

COMMUNITIES STRATEGY 2017-2020

Report of the Chief Officer for Communities, Public Health, Environment & Prosperity

This report presents the Communities Strategy for Devon County Council

The Strategy can be summarised as follows

1. This Strategy is our vision for the development, over the next three years, of communities in Devon: “Flourishing people and communities that are strong, kind, compassionate and safe.” It supports and strengthens other Council and partnership strategies with the overall aim for Devon to be a place where everyone can live their life well.
 - 1.1 The Communities Strategy is based on a wide range of input from the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, community surveys, localised data, the latest research nationally and the Council’s own experience and expertise in working with communities.
 - 1.2 It is not meant to be a definitive or final piece of work. The complex, multi-layered, every changing and diverse character of communities means that this is best seen as a starting point for a longer journey to improve how we can support communities and their citizens to flourish, be strong, safe and resilient.
 - 1.3 The Council hosted a “Communities in Control” workshop on 31 October which enabled a range of people with an interest in the Strategy to begin to explore and develop some of the detail. A summary of the outcomes of the workshop will be available at www.devon.gov.uk/communities. There are many more people and groups we need to speak with and work with in order to achieve this vision. We will continue to have these conversations and this will inform and develop the strategy and its implementation plan.
 - 1.4 The strategy is underpinned, in part, by a Needs Assessment. This needs assessment identified key areas that should be focussed on in order to develop communities and their capacity to flourish. A summary of these findings is included in the 7 Action Areas within the strategy.
 - 1.5 This strategy also outlines the four core principles by which we will undertake this work. These are explained and a short ‘pen-picture’ of what this might look like.
 - 1.6 This strategy has had input from the Equality Reference Group.
2. Behind this strategy is a desire for a more asset-based, collaborative approach that seeks to better connect communities and those who need help, to give communities greater say in meeting their needs and ambitions and to find more effective ways to work in order to meet some of the big challenges of the future. By helping communities become more cohesive and to help unlock their ability to support themselves in a more kind and compassionate context we hope to see our all our communities flourish.
3. The strategy will also help inform how the Council, and its services, can develop ways of working with communities to develop different approaches and services and potentially explore a different local infrastructure to deliver and resource them.