

## Priority One: Improve the environment

### Key Issues/background

In relation to the living environment of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, the West has no Lower Super Output Areas in the top 20% most deprived in the country. Numbers of residents in the West agreeing that local services are keeping the area cleaner and greener is in line with the city average.

### Current activities

- Green Space Strategy is being produced identifying quantity and quality of green spaces and will recommend where improvements are needed.
- The Green Space Strategy will inform a Green Infrastructure Strategy. This national initiative will create a series of primary and secondary corridors, which will provide corridors of green space concerned with the quality of wild life, play areas, recreational land and parks.
- Play Pathfinder schemes are improving play access across the city.
- There is a further development of the cycle network across the city with the construction of a cycle path in the Barnes Park redevelopment.
- Responsive Local Services will enable a range of environmental services to respond more effectively to the needs and expectations of local people.
- The Council's team of Environmental Enforcement Officers has been increased to 12 and they patrol the streets, educating the public and issuing fixed penalty notices if they see a littering or dog fouling offence, and will take appropriate action on those responsible for graffiti and fly tipping. In the period May to October 2009 there have been 23 fixed penalty notices for dog fouling.
- Gentoo's Neighbourhood Housing Managers pick up issues and report to grounds maintenance, repairs, cleaning teams and also refer issues to the Council teams and other relevant partners.
- The SIP programme of works being carried out by City Services is designed to tackle fly tipping and make improvements to cycle ways.

### Gaps/Comments/Needs

- The Green space Strategy and the Green Infrastructure Strategy will identify gaps in provision with 'headlines' available in spring.
- There are a low numbers of trees in the area.
- Play areas – no facilities in Hastings Hill, Grindon.
- Need to ensure strong linkages to the LSP thematic delivery plan.
- The new area Voluntary and Community Sector Network will enable greater community engagement.
- There is a need to fully ascertain land ownership.
- Cycle/walking path at Hastings Hill is subject to flooding and inaccessibility.

### Actions

- Investigate options for improving the path at Hastings Hill.
- Investigate increasing numbers of trees.
- Investigate steps needed to improve land ownership information.

### Proposal

<p><b>Review:</b> Receive a report on the implications and opportunities for the West as a result of the Green Space Strategy and Green Infrastructure Strategy.</p>
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## **Priority Two: Improve local shopping centres**

### **Key issues/background**

The main local shopping centres have been subject to a 'Retail Needs Assessment'. Some streets have empty shops creating an unattractive environment and a negative impression of the area.

### **Current activities**

- Small local centres, no recognised district centre serving West area.
- Chester Road is seen as a busy district centre that serves its area well.
- Pennywell is seen as having pleasant, good quality public realm.
- Recent small supermarkets built (Tesco- Middle Herrington, Somerfield- North Moor, Lidl- Prospect).
- Recent push for more fresh produce available at local stores (eg Londis).
- Responsive Local Services will enable a range of environmental services to respond more effectively to local needs and expectations.

### **Gaps/Comments/Needs**

- Pennywell is probably the nearest example of a local district centre. No free-ATM machine available. Some wider facilities not in the area, for example library provision.
- Pallion has an attractive public realm, but has six vacant units as well as units with shutters down during the day. It is seen to lack vibrancy.
- Silksworth has five vacant units and would benefit from investment in the public realm.
- There is poor walking and cycling to some centres in the West Area.
- More proactive shop owners could help by ensuring their shop frontages are tidy and reporting of graffiti.

### **Actions**

- Investigate potential street scene improvements and work with shop owners.
- Investigate the possibility of walking and cycling improvements.
- Area Committee to receive feedback regarding the 'Retail Needs Assessment'.

## Priority Three: Improve local parks

### Key issues/background

There are five parks in the West area: Barnes Park, Silksworth Recreation Park, Middle Herrington Park, King George V Park and Thorndale Road Park. Barnes Park is currently closed whilst a £3m plus redevelopment project takes place. In addition, there are a number of open spaces and playing fields.

### Current activities

- There is ongoing maintenance and enhancement of local parks. Major improvement works to Barnes Park. High quality achieved at many other parks.
- There is a Community Education and Development Worker for Barnes Park.
- Improvements to the stream and habitat at Barnes extension are being undertaken.
- Play pathfinder schemes rolling out high quality play sites across the area.
- Green Space Strategy is examining green space provision across the city.

### Gaps/Comments/Needs

- Hastings Hill and Grindon have limited access to play provision.
- The City Adventure Play Park at Silksworth Sports Complex, part of the Play pathfinder programme has a planned phase 2, for which there is a shortfall.
- Green space Strategy will highlight gaps in green space provision in terms of quality, quantity and value.
- There is potential for local parks and green spaces to provide linked networks of green infrastructure. However, there are some barriers to be addressed.
- There are unsightly areas of open land, which attract fly tipping.
- There is little capital to improve local parks and open spaces.
- There is a waiting list for allotments and a number of disused sites. A needs assessment is being undertaken.
- Vandalism is not considered a major problem; although anti social behaviour can be an issue.

### Actions

- Investigate upgrading existing green spaces in key locations to improve access to formal parkland, such as Pennywell Children's Forest, Hylton Road Playing Fields.
- Use the Green Space Strategy recommendations to identify funding improvements to amenity open space, natural green space, allotments etc.
- Investigate options to complete phase 2 of the City Adventure Play Park.

### Proposal

<p><b>Review:</b> Receive a report on potential park structural improvements;</p> <p><b>Review:</b> Receive a report on improving waste and unsightly land.</p>
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## Priority Four: Regenerate the riverside

### Key issues/background

The riverbanks show evidence of past industrialisation, with former collieries, engineering works and dozens of shipyards. The artist LS Lowry visited Sunderland repeatedly to paint industrial landscapes around the river. A new bridge is to be built, starting in 2012.

### Current activities

- Rights of Way improvements – stabilising the riverbanks
- A new bridge is to be built, as part of the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor, linking Pallion with Hylton.
- There are some footpath improvements taking place at Claxheugh Rocks.
- The City of Sunderland Rowing Club is located at the Claxheugh recreation area at South Hylton.
- The Groves site is earmarked for housing, educational and community facilities.
- The Timber Beach area is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in council ownership.

### Gaps/Comments/Needs

- The Claxheugh area could be further utilised as a recreation space linked to the SSSI.
- There is potential to further develop water sports opportunity, with the tremendous backdrop of Claxheugh Rock.
- The Groves redevelopment can enable access improvement to river.
- Riverside pathway may need upgrade as well as developing a more extensive footpath/cycleway network.
- The construction of the new bridge can provide employment, training and educational opportunities.

### Actions

- Ensure Groves development enables riverside promenade to be achieved and links west and east.
- Investigate further improvements to riverside Right of Way (tied in with River Wear Trail).
- Look at opportunities for local schools and the local community to be involved in engineering and heritage projects with the construction of the new bridge.
- Investigate the possibility of maximising the employment of local labour and trainees from Pallion Skills Centre in the construction of the new bridge.
- Investigate the commercial opportunities of the new bridge 'brand', including a viewing platform.

### Proposal

<p><b>Review:</b> Investigate the potential of Claxheugh Riverside for water sports, recreation and formal parkland; Investigate an 'Employment Initiative' linking construction skills required to build the new bridge, and its infrastructure, with training opportunities.</p>
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## **Priority Five: Improve public transport**

### **Key issues/background**

Public transport access to the city centre varies markedly. Currently 50% of the population live more than 20 minutes away from the city centre, with parts of Grindon and Hastings Hill over 30 minutes travel time away.

### **Current activities**

- Tyne and Wear Bus Strategy
- Good public transport services generally.
- Transport focused along corridors accessing the city centre.
- Satisfaction levels with bus services are considerably higher than the city average. Satisfaction with local transport information is also higher than average.
- The Metro to South Hylton has increased its day time frequency to every 12 minutes.
- Due to the re-routing of the no. 35 bus, the evening bus services connecting Silksworth and the city centre have been restored and residents now have direct access to South Shields and Hetton.
- Nexus Secured Services Strategy is currently out to consultation and should be available for publication after end of January 2010
- Nexus work with Compass to provide group travel. Community Travel and Community Centre provision is provided by Compass, subsidised by Nexus. Compass also runs a service linking South Hylton to the main bus network, funded by Nexus.
- Nexus also operate Taxi Card scheme and Link Up demand-responsive services and subsidise group travel and Age Concern Shopper Services. Nexus also administer Network Travel ticket scheme and Teen Travel, and free concessionary travel scheme
- Nexus are currently in the process of designing a network of secured services to provide enhancements to existing commercial services. From March 2010 public consultations on the proposals in the West will take place. Councilors will have the opportunity to view and feed back on the network in advance of this. It is planned to implement the project in late summer 2010

### **Gaps/Comments/Needs**

- Park lane terminus is the public transport hub for connecting to other transport corridors, which limits connections between some estates on a north – south axis.
- The quality of some local centres' public transport stops/hubs.
- Fewer residents in the west have access to a car.

### **Actions**

- A183 traffic and transport improvements, look to these improving pedestrian access to bus stops and in crossing the road.
- Nexus would appreciate the opportunity to work with the Area Committee to better understand issues of concern and to identify ways of resolving them.
- Investigate street and environmental improvements, which improve the area locally but also help to facilitate through-movement of buses.
- West Committee to identify gaps and engage with Nexus on how these gaps may be filled.

**Proposal:** Committee is requested to note the contents of the information contained under priority five, and agree to accept an update report at a future meeting re Nexus Accessible Bus Network Design Project and Consultation.