

Waverley Borough Council

Social Inclusion Strategy

June 2008

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(Details of other languages to be added).

Introduction

We first adopted *Opportunities for All – A Social Inclusion Strategy for Waverley* in 1997. Since then a lot has happened through our own work, working in partnership and through enabling others. This Strategy is a 'refresh' – many of the issues identified in the Strategy ten years ago are still relevant today. This new Strategy highlights the progress we have made dealing with these issues, but we know there is still much more work to be done.

Through this strategy, we aim to:

- Understand factors in Waverley that could lead to Social Exclusion
- Support the achievement of our Corporate Plan 2008-11 priorities, particularly 'Improving Lives'
- Set ourselves objectives to work towards Social Inclusion through our own work, partnership working and by enabling others
- Highlight current areas of our work delivering these objectives, and identify further actions that we need to do
- Give ourselves a method for monitoring and reviewing our progress in delivering Social Inclusion.

This Strategy brings together information and ideas from many of our services. We have consulted (will consult) with external groups and organisations involved in Social Inclusion to ask whether we have identified and understood the social exclusion factors in Waverley, and whether our objectives and actions are the right ones to benefit our residents.

Social Exclusion is defined as a shorthand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdowns.¹

Social Inclusion is a process that ensures that those at risk of poverty and social exclusion gain the opportunities and support necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live. It ensures that they have greater participation in decision making that affects their lives and access to their fundamental rights.²

Our Corporate Plan 2008-11, Town and Countryside Together

We agreed our Corporate Plan 2008-11, setting out our vision and ambitions for Waverley for the next three years, in February 2008. We identified five priorities that we will strive to achieve to have a positive impact on the lives of all our residents, and underpin this Social Inclusion Strategy:

Priority one – Environment – protecting and enhancing Waverley's unique mix of rural and urban communities

Priority two – Improving lives – improving the quality of life for all, particularly the more vulnerable in our society.

Priority three – Leisure – improving and supporting opportunities for all to take part in sport, recreation and culture.

Priority four – Subsidised affordable housing – working for more subsidised

¹ Social Exclusion Unit, quoted in Eastleigh Borough Council, 2005

² Charter of the Fundamental Rights of the Europe Union, quoted in Thurrock LSP, 2006.

affordable housing to be built, and to manage Council housing well.

Priority five – Value for money – Ensuring all our activities are customer focused and provide good value for money.

Surrey's Draft Sustainable Community Strategy

Priorities have been agreed for a Surrey-wide Sustainable Community Strategy by the Surrey Strategic Partnership (SSP), which includes representatives from Surrey County Council, all 11 District and Borough Councils (including Waverley) and representatives from other bodies such as the Police, NHS, Learning & Skills Council and the voluntary sector. The draft SCS sets out the SSP's vision for a better Surrey and has 5 improvement priorities, all of which are relevant to this strategy.

- Safer & Stronger Communities
- Children and Young People
- Health and Well-being
- Economic Development
- Housing, Environment and Infrastructure

Targets against national indicators under these five themes are being agreed with the Government to form Surrey's Local Area Agreement (LAA).

Waverley's Local Strategic Partnership

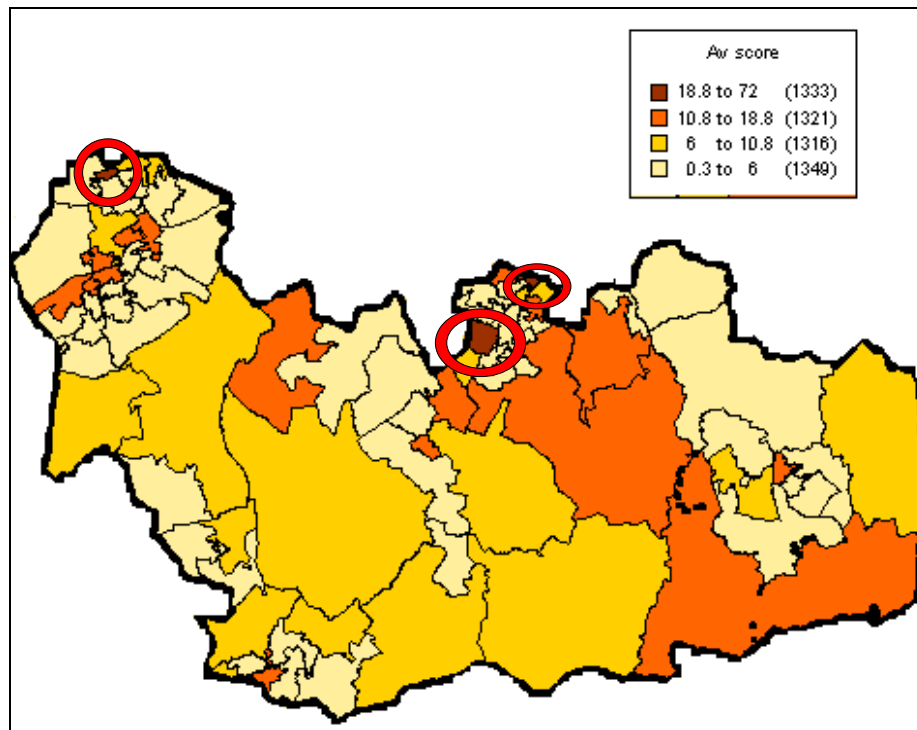
Waverley's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) brings together representatives from different organisations across Waverley, including ourselves, Surrey County Council, the Police, the PCT, community, voluntary and faith organisations, businesses and towns and parish councils. The LSP has agreed to adopt the SCS priorities listed above and to try and work together in partnership to achieve these in Waverley. Some of the sub-groups of the LSP such as the 'Health and Social Inclusion Group, and the 'Economic Development Group' have concentrated on many of the issues contained within this strategy.

Social Exclusion in Waverley?

Waverley is, on the whole, an affluent area, as demonstrated by high house prices and the high level of car ownership. So how could Social Exclusion be an issue in Waverley? Relative affluence can mask individuals or groups of people who may be struggling to live in an expensive area without the income levels. There are also a number of other factors that could impact on those who are less advantaged and these are reflected in the indices below.

The map below is based on the 2007 'Indices of Multiple Deprivation' – a score based on 7 different measures – education, employment, crime, health, access to housing and services, income & living environment. The darker the shading, the higher the score, and the more deprived an area is considered to be. The map is split into 'Super Output Areas' (SOAs) – areas containing around 1,500 residents. The three SOAs with the highest score have been highlighted.

Map 1 – Waverley's Deprivation Scores by 'Super Output Area'



Source – www.localknowledge.co.uk

Although Waverley as a whole area is the 6th least deprived area in the country (348 out of 354), the map shows that there are differences and inequalities between the areas within Waverley. The neighbourhoods of greatest need that largely fall into the areas highlighted above are Sandy Hill (Farnham), Ockford Ridge/Aaron's Hill (Godalming) and Northbourne (Farncombe).

Things to remember about Social Exclusion:

- The key to someone being excluded is how they **compare with what is 'normal'** in the society and communities around them. For example, a household might earn around the national average, but that would make them relatively poor in affluent, wealthy Waverley, and therefore potentially excluded;
- Social Exclusion **may not be a permanent state**, people can become temporarily excluded due to, for example, illness, seasonal work and varying personal finances.

What factors could lead to Social Exclusion in Waverley?

The list below tries to identify some of the most common ways that people may be at risk of being socially excluded in Waverley. We must recognise that, while we can make judgements based on evidence about whether people are or feel socially excluded, we may not always get it right. This is why it is important to involve those working in the community to test and challenge our views.

<p>Personal finances & debt</p>	<p>The average weekly income of working residents in Waverley is £624, which is high compared to the national average of £456. However, the average weekly income of workers employed in Waverley is significantly lower - £467 – and the lowest in Surrey.</p> <p>In 2006 the take up of welfare benefits was less than 1% of the economically active population – the lowest of Surrey’s Districts – this could be due to low awareness, or the stigma associated with claiming benefits. The recent ‘credit crunch’ is putting more pressure on those with low income, which is likely to lead to an increase in the demand for support services.</p> <p>The experience of disadvantage will often be worse and result in more exclusion in an area like Waverley because of the relative affluence that is experienced by most people – this has been described as being “at the bottom of a cliff face of affluence”. It is estimated that 41% of children in poverty do not live in an area considered to have multiple need. There is the potential for that high earning residents with an affluent lifestyle may become socially excluded if they lose their health or their job.</p> <p>With the rising cost of fuel, ‘fuel poverty’ (where 10% of a household’s income is spent on fuel use in order to heat the home to an adequate standard of warmth) is an increasingly significant issue.</p>
<p>Age – older people</p>	<p>Nearly 1 in 10 residents in Waverley are over the age of 75, the second highest proportion in Surrey. Projections show that there is likely to be almost a 30% rise in the number of people aged over 85 in the next 10 years.</p> <p>Older people can be excluded because of lack of available resources or limited ‘liquid’ cash, lack of contact with other people, ill health, inability to access services and not enough opportunities to become involved in neighbourhood activities.³ A particular issue can be living in a society that is increasingly dependent on information and transactions on the internet.</p>
<p>Age - youth</p>	<p>Young people run the risk of being excluded because of the rural nature of Waverley – a lack of facilities or transport to facilities. This can lead, as a result of boredom or nothing to do, to a higher risk of crime or anti social behaviour. For example, a recent Godalming ‘Health Check’ identified that there was a lack of places to be for young</p>

³ Excluded Older People, Social Exclusion Unit, 2005

	<p>people in their own areas, and that they did not necessarily wish to travel to other areas.</p> <p>Young people are in danger of being excluded from decision making and shaping their areas, as there can be less opportunities for them to participate and comment, e.g. as they are unable to vote.</p>
<i>Ethnicity</i>	<p>The 2001 census showed that 2.61% of the Borough's residents classed themselves as 'non-white' although this was almost a 100% increase from the 1991 census. The electoral role appears to show an increase in residents from other European countries, with over 1800 residents in 2008 with a European nationality other than British. Recent years have seen an increase in migrant workers in the healthcare and agricultural sectors. There is now a requirement for all care workers to have an NVQ qualification, which can be an issue for those who do not speak English as a first language. Some schools in the Borough have also seen an increase in pupils whose first language is not English.</p> <p>It would be easy for ethnic minority residents to feel isolated in an area where most people are from the same ethnic group or background.</p>
<i>Disability / Illness</i>	<p>14% of residents have a disability or long-term limiting illness. Those with a disability or illness may experience difficulties accessing services, participating in neighbourhood activities and remaining in their own homes. Carers for those with a disability or illness, including young carers, may also be at risk of being socially excluded and have their own support needs.</p> <p>People with learning disabilities or mental health problems are also at risk of becoming excluded. Surrey PCT's strategy "Improving Mental Well-being in Surrey" identifies risk factors which contribute to mental health problems such as low income, poor housing, unemployment and social isolation. An increase in young people suffering from dementia has been identified.</p>
<i>Lack of affordable housing / Quality of housing</i>	<p>The current average house price in Waverley is £378,430. The average entry level property price for a two bedroom home is currently £275,000. The income required to buy an entry level property in Waverley is approximately £40,000 - £45,000⁴, which would suggest that first time home-ownership is out of reach of most people.</p> <p>Groups that may be particularly affected include 'keyworkers', those on low incomes, first-time buyers who want to stay in their existing communities and 'concealed households' (individuals or families living within a household who want to move). There is a link between poor quality of housing and health issues.</p>
<i>Access to Services / Transport</i>	<p>Waverley covers 133 square miles, the largest Borough in Surrey, and much of the area is rural. 30% of Waverley is woodland. A major social inclusion issue is whether people are able to access services</p>

⁴ West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008

	<p>and activities – from both rural and urban areas, although we recognise that some people have chosen to live in Waverley because of its ‘rural isolation’.</p> <p>Some areas of Waverley have good transport links, such as mainline trains services, but some of the more rural villages are dependent on infrequent bus services or travel by car. Transport links to London are good, but not across the Borough. Public transport is not affordable for many, particularly with commuter pricing.</p> <p>The 2001 census recorded that nearly 14% of households in Waverley had no car.</p> <p>Lack of affordable transport can be a factor that links with many of the other factors in this strategy, for example making it difficult to access services such as homeless hostel accommodation in Guildford.</p>
Unemployment	77% of the working age population of the Borough is economically active, and unemployment is estimated to be around 3.3% compared to a national average of 5.5%. (Office of National Statistics)
Skills & qualifications	<p>Surrey-wide figures show that almost 38% of children fail to achieve 5 GCSEs A*-C passes (Surrey State Schools). 9.36% of the adult population in Waverley (according to the Annual population survey 2005) have no qualifications at all, compared with a national average of 14.3%.</p> <p>In an affluent area those with few / no educational qualifications may become excluded.</p>
Religion	There are many Christian-based initiatives in Waverley. The 2001 census recorded over 1,700 people in Waverley who gave their religion as one other than Christian (including Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh). There are few places of worship or facilities linked to these faiths in Waverley.
Crime, and fear of crime	<p>Waverley is an area with very low levels of crime. But there is a relatively high fear of crime, as captured in a fear of crime survey carried out in 2003.</p> <p>Crime and fear of crime may contribute to social exclusion, for example it may contribute to the isolation of older people if they are afraid to go out at night, or it may increase negative feelings towards young people. How people are treated when they use support services or report crimes or issues can lead to them feeling victimised.</p>
Domestic abuse	Statistically, domestic abuse will be as common in Waverley as anywhere in the country, but victims may be less likely to come forward in an affluent area where there is more to lose in respect of status, social stigma and finances. There is very little access to solicitors who hold the Legal Services franchise in Waverley, therefore victims may be less able to seek injunctions through the courts which decreases their ability to take control of the situation and increase feelings of

	<p>exclusion. Domestic abuse accounts for a large proportion of homelessness and can leave victims and their families with worse-off financially, poorer performance at work and school and worsened physical and mental health.</p>
<p><i>Lack of affordable legal support</i></p>	<p>There is a lack of access to affordable legal support in Waverley, which can hinder people's ability to deal with situations that can lead to social exclusion such as domestic abuse (see above) or industrial tribunals.</p>
<p><i>Health Services</i></p>	<p>It is important that everyone accesses health services, but this can be difficult due to transport/access issues in Waverley and cost.</p> <p>There is very limited access to NHS dentists in Waverley. Prescription charges could lead to more health issues if people do not take up prescriptions due to their cost.</p> <p>It is critical that vulnerable groups such as older people and young people (particularly in relation to STDs or teenage pregnancies) access health services.</p>

What are we doing to minimise Social Exclusion in Waverley?

We know there are people in our society who need extra help and support, and who are at risk of being socially excluded. We aim to provide the means for that support to be available to those who need it, by working in partnership with other organisations, local communities and the thriving voluntary sector in Waverley to fund care and support services, and by ensuring that our own services target those in need.

Objective 1 – Combating poverty and financial disadvantage

We know that, because Waverley is a very affluent area, those who have low incomes or are deprived in other ways are worse off in comparison with others. We raise awareness of available services, encourage people to access the benefits that are available to them, and try and make quality services accessible to all. For example we:

- Have set ourselves a target in our Corporate Plan 2008-11 to increase the uptake of Housing and Council Tax benefit by 2% in target groups (pensioners and low income families) by promotion and through partnership working
- Have set ourselves a target in our Corporate plan 2008-11 to increase the year on year uptake of IN2 Passport to Leisure scheme (providing a discount for those receiving income-related benefit or in full-time education) subscribers by 5%
- Agreed a Corporate Debt Policy in March 2008 to supports those with multiple Waverley debts
- Provide rent arrears support to our tenants by referring them to specialist Supporting People services – supporting vulnerable tenants and their families, older tenants and tenants with mental health problems
- Provide funding to agencies such as Citizen’s Advice Bureaux who provide support on issues such as debt management
- Are working with others such as Surrey County Council, as part of a Surrey ‘Stronger Communities Strategy’ – one of the key themes in the Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement - to identify and target communities and areas where there is inequality or deprivation.
- Have negotiated free access to leisure facilities for ‘looked after’ and vulnerable children as part of our new leisure contract.

Objective 2 – Helping people to remain in their own communities

We know that an important part of Social Inclusion is for people to be able to remain in their own communities, either through being able to stay in their own home close to friends and activities, or by being able to afford to remain in the area they live in through access to subsidised affordable housing. We help to achieve this by:

- Setting ‘Subsidised affordable Housing’ as one of our key priorities in our Corporate Plan 2008-11 and setting ourselves targets to achieve this through planning policy guidance and by evaluating the business case for a ‘Special Purpose Vehicle’ – a means by which we could develop new affordable housing for rent or sale.
- Supporting WRVS to provide meals on wheels to allow people to remain in their own homes.
- Providing Disabled Facilities grants and Waverley’s Home Improvement grant to assist vulnerable people to live in decent, efficient homes that meet their needs.
- Providing disabled adaptations to enable tenants to remain in their own

- homes or move to a home which is more suitable for adaptation.
- Developing affordable housing for people with a local connection.
- Transport support schemes (see Objective 4) to assist people to live independently and continue to do day to day tasks such as shopping.
- Providing nine sheltered schemes throughout the Borough providing a high level of support to older and vulnerable tenants to remain at home. An enhanced care service is provided by Surrey County Council at two of the schemes in Farnham
- Providing long term support for older and vulnerable tenants to live independently in the community through the Community Support service.

Objective 3 – Encourage stronger ‘cohesive’ communities and increasing community capacity and leadership

We have identified areas where there are some pockets of disadvantage and deprivation, and we target specific resources into working within these areas and within our housing estates to encourage a stronger and more active sense of community. We endeavour to try and increase the capacity and leadership within the community. We support cultural initiatives in several areas and support partnerships such as town initiatives to identify priorities for their areas. We have

- Been working with others such as Surrey County Council, as part of a Surrey ‘Stronger Communities Strategy’ – one of the key themes in the Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement - to identify and target communities and areas where there is inequality or deprivation against a range of measures, through a pilot ‘heat mapping’ approach.
- Supported Market Town Healthchecks in Cranleigh, Haslemere, Farnham and Godalming to create an evidence base for local priorities
- Supported Town Partnerships that have delivered projects including the award winning ‘Fly’ project in Cranleigh and the ‘Place to Be’ in Haslemere aimed at young people.
- Set ourselves a target in the Corporate Plan 2008-11 to strengthen existing relationships with all of our town and parish councils (including Market Town Healthchecks, Parish Plans and partnership working) by April 2009.
- Targeted specific resources, in partnership with Surrey County Council, focusing on a wide variety of projects, including community planning, life-long learning, youth provision, shared community facilities, environmental improvements, capacity and confidence building and service uptake in a number of Waverley’s communities, most notably recently in Sandy Hill (Farnham), Ockford Ridge (Godalming), the Chantrys (Farnham) and Northbourne (Farncombe).
- Supported community development in Ockford Ridge/Aarons Hill which has led to the community succeeding in refurbishing the local Scout Hut, two play parks and starting up a toy library and youth club.
- Started an in-depth review, under our Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee, of the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour in Waverley.

Objective 4 – Tackle rural isolation

Although some people chose to live in Waverley due to its rural nature, it is an area where getting to services and activities can be difficult, particularly for older or younger people or those with disabilities. We try and ensure that transport and local facilities are available to those that need it by

- Encouraging those who are eligible for concessionary fares (older & disabled people) to apply for bus passes
- Providing funding for the 'Hoppa' service – over 15 minibuses providing a door to door service for those that need it, and also providing dedicated services to the Royal Surrey and Frimley Park hospitals.
- Supporting social car schemes and hosting a quarterly Waverley Community transport forum.
- Working in partnership with voluntary and statutory agencies to develop and increase local youth provision, such as youth cafes, multi-use games areas and youth shelters.
- Seeking funding to continue the 'Be Active' (Active Communities) programme and expand during 2009-12 to additional locations to tackle rural isolation and social deprivation.

Objective 5 – Ensure equal access to all to our services

We will make sure there is equal access for all to all of our services, and that we consider equality and diversity when we plan and deliver our services. For example we

- Have set ourselves a target in our Corporate Plan 2008-11 to deliver a minimum Level 2 by March 2009, and Level 3 by March 2011, against the Equality Standard for Local Government
- Have carried out assessments of all of our services to make sure that no there is no adverse impact on any particular group. We will regularly review these assessments, and take them into account when planning our services.
- Are producing a Single Equality scheme covering all of the different equality strands
- Ensure equal opportunities for all as part of our recruitment processes and promote flexible working, as one of the larger employers in the Borough.
- Undertake outreach in our Leisure Service through initiatives such as "Be Active" (Active Communities) and the IN2 passport to leisure scheme.

Objective 6 – Give a voice and support to marginalised groups

It is important for social inclusion that everyone is able to participate and comment on decisions that affect their lives, but we know that this can be difficult for some groups of people. We have tried to address this by

- Setting up and running the Waverley Top Youth Council to give young people across the Borough a chance to have a say about services and issues that affect them, and trying to ensure that this Council represents as wide a range of Waverley youth as possible.
- A community development officer for Youth championing young people through work with partners and seeking to ensure that they are involved and valued
- Setting up a new Waverley Disability Forum in November 2007, and supporting the Forum in producing an Action Plan.
- Assisting, through our Care and Repair Agency, vulnerable households claim grants and benefits, and supporting private sector tenants or landlords if disputes or problems arise.
- Supporting the Guildford, Waverley and Surrey Heath Over 50s Forum, and a Carers Forum.
- Providing, in partnership with Surrey County Council, a Community Development worker who supports St Marks Active Residents Team (SMART). They meet weekly to co-ordinate activities and attend courses and provide a free crèche so young mothers can attend. Benefits have included building a sense of community, reducing isolation and building confidence and self esteem.
- Supporting victims of domestic abuse through an outreach service provided in partnership with Guildford Borough Council.

Objective 7 – Seek to provide people to skills and employment

We aim to provide access to important skills and employment, promoting independence and participation (see Objective 6) to both adults and young people, through a range of providers including Waverley Training Services. We have:

- Set ourselves a target in the Corporate Plan 2008-11 to expand the coverage of our e2e (Entry to Employment), apprenticeship and schools work during 2008, such that it is accessible to all of the Borough's communities. This will include work during 2008 to develop a business case for an extra base to service the Eastern part of the Borough.
- Set ourselves a target in the Corporate Plan to improve outcomes by securing at least 5% additional performance against each year's targets for the number of WTS student completions
- Supported Cranfold Job Seekers club in 2008/09.
- Supported the St Marks Active Residents Team (SMART), who seek to improve the skills and employability of young women, parents and single mothers. Some mothers have started returning to work.

Objective 8 – Promote health, well-being and culture

We support and promote affordable opportunities for all (see Objective 1), particularly vulnerable or excluded groups to participate in activities that promote health, well-being and culture, by:

- Funding and supporting voluntary organisations that provide five social centres across the Borough running a variety of accessible lessons and activities promoting learning, culture, health & well-being and community interaction.
- Running the Active Communities Project with the specific aim of increasing participation in sport and improving the health of people in certain deprived areas, including enabling new Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)
- Investing in affordable leisure facilities and encouraging uptake from new customers. We have set targets through our new leisure contract to promote our IN2 Passport to Leisure discount scheme
- Funding a variety of community support organisations
- Running 'Live and Direct' – a youth music event. Working multi-agency to trial youth music technology and dance programme later this year.
- Working in partnership to pilot a dance programme for older people.
- Working with community groups to plan a community arts project in Ockford Ridge.
- Supporting SMART who are developing a heritage project, children's heritage club, community website and the SMART neighbours scheme.
- Disseminating, through the Youth Council, the Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital fund, with an emphasis on things to do and places to go – staying safe, healthy living, enjoying and achieving.

What other strategies are relevant?

We have other strategies, policies and plans that also contribute to promoting Social inclusion in Waverley, including:

- Corporate Plan 2008-11, Town and Countryside Together
- Housing Strategy 2005-10
- Homelessness Strategy
- Cultural Strategy
- Arts Plan
- Corporate Debt Policy
- Empty Homes Strategy 2008-11
- Draft Older Persons Housing Strategy 2008-10
- Community Safety Strategy and Partnership Plan 2008-11

Many of the partners and agencies that we work closely with have strategies promoting Social Inclusion, including:

- Draft Surrey Sustainable Community Strategy
- Improving Mental Wellbeing in Surrey Strategy 2008-11, Surrey Primary Care Trust
- Children Centres Strategy, Surrey County Council

References:

Crime Audit 2003/04, Safer Waverley Partnership

Cranleigh Healthcheck

'Excluded Older People' – Social Exclusion Unit Interim Report, Better Government for Older People (BGOP), 2006, www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Godalming Healthcheck

Haslemere Healthcheck

Local Knowledge Website, www.localknowledge.co.uk

Office of National Statistics, www.ons.gov.uk

Opportunities for All – A Social Inclusion Strategy, Waverley Borough Council, 1997

Corporate Plan 2008-11, Town and Countryside Together, Waverley Borough Council, 2008

Social Inclusion Strategy 2005-2007, Eastleigh Borough Council, 2005, www.eastleigh.gov.uk

Shaping Thurrock For Everyone – Thurrock's Social Inclusion Strategy, Thurrock Local Strategic Partnership, 2006, www.thurrock.gov.uk

West Surrey Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008, (Currently in draft)

Waverley Local Strategic Partnership, Health and Social Inclusion Group, (evidence for Refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy 2007-2008)

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This is a draft document. We would like to hear your comments and suggestions. Please contact:

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