

Local Development Framework Briefing Paper Health



Devon County Council's advice to Local Planning Authorities.

This is one of a series of briefing papers prepared by Devon County Council to assist the preparation of Local Development Documents.

To view this, and other briefing papers, see <http://www.devon.gov.uk/ldf-briefing-papers>

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Local Planning Authorities are requested to take the following matters into account in preparing their Local Development Frameworks and other documents:

- 1. Acknowledgement of the importance of promoting healthy living environments and lifestyles in the creation of sustainable communities and the role that development plays in this.***
- 2. Promote policies and proposals for built environments which sustain positive health and well-being and contribute to the reduction in health inequalities.***
- 3. Promote policies and proposals for the natural environment, access to the open countryside, provision of open space and integration of natural areas into development so that physical activity, recreation and leisure is encouraged.***
- 4. Embed and integrate health issues fully into strategic sustainability appraisal process. When assessing the impact of planning strategy and the degree to which proposals result in the creation of sustainable communities, health issues should be considered from the start.***

At the more detailed site specific level, particularly for proposals which are likely to have a major impact on health, LDFs should promote the use of Health Impact Assessment at an early stage of planning to support the identification of the effects of policies or projects on the health and health inequalities of local people. Developers will be expected to contribute to or bear the full cost of such assessments and any impacts that will need to be addressed.

Local Development Framework Briefing Paper

Health

Introduction

One of the key commitments of the present government is to improve the health of the nation by preventing ill health and providing treatment services in line with the best in Europe. Local government signed up to a shared priority with central government to promote healthier communities and reduce health inequalities in 2002. This has now informed the cross cutting theme 'healthier communities' of the comprehensive performance review (CPA), which is an acknowledgement that action by local authorities, working in partnership with others, is crucial to making progress in this area.

The UK Sustainable Development Strategy includes targets to reduce health inequalities¹ and there is growing emphasis on the "importance of health issues in creating sustainable environments"².

The Local Government Association (LGA) has made public health one of its five core priorities for 2006 and maintains that local authorities are 'best placed to understand the needs of our local communities, to help everyone to live more healthily'³.

Devon County Council's policies across the whole spectrum of its activity, including those associated with planning, transport, environment, education, social support, and cultural issues, include both direct and indirect support to promote good health and reduce health inequalities in Devon's population.

This briefing paper sets out the health issues that Devon County Council suggests should be taken into account by Local Planning Authorities in preparing their Local Development Frameworks. The purpose of the advice is to ensure that Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) include necessary guidance to reflect the interests of the County Council to:

- a) Improve the health and wellbeing of local people
- b) Contribute to a reduction in inequalities between those with the worst and those with the best health in Devon.

(Issues associated with the development of health services infrastructure, eg. health clinics, are not addressed here – this is primarily a matter for discussion with the NHS. Social care infrastructure is dealt with in a separate briefing paper.)

1. Principles and Issues to be addressed

The core strategy should recognise the importance of issues associated with health and the role of development in addressing health and health inequalities. The spatial profile of the District, set out in the Core Strategy, should acknowledge these links.

Both physical and mental health is affected by the planning and design of urban and rural environments. Many of the key determinants of health such as, housing, levels of crime, feelings of community safety, employment, access to many types of services, and social environments, can be affected by planning and design considerations.

The health of local communities is affected by a wide range of issues and aspects of the promotion of health can therefore be seen across much of the work of the County Council. A list of Devon documents relevant to health issues is included in the appendix.

Policies expressed in the LDF can contribute to sustainable planning, good design and the development of community resources. These can encourage environments which for example,

¹ UK Sustainable Development Strategy 2005, see www.sustainable-development.gov.uk

² Healthier planning: spatial strategies and beyond, 2006, C Falce and B. Cave, NIHCE

³ Sandy Bruce-Lockhart in Health Inequalities: Rising to the Challenge, 2006 Municipal Journal on behalf of Dept of Health's Health Inequalities Unit

increase people's sense of safety and wellbeing, their opportunities for social interaction and community connectivity, improve air quality and water conservation and promote active travel and physical exercise, such as walking or children's play. They should take into account the projected demographic changes, which indicate a substantial increase in the elderly population (over 75 years) over the next twenty years. This increasingly aging population implies that there will have to be changes to patterns of facilities and services.

Three main dimensions of the environment can be defined:

- The service environment (ie, access to, and quality of, neighbourhood services and amenities).
- The physical environment (e.g. air pollution, traffic patterns, housing stock).
- The social environment which refers broadly to the social norms and values shared by members of social groups, as well as the quality, content, and volume of interpersonal interactions within urban communities.

(From: *Healthy Sustainable Communities. What Works?* Ben Cave et al. October 2004 Milton Keynes/South Midlands Sub-region NHS)

The Local Development Framework process should embed and integrate health issues fully into Strategic Sustainability Appraisal when assessing the overall impact of the planning strategy for the District and the degree to which proposals result in sustainable communities. *This is recognised in a separate LDF Briefing Paper about Sustainability Appraisals available on the website at: <http://www.devon.gov.uk/ldf-briefing-papers>. A guide to the range of issues to consider is provided in the planning checklist developed by the NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit [attached - The matrix is accompanied by short notes on each of the issues under the headings - health benefits, potential negative effects of planning and positive effects of planning⁴].*

At the more detailed site specific level, particularly for proposals which are likely to have a major impact on health, LDFs should promote the use of Health Impact Assessment at an early stage of planning to support the identification of the effects of policies or projects on the health and health inequalities of local people. Developers will be expected to contribute to or bear the full cost of such assessments and any impacts that will need to be addressed. Current guidance on the integration of health into sustainability appraisals is at an early stage of development but is expected to be progressed over the next year. It is suggested that the joint Director of Public Health of Devon Primary Care Trust and Devon County Council should be the first point of contact for advice in connection with the preparation of health baseline data, the setting of indicators and the conduct of Health Impact Assessments. A list of Health Impact Assessment Advisors is included for information (see Appendix).

Other advice of relevance to health issues is contained in the briefings pack on related topics, eg air pollution, sport and physical activity, the Local Transport Plan.

⁴ See <http://www.healthyrbandevelopment.nhs.uk/> for planning checklist.

WATCH OUT FOR HEALTH – A GUIDE TO HEALTHY SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

√	Healthy Lifestyles – Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote healthy exercise? Opportunities for play and exercise. Open spaces. Green space and parks. Playing fields. Manage parks and spaces for everyone. Green space within 15 minutes from any home.
√	Housing Quality – Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote housing quality? Lifetime homes standards. Adaptability and flexibility. Are homes well designed and oriented; have the highest energy efficiency rating; and constructed from environmentally friendly materials as locally sourced as possible? Tenure mix. Affordability.
√	Access to Work – Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote access to employment and training opportunities? Does the development or policy promote diversity in jobs for local residents; and provide opportunities for business?
√	Accessibility – Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote accessibility? Encourage mobility. Public transport. Reduce car dependency. Minimise the need to travel. Is the community served by frequent, reliable, cheap public transport? Are the streets pedestrian-friendly and cycle-friendly?
√	Food Access – Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote access to wholesome locally produced food? Address food deserts. Does the development or plan allow for allotments, city farms or healthy living centres; safeguard good agricultural land from development; and avoid centralisation of shopping and provision of large supermarkets?
√	Crime Reduction and Community Safety – Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote crime reduction and community safety? Is there effective security and street surveillance? Traffic calming and home zones.
√	Air Quality and Neighbourhood Amenity – Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote air quality and an attractive environment? Good urban design. High quality public spaces. Minimise air and noise pollution and conserve existing quality townscape.
√	Social Cohesion and Social Capital – Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote social cohesion and social capital? Opportunities for social interaction, leisure activities and local empowerment. Avoid community severance by major roads or large commercial schemes. Are existing health inequalities likely to be reduced?
√	Public Services – Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote access to good public services? The right services in the right place. Sustainable design and construction in public buildings. Are community facilities provided and is community involvement encouraged?
√	Resource Minimisation – Do planning policies and proposals encourage waste reduction, minimise energy and water use, minimise use of non-renewable resources, promote recycling and waste reduction, promote sustainable urban drainage, minimise land contamination? √
√	Climate Change – Do planning policies and proposals encourage and promote climate stability and minimisation of greenhouse gases? Does the plan or development reduce energy use in buildings and transport?

From HUDU - Watch Out For Health - Planning Checklist

Appendix: Devon Statistics

(To be confirmed if the South West Public Health Observatories data has now been replaced by the community health profiles).

Health in Devon

- The health of Devon's population is good but there are areas in the lowest quartile of the Index of Deprivation nationally, where the health of local people is poorer than the average.
- Devon's population is predicted to rise at an average of 4900 pa over the next 10 years.
- Devon's population is aging. The birth rate is falling, young people are moving away from the county and there is a predicted 40% rise in the +85 population over the next 20 years.
- The rate for obesity in Devon is increasing.
- Mortality from circulatory diseases and cancers is lower in Devon than nationally.
- Young men in Devon are a high risk group for mental health problems and suicide.

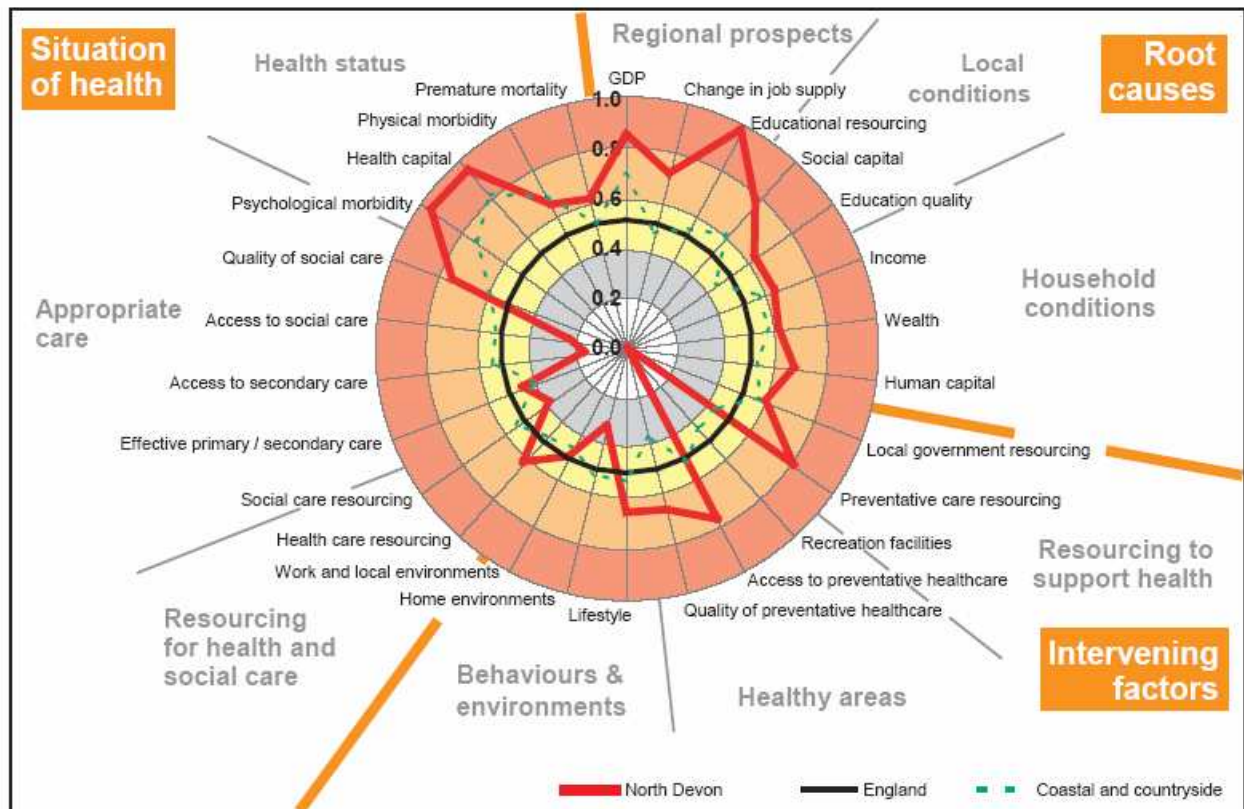
(Taken from Devon Strategic Partnership's 'Focus on Devon' and Devon County Council's Strategic Plan 2006-11.)

Health Poverty Data

The graphs below are a sample of data for North Devon taken from the South West Health Observatory Publication 'Health Poverty Index: A Set of Indicators about the South West Volume 3' March 2005. Details of how to interpret the information and profiles for all Devon districts can be found on:

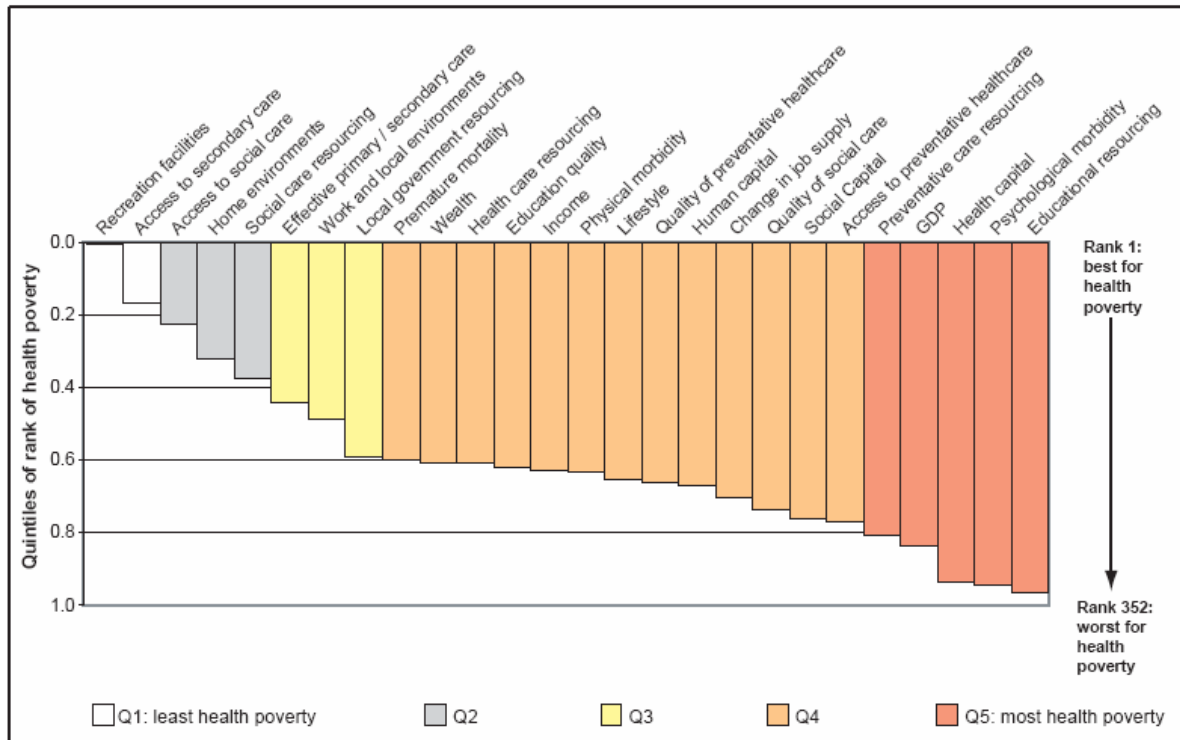
<http://www.swpho.nhs.uk/resource/item.aspx?RID=9046>

Chart 3.1b: North Devon ranked data



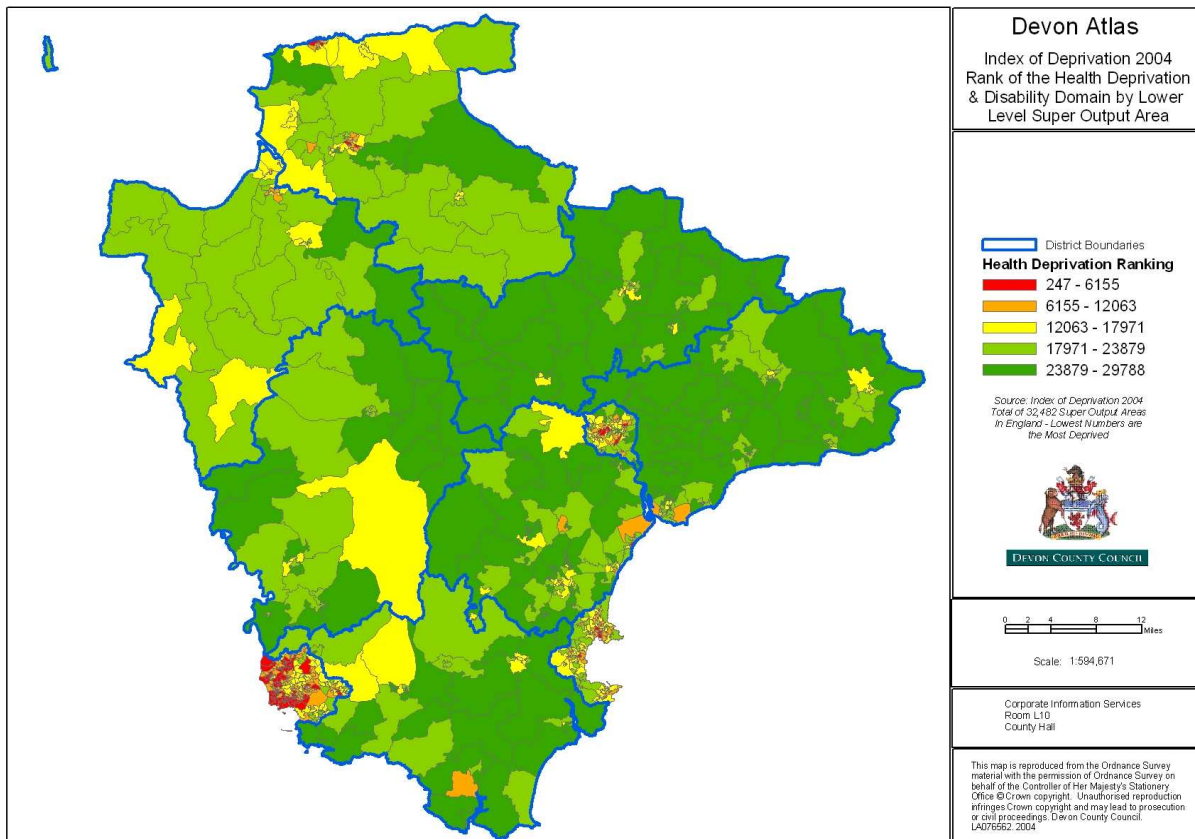
Source: Health Poverty Index 2004

Chart 3.1c: North Devon ordered ranked data



Source: Health Poverty Index 2004

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004: Rank of Health Deprivation



Relevant Devon Policy Documents

- Devon to 2016 - Structure Plan <http://www.devon.gov.uk/structureplan>
- Devon County Council – Strategic Plan 2006-11
http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/democracymunities/improving_our_services/strategicplan.htm
- Devon Transport Plan 2006-11
http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/transport/devon_local_transport_plan/dltp_20062011.htm
- Devon Children and Young People's Plan 2006-9
<http://www.devonchildrenstrust.org.uk/index/cypp.htm>
- Our Devon a Focus on the Future – Adult and Community Services Directorate Plan 2006/7
http://www.devon.gov.uk/acs_business_plan_2006-7_6-final_draft.pdf
- Environmental Strategies associated with waste and recycling
http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/democracymunities/improving_our_services/strategicplan/strategic-plan-env/environment-our_strategies.htm
- Devon Public Rights of Way Improvements Plan
http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/transport/public_rights_of_way/rowip.htm
- Regeneration Role and Action Plan <http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/business/regeneration/rrap.htm>
- Devon Strategic Partnership – A Community Strategy for Devon
<http://www.devonsp.org.uk/community-strategy.html>
- Devon Local Area Agreement
http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/community/the_county/local_area_agreement.htm

Further Reading

Choosing Health White Paper, 2004, Department of Health

http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4094550&chk=aN5Cor

Healthier Planning: spatial strategies and beyond, eds C. Falce, B. Cave, 2006, National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

<http://www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=305624>

Healthy Sustainable Communities: A spatial planning checklist, B. Cave, P. Molyneux, 2004

<http://www.mksm.nhs.uk/FileAccess.aspx?id=364>

Healthy Sustainable Communities. What Works? Ben Cave et al. October 2004 Milton Keynes/South Midlands Sub-region NHS

<http://www.mksm.nhs.uk/FileAccess.aspx?id=384>

NHS London Healthy Urban Development unit (referred to in the text). See:

<http://www.healthyurbandevopment.nhs.uk/>

The University of the West of England actively promotes research and policy for health integrated planning and design: see:

<http://www.built-environment.uwe.ac.uk/research/cep/> and

<http://www.built-environment.uwe.ac.uk/research/who/>

Health Impact Assessment see:

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, which provides a Health Impact Assessment Gateway to HIA related information resources, sources of evidence and networks at:

<http://www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=HIAGateway>

and

Health and Wellbeing Screening Checklist developed by the Devon Health Forum 2003.

http://telematics.ex.ac.uk/health_forum/HealthImpactAssessment.html

and

London Health Observatory site for a useful introduction to HIA: <http://www.lho.org.uk/HIA/AboutHIA.aspx>
and

The London Health Commission for Health Impact Assessments of different strategies
<http://www.londonshealth.gov.uk/hia.htm#Top>

Health Data – community profiles, recently prepared by the public health observatories, are available at the county and district level. see: <http://www.communityhealthprofiles.info/index.php>

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