

## **Darlington Partnership**

# **Introduction to One Darlington : Perfectly Placed Delivery Plan 2008 – 2011**



## Introduction

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#### Introduction

This is the first Delivery Plan for One Darlington: Perfectly Placed, the Sustainable Community Strategy, which was published in July 2008.

The Themed Groups of Darlington Partnership, and a wide range of partners, have developed this Delivery Plan to take forward the Sustainable Community Strategy for Darlington. We have built on the experience of successfully delivering the previous Community Strategy from 2003 and the pilot Local Area Agreement from 2006.

The Delivery Plan is in seven separate parts which are:

- 1) This Introduction
- 2) Aspiring Darlington Delivery Plan
- 3) Greener Darlington Delivery Plan
- 4) Healthy Darlington Delivery Plan
- 5) Prosperous Darlington Delivery Plan
- 6) Safer Darlington Delivery Plan
- 7) Achievability Templates

Each of the Themed Group delivery plans are regularly updated in order to reflect progress made and the evolving nature of the practical implementation of One Darlington : Perfectly Placed.

Further information and the latest version of delivery plans, Achievability templates and information on performance can be on the Darlington Partnership website [www.darlington.org.uk](http://www.darlington.org.uk) and the Darlington Borough Council website [www.darlington.gov.uk](http://www.darlington.gov.uk).

## Introduction

### **One Darlington: Perfectly Placed – the Sustainable Community Strategy**

One Darlington: Perfectly Placed, the overall plan for Darlington up to 2021. It is about both the people and the place. It is concerned with preserving and strengthening all that is good about life in Darlington, whilst tackling what needs to be improved to build a better quality of life for everyone in the borough community.

It sets out a vision for the future that reflects your views on what is precious about the borough, and on what could be better. It is about supporting your hopes and aspirations, about the wellbeing of your community, and ultimately about your happiness and fulfilment as a citizen of Darlington.

Darlington Partnership has led the preparation of the vision and the plan for turning it into reality, and partnership will be the key to its delivery. The plan is a framework for action by the whole community. Whilst the big organisations, like the Council, NHS and Police, will have a major role in delivering improvements, much of what we want – a strong borough-wide community that is both diverse and cohesive, vibrant and caring – is about us as individual citizens being able to pursue our diverse aspirations, live active, confident lives, make the choices that are right for us and have opportunities to participate in many different ways in the life of the community.

The Third Sector is already strong in Darlington, and the infrastructure organisations, community groups, voluntary organisations and faith groups are best placed to lead and support many aspects of this vision, whilst individuals will also play their part through their volunteering activities.

The business community, as well, has a major part to play in building a stronger economy and the increased prosperity that will be the bedrock of much that we want to create for our community and our citizens.

Darlington has a great history of innovation, partnership and community life, and this vision seeks to carry that spirit forward into the future. We will measure success by what we create and deliver, but we will achieve it by what we all contribute as a community.

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### Two Priorities: One Darlington

One Darlington: Perfectly Placed has two priorities from which the strategy takes its title. These are:

#### One Darlington

**The One Darlington priority carries forward the vision as it relates to people, and it therefore has many strands, including:**

- Tackling deprivation wherever it exists, narrowing the gaps in life chances across the borough, and focusing on reducing inequality for the most deprived and disadvantaged
- Nurturing a strong, vibrant and cohesive borough-wide community, with shared values of respect and caring for others
- Making sure that residents in the villages and countryside can share in the sense of being part of a borough-wide community
- Valuing diversity – recognising that a cohesive community doesn't mean everyone being the same; supporting and empowering everyone to develop and pursue their true aspirations and make the life choices that are right for them as individuals, whilst honouring the values of respect and caring for others
- Making sure that groups of people who may be at risk of discrimination or disadvantage are included in the community, with equality of opportunity and access to services
- Linked to the above, protecting vulnerable people, ranging from individual victims of domestic violence to whole groups or communities at risk of abuse and violence
- Valuing each person for who they are, throughout their lives, and recognising and valuing what each offers and contributes to the community as well as what each needs
- Encouraging and opening up opportunities for people to volunteer their skills, experience and willingness for the benefit of the community, and generally to build-up social capital in the borough
- Regarding the happiness, fulfilment and wellbeing of individuals as a legitimate concern for the community as a whole, and doing what is possible to support individuals to enjoy their lives and achieve wholeness and mental well-being.

**The One Darlington priority is about bringing all of these perspectives on individual and community wellbeing to bear on the programmes and actions developed across all the delivery themes set out in the next section of the plan.**

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### Two Priorities: Perfectly Placed

#### Perfectly Placed

As with the One Darlington priority, Perfectly Placed embraces several strands, recognising the strong physical qualities and assets that Darlington exhibits, and the need to preserve and strengthen these characteristics. They include:

- Looking after the vibrant, attractive town centre, as a place that people like to visit and where they feel safe and comfortable, whilst working to enhance the shopping and leisure experience on offer
- Using Darlington's distinctive character to develop an identity for promoting the borough nationally and internationally as an investment and visitor location
- Continuing to exploit Darlington's assets of location, accessibility and quality of life to attract businesses to relocate into the borough
- Maintaining and enhancing the cultural life of the borough, making the most of the excellent established arts facilities and programmes and looking for opportunities to develop and enrich them
- Exploring the opportunity to develop and promote Darlington as a University town, and to potentially exploit that development to strengthen Darlington's economy, cultural offer and overall quality of life – this development is too recent to have been discussed in the consultation on this plan, but its potential economic, educational and cultural benefits should be examined
- Making the most of Darlington's excellent transport links, both outwards into the region, the rest of the country and into Europe, and within the borough to provide good accessibility, travel safety and choice of transport modes for everyone
- Recognising that most people like the size, and the layout, of both the town and the borough – big enough to provide good employment, shopping and leisure facilities, small enough for easy accessibility and to be easily 'understood'; whilst facilities and quality of life can be further improved with new infrastructure, most residents would not want their town or their village to get significantly bigger.
- Combined with the above, preserving Darlington's friendly market town character
- Reinforcing the local housing market, which provides a broad choice of accommodation in a diverse range of neighbourhoods, by increasing the supply and range of affordable housing in response to the significant increases in prices in recent years, and the impact of rising prices in a low wage economy

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### Two Priorities: Perfectly Placed (continued)

- Continuing the successful programmes of recent years to build a stronger economy that now has the lowest unemployment rate in the region and is attractive to inward investors, by attracting high quality jobs and raising average wage levels
- Continuing the programme to provide new and revitalised school buildings across the borough, to complement the established range of good schools and provide high quality learning environments for all children
- Learning from the best examples of new development in the borough, like West Park, to develop sustainable neighbourhoods with a good range of local facilities and transport links to the town centre and employment areas
- Valuing and reinforcing Darlington's excellent green infrastructure of parks, open spaces, green corridors and countryside features like ponds, hedgerows and woodland, combined with good public access for recreation

**The challenge under the Perfectly Placed priority is to bring about the development and improvements that Darlington needs, in order to tackle deprivation and provide opportunities for a good quality of life for everybody, whilst preserving and strengthening the scale and character and sense of place that people value so much.**

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## Structures of Delivery

Responsibility for overseeing delivery of this action plan rests with Darlington Partnership, the Local Strategic Partnership for Darlington. The five themed groups are responsible for the monitoring and performance as well as the actual delivery of each of the actions listed in its own section.

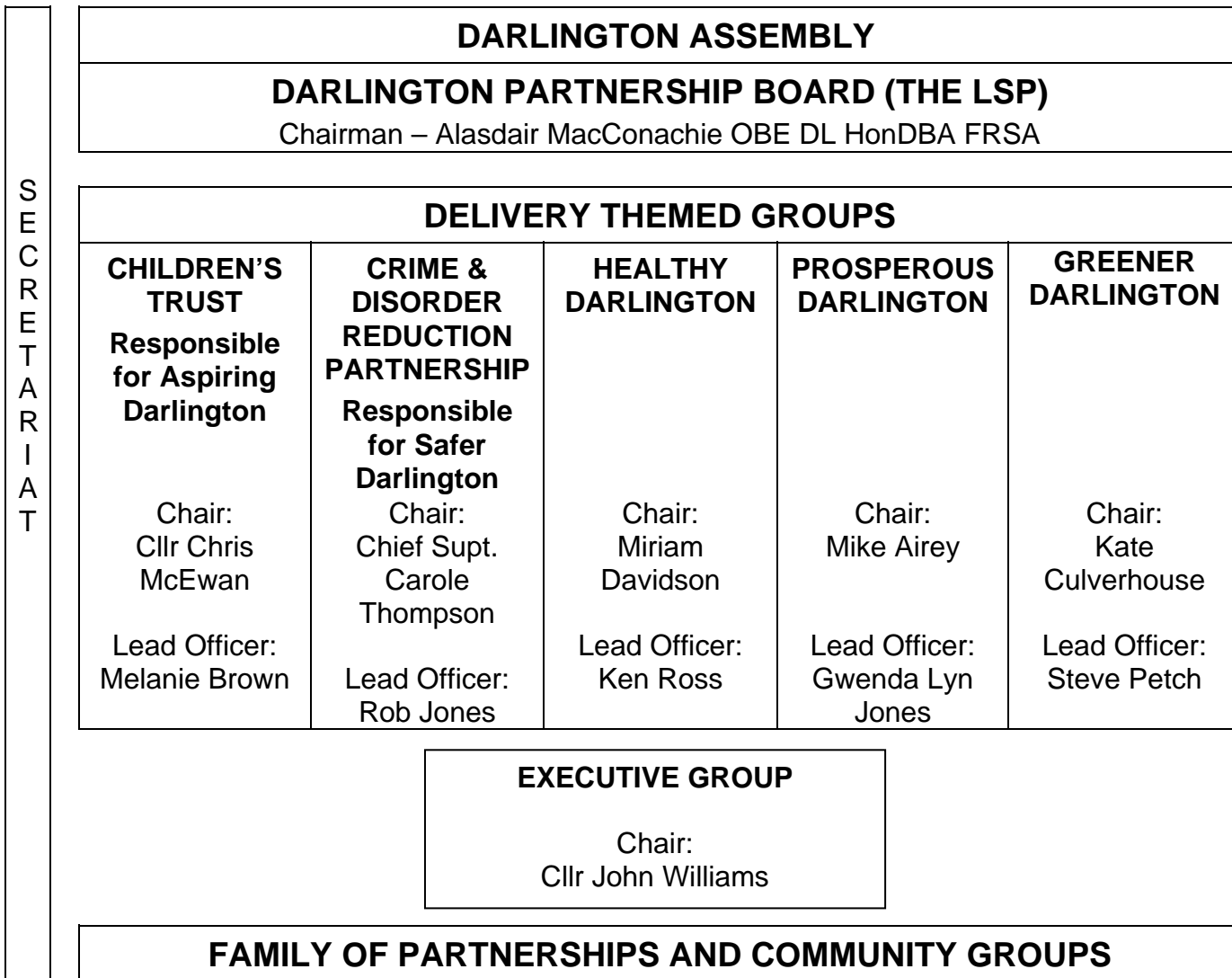
Darlington Partnership brings together the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to oversee implementation of the Community Strategy. Darlington Partnership is not a service delivery organisation, rather it is the facilitator and co-ordinator of actions to deliver the challenging goals contained in the Sustainable Community Strategy and this Delivery Plan.

### Five Delivery Themes

Five themes for organising and delivering improvement actions have been identified which are:

- Prosperous Darlington – focused on creating a vibrant economy and prosperity for all, recognising the quality of life that makes Darlington perfectly placed
- Aspiring Darlington – enabling people to develop and achieve their aspirations, and to maximise their potential
- Healthy Darlington – improving health and well-being for everybody, irrespective of social, economic and environmental constraints
- Greener Darlington – ensuring an attractive and ‘liveable’ local environment, and contributing to tackling global environmental challenges
- Safer Darlington – creating a safer and more cohesive Darlington.

The diagram below shows the structure of Darlington Partnership, which has been designed with its core function in mind. This structure will be kept under review to ensure that it is successful in facilitating delivery. This structure was approved by the Board in May 2008 and Delivery Themes are now fully operational.



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## Measuring Progress

There are now 198 national performance indicators which government will use to measure progress in every area. It is around this set of indicators that the performance management of One Darlington: Perfectly Placed is framed by using the following hierarchy:

- **SCS Targets:** three long-term national indicators allocated to each delivery theme (15 in all) that we will measure progress against until 2021;
- **One Darlington:** a set of indicators which describe our progress against our first priority, One Darlington. These are a suite of 25 indicators taken from the full set of 198 that can be measured at a local level and give a comparison of how we are narrowing the gap between different parts of the borough;
- **Perfectly Placed:** a set of key development projects that define progress against our second priority Perfectly Placed – this is not using national indicators but update reports on progress of key development projects within the borough;
- **The Local Area Agreement:** a set of 35 indicators agreed with government as our local area agreement (LAA) for the years 2008-11. The LAA indicators are seen as the focus for delivery planning and achieving change in areas of highest priority. Each delivery theme has a number of LAA indicators allocated to them and is then responsible for developing a plan that will directly influence better performance against the agreed targets. In order to do this they carry out a detailed achievability test for each indicator which is reported within each Delivery Plan as well as the planned interventions to improve performance;
- **Statutory Indicators:** an additional set of 16 indicators that are a statutory requirement as priorities in the LAA;
- **Additional Local Indicators:** an additional set of indicators that are not agreed with government but that we regard as being local priorities (there are none in Darlington for 2008-09);
- **National Indicators:** the remaining 147 national indicators. These will also be measured and reported to government although are not of the same significance as the 35 in the LAA. Delivery theme lead officers will be mindful of progress against these targets in case they show emerging areas of concern in Darlington.

Reporting on these indicators will take place quarterly with individual delivery theme progress being reported to each group in a standardised format. Some Themed Groups may have already developed other reporting mechanisms which may also continue to meet the expectations of individual partners – these will also continue if necessary.

The Executive Group and LSP will receive quarterly performance reports on progress of all levels of indicators.

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## Reporting Progress

The delivery and progress of One Darlington: Perfectly Placed will be reported in a number of ways including:

- Press reports
- Articles in Town Crier
- E-Bulletin to partners after every LSP meeting focusing on areas of activity that need their support
- Twice yearly reporting to Darlington Assembly
- Public reporting at DBC Scrutiny Committees
- Annual report to the Audit Commission
- Written reports to Darlington Partnership Board
- Published reports on the Darlington partnership and Darlington Borough Council websites

Focused activity will take place to ensure hard to reach groups receive information and are engaged in the process of delivery. This will include ensuring that Community partnerships are kept apprised of activity and issues as well as Youth Parliament, Older Persons Partnership Board, Interfaith Network, Multi-Cultural Liaison Group, Learning Disabilities Partnership Board, Disability Forum and Gay Advice Darlington. Discussion and reports will also be made as requested at Talking Together events across the borough.

Representatives of Darlington Partnership are always willing to attend or speak at meetings to discuss the performance and delivery plans.

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### Cross Cutting Projects

There are a range of strategic issues and practical projects that do not fit easily into any one delivery theme

In order to address these issues there needs to be a uniform approach adopted in order to manage each and so ensure positive outcomes are being delivered. A three stage process is used to identify which of projects need a higher level of scrutiny than others:

- Stage 1) Agree which issues cut across more than one delivery theme rather than being the main responsibility of one theme with small input from others;
- Stage 2) Assess that mechanisms are in place for co-ordination of resources and delivery of positive outcomes through an achievability analysis;
- Stage 3) The Executive Group takes a leadership role in those cases that meet the first criteria but fail the second to ensure that positive outcomes are being delivered.

The list of projects that meet the first criteria are itemised below. Achievability analysis for these projects will be reported alongside the LAA Achievability templates at the back of this document.

1. Tackling Child Poverty
2. Reducing the Impact of Alcohol
3. Obesity, Exercise and Healthy Eating
4. Well-Being and Improved Mental Health
5. Tackling Domestic Abuse
6. Identifying and Developing Skills needs for the future
7. Teenage Pregnancy
8. Support for newly unemployed
9. Low Carbon Borough

**Contact Details**

For further details on Darlington's Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement or the work of Darlington Partnership generally please contact:

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