

The Highfields Area Plan

Produced by: The Highfields Area Forum

In conjunction with: Wavehill Consulting

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FOREWORD

The Highfields Area Forum is an alliance of public agencies, voluntary organisations and tenants and residents groups that operate within the Highfields area of Leicester. The Forum (which is a major focal point for the consideration of local issues) meets monthly to discuss and push forward issues of strategic importance for Highfields.

The Forum, together with the St Matthews Area Forum, prepared a vision document based on what they saw as the strengths and weaknesses of the two communities. The document identifies a series of problems based on seven thematic areas and solutions to address those problems. The issues raised within those seven themes were taken forward into a cycle of open meetings to which the relevant agencies were invited to contribute. The ultimate objective of these meetings was the production of evidence to feed into an Area Plan for Highfields.

Wavehill Consulting is delighted to have been invited to take forward the development of the Area Plan, based on the evidence accumulated through these meetings and other research. Wavehill was previously involved in Highfields through our evaluation of the SRB2 (Core Area) Scheme. This included in-depth research with the non-direct beneficiaries of the SRB Scheme, i.e. the people of Highfields. As well as their impressions of the Scheme itself, we also obtained useful data on people's perceptions of their area generally including what they felt the area lacked.

This document, the Area Plan, has been prepared as a result of direct consultation by the Forum with local people and service delivery agencies. The objective of the plan is to:

- Provide a locally-determined framework for the delivery of services;
- Give the Area Forum a strategic focus for its work;
- Give local people and statutory agencies a framework for measuring the success and progress of activities within the area.

Public resources are finite and it is possible that many of the aspirations contained within this document may be difficult to achieve in the short term. However, as this plan has been developed locally, it should be regarded as a series of local priorities and given weight accordingly. It has also been prepared with the co-operation of the statutory agencies. We look forward to its implementation.

Councillor.....

Chair, Highfields Area Forum

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1 OVERVIEW

1.1 Themes of the Plan

The themes of this plan follow those set out through the joint Highfields/St Matthews visioning document, and are:

- Environment
- Education
- Health
- Jobs and Regeneration
- Children and young people
- Social Regeneration
- Community Safety.

1.2 The Aims of the Plan

The aims of the Plan are:

- To provide a strategic focus for the Area Forum's activities as they relate to Leicester's City-wide Community Plan;
- To provide a series of milestones against which the success in implementing the Plan can be measured;
- To inform statutory agencies of what locally-determined priorities are.

Section 2 of this Plan sets out the baseline positions, identifying local needs and aspirations. Section 3 of the Plan sets out a framework for action for dealing with those issues.

1.3 Methodology

The Highfields Area Forum and Wavehill used a number of different methodologies to develop this Plan. These are:

- The direct community consultation Wavehill undertook as part of its evaluation of the SRB2 programme (see below);
- Regular contact between the Highfields Area Forum and Wavehill;
- The seven thematic meetings and the minutes of those meetings;
- Desk-top research involving an extensive series of reports and policies prepared in recent years that have special relevance to Highfields.

1.3.1 Community Consultation

An important part of Wavehill's work in Highfields was the direct consultation with the wider community, i.e. the non-direct beneficiaries of the SRB Scheme. To obtain the views of the wider community, Wavehill obtained a statistically valid sample of views from local people

through simple questionnaires; over a period of two days in March 2003, over 500 interviews took place in Highfields and St Matthews.

Rather than use “professional” interviewers, Wavehill prefers to employ local workers/volunteers to determine community views. A group of between 4-12 people are initially given training in social research and interviewing techniques. Part of this training involves devising the questionnaire themselves. This is an important point; it gives the interviewers ownership of their questionnaire, and allows them to feel more comfortable with using it.

Using local volunteer workers in this has a number of distinct advantages:

- It utilises a great deal of local intelligence/knowledge;
- The interviewees are greeted by a local, and often familiar, face, rather than an anonymous “professional” interviewer;

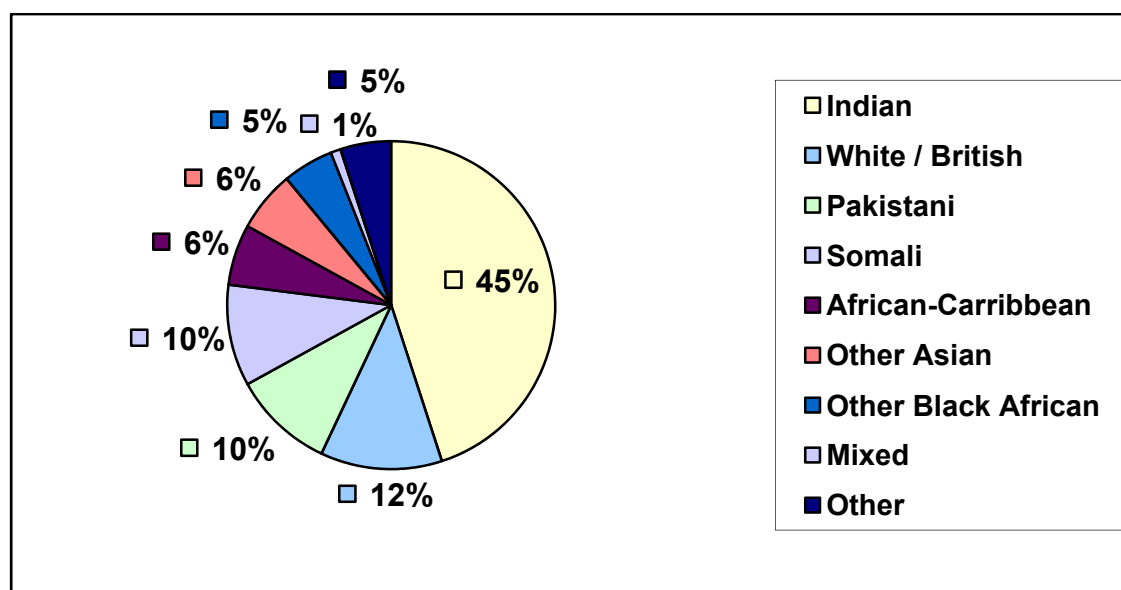
It enhances the capacity of the interviewers themselves. The interviewers are frequently people who are already involved in local voluntary work, and the skills they acquire through the community consultation process can be re-used elsewhere in another voluntary capacity.

2. The Baselines: Local needs and aspirations

2.1 Population and ethnicity

The population of Highfields is estimated as some 18,000 persons (estimates vary as the area known as Highfields does not equate conveniently with any political or administrative divisions). The population appears to be very mobile, as in Wavehill's survey in March 2003,¹ some 12% of respondents stated that they had lived in the area less than three years.

The ethnic breakdown of Wavehill's survey is as follows:



This is rather different from the estimated breakdown contained within the 1991 census:

Wycliffe Ward ²	% Population
Asian	38%
White	49%
Black/Caribbean	9%
Chinese	0.5%
Other	3.5%

However, this census is rather out of date. For example, the table fails to take into account the arrival of many Somali newcomers. Furthermore, it has been suggested³ that the number of Pakistani residents has increased significantly throughout the 1990s. Initial estimates from the 2001 census suggest that 73% of the population of Spinney Hills⁴ describes itself as Asian or British Asian.

¹ Wavehill's Community Consultation, SRB2 Evaluation, March 2003

² NB Wycliffe Ward does not equate exactly with Highfields but, together with Spinney Hills, it does give a reasonably accurate comparison.

³ "Research into the needs of the Pakistani Community", PYCA, October 2003

⁴ In December 2002, to confuse things further, the Electoral Commission recommended a number of changes to the Spinney Hills Ward, so that it now includes St Matthews and parts of Crown Hills

An analysis of the ethnic breakdown of the area is important because it can help inform the service delivery agencies of specific issues within local ethnic groups. For example, a study in 2002 of the needs of Leicester's Pakistani community⁵ found that:

- Unemployment amongst the City's Pakistani population was much higher than the City average;
- Only 19% of respondents had a household income of more than the national average of £20,000;
- 20% cannot read or write in English;
- 27% were living in overcrowded conditions;
- 84% believe themselves to be poorly treated by employers.

Finally, it should be noted that the Highfields/St Matthews vision document regards the mix of races within the area as a potential strength. In listing the areas' former strengths, the document noted:

- Togetherness (diverse cultures)
- Cultural bond with others
- Mixed school populations
- High level of cultural awareness.

This Plan is all about recovering those former strengths.

2.2 Socio-economic needs

Highfields is one of the most disadvantaged areas of Leicester. The difference in household income is striking. In Highfields (i.e. Spinney Hills Ward), some 51% of residents earn less than half of the national average household income; the national figure is 19%⁶.

Even during a period of relative economic affluence (November 2003), official unemployment stands at 6.7% (the Leicester average is 4.9%, the East Midlands average 3.27%)⁷. The level of unemployment hides the fact that large numbers of people within the area are not eligible to work. Only some 37% of Highfields residents derive their household incomes wholly from employment, and over 35% are wholly dependent on some form of state benefits.

One of the main barriers to employment seems to be lack of qualifications or training. Some 50% of local residents had not undertaken any form of training since leaving school.⁸ Nine out

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *SRB Mid-term Evaluation, Loughborough University*

⁷ *Neighbourhood Statistics*

⁸ *Loughborough University*

of ten unemployed people cite lack of training as the principal barrier to employment. There are also few facilities locally for providing such training.

Finally, there is insufficient support to encourage local enterprise. Wavehill's survey of local businesses found that only 10% could name a business support agency and only 2.4% had actually approached an organisation like Business Link. This was coupled with a lack of incubator space for small businesses in the area.

2.3 Education issues

In educational terms, the level of attainment at the local secondary school at first appears quite low: 32% of pupils obtained five or more GCSE passes A-C grade in 2002, compared with the City average of 40.5% and the national average of 51%.

However, these seemingly low results disguise the fact that:

- Some 90% of pupils are from a minority ethnic background;
- The results have improved consistently since 2000;
- Only 1% of pupils failed to pass any GCSE's at all, compared with the City average of 5% and the national average, also of 5%;
- The school have good "value added" results, which is a more accurate assessment of the school's quality than the cruder number of GCSE passes.

There is a need to enhance educational achievement to enable pupils to compete in a post-school environment for jobs and training opportunities.

There are also important issues around the level of parental involvement in local schools, particularly in the secondary sector.

On a more positive note, there are a number of key existing strategies, formulated in 2003, known as Cluster Plans. These strategies, the Adult, Youth and Children's Services Plans have been prepared by the local Lifelong Learning Division.

2.4 The Environment

There are a number of separate issues within the umbrella of the environment:

2.4.1 Public transport

There are a number of transportation issues pertinent to Highfields:

- There are low levels of car ownership within the area placing a greater emphasis on the need for public transport;

- One of the key bus routes through Highfields, the No.17, does not operate after 18:00, restricting education and employment routines to a “nine-to-five” schedule;
- There is a higher than average number of disabled people within Highfields, suggesting that there is a greater need for accessible buses within the area.

2.4.2 Residents car parking and pedestrian/vehicle conflict

Given the narrowness of Highfields’ Victorian streets, it is hardly surprising that the City Council has considered a residents parking scheme. However, this was rejected by local residents (apparently due to the cost of the permit rather than the principle).

Another problem within the area is that of vehicles parking on pavements. This is proving to be an issue with the blind/partially sighted, wheelchair users and people with prams.

2.4.3 Limited green spaces

As a densely-populated residential area, Highfields needs, but lacks, green open space (the notable exception being Spinney Hill Park, which is located on the fringes of Highfields).

Spinney Hill Park itself, while well-used, needs more maintenance, lighting and modernised children’s play facilities.

2.4.4 Dumping of large items and graffiti

Parts of Highfields suffer from large unused items being illegally dumped and areas of graffiti.

2.4.5 Fuel poverty

The SRB-funded project CHESS provided much-needed grant aid to enable local people to upgrade the heating and insulation systems of their Victorian homes. This is an important means of tackling fuel poverty in the area.

2.5 Health

A number of specific health-related issues have been identified in Highfields, namely:

- (a) There are few, if any, facilities for dealing with mental health issues in the area;
- (b) A lack of appropriate and accessible services and facilities for elderly people, disabled people and children with special needs;
- (c) An increasing incidence of domestic violence.

Research prior to the implementation of the Highfields Sure Start programme⁹ revealed the perception amongst local people that:

⁹ *Research undertaken by M.E.L. in October 2002.*

- Health professionals could often be unsympathetic and formal;
- That there were not enough female doctors to deal with culturally sensitive issues;
- That some groups did not make adequate use of ante-natal classes.

Given the size of Highfield's population, and the levels of disadvantage within, these are issues that need to be addressed.

2.6 Children and Young People

Highfields is fortunate in having a very active and ambitious Sure Start programme. However, even this programme cannot deal with wider issues, particularly amongst children and young people over 4 years old.

Highfields is also fortunate in having an active Youth & Community Centre (currently with a sports hall under construction), but again staffing and outreach work will always be a problem.

Specific problems identified through the vision exercise include:

- Inadequate childcare facilities, which themselves act as a barrier to employment and training.

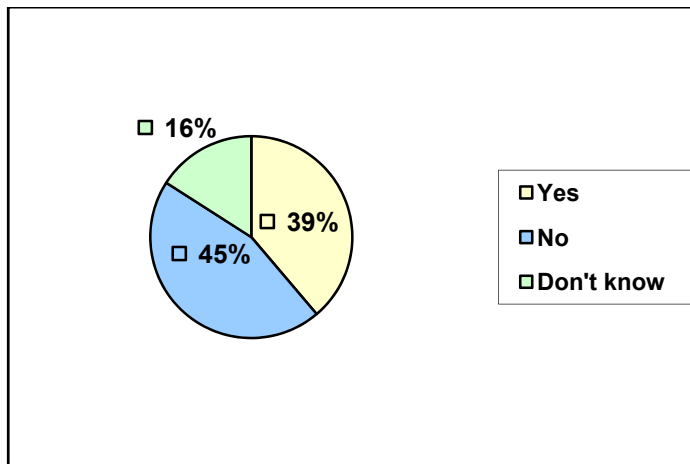
"Childcare was a major concern for local parents..."

- M.E.L. Research, October 2002

- Insufficient all-year play schemes;
- Inadequate and poorly maintained outdoor play, together with a lack of indoor play;
- Lack of out-of-school provision;
- Absence of suitable opportunities for young people to move on;
- Inadequate youth facilities.

Public perception of this issue is seen clearly in Wavehill's street survey of the area:

Q: Do you think that there's more for young people to do in Highfields than there used to be? (232)



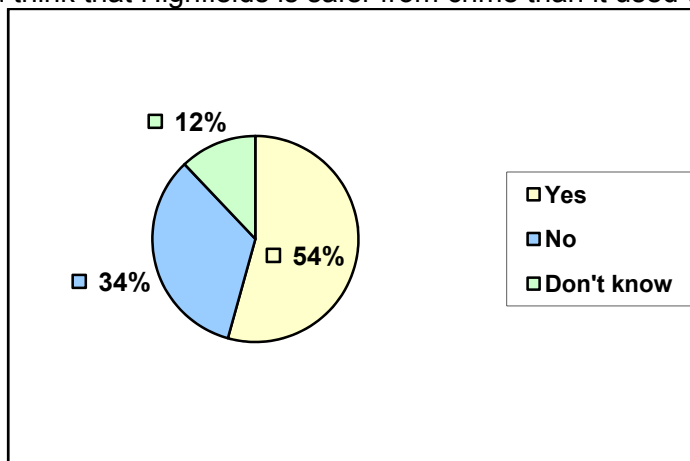
Source: Wavehill Street Interviews 2003

There appears to be a real need to provide facilities for children and young people of all ages in Highfields, to generate real social, educational and community safety benefits.

2.7 Community Safety

Between 1995 and 2002, for a whole host of factors, including the SRB2 Scheme, crime and the fear of crime appear to have fallen. This is reflected in Wavehill's survey of Highfields residents:

Do you think that Highfields is safer from crime than it used to be? (232)



Source: Wavehill Street Interviews 2003

When Wavehill asked whether local people were afraid of having their home burgled, 52% said that they were not while 39% said that they were afraid.

Despite this positive feeling, there are still serious community safety issues in the area. Highfields residents consistently mentioned the issues of drugs and street crime to Wavehill as reasons to be fearful. For example, some 49% of respondents said that they were afraid of getting attacked in the street.

While our evidence for the supply and use of Class A drugs being an issue is anecdotal at this stage, it is so consistent that service providers have to give it credence.

As noted above, part of the reduction in crime across Highfields may be due to many of the initiatives undertaken through the SRB2 Scheme: BANISH (a locks and bolts project); CADEP (a drug misuse support project); and the Highfields Compact (which supported, among others, young offenders). Unfortunately, as the SRB Scheme ended, so did many of these excellent projects. There is therefore a danger that unless some continuation projects are put in place, the previous feeling of insecurity will return.

2.8 Social Regeneration

This theme comprises a number of different issues including:

2.8.1 A **low level of awareness of local political and service delivery issues**, and so a low level of engagement with existing forums.

2.8.2 Despite the **large number of community groups and voluntary organisations** that operate in the area, there is little joint working between organisations, and between organisations and agencies.

2.8.3 **Residents and tenants associations** are declining in membership and therefore effectiveness.

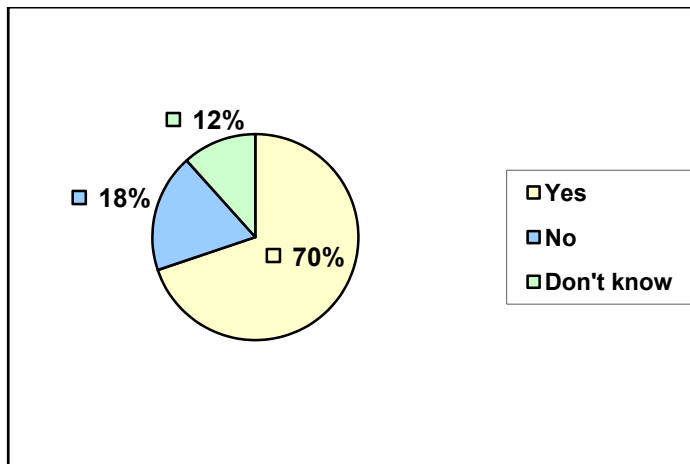
2.8.4 **Sports and fitness facilities** are inadequate or inaccessible.

2.9 Finally

The issues described above create a picture of a community with severe social, economic and physical problems. However, there is much in Highfields that is good, as the vision document revealed.

Wavehill's own research found a great deal of optimism in the local community:

Do you think that Highfields is a better area to live than used to be? (232)



Source: Wavehill Street Interviews 2003

Ultimately, the purpose is not to point out Highfields' shortfalls, but to put in place a strategy to tackle many of these problems.

3.0 The Highfields Area Plan

Mission Statement

To provide REALISTIC solutions to LOCALLY determined problems, to benefit ALL sectors of the Community of Highfields.

Introduction

The Plan comprises 31 action points that reflect local aspirations within Highfields as far as service delivery is concerned.

It has been developed to influence mainstream service delivery and external funding in Highfields. It seeks relatively little “new” funding from mainstream providers, rather it attempts to “bend” service provision into what is one of the most disadvantaged areas of Leicester, and seeks to maximise external funding. The concept here is not to scare away service providers with unrealistic proposals, but to seek to influence a new way of service delivery that meets local needs and aspirations.

To take account of this, the action points within the Plan have a delivery target attached to them. These targets, or milestones, are rated according to how swiftly they can be implemented. For example, action point two relates to re-visiting a potential residents parking in Highfields. The first stage relates to:

[That the feasibility of a residents parking scheme be re-addressed within six months.](#)

This does not involve the expenditure of any “new” funding, however, it does require the City Council’s transportation engineers to undertake some work to determine the feasibility of the Scheme. Given that the staff are already in place, and that there is no “new” funding involved at the feasibility stage, this is an issue that can be implemented within six months. The actual scheme itself, if it is feasible and the residents of Highfields are agreeable, will take longer to implement, and this has a total time scale of two years attached to it.

The Strategy

The Plan has three key elements attached to it:

(a) Community Development Worker

What Highfields needs to ensure that the Plan is implemented is a “Highfields Champion”. One possible way of achieving this is by appointing a new post (*or amending the role of an existing post*) to co-ordinate the Plan’s activities. Such a post would only need to be a three-year appointment, and would ideally be funded through external funds (e.g. NRF monies). It is possible that this role can be taken on board by the Area Neighbourhood Renewal Worker.

(b) Training and Employment: One Stop Shop

An important part of the plan is the provision of a One-Stop Shop for all training, employment and business support needs. This organisation would not be dissimilar to HaSCEP, which was funded through the SRB2 Scheme. The organisation would provide services including:

- Training in basic skills;
- Vocational training;
- Employability training;
- Job brokerage;
- Enterprise/business advice and support.

The organisation could also be the home of initiatives such as a Buy Local campaign.

It is envisaged that initial core funding for the organisation would come from a source such as the NRF, ESF or the City Council. The Community Fund is also a possibility. However, most of the running costs would be secured through the purchase of contracts by the LSC, Job Centre Plus, Business Link etc.

It has to be emphasised here that the organisation need not be a new one. An existing local organisation that undertakes some of these functions (e.g. Hitslink) could be expanded/enhanced to take on board a wider array of services.

(c) Social Enterprise

Social Enterprise is all about local people setting up their own businesses, managed locally on a not for profit basis, supplying services that the private sector has not, or cannot provide. Social enterprises are often involved in Intermediate Labour Markets (i.e. involving people who can be excluded from “traditional” routes to work, e.g. ex-offenders, people recovering from drug/alcohol abuse, people with learning difficulties, homeless people, asylum seekers etc). Examples of social enterprise include:

- A Credit Union;
- A furniture refurbishment business;
- A laundry business;
- Community transport;
- A juice bar for young people;
- An indoor play area;
- Out of school care.

Such organisations/businesses will need the support of Leicester & County Co-operative Development Agency for advice, training and access to funding.

The Action Plan

The three areas of activity outlined above are not the only ones of course. The Action Plan, detailed overleaf, contains thirty-one individual action points, based on the aspirations expressed by the people of Highfields.

The Plan has four sections:

A **Strategic Objective**, which sets out the overall aim of the Forum;

An **Activity**, designed to meet that strategic objective;

A **Target**, expressed as a milestone by which the activity should have been commenced;

A list of **Implementing Agencies**, together with **possible sources of funding**.

An annex sets out the activities again but according to the time-table rather than the theme.

3.1 Environment

There are a number of diverse environmental issues that need to be tackled in Highfields. There is no one specific agency responsible for this activity, although it is clear that the City Council must take a lead in most.

Strategic Objective	Activity	Targets	Implementing agency/possible sources of funding
1. To provide an adequate public transport service for Highfields, and to encourage alternative means of transport.	<p>Provision of a local bus service (No.17) along Melbourne Road after 6:00 PM.</p> <p>Provision of cycling-related facilities (including cycle stands, cycle lanes etc).</p>	<p>That the No.17 service runs along Melbourne Road and Nedham Street until 10:00 PM, within three months.</p> <p>That the feasibility of giving incentives (for both passengers and bus operators) be examined within six months, and recommendations acted upon within two years.</p> <p>That the excessive height of the road humps be reviewed within twelve months.</p> <p>To undertake an audit of cycle-related facilities in Highfields within six months and act on the recommendations of that audit within two years.</p>	<p>Arriva Fox, First Leicester, City Council.</p> <p>Leicester City Council (Transportation & Planning Depts); local cycling user groups.</p>
2. To re-visit the concept of a free residents parking scheme.	To re-examine the feasibility of a residents parking scheme for Highfields, including options such as spreading out the cost of the pass and allocating visitor passes.	<p>That the feasibility of a residents parking scheme be re-addressed within six months.</p> <p>That residents be balloted on the issue within an additional six months of that feasibility.</p> <p>That, if the residents' ballot has occurred and is positive, the scheme be implemented within a further twelve months.</p>	Leicester City Council.
3. To ensure that children can arrive at school safely without the need for the use	The setting up of a Walking Bus Scheme.	That each school attempts to set up a Walking Bus Scheme within six months.	Leicester City Council (Education and Transportation Dept).

of cars.	A safer routes to school project.	That the City Council develops a Safer Routes to School project within twelve months.	Safer Routes to School funding. Neighbourhood Renewal funds.
4. To ensure that where possible vehicles do not mount pavements.	An audit of highways in Highfields to determine where parking on pavements is causing a danger to pedestrians. Where dangers are identified, a series of bollards be installed to prevent vehicles from mounting the pavement.	That the audit be completed within three months. That, where necessary, bollards be installed within six months.	Leicester City Council.
5. To maximise the use of public land within Highfields for safe play or other recreation.	An audit of all public spaces within Highfields, including school playgrounds and communal courtyards, to determine which can be used for safe play and other activity. The audit's findings should then be implemented. The audit should include the potential for bio-diversity and environmental education.	That the audit be completed within six months. That, where necessary, the findings of the audit be implemented within two years, including the physical upgrading of sites.	Leicester City Council (Estates, Leisure, Education, Planning and Transportation Depts.)
6. To maximise the use of Spinney Hill Park as an attractive recreational resource for local people.	Installation of an appropriate lighting scheme. Increased level of maintenance, including a rapid response to vandalism. Improved children's play facilities at both ends of park	That a high quality lighting scheme be installed within two years. That a revised maintenance plan for the park, including a rapid response facility, be put in place within six months. That improved play facilities be in place within two years.	Leicester City Council (Leisure Dept).
7. To ensure that the dumping of refuse and graffiti are dealt with swiftly and effectively.	The serving of Amenity notices under the Planning Acts on owners of private land where dumping is taking place. The effective cordoning-off of public land where dumping is taking place, and signage posted.	That Amenity Notices be served on the owners of land where dumping is taking place within three months of the dumping taking place. That all public land where dumping is taking place be cordoned off within three months.	Leicester City Council (Planning & Waste management Depts.)

	<p>A legal view on whether the Council can remove graffiti from private land and buildings.</p> <p>The provision of occasional free skips in prominent areas for bulky goods, or a subsidised bulky goods service, publicised in all the relevant languages, be introduced.</p>	<p>That the legal position on whether the Council can remove graffiti from private buildings be obtained within three months. That, if the response is favourable, a rapid response function be established within the Council.</p> <p>That skips be introduced locally at quarterly periods within six months and a subsidised bulky goods service be introduced within two years.</p> <p>That the outcome of all the above be communicated to local people.</p>	
8. To tackle the issue of fuel poverty within Highfields.	The revival of the CHES project to fund energy efficiency improvements to pre-1914 housing in Highfields.	That a CHES-style grant scheme be re-established within twelve months.	Warmfront grants (Deputy Prime Minister's Dept.) City Council's Housing Department. Housing Associations.

3.2 Education

The establishment of the School Development Support Agency appears to have led to a more pro-active approach to enhancing the performance of schools in Leicester. This should be particularly important for Highfields where levels of attainment are lower than the City average.

Strategic Objective	Activity	Targets	Implementing agency/possible sources of funding
9. To improve the level of educational attainment of local schools.	<p>Family Learning Sessions. The employment of Learning Assistants.</p> <p>The setting up of a Parents Union at</p>	<p>To improve SATS and GCSE results of local schools so that they are within 10% of the City average within five years. To ensure that all local parent governor places are filled within one year.</p> <p>A Parents Union at Moat College within</p>	City Council Education Dept.

	<p>Moat College.</p> <p>Develop links between schools and community-based groups e.g. after-school activities, youth work.</p> <p>Greater links be fostered between pupils and staff at Moat College.</p>	<p>one year, with particular attention been given to recruiting young parents.</p> <p>That potential links be identified within one year.</p> <p>A "School Council" be established within one year.</p>	
10. To tackle the problem of school absenteeism.	Support for pupils (and their parents) who have high levels of unauthorised or authorised absenteeism.	To reduce pupil absenteeism by 50% within two years.	City Council Education Dept. Connexions
11. To improve the English Language skills of people in Highfields through ESOL/adult literacy courses.	Increased provision of English for adults (both ESOL and adult literacy classes).	To reduce by 25% the number of people who have problems with reading and writing English within two years.	Learning & Skills Council; Lifelong Learning Division of LCC.

3.3 Health

Many of Highfields outstanding health issues, particularly as they relate to children and parents, are being addressed through the Sure Start programme. The reader is referred to the Highfields Sure Start Delivery Plan for further information. This section deals with broader issues and some of those not addressed through Sure Start.

Strategic Objective	Activity	Targets	Implementing agency/possible sources of funding
12. To establish a detailed set of health-related baselines for Highfields, to allow health inequalities and other issues to be identified. To undertake action to tackle those issues and inequalities.	To encourage the PCT to undertake a comparative study of health issues and access to health care between Highfields and the rest of Leicester.	<p>PCT to develop a series of health-related baselines based on comparative data and research undertaken with the people of Highfields within 12 months.</p> <p>Based on the research, the PCT to set targets to reduce health inequalities</p>	Eastern Leicester PCT. Research: Neighbourhood Renewal, Sure Start.

		between Highfields and the rest of the City.	
13. To establish better facilities for older persons.	A centrally located day-care centre. Culturally appropriate sheltered accommodation.	That the feasibility of constructing or converting a building to accommodate day care for older persons be established within six months. If the outcome is positive, that work to construct or convert such a venue be undertaken within five years. That the feasibility of constructing or converting sheltered housing in Highfields that is culturally sensitive be investigated within six months. If the outcome is positive, that work to construct or convert such a venue be undertaken within five years.	Day-care centre: City Council's Social Services; Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. Age Concern. Housing: City Council's Housing Department in partnership with a registered social landlord.
14. To provide better access for disabled people.	A grant scheme available to privately owned public buildings (shops, offices, places of worship etc) to encourage them to adapt the buildings to allow disabled persons access.	That a grant scheme be established within two years.	Leicester City Council (Economic Development Dept.) and ERDF as part of a business grant. City Council elsewhere.
15. To provide culturally sensitive support for victims of domestic violence.	A support project for victims of domestic violence specialising in working with victims from a black and minority ethnic background.	That the ISIS domestic violence project be mainstreamed across Leicester.	Leicester City Council (Housing, Social Services, Community Safety). Supporting People initiative. Voluntary sector (e.g. Women's Roof Leicester). Eastern Leicester PCT Leicestershire Police and Probation.

3.4 Economy: Jobs and Training

There are a number of key issues that concern local people and agencies regarding economic issues in Highfields. The first is the high level of unemployment relative to the rest of Leicester. The second is in terms of access to employment, i.e. the extent to which local people are job ready. The third is in terms of access to training. Finally, there is a perceived lack of support for Highfields-based businesses, both existing businesses and potential entrepreneurs.

There is a need for a One-Stop Shop to address all of these needs. This can be a joint facility with St Matthews if necessary, should the service providers need to be confident that there are economies of scale. An organisation like HaSCEP (funded through the SRB2 Scheme) demonstrated that a community-based organisation can deliver these services if properly supported. The One-Stop Shop concept fits in with the Leicester Regeneration Agency's concept of an "access centre".

Strategic Objective	Activity	Targets	Implementing agency/possible sources of funding
16. To establish a community-based organisation to deliver employment, employability, training and enterprise support.	The establishment of an organisation, based locally, to deliver these services. This will need a properly formulated constitution and elected executive members.	To establish a community-based one-stop shop to deliver some of those services listed in 17-20 below within three years.	Initial running/establishment costs only: Neighbourhood Renewal Fund; European Social Fund. The L.R.A.'s Community Support Programme. Help in kind from City Council (e.g. premises costs). Other costs will have to be met by securing contracts from the service providers below.
17. To provide a job brokerage service locally which is accessible and sensitive to the needs of local people.	The "shop window" of the one-stop shop should be a job brokerage service with full interpretation facilities. It will maintain a database of both jobs available and local job seekers.	To reduce the level of unemployment locally to within 1% of the City average within five years.	Contract from Job Centre Plus/Department of Work and Pensions. Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.
18. To provide basic training needs and employment skills for local people, delivered locally.	The provision of: (a) Basic Skills (English, numeracy, basic IT skills); (b) Employability skills (CVs, interviewing techniques etc).	To provide basic skills training locally to increase the local employment rate by 10% within five years. To provide employability support as part of the one-stop shop.	Basic skills: LCCs Lifelong Learning Dept (especially Moat College), Leicester College, St Matthews IT Centre. Main funder the LSC Employability: Job Centre Plus, LSC, ESF.
19. To address the longer-term training needs of local people.	Vocational and non-vocational courses, locally delivered by an outreach operation of the statutory providers, addressing	A full community education programme delivered in community buildings in Highfields that reacts to local demand	Leicester College, LCC's Lifelong Learning Department. Funded by LSC and ESF.

<p>20. To provide support for both existing businesses and potential entrepreneurs.</p>	<p>demand that is determined locally.</p> <p>A weekly “surgery” for existing and potential business-people, and other forms of outreach activity.</p> <p>Successful business-people from target groups to act as mentors for newly established businesses.</p> <p>Outreach work to encourage under-represented groups (e.g. women) to become entrepreneurs.</p> <p>A small grants budget to assist new businesses.</p> <p>The construction/conversion of a series of business incubation units for newly-formed businesses.</p> <p>A greater level of support for social enterprise.</p> <p>A “Spend Local” campaign, to encourage people and businesses to spend locally.</p>	<p>within three years.</p> <p>To establish thirty new businesses locally run by local people, with a survival rate of 75% within two years.</p> <p>A network of potential business mentors from target groups available within two years.</p> <p>That of the thirty new businesses, at least ten will be owned and/or managed by women.</p> <p>That a new grant scheme will assist 15 new businesses per annum be set up within two years.</p> <p>1200 sq m of new business floorspace to support local micro-businesses within five years.</p> <p>[See Section 25]</p> <p>A “Spend Local” campaign be established within six months.</p>	<p>Surgery service: Business Link</p> <p>Mentors: Business Link, Leicester Asian Business Association, Leicester African-Caribbean Business Association.</p> <p>Outreach work: as above. Also, European EQUAL funds.</p> <p>The City Council's Economic Development Dept; ERDF funds.</p> <p>The City Council's Economic Development Dept; ERDF funds. The Leicestershire Partnership's Single Pot allocation.</p> <p>[See Section 25]</p> <p>Local traders; the City Council's Economic Development Unit; LABA; LACBA.</p>
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3.5 Children and Young People

As with health matters, many of the issues affecting young children and their parents are being dealt with through an active Sure Start programme. This section of the Plan therefore concentrates on older children (aged 5-13) and young people (aged 13-19).

While public funds can support some of these activities, there is also a role for social enterprise to play here in terms of setting up facilities for children. This would give local people control over the delivery of the services. Initial funding may be required to set up the indoor play and wrap-around out-of school provision, but beyond that they could be managed as co-operative enterprises.

Strategic Objective	Activity	Targets	Implementing agency/possible sources of funding
21. To improve the range of activities for 0-13 year olds and facilities for their parents.	<p>The provision of all year play schemes.</p> <p>The provision of permanent indoor play areas.</p> <p>The provision of out-of-school/wrap-around care sessions.</p>	<p>That there will be at least one all-year play scheme within twelve months.</p> <p>That there will be an indoor play area (including soft-play for younger children), run as a community enterprise, in Highfields within five years. This will be managed by a local committee.</p> <p>That there will be out-of-school/wrap-around care sessions within five years.</p>	<p>Leicester City Council (Leisure Services/HYCC); Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.</p> <p>Children's Fund; New Opportunities Fund; Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. Advice and support from Business Link and the City Council.</p> <p>Leicester City Council (Education/Youth services). Alternatively, this again could be run as social enterprise (see indoor play proposal, above). If so, grants can also be made through the N.O.F. and Children's Fund.</p>
22. To increase the range of meaningful activity available for young people.	<p>Increased detached/outreach work.</p> <p>Provision of a youth "Juice Bar".</p> <p>A voluntary sector with better capacity to</p>	<p>That a structured system of detached/outreach youth work be established within two years.</p> <p>That the youth work includes projects relating to informal education, sexual health matters in a culturally sensitive way, and drug/alcohol misuse advice.</p> <p>That a youth "Juice Bar" be set up in Highfields within five years.</p> <p>That grant aid be given to support the</p>	<p>Leicester City Council (Youth/Education Departments); Children's Fund; N.O.F.</p> <p>Depending on the nature of the project, Connexions, Eastern Leicester PCT, Drug Action team.</p> <p>This could be set up as a social enterprise. Initial assistance from City Council, the L.R.A.'s Community Support Programme and Business Link to establish it. Support from N.O.F. and N.R.F. to meet staff costs.</p> <p>Leicester City Council, Children's Fund,</p>

	deliver services to young people.	work of the voluntary sector in the community to deliver services to young people within two years.	N.O.F.
23. To increase the life choices available to local young people.	<p>An outreach service run by Connexions on a regular basis, at least twice/week, in Highfields.</p> <p>An employability project to support young people, with access to work experience placements (see 3, 4, and 5, above) and encourage enterprise.</p>	<p>That Connexions run outreach sessions, twice a week, from a convenient and accessible building in Highfields within one year.</p> <p>That as part of the One-stop shop approach outlined in the Economy section, above, a particular emphasis be placed on supporting the needs of young people and employability.</p> <p>That as a result, youth unemployment in Highfields is brought to within 1% of the City average within five years.</p>	<p>Connexions. N.R.F.</p> <p>Connexions, Job Centre Plus, the LSC, Leicester City Council (Education, Economic Development), Business Link, the Princes Trust, N.O.F., N.R.F., Chamber of Commerce.</p>

3.6 Social Regeneration

The objective of this element of the Plan is to encourage and empower local people to engage with statutory agencies, representative bodies and the community and voluntary sector. It is also to encourage community cohesion and break down the barriers between different communities.

Much of the success of this area of work is dependent on employing a dedicated Community Outreach Worker who can kick-start the process of empowering local people in Highfields.

Strategic Objective	Activity	Targets	Implementing agency/possible sources of funding
24. To develop the Area Forum as the representative body in Highfields.	<p>To review the structure of the Forum to ensure that it is as representative as it could be and that all sectors of Highfields' community are represented.</p> <p>To set up a three-year Community Development Worker post within Highfields to work closely with the</p>	<p>To review the present structure to ensure that it is in a position to implement the Plan within 6 months.</p> <p>To set up a limited-term Community Development Worker post within two years. That post to increase the level of</p>	<p>Highfields Area Forum.</p> <p>Leicester City Council (Lifelong Learning & Community Development); N.R.F.; the L.R.A.'s funds for Capacity Building.</p>

	Neighbourhood Co-ordinator to build the capacity of the voluntary sector locally and encourage local people to engage with existing representative bodies and statutory agencies.	engagement of under-represented groups within Highfields within another twelve months.	
25. To develop the capacity of local young people to engage with wider society.	The setting up of a Young Person's Council.	To set up a Young Person's Council within two years.	Leicester City Council (Youth Services).
26. To ensure that the local community and voluntary sector has the skills and capacity to develop services itself.	<p>A good take up of grants through the City Council's Community Managed Projects Scheme, by ensuring that local groups have full access to information about the Scheme.</p> <p>A series of community enterprises owned and managed by local people, including indoor play area and out of school care (see objective 21, above), a juice bar (see 22, above) and a Credit Union. Other potential social enterprise could include a furniture refurbishment service, laundry service and community transport service.</p>	<p>To increase the number of grant applications from within Highfields by 50% within two years.</p> <p>To meet all other targets relating to community enterprise within five years. To establish a credit union for Highfields within five years, or to increase membership of the Leicester Credit Union from Highfields residents.</p>	<p>Leicester City Council.</p> <p>Credit Union: Leicester City Council (Community Economic Devt. Section), Business Link, ABCUL (credit union trade organisation). Leicester CDA. Other enterprises: see objectives 21 and 22, above.</p>
27. To break down the barriers between different communities.	<p>To develop a community welcoming and befriending project for new arrivals into the area, including a welcome "pack".</p> <p>A mentoring project so that individuals already engaged in community activities can mentor those who wish to get involved, particularly from sections of the community currently under-represented.</p>	<p>That a community welcoming and befriending project, run by the Community Outreach Worker identified under objective 27, above, be set up within two years.</p> <p>A mentoring project, run by the Community Outreach Worker identified under objective 27 above, be set up within two years.</p>	<p>Volunteer Bureau, the local voluntary, community and faith sector, Leicester City Council, Social Landlords, Home Office Challenge Fund.</p> <p>Local voluntary, community and faith sector, Leicester City Council, N.R.F.</p>
28. To build the capacity of Residents & Tenants Association.	Active support to develop the Residents & Tenants Association, including "door-knocking"-type outreach work. This could be undertaken by the Community Outreach Worker identified above	That at least 50% of tenants of Council and RSL properties have at least some engagement with a tenants and residents association within two years.	Leicester City Council (Housing), Social Landlords, N.R.F.

	supported by the relevant social landlords.		
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3.7 Community Safety

There are a number of key community safety issues that need to be tackled, and the aim of the Plan is to address these outstanding issues. The two most prevalent in the view of local people are drug misuse and fear of being attacked in the street. We will try to address these fears through the following activities:

Strategic Objective	Activity	Targets	Implementing agency/possible sources of funding
29. To reduce the level of drug misuse and the crime associated with drug misuse.	<p>The setting up of a community-based substance misuse support project.</p> <p>Greater Police visibility in areas of concern.</p> <p>A multi-lingual Crimestoppers-type service.</p>	<p>That a community-based substance misuse support project be set up within two years.</p> <p>To increase the number of drug-related arrests within twelve months from current figures.</p> <p>That a Crimestoppers-type service be introduced on a multi-lingual basis within one year.</p>	<p>Eastern Leicester PCT, Leicester City Council, Drug Action Team, Probation. Funds from N.R.F., Community Fund.</p> <p>Leicestershire Partnership Against Crime and Disorder, Police, Drug Action Team.</p>
30. Reduce the fear of street crime.	<p>Greater Police visibility in areas of concern.</p> <p>Increased lighting in areas identified as being "at risk".</p>	<p>To reduce the number of people who say that they fear being attacked in the street from 45% to 33% within two years.</p> <p>That a review of existing street lighting be undertaken within six months. That where areas of concern are identified through the audit, increased lighting be installed within two years.</p>	<p>Leicestershire Police</p> <p>Leicester City Council (Transportation and Community Safety Depts).</p>
31. To continue to reduce the level of burglary within Highfields.	To revive a "locks and bolts"-type project similar to the BANISH programme supported through SRB2.	To set up a BANISH-style grants programme within two years.	Home Office, Leicester City Council (Community Safety Dept.), Leicestershire partnership Against Crime & Disorder)

ANNEX

Timetable of Delivery

Actions to be undertaken within three months.

That the No.17 service runs along Melbourne Road and Nedham Street until 10:00 PM.

An audit of highways in Highfields to determine where parking on pavements is causing a danger to pedestrians.

That Amenity Notices be served on the owners of land where dumping is taking place.

That all public land where dumping is taking place be cordoned off.

That the legal position on whether the Council can remove graffiti from private buildings be obtained. That, if the response is favourable, a rapid response function be established within the Council.

Actions to be undertaken within six months

That the feasibility of giving incentives (for both passengers and bus operators) be examined within six months, and recommendations acted upon within two years.

That the feasibility of a residents parking scheme be re-addressed.

That each school attempts to set up a Walking Bus Scheme.

Where dangers are identified, a series of bollards be installed to prevent vehicles from mounting the pavement.

An audit of all public spaces within Highfields, including school playgrounds and communal courtyards, to determine which can be used for safe play and other activity.

That a revised maintenance plan for the park, including a rapid response facility, be put in place for Spinney Park.

The provision of occasional free skips in prominent areas for bulky goods, or a subsidised bulky goods service, publicised in all the relevant languages, be introduced.

That the feasibility of constructing or converting a building to accommodate day care for older persons be established.

That the feasibility of constructing or converting sheltered housing in Highfields that is culturally sensitive be investigated.

A "Spend Local" campaign be established.

To review the structure of the Forum to ensure that it is as representative as it could be and that all sectors of Highfields' community are represented.

Actions to be undertaken within one year

That the excessive height of the road humps be reviewed.

That the feasibility of a residents parking scheme be re-addressed within six months. That residents be balloted on the issue within an additional six months of that feasibility.

That the City Council develops a Safer Routes to School project.

The revival of the CHES project to fund energy efficiency improvements to pre-1914 housing in Highfields.

To ensure that all local parent governor places are filled.

A Parents Union at Moat College within one year, with particular attention been given to recruiting young parents.

Develop links between schools and community-based groups e.g. after-school activities, youth work.

A "School Council" be established.

PCT to develop a series of health-related baselines based on comparative data and research undertaken with the people of Highfields.

That there will be at least one all-year play scheme.

That Connexions run outreach sessions, twice a week, from a convenient and accessible building in Highfields.

To increase the number of drug-related arrests within twelve months from current figures.

That a Crimestoppers-type service be introduced on a multi-lingual basis.

Actions to be undertaken within two years

That the feasibility of giving incentives (for both passengers and bus operators) be examined within six months, and recommendations acted upon within two years.

That the feasibility of a residents parking scheme be re-addressed within six months. That residents be balloted on the issue within an additional six months of that feasibility. That, if the residents' ballot has occurred and is positive, the scheme be implemented within a further twelve months.

An audit of all public spaces within Highfields, including school playgrounds and communal courtyards, to determine which can be used for safe play and other activity. The audit's findings should then be implemented.

That a high quality lighting scheme be installed for Spinney Hill Park.

Improved children's play facilities at both ends of park

To reduce pupil absenteeism by 50%.

To reduce by 25% the number of people who have problems with reading and writing English.

A grant scheme available to privately owned public buildings (shops, offices, places of worship etc) to encourage them to adapt the buildings to allow disabled persons access.

To establish thirty new businesses locally run by local people, with a survival rate of 75%.

That a new grant scheme will assist 15 new businesses per annum be set up.

Successful business-people from target groups to act as mentors for newly established businesses.

That a structured system of detached/outreach youth work be established within two years. That the youth work includes projects relating to informal education, sexual health matters in a culturally sensitive way, and drug/alcohol misuse advice.

That grant aid be given to support the work of the voluntary sector in the community to deliver services to young people.

To set up a limited-term Community Development Worker post within two years. That post to increase the level of engagement of under-represented groups within Highfields within another twelve months.

To set up a Young Person's Council.

To increase the number of grant applications from within Highfields by 50%.

To develop a community welcoming and befriending project for new arrivals into the area, including a welcome "pack".

A mentoring project so that individuals already engaged in community activities can mentor those who wish to get involved, particularly from sections of the community currently under-represented.

The setting up of a community-based substance misuse support project.

To reduce the number of people who say that they fear being attacked in the street from 45% to 33%.

To revive a “locks and bolts”-type project similar to the BANISH programme supported through SRB2.

That a review of existing street lighting be undertaken within six months.

That where areas of concern are identified through the audit, increased lighting be installed within two years.

Action to be undertaken within three to five years.

To improve SATS and GCSE results of local schools so that they are within 10% of the City average.

That the feasibility of constructing or converting a building to accommodate day care for older persons be established within six months.

If the outcome is positive, that work to construct or convert such a venue be undertaken within five years.

That the feasibility of constructing or converting sheltered housing in Highfields that is culturally sensitive be investigated within six months.

If the outcome is positive, that work to construct or convert such a venue be undertaken within five years.

The establishment of an organisation, based locally, to deliver these services. This will need a properly formulated constitution and elected executive members.

To reduce the level of unemployment locally to within 1% of the City average.

To provide basic skills training locally to increase the local employment rate by 10%.

A full community education programme delivered in community buildings in Highfields that reacts to local demand.

1200 sq m of new business floorspace to support local micro-businesses.

That there will be an indoor play area (including soft-play for younger children), run as a community enterprise, in Highfields within five years. This will be managed by a local committee.

That there will be out-of-school/wrap-around care sessions within five years.

That a youth “Juice Bar” be set up in Highfields within five years.

That as part of the One-stop shop approach outlined in the Economy section, above, a particular emphasis be placed on supporting the needs of young people and employability.

That as a result, youth unemployment in Highfields is brought to within 1% of the City average within five years.

To meet all other targets relating to community enterprise within five years.

To establish a credit union for Highfields within five years, or to increase membership of the Leicester Credit Union from Highfields residents.