

Local Development Framework Briefing Paper Youth Provision



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.

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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. The Core Strategy:

a) Should recognise and ensure that provision is made for all young people in localities across Devon to have access to appropriate well maintained and equipped venues for the purposes of educational and recreational activities and services.

b) Should demonstrate a clear process of engagement and consultation with young people both specifically for the Core Strategy and for the LDF Process as a whole, providing appropriate opportunities for young people to take an active role in shaping their own area and recognising the diverse views and needs within the category 'young people'

c) Should recognise and incorporate the key elements of Devon's Strategy for Youth Involvement (Bigger Places, Better Worlds), Hear By Right and Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2. Other Local Plan Documents:

a) Should make provision for DCC's Youth Service to provide, with partners, suitable meeting places for young people aged 13 – 19 for the purposes determined by current and stated Government policy, and in line with local young people's needs, requirements and priorities.

b) Recognise the need to develop and provide for alternative methods of engaging young people with DCC services i.e. mobile and street based provision

c) To ensure that where partnerships are entered into with other departments/agencies, national standards and DCC Youth Service standards are adhered to.

d) Ensure that all major development proposals (e.g. new communities, urban extensions), where capital funding and revenue support allows, build (or give proportionate contributions towards) a permanent youth centre/building in phase with residential, infrastructure and commercial development giving the young people their own 'space' within the development at the earliest opportunity.

3. Partnership Working

Devon County Council wishes to work in partnership with District Councils, in further developing the above policy areas with colleagues and other organisations and would wish to be involved in any discussion relating to them.

1. The Issue

Devon County Council is charged with ensuring that young people (primarily aged 13 – 19 and secondarily those aged 11 – 25), have access to safe warm meeting places for the purposes of educational and recreational activities, and services.

The demand for such venues is increasing. That demand comes not only from the young people of Devon, but increasingly from parents, other agencies/ departments, as well as from the wider community. Such venues are also an important part of creating more sustainable, socially inclusive communities and encouraging the adoption of healthy, active, more sustainable lifestyles.

It is recognised locally, regionally and nationally that, where such provision exists and are well managed, governed and maintained and “owned by the local community”, the benefits to the wider community, other agency/departmental targets, and young people themselves, are substantial and sustained.

This Paper addresses the opportunity for Local Authorities to encourage and enhance provision of this nature, in localities, through their planning, funding and other processes.

2. The Vision and Objectives to 2021 and beyond

Local Development Frameworks present a tremendous opportunity to actively engage young people in making decisions about the long-term future of their areas, giving them greater ownership and satisfaction with the outcomes of the LDF process. These young people will be the decision makers, economic drivers, home owners and community leaders of the future. Engagement with, and investment in them now will help in securing their futures and those of their children.

The National Standards of Youth Work Provision (R.E.Y.S., DfES 2002) devised by the National Youth Agency provide some helpful objectives for inclusion in LDFs.

Objective 2: Authorities must secure convenient and suitable access for young people to high quality youth work in safe, warm, well-equipped locations and secure adequate opening of youth provision within these locations.

Youth Standard 4 Percentage of youth population within a safe 30 minute journey time to youth work provision. Target:

- 100% of young people in inner London
- 95% of young people in outer London and Metropolitan District areas
- 85% of young people in Unitary Authority areas
- 80% of young people in County Council areas

Objective 3: Authorities must secure provision, including detached and outreach work, which is attractive and relevant and hence promotes access to and participation in the youth service

DCC Youth Service is striving to meet these and other objectives and achieve the standards across the County. The service is doing this within the context provided by Youth Matters (DfES 2005) and earlier by Every Child Matters (DfES 2005). These key reform strategies hold commonality in their five broad targets for young people. These are:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe

- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution, and
- Achieving economic well being

The DfES release of Youth Matters: Next Steps (“Something to do, somewhere to go, someone to talk to”), has reinforced the need to provide more and higher quality venues for young people outside of school and college time.

LDFs should reflect the above priorities and objectives in planning for the needs of their young people through their Core Strategies and other DPDs.

3. Key Issues to be addressed

The preparation and implementation of a capital strategy for youth provision across Devon is a critical element within the broader developments of the Children and Young People’s Directorate and the Children and Youth People’s Trust. It is also a vital element in delivering more socially inclusive communities. Specific issues which need to be addressed include:

1. **The ‘reach’ of our current provision**, particularly in isolated and remote areas.
2. **The need for a range of provision and venues**. One size doesn’t always fit all young people, particularly in our largest conurbations such as Exeter, Exmouth, Barnstaple and Newton Abbot and young people are a heterogeneous group
3. **The maintenance and quality of venues across Devon**. Where venues and centres are well equipped, well maintained and located appropriately, young people will respect and use them. If we offer poor venues, their response is more likely to be poor.
4. **Developing the drive to provide more coherent mobile and detached work provision** which provides higher value for money in some remote and small villages and hamlets.
5. **Ensuring appropriate engagement and consultation** with a diverse range of young people in planning their areas and key spaces in their environment, seeking to achieve the highest levels of the ladder of youth engagement (see Appendix 1).

National standards determine that venues need to be safe, warm, welcoming, planned for and designed by young people.

Many of DCC Youth Service venues have historically been dual usage premises. This approach significantly limits the programme of delivery and development of an appropriate curriculum and services for teenagers in many localities. For example the sharing of local venues for other 13 – 19 services with other groups such as playgroups are generally not satisfactory. Actively seeking to develop the joint usage of venues with link education, agencies providing ‘Connexions’ type support, YOTs, schools and others will be a priority over the coming years.

4. Proposals and Options to be taken into account in preparing Local Development Documents

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

The Core Strategy should:

- a) Recognise and ensure that provision is made for all young people in localities across Devon to have access to appropriate well maintained and equipped venues for the purposes of educational and recreational activities and services
- b) Encourage agencies and services, including housing, planning and leisure services, to develop more robust and meaningful partnership arrangements locally in order to meet common aims in relation to young people
- c) Demonstrate a clear process of engagement and consultation with young people both specifically for the Core Strategy and for the LDF Process as a whole, providing appropriate opportunities for young people to take an active role in planning, shaping and developing their own area (e.g. Young People's Planning Day for the Sherford New Community)
- d) Recognise and apply Devon's Strategy for Youth Involvement (Bigger Places, Better Worlds), the need to achieve the advanced level of Hear By Right¹ and Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Other Local Plan Documents should:

- a) Make provision for DCC Youth Service to provide, with partners, suitable meeting places for young people aged 13 – 19 for the purposes determined by current and stated Government policy, and in line with local young people's needs
- b) Recognise the need to develop and provide for alternative methods of engaging young people with DCC services i.e. mobile and street based provision
- c) To ensure that where partnerships are entered into with other departments/agencies, national standards and DCC Youth Service standards are adhered to
- d) Recognise the heterogeneous nature of the category 'young people' and clearly demonstrate that it has considered separate groups within this bracket (e.g. young people with physical needs, young women)
- e) Ensure that all major development proposals engage and consult young people on their plans at the outset of discussions (e.g. a Young People's Planning Day) and provide feedback to the young people on how their views have been incorporated into the final plans
- f) Recognise the benefits of involving young people in the planning process in terms of reduced graffiti, vandalism and anti-social behaviour and greater ownership and satisfaction with the final outcomes.

¹ Hear by Right is a framework to assess and improve organisations' practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people.

Appendix 1

Appropriate Statistics

During the last three years, Devon County Council, in partnership with other local authorities, other agencies and the voluntary and community sectors, has been able to ensure the strategic development of such provision in a number of localities. These include Ivybridge town centre, Beacon Heath and Cowick in Exeter, and Exmouth town centre.

Currently new projects are at different stages of development in Dawlish, Okehampton and Barnstaple.

- There are approximately 63,000 young people in the 13 – 19 year age range living in Devon
- DCC Youth Service in line with Resourcing Excellent Youth Services (DfES 2002) should, as a minimum be in regular contact with 25% of that number (15,700 young people) annually
- 60% of the 9,450 young people should have demonstrable recorded outcomes in relation to their personal and social development
- further targets are set in relation to young people achieving accredited outcomes

These targets can only realistically be met through the provision of well maintained and equipped local venues, a flexible transport strategy and extensive partnership developments.

Ladder of Youth Involvement

