

A Strategy for Community Cohesion in Northamptonshire

**Northamptonshire – a Shared Future
for all our Communities**

September 2007

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Foreword

The focus on community cohesion and shared partnership work has been a strong priority for many partners for some years. The recent report produced by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC), along with the focus on community cohesion that is provided through the White Paper can only further strengthen our commitment to the wider cohesion agenda and improve understanding of the underlying causes of divisions in communities. The advice and recommendations set out in the CIC report gives us all much to contemplate in informing the planning, delivery and monitoring of progress and this LAA document for the county offers the framework for a long and united journey. Clearly the report by the CIC represents a turning point nationally. The new LAA arrangements targeted at action at a local level will ensure that we are implementing local action.

Northamptonshire is a diverse county with a large rural and urban base and where each local area has rich and distinct identities. This makes for a unique county. The growth of the county as part of the national government's Sustainable Communities programme means there is huge potential to develop a shared future and one where there are further opportunities to build strong, cohesive and sustainable communities in the county.

We all stand to benefit from a Northamptonshire where community cohesion is the norm; where all people enjoy a daily experience of respect and acceptance within a safe and nurturing environment.

“Integration and cohesionis not about race, faith or other forms of group status or identity. It is simply about how we all get on and secure benefits that are mutually desirable for our communities and ourselves.” (Darra Singh, CIC)

In Northamptonshire we will aspire to:-

Building strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, schools and across the whole county.

This strategy provides the basis for us all to engage collectively, share our understanding, raise awareness of community cohesion in our communities and develop our shared values so that we build a shared future that supports both existing and new communities.

Cllr Jim Harker (Chair of the LAA Board and Leader of the County Council)

Murphy Brown (Vice Chair of the LAA Board and Chief Officer of the Northamptonshire Third Sector Office (NCompass))

Introduction

During the past 2 years, the countywide Community Cohesion Strategy Group has concentrated on implementing community cohesion activity and monitoring progress against a countywide framework to support the development of cohesive communities in Northamptonshire. During this period, thinking at a national, regional and local level on what Community Cohesion means in practice, and how to bring about cohesion within neighbourhoods has continued to be informed by the Local Government White Paper, Strong and Prosperous Communities, and in particular the findings of the recent final report by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (produced in July 2007). It is therefore timely to revisit Northamptonshire's Framework to ensure that the county moves forward with confidence and shared understanding, benefiting from the range of recommendations made by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC), and advice and support provided through the Institute of Community Cohesion (ICoCo), whilst working to the Local Government White Paper through local delivery and local accountability.

Northamptonshire's vision for community cohesion builds on the CIC's vision of a shared future – **A county where people are committed to working and living together through what we have in common, rather than focussing on those things that make us different.**

The CIC report recommends a new definition of integration and community cohesion, one which encourages us all to respond to local complexities across the Northamptonshire, and that reinforces a sense of common purpose across communities. Whilst the focus of this Framework is on community cohesion – the process that happens to ensure that different groups of people get on well together – this process goes hand in hand with integration – the process of supporting existing and new residents to adapt to one another. Developing our shared future depends largely on the interaction between these 2 concepts - integration and cohesion.

Overview of Northamptonshire

Northamptonshire is a unique county. In a county of over 630,000 people there are over 100 languages spoken, at least 14 faiths and belief systems, a mix of urban and rural communities.

Northamptonshire's population has expanded significantly over recent decades and this trend is set to continue and accelerate as part of the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Growth. Between 1991 and 2001 the population grew by 9% and is projected to grow by 24% by 2021. The number of new homes planned through the MKSM Regional Spatial Strategy is 99,666, with a target of 81,000 new jobs.

The White Paper placed housing and the development of sustainable communities at the heart of the local authority place-shaping role. Creating successful places and a sense of place depends on housing that is built and maintained to a high standard and is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure and high quality public services.

Set alongside opportunities for growth across the county, there are pockets of significant multiple deprivation. There are 10 Super Output Areas (SOAs) in the 10% most deprived nationally and 44 in the 20% most deprived nationally. These areas are concentrated in Northampton, Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough with one neighbourhood in Daventry.

Northamptonshire's population is made up of 95.1% white (599,900) and an ethnic minority population of 4.9% (31,000) - compared with 6.5% in the East Midlands and 7.9% of the UK population. The highest concentration of Black and Minority Ethnic groups is in Wellingborough – almost 10%, however the borough of Northampton is home to a large refugee community, approximately 3,500, with the majority being of Somali origin, but with many other pockets of refugee communities throughout the area such as Liberian and Zimbabwean. In addition, based on local information and recent research undertaken by the East Midlands Development Agency, there is a growing economic migrant population, particularly from Poland, with a high density of economic migrants in Corby, Daventry and Northampton.

The unemployment level is low at 3.6% although the average weekly earnings are below the national average as are qualifications and skill levels in the workforce.

In terms of measuring the sense of cohesion in Northamptonshire, overall the picture for the county based on the county council survey is a positive one, with recent BVPI survey results indicating that 80% of residents across the county feel that Northamptonshire is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. Compared with the mean national picture for all county council results where an average of 80.7% of people agree that people of different backgrounds got on well in their local area the picture is very similar and puts

Northamptonshire in the 3rd highest percentile of all county council survey results in the country in terms of satisfaction with community cohesion.

How cohesive an area is will depend upon a series of interacting factors about the area and people who live there. So the story of cohesion in each local area will be different. Improving cohesion is about addressing multiple issues at the same time. If cohesion is going to improve, local actions need to be taken to improve individuals' personal circumstances, to change individuals' perceptions and address area wide issues. This means we need to use other indicators such as:-

- Satisfaction with their local area as a place to live
- Perception measures on anti-social behaviour, physical spaces and the chance to participate.
- Deprivation and particular crime types are key to community cohesion
- Sense of belonging in communities
- Importance of race relations in their area
- Sense of being treated with respect and consideration
- Sense of loneliness
- Fear of hate incidents and hate crime
- Opportunities for educational attainment

Definition of Community Cohesion

Community cohesion is where there is a **“common vision and sense of belonging for all communities”** and where **“strong and positive relationships are developed”** underpins the county’s vision for a shared future for all of its residents.

In Northamptonshire we will aspire to:-

‘Building strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, schools and across the whole county’

The need to respect and value people’s different backgrounds and circumstances and the need for equality of opportunity and treatment are reinforced through this strategy. Importantly however this strategy also addresses the challenges of how to bring people together and encourage belonging.

There is an important distinction between Integration and Cohesion which is made by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion:

Integration “...is principally the process that ensures new residents and existing residents adapt to one another.”

Cohesion ‘...is principally the process that must happen in all communities to ensure different groups of people get on well together.’

The CIC suggests that an integrated and cohesive community is one where:

- There is a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and different communities to a future vision for a neighbourhood, city, region or country.
- There is a strong sense of an individual’s rights and responsibilities when living in a particular place – people know what everyone expects of them, and what they can expect in turn.
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, access to services and treatment
- There is a strong sense of trust in institutions locally to act fairly in arbitrating between different interests and for their role and justifications to be subject to public scrutiny
- There is a strong recognition of the contribution of both those who have newly arrived and those who already have the deep attachments to a particular place, with a focus on what they have in common
- There are strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and other institutions within neighbourhoods

Northamptonshire Shared Values

Northamptonshire wants to promote and develop community cohesion with existing and new communities, taking into account the changing demography of the county, particularly with the growth agenda and with the increasing numbers of economic migrants living in parts of the county such as Corby, Daventry and Northampton. This presents new challenges for both new and existing communities. In addition, we want to address gaps in local areas and communities who do not feel a sense of community cohesion or a sense of belonging and to raise awareness of geographical differences in rural and urban communities, different cultures and religions, race and ethnicity, disability, gender and sexual orientation. There is prejudice, discrimination, intolerance that exists within different communities and groups, defined by one or more of these factors. It is our responsibility to address all manifestations of prejudice and focus on the things that people share in common so that all people of Northamptonshire can live and work in harmony and safety based on respect and acceptance of difference.

In Northamptonshire we have agreed the following common shared values:-

Northamptonshire will be a county where:-

- There is mutual respect for all communities
- There is a collective pride in the county and in the different areas of the county where people live and work
- The county's diverse history, cultures and traditions are respected and understood
- Citizenship of Great Britain and Northamptonshire is promoted so that people are aware of their rights and responsibilities
- We develop a thriving economy and prosperous communities where every individual is able to realise their full potential
- All citizens have equal rights
- We promote dialogue and debate around the issues that most affect our communities and develop a shared future together
- Responsibility to each other transcends the differences between them, enabling a shared future for everyone
- Growth is managed effectively to avoid creation of Tension within communities

This strategy provides the basis for us all to share our understanding and raise awareness of community cohesion and develop our shared values. Promoting shared values is the responsibility of us all.

In developing our shared values, we recognise that:

- There is a need to value all communities, agencies, organisations and institutions working together.
- Community cohesion will take time and sustained effort.
- The work carried out to build community cohesion can be nurtured through project work and through organisations and partnerships active in the community.
- There must be adequate and sustained funding or support over the long term to build community cohesion.
- Research needs to be based on effective consultation with, and involvement of, local communities including those often harder to reach.
- Monitoring and evaluation systems are required to understand the current situation and to identify strategic objectives and funding priorities.
- Co-ordination and co-operation must inform all aspects of policy and practice.
- Discussion and debate are healthy and should be encouraged.
- Education, training and awareness-building are an effective challenge to historic prejudices and ignorance.
- Communities need to be empowered to challenge discrimination where they encounter it, as individuals and groups through effective advice support and representation.
- Statements relating to equal opportunities and diversity enshrine the values of community cohesion and provide a framework for policy formation.

Northamptonshire Community Cohesion framework

The LAA is the vehicle for commitment to, and delivery on, the community cohesion agenda. This overarching framework provides the context and priorities against which local community cohesion plans can be defined and developed to reflect local circumstances and address the main cohesion challenges that face the county and local areas. The LAA wants to ensure that communities in Northamptonshire are sustainable, along with being a county where people from different places and backgrounds can get on well together. Ownership of the community cohesion agenda by partnerships that understand both the make up of communities and the local needs will support this transition.

The Local Government White Paper ‘Strong and Prosperous Communities’ (Dept of Communities and Local Government, October 2006) sets out eight priorities to guide community cohesion. The CIC outlines four principles that should guide community cohesion in local areas.

These priorities form the basis of the community cohesion strategy delivery plan and will bring about the commitment and involvement of all our key partners in the public, voluntary, community and commercial sectors, through the county’s Local Area Agreement.

The Community Cohesion Framework for Northamptonshire

8 priorities outlined in White Paper	1. Leadership and Engagement	2. Developing shared Values	3. Prevent Problems of Tomorrow	4. Good Informa tion	5. Tackling Inequalities	6. Involving Young People	7. Interfaith Work	8. Partnership Working
4 principles outlined by CIC	Shared Futures – emphasising what binds communities together							
	A model of rights and responsibilities – clarifying a sense of citizenship and obligations for communities and individuals							
	Hospitality - a new emphasis on mutual respect and civility, fundamental to integration and cohesion							
	Visible Social Justice – a commitment to equality and to prioritise transparency and fairness							

- **Shared Futures - Local processes that distinguish one area from another, our shared values**

Developing a greater sense of cohesion in Northamptonshire for all our communities relies on all of us articulating what binds communities together – rather than concentrating on the differences that might divide them. To achieve this vision, we recognise the need for strong local leadership and democracy, whilst developing locally tailored approaches. We need to understand our communities better, mainstreaming cohesion policy in our service planning and delivery

- **Strengthened Rights and Responsibilities - Clarifying a sense of citizenship and obligations for communities and individuals**

In Northamptonshire we will move towards a clear understanding of rights and responsibilities that emphasises both a sense of citizenship and the obligations that go along with being a citizen or resident of Great Britain, for both individuals and groups. We need to consider how local people can be brought together to discuss their concerns, how to strengthen people’s sense of citizenship and how to support the integration of new communities and migrants to Northamptonshire.

- **Mutual Respect and Civility - Recognises the need for mutual hospitality and respect.**

This principle focuses on an ethics of hospitality. The pace of change brought about through growth in the county means that the makeup of local communities is rapidly changing. Therefore, mutual respect and civility become fundamental to promoting integration and cohesion in Northamptonshire. Across Northamptonshire we need to support the growth agenda, continue to work with our partners to tackle anti-social behaviour and crimes, work with all communities, monitor and respond to community tensions or hate crimes, undertake community development and intergenerational work and continue to work with young people.

- **Visible Social Justice - Highlights the need for trust in institutions to act fairly and to be called to account**

Throughout the county there needs to be a strong commitment to equality alongside the need to prioritise transparency and fairness. We need to aim towards ensuring that communities and individuals have complete trust in our organisations to treat people fairly and arbitrate fairly between groups.

The role of elected members as community leaders is important. The new duties under the emerging Single Equality Act within the Police Justice Act for ‘Community Call for Action’ should be actively promoted by LAA partners

This will require partners to tackle myths, engage the local media, collect and share our data far better between us.

Strategic Objectives for the Community Cohesion Strategy

The strategic objectives are linked directly to the White Paper priorities for community cohesion as set out within this community cohesion framework.

Leadership and Engagement

Strategic Objective 1 – developing effective leadership and engagement to support the implementation of the county community cohesion strategy

A Community Cohesion leadership group will be formed, supported by the LAA Community Cohesion Strategy Group, made up of the Chair of the LAA Board, the Chief Constable, the Chief Executive of the County Council and faith leaders who will oversee and champion the delivery of this strategy, provide one united voice on community cohesion in Northamptonshire. and particularly to:-

To ensure that we develop a shared futures agenda for the county – emphasising what binds communities together.

We develop a model of rights and responsibilities – clarifying a sense of citizenship and obligations for communities and individual

Hospitality - we develop mutual respect and civility, fundamental to integration and cohesion

Visible Social Justice – we make a clear commitment to equality and to prioritise transparency and fairness

This will be achieved through:

- Implementing a Community Cohesion Framework and Strategy through the Local Area Agreement.
- Awareness raising of community cohesion and activity and link to the new Community Call for Action and local engagement with communities.
- Mapping and understanding our communities to have a better understanding of the changing demography across Northamptonshire.
- Establishing a community cohesion standing conference and annual awards ceremony.
- Promoting a positive communications and myth-busting strategies and develop effective relations with the media in promoting positive messages.
- Working with the media to increase understanding of community cohesion in Northamptonshire.
- Enhancing the role of British citizenship ceremonies and encouraging citizenship through schools
- Mainstreaming issues of integration and cohesion into the county's Sustainable Communities Strategy
- Developing and improving diversity through workforce strategies

Strategic Objective 1.1 - To develop an LAA Community Engagement strategy linked to the Community Cohesion strategy

We will work with our partners to maximise engagement with all sectors of the communities, particularly those traditionally marginalized and those harder to reach. Through targeted activity we aim to bring about greater understanding of difference among all sectors of communities.

This will be achieved through:

- Trying to pool and align resources of partner agencies to develop cohesive community engagement structures and methodologies.
- Building on the work of the voluntary and community sector fora across the county to engage local communities
- Engaging with the media in promoting dialogue and debate
- Providing information and communication to enable communities to influence decision making

Developing Shared Values

Strategic Objective 2 - To promote the agreed shared values presented in this strategy through the wider community cohesion engagement and communication strategies and through engagement with the media.

The shared values will need to be agreed by partners and actively promoted by the Community Cohesion Leadership Group.

This will be achieved through:-

- A statement of shared values will be promoted through all LAA activity
- Holding an annual community cohesion standing conference to assess progress
- All LAA partners promoting these values within their organisations

Preventing Problems of Tomorrow

Strategic Objective 3 - To develop good leadership in local communities with a clear understanding of local problems, tensions and causes of concern within different communities to prevent the manifestation of major issues at a future date.

Daily experiences of community cohesion at a local level are often the result – albeit subtly on occasions – of changes in global factors such as the world economy, politics. There is a global flow of money, people and information and the changes in our communities along with our own experiences therefore have a strong influence on our views of integration and cohesion within our neighbourhoods. To prevent problems of tomorrow we need to become increasingly comfortable with these changes and feel committed to being good neighbours and active citizens.

This will be achieved through:

- Developing a multi-agency procedure for monitoring community tensions, linked to GOEM and hold initial meeting of Community Tensions Monitoring Group (ICoCO good practice)
- Identifying “hotspots” of tension through work with the ComPass Unit and develop actions to support these areas
- A need to support conflict resolution in communities and neighbourhoods where tensions are known to exist. We will develop good knowledge of local circumstances.
- Working with local elected members to act as local champions and provide local community leadership for community cohesion.
- The Third sector working through its growing networks and fora to support community cohesion action in local areas.
- A plan for how Northamptonshire will react in the event of a crisis will be developed, by the Community Leadership Group. A united public service voice on extreme acts, threats of violence or hate crime will help to reinforce the message that Northamptonshire will not tolerate any form of extremism.

Good Information

Strategic Objective 4 - To develop good information including recording, collating, monitoring and sharing of both hard and soft information between agencies and neighbourhoods

Challenges that we face to integration and cohesion are usually local in their characteristics, so requiring local solutions. The challenges and solutions can only be understood through the sharing of good quality information and the shared planning of initiatives across the county.

This will be achieved through:

- The Compass Unit facilitating the provision of information and developing mechanisms for gathering community intelligence.
- The Safer Communities Teams being able to play an important role in gathering local information
- Linking with the Community Engagement Strategy and this Strategy to ensure we share local information.
- Monitoring BVPI cohesion performance indicators and developing locally specific indicators
- All partners auditing opportunities for inter-cultural activity and develop funding strategies to promote intercultural dialogue
- LAA Performance management systems being utilised to demonstrate progress against community targets and assess outcomes.

Visible work to tackle inequalities

Strategic Objective 5 - We will work with all LAA partners to aim to achieve standards for equality measured through the Equality Standard and that we meet responsibilities under the Single Equalities Act. We will also implement the BME and New Arrivals Integration Strategy

In Northamptonshire we are committed to equal and fair treatment for all of our residents, with a focus on ensuring transparency and fairness in the delivery of the range of services provided by all LAA partners. This particular priority is underpinned by the principle of visible social justice which emphasises issues such as the perception among communities of fairness in the allocation of resources, the need for all to share in the benefits of economic prosperity and a sense of equality and fairness for all groups.

This will be achieved through:

- Agencies signing up to delivering against the Equality Standard to achieve consistency across the county and amongst agencies.
- Equality Impact assessments being undertaken on the LAA 2 delivery plan and actions agreed
- Equality Impacts being made against all future policies agreed by the LAA Board
- Addressing substantive issues being experienced by both majority and minority communities e.g. deprivation, or underachievement
- Appropriately targeting investment in equality and community cohesion based work through the Third Sector and ensuring all funded Third Sector organisations demonstrate commitment to meeting equality outcomes
- Rebalancing communications to include all residents
- Scrutinising the above effectively through appropriate structures backed up by strong local data and intelligence.
- Publishing BME and New Arrivals Integration Strategy widely throughout county to raise awareness of integration priorities, the framework for activity, the structure for delivering support and the links to local areas throughout the county.
- Raising importance and value of citizenship ceremonies
- Developing welcome packs for new arrivals to assist integration.
- Working to dispel myths and misconceptions about the generality of migrants, developing good relations with the press.

Involving Young People

Strategic Objective 6 - To involve young people in promoting community cohesion and in developing effective leaders for the future

Research undertaken by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC) highlighted that tensions between young people in local communities are often the early indicators of wider community unease. We will work through the Children and Young Peoples' Partnerships (the county's Children's Trust) to promote community cohesion involving young people. In Northamptonshire we need to consider our provision for young people across the county and the investment needed to deliver longer-term benefits much wider than integration and cohesion. We need to ensure that all young people are engaged in education, training and employment, particularly those most at risk of social exclusion.

Young people should be empowered to decide themselves on the activities they undertake, and to develop open and trusting relationships with adults. This will also support intergenerational activity and understanding. Engaging with young people now provides the opportunity to engage with the leaders of the future.

This will be achieved through:-

- Engaging the Children and Young People Partnerships to develop or align programmes promoting young people and their contribution to community cohesion.
- Schools now having a new duty placed on them to promote community cohesion. Schools should play an important role in helping young people to celebrate diversity and in bringing together people from different communities, often through out-of-school hours learning activities such as sports, arts and music. Putting this duty into practice and monitoring its progress.

The final strategy, following consultation with the CYP will identify the programmes we will promote.

Inter-faith Work

Strategic Objective 7 - To develop a countywide Faith Community Leadership to support community cohesion

Faith groups help to build integration and cohesion through their community buildings and leaders, and through their support for projects and networks. Northamptonshire's faith groups are many and diverse. For some people faith groups may offer the only vehicle by which they engage with others outside of their family and friends. Inter-faith initiatives can bring people together to learn more about other people's faiths and provide a helpful framework for promoting understanding and co-operation between them. Faith groups can also provide a channel for consultation and communication between local authorities and other bodies, giving the opportunity to ensure that new initiatives and policies reflect the needs of the differing faith communities in the area.

This will be achieved through:

- Developing a countywide Faith Community Leadership Group to support community cohesion leadership in the county.
- Developing local faith forums that can promote multi-faith activities and raise the profile of the faith communities' contribution to community cohesion.
- Promoting inter-faith dialogue and a strong voice for faith communities in the changing profile of Northamptonshire.
- Supporting the Countywide Faith Forum Development in Northamptonshire. We are consulting with faith groups in the county to look at their capacity, needs and resources to continue working with the cohesion agenda for the county.

The final strategy will define in greater details the role of this forum and the resources required.

Partnership Working

Strategic Objective 8 - To develop a shared level of understanding of the importance of the cohesion agenda among all LAA partners, shared commitment to achieving the identified outcomes developed through shared working, and shared responsibility to ensuring synchronicity between the overarching framework and other action plans.

The LAA Community Cohesion Strategy Group will support the implementation of this strategy. The final strategy will outline the level of partnership resources available and deployed to support implementation.

This will be achieved through:

- **Community cohesion and employment**

Community cohesion is supported when individuals and communities have access to local employment opportunities. Any effective community cohesion strategy should focus on outlining effective ways to achieve increased employability of local people, to improve relationships between people whilst at work and improving the work-life balance. Local employers are key to local community cohesion initiatives but they may need help and guidance to understand the links between the community and the workplace. This can be provided in the form of guidelines for building a cohesive workplace.

We will agree with NEL how they will support this strategy. The final strategy will outline agreed actions.

- **Community cohesion and education**

New duty to promote CC

Education is a key factor when considering community cohesion initiatives. Local children and adults need programmes that will fulfil their potential. Exclusion from educational processes, linked with poverty and unemployment frequently have a generational impact, with long-term implications for community cohesion and stability.

The new duty on schools to promote community cohesion will mean:-

Successful educational planning which promotes community cohesion must ensure equality of access, celebrate diversity and recognise the needs of individual learners within a wider framework of meeting the needs of the employment market. In addition, all public bodies, including schools and colleges, should have due regard to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 which, among other responsibilities, places a duty on institutions to promote equality of opportunity.

We will agree with the Education Service how they will support this strategy. The final strategy will outline agreed actions.

- **Community cohesion and housing**

Housing is an important specialist area to consider when developing community cohesion initiatives. Individuals and families need adequate, affordable and accessible housing if they are to develop a sense of belonging and community. A greater supply of social housing needs to be accessible for those with disability and impairment.

Community cohesion needs to be integrated into all housing planning. For example, when planners are considering the demolition of buildings or the building of new homes, they need to be aware of the impact on community cohesion and perception over who is to benefit from new housing developments. Opportunities for encouraging community cohesion through housing development should be built into all planning.

Working with the two growth delivery vehicles, establish a plan and resources to support community cohesion through the county's growth agenda.

To ensure that the plan supports existing and new communities

We will agree with the 2 growth delivery vehicles (WNDC and NNDC) and the Housing authorities how they will support this strategy. The final strategy will outline agreed actions.

- **Community cohesion and health**

The quality of people's lives impacts directly on their ability to be an active member of the community. Indeed, inequalities in access to health services are directly linked to levels of community cohesion. It is therefore essential that health workers and PCTs are included in any effective community cohesion strategy.

Healthy, sustainable and cohesive communities require NHS organisations to develop joint approaches with local and regional government departments as well as working across traditional boundaries to include the voluntary and community sector. Tackling deprivation and social exclusion requires cross-sector co-ordination and the seamless integration of planning, commissioning and delivery of new services and infrastructures.

Central Government proposes that achieving community cohesion by tackling health inequalities first requires research into clarifying the local relationship between community cohesion and health. There are three established tools developed to carry out this mapping process: the Health Needs Assessment, the Health Impact Assessment and the Integrated Impact Assessment.

We will agree with the Health Services how they will support this strategy. The final strategy will outline agreed actions.

- **Community cohesion and community safety**

The ability of local areas to develop a sense of community cohesion is directly related to the levels of safety perceived and experienced by individuals and groups; much of community cohesion is about reducing tension between groups and individuals. Therefore, an effective community cohesion strategy should be developed in close consultation with the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. The work of the countywide Hate Crimes Forum is being developed and LAA hate crime targets will be agreed by April 2008.

We will agree with the CDRPs how they will support this strategy. The final strategy will outline agreed actions.

- **Community cohesion and advice, information and support**

Local communities need to be able to access high quality, timely and effective advice services in order to build confidence in the role of the legal framework supporting them. Advice and information services should exist for all sectors of every community. The advice provision should include services and support which enable all communities to have confidence that their concerns will be given full recognition and managed carefully.

We will agree with the Advice Agencies in the county how they will support this strategy. The final strategy will outline agreed actions.