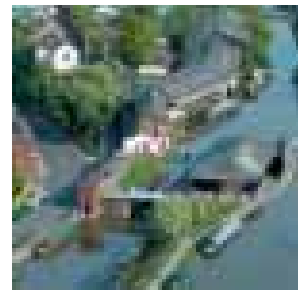
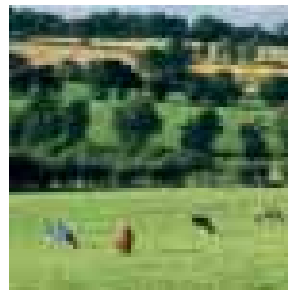
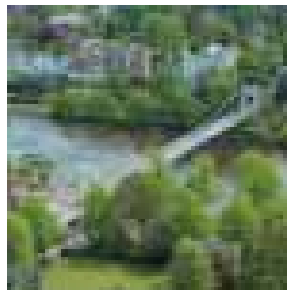


Project Chester



Chester City Council's contribution to achieving Chester's Community Plan



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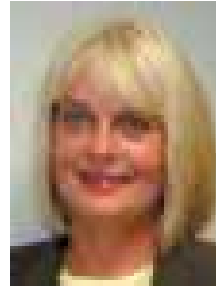
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David Evans



John Price



Margaret Parker

Foreword

"We are pleased to introduce 'Project Chester' to you. With its partners, Chester City Council is delivering a challenging agenda. Project Chester is this 'big picture' - it is happening all around us - both in the city and in the rural areas.

The place is being transformed, but this transformation is based upon the people of Chester, its culture and its distinctive character. We aim to make Chester a city of world stature. We ask that you join with us in our endeavours."

David Evans, Leader

John Price, Deputy Leader

Margaret Parker



Chester

1. Introduction

- 1.1 'Project Chester' is Chester City Council's contribution to achieving the Community Plan's vision for the future of the district, "Chester's Way Ahead".**
- 1.2** Project Chester has been prepared to assist us in our involvement in Community Planning and to help stimulate discussion between partners. We will use it to help us shape our own Corporate Plan and key strategies. It will help set the framework for service delivery and how we organise ourselves to do this. It also helps us to explain to people and helps us understand how the council's aspirations are being delivered and how the various components of our activities fit together. Much is currently happening in the district. Some of this activity is being undertaken directly by the city council and its partners, others are being facilitated or supported by the council.
- 1.3 'Project Chester' explains this activity and how it all fits together - it is an explanation of the 'big picture' and how this contributes to delivering Chester's Community Plan and the city council's Corporate Plan.**
- 1.4** Both the IDeA Peer Review and Comprehensive Performance Assessment Teams, who have visited us to check out our performance, said that we should prepare such a document in order to give greater clarity to what we are about and how our priorities are established.



New homes

- 1.5 This paper brings our thinking together for a wide area of activity. While it looks to the future and sets many challenges it is, nevertheless, founded on existing plans for which action is currently progressing.
- 1.6 **We are committed to improve the quality of life for people in Chester. Project Chester helps us to plan and communicate our role to do that!**



Corporate principles

2. Corporate Plan

2.1 Our Corporate Plan is the overriding plan for our actions, which sets out what we intend to achieve by 2007 - it is set out as five priority areas to:

achieve safe and attractive neighbourhoods

protect and enhance Chester's built and natural environment

increase Chester's prosperity, protect job opportunities and develop competitiveness of the local economy

improve access and equality of opportunity for all

make Chester livelier and develop its locally distinctive qualities

These priority areas have been derived from the Community Plan vision and focus the council's activities and resources. Our corporate plan is helping us transform our organisation so that it is excellent by any standards as a modern local authority. This paper explains how we are helping to transform Chester so that our district also excels in the modern world.



Eastgate Street



Business Park



Shoppers

3. The Big Picture

3.1 Chester's Place in the World

Chester is many things to many people. For 120,000 of us it's home. For over 70,000 of us it's where we work and not all of us live here - Chester is a regional centre for employment. The sub-region that comprises Chester, Deeside, Ellesmere Port and Wrexham is an acknowledged economic driver to the wider economies of the North West of England and North Wales. Over the last 20 years it has been one of the fastest growing economies in the UK. Chester and Deeside are the focus of this economic hub - the image and profile of Chester is the driver for this activity.

For over six million people each year it's a place to visit for business or pleasure; only Manchester and Blackpool in the North West receive more visitors. Chester's shopping economy is usually in the top ten in national retail surveys. Chester is one of the best-preserved and most popular historic cities in Europe.

All of this creates tensions that we have to manage. Some residents feel too much is done for visitors, to the disadvantage of local people who pay local taxes. Businesses that rely on visitors feel even more should be done to attract more visitors. The business community wants Chester to stay competitive in its key markets like shopping and leisure by extending what is on offer. Most of Chester's jobs are underpinned, one way or the other, by the money spent by those who visit. Chester's setting in the midst of green belt and attractive open countryside is part of its appeal and so outward growth is not an option.



Vision of Chester

Our vision for Chester is one that tries to manage that complex picture. It also reflects the great pride in the place that characterises how people feel about their part of Chester. We aim to work with residents and partners to create a Chester that:

locally, gives residents safe, attractive communities and the quality services and environment they are entitled to

regionally, offers the range of shopping, leisure and employment opportunities that people in our sub-region and wider region need from our city and district

nationally, is seen as a regional centre and a major historic city and is highly regarded as a good place to visit and invest in

internationally, is recognised as a major heritage city and visitor destination

How do we do that? We need to work in partnership at a variety of levels to achieve this multi-layered vision:

locally, our members are elected by local people to represent their interests. We work with other public agencies and through Chester in Partnership, the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), and our own Area Committees. We listen to and consult local people and interest groups

regionally we work with our regional and sub-regional partners:

- The Mersey/Dee Alliance
- Cheshire and Warrington Economic Alliance



Cheshire Countryside

- ⌘ Chester and Warrington Information Consortium
- ⌘ The North East Wales/West Cheshire Partnership
- ⌘ GONW, the Regional Housing Board, NWRA and NWDA
- ⌘ Cheshire Local Government Association (LGA)

nationally, we work with the national LGA, central government and national agencies and companies that can help Chester

internationally, we work with international businesses, the European Commission, the Walled Towns Friendship Circle, our twin towns and our various partners in Europe and elsewhere

Within the context of the Community Plan, and after consultation on what we plan to do with residents and partners, we have developed some key themes which are the focus of our actions and investment over the next few years - these are:

3.2 Regenerating Neighbourhoods

We will focus on regenerating key neighbourhoods in the District:

West Chester

Chester North East Urban Action Area

Rural villages

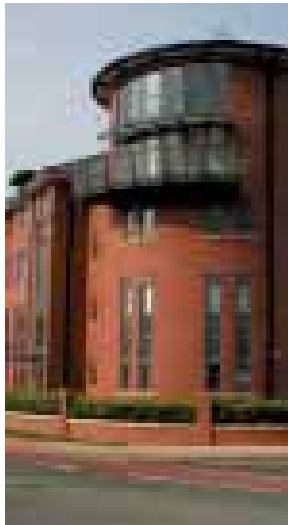
Urban villages



**TOWER WHARF
CHESTER**

2007 2008





Old Port



Lead works



Crane Wharf

West Chester

We are working with the local community and partners to regenerate West Chester and help the local communities make the area a safe and attractive place to live. Activity will focus on building the capacity of local people, involving them in decisions about how services are delivered, enhancing people's homes and their neighbourhood, providing essential community facilities, providing local jobs, encouraging social enterprise and enhancing local public space.

Action is also being focused on improving the two local shopping centres at The Parade and Western Avenue in Blacon.

The Chester Ports area is covered by a large area development brief. This will guide the mixed-use development of this important waterfront area.

The Blacon Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder is a national pilot scheme to develop the local organisation and delivery of core urban services to reverse social exclusion and promote neighbourhood renewal. It is intended that local people will drive the image and infrastructure improvement of their area.

Chester North East Urban Action Area

This is the focus of intense activity. Much of the housing and employment needs of the District in the future are being met by high-density housing and commercial development in this area. However, we are not just interested in new development; the aim is to regenerate the area as a whole for existing and new residents. This is about place-making.



Boughton Canal Corridor

Proposals here include:

- the pilot Homezone at Francis Street/Egerton Street
- a Housing Renewal Area in the Royals area
- developing mixed use communities at the rail lands and the canal side - providing homes, jobs and leisure opportunities
- enhancing Brook Street and City Road as key linkages to the city centre
- providing new and enhanced open spaces for leisure and play
- major improvements to the railway station and station square as a key gateway to the city, focus for business and commerce and an integrated travel hub
- providing affordable homes for local people

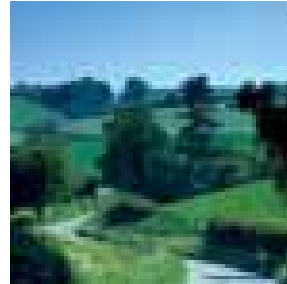
Rural Villages

Chester's villages are vital to rural life. We will work with village communities, local business people and the large estate owners to enhance and regenerate the key villages to help them to be sustainable, prosper and be safe, attractive and vibrant places to live, work and visit. Our Rural Regeneration Strategy and LEADER+ programme are the key tools for this activity. We will focus on larger villages that are the centre of large rural hinterlands:

- Malpas
- Tattenhall
- Farndon



Malpas



Countryside

Elton
Saughall
Tarvin
Waverton
Kelsall

This regeneration will comprise:

- new homes for local people
- affordable homes
- local job retention and creation
- environmental improvements of village 'high streets' and local shopping retention and enhancement projects
- improving existing and providing new village open spaces
- promoting sustainable tourism
- improving rural public transport with the county council and local bus and rail operators
- improving rural community safety

We are also enabling village design statements and Parish Plans in partnership with parish councils and local people.



Brook Street

Urban Villages

The city of Chester is made up of many 'urban villages' - communities with a clear local distinctiveness focused around a neighbourhood centre where shops, schools, community facilities, pubs and social activity take place. We will work with local communities to strengthen and enhance these local centres as the focus for improving these urban villages.

Priorities are:

- Faulkner Street/Charles Street, Hoole
- Garden Lane
- Brook Street
- Handbridge
- Westminster Park
- The Parade at Blacon
- Boughton
- Hough Green
- Kingsway
- The Lache



Improvements will comprise:

- environmental and car parking improvements
- local public transport facilities
- enhanced and safe local walking and cycle routes - both within the neighbourhoods and strategic routes to the city centre
- improvements to shops and local businesses
- CCTV and other community safety initiatives

We will work with schools and GPs, and the PCT, the police and county council to enhance local health facilities, to tackle crime and community safety and improve local education to strengthen these local centres as the hub of their neighbourhoods.

3.3 The Learning City

We want Chester to be a centre of excellence in education and research. This will help towards sustainable prosperity, civic pride and an increased profile. It will raise the skill levels of our workforce. We will work closely with colleges and education institutions and communities to:

- transform and develop University College Chester into the University of Chester
- enable and promote the expansion and development of West Cheshire College on a new city centre campus at Northgate Village



Education



e-government

create a safe and attractive city for students to live and work - providing safe walking routes in and around college areas. Working with local landlords and the colleges to provide safe and high quality student accommodation

enhance and safeguard local communities affected by college activity

work with colleges and local employers to reinforce and exploit the links between training, skill development and business need

the development of new creative industry space in association with University College Chester

tackle social exclusion

The area just to the north of the city centre around Parkgate Road and Liverpool Road will become Chester's **Education Cluster**.

3.4 Connecting Chester

New technology is changing the face of the globe - the Internet, the World Wide Web, e-commerce and e-government are transforming business and community interaction. Chester is well placed to exploit this transformation - it has a wonderful quality of life and environment in which to live and work. It is compact, has a cluster of businesses using new technology, a wealth of small local companies developing and using new technologies and a highly skilled population.

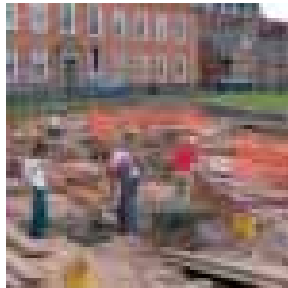


We will promote and develop the District as a connected place to put it at the forefront in these new technologies by:

- achieving full Broadband coverage across the District
- promoting home working and telematics
- promoting creative industry development focusing on the canal corridor
- promoting access in disadvantaged communities and the rural area
- working with local businesses, colleges, schools and communities to create strong virtual networks
- promoting and working with local public and voluntary agencies to enhance e-government

3.5 Polishing the Heritage Gem

Chester is known worldwide as a centre for culture, heritage and history and this is the basis of its tourism industry - it is an acknowledged regional, national and international gem. This sector employs many local people and underpins much of the local economy. It is the source of local civic pride. Working with English Heritage, the NWDA, the Chester Civic Trust and other agencies and local groups, we will improve its heritage assets and their interpretation and maintenance.



Excavations



Amphitheatre

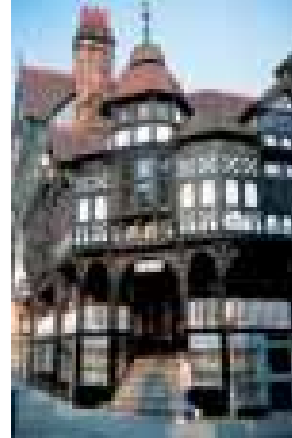
Chester's full story still waits to be told in a coherent and understandable way. We will put this right through the **Chester City Culture Park**. The aim of this concept is to pull together all the heritage and cultural assets of the city, both built and people based, and tell the story of Chester, in a modern and exciting way. It will be a journey of discovery for local people and our visitors. This will be a process of joining up the city's cultural and heritage assets so that the whole will be greater than the sum of the individual parts. It will also be a great catalyst for urban regeneration and will seek to capture the spirit of Chester. The park will form an important marketing concept for the city.

The Chester City Culture Park will focus on:

Amphitheatre Park - we aim to link the Amphitheatre, St John's and its open space, Grosvenor Park, the Roman Gardens and the Groves into one coherent place. The initial focus of this will be the research, excavation and display of Chester Amphitheatre and surrounding area - this will be a major heritage, community and tourism project and we are determined to lead, exploit and promote this - a truly international event. This area will become a focus for outdoor events and festivals and the future centre for telling the Chester story. The Chester Visitor Centre will be transformed into the Chester Amphitheatre Research and Excavation Centre.



City Walls



Chester Rows

Improving and reusing the City Walls and Towers - The Chester Local Distinctiveness Strategy proposes the '**Green Moat**' concept - linking and improving all the open space adjoining the city walls. This will improve the setting of the city walls and reinforce the core of the city as a fortress. The architectural lighting of the walls and Castle will further enhance the use and setting of what are the most intact city walls in England.

Chester Rows - enhancing and co-ordinating management of these unique assets and promoting their use as vibrant and colourful arcades. The Chester Local Distinctiveness Strategy proposes the '**Chester Bazaar**' project to promote the use of the Rows as gallery trading areas with cafes and local traders.

Chester Castle Gateway:

- ⌘ the enhancement of the Castle area as a visitor destination, a major heritage quarter and a place for events
- ⌘ the transformation of the Little Roodee as the main visitor coach facility and visitor orientation place serving the city centre
- ⌘ the redevelopment of the former Police HQ to a landmark mixed use development area with hotel, conference facilities and business space with links to the Castle and racecourse
- ⌘ developing a visitor interpretation centre and cafe on the Roman Quay alongside the racecourse





The Cathedral



Canal Corridor

The Racecourse - improving and developing Chester Racecourse as a focus for racing and equestrian events and as a beautiful venue for events and festivals.

Chester's Riverfront - enhancing and extending Chester's wonderful riverfront walkways and promenades linking the open spaces, parks and destinations on this spectacular corridor from the Meadows to the Old Port.

Chester's Canal Corridor - developing the canal corridor to rediscover the area for visitors and provide a setting for new waterfront living, leisure, entertainment and creative industries. This is Chester's urban regeneration zone with major developments at Boughton, Gorsestacks, Tower Wharf and the Old Port.

Chester Cathedral - working with the Church to further enhance the cathedral and its environs to reinforce it as a religious and cultural venue and visitor destination.

The Railway Station Gateway - enhancing the railway station and its forecourt as an attractive gateway to the city and a destination in its own right.

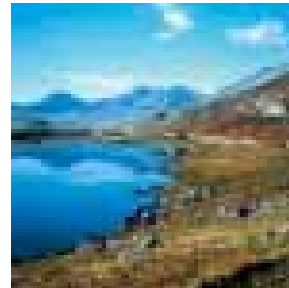
Boughton Antiques Quarter - improving this interesting part of the city as a quarter for antiques and collectibles.

The Performing Arts Centre - being developed as part of the Northgate scheme this will be the centre for performing arts in the city and its associated square will be a venue for outdoor events.

The Festival City - Chester's rich variety of festivals, events and street activity will be strengthened so that the city itself becomes the venue and also a vibrant, colourful and cosmopolitan place.



River Dee



Snowdonia

Promoting Rural Heritage

There is a wealth of rural heritage which the council will promote - activities will be centred around:

- ⌘ Beeston Castle area
- ⌘ Malpas Cross
- ⌘ Farndon and its riverfront
- ⌘ Tattenhall village
- ⌘ The rural canal and river corridors

The River Dee Regional Park will be the priority for our rural tourism drive. We will work with our Welsh partners on this initiative.

We will improve basic facilities for visitors - public toilets, signs and visitor information.

3.6 A Place to Stay and Explore

We are committed to reinforcing the city and the rural area as a place to stay and as the centre of a rich and varied tourist region. Stay in Chester and explore:

North Wales with its coastal resorts, beaches, natural beauty, Snowdonia, castles, historic towns and distinctive culture

the Welsh Marches and distinctive border towns



Dunham Massey



Lyme Park

the gardens and country houses of Cheshire
the canals and the Boat Museum at Ellesmere Port
the vibrant cities of Liverpool and Manchester
Chester Zoo and the Blue Planet Aquarium
Chester's countryside
Chester - with all it has to offer

We will promote additional places for people to stay on holiday and seek to improve existing accommodation. This is important in the city and rural area - guesthouses, hotels, cottages and campsites will cater for everyone. We will continue to market Chester to visitors and forge greater partnerships with our surrounding region.

We are also in the process of developing a visitor management strategy. This will help us and our tourism partners to manage Chester as a destination. Our aim is to diversify Chester's tourism product and reinforce cultural aspects of tourism to encourage visitors to stay longer. Local Distinctiveness will be the key to our place marketing.



3.7 Rediscovering Chester's Waterfronts

We want to regenerate the city's waterfronts, the canal corridor and the River Dee as vibrant, colourful and attractive places to live, work and visit:

Boughton Canal Corridor

Gorsestacks

Tower Wharf

Old Port

The Groves

These will be the focus of new development, new activity, new homes and new businesses. Chester is a waterfront city, yet this is not readily apparent. Through the regeneration and development of these places the city will rediscover its waterfront heritage and role. Key to this is the creation of new waterfront pedestrian and cycling links such as:

The Meadows to Duke's Drive

The Groves and Grosvenor Park to the Old Port and beyond to Sealand

Christleton via Hoole Locks to the city centre and on to Tower Wharf and the Old Port



Two level shopping - Northgate

3.8 Enhancing Public Space

Chester has some of the most wonderful streets, parks and public spaces anywhere. We want to see all its public spaces clean, safe and well maintained.

new and improved existing public spaces will be provided at:

- ⌘ Town Hall Square - an enhanced focus for the city.
- ⌘ Theatre Square - a new area for cafes and restaurants, as part of the Northgate Development
- ⌘ Crane Wharf as part of the Old Port regeneration
- ⌘ Tower Wharf - around the reformed canal basin
- ⌘ Cow Lane and George Street as part of the Gorsestacks regeneration area
- ⌘ The Groves
- ⌘ Chester Amphitheatre
- ⌘ Chester Castle forecourt
- ⌘ Chester Railway Station Square
- ⌘ Generally as part of the city centre development brief action area
- ⌘ Malpas Cross and other village spaces





investing in public open space - we will improve existing areas of public open space and new areas will be provided through the Open Space Investment Strategy

improving maintenance - we will improve our public space maintenance and cleaning regimes throughout the District

safer streets - will be provided through the Chester Community Safety Partnership and by the expansion of the CCTV system and the City Centre Community Safety Centre

street activity - we want to increase activity on Chester's main streets to make them more vibrant, colourful and safer by:

- re-launching Chester Alfresco
- promoting more street festivals and events
- promoting street markets and fairs
- extending the opening hours of shops and civic facilities into the evening

lighting - we will deliver the Chester Architectural Lighting Strategy - to show Chester's built and natural assets to their greatest effect. We've delivered the first phase of this on The Rows, the next stage will be to light the city walls and the Castle



3.9 Beautiful Countryside and a Vibrant Rural Economy

The District's open countryside and rural landscape is a delight. It is our aim to retain the beauty and open quality of this countryside. This however, needs to be in the context that Chester's countryside is a place of work and economic activity - still a key source of rural jobs and rural prosperity.

We will actively conserve Chester's open countryside and its beauty.

Chester has enough land allocated within the city and in villages for its foreseeable future. We are concentrating development on previously used land (brownfield) rather than allowing development on green fields. We have no plans to change Chester's green belt. We will develop the Hoole Park and Ride site as an important piece of the city's transport. This development is exceptional and is not a precursor to other developments in the green belt.

We know there may be a point when we run out of brownfield land - so as part of the council's development planning function we will constantly monitor and review this situation.

Agriculture is going through a period of rapid change and the rural economy needs all the help it can get. The council is committed to diversifying the rural economy and will work closely with rural landowners and farmers to help retain an attractive countryside with vibrant rural communities.



Shoppers

3.10 Reinforcing the Shopping City

The centre of the city is the engine house for the prosperity of the District and sub-region. Retailing is key to this. Almost a quarter of Chester's residents are employed in the retail sector in the city centre - it is one of Chester's main employers. The shopping core is the hub of a very large hinterland providing shopping to a significant wider community. Chester faces stiff competition from other towns and cities and out of town centres. We are not complacent about Chester's future. We are committed to supporting retail activity in the City Centre by:

Enhancing the Shopping Product:

- increasing the amount, variety and quality of shops

- providing shop units which the industry demands and meeting the needs of many national retailers who want to come to Chester, but cannot currently find premises

- providing shop units for small and local niche retailers

- providing another major department store

- reinforcing and improving the special and distinctive qualities of Chester

Animating City Streets and Spaces:

- improving the city centre's public spaces

- further improvement of the public realm in the main shopping area - lively streets and squares



Watergate Street



Outdoor market

attracting more shops, bars and restaurants together with 'al fresco' eating and drinking to enliven the city centre and widen the Chester experience for local people, visitors and shoppers

encouraging shops to stay open longer in the evening - to promote evening activity

enhancing cultural activity and increased use of the city's streets for outdoor entertainment, markets and fairs

Regenerating Key Shopping Areas:

providing key retail magnets and 'destinations' at strategic locations to reinforce and promote footfall along streets

the redevelopment of underused or tired parts of the city centre as mixed use areas - shops, restaurants, bars, homes and business premises

We will achieve this by:

Redevelopment and Regeneration Projects:

Northgate Development

regeneration of Gorsestacks

redevelopment of Commonhall Street

development of the south side of Pepper Street



Proposed Library - Northgate

regeneration of Frodsham Street and the Cow Lane Bridge canal basin

regeneration of Brook Street and City Road

Improvement Schemes:

the major refurbishment of Town Hall Square

providing a new indoor market and the use of Town Hall Square for the outdoor market

the improvement and increased use of Chester's Rows

Improving Main Retail Routes:

Northgate Street to Gorsestacks

Frodsham Street and Foregate Street

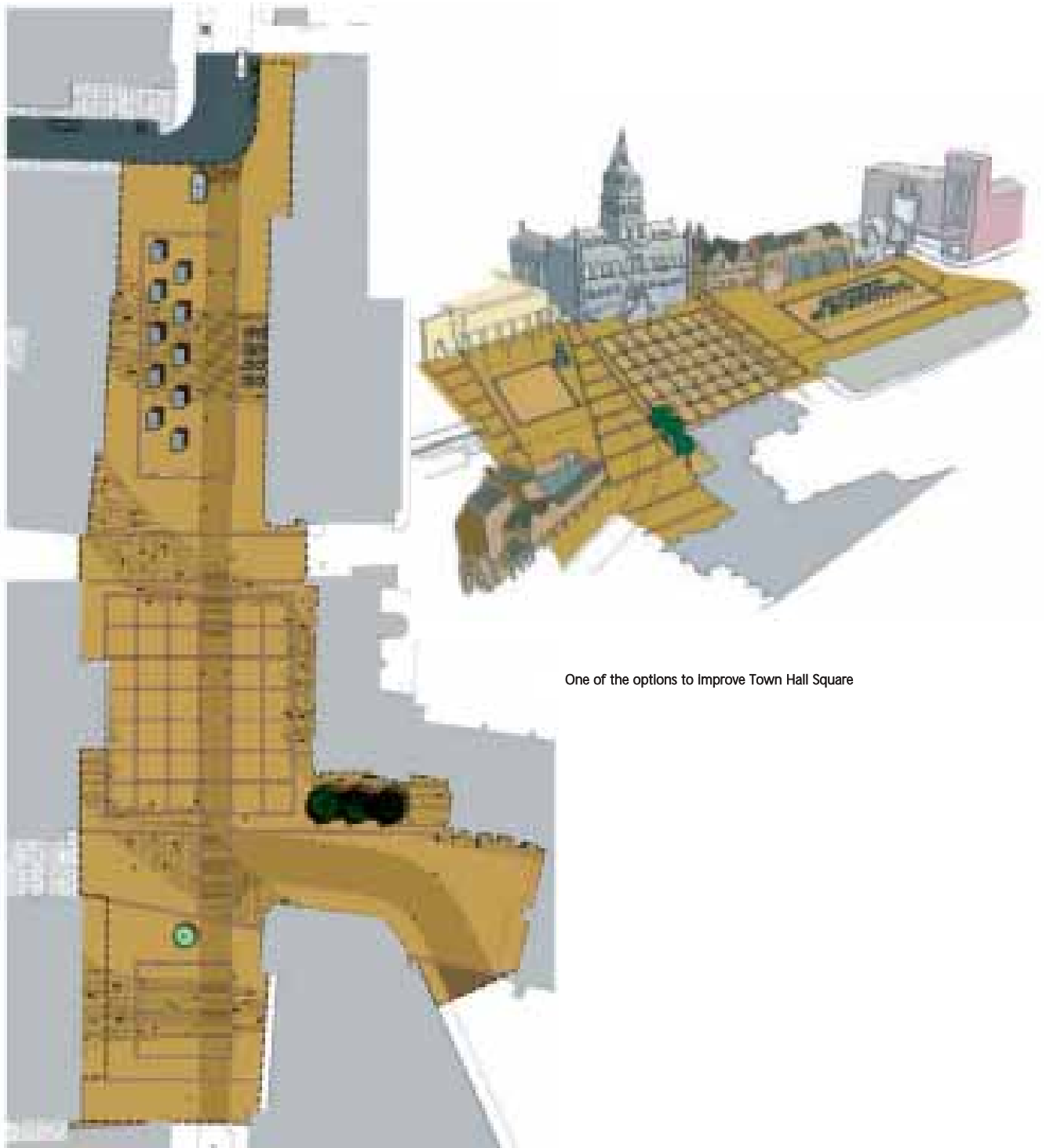
Watergate Street to the racecourse and Crane Wharf

Brook Street and City Road to the railway station, including Station Square

Bridge Street to the river

St John's Street to the Amphitheatre and The Groves

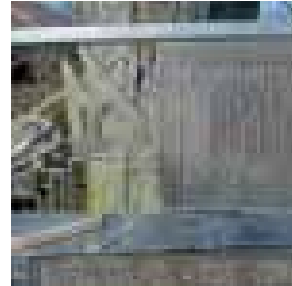
Grosvenor Street to the Castle



One of the options to Improve Town Hall Square



Waymarker on canal



Public Art

3.11 Promoting Chester's Culture and Distinctiveness

Chester's distinctive qualities are the key to its future. This distinctiveness is not only its buildings but also its people and culture. We are committed to reinforcing Chester as a cultural centre for the sub-region. The Partnership Cultural Strategy, Chester City Culture Park and our Local Distinctiveness Strategy are the main tools for this and we will concentrate on active marketing, with local distinctiveness being the key.

Priorities here are:

Investing in the Arts:

developing a new performing arts centre as part of the Northgate Development
providing a new larger city centre library via the Northgate Development with the county council

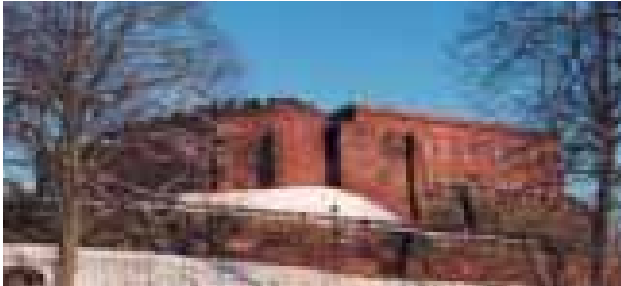
delivering a wide programme of public art

improving gallery space

reinforcing the city as a conference venue by providing better facilities at:

- ⌘ the Roodee Racecourse
- ⌘ the former Police HQ redevelopment
- ⌘ new city council offices





Chester Castle



Street entertainers

- ⌘ Chester Zoo
- ⌘ other venues around the District

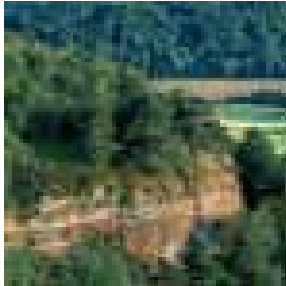
Animating Chester's Streets and Spaces:

continuing to develop events, festivals, markets and street entertainment
reinforcing Chester's street activity including relaunching 'Chester Alfresco'

Reinforcing Heritage Places:

developing seven heritage destinations and 'people places' in the city:

- ⌘ the Amphitheatre and 'Amphitheatre Park'
- ⌘ Chester Castle and the 'Castle Gateway'
- ⌘ the city walls and the 'Green Moat'
- ⌘ Chester Rows and the 'Chester Bazaar'
- ⌘ Tower Wharf
- ⌘ Crane Wharf
- ⌘ Cow Lane Basin
- ⌘ Town Hall Square



Sandstone Trail



Horse racing



Indoor sports

Promoting the Rural Area:

we will promote and reinforce the distinctive and varied qualities of Chester's rural area such as:

- ⌘ the historic villages of Tarvin, Tattenhall, Malpas, Farndon and Christleton
- ⌘ the 'Estate' villages in the district
- ⌘ the River Dee and the canal
- ⌘ the Sandstone Ridge and its Iron Age hill forts and stunning vistas

3.12 A Centre of Sporting Excellence

We will promote Chester as a centre of sporting excellence including:

Chester Racecourse - working with the racecourse to enable them to deliver their imaginative development plans:

- ⌘ relocating the stables from Linen Hall closer to the Old Port
- ⌘ improved facilities and stands
- ⌘ new hotels and jockey accommodation
- ⌘ new entrance features

Northgate Arena - the major refurbishment/reconstruction of the arena as a centre for indoor sports, including a competition swimming pool



Young people



Pitches and play areas

joint use - continuing to support joint use facilities at:

- Malpas
- Christleton

pitches and play areas - improving sports pitches and play areas in the city and the rural villages and protecting playing fields throughout the District from development

Chester Football Club - supporting the continued development of the club, including training facilities and facilities for young footballers

schools and colleges - working with schools and colleges to promote and encourage young people to play sport. Forging close partnerships with the local colleges to promote sports education

County Officers Sports Club - Working with the sports club to improve and expand their sports facilities

private sports developers and clubs - working with private providers to deliver additional leisure and sports clubs throughout the District

major golf clubs/centres - working with the operators/owners of major golf clubs/centres (eg Carden Park) to promote golf and associated leisure activities

young people - working with young people and sports clubs to promote sport and healthy living





New development at Delamere Street

3.13 The Enterprise District

Chester has grown as a sub-regional focus for business and enterprise. Over the last 25 years it has been a destination for major inward investment in the service sector as well as growth in retailing.

We will focus on:

Creating the Right Environment:

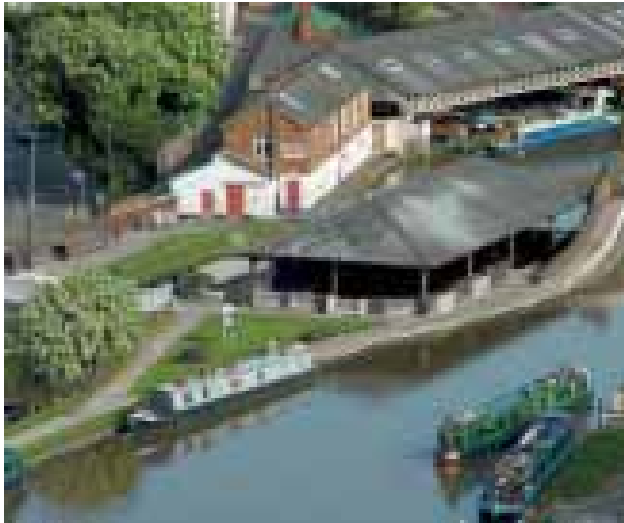
Chester's local distinctiveness - our research shows that this is a strong reason why people invest in Chester. This will be important to our sustainable economic competitiveness

supporting local enterprise by caring for and working with existing businesses, helping them to grow and expand

The Deeside Hub - emphasising the synergy between Chester, Deeside and Ellesmere Port as a concentration of business and economic activity and opportunity. The Deeside Hub drives the sub-region. We will work closely with our neighbours to ensure that this hub of activity is strengthened. Enabling it to fulfil its national and regional role, we will ensure that it benefits the more disadvantaged communities in the North West of England and North Wales.

Providing Land and Premises:

providing land and premises for new businesses to expand and develop through our land holdings and property reinvestment programme. We will target West



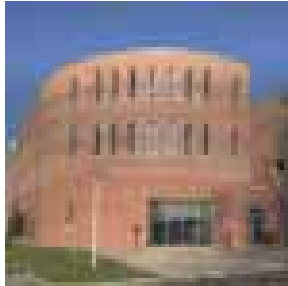
Canal Basin

Chester and the canal corridor. City council land holdings at Bumpers Lane will be a major location for business development in the future

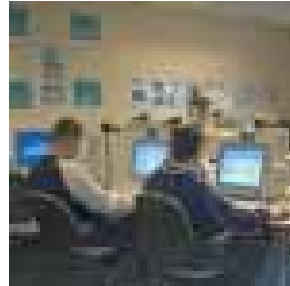
working with rural land owners to achieve the reuse of rural buildings for business and tourism

supporting the development of major employment sites at:

- ✘ Capenhurst
- ✘ Ince Power Stations
- ✘ Chowley Oak
- ✘ Chester West
- ✘ Old Port
- ✘ Tower Wharf
- ✘ Chester and Saltney Waterfront
- ✘ Chester Gates
- ✘ Chester Business Park
- ✘ HBoS at Hoole Lane



Chester College



Cybercentre

in the longer term, developing Saighton Camp as a regional business location with access directly off the A55

providing business premises and development opportunities in urban regeneration areas

exploring new models of business premises

transforming the Chester railway station area for business development

Exploiting Creativity and Information Technology:

ensuring that Chester is fully 'connected' in terms of new technology and is well placed for knowledge-based business to locate and expand

developing creative industries along the canal corridor - particularly at Boughton and Tower Wharf

Skill Development:

ensuring that Chester provides the highest standard of education at all levels.

That it is well connected to the needs of the local economy and is giving local people the chance to acquire the skills they need



Zoological gardens



Chester Zoo

3.14 A Centre of Excellence in Wildlife Conservation and Biodiversity

Chester Zoo - Super Zoo and Regional Biodiversity Park

Chester Zoo attracts more visitors than any other zoo in the UK and has an international reputation in wildlife conservation and biodiversity. The zoo is one of the District's most important employers and is the single largest visitor attraction.

We will work with the zoo to achieve:

the continuing programme of improving, renewing and developing the core zoo as a 'super zoo'

the development of a regional biodiversity park on adjacent zoo-owned land. This will be a regional and national place for understanding and conserving local biodiversity. It will be an area of unique open space for visitors and residents to enjoy

increased links between the two key visitor attractions in the District - the zoo and the historic centre of Chester:

- ⌘ transport links between the city centre and zoo - particularly the rail and bus stations and Park and Ride sites
- ⌘ the joint marketing of both attractions



Old Dee Bridge

- the access routes to the zoo - making these sign-posted routes more attractive via the Hoole/M53 junction rather than through Stanlow as at present

The River Dee Regional Park

The River Dee links places and communities from its source to the estuary - it is a wildlife, landscape and environmental asset as well as a setting for towns and villages. It is proposed to develop the River Dee Regional Park as:

- an area for rural and urban regeneration
- an opportunity for sustainable tourism
- an important part of Chester's "Greenways"
- a wildlife, biodiversity and environmental resource
- a place for walking, cycling
- an opportunity for waterfront and water based activities

The river connects some of the areas most important tourism assets and opportunities - Llangollen, Bangor on Dee, Wrexham, Farndon, Holt, Chester, Neston and the Dee Estuary side villages.



Chester's Green Network



Chester Railway
Station Gateway

Chester Greenways

We will also deliver the Chester Greenways project - this seeks to join up important areas of open and green space throughout the District. It is a network of natural places and routes, a wildlife resource and leisure facility. The zoo's Regional Biodiversity Park and the River Dee Regional Park will be important components of this green network.

3.15 Getting Around

Chester is a busy place and its rural areas suffer from a lack of credible and useful public transport. Transportation will be an increasingly important part of the District's infrastructure in the future. We are committed to transport in Chester being as sustainable as possible and available to all. We are also committed to the conservation of historic Chester and retaining the beauty of our rural villages. Success in transport is a real partnership between the city council, the county council and bus and rail operators. We are committed to working in partnership in this vital area to achieve improvements for Chester residents, workers and visitors and for tackling social and geographical exclusion.

Our priorities here are:

Improving Public Transport and Interchange:

- new central bus station as part of the Northgate Development
- system of 'super bus stops' and bus priority lanes to serve the city centre



exploring the provision of small electric/gas hopper buses to help people travel around the city centre more easily

the development of Chester railway station as a focus for business, interchange, travel and activity. This is called the '**Station Gateway**' project

a new visitor coach park and visitor orientation point at the Little Roodee with facilities for travellers and drivers

a system of visitor coach pick up and drop off points to serve the city centre

'Night Buses' - to provide better access for people to the city centre

better bus stops and service information at neighbourhood centres

improved bus stops, service information and transport generally to meet the needs of our rural communities

raising the image of public transport through marketing, smart card technology and user friendly information



Cycling



Wrexham Road P&R site

Access for All:

- making buses and stops accessible to everyone
- additional Shop Mobility facilities as part of the Northgate Development scheme
- better taxi facilities and taxi provision, particularly in the evening

Improving Cycling and Walking:

- an extensive network of safe cycle and walking routes will be provided throughout the District

Improving Car Parking:

- completing the ring of Park and Rides sites around the city by developing the Hoole site at the M53 junction
- providing new state of the art, safe and attractive city centre car parks at:
 - Delamere Street and Cow Lane as part of the Gorsestacks regeneration area
 - The Northgate Development

Completing The Western Relief Road:

- completion of the Chester Western Relief Road - its final phases from Sealand Road to the A55/Wrexham Road junction via Saltney, together with major improvements of the A55/Wrexham Road/A483 junctions. This will involve complementary traffic management and enhancement in the city centre



Chester Gates



Capenhurst

Improving sub-regional transportation infrastructure

improving the M53/A55/A550/A5117/M56 routes as an orbital, linking sub-regional business opportunities in and around the Deeside Hub (Chester, Deeside and Ellesmere Port):

- ⌘ Chester Business Park
- ⌘ Hawarden Airport
- ⌘ Warren Hall Business Park
- ⌘ Deeside Industrial Park
- ⌘ Capenhurst
- ⌘ Chester Gates
- ⌘ Cheshire Oaks
- ⌘ Chester Zoo
- ⌘ Stanlow and Ince
- ⌘ Ellesmere Port Enterprise Zone
- ⌘ Chester City Centre
- ⌘ Saighton Camp
- ⌘ Chester/Saltney Waterfront

enhancing inter-urban public transport routes



3.16 A Place for Everyone by Day and Night

We want to create a city for everyone - a safe and vibrant place for people to enjoy and feel comfortable during the day and in the evening. We also want to boost Chester's evening economy as an important part of Chester's attractiveness and economic future. We have produced a **Chester at Night Strategy** to help guide this process.

We will achieve this by:

Reinforcing Ownership:

encouraging more people to live in the city centre. By 2011 we estimate that 4000 new homes will be provided within the city and urban regeneration areas. This will mean an additional 8000 people living in the heart of Chester. This will make our city more sustainable, safer and more colourful at all times. A large proportion of these new homes will be affordable to local people

more people living over the shop. We will do this by reusing and converting properties but also by new build, eg in the Northgate and Gorsestacks schemes

encouraging more people to work in the city centre. Our urban regeneration areas are mixed use and will provide jobs as well as homes. This will make Chester more sustainable, safer and more vibrant



St Michael's Arcade

Increasing City Centre Activity:

improving Chester's cultural offer - a new performing arts centre, an improved arena, new central library, exciting entertainment venues and improved museum and galleries will all contribute to making Chester more attractive to a wider range of people by day and in the evening

continuing to improve Chester's festivals and events - making Chester a true festival city - colourful and unique

opening civic buildings and museums later in the evening - this creates new activity and provides services when people want them

working with traders to get shops to stay open later in the evening - again to promote early evening activity in the heart of our city

Actively Promoting the Evening Economy:

this is a critical sector for Chester, but this should be for everyone - for families and older people as well as young people. It will feel safer and be better managed. We will work with venue operators, the police and the Community Safety Partnership to achieve this through our 'Chester at Night Strategy'

widening Chester's day time and evening offer - better restaurants, cafes, clubs, bars and a greater variety of shops

managing the spatial distribution of homes and evening activity - to avoid potential conflict



Mobile CCTV vehicle



Mobile CCTV operations

The Accessible City:

making Chester the 'Accessible City' - for people of all abilities, ages and people with children. We will use Chester's natural changes in level and other physical measures to achieve this, including better signs and way-marking

Making the Place Feel Safer:

providing better lighting and enhancing main walking routes - including pedestrian crossings over the ring road and removing the unattractive system of subways under the ring road - people don't feel safe using them

removing the barrier effect of the ring road and, in conjunction with the Western Relief Road, we will seek to humanise and calm the inner ring road - it will become an avenue rather than just a strip of tarmac

working with our community safety partners to make the city centre feel safer by:

- extending CCTV coverage
- operating the Community Safety Centre at the Town Hall
- continuing to develop the pub/club watch scheme
- expanding the Safe Child initiative
- developing effective measures to combat anti-social behaviour and drug and alcohol abuse



Proposed Theatre Square - Northgate

Enhancing and Animating the Place:

implementing the Chester Architectural Lighting Strategy to show Chester's wonderful assets in all their glory through the creative use of light. We've completed the first phase - lighting Chester's unique Rows. The next phase will be to light the city walls and castle

enhancing Chester's street scene by:

- ⌘ further improvements of the main shopping streets
- ⌘ rediscovering and improving Chester's squares and urban spaces - many of which are hidden by clutter
- ⌘ re-paving the Town Hall Square
- ⌘ providing new squares and spaces, eg Theatre Square as part of the Northgate project
- ⌘ improving maintenance and street cleanliness
- ⌘ re-launching Chester Alfresco
- ⌘ more street events, festivals and street entertainment
- ⌘ more street markets and fairs





Community Safety

3.17 A Safe Place to Live, Work and Visit

Community safety and the fear of crime are seen as particularly important issues. Priorities to tackle include anti-social behaviour, youth nuisance, violent crime and drug/alcohol abuse. Car crime and burglary are particular issues. We will work with the police and the Community Safety Partnership to implement a range of effective measures to reduce the incidence of crime and improve perceptions of community safety in all areas. We will continue the council's investment in crime reduction and respond to issues at a local level. Importantly we will ensure that all services provided by the council, fully consider how they can contribute to a safer Chester. All the council's activities will be regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure that we actually make a positive impact.

3.18 Giving Everyone the Chance to Enjoy Chester's Success

Chester is a wonderful place to live, work or visit in many ways. Six million visitors wouldn't come here otherwise and our employment market wouldn't be so buoyant. But not everyone here is enjoying the fruits of that success. Part of our role and vision for the future of Chester is to put that right. Most of what we will do is threaded through the other themes in this vision, and in delivering them we will be delivering on this. But there are some specific tasks we are committed to achieving to ensure that the fruits of Chester's success are enjoyed by all people in our communities.



New Affordable Homes

equal opportunity for everyone - we are committed to creating accessible communities where all people are valued, irrespective of ability, can live in harmony and have access to what they need in order to play an active and inclusive part in society, free from fear of discrimination. To that end we will work as a provider of services, an employer and community leader to promote social inclusion, respect for others and equal opportunities for all

ease of access for everyone - access in the widest sense, access to jobs, electronic access, work on improving access for people of all abilities

helping people gain the skills for life and work - community enterprise, training and personal development through life long learning initiatives

affordable homes - Chester is a high demand, high price area for houses. We have policies to secure the houses Chester needs for the future and the market will provide them over time. Without our help this would squeeze out many people who cannot afford property in Chester at the current prices. We therefore have a policy to provide at least 25% affordable homes in all but the smallest development sites and we will work with developers and social housing partners to deliver this. We will also continue to provide grants to enable homes that lack amenities to be improved



Area Committees

community focused services - we will increasingly manage and provide our services more locally and we will work with Parish Councils, our Area Committees and Neighbourhood Forums to achieve this. The Blacon Neighbourhood Pathfinder is leading the way in this

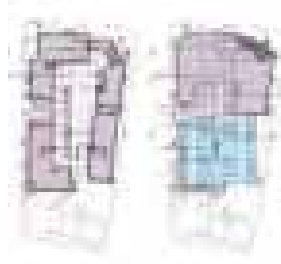
an adequate income for everyone - our housing benefits service will help to ensure an adequate income for everyone. We will work with a range of local partners to provide further help and support

a place for people of all ages - we will ensure that people of all ages can enjoy Chester and what it has to offer. Young people will be a particular focus for our activity





Gorsestacks Development



4. Working Together to Promote the Vision of Chester

- 4.1 Project Chester will not be delivered overnight. Although much of this is currently being progressed, it is a long-term endeavour. It will be shaped by many discussions as it progresses. It will be achieved through a wide range of plans and strategies. Examples include:

- Community Safety
- Local Distinctiveness
- Economic Development
- Rural Regeneration
- Culture
- Housing
- Chester District Local Plan
- The various area development briefs

- 4.2 It is a 'live' project - it will constantly develop, evolve and change.
- 4.3 It requires the efforts of many through Chester in Partnership and our sub regional partnerships, including;
- The North East Wales/West Cheshire Partnership



Cheshire and Warrington Economic Alliance
Mersey - Dee Alliance
Cheshire and Warrington Information Consortium
Cheshire and Warrington Tourism Board

- 4.4 Success in delivery will be achieved through real 'community' involvement between Chester residents and businesses, not only in helping to shape this plan and in influencing Chester's Community Plan, but also taking responsibility for the delivery of specific actions. It will also be achieved through the commitment and creativity of our local business sector and through the investment of private developers and financial institutions.
- 4.5 For our part we are committed to a community focused approach and the empowerment of individuals, groups and businesses to take responsibility for shaping their future and that of their community. Civic pride will be critical.
- 4.6 Delivery requires real partnership in the sharing of resources. It will require us and hopefully others to challenge the way we currently apply our resources. We need to direct them to achieve the priorities that emerge from this vision.
- 4.7 Together we can help make - **"Chester excellent by any standards"**.





*Chester
City Council*



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