

SUMMARY AND GAPS

This report takes a descriptive approach to information on the community in Charnwood Borough using readily available data sets. Where possible, areas of deficiencies or strengths have been identified to assist both the Borough Council and the Local Strategic Partnership to identify the issues which may need to be addressed. Very limited analysis has been undertaken: the report presents only what is happening, it does not explain why it is happening.

However, given the timescale for preparing this report, there are a number of data sets which have not been explored in any great detail. There are also a number of issues which have not been considered in detail due to the lack of available information.

The main gaps in this report are highlighted below. This list may be a starting point for further in depth work, and may yield further issues to be tackled:

- Healthier communities. It has proved difficult in the short timescale to obtain detailed information on the health and lifestyles of people living in the Borough. In many cases it is because the information is hard to obtain or does not exist – for example data on smoking and levels of exercise. In other cases, where such small numbers are involved, authorities are reluctant to release information that could identify individuals or give misleading results when analysed. Any future research in this area should be done in conjunction with health experts who may be able to access new data sets and will have more experience of analysing the results.
- Attitudinal data. There is a wealth of attitudinal data available from sources such as the User Satisfaction Survey 2004 and the Household Survey conducted by the Learning and Skills Council in 2003. There is also a range of more local consultations such as parish plan questionnaires which could be used to identify the issues of concern to local residents. Further research could be undertaken to show if attitudes demonstrated by the local community match the ‘real world’ situation, and whether any interventions could adequately address these concerns.

- Access to Services. There is a lack of information regarding access to key local services by individuals and communities. To a small extent, one aspect of this is addressed in the Indices of Deprivation Barriers to Services domain. However, further in-depth research is required to identify different issues affecting different parts of the community in different areas, both in terms of the provision of services and access to them.
- Benefits data. The Department for Work and Pensions has recently released more detailed information on different types of benefits claimants at Super Output Area level for the first time. More detailed analysis of this data (at a smaller geography than was previously possible) may identify smaller areas with different problems. Access to other data sets, some held by the Borough council (such as council tax and housing benefits claimants) would compliment this research.
- Environmental data. One area which has not been considered by this report relates to the environment. Environmental data is notoriously difficult to collect and is often only available at a higher level of geography. Further research is required to identify potential sources of data and analyse the impact of various environmental factors on the local community, along with the impact of the local community on the environment.