

**PLAN FOR
INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES
IN
DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY**

UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2002

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The Inclusive Communities plan contains the following sections:

- Section 1 gives the introduction
- Section 2 sets the scene in Dumfries and Galloway in terms of presenting some examples of current activities on inclusion
- Section 3 identifies the priorities and actions for each of the three strands of the *inclusive communities* theme
- Section 4 presents the Indicators for Change
- Section 5 shows the organisational framework and delivery arrangements for *inclusive communities*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Dumfries and Galloway's Community Plan was published in October 2000. It is "the Plan for a process which leads to a truly shared vision and direct action for all involved" and contained within the Plan is the long-term vision for Dumfries and Galloway for the next 20 years-see attached outline in Appendix I. Through the *inclusive communities* action plan the aim is to address all aspects of the vision and in particular to "succeed in reducing inequalities in terms of health, educational achievement and housing conditions".

1.2 There are three themes of action which underpin the achievement of this 20 year vision:-

- Inclusive communities
- Safe and healthy communities
- Enterprising and learning communities

These themes of action are about engaging stakeholders and providing creative solutions which can cut across operational boundaries and procedures, budgetary processes and traditional forms of management. Inclusion is an underlying theme of both economic development and health improvement. Promoting Social Inclusion is essential for bringing about economic growth and improved health.

1.3 This paper concentrates on the *inclusive communities* theme within Dumfries and Galloway. The five year vision is:-

- to enable people to have the means and motivation to make a greater contribution to the social, economic, environmental and cultural life of Dumfries and Galloway
- to improve individuals' opportunities to access services, facilities and employment
- to maximise the opportunity for active citizenship

Underpinning these three strands are the principles of sustainable development and a commitment to partnership action.

1.4 The Community Planning Joint Board and the Executive Committee of Dumfries and Galloway Council have adopted the following definition of social inclusion –

“Social Inclusion is achieved when individuals or areas do not suffer from the negative effects of unemployment, poor skills, low income, poor housing, crime, bad health, family problems, limited access to services and rurality, e.g. remoteness, sparsity, isolation and high costs”.

This plan aims to address these issues.

1.5 This plan has been developed through working with partner agencies in Dumfries and Galloway. It sets out the priorities for action for the next few years and aims to guide the development of partners’ detailed service/operational plans and budgets, to guide the Local Rural Partnerships in setting their priorities and workplan and to provide the basis for joint initiatives.

2. SETTING THE SCENE

2.1 There are a number of national and local policy documents which are at present guiding the development of inclusion within Dumfries and Galloway and some of the key policy drivers include:-

- “Social Justice...A Scotland where everyone matters” Annual report 2000, Scottish Executive
- Community Care Health Improvement Programme 2000-2005
- Dumfries and Galloway Corporate Plan
- Our National Health (2000)
- Joint Economic Recovery Plan for Dumfries and Galloway April 2001
- Smart and Successful Scotland, Scottish Executive
- Children’s Services Plan 2001-2004
- “Implementing Inclusiveness Realising Potential” The Beattie Report, Scottish Executive
- Better Government for Older People
- The Same As You May 2000, Scottish Executive
- “Learning With Care-The Education of Children Looked After Away from Home by Local Authorities”, Scottish Executive
- Modernising Community Care: An Action Plan (1998)
- Mental Health Framework 2000
- Criminal Justice Plan
- "Getting It Right" strategic approach to Multicultural Activity in Dumfries and Galloway

2.2 The social inclusion agenda is of vital importance in terms of achieving equity within our society in ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to be included in mainstream activity. In 1999, the Scottish Executive published their report on a vision for Scotland called “Social Justice...A Scotland Where Everyone Matters”. This report contains 10 long term milestones and 29 short term targets for delivering social justice in Scotland and these will underpin this plan of action.

- 2.3 There is a vast amount of work already being undertaken on inclusion by all agencies in Dumfries and Galloway and one of the aims of this plan is to ensure that agencies work in partnership to avoid duplication and to offer the maximum benefit to individuals and communities in Dumfries and Galloway.

ENABLEMENT

- 2.5 “To enable people to have the means and motivation to make a greater contribution to the social, economic, environmental and cultural life of Dumfries and Galloway”.

Examples of progress to date:

- There are a number of multi agency initiatives which support young people with social and emotional problems.
- The development of an Income Maximisation/Anti-Poverty Strategy which will enable people to achieve the financial means to have a reasonable quality of life.
- The development of Area Regeneration Strategies for every part of the region, which will lead to increased opportunities for people in terms of education, employment and having an input into the development of their local communities.
- Projects such as Building Healthy Communities which aims to address inequalities in local communities and which targets the most deprived areas in the region.
- The development of a Domestic Abuse Strategy for Dumfries and Galloway.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACCESS

- 2.6 “To improve individuals’ opportunities to access services, facilities and employment”.

In a rural area, accessibility is a particular issue for all agencies and is a problem for many communities in Dumfries and Galloway.

Examples of progress to date:

- The development of access and services for people with disabilities/difficulties so that full inclusion is achieved for such people of all ages within their local communities. This includes access to services, buildings, employment and education.
- North West Dumfries Community Planning pilot and the activities identified in the community survey action plan.
- One Stop Shops – the ongoing review and development of One Stop Shops will help towards giving people easy access to information and services from many different agencies.
- Dumfries and Galloway Transport Strategy which sets out the many transport initiatives in support of both national and local transport policies with the aim of having accessible transport available to all communities.
- The support of the Childcare Partnership for the development of Childcare initiatives.

- Equal opportunities is seen as essential for promoting social inclusion at all levels and agencies should have equal opportunities embedded in their organisation.
- The ongoing work on gender issues which will identify barriers for women's involvement in economic development.

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

2.7 “To maximise the opportunity for active citizenship”

Examples of progress to date:-

- The ongoing work of the Youth Strategy Executive Group which involves young people in the decision making process at all levels and stages eg the development of the 'Rough Guide'.
- The development of a Customer Consultation Strategy which allows the people of Dumfries and Galloway to have their views heard and acted upon.
- The role of Community Councils which have an important role to play as the most local community-based tier of elected representation provided by statute by offering people a real say in matters such as local service delivery and other issues which affect their daily lives.
- The network of disabilities and mental health groups which involve people in decision making processes.
- The Active Communities Initiative which aims to increase volunteering and in particular targets groups not traditionally active in communities.
- The existence of the Race Relations Consultative Group and the implementation of their action plan.
- The capacity building work being carried out through voluntary agencies such as the Council for Voluntary Service, etc.
- The Local Rural partnerships and the role they now play in promoting active citizenship.
- Decentralisation of decision making and the development of Local Rural Partnerships aim to increase connections between policy makers and local communities, thereby promoting social inclusion.

2.8 **CHALLENGES FACING DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY**

- The average gross weekly pay of full-time working adults decreased by 1.8% in Scotland and 2.3% in the UK (Reference (1) Appendix III).
- Wages in Dumfries and Galloway are 19.5% below the Great Britain average and 7.5% below the Scottish average (Reference (2) Appendix III).
- In rural areas those who have access to services to address personal problems may be very visible in the community and many will hide their problems rather than risk being stigmatised or labelled.
- The number of people in Dumfries and Galloway per square kilometre is 23 compared to a Scottish figure of 65 per square kilometre (Reference (3) Appendix III).

- Access to key services is widely accepted amongst rural communities as being a major cause of social exclusion. This includes high unit cost of provision and the time and cost involved for the individual travelling to access services.
- Sparsity of population creates problems for both individuals accessing services and the service providers. The spread and sparsity of population has led, for example, to infrastructure transport problems which commercial transport groups have been unable to address particularly in outlying hamlets.
- The ageing population where 39% of the population for Scotland as a whole is over the age of 45 compared to 46% in Dumfries and Galloway, with this percentage forecast to increase over the next 10 years.

3. THE FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

The objectives for each of the three strands of *inclusive communities* theme are as follows:-

3.1 Enablement

- To have in place a multi agency Income Maximisation/Anti-poverty policy statement, strategy and action plan.
- To achieve inclusion of people of all ages with disabilities (as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act) within their local communities.
- To increase preventative and support services to enable older people to remain in their communities.
- To promote the inclusion of children and young people in society and in particular to develop opportunities for “looked after children”.
- To promote the inclusion of other groups likely to experience exclusion such as gay/lesbian/bisexual.
- To promote the inclusion of a specific group who experience total exclusion. The personal affect of total exclusion is very high on the individual and communities are adversely affected by this group. Example groups include absolute roofless, serious addicts (drugs, alcohol, gambling), paedophiles. It is unlikely that mainstream activities will address the needs of this group.
- To support and encourage service providers, employers and other organisations within Dumfries and Galloway to review their equal opportunities policies.
- To work with voluntary organisations and other non-statutory partners to enable them to play a more active role in policy development and in their local communities.

3.2 Opportunities for Access

- To support the use of Information Technology for communities/individuals.
- To introduce the Disability Discrimination Act, this allowing ease of access to amenities and facilities such as health, education and community organisations
- To develop a Strategy for Older People.
- To support the development of a multi-agency information system accessible by all.

- To continue to promote and provide accessible transport to all communities across Dumfries and Galloway.
- To promote initiatives which enable access to healthy living such as high quality food.
- To ensure there are mechanisms in place, via the Rural Partnerships, for improving access to decision makers for people in rural communities.
- To promote research to identify access issues in our rural community.
- To strengthen the Childcare Partnership's work in improving childcare across the region.
- To ensure equal opportunities are embedded in partner organisations.

3.3 Active Citizenship

- To have in place skills/confidence courses for women and young people to increase their capacity to participate in their communities.
- To promote the use of the Customer Consultation Strategy by all agencies.
- To continue to increase capacity building within communities through multi-agency developments such as the Community Learning Strategy.
- To encourage community councils and other community organisations to participate in the work of the Local Rural Partnerships.
- To support the capacity building of the voluntary sector to carry out the work of promoting active citizenship.

3.4 Priorities

The Inclusive Communities Forum has identified the following areas of work as priorities for 2002-03 and will work towards having an action plan in place to address these by January 2003.

- 3.4.1 To have in place a multi-agency income maximisation/anti poverty statement, strategy and action plan.

Seminar planned for October 2002 with strategy and action out for consultation November/December 2002. Strategy and Action Plan in place February 2003.

- 3.4.2 To provide the inclusion of other groups likely to experience exclusion including for example those who are gay/lesbian/bisexual.

- 3.4.3 To promote the inclusion of a specific group who experience total exclusion. The personal affect of total exclusion is very high on the individual and communities are adversely affected. Example groups include absolute roofless, serious addicts and paedophiles. It is further acknowledged that it is unlikely that mainstream activities will address the needs of this group.

- 3.4.4 To continue to promote and provide accessible transport to all communities across Dumfries and Galloway.

To date, the Forum has agreed seven key actions and has asked the Accessible Transport Forum to produce a briefing paper containing the objectives, financial implications and timescales for the seven action themes for November 2002.

4. INDICATORS OF CHANGE

- 4.1 It will be essential to monitor progress to see if we are achieving the vision set down in the Community Plan for *inclusive communities* in Dumfries and Galloway.
- 4.2 Local and national data is being identified relating to the wide determinants of health and well being in Dumfries and Galloway to form a Common Health Data Set for the region being collected through the Better Neighbourhood Services Pathfinder pilots for Vulnerable Older People and Vulnerable Children 12-18 will add to this data set.
- 4.3 Where possible, we will try to benchmark against other authorities in Scotland.
- 4.4 In keeping with the other themes of action, it will be useful to focus on Indicators of Change that will reflect how we are achieving inclusiveness in our communities. The following are the key Scottish Executive social justice milestones and targets which will be achieved through meeting the objectives stated in section 3.

Enablement

- everyone will be undertaking some form of learning to widen their knowledge and skills (target)
- reduce inequalities between communities (milestone)
- increasing the preparation of people with learning disabilities to live at home or in a “homely” environment (milestone)
- increasing the quality and variety of houses in our most disadvantaged communities (milestone)
- make sure older people are financially secure (milestone)
- reducing the proportion of older people with low incomes (milestone)
- increasing the proportion of older people able to live independently by doubling the proportion of older people receiving respite care at home and increasing care opportunities (milestone)
- increase the number of older people who enjoy active, independent and healthy lives (milestone)
- no-one has to sleep rough (milestone)
- reducing the incidence of drugs misuse in general and of injections and sharing of needles in particular (milestone)

Opportunities for Access

- all of our children will have access to quality care and early learning before entering school (milestone)
- halving the proportion of 16-19 year olds who are not in education, training or employment (milestone)
- every 19 year old is engaged in education, training or work (target)

- reducing the proportion of unemployed working age people (milestone)
- there will be full employment in Scotland(target)
- increasing the proportion of working age people contributing to a non state pension(milestone)
- accelerating the number of households in disadvantaged areas with access to the Internet (milestone)

Active Citizenship

- increasing the employment rates of groups that are relatively disadvantaged in the labour market (milestone)
- increasing the proportion of students from under-represented, disadvantaged groups and areas in higher education compared with the overall student population in higher education (milestone)
- increasing the number of people from all communities taking part in voluntary activities (milestone)
- increase residents' satisfaction with their neighbourhoods and communities (target)

4.5 The main objectives of this plan will be delivered at a local level through the Local Rural Partnerships.

4.6 It is expected that the Area Regeneration Strategies will base their actions on strategic objectives as set out in the plan.

5. DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 The delivery and prioritisation of the thematic plan and corresponding action plan will be through the Inclusive Communities Forum, formerly the Inclusive Communities Stakeholders Group. This Forum will have the following aims which are common to all three Community Planning themes:

- to champion the delivery of the thematic vision
- to develop the thematic plan and monitor the annual action plan
- to identify and implement creative solutions for improving policy development and service delivery
- to co-ordinate partnerships, projects and initiatives which are integral to the Inclusive Communities Plan

5.2 The Inclusive Communities Forum membership will include representatives from the Community Planning Strategic Change Group and the four Local Rural Partnerships. The organisational chart is attached for information as Appendix II. This partnership group will adhere to the principles of partnership working to achieve best value and best use of resources for communities in Dumfries and Galloway.

Organisations currently represented on the Forum are as follows but membership likely to be fluent as work progresses -

Age Concern
Dumfries and Galloway Elderly Forum
Scottish Enterprise Dumfries and Galloway
Dumfries and Galloway Council
Dumfries and Galloway Coalition of Disabled People
Dumfries and Galloway Federation of CVS
Dumfries and Galloway Accessible Transport Forum
Dumfries and Galloway Council, Emergency Planning/Community Safety Unit
NHS Dumfries and Galloway
Representatives from the Local Rural Partnerships

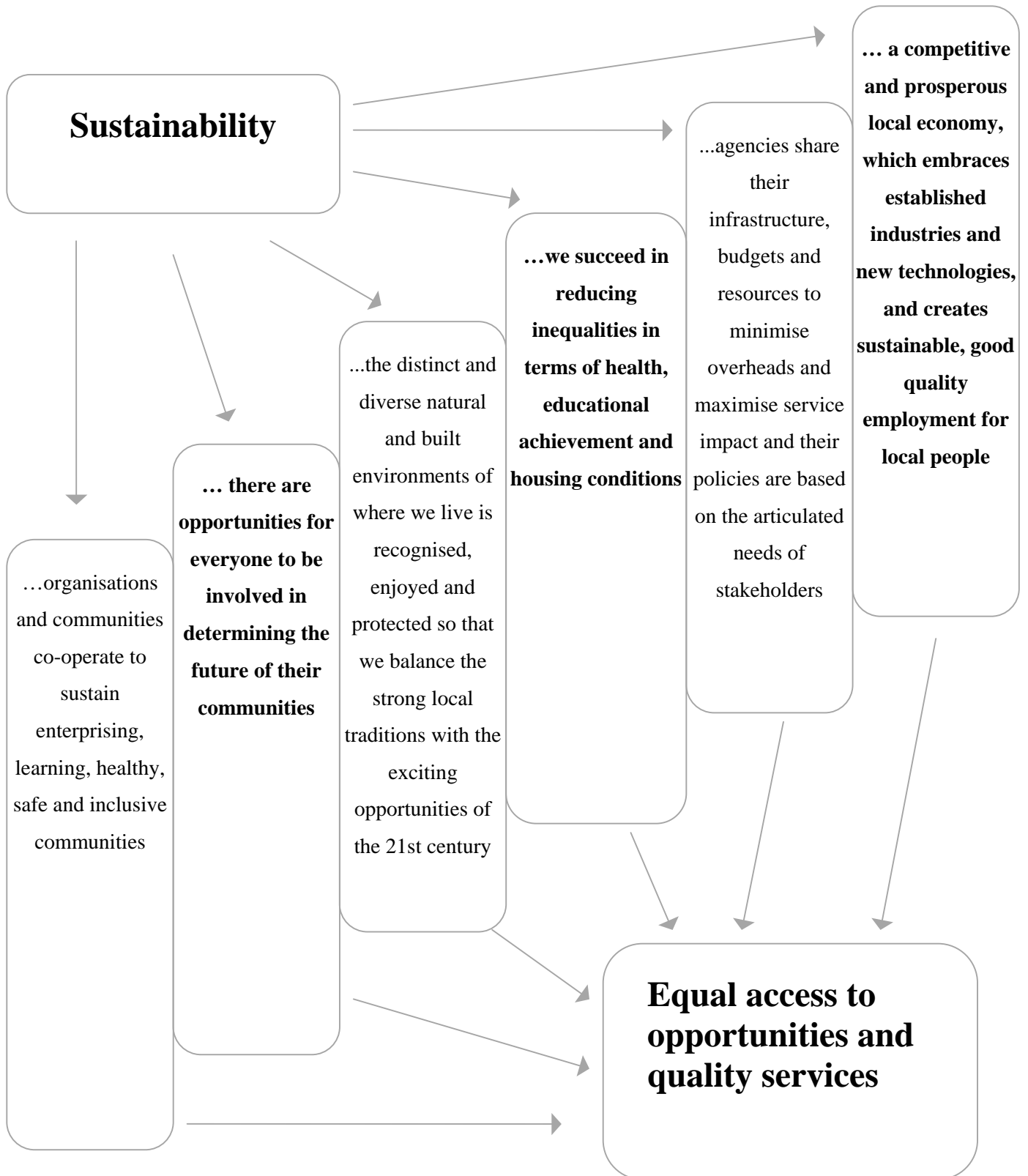
- 5.3 The Forum will have an overview of the action plan but it is recognised that many of the actions will be taken by a specific agency working in partnership with relevant others. However the overall aim should be to rationalise partnerships and streamline structures while still achieving effective delivery and this will be one of the challenges of the Forum which will, through time, develop into a more complex and devolved grouping.
- 5.4 The Local Rural Partnerships have an important role to play in promoting social inclusion at area level. The Local Rural Partnerships are inclusive strategic partnerships, which have been set up to develop community planning in the four areas in Dumfries and Galloway. They have the following general aims:
- to provide links between strategic policy development and planning with front line agencies involved in operational implementation
 - to develop a capacity building approach to involve customers, citizens and communities in identifying their social, health, economic and cultural needs
 - to improve existing arrangements for local Community Planning
 - to rationalise and revitalise existing local partnerships
 - to lead the implementation of a scheme of community consultation and participation to improve upon existing practice
 - to establish an effective working partnership with Local Area Committees and the Local Health Care Co-operative as a means to agree local priorities regarding service and policy development.
- 5.5 The Local Rural Partnerships will develop plans to promote Inclusion which are based on local needs but guided by the plan for Inclusive Communities and the Action Plan.
- 5.6 It is worth noting that the actions contained within the other two themes, safe and healthy communities and enterprising and learning communities are inextricably linked to this theme and a major part of the challenge of the community planning approach will be to integrate the planning and delivery of all three themed plans. The organisational links between the themed groups through shared membership will help towards integration.

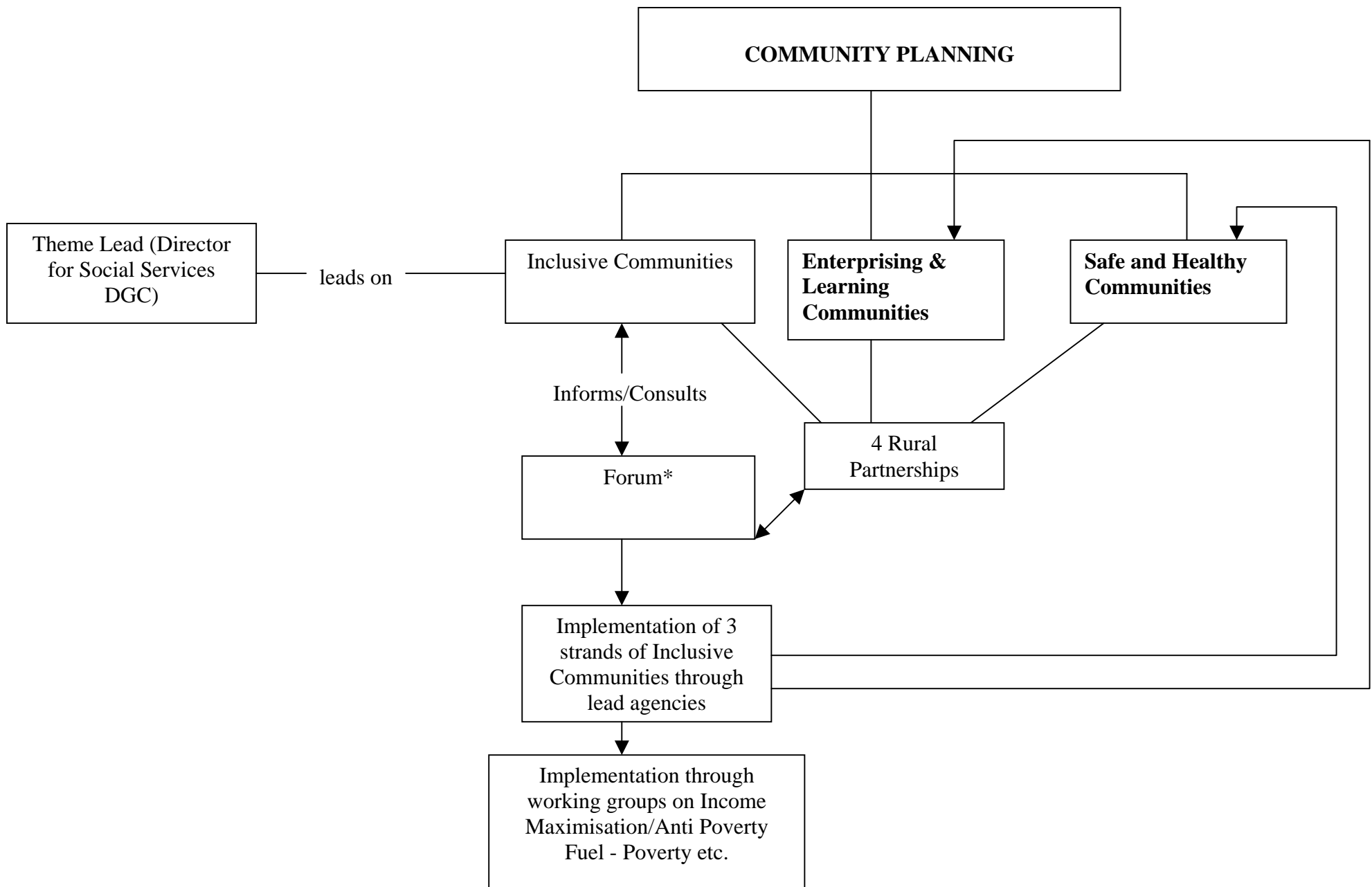
Appendix I Copy of Community Plan 20 year vision
Appendix II Chart of organisational framework
Appendix III References

Updated September 2002

Responding to Consultation

Our 20/20 vision off Dumfries and Galloway is one where





* the membership of this group is drawn mainly from the Community Planning Strategic Change Group.

APPENDIX III

- (1) Dumfries and Galloway Economic Update – December 2000
- (2) Nomis 2000
- (3) General Registrar Office for Scotland 2000 and The Scottish Office "The New Councils" Statistical Report.