

# **East Boldon Neighbourhood Plan**

## **Community Wellbeing Background Paper**

**February 2021**

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## 1. Background

- 1.1 This document is one in a series of background papers prepared by the East Boldon Neighbourhood Forum ('the forum'). It sets out the relevant national and local policy and guidance that is informing the preparation of the East Boldon Neighbourhood Plan. The background paper also identifies and explains the relevant evidence base, feedback from early engagement and explains how the preferred policy approach has been identified.
- 1.2 The vision and objectives for the neighbourhood plan define what the plan aims to achieve. The vision for the neighbourhood plan is:

<b>A vision for East Boldon</b>
<p><i>East Boldon remains a thriving village full of character.</i></p> <p><i>It has a strong sense of community where local schools and voluntary groups, including sport and leisure organisations, play an important part in bringing people together. It is home to a wide range of successful businesses. These make an important contribution to village life and are actively supported by local people.</i></p> <p><i>It is blessed with wonderful green spaces on all sides, much of which is safeguarded by Green Belt status. This has done much to protect the village from urban sprawl and help maintain its identity and separation from other settlements as well as providing important habitat for wildlife.</i></p> <p><i>Infrastructure has been delivered to support the needs of the local community and businesses.</i></p> <p><i>New development conserves and enhances the historic environment and is sympathetic to the character of the village, it provides opportunities for the enhanced wellbeing of its residents, and ensures an environment which is rich in landscape for wildlife. In short, new development should be sustainable in every sense.</i></p> <p><i>The needs of local residents, both young and old, should be a major consideration in the type and location of any new development.</i></p> <p><i>The need to keep the local community together by providing the right mix of housing is seen as a priority.</i></p> <p><i>Any new development should be seen as an opportunity to address the issue of parking and not add to it.</i></p>

- 1.3 Plan objective six is specifically relevant to community wellbeing matters:  
*“Contribute to community wellbeing by ensuring that the neighbourhood plan area’s community, especially its older and younger people, have access to the services and facilities they need.”*
- 1.4 In addition, there is some overlap with objectives three and four, the natural environment and local economy:  
*“Plan positively for the creation, protection and enhancement of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure in the neighbourhood plan area including ensuring that there are linkages to wider green infrastructure networks.”*

*“Support the sustainable creation and protection of employment opportunities in the neighbourhood plan area, and the vitality of the village and local centre.”*

- 1.5 The main areas covered by this background paper are:
- The national and local policy context for community wellbeing;
  - An overview of other relevant documents and evidence;
  - Consideration of feedback received as part of the early engagement on the plan;
  - Identification of the preferred policy approach.
- 1.6 As part of the consultation on the pre-submission draft neighbourhood plan, we invited comments on the draft background paper. The paper has been revised where appropriate.

## 2. Strategic Planning Context

### Background

- 2.1 As they are part of the development plan, neighbourhood plans have to be prepared in line with legal requirements. The way in which neighbourhood plans are prepared and the policies they contain will be tested by an Independent Examiner. In order to pass an examination and proceed to referendum, neighbourhood plans must meet a number of 'basic conditions', to ensure they are legally compliant they must:
- Have regard to national planning policy and guidance;
  - Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the local plan;
  - Contribute to sustainable development; and
  - Be compatible with European obligations.

### National planning policy and guidance

- 2.2 National planning policy and guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) respectively. The NPPF is clear that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependent.
- 2.3 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The application of the presumption will have implications for how communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Critically, it means that neighbourhood plans should:
- Support the strategic development needs set out in local plans, including policies for the provision of community facilities (paragraphs 13 and 20);
  - Address non-strategic matters (paragraph 18); and
  - Shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development and not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies (paragraph 29).
- 2.4 Paragraph 28 explains that non-strategic policies can include the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level.
- 2.5 Section 8 of the NPPF seeks to promote healthy and safe communities. Paragraph 91 requires the planning system to aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:
- promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;
  - are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high-quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and
  - enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

- 2.6 In order to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, paragraph 92 requires planning policies and decisions to:
- plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
  - take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;
  - guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
  - ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and
  - ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.
- 2.7 In addition, paragraph 95 requires planning policies and decisions to promote public safety and take into account wider securing requirements.
- 2.8 The ability for the local community to access a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is acknowledged within paragraph 96 as being important for health and wellbeing. It requires planning policies to be based on robust and up to date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision.
- 2.9 Paragraph 97 states that existing open spaces, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields should not be built upon, unless specific criteria can be met (further information is included within the local green space and protected open space background paper).
- 2.10 Paragraph 182 requires planning policies and decisions to ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities. In addition, that facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing community facilities could have a significant adverse effect on new development in its vicinity, the application should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.
- 2.11 With regard to local and neighbourhood centres, paragraph 91 requires planning policies to aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction. In order to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, paragraph 92 requires planning policies to:
- Plan positively for the provision of community facilities, such as local shops to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
  - Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where it would reduce the community's ability to meet its day to day needs; and
  - Ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise and are retained for the benefit of the community.

- 2.12 Paragraph 112 acknowledges that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social wellbeing. As a result, planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks.
- 2.13 With regard to design considerations, paragraph 127 identifies the need to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 2.14 The NPPG provides guidance on how positive planning can contribute to healthier communities. It identifies the main health organisations that need to be involved in considering planning for health. It explains that ‘a healthy place’ is:  
*“... one which supports and promotes healthy behaviours and environments and a reduction in health inequalities for people of all ages. It will provide the community with opportunities to improve their physical and mental health, and support community engagement and wellbeing... It meets the needs of children and young people to grow and develop, as well as being adaptable to the needs of an increasingly elderly population and those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments.”*
- 2.15 Guidance is also included on how the planning system can help to create a healthier food environment, in particular that policies can have regard to the following issues:
- proximity to locations where children and young people congregate such as schools, community centres and playgrounds;
  - evidence indicating high levels of obesity, deprivation, health inequalities and general poor health in specific locations;
  - over-concentration of certain uses within a specified area;
  - odours and noise impact;
  - traffic impact;
  - refuse and litter.
- 2.16 NPPG also: how the need for health facilities and other health and wellbeing impacts can be considered in planning policies and decisions; provides guidance on planning for schools; and the role of the planning system in preventing crime and disorder.

## **Local Plan**

### Current Local Plan

- 2.17 Currently the development plan policies which cover the East Boldon Neighbourhood Plan Area are contained in the South Tyneside: Core Strategy (2007); Development Policies (2011); and Site Specific Allocations (2012). The South Tyneside Development Policies document contains a set of generic policies against which planning applications for new development are assessed. As the neighbourhood plan is required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan, the policies contained within the South Tyneside Development Policies document are not considered to be strategic policies and therefore are not applicable.
- 2.18 Table 1 below provides a summary of the relevant South Tyneside Core Strategy policies:

Table 1: Relevant South Tyneside Core Strategy Policies

Policy	Description
ST2 – sustainable urban living	Seeks to promote high quality development and includes a number of measures to ensure this is delivered, including: design, energy efficiency, embedding renewable energy, accessibility, enhancing electronic communication and designing out crime.
SC1 – creating sustainable urban areas	Seeks to focus new development within built up areas.
SC2 – reviving our town centres and other shopping centres	Focuses the majority of retail, office, commercial leisure, indoor sports, cultural, social and community facilities within South Shields, Jarrow and Hebburn. Supports developments within local neighbourhood centres.
SC6 - providing for recreational open space, sport and leisure	Seeks to promote the provision of high quality recreational open space, playing fields and outdoor sporting facilities.

2.19 The allocations which cover the plan area are included in figure 1 below:

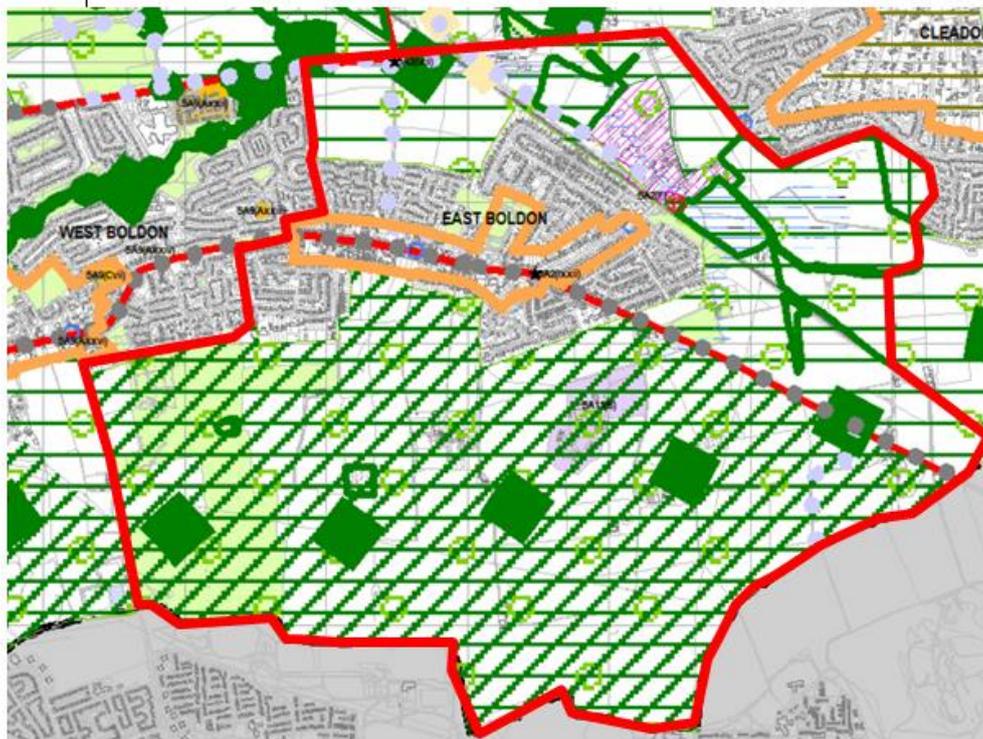


Figure 1: Extract from South Tyneside Site Specific Allocations Document

### Emerging South Tyneside Local Plan

2.20 South Tyneside Council (STC) is currently preparing a new local plan which will replace the existing saved planning policies. STC has undertaken four rounds of engagement: Local Plan Key Issues & Options (April 2013); Issues Review of Policies and Guidance (2014); Local Plan Growth Options (July 2015); and Local Plan Pre-Publication Draft (August 2019).

2.21 The draft local plan (2019) proposes:

- Policy S1 (spatial strategy) – to focus the majority of new development in the main urban areas of South Shields, Hebburn and Jarrow, as well as supporting the regeneration of the River Tyne corridor. The policy seeks to secure the sustainability of East Boldon and the other villages in the borough. In addition, the policy looks to enhance the vitality and viability of the East Boldon local centre;
- Policy ED6 (leisure and tourism) – to support enhancements to the diverse range of leisure and tourism attractions;
- Policy ED7 (tourist and visitor accommodation) – to support proposals for visitor and tourist accommodation where specific criteria are met;
- Policy R1 (the hierarchy of our centres) – to define East Boldon as a local centre. The role and function of which would be to serve the everyday needs of local communities and be the focus for small scale shops and services;
- Policy R2 (ensuring vitality and viability in our retail centres) – to support proposals that maintain the vitality and viability of the local centre. The policy provides guidance on how proposals would be assessed against vitality and viability factors;
- Policy R5 (prioritising centres sequentially) – to define the sequential approach to assessing development outside town, district or local centres;
- Policy R6 (proposals requiring an impact assessment) – to define where an impact assessment would be required to support edge or out of centre retail development;
- Policy IN3 (social and community infrastructure) – to seek to ensure that the social and community infrastructure needs of the community are met. The draft policy supports the provision of social and community infrastructure where specific criteria are met and seeks to resist the loss of valued services and facilities.

2.22 Figure 2 provides an extract of the draft policies map.

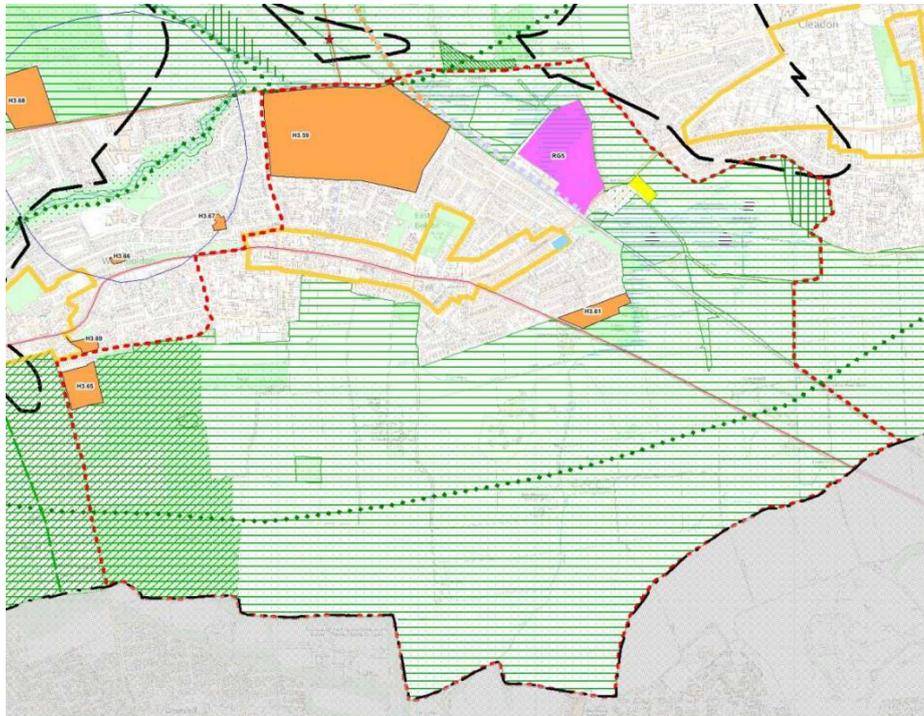


Figure 2: Extract of the emerging local plan policies map

## **Summary**

- 2.23 The NPPF requires planning policies to take a positive approach to aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places, this approach is generally reflected within the saved South Tyneside Core Strategy policies and emerging South Tyneside Local Plan.

### 3. Other documents

- 3.1 In addition to the strategic planning framework, there are a number of other documents and evidence available to inform the preparation of the community wellbeing elements of the neighbourhood plan.

#### South Tyneside level

##### South Tyneside Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2019)

- 3.2 The South Tyneside Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) was prepared by STC as part of the evidence base for the emerging local plan. Its purpose is to: assess the current infrastructure in the borough, what is being planned with committed investment and what will be needed in the future to support the delivery of the emerging local plan. It considers the need for the following types of infrastructure: travel (road network, public transport, cycling and walking, electric charging points); environmental (green infrastructure, open space, parks and gardens, green space, provision for children/ young people, allotments, cemeteries/ churchyards, civic spaces, sport and recreation); utility (electricity, telecommunications, water/ flooding); health (assets); education; and other community facilities (leisure and libraries).
- 3.3 The environmental infrastructure assessment found that:
- New natural environment sites are not considered to be required, but there may be a need to ensure other open spaces contain appropriate natural environment features;
  - The current standard of accessibility to open space would reduce from 3.28ha per 1,000 population to 3.25ha per 1,000 population;
  - No deficit in the provision of amenity greenspace;
  - There is a need for additional play provision in the inner and outer South Shields area;
  - There is a waiting list for allotments across the borough, suggesting that demand is not being met by supply. Therefore, measures should be made to provide additional plots;
  - Boldon Cemetery has capacity for 23 years; and
  - There are shortfalls in playing pitch provision across the borough.
- 3.4 The health infrastructure assessment concluded that:
- Whilst life expectancy has greatly improved across the borough, some health facilities are under a great deal of pressure due to an ageing population and health facility capacities;
  - There are 22 GP practices in the borough, five of which have branch surgeries – a decrease in 26 practices over the past three years due to mergers and closures; and
  - The level of planned development is unlikely to require new pharmacy contracts due to satisfactory cover from existing pharmacies.
- 3.5 The education infrastructure assessment concluded that there is pressure on primary and secondary school capacity in the Whitburn, Cleadon and Boldon area. Further work is ongoing on this need.
- 3.6 With regard to leisure and libraries, the assessment concluded:
- In recent years, there has been significant investment in the council's leisure and library stock;
  - The council consider there is a sound leisure and library offer and the priority is not ensuring maintenance is maintained to a high standard;

- No need to expand the current leisure and library provision.

East Boldon Business Categorisation (July 2017) and Wellbeing Survey (March 2019)

- 3.7 The forum has a spreadsheet which identifies the businesses which operate across the plan area. This is included within the employment background paper. This also includes information from the wellbeing survey. The categorisation table identifies that there are a number of important services provided across the plan area, these include: hairdressers/ barbers; vehicle repair; sports services; property construction/ maintenance; cafes/ restaurants; and pet services.
- 3.8 There are also important community facilities including: East Boldon infant and junior schools; nursery provision; sheltered accommodation; dental surgery and pharmacy; many clubs such as tennis, golf, cricket, squash and archery; scouts and girl guides groups; religious facilities including East Boldon Methodist Church, Boldon United Reformed Church Hall and St Georges Church; public houses, including The Grey Horse Inn, The Black Bull Inn and Beggars Bridge; social club; and a greyhound stadium; and play areas at the Mundles and Grange Park.
- 3.9 The wellbeing survey indicated that local community groups and businesses provide a variety of activities and events, including: social drinking; family fun events; summer camps and coaching; functions and private parties; sporting competitions; and live music.

## 4. Feedback

### Early engagement – local community

- 4.1 As a means of starting the process of collecting information and opinions that would influence the content of the neighbourhood plan, the forum held a number of community engagement drop-in sessions in: July 2017; June 2018; March 2019; and June 2019. The purpose of the events was to raise awareness of the opportunities presented by neighbourhood planning and to engage as broad a range of people from the local community as possible from the start of the plan making process.
- 4.2 The engagement exercise in June 2018 sought to help the forum to define those issues of greatest importance to the local community. Feedback was sought on eight draft objectives for the neighbourhood plan. In addition, it asked for views on what East Boldon means to the local community and what their vision was for East Boldon.
- 4.3 Draft objective six on community wellbeing was supported by all 54 respondents.

#### *What does East Boldon mean to you?*

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential community action
Retention of village feel and community	Policy to ensure that any new community services and facilities protects/ enhances the special character of the area.	Enhancement of green space in front of and around St George's Church and Cenotaph.
Safe environment to raise a family	Policy to support new community services and facilities as well as retaining existing facilities	Enhancement and development of connecting green routes for walking and cycling. Improvements to signage and maintenance of footpaths and cycle routes. Enhancement of play areas in Grange Park and Mundles Lane.
Rich rural environment should be protected	Policy to ensure that any new community services and facilities protects/ enhances the special character of the area	
New development should be limited and sensitive to existing character	Policy to ensure that any new community services and facilities protects/ enhances the special character of the area	

#### *What is your vision for East Boldon for the future?*

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential community action
Maintain current character of village/ any new development should be sensitive to this	Policy to ensure that any new community services and facilities protects/ enhances the special character of the area	
Closer and caring community spirit	Policy to support new community services and facilities as well as retaining existing facilities	Retain or develop a village hall in the United Reform Church site or another location.

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential community action
		New village sign and notice board. Working with local faith groups to develop a spiritual centre.
Any new housing should provide for the needs of a diverse community (young and old)	Policy to ensure that new housing development can access key community services and facilities by means other than by the private car	Work with health organisations to improve access to local health care (dentists and GPs)
Maintain/ improve/ increase green and open spaces	Identification of local green space/ protected open space – see background paper on local green space and protected open space.	
Improved parking, particularly near metro/ concerns over volume of traffic	Policy to ensure that new development proposals for community services and facilities provides an appropriate level of parking.	

*General comments on the wellbeing objective*

Issue identified	Potential Planning response	Potential community action
St Georges Church should be made more visible, so it becomes the focus of the village	N/A	Work with South Tyneside Council to protect important trees with tree preservation orders. Develop a community project to improve the visibility of the church.
More facilities for teenagers needed	Policy to support new community services and facilities	Creation of a sporting hub. Consider the need for a village hall. Consider the identification of the infant school as an asset of community value.
Junior school should stay where it is. The surrounds are a rich source of study for the pupils – urban geography in the wonderful streets and biology in the park and on grass verges. In turn, the school in its current location contributes to the wellbeing of the village.	Policy to identify the schools as key community facilities that should be retained unless specific criteria are met. Assess the green area surrounding the school for identification as local green space or protected open space.	

- 4.4 The engagement exercise that took place in March 2019 focused on: parking; Green Belt; the natural environment; local green space; housing; and the vision for the plan.
- 4.5 In June 2019 the forum asked for community input to a range of issues, including: the built and historic environment; community wellbeing; flooding; the economy; and transport.

- 4.6 Residents were asked whether they felt happy living in East Boldon and feel part of village life and the community. All 77 respondents agreed with this statement, with 49 people elaborating on their response. Comments included:
- Sense of community, good neighbours, social interaction, friendly, welcoming (31);
  - Good range of amenities including shops, parks, clubs/activities and community events (17);
  - Schools being the centre of the village (3);
  - Appreciation of the green belt, open spaces with diverse wildlife (6);
  - Architecture/buildings/history of the village (3);
  - Safe place to live (1);
- 4.7 Two areas of concern were identified by respondents:
- Concerns over the potential impact of future development (4); and
  - Concerns over the speed and volume of traffic as well as highway safety and parking (3).
- 4.8 Four areas of improvement were identified:
- Should be a prominent village notice board;
  - More events;
  - Parking;
  - More community areas, such as a community centre.
- 4.9 The local community were asked whether they felt there were sufficient recreation and sporting opportunities and facilities in East Boldon for all. In response, 42 of the 77 respondents agreed that there were sufficient, 28 disagreed and seven did not respond. Of those that responded, 18 people elaborated. Concern was expressed that there are not enough for all age groups. Specifically, more facilities are needed for younger people/teenagers, older people and those with disabilities. Suggestions included: a village hall; sports hub; allotments; football pitch provision; youth club; and need for more cycle lanes. Five of the comments identify a need to raise greater awareness about the sport and recreation facilities that are available.
- 4.10 When asked whether residents considered there is adequate provision for health needs, 53 respondents said yes, 16 said no and eight did not respond. Support was shown for the local pharmacy and good doctors however concern was expressed over the impact of potential new development. In addition, concerns were expressed over the accessibility of the doctor's surgery since its relocation with a suggestion that there could be a mobile surgery. Waiting times to see a GP were identified by two respondents as was lack of capacity at the dentists.
- 4.11 Residents were asked whether they considered there was sufficient opportunities to develop spiritual wellbeing with the existing three churches and other community groups in the plan area. 57 respondents agreed, seven disagreed and there was no reply from 17 people. Eight of the respondents stated that there are too many churches with four responses referring to the good range of courses, groups and organisations available. Two respondents made reference to the importance of green spaces for wellbeing. Reference was made to falling church congregations and consideration could be given to the introduction of a community spiritual centre and also making better use of the church hall.
- 4.12 When asked whether the community considered it was important to retain local schools close to the heart of the village, 73 supported this statement, two people disagreed and two people

did not reply. In response to the statement that it is important that the forum seeks to retain the junior school site for educational purposes, 72 supported this statement, two people disagreed and three did not respond.

- 4.13 Specific comments referred to the support and appreciation of the junior school as an essential aspect of village life, a highly valued community asset and its important location within the centre of the village. Suggestions were made to build a new school which could accommodate all three current schools, both on the current site or on the edge of the village
- 4.14 Potential planning responses to the issues identified are:
- Policy to ensure that new development protects the important character, natural and built environment of the plan area which is an important part of community wellbeing;
  - Policy to protect important community services and facilities and to support the provision of new services and facilities;
  - Policy to ensure that new development is supported by the required levels of community infrastructure provision;
  - Protection of important open spaces;
  - Identification of the schools as key community facilities that should be retained unless specific criteria are met.
- 4.15 Potential community actions relevant to the community wellbeing area in response to the issues identified are:
- Provision of village signs and a new notice board in prominent locations;
  - Develop a programme of community events;
  - Consider options to provide more facilities for younger people/ teenagers, older people and those with disabilities such as a sporting hub;
  - Consider options to allow awareness raising of existing sport and recreation facilities that are available;
  - Work with the local primary care network to explore options for the provision of mobile service provision;
  - Work with local faith groups to consider options for the creation of a spiritual centre to enable facilities to be shared?

## 5. Planning policy options and preferred approach

### Background

- 5.1 The strategic policy and evidence review, as well as the feedback from early engagement has identified a number of potential planning issues for the neighbourhood plan to seek to address:
- Supporting the development of new community services and facilities where it does not damage what is special about the area;
  - Protecting community facilities and services;
  - New development is supported by the required levels of community infrastructure provision; and
  - Protection of important open spaces (see local green space and protected open space background paper).
- 5.2 This section sets out potential planning policy options to address the issues identified above and explains the preferred policy approach which is proposed within the pre-submission neighbourhood plan. Other planning issues which are relevant to community wellbeing are included within other background papers, such as economic development and retail, as well as open space.

### Issue 1: Supporting the development of new community services and facilities

- 5.3 Possible options:
- 1a: High level policy statement which supports future development of community services and facilities which balances the need to protect and enhance the distinctive and valued environment, relying on other policies within the plan to cover detailed points such as design, amenity and parking provision;
  - 1b: 1a plus criteria to address specific issues to manage new community services and facilities development;
  - 1c: 1b plus specific guiding principles to identify the specific types of new community services and facilities development that would be particularly welcomed/ needed within the plan area.
- 5.4 The preferred approach highlights the importance of the variety of community services and facilities within the plan area. Whilst the provision of new services and facilities are important, given the potential impact of development, the preferred policy approach identifies the following key considerations: impact of noise, fumes, smell or other disturbance to adjacent properties; highway safety; and parking provision.

### Issue 2: Protecting community facilities and services

- 5.5 Possible options:
- 2a: Policy that requires the protection of all community services and facilities unless specific identified criteria can be met;
  - 2b: 2a plus the identification of specific community facilities and services that are of great importance to the local community (such as the school) and the development of guiding principles to identify where there is a perceived lack of facilities

- 5.6 As there is the potential that the importance of community facilities and services could change over the plan period, it was considered there could be risks to the identification of specific facilities. However, the supporting text provides a summary of important services and facilities. The preferred policy approach requires that where a proposal would result in the loss of buildings or land for public or community use, applicants must demonstrate: it is no longer needed; that an appropriate replacement facility is to be provided; or that it would not be economically viable or feasible to retain the facility and there is no reasonable prospect of securing an alternative community use for the land or building.

### **Issue 3: Community infrastructure**

- 5.7 Possible options:
- 3a: High level policy approach with an overarching policy requiring the delivery of community infrastructure in association with new developments;
  - 3b: 3a plus a separate policy setting out the specific community infrastructure that is required across the plan area.
- 5.8 As infrastructure can cover a wide variety of matters, including roads and other transport facilities, flood defences, schools and other educational facilities, medical facilities, sporting and recreational facilities, as well as open spaces. As the infrastructure requirements of new developments will vary depending on the type, scale and nature of the proposals and over time, it was considered that it would be difficult to specify the community infrastructure requirements. However, the preferred approach does highlight community concerns regarding the impact of traffic and parking levels within the plan area, which are causing highway safety and congestion issues. In addition, there are concerns over the ability of members of the local community to access a dentist and get GP appointments. Furthermore, there is concern regarding the potential future location of the schools. The preferred policy approach therefore requires new development to provide or contribute to the infrastructure requirements that are related to them and that this should be provided within an agreed timescale.

## 6 Potential community actions

1. Provision of village signs and a new notice board in prominent locations;
2. Consider options to provide more facilities for younger people/ teenagers, older people and those with disabilities such as a sporting hub;
3. Consider options to allow awareness raising of existing sport and recreation facilities that are available;
4. Work with the local primary care network to explore options for the provision of mobile service provision;
5. Work with local faith groups to consider options for the creation of a spiritual centre to enable facilities to be shared;
6. Enhancement of green space in front of and around St George's Church and Cenotaph, including working with South Tyneside Council to safeguard important trees;
7. Enhancement and development of connecting green routes for walking and cycling. Improvements to signage and maintenance of footpaths and cycle routes;
8. Enhancement of play areas in Grange Park and Mundles Lane;
9. Retain or develop a village hall in the United Reform Church site or another location;
10. Consider the identification of the infant school as an asset of community value.