SHRUB END WARD COMMUNITY STENGTHS ASSESSMENT

GENERAL INFORMATION

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION, GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES, AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Background to the research

1.1.1 This is the fifth Community Strength Assessment carried out by the Enterprise and Communities team at Colchester Borough Council in local authority wards that have been identified as priorities to tackle owing to their relative deprivation levels.

1.1.2 In 2004, reports were completed for Harbour, Berechurch and St Anne's wards. These wards were identified as deprived in the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000. All of these reports are currently available online at www.colchester.gov.uk (to find these, click on the "Knowing Your Community" link, and search under "c-consultation"). Alternatively, you may telephone us if you would prefer to receive a paper copy (see Community Development and Research Contacts listed on page 4).

1.1.3 In 2006, it was decided that the wards New Town and Shrub End would be added to the Community Development remit, as they were both shown to have pockets of deprivation within them, according to the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004[1] (see section 1.4 for a detailed description of the location of these 'pockets' within the ward).

1.1.2 The purpose of producing this report was to increase local knowledge about characteristics and needs in these wards. These needs have been established from consultation with residents about their neighbourhood and community. This is accompanied by analysis from interviews with community and voluntary groups about the strengths and needs of their organisations and interviews about the support that these groups receive.

1.1.3 Research has shown that a vibrant community and voluntary sector and increased community involvement can have a significant and positive impact on social exclusion in areas of deprivation. Future community development work will be planned largely around the findings of this research.

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[1] The 2004 Index differed from the 2000 Index in that it is based on small areas known as Lower Layer Super Output Areas (small areas), rather than wards. These are usually small than wards, and have an average population of 1500 people. They 'fit' into the existing ward boundaries. Shrub End had two of its seven small areas within the 40% most deprived of all 32,482 small areas in England.

1.2 Structure of the report

This report is divided into six main chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction, geographical boundaries and methodology
Chapter 2: Executive summary of main findings
Chapter 3: Recommendations
Chapter 4: Results of household survey
Chapter 5: Results of structured interviews with community and voluntary groups
Chapter 6: Results of open interviews with support organisations
Appendices: Copies of the questionnaires used in the research

1.3 Geography and boundaries used

1.3.1 This report looks at community needs in Shrub End ward. As mentioned above, Shrub End ward has been recently identified as a priority ward for Colchester Borough Council's Community Development team (identified in 2006), from the results of The Government's 2004 Indices of Multiple Deprivation. This highlighted that Shrub End ward was amongst the most deprived of all 27 wards in the borough. Section 1.4 below puts Shrub End's position in the 2004 Indices of Deprivation in the context of Colchester and England as a whole. Details of the ward and small area boundaries can be viewed from the map on page xx.

1.4 Indices of Deprivation and ASB summary for Shrub End

1.4.1 Five of the seven small areas in Shrub End ward were not amongst the 40% most deprived in England according to their scores on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 (IMD04). In fact some areas of the ward were highly affluent. For instance, the 'Layer Road' and 'Littlefields' areas of Shrub End were amongst the 11-20% *least* deprived in England.

In contrast, two small areas of Shrub End were relatively deprived. These areas were: [2]

- **'Iceni Square'**, which was amongst the 21-30% *most* deprived in England, and had the seventh highest level of deprivation of all 104 small areas in Colchester; and,

- **'Rayner Road'**, which was amongst the 31-40% *most* deprived in England, ranking 15 of all 104 small areas in Colchester.

This contrast between the *most* deprived and the *least* deprived small area within Shrub End on the IMD04 was more extreme than that of any of the other 26 wards in Colchester.

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[2] The small areas (Lower Super Output Areas) were named with the assistance of the local Community Development team to enable easier identification of the locality that these areas refer to. See page 43 for a detailed map of Shrub End showing these areas.

1.4.2 The 'Iceni Square' Area

The 'Iceni Square' area was amongst the 40% most affected in England on six of the seven domains of the ID04. It was particularly deprived on the Income Deprivation domain and the Education, Skills and Training Deprivation domain, situated amongst the 11-20% most affected in England on each of these domains. It was also amongst the 11-20% most affected on the Child Poverty Index [3]. The Living Environment Deprivation domain was the one domain on which it was not amongst the 40% most affected in England. However, as noted above, not one of the seven small areas in Shrub End were amongst the 40% most affected in England on this domain.

1.4.3 The 'Rayner Road' area

The Employment Deprivation domain and Crime domain affected the 'Rayner Road' area of Shrub End most of all seven domains in the ID04 situated amongst the 21-30% most affected in England on each of these domains. This area ranked 12 and 14 of all 104 small areas in Colchester on each of these domains, respectively.

This area was also amongst the 31-40% most affected in England on:

- Income Deprivation domain, ranking 15 of all 104 small areas in Colchester,
- Health Deprivation and Disability domain, ranking 19 of all 104 small areas in Colchester; and,
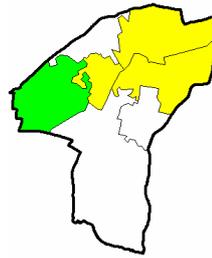- Education, Skills and Training domain, ranking 22 of all 104 small areas in Colchester.

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[3] The Child Poverty Index is a supplementary index, created from selective indicators included in the Income Deprivation domain.
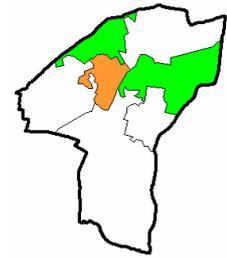
SHRUB END [4]

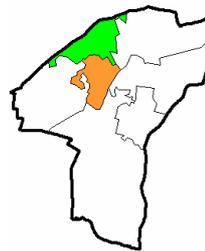a) Index of Multiple Deprivation (2004)
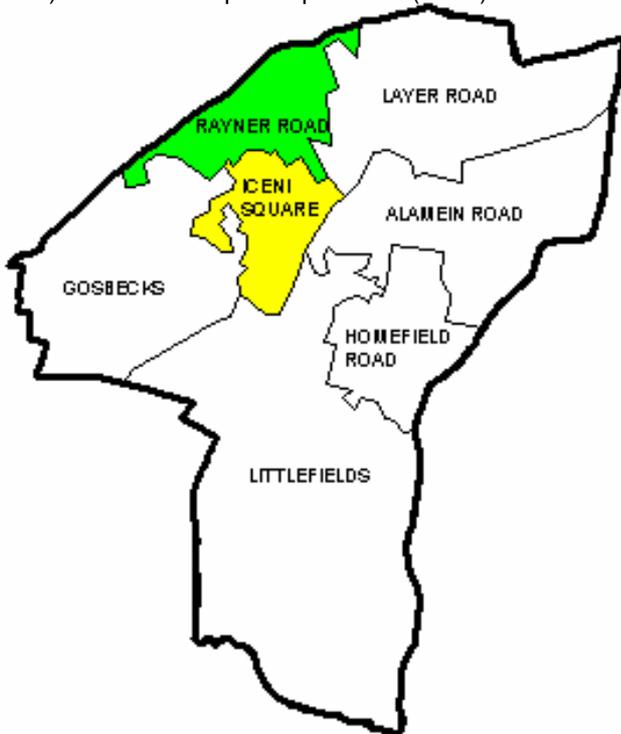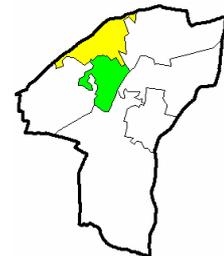

b) Barriers to Housing and Services Domain

c) Education, Skills and Training Domain

d) Income Deprivation Domain

e) Crime Domain

f) Health Deprivation and Disability Domain
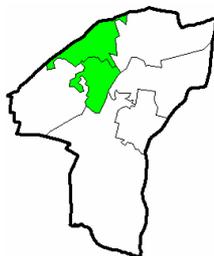
g) Employment Deprivation Domain

h) Living Environment Deprivation Domain

Key

In 10% most affected small areas in England

In 11-20% most affected small areas in England

In 21-30% most affected small areas in England

In 31-40% most affected small areas in England

Ward Boundaries

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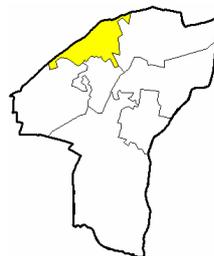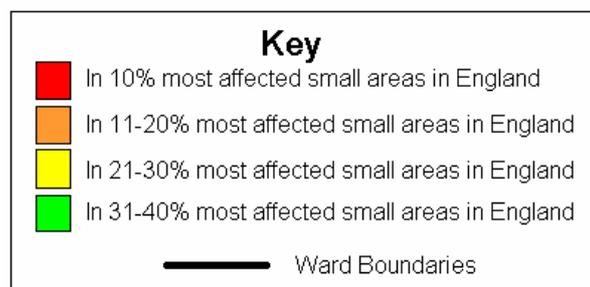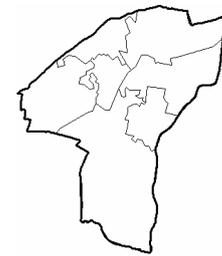
[4] The small areas (Lower Super Output Areas) in these maps were named with the assistance of the local Community Development team to enable easier identification of the locality that these areas refer to. See page 43 for a detailed map of Shrub End showing these areas.

Shrub End ward: Position of small areas in relation to all small areas in England and Colchester rank [5]

|	Iceni Square (E01021711)	Alamein Road (E01021712)	Rayner Road (E01021713)	Littlefields (E01021714)	*Gosebecks (E01021715)*	Homefield Road (E01021716)	Layer Road (E01021717)
Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 *(comprised of the seven domains below)*	7	62	15	92	44	93	96
Barriers to Housing and Services domain	40	32	72	99	68	80	39
Education, Skills and Training Deprivation domain	6	25	22	51	27	42	89
Income Deprivation domain	4	63	15	57	31	89	93
Crime domain	18	99	14	92	24	100	83
Health Deprivation and Disability domain	15	35	19	74	61	71	94
Employment Deprivation domain	9	101	12	100	46	97	103
Living Environment Deprivation domain	29	96	39	89	55	80	46

KEY	
1-10% most affected small areas in England	
11-20% most affected small areas in England	
21-30% most affected small areas in England	
31-40% most affected small areas in England	

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[5] These small areas (Lower Super Output Areas) were named with the assistance of the local Community Development team to enable easier identification of the locality that these areas refer to. See page 43 for a detailed map of Shrub End.
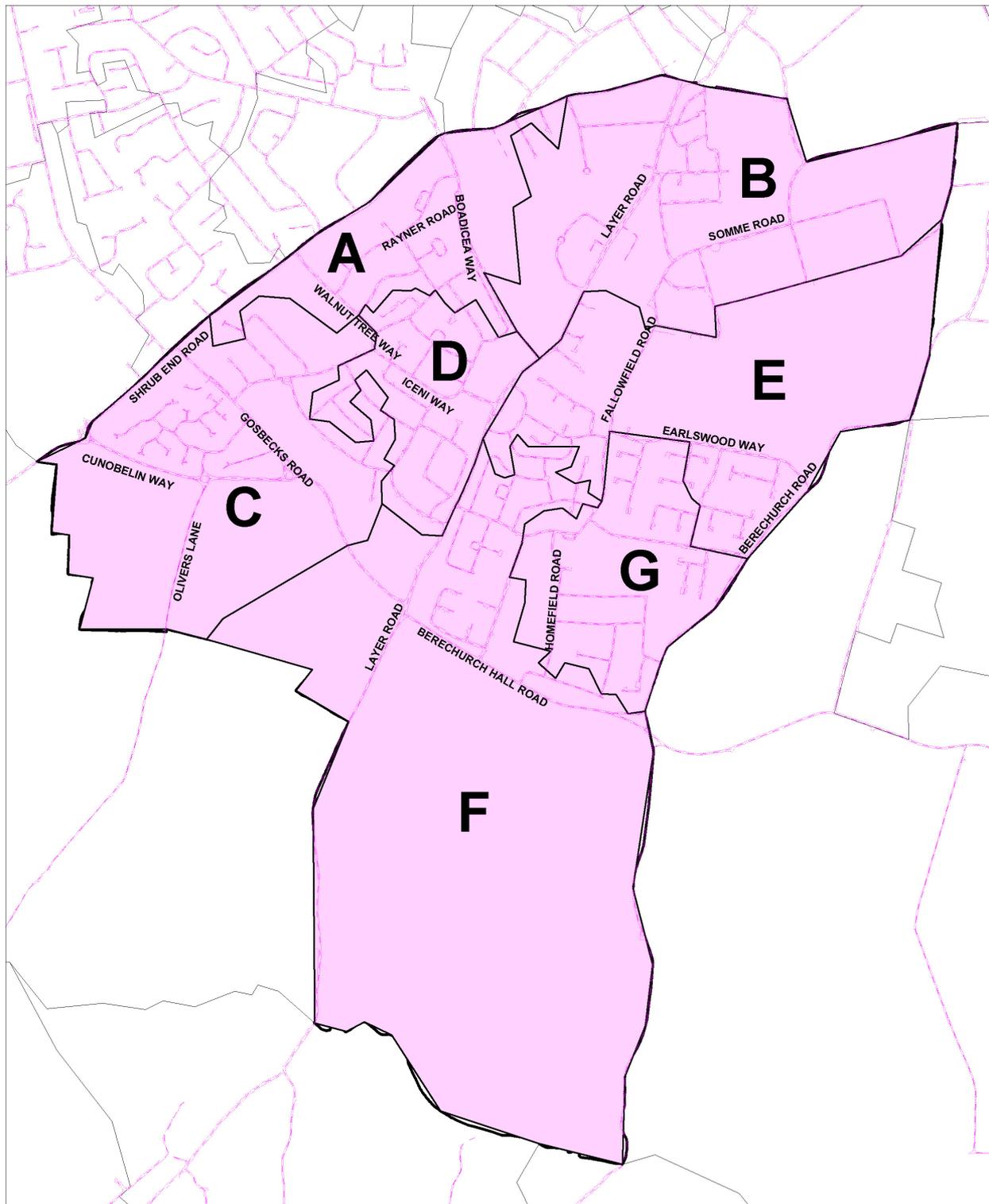
KEY

A = RAYNER ROAD   E = ALAMEIN ROAD
B = LAYER ROAD   F = LITTLEFIELDS
C = GOSBECKS   G = HOMEFIELD ROAD
D = ICENI SQUARE

———— WARD BOUNDARIES
——— L-SOA BOUNDARIES

1.4.4 ASB in Shrub End

Typically within these Community Strengths Assessments, ASB is not analysed to a great extent, as the focus is more on public opinion and what is felt to be of concern in the area by the residents, and those involved in local community or voluntary support organisations.

However in this instance there will here be a brief analysis made of the latest ASB statistics in the ward, in order to provide some contextual information about the ward alongside the deprivation data available. See Figure 1 below for details.

Figure 1: Top ten highest frequency roads for ASB incidents in Shrub End, 2006/2007

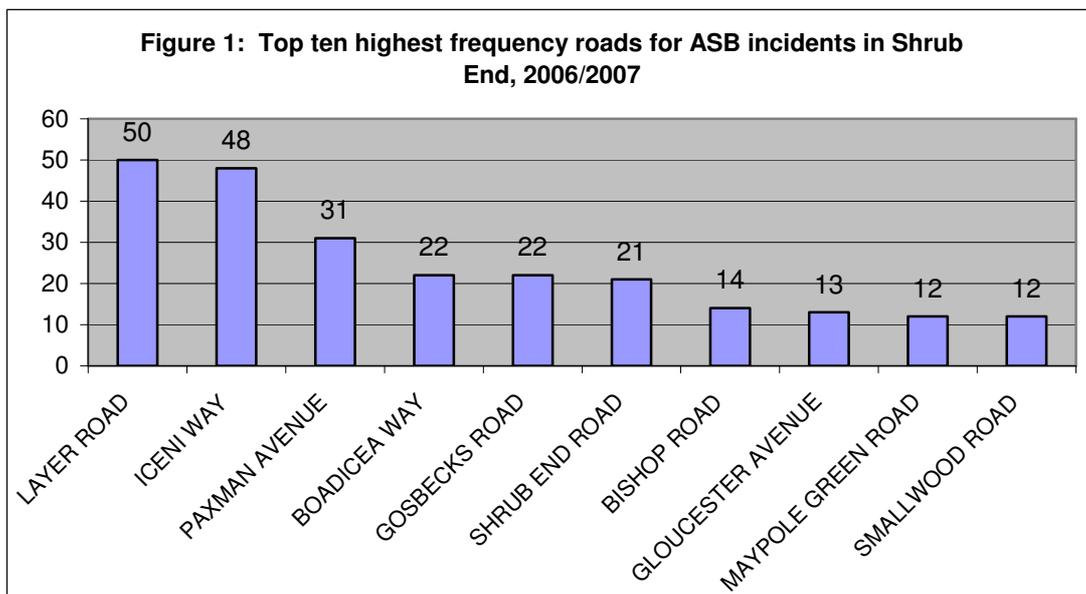| Road	Incidents
LAYER ROAD	50
ICENI WAY	48
PAXMAN AVENUE	31
BOADICEA WAY	22
GOSBECKS ROAD	22
SHRUB END ROAD	21
BISHOP ROAD	14
GLOUCESTER AVENUE	13
MAYPOLE GREEN ROAD	12
SMALLWOOD ROAD	12

Figure one above shows that the road with the greatest number of offences by far is Layer Road, with 50 incidents over the course of the year. This falls slightly to 48 for Iceni Way, the road with the second greatest number of incidents, and is considerably lower for Paxmans Avenue, which had just 31 incidents over the year. In order to put these figures into context, in Harbour for example, the road with the highest number of incidents in 2004/2005 (as reported in the Harbour Evaluation[6], completed in 2006) was Stalin Road, with 75 incidents. In Berechurch, the highest number of incidents in 2004/2005 (see the Berechurch Evaluation, completed in 2006) occurred in Mersea Road with 109 incidents; the second highest was Monkwick Avenue, with 73 incidents. Whilst different years' data has been used here (data for Harbour and Berechurch is that which was most recent at the time of producing the evaluation reports), and so direct comparisons cannot be made, the difference in numbers may provide an indication of why ASB may not be as prevalanet in peoples' minds as it is for example in Berechurch or Harbour.

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[6] For full report visit http://www.colchester.gov.uk/knowingyourcommunity

1.5 Methodology

1.5.1 This research involved three separate parts:

a) A household survey
b) Interviews with community and voluntary groups
c) Interviews with support organisations

The details of each of these methods are outlined below.

a) Household survey

1.5.2 A household survey was carried out in February 2007. This involved face to face interviews with 100 residents in the two small areas identified as 'deprived' in Shrub End ward (see map, page 7). This amounts to a survey of approximately 3.3% of all the households in the deprived small areas. It was decided to focus on these two small areas as these should be the areas which the Community Development team are likely to put most focus on in the ward.

1.5.3 The survey asked people about their level of involvement in the community. It also explored the issues that they felt need addressing, in terms of community needs and gaps in the delivery of services to St Andrew's. A copy of the survey that was used is included in Appendix 3.

b) Interviews with community and voluntary groups

1.5.4 A total of 18 interviews were conducted with representatives from local community and voluntary groups. These interviews looked at the strengths, levels of organisation and the needs of these groups. A list of the groups interviewed is included in Appendix 1 and a copy of the interview form is included in Appendix 2.

c) Interviews with support organisations

1.5.5 A total of 7 unstructured interviews were conducted with 7 organisations that provide support either to community and voluntary groups in St Andrew's to achieve their objectives, or provide a community based role in the ward. In one of these interviews three representatives each with a slightly different role in the organisation was present, so in total 9 individuals from support organisations were interviewed. As there were are relatively few of these currently in place in Shrub End, an unstructured interview approach was taken, which allowed a general discussion around the following themes:

- What their role in the Shrub End ward is, and how long they have been carrying out that role

- What support is available locally for them, and for the local community and voluntary groups
- What they feel the main "issues" or problems facing both them professionally and the community more generally in Shrub End are
- What joint or partnership working might benefit their ability to carry out their role in the ward

These interviews looked at support currently delivered in Shrub End, as well as support available. The list of organisations interviewed is included in Appendix 1.

CHAPTER 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1   Introduction

2.1.1   This summary integrates the findings from each of the methodologies used throughout the research. Methodologies used include a household survey, interviews with community and voluntary groups, and interviewes with support organisations (see chapter 1 for more detail on the methodologies used).

2.1.2   The main findings that emerged from the research shaped the structure of the chapter. It is organised under the following headings:

- Young people
- Top offence types of concern; "litter and rubbish" and "dogs and dogs' mess"
- Community Participation
- Capacity of Groups
- Publicity issues
- Funding issues
- Identifying equal opportunities and training needs
- Outreach, Joint Working and Networking
- Other

2.1.3   Each section incorporates findings from each of the surveys relevant to it; although "capacity of groups", "publicity issues", "funding issues"; "identifying equal opportunities and training needs"; and "joint working and networking" tend to focus more on the community and voluntary groups survey, as they look more at the needs and current status of these groups.

2.1.4   "Other" has been included as it was felt that there were some additional specific important issues in the ward which did not fit with the remaining more generic headings.

2.2   Young people

2.2.1   The needs of younger people has been a recurrent theme throughout the research process. What is interesting is that, in previous assessments, there has been a tendency to link Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) and disruptive or abusive behaviour displayed by young people closely to facilities or diversionary activities (or a lack

there of) available in the locality.   In the research process, considerable reference has been made to developing facilities for young people, yet relatively little reference has however been made to ASB (see section 2.3).

2.2.2   The household survey revealed that there was a lack of provision of activities for young people. Specifically, when asked what they would like to see in the area, seven interviewees stated activities for young people. These suggestions were unprompted as this was an open question, with no options to select from. Six of these specified a youth club.   In addition, facilities for young people was only felt to be a good or fairly good service by 11 respondents; 38% of interviewees found facilities for young people to be poor.

2.2.3   The support groups survey also highlighted that, historically, Shrub End has been a ward with insufficient facilities for young people; but a number of interviewees pointed to the benefit that the addition of the CUCST (Colchester United Community Sports Trust) has had to the local area. One stated:

"A lot has been shifted away from the ward. Equally however, we have gained services, including the Colchester United Community Sports Trust development on Boadicea Way. The BMX track when it is developed will help to fill some of the gap in provision in that area."

2.2.4   In relation to available facilities for young people, a point which was touched upon by three of the support groups interviewed was that the Shrub End clinic is no longer open to the public. This is relevant to young people in particular, as previously on offer at the clinic was an ad-hoc drop-in service (rather than a formal family planning service). The c-card[7] was accepted at the clinic, and two members of staff trained in family planning advice were available for the young people to talk to. The removal of this service could be problematic in this ward, owing to relatively high conception rates. The birth *rate*[8](per 1,000 population) in 2004 for Shrub End was the second highest of all wards in the borough (Highwoods had the highest rate). In terms of teenage conceptions, aggregated teenage conception data (where age at conception is 18 or under) for 2001 to 2003 shows Shrub End to have the third highest total *number* of teenage conceptions of all wards in Colchester[9]. Two commentators brought up their concerns about the removal of this service, in the support groups survey (see chapter 6).

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[7] Young people aged between 13 – 19 are entitled to free condoms at participating clinics or health centres, when in possession of a c-card.
[8] Office for National Statistics, mid 2003 to mid 2004 year estimates (tables VS1, 2, 3 and 4). Crown Copyright reserved.
[9] 2001 to 2003 Conceptions for wards, sourced from North East Essex PCT

2.3 **Top offence types of concern are "litter and rubbish" and "dogs and dogs mess"**

2.3.1 As stated in the previous section, although ASB came out as the third highest issue of conern within the household survey[10], it did not come out as one of the major issues within the research process as a whole.

2.3.2 As stated, in the household survey ASB came out as the offence of third greatest concern to interviewees, after "Litter and rubbish" (the offence type interviewees were most concerned about), and "Dogs and dogs' mess" (the offence type of 2nd greatest concern). Litter and rubbish was thought to be a problem by 63% of interviewees. Dogs and dogs mess was felt to be a problem by 55% of interviewees, and ASB was considered a problem by 52% of interviewees. The next offence types of greatest concern were "Vandalism and graffiti"; "Abandoned vehicles"; "Drug use and dealing"; and "Violent Crime" respectively.

2.3.3 The household survey found that 95% of interviewees either strongly or slightly agreed with the statement "I feel safe in my local nieghbourhood in the daytime". This figure was slightly lower for feelings of safety at night time, at 72%. In addition, it is encouraging to note that 78.5% of residents in our sample agreed that "they feel happy living in this neighbourhood".

2.3.4 ASB was not commented on as an issue of great concern amongst Support Group interviewees. The PC interviewed who operates in the Shrub End area discussed some of the issues however. She stated that Shrub End has been identified by the NSOs (Neighbourhood Specialist Officers) as a priority area for just over four and a half years, and that in general two of the major issues which they repeatedly address in the ward is nuisance youths and neighbourhood disputes. She did state that she felt that there had been "considerable improvement" in the Iceni Square area more recently, and that Iceni Way and Katherine Hunt Way are the roads in the ward which tend to be policed more regularly and identified as "hotspot" areas.

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[10] In response to the question "who much of a problem do you think the following (offence types) are in this neighbourhood?)

the Shrub End area discussed some of the issues however. She stated that Shrub End has been identified by the NSOs (Neighbourhood Specialist Officers) as a priority area for just over four and a half years, and that in general two of the major issues which they repeatedly address in the ward is nuisance youths and neighbourhood disputes. She did state that she felt that there had been "considerable improvement" in the Iceni Square area more recently, and that Iceni Way and Katherine Hunt Way are the roads in the ward which tend to be policed more regularly and identified as "hotspot" areas.

2.3.6   ASB incident data (see section 1.4.4) by road found overall numbers of incidents occurring along the most problematic roads in the ward to be, in general, lower than in other priority wards[11]. In 2006/2007, Iceni Way in Shrub End had 43 reported incidents of ASB. This was the road in the ward with the highest number of incidents. The second highest was Layer Road, with 38. In Harbour for example, the road with the highest number of incidents in 2004/2005 (as reported in the Harbour Evaluation[12], completed in 2006) was Stalin Road, with 75 incidents. In Berechurch, the highest number of incidents in 2004/2005 (see the Berechurch Evaluation, completed in 2006) occurred in Mersea Road with 109 incidents; the second highest was Monkwick Avenue, with 73 incidents. Whilst different years' data has been used here (data for Harour and Berechurch is that which was most recent at the time of producing the evaluation reports), and so direct comparisons cannot be made, the difference in numbers may provide an indication of why ASB may not be as prevalanet in peoples' minds as it is for example in Berechurch or Harbour.

2.4   Community Participation

2.4.1   The household survey identified low usage of existing groups (emphasising the need for greater advertising, see section 2.6), and even lower levels of volunteering amongst the sample. From the sample of 100 for example, the group with the highest level of users was the St Cedds Church Hall, with just four users. Three volunteers for local groups were found within the sample of 100 residents. When asked what prevents them from participating more fully, 49%

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[11] It should be noted that this is an anecdotal comparison; given that the length of roads obviously varies between those used as examples. It does however provide an indication of why ASB may not be as prevalanet in peoples minds in Shrub End, as for example in Berechurch or Harbour.
[12] For full report visit http://www.colchester.gov.uk/knowingyourcommunity

stated, as might be expected, "no time"; although, 39% stated options around confidence issues, including "wouldn't know what to do or say"; "wouldn't know where to go", and "I don't have the knowledge or skills".

2.4.2   The support survey can also be used to look at some potential reasons for the low levels of participation. A key theme which came out of this survey (see sections 6.2) were around the ways in which the ward is divided into distinct areas which tend to have different needs and concerns, and the impact that this has on community cohesion.

2.4.3   The garrison estate obviously is one such distinct area. Some of the support interviews commended the Army Welfare Service and Colchester Garrison more generally for the extent of activities and facilities available (including a youth club, and a summer programme which is being developed for activities for young people). How available to the wider Shrub End community these activities are however, was an area of slight uncertainty amongst the support groups interviewed. Clarification ought to be sought on this issue therefore.

2.4.4   Equally distinct are the small areas of the ward categorised as 'deprived', around Iceni Way and Rayner Road[13]. One of the support group interviewees also commented on an area of the ward which they perceived to be much more affluent, around the Layer Road small area. Indeed, the Indices of Deprivation 2004 shows this small area to be within the 11 – 20% least deprived small areas in England. This interviewee also stated that the Gosbecks small area tends to have a younger, more transient population.

2.4.5   The mutually distinct nature of the communities which have been commented on by interviewees, and the way in which this is reinforced by data around the variation in levels of deprivation in the ward (see section 1.4) may go some way to explaining why community participation and interaction is quite low in the ward.

2.4.6   The diverse nature of Shrub End ward community may also explain why one of the support groups interviewed stated how much they felt a central meeting place for people and groups in the ward might help. One additional interviewee stated that they felt that the proposed BMX track in Shrub End might act as such a meeting point for young

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[13] See map and Indices of Deprivation summary for Shrub End, section 1.4.

people, at least. It should be noted also at this point that, in the household survey, just over 15% of the sample (16 interviewees) left their contact details to be passed on to the Community Development Worker, so that they could get involved with progressing the plans. Equally, 16 interviewees expressed an interest in attending future NAPs in the ward, which indicates a degree of commitment to increased participation

2.4.7   Two of the support group interviewees mentioned their desire to improve community participation particularly in relation to the three schools in the area; and how getting parents from the local area more involed in activities in the schools is a continuing problem for them.

2.5   Capacity of groups

2.5.1   This section aims to give an overview of the interviewed groups' size, income and status, drawing comparisons with one of the existing priority wards in Colchester which was assessed in 2004. By drawing comparisons we can view what level of capacity the groups in Shrub End have, in relation to other wards in the borough. Sections 2.6, 2.7, 2.8 and 2.9 which follow relate closely to this, by looking at how these groups' capacity can be developed.

2.5.2   A total of 18 community and voluntary groups were interviewed through the research process. Eleven of these groups are providing "social activities", and nine are providing "sports and recreation". The number of groups providing other services in the ward is limited; for example two groups provide "advice", two provide "counselling", two provide "training and education", and just one claimed to provide "arts and cultural" services (see section 5.2 for full details). This indicates a signficant bias towards social and sporting activities, and limited availability of other types of activity.

2.5.3   The majority of groups seemed to be fairly small organizations. For example, nine of the 18 groups had between one and 20 users in an average week. Just three had in excess of 40 users in a week. In addition, only one of the 18 groups stated their total income or funding this financial year to be in excess of £10,000. Perhaps more tellingly, only eight of the 18 groups stated that they employed any paid staff, and of those eight, only one had in excess of five. All the other groups had less than five paid employees, indicating them to be fairly small in size.

2.5.4   In order to contextualise this information, we can draw comparisons with the St Andrews and Berechurch Community Strengths Assessments, both carried out in 2004[14]. For St Andrews, 19 groups were interviewed. Of this 19, a total of ten groups each stated that they were providing "advice", "play activities" and "sports and education". Nine stated "training and community education", and eight "social activiites". Fourteen of the 19 groups stated their total income or funding in that financial year to have been in excess of £10,000. In Berechurch, 18 groups were interviewed. Six stated they provided "advice" services, six stated "social activities", four stated "self help and support", and four stated "training and community education. This shows a greater diversity in services available in these two wards, compared with Shrub End.

2.5.5   Comparing this information indicates that Shrub End has a smaller, less diverse range of community and voluntary groups than has been found in other wards identified as priorities for Colchester Borough Council. This indicates that Shrub End may at this stage have a lower capacity in terms of developing the local groups, building links between groups, and working in partnership with different agencies, in relation to other areas in the borough. This is not to say that they should not be developed however, as is explored in the following sections.

2.6   Publicity Issues

2.6.1   Publicity came up as an area around which those groups interviewed felt they could benefit from assistance.

2.6.2   This appeared in the community and voluntary groups interviews, in particular when interviewees were asked "how well did they feel the skills of their staff (voluntary and paid) met the needs of the organisation", in relation to a number of factors including, managing projects, managing staff, how the council works, etc. For this question, the top two areas where interviewees disagreed that their staff could fully meet the needs of the organisation, were "the media" and "publicity". For the majority of skills areas however, the groups interviewed felt that their needs were fully met by current staff. This could be due to the groups being very small and fairly focused or narrow in their remit, in relation to groups in other areas (see 2.5.4).

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[14] The same methodologies were used for this ward. The full report is available on-line at http://www.colchester.gov.uk/knowingyourcommunity

2.6.3   Some community groups did however feel that further development was desirable as evidenced by two comments in relation to skills gaps in their groups. The two comments were:

"a local newsletter would really benefit the ward to get out the message of what groups are available, and what their purpose is" and "*advertising ourselves is something we are a bit weaker on. More wide advertising across Colchester could help benefit uptake"*.

2.6.4   In addition, the second greatest problem which community and voluntary groups saw as issues for them in meeting their objectives was "recruiting and retaining volunteers" (eight of the 18 groups interviewed had difficulty in relation to this. "Funding" was the problem viewed as the greatest obstacle facing them, see section 2.7). This stated need for more volunteers strengthens the case for developing the capacity of the groups in Shrub End.

2.6.5   Two of the support groups interviewed mentioned a problem for them professionally being an absence of any directory which could be used for signposting both them, and the community members with which they work,to local information which might assist them. Discussion progressed in these interviews around the potential benefit that such a directory could have in advertising and mapping local facilities, amenities and resources.

2.6.6   The household survey reiterated this potential problem with publicity, as 64% of interviewees disagreed that they "felt well informed about issues of concern". Similarly, 74% disagreed that they felt well informed about local events. To give a specific example, only four interviewees had heard of the NAPs (Neighbourhood Action Panels) which cover Shrub End ward.

2.7   Funding issues

2.7.1   Funding came out as the greatest problem affecting the community and voluntary groups interviewed. Nine of the 18 interviewees felt that this was an occasional, slight or signficant problem facing them and their work in the area.   Interestingly only four of the 18 groups have sought any funding advice on any occassion in the last three years. This may indicate either a gap in provision or a gap in the uptake of available provision of funding advice. In addition, only two of the 18 interviewees stated that they would approach the local authority for funding advice, should they need it in the future. This

suggests that more could be done in assisting local groups to access funding.

2.8   Identifying equal opportunity and training needs

2.8.1   Amongst the community and voluntary groups interviewed, just four stated that they had carried out any training in the last year. Similarly, just six of the 18 interviewees stated that they would be interested in getting assistance with identifying their training needs; ten stated that they were not interested, and two stated "not applicable". Some went on to state a relative disinterest in training needs partially because they exist as small groups providing quite a narrow or specific service (for example, five dance groups/clubs were interviewed as part of the research, see also "Capacity of Groups", 2.5.4), and as such did not see further training to be necessary.

2.8.2   Five of the 18 groups interviewed stated that they had neither a written equal opportunities policy nor a statement of equality within their constitution. Of these five, just one expressed an interest in getting advice or guidance on producing such a policy.

2.8.3   Similarly, when asked, just one group stated that they sometimes felt that they needed advice or guidance on equal opportunities matters but did not know where to access it. This could mean one of two things; either that the remaining 17 groups have sufficient information and support regarding equal opportunities, or that equal opportunities are not currently viewed as a major priority for the groups interviewed, and as such they tend not to seek advice on the matter.

2.8.4   Groups were also asked how they were actively aiming to challenge discrimination. Whilst three groups had had recent involvement in "awareness raising events", most responses to this focused on addressing any issues in quite an ad-hoc fashion; four groups for example stated that they ensured that they kept up to date with legislation, and tried to remain an open and accessible group. As would be expected given the smaller size of the groups, there was limited evidence as such of widespread systematic means to implement or monitor equal opportunities amongst the groups interviewed.

2.8.5   Community and voluntary groups rated language barriers in communicating with the local community and access to childcare for members as two of the four least problematic of all issues listed (limited skills and access to training where the other two issues seen

as unproblematic; for each of these four all groups responded either "no problem", "dont know", or "not applicable". Language barriers recieved the highest number of "no problem"'s, at 12). However, this does not necessarily mean that these are not problems for these groups, but perhaps that they were not perceived as such by those interviewed. Further examination would be needed to investigate the possible existence, and then the extent of, any of these access issues. It may be the case that there is a low level of access by minority ethnic groups in Shrub End to the groups currently in place.

2.8.6   However, Shrub End has a higher than average presence of "people born outside Europe" (5.46% of population) than both the regional (4.75%) and the county (3.12%) averages. As would be expected from Shrub End's close location to the army barracks, Shrub End also has an above average percentage of Scottish born and Welsh born residents[15]. One support group interviewee also commented on a growing Fijian population in the ward, and particularly in the army estate. This does suggest the importance of developing diversity awareness within the exisitng groups. There is signficiant potential to do this; whereas previously groups would not necessarily have had one contact for diversity issues, there is now a Community Development Worker in place for the ward who can provide this guidance.

2.9   Outreach, Joint Working and Networking

2.9.1   The groups interviewed, in general, had good levels of support from their active members and/or management committees. They interact well with their members, consistently seeking feedback via a number of means.   In addition, groups in general showed a high level of satisfaction with their current arrangements for using premises, and felt that they had good access to resources such as storage, meeting space, and any relevant technology.

2.9.2   This given, groups seemed to an extent to be fairly independent and self sufficient. This was enforced through questions around joint working and networking. Fifty per cent; nine of the 18 groups interviewed; had not had any involvement within joint working. Just two of the groups had carried out any joint working with the Council.

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[15] This data is sourced from the 2001 Census, see Colchester Borough Council's Ethnicity Profile, available on line at http://www.colchester.gov.uk/knowingyourcommunity

This again points to the low levels of community capacity, and the tendency for groups to have a focused, narrow remit (see also, 2.5.4).

2.9.3   Whilst groups responses outlined in 2.9.2 may suggest a preference to work autonomously, funding was stated as either a "slight", "very" or "occasional" problem for nine of the 18 groups. This was in fact the issue around which greatest problems were identified by the groups (See section 2.6). The potential funding streams which could be opened to a number of these groups through joint working with the council, perhaps could be an issue for future focus by the Community Development Worker.

2.9.4   Relatively few groups again were involved in any formal networks available to them. Eight of the 18 groups were members of formal networks; only one of these was a Colchester-based network[16]. This again perhaps reflects the need to more widely publicise formal networks in the locality; but equally it may well reflect the fact that Community Development is in its infancy in Shrub End, and as such formal networks engaging with the area may be few and limited.

2.9.5   Whilst groups in general seem content in their current state of autonomy, and indeed many (seven) have been in Shrub End for more than ten years and are being well sustained by their active members, should they wish to tackle their key identified issues of funding and publicity, joint working and networking with fellow groups and statutory organisations may be the most effective way to do this.

2.10   Other

2.10.1   This last section will draw out two final key points about the ward, which the research has raised.

2.10.2   Firstly, public transport was commended in both the household survey, and the community and voluntary groups survey.   Seventy one per cent of those interviewed within the household survey stated that public transport in Shrub End was either "very good" or "good". In the support survey, one interviewee stated that Shrub End has a good bus service connecting the different sections of the ward. Interestingly however, the largest problem in terms of access to

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[16] When drawing comparisons with previous Community Strengths Assessments carried out by Colchester Borough Council, it should be noted that in previous assessments schools and health care workers for example were treated as community groups. In this assessment, these have been treated as support groups or organisations. This may have an impact on numbers of groups involved in formal networks here.

resources stated by the community and voluntary groups, was transport. Eight interviewees stated this to be a slight, significant or occasional problem. This suggests that community transport is an issue in Shrub End, as opposed to public transport.

2.10.3   Four interviewees felt that truancy from the Alderman Blaxhill school was a problem. At the time of producing this report, it was stated that the school are currently trying to gain funding to replace the fencing around the school, in order to tackle this problem.

CHAPTER 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. Introduction

3.1.1 Below is a list of recommendations from issues that have emerged from the research. These recommendations are intended as a starting point for community development in Shrub End, clarifying also which different support or statutory groups or agencies are most suited to acting on these recommendations.

3.2 Young people

3.2.1 The research has highlighted a lack of activities in the Shrub End ward for young people. A number of interviewees commented favourably during the research on the BMX track which is planned for the ward, and the positive impact that this could have for young people. This project is currently being progressed by Colchester Borough Council's Street and Leisure department. It is recommended that this project is further progressed by the relevant department(s), and that those interviewees who stated they would be happy to be involved in the plans for the BMX track are included in the planning process.

3.2.2 When the Shrub End clinic was open to the public, the "c-card scheme"[17] was run from this location, and two staff members trained in Family Planning were available for young people to talk to about contraception and family planning matters, on an ad-hoc basis. Now that the clinic is no longer open to the public, this service is not available. This came up as an issue within the research. It is recommended that further research is undertaken to establish whether there is a need in the area for a Family Planning clinic or service, or whether this need can be met elsewhere. This has been brought up in the recommendations in part because of relatively high conception numbers and rates in Shrub End, when compared with the rest of the borough (2.2.4).

3.3 ASB, Litter and Dogs Mess

3.3.1 The offence type stated to be of greatest concern within the research was "litter and rubbish". This was followed by "dogs and dogs' mess". Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) was the issue of third greatest concern. This message needs to be passed on to the Neighbourhood Action Panel (NAP) for West Colchester for discussion and to address as they see fit.

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[17] Young people aged between 13 – 19 are entitled to free condoms at participating clinics or health centres, when in possession of a c-card.

3.4 Community Participation

3.4.1 The garrison estate holds a number of activities and services, including a youth club and a summer programme of activities for young people. Clarification needs to be sought from the Army Community Development worker regarding the availability of these services to the wider Shrub End ward.

3.4.2 A number of the groups did not interact to a large extent with the local ward community. Many of their members were from outside of the Shrub End ward. This builds the case for developing the capacity of these groups locally, as is outlined in 3.5 as follows.

3.5 Capacity of Groups

3.5.1 The research revealed that there was a smaller, less diverse range of community and voluntary groups available in Shrub End than in other wards identified as priorities for Colchester Borough Council. It is recommended that the capacity of groups is developed in the following ways.

   a) *Publicity Issues*

The second greatest problem stated by community and voluntary groups was "recruiting and retaining volunteers". Interviewees also expressed concern about their staffs' ability to meet the groups' needs in relation to publicity and the media. A pilot copy of a "Shrub End directory" is currently being developed by the Community Development team at Colchester Borough Council. This will signpost residents to local facilities, amenities and resources available to them. It is recommended that this pilot is developed further by the Community Development Team and partner organisations, including the means by which it will be maintained and circulated.

In the past, volunteering recruitment fayres have been run by the Community Development team, in other wards which are dealt with as a priority by the team. These have proved to be highly successful. As such it is recommended that the possibility of similar events, using local venues, is explored in Shrub End.

   b) *Funding Issues*

The majority of local community and voluntary groups currently operate on little, if any, funding. Support organisations need to ensure that groups are aware of the funding advice that is available and offer this support on a proactive basis. In particular, this applies to the Funding Coordinator at Colchester Borough Council, and the support available from CCVS (Colchester Community and Voluntary Services).

c)   *Identifying equal opportunities and training needs*

The research evidenced a reluctance on the part of the groups in Shrub End to develop their Equal Opportunities policies. This might be expected, given the number of smaller groups in the Shrub End ward. To ensure that the groups build Equal Opportunities policies, whilst developing services, support organisations including Colchester Borough Homes, the Community Development Worker at Colchester Borough Council, and CCVS, should aim to ensure groups are aware of the help they can provide in assisting in the development of relevant policies. In addition, support organisations should assist groups to respond to issues of diversity and equality of opportunity as they arise.

d)   *Outreach, joint working and networking*

Few of the interviewed groups stated that they had been involved in joint working and networking. The majority had good levels of support from their active members and/or management committees, but tended to work fairly independently. They also tended to plan programmes and events through consultation with their existing members, but with relatively low levels of outreach locally.

An event is being planned for September 2007 at the Shrub End Social Centre, to which all the community, voluntary and support groups who participated in the research process will be invited. Attendees will be informed about the findings of the research, followed by a "networking" session. Future possibilities of joint working should begin to arise as an outcome of this, which will identify tasks to further community engagement and develop capacity. The most appropriate organisations to deal with any future priorities or tasks will be informed; in the same way as they have been identified within these recommendations.

The Shrub End directory pilot, as outlined in 3.5.1 (a) should also address some of the issues regarding low levels of outreach in the ward, by increasing awareness of groups and services available.