



## **Structure of the draft Sustainable Community Strategy (Oxfordshire 2030)**

### **Item 3**

The purpose of a Sustainable Community Strategy is to set the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental well-being of a local area – typically 10-20 years – in a way that contributes to sustainable development in the UK. It tells the ‘story of the place’ – the distinctive vision and ambition of the area, backed by clear evidence and analysis.

The Sustainable Community Strategy should contain the following elements:

- The long-term vision based firmly on local needs. This will be underpinned by a shared evidence base informed by community aspirations
- Key priorities for the local area, based upon this vision which may realistically be achieved in the medium term – these will inform the strategy’s delivery agreement – the LAA.

Attached is a **draft structure** for discussion of what Oxfordshire 2030 may look like. We are aiming to keep the strategy as short as possible, readable and will provide relevant links where appropriate for further information e.g. the LAA.

There will be two versions of the strategy:

- a) a short version intended for consultation
- b) a longer version for partners

I have populated some of the draft with **examples (shaded text)** of what could be contained within the draft strategy and would welcome comments if you feel the right sections have been included or if there is something missed out.

### **Recommendation:**

- To agree the structure of the draft strategy for further development

1. **Foreword:** Cllr Keith Mitchell, Chairman Oxfordshire Partnership

2. **Introduction**

- What is a Sustainable Community Strategy
- Links to Local Development Framework

**FOR EXAMPLE:**

This is Oxfordshire's second community strategy that provides the blueprint for joint action by the Oxfordshire Partnership, a group made up of a wide range of public, private and voluntary organisations in the county.

It is about tackling crime, strengthening the economy and protecting the environment and is as based on what you've told us matters to you most. There are three key themes within the strategy:

- A World Class-Economy
- Thriving and Healthy Communities
- Environment and Climate Change

The strategy seeks to address the Government's wish to see Community Strategies provide a clear framework for promoting sustainability and this is now reflected in the title. The Government has not set a standard template for what a sustainable community should look like but feels they should exhibit the following characteristics – they should be:

**We want Oxfordshire to be a Community which is....**

- **Active, inclusive and safe:** fair, tolerant and cohesive with a strong culture and other shared community activities
- **Well run:** effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership
- **Healthy:** promoting healthy lifestyles, good health and well-being and independence
- **Environmentally sensitive** – protecting and enhancing our natural and built environment
- **Well designed and built:** providing high quality places and spaces for people to live, work and spend their leisure time
- **Well connected:** good transport services and communication linking people to jobs, schools, health and other services
- **Thriving:** a flourishing and diverse local economy
- **Well serviced:** with public, private, community and voluntary services that are appropriate to people's needs and accessible to all
- **Fair for everyone:** equality of opportunity for all, including new communities, now and in the future

**What is a Sustainable Community Strategy?**

All local authorities have a duty to work with partner organisations to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy – a document which demonstrates how local organisations and agencies will work together improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area.

The task of developing this Sustainable Community Strategy has been taken on by the Oxfordshire Partnership, the countywide local strategic partnership. This brings organisations together to improve the quality of life for people in their area by tackling the big issues that concern them.

### **Links to Local Development Frameworks**

Each of the district councils are developing a local development framework – a collection of policies and plans affecting developments in a local area. These LDFs, along with the South East Plan and other major plans, such as the Waste and Minerals Development Framework, will guide how much development and building there is in your area, where it is located and what infrastructure support services are needed to support it.

The planning system plays an important role in helping us to deliver sustainable communities by providing, for example:

- Housing
- Shops
- Schools
- Transport networks
- Parks, sports provision
- Energy supply, waste management sites and flood defences

We are working closely to ensure that the Local Development Frameworks and relevant county and regional plans are fully aligned with the priorities identified in this Sustainable Community Strategy.

### **3. A vision for the future**

- a. Our Vision
- b. Three key themes: A World Class Economy, Healthy and Thriving Communities and Environment and Climate Change
- c. Cross cutting priorities : Breaking the cycle of deprivation
- d. Delivering the vision – the LAA (link to LAA)

### **4. How the strategy has been developed** (the various stages involved)

### **5. Partnership Principles:**

*FOR EXAMPLE:*

For partnership working to be successful we believe the following principles must be adhered to:

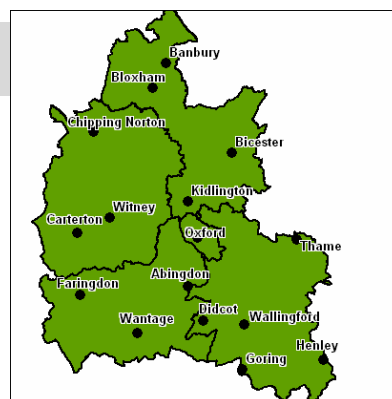
- All partners derive a benefit from working together.
- Adding value often involves individual organisations having to surrender resources and or power (but not accountability) to the partnership.
- Goals and priorities cannot be imposed but must be set collectively.
- Partnerships need to recognise the statutory responsibilities of partner organisations.
- Statutory partners need to recognise the important role played by the voluntary, community and faith sectors, both in supporting and representing local communities and groups.
- The governance arrangements must ensure that partnerships are inclusive and the participants are clear about their purpose, roles and responsibilities.
- Partnership lead roles should be shared in order to maximize the skills and talents available.
- Partners need to trust one another and treat each other with respect.

## 6. What is distinctive about Oxfordshire

- a. The challenges we face
- b. Short section on each district (what is distinctive and the challenges faced)

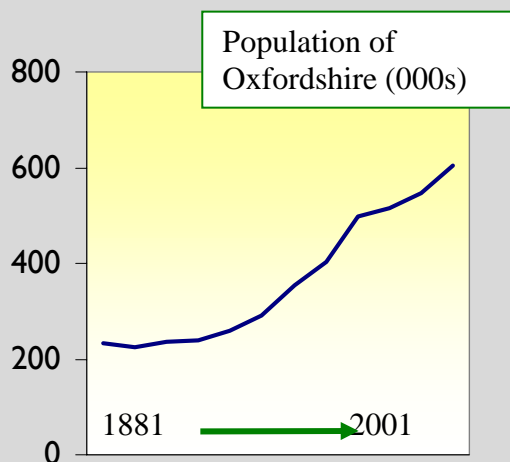
### Oxfordshire in context:

- As of mid-2006, an estimated 632,000 people lived in Oxfordshire.
- Oxfordshire is the most rural county in the South East region - over 50% of people in Oxfordshire live in settlements of less than 10,000 people.
- Our largest settlement is Oxford City with a population of 149,100.
- Around one-third of the population live in our market towns.



### Population Growth:

- The population of Oxfordshire has more than doubled since the 1940s.

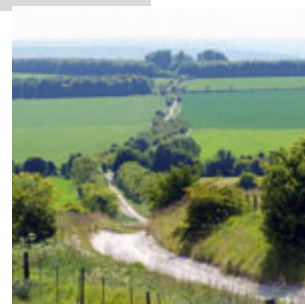


- The proportion of people from non-white ethnic groups in Oxfordshire has grown from 3.3% of the population in 1991 to 4.9% in 2001.
- Recent estimates predict that between 2001 and 2011 an additional 47,700 (7.8%) people will be living in the county.

	mid 2001	mid 2011
Oxfordshire	607,300	655,000
Cherwell	132,000	146,200
Oxford	135,500	157,000
South Oxfordshire	128,300	129,400
Vale of White Horse	115,800	119,700
West Oxfordshire	95,700	102,600

### **Oxfordshire's Environment:**

- 78% of the land in Oxfordshire is under agricultural management and almost a quarter of the land is designated an area of outstanding natural beauty.
- The number of cars owned by people living in Oxfordshire increased from 175,000 to over 300,000 (+78%) between 1981 and 2001.
- Traffic on Oxfordshire's roads increased by 12.5% from 1996 to 2006 (just over 1% per year).
- Consumption of water, electricity and gas per person in Oxfordshire is above national averages.



Oxfordshire is a county alive with enterprise, beauty, learning and history. It has become internationally renowned as a place of architectural and natural beauty, a centre of excellence for higher education, research and innovation and is a designated European Centre of Culture.

### **Environment**

Approximately half of the population reside in settlements of less than 10,000 making Oxfordshire the most rural county in the South East. The county's geographical position makes it attractive to those individuals or businesses needing access to the Midlands and London via the road and rail networks. The county's rural character, market towns, the historic city of Oxford along with access to three areas of outstanding beauty make it an attractive place to work and live.

### **Economy**

Oxfordshire's economy is one of the fastest growing in the country, particularly in terms of gross value added. The employment structure has changed significantly, notably in the dramatic decline in the numbers employed in the motor industry over the last 25 years. Tourism is a major contributor to the local economy with Oxford the main magnet for visitors. However many tourists are also drawn to the more rural parts of the county and notably to the Cotswolds. The growth of hi-tech companies and employment has been one of the most marked features of the Oxfordshire economy. The County has a significant number of world-class science and technology research establishments including the Harwell Chilton Science Campus and the county council is working to ensure that these key businesses are supported to sustain their growth and development and that of potential spin off businesses. The challenge is to build on these strengths in the face of global competition.

Economic prosperity and the quality of the environment make Oxfordshire an attractive place in which to live and work. However, Oxfordshire is not without its problems. In an ever more competitive world economy Oxfordshire businesses need to be more and more innovative and productive. In this respect workforce skills,

housing costs and availability and transport difficulties are potential obstacles to success and need to be addressed over the long-term. At the same time not everyone has benefited from our flourishing economy. There is a lack of opportunity in some rural areas together with pockets of deprivation in Oxford City, Banbury and other parts of the county which have an impact on the health, wellbeing and life expectancy of individuals as well as having significant implications for the economy and public service providers.

Alongside its exceptional achievement in higher education, Oxfordshire has a fifth of its adult population without qualifications who, as a result, are inadequately equipped to maximise their contribution to businesses operating in an increasingly competitive global market.

### **Infrastructure**

Oxfordshire's principal road network is already operating at near capacity and traffic growth is predicted to increase significantly over the next few years. There is a backlog on infrastructure development both in road and rail. This is likely to be a growing problem both for businesses and individuals. The resultant traffic congestion will also add to pollution.

Housing costs more than doubled in the period from 1998 to 2004, well above the rise in average salaries. In consequence, people find it increasingly difficult to afford a home within easy reach of their employment. This impacts on the economy as wage pressures feed into prices but also adds to traffic congestion as more and more people commute significant distances to work.

Crime and anti-social behaviour are low by national levels, but are growing concerns in all parts of the county, highlighted by the recent MORI survey.

Within this context there are a number of clear strategic challenges facing the county over the life of this plan and beyond. Countywide solutions, particularly in relation to the economy, environment and transport will be essential if we are to maintain and increase our prosperity and competitiveness. Our focus for the period of this plan will be:

- World class economy
- Environment and climate change
- Healthy and thriving communities
- Breaking the cycle of deprivation (cross cutting issue)

## 7. A guiding framework

The strategy is split into 3 themed chapters:

- **A World Class Economy**
- **Environment and Climate Change**
- **Healthy and Thriving Communities**

Each chapter is split into the following sections:

### **Where are we now?**

This section provides a snapshot of relevant key facts about Oxfordshire within that section

### **The Challenges we face**

**The pledges the partnership will make in order to get us there** – the Oxfordshire Partnership has made pledges about what it is going to do in the next three years, as well as in the longer term.

### **Our long term priorities**

This section lists the main activities to be undertaken – e.g. through the Local Area Agreement

### **How will we measure success?**

We will measure success on the partnership priorities using a wider range of relevant indicators, including the LAA indicators, national quality of life indicators and local satisfaction survey results.

We will know when we have achieved our goals by:

The successful achievement of the targets contained within the Oxfordshire LAA  
Monitoring the impact of our own organisational policies and plan

### **Key partnerships to develop the theme:**

Who will deliver e.g. housing partnership etc.

**What you can do to make a difference** e.g. short section to encourage community involvement e.g. recycle more/eat more healthily ...

**8. How we will monitor the actions within the strategy**

- Delivering change and monitoring our progress

9. **Appendixes:** membership of Oxfordshire Partnership/Who to contact for further information/link to website