

narrowing the gaps news update

bulletin 2 - october 2009

in this bulletin

focus area - percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality

Each bulletin will focus on a different Narrowing the Gaps' priority.

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The county perspective on NtGs

- Working to improve quality of life for all, but more quickly for those most disadvantaged in our more deprived areas.
- Greater acceptance of the need to drill down to localities and priority neighbourhoods.

What about integration with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) ?

- NtGs needs to be fully integrated with the SCS for Warwickshire.
- Key officers from across the county are working to ensure that the principle of Narrowing the Gaps is clearly reflected in the emerging strategy, tackling a broad range of inequalities across all communities of interest, and the county.



Whitnash Community Forum

Focus Area - percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality

NtG Corporate Champions

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where are we at corporately with the NtG agenda?

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How Narrowing the Gaps fits with other corporate issues

The approach for NtGs supports the county's emerging focus on other corporate issues in respect of :

- i) Development of the localities / communities agenda
- ii) Personalisation of Services
- iii) The 'Total Place' agenda.

Report to Public Service Board

A report has been developed for the PSB outlining:

- Where we want to be in four years time
- Focus on future priorities and actions
- An outline of resource implications

NtGs Corporate Steering Group Update

Actions: To prepare a draft report for WCC SDLT
To develop proposals targeting the following key areas
To widen membership to other key officers
To extend the range of Challenge interviews to external partners

Discussion took place around appropriate indicators and service areas. It was agreed that projects should initially be based on the following key areas:

Young people and Vulnerable and High Harm Causers - the NEET and Family Centred projects were already underway and should be encouraged and supported.

Helping older people remain independent - linking Indicators around older people and equality. Kim Harlock and Andy Sharp will continue to advise on this work area.

Employment opportunities – an appropriate outcome to be developed reflecting the importance of tackling a recession based problem.

Developing 15-20 community leaders in specific areas - links to locality agenda and community empowerment indicators. Good practice was available.



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Why?

One of the objectives of the Narrowing the Gaps activity is to reduce the differences that exist amongst our communities on a spatial basis.

Data is taken from the 2008/09 Place Survey and is based on the weighted responses of 9,888 residents.

- Those aged over 75 are almost twice as likely to believe they can influence decisions affecting their local area than those aged under 35.
- Our most elderly residents are the cohort with the highest figure for this measure across all aspects of our society.
- Those involved in full-time education have the lowest figure.
- Those people who perceive themselves to be the 'busiest' (i.e. those in full time employment, younger age groups) believe that they have less influence over decisions affecting their local area. This might suggest the issue is related to an individual's perceived ability to engage with the existing engagement mechanisms (i.e. Community Forums), not necessarily the effectiveness of the mechanisms themselves.
- This is the second consecutive year where the evidence has demonstrated that residents from minority ethnic groups feel more engaged than the white population.

- All figures are lower than we would hope (40% or less), so there is clearly room for improvement across all communities of interest.

What we are aiming to achieve:

To increase the percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their community to within 8% of the best and worst performing Community Forum areas.

Action taken so far:

- 30 Community Forums established across the county.
- Each Strategic Director has responsibility for a district.

Are you contributing to the agenda?

First: Do you feel your customers are able to influence the decision making process?

Second: What mechanisms are there in your own service for people to influence the decision making process?

Third: Any ideas/ suggestions for further improvements?



- Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) – The Common Assessment Framework approach in this directorate looks to tackle gaps identified in the support needs for children, young people and families.
- Environment & Economy directorate is leading a partnership to secure funding from the European Regional Development Fund for a Sustainable Urban Development Package for the Coventry and Nuneaton Regeneration Zone area, including the most disadvantaged areas in NBBC, to improve skills' levels and get more people into work.
- Partnerships in Nuneaton and Bedworth and Warwick District Councils' areas are currently putting together, with support from local colleges, a package of proposals to support those young people Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETs)
- Nuneaton and WCC's CYPF directorate are currently developing a needs-based, priority area-focused approach to engagement and support for young people with their new Integrated Youth Support Service.
- The Health Inequalities Strategy, presented to the PSB in January 2009 is now being championed through the Warwickshire Healthier Communities Delivery Network partnership, and will ensure more effective "joined up" working on health issues across the county. More to follow after feedback from the National Support Team visit on health inequalities which took place in September.

Next issue

This will be a monthly publication, if you have any ideas to contribute to the next or future issues please contact:

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Recap on past bulletins

Bulletin 1 - Focus (NI 117): NEETs (Not in Employment Education or Training)

Bulletin 2 - Focus (NI 4) % People who feel they can influence decisions in their locality.

Focus issues in future bulletins will include

- **Family Intervention Project**
- **Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime (NI 21)**
- **Achievement of 5 or more A* - C grades at GCSE or equivalent (NI 75)**
- **Working age people on out of work benefits (NI 152)**