



Report on the Sheerwater Community Needs Assessment

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Appendices

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1. Surrey Community Action

Surrey Community Action provides a wide range of services to help Surrey's communities and its Voluntary & Community Organisations (VCOs) grow and develop. Resources available include advice, training, funding and advocacy. There are over 6,000¹ voluntary and community groups and a mixture of urban, suburban and rural communities in Surrey, and we offer support to all of them, no matter how large or small.

Surrey Community Action is a countywide Council of Voluntary Service as well as a Rural Community Council. We are accredited for 'Investors in People', Job Centre Plus 'Positive about Disabled People' and Level 2 of the ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) Quality Standards.

Surrey Community Action's services include:

- Specialist Community Development support
- Support for communities to identify needs and take action
- Training and development opportunities
- Communication across the sector
- Grants, funding and funding advice
- Promotion of active partnership with the statutory sector
- Encouragement of corporate sector support and engagement
- Linking Surrey issues to regional and national policy agendas

Surrey Community Action

Astolat

Coniers Way

Burpham

Guildford

Surrey GU4 7HL

01483 566072

www.surreyca.org.uk

¹ This figure does not include faith and sports groups

Acknowledgements

Thanks to all of the following for their support, with a special thank you to the community of Sheerwater and those local residents who gave their time to make this engagement process a success.

Local residents:

- Margot West
- Stewart MacDiarmid
- Tracey Francis
- Kathy Hook

Organisations:

Woking Association of Voluntary Service:

- Lesley Kitchen
- Karen Lody

Sheerwater and Maybury Partnership:

- Stephen Thomas
- Monique Kibara (Connexions)

Woking Borough Council Officers:

- Hilary Thomas
- Sue Barham
- Mike Gordon

Surrey Community Action:

- Abby Thomas
- Paul Napthine
- Margaret Morton
- Mona Johansson
- Sarah Clarke

Borough Councillors:

- Councillor Mohammed Iqbal
- Councillor Riasat Khan
- Councillor Muzaffar Ali

2. Executive Summary



Accessible for the whole community

A Community Needs Assessment for Sheerwater was commissioned by Woking Borough Council to clearly identify the needs of the changing Sheerwater community. Surrey Community Action (Surrey CA) was commissioned to carry out this work as the organisation has specialist expertise in Community Development, and bottom-up community action planning. The findings of this Community Needs Assessment will contribute to decisions around service and facility provision, to the development of the Neighbourhood Management ²programme in Sheerwater, enabling service providers to be clear of community needs and it will also link into the 'Tune In' ³campaign for the Sheerwater and Woodham cluster.

A Planning for Real® exercise was carried out to engage the community in having their say on the future of the area. Planning for Real® is a 3-dimensional model of the local area built by schoolchildren and local residents to use to give their views on the local area. It is a process that is community led and so immediately begins the process of building local capacity. As a visual, eye-catching and hands on method of engagement, this worked extremely well in Sheerwater. It was accessible for the whole community as it did not require confidence to speak out at a meeting or the ability to read and write in English. It was engaging across the age range and ethnic mix of the community, and this was aided by the use of multi-lingual staff and volunteers. The exercise was carried out at 13 events. To supplement this, a range of other methods were employed to ensure all parts of the community were given the opportunity to engage. The following range of engagement techniques were used in addition to Planning for Real®:

- Specially designed comment-beermats/coasters and suggestion boxes in the Community Centre bar, the local café, the Children's Centre, etc.
- Online questionnaires for residents in English and Urdu (second most commonly spoken language in Sheerwater)
- Online questionnaires for organisations and over 100 direct mail questionnaires sent to organisations operating in Sheerwater
- Questionnaires for businesses based in Sheerwater
- Health Visitors and District Nurses carrying out questionnaires with isolated young families and house bound clients
- Teenagers using disposable cameras to photograph the hot spots and grot spots in the local area

² *Neighbourhood Management is a joint initiative between the Police and Woking Borough Council to engage at a neighbourhood level and work with other service providers and the community to better manage the local area*

³ *"Tune In" is the name for a series of community based workshops across the Borough, aimed at providing residents with the opportunity to engage in the Neighbourhood Management initiative.*

Engaging over 630 local residents, 28 local organisations and 10 Sheerwater based businesses

- Focus groups with pensioner's clubs
- Youth questionnaire designed by young people at Broadmere School
- Connexions worker carrying out interviews with young, excluded people
- 121 interviews with key community members

By using a varied and flexible approach to bottom up community participation we were able to engage 637 local residents (which is over 18% of Sheerwater's population), 28 local organisations and 10 Sheerwater based businesses.

Residents stated their key issues and recommended ways to address these issues. The 11 key areas highlighted for improvements are listed below in no particular order; to read the full list of issues and recommendations turn to Section 7.



- Policing and Safety
- Youth Provision
- Sheerwater Community Centre
- The Recreation Ground
- Road safety and Parking
- Public Transport, Travel and Isolation
- Health, Advice & Outreach
- Housing
- Racial Tension
- Schools
- Communication and Cohesion

Many of the issues raised and subsequent recommended actions are for the community to lead on and though there is a willingness to get involved and volunteer to take part, there is a lack of confidence to actually lead or coordinate. The perception is that the community is also a transient one. To make long term, sustainable change there is a need for a Community Development Worker to build confidence and capacity within the community to take and sustain local action, and to make linkages between the various service providers and the community.

The next steps are now to use the community's collated issues and suggestions with residents and service providers to build an action plan to address the needs of Sheerwater.

3. Background

Sheerwater is one of the five areas in Surrey that received Single Regeneration Budget funding and has been a part of the Surrey County Council Self-Reliance Programme. Sheerwater is also part of the third most deprived ward in the county, with particular deprivation in health, income and employment (2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation). These classifications have led to targeted work in the area bringing about some significant improvements as documented in the "What's been said and what's been done" report produced by the Community Support Team for Woking in May 2004. Community Development support for Sheerwater ended in 2003 with the end of the SRB funding and many initiatives that were started with and for the community have not continued. As a result of this and the changing community demographics, there are still many issues that need tackling in Sheerwater.

The community has always been perceived as transient. It is probably more accurate to say that while much of the community is well established and may well have lived in the community since the original Greater London Council estate (GLC) was built, there are also a large number of residents who occupy the 1 and 2 bedroom social housing for a short period of time only. This may have exacerbated the lack of community cohesion in the local area.

From time spent in the community and from the experience of local residents and retailers the 2001 census data does not reflect the current demographics of Sheerwater. Many have suggested that a modest guess would be that the Asian population in Sheerwater has at least doubled in numbers. However, while the eastern European community grows across Woking, it appears to be mainly around Walton Road in Maybury rather than in Sheerwater. Over a third of the population of Sheerwater is under the age of 25, a statistic that goes against the norm of an ageing population in Surrey. See the table on pages 12 and 13 for Sheerwater Census 2001 data.

A Community Needs Assessment for Sheerwater was commissioned by Woking Borough Council to clearly identify the needs of the changing Sheerwater community. Surrey Community Action (Surrey CA) was commissioned to carry out this work as the organisation has specialist expertise in Community Development, and bottom-up community action planning. The findings of this Community Needs Assessment will contribute to decisions around service and facility provision, to the development of the Neighbourhood Management programme in Sheerwater, enabling service providers to be clear of community needs and it will also link into the 'Tune In Campaign' for the Sheerwater and Woodham cluster.

Aims of the Community Needs Assessment

- To increase knowledge of the community's needs for services and facilities, including considering issues of accessibility.

Objectives

- To conduct an inclusive Community Needs Assessment.

Outcomes

- Increased knowledge and/or a confirmation of the accuracy of existing knowledge and understanding of community needs in Sheerwater.

4. Methodology



The objective of the Community Needs Assessment was to enable maximum engagement and participation from the community and from service providers. A variety of methods were used to engage the breadth of the community and its organisations.

Service Provider Engagement

Service providers included local voluntary and community groups and public sector bodies such as the Police, PCT, schools, and various service areas within Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council. These service providers were sent an organisational questionnaire, to enable us to gather information regarding their current provision, any barriers to provision, perceived needs of the community in terms of local services and facilities, and what support/facilities would enable them to improve their service provision.

Business Engagement

Businesses including large industrial firms on the Forsyth Road factory area, retailers along Dartmouth Road and a number of small businesses in the community were also sent questionnaires. This enabled us to gather information around the benefits and issues of locating a business in Sheerwater, and also to get pledges for how businesses could support local community action.

Community Engagement

In terms of engaging the community it was clear that a residents' questionnaire might exclude those with lower literacy, or who did not have English as a first language. However, the use of online questionnaires can be successful particularly with residents who commute or are unable to attend events. It was therefore decided that an online questionnaire would be available for use by residents and organisations as an additional method of consultation.

"Planning for Real®"

The main method of community engagement was "Planning for Real®". It is an eye-catching, 'hands on' method which, by using a large scale, three dimensional model as a focus, enables local people to put forward suggestions to "show" how an area can be improved or to point out specific problems. It is a process that is community led and so immediately begins the process of building local capacity. 17 people were trained to use the Planning for Real® process, including local residents and officers from Woking Borough Council. This meant that the local community and organisations were up-skilled to shape and carry out community engagement exercises now and in the future. The 3-D model was made at Broadmere School with Year 6 students and local residents to a scale of 1:500. This meant that individual houses were recognisable and people could also identify familiar landmarks. The model was made up of small, sections of polystyrene board, making it easily transportable to be taken to different locations where people naturally meet. By using the model as a focus, the consultation was non-confrontational and the suggestions were anonymous so that people did not feel inhibited in expressing their opinions.

Maximum engagement and participation from the community and from service providers

The model was taken to outdoor venues where local people naturally met: St Michael's Church car park, Dartmouth Road shops, the Sheerwater Festival, the Woking Mela, outside Maria's Polish Speciality Shop.

It was also taken to harder to reach groups: older peoples clubs, mother and toddler groups and Black Minority Ethnic support groups. This ensured that people were comfortable and confident in their environment and engaged out of interest and curiosity. On other tables beside the map were placed a range of suggestions cards or flags, which were also pictorial. In addition, a large number of blank cards were provided for people to write or draw their own ideas.



People were given the opportunity to browse through all the suggestions and to select as many as they wanted and then place them on the model where they felt the issue was relevant. To help them, all the suggestions were categorised under issue heading and colour coded. For example, all health suggestions were grouped together and printed on light blue card, crime and safety on orange and so on. There were 9 issue categories in total and this means that, at a glance, the main issues for a particular area or place were easily apparent. We also used local volunteers, Surrey Community Action staff and multi-lingual volunteers to help people feel at ease and if necessary act as translators, readers or scribes. This is reflected in the level of engagement we had across the demographic mix of the community.

At the end of each session all the suggestions were recorded, including the location, issue, number of suggestions placed, and the ethnicity, gender and age of all participants.

We used a range of other methods to ensure that as many people as possible were able to contribute to the process such as:

- Specially designed comment-beermats/coasters and suggestion boxes in the Community Centre bar, the local café, the Children's Centre
- Health Visitors and District Nurses carrying out questionnaires with isolated young families and house bound clients
- Teenagers using disposable cameras to photograph the hot spots and grot spots in the local area
- Focus groups with pensioner's clubs
- Youth questionnaire designed by young people at Broadmere School
- Questionnaires translated into Urdu (second most commonly spoken language in Sheerwater)
- Connexions worker carrying out interviews with young, excluded people
- 121 interviews with key community members

5. Demographics

By using this wide range of engagement methods, the consultation inclusively reached a large number, and an ideal demographic mix, of the community. The tables below show the ethnic and age mix of Sheerwater as captured by the 2001 census. The third and sixth columns show the numbers/percentages of people reached through this Sheerwater Needs Assessment exercise and can be compared to the demographics of Sheerwater and Woking from the 2001 census. The community and local Councillors have indicated that the Asian population in Sheerwater has more than doubled since the last census, with many moving out of Maybury in favour of the larger homes in Sheerwater. This increase is also reflected in the numbers/percentages of Asians that engaged in this Sheerwater Needs Assessment. It is interesting to note that despite the reportedly growing Eastern European population across the Borough, very few engaged in this process. Upon further investigation with a local Polish community link and owner of Maria's Polish Speciality Shop, it came to light that most of the Eastern European community are renting accommodation from Asian landlords along the Walton Road in Maybury and very few live in Sheerwater.

The inaccuracy of the baseline demographic information from the 2001 Census data, and the need to rely upon local knowledge of the make up of the community, highlighted a general need for more up-to-date demographic information. There may be an opportunity for service providers to better share community data to ensure services are targeted appropriately.



Census Data Apr – 01

Ethnic Group	Sheerwater	Surrey CA Needs Analysis	Woking	Sheerwater	Surrey CA Needs Analysis	Woking
All People	3521	637	89840	100%	100% (18% of total pop)	100%
White	3082	362	82001	87.5%	56.8%	91.3%
White: British	2862	351	75599	81.3%	55.1%	84.1%
White: Irish	60	2	1228	1.7%	0.3%	1.4%
White: Other White	160	9	5174	4.5%	1.4%	5.8%
Mixed	33	3	1228	0.9%	0.5%	1.4%
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	6	0	222	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%
Mixed: White and Black African	3	3	116	0.1%	0.5%	0.1%
Mixed: White and Asian	11	0	503	0.3%	0.0%	0.6%
Mixed: Other Mixed	13	0	387	0.4%	0.0%	0.4%
Asian or Asian British	364	147	5219	10.3%	23.1%	5.8%
Asian or Asian British: Indian	24	6	961	0.7%	0.9%	1.1%
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	308	136	3517	8.7%	21.4%	3.9%
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	16	5	288	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%
Asian or Asian British: Other Asian	16	0	453	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%
Black or Black British	28	13	447	0.8%	2.0%	0.5%
Black or Black British: Caribbean	12	1	170	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%
Black or Black British: African	13	12	222	0.4%	1.9%	0.2%
Black or Black British: Other Black	3	0	55	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group	14	6	945	0.4%	0.9%	1.1%
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group: Chinese	10	1	424	0.3%	0.2%	0.5%
Chinese or Other Ethnic Group: Other Ethnic Group	4	5	521	0.1%	0.8%	0.6%
Other		106			16.6%	

Census Data Apr – 01

Age Profile	Sheerwater	Surrey CA Needs Analysis	Sheerwater	Surrey CA Needs Analysis
All People	3516	637	100%	18%
Aged under 16	900	249	26%	39%
Aged 16-24	376	88	11%	14%
Aged 25-44	1061	150	30%	24%
Aged 45-54	364	47	10%	7%
Aged 55-69	293	38	8%	6%
Aged 70+	468	65	13%	10%

6. Introduction to Findings

Through the consultation, it was clear that although residents recognised the needs and issues for the community, there was also a great deal of pride and many wished to state the positive aspects of life in Sheerwater:

The community:

- Good neighbours
- Community Spirit
- Friendly people
- Knowing other people here
- My family grew up here
- People are fantastic here
- Londoners originally settled in area
- There is some community activity
- Low crime rates & amount of police presence
- Feel safe

The environment:

- Clean & Tidy Roads/ Pavements etc
- Quietness
- A lot of grassy areas
- It is a pleasant looking estate, nice outlooks
- The green spaces & trees
- My house
- Lots of trees/ornamental cherry etc.

Local facilities:

- Close to amenities [railway station]
- Excellent shopping facilities
- Close to the town centre
- Easy access, good transport links, neighbourhood watch
- Its convenience for Woking
- Access to public transport
- Central doctors & dentists
- Post office
- Living near Bus stop
- Children's Centre
- English Classes at Children's Centre

Young people at Broadmere School rated the following as amongst the best things about living in Sheerwater:

- Park
- School
- Shops
- Near friends
- New Houses
- Close to school
- Nice people
- Green grass

Local businesses stated the following benefits of basing their business in Sheerwater:

- Local labour
- Transport links: air/road/rail
- Proximity to London
- Cheap rates

The findings below are based on a very high level of community involvement (637 local residents taking part in the Planning for Real and questionnaires, 41 beer mats filled in, plus 28 local organisation questionnaires and 10 Sheerwater based business questionnaires). In excess of 1700 suggestions were made through the consultation methods and these have been collated in order to show what issues were raised repeatedly. The collated issues have then been grouped into 11 key topic areas that arose naturally out of the responses from the community. Within each topic area the key issues are listed as well as the community's recommended solutions to these issues. The number of people who have stated each issue or recommendation is recorded in brackets.

اپنی رائے کا اظہار کریں!

1. آپ کے بچے یا دوستوں کے پاس کون سا کھیل سہولت ہے؟
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7. Issues and Recommendations

Key: The number of people stating each key issue or recommendation is recorded in brackets



Policing and Safety

The most commonly stated issue during the Planning for Real® consultation was “I don’t feel safe here” followed by a series of other crime and safety related issues. Fear of crime in Sheerwater was evident from these responses and residents have stated that more visible policing and engagement in local initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch and Community Speedwatch, would help to address local issues. Throughout the consultation period, Sheerwater had one attached Police Community Support Officer and was the only Woking neighbourhood without a Neighbourhood Specialist Officer.

Key Issues:

- I don’t feel safe here (53)
- Drug dealing and related problems (52)
- Vandalism problem (36) – young people at Broadmere also stated vandalism as a concern
- Night noise and rowdiness (33)
- Graffiti problem (14)
- Mugging problem (7)
- Car theft (4)
- Theft from cars (4)
- No response from Police when crime reported (3)
- Drunken people sleeping on steps (2)
- Drunken aggression (2)
- No one looks at the security cameras (1)
- People fighting and causing trouble (1)
- No police response to race related crimes (1)

Key Recommendations:

- More Police foot patrols (55)
- Security cameras needed (18)
- Police support for Neighbourhood Watch and Community Speedwatch (13)
- Community to join and extend Neighbourhood Watch (6)
- Stiffer sentences for violent criminals (2)
- Improved street lighting (2)
- Police involvement in youth provision

Youth Provision:

Many of the top issues for the community focussed on young people. Many residents (including other young people) felt intimidated by groups of young people hanging around. Most people felt that this was due to a lack of youth provision and activities in the area. This has partly been due to difficulties recruiting a new youth worker for the Youth Centre.

However, over a third of Sheerwater's population is below the age of 20 and it is a growing section of the community. Therefore, an approach that recognises the variety of different needs within this young population is needed. A youth centre may serve a part of the population, but many will want training support, or perhaps a place to sit with older teens without organised activities.

Young people themselves, have played a significant role in this consultation and have taken part in considering what facilities, services and activities would best serve them. Some of the activities that were suggested can be found in the 'Recreation Ground' section.

Key Issues:

- Young people hanging around (55)
- Youth Centre not open enough (16)
- Not enough youth provision (10)
- Underage drinking (4)
- Lack of sex education and sexual health information (3)
- Rude language from young people (2)
- Racial tension between Asian and white youths (2)
- Young people threatening little kids (1)
- Lack of support for young Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transexual people (1)

Key Recommendations:

- Meeting place for young people (18)
- Youth Café at Community Centre, if there is no longer a bar here⁴ (17)
- Activities for young people (14)
- Local volunteers to run activities for young people (11)
- Support and counselling for young parents (9)
- Support for school non-attendees (4)
- More vocational training for 13-16 year olds (4)
- Youth theatre at Youth Centre (4)
- More sex education for teens (3)
- Parties for teenagers at Youth Centre (2)
- Support and counselling for youths (1)

⁴ People making this comment felt that the bar in the Community Centre made it an inappropriate venue for young people to meet

- Nappy changing facility at Youth Centre (1)
- Activities for young Asians (1)
- Support for Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transexual youth (1)

Sheerwater Community Centre:

Sheerwater Community Centre was highlighted on the Planning for Real map to ask people to make suggestions for how it could be improved. Many local residents were initially unaware of the existence of the Sheerwater Community Centre. Others knew it as “the Club” and viewed it as a drinking club.

The community were keen for the centre to become a hub for local activity and made many suggestions about how it could be better used.

Key Issues:

- Lack of awareness/advertising (20)
- Inaccessible premises (7)
- Bar off-putting to wider community (6)
- Needs cleaning up and refurbishment (6)
- Organisations reported poor service when booking & using the venue (4)
- Community Centre is not perceived as family friendly because of the bar (3)
- Bar off-putting to youth groups (2)
- Bar is off-putting to the Muslim community (2)

Key Recommendations:

- Advertise and market the activities of the centre to build a new community-friendly image
- Meeting place for young people/Youth Café here if the centre is no longer a bar (29)
- Community Development Worker for Sheerwater (25)
- Leisure facilities (23)
- Community gym/Keep fit/Keep fit for women/Martial arts/Yoga (21)
- Internet/Cyber Café (15)
- Summer and activity clubs for young people (14)
- Active activities for older people (14)
- Training to get people back into employment (11)
- Local job information point & job seekers support (10)
- Library (10)
- Adult English language classes and Reading & Writing classes (9),Computer classes (3)
- Arts & crafts clubs (9) including one specifically for women (1)
- Support for vocational training for 13-16 year olds & support for non-attenders (8)
- Hold events to bring the community together (7)

- Community Café (4)
- Prayer room (3)
- Basic Quran classes (3)
- Community activities that are accessible to Asian community (3)

The Recreation Ground

The park and canal are highly valued by the community but many had reasons for not accessing either. Young people at Broadmere School voted the Park as the most enjoyable thing about Sheerwater (63 young people). Many people, particularly young people, felt that more could be made of this space, thereby encouraging more of the community to access it.

Key Issues:

- Dog mess problem (47)
- Too much broken glass (8)
- Rubbish & litter (2)
- Used condoms left here (2)
- Needles left here (1)

Key Recommendations:

- Sports facilities:
 - Cricket pitch (20)
 - Skateboard/Rollerblade park (18)
 - Football pitch with goals (16)
 - Tennis court (11)
 - Fishing club (10)
 - Basketball facilities (9)
 - Sports complex (9)
 - Mountain bike trail (5)
- Poop-scoop bins needed (19)
- Litter bins needed (17)
- Adventure playground 6-12 year olds (9)
- Playground for under 5s (7)
- Dog walking zone (6)
- Youth Shelter (6)
- Toilets with accessible facilities (5)
- Floodlights on until later (5)
- Separate dog free area needed (5)
- Wildlife, nature areas, nature trails (4)
- Keeper/maintenance for the park (3)
- More seating (3)
- Picnic area (3)
- Footpath for the disabled needed (2)
- Dogs to be kept out of play area (2)

- Community vegetable garden (1)
- Athletics Club needs to do more with the community (1)

Public Transport, Travel & Isolation:

“Sheerwater is like an island, closed in on one side by the canal and on the other by the railway tracks.” This is a statement that was repeated by many people during the consultation and demonstrates the sense of isolation that many people living here feel. As a result, there were many comments about public transport and the need for better, more accessible transport to key locations outside the estate (supermarket, town centre, and St Peter’s Hospital) and within the estate (e.g. community run minibus to Community Centre).

Key Issues:

- Poor bus service to supermarket, town centre & hospital (21)
- Poor public transport (19)
- Poor evening and weekend service (5)
- Bus service only accessible along Albert Drive (4)

Key Recommendations:

- Bus service or mini buses to cover the whole estate (23)
- Voluntary Car Scheme (12)
- Cycle lane to continue right through Albert Drive and Dartmouth Road (10)
- Improved evening and weekend bus service (5)
- More bus shelters around the estate, not just on Albert Drive (4)
- Mini bus for women and children only (2)
- Mini-buses that are accessible and can get to the disabled residents of Sheerwater (1)
- Pedestrian footpath to Maybury via Industrial Estate (1)
- Use canal to transport people to boat via a water-taxi (1)

Road Safety & Parking

Sheerwater roads were not built for a society so reliant on car travel. Subsequently, some of the top issues for local residents are around parking and road safety.

Key Issues:

- Dangerous/inappropriate parking throughout estate (60)
- Speeding/dangerous driving (50)
- Parking problems outside Broadmere Community Primary School(11)
- Too many cars (7)



Key Recommendations:

- Lower the speed limit to 20 MPH (49)
- Parking restrictions enforced: grass verges, paths, disabled spaces, double parking (29)
- Parking scheme for residents only (22)
- Zebra crossing/traffic lights needed: Broadmere School, Albert Drive at end of Henslow Way, Dartmouth Avenue shops (22)
- Introduce traffic calming measures (10)
- Road surfaces need improving: Albert Drive, Lambourne Crescent (6)

Health, Advice & Outreach:

The average life expectancy in Sheerwater is reportedly 20 years lower than neighbouring West Byfleet. It is a community put together in part by housing allocation policy and as a result there is a high proportion of people with health needs and this was reflected in the consultation responses and range of suggested solutions to local health problems.

Key Issues:

- Drug taking problem (49)
- Drinking problem (34)
- GP surgery has closed register to local residents (5)
- Lack of support for people with mental health needs (5)
- Lack of sex education and sexual health information (3)
- Lack of affordable nursery spaces (3)
- Solvent abuse problem (2)
- Lack of support for people with HIV/AIDS (2)
- Dentist's surgery has closed register to local residents (1)

Key Recommendations:

- Mental Health support (16)
- Drug and alcohol addiction support (15)
- Home help for the elderly (14)
- Voluntary Car Scheme (12)
- Support and counselling for young parents (9)
- GP surgery to open register for local residents (5)
- More outreach nurses (3)
- More health visitors (3)
- Sex education and sexual health information (3)
- Healthy eating & cooking classes for parents (3)
- Affordable nursery spaces for local residents (3)
- Smoking cessation group (2)
- Needle exchange point (2)
- Child psychologist needed (2)

- Childcare training needed (2)
- Support and counselling for families (2)
- Local outreach support for people with HIV/AIDS (2)
- Childminder information needed (1)
- Chiropodist needed (1)
- Diabetic clinic (1)
- Blood donor service (1)
- Support group for cancer sufferers (1)
- Well woman/well man clinic (1)
- Respite care facilities (1)
- Need security lights by Health Centre (1)
- Dentist's surgery to open register for local residents (1)
- Dangerous slabs outside Health Centre (1)



Housing

Sheerwater was built in the 1950s by the former London County Council as housing for bomb damaged London. It is now Woking Borough Council's largest stock of smaller social housing and therefore houses many single people with support needs, needs that are not currently being met. This, alongside the transient nature of these tenants, has led to a lack of community cohesion and this is reflected in the consultation responses.

The community's perception is that the maintenance of the housing stock and the estate itself has deteriorated over the last 20 years, and there is an increasing need to address some of the physical problems with the housing stock.

Key Issues:

- Nuisance/noisy neighbour problem (16)
- Lack of security for tenants in Dartmouth Road flats (17)
- Lack of appropriate housing for families/people with disabilities/elderly (11)
- Drainage needs improving (9)
- Communal areas of blocks of flats in need repair (3)
- Damp and condensation problem in flats on Devonshire Avenue (2)
- House prices too high (1)
- Housing mix is unsafe for young families (1)

Key Recommendations:

- Housing suitable for families (9)
- Drainage problems addressed (9)
- Doors with security locks on Dartmouth Road flats (8)
- House/flat security measures needed (7)
- More recycling and doorstep collection facilities (7)



- More affordable housing (7)
- More social housing (6)
- Woking Borough Council to be tougher on problem tenants (6)
- Repairs to communal areas in blocks of flats (6)
- Maintenance of grass verges and gardens (6)
- Accessible flats for older people (3)
- Security alarms needed on Dartmouth Road flats (2)
- Entry phone system for flats (2)
- Mechanism to enable tenants to report anti-social behaviour anonymously (2)
- Housing suitable for people with disabilities (2)
- Flats for young people (2)
- Damp and condensation to be tackled (2)
- Garage blocks to be renovated (2)
- Most problems caused by 11 or 12 families – Woking BC should be tougher on them (2)
- Residents made accountable for keeping their area tidy (1)

Racial Tension:

Ethnic minority residents and white British residents spoke openly about their frustrations and fears about racial tension. Some felt that the barrier between the different ethnic groups in Sheerwater was partly a language barrier and others felt they did not or could not understand one another's cultural differences. Two white residents refused to take part in the consultation and explained that the only things they had to say would be taken as racist.

The beer mats were a completely anonymous form of engagement and through this medium, 10 extremely racist and unprintable comments were made. One verbal racist comment was made to the Community Development Worker whilst carrying out this consultation process. All of these comments, alongside the tension reported through the Planning for Real exercise and questionnaires, clearly show that there is a great need to build respect for diversity and community cohesion within the Sheerwater community.

Key Issues:

- Racial tension here (19)
- Language barrier problem (17)
- Racist comments (11)
- Asian youths being beaten up (1)
- Fights between Pakistani and white youths (1)
- No Police response to race related crimes (1)

Key Recommendations:

- English language classes offered here (9)
- Community activities that are accessible to all of the community (3)
- Women only groups/exercise classes/skills training (3)
- Citizenship classes to understand local cultures, legal rights, minimum wage, service providers, etc (2)

Schools & Community Learning

Broadmere Community Primary School and Bishop David Brown School take in students from across the age range in Sheerwater. Both schools were perceived by the community as having improved over recent years and staff were praised as supportive.

Advances have been made with literacy levels and attendance, however, the community still perceived a need to improve support for non attendees and to offer more vocational training options.

A questionnaire used with students at Broadmere revealed that their greatest concerns were safety and crime in the local area, and general litter and vandalism. Bullying has arisen as an issue for both schools, however, the Broadmere questionnaire revealed that 30 students felt safest whilst at school.

A number of suggestions were made around community learning that would be valued by the community. Delivering these courses at the schools would create a stronger link between the school, however a community venue may be less of a barrier for reluctant learners.

Key Issues

- Bullying problem at both schools(15)
- Parking problems outside Broadmere (11)
- Non-attendees and lack of interest in academic subjects (8)
- Lack of parental involvement and support (2)
- Bi-lingual teachers with a good grasp of English (1)
- Security of Broadmere Primary School (1)

Key Recommendations

- Training to get people back into employment (11)
- School patrol needed to coordinate cars and crossing students at Broadmere (10)
- Adult English language classes and Reading & Writing classes (9),Computer classes (3)
- Support for vocational training for 13-16 year olds & support for non-attenders (8)
- Affordable after school club needed (7)
- Build better links between community and school by reopening pool (4)
- More vocational training for 13-16 year olds (4)
- Support for school non-attendees (4)

- Homework club at Bishop David Brown School (4)
- Support for parents with homework (1)
- Protective fencing around Broadmere Community Primary School grounds (1)

Communication & Cohesion:

Throughout the consultation period, it has been clear that there is a need for better communication of services/facilities available. Many local residents made requests for activities that already run in Sheerwater, and even more were unaware of the existence of the Community Centre and of the activities run there.

There is a need to improve communication within the community but also improve communication channels between the community and its service providers. Building capacity and confidence in local residents is important in building up the community's ability to speak for and manage itself.

Many organisations operating in the area were keen to make their services more accessible to all ethnic groups in the area and stated language and cultural barriers as a problem. Many stated a need for support in publicising their services in an appropriate way for all residents, and also support with translation.

Key Issues:

- Services not reaching the hard to reach (21)
- Lack of awareness of facilities & services in Sheerwater (15)
- Lack of community spirit (9)

Key Recommendations:

- Community Development Worker for Sheerwater (25)
- Create a community action group to address local issues (15)
- Support organisations to publicise services appropriately to all (14)
- Community newsletter (13)
- Volunteer to do neighbourly duties (11)
- Translation services for organisations (3)
- Community lunches to bring together service providers and the community (3)
- Community notice-board (1)

General Issues:

Some issues relate to the overall state of Sheerwater and are single issues rather than fitting within a theme or service area. These issues have been grouped below.

Key Issues

- Litter and lack of respect for the estate (14) – litter was also a key concern for young people at Broadmere School

- Revamp Dartmouth Avenue & the shops area (4)
- Re-open the Birch and Pines (3)

Key Recommendations:

- Hold a Sheerwater clear up and litter pick day (12)

Responses from Organisations:

28 local organisations or service providers also engaged in the consultation. These organisations stated general issues unrelated to their service and made general recommendations about what would improve the local area and these have been built into the sections above.

Summarised below are the responses that organisation made about service provision and delivery in Sheerwater. There is clearly a need to support organisations to engage more with the community to hear local needs and also to publicise their services. Many organisations stated that a Community Development Worker would be a much needed link between providers and the community. The highest number of organisations suggested Sheerwater Community Centre as a venue for more service provision. This correlates with the community's desire for Sheerwater Community Centre to become a "hub" for local activity.

Key Issues:

- Reaching the hard to reach (21)
- Language barrier (12)
- Lack of venue (4)
- Safety (4)
- Resource intensive (3)

Additional Support Required:

- Dedicated Sheerwater worker to link community to agencies (14)
- Support in publicising services to all (14)
- Better joint-working between agencies (13)
- Appropriate venue from which to deliver outreach work (9)
- Translation services (3)

Perceived barriers to Sheerwater residents accessing services:

- Cost of transport to service provision venue (8)
- Inaccessible service provision premises (4)
- Lack of awareness of service (15)
- Lack of transport to service provision venue (5)
- Location of service (4)

Suggested venues for service delivery:

- Community Centre (7)
- School (4)

- Health Centre (3)
- Church (2)
- Dartmouth Road (2)
- Youth Centre (2)
- Industrial site (1)
- Lambourne Crescent (1)
- Local library/CAB (1)
- Neighbourhood Office (1)
- Bentham Avenue (1)
- Redeveloped Bunyard Drive site (1)

Responses from Businesses

10 local Sheerwater-based businesses took part in the consultation and stated the benefits and issues of location in Sheerwater, as well as ways in which they could support the local community.

Benefits of location in Sheerwater:

- Local labour (3)
- Transport links:air/road/rail (5)
- Proximity to London (3)
- Cheap rates (1)

Issues of location in Sheerwater:

- Vandalism/theft (3)
- Language barrier (2)
- Poor roads (1)
- Traffic congestion (1)
- Indifferent policing (1)
- Safety of staff (1)

Offers of support for local community:

- Offer cheap/free printing for a community newsletter
- Offer a community noticeboard
- Sponsor/fundraise for local activities
- Take part in local volunteer days
- Attend local events with a stall or goods
- Advertise locally
- Attend local events with a stall or goods
- We already participate in local charity events, e.g. - Bikathon
- Offer a discount on printing/stationary/art materials

8. Prioritised issues & recommendations

The consultation process revealed that some issues are top priorities for a large section of the community. The top ten have been listed below:

- Dangerous/inappropriate parking throughout estate (60)
- Young people hanging around (55)
- I don't feel safe here (53)
- Drug dealing and related problems (52)
- Speeding/dangerous driving (50)
- Drug taking problem (49)
- Dog mess problem (47)
- Vandalism problem (36) – young people at Broadmere also stated vandalism as a concern
- Drinking problem (34)
- Night noise and rowdiness (33)

During Planning for Real, it may be that 50 people write down Dog Poop Scoop Bins as a recommendation and only 2 people write down Housing for Young People as a recommendation. However if the same people were asked to prioritise their recommendations, they would probably feel that addressing homelessness and housing need is more important than tackling dog fouling. In order to ascertain what the communities true priorities are we carried out a Prioritisation Exercise. The purpose of the exercise was to enable the community to "vote" for their top three recommendations. 73 local community members took part in this exercise. The ten recommendations that received most votes are as follows:

- More Police foot patrols (12)
- Sports Complex (11)
- Skateboard/Rollerblade park (10)
- Stiffer sentences for violent criminals (9)
- Flats for young people (7)
- Protective fencing around Broadmere Community Primary School Grounds (7)
- Separate dog free area (6)
- More sex education for teens (5)
- Most problems caused by 11 or 12 families – Woking BC should be tougher on them (5)
- Introduce traffic calming measures (5)

9. Conclusion:

The consultation has shown a range of issues that the community faces, as well recommended solutions from the community. While some of the issues require support from service providers, many of the issues raised and subsequent actions to be taken are for the community to lead on. Within the community there is a willingness to get involved and volunteer to take part, but there is also a lack of confidence to actually lead or coordinate any community action. The perception is that the community is a transient one. To make long term, sustainable change there is a need for a Community Development Worker to build confidence and capacity within the community to take and sustain local action, and to make linkages between the various service providers and the community. A community development worker would also play a key role in building cultural links, respect for diversity and support for minorities.



10. Next Steps:

This consultation process has enabled us to provide the key issues and recommendations that the community have stated. To an extent, these are prioritised by the numbers of people who have stated them. In order to prioritise which issues are most important to the community as a whole and which should be tackled first a prioritisation event was held in the community in September with 73 participants.

The issues and recommendations will also be worked up with relevant partners to begin to build an action plan for the future of Sheerwater. This action plan will outline the issue, action needed, lead partners, community involvement and resources needed. The action plan will remain a working document to shape the Tune-In campaign and to be reviewed with the community at regular intervals.

11. Appendices:



Appendix A -
Beermat Comments.x



Appendix B -
Broadmere Questionn



Appendix C -
Business Responses.}



Appendix D -
Organisations.xls



Appendix E -
Residents.xls



Appendix F -
Planning for Real Res

The photographs in this report were taken during the process of the Community Needs Assessment with the consent of the individuals and/or their parents. These photographs are the property of Surrey Community Action.

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