

RICHMOND HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Our Community Development Strategy sets out how we intend to empower our residents to improve their economic and social well-being.

1.2 RHP is committed to building sustainable communities - places where people can live, work productively, and play an active part in shaping change.

In 2005 Service Delivery Committee agreed our strategic community development priorities:

- i. Building better neighbourhoods
- ii. Enabling life-long learning and capacity building
- iii. Facilitating inclusion

These priorities have acted as the basis for the successful community development work we have engaged in over the past three years.

1.3 The expectations on social housing providers' to be more than a provider and manager of homes continue to grow. To ensure we remain responsive and our approach continues to be community driven there is a recommendation to renew our community development strategy for the 2008-2011 period.

1.4 The strategy will provide the overarching purpose against which projects can be assessed to ensure initiatives remain sustainable and continue to have a positive impact. As well as our project based work, in partnership, we are now looking at larger scale infrastructural solutions to some of the issues impacting on these communities. The strategy focuses both on building on our past successes and getting new initiatives off the ground to meet the changing needs of our residents and their communities.

2 WHICH COMMUNITIES

2.1 To ensure our resources are most effective and targeted at those most in need, we are now focusing our community development activities on the five most deprived communities in Richmond as well as the Butts Farm estate in Hounslow.

2.2 Richmond Borough

The Richmond Local Strategic Partnerships (RLSP) Community Plan 2007-2017 sets out the objective to prioritise five areas of relative disadvantage within the borough. Where disadvantage exists in Richmond it is populated by significant amounts of RHP housing stock. This disadvantage is scattered across the borough but with local concentrations particularly in parts of five areas:

- Ham
- Heathfield
- Hampton Nurserylands
- Mortlake
- Castelnau

RHP leads on Community Development work in Ham, Heathfield and Hampton Nurserylands, employing the Community Development Worker (CDW) in those areas. In Castelnau and Mortlake we support the work of the voluntary sector groups, Castelnau Centre Project and Mortlake Community Association.

All five areas experience rates of economic inactivity higher than the borough average, with skill levels of residents in the five areas also significantly lower than the borough average.

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Other data sets demonstrate higher crime levels and substance misuse problems and poorer physical and mental health in comparison to the overall borough and London averages¹.

2.3 Butts Farm, Hounslow Borough

The Butts Farm estate in Hounslow borough is our other priority area. Of the 32,482 areas which make-up the Office of National Statistics (ONS) neighbourhoods in England, the Butts Farm area ranks 2874 in overall deprivation. This puts the area in the most deprived 9% in England. Community Development work is at a very early stage on the estate but has the potential to play a key role in addressing many of the economic and social issues experienced by residents there at the present time.

2.4 Other Communities

Focusing on the most disadvantaged communities is not to exclude RHP residents who experience issues of inequality living outside these areas. Community Development projects within these six areas are open to all and the increasing level of involvement of other services, particular the Customer Liaison Officers (CLO's), has helped to involve residents from outside these areas. Transport, or subsidy towards transport costs, is provided on a case by case basis for residents for whom access to community development projects is an issue.

RHP also hosts a quarterly community development network for public and voluntary sector professionals who work with disadvantaged communities across Richmond and Hounslow which has a similar impact.

3 MEASURING THE EFFECT

3.1 Output Indicators

In 2006 RHP lead on the development of a suite of community development project indicators. The output indicators were designed to quantify the type of community development activities which were taking place as well as participation levels and progressions. They are completed by Community Development workers in each of the areas and are reported on a quarterly basis to the Community Development Steering Group (CDSG), a sub-group of the Local Strategic Partnership chaired by the Local Authority Chief Executive. See Appendix I.

3.2 Perception Indicators

Through the CDSG, RHP is supporting the undertaking of a perception survey to be carried out across the five areas in 2008. This perception survey is being carried out following the recommendations made by Government Office for London on how best to measure the impact of community development work in the five areas. The 2008 survey will act as a benchmark and will be repeated annually for at least two years. This survey will focus on the key quality of life issues and how peoples perceptions of these issues changes over time. The results will inform what aspects of inequality we prioritise in each area and whether the strategies we have for tackling disadvantage are actually working. Appendix II outlines the areas on which perceptions will be gathered.

3.3 Tracking Model & Qualitative Information

The nature of community development work often lends itself better to qualitative rather than quantitative reporting. One of the areas which RHP proposes to lead on over the next three year period is the use of a tracking approach for measuring the quality of life impact of community development work on a specific number of individuals and families over a period of time.

4 PARTNERSHIPS

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- 4.1 Strategic and operational management of Community Development is accepted by local statutory and other agencies as being one of RHP's distinctive capabilities. We have taken on the mantle of being a hub for community development in Richmond and are developing our profile within Hounslow. Richmond Council and the Primary Care Trust have continued to demonstrate their confidence in RHP by committing resources to projects that our team manage and deliver.

The past three years has seen a concerted effort at developing partnerships with various agencies and voluntary sector groups. These relationships have been at directorate and senior management level but also importantly at a local operational level.

4.2 Working Together Model

Local partnership working and devolved decision making are key to the long term sustainability of these communities. We are committed to an approach which gives local communities the power to decide their own futures.

We will do this by supporting the development of the Working Together Group (WTG) model which has been developed and been effective in Castelnau and Ham. The WTG's are led by local community leaders and provide a focus for work to improve services through partnership working and sharing resources; bringing local people together with those delivering services to explore new ways of working.

These groups anticipate the new emphasis on the place-shaping role that landlords should play as most recently mooted by central government and the Housing Corporation.

4.3 Community Anchors

- 4.3.1 Community anchors have been identified by government as a central driving force in community renewal. These are independent community-led organisations which provide local solutions to local challenges, bringing out the best in people and agencies. The Castelnau Centre Project (CCP), in north Barnes is a local example of a thriving community anchor group which is having a major impact on a disadvantaged community. The success of CCP and similar community anchors nationwide provides a strong basis for supporting the establishment of similar organisations in each of the other four areas in Richmond and on Butts Farm in Hounslow.

The decision to actively rather than passively pursue the establishment of community anchors in each of the areas has significant implications. If we are successful in establishing a CCP type of group in each area it would mean:

- increased local service provision;
- increased local resourcing;
- greater local advocacy & lobbying capacity;
- strengthening of community participation;

- 4.3.2 This strategy will have other implications for RHP. There is clearly some risk that devolving the lead role from RHP to local community groups in each of the areas could reduce our profile. If drawn to its ultimate conclusion the model would involve the community anchor group employing the community development worker. RHP will have less direct influence on the day to day work which takes place but would have a key strategic role on the board of these groups.

4.4 Involving Other RHP Services

For RHP to have optimum impact in creating sustainable communities the involvement of services other than Community Development is vital. In particular the synergy to be harnessed from a close housing management /community development relationship is important. Practically this relationship should continue to develop in a number of ways including:

- Housing Management / Community Development involvement in interdisciplinary forums e.g. Working Together Groups, RHP Respect Forum, Equalities Working Group
- Increasing knowledge and understanding of community development for CLO's via training e.g. Common Assessment Framework Training

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- Use of community development groups in consultation on policy reviews and service delivery e.g. ASB focus groups with young parents groups.
- Joint project working e.g. estate fun days, hosting of work placements for CD clients.

5 COMMUNITY DEVELOPEMNT TRUST (CDT)

- 5.1 Development Trusts of various shapes and sizes have been among the most successful bodies in terms establishing and providing ongoing support for community development and community anchor organisations. We have evolved our thinking on how a CDT could be used to improve our effectiveness as a community agency over the past year.
- 5.2 The CDT should have a key role around securing ongoing funding streams to achieve outcomes rather than just individual projects. It will be a key vehicle for impacting on the larger scale infrastructural issues which contribute to inequalities for issues such as health, training and employment in each of the community development areas.

6 FINANCIAL INCLUSION

- 6.1 Over the past three years we have successfully adopted a community development approach to engaging harder-to-reach groups e.g. older people, people returning to work after periods on state benefit, lone parents, young people not in education, employment or training, and BME communities.
- 6.2 A recurring issue in this work are the barriers faced by target groups to reach a level of economic or financial stability. These barriers are particularly evident in terms of accessing local training and employment opportunities.
- 6.3 Tackling worklessness and the barriers which prevent people accessing employment will be a key theme of our community development work going forward. This will include:
- developing an RHP resident apprenticeship / employment programme in partnership with Richmond Council and including our partnering contractors Mears and Lakehouse;
 - supporting the development of a credit union;
 - expanding the Slivers of Time resident employment pilot project;
 - partnering with Richmond Adult Community College (RACC) to support social enterprise projects in the six areas;
 - continuing to provide flexible local training projects e.g. Ham allotment, Richmond Furniture Scheme, Paintbrush;
 - developing closer links with Richmond Council for Voluntary Services and a structured volunteering programme for community development;

7 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY

- 7.1 We are committed to Equality and Diversity in all areas of our work. We continue to have a strong relationship with EMAG (Ethnic Minorities Advocacy Group). With the expansion of our community development work however we are less dependent on EMAG as an intermediary and are now running a number of multi-cultural health and education projects.
- 7.2 Substantial preventative work is required on the Butts Farm estate in the short term to champion community cohesion.
- 7.3 Families with Children remain a key demographic for our community development work. A number of the key recommendations from RHP's Families with Children Strategy dovetail with the recommendations outlined in this paper.

8 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2008-2011

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This Strategy sets out our direction for 2008-2011. Our three strategic objectives are set out below with a number of key areas of activity outlined for each objective.

- 8.1 Empowering communities:** giving residents adequate support and resources to find their own solutions to problems they identify in their own communities.
- supporting new and existing community anchor organisations in each of the six priority areas;
 - supporting Working Together Groups in each the six priority areas;
 - informing the development of a Community Development Trust which will provide long-term financing for frontline community organisations;
- 8.2 Facilitating Economic Inclusion:** developing strategies and interventions targeted at the six areas and our residents in those areas who are not fully able to participate in economic life.
- developing a formal training, apprenticeship & employment programme;
 - developing social enterprise projects in the six areas;
 - supporting the development of a credit union;
 - providing innovative local training projects for those furthest from the labour market;
 - developing a structured volunteering programme for RHP residents;
 - maximising the resources and their impact from the PCT's Choosing Health Plan in each of the five areas.
- 8.3 Promoting Social Capital and Cohesion:** delivering interventions and supporting networks that enable residents to act together more effectively and have a communicative, functioning relationship with RHP.
- challenging anti-social behaviour through positive interventions with young people including Urban Academy;
 - advocating for and responding to the needs of excluded communities including Travellers, Black and Minority Ethnic residents, older people and people experiencing disabilities;
 - delivery of family learning based activities to increase quality of life and customer satisfaction levels of families with children;
 - improving community relations on the Butts Farm estate with interventions targeting young people aged 16 and under;

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APPENDIX I

Community Development Output Indicators

Section I

N.B. Please refer to document on definitions of indicators in the cover sheet when completing indicators

Indicators of Lifelong Learning and Education

- LLE1 Lifelong Learning and Education e.g. family learning, computing, etc
- LLE2 Training/Careers Advice/ Further & Higher Education / Work Placement

Indicators of Culture and Leisure

- CL1 Sport and Leisure facilities/opportunities
- CL2 Access to parks and open spaces/cultural/artistic projects

Indicators of Health and Social Well-being

- HSW1 Tackling Health Inequalities
- HSW2 Tackling obesity
- HSW3 Improving Sexual Health/ Reducing Teenage Pregnancy
- HSW4 Stop Smoking
- HSW5 Mental Health and Well-being
- HSW6 Reducing harm, encouraging sensible drinking

Indicators of the Quality of the Environment

- QE1 Improve Visual Environment and Sustainability

Indicators of Economic Well-Being

- EWB1 Income Management

Indicators of People and Place

- PP1 Diversity in The Community

Section II

Indicators of Community Involvement & Social Cohesion

- CISC1 Attendance at CD event/project e.g stall at a fairs, fun day, etc
- CISC2 Community Meetings Held i.e. meetings that you have generated
- CISC3 Volunteers / Projects Targeting Volunteer Participation

Indicators of Community Safety

- CS1 Third Party Race Related Incidences Reporting
- CS2 Third Party ASB Related Incidences Reporting
- CS3 Third Party Domestic Violence Related Incidences Reporting
- CS4 Third Party Child Protection Reporting

Indicators of Transport and Accessibility of Facilities and Services

- TAFS1 Increasing access to facilities and services

Indicators of Housing Demand

- HD1 Access to Housing Services

APPENDIX II

Annual Perception Survey

% of residents surveyed who think that **over the last year** their local area has got better or stayed the same

% of residents surveyed who think that over the last year facilities for children and young people have got better or stayed the same

% of residents surveyed who think that over the last year facilities for older people have got better or stayed the same

% of residents surveyed who think that over the last year the facilities for families on low incomes have got better or stayed the same

% of residents surveyed who think that over the last year the opportunities provided to enable people to acquire new skills and to get into work has got better or stayed the same

% of residents surveyed who think that over the last year the opportunities for becoming involved in the local community have got better or stayed the same

% of residents surveyed who think that over the last year people from different backgrounds in the local area are getting on better or stayed the same

% of residents surveyed who think that over the last year the general environment of their local area has got better or stayed the same

% of residents surveyed who think that over the last year anti social behaviour in their local area has got better or stayed the same

% of residents surveyed who think that over the last year they feel safer in their homes or stayed the same

% of residents surveyed who think that over the last year they feel safe outside during the day and after dark or stayed the same