

DRAFT

**Darlington Local Neighbourhood Renewal
Strategy**

Foreword

Darlington Partnership is the Local Strategic Partnership for the area and is at the centre of neighbourhood renewal for Darlington. The Partnership is leading the work on tackling deprivation within the Borough and has responsibility for the production of this Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

This Strategy sets out Darlington Partnership's approach to tackle deprivation, promote social inclusion and address the spiral of decline in Darlington's eleven most disadvantaged areas. In so doing, it will seek to raise the self esteem, confidence and power of those local communities.

Partnership working and consultation with local residents has been integral to the development of this strategy. Darlington Partnership will ensure that priorities are addresses and actions are delivered in a coordinated way to ensure key outcomes are met which result in improved services and opportunities for people living in the priority wards.

In the delivery of this strategy, Darlington Partnership will;

- Provide Leadership and Capacity for Delivery
 - Secure Funding for Change
 - Improve performance against key deprivation targets
- Tackle Livability Issues identified by local communities
- Ensure delivering via Darlington Partnership Themed Groups
 - Deliver change at Neighbourhood Level

Insert Photo

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Chairman
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Contents

Introduction	4
Identification of the NRS Priority Wards	8
An Integrated Approach to Strategy Development	9
Defining Our Problems	11
Strategic Priorities	23
Delivering Arrangements	25

Appendix 1 Ward Profiles

Appendix 2 Data Comparison across all wards

Introduction

The purpose of this strategy is to provide an approach to tackling deprivation on a neighbourhood – by neighbourhood basis predominantly in the eleven most disadvantaged wards within Darlington these have been identified as suffering high levels of deprivation, but in doing so the boundaries of these wards will not constrain action where neighbourhoods cross ward boundaries.

The Strategy provides an overarching framework for tackling deprivation in Darlington's priority wards over five years and its development has accommodated consultation with a wide variety of interested parties. It also includes linkages with other complimentary strategies in particular the Government's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, Darlington's Community Strategy and Darlington Borough Council's Social Inclusion Strategy.

The aim of this Strategy is to:

'reduce deprivation in the eleven most disadvantaged wards within the Borough and improve the life chances of those residents living within these areas'.

Neighbourhood Renewal

Neighbourhood renewal involves reversing the spiral of decline in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It is about working from the grassroots to deliver economic prosperity and jobs, safer communities, good education, decent housing and better health, as well as fostering a new sense of community among residents.

Neighbourhood renewal is a central feature of the Labour government's political and social agenda for the UK. The Government's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal was launched by the Prime Minister in January 2001. Its aim is to ensure that within 20 years, no-one will be disadvantaged by where they live and presented a vision that:

Within 10-20 years, no-one should be seriously disadvantaged by where they live. People on low income should not have to suffer conditions and services that are failing and so different from what the rest of the population receives.

The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal programme is designed to improve standards of health, education, housing and the environment, to reduce crime and worklessness, and to close the gap between the worst-off neighbourhoods and the rest of the country.

A central part of the Government's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plan was a requirement that the 88 most deprived local authorities in England and Wales produce Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies and that Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) play a leading role in bringing together key agencies to find the root cause of neighbourhood decline, develop solutions and agree actions to reverse this trend, narrowing the deprivation gap between the most deprived local authority areas and the rest of the country. In the delivery of Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies the government created the £800 million Neighbourhood Renewal Fund available to the 88 most deprived local authorities.

The Darlington Context

Darlington is a compact Borough covering an area of approximately 198 kilometers (76 square miles) and has a population of around 98,000. Darlington has not been identified as one of the 88 most deprived local authorities in England and Wales according to the Government's latest Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 (IMD 2004). Darlington is currently ranked as the 90th most deprived local authority area in England (out of 354). As such Darlington does not qualify for Neighbourhood Renewal funding and it is therefore not a requirement for Darlington to produce a Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

However Darlington is a patchwork of neighborhoods where prosperity and quality of life can vary considerably. Darlington does have some significant pockets of deprivation, the IMD 2004 shows that 7 of the Borough wards are within the 10% most deprived wards in the county and that 45% of the population live in the 10 wards that are within the 25% of wards that are the most deprived in the country .

Despite Darlington not being eligible for Neighbourhood Renewal Funding Darlington Partnership the (Local Strategic Partnership) has recognised the need for a co-ordinated approach to neighbourhood renewal to help address high levels of deprivation that exist within the Borough of Darlington.

Document Framework

The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal has therefore provided the impetus for producing this local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

This strategy also compliments the vision of the Community Strategy '*Where quality comes to life*' translating the four visionary goals and eight connecting themes (see overleaf) of the Community Strategy down to local neighbourhood level.

Goals

An area creating and sharing prosperity	A location for learning, achievement and leisure	A place for living safely and well	A high quality environment with excellent communication links
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Connecting Themes

Improving the local economy	Raising educational achievement	Promoting community safety	Improving the environment
Promoting inclusive communities	Stimulating leisure activities	Improving health and well-being	Developing an effective transport system

Running in parallel to the development of this Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy is Darlington Borough Council’s Social Inclusion Strategy. Neighbourhood Renewal and social inclusion can be understood as different approaches to tackling similar problems. The Council’s approach to social inclusion is structured around:

- improving the life chances of those who are experiencing, and those who are at risk of experiencing, discrimination and disadvantage (regardless of where they live);

It offers solutions based on the communities of interest and identity to which people belong. The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy is about tackling deprivation on a geographical basis and offers solutions based on the physical communities (the neighbourhoods) to which people belong.

Social inclusion refers to the action that can be taken to address the problems of social exclusion. To some extent, social exclusion is a new term for an old concept. It includes what used to be called anti-poverty and social or community development work, but it has the benefit of being broader in scope. Social exclusion is about multiple deprivation. The Government Social Exclusion Unit describe this as:

“a short hand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked [social] problems.”

There is a whole range of problems that can contribute to causing social exclusion. They will be different for different people in different neighbourhoods.

A number seem to recur. These include:

- Unemployment
- Poor educational attainment
- Ill health
- Low income
- Crime

- Poor housing or local environment.

The problem of social exclusion becomes acute when the diverse (yet often interlinked) issues listed above amplify each other and become mutually reinforcing. A complex chain of cause and effect is then set in motion. This can lead to individuals feeling first disempowerment, then disengagement and disenchantment, before finally they can be said to have become socially excluded.

Darlington Borough Council's approaches to tackling social exclusion rely on an understanding of how these chains of cause and effect work..

Both Neighbourhood Renewal and Social Inclusion Strategies recognise that some people in Darlington are at risk of "double jeopardy". That is to say that their identity and their location mean that they are at higher risk of deprivation, disadvantage and discrimination. Examples of this may include members of the BME community or people with a long term illness who live in one of Darlington's eleven target wards.

This Strategy will also be enhanced over time by the development of individual Neighbourhood Plans for each of the priority areas. The actions contained in these local plans will be those that are specific to that particular neighbourhood and can be taken forward by the community with assistance from other organisations.

Identification of the NRS Priority Wards

Deprivation is a multi-faceted problem which cannot be measured by a single indicator. The existence of deprivation can only be identified by examining a range of factors, or social issues.

In determining the priority wards for inclusion within this strategy the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000 was originally used which ranked 11 wards within the Borough as being within the worst 25% in England. These wards were used as the basis for the development of Community Partnerships and the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation is a ranking produced by Government of all districts (and wards within districts) across England showing their degree of deprivation. The index is made of six different domains, each measuring different aspects of deprivation. These are income, employment, housing, health, education, skills and training deprivation and geographical access to services.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation has recently been revised to provide a more up to date picture of deprivation, focussing on sub-ward areas (Super Output Areas). Analysis of the new IMD shows that ten of the wards previously identified are still within the worst 25% nationally, when the whole ward is looked at, yet Cockerton East is replaced as the 11th most deprived area by Pierremont. Further analysis at sub ward level however, shows that significant deprivation problems still exist in Cockerton East and as such it still merits inclusion in the strategy. Out of the ten wards within the worst 25% in England in terms of deprivation 7 are within the worst 10% in England. Ward Profiles are included at Appendix 1.

Priority Wards

Central	Northgate
Cockerton West	Haughton East
Banktop	North Road
Eastbourne	Lingfield
Lascelles	Cockerton East.
Park East	

The 11 priority wards have been the focus of a considerable amount of work for building the social regeneration of these communities by way of SRB and Single Programme and Sure Start Programmes.

Community Partnerships

In particular the *'Darlington's Communities Project'* funded through SRB and Single Programme monies has been instrumental in developing capacity within disadvantaged communities. Community Partnerships within natural neighbourhoods have been established. The key objectives of the Community Partnerships are to build community capacity, improve community access to future funding and to create community partnerships, which are resident run, resident led, and community focused. They also involve a range of providers including churches, businesses, schools, Sure Start, Connexions and council departments. The Community Partnerships are integral to the implementation of this Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy as they will create and implement local neighbourhood action plans.

An Integrated Approach To Strategy Development

If this Strategy is to be successful then it must achieve buy in from those communities that it aims to serve and from key partners from the public, private, voluntary and community sector. This strategy has therefore taken an integrated approach in order to fully understand priorities to be addressed.

Community Engagement

In order to understand the problems of the priority areas through the eyes of local people Community Appraisals have been undertaken in all 11 areas. Residents have had the chance to identify the strengths and opportunities for their neighbourhoods and also to put forward project ideas that will help improve the area. Community Partnerships have played an integral part in the development of this strategy

The primary research for appraisals comprised a series of opportunities for community involvement.

- Focus groups were conducted with Community Partnerships in the identified wards
- Focus groups were held with local residents recruited randomly from households listed on the electoral register.
- Specific consultation was undertaken with members of the Bangladeshi community.
- Community Partnerships and random focus groups explored perceptions about the wards. Participants were encouraged to describe community needs and concerns, identify current/potential resources and suggest potential improvements. The aim was to dig deeper and explore the underlying problems and issues. Specific questions also encouraged the groups to reflect on health issues.
- Walkabouts in all 11 areas took place with residents and ward Councillors through the Community Partnerships.

- Community art work was undertaken with young people from 4 schools located in the priority wards and their work was used to attract local people to drop in events in order to ascertain the views of the wider population. Young People were given the opportunity to discuss life in their areas and explored their local community identifying positive and negative aspects of their community and the issues they felt needed tackling. Students were encouraged to take photographs and write poems that captured their feelings about the area.
- Community appraisal drop-in events were held . The material produced by the young people was exhibited as a means of encouraging further discussion and debate about the wards. Participants were asked to identify positive and negative aspects of life in the ward and to suggest how things could be improved further. They were also asked to reflect on the issues highlighted in the young people's work.
- Christmas wish 'Listening Day' exercises in Cockerton East and North Road
- Workshop session with the Community Partnership Forum

Partnership Working

In addition to the community consultation, specific discussions have been held with the Darlington Partnership's themed co-ordination group and with representatives of various statutory agencies.

All five Scrutiny Committees of the Council have been involved throughout the NRS development.

Darlington Assembly in January 2004 was the focus for the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy with over 100 representatives from the voluntary and community sector in attendance . Workshops were facilitated to consider issues arising from Community Appraisals and performance against key deprivation targets.

A multi-agency action planning day was held in July 2004 with representatives form the Community Partnerships in attendance to develop the action plan to this document.

Defining our Problems

In order to establish issues to be addressed by this Strategy various sources of data have been used:

National Floor Targets

To help drive improvement of public services and Government Programmes in disadvantaged neighbourhoods the Government has set floor targets and other deprivation related targets to ensure public service standards do not drop below a defined level in areas where problems are greatest. These targets are a set of minimum standards for service delivery that challenge local authorities and public sector agencies to improve health, housing, crime, employment, transport and educational inequalities. They focus on raising the quality of services in poorly performing areas up to the national average, in line with the Government aims that within 10-20 years, no-one should be seriously disadvantaged by where they live.

Health	Improve the chances for children by reducing the under-18 conception rate by 50% by 2010. By 2010, to reduce the inequalities in health outcomes by 10%
Housing	As measured by infant mortality and life expectancy at birth. By 2010, to bring all social housing into decent condition, with most of the improvement taking place in deprived areas, and increase the proportion of private housing in decent condition occupied by vulnerable groups.
Crime	Reduce crime and the fear of crime; improve performance overall, including by reducing the gap between the highest Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership areas and the best comparable areas; and Reduce vehicle crime Reduce domestic burglary
Employment	Over the 3 years to Spring 2006 increase the employment rates of disadvantaged areas and groups, taking account of the economic cycle – lone parents, ethnic minorities, people aged 50 and over, those with the lowest qualifications, and people in the 30 local authority Boroughs with the poorest initial labour market provision, and significantly reduce the difference between their employment rates and the overall rate. Help build an enterprising society in which small firms of all kinds thrive and achieve their potential with an increase in the number of people considering going into business. An improvement in the overall productivity of small firms and more enterprise in disadvantage communities.

Transport Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in Great Britain in road accidents by 40%, and the number of children killed or seriously injured by 50%, by 2010 compared with the average for 1994-98, tackling the significantly higher incidence in disadvantaged communities:

- Reduction in All Road Accidents by 40%
- 50% Reduction in Child Road Accidents

Education To sustain improvement in primary education by raising standards in English and Maths so that by 2004, 85% of 11 year olds achieve level 4 or above, and, by 2006, the number of schools in which fewer than 65% of pupils achieve level 4 or above is significantly reduced.

Transform secondary education by raising standards in English, maths, ICT and Science in Secondary Education so that by 2004 75% of 14 year olds achieve level 5 or above in English, maths and ICT (70% in science) nationally and by 2007 85% (80% in science), and by 2007, the number of schools where fewer than 60% of 14 year olds achieve level 5 or above is significantly reduced.

Between 2002 and 2006 the proportion of those aged 16 who get qualifications equivalent to 5 GCSEs at grades A* to C rises by 2 percentage points each year on average and in all schools at least 20% of pupils achieve this standard by 2004 rising to 25% by **2006**.

Increase the percentage of pupils obtaining five or more GCSEs at A*-C, with at least 38 per cent to achieve this standard in every local education authority (LEA) by 2004

In addition to Government floor targets key Community Strategy and Public Service Agreement Targets (PSA's) have also been considered.

Darlington Social Issues Map

Darlington Social Issues Map 2004 has been developed to encourage a better understanding of the facts about deprivation in Darlington and the geographical areas that are most effected. It includes specific information from the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation and measures deprivation in terms of:

- Income
- Employment
- Health and Disability
- Education skills and training

- Barriers to housing and services
- Crime and the living environment

Issues arising from the analysis of performance against key deprivation targets and issues identified in Darlington's Social Issues Map comparing data in priority wards across all wards in Darlington is outlined below. Data comparison data across all wards is included at Appendix 2.

Income: In looking at income, there are a number of nationally recognised indicators which are effectively 'means tested' including people or households in receipt of particular benefits and as such provides a reliable picture of income deprivation. Some of the indicators used are clearly inter-related, yet each tells a distinctive story identifying different problem areas. When examining income the following indicators have been taken into account:

- **Low income households** - are those receiving either Job Seekers Allowance, Family Credit or Income Support (JSU 2000-02)
- **Children in low income households** - represents the % of children in households in receipt of the above benefits (JSU 2000-02)
- **Income Support households** - are those in receipt of Income Support (JSU 2000-02)
- **Single parent households** - are those where the head of the household is a lone parent (ONS 2001)
- **Free School Meals** - represents the % of people eligible for free school meals (JSU 1999)
- All figures are estimated for the new ward boundaries from existing information

Key Findings relating to income

Despite not being a measure of low income on its own, the number of single parent households is included as an indicator due to its close links to low income and consequently deprivation.

Over one quarter (27.8%) of the households in Darlington are classified as 'low income households' as they are in receipt of income support, family credit or job seekers allowance. 41.2% of the children in Darlington live in 'low income households'. Overall, Central is the ward which performs worst overall, with poor results for all five indicators.

Haughton East performs notably badly on the measures of single parent households and free school meals eligibility, being the worst and second-worst performing ward respectively. This contrasts with the other results, where it achieves a ranking that indicates it is far from being the worst performing ward on these criteria. A similar situation can be observed for Northgate, which performs respectably on the measures of Income Support and single parent households, but far more poorly on the other three indicators.

The following income rankings show how the priority wards compare across the full range of income indicators:

Rank	Ward
1	Central
2	Cockerton West
3	Eastbourne
4	Park East
5	Lascelles
6	Bank Top
6	Haughton East
8	Northgate
9	North Road
10	Lingfield
11	Pierremont
12	Haughton West
13	Middleton St George
14	Harrowgate Hill
14	Haughton North
16	Hurworth
17	Cockerton East
18	Sadberge and Whessoe
19	Mowden
20	Faverdale
20	Hummersknott
22	College
22	Heighington and Coniscliffe
24	Park West

Employment: The issue of employment is best looked at in terms of who is without employment and who is seeking employment in each area. The indicators therefore reflect the number and circumstances of people without employment. The following employment indicators have been considered:

- **Total unemployment** - represents the number of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance divided by the JSU's estimate for working age people (JSU July 2004)
- **Youth unemployment** - represents the unemployment rate for people under 24 (JSU February 2004)
- **Long term unemployment** - represents the proportion of unemployed people who have been unemployed over 12 months (JSU February 2004)
- **Job demand** - is the % of working age people *seeking* a job (JSU July 2004)
- **Joblessness** - is the % of working age people without a job (JSU July 2004)

Key Findings relating to employment

Darlington has a relatively low unemployment rate compared to the rest of the Tees Valley, yet still exceeds national rates in most areas. The exception to this is the long-

term unemployment figures, which show Darlington as having less of a problem than elsewhere. Another area where Darlington is comparable to the national figure is with low rates of joblessness, which reflects higher than average participation in the employment market.

The major unemployment problem in Darlington is within the Central and Northgate areas where the unemployment rate is more than twice the national average. Unemployment among young people is a particular problem in Central, where 34.3% of unemployed people are within the under 24 year old age group.

Long term unemployment is a problem in certain areas which do not suffer from particularly high unemployment rates, which perhaps suggests that the unemployment rate is unlikely to reduce much further in those areas. .

The following employment rankings show how the priority wards compare across the full range of employment indicators:

Rank	Ward
1	Central
2	Park East
3	Northgate
4	Cockerton West
5	North Road
6	Eastbourne
6	Haughton East
8	Lingfield
9	Lascelles
10	Bank Top
11	Pierremont
12	Haughton West
13	Park West
14	Harrowgate Hill
14	Haughton North
16	Faverdale
17	Cockerton East
17	Middleton St George
19	Sadberge and Whessoe
20	College
21	Hummersknott
22	Heighington and Coniscliffe
22	Hurworth
22	Mowden

Health: When examining health issues at ward level, the indicators chosen reflect the most appropriate and available measures of health from birth (low birth weight babies) through to death (mortality rates). Some of the health data used needs to be examined with a note of caution, as the numbers involved can be significantly lower than with other themed indicators and therefore are more susceptible to uncharacteristic variations.

Others are also affected by the location of particular facilities such as sheltered accommodation. The following indicators have been taken into consideration:

- **People needing care** - represents the percentage of people who are in receipt of Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance benefits (JSU 2002)
- **Teenage pregnancies** - represents the number of pregnancies per '000 under 18 year old females, note 0 means fewer than 3 (Darlington PCT 2000)
- **Birth weight <2500g** - represents the percentage of babies born weighing less than 2500g (5^{1/2}lbs) (Darlington PCT 1996-2000)
- **Mortality rate** - represents the number of deaths per '000 population (Darlington PCT 1997-2001)
- **Dental health of 5 year olds** - represents the average number of decayed, missing or filled teeth in five year old children (Darlington PCT 2000)
- All figures except people needing care are estimated for the new ward boundaries from existing information

Key Findings relating to health

Cockerton West has by some margin the highest proportion of its population requiring care. The data on teenage pregnancies indicates that whilst under 18 conception rates across the priority wards has been steadily reducing numbers are still above the national rate. Teenage pregnancy is a particular problem in the Eastbourne and Park East wards.

Mortality rates in the majority of priority wards are higher than the national average. Only two priority wards Cockerton East and Park East are below the national rate.

Eastbourne and Cockerton West are clearly the areas where children are most affected by dental health problems, averaging more than three decayed, missing or filled teeth for each child

The following health rankings show how the priority wards compare across the full range of health indicators:

Rank	Ward
1	Northgate
2	Cockerton West
3	Bank Top
4	Eastbourne
4	Haughton East
4	Lascelles
7	Central
8	Park East
9	Haughton West
9	North Road
11	Pierremont
12	Lingfield
13	Haughton North

14	Harrowgate Hill
15	Middleton St George
16	Faverdale
17	Sadberge and Whessoe
18	Cockerton East
19	Heighington and Coniscliffe
20	Hurworth
20	College
22	Mowden
22	Park West
24	Hummersknott

Education: The data compiled to reflect the education and skills of the population of each ward has focussed on formal education and the progression from school to university, which is increasingly linked to other factors such as family incomes. The following indicators have been taken into consideration:

- The first four indicators have been estimated for the new wards from existing information
- **Key Stage 2 attainment** - is the average score for Maths, English and Science (JSU 2002)
- **GCSE attainment** - is the average scores for GCSE awards where A*=8 to G=0 (JSU 2001)
- **University progression** - rates are the number of successful applicants per '000 of population (ONS 1998)
- **Adults with low literacy levels** - who are expected to encounter 'everyday problems' (Basic Skills Agency 1995)
- **17+ in further education** - represents the proportion of people between 17 and retirement age who are involved in LSC funded courses (Tees Valley LSC 2002)

Key Findings relating to education

Park East is the area with the lowest attainment at both Key Stage 2 and GCSE. Notable features of these two indicators are the large decline in performance between Key Stage 2 and GCSE experienced by the Central, Cockerton East, Haughton North and Lingfield wards.

Lascelles ward has a zero rate of progression into university. In comparison Hummersknott ward has a progression rate more than double the average across Darlington.

Lascelles and Eastbourne have the most adults with poor literacy. Eastbourne also has the fewest adults involved in further education, with a figure much worse than the next lowest.

The following education rankings show how the priority wards compare across the full range of education indicators:

Rank	Ward
1	Eastbourne
2	Park East
3	Bank Top
4	Lascelles
5	North Road
6	Cockerton West
7	Haughton East
8	Lingfield
9	Northgate
10	Cocketon East
11	Central
12	Haughton West
13	Haughton North
14	Harrowgate Hill
15	Faverdale
16	Pierremont
17	Hurworth
18	Sadberge and Whessoe
19	Middleton-St-George
20	Heightington and Coniscliffe
21	Mowden
22	Park West
23	Hummersknott
24	College

Crime: The link between deprivation and crime is well documented and particular types of crime are more prevalent in deprived areas than others. The indicators used cover a range of crimes, focusing on the main categories which affect the public. As Central ward contains the majority of shops, pubs and nightlife in Darlington, it is clearly a focal point for the majority of criminal activity, which needs to be taken into account when looking at non-domestic crimes. The following indicators have been considered:

- ***Violent Crime***
- ***Domestic Burglary***
- ***Theft of/from Motor Vehicles***
- ***Criminal Damage***
- ***Total Theft***
- All crime figures from Darlington Police 2003-04
- All figures are expressed as rates per '000 population, except for household burglaries which is expressed as per '000 households

Key Findings in relation to crime

Darlington has low levels of crime when compared to the Tees Valley. This is not the case however when looking at car crime and total theft which are similar to the Tees Valley average.

As expected, Central ward is the main focus of criminal activity across most of the indicators. Even levels of domestic burglary are high, the third highest in Darlington.

Northgate appears to be the second area most affected by crime, ranking the second poorest ward in terms of violent crime and theft.

The following crime rankings show how the priority wards compare across the full range of crime indicators:

Rank	Ward
1	Central
2	Northgate
3	Bank Top
4	Park East
5	Lascelles
5	Lingfield
7	North Road
8	Haughton East
9	Cockerton West
10	College
11	Eastbourne
12	Pierremont
13	Sadberge and Whessoe
14	Haughton West
15	Middleton St George
16	Harrowgate Hill
17	Cockerton East
18	Faverdale
19	Haughton North
20	Park West
21	Mowden
22	Hurworth
23	Heighington and Coniscliffe
23	Hummersknott

Environment: The indicators chosen to represent environment are more to do with the population's immediate environment i.e. their homes and the link between low value housing and deprivation. The inclusion of no car households is intended to represent both the impact of financial deprivation and access to services. The following indicators have been taken into consideration:

- *No car households* (ONS 2001)
- *Household Tenure LA/HA* - represents the proportion of the areas housing stock which is rented from social landlords (ONS 2001)
- *Council Tax Bands A and B* -represents the proportion of dwellings which are valued for Council Tax purposes at under £52,000 (ONS 2003)

- **Average House Price** - represents the average price of houses sold within each area (JSU 2003/04)
- **House Affordability** - represents an index where a score over 1 indicates average house prices exceed 3.5 times average household incomes, and has been estimated for the new wards from existing data (TVHP 2001)

Key Findings relating to environment

Over half of the households in Cockerton West have no car. This compares with Faverdale at the other extreme, where 94% of households own a car. In addition, housing rented from social landlords makes up more than half of the total households in Cockerton West, which is more than 10% higher than the next ward.

House prices are lowest in Northgate, with the average price being £65,300. Bank Top, Eastbourne and Lascelles, Lingfield and Park East all have average house prices under £70,000.

Data provided by the Housing Department shows that less than 3% of council dwellings fails to meet the Government's decent home standard. It is expected that by 2008 a 100% of council owned dwellings will have reached the standard. In terms of private housing conditions decent homes information is not currently available for all of the priority wards.

The following environment rankings show how the priority wards compare across the full range of environment indicators:

Ward	
1	Lascelles
2	Bank Top
3	Cockerton West
4	Eastbourne
5	Lingfield
5	North Road
7	Park East
8	Northgate
9	Central
10	Haughton East
11	Pierremont
12	Haughton West
13	Cockerton East
14	Haughton North
15	Harrowgate Hill
16	Middleton St George
17	Hurworth

18	Faverdale
19	Sadberge and Whessoe
20	Heighington and Coniscliffe
21	College
21	Mowden
21	Park West
24	Hummersknott

Transport: Government indicators measure the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents, and the number of children killed or seriously injured involved in road accidents .

Statistics show that 5 out of the 11 wards have not met the government target to reduce road accidents by 40% and 6 wards have not met the target to reduce the number of child road accidents

Community Priorities

Community Appraisal Consultation raised a range of issues and the following is a list of issues that were repeatedly identified by residents

Enhancing the Environment

- Develop ways of tackling problems posed by private sector landlords including enforcement and making private sector landlords accountable.
- Tackle problems with litter, fly tipping, dog dirt and graffiti.

Stimulating Leisure Activities

- Development of youth/community centres.
- Increase provision for young people.
- Increase the number of youth workers.

Improving the Local Economy

- Develop local training to tackle high levels of unemployment.
- Increase training for local environmental works.
- Development of new businesses and job creation.

Developing an Effective Transport System

- Introduction of more speed restriction/traffic calming.
- Improve bus service and routes.

Promoting Community Safety

- Improve street lighting.
- Increase in Police, Police Community Support Officers and Community Wardens presence.
- Introduce/Expand CCTV.

- Deal with issues of young people hanging around outside shops and off-licence.

Improve Health and Well-being

- Improve diet and levels of nutrition.
- Tackle young people drinking.
- Reduce smoking.

Raising Educational Achievement

- Develop parenting courses.
- Increase practical and life-skills element of schooling.

Promoting Inclusive Communities

- More involvement of young people and school in the community.

Stimulating Leisure Activities

- Development of youth/community centres.
- Increase provision for young people.
- Increase the number of youth workers.

Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priorities for this strategy and the resulting Action Plan have been driven by the need to improve performance against key deprivation targets i.e. Government Floor Targets , Community Strategy Targets and PSA targets, issues identified in Darlington's Social Issues Map and community aspirations identified through Community Appraisals.

The Strategic Priorities of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and Action Plan are designed to have a positive impact on reversing the spiral of decline in the designated priority areas and to build the capacity and confidence in those communities. The Priorities and Action Plan have been structured into sections based on the four visionary goals and eight connecting themes of the Community Strategy.

The Strategic Priorities identified below summarise the key actions contained within the Action Plan

Improving the local Economy

- Reduce worklessness and improve training opportunities and business development within the priority areas

Promoting Inclusive Communities

- Build cohesive and confident communities raising self esteem and confidence.

Enhancing the local environment

- Create a more attractive environment by tackling sustainability issues to protect the natural environment and liveability issues such as litter, graffiti, dog fouling that have been identified by the community
- Developing an effective transport system

Raising Education Achievement

- Raise educational standards and develop an ethos of lifelong learning by providing opportunities for access, achievement and engagement.
- Provide local training opportunities that develop the skills and confidence of local people

Stimulating Leisure Activity

- Engage communities and in particular young people in leisure activities

Promoting Community Safety

- Reduce crime and antisocial behaviour and increase the number of local people feeling safer within their community

Improving Health and well-being

- Encourage healthier lifestyles and reduce health inequalities

Providing Decent Homes

- Engage with private sector landlords to improve standards and increase the proportion of decent homes within the private sector occupied by vulnerable groups.

Delivery Arrangements

The body responsible for ensuring that the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy is turned into reality is Darlington Partnership.

Darlington Partnership Themed groups; Community Safety, Learning Partnership, Health Improvement & Social Inclusion and Economy & Environment will be responsible for the delivery of the action plan and will focus upon the monitoring and review of the actions linked to their group.

The Darlington Community Partnership Steering Group the umbrella organisation for the Community Partnerships will also monitor progress against the strategic priorities of the document.

Seven key indicators have been selected to measure the performance of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and have been selected as they are both national floor targets and key Community Strategy targets measuring deprivation. These indicators are as follows .

Health

Number of conceptions per 1,000 females aged 15-17 average for 3-year period
Increase the average mortality ratio across the priority wards

Education

Percentage of pupils achieving 5 GCSEs grade A*-C

Crime

Total recorded crimes per 1,000 of population

Economy

Proportion of working age in employment

Transport

Road safety casualties per 100,000 population; total, pedestrians, pedal cyclists, motor cyclists, car users, other vehicles killed/serious injury / slightly injured

Housing

Number of social housing in a decent condition