

The Big Picture in South Yorkshire

Extracts from Area Assessments

An event for voluntary and community groups was held on the 8th February 2010 at St Mary's Community centre, Sheffield to explore what the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) results say about empowerment and engagement in **Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield**.

The event was organised by the Yorkshire & Humber Regional Forum and the Regional Empowerment Partnership

The extracts from the 2009 Area Assessments for each locality were presented at the meeting and reproduced below.

Full details can be found at

<http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/Pages/default.aspx>



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The Big Picture in South Yorkshire: Extracts from the 2009 Area Assessment for Barnsley

Around 224,600 people live in the Barnsley district, and this number is increasing. Barnsley, an historic market town, is the main urban centre surrounded by a number of smaller communities. The rural area to the west is very different to the more built-up and industrial areas to the east. Most people come from a white, working class background whose roots are in coal mining. The dependence on 'King Coal' has produced a culture where aspiration, ambition and enterprise have not been the norm. This has led to low levels of business activity and many children who get poorer results at school. It has created communities which are very stable but which now face a lot of uncertainty and change.

NI 1 % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area

65.1% in the worst 10%

NI 2 % of people who feel they belong to their local neighbourhood

62.1 % in the best 20%

NI 3 % of residents involved in civic participation in the local area

11.6 % in the worst 20%

NI 4 % of residents who agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area

25.4% in the worst 20%

NI 5 overall/general satisfaction with local area

76.1 % average

NI 6 % of residents participating in regular volunteering

18.3% in the worst 20%

NI 7 environment for a thriving third sector

13.5% in the worst 25%

How well do the priorities for Barnsley express community needs and aspirations?

The biggest challenge for Barnsley is to improve the economy and with it the aspirations and prospects of local people. The collapse of the mining industry in the late 1990s had a massive effect. It meant the loss of 20,000 jobs from the industry itself and a similar number of jobs that were linked to it. It also meant the loss of the 'glue' which held many communities together.

In many parts of the borough, incomes are low. People can't always afford a decent home, they don't live as long as in other parts of the country and their overall health is poor. Many children get poorer results at school which means their opportunities later on are limited.

Local public services are well aware of the challenges. They have a clear plan, with an agreed set of priorities and targets from now until 2011. Their aim is to tackle the big issues of poverty and deprivation and to make sure people can get the services they need. The plan could be improved by explaining what improvements people can expect to see beyond 2011.

The plan recognises that people's needs vary depending on their circumstances and their background. Partners understand some of their communities well, but some sectors of the population are at risk of being left out. Partners must talk more with some specific groups such as those from ethnic minorities. Public service partners also need to share their knowledge better to guide their decisions and decide how best to use their resources.

People in some areas like Kendray have had a big say in planning for their area. But this is not the case everywhere. Partners know they are not always so good at giving everyone a voice in what is needed or how services should be provided. They are therefore changing the way they work to make it easier for people to influence decisions that affect them.

Partners work well together. Their work is paying off in some areas, for instance in reducing crime and helping vulnerable people choose services that suit their needs. They have recently changed the way they hold one another to account for performance. This gives more confidence that they will deliver on their priorities and improve results for the borough.

Community spirit and diversity

People in Barnsley are less likely than in many other places to think that people from different backgrounds get on well together. Partners know the issues and have plans to tackle them by working closely with local people. They need to be clearer about what they want to achieve and need clear targets to help them do this.

According to the recent Place Survey of local people, less than two thirds of Barnsley residents think people from different backgrounds get on well

together. This is lower than most other parts of the country. Results for some of Barnsley's more deprived neighbourhoods are even lower.

Typically, this is due to a number of things. People who come from poorer backgrounds have faced considerable change through the loss of traditional jobs. Work and education prospects are poor for many people, and the make-up of communities has changed in recent years as more people have moved there from other places in the UK and abroad.

Partners are determined to improve these results and have recognised they need to do things differently in order to do so. They know they need to work more closely with local people and to have a more open and honest debate about what people see as threats and which aspects of change worry them.

Partners know they must support communities to get on well with each other and also take account of other concerns such as poverty, unemployment and health. They have taken steps to better understand the make-up of different parts of the borough and what their different needs are. They know that problems are not necessarily race-related. They have worked well with the small Muslim minority in the borough and are concerned that any problem of violent extremism is more likely to come from the far right.

Partners have worked closely with local people to improve life in some neighbourhoods affected by poverty and low employment - factors which can influence how people feel about themselves and others. In Kendray people now have better homes, crime has fallen, children are achieving better results at school and people are generally more satisfied with the area. Almost half of the residents in Kendray said they knew most or many of the people in their neighbourhood. This is much better than areas in other parts of the country where similar work has been done. They also felt they were more in control by being able to influence the local organisations that were working with them.

Similar schemes are being planned in other parts of the borough, based on what has been learnt from these 'pathfinder' projects. Community involvement was key to success, and many activities can be kept going by local people working as volunteers. This keeps costs low which is important because money is tight. Partners will need to make sure that people know how much investment they can expect in their area and show how these decisions represent a fair deal for everyone.

The Big Picture in South Yorkshire: Extracts from the 2009 Area Assessment for Doncaster

291,100 people live in the large town of Doncaster itself and its neighbouring towns and villages, surrounded by wide areas of countryside. 3.5 per cent of the population are from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds, with some 4,000 gypsy and traveller residents and approximately 1,000 new migrants.

NI 1 % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area

69.3% in the worst 20%

NI 2 % of people who feel they belong to their local neighbourhood

57.1% average

NI 3 % of residents involved in civic participation in the local area

12.3% in the worst third

NI 4 % of residents who agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area

22.1% in the worst 5%

NI 5 overall/general satisfaction with local area

77.4% average

NI 6 % of residents participating in regular volunteering

19.6% in the worst third

NI 7 environment for a thriving third sector

15.5% average

People are less well off than many other parts of the country, unemployment is higher and has been rising, and the health of the population is generally worse. This means greater pressure on public services. Both men and women living in more prosperous areas are more likely to live longer than those living in poorer areas.

A recent survey shows that in Doncaster 69 per cent of people are satisfied with their immediate local area as a place to live. This is lower than the average for similar areas and lower than the national average of 81 per cent

How well do the priorities for Doncaster express community needs and aspirations?

The biggest challenge for Doncaster is to improve the future for its children. The prospects for their health are not good. They are less likely to do well at school or achieve the skills they need to succeed as adults. They are more likely to witness domestic violence than many other places in England. And for the more vulnerable children their chances of being properly safeguarded aren't guaranteed. Their economic prospects are poor.

Local public services are aware of the challenges but they have not prioritised the issues well enough. They have a plan, the Borough Strategy, to tackle poverty and deprivation but it lacks realism and is not clear about the long-term results it seeks to achieve.

A local area agreement sets targets for 2011 but these by themselves are not enough. Partners need to reach a shared view about the future of the borough and spell out what levels of improvement people can expect to see beyond 2011, for instance, in reducing deprivation.

The reason that things have not improved faster is that the local strategic partnership (LSP) has not been well enough organised. The main board has not led the way or focused on making sure plans are being delivered. It has not always made clear who has the main responsibility for making things happen or held people properly to account. Where things are falling behind it hasn't always taken the actions needed to improve. The partnership has recently taken steps to sort itself out.

Local services understand their communities well. They need to share their knowledge better to make informed decisions and to decide how best to use their joint resources. Talking to local people has resulted in improvements to services but partners have not always been good at telling them about what has changed. This devalues people's contribution and results in low satisfaction with public services.

Some people are at risk of being left out. For instance some health conditions are analysed by area but detail is missing about particular groups. Partners must talk more with some specific groups such as those from ethnic minorities or those with particular needs.

People have a big say in planning for their area. The system of neighbourhood management gives people opportunity to be involved in planning for their area but they plainly do not recognise they can influence decisions that affect them. When asked about this they put Doncaster bottom of the list of similar councils in the recent Place Survey.

The Big Picture in South Yorkshire: Extracts from the 2009 Area Assessment for Rotherham

The area has a population of around 253,400 people. Most of Rotherham's population lives in urban areas though large parts of the borough are rural. Half of the land is used for agriculture. The population is ageing in line with the rest of England. The borough's population is growing as more people are coming to live there, most recently from Eastern Europe. There is a small but significant minority ethnic population with the largest group being people of Kashmiri or Pakistani origin.

NI 1 % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area

61.6% in the worst 5%

NI 2 % of people who feel they belong to their local neighbourhood

62% in the best 20%

NI 3 % of residents involved in civic participation in the local area

11.1% in the worst 20%

NI 4 % of residents who agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area

25.1% in the worst 20%

NI 5 overall/general satisfaction with local area

74.1% average

NI 6 % of residents participating in regular volunteering

20% in the worst third

NI 7 environment for a thriving third sector

15.8% average

People in Rotherham are generally not well off but, compared with other areas, poverty has decreased in the past five years. Employment rates are lower in Rotherham than many other parts of the country and jobs often do not pay well. Skill levels are also lower so it is not as easy to attract new jobs and businesses into Rotherham. The greatest deprivation is found around central Rotherham and the eastern ward of Maltby: these are also the areas where there are most people not working. House prices are lower in Rotherham than nationally.

The health of people in Rotherham is worse than for England as a whole. There are also differences between the health of people within Rotherham: men and women in more prosperous areas are likely to live longer than those in more deprived areas.

Rotherham's Council, public services, voluntary organisations and businesses are working together in partnership. They have agreed priorities and targets for improvement.

How well do the priorities for Rotherham express community needs and aspirations?

The greatest challenge for Rotherham is to improve the local economy and create more jobs. Unemployment is closely linked to deprivation and ill health. Rotherham is affected by all three and by inequalities, with some areas suffering more than others. If the economy is going to get stronger the local workforce needs to be skilled to a higher level.

Rotherham's local public services have forged a strong and effective partnership which understands these big issues and has plans to make life better for the population. The partnership has identified its priorities and knows that there is a long way to go before people in deprived areas have similar opportunities to those in better off areas, whether in education, health or employment.

Public services work well in partnership and with local people to make a difference for local communities. They work well with community and neighbourhood groups to understand what people want and need. Service user forums in many sectors give people the chance to get involved in decision making. For example, the Voluntary Sector Provider Forum and the Pensioners Action Group have been active in changing the way services are run. However, most people in Rotherham do not feel they can influence local decisions and partners need to find out why.

The population of Rotherham is growing and its makeup is changing. There are more older people and an increasing number of people who have settled from Eastern Europe, adding to the ethnic mix. Partners have shown they can respond to these changes by taking specific needs into account when planning services for the future.

By working together, and with voluntary organisations, public services are giving good value for money for people in Rotherham. They are striving to make real improvements in people's lives and also to reduce costs. Partners could be even more effective if they clearly understood what money is committed by different organisations to specific problem areas and what is being achieved. They have begun to do this; such understanding is the first step in a truly combined approach to planning and funding a prosperous future for Rotherham.

Proud: people, businesses, and pride in the borough are at the heart of the vision

The Rotherham Partnership is committed to making people feel proud to live and work in Rotherham. Civic pride can help people to get on better together and make Rotherham a better, more prosperous place to live. There is much work to be done.

Results from the recent Place Survey show that perceptions of how well people get on together are not as good as elsewhere, although the ethnic minority communities say that they feel more part of their community than others. Partners need to understand the reasons behind these perceptions so they can address people's real concerns and what they see as threats or aspects of change that worry them.

Partners want local people to feel proud about where they live. They have invested in large-scale public events, including a popular Diversity Festival, part of the annual Rotherham Show, and new ways of communicating with residents, such as Rotherham News. However, partners need to find ways of measuring whether these activities are having a positive impact.

Rotherham's work on preventing any growth of violent extremism is very good. The Council and police work closely together and share intelligence. In April 2009, 'One Town One Community' was launched, bringing together people to unite against hate and extremism.

People from different cultures and countries continue to settle in the borough. Many people arriving know little about local life. Neighbourhood management projects have provided information and training for new residents on how public services work - and to help ensure people of different backgrounds get on well in their changing neighbourhoods.

The Big Picture in South Yorkshire: Extracts from the 2009 Area Assessment for Sheffield

The population has grown to around 530,000 and is quickly becoming much more ethnically diverse. Overall Sheffield is a relatively deprived area, although less so than elsewhere in South Yorkshire. Compared with other areas, more unemployed people are looking for work and earnings are lower for those in work. The health of people in Sheffield has generally improved and is now close to the England average. But there are large differences in people's life experiences of health, education, work and crime.

NI 1 % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area

72.6% in the worst third

NI 2 % of people who feel they belong to their local neighbourhood

54.9% average

NI 3 % of residents involved in civic participation in the local area

12.3% in the worst third

NI 4 % of residents who agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area

27% in the worst third

NI 5 overall/general satisfaction with local area

78.5% average

NI 6 % of residents participating in regular volunteering

21.1% average

NI 7 environment for a thriving third sector

14.7% average

Local priorities and community needs

How well do the priorities for Sheffield express community needs and aspirations?

The Council and partners involve and consult well with local people on all the major issues affecting them. NHS Sheffield's Advisory Group is designed to allow local people to influence health services. South Yorkshire Police regularly consult with local communities. Partners are also working together to make sure that they join-up their consultation wherever possible.

There is a good understanding of the needs of the different communities within Sheffield. Many children and young people have helped inform plans through the 'Tell Us' survey and there are good ideas to involve children in making decisions through school councils and also attending Partners meetings.

People who don't often have the chance to give their views are able to contribute fully. For example, in helping to decide about services for older people in Darnall, partners ensured they listened to Pakistani and Somali women from the area.

There have been problems communicating and consulting with certain sections of the Sheffield population, particularly with people from the black and minority ethnic communities. By working with voluntary organisations, the Council has strived to make sure that local people from these groups are properly represented and heard.

Local people do not always feel they can influence decisions. This should improve. Seven groups - Community Assemblies - are being formed across the City which will allow people to locally help set priorities and budgets for services including libraries, parks and street cleaning. These assemblies have an important goal to make sure that everyone in an area is able to contribute to how local services are provided.

Sheffield is a good place to live for many people and more Sheffield people, especially those who are older, are satisfied with their area as a place to live than in most other parts of the country. However, some parts of the City and some types of people are getting left behind. Partners understand where these areas are - mainly in the east of the City, including Manor and Burngreave - and have identified people who need help.

They are helping these areas and people such as the elderly, unemployed, those with learning difficulties or mental health problems, and local people who can't afford to buy a house, so that they can enjoy a better life.

Partners' plans and actions are clearly focussed on treating all people equally and making sure that everyone achieves their best regardless of their background or circumstances.

Sheffield residents are most concerned with the quality of roads and pavements, crime and activities for teenagers. Sheffield's City Strategy makes it clear how local people's views have been taken into account.

There are challenging targets for Sheffield's future. It is too soon to clearly assess progress in some areas but there are grounds for confidence. Partners work together very well and regularly review what actions they are taking and how well they are

doing in achieving their ambitions for the City. They make sure that the decisions about key issues in Sheffield, including crime and the achievement of children and young people, are based on a good understanding of what the problems are, what local people think and what action is most likely to work to make things better.

People, and especially those who are older, like living in Sheffield. But relatively few residents feel strongly that they belong to their neighbourhood. People get involved by doing voluntary and other community work and making decisions about what happens locally. In Sheffield this happens no more than in other places. Partners are acting to build stronger communities by encouraging people to get more involved in their neighbourhood.

Sheffield residents generally think people from different backgrounds get on well together. Partners are not complacent. They understand the need for people in the City to be treated equally and challenge myths and perceptions where people feel this is not the case

Successful Neighbourhoods

Partners are clear that making successful neighbourhoods means developing better community spirit and involvement, and tackling differences between and within areas. It is also about improving things that matter to local people including crime and housing.

People, and especially those who are older, like living in Sheffield. Just over half of residents feel strongly that they belong to their neighbourhood. This is generally lower than other areas and could be because people in large urban areas tend to be more mobile. People get involved in their communities about the same as in other areas. This includes doing voluntary work or helping in community groups and making decisions about what happens in their area.

Partners are keen to encourage people to get involved fully in the life of their communities and the decisions that affect their neighbourhoods. Voluntary Action Sheffield is leading work to promote volunteering with the support of the Council and PCT. The Council and PCT working with the voluntary sector is also examining how it uses and works with voluntary organisations to deliver better outcomes for local people.

According to a recent survey, nearly three quarters of Sheffield residents said they thought people from different backgrounds got on well together. This is a little better than many other urban areas and similar to other major cities. Partners are not complacent and have included this as a priority in their Local Area Agreement. They understand the need for people in the City to be treated fairly and equally. And also to challenge myths and perceptions where people feel this is not the case.

Relatively few local people feel that anti-social behaviour is a particular problem in their neighbourhood. Good initiatives exist for reporting anti-social behaviour such as the '101' telephone number, and Sheffield residents are generally more likely to think that the Police and other local public services are effectively dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour than those living in most similar cities.

Crime is likely to continue to fall but there is still much to do if Sheffield is to achieve the target of being one of the safest major English cities.

Too many people who live in public sector housing in Sheffield are living in homes that do not meet basic standards set by the Government. Tenants in many other parts of the country have had their homes modernised more quickly. 30 per cent of houses still need to be updated. The Council is now expecting to complete this work in 2014, 4 years after the national deadline.

Council tenants are generally getting happier but satisfaction is still not high. Those from minority ethnic groups are even less satisfied but this gap is starting to close so that all tenants are noticing improvements. Tenants have particular problems with noisy neighbours and the speed and quality of repairs.

It is difficult for many people in Sheffield to buy a house if they want to. Housing is less affordable in Sheffield compared with other areas in the region. The target number of new affordable homes - 1,215 by 2011 - is not enough to meet the need. Only 788 are expected to be ready by then. The recession has delayed progress but Sheffield is making full use of national funding programmes and developers remain confident in the local housing market. In the meantime, many people will still not have access to homes they can afford to buy.

**7 indicators relating to:
Empowerment, cohesion, third sector**

NI 1 % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area

NI 2 % of people who feel they belong to their local neighbourhood

NI 3 % of residents involved in civic participation in the local area

NI 4 % of residents who agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area

NI 5 overall/general satisfaction with local area

NI 6 % of residents participating in regular volunteering

NI 7 environment for a thriving third sector