



North Shropshire District Council

By using their LA21 Strategy as a basis for the North Shropshire Community Strategy, North Shropshire District Council and its partners aim to ensure sustainability underpins the whole strategy.

By the time North Shropshire started to develop their LA21 strategy, the guidance on community strategies had been published. This meant they were able to structure the LA21 strategy in a way that would be compatible with their subsequent community strategy, and carry out a single public consultation exercise. The community strategy was subsequently finalised in October 2002.

The North Shropshire Community Strategy is based on 14 topic areas identified by the LA21 process, with a strong sustainability theme embedded in each. Other main themes are accessibility, innovation and equality. The topic areas are arranged across four pillars or themes common to community strategy development across Shropshire. Priorities for each topic area were chosen through consultation with a variety of local groups, and subsequent annual 'Rainbow Events' for stakeholders have identified ways forward for these priorities. Each priority has to be systematically analysed for its sustainability considerations. For example, under the housing topic, a key priority is 'Bringing empty properties back into productive use.' Partners therefore have to assess whether it is desirable to do this in particular settlements because of the travel impact, what use can be made of local building materials, the impact on green spaces, etc, and agree and carry out actions that will lead to tangible outcomes.

A core group of partners that had been closely involved in developing the LA21 strategy into the community strategy now forms the basis of the local strategic partnership, which was created in January 2003. The partners include representatives from the voluntary, community and youth sector, as well as statutory agencies. The steering group comprises representatives for each of the four pillars or themes, which are community, economy, environment, and lifelong learning. The local authority's Director of Planning Services and Head of Environmental Services lead on the environment pillar at present. As with the other cross-cutting themes of equality, etc, the LSP aims instead to ensure that sustainability is given its broadest interpretation through mainstreaming it into each topic area. Other organisations are involved in the community strategy through the pillars and the task groups for the handful of priorities taken forward each year. The LSP, through its Steering Group, aims to ensure that sustainability is retained as the overarching principle, and that this emphasis will match that given to sustainability in the community consultations. The LSP will now be carrying out



further development work with the public, particularly through parish plans and other community-based planning mechanisms.

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