



Huddersfield North Locality Plan Executive Summary

Introduction

This document provides key information about Huddersfield North locality. It and sets out the priorities for change over the next ten years. This draft document has been produced from a range of information sources and discussions. It compliments the full locality plan which contains much of the detail in respect of the locality. It is recognised that there are many things to celebrate within Huddersfield North, however there are also many aspects of the locality that need to focus on improvement. This is not an analysis of the experience of living in Huddersfield North but sets out areas where it is felt progress can be made effectively to improve individual's lives and benefit the communities within the locality.

The locality priorities are highlighted. They will become the subject of individual work streams and performance management arrangements will be put in place to make sure that progress can be measured.

Locality Profile

Huddersfield North is an area of contrasts, ranging from the natural beauty of large sections of green belt through to the urban neighbourhoods at the edge of the town centre.

Scattered across the locality are a number of distinct villages. Despite the increasing demand for housing blurring the geographical boundaries, the villages have retained much of their own character and identity.

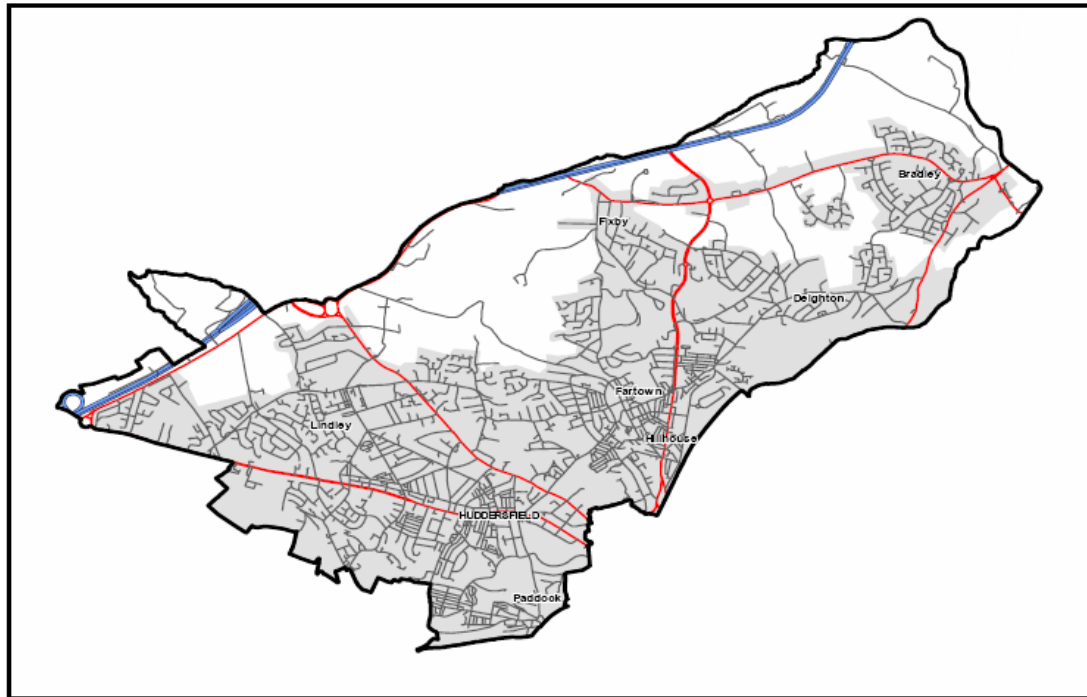
Economically the localities around Huddersfield (North and South) were built around wool/textile production which made the town one of the pioneers of the industrial revolution.

Inland waterways were also crucial to economic growth. At the end of the 18th Century, a canal was built linking the Calder and Hebble navigation in North Kirklees to Aspley in the town centre. The Huddersfield Narrow Canal was developed the following century which connected to the canal systems of Lancashire by means of a tunnel under the Pennines.

Huddersfield North benefits from strategic positioning in relation to road and rail networks. The M62 links the major economic centres of Manchester and Leeds and cuts across the north of the locality providing easy access for the locality's residents.

Huddersfield is the central point of the Trans-Pennine rail network. Huddersfield North has the most transient population in Kirklees due to good commuter links and infrastructure.

Map of Huddersfield North



Huddersfield North covers an area of 2284 hectares and has approximately 52000 residents. It includes the electoral wards of Ashbrow, Greenhead and Lindley. The locality has a large and vibrant ethnic population with over a fifth of residents from non-white ethnic groups (22%). It is also diverse in character – the Pakistani community accounts for 9.5% of the population, 4.4% are Black/Black Caribbean, 3.7% Indian and 2.8% from a mixed race background.

Ashbrow is the only ward in Kirklees where Black Caribbean is the largest minority ethnic community.

Population dynamics continually change, with an increasing Kurdish, African and East European population not shown in most official statistics.

Recent survey findings show the enthusiasm of the population and the nature of community cohesion. According to the Local Area Agreement (LAA) tracker survey 2007, the proportion of residents stating that Huddersfield North is a locality where people from different backgrounds and ages get on well together exceeds the Kirklees average.

Socio-demographic profile

Huddersfield North has diverse, vibrant and cohesive communities. Minority ethnic groups account for 22% of the population, including a large Pakistani community. The locality has increasing numbers of Kurdish, African and East European residents. In some schools 18 languages are spoken.

Huddersfield North has an urban nature and suffers from deprivation. Ashbrow is the most disadvantaged ward within the locality. It is going through substantial economic regeneration through the Kirklees Strategic Economic Zone. There are small geographical areas of affluence and information shows that Huddersfield North is the least deprived of the urban based localities in Kirklees.

Local drivers for change

Huddersfield North is shaped by a number of key drivers which encourage investment. The locality benefits from low property and land values with attractive residential areas.

Huddersfield has gained the economic benefit of the Creative Town Initiative by developing a well-known creative and media sector. The retail sector has also seen significant developments.

The town has strong links with the University. As numbers progressing onto higher education are rising, this will help to provide an educated workforce to maintain commercial growth.

Impressive local developments show commitment to revitalise Huddersfield's commercial, residential and leisure facilities.

Vision for the future

The impact of this will see Huddersfield North change. The locality will use greener modes of transport to cut congestion and improve environmental quality. There will be significant residential development and redevelopment, including improvements to the Leeds Road corridor.

Huddersfield will see the university campus expand showing that the town's localities welcome change and create an environment attractive for living and working.

Key challenges

For Huddersfield North to make the most of its strategic position and economic platform a number of challenges will need to be addressed by thorough planning processes and new ways of working. These are separated in to the four themes of the Kirklees Local Area Agreement:

Safer, stronger communities

Headline findings

- Crime has fallen significantly in recent years, and continues to do so. However, Huddersfield North has higher than average levels of some crime types, with identifiable hotspots across all three wards.
- Domestic Violence is a significant locality concern not reflected in crime statistics.
- Resident dissatisfaction, fear of crime and a perception of environmental degradation are key factors in the locality.
- A strong basis for enhancing community involvement exists.

Policing Priorities

1. On street drug dealing (Ashbrow and Greenhead)
2. Anti social behaviour (Lindley and Greenhead)
3. Burglary dwelling in all wards

Levels of satisfaction with the area in terms of environment and fear/perception of crime are lower than the Kirklees average. A targeted approach is needed as there are significant crime 'hotspots'. Continued measures to address anti-social behaviour are needed. These are preventative as well as reactive. Focussing on environmental improvements, youth provision and improved community involvement is needed to challenge negative perceptions and improve developing positive outcomes.

Although relatively low, a higher than average number of people feel involved in local decision-making, and more than average would like to be. Further work needs to be done to build up the existing volunteer base and surrounding infrastructure of the locality.

Children and young people

Headline findings

- Domestic violence is shown to be a substantial locality concern impacting upon a broad cross-section of society. High rates of referrals to Children and Young People services are present, the highest proportion of which concern domestic violence.
- Despite health and well-being patterns showing broadly similar trends to the Kirklees picture, emotional vulnerability and alcohol consumption are key areas of concern.
- Educational attainment in Ashbrow ward is significantly lower than the rest of the locality, detrimentally affecting otherwise impressive performance figures.
- A lack of access to youth provision, particularly in Lindley, Edgerton and Marsh has led to an increase in perceived anti-social behaviour.

Information shows a need to improve the availability and standard of youth provision in the locality. Measures to address emotional vulnerability and alcohol consumption and the numbers of unintended teenage pregnancies are vital to tackling health concerns for young people in Huddersfield North are necessary.

The level of educational attainment in Ashbrow constrains Huddersfield North from establishing itself as a locality with well above average educational standards. The successful implementation of the 'narrowing the gap' agenda between this ward and the rest of the locality is a clear priority.

There is a need to successfully implement a multi-agency response to domestic violence. Local intelligence suggests that this is a significant problem impacting upon a wide section of Huddersfield North's society, including young people.

Healthier communities and older people

Headline findings

- Despite having a generally healthy community, a diversifying and ageing population will raise the potential for social isolation and place an increasing burden on service providers for health and social care in the forthcoming years.
- Levels of living and working benefit claimants are higher in Huddersfield North (Ashbrow and Greenhead) than Kirklees and national averages.

- **There are concerns in respect of some areas of the locality not having suitable access to General Practitioners.**

The health status of the population of Huddersfield North is worse than the national average (but not the lowest in Kirklees). The diversity within the locality presents a number of challenges. There is a higher proportion of older people living in the Huddersfield North locality than elsewhere in Kirklees. The risk of suffering an age related health problem such as arthritis increases as people get older.

People on low incomes are more likely to suffer from poor health than those on higher incomes. Efforts are needed to reduce the level of welfare benefit claimants, particularly in Ashbrow.

There is also a need to ensure effective health and social care provision to cope with the increasing demands of an ageing and changing population and the increasing risk of social isolation. Supporting people to manage their health better is vital to improving the quality of life of the population of Huddersfield North.

Economy and Enterprise

Headline findings

- **Huddersfield North has a growing economy with a large amount of job opportunities created in the public sector. There is a concern as to the extent to which those residents staying within the locality are suitably skilled and qualified to access these opportunities.**
- **Levels of unemployment are higher in Huddersfield North than Kirklees and national averages. Rates in Ashbrow are particularly high.**
- **Affordable housing and the maintenance of efficient road networks represent key challenges for the locality.**

Huddersfield North is a locality showing signs of economic growth. To make sure progress is sustained and maximum benefit is gained an effective balance between workforce needs and available skills is a locality challenge.

The increase in new housing and conversions has not really addressed issues of the shortage of affordable housing and has created high density and reduced the space for children's play in some areas.

Economic sustainability also needs to be supported through the maintenance of efficient travel networks and a significant increase in the use of more eco-friendly modes of transport.

Locality priorities

Key priorities need to be addressed at locality and sub-locality level, to make sure that Huddersfield North is built around prosperous, healthy and safe community foundations offering opportunities for all.

1. Public services will work differently. They will transform how they relate to local residents so that services are tailored to the individuals, families and community needs. The emphasis will be on empowering residents, staff and communities to achieve solutions and opportunities.

Short and Medium Term

2. Social isolation of older people is a growing problem in our ageing and diversifying population. Bringing multiple agencies together with local representatives to overcome isolation and promote inter-generational contact will improve this situation.
3. Domestic violence is recognised as having an impact (often hidden) on a wide section of Huddersfield North's society. Tackling it more successfully will involve increasing our multi-agency ability to respond.
4. Young people face serious challenges both in terms of emotional vulnerability, high levels of alcohol abuse, and a perceived lack of youth facilities leading to concerns about anti-social behaviour.
5. Review residents access to GP's to establish whether there is a need for re-distribution of existing provision or the introduction of additional provision.

Longer Term

6. Ensure that the skills of the existing and future workforce in Huddersfield North are suited to the needs of the local diverse population, and suited to contribute and benefit from a flourishing economy in Huddersfield. This requires supporting the community to raise their aspirations and includes tackling low educational achievement in Ashbrow.

7. Mental health and diabetes are two areas for priority attention in Huddersfield North and tackling these long term conditions requires a collective approach by agencies, and improved access to health services.