



Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Plan

2010 - 1013

NB this introductory section of the Neighbourhood Plan will be produced for all four Neighbourhood Plans, but as much of the content will be the same for each only the Rawtenstall section is here.

(Consideration will be given to producing this introductory section of the neighbourhood Plan as a printed document with photographs etc. breaking up the text. The action plan will be included as a separate insert at the back to enable frequent updating and the addition of monitoring updates as the plan is implemented.)

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Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Action Plan (insert)

Introduction by the Chair of Rawtenstall Neighbourhood forum, Cllr Tony Swain

To be added

Map of area covered by Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Forum

To be added

What is the Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Forum?

The Neighbourhood Forum is a partnership involving:

- Local residents and representatives of local community groups
- Borough and County Councillors
- Local service providers like the Police, East Lancashire Primary Care Trust, Rossendale Borough Council, Lancashire County Council and Greenvale Homes

There are four Neighbourhood Forums across Rossendale covering the areas of:

- Haslingden with Helmshore and Edenfield,
- Rawtenstall,
- Bacup
- Whitworth

The Neighbourhood Forum has at the core the principle of promoting engagement and partnership working at the community level. The overall objective of the Neighbourhood Forum is to improve the quality of life for local people by ensuring they play an active and equal part in designing and shaping the services that affect their everyday lives.

The main task of the Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Forum has been to put together a Neighbourhood Plan for the area which addresses key issues that matter to local residents, businesses and visitors. Rossendale's heritage is unique and its' people have a distinctly strong sense of connection to the area in which they live. This strong sense of belonging to place and the social, economic, health and wellbeing challenges each community faces are reflected in the Neighbourhood Plans for each area.

The Neighbourhood Plan will help to deliver the outcomes of the Sustainable Community Strategy – the overarching strategy for Rossendale. The vision for the Sustainable Community Strategy is that “ By 2018 Rossendale will have strong

communities with an enhanced environment and heritage. It will be an attractive place to live where tourists visit and employers invest.”

Community members are a vital part of the Forum and the Neighbourhood Plan will help to deliver the challenges and aspirations of the community.

The Neighbourhood Forum members meet quarterly to discuss the development and implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan and to share information about local activities and services. In addition, public consultation meetings are held at least twice a year in each area, together with other consultation events. It is important that the work of the Neighbourhood Forum reflects the views of local residents and members of the public are encouraged to attend the public meetings to express their views and raise issues of concern with Neighbourhood Forum members.

How can I get involved?

Local residents get involved by coming along to the public meetings of the Neighbourhood Forums, or by becoming a Community Member on one of the Forums.

The Neighbourhood Forums aim to enable residents and communities to play a full and active part in shaping their communities. The Forums aim to be inclusive with all members playing an active part. If you are interested in becoming a Community Member of one of the Neighbourhood Forums, contact the Communities Team as detailed below. We welcome membership from all sections of the community.

If you would like to attend the public meetings, we can add you to our mailing list so that you will be notified about forthcoming meetings.

Full details of the public meetings and agendas are published on the Council’s website.

For more information, please contact the Communities Team on 01706 252551 / communitiesteam@rossendalebc.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Forum Grant Funding

The Neighbourhood Forums can give grants of up to £750 to local community groups and projects. All Neighbourhood Forums are given funding each year and your local Councillors determine who the grants are allocated to and how much is allocated.

Grant applications must fit with the Council’s Corporate objectives and the priorities of the Local Strategic Partnership and Neighbourhood Forum.

For more information, contact the Communities Team or your local councillor.

Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Plan

Our overriding aim has been to produce a document that reflects the priorities and aspirations of the people, businesses and local organisations in the Rawtenstall area.

In putting the Plan together, each Neighbourhood Forum held at least three planning meetings and two public consultation meetings, primarily focused on developing the Neighbourhood Plans. The process began with the Forums identifying the key challenges and issues in each area, and then identifying actions to address these key issues. The two consultation meetings have been used to get wider views and comments on the priorities and actions in the Plans. Draft Plans were widely circulated to local community groups and partner agencies and have been available via the Council website for comments and suggestions.

In addition, separate consultation events have been held to engage with particular groups of people such as rural communities and Asian women. The findings from other recent surveys such as the Place Survey and the consultation done by Forward Planning around the Core Strategy, have also been incorporated.

The Plans are intended to be flexible documents that that will be updated regularly and can be added to as the Forums develop and new challenges emerge.

We are also mindful of the economic climate and the pressure the public sector is facing in terms of making efficiency savings. There is great uncertainty in terms of budgets over the next few years and in order to deal with this in a practical way, we've decided to focus on those actions that can be delivered in the first 12 months - October 2010 – October 2011, and at the end of this period review what progress has been made and what can be delivered in the future.

The implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored through the Neighbourhood Forum and progress reported back to the community at public meetings and through the website and community newsletters.

Profile of the Rawtenstall area

The Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Forum covers the area of Rawtenstall, Crawshawbooth, Loveclough, Waterfoot, Cowpe, Whitewell, Water and surrounding areas.(see map). It includes the five wards of Longholme, Hareholme, Cribden, Goodshaw and Whitewell.

Rossendale is in southeast Lancashire and covers an area of approximately 140 square kilometres. The development of the Borough and its settlements has been dictated by its geography, its natural resources, and its response to commercial and industrial opportunities. Many of the communities, which make up the district stand at the foot of the valleys that cut through the picturesque fells and moor land which characterise much of the Borough.

Rossendale has a population of 67,300 (2008), which has increased by 0.4% since 1991 compared with a Lancashire wide increase of 0.1%. This compares with a 0.7% yearly increase for England and Wales as a whole and an overall loss of 0.1% for East Lancashire. (LCC area summary – Rossendale)

The ethnic mix is much less pronounced than other authorities in East Lancashire. The Place Survey undertaken by all local authorities in England asked the question "to what extent do you agree or disagree that this local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together"? In 2008 61% of people in Rossendale agreed with this statement, compared with 74% in Lancashire and an England average of 76%.

The health of people in Rossendale is varied. Estimated percentages of binge drinking adults and healthy eating adults, rates of deaths from smoking and hospital stays for alcohol related harm are all worse than the average for England. Over the last 10 years there has been a fall in death rates but there are still inequalities in life expectancy between different parts of Rossendale and between Rossendale and the national average. The health of children and young people is generally worse than the England average, including the percentages of physically active children and tooth decay.

Rossendale represents a gateway between the industrial towns of East Lancashire to the north, the conurbation of Rochdale to the east and the city of Manchester 29 kilometres (18 miles) to the South; its strategic location has provided it with good links to the road network.

Rawtenstall is the largest town in Rossendale. It has the biggest shopping centre in the Borough, but the poor state of the Valley centre contrasts with the general attractiveness of much of the town centre. The Rawtenstall area is very accessible for Manchester via the A56 and the East Lancashire Railway has an important tourist role but is not particularly accessible to the rest of the town centre. Crawshawbooth village, and the surrounding settlements of Goodshaw and Loveclough are attractive areas with great access to the surrounding countryside. Recent housing growth in these areas has put pressure on schools and main roads.

Waterfoot is located in the centre of Rossendale and shaped by the two main arteries of Bacup Road and Burnley Road East. The area has a unique character but since the decline of the footwear manufacturing industry, many former industrial buildings have fallen into disrepair.

Rossendale as a whole does not experience the levels of deprivation of many of its neighbours, but it is ranked the 92nd most deprived authority nationally out of 354 and has some significant pockets of deprivation across all areas of the Valley, although these are less prevalent in Rawtenstall than in Bacup and Haslingden. Crime levels across the Valley are low and falling, although anti-social behaviour remains a problem in some areas. Within the Rawtenstall area, Longholme ward which covers the town centre, has the highest levels of crime.

Rawtenstall experiences many of the key issues facing Rossendale as a whole. These include:

- low life expectancy, particularly for men
- high out-commuting rates (nearly 50%)
- low wage levels for people working in Rossendale compared with other areas
- low retention of 20-24 year olds
- high levels of old, terraced housing stock
- several conservation areas and a high proportion of listed buildings

The Neighbourhood Plan focuses on the actions that can be taken locally to address issues on concern. The Community Strategy identifies a number of transformational projects that will make a real difference to the lives of people in Rossendale. These are outside the remit of the Neighbourhood Plan but are mentioned here as they will impact on the challenges and outcomes in the Plan.

Transformational projects impacting on the Rawtenstall area include:

- Manchester to Rawtenstall commuter rail link – will aim to provide a frequent and regular railway connection between Pennine Lancashire and Greater Manchester
- Rawtenstall town centre regeneration – the planned regeneration includes redevelopment of the Valley centre and surrounding area and the development of a retail, leisure and business park at New Hall Hey