



Westfield Community Association Community Action Plan 2015-2018



Westfield Community Association

3 Year Action Plan (May 2015)

Introduction

The action plan identifies the key aims and objectives for the neighbourhood of Westfield (Yeovil) and how local groups and residents will meet them. The Westfield Community Association (WCA) has drawn on local intelligence from partners and from the results of a public consultation sessions and engagement. This has all been documented within the Westfield 'Our Place' report and programme. Westfield Community Association aims to continue gathering local information throughout the year and centrally at an annual meeting or event each year.

What is Westfield Community Association?

Westfield Community Association brings together individuals, elected representatives and local organisations to work towards improving the quality of life in the Westfield neighbourhood, Yeovil. A steering group has been formed to monitor the progression of the Action Plan through regular meetings.

The Community Association aims to work with local organisations and individuals to develop the action plan through either direct delivery from the steering group or by identifying the 'best placed partner' to lead on a project. The Community Association will then offer help, signposting and possible financial support to maintain a co-ordinated approach, stopping possible duplication and develop positive effective partnership working.

Our vision

'We are working towards a Westfield neighbourhood that is a thriving community, proud of its heritage yet welcoming change, and is a confident, supportive and a united community for all its people'

How to get involved?

If you would like to get involved in one of the projects or would like to sit on the Westfield Community Association group please contact Chris Adcock (Chairperson of Westfield Community Association) at chair@wcaonline.org.uk



Aims & Objects

Aim 1: Our Neighbourhood: Environment, community identity and economy.

The Central Westfield neighbourhood area provides a hub for the community and is particularly used for accessing education, community activities, back up shopping and the post office. However there is competition for work and services, with limitations locally meaning large numbers of residents need to access employment & support services within the main town centre or sometimes even further afield.

The effects of changes in the economy are often felt harder in our poorer communities, such as the impact of rising fuel prices. Urban isolation leads to problems in accessing services.

The key community & economic issues identified in the neighbourhood research and consultation falls under the headings of improve the brand of Westfield (its reputation), improving the local environment, helping residents economically with fuel poverty and continued commitment to allow Westfield residents the need to shape the community the way local people feel it should be.

Brand 'Westfield'

Issues

Reputation / neighbourhood image is poor
New website or enhance current one

Actions

Improve information & signage for visitors/ residents
Develop a dynamic website for Westfield

Improving the local environment

Issues

Poor signage
Litter
Central waste land (visual eyesore within community)
Need for a community central hub / destination (shops area)

Actions

Signage audit within the area
Co-ordinate volunteer clean up and litter pick days along key routes in the town.
Project to enhance waste land & shops area within community.

Targeting Fuel Poverty (Economy)

Issues

Need for a local sustainable energy source in Yeovil.
Fuel Poverty high (low income area)

Actions

Develop a community renewable energy source (support residents)
Information & guidance on recycling / saving energy

Community Shaped

Issues

Community feel disempowered at times.
Agencies need to be co-ordinated to support community / residents
Lack of volunteers to implement effective change

Actions

Action Plan - led by WCA (agencies support from highlighted need)
Helping hand week - Residents supporting residents
Volunteer promotion (get involved & shape community)

Aim 2: Digital inclusion & communications

The web has transformed almost every aspect of public, private and work life. It has underpinned our new economy; from changing the way every workplace communicates to creating entire new industries. It has improved people's lives, whether through cutting household bills, finding a job or maintaining contact with distant friends and relatives. With more and more support services being streamlined into IT accessible forms such as benefits there is a great need for digital inclusion and access to IT equipment. However recent research published by the BBC has found that 21% of Britain's population lack the basic digital skills and capabilities required to realise the benefits of the internet and even access these services (data that is mirrored within the Westfield consultation).

It is important to not only develop new IT systems, web sites and training for Westfield and its residents but also to provide all forms of communication while we are developing IT communications and training local people to be able to use them.

Education & Training

Issues

Limited understand of IT, the internet & social media
Lack of access to training

Actions

Social media training - for community groups
Resident IT training courses (held within the community)

Communications

Issues

Changing world - technology & communication updating
Lack of capacity / support to develop communications in Westfield

Actions

Support to improve current website making it easier to use & more effective.
Introduction of social media streams (WCA)
Info points in community

Access to the Internet

Issues

Limited access to community IT facilities
Cost of IT equipment for residents

Actions

Development of IT access within community facilities
Community loan scheme - IT equipment (pilot from YHG)

Digital technology

Issues

Lack of understanding of what is available? costs?
Cost of equipment (high)

Actions

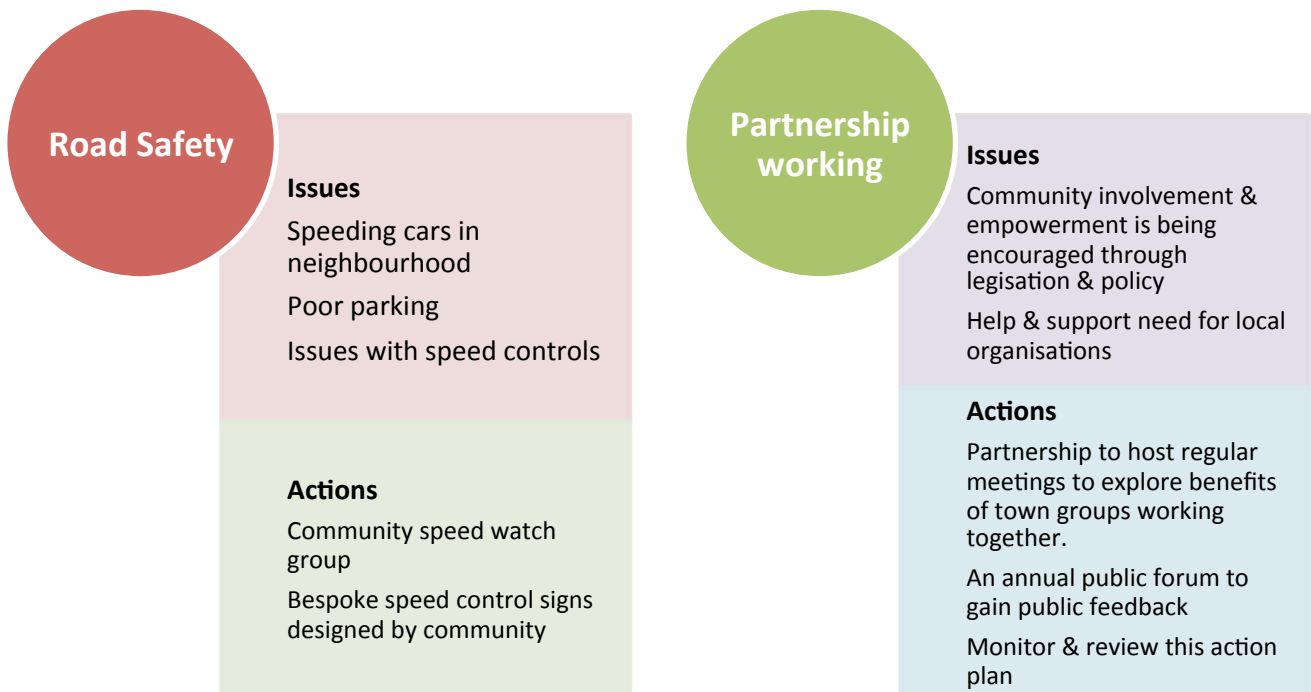
Gadget show within Community to highlight what is on the market
Help to buy schemes (Housing Associations).

Aim 3: Promote safer & stronger communities

Statistics on crime and anti-social behaviour are low within Westfield but perception and public concern for safety is relatively high. This could be down to lack of incident reporting or just unjustified public perception. Local community priorities from the consultation identified issues such as speeding traffic, poor lighting, school safety and anti-social behaviour as reasons for a need to address community safety in the Westfield neighbourhood.

Westfield Academy have highlighted safety concerns for young people during pick up /drop off times on a number of occasions due to increased vehicle and foot traffic in the neighbourhood. Near misses have been recorded in 'hot spot' areas such as the current bus bays and the main entrances where parents are dropping and parking in area that are inappropriate.

The value of community involvement and local democracy is recognised in the 'Big Society' and opportunities for local empowerment are offered through the localism bill. We hope that this plan will help engender local interest and support the community partnership and town council to deliver local activities.



Schools safety

Issues

No pick up / drop point for car users.
Poor coach / bus parking
Student cycling to school safety concerns.

Actions

Bikeability road safety course - free to students.
New coach park within school grounds (including drop off / pick up zone).

Community safety

Issues

Poor lighting in some areas
Perception of anti social behaviour
Graffiti problem within the town

Actions

Environment clean up
Brand Westfield development
regeneration projects to community areas.

Aim 4: Access to community services & facilities.

Life expectancy for men and women in Yeovil (especially Yeovil West) is one of the lowest figures in Somerset.

Alongside the walks and recreational activities, the Westfield neighbourhood and the town of Yeovil have a strong involvement in local sport with its own cricket, rugby, hockey, football and netball teams as well as a large number of recreational sports clubs and casual activity sessions. The social activities in the town are well attended with an ever growing list of hobby groups, educational workshops, clubs and societies located across the town. However, engagement in these activities from residents on the estate is low, with some residents highlighting cost, distance of travel, time and lack of awareness and barriers to participation.

The community survey shows that local people consider the provision of activities & community facilities for young people and support for older people to be important issues. More information is needed on what is currently available for young people and where there are gaps.

Access to healthy lifestyle services

Issues

Lack of understanding of what is going on.
Poor engagement in activities within community

Actions

Audit & promotion of clubs / activities running in Westfield
Support Back to Netball
Community £ project

Guidance & advice services

Issues

Lack of understanding of what is available in community
High level of need / high isolation issues with community

Actions

Yeovil4family programme (befriending support)
YHG Job club (tenants)
Parenting course
Promotion of what support is available in Westfield

Youth

Issues

Lack of sustainable funding for youth club

Lack of opportunities for young people in Westfield

Actions

Sustain youth club provision

Look at wider community 'Youth Offer' for local residents

Youth employability research project

Community facilities

Issues

No Community facilities within Neighbourhood for community

No information hub

Actions

Development of a new community hall in Westfield

Work with agencies / alternative venues to highlight hire / club operations within Westfield

Enhancement / clean up of Westfield MUGA