

Summary of Discussions – Key themes

Musselburgh Area Partnership meeting 12th May 2014

Cross Cutting theme

A key theme linking many of the topics discussed was ‘**aspiration**’ or more specifically lack of aspiration across the area – both individually and collectively for the future of the town. What are the communities’ aspirations, or has there become a pattern in the area of settling for ‘good enough’ or ‘better than it was’?

Some key areas of concern:

- 1. Poor attainment patterns for children and young people** – from early years to school leavers (and while easy to illustrate a simple east-west divide is not really enough to understand what is going on). Overall the schools in our area have a great ethos and are working hard with their communities to build links and support pupils, and families are getting more involved with schools. But is there something bigger underpinning the increased reports of disruptive behaviour (leading to higher rates of suspension /exclusion)? Is there a risk of young people being ‘born to fail’ – being part of a cycle of ‘poverty of aspiration’ in communities where there are fewer people with formal qualifications, a higher proportion of working age adults needing support with core skills and a prevalence of lower tier employment? What can be done to foster a ‘culture of achievement’ across the area?
- 2. Health inequalities within our communities** – particularly in relation to life-style dependent illnesses and child health and well-being indicators. Traditionally ex-mining communities have had poorer overall health outcomes due to the particular nature of the work that sustained them, but is this the reason for the current situation or is it more to do with poverty, education and aspiration?
- 3. Town Centre / High street regeneration** – what is the Town Centre Strategy (approved in November 2013) going to do to help create more reasons for visitors and local people to ‘stop and stay’ and enjoy Musselburgh, support small independent businesses and develop local employment? What else needs to be done?
- 4. Tourism offer** - How is Musselburgh presented to the wider world? East Lothian has a growing tourism industry – but what is Musselburgh’s unique selling point? Can Musselburgh, as the gateway to East Lothian, be making more of our tourist offer – the river Esk, historic harbour, roman heritage, golf course, racecourse, Brunton, world class bird watching and even charity shops (they are a tourist draw in some areas!)?
- 5. Community Safety** – while fear of crime is generally low and rates of crime falling - and it was acknowledged that here has been some really good diversionary and partnership work in the area to address anti-social behaviour and community safety - Musselburgh West, particularly around North High St, has more than double the rate of reported crimes per person than average across East Lothian. What can help maintain the good progress on safety figures and what is/could be done to address the high rates of reported crime in some areas?
- 6. Transport and travel** - Transport to and from the centre of Musselburgh is probably the most extensive and affordable in East Lothian, and the park and ride is generating increased passenger use of Wallyford station. There are however still areas (particularly Whitecraig) with real public transport issues that affect people’s ability to take up employment, access services and participate in activities within this community. Connections between communities not only relates to public transport but also to safe cycle and walking routes as well – where are the gaps that restrict these active forms of transport.
- 7. Inclusion** – across Musselburgh (particularly in Musselburgh West) the make-up of the population is changing – becoming younger, more likely to live alone and have moved to East Lothian from elsewhere. In this area too the proportion of people identifying themselves as coming from minority ethnic backgrounds is growing faster than across the rest of county and approaching the average rate across Scotland. Is our community (and the services, recreation options and support available) adapting to, and making the most of, these changes?

Record of Discussions – Musselburgh Area Partnership 12th May 2014

Objective 1) To reduce inequalities across and within our communities

Fewer people across our community are living in poverty.

What has been getting worse?

- Child care costs
- Volume of part time work affecting earnings
- Income reduced
- Aspiration
- Income/spend maximisation
- Fuel poverty
- Working poor
- Increased dependence on the 'system'

What has been getting better?

- Foodbanks – less stigma – increasing use and accessible

We live healthy lives and the gaps in health inequalities are closing

What has been getting worse?

- Reduced health visitor role in Community Centres
- Fast food takeaways in areas of health inequality
- EDI physical activity for toddlers too low
- Health and wellbeing of parents?
- Is the health gap getting worse across the socio-economic range?

What has been getting better?

- Whitecraig : cookery classes and healthy food sessions
- Health & wellbeing in schools
- Reduction in smokers at Bridges Project

PARKED ITEMS

- Types of health / sport groups – cost and travel

Our communities are supportive and inclusive places

What has been getting worse?

- Homophobia especially among young people
- Localised tribal community ethos

What has been getting better?

- Musselburgh disability badminton club
- Sports clubs generally encouraging 'disabled' members
- Better inclusion for adults with disabilities – supports and housing

PARKED ITEMS

- High rate of young disabled people in the area – why?
- Increased ethnic minority population = not too aware of them

General observations

- Increased use of foodbanks (rising levels of poverty / Quick change) - Food bank usage links to jobs / salaries
- Shops/high street – full BUT quality of shops eg £1 shops - evidence of poverty – pawn shops, bookmakers
- Welfare cuts = under 25yr olds affected
- Not enough for teenagers to do
- Gaps – unemployment low / high level of employment at the top BUT low level of employment at the bottom
- Village facilities poor – bus services poor & distance/fare inequity

Overall priorities for this theme

1. **Fit and healthy**
2. **Aspiration**
3. **Basic skills – literacy etc.**

Objective 2) To develop a sustainable economy across the area

<i>What has been getting worse?</i>	Our town and village centres are thriving and well maintained places where people want to be.		<i>What has been getting better?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small shop closed after Day-to Day opened • No traffic wardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through traffic not encouraged to shop in Musselburgh • Somewhere to stop and stay in Musselburgh – no facilities at the river for a day out or for tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Centre strategy for Musselburgh • Waterfront improvement – Brunstane Burn to mouth of Esk • Attractive Wallyford redevelopment at Salter’s Rd – parking and new store/ encourages people to stop – footfall helping other businesses. However, it’s not quite finished off (road/pavement issues) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charity shops well used – they bring people in from other areas • Plenty of parks and beaches to visit with your children in Musselburgh

PARKED ISSUES

Consider comparison with Peebles Town and Musselburgh – how to make a tour to Musselburgh / attract bus tours.

Our business sectors are growing and a higher proportion of our residents are working in, and therefore contributing to, East Lothian’s economy.

<i>What has been getting worse?</i>	Our business sectors are growing and a higher proportion of our residents are working in, and therefore contributing to, East Lothian’s economy.		<i>What has been getting better?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North High St vacancy rates increasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication among service providers – lack of connection across departments in the local authority (economic dev/transport) e.g. Sky stall located in the High St outside Costa – loss of several parking spaces and congestion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public transport improving but still could be better e.g. 44 and Whitecraig. It’s cheaper to travel to Edinburgh than to Musselburgh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the up – more small businesses in town – what about survival rates (e.g. situation on North High St)

PARKED ITEMS

- Lower shop rates?

We are changing our patterns of consumption to reduce our use of finite natural resources

What has been getting worse?

What has been getting better?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of bike / cycle routes and training especially in primary schools- no Bikeability in Wallyford Primary- lack of cycle routes in Wallyford to connect with those outside the village | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Traffic congestion on (Musselburgh) High St – will increase harmful emissions• WHITECRAIG - Lack of public transport / buses therefore struggle to look for work-used to have one 44/hr but it has been taken off first thing; have to take two buses to get to Edinburgh- Can't access services in Musselburgh East (First Step) – requires 2 buses- Facilities not within walking distance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good public transport links in Musselburgh – but what about Whitecraig and Wallyford? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compact High St with a superstore close at hand reduces consumption of fuel | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase in recycling rates |
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Overall priorities for this theme

1. **Employment / lack of range of employers**
 - Types of shop on the High St
 - Charity shops offer limited employment
 - Improve the offer for newcomers to Wallyford Housing development
2. **Lack of local traders association**
3. **Empty business units – why?**
4. **What can Musselburgh offer now? What is its niche?**
 - Noted that previously the communities had a mining identity
 - How to build on the key attractions e.g. build up around the Racecourse, the Golf Course, Levenhall Links and wildlife
 - Develop the waterfront area
 - Consider what Musselburgh can bring to the East Lothian tourism offer
5. **North High St - demographics**

Objective 3) To support people to develop the resilience they need to lead a fulfilling life

Children in our area get the best start in life and are ready to succeed

What has been getting worse?

What has been getting better?

This was not explicitly discussed – but the discussion below is relevant

Our young people have the opportunities needed to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens

What has been getting worse?

What has been getting better?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruptive pupils • Employment for young people is lacking and becoming a cause for concern, resulting in potential anti-social behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational attainment • Respect for school staff by pupils • Bullying, lack of respect for themselves • Bad behaviour of some youngsters • Still a huge lack of confidence, resilience and aspiration among the most needy young people and families • There is a lack of variety in young people's ambitions – childcare, hair. Beauty, trades • 29% of students from East Musselburgh with no formal education qualifications - higher than the Scottish average 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for children to take part in extra-curricular activities • Implementation of Curriculum for Excellence • Curriculum for Excellence, - schools looking at individual needs in a different way • Curriculum for Excellence – primary and secondary • School teaching staff more approachable • Reputation of schools • Ethos of schools and wider social education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More parents are taking an interest in their child's education – attending parents evening and wanting to be involved in the parents council • 83% of school leavers with positive destinations • Crime and anti-social behaviour declining
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PARKED ITEMS

- Breaking the cycle of deprivation 'Born to fail' – how much relates to economic poverty

**People in this community have the skills, confidence and capacity to make positive changes
in their lives and their communities**

What has been getting worse?

What has been getting better?

This was not explicitly discussed – but the discussion above is relevant

General observations:

- There are lots of volunteers willing to make a difference
- More support needed for vulnerable adults to complement what is already going on
- Challenge in housing allocations to keep families together
- Still a lack of affordable housing – especially for young people
- Support networks for pupils of leaver age
- The two most common areas of vulnerability in Bridges' clients are: social isolation and lack of confidence
- DWP sanctions already starting to bite – vicious cycle of poverty

Overall priorities for this theme:

- **Attainment – from our schools that have a great ethos**
- **Behaviour of some of our pupils**
- **Early Intervention**

Objective 4) To ensure safe and vibrant communities

<i>What has been getting worse?</i>	Our area is a safe place	<i>What has been getting better?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In general older people in the community are frightened to come out at night	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• With the reported drugs issues, it is surprising to know that only two incidences (reported) of needles being discarded.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less groups of young people 'hanging around' in the Fisherrow area• High percentage of Musselburgh residents did not feel threatened by crime in their area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less anti-social behaviour in Whitecraig – and the small percentage of anti-social behaviour due to youth disorder• Improvements in policing / Council and Police working together

PARKED ITEMS:

Areas of Deprivation – should drill down to separate the good pockets within a particular area

<i>What has been getting worse?</i>	People in this area have access to high quality sustainable housing that meets their needs	<i>What has been getting better?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anti-social behaviour neighbours – Council take too long to address the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inequalities within housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The construction of new housing improves the chances of securing a tenancy• The creation of the new Travellers site has helped improve the environment by travellers not parking up in non designated spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New build houses

We have high quality natural environments and greenspace in our area that enhances the wellbeing of our communities

What has been getting worse?

- Pollution

What has been getting better?

- Whitecraig – great football park
- Storytelling garden getting used more
- Musselburgh Links
- Levenhall Links

Overall priorities for this theme

1. **Funding for the existing diversionary youth issues to increase and continue**
2. **Re-assess the housing allocation policy**
3. **Travel – barrier to go to Edinburgh and through the authority (*local authority area?*)**
4. **More work opportunities in the area**
5. **Water type feature and other attractions in Lewisvale Park with parking available in High School**
6. **Pro-rata of funding of needs of the data zone**