

Contents

		Page
1	The Executive Summary	3
2	Why a Community Plan for Chard and surrounding Area? The Plan for Chard The Chard Area The MCTi Links with other Towns and Strategies	7
3	Who is the Community Plan for? The people of Chard and area Service Providers, Agencies and Funders Community planners Project champions and local partners	19
4	Who prepared the Community Plan? Action for Chard Town (ACT)	23
5	How have we prepared the Community Plan? The early days Evidence Consulting the community Linking the evidence to the Plan	29
6	What is the Community Plan for Chard? The vision The Plan Summary of Projects	49
7	How will the Community Plan be implemented? Partnership working Reviewing Support of the Community Brokering Targets	69
8	How will we check progress? Monitoring and Evaluation Evaluation of new projects Project Planning Guide lines	73
9	How can you get involved? Contact us	79
10	Appendix One	83
11	Appendix Two	133

Executive Summary

This Community Plan has been prepared by Action for Chard Town (ACT) with funding provided under the original South West Regional Development Agency's "Market and Coastal Town Initiative" and latterly transferred to the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative Association. The plan is the result of widespread consultation and sets out the key aspirations that the community of Chard and the surrounding villages have for the next twenty years. Realising these aspirations will help to achieve the long-term vision for Chard.

The process of arriving at the completed Community Plan has been to consult with the wider community, identify the issues, collect the data, prepare a vision, build capacity, undertake ongoing consultation and produce the Community Plan for Chard and surrounding area.

The Vision is that Chard and its surrounding area will be a community that:

- " Is Healthy
- Is Spiritually fulfilled
- Is Safe
- Is well connected
- Is proud of its good self image
- Has good facilities reflecting its role as a market town
- Meets the needs of its vulnerable people
- Celebrates its inclusive nature and its diverse cultures
- Is high achieving
- Has good quality jobs and a diverse economy
- Has housing for everyone
- Addresses the needs of its young people
- Looks after its environment and heritage"

The evidence has been collected from a wide range of sources, including reports, strategies and policies from a variety of statutory and other organisations, locally, regionally and nationally. These have covered a range of issues including the economy, housing, deprivation and social issues, crime, transport and the town centre of Chard.

The themes under which the main issues were identified are:

- Better Health & Social Care
- Leisure and Culture
- Improving Prosperity
- Improving Transport
- Crime and Fear of Crime
- Improved Living Standards
- Lifelong Learning
- Quality of the Environment

The Key aims for this Community Plan are to:

- Improve the skills of Chard's workforce and encourage better quality jobs

- Sustain Chard's viability and vitality as a market town
- Ensure that Chard's social infrastructure and support systems are available to all who need them
- Raise peoples self-esteem and aspirations, and bring back a sense of community pride

The Headline projects to address the key aims are:

- Chard Enviro Centre – Business Incubation
- Town Design Study
- Independent Living Centre
- Chard Celebration of Flight

A number of linked priority projects will be developed under these headline projects.

The Priority projects that will be undertaken first and which will contribute towards the four Headline projects above are:

- An annual Young Entrepreneur event
- A Community Learning Plan
- A sculpture of Flight
- A mobile support service to drug misusers
- A new garden with water feature for Chard town centre
- A transport study for Chard area

The key principles under which ACT will ensure the work is carried out are that:

- We want the actions contained in the Chard Community Plan to benefit the people who live, work and visit Chard and its locality
- We will actively promote partnership working in and out of the Chard area
- We will do all we can to include and value everyone, regardless of their age, gender, culture, social standing, religion, ability and disability
- When developing projects we will take into account the impact those actions could have on local, national and global issues

The Next Steps are:

- The presentation of the plan, through a process known as 'Brokering', to potential partners
- Further engagement with the community
- Working with other organisations to keep the implementation of the community plan high on their agenda

Monitoring and Evaluation will be undertaken to validate, encourage and inspire the Community Plan. The monitoring will find out WHAT happened and the evaluation will find out WHY it happened in the way it did.

Monitoring the Community Plan

ACT will be responsible for monitoring the Action Plan on an annual basis this will include

- Working with other local MCTi to develop a set of local indicators which will be employed to measure progress towards the vision
- Offering regular opportunities for further community input and providing feedback to the community on progress to date
- Updating the action plan
- Evaluation and development of new projects as they arise against a set process

Monitoring the Projects

Projects will be monitored to ensure that the project has delivered, or is delivering, what it set out to do. Monitors will check that:

- The outputs for each project are being met
- The project budget has been spent correctly
- The project has, or will be, completed on time

Evaluation of the Community Plan

This will yield more qualitative information about the action plan and individual projects; it will seek the answers to the following questions:

Is the Community Plan meeting its objectives? If not what is the reason for the failure?

What are the lessons, good and bad, that can be learned from trying to deliver the action plan?

Evaluation of Projects

The evaluation of projects will vary according to the complexity of the project but will seek to find out

- If the objectives were appropriate
- How well the project plan worked in practise
- What happened as a result of the project i.e. the value of achieving the outputs
- What has been the result of the project i.e. its impact on the beneficiaries

WHY A COMMUNITY PLAN FOR CHARD?

Why a Community Plan for Chard?

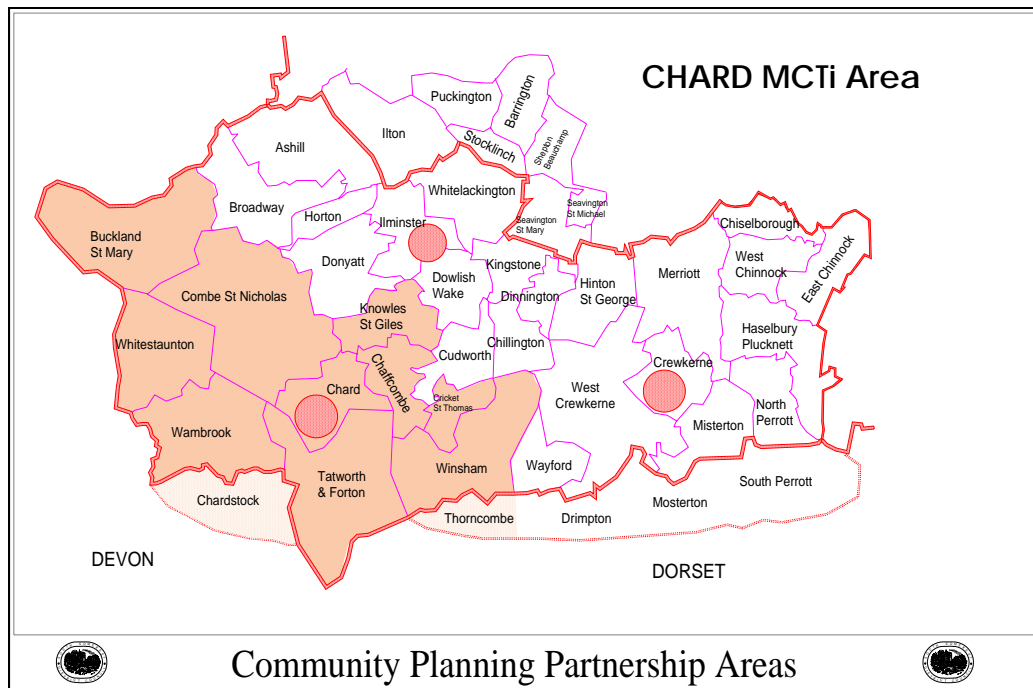
The Community Plan for Chard

This is a Community Plan for the Chard area. It represents the culmination of 4 years of hard work. Yet it is just the beginning of what promises to be a new era in Chard's history.

This Plan sets out a Vision for the town and its hinterland for the next twenty years. It also shows how that vision can be realised.

The Plan covers Chard and its surrounding eleven parishes and has been prepared by the community as part of the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTi) (see below).

Map of the Chard MCTi area.



Background to Chard town

The town itself has a resident population of around 14000 and its shopping amenities draw a fair percentage of the 39000 inhabitants of *Area West* in South Somerset, and from the adjacent counties of Devon and Dorset.

Chard is a historic market town, strategically placed between the M5 motorway, the A303 (London to Exeter) and the A358 in the western area of South Somerset. The county town of Taunton is the closest major centre. It lies within easy reach of the Heritage Coastline of Dorset and the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Nature Beauty (AONB).

There are a total of 11 parishes that together form the Chard MCTi area. Their combined population is 7,000. The residents of these parishes regularly look to use Chard as a vital service centre. These Parishes are:

- **Tatworth and Forton**
- **Combe St Nicholas**
- **Wambrook**
- **Chaffcombe**
- **Winsham**
- **Cricket St Thomas**
- **Buckland St Mary**
- **Whitestaunton**
- **Knowle St Giles**
- **Chardstock (Devon)**
- **Thorncombe (Dorset)**

Historical Chard town

The Chard area has a long and distinguished history. Originally the town was an Iron Age settlement, and gained borough status in the 13th century.

Chard was identified in the Domesday Book as Cerdre - the royal house of Cerdric, who founded the kingdom of Wessex in 495AD. It was therefore a town of great significance in the past.

In Stuart times, Charles I of England stayed in Chard whilst he tried to sue for peace with Oliver Cromwell. Later during the reign of James II it was at the epicentre of the uprising against the King by the Duke of Monmouth.

In 1923 a woman born in Chard became the first female to attain cabinet rank in a British Government. Margaret Bondfield (1873-1953) was the daughter of a Chard lacemaker and she was educated at High Street School in Chard.

Whilst Chard remains an attractive market town today, sadly much of Medieval and Elizabethan Chard was destroyed in a disastrous fire known as the Great Fire of Chard in 1577.

Industrial Chard

Chard was at the centre of the industrial revolution and has been a lace weaving, woollen cloth making and agricultural town.

In 1843, half a century before the Wright brothers, the first powered aeroplane was made and took to the air in Chard through the project led by John Stringfellow (1799-1883).

A further claim to fame is that Chard was also the place where the first artificial limbs were made. James Gillingham (1840-1924) was a high-class boot and shoemaker in the town. He was inspired to create replacement limbs after a local man lost his arm in 1863. The production of artificial arms

and legs soon took over from shoemaking and Chard became the centre for this trade and was internationally recognised.

Today, Chard's business base has diversified to include light engineering and recently manufacturing, in particular the food sector, has dominated the local economy. Whilst the population of the area is steadily rising, much of the areas employment is in the low paid sectors and there are pockets of deprivation within the town and its surrounding area.

The Market & Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTi)

The Market and Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTi) is a partnership scheme initially led by the South West Regional Development Agency and currently administered by the newly formed Market & Coastal Towns Initiative Association (MCTiA), based in Taunton.

The MCTi process seeks to deliver community based regeneration for market and coastal towns and their surrounding areas. The initiative invests in these communities and helps them to plan their vision for their town and build their own capacity to influence actions and delivery. In essence the MCTi process aims to help all sectors of a community to prepare a Community Plan covering social, economic, environmental and cultural themes relevant to their town and its surrounding area. Following completion of the Community Plan, the Initiative allows for a brokering stage at which major funders and stakeholders will consider how they may be able to support and provide resources for the implementation of the Community Plan.

The MCTi process

As part of the MCTi process, towns are encouraged to carry out a number of steps to develop their Community Plan:

STAGE	PURPOSE	CHARD OUTCOMES
Consultation	To consult with all sectors of the local community	Public Consultations Further work with hard to reach groups was planned
Issues	To identify Issues raised by the community during consultations	Issues identified
Evidence	To collect data that can confirm the issues are based on the situation as it really is	Background data
Visioning	To provide a goal towards which the Community Plan is heading	The Vision
Themes	To create a framework under which issues can be progressed by interested groups	The Themes
Capacity Building	To raise the skills of the community so that it is in the position to carry out the work of creating and supporting a Community Plan	Action for Chard Town (ACT)

On going Consultation	To ensure the wider community endorses the plan and to amend and update the plan as required.	Feed back and ongoing consultation via meetings, stakeholder day, the media, consultation on the Draft Community Plan and
Production of the Plan	To produce a Community Plan for the Chard MCTi area that will provide the basis for regeneration projects and future funding	The plan was completed in October 2005
Brokering	To present the Community Plan to and develop a working relationship with potential partners and funding sources	On-going

Links with other Plans and Strategies

The Community Plan for Chard should not be read in isolation. There are many other documents, plans and strategies that will have an impact on how Chard and its surrounding area manage the challenges of the forthcoming two decades. The Community Plan for Chard has the capacity to influence future development and services. This is where the real potential for change will occur. When these agencies begin to adjust their ways of working, taking into account what the community of Chard has set down as its priorities, then the real impacts will be realised.

Community Planning

The work being undertaken by Action for Chard Town (ACT) fits within a much wider context of community planning. It provides the local tier at which community needs and aspirations are identified and solutions sought to local issues. At a more strategic level, Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP) bring together people from the public, business, private, community and voluntary sectors. Bringing representatives together in this way helps to ensure that the work of individual partners, and their organisations is joined up and links with the work being undertaken at the local level. Part of the role of LSPs is to produce a Community Strategy - which identifies the main priorities (short, medium and long term) for the area which have been agreed with the local community.

In Somerset, which has both County and District Councils, Local Strategic Partnerships exist at district level, in addition to a county level LSP, for example South Somerset Together's Community Strategy (2003-2006).

Somerset: A Landscape for the Future

The overall county vision for 2025 contained within the Somerset Community Strategy is of a dynamic, successful modern economy that supports, respects and develops Somerset's distinctive communities and unique environment.

The 6 Strategic Priorities are:

- Image and Influence - Building an Image for the Future
- Business and Industry - an Enterprising Environment
- Skills and Training - Investing in our Future
- Culture and Leisure - Creating a Lifestyle
- Infrastructure, Access and Transport - Creating Sustainable Foundations
- Our Communities - Sharing with each other a Sense of Belonging

South Somerset's Community Strategy

In South Somerset, community planning is overseen by a partnership of organisations (the LSP) known as South Somerset Together. The South Somerset Together partnership has produced a district-wide Community Strategy called, "Improving the Quality of Life in South Somerset - Community Strategy 2003-2006".

The LSP will be particularly important to ACT in supporting the delivery of its vision. It includes the following local organisations:

- Avon and Somerset Constabulary
- Connexions Somerset
- The Environment Agency
- Somerset County Council
- South Somerset District Council
- South Somerset Primary Care Trust

Because of the importance of the South Somerset Community Strategy, its priorities have been included in full:

Reduce crime and the fear of crime:

- Develop an existing focus on people under the age of 25
- Work with persistent offenders involved in criminal activities and anti social behaviour to reduce crime, the fear of crime and neighbourhood nuisance,
- Increase the visibility and accessibility of police for local communities
- Reduce the fear of crime by addressing the 'signs of crime' effectively,
- Provide support for repeat victims, victims of domestic violence and race hatred,

Improving prosperity

- Provide more support for business start-up and growth
- Move from a traditional manufacturing economy towards a knowledge, innovation and design-based economy
- Enhance and sustain local life and encourage sustainable tourism
- Improve the vitality of our towns

Lifelong learning

- Raise learning achievement in adults, promote life-long learning and develop effective learning communities

- Raise learning standards in children
- Continue to widen participation in learning

Improving transport

- Promote public transport alternatives to the car
- Addressing the impact of traffic and roads in South Somerset
- Promote road safety

Better health and social care

- Improve local health services
- Help people live healthy lifestyles
- Address the cause of illness

Improving living standards

- Maintain choice in housing and increase the provision of affordable housing
- Improve the energy efficiency of homes to the benefit of both householders and the environment
- Support people with particular housing needs
- Preserve the character of our countryside, market towns and villages

Quality of the environment

- Ensure residents of South Somerset are provided with a safe, efficient and sustainable waste management service which represents value for money
- Provide clean and attractive streets and public spaces that the whole community feels comfortable using
- Promote the positive conservation of wildlife and habitats
- Prevent and control pollution
- Help to reduce and control flooding
- Promoting sustainable development

Something interesting to do

- Protect the distinctive landscape of South Somerset and improve access to the countryside
- Celebrate local history and heritage
- Encourage healthy active sport and leisure pursuits
- Encourage more people to get involved in cultural activity

Mendip & South Somerset Community Safety Partnership

The Safer South Somerset Partnership has existed since 1999 and is implementing its second three-year strategy. The partnership embraces statutory and voluntary agencies. The Community Safety Strategy aims to:

- improve the sense of community well-being;
- reduce crime and disorder;
- reduce the fear of crime

Task groups operate for five areas of work which form the backbone of the strategy and which were arrived at through a lengthy partner and public consultation process. The Partnership Executive has now merged with its counterpart in Mendip and is now known as the *Mendip & South Somerset Community Safety Partnership*. There are four area action panels based on the District Council's areas, with local action teams on a town basis to resolve specific issues in these areas.

South Somerset District Council

The District Council has identified 3 key factors affecting the quality of life of South Somerset residents. Accessibility is a key concern for many residents. This is accessibility to:

- public services;
- jobs;
- leisure facilities.

Its priorities are also influenced by the state of the local economy, which it identifies as being dominated by three factors:

- low wage employment;
- dependence on one key employer and its related suppliers.
- decline in agricultural employment.

It also identifies the local environment as a key factor.

The Council's longer-term ambitions for the area, focusing on the above three factors are:

- Creating local service provision, and sustainable communities that work with the Council, to address the problems of accessibility.
- Raising the average income level and reducing the disparity between high and low earners by creating the environment for high tech businesses.
- Providing enough affordable housing to meet our communities' needs.
- Attracting private sector leisure facilities into our main town of Yeovil and our other market towns.
- Maintaining the high quality environment through quality development, cleaner streets and high recycling rates.

Its corporate priorities are to:

- develop affordable housing and thus reduce homelessness and the reliance upon bed and breakfast accommodation;
- target areas of deprivation and work with partners to improve health, income levels and community safety, and to combat anti-social behaviour;
- promote and support regeneration in our market towns and the delivery of the Yeovil Vision;
- increase our recycling rate and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill;

- provide more opportunities for young people to take part in local leisure and cultural activity;
- improve the cleanliness of roads in South Somerset.

Spatial Planning

Many of the initiatives being progressed by ACT will rely on the planning system to enable their implementation. This relates not only to the physical issues of development and land-use but also to the progression of wider objectives such as accessibility to services and economic prosperity.

Revised Regional Planning Guidance for the South West was published in September 2001. The RPG provides a regional spatial strategy within which development plans and Local Transport Plans should be prepared sets out a broad development strategy for the period to 2016 and beyond. It also provides the spatial framework for other strategies and programmes. The RPG has four underlying aims expressing at the regional level the four objectives of sustainable development set out by the government:

- Protection of the environment;
- Prosperity for communities and the regional and national economy;
- Progress in meeting society's needs and aspirations;
- Prudence in the use and management of resources.

A new Regional Spatial Strategy is being prepared by the South West Regional Assembly under the 2004 Planning Act.

At the county level, the Joint Structure Plan Review for the period 1991 to 2011 was, prepared by Somerset County Council and Exmoor National Park. It was adopted in April 2000 and a review to take the Plan to 2016 was prepared and placed on public deposit in June 2004. The Structure Plan will not progress beyond this stage and will be replaced by the new Regional Spatial Strategy.

The South Somerset Local Plan puts forward proposals for the conservation and development or other use of land and guides most day-to-day planning decisions. The Plan is designed to meet the future needs of communities in South Somerset for the period to 2011. Its preparation is co-ordinated with other planning guidance including national policies, regional guidance, Somerset Structure Plan and the Somerset Local Transport Plan.

The South Somerset Local Plan is soon to be adopted. The broad aim is the desire to maintain and improve the quality of life for all people in the District. Quality of life includes those features which provide for or encourage, personal well being and would include availability of or access to, housing, employment, welfare, etc. The impact of the Local Plan will, of course, be limited as many of these features are outside the powers or direct influence of the District Council as a Local Planning Authority.

The Local Plan's Guiding Principles are:

- To achieve sustainable development, which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs;
- To maintain and enhance the social and economic well being of the area;
- To locate development where it does not encourage additional car borne travel, particularly taking advantage of locations well served by public transport;
- To make efficient use of resources, particularly by giving priority to the re-use of previously developed sites, and achieving the maximum benefits from the land that is used;
- To conserve and enhance the distinctive character and quality of the urban and rural landscape and townscape;
- To conserve and enhance the architectural and historic heritage of the area;
- To protect and enhance the natural environment, including biodiversity;
- To seek to make sustainable design and building practice normal rather than exceptional throughout South Somerset by the year 2010 through education awareness raising, the provision of exemplar projects, co-operation with Registered Social Landlords and the implementation of the policies in this local plan.

Initial work has started on preparing for the introduction of the new plan-making system - Local Development Framework's (LDF's) - which will provide a replacement for the South Somerset Local Plan.

How will the Local Development Framework affect Chard?

Currently, the Development Plan comprises the Regional Spatial Strategy formerly known as Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10), the Somerset & Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review, April 2000, the Chard & Ilminster Local Plan, and the Crewkerne Local Plan, 1993. However, the new Local Development Framework will replace these adopted and soon to be adopted Local Plans with a series of new "Local Development Documents" (LDD's). The LDF will include a "Core Strategy" LDD, other location/issue specific "Area Action Plan" LDD's, and a "Statement of Community Involvement" (SCI) LDD.

A "Local Development Scheme" (LDS), which sets out what the District Council is to produce by way of Local Development Documents over the next 3 years, has been prepared by South Somerset District Council and submitted to and approved by GOSW.

The national and regional context

At the national and regional level there is a raft of policies and plans that will have a bearing on the delivery of the objectives and initiatives included in Chard's Community Plan. They are too numerous to include in detail, and

the policy context is constantly changing. However, the background policy context is generally favourable to Chard's position since there is a general emphasis within many of the policy initiatives towards:

- a recognition of the important role played by market towns
- an emphasis on rural regeneration
- a general recognition of the need to consult with communities

This places Chard and its surrounding area in a favourable position to gain support for its Community Plan and its implementation. This is particularly so given the commitment of the South Somerset District Council and the commitment to the MCTi process of a number of local and regional organisations, including:

- South West Regional Development Agency
- Government Office for the South West
- South West Regional Assembly
- South West ACRE Network
- The Housing Corporation
- English Heritage
- The Market & Coastal Towns Initiative Association

Who is the Community Plan for?

Who is the Community Plan for?

A Community Plan is developed by the local community and with the local community by consulting on the positive points and highlighting areas for improvement of the environmental, social and economic aspects of community life. Its long-term aim is to improve the standard and quality of life for the wider community of the chosen location.

The people of Chard and surrounding area

This is a Community Plan for the people of Chard and surrounding area. Local people have contributed to its preparation and will contribute to its delivery. They are also the ones who will experience the benefits.

Service providers, agencies and funders

This is a Community Plan for service providers and agencies. It sets out clearly the needs and aspirations of the people of the Chard area. Never before has such a comprehensive analysis of Chard taken place. This Community Plan will prove invaluable in planning service delivery and resource allocation.

Community planners

This is a Community Plan for community planners. It represents the aspirations of the Chard community. It is the necessary foundation for community planning at District and County level and provides a focus for other neighbourhood and parish plans developed by villages and neighbourhoods within the area.

Project champions and local partners

This is a Community Plan for those local people and organisations that will assist in delivering the emerging project proposals. It sets out clearly what projects are to be developed and delivered over the short and long term. It also gives a clear context for these projects and the actions of other local partners, identifying how they contribute to the overall vision for Chard and surrounding area.

Who prepared the Community Plan?

Who prepared the Community Plan?

Action for Chard Town (ACT)

Action for Chard Town (ACT), formerly Chard Town Action Plan Partnership (Chard TAPP), was formed following a meeting of interested individuals in August 2001. The following Spring (2002) the Chard Town Action Plan Partnership adopted a constitution and become Action for Chard Town (ACT). The key principles under which ACT will ensure the work is carried out are that:

- We want the actions contained in the Chard Community Plan to benefit the people who live, work and visit Chard and its locality
- We will actively promote partnership working in and out of the Chard area
- We will do all we can to value everyone by being inclusive to all
- When developing projects we will take into account the impact those actions could have on local, national and global issues

Using the information from the consultations, ACT made a successful application to join The Market & Coastal Town Initiative. In November 2003 ACT appointed consultants, Westden Services, to assist in the production of this Community Plan for Chard.

ACT members are volunteers drawn from the community who have many links to other organisations and activities within the Chard area. They have been supported in their work by others from the community and by officers from South Somerset District Council, in particular the Community Regeneration officer, Saveria Moss and latterly Katie Binding. They meet on a regular basis to progress the Chard Community Plan and welcome the involvement of new members.

In Spring 2004 work began with the Community Enterprise Unit (CEU) from Exeter. The CEU offer support and guidance to voluntary groups on a range of issues that are involved in establishing a community-based organisation. CEU worked with the members of ACT to adopt a legal and organisational structure.

Steering Group Members

Diana Goldsmith (Chair)

In addition to her role as chair of ACT, Diana is actively involved in Chard as a town councillor, part-time teacher, school governor and member of a thriving church. Diana has lived in Chard for 34 years and feels that there is still much untapped potential in the area, which once regenerated would mean that Chard could once again become a thriving market town. She is confident that with its position, set in beautiful countryside, its accessibility and miles of superb coast, together with its friendly community, Chard should be a key South West town capable of attracting both visitors and new businesses.

Jean Smith

Following early retirement from her work in nurse education, Jean began her voluntary work in Chard. Later she became a town and a district councillor and served as Mayor. She is involved in many organisations, including the Healthy Living Centre and Community Justice Panel. She is chair of the Hercules Opportunity Group and the Guildhall Promotion group, vice chair of a Twinning venture, a trustee of Crowshute House and a life member of Chard Light Operatic Society. She sees her work with ACT as an opportunity to work with a group who, through consultation with the area's residents, can gain access to resources for the town, which are not available to local government.

Alan Braley

Alan was ACT treasurer until early 2005 when he stepped down to give more time to his other interests. As well as his work as a community volunteer, working with Inclusion projects, Alan is vice chair of Chard Healthy Options Partnership, a governor with Holyrood Community School and chair of Somerset Disabled Cricket Club. He is also involved with a number of disability action groups. Alan joined ACT because the MCTi process offered a 'grass roots' approach to regeneration and encouraged creativity and innovation – attributes that he hopes will soon become a feature of life in Chard. Alan is a retired Global Purchasing Director and now operates a 'not for private profit' enterprise.

Andrew Turpin

Andrew is a South Somerset District Councillor, representing Tatworth and Forton for 22 years and has championed a number of environmental issues, including the introduction of paper, can and bottle banks, and the concept of a Coast-to-Coast Cycleway linking Seaton in Devon with Bridgewater Bay. He has a particular interest in securing better public transport provision through an urgent review of existing transport provision in the area, including the feasibility of reopening the local railway station. Andrew was a registered nurse and is now retired from his work as a ward manager and community psychiatric nurse.

Bernard Genge

Bernard has lived in Chard all his life and is involved with The Magdalen Project, Somerset Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and Chard Road runners. He joined ACT because he would like to see improvements for the community. Bernard brought to ACT his professional expertise as a freelance Trainer, Facilitator and Individual team Performance Coach and his practical knowledge of helping organisations to resolve 'real issues'.

Mary Pomfret

Mary has lived in the Chard area for most of her life and has been involved with ACT for several years. As a Further Education teacher she sees

education as the key to unlocking potential and improving the prosperity of the region. She recognises that Chard is part of a wider picture of low achievement nationally and would like to see the promotion of lifelong learning strategies, particularly in regard to raising Basic Skills. Mary's other interests in joining ACT are a desire to see a more integrated transport system and a concern for her local community, particularly those on the fringes of society.

Laurie Uncles

Laurie moved to South Somerset in 1990 and more recently to Chard town itself. He has served as a district councillor in Surrey and a parish councillor in Somerset. His background as a Chartered Civil Engineer (retired) is still evident in his continued involvement with REMAP (Yeovil engineers making special items for disabled). Laurie came to ACT through his association with the Mitchell Gardens Residents, from whom he learnt more about the needs of Chard. He joined ACT because he trusts that the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative may resolve some of the issues around low pay, under achievement in education and low self esteem.

John Rider-Dobson

John first became aware of ACT during a Business Event organised by ACT in Autumn 2004 when he was struck by the need to stimulate employment opportunities away from the manufacturing sector. He brought to ACT management skills, funding bid support and general advice on technology issues. He has 16 years experience of the public sector, as senior manager in two FE colleges, and 9 years in the private sector, including his current work as Business Analyst (IT). In addition to his support for Voluntary Service Overseas, as a member of the Board of Trustees and VSO Council, John is locally involved with Chard Chamber of Trade and Commerce.

Dave Easeman

Dave runs an IT company based in Chard, Easeman Todd Associates. He has joined ACT to replace John Rider-Dobson and will be designing and hosting the Chard Community Plan website, as well as producing a CD Rom for distribution.

New Members

ACT would welcome the involvement of new members either on ACT or to take part in project development groups.

Contact details are provided at the end of this document.

How have we prepared the Community Plan?

How have we prepared it?

The early days

The development of the Community Plan has taken place over a period of approximately four years. The process began in the summer of 2001 when Action for Chard Town (formerly Chard TAPP) was formed, as previously described. During that autumn a series of open meetings were held to take the process forward and regular public meetings saw progress towards a 'Planning for Real' exercise, which took place in November 2001. Using the information from the consultations ACT made a successful application to join The Market & Coastal Town Initiative and draw down funding to start the community planning process in Chard. In November 2003 ACT appointed consultants, Westden Services, to assist in the production of the Community Plan for Chard

Evidence

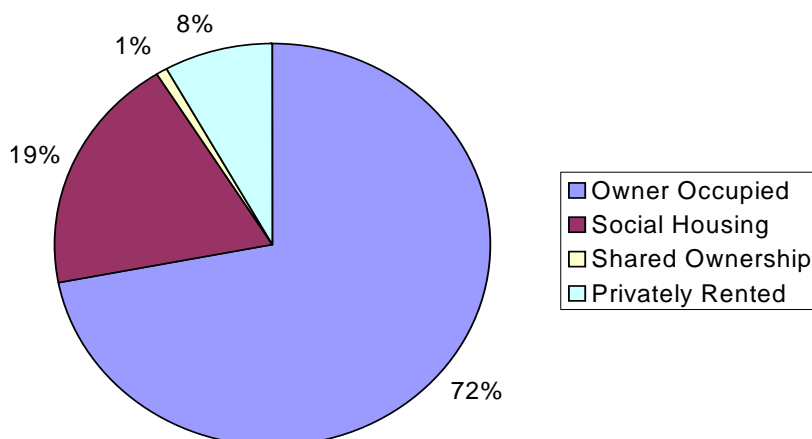
Whilst a formal Health check (see Appendix 2) has not been undertaken for the Chard area, there is a wealth of background data collected by a number of different organisations, which identifies the key issues. Below is a summary of some of the reports that are of particular relevance to the Chard Community Plan:

- **Innovative Market Towns Labour Market Strategies, May 2004 (draft)**
- **Indices of Deprivation 2004**
- **South Somerset District Council Homelessness Strategy 2003-2006**
- **Appraisal of Chard Town Centre, Drivers Jonas, July 2003**
- **Health and Social Needs in Somerset 2002**
- **SRB6 Report, Community Regeneration in South Somerset Market Towns, April 2001**
- **Crime Audit, Autumn 2001**
- **Census 2001**
- **South Somerset District Council Housing Needs Survey 2000**
- **A Transport Strategy for Chard May 1999**
- **Communities First in Rural Somerset**
- **Chard Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme**
- **Tatworth and Forton Parish Plan**

Census 2001

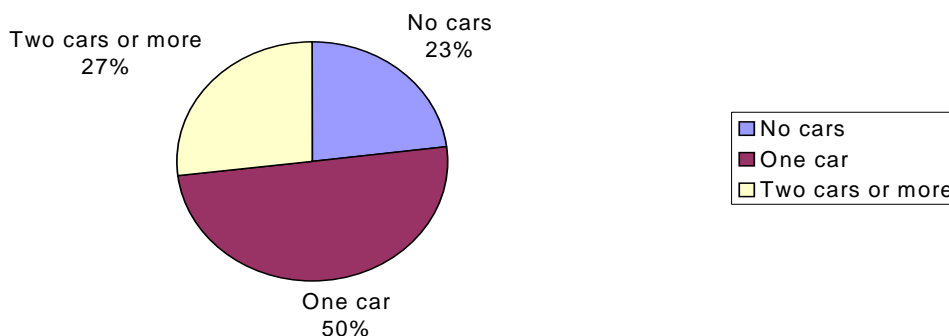
The 2001 Census shows that there were 12008 people living in Chard town. The population profile shows more young children, fewer teenagers and more pensioners than the Somerset average. Less than 1% of the population are non-white. Blackdown ward shows a much higher proportion of over 45year olds.

Chard Households (5194)



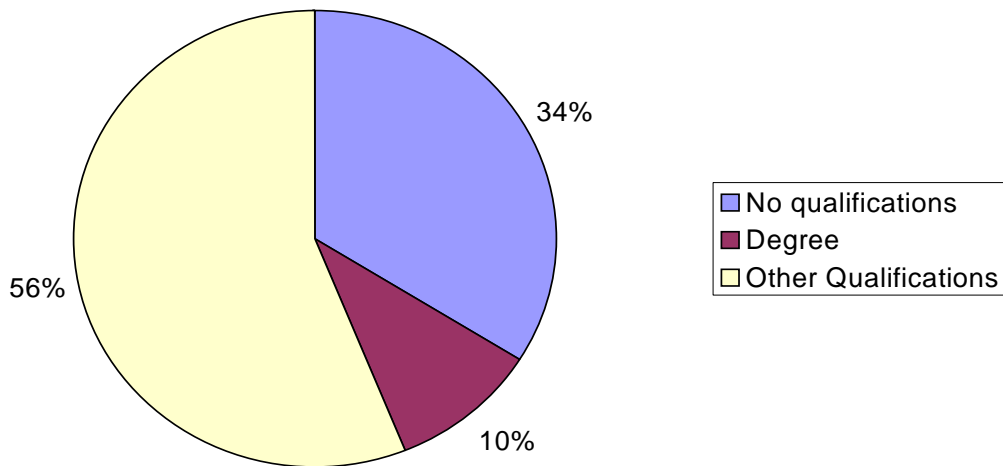
There are 5194 households in Chard town of which 72% live in owner occupied accommodation, and 19% rent from the local authority or a Housing Association.

Car Ownership in Chard



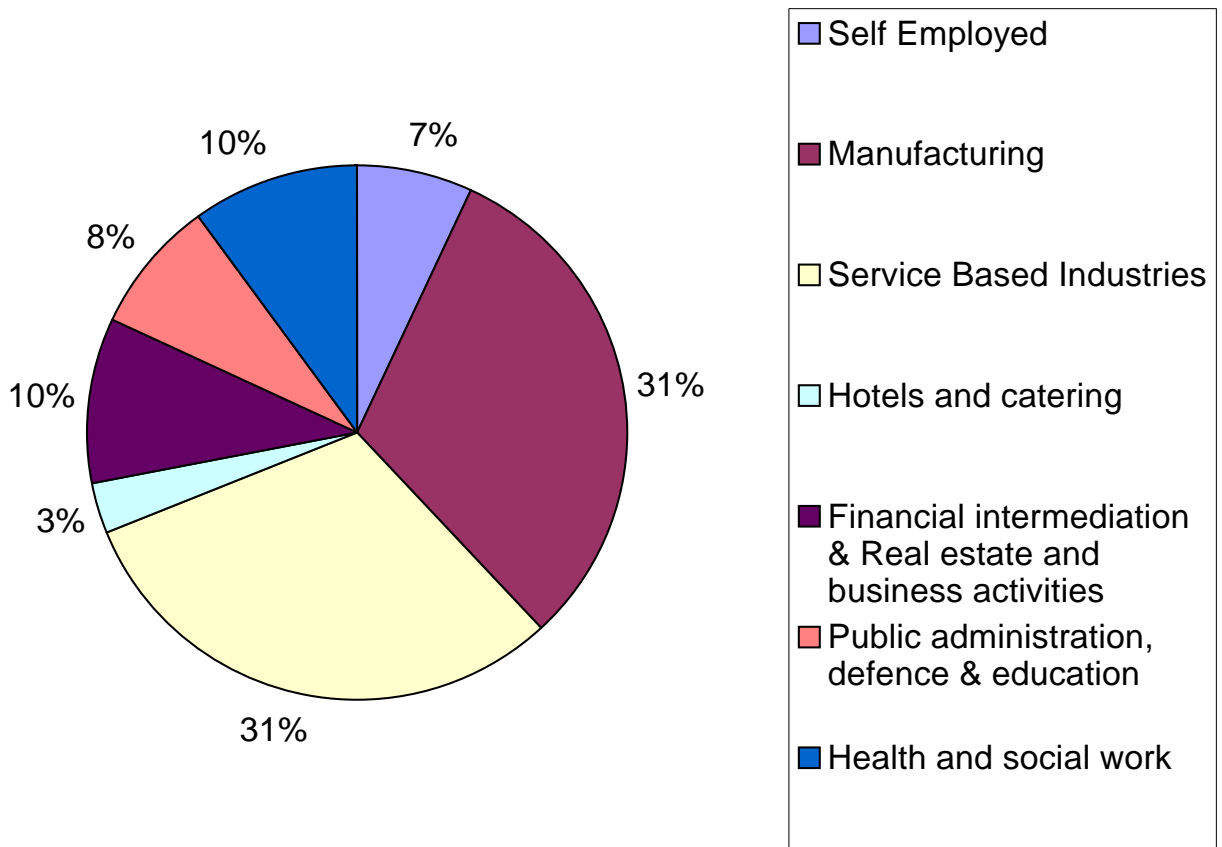
Car ownership is less than the county average with 23% of households having no car (county 18%) and only 27% having 2 or more vehicles (county 36%). In Blackdown ward the proportion with no car is only 9%. A much higher percentage walk to work, 21% compared to 12.5% across the county.

Qualifications



34% of the population of Chard have no qualifications (county 28%), whilst only 10% have a degree (county 17%).

Employment



Only 7% are self employed (county 11%). 31% of workers work in manufacturing, whilst 31% work in service based industries (county 41%).

<i>Chard Parishes</i>	<i>Population</i>
Chard	12008
Buckland St Mary	488
Combe St Nicholas	1317
Whitestaunton	211
Wambrook	188
Knowle St Giles (also includes Cudworth outside MCTi)	258
Chaffcombe	193
Cricket St Thomas (see Knowle St Giles)	0
Tatworth and Forton	2580
Winsham	752
Thorncombe (West Dorset)	700
Chardstock (East Devon)	750
Total	19,445

Indices of Deprivation 2004

The national Indices of Multiple Deprivation have been revised and recalculated for 2004. None of Chard's wards feature in the 20% most deprived in the overall deprivation index although Chard Avishayes (W), Chard Holyrood (N), Chard Jocelyn (W) and Chard Crimchard (E) feature in the second 20%.

In relation to income deprivation, the most deprived wards are Chard Holyrood (N), Chard Jocelyn (W) and Chard Avishayes (W), although they do not occur in the top 20%. These three wards again feature in the employment deprivation index (numbers involuntarily excluded from work), but not in the worst 20%.

In relation to education (education deprivation for young people and children, and skills and qualifications amongst the working population), Chard Avishayes (W) and Chard Jocelyn (W) are in the worst 20% nationally as well as being in the worst 20 wards in Somerset. Chard Holyrood (N) also features in the worst 20% nationally whilst Chard Crimchard (E), Chard Holyrood (S), Tatworth and Forton and Chard Combe are in the second 20%.

For housing affordability and access to key services, Tatworth and Forton are in the worst 20% nationally, followed by Chard Crimchard (E) and Chard Jocelyn (E). Chard Holyrood (N) and Chard Combe are in the second 20% for recorded crime levels.

Five wards are in the worst 20% nationally for Living Environment (housing condition and external living environment e.g. air quality and road accidents). These are Chard Crimchard (E) and (W) (also in the worst 20 in

Somerset), Chard Jocelyn (E), Chard Avishayes (E), and Tatworth and Forton. Chard Jocelyn (W) is in the second 20%.

Health and Social Needs in Somerset 2002

The Second Report of the Somerset Health and Social Needs Analysis Group was published in 2002. It is based on the development of multi-agency information set for the county. Data on a wide range of issues, including accidents, benefit dependency, crime and disorder, education, employment, health, housing and social service use have been mapped at ward level. They include an all age measure, a children's measure and an older age measure.

The 2002 report gives an up to date picture of health and social needs in Chard and across the county and provides an essential tool with which to assess levels of health and social need. In particular, it identifies those wards in Chard area where health and social needs are highest:

- Chard Holyrood and Chard Avishayes appear in the top 5 priority wards in South Somerset for children
- Chard Combe, Chard Jocelyn, Chard Avishayes and Chard Holyrood appear in the top 6 priority wards for people aged 65+
- Chard Avishayes, Chard Jocelyn and Chard Holyrood appear in the top 6 priority wards for all ages.

SRB6 Report, Community Regeneration in South Somerset Market Towns, April 2001

The draft Action Plan identified four objectives for the Chard area:

- Enhance the employment prospects, education and skills of local people;
- Address social exclusion and enhance opportunities for the disadvantaged;
- Support sustainable regeneration, improving and protecting the environment and infrastructure, including housing;
- Reduce crime and drug abuse and improve community safety.

Communities First in Rural Somerset (CFIRS)

CIFRS was a Government funded regeneration programme (SRB6), providing support to businesses and local community groups. Its aims were to deliver economic and social regeneration in the more rural parts of Somerset. The five main objectives are:

- To enhance the employment prospects, education and skills of local people
- To support and promote growth in local economies and businesses
- To address social inclusion and enhance opportunities for the disadvantaged - improving access to local services and facilities
- To promote regeneration whilst protecting the environment and infrastructure

- To improve community safety by tackling issues around crime and drug abuse

Chard Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS)

This scheme seeks to physically regenerate the built environment of Holyrood Street, part of Chards primary shopping area. The main elements of the scheme propose to enhance the buildings and the streetscape, together with the creation or re-use of additional commercial and residential units.

The Chard HERS June 2002 report identified Chards underlying economic problems as being:

- Agriculture in decline
- Traditional manufacturing in decline
- Very low rental values and lack of investment
- Low income levels
- Pressures from out of town retailing
- Lack of local post school training and education
- Threats to the town centre
- High demand for and lack of supply of affordable housing
- Significant community safety issues

Appraisal of Chard Town Centre (Drivers Jonas)- July 2003

In July 2003 Drivers-Jonas Consultants were appointed to undertake an appraisal of the town centre of Chard. The town centre is situated on the junction of Holyrood Street and Fore Street. There are approximately 165 units, with a total floor area of 25000 sq m located in these two streets. Non-food retail is limited whilst the town is reasonably well served by food shopping and other supporting services.

Amongst the weaknesses, the Town Centre Report identifies the limiting catchment area and the proximity of other centres, which mean that Chard is likely to only ever serve the needs of its immediate population. In addition it has fewer high-income households and more blue-collar workers, limiting the spending power of the local population. However, its attractive town centre environment, its accessibility, the numbers of visitors, and the numbers of employees who could be attracted to make more use of the centre are opportunities that ought to be exploited.

It makes a number of recommendations including:

- Improving the shopping environment – general upkeep and street furniture
- Greatest potential for improvement on offer is in mainstream/mass market comparison shops and catering establishments
- Traffic mitigation measures would improve the pedestrian environment

- Car parks could be better linked with shopping frontages
- More cycle facilities
- More initiatives to link Tesco with town shops and facilities
- Better marketing and promotion
- Better management of potential investment opportunities
- Consider additional residential development in and adjacent to the town centre

Innovative Market Towns Labour Market Strategies, May 2004 (draft)

Six towns in Somerset, including Chard, are benefiting from a successful European Social Fund Article 6 programme bid for a major two year project to develop local strategies for diversifying and developing their labour markets. ACT have been involved in setting up a Market Town Employment Partnership to take this forward.

In the report prepared as a baseline for this programme it identifies the following issues:

"Issues facing Chard focus on limited employment opportunities, low wages and therefore low disposable income. Relatively low literacy and numeracy leave the workforce at a disadvantage in competing for opportunities for higher value jobs but are such opportunities readily attracted to Chard in the first place? The wards of Chard Holyrood and Avishayes have particular problems of deprivation in income, employment training, child poverty, health and education."

From the Report a number of other issues can be drawn:

- A 17% fall in the total number of jobs between 1998 and 2002;
- 3 out of 10 jobs rely on only 3 employers;
- Nearly 40% employed in manufacturing, twice the county average;
- Below average employment in service sectors;
- Only 7% of employees in knowledge based industries, with a 37% decline between 1998 and 2002;
- In 1998, 50% of jobs were in declining sectors;
- A reduction in the number of jobs in the increasing sectors between 1998 and 2002;
- 4 out of 5 of the largest employers are in the declining sectors;
- Nearly 30% of unemployed people are over 50;
- Low levels of entrepreneurship;
- Chard Holyrood is in the most deprived 25% on income levels;
- Chard Jocelyn is in the most deprived 25% on education levels;
- Chard experiences a high disparity between household income and housing costs;
- Chard has high levels of literacy and numeracy compared with county averages but generally lower than regional and national averages;

- Chard is below the national and county achievement levels for GCSEs and performance is falling;
- Below national and county averages for 16-17 year olds in full time education, and for 16-74 year olds who are full time students;
- Low levels of qualifications;
- A third of the population in the lowest skilled occupations (county and national approx one fifth);

A Transport Strategy for Chard May 1999

The aims of the Strategy were to:

- Maintain and enhance the viability and vitality of the local economy;
- Maintain and adapt the transport infrastructure to maximise its effectiveness;
- Improve access for people with disabilities;
- Protect and improve the environment;
- Improve people's awareness of a more sustainable lifestyle;
- Reduce the need to travel in terms of the number and length of journeys;
- Achieve a modal shift to train, bus, cycling and walking;
- Improve travel conditions for all modes and users;
- Reduce car dependency

The Transport Strategy sets out a range of specific proposals to improve transport conditions around Chard including improvements to existing pedestrian and cycle routes, improvements to the public transport service and better traffic management. The proposals all meet the wider Government desire to see more local authority policies to develop sustainable transport systems and create Local Transport Plans. The Transport Strategy recognises the alarming rise in traffic within Chard, with its adverse effects, and seeks to decrease the need for private vehicle journeys whilst at the same time increasing accessibility for all. However, the Strategy also draws attention to the need to provide a new Distributor road to cater to the proposed Key Site development and the benefits to the town of linking this with other Town Centre enhancements. Overall the vision is for better use of public transport, safer routes for cyclists and pedestrians and an increased quality of life for the residents and users of the town.

South Somerset District Council Housing Needs Survey 2000

This was a comprehensive study (3,925 responses) of the housing needs of existing, concealed and homeless households in South Somerset. The survey estimated that:

- 4,441 (7.0%) of all existing households are living in accommodation which is not suitable for their needs
- 496 concealed households are living in need
- There are 157 additional homeless households
- 2,211 (61.3%) of all households in housing need are not registered.

The total level of housing need in the District of South Somerset was calculated as being 3,607 households (5.7% of all households), which is lower than the national average (8.9%) but a significant factor in deciding district housing policy and informing this plan. The housing need in Chard itself was calculated as 223 households in need (representing 6.5% of its households) and therefore higher than the District average but still below the national average. A similar picture (6.7%) emerged for the Rural West area, which includes the Chard MCTi parishes. The provision of affordable housing was seen as one of a package of measures to address the shortfall. Of relevance to this action plan was the calculation that just fewer than 30% of all South Somerset Homes households contain at least one member with a special need (physically disabled or frail elderly); this sector was four times more likely to have housing needs.

South Somerset District Council Homelessness Strategy 2003-2006

The three main strategic goals for the strategy, under which the proposals for the 2003-06 Action Plan are set out, are:

- Invest to Save
- Co-ordinate Housing Advice delivery in a One Stop Shop
- Review procedures and practices that contribute to homelessness

The main thrust of the strategy is to adopt a proactive role in providing housing advice, to improve partnership working amongst those involved with homelessness and to work to prevent homelessness in the first place. The strategy recognises the loss of social housing, as a result of the 'right to buy', together with an increase in demand. The Supporting People Partnership is seen as a key means to support independent living for vulnerable sectors of the community. The strategy sets out a number of proactive ways to achieve improved preventative measures; including outreach work, better training for advice workers and mediation to resolve conflict (in South Somerset non violent disagreements leading to homelessness were up by 270% in 5 years).

Crime Audit, Autumn 2001

This audit was carried out by the Safer South Somerset Partnership to inform the 2002 Crime and Disorder Strategy 2002, and determine the issues and priorities for the Partnership to 2005.

The audit

- Identifies key crime and disorder issues in South Somerset, as identified through statistical data and consultation (802 completed surveys)
- Outlines ways agencies and groups can work in partnership to overcome them.
- Sets out the previous objectives against the achievements to date and the current position

Among the key findings were:

- Links to drug misuse (including burglary, vehicle crime, violent and domestic crime and town centre disorder). 170 people in Somerset were receiving treatment for drug misuse in 2000/01, of which fewer than 2% were under 18, 45% were aged 18-25 and 53% were over 25 years of age. A lack of services for those seeking help with drug misuse was identified.
- The gap between the public perceptions, of disorder as being youth related, with the reality, that most disorder in Chard was committed by those over 30 years of age. The lack of places for young people to go was felt to contribute to this misconception, as it led to young people congregating in public places. This lack of facilities, combined with difficulties of accessing those that are available, was identified as a key local concern.
- A rise in race hate crime. There were 29 victims of race hate crime recorded in South Somerset in 2000/01; a national risk assessment puts Somerset as the eighth highest risk of race hate crime, put against population figures, in the UK.

The Crime Audit stressed the need for agencies to work more closely with communities to address local problems.

Tatworth and Forton Parish Plan (2003)

The Tatworth and Forton Parish Plan was published in 2003. Its main conclusions were that the parish is pleasant and the residents want to keep it that way. It has beautiful surroundings, generally good neighbours, good facilities and a reasonably safe environment. However the Plan identified the following problems:

- Anti social behaviour, petty crime, limited police presence, street lighting
- Lack of road safety for pedestrians and cyclists, limited bus services, poor access to railway station
- Imperfect distribution of information about societies and events, poor access to medical facilities, limited provision of social/ educational amenities for different age groups
- Limited care for the countryside and wildlife, lack of provision for litter removal and recycling

Among the projects supported are:

- The reopening of Chard Junction Station
- Improvement scheme for Coombes Pond Wildlife Area
- Establishment of a Residents Action group
- Better street lighting
- Improved bus services, and cycle and pedestrian facilities

ACT consulting the community

The first community consultation, which took place as part of the MCTi programme, was a *Planning for Real*® exercise undertaken in November 2001. The information from these consultations formed the basis of a successful application to join the MCTi. In addition, a wide range of other consultations have been undertaken by Action for Chard Town (ACT) within the Chard area, to ensure that as many residents as possible have had the opportunity to put across their views and opinions about life in Chard which include:

- **Planning for Real Events, Nov-Dec 2001**
- **Play area competition with the schools 2002**
- **Consultations with Market Traders and on street consultations, 9th August to 13th September 2003**
- **Community Event/Stakeholder Day, 11th June 2004**
- **Consultation at Chard Young People Centre, 26th July 2004**
- **Chard Business Day, 28th September 2004**
- **Ashcroft Play Area young people's consultation, 2004**

Chard Planning for Real® exercises, Nov-Dec 2001

A series of Planning for Real® exercises were run and were based around a model produced by pupils at Holyrood Community School. Most of the responses to this consultation concerned physical regeneration issues. It was estimated that around 3000 people were covered by the exercises and this generated over 2000 individual suggestions covering nearly 200 ideas:

- 60% of the comments were concerned with leisure and recreation, of which the most common issue was facilities for young people and children, followed by new leisure facilities
- This was followed in relative importance by retail and business (13%), with the most common issues being the physical look of the town centre, the range of shops, expanding the market, CCTV, pedestrianisation and marketing/promotion
- 11% of comments related to transport, including public transport, a rail link, more cycle paths, and better traffic management
- Environmental issues accounted for 8%, with most wanting to see a public park

Some of the potential projects emerging from this consultation included the following suggestions:

- *Integrated approach to careers advice*
- *Developing better means to promote local opportunities*
- *Business start-up programmes*
- *Business units for youth enterprise*
- *Health Checks for local businesses*
- *Training provision from Basic Skills to IT*
- *Seek ways to encourage larger employers into Chard*
- *Family and parenting support*

- *Develop the Passport to Leisure scheme for low-income groups and families*
- *Provision of safe play areas for children*
- *Improved youth facilities/leisure opportunities*
- *Tidying up the town centre*
- *Improving High Street businesses*
- *Sports and Leisure complex*
- *Credit Union*
- *Better signposts in the Town Centre*
- *Better public transport to train stations*
- *Recycling collections*
- *Cycle routes*
- *Tidying up eyesores*
- *A drop in centre for young people*
- *Skatepark*
- *Better street lighting*
- *More policing*
- *Music facilities*
- *Ultimately for Chard TAPP group to form a Community Development Trust*

Consultations with Market Traders and on street consultations, 9th August to 13th September 2003

As part of the bid for the Market and Coastal Towns initiative, in 2001, a large-scale consultation with the community of Chard (as described above) resulted in nearly 3,000 suggestions as to how to regenerate the town. Highlighted in these results was the strong desire to expand Chard market. The reasoning that lay behind this was two-fold:

- a) firstly, to put Chard back on the map as being a thriving market town with the market itself attracting tourists and shoppers alike, as in towns like Honiton and Bridport;
- b) secondly, the resulting increase in footfall would translate as increased trade for Chard retailers.

Markets are very popular the country over, some more so than others. People come from miles around to visit them who otherwise would not visit the town. The ACT Group saw this as an opportunity to attempt to increase the general prosperity of Chard, with the market and retailers working in tandem to create a thriving economic arena wherein businesses could grow; a chance also to improve the flagging image of Chard. There is the prospect now to draw in funding to progress this project, to work in conjunction with other agencies – from Tourism and Food Links to other major projects in the area – and to attract new and diverse trading opportunities to the town that work in harmony with existing traders to create an atmosphere where everyone can benefit.

Three questionnaires were designed in order to capture what was felt about these ideas, and about the market in general. These were aimed separately at:

1. The General Public: An on street survey of shoppers identifying location of residence, what they shop for in Chard, likes and dislikes and the venue of the market
2. Chard Retailers: A survey of retailers in Holyrood Street and Fore Street
3. Market Traders: A survey of Market Traders

It was noted that these three groups have slightly different agendas and thus the data needed to be captured in such a way that an independent evaluation was possible of each distinct group. Members of ACT, the Chamber of Trade, as well as a number of youths, volunteered to gather the information and produced between them a total of 261 questionnaires broken down as follows:

- Market Traders – 10 respondents (the number of traders available)
- Chard Retailers – 38 respondents (out of a possible 100 delivered)
- General public - 213 respondents

The Questionnaire Results Summary is as follows:

Most of what is felt about the market from a public point of view is self-explanatory. As can be seen quite plainly, the general publics are strongly in favour of a market, and this is reflected in the positive response. From an economic point of view, retailers should see this as a plus, for if people (their customers) on the whole like markets, they will want to visit those towns that possess them, and it appears to follow that the better the market, the more people will visit. This can only be good for the retail heart of the town. Though the public might not be said to be business people, they firmly believe that having a bigger market will increase general trade and whilst this is a perception, if this perception that having a bigger market town equates with that town's prosperity, then merely having a bigger market will be a huge boost to the town's image as a thriving town.

The problem remains that the market traders do not like the idea of moving into Holyrood Street, there is a 50-50 split amongst retailers, and there are doubts that the street might be too crowded. There is the option of expanding on both sides of Fore Street, much as has been done in Honiton and Bridport, and this should be seriously looked at as an alternative. Conversations with retailers about their objections centre on the loss of car parking, the possibility of long-term closure of the street and pedestrianisation, the latter causing equal concern and excitement.

(For the full results see Appendix Two)

Community Event & Stakeholder Day, 11th June 2004

The Stakeholder Day was a key stage in the preparation of the Community Plan for Chard. It represented the completion of the main consultation and evidence gathering stage and the beginning of the sifting and prioritising process crucial to the preparation of a realistic Community Plan. There were

over 80 delegates in total, representing a wide range of the organisations and agencies that represent Chard people or who deliver services to them.

Delegates were given background information covering the consultation and evidence gathered up to that point. An intensive programme of activities during the day enabled the following to be achieved:

- The development of a Vision, from an exercise where the delegates were asked what local newspaper headlines they would like to see 20 years into the future
- The development of objectives for each of the key themes
- The prioritising of issues against each of the key themes
- The identification of existing, planned and potential projects

A comprehensive SWOT Analysis was also carried out by the stakeholders, which revealed the following strengths and weaknesses within Chard and surrounding area:

Chard SWOT Analysis	
<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
<p>Good community spirit Generally good accessibility Good range of community facilities and venues Good schools and pre-school facilities Beautiful surrounding countryside and many local assets Interesting history and heritage Diverse workforce, history of innovation, and potential for tourism Wide range of sporting and cultural activities Good range of shops</p>	<p>Poor self image Low self esteem Areas of deprivation Some congestion Poor public transport Improvements needed to health and community support services, such as family support, drug and alcohol support, NHS dentist, residential care Lack of things for children and young people to do Poor access to FE, HE and training Some local environmental problems such as vandalism, dereliction, and litter Not enough done to promote local heritage & history High proportion of declining and vulnerable industries, Low paid, low skill jobs Lack of training programmes or start -up support Lack of pitches, entertainment facilities</p>

<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Threats</i>
Plans for town expansion could bring more services and facilities	Threats to vitality and viability
Better use of the towns history and heritage could bring benefits for education, employment, tourism	Potential for breakdown in community cohesion due to drugs and alcohol problems, racism, negativity, anti-social behaviour, deprivation and income levels
Capitalising on Chards location and accessibility e.g. Gateway to the Blackdown Hills	Expansion of town not keeping pace with the infrastructure, or respecting heritage
	Risk of continued decline in traditional industries or loss of major employer

Consultation at Chard Young People Centre, 26th July 2004

Looked at the key issues facing young people in Chard today, and identified some potential projects to change things for the better.

The consultation focused on two main issues:

1. - Identifying **key issues** facing young people in Chard today
2. - Identifying some **potential projects** to change things for the better!

The Key questions asked were as follows:

- ❖ Where do you see yourself (working, living, training) in the next few years?
- ❖ How do you see the solutions to any difficulties you face associated with living in Chard?
- ❖ How can ACT help make Chard a better place for us all to live in?

The four key issues the young people thought should be tackled over the next 10 years were better job prospects, more support for families, better transport, and affordable, accessible housing.

From these results emerged a list of potential projects young people in Chard would like to see happen in the future. A number of these project ideas are listed below:

- Cyber café
- Adventure/fun park
- More shops, clothes shops
- More sports for girls

Disco at the Guildhall
A Taster of other jobs – work experience on different jobs
Job Roadshow
Building more affordable housing!
Go Karting centre
Better Skate Park.
Dirt tracks for all-rounders
Youth Forum

(For full details on the Young People's consultation see Appendix Two)

Chard Means Business!-22nd September 2004

The ACT Business Event in 2004 was a unique consultation event. Those attending were asked to engage in a Business SWOT analysis for Chard and to add comments and ideas to the issues and potential projects identified so far (including the information from the ACT Stakeholder Event held in June 2004). It was recognised that most businesses would have found engagement at the Stakeholder Event difficult (it was an all-day intensive consultation programme for agencies and local organisations) so a purpose built consultation process was devised to meet the specific needs of the business community.

There was a series of speakers from Numatic International, the Blackdown Hills Business Association, Somerset Skills Alliance and Learning + Skills Council. A presentation was given by consultants appointed by the Somerset Market Town Labour Market Strategy Project about how Chard is one of six Somerset market towns which has been successfully awarded ESF funding to develop a business strategy and action plan for Chard. Local businesses were asked to join ACT in becoming the steering group to deliver this process in Chard.

There was also be the opportunity for local retailers to influence the extension of the present Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS), which offers substantial grants from English Heritage and South Somerset District Council towards the reinstatement of shop fronts and other property improvements, into other areas of the town centre.

12 exhibition stalls were set up and 58 local business people representing 43 businesses attended the event.

Linking the evidence to the Plan

It is clear from the evidence that there are some key issues facing Chard and its hinterland. Whilst the town has an impressive past, there are a number of factors inhibiting the improvement of quality of life for a large proportion of the areas population. Many of them are linked, such that action to improve one issue will have a marked impact on another. The four keys issues are summarised below.

1. The economy and income levels

Successive reports over recent years have identified the problems within the areas economy. The District Council in 2002 noted that “the economy of Chard is not thriving”, whilst the Labour Market Strategy Report of 2004 recognised “*the limited employment opportunities, low wages, ... relatively low literacy and numeracy*”.

There are some structural problems within the economy such as a reliance on large employers, lack of knowledge-based industries and a high proportion of jobs in the declining industries. There are also some serious issues around training, with low levels of qualifications, below average numbers in full time education, and low levels of entrepreneurship. The Chard Town Centre report noted that the town “*has an impressive industrial heritage, including innovation. This could be exploited more....*”.

Improving jobs and training will increase income levels, raising more people out of poverty and deprivation, and enabling more to be spent locally on improving services and infrastructure. It will also assist with raising self-esteem, greater achievements and a more positive perception of the town and its surrounding area.

Evidence of support for action on the local economy was clearly shown at the Chard Means Business consultation event in 2004. The young people’s consultation also showed that young people would support the idea of better job prospects in Chard and surrounding area.

2. Chard as a Market Town

The population of the Chard’s surrounding area looks to the town to provide all the services and facilities normally expected of a market town. Chard is the place where most people do their essential food shopping and are able to find the full range of other associated services.

However, many people shop in larger towns such as Taunton and Yeovil for luxury goods. Consultation showed that the physical look of the town centre, the range of shops and the market were of great concern to the local population. It also showed the level of concern over transport and traffic issues including congestion.

The Appraisal of Chard Town Centre undertaken in 2003 highlighted a number of issues including the shopping environment, the range of shops, traffic and marketing and promotion. Whilst it recognised the limitations created by the low levels of local spending power it saw potential through the town’s accessibility, the attractive environment and the potential for tourism. The Traffic Strategy 1999 set out a comprehensive range of proposals for town-linked improvements that would now benefit from a more up to date study of transport needs.

"Despite the undoubted physical qualities of the town, the economy of Chard is not thriving and indeed demonstrates many factors of deprivation, which are having their toll on the physical fabric. The result has been a loss of confidence and insidious degradation of the built environment The decline has in the last few years accelerated due to a combination of local and more widespread problems affecting market towns generally" South Somerset District Council, 2002

3. Deprivation and poor access to services

Both the Indices of Multiple Deprivation and the Health and Social Needs Analysis (2002) show areas of serious poverty and deprivation within the Chard area. Within the affected areas the main issues are:

- o Low-income levels
- o Education and qualifications
- o Unemployment
- o Housing affordability
- o Access to services
- o Crime levels
- o Living environment.

Concerns around housing affordability were also identified in the SSDC Housing Needs Survey (2000). The Crime Audit (2001) established that drug misuse was one of the major underlying causes of crime.

Whilst social issues were not the main focus of the consultation events, the young peoples consultation highlighted the need for more support for families, and more affordable housing. This was echoed by the SWOT Analysis, which identified family support, drug and alcohol support, NHS dentists and residential care as key issues. It is clear from the priorities identified by the District Council that removing social exclusion and ensuring a good quality of life for all is a major objective of the local population.

4. Negative perceptions and low self esteem

The Appraisal of Chard Town Centre report identified *" a negative perception of the town amongst its inhabitants and even its shopkeeper" and recommended" Proactive marketing of the town centre to residents through promotional days and events should be encouraged, building on the success of events like the Chard festival of Women in Music and the one day carnival. Other annual or monthly themed events could be considered"*. The Stakeholder day SWOT Analysis also found that there is a poor self image and low self esteem amongst the population, and saw significant threats to community cohesion from, for example, drugs and alcohol, negativity and apathy, and anti-social behaviour.

The Community Plan shows how these four issues in particular can be taken forward by ACT over the coming years.

What is the Community Plan for Chard?

What is the Community Plan for Chard?

The Vision

A vision statement is intended to set a picture of where the community would like to see itself in the future. The vision provides a goal towards which the community can work and is therefore intended to be both visionary and realistic.

The participants at the Stakeholder day in June 2004 were divided into small groups and asked to identify two headlines each, representing what they would like to see in the local Chard newspapers in 15-20 years time. The vision statement below evolved from that exercise.

Chard and its surrounding area will be a community that:

- ⇒ *Is Healthy*
- ⇒ *Is Spiritually fulfilled*
- ⇒ *Is Safe*
- ⇒ *Is Well connected*
- ⇒ *Is proud of its good self image*
- ⇒ *Has good facilities, reflecting its role as a market town*
- ⇒ *Meets the needs of its vulnerable people*
- ⇒ *Celebrates its inclusiveness and its diverse cultures*
- ⇒ *Is high achieving*
- ⇒ *Has good quality jobs and a diverse economy*
- ⇒ *Has housing for everyone*
- ⇒ *Addresses the needs of its young people*
- ⇒ *Looks after its environment and heritage*

The Community Plan for Chard

In arriving at the production of the Community Plan for Chard a number of distinct phases took place in the process. These phases include community consultation events, a SWOT analysis, Stakeholder events, Business Events, a District Profile and local strategy collation.

Each of these phases has been documented and can be referred to by contacting members of ACT, or referring to the appendices section. Below is a summary of that process, showing how the concerns raised by the community have been turned into a set of key aims and headline projects.

The issues

In the first instance all the issues that had been raised during consultations were listed. Each issue on the list was then taken through a flow chart to see whether it was an issue or a project; an example would be 'the desire for CCTV' is not just an issue but could be part of a project to provide a solution to the issue of vandalism in the town.

ACT is aware that there are issues affecting particular sectors of the community that have not yet been identified. Further work to engage with these groups will form part of the future work of ACT.

The evidence

The list of issues was then set against available evidence to see if the concern was based on fact. An example would be 'the desire to encourage new small businesses' is supported by the evidence that shows Chard has a high reliance for employment on a few large firms. In many instances the evidence is not available or insufficient, this does not mean that the issue is not real but that further work is needed to find out more background evidence which will form part of future action plans.

Prioritisation

At the Stakeholder day, held in July 2004, participants prioritised the issues identified for Chard. All issues were deemed relevant. It was decided that a number of key issues needed addressing in the short-term, others could wait to be tackled. An example of this would be the issue of 'Chard Reservoir water levels', which is seen as a long-term project.

The Identified Themes

The issues were also organised into themes. The 8 themes that were chosen were those identified in the South Somerset Community Strategy:

- o Better health and Social Care
- o Leisure and Culture
- o Improving Prosperity
- o Improving Transport
- o Crime and Fear of Crime
- o Improved Living Standards
- o Lifelong Learning
- o Quality of the Environment

The theme headings helped to sort the issues into areas of linked concern, for example 'poor motivation' and 'a lack of awareness of opportunities' both fitted naturally within the theme of Lifelong Learning'.

The Objectives

Objectives for each theme were chosen by the Stakeholders to guide the direction of the work. 'Raise a positive profile of Chard Town – facts not myths' was chosen as one of three objectives for the theme Crime and Fear of Crime. This objective will be used as one of the guiding principals for evaluating potential projects under that theme.

The relationship between the themes and the objectives is shown below.

Theme		Objectives
1	Better Health and Social Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health Education for all ▪ Encourage investment by new providers ▪ Affordable leisure facilities for all
2	Leisure and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop focal point for development and support of leisure, cultural, recreational and sporting opportunities ▪ Promote existing facilities
3	Improving Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upgrade skills of workforce ▪ Encourage enterprise and small business start-up ▪ Broadband access throughout Chard hinterland
4	Improving Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investigate the provision of public transport interchanges ▪ Establish the current and future provision of cycle routes ▪ Promote improved, dedicated and adequate public transport provision for disabled users
5	Crime and Fear of Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Raise positive profile of town – facts not myths ▪ Improve education for all about citizenship and causes of crime ▪ Promote greater understanding between communities to promote harmony
6	Improved Living Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase quality, affordable housing ▪ Build a cohesive, inclusive, diverse aspiration community ▪ Developing better training to achieve better jobs, attracting employers
7	Lifelong Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve motivation into lifelong learning ▪ Raise awareness of learning opportunities ▪ Reduce physical and physiological barriers to learning
8	Quality of the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retain and develop character of existing built and natural environment ▪ Through sustainable development and effective planning control ▪ Improve integration between town and surrounding parishes in terms of access and welcome

Key aims

Finally ACT looked at the outcomes of the work on the issues, themes and objectives and chose four key aims for the Community Plan, listed below:

1. To improve the skills of Chard's workforce and encourage better quality jobs – 'enhanced skills, better jobs'
2. Sustain Chard's viability and vitality as a market town - 'A Thriving Market Town'
3. Ensure that Chard's social infrastructure and support systems are available to all who need them – 'improving the social infrastructure'
4. Raise people's self esteem and aspirations and bring back a sense of community pride – 'Raising Esteem, Raising Aspirations'

ACT believes that by concentrating on these four aims, focused and responsive progress can be made towards the creation of a more prosperous and sustainable community. The four key aims crosscut the eight identified

themes and as a result have the maximised impact, as suggested in the table below.

	Improve the skills of Chard's workforce and encourage better quality jobs	Sustain Chard's viability and vitality as a market town	Ensure that Chard's social infrastructure and support systems are available to all who need them	Raise peoples self esteem and aspirations and bring back a sense of community pride
Better health and social care				
Leisure and culture				
Improving prosperity				
Improving transport				
Crime and fear of crime				
Improved living standards				
Lifelong learning				
Quality of the environment				

Headline Projects

The headline projects have been chosen to further the four main aims of the plan. These projects are both visionary and deemed achievable and together they will make a strategic difference to the Chard area. The Headline Projects are:

- o Chard Enviro Centre - A business incubation centre for Chard
- o Feasibility Study for the Chard Enviro Centre
- o Chard Millennium Garden
- o Chard Transport Study
- o Bondfield Grange Independent Living Centre
- o Chard Takes Flight – Celebrating the history of flight in Chard
- o Chard Urban Design Statement and Urban Plan - A Town Design Study

Priority Projects

The four headline projects will initially be taken forward in the first year by the following linked priority projects:

- o An annual Entrepreneur event – 'Spirit of Enterprise'
- o A Community Learning Plan - Chard Community Learning Plan Project'
- o A sculpture of Flight – 'Gateway to Chard'

- o A Support service to drug misusers – ‘Mobile Drug Support Project’
- o A new garden for Chard town centre – ‘Chard Community Garden Project’
- o A transport study – ‘Chard Transport Network Map Project 2005’

The Priority projects are intended not only to kick-start the headline projects but also to enthuse the community and encourage them to get involved. The relationship between the 4 key aims and the projects is shown in the following table.

Improve the skills of Chard’s workforce and encourage better quality jobs	Sustain Chard’s viability and vitality as a market town	Ensure that Chard’s social infrastructure and support systems are available to all who need them	Raise peoples self esteem and aspirations and bring back a sense of community pride
Priority projects - to be taken forward within Year 1			
Entrepreneur event	Community Garden Project	Mobile Drugs unit	Sculpture of Flight
Community Learning Plan	Transport Network Map		
Headline Projects - High priority, longer-term but to be substantially started in Year 1			
Business Development Centre	Town Centre Study	Independent Living Centre	Celebration of Flight

SUMMARY OF PROJECTS

Key Aim 1: 'Enhanced Skills, better jobs'

Justification:

There is overwhelming data in support of the need to do something dramatic about the local economy. Skills and qualification levels are amongst the lowest in the county, with three Chard wards being in the worst 20% in the country; many of Chard's jobs are low paid and in the declining non-knowledge based sectors; there are low levels of self employment and entrepreneurship. As a consequence there are low levels of disposable income, which has knock on effects for quality of life across the community.

Strategy:

ACT will seek to ensure that the local population is able to take advantage of a range of new learning opportunities. At the same time this will support local entrepreneurs and encourage new knowledge based industries.

Headline Project: Chard Enviro Centre

Aims:

- To revive Chard's industrial and engineering heritage through the provision of an Environmental Engineering Centre of Excellence
- To provide new, all inclusive and challenging employment opportunities for Chard, including its disabled workers
- To reduce the risks for new business start ups by providing a business incubation centre
- To challenge a culture of low expectations, low skills, low pay and low self esteem

Objective	Timescale	Partners	Funding	Objectives met	Linked projects
To construct a purpose-built, sustainable Business Incubation Centre "Chard Enviro Centre" on the Chard Business Park	2005-2010	Learning and Skills Council, Yeovil College (Advanced Engineering), Somerset College (Sustainable Building Technologies), SWERDA, GOSW, Somerset "Pathways to Work", Somerset Business Link	Initial design and development costs of £30,000 Feasibility Study funds secured (2005)	Creation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20-30 small business incubator units • Shared business services unit • Training centre • Environmental engineering demonstration unit Links made with local, regional and national organisations Small business apprenticeships increased	Chard "Spirit of Enterprise" "Chard Takes Flight!" project

Appendix One for full Project details.

Priority Project: Spirit of Enterprise

Aims:

- To address some of the barriers to young people (less than 30 years) developing businesses.
- To encourage a spirit of enterprise and entrepreneurship in young people.
- To challenge a culture of low expectations, low skills, low pay and low self esteem

Objective	Timescale	Partners	Funding	Objectives met	Linked projects
To create an annual "Spirit of Enterprise" event	2005	Action for Chard Town; Chard Town Council; South Somerset District Council; Somerset County Council; Holyrood Community School; Connexions; Business Link Somerset; Somerset Learning & Skills Council; Somerset Small Business Association; Chard Chamber of Trade and Commerce; Inland Revenue; Somerset College of Art and Technology; Yeovil College; Somerset Chamber of Trade and Commerce; Local Businesses; Chard Young People Centre; Somerset Youth Service; Jobcentre Plus;.	An initial sum of £5,000 is being sought for set up costs, rental fees and publicity. Not yet secured Sponsorship to be additionally sought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young entrepreneurs and specialist support brought together on annual basis • Links created with South Somerset annual Young Enterprise Award • Workshops, seminars and networking opportunities provided • Links established with other projects 	Chard Enviro Centre (business incubation project) "Chard Takes Flight!" project

Appendix One for full Project details

Priority Project: Chard Community Learning Plan Project

Aims:

- To improve partnership working in Chard between learning providers and beneficiaries
- To involve the community in decisions about local learning and skills provision
- To stimulate economic growth and improve the quality of life by increased learning opportunities and challenging negativity to learning
- To develop an innovative long term approach to learning

Objective	Timescale	Partners	Funding	Objectives met	Linked projects
To create a Community Learning Plan	2005-8	Action for Chard Town (ACT); Chard Town Council; South Somerset District Council; Somerset County Council; Yeovil College; Somerset College of Art and Technology (SCAT); Richard Huish College, Taunton; Adult Learning & Leisure; Holyrood Community School; CRESTA; Somerset Learning & Skills Council; Connexions; Business Link; South West Regional Development Agency; CITB; Chard Chamber of Trade & Commerce; Job Centre Plus; Local employers	£15,000 + Project worker costs for 3 years Not yet secured	<i>Community Learning Partnership formed, Consultant engaged and long term local learning strategy developed</i> <i>Consultation with community and businesses to identify gaps in provision</i> <i>Business Pack developed for new businesses</i> <i>A programme of learning classes provided</i> <i>Project worker employed</i>	<i>Chard Enviro Centre (business incubation project)</i> <i>Chard "Spirit of Enterprise"</i> <i>"Chard Takes Flight!" project</i>

Appendix One for full Project details

Key Aim 2: Improving the Social Infrastructure

Justification:

The Chard area has more young children and more pensioners than the county average. There is an increasing black and minority ethnic(BME) population. Chard also has more than its share of households in poverty. Public consultation showed that additional support for those who need it is a priority.

Strategy:

ACT will promote existing social, welfare and health facilities and services to the wider population, whilst also seeking to identify and encourage others to fill any gaps that arise.

Headline Project: Bondfield Grange Independent Living Centre

Aims:

- To enable disabled people needing care to enjoy independent living
- To improve the availability and quality of medical provision for disabled and wider community of Chard
- To enable greater take up of adapted /assisted housing
- To increase opportunities for professional carers and others to undertake training in disability, equality and health and social care skills

Bondfield Grange Independent Living Centre

Objective	Timescale	Partners	Funding	Objectives met	Linked projects
Provide complex of purpose built lifetime homes	2005-15	Action for Chard Town; Chard Town Council; South Somerset District Council; South Somerset House; Somerset Care; Somerset Primary Care Trust; Private care providers	Project design and development of £50,000 Not yet secured	Accommodation for up to 16 disabled residents created. Respite facility for trying out 'independent living' provided. Service Manager and Support staff employed	Chard Enviro Centre
Create adjacent Medical Centre				Urban Design for Chard/Transport Study	
Set up new South Somerset Accessible Homes Register				Community Learning Plan	
Provide Care suite				Mobile drug Support Project	
				Accessible Homes Register established and information made more available	
	Increased take up of Care skills training				

Appendix One for full Project details

Priority Project: Mobile Drug Support Project

Aims:

- To help drug misusers and their families by providing mobile and professional support
- To encourage care providers to work together in providing a flexible and personal level of care
- To develop new and innovative ways to meet the needs of drug misusers and their families

Mobile Drug Support Project

Objective	Timescale	Partners	Funding	Objectives met	Linked projects
To provide a high level of support to drug misusers and their families, including partnership working with other professionals and providing one to one support	2005 - 08	Action for Chard Town; Chard Town Council; south Somerset District Council; Somerset County Council; Somerset Primary Care Trust; Bracken House, Chard Hospital; Chard Medical Centres; Chard Healthy Options Partnership; South Somerset Homes; Area West Community Safety Panel; Avon & Somerset Police; Chard & Ilminster Community Justice Panel.	£100,000 over three years Not yet secured	Drug link support worker employed Partnership of health care providers developed Existing provision and future needs analysis mapped One to one sessions for a number of misusers & their families Provided Additional support projects developed	Bondfield Grange Independent Living Centre/medical centre Urban Study /Transport study

Appendix One for full Project details

Key Aim 3: Raising Esteem, Raising Aspirations

Justification:

There is a wide gap between the reality of Chard and local peoples perception of their town. Whilst Chard has much going for it, local people tend to see only the negative side. This has an impact on peoples self esteem, their aspirations and their pride in the community. Promoting the good side to Chard will have a major beneficial impact across the community, thus also supporting the other key aims.

Strategy:

By searching through Chard's history and heritage, ACT will identify role models and events worthy of celebration, as an inspiration to current and future generations of Chard residents. ACT will seek to promote the town both internally and externally through generating national and international links, commissioning works of art, and organising festivals and other community events and celebrations.

Headline Project: Chard Takes Flight

Aims:

- To raise the esteem and aspirations of the people of Chard in an imaginative and visual way
- To provide a positive image of Chard to residents and visitors, by celebrating Chard's engineering past and developing as a future Centre of Excellence in science, technology and engineering
- To encourage young people, especially young women, to make career choices in science, technology and engineering

Chard Takes Flight

<u>Objective</u>	Timescale	Partners	Funding	Objectives met	Linked projects
Create an annual event - "Chard Takes Flight!"	2006 onwards	This project is expected to attract a large number of partners locally, nationally and internationally.	£10,000	Annual 'Chard Takes Flight' Event arranged with good levels of participation and visitors numbers	Urban Design for Chard
Develop a Learning Centre of Excellence in science, technology and engineering	2005-15		£15,000	Creation of Partnership working with Schools, business &, twinning with US 'Flight' town	Chard "Spirit of Enterprise"
Support visual celebration of flight e.g. "Gateway" Sculpture,	2005-6		£10,000	Chard landmark Sculpture commissioned.	Bondfield Grange Independent Living
Themed play park & art projects	2005 onwards		£50,000 All of the above has yet to be secured	Flight theme Play park developed (Disabled accessible). Programme of Art projects arranged	

Appendix One for full Project details

Key aim 4: A Thriving Market Town

Justification:

Throughout the consultation phase of the Chard MCTi, the environment and facilities offered by the town centre has been top of the list for most people within and outside Chard. It is clear that Chard still has a wide catchment population and is expected to perform a market town function for its residents. This means not only ensuring that the town centre continues to thrive, but that the town itself is accessible to all, attractive, and able to provide the full range of recreational and leisure activities, as well as the full range of other services expected in a market town.

Strategy:

To commission a comprehensive town design study, looking not only at the scope for further development and improvement of the town centre but also looking at accessibility, traffic and transport, the town environment, and the relationship with the new Chard Key Site. ACT will also pursue opportunities to enhance the range of facilities provided within the town.

Headline Project: Chard Urban Design Statement and Urban Plan

Aims:

- To make Chard an attractive place to live and work
- To create opportunities for new and expanding businesses
- To develop a vibrant and inclusive residential, cultural, leisure and economic environment
- To provide facilities and transport options to meet the needs of Chard and the wider hinterland

Chard Urban Design Statement and Urban Plan

Objective	Timescale	Partners	Funding	Objectives met	Linked projects
Undertake a detailed study of Chard to produce a long term strategy for developing Town Chard Centre and transport links with the hinterland	2005-2010	Action for Chard Town; Chard Town Council; South Somerset District Council; Somerset County Council; Chard Chamber of Trade & Commerce; South West Regional Development Agency;	£50,000 Not yet secured	Detailed Study of existing land use completed with scenarios for future use (including effects on infrastructure) identified. Public consultation undertaken Existing & projected Traffic flow study & report completed, public transport options identified Effects of Climate Change on Chard & hinterland, study & report completed	Chard "Spirit of Enterprise" "Chard Takes Flight!" project Bondfield Grange Independent Living Centre

Appendix One for full Project details

Priority Project: Chard Millennium Garden Project

Aims:

- To provide an attractive, natural feature in the town centre for everyone to enjoy
- To improve a run down part of the town and provide a quiet meeting place for visitors and residents
- To encourage users to be involved in planting and maintaining the site and support similar regeneration projects

Chard Millennium Garden Project

Objective	Timescale	Partners	Funding	Objectives met	Linked projects
To create a garden in the Town Centre	2005-6	Action for Chard Town; Chard Town Council; South Somerset District Council; Somerset County Council Highways; Chard 2000; Chard Chamber of Trade and Commerce; The Laurels; Mawbry House; Bracken House; The Order of Buffaloes; Chard School; Holyrood Community School; Dr Tressider, local GP; Chard Young People Centre; Chard Gardening Club; Cerdic Foundry; Cuttifords Door (Chard) Garden Centre; Chard Healthy Living Centre.	£50,000 Not yet secured	One new open space incorporating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An exhibition space for feature items • A natural spring water feature • Opportunities for future involvement in its long term care and other projects 	"Chard Takes Flight!" project

Appendix One for full Project Details

Priority Project: Chard Transport Network Map Project 2005

Aims:

- To build a clear picture of the current transport provision and needs of Chard and its hinterland
- To develop an action plan that will address the long term transport needs of the area in such a way as to improve the quality of life for all

Chard Transport Network Map Project

Objective	Timescale	Partners	Funding	Objectives met	Linked projects
Undertake a detailed transport study of Chard and its hinterland leading to a long term action plan (to 2025)	2005-6	Trains Action for Chard Town Roads, Routes and Transport project group; Chard Town Council; South Somerset District Council; Somerset County Council, Chard Chamber of Trade and Commerce, Local Businesses and employers; Local schools including Holyrood Community School; Yeovil College; Somerset College of Art and Technology (SCAT); Jobcentre Plus; Musgrove Park Hospital; Yeovil Hospital; Southwest; Private bus service providers; Other organisations, clubs, and groups	£8,000 excluding any staff costs	Detailed questionnaires undertaken with all sectors – households, employers, providers and organisations Network maps of existing transport patterns and gaps produced 20 year Transport Action Plan produced	<i>Chard Urban Design Statement and Urban Plan</i> Aims Chard Enviro Centre Spirit of Enterprise

Appendix One for full Project details

How Will the Community Plan be Implemented?

How Will the Community Plan be Implemented?

Partnership working

Action for Chard Town (ACT) will take responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of the Community Plan. ACT will seek to achieve as much of the plan as is possible through the work of existing organisations and a partnership approach. ACT will therefore work to have projects from the Community Plan included within the work programmes of key organisations. Some organisations have committed to supporting the objectives and projects contained within the Community Plan. ACT will shortly start negotiating with the many agencies, service providers and potential funders who need to be engaged in the delivery of the projects identified in the Community Plan. This will start with a process known as Brokering, when the Plan and the initial priority projects will be presented to a range of relevant organisations for accessing funding and identifying a lead organisation.

Support of the Community

By realising the projects emerging from the Community Plan they will be able to make an immediate impression on Chard and surrounding area and its residents.

Whilst the projects will be capable of delivering tangible improvements to peoples lives in Chard, this will encourage further local people to become involved in the process. This is where the support of local people is crucial. Not only to help in actually developing and delivering local projects, but also to show potential partners and funders that there is real local commitment to implementing the Community Plan and improving life in the local community. Given the scarcity of resources and competition with other communities, it is essential that ACT is able to demonstrate not only that there is proven need, but also that there is a community willing and able to help itself.

Reviewing

The Chard Community Plan whilst maintaining the priority aims and objectives, will naturally respond to the changing needs of the local communities and evolve accordingly. It is recognised that as projects are developed others will be identified in an on-going process.

Brokering

Approximate timescales have been identified for the projects. This gives maximum flexibility to enable projects to be matched with support and resources through the brokering process and beyond. Whilst the Plan is clearly community led, the reality is that projects need

the support of agencies and funders. This will be negotiated throughout the brokering process. Brokering will be an on-going process.

Targets

There are some key tasks to be undertaken by ACT over the coming months and years, against which ACT can be held to account by the community.

Further work has also been highlighted in relation to the need to ensure full engagement with the wider Chard MCTi area and its communities. The following should have been achieved within the first year:

- Consultation with the Parishes
- Consultation with minority groups
- Further consultation with the Youth sector
- A website
- The involvement of the community in some, if not all, the priority projects, particularly the Community Learning Plan, the sculpture of flight and the town centre garden.

Finally, progress will need to have been made in taking forward the four Headline Projects:

- A business development centre for Chard
- An independent living centre
- Celebration of flight
- Town design study

**How will we
check progress?**

How will we check progress?

In order to ensure that the plan continues to be relevant to Chard's regeneration, ACT will:

- Check on the progress so far (monitoring and evaluation)
- Assess future projects (new project evaluation and guidelines)

Monitoring and Evaluation

This will be undertaken to validate, encourage and inspire the outcomes of the Community Plan. The process of monitoring and evaluation will help to document the role of the Community Plan in Chard's regeneration and provide a record for future reference and work.

In essence monitoring will find out WHAT happened and evaluation will find out WHY it happened in the way it did.

Monitoring

Monitoring the Community Plan

ACT will be responsible for monitoring the Community Plan on an annual basis to ensure it is keeping on track, this will include

- Working with other local MCTi to develop a set of local indicators which will be employed to measure progress towards the vision
- Offering regular opportunities for further community input and providing feedback to the community on progress to date
- Updating the action plan
- Evaluation and development of new projects as they arise against a set process

ACT recognises the importance of its monitoring role and will work to ensure it has the skills, knowledge and tools required amongst the group to carry out the work effectively and efficiently

Monitoring the Projects

The process for monitoring projects will vary according to the scope of the individual project and requirements of the funding partners: for example, the monitoring system for an EU supported project will be a great deal more detailed than one funded by a local community grant.

It is expected that in most cases the project manager, working with the lead organisations, will monitor individual projects on an ongoing basis. Together they will want to know that the project has delivered, or is delivering, what it set out to do. They will check that:

- There are suitable systems in place to deliver the project
- That the project is meeting the eligibility criteria of its grant(s)
- The outputs for each project are being met
- The project budget has been spent correctly
- The project has, or will be, completed on time

In order to carry out this work they will look at the project proposal, all general and financial record keeping and cross check the evidence to support the claimed outputs.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the Community Plan

ACT, working with other organisations and members of the community, will undertake the evaluation of the Community Plan on an annual basis. The evaluation process will seek to answer the following questions:

- Is the Community Plan meeting its objectives? If not what is the reason for the failure?
- What are the lessons, good and bad, that can be learned to date from the delivery of the action plan?

The evaluation will highlight any successes and identify any barriers to implementing the Community Plan. This will inform any future work towards achieving the vision for Chard. An updated Community Plan will result from the evaluation process

Evaluation of the Projects

Who will undertake the work?: Depending on the size of the project and requirements of the funding partners, projects may be assessed internally, overseen by an outside assessor, or assessed entirely by an external consultant. In the case of evaluation by a consultant, those involved in the ongoing management of the project will draw up a detailed evaluation brief.

When will it take place?: Evaluation will take place on completion of the project or, in the case of a longer-term project, as an interim and final evaluation.

What will it do?: The evaluation will vary according to the complexity of the project but will use hard data and judgement to find out:

- If the objectives were appropriate
- How well the project plan worked in practise
- What happened as a result of the project i.e. the value of achieving the outputs

- What has been the result of the project i.e. its impact on the beneficiaries

Who will be involved?: All key stakeholders with an interest in the project. In addition to project partners this may include trainers, project staff, beneficiaries, clients or end users and any organisation or group wishing to emulate the project.

What will it look like?: the report will contain some or all of the following elements but will vary in its detail according to the scope of the project:

- ◇ Summary of the findings
- ◇ Background to the project and its purpose
- ◇ Account of the evaluation criteria and method
- ◇ Results showing all problems and successes
- ◇ Recommendations
- ◇ Conclusion with the main lessons to be learnt and implication for future work

What is the purpose?: Evaluation will provide information to all those with an interest in the project, so they can learn about what did and did not work with the project and pass on that experience to use in future planning.

Evaluation of new projects

As new projects emerge they will be measured against the following criteria and depending on the result will either be:

- incorporated into a future Community Plan
- passed to a more relevant organisation to progress
- passed back to the originator

These are the questions we will ask:

1 *Is the aim of the project clear?*

If the answer is NO - Seek clarity with the originator or the community.

2 *Does the project fit within the Action Plan process?*

Does the community consultation process support the project?

Does it fit the vision?

Does it fit the existing objectives?

If the answer to any of the above is NO then the project will be passed back to the originator.

3 *What is the best way to support the project?*

Does the project complement an existing ACT project?

Is ACT the best organisation to take the project forward?

Is ACT the only potential partner?

If the answer to any of the above is NO, then the involvement of other potential partners or lead organisations will be sought.

Project Planning Guidelines

If the evaluation of the project is positive then the following project planning guidelines can be used to plan the project and develop a proposal for funders.

1. Who are the beneficiaries?
2. Is it achievable –practically and in terms of commitment?
3. If it involves a site – is ownership clear?
4. Is planning permission required?
5. Who is going to be responsible for the work – now and in the future?
6. Is there a project management group?
7. Are there any long-term maintenance costs?
8. Does it require expertise – is this available locally?
9. Is equipment required?
10. Is a risk assessment required?
11. Will it last beyond the period of funding?
12. Is insurance required?
13. Will it require publicity?
14. Can it be funded?

How to get involved

How to get involved

Contact us

If you live in the Chard MCTi area and would like to find out more about any of the information you have seen in this plan, or would like to contribute to the work of the plan and its projects, please contact us:

Diana Goldsmith

Chair of Action for Chard Town (ACT)

Address:

40 Fairway Rise
Chard
TA20 1NT

Email:

Digold@onetel.com

Community Regeneration Officer

South Somerset District Council – Area West
Holyrood Lace Mill
Holyrood Street
Chard
Somerset
TA20 2YA

Telephone: 01460 260423

APPENDIX ONE

Detailing Project Briefs
for the Community Plan for Chard & Surrounding Area.

1. Bondfield Grange – Chards Independent Supported Living Centre

Background: In August 2003 the Department of Health invited applications for £87 million of grants for extra-care housing, following the Ministerial wish to see 50 percent more extra-care housing by 2006. Private and local authority purchasers increasingly see it as a real alternative to a care home and dispersed homecare.

However, some local authorities still give a lower priority to providing Independent Living options to people with significant physical and multiple impairments, despite the growing evidence that such individuals are perfectly capable of flourishing outside traditional residential care accommodation, as long as the accommodation and support services are properly designed.

Extra care housing offers another choice to the individual; a choice based on security, rights and control. A private home with your own front door but all the support you might expect in a residential home. But it must be more than a housing solution - it must be a community solution, which requires the full commitment of housing, health and social care agencies.

Why Chard needs this project:

Demographics show nationwide that the proportion of those 60+ has increased and predictions show this figure will significantly increase in the next 20 years. The case in Chard shows that:

- The elderly population has increased from Census 1991, 24% of the population of 10770, compared to Census 2001 showing 22% of the population of 12008; an increase of 143 people.
- Looking at the Census 2001 figures of pensioners per wards, comparing the South Somerset ward average of 15.8%, with Chard Holyrood ward 21.8%, Chard Jocelyn ward

21.4% and Chard Combe ward 26.8% are all significantly higher.

- The Census 2001 showed that the figures for South Somerset ward average of people with limiting long term illness was 17.4% and people of working age with limiting long term illness is 6.9%; this compares with Chard Holyrood ward at 22.4% and 8.5%; Chard Jocelyn ward at 20.8% and 6.9%; Chard Combe ward at 23.3% and 6.4%; Chard Avishayes ward at 18.8% and 8.9%, respectively.
- The Somerset Health and Social Needs Analysis 2002 shows that in comparison to other South Somerset wards (figures in brackets), Chard Holyrood Ward had 27.62% (22.08%) households with long term limiting illness; 24.17% (15.88%) lone pensioners; 38.91% (20.37%) households with no car; 298.82 (204.63) referrals to Social Services Ages 65+. Figures for Chard Avishayes Ward are 22.21 (22.08%) for households with long term limiting illness; 13.12% (15.88%) lone pensioners; 25.21% (20.37%) households with no car; 333.33 (204.63) referrals to Social Services Aged 65+. Figures for Chard Combe ward are 27.68% (22.08%) households with long term limiting illness; 26.52% (15.88%) lone pensioners; 33.19% (20.37%) households with no car; 292.48 (204.63) referrals to Social Services aged 65+. Figures for Chard Jocelyn ward show 25.81% (22.08%) households with long term limiting illness; 19.59% (15.88%) lone pensioners; 29.71% (20.37%) households with no car and 211.06 (204.63) referrals for Social Services aged 65+. Chard Jocelyn ward also shows the highest figure for Chard of 85.43 (48.60) Home Care customers aged 65+ per 1000 population 65+. All four of these wards show higher than South Somerset wards for having no access to a car, with Holyrood registering 30.44% (13.15%)

Action for Chard Town (ACT) carried out consultation in Chard consisting of six "Planning for Real"-type events, a Stakeholder Event, a Business Event and consultation with young people. This identified key related issues requiring improved social infrastructure, including ensuring that a broad range of medical care provision keeps pace with the development of the Key site to the east of Chard and that the needs of the growing elderly and significant disabled population are met. Although not specifically stated this would include residential care and/or supported independent care.

The aims of the project:

The Bondfield Grange scheme would provide:

- A new build complex of purpose built lifetime homes
- With hoist and handling equipment built into the fabric of the accommodation
- Accommodation for up to 16 disabled residents
- A respite/transitional facility, enabling disabled people to 'try out' independent living, prior to making a final choice.
- A Service Manager and key support staff

The building would be:

- Constructed to the latest sustainable building standards
- An 'intelligent' building incorporating the latest environmental control and communications technology, enabling residents the maximum autonomy over their lives.
- Able to host remote health diagnostic technologies.

The project would incorporate:

- A new Community Medical Centre adjacent to Bondfield Grange, servicing the needs of the expanding Chard population, as well as the Grange residents. The Medical Centre would be fully accessible and provide Dental Health Care, Chiropody services as well as Occupational Therapy.

- A new service: The South Somerset Accessible Homes Register, providing information on using accessible or adapted housing within South Somerset. The service would offer general housing advice to disabled people and would direct them to appropriate sources of assistance. The housing needs of disabled individuals would be assessed as well as assessments of property. The service will also act as a centre-point for encouraging a more cohesive approach to the provision of accessible housing within the district.
- A Care Learning Suite, where Disability, Equality and Health & Social Care skills training can be carried out.

Outputs	Outcomes
A purpose built complex lifetime homes	Sustainable building materials and standards incorporated
Accommodation for up to 16 disabled residents	Independent living for disabled people needing care
A respite/transitional facility	Helping carers of the long term sick in the community by offering respite care, and giving disabled people the opportunity to try out the independent living facilities
A Service Manager and support staff	Well trained staff to run the Centre and provide care as needed
"Intelligent" building incorporating latest environmental control and communication technology	Offering residents the ability to live independently, controlling their own environment
Remote health diagnostic technologies	Providing a unique facility to both residents, staff and medical providers
A new Community Medical Centre with dental care, chiropody service and occupational therapy	An opportunity to increase Chards medical provision for the growing community
South Somerset Accessible Homes Register	Information on accessible or adapted housing within the area; assessments of disabled individuals
A Care Learning Suite	Offering a facility for disability, equality and health & social care skills training for professional carers

	and unpaid carers in the community
--	------------------------------------

Stakeholders: Action for Chard Town; Chard Town Council; South Somerset District Council; South Somerset Homes; Somerset Care; Somerset Primary Care Trust; Private care providers

Research:

South Somerset Profiles *Laurence Jackson SSDC Research Officer*: Census 1991; Census 2001; Health & Social Needs Analysis 2002; Index of Multiple Deprivation

Brief Prepared by: Alan Braley, Saveria Moss (SSDC Community Regeneration Officer)

2. “Chard Enviro Centre - Business Incubation”

Background: This project has been developed as a direct result of consultation that has taken place from 2001-2004 to develop a Community Plan for Chard and its rural hinterland. From the consultation Action for Chard Town (ACT) developed four key objectives:

- Enhancing skills, providing better jobs
- Improving the Social infrastructure
- Raising local esteem and aspirations
- Developing wider opportunities for Chard town centre

“Chard Enviro” is the landmark project for “Enhancing skills, providing better jobs” but it will also “Raise local esteem and aspirations” as it directly links with Chard’s engineering and industrial heritage, bringing new opportunities for the present and future.

The Local Context:

It is intended that a successful Chard Enviro would endow Chard with a rebirth of its engineering heritage, by becoming recognised as a Centre of Excellence for environmental engineering and technologies, and so attract new entrepreneurs and investors to Chard.

There are clear synergies with existing local and area economic, learning and skills strategies:

- Yeovil College has qualified as a Centre of Vocational Excellence (COVE) in Advanced Engineering;
- Somerset College of Art and Technology as a COVE for Sustainable Building Technologies;
- Holyrood Community School has been awarded Technology College status
- The South West of England Rural Development Agency (RDA) and Government Office South West (GOSW) are looking for more investment in environmental engineering in the South West.
- Somerset's "Pathways to Work" pilot study allows wheelchair users to access the site from other parts of the town.

Why Chard needs this project:

There are key strategic and economic reasons for basing the project in Chard:

- The project would create great interest and pride amongst many local people.
- It will provide alternative career options, for those who decide to seek work or continue in local Further Education, but attract back to Chard some of the young talent, after their time away at University.
- It will positively affect a "fragile" economy presently dependent mostly on several large employers, by creating a wider employment base.
- It will challenge established trends in Chard of low skilled, low paid work by developing innovative approaches to on-site training linked to work.
- It will provide an "incubator" environment for entrepreneurial opportunities, taking away some but not all the risks involved in new business start up.
- It will link with the "Chard in Flight!" project, which aims to develop a learning centre of excellence in science, engineering and technology in Chard and the "Spirit of Enterprise" young entrepreneurial project, an annual event which aims to stimulate and advise young people (under 30) to explore and develop their own business ideas.

The aim of this project is to:

Construct a purpose-built, sustainable Business Development Centre "Chard Enviro" on the Chard Business Park. This will incorporate:

- 20 – 30 small business incubator units
- A shared business services unit – office secretarial, administration, and purchase ledger, accounting services.
- A training centre – for IT, Business Management, Office Skills, Customer Service skills.
- An environmental engineering demonstration unit/seminar room.

How it will do that:

It is envisaged that the Chard Enviro will be a "Living and Growing" building. It will do this by:

- Its construction will demonstrate the very best examples of sustainable building methods and materials, utilising the most up to date environmental engineering and resource management technologies. This innovative, best practice approach is not seen as a cost premium, but as an opportunity to attract extra third party funding from the UK and EU.
- The units will be fully accessible to disabled workers and fits well with Somerset's "Pathways to Work" pilot.
- The design will enable the size and use of the incubator units to be flexible, so that occupying businesses will be able to 'flex' their capacity to respond to market demands, which is critical to the success of start up businesses.
- It is envisaged that tenants will be given time-limited tenure of say between 3 and 5 years, to encourage business progression.
- Whilst Chard Enviro will feature the latest in computing and technological infrastructure, the incubator units will be designed to encourage manufacturing and construction trade start ups to share the building and to encourage cross pollination between traditional 'craft' based businesses and 'knowledge' based enterprises.

- The environmental engineering demonstration unit, is envisaged as a flexible space, in which environmental engineering innovations may be showcased by manufacturers, universities and technology developers, around which seminars would be held, attracting 'high value' visitors to Chard.
- In addition, the building by its innovative design and construction would be a 'demonstrator' project, attracting visitors and a quality profile.

Outputs	Outcomes
Construct a purpose-built Business Development Centre	Provide a unique building which demonstrates the use of sustainable building materials and techniques
Provide 20-30 small business incubator units	Allow small incubator businesses to "find their feet" and expand, for an agreed period of time
Provide shared business services unit	Support small businesses, particularly encouraging local business start-up
A training centre	Provide on-site training in essential skills for small businesses based at the Centre and other businesses based in the area
An environmental engineering demonstration unit/seminar room	Provide a seminar room which can be used for a variety of training/conference uses including demonstrating environmental engineering
Link with local, regional and national organisations	Provide accommodation, training and seminar facilities for a variety of organisations linked to employment, business development, training and skills development, and environmental engineering.
Encourage small businesses to take on apprentices	Provide the opportunity for young people and mature students to train in trades, crafts and technology which will challenge the present trend in Chard of low skills which will encourage businesses to move into the area and local business start-ups

What is Environment Engineering?

The environmental technology sector is an emerging sector in South West England. The sector includes:

- Environmental Consultancy Services
- Air pollution control
- Water Treatment (including wastewater)
- Energy Management
- Renewable Energy
- Noise & Vibration Control
- Waste Management / Recovery & Recycling
- Marine Pollution Control
- Contaminated Land Remediation
- Environmental Monitoring & Analysis
- Technology for Sustainable Land Use & Management

Stakeholders: The quality of this project will attract many active partners, some of whom may wish to have a physical presence at Chard Enviro. For example:

- The shared business services unit, could be provided within a learning and skills context, with key staff being GNVQ students or Modern Apprentices under the training supervision of one of the FE Colleges.
- The environmental engineering demonstration unit may be an attractive home for the Enviro Skills Agency.
- Somerset Business Link may wish to locate local Business Advisors at this location.

Sources:

Local Research:

Chard Market Town Employment Project- Baseline Study 2004

Clive Miller Associates

UK Incubator Network

The Irish YES Project

"Creating an Enterprise Culture- Understanding the National Mission"

August 2004

Enterprise Insight

Further information:

Relating to environmental technologies please contact:

Tim Fleetwood
Sector Manager
South West RDA
Tel: 0117 933 0235
Email: tim.fleetwood@southwestrda.org.uk

Relating to Incubator Centres:

For a list of existing Incubator Centres, visit www.ukib.co.uk and for a virtual tour of one award-winning centre in Framlington, Suffolk, visit www.t-centre.co.uk.

Prepared by: Alan Braley; Saveria Moss (SSDC Community Regeneration Officer)

3. “Chard Takes Flight!”

Background: This project has been developed as a direct result of consultation that has taken place from 2001-2004 to develop a Community Plan for Chard and its rural hinterland. Action for Chard Town (ACT) carried out consultation consisting of six “Planning-for-Real”-type events, a Stakeholder Event, a Business Event and consultation with young people at the Chard “Young People Centre” who were about to leave Holyrood School.

A number of key issues were raised:

- Low esteem of people living in Chard
- Chard viewed negatively from outside
- Not enough for young people to do, sometimes leading to anti-social behaviour
- The area leaking young people looking for better paid, skilled employment
- Lack of links between Chard’s successful economic and inventive heritage with the low skills, low paid employment generally available locally today
- Lack of opportunity and resources to change the present employment “culture” or to aspire to an entrepreneurial approach to work
- Some young people have a poor attitude to work, resulting in dissatisfaction for them and their employers

From these and other related issues the Community Plan has developed four key objectives, three of which link to the aims of this project. These are:

- Raise local esteem and aspirations

- Enhance local skills to develop better jobs.
- Developing wider opportunities for Chard Town Centre

This project is the landmark project for Chard because it aims to meet these needs directly, by linking the town's inventive and engineering past and present with the future, through the support and encouragement of young people to take up careers in science, technology and engineering locally.

The aims of this project are to:

Hold an annual festival of flight Event of national and international interest that celebrates and builds on John Stringfellow's model aircraft, which was the world's first powered flight.

Create a landmark sculpture that is a modern interpretation of John Stringfellow's powered flight model, made by local manufacturers as a "Gateway to Chard"

Create an innovative Learning Centre of Excellence in science, technology and engineering in Chard.

Raise local and visitor awareness of Chard's dynamic engineering and manufacturing heritage.

Develop a town centre play park with a flight theme, for all young children but particularly suitable for children with physical disabilities.

Develop art projects using local artists working with children, the disabled and ethnic minority groups to create positive images of Chard (past, present and future) for display.

The project will do this by:

Forming a unique **partnership**, which will create long-term relationships between schools, colleges, universities, engineering and aircraft manufacturers and other interested organisations locally, in Somerset and in the South West to develop and sustain the project.

Developing a **local Learning Centre of Excellence** for science, technology and engineering through the partnership, which will create the links for innovation and expertise, that will in turn build local skills, knowledge and confidence to inspire the development of new businesses.

Engaging young people to develop, initially an interest and then ability in science, technology and engineering. To keep expertise and entrepreneurial skills in Chard, the project aims to establish a means of meeting their educational needs (including Further, Higher and Vocational training) and their career needs locally.

Organising and holding **an annual, model aircraft competitive Event** which will stimulate the design and creation of aircraft models using innovative structural designs, materials and power sources, which could ultimately influence future aviation.

Attracting local sculptors to design a modern interpretation **sculpture** of Stringfellow's model, on a huge scale, which would act as a "Gateway to Chard" landmark feature, inspiring local people and visitors.

Developing "Twinning" **links with Kittyhawk**, North America (the home of the first *manned* powered flight by the Wright brothers).

Linking Chard's heritage in flight and engineering with other local noteworthy historic events such as a walk based on Chard Lace Riots and sites such as renovated lace and engineering Mills, the remains of the canal Incline near to Chard Reservoir (Nature Reserve), the Second World War "Stop Line", etc.

Outputs	Outcomes
"Chard Takes Flight!" Annual Event	Raising the esteem and aspirations of the people of Chard
A competition for various categories, including the "Stringfellow Award" for innovation.	Young people given first hand experience of science and engineering increasing their appeal as career choices

A Learning Centre of Excellence in science, technology and engineering in Chard	Local businesses support teams of young people, forging positive links between the "worlds" of school and work
Increased visitors to Chard	Increase in local economy particularly tourism
Schools working closer with local businesses	New opportunities for local people and others establishing businesses in Chard
Establishing a Partnership	Links for long term partnership working between a range of local, regional and national organisations
"Gateway to Chard" Sculpture	A landmark feature
New all-ability play park in town centre	Families with children, with or without disabilities, drawn to a local facility
Art projects	Local artists work with children and adults, with or without disabilities, learning difficulties and/or from different cultures and language groups
	New model aircraft designs, materials and power sources (fuel and engines)

Those who will benefit from the project will be:

The "Chard Takes Flight!" Event and competition:

- **Children and Young people:** By engaging on any ability level, children will have fun learning about the science and technology needed for flight, and experience the excitement of entering a major competition.
- **Adults:** With or without a previous interest in flight and/or model aircraft this is an opportunity to make a model at any ability level, but with the added incentive to design and develop a model that incorporates innovative structure, materials or power source.
- **Businesses:** Having the opportunity to sponsor and/or support a team of young people from a local school to develop a model for entry will raise the business' profile but also help develop a lasting relationship with the school, the young people and the wider community.

- **Schools:** By giving local primary schools the opportunity of building into the curriculum a science and technology project that links with a local Event and historical fact. For Holyrood Community School to further develop it's Technology Status by engaging teams of young people to work with local engineering firms to develop entries for the competition.
- **Local community:** Organising and holding an Event, which brings people to Chard annually, will raise the community's esteem. It will make local people feel positive about living Chard and change the negative perception of people living elsewhere towards Chard. The project will in the long term will create more jobs for local people.
- **Local retailers, businesses and organisations:** By creating a focal point for visitors to come to Chard, this will generate tourism and the local economy.
- **The Aircraft Industry:** By promoting innovation the Event could stimulate the development of new techniques, materials and power sources that could have a commercial benefit.

The Learning Centre of Excellence in science, technology and engineering:

- **Disaffected young people:** The project could engage those who may find themselves excluded from school or who have a negative view of learning and training. Although these young people may not naturally have chosen to enter further or vocational training this project should enable them to develop interest, skills and knowledge that could change their future.
- **Entrepreneurial young people:** Although Holyrood School has Technology Status and offers courses in science and technology and there are limited apprenticeships offered by some engineering companies locally, at present if young people have ambitions to enter higher or vocational training in science, technology and engineering they are unable to access that in Chard. Unfortunately because of the limited availability of well-paid skilled jobs once they complete that training, they rarely return to Chard. By developing a centre for local training and linking this project with other key projects in the Chard Community Plan, which

encourage local entrepreneurial businesses in Chard, the project aims to change that long-established practice.

- **Mature low-skilled, low-paid workers:** Although Chard does offer limited skilled well-paid employment and unemployment is low, many people in Chard are employed as low-skilled, low-paid workers. Most of these are dependent on a small number of manufacturers forming a “fragile” economy. By developing a local Learning Centre these workers will have the opportunity to retrain and gain qualifications without the obstacle of travel time and costs, which often prevent them from engaging in vocational training.
- **Young females and female work returnees:** The local Centre linking with the positive experience of the “Chard Takes Flight!” event, could attract young women to train in science, technology and engineering which are known nationally to be subjects that women are least likely to enter. Women in Chard are among the lowest skilled and lowest paid workers; therefore by giving women access to training locally they may retrain before re-entering the work force but at an economically improved level.
- **Local businesses:** Existing businesses will benefit from better skilled staff, improving their choice of manufacturing products, which will ultimately make them more economically competitive. One of the key aims of the project is to develop a resource for new businesses whether those are looking to re-locate in the Chard area from elsewhere or are developed by local people of all ages. The proposed business incubation centre project, “Chard Enviro” will provide the support these new businesses will need to succeed.

The Play Park:

- **All children:** Having a play park focusing on the flight theme will raise even very young children’s awareness of Chard’s role in the development of flight. Of course the idea is to stimulate physical, cognitive and social development in children

through interesting and challenging equipment in a safe environment.

- **Children with special needs:** The play park equipment will be accessible to children with physical disabilities, and incorporate colours and textures that are interesting and appealing. The play park will be in a sensory garden that will stimulate children's smell, sight, hearing and touch. The planting will be safe if tasted but this will not be encouraged. Chard has the Hercules Opportunity group, which supports children with special needs and Clare House a full day nursery both of which are in the town centre. Ideally the Play Park will be cited nearby.
- **Adults with disabilities and/or learning difficulties:** The sensory garden will be a pleasant environment for all people but particularly for adults with disabilities.

The Landmark sculpture and the Art projects:

- **People of all ages and all cultures living in Chard:** The arts projects will encourage people from a range of backgrounds to engage in interpretative works using a wide range of mediums, for display in the town centre. Specific organisations in the town will be involved such as the local schools, the Chard Young Peoples Centre, the Laurels, the Healthy Living Centre, etc. It is intended that particularly people with disabilities and people from other countries and cultures should be included.
- **Local sculptors and artists:** Involvement in the creation of the landmark sculpture and community art projects will raise the profile of many local artists and sculptors.

Stakeholders: The project will engage with a wide range of Stakeholders. These are categorised as follows:

Local Stakeholders:

Action for Chard Town; Chard Town Council; South Somerset District Council; Somerset County Council; Chard Chamber of Trade and Commerce; Holyrood Community School and local primary schools; Chard Museum; local engineering companies and foundries, and aircraft designers and manufacturers;

Somerset College of Art and Technology; Yeovil College; Local model aircraft clubs (Ilminster Radio Controlled Club); Local landowners (for the annual event); Descendents of John Stringfellow

Stakeholders in Somerset or the South West:

Museums of South Somerset (Yeovil) and Somerset (Taunton); The Royal Air Arm Museum; National Museum of Civil Aviation; Bristol University; University of the South West of England, Exeter; Bristol Airport; Exeter Airport; Westlands Engineering; British Aerospace, Filton; Fleet Air Arm at Yeovilton; British Microlight Association, Dunkerswell; Bristol Transport Museum; Bournemouth Civil Aviation Museum; Somerset Learning & Skills Council; Adult Learning & Leisure.

Stakeholders in Britain and Overseas:

Royal Aircraft Establishment Farnborough; British Model Flying Association, Leicester; Royal Aeronautical Association; Rolls Royce Engines; Kittyhawk Council.

Prepared by: Jean Smith, Diana Goldsmith and Saveria Moss (SSDC Community Regeneration Officer)

Checklist:

- Legislation governing model flight
- Legislation governing public events
- Insurance for all aspects of the project (Event, Sculpture, Displays, Play park, Centre of excellence)
- Ownership/rights to Stringfellow design and name
- Research already done by Bristol University into the design, materials, construction, etc
- Identify sites (Event, Sculpture, displays and play park)
- Event issues such as: access by vehicles; safety; costs etc.
- Running the Event: Build in costs for project worker, admin, tickets on line, website, marketing (national & international) site office.
- Competition: rules; classes (age/size and weight/ engine size/ cost of plane); judges & stewards;
- Links with Air force/aircraft magazines and organisations
- Date: 1848 to 2005 = 157 years
- British Model Flying Association (Chacksfield House, 31 St Andre's Road, Leicester, LE2 8RE Tel: 116 244 0028 Manny Williamson Development Officer).

- Innovation: propulsion system, design, materials, fuels.
- Wright Bros. Kittyhawk. East Coast. 1903. Link?
- Adam Hart Davies (aj@hd.org)

Other options for adding to Event:

- Parachuting
- Hot Air balloons
- Kites
- Bubbles
- Micro-light
- Laser light displays
- Birds (of prey, pigeon clubs etc)
- Paragliding
- Parade in town

4. Chard Millennium Garden Project

Background: To celebrate the Millennium of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the then Mayor of Chard hosted a public meeting in 1999. The purpose of this meeting was for the community to identify what they should like to see happen in Chard. The key project was for an open space or garden right in the town centre; the overwhelming majority of views were for this garden to have a water feature and planted trees. A suitable site at the lower end of Fore Street (the principal shopping street in Chard) was identified as the ideal place for this community space or garden. The area identified is a triangle of uneven pavement formed by the junctions of Fore Street with Silver Street

This area of Chard although within the Conservation area is particularly in need of regeneration; the A358 between Taunton and Axminster was originally channelled through Silver Street and was (due to traffic constraints) redirected around the Covent Link a few years ago. The area is faced by various small retail shops (some empty) and a community information and advice centre, Forefront; opposite in Fore Street the site faces the historic building and thriving Chard School; and on the other side of Silver Street, the Red House presently under going refurbishment. Although the site is on Fore Street it is back from the highway into what could become a quiet area for people to sit and meditate. This site is ideally positioned to

facilitate people of all ages and abilities to use the garden to rest:

- When walking into the town centre for services or facilities
- Walking to the existing residential areas and Tesco supermarket, east of the town.
- The Local Plan has adopted an area for development further to the east of the existing town boundary
- The opening of the local section of the Sustrans Coast-to-coast cycleway links with cycle tracks nearby
- Growing health advice from Government encouraging people of all ages to exercise more.

Historic value and Community Links:

The project would provide space for several key items of historic and cultural interest:

- A granite trough which was built to commemorate a local young man who died saving the life of another at Chard Reservoir
- A modern reproduction of the Jubilee Lamp built in 1887 to commemorate the jubilee of Queen Victoria made by local artisans (A separate project)
- The site for the "Twinning Stones"; Chard possesses boulders of stone from the towns of Morangis (France) and Helmstedt (Germany) with which it is twinned. It is proposed that these, together with a local boulder will be displayed in the garden.

The aims of the project:

To create a garden in the town centre which will:

- Improve a run down area, which is the first view of the town centre's principal shopping and historic market street from the east, north and south
- Link Chard with features from its historic past
- Link Chard with its Twin towns
- Link with the water features at the top of Fore Street using the local water from the Resurrection Spring (which runs in a channel down High Street and Fore Street)
- Create a new open space which consultation has identified as a key action in Chard

- Provide a new meeting area in a pleasant environment for young people, the elderly, people with physical and learning difficulties, those visiting the town and particularly for people living in that part of Fore Street
- Raise the esteem of people living in Chard by regenerating a run down area

Outputs	Outcomes
A new open space in the town centre	A meeting space for people of all ages
An exhibition space for the trough, Jubilee Lamp, and "Twinning Towns" Boulders	The restful effects of the sensory plants makes it a pleasant "quiet" place
The garden will incorporate a water feature using the natural spring water in Fore Street	
Engage a variety of people to be involved in the planting and long term maintenance of the garden	

Stakeholders: Action for Chard Town (ACT); Chard Town Council; South Somerset District Council; Somerset County Council Highways; Chard 2000; Chard Chamber of Trade and Commerce; The Laurels; Mawbry House; Bracken House; The Order of Buffaloes; Chard School; Holyrood Community School; Dr Tressider, local GP; Chard Young People Centre; Chard Gardening Club; Cerdic Foundry; Cuttifords Door (Chard) Garden Centre; Chard Healthy Living Centre.

Prepared by: David Hill, Chard 2000, Jean Smith, Diana Goldsmith, Laurie Uncles, Mary Pomfret and Saveria Moss (SSDC Community Regeneration Officer)

5. Chard Mobile Drug Support Project

Background

In 2002-2003 Chard successfully piloted a part-time Drugs Link Worker for 18 months based at the Healthy Options Partnership in Boden Street. The aims of the project were to:

- Map out the provision for supporting alcohol and substance misusers in Chard and the surrounding area;
- Draw together representatives of the key providers to form a Steering Group, which would direct the project;
- Devise systems and project work that would address the identified issues and dovetail provision for better value.

Although a mapping of provision was carried out and a Steering Group formed, the project outcomes were not fully met because:

- The work focused on support at a more personal level because this is what alcohol and substance abusers needed most
- The project did not have enough resources in terms of staff time to meet those needs
- Bringing drug and substance abusers into the Healthy Living Centre or any other centre in Chard proved problematic for them, due to a variety of reasons including transport, and it was felt that support given at home would be more appropriate and would have the advantage of including other family members.

The links from that project to this are:

- There is a need for a co-ordinating role working with providers and misusers
- There is a need to plan carefully the approach towards working with misusers and meeting their needs in the way that is most effective in the long term
- Alcohol and substance misusers may have a number of related factors such as low income, lack of transport, low self esteem

and aspirations, etc that will affect how they access this kind of support

The key issues that this project should address are:

- Providers working in partnership effectively to set up, monitor and develop the project
- There needs to be greater resource investment to make the project viable
- More flexibility needs to be developed so that a number of approaches to reaching and working with abusers can be used simultaneously
- A link worker needs to have more psychiatric practitioner training and have the experience and support to work in a variety of delivery methods in a variety of settings

Why Chard needs this project:

Action for Chard Town (ACT) carried out consultation in Chard consisting of six "Planning for Real"-type events, a Stakeholder Event, a Business Event and consultation with young people at the Chard "Young People Centre" who were about to leave Holyrood School.

A number of key issues were raised:

- There is limited support for alcohol and substance misusers in Chard
- More local support is needed for people before they reach the point when suicide seems the only choice
- Families of alcohol and substance misusers need support as well
- That difficulty in accessing transport is a key factor for people on low income and/or living in the rural area around Chard
- Alcohol and substance misuse are key factors in increasing anti-social behaviour in the town centre.

The aims of this project are to:

- Provide a mobile drug link/support worker who is a psychiatric practitioner nurse specialising in drug management and rehabilitation
- A link between the key medical facilities and service providers in Chard (such as the medical centres, Bracken House (the community psychiatric unit) and the Healthy Living Centre) and other initiatives in Somerset.
- One to one support, advice and medical care for drug/alcohol misusers in their own homes.

Outputs	Outcomes
Drug link/support worker	A key role in the success of this project; a highly trained practitioner who is able to link with professionals, work as part of a team, and on their own to provide the level of support needed in the community Building links that help alcohol and substance misusers to change their lives
A partnership made up of health care providers in Chard and the surrounding area	Linking key professionals to develop a joined-up approach to provision Close monitoring of the project to ensure SMART targets are set and met
A map of existing provision and future needs analysis	Build on existing provision map knowledge, identify the gaps and address the priority issues arising
On-to-one sessions for a number of alcohol and substance misusers and their families	Individual needs for support and advice can be in the home environment, or other suitable sites in Chard
Projects developed to support misusers and their families such as workshops, group therapy sessions, etc.	Provide a number of formal and informal settings which help alcohol and substance misusers and their families to make self-help links with others and build on positive experience and role modelling

Stakeholders: Action for Chard Town; Chard Town Council; south Somerset District Council; Somerset County Council; Somerset Primary Care Trust; Bracken House, Chard Hospital; Chard Medical Centres; Healthy Options Partnership; South Somerset Homes; Area West Community Safety Panel; Avon & Somerset Police; Chard & Ilminster Community Justice Panel. Prepared by: Jean Smith, Saveria Moss (SSDC Community Regeneration Officer)

6. Chard Community Learning Plan Project

Background: Action for Chard Town (ACT) has conducted various consultations during 2001-2004 as part of the process of producing a Community Plan. Four key objectives have emerged:

- Enhancing skills, providing better jobs
- Improving the social infrastructure
- Raising local esteem and aspirations
- Developing wider opportunities for Chard town centre

These objectives link directly into the learning and training needs of the community and of the members of the partnership itself to be able to develop the projects identified in the Community Plan.

The project hopes to improve partnership working in Chard between learning providers, employers, other organisations such as Business Link and the community. ACT aims to involve the community in decisions about provision locally by building a structure of consultation. The benefits will be that:

- There will be less duplication of courses
- Courses will reflect the needs of the community and therefore will increase take up and completion of courses by candidates
- Courses will be held locally, at times when working people can attend
- Child care provision will be developed locally to support parents/carers in training

Action for Chard Town held a Stakeholder Event in June 2004 where a group of local learning providers

met under the theme of Lifelong Learning discussing key issues and potential projects for the Community Plan. Other potential partners of the Community Learning Partnership attended in the other seven theme groups at that Event. This core group would help develop the process for planning such an innovative approach to learning. Funding for a project worker would be applied for to support this.

The Community Learning Plan project links with other key projects in the Community Plan:

- "Chard Takes Flight!" project
- The Enviro Business Centre project
- The "Spirit of Enterprise" project.

What is a Community Learning Plan?

A comprehensive Community Learning Plan should:

- Improve local educational attainment
- Engage employers in workforce development
- Avoid duplication

The four key themes are:

- Mapping existing learning and skills provision with regard to quality, usage, range of services, availability and accessibility.
- Developing ways of addressing identified learning and skills needs that will stimulate economic growth, such as Employer and Labour Market skills needs, in relation to capacity building, project sustainability, project management and the development of funding opportunities.
- Developing ways of addressing identified learning and skills needs that will have an improved social impact
- Creating opportunities that address individual learning needs, such as basic needs training and vocational training.

The key to this is to enable local people to access the training and learning opportunities *that they feel* will enable them to get employment or improve the quality of their lives.

What is the Vision for Chard:

The Chard Vision says in part that:

“Chard and area will be a community that...is high achieving; has good quality jobs and a diverse economy; addresses the needs of its young people”

A Community Learning Plan for Chard must therefore include these key elements.

The project will do this by:

- Forming a **partnership** with local learning providers, employers and other interested organisations.
- Mapping and producing a document of the **present learning provision** in Chard and the surrounding area.
- Identifying the **gaps** in learning provision
- **Consulting with the community** to identify what will help them learn with the aim of getting employment
- **Consulting with local businesses** about the training needs of their staff with the aim of increasing their skills
- Working with local learning providers and the Chamber of Trade and Commerce to **develop a Business pack**, which outlines the support and opportunities available locally, with the aim of attracting new businesses to Chard.
- Based on the consultation to develop **a plan of courses available locally** that meets the needs of the whole community (employers, adults, young people, female returnees to work, people on low income, people with no transport of their own, etc)
- Ensuring the partnership **regularly monitors and evaluates provision and need**, to inform individual

learning provider's Strategic Work Plans for future funding and course development

- Ensuring that original ideas for course content or venues from the community undergo a trial to explore their **feasibility**

Outputs	Outcomes
Form a Community Learning Partnership for Chard	Key Stakeholders work together on producing a strategy and fundable projects
Consultant appointed to develop the Learning Plan Strategy	Bring external expertise to the process
Map present provision	A shared view of what is going on
Engage with a wide range of local people and organisations to map need	Identify gaps in provision
Develop a Business Pack	Support existing and new businesses in Chard by signposting to support and advice services, and training opportunities
Provide learning courses that have been identified, locally, at low cost and with childcare provision	Meet peoples needs locally by providing the training people want, when & where they want it
A long term Community Learning Plan strategy for learning provision locally	Challenge established patterns of negativity to learning, particularly targeting non-learners
Employ a project worker	Allow the project to develop without over burdening existing partner work loads

The Groups that will benefit from the project:

- Unemployed people to train and gain skills, which will help them to find work.
- Young people
- Female work returnees
- Low skilled, low paid people to retrain and develop new skills that will allow them to apply for higher paid employment
- Employers
- Businesses attracted to Chard by the increase of the skilled workforce available
- People who want to set up their own businesses locally, to gain the skills to make it successful

Stakeholders:

Action for Chard Town (ACT); Chard Town Council; South Somerset District Council; Somerset County Council; Yeovil College; Somerset College of Art and Technology (SCAT); Richard Huish College, Taunton; Adult Learning & Leisure; Holyrood Community School; CRESTA; Somerset Learning & Skills Council; Connexions; Business Link; South West Regional Development Agency; CITB; Chard Chamber of Trade & Commerce; Job Centre Plus; Local employers.

Sources: Chard Market Town Employment Project- Baseline Study 2004 - *Clive Miller Associates*
Market & Coastal Town Initiative: Learning & Skills Statement- July 2004 - *Nigel Williams*

Prepared by: Alan Braley, Saveria Moss (SSDC Community Regeneration Officer)

7. “Spirit of Enterprise”

Background Research studies on the business start up process and on small business management suggest that the typical age for people setting up and running a business is over 30 and in many cases over 40 years. However, increasing focus is being placed in policy and research circles on younger entrepreneurs (less than 30 years). High levels of unemployment among some groups of young people have partly fuelled this interest, with *entrepreneurship* being seen as one way out of the trap of social exclusion. Entrepreneurship might also provide an outlet for the talents of many highly educated young people, such as university graduates, in areas such as information technology, biotechnology and other modern industries.

While the potential contribution of young entrepreneurs towards the alleviation of unemployment and the promotion of economic growth and innovation is increasingly recognised, young entrepreneurs face a series of specific

problems related to their youth, which may act as a brake on their development. These are:

- Lack of capital
- Underdeveloped skills in business management
- Limited market contacts
- Outdated attitudes on the part of support or finance providers.

Why Chard needs this project:

Action for Chard Town (ACT) carried out consultation in Chard consisting of six "Planning for Real" type events, a Stakeholder Event, a Business Event and consultation with young people at the Chard "Young People Centre" who were about to leave Holyrood School.

A number of key issues were raised:

- Although Chard has low unemployment, most work available is low skilled, low paid which means that young people who leave the area to enter further, higher and vocational training rarely return to work in Chard.
- Chard's economy is based mainly on several large employers in manufacturing, which is seen nationally as a declining industry. Chard therefore needs to encourage new businesses into the area and to give local people opportunities to develop their own businesses.
- There is a "culture" of low skills, low paid work in Chard; young people may therefore have lower expectations and aspirations and this project aims to challenge that by demonstrating to young people that they can develop an entrepreneurial spirit

From these and other related issues the Community Plan has developed four key objectives:

- Enhancing skills, providing better jobs
- Improving the Social infrastructure
- Raising local esteem and aspirations
- Developing wider opportunities for Chard town centre

The aims of the project:

The Chard 'Spirit of Enterprise' project is designed as an annual event. It will be held over two/three days, in Chard Guildhall. It will bring together existing, emerging and aspiring young entrepreneurs, with specialist support organisations, who will provide:

- Access to start up and business development finance
- Awareness of, and access to appropriate support for start up and business development;
- Skills and experience in key areas such as marketing;
- Limited experience in dealing with administrative and regulatory issues.

Young Enterprise Awards

It is intended that the reputation of this annual event, will encourage Connexions and its partners to incorporate annual Somerset Young Enterprise Awards into Chard's "Spirit of Enterprise" event.

Outputs	Outcomes
An Annual Event in Chard	Bringing together a variety of local, regional and national experts delivering a wide range of experiences which not only inspire, but work
Somerset Young Enterprise Awards	The aspirational value of recognising and rewarding entrepreneurial efforts, attitude and achievements
A variety of workshops, seminars and networking opportunities	Giving a "taster" of what is working elsewhere, ideas on how a talent or skill can be made into a feasible employment opportunity
Links to support for young entrepreneurs, including to the Chard Enviro Centre (business incubation project) and the "Chard Takes Flight!" project	Encouraging young entrepreneurs to be mentored by experienced individuals and businesses, and providing new businesses with the training in business management and support services to succeed
Creating new "horizons" for work,	Challenging the low esteem, low

for people living in Chard	aspirations of local people
----------------------------	-----------------------------

What the Event will do:

The event will incorporate workshops and expert-delivered seminars; some being conducted as 'virtual' mini conferences, using video conferencing.

Subjects covered may include:

Who wants to be an Entrepreneur?

Would-be entrepreneurs are introduced to young entrepreneurs from outside Chard, who have already "made it!" This will help explore the pitfalls and success criteria for making your first £ million!

Chard: Open for Business

A showcase opportunity for local companies who have recently started up in business. Open to the public, this offers a great opportunity to see the range of new businesses that have been created in Chard and the surrounding area and to speak to those who have gone through the process of starting up their own company. Information will also be available from business support agencies from across the South Somerset district.

Trade Into Business

For those people who have a trade or craft 'hobby' and want to turn it into a business,

Supporting Young Entrepreneurs

This information session describes the support services offered by the Prince's Trust to young people interested in becoming their own boss.

Women Working For Themselves

Self-employment may suit many women as it offers them the opportunity to work from home and gives flexible working hours. This workshop explores the development of ideas or skills into businesses.

Ideas Generation Workshop

Finding & Checking out a business idea:

- Brainstorming
- Ideas Mapping
- Problem Solving
- Lateral Thinking

Online Training for Small Business Development

Broadband opens up new training opportunities. Finding the time to receive training for yourself or your staff when you are running a business can be difficult. This lunch-time seminar will introduce small businesses to the different courses available through online training. Individual appointments can be made at the seminar for introductory appointments with an online learning advisor to help you identify the best courses for local businesses.

Franchise Information Seminar

Find out the implications of taking on a franchise and get a step-by-step guide to making the most of a franchise opportunity.

Inland Revenue Workshop for the Small Business Employer

This workshop offers invaluable advice for the small business employer on a range of key issues including paying your employees, Statutory Sick Pay and Statutory Maternity Pay.

Understanding How to Reduce Your Tax Bill

This seminar aims to help small businesses understand how they can reduce their tax bill and gives hints to facilitate tax returns.

Seminar for Innovators

With representatives Link and Trademark Agents – a chance to get to grips with the help available for innovative businesses.

Trading with the EURO

Seminar organised in association with a major Bank's International Marketing Division to give companies an insight into doing business in the Euro zone.

Business Incubation: Building Futures, Not Just Careers

Through this on-line interactive workshop, delegates will be able to visit an established 'best practice' Business Incubator Scheme, via video link and ask questions.

Young Enterprise On-line Conference

An opportunity for local school children involved in Young Enterprise programmes, to showcase their

Businesses and share ideas via video conference links with schools in other parts of the UK.

This event will be also offer local students a chance to meet and work with role models from local companies and recruit more local business people to a Young Enterprise support network.

Information Booths

A number of Broadband On-line access points will be available, allowing visitors to access on-line advice on New Business Start up and Entrepreneurship, through the Shell-LiveWire and Startups.uk interactive Web Site resources.

Stakeholders: Action for Chard Town; Chard Town Council; South Somerset District Council; Somerset County Council; Holyrood Community School; Connexions; Business Link Somerset; Somerset Learning & Skills Council; Somerset Small Business Association??; Chard Chamber of Trade and Commerce; Inland Revenue; Somerset College of Art and Technology; Yeovil College; Somerset Chamber of Trade and Commerce; Local Businesses; Chard Young People Centre; Somerset Youth Service; Jobcentre Plus;.

Links with other Chard Community Plan Projects:

- The Chard Enviro: Purpose-built, sustainable units in a Business Development Centre featuring high-tech support and reduced business rates to "incubate" new businesses.
- "Chard Takes Flight!" annual powered flight model event and competition: To develop a local Learning Centre of Excellence in science, technology and engineering, initially by developing sustainable links between local engineering firms and young people by sponsoring and supporting teams of young people to design and build a model for entry.

Sources of Research:

Chard Market Town Employment Project- Baseline Study 2004

Clive Miller Associates

European Commission- Enterprise Directorate 2004

including: (Refers to specific pilot projects outcome reviews

Study into "Young, Women, Minority and Co-Entrepreneurs" July 2000

Projects co-financed under the 2nd and 3rd Multi-annual Programmes for SMEs:

"Transnational co-operation network to assist young entrepreneurs in the craft and small business sector"

"SAFE": Support and training service for entrepreneurs

"EYGE-NET": Promotion of young entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurs in the craft and micro-enterprise sector

"Entrepraining": analysis of the training and consulting needs of entrepreneurs

"Strengthening awareness of the opportunities in small and craft enterprises"

"Craft and micro-businesses- Memories for the future")

Prepared by: Alan Braley, Saveria Moss (SSDC Community Regeneration Officer)

8. Chard Transport Network Map Project 2005

Background Somerset County Council is currently consulting for the next Local Transport Plan

(LTP2) strategy and programme for 2006-2011. The draft objectives for LTP2 are:

- Reduce the growth of congestion and pollution
- Reduce social exclusion and improve access to everyday facilities
- Improve safety for all who travel
- Protect and enhance the built and natural environment
- Support sustainable economic growth in appropriate locations

The programme of works will include:

- Improvements to highways, footpaths and cycleways
- Local safety schemes and speed management
- Development of minor improvement schemes such as traffic flow schemes, dropped kerbs, pavement enhancements etc.
- Support to Community Transport schemes

In 1999 Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council, Travelwise and WS Atkins produced a Transport Strategy for Chard. A key role in developing this document was played by the Land Use and Transport steering group formed by SCC and SSDC in 1997 to produce a strategy that would meet the needs of Chard over the next fourteen years to 2011. The steering group was made up of elected members of County, District and Town Councils, District Council officers, representatives from W S Atkins, the Police, Transport 2000 and the Southern National Bus Company.

The Vision for Chard's transport system in the Strategy was one of "availability of choice" in order that:

- The well being of all the town's residents is considered as well as those who use its services;

- Public transport becomes the first choice for many journeys, linking with an interchange point for changing mode i.e. taxi, cycle and walk; and
- Those who choose to walk or cycle are able to use safe, well signed routes with secure facilities, to travel to work, school and the shops.

The aims of the Strategy were to:

- Maintain and enhance the viability and vitality of the local economy;
- Maintain and adapt the transport infrastructure to maximise its effectiveness;
- Improve access for people with disabilities;
- Protect and improve the environment;
- Improve people's awareness of a more sustainable lifestyle;
- Reduce the need to travel in terms of the number and length of journeys;
- Achieve a modal shift to train, bus, cycling and walking;
- Improve travel conditions for all modes and users;
- Reduce car dependency;
- Improve safety for all.

Why Chard needs this project:

In the Chard and district locality (the parishes of Combe St Nicholas, Wambrook, Whitestaunton, Buckland St Mary, Knowle St Giles, Chaffcombe, Cricket St Thomas, Winsham and Tatworth and Forton in South Somerset and Thorncombe (in West Dorset) and Chardstock (in East Devon)) live over 18,000 people, which will soon rise with the development of the Chard Key Site.

This population is made up of:

- 25-30% of the population are over 65 years of age, many of which cannot or no longer wish to drive;
- Although unemployment is very low in the Chard area, many of the people who are unable to work particularly in the rural areas, are without their own transport and are unable to access public transport in their locality and the right time (most factories work early/late shifts when buses do not run);

- Chard itself has five wards; two of which Holyrood and Jocelyn, register as significantly deprived. The area has key economic issues such as low wages, low skills, poor participation in further education etc which are directly influenced by the availability and cost of public transport.
- The quality of the main road links affects the small numbers of large local employers who are in the nationally declining sector of manufacturing. Improving freight road and rail links as well as public access to transport are a key consideration for the future economic development of the Chard.
- Chard has in recent times had an influx of foreign workers who have poor access to transport and housing.
- People in parts of the town as well as the rural hinterland have difficulty accessing facilities and services in Chard and other key locations such as Taunton, Yeovil, Exeter and London.

Action for Chard Town (ACT) carried out consultation in Chard consisting of six "Planning for Real"-type events, a Stakeholder Event, a Business Event and consultation with young people at the Chard "Young People Centre" who were about to leave Holyrood School.

A number of key issues were raised:

- Poor bus service which can be infrequent or non-existent in some places
- Lack of disabled access on public transport
- Disconnected rail and bus links
- Rail link at Taunton, Crewkerne and Axminster although Chard Junction could be re-opened (trains presently stop at the Junction but do not allow people to get on or off)
- No rail link to Exeter and Bristol airports
- A need for the Chard link road to relieve congestion and pollution in the town centre
- Improve parking and traffic management
- A dependency on private car use as public transport is inadequate

- Inadequate interchange facilities
- Safety and access for cyclists and pedestrians

The overall picture for this area has been described as a transport “black hole”. The present picture of Chard in which transport is the key influence, is one of:

- Rural isolation
- Fragmented rural provision
- Reliable but inaccessible rail service through the area
- Poverty induced by lack of transport for work
- A growing ageing population
- Area “leaking” young people
- People excluded from services
- Health poverty
- Lack of opportunity for further education including vocational training
- Lack of opportunity for social interaction and development
- Disabled inaccessibility

The issues around transport were so significant that ACT formed a Roads, Routes and Transport project group to start the process of addressing these local issues.

What is the Vision for Chard:

Based on the Chard Vision which says in part that “Chard and area will be a community that ...is well connected” the Roads, Routes and Transport project group (RRT) transport Vision for Chard is:

“ A fully integrated, innovative transport system that is accessible to all, affordable, energy efficient and well used. It should provide short, medium and long distance links; reduce car dependency; provide a choice of freight delivery methods; better and new rail links; and comfortable interchanges.”

This Vision includes ideas already voiced by the community, such as these quotes from the 2001 consultation events:

"Ring road around Chard-taking the traffic away from the town centre"

"Improve pavements for a safer walk to school"

"Open up the possibility of better transport, buses, trains etc...to reduce car traffic"

"Evening bus services or Dial-a-ride- especially for older people and those without cars"

"Traffic free town centre"

"Evening bus service"

"Open station"

"Bring back a form of rail transport, possibly a tramway between Chard Junction and Taunton- at least re-open Chard Junction Station"

"Bus service needs improving- especially to Tatworth etc"

"Improve pedestrian crossings...parking...traffic flow"

"More bus and coach links"

" Rail link at Chard Junction with facilities such as car parking and bus service from town"

"[Improve access] from Millfield Industrial Estate to [A30]"

The RRT principles for developing projects, are that all projects should be:

- Achievable within the rail and road network we have

- Total cost effective: environmental, social and economic costs
- An inclusive process; no assumptions made
- Involve the whole community
- Outcome to change the status quo
- Fundable
- Developed and delivered in partnership

The aim of the project is to:

Conduct a detailed *household transport survey* in the geographical area of Chard and the hinterland parishes which will:

- Map **existing use** of public transport, own car and car sharing, cycling, walking and other transport methods
- Map **where people want to go**, why, what they need, and when for work, education and training, health needs, shopping, sport, leisure and social needs
- Map **potential use** in alternative (to private car use) transport

Conduct a detailed *transport survey with a wide range of other organisations* within and outside the geographical area of Chard and the hinterland parishes, which will:

- Map the present and potential needs of **businesses** (large and small)
- Map the present and potential needs of **employers**
- Map the present and potential needs of clients of **service providers** (such as colleges and hospitals in Yeovil and Taunton)
- Map the present and potential use of **organisations and clubs**

Produce detailed *network maps* of:

- What **existing patterns and modes of transport** are; destinations, reasons for travel, cost
- Where the present **gaps in public transport provision** are
- What **changes** can be made to enhance service

Produce detailed **data** on:

- What the **barriers** are to business development, relating to recruitment, training, movement of goods, etc
- What **opportunities** there are relating to work, training and leisure facilities
- What **potential** there is for economic, social and cultural growth while enhancing the environment

What will the project do:

The data from these surveys will allow RRT, and their partners to:

- Build a clear baseline study of transport need within this area
- Build on previous consultation such as the Census 2001 for a more detailed view of transport need within this area
- Identify key projects for development.
- Prioritise projects according to evidence of need
- Prepare projects for funding application
- Develop a clear action plan for the delivery of projects up to 2025
- Feedback to the community

Outputs	Outcomes
Detailed Questionnaire to each household in Chard and surrounding area (available in languages other than English, large print and audio cassette)	Everyone within the area included in a survey of transport use and need
Detailed questionnaire to Businesses	Identify transport related barriers to the development of business, relating to recruitment, training and movement of goods, etc
Detailed questionnaire to Employers	Improve traffic congestion by providing viable alternative transport methods
Detailed questionnaire to Service providers (in Somerset)	Change people's attitude towards car dependency by raising awareness of the long term environmental and economic issues
Detailed questionnaire to local organisations and clubs	Improve prosperity, health and environmental impact by promoting a more sustainable approach to transport

Produce detailed network maps of existing transport patterns and modes of transport for a range of reasons	Challenge social isolation and exclusion resulting from lack of public transport, low income and accessibility
Develop a clear action plan for the delivery of projects up to 2025	
Provide evidence of need for funding bids for projects to improve existing public transport provision and new schemes	

Stakeholders: Action for Chard Town Roads, Routes and Transport project group; Chard Town Council; South Somerset District Council; Somerset County Council, Chard Chamber of Trade and Commerce, Local Businesses and employers; Local schools including Holyrood Community School; Yeovil College; Somerset College of Art and Technology(SCAT); Jobcentre Plus; Musgrove Park Hospital; Yeovil Hospital; Southwest Trains; Private bus service providers; Other organisations, clubs, and groups.

Prepared by: Cllr Andrew Turpin; Alan Braley; Mary Pomfret; Laurie Uncles; Saveria Moss (SSDC Community Regeneration Officer)

9. Chard Urban Design Statement and Urban Plan

Background: This project has been developed as a direct result of consultation that has taken place from 2001-2004 to develop a Community Plan for Chard and its rural hinterland. The consultation carried out by Action for Chard Town (ACT) consisting of six "Planning-For-Real" type events, a Stakeholder Event, Business Event, Youth Event and on-the-street interviews with local people about the extension to Chard Street Market identified a range of issues involving Chard Town Centre. These recurring issues are:

- Improving the choice of retail outlets by attracting larger stores presently only available in Taunton or Yeovil

- Improving the appearance of the town centre by renovating deteriorating shop fronts, making Holyrood Street a pedestrian priority zone with new attractive paving, improving run down areas by planting and paving, etc.
- Improving pedestrian access and safety by reviewing narrow and uneven pavements, street lighting and the position of dropped kerbs, particularly for the increasing number of wheelchair and motorised "buggy" users.
- Improving and increasing parking, but retaining some on-street parking especially for disabled badge holders and short stay shoppers
- Improving the overall appearance of the town by redeveloping vacant industrial buildings in or near the town centre (such as old mills and factory sites) including Brown Field sites, for mixed use (retail, business, light industrial, leisure, parking and accommodation)
- Improving and increasing the leisure and sport facilities in the town, including the use of existing open spaces and identifying new ones.
- Improving the overall facilities and services (including schools, health provision, etc) and retaining existing services such as the Post office, banks, building societies to meet the need arising from the development of the Local Plan.
- Improving traffic congestion in the town centre, particularly at the junction of the A358 and A30.
- Developing Chard as an interchange site for improved public transport, including reopening the station at South Chard, and promoting it's position on the Coast-to-coast cycleway.
- Preserving Chard's heritage and the beauty of the surrounding countryside, as well as its economic position as the second largest town in South Somerset.

From the consultation four key economic, social and environmental objectives for Chard have been identified. These are:

- Enhancing skills, providing better jobs
- Improving the Social Infrastructure
- Raising local esteem and aspirations
- Developing wider opportunities for Chard Town Centre

These key objectives can be broken into specific areas of need in Chard linked to the physical development of Chard town centre. These are:

- Make Chard an attractive place to live and work
- Develop the existing Business Park
- Attract new businesses (retail and commercial) to Chard
- Create new and better paid jobs
- Develop new ways of providing local training opportunities including vocational training for mature people, female returnees to work and young people
- Develop and improve an understanding and acceptance by local people of ethnic minority groups including European Union member workers in Chard
- Provide affordable housing to buy or rent, especially for single people, couples and young people
- Develop new and improve existing sports and leisure facilities and activities for all age groups but especially young people
- Plan for the possible local effects of climate change including flooding of areas in the town
- Create opportunities that support carers of the long term or terminally ill, and the elderly, disabled, drug users and other groups.

The aim of this project is to:

1. **Existing and Potential Land Use:**
 - Produce a detailed study of **existing land use** (including brown field and underused sites) and **land ownership** of the town centre of Chard
 - Identify key **areas for redevelopment** (including reports on the pollution of sites and geology if applicable)
 - Identify **options of possible future use** for these sites giving **reasons** for option and **affects** of such on the immediate locality and to Chard overall
 - Identify **open spaces** and **ownership**
 - Link the detailed study of the existing built environment with the **Local Plan**, identifying the **effects on infrastructure**, and **specific solution scenarios**

- **Consult with Stakeholders** of specific sites, the options and the evidence for and against them
- **Consult with the community** of Chard about the options and the reasons for each
- Produce a **Chard Design Statement**
- **Link the** options of this study with the studies below (2, 3 & 4)
- Produce **briefs for the feasibility study(s)** of the key options(s) identified for both existing and new sites

2. Traffic and Parking:

- Produce a **summary report**, which consolidates all the existing data relating to traffic and parking in Chard and the surrounding area
- Produce a detailed study of **existing traffic flow** in the town centre
- Identify the key **issues** around traffic flow and the **options** for solutions with the existing road infrastructure and the proposed "link road"
- Produce a detailed study of **existing parking**, including resident parking, on-street shoppers parking, disabled parking and in car parks
- Identify the **options** to improving and increasing parking in the town including improved bus parking and taxi rank(s)
- **Consult** with Stakeholders and the community about the options for improved traffic management and parking
- **Link** the options with the options of the public transport study (3)
- Produce **briefs for the feasibility study(s)** of the key option(s) identified

3. Developing public transport (Links to the Chard Transport Network Map Project)

- Produce a **report**, which consolidates all the data relating to **existing public transport**, availability and use, relating to buses, coaches, and train.
- Produce a **detailed study** of alternative public transport **options** for improved access in Chard, between Chard and surrounding villages, and between Chard and other key towns such as Crewkerne, Ilminster and Taunton, and key cities such as Exeter and London.
- From the arising options produce detailed **advantages/disadvantages, economic benefits** to

Chard and the surrounding area, **costing** and **timescales** for **each**

- **Consult** the options with Stakeholders and the community
- **Link** the options of this study with the traffic and parking study (2)
- Produce **briefs for the feasibility study(s)** of the key option(s) identified

4. **Effects of Climate Change on Chard and hinterland:**

- Produce a **detailed study of the effects on Chard** of possible climate change including the effects on the built environment and open spaces including Chard Reservoir (Nature Reserve)
- Produce a **detailed study of the effects on the flood plain** communities in Chard’s rural hinterland particularly of increased precipitation and river flow
- From the possible scenarios arising from the study(s) identify **options** with detailed **costing** and **timescale** for **each**

Outputs	Outcomes
Study of existing land use including open spaces, Brown field sites, etc (ownership, pollution, geology, etc)	Gain an understanding of what the present situation is in Chard concerning land use, traffic flow and parking
Specific scenarios identified for possible future use (including a study of effects on infrastructure)	Gain an understanding of the effects of different development scenarios, particularly the effect on infrastructure and environment
Consultation with Stakeholders and the community about land use, traffic and parking scenarios for Chard Town Centre	Have an agreed strategy for the development of the town which will become part of the Local Development Framework for Chard
Consultant brief(s) prepared	
Chard Design Statement produced	
Study of existing and projected traffic flow and parking and report (linking with Chard Transport Network Map Project)	
Study of effects of Climate Change on Chard and hinterland	

Stakeholders: Action for Chard Town(ACT); Chard Town Council;
South Somerset District Council;
Somerset County Council; Chard Chamber of Trade
& Commerce; South West Regional Development
Agency;

Other key studies: *Action for Chard Town (ACT)* Consultation Reports
and Data:
Chard Consultations November-December 2001
Action for Chard Town –Now! Stakeholder Event
June 2004
Chard Young Peoples Centre July 2004
Chard Means Business! Event September 2004
Surveys in Chard Market April-Sept 2003
Chard Transport Mapping Project Data from Surveys
(Action for Chard Town) 2005

Chard Retail Study - *Jonas Driver 2003*
Chard Local Transport Plan -(SCC) 1999
Local Transport Plan II Consultation- (SCC) 2005
Chard Market Town Employment Project Baseline
Study 2004- *Clive Miller Associates*

APPENDIX TWO

Background Information and reports from the MCTi
and Consultation process
for the Community Plan for Chard & Surrounding Area.

What is a Market Town Healthcheck?

The market town healthcheck;

- ❖ Allows local people to identify the economic, environmental and social strengths and weaknesses of a market town and its surrounding countryside;
- ❖ Helps people to identify the impact of changing local circumstances;
- ❖ Is a sound basis for creating an action plan for revitalisation.

This healthcheck not only covers the whole town and its surrounding countryside, but enables people to look at a wide range of connected issues that affect the quality of life. It can be used by people in market towns of any size. The healthcheck, leading to a rejuvenated and healthy market town, will benefit residents and visitors alike.

The healthcheck consists of a series of worksheets that contain questions about environmental, social and economic issues. Answering the worksheets can lead to a vision for the future of the town, from which a plan of action can be prepared. Carrying out a healthcheck requires commitment from all members of the community; it is a process that is led by a partnership of market town interests.

Above item taken from the "Market Towns Healthcheck Handbook" March 2005

Results of ACT Consultations

Expansion of Chard Market

Results of Consultations, October-November 2002

Background:

As part of the bid for the Market and Coastal Towns initiative, in November and December 2001, a large-scale consultation with the community of Chard resulted in nearly 3,000 suggestions as to how to regenerate the town. Highlighted in these results was the strong desire to expand Chard market. The reasoning that lay behind this was twofold: firstly, to put Chard back on the map as being a thriving market town with the market itself attracting tourists and shoppers alike, as in towns like Honiton and Bridport; secondly, the resulting increase in footfall would translate as increased trade for Chard retailers.

Markets are very popular the country over, some more so than others. People come from miles around to visit them who otherwise would not visit the town. The ACT Group saw this as an opportunity to attempt to increase the general prosperity of Chard, with the market and retailers working in tandem to create a thriving economic arena wherein businesses could grow; a chance also to improve the flagging image of Chard. There is the prospect now to draw in funding to progress this project, to work in conjunction with other agencies – from Tourism and Food Links to other major projects in the area – and to attract new and diverse trading opportunities to the town that work in harmony with existing traders to create an atmosphere where everyone can benefit.

Holyrood Street

This street is already earmarked for economic regeneration, particularly through the HERS scheme. It was felt that the retailers here would benefit from having trade siphoned down via an extended market. Also, learning from the experience of other successful markets, those that work well are those that have some form of pedestrian priority – where people can wander freely without traffic causing a nuisance – and those that have a diverse range of goods for sale, from an established Farmers' Market to craft and antiques stalls etc. Wells market is a good example of how this works in practice. Thus the thoughts were that Holyrood Street could possibly be closed off for a trial period on market day, coupled with free car parking for the day, with the market stretching down the street accommodating as many diverse stalls as possible. The trial period would be followed by a period of evaluation to ascertain its impact on both the market, the retailers and the public alike.

Fore Street

This has also attracted attention. Two options were put forward:

1. That the road be closed off and traffic diverted through and around the town. Car parks would still be accessible to cars, as would Boden Street and Holyrood Street. This allows the use of a lengthy, pedestrian-friendly environment in which to extend the number and variety of stalls.
2. That the market be held on both sides of Fore Street, with cars passing between, much like Honiton and Bridport. Naturally, the car parking situated on this stretch of Fore Street would have to be foregone throughout the duration of market trading.

Again this would be a pilot programme to be evaluated later. However, there are difficulties in closing off the main A30 entirely, though this is not an impossibility.

The Consultations:

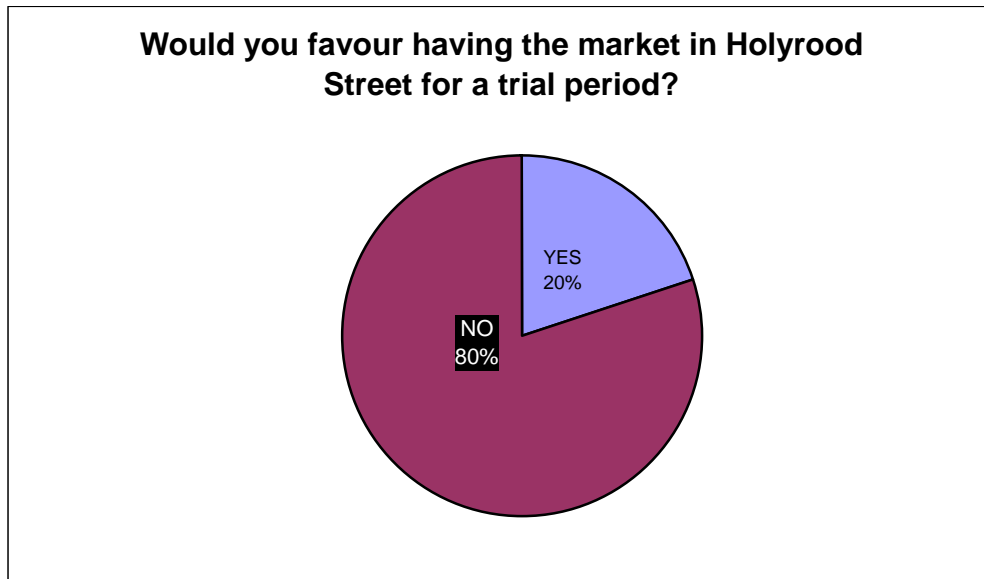
Three questionnaires were designed in order to capture what was felt about these ideas, and about the market in general. These were aimed separately at:

- Market Traders
- Shop Keepers
- The General Public

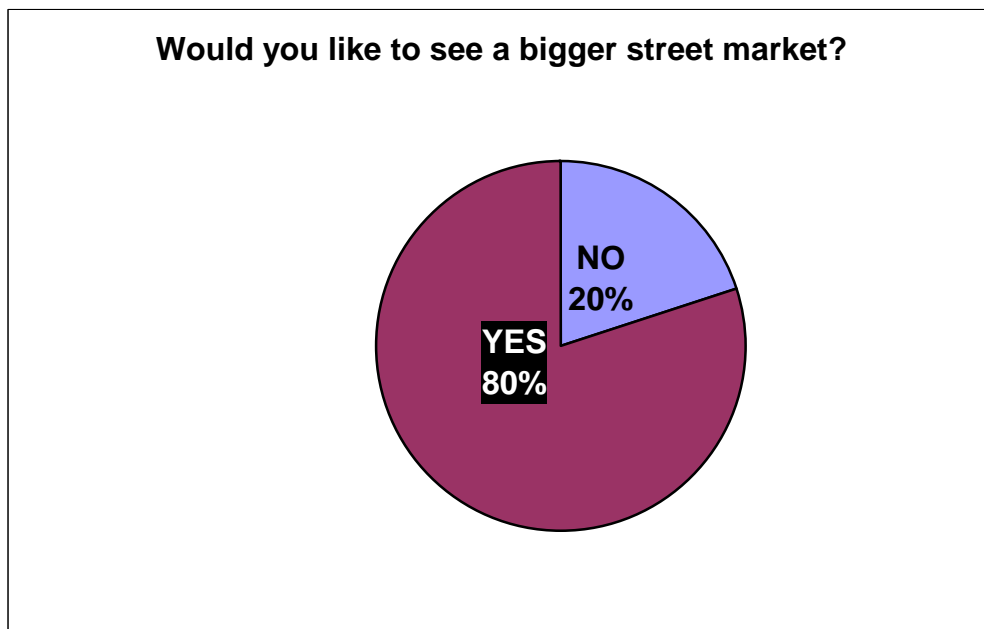
It was noted that these three groups have slightly different agendas and thus the data needed to be captured in such a way that an independent evaluation was possible of each distinct group. Members of ACT, the Chamber of Trade, as well as a number of youths, volunteered to gather the information and produced between them a total of 261 questionnaires broken down as follows:

- Market Traders – 10 respondents (the number of traders available)
- Chard Retailers – 38 respondents (out of a possible 100 delivered)
- General public - 213 respondents

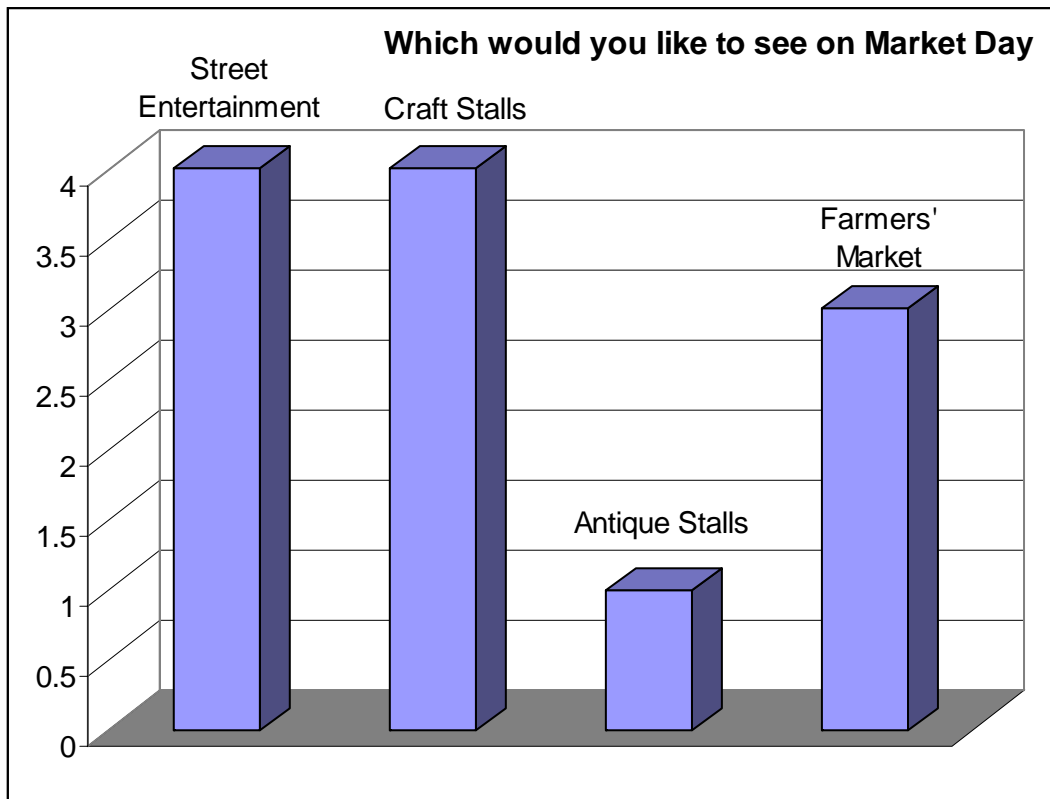
Market Trader Questionnaires – Results



*



The first thing that is apparent is that, though the market traders are almost overwhelmingly in favour of a bigger market, the exact opposite is true when asked if they would like to go into Holyrood Street. There is some concern that siting the market in this street will have the effect of ‘hiding’ them around the corner, and that customers themselves don’t like change. Also, it has later transpired that some of the traders recall having stalls in this street before, as an extension of the market held in Fore Street, and felt isolated as a result.



Nearly half the traders wanted to see both **street entertainment** and **craft stalls**, but were less than enthusiastic about the **antique stalls**, which only 1 trader liked. 3 traders wished to see a **farmers' market**.

Only 2 traders wished to see **Sunday** as a market day.

9 out of 10 traders thought it was a good idea that the car parks were free on market day to help promote business.

Traders' Comments:

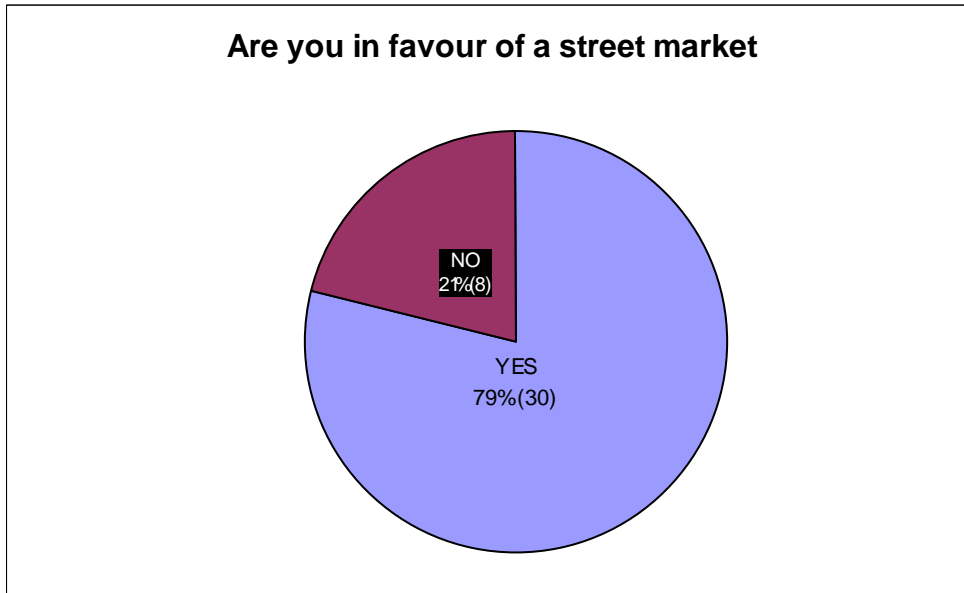
- Insufficient trade for a bigger market
- Fill the one we've got first
- Have stalls opposite side of Fore Street – close off the road
- Make this market larger on both sides of the road
- Close off Fore Street and divert the traffic

All in all, the market traders themselves were keener on the idea of using Fore Street in one form or another, than using Holyrood Street.

Chard Retailers – Results:

There was a total of 38 respondents and were located in the town center as follows:

- Holyrood Street 21
- Fore Street 7
- Boden Street 1
- High Street 8
- Howards Row 1

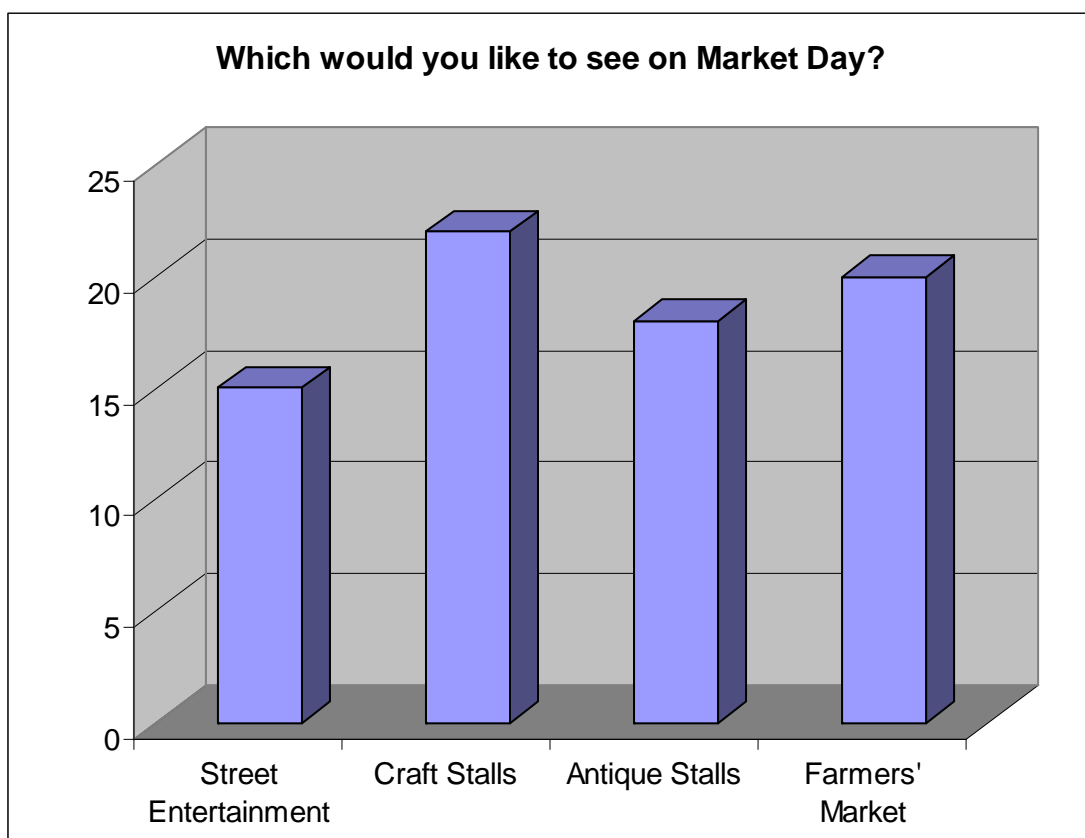


There is certainly a shift towards the majority of retailers being in favour of a street market (79%). However, there is still some antagonism towards the market in general from some retailers. Arguments range from the low rates paid in comparison to retailers, and the presence of competition opposite shops and stores that take trade away (see comments below).

Interestingly, there is an almost 50-50 split by **Holyrood Street retailers** over whether the market should go into Holyrood Street, with 10 against and 11 for. This split was again evident in **Fore Street retailers**, with 3 for it and 4 against. **High Street retailers**, on the other hand, were generally for it moving into Holyrood Street, with 6 for and 2 against.

Parking:

29 out of 31 retailers said that it was a good idea that parking should be free on Saturday market day.



There is a general consensus by retailers that there would be approval of different kinds of stalls. Particular favourites were the craft stalls and a farmers' market. Antique stalls (such as in Bridport market) were not far behind the farmers' market in popularity. Even Street Entertainment is considered by what represents nearly half the respondents. The general feeling is that different types of stalls should be attracted and can be beneficial.

When asked what other days the Market might be held, the results were as follows:

Wednesday – 16

Monday – 4

Thursday – 3

Friday – 3

Sunday – 1

Wednesday – the most popular – is half day closing in Chard, therefore does not, one suspects, interfere with retailers' trade, which possibly accounts for its popularity.

The market is a contentious issue in Chard from a retailer's point of view. Whilst there is recognition that it can increase trade for all concerned, there are still issues surrounding it that are not, it should be pointed out, endemic to Chard. They have been voiced in other towns. Some of the comments below help to illustrate these issues:

- " I like the market where it is and it helps trade on a Saturday" (Fore Street)
- "Stall holders pay no rates. They are not subject to rules and regulations. Are you really trying to put ALL businesses out of business? Try cleaning up prostitutes, drugs and boozing in the road and maybe you'd get people back"
- "Congestion in Holyrood Street is a problem"
- "The traffic on HS is business for us"
- "Thought it was good on Lace Mill car park as it was central and far away from traffic"
- " "It would stop /reduce traffic flow and parking on HS – road too narrow"
- "Traffic congestion"
- "Lack of vehicular access to my store. If I have no access I am stumped for both deliveries and customer pick ups"
- "It is not fair on retailers – why should we lose money for someone else to make money at our expense?"
- "People rely on being able to park outside, especially the infirm who cannot walk far"
- "A larger market is bound to affect the trade of existing shops. We are already struggling with a change of shopping habits in the town."
- You can still shop and park in HS easier than ever before. You do not want to frighten away those shoppers who park and walk about."
- "Blocked streets. Chaos."
- "18 months ago this was thrown out by the Town Council because we lose a street where people park and get what they want."

Whilst these comments are valid, it is worth noting that virtually all who objected to the market/market in Holyrood Street, made extra comments like the above. The ones who were in favour of the market generally did not expand on why they were in favour, except to add that they'd like to see more variety and were in favour of it increasing, so the picture here is slightly skewed towards the negative. Nearly half of retailers had nothing extra to say, and this is obvious by its absence and one assumes they were strongly in favour.

Customer/Public Survey

Total Respondents – 213

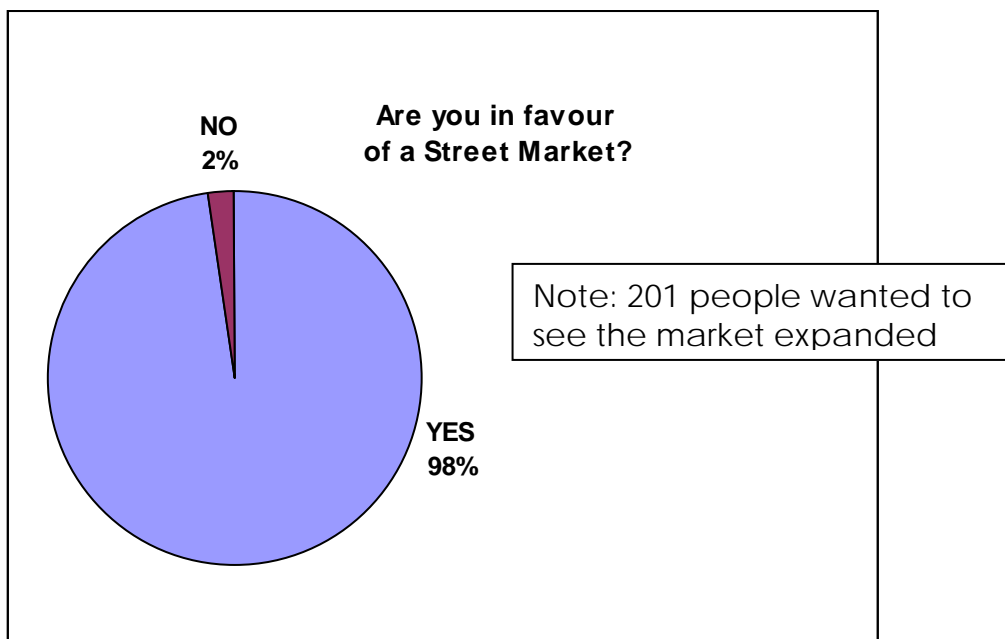
These were made up of:

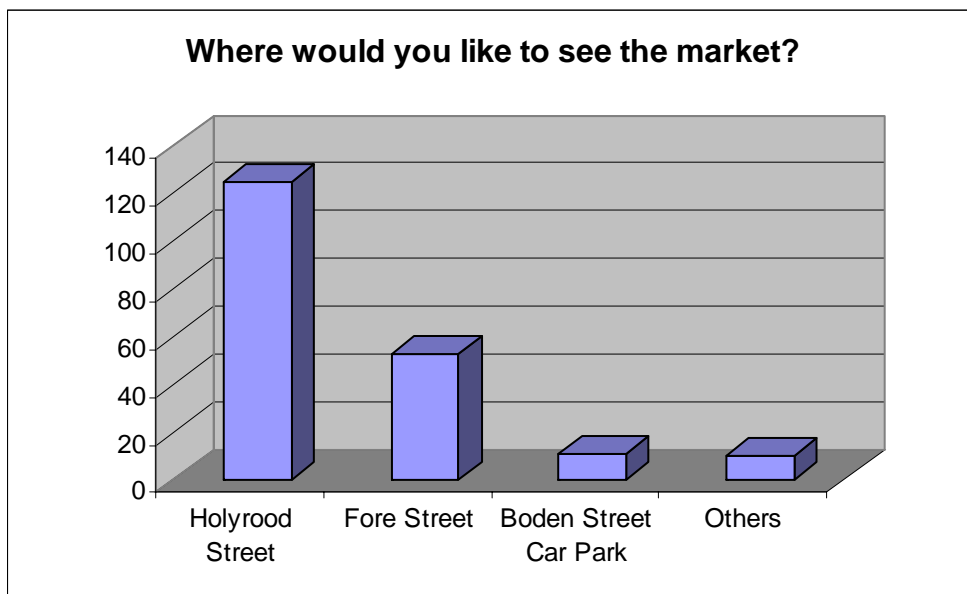
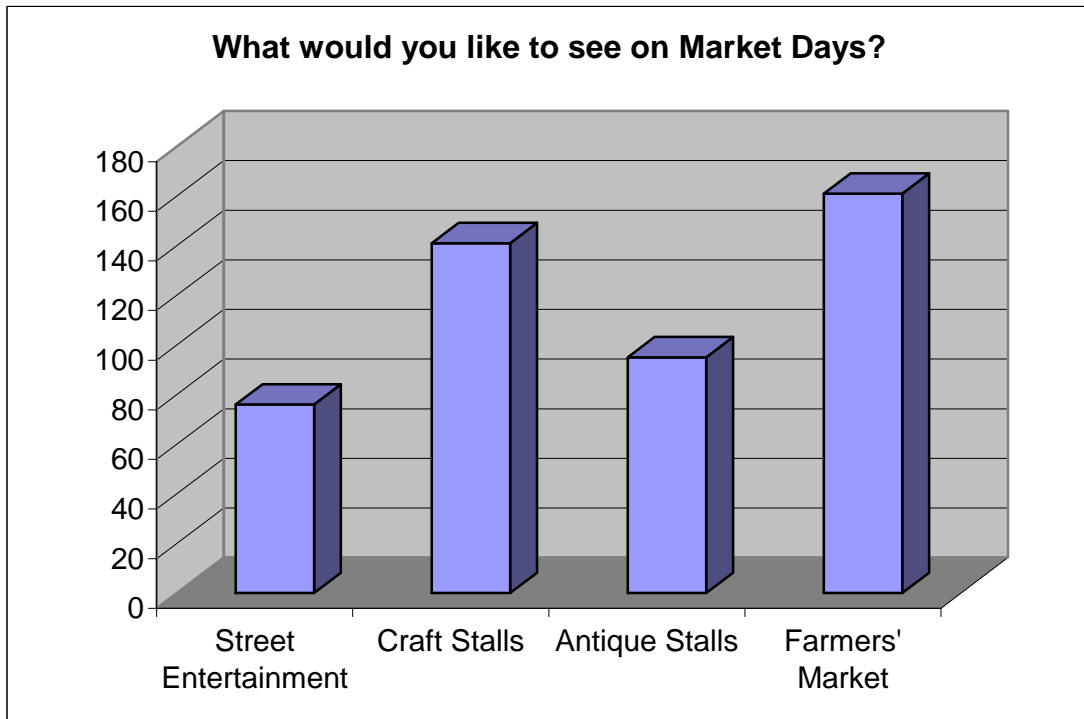
Town residents – 143

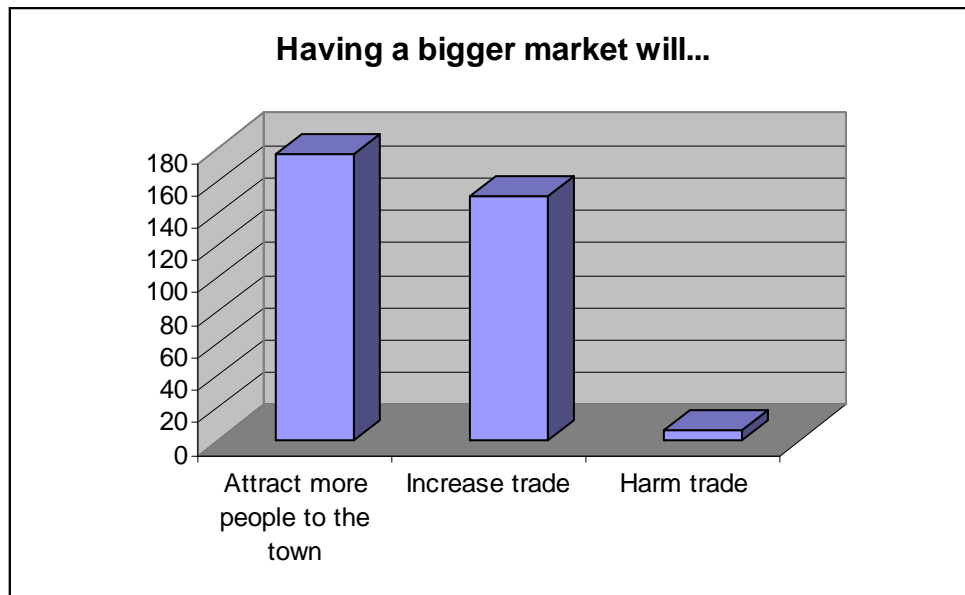
Villagers – 48

Visitors – 11

Blanks – 11







Summary

Most of what is felt about the market from a public point of view is self explanatory. As can be seen quite plainly, the general public are strongly in favour of a market, and this is reflected in the positive response. From an economic point of view, retailers should see this as a plus, for if people (their customers) on the whole like markets, they will want to visit those towns that possess them, and it appears to follow that the better the market, the more people will visit. This can only be good for the retail heart of the town. Though the public might not be said to be business people, they firmly believe that having a bigger market will increase general trade and whilst this is a perception, if this perception that having a bigger market town equates with that town's prosperity, then merely having a bigger market will be a huge boost to the town's image as a thriving town.

The problem remains that the market traders do not like the idea of moving into Holyrood Street, there is a 50-50 split amongst retailers, and there are doubts that the street might be too crowded. There is the option of expanding on both sides of Fore Street, much as has been done in Honiton and Bridport, and this should be seriously looked at as an alternative. Conversations with retailers about their objections center on the loss of car parking, the possibility of long-term closure of the street and pedestrianisation, the latter causing equal concern and excitement.

Appendix – results of questionnaires

Market traders - results	YES	NO
Would you like to see a bigger street market	8	2
Would you favour having the market in Holyrood Street for a trial period	2	8
Do you think having a bigger market will:		
Attract more people to the town	8	
Increase trade	8	
Harm trade	0	
Which would you like to see on market day		
Street entertainment	4	
Craft stalls	4	
Antique Stalls	1	
Farmers Market	3	
Other		
Would free parking help the markets and shops on market day	9	
What other day/s would you like to see the market held		
Monday	0	
Tuesday	0	
Wednesday	0	
Thursday	0	
Friday	0	
Sunday	2	

Comments:

Insufficient trade for a bigger market
 Fill the one we've got first
 Have stalls opposite side of Fore Street - close the road
 Make this market larger both sides of the road
 Close off Fore Street and divert the traffic

Total of 10 respondents (100% return)

Market Questionnaire - General Public

	YES	NO
Are you in favour of a street market?	208	5
Would you like to see bigger street market?	201	12
Town residents	143	

Villagers	48
Visitors	11
Blanks	11
Total Respondents	213

Where would you like to see the market: Town residents

1 Holyrood Street	89
2 Fore Street	34
Boden St car park	10
Others	10

Where would you like to see the market: Villagers

1 Holyrood Street	30
2 Fore Street	14
Boden St car park	1
Others	3

Where would you like to see the market: Visitors

1 Holyrood Street	6
2 Fore Street	5

Totals:

Holyrood Street	125
Fore street	53
Boden St car Park	11
Others	10

Which would you like to see on market days:

Street entertainment	76
Craft stalls	141
Antique Stalls	95
Farmers' Market	161
Other	To list separately

What other days would you like to see it held

Mon	3
Tues	22
Wed	61
Thur	29
Fri	23
Sun	15
Saturday only	22

Having a bigger market will

Attract more people to the town	176
Increase trade	150
Harm trade	6

Market questionnaire - Chard retailers

38 respondents

Where is your store located

Holyrood Street	21
Fore Street	7
Boden Street	1
High Street	8
Howards Row	1

Are you in favour of a street market

YES	NO
30	8

Are you in favour of having the market in Holyrood Street etc

23	15
----	----

Are you in favour of free parking?

29	2
----	---

Which of the following would you like to see on market day

Street entertainment	15
Craft stalls	22
Antique stalls	18
Farmers' market	20

On what other days would you like to see the market held

Mon	
Tues	4
Wed	16
Thurs	3
Fri	3
Sun	1

**CONSULTATION AT
CHARD YOUNG PEOPLE CENTRE
26th July 2004**

By the end of this session we will have:

1. - Identified **key issues** facing young people in Chard today
2. - Identified some **potential projects** to change things for the better!

Key questions

Where do you see yourself (working, living, training) in the next few years?

How do you see the solutions to any difficulties you face associated with living in Chard?

How can ACT help make Chard a better place for us all to live in?

1. What would have made growing up in Chard better for you

- Somewhere to go at the weekends (evenings)
- Somewhere safe! Not controlled (in town)
- Skate park – earlier. Better quality. Under shelter (bigger – :Bowl:)
- Use Guildhall for discos (rollerblade) (under 18's)
- Shops: (Ecko) shopping mall. Hippi – shops
- Cyber café (late night)
- Make a place for boyracers (workshop)
- MacDonalds
- Shops (boys – New Look)
- Arcade
- More sports for girls (football, cricket)
- Adventure/ fun park/ (Crealy...)
- Cheaper transport particularly for 15-18 year olds/ better links / more regular trains

2. What has helped you most in growing up in Chard

- Youth Club
- Sports Clubs (Cresta) and clubs / societies
- Schools – Holyrood + primary

- Small community – so you know everyone (this is not always a positive thing)
- Safe environment to grow up in
- It is not too loud and busy
- Sports – skateboarding, BMX, football, rugby, roller blading
- Family & friends
- Friendly environment – knowing everyone
- Shopping
- Fields/parks/ public spaces.

3 What do you think are the 3 most important things you will need in the next 10 years.

1. Jobs – better job prospects in Chard

Especially for girls, not enough jobs. Not enough good ones.

Need more

(Larger businesses) with interesting jobs

Jobs & Education - more accessibility to better jobs

1. Family - being able to have family around to support – and a more family orientated

Community.

More help for families.

2. Transport, buses, own car for own independence. Because public transport is not good

Tackling traffic congestion, somewhere to take them.

Somewhere that is safe for children, where there is a crèche available, Moving 'boy racers' on.

3. Affordable and accessible housing

Housing needs to be affordable.

More accessibility to rented housing and lower cost housing

POTENTIAL PROJECTS

Cyber café

Adventure/fun park (Crealy)

More shops, clothes shops /Arcade

More sports for girls

Disco – Guildhall

A Taster of other jobs – work experience on different jobs

Travel to other places

Job Roadshow
Building more affordable housing! (basic)
Sort the Dalgety's site out, ie. Arcades/ Pool/ snooker Skate
Park, McDonalds/ stuff to do!
Go Karting centre
Better Skate Park. Dirt tracks for all-rounders
Sort Bracken House out!!

Youth Forum

ISSUES

Not enough quality job's (around and in Chard)
Lack of communication
Rubbish skate park/poor quality – too dangerous (under cover)
Dalgety's going to waste / buy the warehouse near Focus
Not being listened to
Bad lighting area around rugby club
More to do for girls
We get bored
Not enough sports facilities
We have nowhere to go
Not enough sports facilities
We have nowhere to go
Not enough starter houses/flats/bungalows – more housing – too
expensive
Reservoir – weird people about
More access to trains
Bad transport – not regular – too expensive
Need late night buses (safe)
Nowhere to camp
Fair Field stream
UFIE (Youth Club) should be open more
Given a chance

28th July 2004