

THE EXECUTIVE

Tuesday, 31 May 2005

Open Report

Agenda Item 6. Developing a "Sense of Place" in Barking and Dagenham (Pages 1 - 28)

Agenda Item 6 has been revised; please substitute the attached version for that which was published on 20 May 2005.

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THE EXECUTIVE

31 MAY 2005

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT

DEVELOPING A “SENSE OF PLACE” IN BARKING AND DAGENHAM	FOR DECISION	
<p><i>This is a strategic issue, reserved for the consideration of the Executive.</i></p> <p>Summary</p> <p>Regeneration will have a far-reaching and long-lasting effect on the borough's appearance, economy, reputation and community life – its “sense of place”. It needs to be informed and guided by a clear and specific vision if it is to meet community aspirations.</p> <p>The attached position paper draws together existing Council strategies and policies to establish principles for the “sense of place” that we want to create through the regeneration of the borough. It has been developed in consultation with the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and the Executive is asked to approve this draft for submission to the LSP as the Partnership's own policy statement on “sense of place”.</p> <p>The London Thames Gateway Development Corporation is also developing a Vision and Regeneration Framework. We therefore recommend to the Executive that we share the draft of our paper with the Corporation as soon as possible.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Executive is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree the attached paper as a working statement of principles; 2. Share the paper with the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation and other partners as appropriate; and 3. Recommend the paper for agreement by the Barking and Dagenham Partnership as the Partnership's statement of principles. <p>Reason</p> <p>To help achieve the Community Priority of <i>‘Regenerating the Local Economy’</i>.</p>		
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1. Background

1.1 Sense of place is a term used in urban geography to denote those features that give a place a distinct identity. These include not only the physical environment, but how a place is used and experienced by residents and visitors and how it is perceived by people outside the area. It covers a broad range of issues including employment, leisure activities, community cohesion, pride in place and reputation.

1.2 Regeneration will have a far-reaching and long-lasting effect on the borough's "sense of place". 25,000 new homes and 15,000 new jobs will be created in Barking and Dagenham, along with new facilities such as schools, medical centres, shops and community space. The borough's industrial areas and its transport infrastructure will be transformed to keep pace with new housing development. This scale of development needs to be informed and guided by a clear vision to meet community aspirations.

2. Purpose of the work

2.1 The Regeneration Board agreed on 25th January to develop a policy statement on the sense of place that the Council, its partners and the local community should seek to create through regeneration. The statement will sit alongside Barking and Dagenham's Community Strategy and give a clearer sense of what we want Barking and Dagenham to look and feel like through regeneration. We want it to be seen by regeneration partners as the basis for common action to meet community aspirations, helping to guide regeneration strategy, programme development and project design, as well as the promotion and marketing of the borough's regeneration opportunities.

2.2 As the paper draws together existing Council policies and reflects views from the Local Strategic Partnership, we are not proposing a separate consultation on the draft. Instead, we recommend its submission to the Barking and Dagenham Partnership for their comment and agreement as the Partnership's statement of principles. Particular aspects of the document will also be developed through already agreed consultations, such as that for the Local Implementation Plan. In particular, we envisage using much of the "sense of place" document as the basis for widespread community consultation around the borough's Local Development Framework (LDF). Embedding the paper as statutory policy in the LDF will be critical to the achievement of agreed principles for sustainability, good design and sense of place.

3. Influencing the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation

3.1 The London Thames Gateway Development Corporation is also developing a "Vision" and Regeneration Framework for programme delivery and resource allocation in the areas that it services. The UDC will be a huge influence on the future of our borough, for good or ill, so we want to make sure that its vision and strategies reflect the ambitions of our community. Our position paper on "Sense of Place" is therefore designed to help set the UDC's priorities.

3.2 Most importantly, we wish to secure explicit recognition that Barking and Dagenham should be a sustainable community and distinct locality in its own right, as well as playing an important role in the social economy of Greater London. We want to

eliminate any possibility of planning and investment decisions being made by public or private sector partners on the default basis of the borough functioning as a low status sector of London, providing mainly cheap and poorly designed housing, low-skill employment and a poor environment.

- 3.3 We have brought forward this work as quickly as possible in order to influence the UDC's work at an early stage. However, we have also sought to engage the Local Strategic Partnership and its sub-groups as far as possible in the time available, so as to improve the content of the document, secure ownership from the Council's strategic partners and strengthen our hand with the UDC. The paper draws on the Council's existing policy positions as far as possible. We hope that the Executive will feel able to agree this paper as a draft to share with the UDC, as well as asking the next full meeting of the Partnership for its endorsement.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 This is a strategic policy paper, with no immediate direct financial implications.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The draft paper has been developed and agreed by officers from all Departments of the Council, including the Heads of Regeneration Implementation, Planning and Transportation, Housing Strategy, Corporate Strategy, Lifelong Learning, Literacy and Cultural Services and Corporate Communications
- 5.2 The LSP sub-groups "Cleaner, Greener, Safer" and Regenerating the Local Economy were consulted on 9th March and 18th April respectively. Participatory workshops were held at the full LSP on 13th April and at the Regeneration Board away-day on 22nd April. Two workshops were organised for Members on 11th and 18th April, although due to election commitments only one Member was able to attend.
- 5.3 The Lead Member for Regeneration was consulted and is content.

Attachments

- Creating a sense of place in Barking and Dagenham: principles
- Creating a sense of place in Barking and Dagenham: themes and neighbourhoods

Background Papers

- 2020 Vision
- Community Strategy: Building Communities, Transforming Lives
- Barking and Dagenham: An Urban Renaissance in East London
- Economic Development in Barking and Dagenham

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Creating a sense of place in Barking and Dagenham

1. Principles

Draft at 13 May 2005

Creating a sense of place in Barking and Dagenham: principles

Purpose

1. Barking and Dagenham's Community Strategy, Building Communities, Transforming Lives, sets out our residents' common aspirations for a better future in the borough. This document complements the Community Strategy by describing:
 - How regeneration will create attractive, distinctive places that have a strong sense of identity and community;
 - The opportunities a regenerated Barking and Dagenham will provide for residents, visitors and businesses;
 - How we want a regenerated Barking and Dagenham to be perceived and experienced, inside and outside the borough;
2. The document draws together existing Council strategies and policies to show how regeneration can create a new pride of place in Barking and Dagenham. We want it to form the common basis of action by our partners, so that regeneration meets the highest aspirations of our community. The principles it establishes for sustainable development and sense of place will be developed further in consultation with the community and embedded in the borough's Local Development Framework.

Where do we fit in?

3. Barking and Dagenham is at the heart of London's Thames Gateway, the biggest regeneration area in the United Kingdom. Regeneration of the Thames Gateway is a once in a generation chance for Barking and Dagenham. The borough's median income is the lowest in London, a consequence of some of the lowest skill levels in the country. Other social indicators – including average life expectancy – show that the borough suffers from deep-rooted cycles of social exclusion. The borough's traditional source of employment in manufacturing has declined in line with national trends, symbolised by Ford's decision to end vehicle manufacture and halve its workforce.
4. But we also have compelling advantages and opportunities. The borough's strategic position in the Thames Gateway makes it commercially competitive. Manufacturing is beginning to regroup around the Centre of Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence, the Ford Diesel plant and the Environmental Technology Resource Centre for London soon to be built at Dagenham Dock. We have excellent east-west public transport, with Barking Town Centre the seventh best-connected transport hub in Greater London.
5. The borough's excellent parks and the heritage represented by treasures such as Eastbury Manor House disprove the easy stereotypes of urban

grime and decay. Two of the borough's parks have secured the National Green Flag Standard for excellence in park management and we have commenced implementation of a Parks and Green Spaces Strategy that has been recognised as best practice by the Greater London Authority and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment. We have several miles of waterfront along the River Thames and Roding, which has been released from industrial uses and can now be used for leisure and new housing.

6. 25,000 new homes and 15,000 new jobs will be created in the borough over the next 15-20 years. Barking's town centre, with its excellent transport connections, is the key to opening up The Gateway. Barking Riverside is the largest brownfield regeneration site in Western Europe and the test of public ambitions to create new sustainable communities in The Gateway. Dagenham Dock is already being transformed into London's home for environmental technologies.

The regeneration vision

7. The successful regeneration of Barking and Dagenham is important for the whole of London Thames Gateway. Getting the best for our community means working in partnership with a wide range of public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations. That is why we were the founder member of the Thames Gateway London Partnership and one of the first local authorities to call for an Urban Development Corporation.
8. We want to seize that opportunity on our own terms. Our ambition is to create more than a commuter dormitory for the City or Canary Wharf, a dumping ground for cheap, mass-produced housing, or a convenient site for London's storage, warehousing, and remaining low-value manufacturing industries. We will say "no" to proposals that fail to measure up to our vision, or meet the standards we have set for community-led sustainable development.
9. Our aim is for Barking and Dagenham and its different neighbourhoods to provide the full range of choices, opportunities and facilities needed to support a lively community in its own right. We want the borough to be known as an attractive, welcoming place, with a range of housing types and tenures for all social groups, a wide range of shops and leisure facilities, and excellent public services and community facilities. We want to give our residents the choice to work in satisfying, well-paid occupations within Barking and Dagenham, as well as the transport to take them to other employment areas in Greater London. And we want to create sustainable communities with a common identity, which value diversity and are proud of the places they live.

Having it both ways?

10. Barking and Dagenham is often seen as part of London's eastern periphery. In fact, Barking Station is only 12 minutes from London

Fenchurch Street by mainline rail services. It is in London Underground's Zone 4, but enjoys Zone 2 travel times. This proximity and easy access to London will enable us to achieve our aim of a borough close to London and its facilities, but with a distinct identity and vibrant community life of its own.

11. The eastward extension of the Docklands Light Railway and construction of the East London Transit will improve these already excellent transport connections still further, opening up new opportunities in central London and the inner Thames Gateway for people from Barking and Dagenham. Residents will have easier transport access to employment, education and leisure activities not just into East and Central London, but via the new Thames Gateway Bridge into South London as well. New residents in the Town Centre and Barking Riverside developments are as likely to think of themselves as living in part of the East London metropolitan area, as they are of living in Barking and Dagenham.
12. We want to celebrate Barking and Dagenham's distinct identity. Some people will choose to live on the Becontree Estate because it feels in many ways more like Essex than London. Facing both ways within the Gateway, we will be able to provide a choice of metropolitan London living at Barking Town Centre, the best in new design at Barking Riverside and South Dagenham and a calmer pace of life in Becontree and Dagenham.

Place - `making by design

13. Quality of design is one of the most important factors in quality of life and will be critical to attracting new investors, residents and visitors. Good design will be a constant in all our regeneration programmes and all areas of the borough. That means:
 - High standards in the design, architecture and construction of all public buildings, new homes (both affordable and "aspirational") and the public realm.
 - Buildings with good architectural "manners", which are interesting to look at and on an appropriate scale for the locality. Larger buildings for example should never offer long, blank frontages, without windows or doors.
 - A public realm designed for different uses, day and night, throughout the week, which "designs out" crime by encouraging active use and providing natural surveillance.
 - Improvements to our popular parks to make them destinations in their own right and the creation of green corridors in the borough's most urban areas.

- A sense of destination and arrival through attractive landmarks and gateways to the borough, including Barking Station, the A13 and the major road routes into Barking Town Centre
- Seeking to develop iconic developments, including a major waterfront facility at Barking Riverside and a possible Arts Centre at South Dagenham, which put the borough “on the map” and redefine its identity.

Neighbourhoods and good neighbours

14. Although we will apply our principles for place-making, good design and sustainability throughout the borough, regeneration will take a different form in different parts of the borough. We want Barking and Dagenham to be known for specific neighbourhoods, each with its own distinct character, appeal and “offer”:

- A bustling, pedestrian-friendly Town Centre in Barking, with plenty to do at night, thought-provoking public art, and local shops offering a different range of goods and services to the mass market. Barking Town Centre will have a recognisably metropolitan feel, with modern high-density housing, shops and office space, linked closely to the rest of East London by population, economy and transport services.
- An exciting new town by the River Thames at Barking Riverside, where high-rise waterfront living and urban design combines with natural green space and parkland. Barking Riverside will be recognisably metropolitan and have schools, medical facilities, community centres and distinct neighbourhoods of its own. But it will look to Barking for many town centre facilities and services.
- A “Green Village” at South Dagenham, close to the wind turbines at Ford and the Environmental Technology Centre at Dagenham Dock. South Dagenham will be known and sought after for its environmentally sustainable housing and we will investigate the possibility of developing an Arts Centre of national significance on the site.
- A local town centre at Dagenham Heathway, redeveloped for the benefit of pedestrians, with a better choice of shopping and a landmark library and Public Service Centre
- A “Garden City”, with a family atmosphere, on the Becontree Estate and in Dagenham, with modernised terraced houses, peaceful streets, attractive parks and local shops within walking distance. Dagenham and the Becontree will be a safe place for children and the elderly.

15. Building neighbourhoods also means supporting residents to be good neighbours. We will engage the borough’s communities in the planning and delivery of projects, so that regeneration represents the aspirations of residents and meets their needs. We will provide support for community

development in all our regeneration areas, so that we build a sense of belonging and community alongside physical construction. And we will help the borough's different communities understand, respect and celebrate their differences, as well as the values they have in common.

Who are we and who will we be?

16. Barking and Dagenham has until recently been more homogenous in ethnicity, income and housing tenure than most other parts of London, but this is already changing. Patterns of housing tenure have been transformed by the Right to Buy legislation, the Borough has become much more diverse over the last 5 years and its median income is creeping up after years of stagnation.
17. Regeneration will continue and accelerate these changes, transforming some existing parts of the borough and creating new communities on what is now brownfield land. Our studies show that the population of the borough will grow by as much as one third in the next twenty years and that the new residents are likely to be socially and ethnically more diverse than much of the borough's existing population.
18. We must also plan for other social changes. Household sizes in the UK are getting smaller, with more single people and couples. Advances in IT are beginning to lead to greater flexibility in the workforce, creating demand for housing to be equipped for working from home. The impacts of climate change are becoming evident, increasing the pressure to be environmentally sustainable and to reduce the demand for resources. This has major implications for the design, construction and location of new housing and infrastructure.
19. Change creates opportunity. Our regeneration programme will provide a better choice of housing for the borough's hard-working families, as well as new homes for many of London's key workers. Our plans to create a "hub" for creative and cultural industries in Barking will attract creative workers, vital to the growth of the "knowledge economy" in Barking and Dagenham. In addition we will also harness the entrepreneurial energies of the borough's growing Black and Minority Ethnic communities, helping boost the borough's economic development. We will build a strong sense of community and pride in the borough by recognising and celebrating our diversity.
20. Barking and Dagenham will act responsibly to limit and reduce the borough's environmental footprint, by ensuring new developments incorporate energy-efficient features, including the generation of energy from renewable sources, and are located to minimise journeys. High standards of environmental sustainability in new buildings can be achieved at little higher cost and make the borough more attractive to skilled and creative workers.

Sustainable communities

21. So our regeneration programme will need to reflect the different aspirations of new communities and to design places that meet a greater variety of needs. We will build economically, socially and environmentally sustainable communities in Barking and Dagenham by:

- Expecting all developments to be built to the highest environmental standards, incorporating features such as green roofs, using recycled building materials and using energy from renewable sources. Our standards are set out in the Interim Planning Guidance for Barking Town Centre and will be embedded in the Local Development Framework;
- Building neighbourhoods in which residents will be within walking distance of key amenities, such as shops and community facilities, and public transport links that connect quickly, cheaply and directly to major centres;
- Encouraging an intensity of uses in the borough's town centre at Barking, with shops, cafes, sports and leisure centres, health facilities and play spaces all provided within walking distance of public transport links;
- Encouraging a mix of incomes and housing tenures in all developments, including through our housing policy and allocations of lettings;
- Supporting an active civil society, in which all communities are visibly engaged;
- Preserving and developing the borough's heritage, including the Abbey ruins, Eastbury Manor House and Valence House;
- Encouraging a mix of uses in regeneration areas through our planning policy and economic development strategy, integrating retail, employment and community uses with housing, providing live-work options where possible and ensuring that childcare facilities are available, affordable and accessible;
- Supporting the borough's growing Small and Medium Sized Enterprises

Delivering the goods for all

22. Regeneration will bring enormous benefits to Barking and Dagenham. New transport systems will open up employment opportunities in the rest of London. Increasing housing choice, particularly at the upper levels of the market, will bring new wealth and a substantial new population. New social infrastructure, including schools, medical facilities and community centres will benefit existing residents as well as new ones.

23. We will welcome these new communities, which bring valuable social capital with them as well as disposable income, and help them integrate into the existing fabric of the borough. But we will not accept “cliff edges” between affluent new and deprived old communities, or allow less well off people to be squeezed out of neighbourhoods such as Barking Town Centre.

24. We want to ensure that regeneration in Barking and Dagenham delivers benefits for all. This means:

- Continuing to improve education and services for children and young people and providing high quality childcare facilities for all who need them, so as to give young people the best possible start in life;
- Raising the skills of adult residents, so that local people can compete for better paid more fulfilling jobs and have better life opportunities.
- Developing new employment opportunities in construction, modern manufacturing, the public sector, shops and office services.
- Ensuring that new social infrastructure is built alongside new housing and is accessible for use by existing and new residents, as well as renewing the social infrastructure already located in existing communities.
- Improving north-south public transport to ensure that employment and leisure opportunities in the regeneration areas are accessible.
- Building around transport nodes, including the District Line stations, Dagenham Dock and Chadwell Heath Stations, to provide accessible new homes, shops and community facilities.
- Investing in the residential and employment areas close to the new developments, including Creekmouth, Thames View and Goresbrook, so that new and existing communities are properly integrated.
- Revitalising neighbourhoods in Dagenham around modernised shopping parades and community facilities, with refurbished and new homes and a wider mix of tenures.

- Working with the community and the voluntary sector to create a strong sense of community and belonging, based on common rights and responsibilities.

What will they think of us?

25. Creating distinct neighbourhoods does not mean a better deal for some at the expense of others – nor does it spell the end of a common identity for the borough. Regeneration will help change negative perceptions of our part of London and restore a pride in place. It will help Barking and Dagenham be seen by residents and people outside the borough as:

- A place where people on different incomes can find the kind of home they want, at a price they can afford, close to good services and public transport.
- Safe and attractive - a good place for the elderly and retired and to raise a family.
- An environmentally aware borough, with “green” landmarks such as the Millennium Centre and Ford wind turbines, high standards of recycling and residents who work together to maintain and improve their environment.
- Down-to-earth, not flashy or pretentious, but with excellent creative and cultural facilities.
- Known for welcoming newcomers, but also a place where different generations of the same family choose to live close together.
- A place where public services work well and put the customer first.
- A business-friendly borough, with modern, well-connected industrial areas and units, where the public and private sectors work together to build prosperity.
- A place with a vibrant civil society, with strong and active community groups and an established tradition of voluntary work.
- A modern place where history – such as Eastbury and Valence Manor Houses – is sometimes unexpectedly alive

Priorities for delivery

26. The Council has taken some big steps to ensure that its regeneration services are fit for purpose. We reorganised in 2004 to create new capacity and acquire the range of skills needed to deliver regeneration. A Best Value Review completed in March 2005 found a “good” (two star) service” with “promising” prospects for improvement. We are determined to build further on this progress, by placing the highest priority on project management and by using Council land to set standards and create exemplary developments.

27. Other key decisions are largely in the hands of partners. These are not only critically important for delivery, but also have a symbolic value, sending strong messages to key stakeholders.

- Converting the East London Transit to a tram-based system as early as possible after completion of the first phase in 2007. This will send an important message about quality and investment to potential residents and investors.
- An early decision to extend the Docklands Light Railway through Barking Riverside to Dagenham Dock and an early start to construction. The sustainability of the London Riverside communities will be put in doubt if this is not done.
- Removing environmental blight to address negative perceptions of the area as an environmental black spot. This should include the underground siting of overhead power lines at Barking Riverside.
- A commitment by public sector partners to a massive extension of existing programmes to improve residents’ skills and employability.
- Agreement with Government and GLA on the right proportions of affordable housing for the borough, and the right balance of housing nomination rights. This is critical if we are to build socially and economically sustainable communities in Barking and Dagenham and to maintain social cohesion during a period of rapid change.

Creating a sense of place in Barking and Dagenham

2. Themes and Neighbourhoods

Draft at 13 May 2005

Creating a sense of place in Barking and Dagenham: themes and neighbourhoods

Gateways and Landmarks

1. The rail journey into Barking Station is many visitors' first impressions of the borough. Until recently, these impressions were formed by unattractive social housing flanking the railway line at Tanner Street and The Lintons, unimaginative office blocks and the grey concrete of the Station itself.
2. This is changing. The Bloomfields, Clevelands and Wakerings flats at Tanner Street have been pulled down and The Lintons will follow in 2006. Attractive, modern housing for rent and sale will be built in their place. The Station building itself is a major priority for improvement and the area immediately outside the Station will be designed to present a more attractive gateway and to give greater priority to pedestrians. We expect The Station Quarter to be the busiest part of Barking, with office, retail and housing development increasing the intensity of use in this part of town.
3. The A13 is another common route into and through Barking and Dagenham. It has been one of the country's least glamorous roads, with "dirty" industries lining much of its progress through our borough. The biggest Lottery funded public arts scheme – A13 Artscape – has funded landscaping, public artworks, installations, and cycle paths along its route – but there is more still to do to enhance the appearance of the road and its environs.
4. We will also look at how other gateways to Barking Town Centre and to Barking Riverside can be improved.
5. New landmark buildings will also help create a sense of place in the borough's new and existing communities. Barking will have a new Town Square, which will create new landmark buildings in The Lifelong Learning Centre, The Lighthouse and The Arc. The New Dagenham Library and Customer Service Centre will give Dagenham Heathway a new focal point. A South Dagenham Arts Centre will help make South Dagenham a destination point and visitor attraction. High quality, multi-storey residential development and the Docklands Light Railway will announce this new community from the river.

On the waterfront

6. The several miles of waterfront along the River Roding and River Thames are perhaps Barking and Dagenham's greatest natural asset. The two rivers have provided the foundation for the borough's development as an industrial community and a large part of their banks are still taken up with industry: the River Road industrial estate along the Roding; Dagenham Dock and Ford along the Thames.

7. The decline of manufacturing industry has released some land along the Roding and at Barking Riverside on the Thames, where a sustainable community of 10,800 homes (25-30,000 people) will be built over the next twenty years. This land now represents a major opportunity for the borough to create housing, landscape features and leisure facilities that will attract new residents and help change perceptions of the Thames Gateway.
8. Our long-term vision for the Roding is to transform the River where it faces the Town Centre into a leisure destination for Barking, with riverside walks, cafes, artwork, space for creative industries to grow and a leisure facility near the Town Quay. We are already working with the Environment Agency to improve public use of the Roding as it flows through Barking Town Centre to the Thames, involving the local community to help design a new layout and new facilities. New aspirational and affordable housing will be built, with aspirational housing capturing the increased land values of a waterfront location. We are looking at the creation of a new public square and other public areas as part of the new housing development. The employment offer will be maintained and strengthened, with new business units already constructed at Freshwharf and the possibility of a creative industries hub at Abbey Road under active investigation.
9. The waterfront at Barking Riverside is a major resource and opportunity for the borough. Housing there will be built to the greatest densities and values. However, we believe that more is needed to capture its full potential for the benefit of the borough and the new community. We would like to see a major visitor attraction based there, combining the thrill and iconic definition of new architecture, with a theme that preserves the heritage of the borough and this part of the River – perhaps, for example, the history of the Thames.

Designing a sense of place

10. High quality design and innovative, but accessible public art are key elements in Barking and Dagenham's regeneration programme. Creating a high quality and well used public realm will help ensure that Barking and Dagenham achieves a distinct sense of place and does not become a commuter dormitory.
11. We have appointed a Design Champion and Design Adviser to ensure that buildings and groups of buildings contribute to the distinctiveness of their neighbourhood and to a safe, attractive and lively public realm. We will expect buildings to have good "architectural manners". This means for example, that larger buildings should never offer long, blank frontages, without windows or doors.
12. The Barking and Dagenham Code is a set of simple rules and guidelines for the use in the public realm of a set of high-quality materials such as glass, granite and steel. It will be applied throughout the Town Centre to create a clean, consistent, modern feel to Barking. The first examples of

its application are underway outside The Broadway and will be followed soon in London Road. The Code will be extended to other parts of the borough, including Dagenham Heathway.

13. Barking's Town Square and the area from Dagenham Heathway to Dagenham Dock Station are among the Mayor's 100 new public spaces for London. Barking Town Square will form the bustling civic heart of Barking's town centre, with shoppers, students and office workers drawn by the Lifelong Learning Centre and new shops and leisure facilities. We are developing plans to bring new business investment to the Heathway and make it more easily usable by pedestrians. Barking Riverside will have a number of public areas with a range of public uses.
14. High quality design is essential in new public buildings, like the Barking Lifelong Learning Centre and the possible New Dagenham Library and Customer Service Centre. Attractive and innovative design can make these buildings into new landmarks for the borough, help restore pride in the borough and make an important statement about our ambition for regeneration.
15. Public art is integral to the regeneration programme in Barking and Dagenham. We have commissioned a series of "light art" projects for major buildings and key junctions in Barking. As well as creating new landmarks and attractions in their own right, these projects will knit together the fabric of the Town Centre and make a very visible announcement of the transformation about to take place.

The borough for business

16. Barking and Dagenham is well known as one of London's most important boroughs for business, home to major names such as Ford, Sanofi Aventis, Dairy Crest, Hi-Grade, Welbeck and Thames Power. Excellent road and rail connections make the borough a competitive location for office and retail development, as well as manufacturing, transport and distribution businesses. The Council's planning policies make the protection and development of employment areas a borough priority and a number of projects are underway to improve the infrastructure and appearance of the major industrial estates.
17. Less well known, is the vitality of Barking and Dagenham's small and medium sized enterprises. In 2003, the borough enjoyed one of the country's largest rates of growth in new businesses. The statistics also showed that new businesses are more likely to survive and grow in the borough. The Council's business support services and those of its partners are increasingly focused on helping smaller businesses, including in the Black and Minority Ethnic communities.
18. Although manufacturing employment declined in line with national trends in the 1990s, the sector has fought back strongly since then. We are working to maintain a modernised, higher-value manufacturing sector in

the borough, based around the Ford Diesel Plant, the nearby Centre for Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence (CEME) and the Environmental Technology Centre for London (ETRCL), to be built at Dagenham Dock.

19. Alongside a modernised manufacturing sector, the Council and its partners aim to diversify the borough's economy into sectors that will be boosted by regeneration. Barking Town Centre's excellent transport links make it a competitive location for retail and back-office development. We are also working with the LDA and others to develop Barking Town Centre as a "hub" for creative and cultural industries. The Council is part of "Building East" a project to help local construction businesses prepare for regeneration contracts.
20. Regeneration will create new employment in the public sector, which currently employs between a fifth and a quarter of the borough's workforce. Led by the Council, public sector employers are collaborating in the development of a Lifelong Learning Centre in Barking's Town Square, which opens in 2006 and will provide education and employment services to support careers in the public sector. Gateway to Health and Social Care, which helps young people and adults into health and social care careers, will be relocated to the Lifelong Learning Centre from 2006.
21. In addition to support for business investment and growth, the Council is seeking to match workforce and employers by providing pathways into employment and helping local people improve their qualifications and skills. The Adult Basic Skills Initiative helps adults that have difficulties with basic skills, including reading and writing. Our Education Business Partnership develops links between the borough's schools and employers. Increasing and coordinating more effectively the efforts of skills providers will be the key to ensuring that regeneration benefits the borough's most deprived residents and communities.

Barking Town Centre

22. Barking Town Centre is the key to opening up The Gateway for Barking and Dagenham. Our ambition is to make it the town centre of choice not just for the borough's existing communities, but for the new developments in London Riverside as well. The East London Transit will provide an early link to Barking Riverside, bringing visitors to shop and use the Town Centre's leisure facilities.
23. After regeneration, Barking will look and feel very different: busier, more urban, more recognisably part of metropolitan London, as it exploits the commercial opportunities created by its transport links and its hinterland in Barking Riverside. But it will not be an inner-London suburb like so many others: it will have a distinct identity based on the heritage of the Abbey ruins, an improved market, a new waterfront Quarter, and specialist and niche shops linked to Barking's facilities for the creative and cultural industries.

24. Although it is only twelve minutes from the centre of London by mainline train services, private sector developers have not yet realised its advantages. We will provide a greater choice of housing, including aspirational waterfront housing along the River Roding and in the Town Square, to attract buyers that cannot afford inner London prices. Altogether, 7,000 new homes – a net increase of at least 4,000 homes - will be built.
25. Regeneration will bring a different shape, appearance and street pattern to Barking and a greater intensity of use. The town will be extended geographically, with a new leisure quarter created along the River Roding and the Gascoigne Estate to the south linked more firmly to the Town Centre and its economy. Physical redevelopment will open up space and movement in the Town Centre, making it easier to navigate. It will be extended in time too, with the development of a nighttime economy making Barking a destination for visitors.
26. We do not want to convert Barking into a soulless, retail warehouse in the day, or drinking factory in the evening. We will seek nationally known retailers to anchor the town's retail offer although we recognise that Barking will not compete with the volume of nearby centres like Ilford, Romford and Stratford. Instead, we will nurture specialist and niche shops, developing a link with the Town Centre's facilities for the creative and cultural industries at The Broadway, the Malthouse and Abbey Road. Barking's intimate scale will be one of its chief attractions, with shops, cafes and social facilities all within easy walking distance. It will be a town designed for pedestrians, with cycle routes and storage facilities and an attractive public realm, book-ended by Barking Park and the Abbey Green.
27. Barking's Town Centre will be joined by a more affluent population, but we do not intend to let existing communities be pushed to the periphery by regeneration. The total number of affordable homes in the Town Centre will not drop and two thirds of the 2,500 properties on the Gascoigne Estate to the south of the Town Centre are likely to be demolished and rebuilt, including most of the estate's tower blocks. We will also take action to maintain the small, often family run businesses that provide services for the town's existing communities.

Play, creativity and heritage

28. Barking is one of the London Development Agency's designated creative and cultural industry hubs for London. We are working with the LDA to refurbish The Malthouse, an historic building by Barking's River Roding, as workshop and exhibition space for designers and craftspeople. We intend to create more live-work and exhibition space for the creative and cultural industries in the Abbey Road development along the Roding.
29. The Broadway in Barking has already been completely transformed to become a regional centre for the performing arts. It is home to Barking

College's performing arts course and hosts plays, pantomime and stand up comedy. It opened in December 2004 with a strong first-night bill including the borough's own Billy Bragg and Phil Jupitus and audience sizes since then have exceeded expectations. The Broadway is a first step towards our ambition to provide greater leisure opportunity to residents.

30. We want the borough to be known – and our residents to take pride in - public art, which is thought provoking and playful, as well as beautiful. In addition to the A13 Artscape installations, we have plans for public art in our town centres, marking out routes within the centres and binding them together. In Barking, this will involve lighting major landmarks, including the Town Hall's Clock Tower and Abbey ruins, as well as public art on roundabouts and in subways.
31. The borough's Arts Strategy is based firmly on the ethos of community engagement. "Sonic Spin" and "Digitise" are long-term arts development projects that provide training in musical disciplines (Sonic Spin) and film production (Digitise) for the borough's young people. We want to extend and add to these programmes and to provide better facilities within the borough. We are investigating the possibility of building an Arts Centre as part of the South Dagenham development.
32. Although much of the fabric of the borough dates from its urbanisation in the 1920s and 1930s, Barking and Dagenham has a rich heritage. "The Catch" – a sculpture that marks a road entrance into Barking – reflects Barking's past as the country's biggest fishing port in the mid-nineteenth century. The Abbey Green contains the ruins of an eleventh century Abbey, at which William the Conqueror spent his first winter in England, making Barking for a short while the capital of England. Eastbury House, a fully preserved Tudor Manor House and Valence House, a grade II listed building that dates from the 15th Century, have been brought back into public use. Regeneration will maintain and develop public access to these important assets.

Getting around

33. Barking and Dagenham's excellent transport links are an important part of its "offer" to businesses and residents. As regeneration extends the housing offer, it will make the borough increasingly attractive to residents looking to buy in areas close to London (Barking is 12 minutes by C2C mainline to London Fenchurch Street), but unwilling to afford inner London prices. New transport systems are needed to ensure regeneration builds genuinely sustainable new communities in the borough.
34. The East London Transit will connect Barking with Barking Riverside and Dagenham Dock. The first phase will be built in 2007 as a bus-based system. We will ensure that this employs state-of-the-art technology, but we remain convinced that ELT should be upgraded to a tram system as soon as possible.

35. The Docklands Light Railway extended from Gallion's Reach to Barking Riverside and Dagenham Dock will be the main transport link for the new developments at Barking Riverside and South Dagenham. We have recently received £3 million from the Sustainable Communities Fund to construct an Interchange between existing C2C, local bus services and proposed ELT and DLR services at Dagenham Dock Station. The DLR extension needs to be in place as soon as possible in order to allow Barking Riverside in particular to realise its full potential. If this is not done, residents at Barking Riverside will be isolated – the opposite of sustainability.
36. We also need the C2C service to be upgraded to a metro service as soon as possible. North-south bus links will need to be significantly improved to ensure that existing communities are connected to the new regeneration areas in the south of the borough.

Sustainable New Communities

37. Barking Riverside and South Dagenham are the biggest brownfield regeneration sites in the Thames Gateway and the critical test of public policy ambitions to create sustainable communities. When fully developed, Barking Riverside will provide 10,800 dwellings and be home to more than 30,000 people. South Dagenham will provide another 6,000 dwellings and house 15,000 new residents.
38. Sustainability requires the creation of distinct, mixed-use neighbourhoods. The master plan for Barking Riverside envisages neighbourhoods centred on a community space providing public services and shopping, each with a different, distinct feel. The Riverside Quarter will be the most urban, with the tallest buildings and highest housing densities along the Thames. The DLR track will run through the Riverside Quarter. Neighbourhoods away from the River will provide more family housing.
39. In both Barking Riverside and South Dagenham we will want to see workplaces, leisure facilities, schools, shops and other communal facilities situated as close as possible to housing, giving people a real choice to walk or cycle instead of using their cars. Neighbourhoods should have mixed uses and not consist only of large tracts of housing. We would like to see people starting new businesses located near, or even in their homes. Individual buildings too should contain a range of uses, with flats over shops and offices and homes with office and workshop space to encourage lively and active streets.
40. We also want to ensure that new communities have an important and well used public realm. The Barking Riverside Master plan for example reserves 40% of the site for green or other public open space, with a Nature Reserve, parks and play areas. Two kilometres of the Thames waterfront at Barking Riverside will be opened to public access for the first time.

41. Decisions on housing tenure will play a large part in determining Barking Riverside's sustainability. We need to ensure that there is a balance of tenures for those who want to buy or rent and that each phase of development reflects this balance.

Cleaner, Greener, Safer

42. Barking and Dagenham's residents consistently rate a cleaner, greener, safer environment near the top of their concerns. We want the borough to be known for an attractive and well-used public realm, the highest environmental standards and leading edge policies for sustainability.

43. In 2003, the Council adopted a Parks and Green Spaces Strategy, setting out an ambitious vision to revitalise the Borough's parks and green spaces. Investment to deliver the vision has already started and a huge programme of improvements is planned for the near future, using the Council's own capital resources and external funding such as the Heritage Lottery Fund. We are working with the Environment Agency and other partners to redesign the River Roding's banks as a green corridor from Barking Town Centre to the River Thames. The Barking Riverside development will restore public access to the Thames for the first time in over a century, as well as creating new public parks and a wildlife refuge.

44. Barking and Dagenham is greener than many people think, but we still face a big challenge to tackle the urban blight that a century of industry has brought to the borough. The A13 Artscape project has already brought colour and beauty to the borough's busiest road. We are engaged in several projects to clean up the borough's Industrial Estates, improve their signage and identity and develop their infrastructure. We will continue to press the Government to take the power lines underground at Barking Riverside, so that the new development will not be affected by environmental blight.

45. We have a set of policies and projects to make the borough environmentally sustainable. Our levels of recycling household waste were unacceptably low, but are now rising faster than any other in London. Barking and Dagenham was the first London local authority to develop an Energy Strategy and our Local Development Framework will set a comprehensive planning framework for sustainable development. We will expect high standards and conservation in the design and construction of new housing. These standards will apply to all new construction, but we have designated the western part of the South Dagenham site as an environmental regeneration zone, where we will work with innovative developers to build a "Green Village". We are also investigating the possibility of using Combined Heat and Power from the Barking Power Station to heat the Barking Riverside development.

46. The development of a Sustainable Business Park and Environmental Technology Centre for London at Dagenham Dock will give a new twist to the stereotype that the borough is a place where London dumps its waste.

Once completed, Dagenham Dock will join a growing number of other environmentally sustainable landmarks. They include the wind turbines in South Dagenham, which supply power to the Ford Diesel works and the Council's Millennium Centre at Eastbrookend Country Park, which will benefit from the development of Rainham Marshes as a visitor attraction.

47. Crime is lower in Barking and Dagenham than in London as a whole. But there are "hotspots" and fear of crime is particularly prevalent among the young and older residents. Barking Town Centre is seen by many as isolated and threatening after office hours. Designing out crime, by making street patterns legible, constructing well-lit and overlooked places, and encouraging a diversity of uses throughout day and night, will therefore be a priority for regeneration projects. On the Gascoigne Estate we will restore the street pattern and eliminate little used walkways and spaces that at present create an impression of isolation.

Serving the Community

48. Excellent public services, built around the needs of the customer, will be an integral part of the pride in place we want to create in Barking and Dagenham. We will build on our achievement as a Beacon Council for Secondary Education and create a network of Children's Centres throughout the borough. Continuing improvements in educational attainment are vital if the borough's residents are to benefit from regeneration opportunities, but they will also help "market" the borough to potential new residents looking for good quality, affordable housing, close to excellent schools.
49. Increasingly, we will provide public services from integrated facilities such as The Knowledge and Jo Richardson Community Complex. The Jo Richardson Community Complex at Castle Green will provide a modern school with custom-built facilities. It will also include a health facility, a shared library, IT services, a community space, a local base for the police, employment services and Connexions.
50. The Knowledge is Barking and Dagenham's Lifelong Learning Centre, now being built on the site of the Barking Library. When completed in December 2005, it will provide integrated education, employment, IT and library services from the same site. This will ensure seamless progression routes through every level of education, from basic skills to degree, and then into employment. It will have a public sector emphasis, specialising in health, education, social care and public administration.
51. The proposed New Dagenham Library and Customer Service Centre will create a similarly integrated centre for Dagenham Heathway. The building will be designed and built to the highest standards and located on a visible, accessible site, bringing new life and investment to Dagenham Heathway.

Engaging the Community

52. Engaging local communities as full partners in regeneration is essential to achieve our ambitions. We will involve local people in every stage of project design, delivery and evaluation, so that their needs and aspirations determine the kind of place that is created. We will expect delivery bodies including the Urban Development Corporation to engage with local residents and facilitate their efforts to do so. We are restructuring the Barking Town Centre Stakeholder Partnership to enable greater involvement by community and voluntary sector groups.
53. We will also encourage residents and businesses to become involved in the management and appearance of the communal areas and public realm. This may mean the creation of Community Development Trusts for Barking Town Centre and Barking Riverside. We will also investigate the potential for creating a community development facility at an early stage in the Barking Riverside and South Dagenham developments, so that new residents can be helped to settle into their new homes and build strong communities.
54. We want to build a much stronger civic society in the borough, with strong and active community groups of every kind and an established tradition of voluntary work. We will work with umbrella organisations like the Council for Voluntary Services and Ethnic Minority Partnership Association, as well as directly with community and tenants' associations.
55. Neighbourhood Management teams, funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, have played an important role in Mark's Gate and the three wards that cover Barking Town Centre and Barking Riverside. We are seeking to extend Neighbourhood Management coverage to the areas of Dagenham that will see large-scale regeneration, to help those communities engage with the regeneration programme and seize new opportunities for employment, training and leisure.

Skills and Employment

56. Barking and Dagenham's residents have some of the lowest skills in the country. As a result, the borough's median income is by far the lowest in London. The greatest challenge for regeneration in Barking and Dagenham is raising the skills of adult residents, so that they can compete for more fulfilling, better paid jobs in the borough and elsewhere. If we do not make significant progress towards this goal, then regeneration may have met Greater London's need for new affordable housing, but it will not have benefited people in Barking and Dagenham.
57. For this reason, our flagship project is the Lifelong Learning Centre now under construction in Barking's Town Square. It is a visible statement of our intent to transform lives, as well as to build new communities and renew the physical infrastructure of the borough. A network of Adult

Learning Facilities already crosses the borough. We want physical regeneration to provide new resources to enable local people to compete for new jobs in the borough and the sub-region. This will also require better childcare facilities.

58. Regeneration is also an opportunity to diversify the borough's economy and to restructure the manufacturing sector that has traditionally provided large numbers of jobs, but is now in decline across London. The Environmental Technology Centre and Sustainable Industrial Park at Dagenham Dock, together with the existing Centre for Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence and Ford Diesel Plant form the basis for a new, higher-value manufacturing sector in the borough.
59. Through Building East we are working with the borough's construction companies to prepare them for regeneration contracts. We are also investigating the provision of an off-site manufacturing facility to help enable much of the new housing development to happen quickly and efficiently. Growth in retail and back office employment is planned for Barking and Dagenham Heathway. Gateway to Health and Social Care has begun to help local people into jobs in the public sector and will relocate in 2006 to the Barking Lifelong Learning Centre. We are developing social enterprises in the borough as a way to help the most disadvantaged back into employment.

Change for Children

60. Delivering change for children is a key part of our aim to make places where people want to live and work. Good schools help attract hard working families who want to give their children a good start in life. The lack of good quality affordable childcare is a barrier to employment for people on low incomes. We want to develop a network of children's services and childcare facilities to help boost incomes and life opportunities in the borough and to ensure that large scale housing developments become genuinely sustainable communities. This is a key part of our "offer" for the future to new and existing residents and businesses.
61. The Council is developing a comprehensive strategy, underpinned by the Children Act of 2004, for delivering integrated services for children under five and their families. The strategy aims to ensure that the interests of local children and families lead the planning and provision of services. It will make early education, childcare and child and family health and support services accessible to every child living in the Borough.
62. The creation of a network of children's centres across the Borough provides an unprecedented opportunity to make life better for children, parents and the local community. An extensive capital programme will create eight new children's centres by March 2006, with a further six centres scheduled for completion by 2010. These centres will use space

and design to provide the very best in child and family facilities. They will be located for access by both existing and planned communities.

63. The ambition for improved outcomes requires radical change in the whole system of children's services including:

- the improvement and integration of universal services in early years settings, schools and the Health Service;
- more specialised help to promote opportunity, prevent problems and act early and effectively if and when problems arise;
- the reconfiguration of services around the child and family in one place and the bringing together of professionals in multi-disciplinary teams;
- the development of a shared sense of responsibility across agencies for safeguarding children and protecting them from harm;
- listening to children and their families when assessing and planning services;

New heart for Dagenham

64. Dagenham and the Becontree Estate already look and feel different to Barking Town Centre. Our vision for Dagenham and the Becontree is to restore or develop their existing appeal – traditional housing, green streets, good local shops within walking distance – and to add modern, public facilities. We will also revitalise Dagenham's local centre at Dagenham Heathway. Dagenham will be a "Garden City", providing a different choice for new and existing residents.

65. Dagenham Heathway is the borough's second town centre, providing local services around the District Line tube station. We will strengthen its identity, pride in place and ability to provide local services in the face of competition from other retail destinations. We will build a new Dagenham Library and Customer Service Centre close to the Heathway to high standards of design, providing an integrated centre for public services and a landmark building for Dagenham. We will combine its construction with improvements to the pedestrian areas of the Heathway and new investment in the retail areas of the Heathway.

66. These plans will provide a greater range of shopping and services in a revitalised town centre for Dagenham. At the same time, we want to strengthen outlying neighbourhoods in Becontree and Dagenham, by refurbishing shopping parades and modernising leisure facilities. A new health facility is planned for Goresbrook Parade and we are developing plans to regenerate the Becontree Heath Estate.

67. The regeneration of land formerly owned by Ford at South Dagenham will provide up to 4,000 new homes, as well as leisure and health facilities,

extended schools and children's centres. Together with the South Dagenham Arts Centre and Dagenham Heathway library and Public Service Centre, these new facilities will help provide Dagenham residents with social infrastructure fit for the 21st Century.

Cohesion and Diversity

68. In the long term, large-scale housing development, new employment opportunities and environmental improvements will strengthen community cohesion by creating opportunity and reducing the perceived competition for resources that fuels conflict between different communities. In the short term, however, they may exacerbate tensions, as populations increase and put extra stress on infrastructure, the environment and public services.
69. Managing the politics of regeneration will require strong leadership from the Council. Members will become Ambassadors for regeneration, mediating the demands and concerns of different sections of the community. The Council and other delivery bodies have a responsibility to inform and engage local communities in every stage of programme delivery, from design to evaluation.
70. Residents also have a key role to place in ensuring that new buildings and public areas are properly maintained. Schemes such as Neighbourhood Wardens, Neighbourhood Management and Community Development Trusts can reduce community tensions and anti-social behaviour, as well as developing a sense of responsibility for the care and maintenance of the local environment.
71. We will take care to site new social infrastructure as far as possible in locations that are accessible to existing populations, as well as the new communities. We will invest in the residential and employment areas close to the new developments, including Creekmouth, Thames View and Goresbrook. This will help avoid obvious "cliff edges" and make the benefits of regeneration apparent. We will also make improved transport links between the north and the south of the borough a priority, so that all residents will have access to employment opportunities and new facilities in the regeneration areas.
72. Above all, we will make better children's services, education and skills our overriding priority, so that regeneration is good for people, as well as the places they live in.