

Priority C: Youth Issues

Reason for selection of this priority

Consultation with the community regularly highlights concerns about the needs, services for and the behaviour of some young people in the community, particularly in Armadale. This and evidence from services operating in the town suggest there are challenges with anti-social behaviour and alcohol misuse.

A multi-agency youth issues group has been set up to look at the needs and provision for young people to ensure that services best match the needs and aspirations of young people. The group will encourage young people's involvement.

Action proposed

Create a children and youth directory listing all available activities, resources and facilities in the Armadale and Blackridge ward for young people.
 Carry out appraisal/audit of existing youth facilities to determine whether they are still appropriate and fit for purpose. E.g. play parks, sports pitches, youth clubs
 Application to Alcohol Diversionary fund (Strategy for tackling underage drinking) for a youth project which is yet to be defined.
 Further develop the Armadale Healthy Respect Drop in service at the Community Clinic, including promotion of the service, involvement of young people and targeting of services to those most at risk.

6. Reporting and Review of the Plan

We will continue to use a variety of methods to engage with the community about the priorities for the area and for reporting back.

This locality plan will be presented to community planning partners in the ward and the Armadale & Blackridge Local Area Committee (LAC) for validation.

Quarterly reports on locality planning activity will be provided to the LAC to allow progress to be monitored. One of these reports will be an annual report highlighting performance relating to the actions identified in the plan. Prior to the annual presentation of the plan to committee, the locality plan will be reviewed by the Steering Group where activity can be reviewed and new activity created.

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SUMMARY LOCALITY PLAN
Armadale and Blackridge Ward 2008 – 2011

1. Introduction

The West Lothian Community Planning Partnership (CPP) a partnership between NHS; Council; Police & other public bodies, is committed to developing and delivering locality planning all council wards in West Lothian. Locality Planning encourages local communities and organisations to work together to jointly plan services at a local level, to ensure local services are as responsive as possible to local needs. Locality Planning provides an additional focus on some key priority issues in the community, as well as tackling disadvantage in an attempt to improve the quality of life for the community.

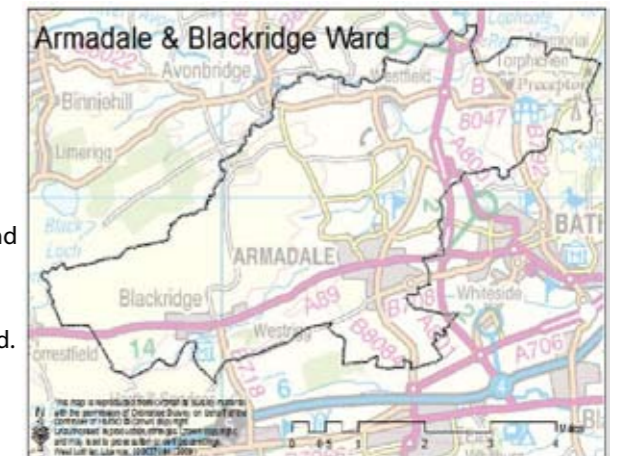
Priorities for action have been identified in The Armadale & Blackridge ward as a result of community consultation, by elected members, and from the knowledge of local staff that work in the area. A steering group has been formed which will implement actions on the priorities identified and will regularly monitor progress and any changing priorities. A senior manager of the council leads the Steering Group.

2. Armadale and Blackridge Ward

Council ward boundaries were changed in 2007 resulting in the community of Torphichen coming into the Armadale & Blackridge ward along with Blackridge, Westfield and Armadale.

The ward has a growing population currently estimated at 13,863 and predicted to increase by around 30% by 2020.

Local Area Committees (LAC) have been established in every ward. These Committees will be a forum through which local issues can be discussed and will encourage discussion between local members, local officers and the wider community, playing a key role in Locality Planning.



3. Local Area Committee



Cllr Stuart Borrowman

Tel No 01506 777003



Cllr Jim Dixon

Tel No 01506 777003



Cllr Isobel Hutton

Tel No 01506 777266

4. Some Recent developments / achievements in the ward include

- The construction of the Bathgate to Airdrie rail link, which will include a station at south Armadale and a proposed station at Blackridge.
- Armadale is identified as Core Development Area (CDA). Westfield and Blackridge also have sites identified for housing in the local plan. The development of these areas will see new house building and significant population growth.
- The new Armadale Academy will be open in Autumn 2009 with new sports playing fields opening in 2010
- Significant investment has been approved for the refurbishment of Armadale Community Centre which will include a new library. Work will start in spring 2009 and should be completed early in 2100.
- Significant investment in Council Housing stock including kitchen and bathroom refurbishment program.
- Opening of the Mayfield community house providing a range of services, and supporting community involvement.
- Under age alcohol reduction measures, including operation floor-walk to tackle underage drinking and alcohol fuelled anti-social behaviour.
- New Armadale town centre bus service commenced in September 08
- Three years funding secured from NHS Lothian for an Armadale community health programme.
- Successful young person's sexual health project has been established at Armadale Community Health Clinic.

5. Priorities for Armadale & Blackridge

After taking into account information gathered from community consultation, local statistics, and the knowledge of local staff, the Steering Group have identified some key themes which require some specific additional targeted work and have set up working group on each themes to find ways of making improvements.

The themes identified are Mayfield area regeneration, Environmental and Development Issues and Youth Issues

Over the coming years the Steering group and working groups will continue to identify issues and determined what can be done to address them. Meantime the priority themes, supporting information and some of the proposed actions are detailed below:-

Priority A: Mayfield Area Regeneration

Reason for selection of this priority: Over the years the Mayfield area has changed from being regarded as a desirable area to live to one that is now less desirable. Although the area represents approx. 7% of the population of the ward, statistics show that there is a concentration of problems related to income deprivation, unemployment and ill health in the area. In an attempt to address some of these issues Community Planning Partners have been working to deliver some services locally in response to the specific needs of the area and its residents. A Community House has been opened to provide a local contact point to promote and deliver services, to promote social cohesion and provide a base for community development work and community activities.

Example issues identified	Action proposed
Numbers of tenancies where people have additional support needs.	To further develop support services at the community house (i.e.: Housing services: Employment support; Youth & Children activities: Health Clinic; Financial advice & support; Early Years services; Healthy eating activities)
Need for local environmental and other community improvements.	Working towards establishing a local Tenants & Residents group to advocate for and work with council, police etc to improve the community. Organise community clean-up involving residents, Nets and Landscape services, Waste Services, Housing.
Poor take up of dental services	An oral health strategy has been developed to increase dental registration amongst 3-5yr olds and to increase the number of children with no recorded dental caries at Primary 1
Need for youth and children's activities	Establish youth and children's groups and further develop school holiday projects.

Priority B: Environmental & Development Issues

Reason for selection of this priority: Armadale has been identified as one of the Core Development Areas (CDA) in the West Lothian Local Plan which will be the focus for new development. The Armadale CDA has three distinct parts. Standhill in the northwest, Colinshiel in the northeast, and an area of land to the south of Armadale around the railway line. The CDA is planned to accommodate up to 2000 new homes in the period up to 2015 and beyond. Westfield is planned to accommodate 540 and Blackridge around 440. The council's CDA strategy is to link new housing with jobs, facilities and public transport

Armadale is one of five traditional town centres in West Lothian that will benefit from a £4 million capital-funding allocation for town centres over the next 10 years. £125,000 has been allocated to spend in the financial year 2008/9. In 2009/10 each town will be allocated £25,000 and can make bids for the remaining funds.

A key challenge of town centre revitalization is to create strong local representative organizations working together to provide leadership, vision and direction. The formation of Town Centre management and traders groups will be encouraged and supported as an appropriate vehicle for bringing about sustainable improvement in town centre prosperity and attractiveness.

Action proposed
Encourage greater participation in town centre group, linking to the capital spend programme for town centre improvements.
Encourage and support community groups with local environmental clean up campaigns. Explore options for setting up a garden tool borrowing scheme.
Secure economic gain (developers contributions towards community improvements) from new housing developments. Improve integration into the community by developing a welcome pack for new residents to assist their integration into the community as house building develops. Pack would contain information on social amenities, local shopping information, health and education services, community groups, faith groups, Cllr surgeries etc. Explore options for regeneration of Bathville Cross area.
Improve the welcome signage and landscape to the entrances areas of all ward settlements

