environment

- Hayle is bounded by a beautiful estuary and an impressive coastline, but the town is disconnected from the beach and there is no town centre – no focal heart to the area
- Town buildings suffer from neglect and underinvestment
- The towans are affected by excessive dog waste, and extensive parking and access demands
- Lack of parks and public green areas
- Parishes suffer from environmental degradation from heavy lorries travelling at speed through villages

Social and community

- Hayle, Gwinear Gwithian and St Erth have a higher percentage population of older people than GB average but levels of services and community facilities do not reflect this
- The whole area lacks community meeting facilities
- Inadequate cultural facilities – no museum, theatre or cinema
- Affordable housing – some areas have not enough, some areas feel saturated. More housing to rent needed in the villages
- Existing sports and leisure facilities are poor
- Lack of things for young people to do – especially in the evenings
- Community apathy, community feels consulted to death but no real change to their quality of life

Transport and access

- Poor linkage between the town and the beaches
- Lack of integration between rail transport and buses to villages
- Bus service to villages is poor, especially in the evenings
- Need for community transport scheme to serve rural hinterland
- Parking and congestion problems at key tourist locations
- Car parking in Hayle is not well-sited or well-used

Consultants' final report

The final report by consultants HRA pulls together all the issues identified in the processes and documents described above, and in summary, makes the following points:

Economy

- The poor condition of the harbour and the lack of development there means that the area is not making the contribution that it should to Hayle by creating new jobs, attracting more tourists and visitors, improving the environment and preserving wildlife
- There is a shortage of good quality, well-paid jobs for local people, and the infrastructure which will encourage existing companies to expand, new companies to be formed and companies to relocate to the area is inadequate. This includes the availability of suitable sites and premises, workforce skills and training, support for business and the promotion of the area as a place to do business
- Hayle does not do enough to attract visitors to the area by celebrating, protecting and promoting its natural and heritage assets
- Although the high quality of the area's beaches attracts visitors there is a feeling that Hayle itself does not get the maximum economic benefit from tourism and that the access to the beaches and the facilities provided for visitors and residents are inadequate
- The area lacks a distinctiveness, or brand, which would help to promote Hayle as an attractive location for visitors, residents, and businesses
- Hayle town centre is unattractive to residents and visitors- the range of shopping is poor, shop fronts are unappealing and in poor condition, some buildings are in disrepair and there is little to do in the evening

Social and community

- The level of community apathy in Hayle could mean that the benefits that the community strategic plan might bring may not be realized
- There is a lack of attractive sports and leisure facilities for the local community and for visitors
- There is no local learning centre available to the community
- There is no local meeting place for the local community
- There is a shortage of affordable and social housing in the area, mainly due to the inadequate supply of available sites

Environment

- The towans area is inadequately protected

Transport

- Public transport provision to and from Hayle and the surrounding area is poor

Consultants' final report: proposed objectives / outcomes and actions

The report proposes a series of possible objectives: those that Revitalise! should action; those it should seek to influence; and those it should endorse and support. These are summarised below:

Action

- Promote community involvement
- Strategic actions with other MCTI areas: joint action through LSP, WCCN, single issue joint action

Influence: economy

- Hayle harbour development plan
- Workforce skills development strategy
- Business support strategy
- Survey of sites and premises for business
- Leisure and learning centres
- Develop Hayle business and conference centre
- Prepare town centre retail strategy

Influence: tourism

- Hayle promotional strategy
- Develop the Penwith tourism information 'gateway'
- Survey of local tourist businesses
- Review of tourist accommodation
- Promote Hayle harbour
- Produce a visitors guide
- Relocate Hayle TIC
- Prepare large scale maps of the area: SSSI's, parking, surf locations, walks, cycleways
- Promote Hayle festivals
- Develop cultural / historic / environmental trails
- Promote Hayle as national surfing and watersports centre
- Improve access to beaches

Influence: environment

- Marine protected status for Hayle area coastline
- A cultural and environmental interpretation centre, including a 'fragile coast' permanent exhibition
- Town centre Townscape strategy
- Allotment provision in Hayle
- Protection measures for the towans
- Remove electricity pylons from the towans

Influence: community facilities

- Audit of existing community facilities
- Leisure centre
- Cinema and community meeting space
- Youth facilities
- Provision of affordable housing
- Support for single pensioner households
- Patient loadings at surgeries and dentists

- Provide part-time surgeries in villages
- Provide CCTV in towns and villages

Influence: transport and access

- Evaluate progress on Hayle area transport survey
- Support Paddington to Penzance sleeper service
- Develop Hayle railway station
- Provide disabled access to transport
- Dial-a-ride scheme
- Late night buses
- Cycle route network
- Rural footpath provision
- 'A30 Gateway' improvements
- Review parking provision
- Gwithian and Godrevy park-and-ride scheme

Endorse and support

- Sustainability- use local labour and local, sustainable materials on harbour and all other large scale development
- Promote importance of tourism
- Tail-back signs at Loggans Mill
- Audit of tourism plans
- Achieve Blue Flag status for beaches
- Tolroy junction improvements

Developing a Community Strategic Plan

Rather than adopt the summary of issues, objectives and proposed actions contained within the consultants' final report as the basis for the Community Strategic Plan, the Steering Group determined to re-look at all of the evidence gathered to date, including this final report, at a 'brainstorming' day event, looking *behind* the individual lists of projects and actions for key factors in the regeneration of Hayle.

The purpose of the day

The purpose of the day is to determine the skeleton of the Community Strategic Plan. After today we need to be in a position where the first draft can be prepared, and put out for consultation and advice, preparatory to the final version. So we need to work on a number of actions during the day: below is a proposal for how we might move forward

- We need to **interrogate the evidence** produced to date
- Agree the **themes** we plan to use to interrogate the evidence: e.g. tourism, economy, environment
- Look for issues around our theme that emerge from the interrogation
- Capture the issues as a 'brainstorming' diagram
- For each issue note a possible **action**

Now is decision time: do we plan to go forward with groups of thematic projects, or pick one or two issues that have a compelling logic to them- 'project logic gets funded'

Based on this decision- look for links and common ground, roots, between the issues / actions you have identified. Where does it all lead? Do we see a series of unrelated projects emerging as a sort of community wish-list, or is there an over-riding order and priorities emerging?

The result: a proposed 'brand' for Hayle

What emerged from the Steering Group 'brainstorming' day we believe is key to the future of Hayle; to addressing issues of community apathy, economic development, tourism offer, and social and community issues.

Why Hayle?

It rapidly became clear that a wish-list of improved amenities such as a cinema, or a leisure centre, is simply that: an aspirational list that is not based on economic growth: an 'I want' statement not grounded in logic. It was also agreed that such civic amenities *could* come from a strong plan, but as a *result of the plan*, not as the plan itself.

It also became clear that what was underlying many of the issues raised through the whole MCTI process was a lack of clarity about what Hayle is: what it has to offer, where it could take itself; what the argument *is* for Hayle. Why should tourists come into the town? Why should new business come here? Why should young people want to stay and build a career here?

The possible list of projects that the MCTI team could consider, as evidenced above, is enormous, and extremely diverse. It is not a manageable list, and many of the items have no economic driver, no way of affording what is being asked for. In order to be successful, i.e. realistic and capable of attracting widespread support and enthusiasm, funding and inward investment, what Revitalise! proposes must be compellingly logical, and economically attractive.

Ideally, the result of the MCTI process should be a plan that

- provides an overall logic to the regeneration of Hayle
- gives a clarity of purpose, a brief, to all those concerned with economic development in Penwith: a clarity about what Hayle could be, what Hayle wants; what to attract to Hayle, and why
- advises and guides key agencies, who react positively and with enthusiasm
- involves the wider community and gives a real sense of purpose and identity for the town and ownership by those that live and work here: a regeneration of commitment to and belief in the town
- Is greater than the sum of the individual projects
- is just the starting point for a long-term regeneration programme, rather than a definitive list of actions
- is understood and endorsed by all those looking at Hayle as an option: to live, work, study, holiday, build careers, build businesses
- makes clear the relationship of Hayle to Penwith, and to neighbouring towns: that *positions* Hayle

Adopt one compellingly logical theme for the future of Hayle

Hayle needs branding in order to bring a focus and shape to the future; and it needs to be clearly and simply stated, compellingly logical, and outstandingly obvious to all stakeholders if it is to succeed.

The Steering Group propose that we can make best use of our heritage, our unique location, and our strengths by adopting **the core theme of Water as a driver to our branding**, and to all our regeneration activity, applied to three clearly-related yet distinct visions:

Hayle: a unique water-front environment

Celebrate and benefit from Hayle's unique heritage and historical relationship with the sea through heritage trails, interpretation centre, themed developments. Hayle's history is one of being at the cutting edge of industrial innovation, inextricably linked to the sea. This should be our future.

Harbour development: to make a unique contribution to social, economic and environmental needs

Develop water-frontage amenities: café culture, meeting places, restaurants, trails, boutiques

Protect the Towans through 'outside the box' thinking: park cars under the dunes, not on them; park and surf, park and beach schemes; manage access to the sea primarily through Hayle

Build environmentally-sensitive facilities on the dunes for all beach users: an alternative to huts, caravans and chalets: introduce new ideas in construction already evidenced elsewhere, eg grass-covered low-level roofs to any new build on the dunes

Resolve beach access and signage with a possible redirection of access from the town, by 'park and surf', 'park and beach' schemes

Wildlife and eco-tourism: develop a proper 'offer' in terms of facilities, accommodation, information

Build festivals and competitions to attract a national audience, involve and engage the community, and create a positive profile

Hayle: the watersports centre of the UK

Attract the participants: surfing*, kite-surfing, wind-surfing, white-water canoeing, sea-kayaking, boating, sailing, gig-racing, rafting, sand-yachting, fishing (* there are in excess of 100,000 surfers)

Create the surround: meeting places and facilities; unique white-water leisure centre; artificial wave-pool for all-year all-weather surfing; artificial white-water course; club facilities; local and national competitions; national festivals

Attract the industries: research; manufacture; retail; distribution: canoes, windsurfers, boards, wetsuits, equipment, safety gear, clothing, paddles, sails, publications, new environmentally-friendly materials, new markets, new technologies: all with *water-sports* at the root of the industry

Innovate new approaches to live-and-work developments: industrial sites with retail, social and living units combined, to resolve the residential v. retail v. industrial divide of most towns

Create exciting, attractive packages to attract new industry: guarantee homes for fixed periods attached to new industries if recruiting local graduates and trainees

Develop the accommodation profile: target accommodation marketing to a much more focused market: develop surf village; backpackers; 'olympic village' concept

Offer specialist training and higher-level education in water-sports related disciplines, up to degree / NVQ level 5, in association with University of Cornwall: boat-building, board manufacture; clothing and equipment design; marine engineering; environmental studies; business management. Extend to include training at all levels in the 'surround' industries: catering, tourism management

Promote a 'healthy-living' philosophy in all aspects of our work

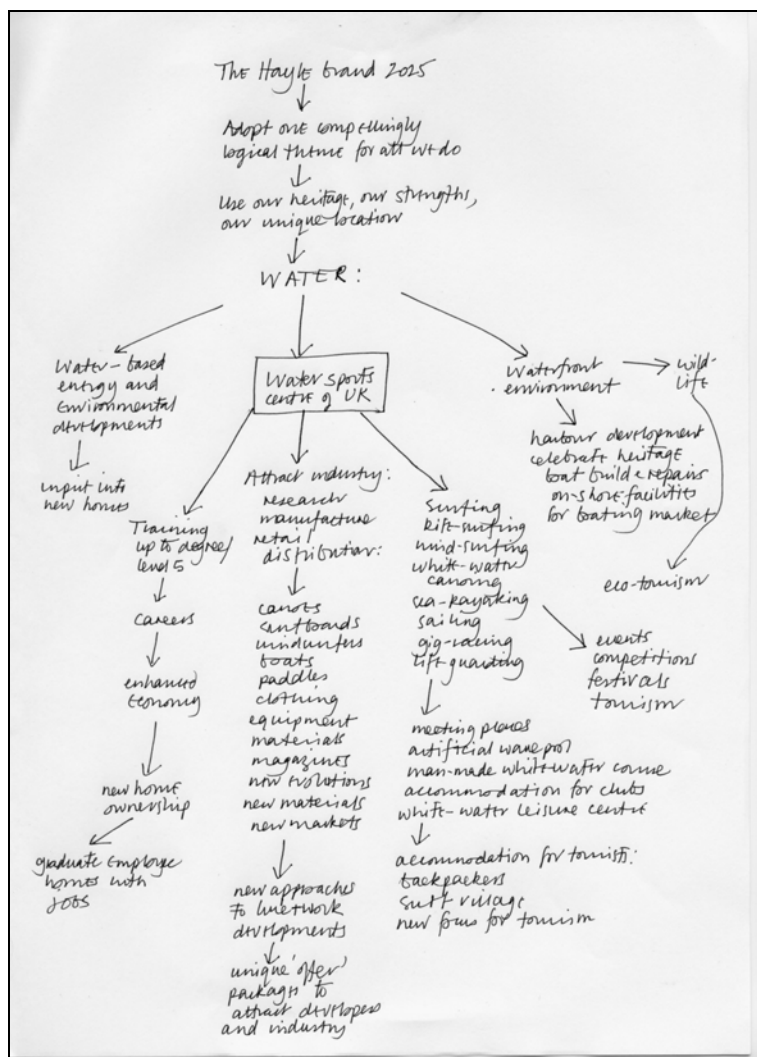
Hayle: the national centre for sustainable water-based energies

Wave Hub as the start of a bid to make Hayle the focus for all wave, sea, tidal, energies development

Offer specialist training and higher-level education in sustainable water-based energy generation, alongside programmes in environmental and ecological studies, and those described above

Attract the industries: technological research and development centre supported through grant aid and positive attitudes by key agencies

Lead the way in eco-homes and businesses using the technology developed in Hayle



In support of the approach

Extracted from: *'The Sport Economy in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly'* report by the Sport Industry Research Centre, the following information substantially supports the proposals outlined in *'Branding Hayle'*. It also identifies a unique opportunity for Hayle to be the focal point of this regeneration approach.

6.78

The primary data has... indicated that sport can make a major contribution to the Rural Renaissance initiative. The first priority of this initiative is to assist the development of a dynamic and sustainable economy in rural areas by creating prosperity and generating employment and by realizing the value of the environment as an economic asset. These results indicate the unique value of sport to this objective. One particular advantage of sport revealed by many of the pilot sports is that **sports facilities that attract tourists into the area and generate jobs in the peak season also provide for and cater to the recreational needs of the local population outside the peak season, hence contributing to community regeneration as well as economic regeneration.**

Conclusions and recommendations

8.1

The research has revealed significant activity in the sport industry sector in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly with:

- around 4,000 full-time equivalent jobs in the sport sector
- sport employment split 50:50 between full-time and part-time employment
- a small but rapidly growing sport manufacturing sector concentrating on diving equipment, wetsuits, surfboards and boating equipment, where the employment structure differs from the rest of the sport sector being predominantly full-time, male, employment

8.2

Overall the sport industry in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly seems healthy with most businesses contacted growing and virtually none declining. However, there are problems that have been identified:

- **there is a lack of recognition of the sport industry as a significant employer with real potential for accelerating economic regeneration**
- there is a lack of any reliable data on sport tourism in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly which is a major handicap to further development of the industry. All the data in this report has been collected from the supply side in the off-peak season, with the consequent danger of an under-estimation of the size of the industry due to the lack of demand side data. Many of the people interviewed were of the opinion that such data already exists. **The reality is that good sport tourism data does not exist for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly**
- **many businesses are hitting capacity constraints with little opportunity to expand further due to the physical constraints on premises**
- the sports services side of the industry suffers from a relatively short peak season combined with **the lack of both a marketing and investment strategy to extend activities beyond the peak season**
- these problems are compounded by the fragmentation of the industry with each business attempting to deal with these problems on their own

8.3

The main recommendations of this project relate to the problems identified above. We recommend that:

- a sport industry forum be set up with opportunities for sport business representatives to discuss and prioritise the policy needs of the industry
- a detailed study of the sport tourism market is carried out over the peak season. This will involve a visitor survey targeted at identifying the size of the sport tourism market, the level of participation of tourists in a variety of sport activities while visiting Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, how important sport activities are in attracting visitors to the county, and the level of expenditure associated with the visits. This would provide an indication of the economic impact of sport tourism. Although this report provides an estimate of the economic significance of sport in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly in terms of jobs and turnover associated with the sport industry, it underestimates the economic impact of sport tourism because of **the additional impact of sports tourists on non-sport businesses in the accommodation, food, drink and travel sectors** which has not been covered in this report
- to devise a sport industry strategy to be backed by an Objective 1 funding bid to develop the sport industry in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (possibly based on the £3million Sportspulse initiative that has recently received Objective 1 funding in the South Yorkshire Objective 1 area).

Next steps in the development of a Community Strategic Plan

The way in which an area presents itself is a key element in any regeneration process.

Further work will be undertaken to show that all those in the Hayle area community will benefit from the adoption and implementation of the three related visions. The ideas describe above reflect the initial brainstorming of the Revitalise! team in the context of all the evidence gathered to date, but we acknowledge that employment, education and training should ultimately cover a wider spectrum, across all levels to meet the needs of all the community. However it is our belief that a focused, thematic regeneration process, with all partner agencies working with the same concept in mind, will result in wider economic and social improvements, longer-term, that extend beyond the original visions.

We now need to secure the absolute support and enthusiasm of key agencies and partners for the ideas expressed above: **that we adopt the branding and visions described above to drive and link all we do individually and collectively.**

If the outline proposals contained in this report gain wider approval, they will be developed to form the thematic basis for the Community Strategic Plan. Therefore the next step will be an informal presentation to potential partner organizations and agencies; a series of individual 'sign-up' meetings with potential partners: to discuss in detail what is possible, short- and long-term: including but exclusively: Cornwall County Council, Penwith District Council, RDA, ING, Business Link, WCCN, Town Council, Chamber of Commerce, MCTIA, South-West Tourism, Cornwall College, Penwith College, Falmouth University College.

Each agency and partner will be asked to draw up a **statement of involvement**, describing their possible contribution to the detailed evolution of the strategic plan. The information that emerges should describe the way to achieve the three 'visions' outlined above, and will be fundamental to the preparation of a meaningful Community Strategic Plan.

Finally, we need the community on board and totally enthused, so a series of public consultations will be held around the draft of the Community Strategic Plan prior to publishing.

Report prepared by Ray Tovey, Community Agent

Extracts from HRA reports to Revitalise! Steering Group are used in the preparation of this report