

**Appendix A - LSP Minutes 2.4.08 –  
Minute 129-  
REVIEW OF AXMINSTER**

<b>Page No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Issues highlighted</b>
4	Population	Like East Devon in general Axminster has a lower proportion of pre-school, primary school and secondary school age than the sub-region average. and a higher proportion of people are of retirement age. 13% of the population are educated to degree level or above, which is significantly lower than the sub-regional average.
5	Population Summary Box	Axminster town has a higher proportion of those aged 25 to 44 and a lower proportion of those aged 45 to 64 than the Surrounding rural parishes. Rate of growth in Axminster town is twice that in surrounding parishes.  Single person occupancy is higher in the urban centre. Population has risen by 12%

**Comment –**

Cllr Moulding said he felt the reason that there is a higher proportion of 25 – 34 year olds in Axminster town might be due to a flourishing economy and young people employed in the manufacturing industry.

8-9	Mosaic groupings	There was far more variety of social groups in the town than the surrounding parishes.
11	Deprivation	Axminster and area are below national and Devon averages and overall Axminster does not suffer too much from deprivation though there may still be specific pockets that need to be tackled.

**Comment –**

The Chairman said to be effective we need to go find the pockets of deprivation.

14 - 17	Community Safety	Jim said that there had been a 7-8% reduction in crime, vehicle crime down by 8-9%, and violent crime down by 2%. East Devon is the second best in the country with the least amount of offences. Vehicle crime is 5 <sup>th</sup> out of 15, East Devon 7 <sup>th</sup> – numbers are low and it has been a good year.  In Axminster there have been a total of 542 offences and shows that it is a low crime area for a community of that size. Good low stats on burglaries and all crime figures are low. Cross border crime (people coming over the border), rural breakins, farm buildings etc anti social behaviour and fear of crime are main issues. Have been using the mosaic data to tap into specific data and to see where the problems lie.
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18 – 19 Perception Peter said the issues that stand out are listed on page 19. The perception of problems in Axminster seemed generally lower than elsewhere in East Devon. – people being drunk and rowdy etc.

**Comments** – Jim referred to item 9 -“Extent to which people using or dealing drugs is a problem” - every community has a drug issue but is not a drug problem area. On the whole East Devon is a low crime area for drugs and Axminster is a good safe town.

Vernon said that you could argue the statistics when comparing to Exmouth – perception may be as relevant as reality.

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21 - 27 Inclusion Peter said statistic 5 – “Agreement that respondent can influence decisions affecting their local area” –showed interestingly Axminster was slightly lower than the East Devon average i.e. people felt less empowered..

23 Axminster School Free School meals Peter said overall higher percentage of eligibility of school meals overall.

24 Axe Vale Community College Peter said this information was taken from the EDCDC Youth Survey and includes some students that do not live in the Axminster area but shows the youth problems around transport, youths being stopped by older people from playing football etc, fear of injuries from cars etc. However young people clearly favoured swimming pools as a physical activity and wanted to do more. Axminster is fairly well provided with sports facilities but seems there is a level of demand that has not been met.

**Comments** –

Cllr Jill Elson said that unfortunately for those living in the surrounding areas young people cannot take advantage of extended school activities because they are unable to return home. She said she has been unable to get DCC to change the bus timetable.

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29 - 33 Housing John said there was a significant need for affordable housing in Axminster although the housing problem was not quite so acute in Axminster and there was a reasonable supply of housing and an above average supply of rented housing in Axminster.

He said there are:  
351 Council homes in Axminster  
272 on the Housing Register

The average house prices are slightly lower than the East Devon average – this might account for any slightly lower demand for affordable housing

Significant demand for shared equity housing, and private rented housing normally in towns the market for the availability of that type of housing is relatively small.

**Comment -**

Cllr Moulding commented that because of the manufacturing base, low wages but above level of deprivation, this enabled people to move on from social housing to shared equity.

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- 31 John said Axminster is not vastly different from the rest of the district when looking at the map showing “percentage of homes which do not meet the Decent Homes standard”.
- 33 John said looking at the map showing the “percentage of homes where warmth is a problem (due to structure)” indicates rural housing problems with clients with minimum standards but also suggests targeting one part of the town centre.

**Comments -**

Cllr Moulding agreed and said that the properties around the town centre were once shops that have now been converted to flats and are well below the decent homes standard.

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- 34 - 46 Healthy & Independent
- Becky said the area is healthy apart from older residents with long term illness and a lower uptake of incapacity benefits. Slightly higher rate of mental health depression although fewer problems with the younger element, despite the fact that the number of children in need is higher and referral to the educational psychologist is higher.
- Becky pointed out that the PCT had delivered health facilities locally, she reported that if people live near to a hospital they will go for more minor issues, people who live further away won't.
- Becky said that the number of deaths from suicide is very small.

**Comments -**

Cllr Moulding felt that the health facilities in Axminster were good. He said Axminster has good surgeries, an excellent health care service which contributes tremendously and makes people feel at ease with themselves.

Cllr Jill Elson stated that she felt extra healthcare housing was needed in Axminster as there was an issue with day services with out-patients having to travel to hospitals.

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- 48 Culture
- Peter said that specific events eg Garden Festival, Urban Lawns had been successfully held in Axminster. There was a fair amount of sport and leisure though use was not as high as other parts of East Devon. The level of usage of museums and galleries is also marginally lower compared to the rest of East Devon.

51	Playing pitches	Peter said that Axminster is rather better off in terms of the total number of pitches than the rest of East Devon on average. Axminster has slightly over provision but although this statistic does not paint a problem, there may still be unmet demand in practice.
56	Environment	Roger commented that he felt neighbourhood assessment results should be added to this section of the profile
62	Economy	Roger said the statistics on page 62 were a straight forward analysis and contained a lot of information. He pointed out the issue around pension credits and how benefits take up is shown compared with the rest of East Devon.  Roger also drew attention to the employment stats and commented on Axminster Carpets and the need to keep such important manufacturing firms in Axminster. This was also picked up by Mac.

**Comment –**

Cllr Moulding said that if Axminster Carpets started to decline it would be a major problem for Axminster and the area.

71 - 73	Transport	Peter pointed out that a quarter of households in Axminster do not have access to a car and said that this is high compared to a lot of other parts in East Devon. He felt the MCTi/ACE may want to look at this.
75 - 76	Education & Skills	Peter said that pupils living in areas other than Axminster achieve significantly higher results at Key Stage 2 than those that live in the town, and that the MCTi/ACE may also want to look at the figure on students' attainment levels. This data was quite old.

**Comment –**

Cllr Moulding said that 8-9 years ago Axminster had a secondary school not a Community College. Pupils/Students more inclined to go to a catchment area. This has been partly addressed in recent years as the Community College has now got a 6<sup>th</sup> form.

78- 80	Land use	Paul Walker produced some additional data for this section from Axminster Fire Station – No. 34  Paul said that the Service had managed to keep the appliance 24 hours 7 days a week compared with other towns where there is not the same level of industry. The station responded to 261 calls from 1.4.07 to 1.1.08. One of the Fire Service's main concerns is the increase in road accidents (17 non fire rescues). They also carried out 51 "at risk" home visits. Currently having discussions with the Police concerning identifying a new site which would incorporate the Police, Ambulance and Fire Services. The Police also want to improve their facilities.
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### **Comments –**

Cllr Moulding said the Fire Service are currently located on the Hospital site which is not ideal. Jim said that the Community Support Officers also visit the “at risk” homes following referral from the Fire Service.

The Chairman wondered if there was a possibility of the Police doing more when they visit a house – looking at state of property, vulnerability. She was keen that the Fire Service, and others also carried out their visits with more than one hat on. Need to drive this issue forward.

Cllr Jill Elson commented that the Environmental Health Service was carrying out a house condition survey which included how safe occupants are, other links etc.

The Chairman said that maybe there was a way of feeding the information back to other agencies. Jim replied that if his staff have a concern about a property they have visited it is immediately passed on but in the meantime will look at a method of feeding back to other agencies and to look at the whole picture, especially the elderly.

The Chairman asked Malcolm if there was a way he could work with the Chamber of Commerce to feed the information back to them and suggested the Axminster Profile be presented to the Chamber of Commerce.

Cllr Moulding said the data could usefully be presented to the Town Council as a first step. The Chairman suggested using the Guildhall in Axminster and invite surrounding villages and the Chamber of Commerce.

Cllr Jill Elson suggested she would like to see a local LSP group as she felt there was a need to tie Axminster with Seaton to provide access to services.

Cllr Whitlock wondered whether Axminster was getting the housing required when looking at the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)

Matt said Axminster’s economic situation needs articulation and would be a real challenge.

Jim said there are big priorities around employment, transport and there is a need for an action plan from our document (the CDRP will do all of the community safety work on behalf of the LSP).

### **Priority areas to tackle**

1. Identifying and addressing pockets of deprivation, and tackling feeling of lack of influence in local Decisions
2. Transport and mobility (including that for youth)
3. Need for greater diversity of the economy
4. Affordable housing and affordable warmth
5. Community engagement in physical and cultural activity
6. Further review of development of educational attainment