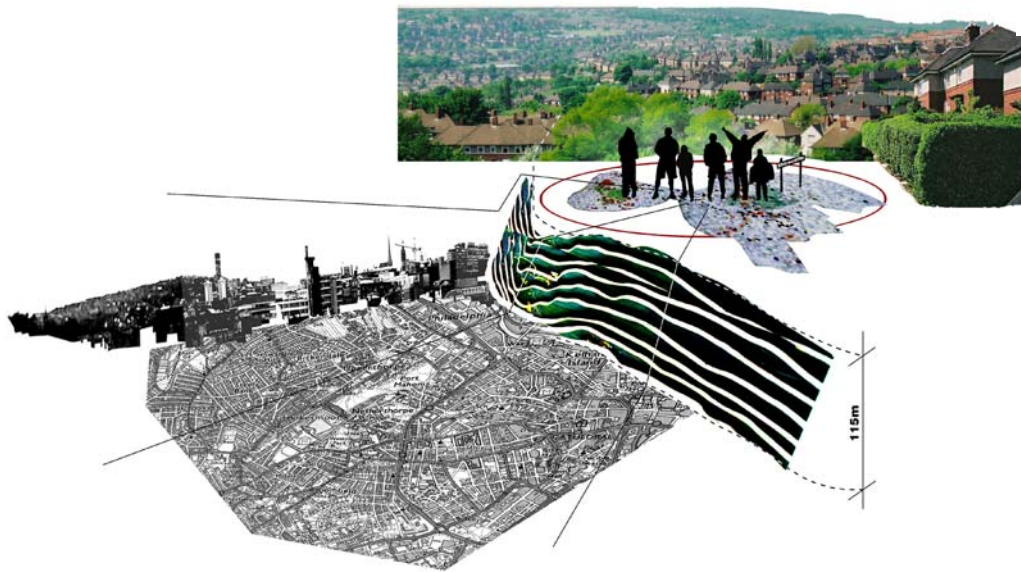


SHIRECLIFFE NEIGHBOURHOOD STRATEGY



SOUTHEY OWLERTON NEIGHBOURHOOD STRATEGIES VOLUME 1 MAY 2002



SUPPORTED BY SOUTHEY /
OWLERTON AREA PANEL



Shirecliffe

“ Shirecliffe lies right at the edge of the estate, squeezed between Herries Road and the “cliff” that runs along the top of Parkwood Springs. In some ways it feels more connected to the city centre than to the estate because of the panoramic views across the city from Parkwood Springs. This part of the neighbourhood is also highly visible from other parts of the city: it feels as if this should be the “front” of the estate, rather than the back. As well as this link with the city, Shirecliffe has some amazing remnants of countryside- woods and meadow at Parkwood and bluebell woods at Busk Meadow.”

INTRODUCTION

Shirecliffe Forward had been working with the Council and other partners since February 2001 to develop a Neighbourhood Strategy for Shirecliffe, when the group dissolved early in 2002. It is hoped that a new group will be established shortly that can start to implement the strategy. In the meantime this document sets out progress to date as well as areas of continuing work.

Although there is much work still to be done, we feel there is also much progress to celebrate and that this is worth documenting at this stage. Workers are now in post to help take the strategy forward, funded through SRB and Objective 1 under the Pioneer Communities initiative.

We in the Council should like to take this opportunity to acknowledge formally the extraordinary commitment, energy, enthusiasm and hard work contributed to date by Shirecliffe Forward and now by individuals and groups in the neighbourhood.



The Big Tent Event

THE PROCESS SO FAR

Shirecliffe Forward at its first meeting in February identified 5 key issues it wished to see addressed in a Neighbourhood Strategy:

1. Modernisation of houses
2. Environmental improvements
3. Relationship with Council officers
4. Future of the tips
5. Community facilities

The group presented details to the Council of their vision for, and the current problems with, each of these issues at a joint event in March, where it was agreed to work together to address them.

The intention was to carry out a detailed questionnaire of the estate to identify what the wider community felt should be included in its Neighbourhood Strategy. However when we started to design a questionnaire, Shirecliffe Forward felt that the estate had been surveyed extensively in the past and that it would be better to test out specific ideas for change, rather than ask the same questions again. In other words local people in the group felt they knew what changes people wanted to see, but they needed the wider community to confirm these.

They therefore decided to organise an event – later known as the Big Tent Event – at which they would use trigger boards (see Appendix) to test ideas about how the neighbourhood might change. The trigger boards were supported at the event by other surveys and stalls seeking to identify what activities and physical changes local people would like to see.

As a starting point for the Big Tent Event Shirecliffe Forward and the officers and independent advisors went on a walkabout of the Shirecliffe estate to show what needed improving and to take photographs. The trigger boards and ideas for other stalls and activities were developed from this day.



The Big Tent Event

The Big Tent Event was held over the weekend of 16/17 June 2001. Despite unseasonal weather (first wet, then cold) the event attracted some 200 people from all over the neighbourhood (see photo of model) who gave their views and joined in the activities. These included:

- Trigger boards based on the neighbourhood as it is now (see Appendix)
- Trigger boards based on how the neighbourhood could be (see Appendix)
- A model of the neighbourhood (on which visitors marked with a pin their houses) (see Appendix)
- An exercise linked to personal journeys and memories of the estate
- Aerial photos and historical maps of the whole Southey Owlerton area
- Representatives from Housing, Planning, Parkwood High, SPELL-NE (who also provided childcare for the event) and Sheffield Wildlife Trust
- A quiz based on photos taken on the walkabout

The independent advisors and officers all fed back the results in report form to Shirecliffe Forward. These results are brought together in this report. In general the event illustrated consensus locally about what needed to happen in Shirecliffe and confirmed that local people share Shirecliffe Forward's view of the priorities.

One clear message from the event was that people were keen to see decisions made about the housing issues in order to remove uncertainties. The Housing Service Manager therefore wrote to Shirecliffe Forward after the event asking them to set out for her their proposals for housing. A paper was submitted and considered by the Housing Service. From May to December 2001 the Housing Service undertook a detailed mapping exercise of housing in the neighbourhood against sustainability criteria and consulted individual households on the results.

A feedback event was held on 8 July as part of the Shirecliffe Fun Day. At this event we:

- fed back what people had said on the trigger boards and the recommendations that Shirecliffe Forward were making as a result
- illustrated the proposed "diagram" (see below) on the model
- tabled Shirecliffe Forward's housing proposals
- suggested some tools for further engagement of local people in the process; and
- recruited residents for areas of further work.

Unfortunately the tent was not very well positioned at this event and we did not see as many people as we had hoped. However those who did come agreed with the ideas.

Since August 2001 we have continued to work on an audit of community facilities in the neighbourhood. The results are documented in a separate report.



People feel a sense of pride in the neighbourhood

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD STRATEGY FOR SHIRECLIFFE

Impressions of the place






General impressions about Shirecliffe that have emerged from conversations over the last few months are:

- People feel a great sense of pride in the neighbourhood yet sadness at the deterioration that has occurred over the years
- Family and friendship links help create a sense of community; in this the extended family plays a crucial role
- At the same time some people feel isolated and “trapped” in their homes – adults with young children and young people have nowhere to meet on the estate and no facilities
- There are no safe places for children to play; everyone emphasised the need for supervision of any new facilities created
- The college and the schools play an important role in the lives of both adults and children
- The elderly members of the community had a great sense of shared history, experience and events; many have lived here all their lives but there is evidence of younger families leaving the estate and elderly relatives behind so that they can bring up their children in a ‘safer’ environment
- People of all ages seem to meet primarily in each other’s houses. There is a desperate need for somewhere to meet



-  Existing community facilities
-  New & improved community facilities (indoor)
-  New & improved play, sports & youth facilities (outdoor)
-  New and improved shopping
-  Streetscape improvement
-  New & improved pedestrian & cycle routes/links
-  New community transport
-  Improvement to key open spaces
-  Landmarks and viewpoints
-  Housing investment areas
-  Potential for new development
-  Hubs & neighbourhood centres
-  Demonstration projects

Demonstration projects:

-  1 Dumpit site and entrance to Parkwood Springs
-  2 New community building/hub project
-  3 Busk Meadow Park and neighbourhood centre
-  4 Parkwood Springs and ridge route
-  5 Proposed extra care housing development

Neighbourhood Strategy Diagram for Shirecliffe

The diagram

Rather than trying to map all of the issues and activities the framework diagram for each of the six neighbourhoods in Southey Owlerton identifies priorities for action. Each of the six diagrams has a standard key or checklist so that when they are pieced together they will form a coherent framework.

What has emerged in terms of a physical plan for Shirecliffe is the need for:

- Community facilities for all ages, making better use of community buildings and open spaces
- An improved image for the area, especially the streetscene
- A clear strategy for improving housing

The diagram shows the key buildings and open spaces that have potential for **community use**. There are four parts of the neighbourhood that local people felt were the focal points and where these physical opportunities converge:

- Tesco's, the other shops and the Herries Road frontage
- the top shops, at the crossroads of Shirecliffe Road and Longley Avenue West, Busk Meadow park & school and the Community Centre
- the entrance to the Dumpit site and the top of Parkwood Springs, Shirecliffe's potential Country Park
- the bottom shops, near Parkwood High

Although these places include a number of opportunities, they currently pose a number of problems – poor image, youth nuisance, run down environment and under-used facilities.

The diagram proposes that for each of these areas **a route should be created** from Herries Road to the open space and viewpoints on the "cliff" at the edge of Parkwood Springs. These routes would be established by improvements to the street scene (including the buildings and the boundaries of the open spaces along them) and would thereby express a positive new identity for the neighbourhood.



Housing in Shirecliffe

The detailed mapping exercise of **housing** undertaken by the Housing Service analysed the level of turnover in Council properties over the last year, the last 5 years and the last 13 years. This was correlated against physical information about the properties – whether they had central heating and whether they had two or three bedrooms. The results showed that in the 5 year period there was an average of 148 tenancy changes per year involving 65% of Council houses in Shirecliffe. About 80% of these were two-bedroom properties.

As a result 246 households received letters from the Housing Service in August 2001 explaining that their property was in a block affected by high turnover. The remaining 1,150 households on the estate received letters stating that their homes were not affected by high turnover and that their homes would not be demolished against their wishes. From September to December the Housing Service carried out home visits to all households to establish their housing needs. The response to this survey was excellent – 86% of the whole estate and 92% of the 246 households.

The survey information has all been collated and has confirmed that in general the areas with low turnover are also those where people wish to continue to live. The Housing Service has now identified these as investment areas. A programme of investment has started and will continue for the next two years (see diagram).

114 of the 246 households affected by high turnover are proposed for demolition, of which 108 are two bedroom properties. In addition the Housing Service has gone back to talk again to 256 properties that are not affected by high turnover but that are adjacent to properties proposed for demolition and/or where the occupiers or their neighbours indicated in the first survey that they wished to move. For both these reasons the Council is unable to invest in these areas. These areas are shown as areas of potential new development on the diagram, although the time scale for bringing forward development on these sites is not yet known.

Within each neighbourhood the intention is to define (and prioritise for investment) a **neighbourhood centre** that includes a hub project (a kind of local one-stop shop for access to local services). In Shirecliffe two centres have been identified: the area around Busk Meadow Park including the top shops and a number of existing and proposed community facilities; and the area around the bottom shops and Parkwood High. The Community Facilities Audit suggested that the best site for a new build hub project would be on school land near the bottom shops.

Areas of housing investment surround both centres. There are also opportunities to create a new relationship with the key open spaces (Busk Meadow Park and Parkwood Springs) if new development is achieved on the sites shown.



Views over the city from Parkwood Springs

Ancient woodland in Shirecliffe

Identity

The reason for choosing the three key routes is that they seem to sum up the features that make Shirecliffe distinctive as a place.

Our walkabout together round Shirecliffe was a revelation: we found hidden pockets of ancient woodland amongst the housing, discovered lovely woods at the edge of the estate and experienced breathtaking views over the city and beyond from the edge of Parkwood Springs. At the same time we found carefully tended houses and gardens.

This contrasted sharply with neglect of some of the “public” buildings, for example the shops, and with the image that most people in Sheffield have of Shirecliffe through their experience of the Dumpit site. There was also evidence of lack of investment in the housing and open spaces. This is exacerbated by the state of the verges and the look of the streets.

We are left with three strong images. The first is of an estate clearly bounded by Herries Road and the rest of Parson Cross to the north, and by the cliff to the south. Perched on the edge of the cliff with spectacular views across the city, in some ways it feels closer to the city centre than to the suburbs, connected by views over Parkwood Springs (as well as by good bus routes into town, although the no.1 bus is sorely missed). The connection with Parkwood Springs, the woods and the cliff is very underused at present: it almost feels as though this should be the “front” of the estate, rather than the back.

The second is of a piece of countryside overlaid within living memory by a housing estate, but not altogether lost in the process. Although Shirecliffe’s ancient woods, bluebells and stone walls are a well-kept secret, they survive to form the basis of an open space network that, if carefully connected, could bring this character to the fore.



A garden city estate

The third is of a garden city estate, built as a piece just before the war, that did not plan for car ownership at the level that we have today. The large front gardens and verges are an opportunity to build a new image for Shirecliffe; at the same time they are the cause of much of its poor image today.

The three routes identified bring together these three images: the link to the city (that results from the special topography of the neighbourhood and its views), its natural assets – memories of the countryside – and its garden city streets. We believe that by developing a “look” based on these images and carrying out improvements along these three routes, we can present the real Shirecliffe to the outside world.

The Bigger Picture

In the main Neighbourhood Strategies report we describe a number of “big ideas” and development principles that together could establish a positive identity for the Southey Owlerton area. At the next stage of developing design briefs for individual projects, it will be important to reflect these ideas and principles.

The relevance of the “big ideas” for Shirecliffe is as follows:

- The two neighbourhood centres are connected to areas of green space and the three key routes link them to Parkwood Springs. Joining up the green spaces within a neighbourhood, connecting them to the key local facilities and linking them by footpath & cycle routes to adjoining neighbourhoods will help create a green backcloth to every day life that could become a hallmark of this part of the city (*Park city and Green arteries*)
- A new path along the edge of the “cliff” at Parkwood Springs will open up the fantastic views to the city centre and countryside to more local people. If this route is linked to Foxhill Back Edge it will create a high level ridge walk from near the city centre right out to the countryside (*From city to countryside and back again*).
- New features on this part of the skyline – whether new housing, lighting, artworks or trees – also need to celebrate the views and make Shirecliffe visible to the rest of the city (*See and be seen*)
- The grassland and woodland areas need to be retained and enhanced to keep the open views and build on distinctive local habitat patterns. (*Identity from landform*)

Demonstration projects can express the new identity for Southey Owlerton as well as the special character of the Shirecliffe neighbourhood:

- The Dumpit and Parkwood Spring sites are typical of the hilltop character described in the main report. Projects should emphasise the cliff and make the most of the dramatic views and big skies.
- At Busk Meadow the key design principle will be to enhance the existing countryside character by creating a single area of woodland with meadow glades that spans both sides of Shirecliffe Road. The buildings, both new and existing, would be set back from the road in glades, giving the feeling of buildings in a wood. The Parkwood hub also has the slopes and hollows character. A new building needs to “funnel” views towards the edge.



The Dumpit Site as it is today

PROJECTS THE COMMUNITY WOULD LIKE TO MOVE FORWARD

The priorities that local people have identified are set out below.

Move the Dumpit site!

This is seen as the top priority and an essential project, not just for the future of the neighbourhood as a whole but to enable the full network of community facilities (buildings and open spaces) to happen.

The proposal is that the site be relocated and accessed via an industrial area, not a residential street. Funding is being sought for a feasibility study to assess the possibility of relocating the Dumpit. If feasible, this will not be an overnight task. In the short term the new Waste Management Contractor, Onyx, will carry out improvements to the existing site.

The diagram shows a proposed pavilion on the present Dumpit site as part of a network of community buildings and as the entrance to a proposed Country Park. The link from Herries Road to the pavilion would form the public entrance to Shirecliffe for the rest of the city.



Trigger board exploring possible community space in the top shops

We need good quality community facilities

- There is a clear and urgent need for a **community centre or network of community buildings** to accommodate:
 - drop-in/café
 - base for local community groups incl N Sheffield Federation for Disabled
 - youth club/facilities
 - sports facilities (to complement the outdoor provision listed below)
 - health services health activities
 - information centre/community library (including web-site set-up)
 - crèche/childcare registered rooms
 - out of school activities
 - learning facilities incl family learning
 - access for all to all facilities

This list will probably requires a shop/house or shops/houses plus a larger space such as the Community Centre hall and something linked to the proposed Country Park, such as the pavilion. The schools and nearby Sheffield United FC facility may also have space to offer. An audit of all of the buildings shown on the model has been carried out to see what they can offer in terms of space and whether this can address the list above.

The audit concluded that a new building linked to Parkwood High School, the existing Community Centre and community space in part of the top shops, provided they could be redeveloped, would together meet the needs outlined above. All of these are complex proposals and would require a strong local group to take any one of them forward: a new build project would have to be developed by and funded via a local group; to engage with the existing Centre will require input at management committee level; and any proposals involving the top shops are likely to form part of a bigger mixed use development with private sector investment. In the short term local people are exploring the potential of existing buildings around Busk Meadow Park.

The buildings will need staff to operate them and supervise use. These should be local people (who will be offered training if necessary). Where schools are involved a better interface between the community and schools is required. The Parkwood High Community Liaison officer and the Family Learning workers (funded through SRB5) will play an important role here. The Fresh Start worker joined the team for the community buildings audit.



Trigger board exploring possible future use of the Dumpit Site

There is also a need for a **network of open space and sports facilities for all ages** to accommodate

- toddler play, formal and informal
- youth play, formal and informal incl BMX, skate boarding etc
- sports facilities – all weather kickabout plus grass pitches
- paths, seating, litter bins, proper entrances, drainage etc
- some parking
- environmental projects such as recycling, wind farm etc
- pavilion/café outpost on Dumpit (links back to community buildings)

Like the community buildings, this needs further work/feasibility to get the location of each facility right and to create a network of provision across the whole neighbourhood. (At present, the full list is being requested on every piece of open space.) The audit suggested that nearly all of the outdoor facilities can be accommodated in two main green spaces – Busk Meadow Park and Parkwood Springs.

For example, it may be appropriate to locate high quality, supervised provision for older children and young people at Parkwood Springs near Parkwood High, with facilities for younger children and families around Busk Meadow where it is proposed to develop extra care housing. (The location of children's facilities near housing for the elderly will, of course, need careful design and management.) The character of Busk Meadow (surrounded by housing) may be more formal than the proposed Country Park (at the edge of the cliff). Again there is a need to look at what the four schools and SUFC can offer too.

These sites will also need staff to operate and supervise them. Staff and training will be available for local people to become coaches, youth workers etc through SRB5 projects already funded (Active Communities, Urban Lynks, Volunteer Network).



Trigger board exploring possible changes to the streetscape

Improve the streetscene and the general look of the place

There is a need for improvements to the streetscene that will:

- improve the image for those living there/driving through and give a clear message that Shirecliffe is a good place to live
- retain the garden city feel of the estate whilst providing for organised car parking and pedestrian movement (esp for the disabled)

Ideas include:

- streetscene and housing improvements along the three key routes – with a locally developed “look” for these – focus on seats and meeting places on these streets linked to the community buildings and open spaces
- improvements to existing local shops e.g. façade improvements
- garden festival project
- project for privet hedges with steel railings project for key public sites in the diagram
- local recycling points at key points of diagram – slot machine model to encourage their use
- better links with police and Council over fly tipping/safety of footpaths and better link with Housing over tenancy management
- explore CCTV for the main routes (i.e. those shown on the diagram)?
- local environment maintenance team with opportunities for local training, jobs and enterprise

Again a further piece of work is needed to develop the details of the Shirecliffe look based on the images described above.

Improve housing on the estate

The diagram indicates areas where the Housing Service will be investing using SRB and other funding over the next two years. The money will be targeted at new kitchens and bathrooms, as well as window replacement, rendering and work to garden boundaries.

New extra care housing development is proposed on the eastern edge of Busk Meadow Park to target the needs of the elderly. Further housing development may take place in time on the areas of potential new development that are shown on the diagram. This will be housing for sale. To meet the needs of local people it should provide for the extended family and for young families who might otherwise have to leave the estate.

Enforcement of tenancy agreements is a key issue for the estate. We should like to explore local service agreements and the idea of neighbourhood wardens.

Local shopping matters

Local people have identified the need for

- locally available fresh groceries/supermarket – ideally Tesco, or a replacement, but if not we need to consider a small local shop plus free transport to a supermarket
- explore whether nearby allotments can be a source of fresh fruit and vegetables for the estate
- physical improvements to the Tesco site with special emphasis on resolving pedestrian and vehicle conflict; this is the “front door” to Shirecliffe off Herries Road and an important piece of the diagram
- improvements to existing local shops e.g. façade improvements as well as to the management and maintenance of shops and forecourts

We should like to explore with Tesco their plans for the area, but also to secure their help and advice in how best to ensure that fresh fruit and vegetables are available, not just in Shirecliffe but across the whole Southey Owlerton area.

Let's make the most of enterprise, training and job opportunities

Residents have identified a number of opportunities for local people to benefit economically from all of the above projects. These include training and jobs for local people to carry out further research, become youth workers, sports coaches, managers of community buildings and open spaces and to form a local environment maintenance team. The latter could become a community enterprise. There is also an idea to develop a kitemarking scheme for local traders to ensure that they can benefit from any project work.

In the first instance it is proposed to explore these ideas further in partnership with existing SRB5 projects such as SPELL-NE, the Intermediate Labour Market, Sheffield Rebuild, Northern Clusters etc.

NEXT STEPS

We believe that the priorities for the next twelve months in the Shirecliffe Neighbourhood Strategy process are:

1. Continue to talk to the Council about the key issues that it can influence.

These are:

- Proposed relocation of the Dumpit site to the south east of the landfill site
- Access to the Community Centre (owned by Education) for local community groups
- Establishing a dialogue with Tesco about their plans in the Southey Owlerton area and how local supplies of fresh fruit and vegetables can be achieved

2. Make full use of the local development team funded through Objective 1's Pioneer Communities and SRB5

Workers have been employed to help local people to continue the Neighbourhood Strategies process and carry out the further pieces of work identified below. Voluntary Action Sheffield have submitted the funding bids and employ the staff, who will work within the Neighbourhood Strategies process in partnership with the community, the Council and other agencies. The team started late in 2001.

3. Identify existing SRB funded projects that can work with Shirecliffe Forward to address the needs described above

There are a number of projects funded to do work across the whole Southey Owlerton area some of which are not yet active in Shirecliffe. These include childcare, learning, youth work, health projects, enterprise, open space projects, community safety etc. This work has already started.

Carry out specific pieces of work that will lead to costed project proposals and funding bids

The pieces of work that need to happen now are:

- Secure funding for the Dumpit feasibility study
- Explore further the feasibility of establishing the network of community facilities identified above, starting with Busk Meadow Park (that has Section 106 funding to spend) and a community building
- Develop the design language or “look” for Shirecliffe that will inform all physical projects and a process of working with all partners to make it happen
- Carry out a neighbourhood Health Needs Assessment in partnership with the local GP surgeries to inform the community facilities debate

It is suggested that local researchers and development workers funded through the Pioneer Communities/SRB5 project carry out this work. This will include training and fact-finding trips to other places. The main report describes how the Council, the independent advisors and other partners will continue to work with local people in each neighbourhood to take the Neighbourhood Strategies process into the implementation phase.

Develop tools for engagement that will ensure a wider group of people can be involved in all of the above.

A number of ideas have been suggested for projects that can engage a range of age groups and widen participation in the regeneration process:

- A home-based project working with the personal experiences of older members of the community
- ‘My community myself’ – a photography/film project that looks at the culture, lives and possible role for young people in Shirecliffe
- ‘Connecting gardens – connecting people’ – a collaborative garden design and play project with parents and children
- Video space placed on the three 3 key routes, a chance to express opinions on the project proposals (Big Brother diary room)
- Information points – marker boards, website, Radio Shirecliffe, activities at bus stops, pubs etc
- Planning and design projects for the Shirecliffe “look” and for proposals for individual sites including workshops in schools, with young people, in pubs (18-30 age group)
- ‘Our patch’ - simulation and self build small scale projects

APPENDIX



At the "Big Tent Event" on 16 & 17 June, we asked people this question:
"What would you like to see put up in place of the demolished flats at Busk Meadow - if anything?"

We got these replies:

- "Managed allotments for people to grow and sell produce"
- "Sheltered housing scheme and houses for the disabled"
- "Sheltered housing" "Secure sheltered housing"
- "Council houses" "Bungalows"
- "Health Centre" "Turn into a training centre"
- "Play group"
- "Better kids club" "Have a kids club"
- "Car park" "Toy shop!"

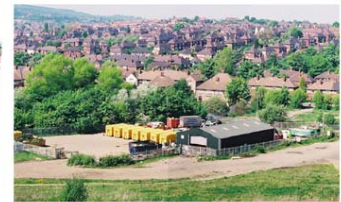
Conclusion reached by Shirecliffe Forward

Even though several people seem to think that a good use for this site would be to increase the availability of community facilities, Shirecliffe Forward members feel that there are other possible sites which are as suitable for community facilities

Shirecliffe Forward's Recommendation

Because this site is a good flat area which is wheelchair friendly, with a doctor across road, with shops and a Church close to hand, Shirecliffe Forward recommends consideration of the following options: (1) Sheltered accommodation; (2) Disabled bungalows; (3) Bungalows for elderly; all with the possibility of an integrated / attached Health Care Centre

Sample trigger board based on the neighbourhood as it is now



The Dump-it Site

What could the Dump it Site be replaced with?

A Community Pavilion?

A Cafe in the Park?

A Childrens Playground?

Changing Rooms for the Playing Fields?

A Meeting Place?

Peoples Comments at the Big Tent Event.

Improve doorstep collection services for recycling

This is a must!! and just what we need!

Cafe in the park. Good idea (x2)

Cafe close to a playground would be good, parents could supervise their kids while chatting over a coffee.

Children's play area

Bike tracks - cyles and motorbikes. (x2)

Sports area

A Shirecliffe park with an attendant

This park looks nice if people will respect it.

If you lost the dump site, increased flytipping penalty up.

What about a youth club?

Need more for kids in area.

Anything is better than the dump site.

Take away as soon as possible if not sooner

The tip is disgusting. We know, we live at the side of it. Thats the first thing we see when we open our curtains, its the first thing we smell when we open our doors. GET RID

Sample trigger board based on how the neighbourhood could be



Photo of model showing the houses of people who came to the Big Tent Event