

Bringing People Together

Community Cohesion in Derbyshire

Guidance Note for the

Voluntary and Community Sector

Who is this guidance for?

Community groups, volunteers, voluntary sector service providers, faith groups, social enterprises, umbrella organisations, charities etc.



What is community cohesion?

Community cohesion is the glue which binds communities together.

This is strengthened when people get on well together, respect each other and feel they can influence decisions in their area. It can be weakened when people feel that they do not enjoy the same life opportunities as others.

What does this mean in Derbyshire?

In Derbyshire, a wide range of factors affect cohesion. These include ethnicity, social and economic background, housing, the length of time people have lived in an area, age, nationality, the availability of local services and levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. We want to build communities where:

- There is a shared vision for the future and a sense of belonging
- Young and older people get on well together and people respect each other
- People from different backgrounds, particularly those who are under represented have a voice and access to the same life opportunities, employment and services
- The gap between “the haves” and “the have nots” is reduced by tackling inequality
- People from new communities are welcomed and are able to settle and integrate.

Why is community cohesion important?

Communities where people work together are stronger communities. Cohesion has many knock on effects such as helping people to feel a sense of belonging and improving satisfaction with an area as a place to live. Although every area is different, cohesion relates closely to many other priorities such as reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and improving education and training.

Why are you important?

You may help to support and develop organisations that deliver community based services and facilities or actually be running those frontline community groups. You assist communities to find local solutions to local problems and also enable many people to get involved in their communities through volunteering. Please turn over for ideas on how you can help.

You can help to make communities in Derbyshire more cohesive by:

- Ensuring membership is inclusive and encourages people from a variety of backgrounds. Advertise your group's meetings and activities as widely as possible and make new people feel welcome.
- Listening to the views, concerns and anxieties of people within your group (or those you work with) and either signposting to further support available or reporting local disputes and tensions which may have the potential to lead to more serious problems.
- Encouraging local people with the ability to lead and inspire to become champions for cohesion.
- Reaching out to people who find it hard to access services and helping them to gain the support they need from local institutions.
- Getting involved in local partnerships to share your knowledge and expertise about local issues with other local service providers.
- Reporting problems and encouraging members of your community to do the same. If you see or hear anything worrying in your neighbourhood call 0345 123 3333 and report it to Keystone (the Derbyshire operation to combat violent extremism).
- Spreading the word through local networks and media about successful local activities that bring people from different backgrounds together to build local pride and a sense of belonging.
- Providing volunteering opportunities which enable people to make a positive contribution to their local communities.

For more information on community cohesion in Derbyshire visit
www.derbyshire.gov.uk/bringingpeopletogether

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On the above website you'll find:

- 'Bringing People Together' – Derbyshire's Community Cohesion Strategy
- A 'Bringing People Together' Action Plan outlining current activities
- Key contact details and information about who is leading this work
- Other guidance notes and resources to help you understand cohesion
- More ideas about how you can help to build cohesion

