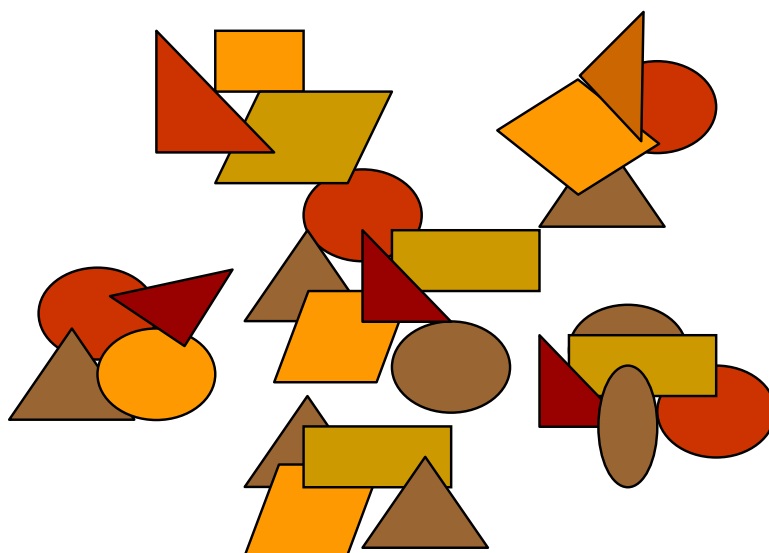


# Social Capital and Stronger Communities in Leicestershire



**Centre for Social Action, De Montfort University**

**Commissioned by the Stronger Communities Board  
of Leicestershire Together**

**First Edition, May 2007**

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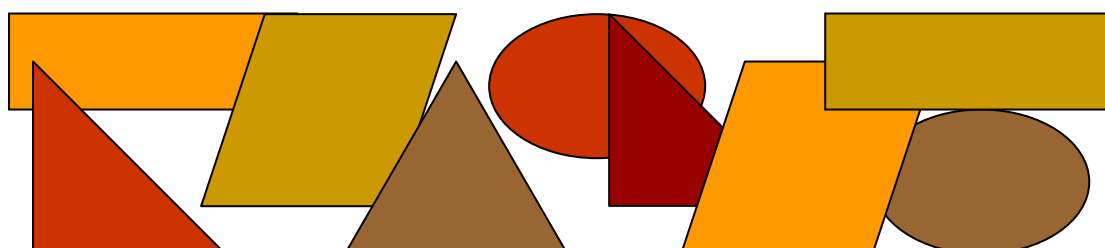
The work on which this report is based was commissioned by **The Stronger Communities Board of Leicestershire Together.**

**Martin Gage**, as lead officer for Stronger Communities coordinated the work with **Thilo Boeck** from the Centre for Social Action (De Montfort University). **Jon Adamson, Sharon Pye** (Leicestershire County Council) and **Jo Cheney**, (CVS Community Partnership) contributed to the analysis

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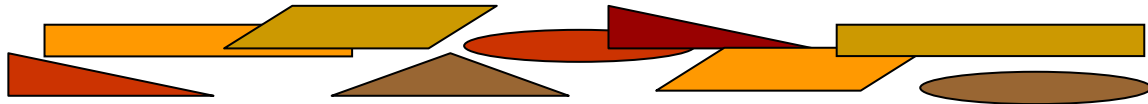
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## **Measuring and Enhancing Social Capital**

I hope you are excited and motivated by this project and report. It has been one of the most exciting things I have ever done and a great team effort.

This report is presented as the First Edition because this document, like the project itself, is still evolving. It is to be a living document - additions will be made as the statistics continue to be analysed and the stories of the 20 communities continue to be written. This first edition was delayed because a new slant on the results was produced by looking at Clusters of people, with some very interesting results.

It seems to have taken a long time from the surveying last June/July to the publication of this document. This was deliberate because the results of the surveys alone would have shown only a partial picture, we needed to verify the statistics with the experience of the residents – those who carried out the surveys, those in local voluntary and community groups, those who live in the area.

This work looks at communities as people not as customers. So much of the work of statutory partners is about service delivery and how it can be improved. Surveys often ask what service providers can do for you. This survey was different. It asked people what do they do for themselves, what do they think of their community and how do neighbours get on with each other. I want to thank our statutory partners for their patience in waiting for these results and the analysis. I now invite them to engage with this work in taking it forward and asking some important questions. For instance – how does it affect your delivery of services in an area if you know that there is low levels of trust and little sense of belonging, or the opposite? It is a different way of seeing things.

I would like to finish by thanking Local Area Agreement partners for trusting the Voluntary and Community Sector to deliver the Stronger Communities theme and for their support. In particular Nicole Rickard, the Head of the Policy Team at Leicestershire County Council, who shares the Lead role with me. I would also like to include Lynn Aisbett, who represents District Councils on the Stronger Communities Board, for her encouragement and to Neil Lambert of Voluntary Action Charnwood, who chairs and leads the Board so ably.

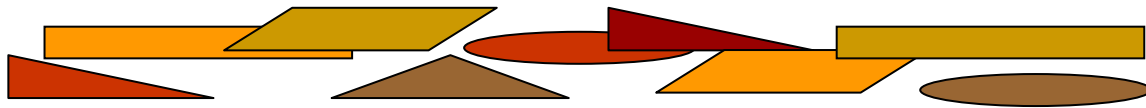
The team listed on the front cover have been so important to this project. Thilo's expertise meant it could all happen, Jon and Sharon have made the results understandable and Jo looks after the reporting. What more could I want!

**Martin Gage**

May 2007

Chief Executive, NWLCVS  
Lead Officer for Stronger Communities.

The Marlene Reid Centre, 85 Belvoir Road, Coalville, Leics., LE67 3PH



# Executive Summary

## Background

As part of the Leicestershire Local Area Agreement, the Voluntary and Community Sector took the lead on the 'Stronger Communities' block. As there was no existing government funding or projects for this area, a new project had to be developed. This led to the development of a project aimed at "Measuring and Enhancing Social Capital" in 20 communities across the County.

The Stronger Block has a total of 4 outcomes addressing empowering local people to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making, an increased sense of community spirit, equality of access to services and thriving market town and village centres, which act as "hubs" for surrounding communities.

## Social Capital

**'Social Capital is a resource that stems from the bulk of social interactions, networks and network opportunities that either people or communities have within a specific environment. This environment is characterised by a commonality of mutual trust and reciprocity and informed by specific norms and values.'**

There are different types of social capital which are important in different situations, or moments in our life. These types are shaped through:

- The types of networks (similar or diverse, outward or inward looking)
- Specific and shared norms and values
- The type of community (location, interest, identity, faith, etc.)
- Power and economic resources

Social capital can be described as the "glue" that holds communities together and the "resources" to help them move on. Thus the enhancement of social capital is key to developing stronger communities.

## Methodology

The project work was based on a participative methodology which involved local volunteers, representatives from the local Council for Voluntary Services (CVSs), Leicestershire County Council and academia. The Social Capital Survey and discussion groups were modelled on work carried out by the Centre for Social Action at De Montfort University.

The first stage was to engage the seven District Local Strategic Partnerships to identify three communities at a Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level in each district. In each LSOA it was hoped to recruit 20 volunteers to undertake a door-to-door survey interviewing 10% of the adult population. Local CVSs requested volunteers to carry out a survey in their local area. In eight of the twenty areas volunteers could not be recruited so MORI was engaged to undertake the surveys. However in the other 12 areas volunteers from a variety of organisations have been trained and carried out the house-to-house surveys. By the end, with a voluntary organisation receiving £100 for each volunteer provided, around £20,000 went into the funds of these organisations.

Led by the respective Council of Voluntary Service, Local Development Groups, made up of voluntary and community groups, faith groups, parish councils and school governors, are being formed to receive and interpret the results from the survey and suggest a range of ideas about how they as Community Groups can strengthen their community. These ideas will form the delivery plan for each of the identified communities.

## Findings and Conclusions

Overall, there are strong feelings of neighbourliness in Leicestershire however generally people in the 'rural areas' feel more positive about their neighbourhood and people from the 'deprived areas' feel less positive about it. For trust and for reciprocity there was a difference between deprived, rural and average areas which reflects these findings.

The qualitative findings give us some insight into why these differences exist. It is crucial to understand that the built environment and the turnover of population has an effect on how people interact with their neighbours.

Different factors contribute to building stronger, or less strong, communities. The responsibility does not lie only with the residents. There is a responsibility of those organisations providing public services to consider how their policies impact directly on communities and also how they impact on other factors – such as poverty and crime – which can impede the development of social capital and stronger communities.

Formal volunteering was low across the whole sample but informal volunteering was quite high in all areas. Proactivity and participation in community affairs was fairly low and there was no significant difference between deprived and average areas. This is an important finding because it suggests that feeling positive about your neighbourhood and trusting your neighbours will not necessarily lead people to take an active part in the shaping of their neighbourhood.

In the deprived areas there is a higher representation of a group of people who, despite holding low levels of trust in the neighbourhood and having a more negative view of their neighbourhood, tend to get slightly more involved in voluntary work and like to mix with people from different backgrounds. Whilst in the rural

areas, the opposite pattern is evident whereby despite higher levels of trust and neighbourliness they tended to make slightly less voluntary contributions to the community and were far less likely to be happy to live with people from different backgrounds. As such strong cohesion and a sense of belonging might sometimes be quite inward looking and exclusive with less active engagement in community affairs.

Social capital is not evenly distributed in Leicestershire and this has a direct influence on tackling social exclusion and building stronger communities. It is important to move away from stereotypical views that people from average or rural areas invest more in their neighbourhood because they have a positive perception of their local area. Policy to encourage volunteering and proactivity should be targeted to all types of neighbourhoods not only the 'deprived' neighbourhoods.

## Implications for Policy

Our findings and the process by which the work is being taken forward in the neighbourhoods have some direct bearing on policy making.

1. Rather than imposing a framework for building stronger communities, there has been an innovative partnership which enabled communities to define, explore and develop the meaning of stronger communities. As a result of the LAA and the voluntary sector taking a lead on 'stronger communities' there have already been a number of tangible benefits in local communities:
  - local volunteers have been trained to become trainers on how to conduct surveys and on what social capital is,
  - local people were involved in developing the Leicestershire Social Capital Survey and then conducted it in their own communities,
  - around £20,000 was invested in local voluntary clubs, groups and organisations communities,
  - local communities were involved in analysing the results of their area and interpreting the findings, adding their stories to the overall picture,
  - using the social capital framework and the findings communities are now developing their own plans on how to strengthen their community.
2. It should be recognised that no single organisation or group can enhance social capital on its own but that the partnership between a range of groups, organisations and individuals can make an important contribution. Our research highlights the following:
  - **The role of the voluntary and community sector (VCS)**  
As demonstrated by this piece of work the bottom-up nature of VCS working is a vital contribution the sector can make to enhancing and building stronger communities. In some ways the enhancement of social capital is a constituent element of their work. Whilst developing its trusted role within the local community the VCS should also bridge

gaps within the community by working with a more diverse group of people.

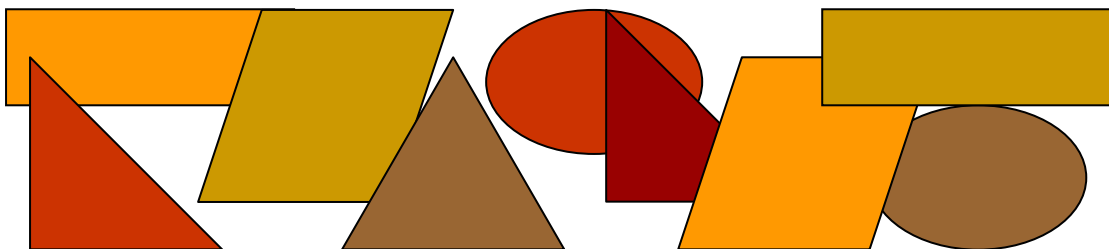
- **The role of local government**

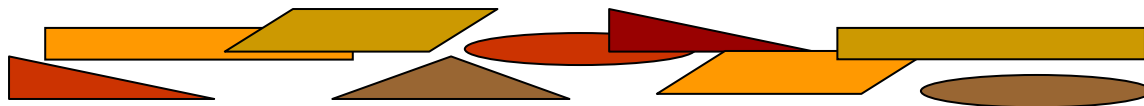
Local government can help to facilitate an environment in which social capital is enhanced and thus local people feel that they have an active role within a strong community. Some of the examples from our study included the important role of decisions relating to housing, transport, migration and especially the feeling that decisions are being made without real consultation or listening. Local authorities can provide opportunities for people to formally come together to tackle specific problems, they can also contribute to 'banal encounters', which are also important for social capital, though their design, planning, leisure and culture functions. (For further details see the IPPR report *Locality Matters*.)

- **The role of local people**

People in a community should have the opportunity to write their own stories. This project and report is only the beginning. This report has begun the process of publishing the statistics and the stories. The stories of the activities of people living in the 20 areas will continue to be recorded and the survey will be repeated in February 2009. Within this process, external interventions will be kept to a minimum and as such the outsiders role will be one of support and facilitation. The people in the communities must be allowed to write their own stories and encourage others to participate within this process.

3. Encouraging more volunteering. The survey has given us a picture of the typical volunteer and also the specific areas for building stronger communities. By building on the process started through this project the Voluntary and Community Sector can work with those 'agents of change' in all the different areas to promote stronger communities. This will hopefully lead to further active participation and volunteering through the discovery that by 'working together people can change things in the community'.





# Introduction

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## ***The Start of the Process***

In April 2005 the Voluntary and Community Sector were invited to put a representative on the LAA Steering Group, which met with a blank piece of paper and pages and pages of Government guidance. The relationship between the County Council, who were leading on the LAA, and the VCS is very good mainly due to a Compact signed two years earlier, which both sides take seriously.

The four blocks of the LAA (Children and Young People; Healthier Communities and Older People; Safer and Stronger Communities; Economic Development) were divided into seven themes. The VCS offered to lead on Stronger Communities, which was accepted.

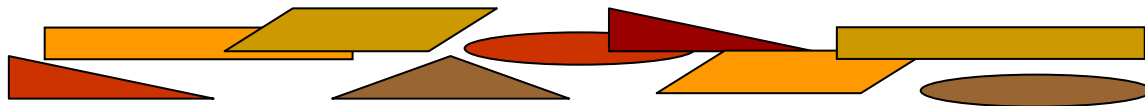
The process began of identifying existing government funding that came into each theme. There was none for Stronger Communities, so to achieve something worthwhile a new project had to be developed. The VCS suggested “Measuring and Enhancing Social Capital” in 20 communities across the County, and this was agreed. The Defra Social and Community Programme was also added to Stronger Communities.

The Centre for Social Action at De Montfort University in Leicester (<http://www.dmu.ac.uk/dmucsa>) was approached by CVS Community Partnership to support the work by training local volunteers to train community members in peer research and to assist with the theoretical framework and the analysis of the data.

## ***Aims***

Overall the aims of this work were:

- To inform and support the implementation and development of the Stronger Communities Theme through the participative development of a social capital questionnaire based on existing and new indicators.
- To train local volunteers to become trainers of community researchers
- To carry out the survey in 20 lower super output areas of Leicestershire
- To actively encourage activities that enhance Social Capital in the 20 areas



## Context

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### ***What is the Local Area Agreement (LAA)?***

LAAs are described by Government as 'the cornerstone of the new relationship between central and local government'. An LAA is a three-year agreement that contains targets for improving services and quality of life for local people. The agreement is made between Central Government (represented by the Government Office (GOEM)), and a county or unitary authority area represented by the principal local authority, (the County Council acting as the 'Accountable body') and other key partners (through the Local Strategic Partnership (Leicestershire Together)).

LAAs are a means by which Leicestershire Together Partners achieve key local and national priorities. They identify outcomes that need to be achieved and measurable target(s) so that it is clear if the outcome has been achieved. They allow money to be used flexibly within four blocks to achieve the agreed targets, without having to consider the precise source of the funding. In theory the LAA allows for the streamlining, simplification and integration of performance management arrangements into one overall framework.

Nationally LAAs are grouped round 4 blocks:

1. children and young people
2. safer and stronger communities
3. healthier communities and older people
4. cleaner, greener communities and economic development and enterprise.

In Leicestershire some of these blocks have been separated, so apart from the Children and Young People block each of the others has been split into two, giving seven blocks in the County:

1. older people
2. healthier communities
3. children and young people
4. safer communities
5. stronger communities
6. cleaner and greener
7. economic development and enterprise.

The current Leicestershire LAA covers the period from April 2006 to March 2009 (the full LAA and related documents can be viewed at [www.leicestershiretogether.org](http://www.leicestershiretogether.org) ). Its progress is reviewed every 6 months by GOEM and every three months by the Strategic Senior Officers Group, Leicestershire Together and LCC Cabinet.

## ***The Stronger Communities Theme***

### ***Outcomes and Targets***

The Stronger Block has a total of 4 outcomes and 20 targets. The outcomes are:

1. To empower local people to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and the delivery of services (7 targets)
2. Local people have a sense of community spirit and are supported in community activities to bring people together (5 targets)
3. Equality of access to services for everyone (1 target)
4. Vital and thriving market town and village centres, which act as "hubs" for surrounding communities (7 targets)

Of 20 targets 10 are measured through the social capital survey in 20 priority neighbourhoods. This survey measures the perception of residents in relation to some key aspects of social capital. While not necessarily unique the survey is an innovative development which will allow effective measurement of what makes a community stronger. It will be next repeated in 2009.

Of these targets two are **reward targets** which will attract a reward of £1,270,150 each if the agreed targets are achieved at the end of 2008/9. These two targets are broken down into sub-targets. Each sub-target attracts a percentage of the overall reward. Achievement of 100% of the target attracts 100% of the reward; achievement of between 60 and 100% attracts 60% of the reward. The target wording with the breakdown of these two targets is:

#### **Target 8: Stronger Communities**

Total Reward available for this target is £1,270,150 which will be apportioned as follows between the indicators:

- I. a. The percentage of adults who respond 'Definitely agree' or 'Tend to agree' to the question 'To what extent do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions that affect your area on your own?' - 25% £317,537.50  
b. The percentage of adults who respond 'Definitely agree' or 'Tend to agree' to the question 'To what extent do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions that affect your area when working with others in the neighbourhood?' - 25% £317,537.50
- II. The percentage of adults who respond 'Definitely agree' or 'Tend to agree' to the question 'To what extent do you agree or disagree that your neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?' - 50% £635,075

#### **Target 9: Stronger Communities**

Total Reward Available for this target is £1,270,150 (100%)

- I. The percentage of people who respond 'Two hours or more per week' to the question 'In the last 12 months, have you given unpaid help to any groups, clubs or organisations in any of the following ways (e.g. being a volunteer for one of these organisations)?'

Table 1 – Summary of key indicators for stronger communities

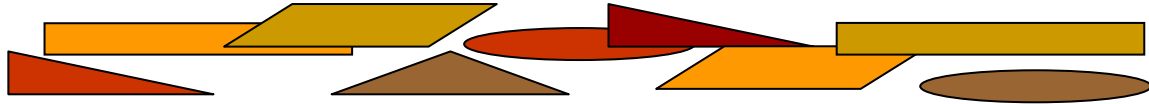
	% response	Comparison <sup>1</sup>	Target Increase			Reward stretch target?
			Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
% of people who voted in the last Parish Council elections	35.6%		-	2%	-	No
% of people who feel that they can influence decisions that affect their area on their own (measured by definitely agree/agree)	15.6%		-	-	6%	Yes
% of people who feel that they can influence decisions that affect their area when working with others in the neighbourhood (measured by definitely agree/agree)	61.7%		-	-	6%	Yes
% of people who definitely agree or tend to agree that their neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together	57.8%	78% East Mids 80% all Eng & Wales (69% most deprived)	-	-	6%	Yes
% of people who respond "2 hours or more a week" to the question "In the last 12 months have you given unpaid help to any groups, clubs or organisations?"	14.3%		-	-	3.50%	Yes
% of people who have given unpaid help to friends, neighbours or anyone except relatives over the last 12 months	77.2%		-	-	5%	No
% of people who say that many of the people in their neighbourhood can be trusted	42.9%	52% East Mids 49% Eng & Wales (67% in least deprived) (24% in most deprived)	-	-	5%	No
% of residents satisfied with overall delivery of public services (measured by very satisfied/satisfied)	70.9%		-	-	2%	No

As reward targets they also enable Pump-priming money to be allocated to this work. As there was no other Stronger Communities funding coming into Leicestershire this was key to making the process happening. Initially the VCS took the lead on Stronger Communities using their existing resources, but the pump-priming money enables extra resources to be put into infrastructure bodies and local VCS groups in year one and some coordination work for all three years. However if the sector was to contribute fully to the process extra resources over five years was required so a budget has been drawn up and applications to the Big Lottery BASIS fund and Capacity Builders were written. The Capacity Builders bid was successful, but the Lottery bid was not. North West Leicestershire Council for Voluntary Service contributes the time of their Chief Executive to lead the project.

### ***Stronger Communities Board***

Each theme of the Local Area Agreement has a board overseeing the work. Because the Voluntary and Community Sector was given the lead an existing board of CVS Community Partnership (CCP), called the Infrastructure Board, was augmented by representatives of partners to fulfil this role. However it has now been launched as a separate body, although still serviced by CCP. Membership consists of:

- 1 County Councillor and 2 County Council Officers
- 7 Councils for Voluntary Service (who also represent their respective Local Strategic Partnerships)
- A District Council Chief Executive (representing District Councils)
- CCP Health and Social Care
- Faith communities
- Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM)
- Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Parish and Local Councils
- Leicestershire and Rutland Primary Care Trust
- Leicestershire and Rutland Rural Community Council
- Leicestershire Council for Voluntary Youth Service
- Leicestershire Ethnic Minority Partnership
- Leicestershire Volunteer Centre Network
- The Police



## Social Capital: an overview

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The concept of social capital is being used in all sorts of arenas without much clarity about its meaning or implications for community development. Most definitions revolve around the notion of “social networks, the reciprocities that arise from them, and the value of these for achieving mutual goals” (Baron, Field and Schuller,2001:1).

### *What is it?*

People engage with others through a variety of associations forming many different types of networks. Sometimes each of these networks has different sets of norms, trust and reciprocity. Social networks are not only important in terms of emotional support but also crucial in giving people more opportunities, choice and power (Boeck; Fleming and Kemshall,2006). However there can be significant differences between the types of networks people have, not only in quantity but also in quality. The concept of social capital can encapsulate these differences.

**Bonding social capital** resides in family and friendship relationships and peer groups that provide a sense of belonging in the here and now. **Bridging social capital** is, as it sounds, about creating links with people outside our immediate circles. These networks can be very important for broadening our opportunities and horizons. Bonding social capital is good for ‘getting by’ but bridging networks are crucial for ‘getting ahead’. (Field,2003; Putnam,2000). **Linking social capital** is about access to influential others and power structures. (Woolcock,2001)

Within this activity lies the notion of **reciprocity**, that if you give something to others, quite often you will have some expectation that this kindness will be returned at some point in your life. In networks where reciprocity is strong, people care for each other’s interests and people will trust each other and feel safe. **Trust** is closely linked to reciprocity. (Fukuyama,2001) However, trust can be very complex. Feelings of trust and safety can be very personal and will vary within and between people and neighbourhoods. Trust also is about taking social risks; people need to feel confident that others will respond as expected and will act in mutually supportive ways, or at least that others do not intend harm.

One of the strengths of ‘social capital’ is that it has the potential to look at the **positive aspects** in the community as well as what might be lacking (Boeck; McCulloch and Ward,2001). However, social capital can be misused to blame people and communities. Therefore it is important to **embrace the diversity** existing within the groups and communities. This refers to gender, race, culture, religion, sexuality, ability and age amongst others and includes different lifestyles and preferences. In order for social capital to flourish it needs groups and communities to be outward looking and to be able to engage in the wider society.

Thus:

**‘Social Capital is a resource that stems from the bulk of social interactions, networks and network opportunities that either people or communities have within a specific environment. This environment is characterised by a commonality of mutual trust and reciprocity and informed by specific norms and values.’**

There are different types of social capital which are important in different situations, or moments in our life. These types are shaped through:

- The types of networks (similar or diverse, outward or inward looking)
- Specific and shared norms and values
- The type of community (location, interest, identity, faith, etc.)
- Power and economic resources

Social capital can be seen as a “social resource” and as the “glue of society” As a **social resource** social capital can give access to opportunities, education and the labour market and can lead to collective efficacy (Bourdieu 1986). For many people it is the attachment and sense of belonging to a certain place which gives them a sense of security and safety. However, the range of networks people have can vary from very restricted to very diverse which might have direct implications on the ability for people to perceive and negotiate social and place mobility. The need for diverse and wider ranging networks, a sense of belonging to a wider locale, and a focused and active outlook in life is well recognised. This is not just about the ‘size and density’ of the network, it is also about the resources that the network brings (Halpern, 2005).

Putnam’s (2000) notion of social capital as a community asset emphasises civic engagement as in membership in local non-governmental organisations. Norms of reciprocity and trust among community members seem to focus on the maintenance of the social system, specifically cohesion and social order and thus aim for integration into society. This perspective places stress on social capital as the **‘glue’ of society**. Thus SC is seen as a means of producing a healthy, economically stable and cohesive community.

### **A note of caution**

Both perspectives have much to contribute but also might lead to further stigmatising communities. Referring to social capital as the glue which holds the society together might further stigmatise some communities labelling them as ‘anti social’ or ‘a nuisance’ if they do not conform to certain types of social capital. A careful exploration of people’s own perspectives of values, norms and views of society is needed.

Without an emphasis on power and the recognition of inequalities the social capital discourse will contribute to blind members of society to the contradictions and

conflicts of interest which are built into their relationships. As a result they might accept their situation as normal and natural, right and proper. Thus the social capital discourse would distort the true nature of society and would serve to legitimate and justify the status quo. Evers (2003:15) says that social capital has not yet been 'linked systematically with the topics of power and inequalities; sometimes it even seems to divert our attention from their impact.' De Fillipas (2001:781) writes that social capital is a 'flawed concept because it fails to understand the issue of power in the productions of communities and because it is divorced from economic capital.' In order to overcome some of these shortfalls it is essential to insert within the social capital framework aspects of power and most importantly power imbalances, between and within communities (Erben et al, 2000).

Another aspect which has to be considered is that, in principle, strong ties within a community can be accompanied by the tendency to discriminate and exclude those people who do not belong to that community (Narayan, 1999 p. 8). The issue of a strong social cohesion within a community which itself is exclusive has lead to the question "Can social cohesion be a threat to social cohesion?" (Jenson, 1998: p. 4) and to the conclusion "that inclusion could also mean exclusion" (Bernard,1999: p. 18).

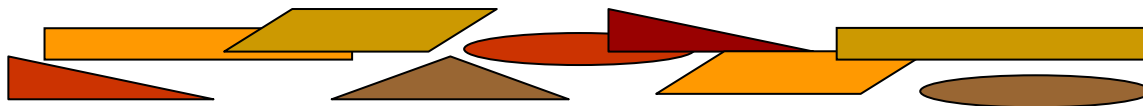
Thus we highlight the importance of considering *both* dimensions -the resource and glue- in order to get a comprehensive picture of the social capital in a neighbourhood.

### ***Social Capital and 'stronger communities'***

If community and voluntary organisations seek to enhance social capital in communities it is important that they have a clear idea of the nature of the communities in which they work and have a clear understanding of the resources that exist within them. Social capital can be used as framework for development work. It can be used proactively to inform how projects are developed and how people, community members or professionals, work in communities. If we accept that social capital is a useful framework then it can be much more than an assessment tool. The understanding of community dynamics in terms of social capital can contribute to the enhancement of community relations, community cohesion and generally making communities stronger.

There is a danger, in using the concept of social capital , of assuming that all people are equal stakeholders in a society where all have equal access to all the resources needed for mutual collaboration. It is a mistake to think that all people will benefit from the collaboration, clearly this is not so and it is only through working in close partnership with the people in the communities that the maximum benefit can be achieved.

It is the task of workers and community activists to create an environment in which all the component parts can contribute to the whole and balance each other while creating a better quality of life and stronger communities



# Methodology

---

## ***Introduction***

The work was based on an approach to practice, training and research which starts from the issues, ideas and understanding of local residents, rather than from a professional's definition of their needs. A key responsibility of practitioners, academics and researchers is to facilitate a process of learning, development and change. This involves specific skills and knowledge, which are not the province of any one group or profession, but should be available and accessible to all.

By adopting an approach aimed at empowerment, learning, development and change, the process of measuring and exploring Social Capital should not only aim to create valuable information and findings but to be central in creating or helping to create new opportunities for participation for local people. This approach is strengthened if the researchers are themselves residents from the neighbourhood being researched. They are the 'experts' of their own neighbourhood.

In this way community research is compatible with the desire to break the vicious circle of exclusion and disenfranchisement by actively including and supporting the local community in focusing, prioritising and developing programmes for community-based sustainable regeneration.

The Social Capital Survey in Leicestershire was modelled on work carried out by the Centre for Social Action at De Montfort University.  
(see: <http://www.dmu.ac.uk/dmucsa> )

## ***The Process***

The first stage was to identify three communities in each district. The seven District Local Strategic Partnerships did this and a list appears later.

In each area it was hoped to recruit 20 volunteers to undertake a door-to-door survey interviewing 10% of the adult population. Also it was hoped for two people to be trained as trainers for each area.

Organisations based in or serving each of the 20 areas were invited to meetings in their community in February 2006 to explain the scheme and encourage the recruitment of the volunteers. This group of groups, consisting of Voluntary and Community Groups, Faith Groups, school governing bodies and parish councils, in each community will be known as the Local Development Group (LDG). The initial response was not good in most areas and had to be developed over time. The results of the survey should help entice them to future meetings.

## **The following organisations / groups were represented in the training:**

Age Concern Leicestershire  
Blaby CVS  
Braunstone Town Council  
Charnwood CVS  
Christian Aid  
Hastings Community Association  
Helping Hands Community Trust  
Holiday at Home in Whetstone  
LLSNWA  
Long Field High School  
Markfield Community Association  
Melton CVS  
Mosaic.

North West Leicestershire CVS  
Oadby Baptist Church  
Oadby United Reformed Church  
RAGE (Residents Action Group Egerton)  
Rural Community Council (Leics & Rutland)  
Savak Samaj  
South Leicestershire CVS  
VISTA.  
Voluntary Action for Oadby & Wigston  
Voluntary Action Hinckley & Bosworth  
Whetstone Parish Council  
Wigston United Reform Church

### ***The interviewers***

Wherever possible, interviews were carried out by local volunteers. Local Councils for Voluntary Service (CVSs) requested volunteers to carry out a survey in their local area. A total of 30 representatives from each CVS attended a 'train the trainer' session run by the Centre for Social Action at De Montfort University. This involved two separate days training covering both the theoretical background to social capital and guidance on conducting surveys. For attending these training sessions a financial donation was made to the voluntary organisation they represented. Those trained at the Centre for Social Action then cascaded this training down to individual volunteers recruited in each area.

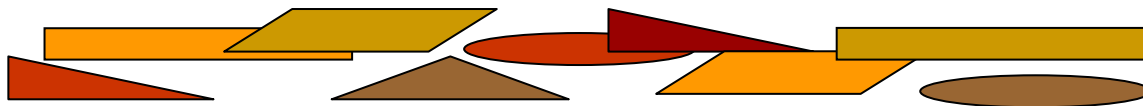
### ***The interviews***

In eight of the twenty areas volunteers could not be recruited so MORI was engaged to undertake the surveys. However in the other twelve, volunteers from a variety of organisations have been trained and surveyed house to house. By the end, with a voluntary organisation receiving £100 for each volunteer provided, around £20,000 went into the funds of these organisations.

### ***Current developments***

Led by the respective Council of Voluntary Service, the Local Development Groups are meeting to receive and interpret the results from the survey and suggest a range of ideas about how they, as Community Groups, can strengthen their community. These ideas will form the delivery plan for each of the identified communities.

Similarly, communities of interest will be identified across Leicestershire and groups from, or working with, those communities of interest will be brought together to conduct the survey, interrogate the results and develop ideas. Initially this is being done through Vista, for the visually impaired community and Mosaic for the physically disabled community.



# The Survey

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## ***Introduction***

The principal purpose of the social capital survey was to explore the level and types of social capital among the adult population resident in households within three communities types – deprived, rural and average – in each district/borough of Leicestershire.

The survey will be conducted twice over the three-year period covered by the Leicestershire Local Area Agreement (LAA). The survey was conducted in the first year of the LAA (summer 2006) and will be repeated sometime in the final year (2008/09). Following analysis and reporting of the first survey local delivery groups will coordinate work in each area. The impact of this work will then be measured by comparing the results of the two surveys.

## ***Selecting the Areas***

The decision was taken that it would be useful to identify three different types of area in each Local Authority District (LAD). The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) responsible for each LAD was asked to select a location within their area which was (i) rural, (ii) deprived and (iii) average. The only exception to this was in Oadby & Wigston which do not have a rural area. Thus, 20 areas were identified across the seven LADs in Leicestershire. Each LSP used their own interpretation of what they considered to be 'rural', 'deprived' and 'average'. In most cases the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2004) were used to identify deprived areas. As such we are aware that the selection of the areas is never clear cut and a matter of subjective interpretation.

Each area chosen to be surveyed corresponded to a Lower Super Output Area (LSOA). This meant that other socio-economic information can be used for each area. An LSOA is an area of geography used in the 2001 Census. It contains on average around 1,500 people. LSOAs will be used in the next Census in 2011 and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has made a commitment to use this geography wherever possible when they publish further statistical information.

Table 1 (next page) shows a list of the twenty priority areas chosen for the Social Capital Survey. Table 1 shows each area with the LSOA code, area name and type. Also included is the population of each LSOA, the target for a ten per cent sample and the number of respondents actually achieved in each area.

It was decided that a ten per cent sample would provide a fairly robust representation of the local community. Given that the population figure includes all people, including around a quarter who are aged 0 to 18 years and not covered by

this stage of the survey, this was an ambitious target to set. A good sample size was achieved in most areas amounting to 8% across all twenty areas. Only two areas (both in Melton Borough) failed to achieve a useful response. These two areas – one deprived and one rural – are being re-surveyed in March 2007 and this will provide a better sample and boost the figure for all areas.

The following organisations provided volunteers to undertake the survey:

Age Concern Leicestershire	Mercenfeld School PTA
Al-Hera Youth Group	Mosaic.
Blaby C.V.S.	Oadby Baptist Church
Castle Donington Bowls Club	Oadby St Peters District Guides
Charnwood C.V.S.	Oadby United Reformed Church
Christian Aid	RAGE (Residents Action Group Egerton)
CRFC Mini Tour	Riverview Tenants & Residents Assoc
DEBRA	R & R Care, Loughborough
Groby Junior Football Club	Sevak Samaj
Hanover at Home	Sharnford C of E Primary School PTA
Harborough & District Mind	Sharnford Golden Jubilee Committee
Hastings Community Association	Sharnford Pre-School Playgroup
Helping Hands Community Trust	South Leicestershire CVS
Hemington School	St Edwards Church
Kings Church, Loughborough	VISTA.
Markfield Community Centre Junior YC	Voluntary Action Hinckley & Bosworth
MCA Summer Programme	Voluntary Action Melton
1st Markfield Scout Group	Voluntary Action for Oadby & Wigston
Markfield Community Centre Junior YC	Whetstone Baptist Church
Markfield Colts Football Club	Whetstone United Reformed Church
Markfield Community Association	Wigston United Reform Church
Measham Methodist Church	Wymondham W.I.
Melton Vineyard	Wymondham & Edmonthorpe Civic Soc
Melton Young Singles Trust	

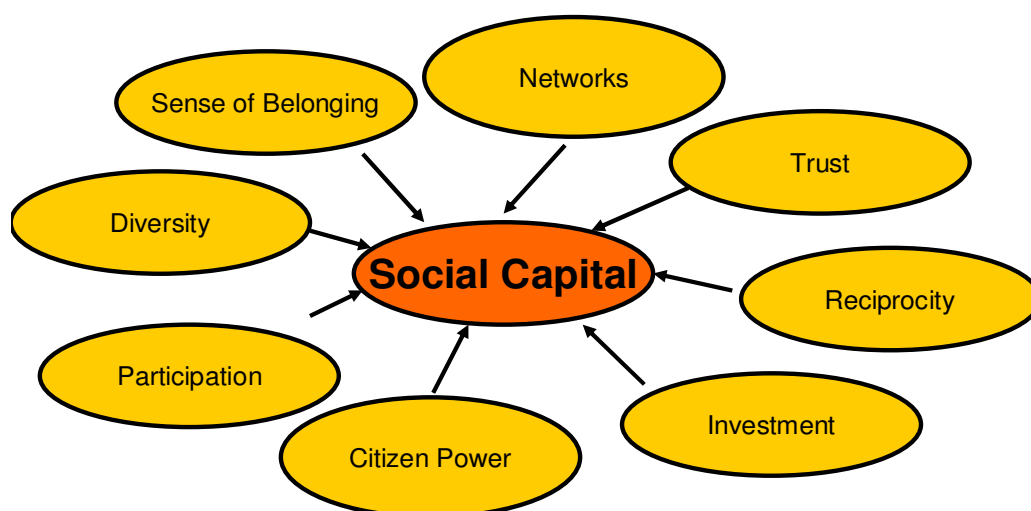
Table 2 – Twenty areas selected for the social capital survey.

Area No.	District/Borough	Area Name	Area Type	Zone ID	All people <sup>1</sup>	Sample size if 10% of all people	No. of responses	% response	
1	Blaby	Sharnford	rural	E01025664	1274	127	151	12%	
2	Blaby	Braunstone	deprived	E01025666	1513	151	131	9%	
3	Blaby	Whetstone	average	E01025647	1485	149	87	6%	
4	Charnwood	Loughborough	deprived	E01025699	1368	137	147	11%	
5	Charnwood	Syston	average	E01025758	1415	142	97	7%	
6	Charnwood	Wolds	rural	E01025760	1324	132	114	9%	
7	Harborough	Primethorpe	average	E01025775	1851	185	136	7%	
8	Harborough	Fleckney	deprived	E01025778	1584	158	128	8%	
9	Harborough	Tilton on the Hill	rural	E01025815	1857	186	108	6%	
10	Hinckley & Bosworth	Earl Shilton	deprived	E01025844	1478	148	115	8%	
11	Hinckley & Bosworth	Markfield	average	E01025868	1453	145	200	14%	
12	Hinckley & Bosworth	Twycross/Witherley	rural	E01025882	1604	160	107	7%	
13	Melton	Bottesford	average	E01025886	1703	170	154	9%	
14	Melton	Melton	deprived	E01025900	1525	153	38	2%	
15	Melton	Wymondham	rural	E01025912	1532	153	22	1%	
16	North West Leics.	Lockington & Hemington	rural	E01025925	1830	183	170	9%	
17	North West Leics.	Ibstock & Heather	average	E01025941	1527	153	90	6%	
18	North West Leics.	Measham	deprived	E01025949	1581	158	102	6%	
19	Oadby & Wigston	Oadby	deprived	E01025976	1284	128	107	8%	
20	Oadby & Wigston	Wigston	average	E01025992	1528	153	92	6%	
					all	29231	3072	2296	8%

## ***The Framework***

Through work with residents, young people, adult volunteers and practitioners and based upon existing research we have developed a multi-faceted framework of social capital for research, evaluation and practice (Boeck and Fleming,2005) This framework contains the key features of social capital (e.g. participation in networks, trust, reciprocity and diversity (Onyx and Bullen,2000: 89; Putnam,2000: 16) and contains factors which were seen as related to social capital or which might influence the enhancement and development of social capital (i.e. sense of belonging, outlook in life and power (Morrow,2002: 138). The framework has been used and adapted by a number of organisations to shape and inform their work with young people and communities.

## **Social Capital Framework**



© Boeck 2002

## ***The Questions (Indicators)***

The development of the Questionnaire was devised under a participative methodology. We facilitated discussion groups with 30 volunteers to establish the indicators. The sessions gave participants the opportunity to debate the concept, consider the meaning of it within their personal lives and in their professional practice. The workshops created the space for the different projects to share their ideas. It was hoped that this approach would ensure that different stakeholders were involved in the process. Our discussions reflected the fact that social capital is a concept difficult to define and to measure. As there can be many definitions, so there can be many measurements. The main problem, either in defining or measuring the concept, is its multilevel and multidimensional nature.

We also discussed questions which have been used by national surveys in order to have comparable data sets. However, the participants of our workshops and meetings saw some of these questions as inappropriate. This was not only because of the sometimes difficult language but also because concerns were expressed that some questions do not reflect people's realities and might contribute to the stigmatisation of communities.

After consideration we reached consensus about which questions to include and which to change or leave out.

Sense of Belonging	Belonging: Your neighbourhood
	Belonging: This Local Authority District
	Belonging: Leicestershire
	Belonging: England
	Belonging: Great Britain
	Belonging: Other place outside GB

Perception of Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood is a close, tight knit community
	Neighbourhood is a friendly place to live
	Neighbourhood is a place where people look after each other
	Most people who live in this neighbourhood trust one another
	So overall, neighbourhood is a good place to live?

British Crime Survey

Perception of Diversity	Your neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together
	I am happy to live amongst people of different lifestyles

Home Office Citizenship Survey

Diversity of Networks	Outside of work, I like to mix with people who - same sex
	Outside of work, I like to mix with people who - same area
	Outside of work, I like to mix with people who - same culture
	Outside of work, I like to mix with people who - same religion/faith
	Outside of work, I like to mix with people who - similar age
	Outside of work, I like to mix with people who - Are a diverse group

Networks	Spoken to somebody outside household/ not work: on the telephone
	Spoken to somebody outside household/ not work: via email
	Spoken to somebody outside household/ not work: by visiting
	Socialise with Neighbours
	Socialise with Friends
	Socialise with Family

British Household Panel Survey

Home Office Citizenship Survey

Trust	Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted?	}	Home Office Citizenship Survey
	People in your neighbourhood can be trusted?		
Investment	In the last 12 months, how many times have you given unpaid help: informal volunteering	}	ONS Social Capital Normalised Question Framework
	In the last 12 months, how often have you given unpaid help: formal volunteering		
	How important is it to you that you contribute to your community		
Proactivity/ Participation	Contacted a local radio station, TV station or newspaper	}	ONS Social Capital Normalised Question Framework
	Contacted the appropriate organisation to deal with the problem, such as the council, PCT, police etc.		
	Contacted a local councillor or MP		
	Initiated local activities, a campaign or network		
	Attended a public meeting or neighbourhood forum to discuss local issues		
	Attended a tenants or local residents group		
	Attended a protest meeting or joined an action group		
	Helped organise a petition on a local issue		
	None of these		
	Thought about it but did not do anything		
	No local problems		
Power	You can influence decisions that affect your area on your own?	}	General Household Survey
	You can influence decisions that affect your area when working with others in the neighbourhood?		
Reciprocity	How likely is it that you could get help from your neighbour?	}	ONS Harmonised British Crime Survey
	Suppose you lost your purse/wallet containing your address would it be returned?		
	In general, in what kind of neighbourhood would you say you live in?		
Voting	In the last general election (national elections - 2005)		
	In the last local elections		

## Demographics

The demographic information of participants in the social capital survey is shown below. Generally the respondents to the survey were fairly similar to the general population of Leicestershire. The main area of difference was in the gender of the respondents with a higher proportion of responses from women.

In terms of age, whilst the percentage figures were different for the census 2001 and for respondents to the social capital survey, the order was the same. So for example, the largest age group was 60 to 74 year olds, followed by 30 to 44 year olds then 45 to 59 year olds. The main difference with regards to age was a higher number of those aged 75 years and older amongst those responding to the survey.

The ethnicity of the general population of Leicestershire (census 2001) and respondents to the social capital survey are remarkably similar.

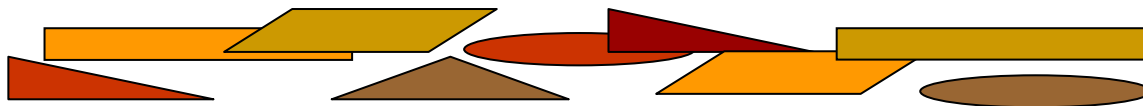
The measure of disability is a slightly different measure for the survey than the one used in the census due to the way the corresponding questions were asked. Nonetheless it does provide some indication of a comparison.

**Table 1: Key demographics of those who responded to the social capital survey compared to the general population of Leicestershire.**

		2001 census	social capital survey
Sex	male	49.4%	38.5%
	female	50.6%	60.1%
Age	18 to 24	12.5%	6.1%
	25 to 29	9.3%	4.7%
	30 to 44	23.4%	21.1%
	45 to 59	19.4%	20.9%
	60 to 74	28.5%	24.0%
	75 & over	6.9%	15.5%
Ethnicity	White	94.7%	94.4%
	Mixed	0.7%	0.5%
	Asian or Asian British	3.7%	3.5%
	Black or Black British	0.3%	0.2%
	Chinese	0.4%	0.0%
	Other	0.2%	0.0%
Disability	self-declared*	15.5%	11.7%

Source: Census 2001 and Leicestershire Social Capital Survey

Note: the figure for disability refers to those with 'a limiting long-term illness' in the census and in the Social Capital Survey refers to those respondents who stated that they 'considered themselves disabled'.



## Findings

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### ***Overall Results and Comparison of Areas***

In this section we will explore the findings of each area of our Social Capital Framework. We will explore the quantitative (survey) and the qualitative (discussion groups and feedback from researchers) findings. This will give the reader a comprehensive picture and the context within which to interpret the data. Both – qualitative and quantitative data – complement each other and should not be seen as separate. The survey will provide us with an overview and some comparisons between the areas. However each of the areas has a story to tell. We have discovered that some areas might be classified as deprived, rural or average but within them there are pockets which are very different. This can not be captured by the survey but was explored through the discussion groups.

One of our concerns was that in the comparisons between the areas some score lower than others. This might lead to make assumptions about the people living in the neighbourhoods and to stigmatise people. The survey is not a reflection on the individual living in an area. Feelings, attitudes and perceptions are formed and are responses of a complex interplay between different factors within neighbourhoods. These factors were explored within the discussion groups and it continues to be an ongoing process within the LAA.

There are outside factors which all influence how people feel about their neighbourhood; such as breakdown between different groups and organisations, people moving into the area, policy decisions, inequality and deprivation. Whatever it is we need to find out to put it into the survey.

### **Survey Findings**

We used Pearson Chi-Square test at 0.05 significance level to determine whether the relationship was real rather than due to chance, in conjunction with the correlation co-efficient Cramer's V. This is a measure of the strength of association between two categorical variables. Cramer's V ranges in value from 0 to 1.0, the higher the number the more strongly two variables are related to each other.

Factor analysis has been used on 31 of the survey questions in order to reduce them down to 9 thematic groups. Each of these resulting thematic groups have been labelled according to the different types of variables summarised by each.

- Neighbourhood perceptions
- Sense of belonging.
- Contact
- Trust and Reciprocity
- Social Contact

- Investment
- Influence and Power
- Belong outside of GB
- Diversity

Using the above variables the 'two step cluster method' was used in order to provide a 2 cluster solution.

## Interpreting the results

The Charts that appear in this section of the report indicate the relationship between the category and the overall results. The charts summarise the findings for each of the three main category types – rural, average and deprived. A full list of the number of responses and the percentage figures is included in Appendix1.

The key for understanding these summary charts is shown below. Where the result is lower (though not necessarily worse) this is indicated by an empty circle. Where the result is higher (though not necessarily better) it is indicated by a solid dot. Where there is no dot this indicates that for this measure the result did not differ significantly from the mean (average).

<u>Comparison to average</u>	
higher	●
no significant difference	
lower	○

## Qualitative Findings

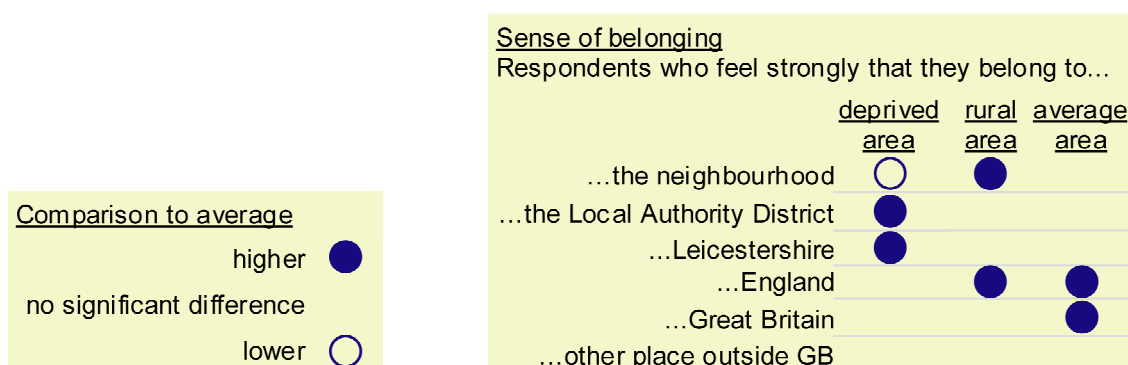
The Social Capital survey was followed up with feedback and discussion groups. The aim of the focus groups was to explore issues in greater depth, identify problems and developing solutions from different perspectives.

Discussion groups were (and still are) being organised targeting all the researched areas. Despite the low attendance in the early ones held, so far lively discussions and some very interesting perspectives have emerged. The findings from these discussions are woven into this report.

## Sense of Belonging

Overall, more people felt a strong sense of belonging to 'England' than any other area (87% of respondents felt 'very' or 'fairly' strongly that they belonged to England). This was followed by a sense of belonging to 'Great Britain' (81%), their own neighbourhood (78%), Leicestershire (64%), the Local Authority District (46%) and any other place outside Great Britain (18%). Thus the main sense of belonging was at a national level (England or Great Britain) but after that the strongest sense of belonging was at the very local, neighbourhood level with other administrative areas much further behind. This trend was evident across all area types.

The findings shown below indicate that – relative to rural and 'average' areas - in the deprived areas there is an issue about belonging to the neighbourhood. However it is interesting to see that in the deprived areas people show a stronger sense of belonging to the Local Authority District and to Leicestershire as a whole. In the rural areas, people feel more attached to their neighbourhood which also comes out strongly in the rest of the survey.



Feedback of researchers and workers also suggests that some of the neighbourhoods which are right at the borders and do not have a Leicestershire postcode do not feel part of Leicestershire. Some of the areas might even feel quite disassociated with Leicestershire and may feel a greater sense of belonging with another area. These are more likely to be rural areas towards the edge of the county boundary.

However the overarching sense was that this does not cause major problems. It seems that it is not a major concern for the residents as long as they have the services they need.

*"They can get most of what they need from there and if they don't they would go outside the county for things like medical. The only main issue they have is transport to the places they need to go to."*

## ***Perception of the Neighbourhood***

It is important how people view their communities and how they perceive others view them. Perceptions of communities are strongly linked to stereotypes of communities and their effect on everyday life. For the building of social capital, communities may need to challenge their history and consider what community means to them and what contribution everyone can make to it.

In a neighbourhood that scores low in neighbourhood connections local residents tend to know their neighbours but do not tend to rely on their help. This does not mean that the relationship with the immediate neighbours is always bad. The concern within a neighbourhood with low neighbourhood connections is that if the need arises, people do not feel they can rely on the neighbours (and vice-versa). For some people the neighbours are vital and they are groups or networks which support each other. If these do not exist people might feel very vulnerable or isolated. This aspect of social capital considers also if residents feel that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their neighbourhood. It is important not to interpret this as if the residents do not want to mix with a diverse community! The results might highlight some of the perceived clashes and conflicts existing in the neighbourhood.

Overall, the percentage of respondents who felt that their neighbourhood 'is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together' was lower than elsewhere in the country. The overall response to this Leicestershire survey showed that 58% of respondents agreed with this. This figure compares to a figure of around 78% for the East Midlands and 80% for all England and Wales.<sup>1</sup> This highlights that in those rural areas which had a more positive response to this question than other areas in Leicestershire they are not necessarily as positive as those results achieved regionally and nationally.

Whilst more people in the 'average areas' and the 'rural areas' perceive their neighbourhood as a tight-knit community the survey suggests that more people in the 'deprived areas' do not share this perception. Overall, people of the 'rural areas' feel more positive about their neighbourhood and people from the 'deprived areas' feel less positive about it also identifying conflicts and clashes between different groups. Important to highlight here is that this does not reflect people's willingness to be part of the neighbourhood or how neighbourly individuals are. The qualitative findings provide us with some insight **why** people might have those feelings.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: 2005 Citizenship Survey. Community cohesion topic report. DLG. June 2006. ISSN 1358-510X.

Perception of neighbourhood Respondents who agree that...	deprived areas	rural areas	average areas
...their neighbourhood is a close, tight knit community	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
...their neighbourhood is a friendly place to live	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
...their neighbourhood is a place where people look after each other	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
...most people who live in their neighbourhood trust one another	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
...you often see strangers in this area	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
...they would be happy asking certain local people to keep an eye on their house and property	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
...people can be relied upon to call the police if someone is acting suspiciously	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
...overall, the neighbourhood is a good place to live	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
...their neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	

## Intergenerational Differences

The qualitative findings suggest that the sense of belonging and pride in the rural areas are often quite pronounced.

*"... there is an awful lot of pride in the fact that it is a wonderful place to live. So when I say to them, come on there must be some issue, something that you want to address, something that mildly irritates people, no, nothing..."*

However in some of the rural areas there are clashes between 'elderly residents' and newcomers, especially young people. As such some residents expressed concern about 'anti-social behaviour and kids being noisy'.

*"The woman I was speaking to on this occasion said, you know, we have peaks and troughs, there will be a year or two where there are small groups of kids being a bit noisy or whatever and then they grow up and go to university, because again it is that kind of area, it is very well to do. So there is a great sense of pride in the actual village itself."*

As such there might exist small pockets of people who are excluded who might become overshadowed by the overall positive response within the rural areas. This might be especially relevant to new people moving into the neighbourhood and young people. It has to be highlighted that for several areas, especially the 'deprived areas' there was a major concern about vandalism and anti-social behaviour. However there were examples of how young people were targeted by residents who at the same time feel intimidated.

*"I think that [anti-social behaviour] can have a really big effect on, you know 'this neighbourhood is a friendly place to live or people look after each other or people call the police if someone is acting suspiciously'. It has got really bad in my area and there is this huge polarisation between old people and younger people. I went to a meeting the other day where there was a policeman who said he was phoned up the other day because an 8 year old boy had thrown a piece of lemon rind in somebody's front garden. The person who phoned wanted the police to come out and tell this*

*boy off. He had another call that somebody was playing cricket with a soft ball in the street, somebody phoned the police."*

It is important not to underplay the feelings and fears of residents however it is also necessary to highlight how some of the clashes and fears can easily get out of hand.

*"Somebody said: god forbid that a young person should stand around and chat to somebody else."*

*"There is a hoodie walking through my village".*

### **Perceived differences between groups of young people**

Whilst there is evidence of strong cohesiveness of young people in the different areas, in some of the 'deprived areas' there is also the perception that there are cultural clashes between different groups of young people:

*"... the local young people on those estates are seeing these new young people as a threat or something and it is them that have been causing the problems... it is a sort of suspicion. You don't tend to see the older English teenage young males going off shopping and you will see these Polish people and Latvian people and whatever, they will go down the local Co-Op in groups of about 6. Once they have all finished their shift they will go off and do their shopping. So they go off and do their shopping and there is a group of about 6 young adults, young male adults, and then the other local young male adults, it is a problem because they see this as a problem."*

### **Turnover of Population**

In some of the deprived areas there was also a strong sense of community breakdown because of people moving in and "you see strangers, you often see strangers in the area". That fear of the stranger and people moving in and not knowing the neighbours coupled with a fear of crime are factors which contribute to the overall feeling of insecurity within the neighbourhood and a lack of belonging.

In some parts of the 'deprived areas' there seems to be quite a high turnover and changeover of families. Whilst there are some people that have been on those estates for a long time there is a perceived influx of newcomers. One phenomenon which was salient was the influx of migrant workers and "not knowing quite how many are in some of the houses because they are private landlords".

*"So they are coming over but because they are working we don't know where they are, how many of them there are, because they are not actually working in that area. Because they have got very good road networks, so they can get up and down the M42, up to East Midlands Airport and the other big industrial areas around, and that there is quite a high influx of these workers. We have got Latvians, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, and we know they are there but you don't see them."*

The following quote encapsulates some of the changes which people have to deal with especially in the 'deprived areas'. As with all the issues some of these barriers are only perceived barriers but nonetheless they contribute to the breakdown in community relationships and the perception of a lack of 'neighbourliness'.

*"..., one of the Polish residents used to trade from their garage and that was fine. They have now got a Polish community shop and that is causing a few problems.. They don't speak other than Polish and from what I have understood.... they have set up a barrier between their own Polish residents. It was OK while they were trading from their garage, they didn't mind that, but now that they have set themselves up as trading from a shop that has caused a problem as well. It is trying to get through the barriers with communicating with them because they will speak Polish. There have been a couple of complaints. From what the police reported back at the last meeting, is that when people go into the shop they have been refused because they don't speak Polish. There are those sorts of barriers that all of a sudden have started in that community that they have got to get round."*

## **The Built Environment**

Not only the relationship with the neighbours influence the sense of belonging and how people interact, but also the built environment. How the houses are built or the layout of the physical environment is important to consider. A sense of isolation was identified if a main road 'divided' a neighbourhood.

*"I think some of the issues, I just think there can be a bit of a sense of isolation. You are on this busy road that cuts you off from what you are looking at opposite and from one another in a sense as well because you are all just in a great long line. I felt that that area didn't feel part of the community as such."*

For some residents the neighbourhood is a street but for other it is "...just that little close" (cul-de-sac).

*"They thought it was great, thought it was fantastic, everybody knew everybody, everybody helped each other and looked after each other. And that is what you see, most of them did not widen it out in their minds. To them the neighbourhood was just those few houses in their close."*

*"...my area is one side of the road and it is all just normal streets and the other side of the road is little closes [cul-de-sac] and there is a completely differently feel. Although there are very similar income levels and type of people that live there, because on one side they live in little closes, they again socialise in this little close, they identify with these little closes, but they don't identify forward with the wider neighbourhood, whereas on the side which is a normal street, they identify more with the neighbourhood."*

These comments indicate that a sense of belonging to the neighbourhood does not always mean the whole area, estate or village. Relationships might be quite tight and 'bonding' might occur within quite restricted boundaries.

## Networks

Generally identified, as being fundamental to the well being of individuals is the relationship with the family, with friends and neighbours. Quite often the core of family, friends and some neighbours provides people with mutual support and the ability to relate to somebody when feeling isolated or to sort out problems and get advice.

<u>Networks</u>		<u>deprived</u> <u>areas</u>	<u>rural</u> <u>areas</u>	<u>average</u> <u>areas</u>
Respondents who during the last week, outside of work have spoken to somebody outside the household...				
	...on the telephone	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
	...via email	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
	...by visiting	<input type="radio"/>		
Respondents who socialise everyday, or at least once a week...				
	...with neighbours	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
	...with friends	<input type="radio"/>		<input checked="" type="radio"/>
	...with family	<input type="radio"/>		<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Within the discussion group people felt quite surprised that in the 'deprived areas' a higher number of people scored lower in the interactions with family and friends. Also the telephone and email communication is lower. This points to the material and economic resources that people have. In some deprived areas people said that they do not have any relationship with their family, because they live quite far away and they do not have the money to go by bus to see them. These points raise questions about economic deprivation and how this influences people's ability to socialise and to mix with other people. This has a direct impact on bonding social capital, creating a sense of isolation and limiting the enhancement of bridging social capital.

## Diversity of Networks

In communities, people engage with others through a variety of associations forming many different sorts of networks. When thinking about the building of social capital it is important to distinguish between bridging and bonding networks. Bonding networks are those tight bonds between family and friends and community members that are important to our everyday lives. Bridging is, as it sounds, about creating links with people outside our immediate circles. These networks can be very important for broadening our opportunities and horizons. Bonding social capital is good for 'getting by' but bridging networks are crucial for 'getting ahead'. Bridging networks can generate broader identities and reciprocity.

This aspect of social capital is also about how much people embrace the diversity within their neighbourhoods. It refers to gender, race, culture, religion, sexuality, ability and age amongst others and includes different lifestyles and preferences. The enhancement of social capital needs groups and communities to be outward looking and engage in the wider society.

More people living in the rural areas identified with being "happy living among people of different lifestyles". They also score higher in the previous, "is your neighbourhood a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together." However this has been explored in depth in our qualitative research and some interesting insights were made. In the next section we will explore; what do people mean by diversity; is their area a diverse area?

Diversity of networks	deprived areas	rural areas	average areas
Respondents who agreed that they were happy living among people of different lifestyles.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Outside of work, respondents liked to mix with people who...			
...are mainly the same sex as me			
...live in the same area as me			
...belong to the same culture as me			
...belong to the same religion/faith as me			
...are similar age as me		<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
...are a diverse group		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...Other	<input checked="" type="radio"/>		
...None			

## Diversity of the Areas

One of the key discussions within this aspect of social capital was the difficulty to reply to the question and how to define 'different backgrounds'

*"Certainly when I went out doing the surveys I think this is the bit people found the hardest to answer. And looking at it as well I would have to think about it, if I asked myself these questions it wouldn't be stuff that I would*

*immediately know an answer to. I think also for some people it is about perceptions."*

*"When we did the survey here... they found it very difficult to answer. It makes you look inside yourself doesn't it and you think 'should I answer the way the survey wants me to answer, or will I look like Billy no mates, or will I look racist?' "*

Our discussion groups reflected on the fact that researchers found that in some areas people might say that they are fine in mixing with other people from different backgrounds. However it was noted that especially in some of the rural areas and the average areas there was less diversity in terms of ethnicity than in some other areas. So it is important to highlight that this question refers to how people perceive themselves. As such in areas where there might be more cultural, ethnic and economic diversity people might answer in a different way because of their lived experiences and reflecting on some of the difficulties and clashes.

The researchers own perception was that a lot of people were saying that they like to meet with people who are a diverse group. Interestingly, here, is that people in the 'average areas' scored slightly lower in socialising with a diverse group and people in the 'deprived areas' scored lower for "I am happy living among people of different live styles".

People understand different things when it comes to diversity. Some referred to ethnicity, some to sexuality, class or age. It reflected more what people considered was causing problems within the neighbourhood and highlighted that some of the clashes were higher in areas of more diversity. Rural areas were perceived as quite homogenous and whilst people were happy seeing themselves as liking diversity they were not confronted by it in everyday life.

As such these questions are not necessarily a reflection on the individuals and not necessarily about intolerance of diversity but might be a reflection of what is going on and the conflicts and the problems in the community.






*"Sometimes I think with deprived areas they don't have a choice. Most of our deprived areas... it was council estates and they don't always have a choice who is going to be living in that area. And a couple of these estates had a high turnover, especially people with lots of problems and they don't have a choice."*

## Trust

Trust entails a willingness to take risks in a community because people feel confident that others will respond as expected and will act in mutually supportive ways, or at least that others do not intend harm. Trust and safety are closely linked. However, in communities trust and safety can be very complex. Feelings of trust and safety can be very personal and will vary within and between neighbourhoods. It is important to pay attention to people's perceptions of trust and safety, what it means to them and how it can be enhanced. Levels or perceptions of crime do not necessarily reflect residents' feelings of safety or levels of trust. Feelings of trust relate to the way people interact with each other, the ability to leave a place without fear and therefore participate in social, political and economic activities.

Overall the number of people who said that many of the people in their neighbourhood could be trusted was lower for this survey than for other surveys carried out nationally. In Leicestershire 43% of respondents to this survey said that many of the people in their neighbourhood could be trusted. This is slightly lower than the corresponding figures for the East Midlands (52%) and for England and Wales (49%)<sup>2</sup>. As for the previous section on neighbourhoods this highlights the fact that even the areas scoring better on this measure in our survey, may have a less positive result when compared in a regional or national context.

Trust in neighbours is closely related to the perception of the neighbourhood. It also reflects on reciprocity. Trust and reciprocity in social capital are very strongly linked and in our survey trust and reciprocity have similar scores. This part of the research reflects what has already been discussed in previous sections and highlights some of the neighbourhood breakdowns resulting from the different dynamics within the areas.

<u>Trust</u>	<u>deprived areas</u>	<u>rural areas</u>	<u>average areas</u>
Respondents who think that generally speaking, most people can be trusted			
Respondents who think that many people in their neighbourhood can be trusted			

<sup>2</sup> Source: 2005 Citizenship Survey. Community cohesion topic report. DLG. June 2006. ISSN 1358-510X.

## Reciprocity

The touchstone of social capital is the principle of reciprocity. There are two different forms. Specific reciprocity, as in, 'I'll do this for you if you do that for me' and generalised reciprocity, 'I'll do this for you without expecting anything specific back from you'. A person acts for the benefit of others at a personal cost, but in the general expectation that this kindness will be returned at some undefined time in the future in case of need. In a community where reciprocity is strong, people care for each other's interests. This concept links closely with trust and safety.

Reciprocity	<u>deprived</u> <u>areas</u>	<u>rural</u> <u>areas</u>	<u>average</u> <u>areas</u>
Respondents who think that it is likely that they could get help from your neighbour when they need it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Respondents who think it likely that their purse/wallet would be returned if found.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	
Respondents who think that their neighbourhood is one in which people try to help each other.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	

Overall the responses to these questions were very positive. Across all areas, nine-out-of-ten respondents (89%) thought that it was 'very' or 'quite' likely that they could get help from their neighbours when they needed it. Almost two-thirds of all respondents (64%) thought it likely their purse/wallet would be returned with nothing missing if it was found in the street by someone living in their neighbourhood.








The results show a greater reciprocity in general in the rural areas. However, bearing in mind the previous point, the level of reciprocity is still high in deprived areas but it is higher in rural areas. For example, 80% of respondents in deprived areas thought it likely they could get help from their neighbours if they needed it.

Some of the participants in our discussion groups highlighted that the reciprocity is not always generalised to everybody in the neighbourhood and it was suggested that reciprocity can be selective and inward looking. This might be an indication of strong bonding and weaker bridging social capital:

*"...yes they think they've got a strong community. However one of the comments was that they don't like the people from the social housing (area) parking in front of the private houses."*

## Investment

The development of social capital requires the active and willing engagement of people within a participative community. This is quite different from the receipt of services, or even from the right to the receipt of services, though these are unquestionably important. However the capacity and willingness to invest is closely related to the feeling of reciprocity, trust and neighbourliness. The lack of personal investment should not be interpreted as an individual's fault but should lead to questions about the relations within a neighbourhood – relations between people and public, private and voluntary organisations.

Investment	deprived areas	rural areas	average areas
In the last 12 months have given unpaid help to friends, neighbours or anyone except relatives (informal volunteering)			
In the last 12 months have given unpaid help to any groups, clubs or organisations (formal volunteering)			
Respondents who think it is important that they contribute to their community in some way.			

Overall around three-quarters (77%) of all respondents had given unpaid help in the last twelve months. This was higher than the level of formal volunteering with around half of all respondents saying they had never given unpaid help to any groups, clubs or organisations.

In general people in deprived areas tended to give less unpaid help. Again there was a higher proportion of respondents from rural and average areas (both 78%) who had volunteered in the last twelve months, although the corresponding figure for deprived areas was still quite positive with over two-thirds (68%) of respondents volunteering. Feedback from a resident carrying out the survey in one of the deprived areas explained:

*"Most people were keen to 'do something' for the community but had only the vaguest notion of how to initiate action or to participate in schemes. They often expressed a need for help with this. People often said that 'they had never been asked' whether they would like to do volunteering."*

## Proactivity/Participation

For the building of social capital people need to have the opportunities to participate. Participation can happen on different levels and in different ways, from using facilities, deciding what to do at sessions, to active participation in local democracy.

Quite often the enhancement of social capital stems from, and is a result of, people having the opportunities to participate in decision-making and take an active part in the shaping of their local community.

<u>Proactivity and participation</u>			
Respondents who, in the last 12 months have taken the following actions to solve a problem in their local area...			
	<u>deprived areas</u>	<u>rural areas</u>	<u>average areas</u>
...contacted a local radio station, TV station or newspaper.			
...contacted the appropriate organisation such as the council, PCT, police etc.		●	
...contacted a local councillor or MP		●	
...initiated local activities, a campaign or network		●	
...attended a public meeting or neighbourhood forum to discuss local issues	○	●	○
...attended a tenants or local residents group			
...attended a protest meeting or joined an action group		●	
...helped organise a petition on a local issue			
None of these			
Thought about it but did not do anything			
No local problems			●

Overall the level of proactivity and participation was fairly low and there was not much difference between the areas. Social capital is not only about how I feel and how I perceive the neighbourhood but also about what do we do and how much people participate and invest in the community.

Important to notice here is that there is no difference between the deprived areas and the average areas when it comes to the engagement and participation within the locality. As such we can speculate that feeling happier about your local area and getting on with the neighbours does not necessarily lead to a higher engagement with local issues. However, whilst overall the percentage of engagement is not very high, more people within the rural areas seem to engage with local problems.

Some of the community workers within the CVS also referred to the difficulty to engage people in rural areas showing that whilst overall rural areas score higher the experience of working in some of the areas is still one of a lack of engagement. This shows also that people in the deprived areas are not lower in participating or in civil engagement, even though the neighbourhood connections and their feelings of neighbourliness are lower.

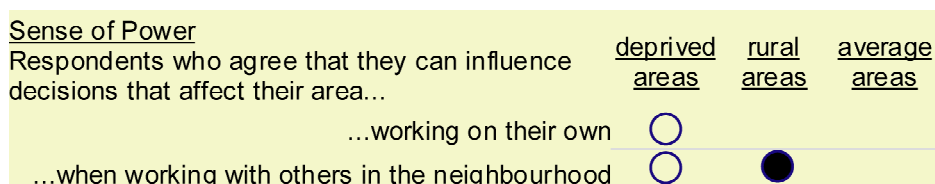
Everybody also agreed that people tend to get together when there is a common problem they want to solve. Quite often a fairly big group gets together at the

beginning but this fades out and at the end often only a few people take the issue further.

*“...you put yourself forward and then everyone leaves you to it... and then you end up with tons of work and you give up in the end because nobody wants to help you. So if you do go forward onto the parish council or try to get on a forum where you can make a difference everyone says fine and they leave you to it, they don't want to then help with that. I have spoken to quite a few people who feel that way, I am just about ready to give up because it is so much work and none of the other community will give me any assistance on it.”*

## Sense of Power

This is a crucial aspect of the social capital framework and it relates to how people feel about having control over their life chances. It explores people's own experience of their power. If people feel that they have personal and collective power they will have experienced that there are possibilities for development and change. Citizen power, means people being able to have their voices heard, and have a part in decisions that affect them. This also involves engaging in new forms of relationships, working with others with the recognition that people always have some degree of control over their own life situations and that of their community.



People within the discussion groups felt quite strongly about this subject. The discussions were about if people feel that they have personal or collective power and whether they have the resources to do, influence or change things that affect their lives and their communities.

One community group highlighted that they campaigned against a road being build through the neighbourhood but without any result.

*"....the perception from a lot of people is,' Oh so what, even if we get together nobody listens to us'."*

The workers highlighted that the results reflected their own experience of how well (or not) in some areas people work with organisations and if bodies with power listen to the community.

## Voting

This section highlights how people replied to the social capital survey, however it does not reflect actual turnout in the elections.

More people voted in a General Election (69%), followed by County Council Elections (57%), District Council Elections (52%) and Parish Council Elections (36%). This pattern was evident across all types of areas

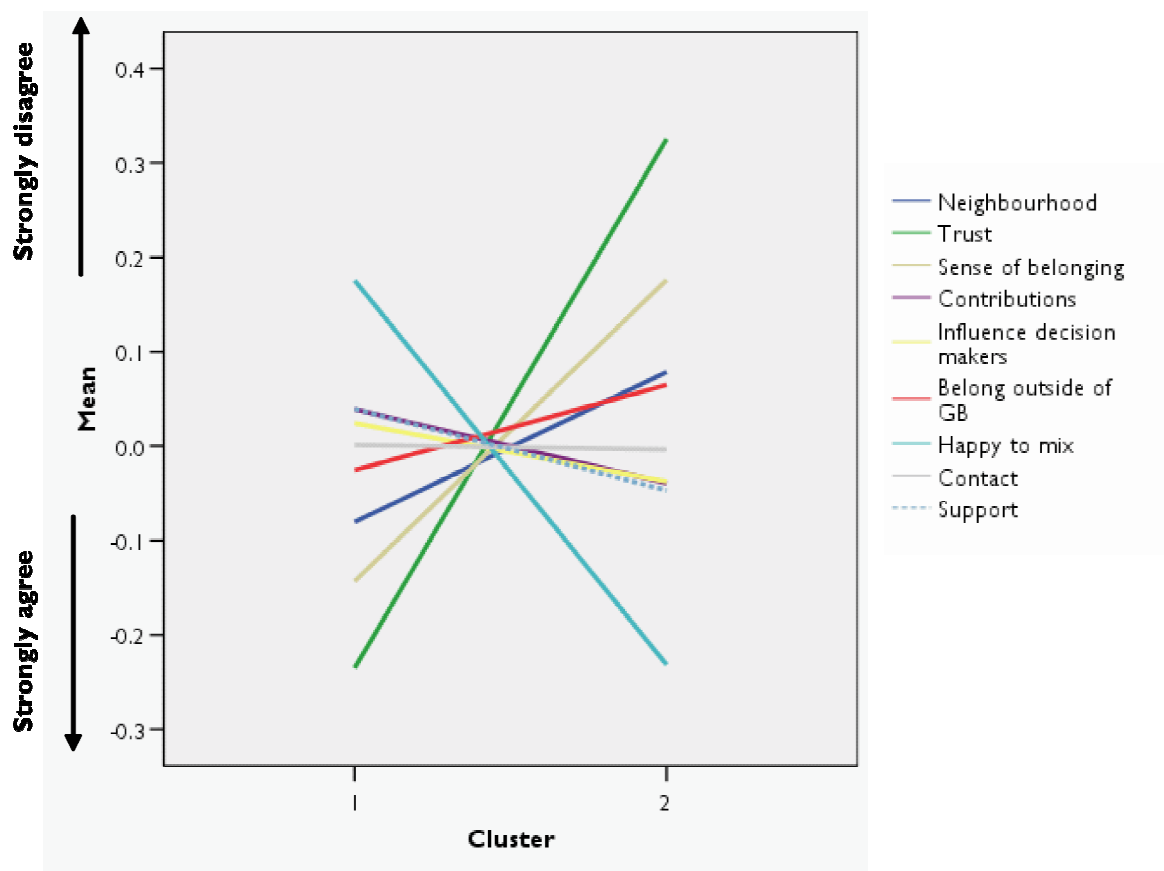
<u>Voting</u>	<u>deprived</u>	<u>rural</u>	<u>average</u>
Voted in each of the following elections:	<u>areas</u>	<u>areas</u>	<u>areas</u>
The last General elections (2005)			
The last County Council elections (2005)			
The last District Council elections (2003)			
The last Parish Council elections (2003)			

There was not a great deal of distinction between the three area types and levels of voting. Slightly fewer people from deprived areas voted in the last General Election but other than that, the areas did not differ significantly from the mean (average) in terms of voting.

## ***Cluster Analysis: associations between respondents***

Cluster analysis is an exploratory data analysis tool to sort cases (people, things, events, etc) into groups, or clusters, so that the degree of association is strong between members of the same cluster and weak between members of different clusters. Cluster analysis is a tool of discovery which can reveal associations and structure in data which, though not previously evident, nevertheless are sensible and useful once found.

A graphical representation of this is shown in the chart below.



The theme groups have been colour coded in the graph. Those lines that are more horizontal are closer to the mean score and so show little variation in response. However those lines that are more vertical detail points that are much further away from the mean and so show considerably more variation in the response range e.g. more people tended to respond either strongly agree or strongly disagree.

	Group One	Group Two
<b>Neighbourhood perceptions</b> Respondents found their neighbourhood a close knit, friendly and supportive environment	more	less
<b>Trust and Reciprocity</b> The respondent felt they could trust people in their neighbourhood and whether they were mutually supportive.	more	less
<b>Sense of belonging</b> Respondents felt they belonged at local, sub-regional and national levels	slightly more	slightly less
<b>Belong outside of GB</b> Respondents were likely to feel that they belonged to a place outside rather than inside Great Britain	slightly more	slightly less
<b>Social Contact</b> Respondents tend to socialise with friends, family and neighbours.	slightly less	slightly more
<b>Investment</b> Respondents tend to spent time volunteering (formal and informal) and laced less importance upon it.	slightly less	slightly more
<b>Influence and Power</b> Respondents felt they could influence decision makers or change things in the local area	slightly less	slightly more
<b>Diversity</b> Respondents felt happy to live amongst others that were perceived as different from themselves	less	more

As such we can identify two different groups of people with a strong degree of similarities between members of the same group and less similarities with the members of the other group.

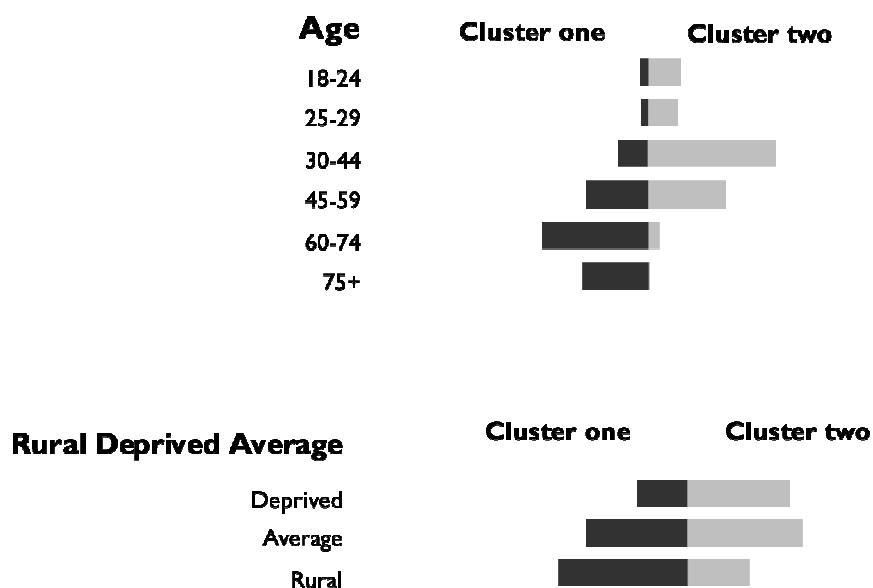
### Group One

Respondents within this group found their neighbourhood a close knit, friendly and supportive environment in which they felt that they could trust their neighbours and that these were mutually supportive. Within this group there were also those people who felt they belonged slightly more at local, sub-regional and national levels and those who identified that they belonged slightly more to a place outside rather than inside Great Britain. However despite the positive perception of their neighbourhood and the high levels of trust these respondents felt less happy to live amongst others that were perceived as different from themselves, they tend to spent slightly less time volunteering (formal and informal) and placed slightly less importance upon it. Respondents were slightly less likely to feel that they could influence decision makers or change things in the local area. Older respondents and people who come from rural and average areas are much more likely to belong to this group.

## Group Two

Respondents within this group are less likely to find their neighbourhood a close knit, friendly and supportive environment in which they feel that they could trust their neighbours and that these were mutually supportive. Within this group there were also those people who felt slightly less strongly to belong at local, sub-regional and national levels and those who identified slightly less that they belonged to a place outside rather than inside Great Britain. However despite the more negative perception of their neighbourhood and the relatively lower levels of trust these respondents felt more happy to live amongst others that were perceived as different from themselves, they tend to spent slightly more time volunteering (formal and informal) and placed slightly more importance upon it. Respondents were slightly more likely to feel that they could influence decision makers or change things in the local area. Younger respondents aged 18 to 44 and people who come from deprived and average areas are much more likely to belong to this group.

Overall it is important to note (see figures below) that there is a wide spread of age and areas in both groups. Some respondents in group one do come from deprived areas and some respondents from rural areas are in group two, whilst those from average areas are split between the two groups.



These findings highlight that we have to be aware of the different ‘types of people’ who live within the surveyed areas. This has to be taken into account when looking at the previous findings in which we compared the different areas (‘deprived’, ‘average’, ‘rural’). The cluster analysis underlines that it would be inappropriate to generalise and thus stigmatise areas by applying general trends to all people in those neighbourhoods.

## Volunteering

One of the stretch targets identified for the Leicestershire Local Area Agreement concerns the percentage of people who volunteer. In line with the government definition of formal volunteering, this indicator is measured by the percentage of people who respond “2 hours or more a week” to the question: “In the last 12 months have you given unpaid help to any groups, clubs or organisations?” The social capital survey found that 14.3% of respondents – around one-in-seven people – responded in this way in the social capital survey.

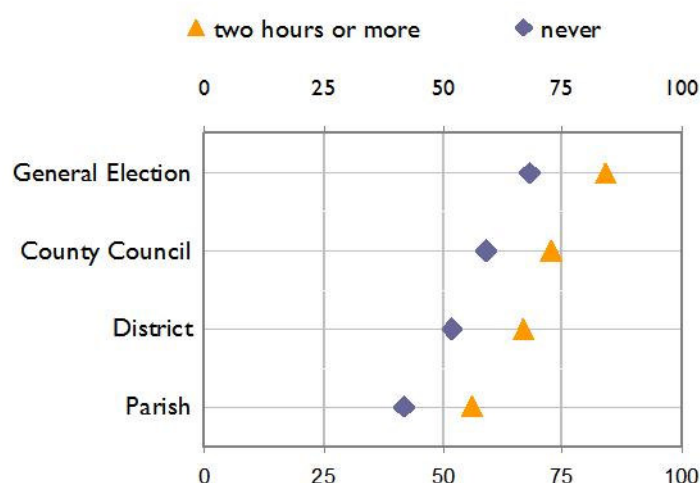
The target for the final year of the LAA is to increase the number of people involved in formal volunteering for 2 hours or more a week by 3.5 percentage points – to 17.8%. Using the results of the social capital survey it is possible to identify common characteristics of those people who volunteer. This will help local development groups to form the delivery plan to strengthen each of the identified communities.

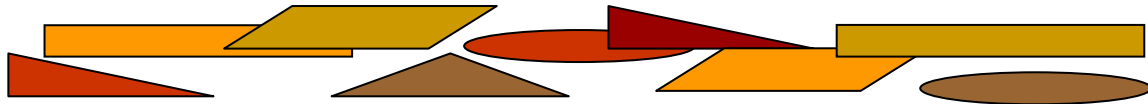
A cross-tabulation analysis shows that the two main groups of volunteers are:

1. Female, aged between 60 and 74 and not in full-time employment;
2. Female, aged between 18 and 24 and student.

Some other commonalities of those who volunteer are that they have lived in the area for 10 to 20 years, they feel that most people can be trusted, that their neighbourhood is a very good place to live and one where people from different backgrounds get on well together. Analysis also shows that those people who take part in formal volunteering are more likely to vote in all kinds of elections. Figure 1 below shows the higher level of voting amongst those who volunteer compared to those who have never volunteered.

Figure 1 – Percentage of respondents who voted in recent elections and who volunteer for 2 or more hours a week.





## Conclusions

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In order to develop stronger communities in Leicestershire it is important that policy makers, practitioners and local people have a clear idea of the nature of the communities in which they work and have a clear understanding of the resources that exist within them.

This work is starting a process of providing information and setting in motion a participative process in which communities use that information to enhance social capital and build stronger communities.

Some important lessons derived from our work are that:

Overall, there are strong feelings of neighbourliness in Leicestershire however attention has to be drawn to the differences between 'deprived', 'rural' and 'average' areas. People of the 'rural areas' feel more positive about their neighbourhood and people for the 'deprived areas' feel less positive about it. This does not reflect people's willingness to be part of the neighbourhood or how neighbourly individuals are. The perception of neighbourliness is closely linked with the issue of trust and it also reflects on reciprocity. Again for trust and for reciprocity there was a difference between deprived, rural and average areas which reflects the findings on neighbourliness

The qualitative findings give us some insight into why these differences exist. It is crucial to understand that the built environment – such as poor housing and the layout of the streets – has an effect on how people interact with their neighbours. Certain groups of people – such as younger generations or migrant workers – quite often are being housed into certain areas within a neighbourhood which can cause frictions with longer term residents. This also quite often contributes to a feeling of mistrust of the 'other'.

Thus it is important to understand and to acknowledge how different factors contribute to building stronger, or less strong, communities. The responsibility does not lie only with the residents. There is a responsibility of those organisations providing public services to consider how their policies impact directly on communities and also how they impact on other factors –such as poverty and crime – which can impede the development of social capital and stronger communities.

When it comes to how much people invest in their local community our data suggests that formal volunteering is low but informal volunteering is quite high in all areas. However, in terms of proactivity, which measured whether people participate in decision making or take an active part in the shaping of their local community overall it was fairly low and there was no significant difference between deprived and average areas. This is an important finding because it suggests that, feeling

positive about your neighbourhood and trusting your neighbours, will not necessarily lead people to take an active part in the shaping of their neighbourhood.

This is supported by the interesting findings of the cluster analysis which suggests that in the deprived areas there is a higher representation of a group of people who despite holding low levels of trust in the neighbourhood and having a more negative view of their neighbourhood, they tend to get involved in more voluntary work and like to mix with people from different backgrounds. Whilst in the rural areas, the opposite pattern is evident whereby despite higher levels of trust and neighbourliness they tended to make slightly less voluntary contributions to the community and were far less likely to be happy to live with people from different backgrounds. As such strong cohesion and a sense of belonging might sometimes be quite inward looking and exclusive with less active engagement in community affairs.

Social capital is not evenly distributed in Leicestershire and this has a direct influence on tackling social exclusion and building stronger communities. Positive perceptions of the neighbourhood, trust and engagement are not necessarily positively correlated with investing in the community. As such it is important to move away from stereotypical views that people from 'average' or 'rural' areas invest more in their neighbourhood because they have a positive perception of their local area. Policy to encourage volunteering and proactivity should be targeted to all types of neighbourhoods not only the 'deprived' neighbourhoods.

Our findings and the process by which the work is being taken forward in the neighbourhoods have some direct bearing on policy making.

1. Rather than imposing a framework for building stronger communities, there has been an innovative partnership which enabled communities to define, explore and develop the meaning of stronger communities. As a result of the LAA and the voluntary sector taking a lead on 'stronger communities' there have already been a number of tangible benefits in local communities:
  - local volunteers have been trained to become trainers on how to conduct surveys and on what social capital is,
  - local people were involved in developing the Leicestershire Social Capital Survey and then conducted it in their own communities,
  - around £20,000 was invested in local voluntary clubs, groups and organisations communities,
  - local communities were involved in analysing the results of their area and interpreting the findings, adding their stories to the overall picture,
  - using the social capital framework and the findings communities are now developing their own plans on how to strengthen their community.
2. It should be recognised that no single organisation or group can enhance social capital on its own but that the partnership between a range of groups,

organisations and individuals can make an important contribution. Our research highlights the following:

- **The role of the voluntary and community sector (VCS)**

As demonstrated by this piece of work the bottom-up nature of VCS working is a vital contribution the sector can make to enhancing and building stronger communities. In some ways the enhancement of social capital is a constituent element of their work. Whilst developing its trusted role within the local community the VCS should also bridge gaps within the community by working with a more diverse group of people.

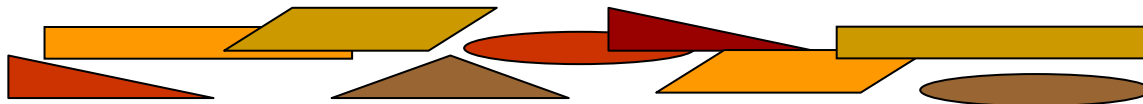
- **The role of local government**

Local government can help to facilitate an environment in which social capital is enhanced and thus local people feel that they have an active role within a strong community. Some of the examples from our study included the important role of decisions relating to housing, transport, migration and especially the feeling that decisions are being made without real consultation or listening. Local authorities can provide opportunities for people to formally come together to tackle specific problems, they can also contribute to 'banal encounters', which are also important for social capital, through their design, planning, leisure and culture functions. (For further details see the IPPR report *Locality Matters*.)

- **The role of local people**

The people in a community should have the opportunity to write their own stories. This project and report is only the beginning. This report has begun the process of publishing the statistics and the stories. The stories of the activities of people living in the 20 areas will continue to be recorded and the survey will be repeated in February 2009. Within this process, external interventions will be kept to a minimum and as such the outsiders role will be one of support and facilitation. The people in the communities must be allowed to write their own stories and encourage others to participate within this process.

3. Encouraging more volunteering. The survey has given us a picture of the typical volunteer and also the specific areas for building stronger communities. Through this project the Voluntary and Community Sector has started to build on existing strengths in the different communities. This has already set in motion a process to work with existing 'agents of change' in all the different areas to promote stronger communities. This will hopefully lead to further active participation and volunteering through the discovery that by 'working together people can change things in the community'.



## Next Steps

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### ***Social Capital Enhancement***

Every Council for Voluntary Service (one in each of 7 districts) has a half-time worker in place whose main task is to engage with Voluntary and Community groups, parish councils, school governors and faith groups based in or servicing each neighbourhood. They are supporting networking and development of initiatives that will enhance social capital.

Key to this is bringing local groups together into a Local Development Group (LDG) in each community. These groups will identify, from the survey results, areas to be addressed, such as opportunities for people in the community to meet, support each other, formally volunteer and so on. Needs for services such as community transport or advice surgeries can be discussed. Statutory service provision can be scrutinised.

May 2007 saw Parish Council elections, so participation in these elections was a high priority for the LDGs, where the area is parished.

Towards the end of the LAA period in March 2008 the Social Capital Survey will be repeated and results compared.

### ***Neighbourhood Management***

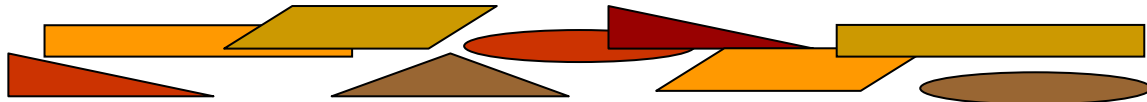
In addition to the 20 Social Capital Lower Super Output Areas there are 18 target wards for the LAA generally. These are the most deprived areas of the county statistically. Seven of them contain a LSOA that is part of the survey work. These 20 wards will be involved in a neighbourhood management process that requires a Neighbourhood Forum that will include local Voluntary and Community Groups, so the 7 CVSs are going to build the same sort of relationship with groups in these areas as is being done for the Social Capital areas.

### ***Mapping***

Each area designated for the Social Capital Survey or Neighbourhood Management will be mapped so that every VCS organisation and every meeting place in the area are recorded. By mapping the meeting places groups from outside the area who provide services will be identified. Relationships with all these organisations are then developed as priorities for the CVS, Volunteer Centres, the RCC and LEMP.

### ***Engagement***

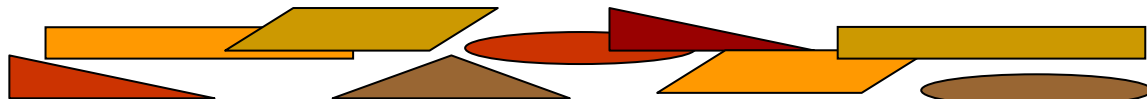
In each of the seven districts the CVS, Volunteer Centre(s), Rural Community Council, Leicestershire Ethnic Minority Partnership (LEMP) and a faith representative will meet to plan and coordinate contact with these communities.



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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 Social Capital Survey-Overall Findings

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20  
6.6% 5.7% 3.8% 6.4% 4.2% 5.0% 5.9% 5.6% 4.7% 5.0% 8.7% 4.6% 6.7% 1.7% 1.0% 7.4% 3.9% 4.4% 4.6% 4.0%

**Survey Area Code - IMPORTANT - Please remember to complete this for every questionnaire.**

#### 1 How long have you lived in this neighbourhood? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Less than 1 year	1-2 years	2-3 years	3-5 years	5-10 years	10-20 years	Over 20 years
5.1%	4.7%	5.4%	8.1%	13.4%	20.7%	41.7%

#### 2 Do you regularly (i.e. weekly)... PLEASE TICK ONE BOX FOR EACH

	Yes	No
... read any local newspapers? .....	73.5%	25.5%
... listen to any local radio? .....	53.9%	44.3%
... access local news on the internet? .....	14.0%	81.9%

#### 3 How strongly do you feel you belong to each of the following? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX FOR EACH ISSUE

	Very Strongly	Fairly Strongly	Not Very Strongly	Not at all Strongly	Don't Know
a) Your neighbourhood.....	35.4%	42.9%	14.0%	4.6%	2.0%
b) This Local Authority District <Questioner to insert name> .....	12.8%	33.4%	29.9%	13.3%	5.2%
c) Leicestershire.....	24.2%	40.0%	21.5%	9.6%	2.3%
d) England.....	56.9%	29.7%	6.8%	3.1%	1.5%
e) Great Britain.....	45.5%	35.0%	10.6%	4.3%	1.8%
f) Other place outside GB.....	6.8%	11.2%	12.7%	36.5%	24.3%

#### 4 How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your local neighbourhood? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX FOR EACH ISSUE

	Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Neither 3	Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5	Don't Know
a) This neighbourhood is a close, tight knit community .....	16.0%	40.8%	14.8%	19.6%	4.4%	3.1%
b) This neighbourhood is a friendly place to live.....	26.5%	55.0%	6.4%	6.3%	2.1%	2.7%
c) This neighbourhood is a place where people look after each other .....	18.7%	46.4%	13.8%	11.8%	3.8%	4.0%
d) Most people who live in this neighbourhood trust one another .....	15.8%	47.0%	14.1%	11.3%	2.9%	7.9%
e) You often see strangers in this area .....	7.5%	29.8%	13.5%	35.9%	6.5%	5.5%
f) I would be happy asking certain local people to keep an eye on my house and property .....	36.5%	49.5%	3.8%	5.2%	2.4%	1.7%
g) The people who live here can be relied upon to call police if someone is acting suspiciously .....	30.7%	48.2%	7.6%	6.5%	1.8%	4.2%

**5 So overall, what do you currently think of this neighbourhood as a place to live?**

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

<i>Very good</i> 1	<i>Good</i> 2	<i>Ok</i> 3	<i>Bad</i> 4	<i>Very Bad</i> 5
36.6%	37.0%	16.4%	2.2%	1.3%

**6 "Your neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together".**

To what extent do you agree or disagree with that statement?

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

<i>Definitely Agree</i> 1	<i>Tend to Agree</i> 2	<i>Neither</i> 3	<i>Tend to Disagree</i> 4	<i>Definitely Disagree</i> 5	<i>Don't Know</i>	<i>Too few people in local area</i>	<i>All same backgrounds</i>
12.8%	45.0%	9.4%	7.1%	2.1%	5.3%	1.7%	10.0%

**7 "I am happy living among people of different lifestyles". To what extent do you agree or disagree with that statement?**

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

<i>Strongly Agree</i> 1	<i>Agree</i> 2	<i>Neither</i> 3	<i>Disagree</i> 4	<i>Strongly Disagree</i> 5
19.6%	56.1%	13.2%	4.2%	1.2%

**8 Outside of work, I like to mix with people who... PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY**

<i>Are mainly the same sex as me</i> .....	18.9%	<i>Are similar age as me</i> .....	41.4%
<i>Live in the same area as me</i> .....	30.3%	<i>Are a diverse group</i> .....	53.8%
<i>Belong to the same culture as me</i> .....	22.2%	<i>Other</i> .....	10.4%
<i>Belong to the same religion/faith as me</i> .....	12.3%	<i>None</i> .....	4.3%

**9 During the last week, outside of work, how often have you spoken to anyone who is not a member of your household?**

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

	<i>2 or 3 times a day</i>	<i>Once a day</i>	<i>2 or 3 times</i>	<i>Once</i>	<i>Never</i>
<i>...on the telephone</i> .....	25.6%	22.7%	22.6%	9.9%	15.8%
<i>...via email</i> .....	8.6%	7.0%	8.6%	6.4%	61.0%
<i>...by visiting</i> .....	7.1%	15.4%	26.1%	19.4%	26.3%

**10 How often do you socialise with neighbours, friends or family for example by going to a pub, restaurant, cinema or somewhere else (including each others homes)?**

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

	<i>Every day</i>	<i>At least once a week</i>	<i>At least once a fortnight</i>	<i>At least once a month</i>	<i>Less than once a month</i>	<i>Never</i>
a) Neighbours .....	7.4%	17.7%	6.8%	8.3%	15.3%	40.3%
b) Friends .....	9.6%	37.0%	11.6%	11.7%	7.9%	15.8%
c) Family .....	14.0%	38.4%	11.3%	10.7%	8.7%	9.5%

**11** Generally speaking, would you say that... PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

...most people can be trusted? .....	30.3%
...some people can be trusted? .....	42.3%
...you can't be too careful in dealing with people? .....	26.2%

**12** How many people in your neighbourhood can be trusted? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Many	Some	A few	None
42.9%	36.2%	17.9%	1.7%

**13** How likely is it that you could get help from your neighbours when you need it?  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Very likely	Quite likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely	Don't know
56.8%	32.5%	5.1%	1.7%	2.9%

**14** Suppose you lost your purse/wallet containing your address details and it was found in the street by someone living in your neighbourhood. How likely is it that it would be returned to you with nothing missing?  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Very likely	Quite likely	Not very likely	Not at all likely	Don't know
27.2%	36.5%	14.3%	12.0%	9.0%

**15** In general, what kind of neighbourhood would you say you live in? Would you say it is an area in which people try to help each other, or one in which people mostly go their own way?  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Help each other	Go own way	Mixture
35.2%	19.4%	44.3%

**16** In the last 12 months, how many times have you given unpaid help to friends, neighbours or anyone else except relatives? For example, by keeping in touch, baby sitting, sitting in or providing personal care, looking after property or pets, giving advice, providing transport.  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

At least once a week	At least once a month	At least once every three months	Less often	Never
25.5%	24.9%	14.9%	11.9%	21.7%

**17** In the last 12 months, how often have you given unpaid help to any groups, clubs or organisations (e.g. being a volunteer)?  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

2 hours or more a week	At least once a month	At least once every three months	Less often	Never
14.3%	13.1%	7.3%	10.9%	53.4%

**18** How important is it to you that you contribute to your community in some way?  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

Very important	Sometimes important	Not at all important
36.0%	50.3%	12.4%

**19 In the last 12 months, have you taken any of the following actions in an attempt to solve a problem facing people in your local area?**  
PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY

Contacted a local radio station, TV station or newspaper .....	8.6%
Contacted the appropriate organisation to deal with the problem, such as the council, PCT, police etc.....	26.6%
Contacted a local councillor or MP .....	16.0%
Initiated local activities, a campaign or network .....	10.8%
Attended a public meeting or neighbourhood forum to discuss local issues .....	18.6%
Attended a tenants or local residents group .....	11.9%
Attended a protest meeting or joined an action group .....	9.7%
Helped organise a petition on a local issue .....	9.6%
None of these .....	49.2%
Thought about it but did not do anything.....	9.8%
No local problems .....	15.2%

**20 To what extent do you agree or disagree that...**  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

	<i>Definitely Agree</i> 1	<i>Tend to Agree</i> 2	<i>Neither</i> 3	<i>Tend to Disagree</i> 4	<i>Definitely Disagree</i> 5	<i>Don't Know</i>
a) You can influence decisions that affect your area on your own?.....	2.5%	13.1%	11.1%	37.8%	23.8%	6.3%
b) You can influence decisions that affect your area when working with others in the neighbourhood? .....	12.7%	49.0%	10.3%	11.2%	4.5%	6.2%

**21 Please indicate if you voted in each of the following elections.**  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX FOR EACH

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Not eligible to vote</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>
a) In the last general election (national elections - 2005) .....	68.7%	14.8%	2.9%	7.2%
b) In the last County Council elections (2005) .....	57.4%	21.3%	4.2%	5.8%
c) In the last District Council elections (2003).....	51.9%	25.0%	4.9%	8.1%
d) In the last Parish Council elections (2003)* .....	35.6%	28.6%	4.3%	9.3%

\*<ONLY ASK IN PARISHED AREA>

**22 To what extent are you satisfied with the delivery of public services in Leicestershire?**  
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

	<i>Very Satisfied 1</i>	<i>Satisfied 2</i>	<i>Neither 3</i>	<i>Dissatisfied 4</i>	<i>Very Dissatisfied 5</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>
Schools .....	12.7%	33.7%	7.4%	4.6%	2.0%	35.8%
Healthcare.....	23.8%	49.8%	7.9%	8.2%	2.1%	5.1%
Policing .....	5.2%	39.4%	16.6%	21.8%	7.6%	6.4%
Waste Management.....	21.1%	45.7%	8.7%	13.0%	6.1%	2.1%
Libraries .....	18.5%	43.5%	9.5%	1.9%	0.4%	22.8%
Social Care .....	5.4%	24.2%	13.4%	3.2%	0.7%	49.0%
Public Transport.....	7.2%	32.9%	11.1%	12.1%	6.4%	26.8%
Housing (provided by the Council) .....	4.1%	16.5%	11.8%	5.0%	2.3%	55.4%
Overall.....	6.0%	64.9%	14.1%	5.8%	1.2%	3.6%

**23 What is your gender?**

*Male*                      *Female*  
38.5%                      60.1%



**24 Do you consider yourself disabled?**

*Yes*                      *No*  
11.7%                      84.8%

**25 What is your ethnic origin? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY**

**a) White**

*British* ..... 89.2%  
*Irish* ..... 1.0%  
*Any other White background* ..... 4.1%

**b) Mixed**

*White and Black Caribbean* ..... 0.3%  
*White and Black African* ..... 0.2%  
*White and Asian* ..... 0.1%  
*Any other Mixed background* ..... 4.1%

**c) Asian or Asian British**

*Indian* ..... 2.2%  
*Pakistani* ..... 0.9%  
*Bangladeshi* ..... 1.4%  
*Any other Asian background* ..... 4.9%

**d) Black or Black British**

*Caribbean* ..... 0.3%  
*African* ..... 1.3%  
*Any other African background* ..... 0.9%

**e) Chinese**

*Chinese* ..... 3.2%  
*Other ethnic group* ..... 1.7%

**26 How old are you?**

18-24	25-29	30-44	45-59	60-74	75+
6.1%	4.7%	21.1%	20.9%	24.0%	15.5%

**27 Which of these activities best describes what you are doing at present? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY**

<i>Employee in full time job (30+ hours per week)</i> .....	14.2%
<i>Employee in part time job (under 30 hours per week)</i> .....	9.4%
<i>Self employed (part-time or full-time)</i> .....	2.9%
<i>On a government supported programme, eg Modern Apprenticeship</i> .....	0.1%
<i>Full time education at School, college or university</i> .....	1.9%
<i>Unemployed but available for work</i> .....	1.3%
<i>Permanently sick or disabled</i> .....	1.8%
<i>Wholly retired from work</i> .....	17.6%
<i>Looking after the home</i> .....	6.3%
<i>Other</i> .....	41.1%

**28 Would you be willing to be interviewed again in 3 years time, and/or be sent feedback on the results of the survey? If so, we will record your name, address and email on a separate sheet so that your answers above remain anonymous\*.**

	Yes	No
Would you be willing to be interviewed again in 3 years time? .....	59.5%	38.5%
Would you like to be sent feedback on the results of the survey? .....	47.5%	48.8%

## Thank You

\* Should you supply any personal data on the contact details form, that information will be held on computer and will be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 for statistical analysis, management, planning and in the provision of services by the County Council and its partners. The information will be held in accordance with the Council's records management and retention policy. The Questionnaire will not carry any information linking it in any way with the contact details form, thus ensuring the information you provide will remain anonymised.

Information contained in the questionnaire may be subject to release to others in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Certain exemptions from release do exist including where the information provided is protected by the Data Protection Act 1998.

## **Appendix 2 Social Capital Survey-Leaflet Summary**

A leaflet summarising the findings of the social capital survey has been produced for each priority area across the county (excluding two areas in Melton, where there was an insufficient response to carry out any analysis). The full leaflet is available from the relevant CVS and contains a map of the area surveyed, some headline statistics and a back page summary of social capital in the area. The summary for each area is reproduced below.

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### **Sharnford**

Respondents to the survey from Sharnford had stronger perception of neighbourliness than the average for other areas surveyed. This includes their neighbourhood being a close-knit community, a friendly place to live and one where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

Compared to the average for other areas surveyed, those from Sharnford were stronger in feeling that people could be trusted—both generally and in their own neighbourhood. They were also stronger in believing that it was important to contribute to their community and this was reflected in higher volunteering—both formal (to groups) and informal (helping friends and neighbours).

People from Sharnford were lower than the average for other areas in terms of some aspects of joining in - e.g. contacting the media or elected members, or attending meetings about local issues.

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### **Braunstone**

Braunstone was strong in comparison with other areas surveyed in terms of a sense of belonging to Leicestershire. Fewer people on average, however, said they feel they belong to their neighbourhood. Compared to the average for other areas, less people on average in Braunstone said that, overall, their neighbourhood is a good place to live.

Overall, the survey showed that people in Braunstone have quite strong networks compared with the average of the other areas. More people surveyed socialise with friends and family. Also the survey showed that people from Braunstone, in the last week, had spoken to someone by visiting them, more often than in other areas.

Fewer people in Braunstone said they have volunteered or given unpaid help to anyone except relatives in the last year compared to the average of the other areas surveyed. However, participation is strong overall in Braunstone. This is because more people in Braunstone said they had initiated local activities, campaigns or networks and attended public meetings or neighbourhood forum to discuss local issues. Also more people in Braunstone said they had contacted a local radio station, TV station or newspaper in the last year compared with the average of the rest.

In the results from the Braunstone area, voting, in General, District Council and Parish Council Elections was comparable with the rest.

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## Whetstone

The responses to the survey from people living in this part of Whetstone were generally very similar to the average responses for all other areas surveyed.

The networks people mix with were generally comparable with the average for all other areas surveyed. However, more in Whetstone like to mix with people who are the same religion or faith as themselves.

Compared to the average result for the rest of the areas surveyed, more people in Whetstone said it is likely they could get help from a neighbour.

More people in Whetstone tend to feel that it is important to contribute to their community compared with the other areas. Along with this, more people said they had thought about participating in their community, but did not do anything.

In Whetstone more than the average of other areas surveyed said they can influence decisions affecting their area when working with others in the neighbourhood.

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## Loughborough Hastings

Compared to the average result for the rest of the areas surveyed we found that people in Loughborough Hastings had a stronger sense of belonging to their Local Authority District (Charnwood).

Overall, fewer people in Loughborough Hastings perceived their neighbourhood as a good place to live when compared to than the average for other areas surveyed. However, more people said they like to mix with people of the same culture, religion and faith.

Residents of Loughborough Hastings were less likely than the average for other areas to say that people could be trusted and would help each other.

Fewer people in Loughborough Hastings said they have given unpaid help to those other than family or to clubs/organisations in the last 12 months compared with the rest.

In Loughborough Hastings, the number of people joining in and participating in the community is comparable with the average of other areas surveyed. This includes, attending public meetings, initiating local activities or contacting an organisation like the police to deal with a problem.

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## Syston

Respondents to the survey from Syston had a stronger sense of belonging to their Local Authority District than the average of all other areas.

In Syston, fewer people than the average of the other areas called the neighbourhood a close, tight knit community. However, more people than the average for the rest said they were happy living among people of different lifestyles and that their neighbourhood was one where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

More people in Syston than the average of other areas gave unpaid help to friends and neighbours (informal volunteering), and formal volunteering was around the same as the average of the rest.

People from Syston were higher than the average of other areas in terms of joining in, for example, initiating local activities, a campaign or network.

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## **The Wolds**

Compared to the average result for the rest of the areas surveyed we found that the Wolds was stronger in perceptions of neighbourliness and neighbourhood connections. People in this area also had strong interactions with friends and family.

It is not only perceptions of neighbourhood. People in the Wolds feel that there is a strong sense of helping each other and that they can trust their neighbours. The investment in formal and informal volunteering is also stronger than the average for other areas and the feeling that if you put something in you get something back is strong.

The Wolds was also quite strong in terms of proactive involvement in local groups and on local issues but lower in terms of voting in County, District and Parish Elections—though not in a General Election.

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## **Primethorpe**

Respondents to the survey from Primethorpe had a stronger sense of belonging to their Local Authority District and Leicestershire than the average of all other areas surveyed.

On average, people in Primethorpe have strong networks – of neighbours, friends and family - compared with the average of other areas. Also, more people in Primethorpe than the average of other areas said that people in their neighbourhood could be trusted.

Fewer people said they had participated in volunteering activities or given unpaid help in Primethorpe than the average of the other areas. However, more people than average in this area said that it is important to them to contribute to their community.

Primethorpe was strong in terms of people saying they are able to influence decisions that affect their area on their own. People in Primethorpe are more likely than the average of the other areas to vote in Parish Council Elections.

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## **Fleckney**

From the results of the survey, Fleckney is comparable with the average of all other areas surveyed in terms of people feeling they belong to their neighbourhood and that their neighbourhood is a good place to live.

Less people in Fleckney said they had spoken to someone outside their household (not including work) on the phone or by visiting, than the average of the other areas surveyed.

The number of people who said they are happy living with people of different lifestyles was comparable with the rest.

In Fleckney, volunteering and giving unpaid help to someone in the last year was also comparable with the other areas surveyed. Fewer people in Fleckney had contacted a local counsellor, or MP in the last year compared with the average for other areas surveyed. Also fewer had attended a public meeting or neighbourhood forum to discuss local issues or had helped organise a petition on a local issue.

In Fleckney fewer people than average voted in General and District Council Elections than the average of other areas surveyed in Leicestershire.

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## **Tilton-on-the-Hill**

Respondents to the survey from Tilton-on-the-Hill were stronger in perceptions of neighbourliness, including the feeling that their neighbourhood was a tight-knit community, a friendly place, where people look out for one another and that overall it was a good place to live. They were also stronger than average in feeling that their neighbourhood was one where people from different backgrounds got on well together and were happy living among people of different lifestyles.

Compared to the average, respondents were more likely to feel that people could be trusted—both generally and within their neighbourhood—and that neighbours would help each other.

In terms of formal volunteering (more than two hours a week to groups) and informal volunteering (to friends and neighbours) people in Tilton-on-the-Hill were comparable with the average for all areas surveyed in Leicestershire.

Respondents to the survey were also stronger than average in terms of 'joining-in', for example, by attending local groups and meetings, or contacting the media or elected members regarding local issues.

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## **Earl Shilton**

Compared to the average result for the rest of the areas surveyed we found that people in Earl Shilton were not as strong in terms of their perceptions of neighbourliness—whether it was a friendly place and whether people looked out for each other. However, more people in Earl Shilton did socialise with their neighbours, compared with the average for other areas.

People in Earl Shilton were stronger than the average for other areas in terms of their diversity of networks. More people were happy living among people of different lifestyles than the average for all areas surveyed in Leicestershire.

People in Earl Shilton were less likely than average to say that people could be trusted—both generally, and in their neighbourhood.

The number of people who gave unpaid help to friends and relatives (informal volunteering) on a weekly basis was comparable with the average for other areas, but those engaged in formal volunteering was lower than average.

Summaries are based on the findings of the Leicestershire Social Capital Survey (2006) carried out by Leicestershire Together, CVS Community Partnership and the Centre for Social Action, De Montfort University.

## **Markfield**

Respondents to the survey from Markfield had a stronger sense of belonging to their neighbourhood and to England, than the average for all areas.

Compared to the average result for all areas surveyed, Markfield was lower in certain aspects of neighbourliness, such as people looking after each other and taking action if someone is acting suspiciously.

Fewer people than average from Markfield were happy living among people of different lifestyles. They preferred to mix with people from the same area and with the same religion/faith and of a similar age.

Compared to the average for other areas surveyed, people from Markfield had stronger networks and were more likely to have contact with those outside the household and to socialise with neighbours, friends and family.

People from Markfield were lower than average in terms of joining in—e.g. attending local groups, contacting media or elected members—though more people than average voted in the most recent General and County elections.

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## **Twycross-Witherley**

Compared to the average for all areas, we found that Twycross & Witherley was stronger in perceptions of neighbourliness and neighbourhood connections. However, compared to the average, fewer people thought that those from different backgrounds got on well together in their neighbourhood.

Twycross & Witherley was strong in terms of social networks with a greater than average number of people mixing with a diverse group and socialising with neighbours and friends.

People in Twycross & Witherley have a strong sense of trusting people, both generally and within their own neighbourhood. There was a strong feeling that it was important to contribute something to your community and that if you put something in, you get something back, reflected in above average investment in informal volunteering (unpaid help to friends & neighbours).

Compared to the average for other areas people in Twycross & Witherley were stronger in their belief they could influence decisions affecting their local area, both individually and as a group.

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## **Bottesford**

Respondents to the survey for Bottesford had a strong sense of belonging to their neighbourhood, England and Great Britain but felt a weaker sense of belonging to Leicestershire when compared with the average for other areas surveyed.

People in Bottesford had stronger perceptions of neighbourliness than the average for other areas surveyed. This included feeling that the neighbourhood was a close, tight-knit community, a friendly place where people look after one another.

Summaries are based on the findings of the Leicestershire Social Capital Survey (2006) carried out by Leicestershire Together, CVS Community Partnership and the Centre for Social Action, De Montfort University.

Compared to the average for other areas surveyed people in Bottesford were happier living among people of different lifestyles. They were stronger than average in believing that people in their neighbourhood can be trusted.

Giving unpaid help to friends and neighbours (informal volunteering) was stronger in Bottesford than the average for other areas. There was also a strong feeling that if you put something in, you get something out.

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## **Lockington & Hemington**

Respondents to the survey from Lockington & Hemington were stronger than the average for other areas in some aspects of their perceptions of neighbourliness. This included, whether they were happy for local people to keep an eye on their property, to call the police if someone is acting suspiciously and overall, their neighbourhood was a good place to live.

People from this area were comparable with the average for other areas in terms of trusting people—both generally, and within their own neighbourhood.

They were stronger than the average for other areas in the amount of unpaid help they gave to friends and neighbours (informal volunteering) and there was a feeling that if you put something in, you get something back.

Lockington & Hemington was strong in terms of getting involved—e.g. in local groups, or by contacting the media or elected members. They were lower than average in feeling they could influence decisions affecting their area on their own, but higher in this respect when working with others.

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## **Ibstock & Heather**

The survey showed that people in Ibstock & Heather are strong in terms of their sense of belonging to England. However on average, less people compared with the other areas surveyed said they felt a sense of belonging to Leicestershire.

More people in Ibstock & Heather than the rest of the areas surveyed felt that overall their neighbourhood is a good place to live. This area was also strong in terms of being perceived as a close, tight knit community and a place where people look after each other.

On average, more people in Ibstock & Heather said they were happy living among people of different lifestyles. Respondents were also more likely to say that people in their neighbourhood can be trusted compared with the average of other areas surveyed.

Respondents from this area were lower than average in terms of joining in and participating – e.g. attending meetings, organising a petition or contacting local media. However, this may be because there was a slightly above average response that there were no local problems.

A higher than average number of people in Ibstock & Heather voted in District and County Council Elections, whilst voting in General elections is comparable with other areas.

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## Measham

We found that less people in Measham compared to the average for the other areas surveyed held a good perception of their neighbourhood. One example, fewer people said the neighbourhood is a place where people look after each other. However the number of people who said they would be happy for local people to keep an eye on their property was comparable with the rest.

What people in Measham said about their networks and people they like to mix with was generally comparable with the other areas surveyed. Less people in Measham than the rest said they were happy living among people of different lifestyles. Fewer people in Measham also said they had spoken to someone by email and telephone in the last week.

Compared to the average of the other areas, fewer people in Measham said that most people can be trusted. The number of respondents who said people in their neighbourhood could be trusted in Measham was comparable with the rest.

Volunteering and participation in the community was comparable with the average for other areas. However, fewer people in Measham said they had initiated local activities, a campaign or network or attended a public meeting or neighbourhood forum to discuss local issues.

Fewer people in Measham than the rest said they had voted in the last General and County Council Elections. However, the District and Parish Council Election figures for Measham were comparable with the other areas surveyed.

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## Oadby

In general we found that Oadby was not as strong as the rest of the surveyed areas in perceptions of neighbourhood and neighbourhood connections. People were less likely to socialise at all but when they did it would tend to be with individuals of similar a background and grouping.

Residents of Oadby were less likely than average to say that people could be trusted and would help each other

Although people in Oadby tend to say that it is less important to contribute to their community, the actual number of individuals giving unpaid help is comparable to the average of all other areas surveyed.

People in Oadby were more likely to vote in the general election than the average of all other areas but they were less likely to engage with local groups or contact elected members.

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## Wigston

Compared to the average for all areas surveyed, Wigston was not as strong in terms of perceptions of neighbourliness. Fewer people thought Wigston was a good, friendly place to live and fewer thought that it was an area where people from different backgrounds got on well together.

The networks - who people like to mix with and socialise with were generally comparable with the average for all areas surveyed. However, fewer people were happy living among of different lifestyles.

People in this neighbourhood of Wigston were less likely to trust people generally, and in their own neighbourhood, than the average for all areas.

More people than average in Wigston gave unpaid help to friends and neighbours (informal volunteering), and formal volunteering was around the same as the average.

Fewer of those surveyed in Wigston participated in local groups, campaigns and meetings and fewer people felt they could influence decisions affecting their area.