

**One Wrexham**  
**[Draft] Community Cohesion Strategy**

**Consultation Summary**

**11 March – 3 June 2008**

**Background**

Within Wrexham County Borough the most significant recent challenge for our communities has been changes to our population resulting from:-

- economic migration;
- increased numbers of overseas students; and
- Wrexham as a dispersal area for Asylum Seekers.

While these changes have enriched our communities by bringing new skills and talents, they have also provided a challenge to service providers and to community relations.

We do not believe integration and cohesion are the same thing as some argue. Cohesion is principally the process that must happen in all communities to ensure different groups of people get on well together; while integration is principally the process that ensures new residents and existing residents adapt to one another.

**Developing the Community Cohesion Strategy**

This is Wrexham's first Community Cohesion Strategy providing a framework for community cohesion for the next three years, 2008-2011. It has been developed by Wrexham County Borough Council in conjunction with other public and voluntary sector partners in Wrexham.

Although community cohesion refers to the coming together of all 'communities' in terms of age, gender, faith, race and sexual orientation, language and disability, this first Community Cohesion Strategy will focus mainly on cohesion in relation to race and ethnicity issues.

The Strategy provides an opportunity to establish a clearer understanding of our communities, and to improve communication with them in order to take forward specific cohesion activities. It recognises that community cohesion is a long term process and learning gained through the implementation of this initial Strategy and action plan will be used to develop actions in the future.

## **Vision**

It has been agreed to adopt the national definition of a cohesive community. It describes our aim of shaping a shared future where rights and responsibilities are understood and respect for others is clear.

The Vision for Wrexham is to be a place where:-

- there is a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and different communities to a future vision for Wrexham;
- there is a strong sense of an individual's rights and responsibilities – people know what everyone expects of them, and what they can expect in return;
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, access to services and treatment;
- there is a strong sense of trust in public services to act fairly in arbitrating between different interests and for their role and justifications to be subject to public scrutiny;
- there is a strong recognition of the contribution of both those who have newly arrived and those who already have deep attachments to Wrexham, with a focus on what they have in common; and
- there are strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and other institutions within neighbourhoods.

## **Strategic Objectives**

We have identified 4 important objectives for our cohesion work:

### **1. Engagement**

'To develop effective engagement with people to ensure involvement and openness in delivering services that meet the needs of the diverse communities in Wrexham.'

Outcomes we want to achieve in relation to engagement:

- Formal and informal community leaders demonstrate a positive approach to communicating community cohesion issues.
- Diverse majority and minority communities across the County Borough are confident that they can influence the decisions that affect them.
- The local media demonstrates a more positive approach to communicating community cohesion issues.

## **2. Education and Raising Awareness**

‘Develop a programme of education and awareness raising activities to build a common vision and understanding across all communities in Wrexham County Borough.’

Outcomes we want to achieve in relation to education and raising awareness:

- Community information needs in relation to community cohesion are met.
- Formal and informal community leaders understand and actively promote community cohesion principles.
- All Local Service Board employees understand and apply community cohesion principles.
- Practitioners across the Local Service Board partner agencies will develop local models of best practice in relation to community cohesion.
- There will be increased recognition and respect for diversity by young people.
- One Wrexham is understood and supported as the overarching theme for community cohesion in Wrexham.
- The business community understand their role in promoting community cohesion.
- There will be an increased awareness of Wrexham’s global links.

## **3. Understanding Community Needs**

‘Develop a co-ordinated approach to collating and sharing information in order to develop a consistent and reliable information base on which to deliver services and target resources.’

Outcomes we want to achieve in relation to understanding community needs:

- Robust data underpins all community cohesion activity.
- Good practice is shared with the Local Service Board and other partners.
- Information about potential changes to local demography informs service developments across all Local Service Board partner organisations.
- Community tensions are recognised as they arise and are robustly addressed.

## **4. Integration**

‘Work in partnership across all sectors, agencies and organisations in identifying and delivering interventions that will facilitate integration between new and existing communities and respond to the needs of minority communities.’

### Outcomes we want to achieve in relation to integration:

- Increased ability within the new communities settling in Wrexham County Borough to communicate in English or Welsh.
- Communities are confident to take cohesion forward at a local level.
- There is an increased level of reporting of hate crime in the County Borough.
- Issues in relation to:-
  - Economic migration;
  - Gypsies and Travellers; and
  - Asylum seekers and refugees are better understood and addressed.

### Your views

If you live in Wrexham County Borough please send us your views on the draft Strategy or complete the Consultation Questionnaire which is available from:

**By post:** Community Cohesion Co-ordination Group, C/o Gill Grainger, Community Cohesion Co-ordinator, WCBC, Economic Development Department, Lambpit Street, Wrexham. LL11 1AR.

**Email:** [gillian.grainger@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:gillian.grainger@wrexham.gov.uk)

**Internet:** [www.wrexham.gov.uk](http://www.wrexham.gov.uk)

We can also send you copies of the full Strategy and Action plan.

**Please note:** the consultation period finishes on 3 June 2008

We will be happy to provide the Strategy and Action Plan in a range of accessible formats including large print, Braille, audio-cassette / CD or computer disk and languages other than English and Welsh upon request.

### What happens next?

Once the consultation period has ended we will review all the comments received and revise the final strategy as appropriate. We will publish all the comments as part of the consultation in spring 2008.

The final version of the 'One Wrexham - Community Cohesion Strategy' will be presented to Wrexham County Borough Council's Executive Board in September 2008 and to our partners' executive groups in October 2008.