



# *Oxfordshire 2030*

**A partnership plan for improving  
quality of life in Oxfordshire**

**Foreword by Councillor Keith Mitchell CBE.  
Leader of Oxfordshire County Council and Chairman of the Oxfordshire  
Partnership.**

**\*To be produced for June version\***



## Oxfordshire 2030

**Oxfordshire 2030** sets out a long-term vision for Oxfordshire's future. The strategy has the support of all of the key statutory agencies in the county as well as voluntary and business sector endorsement. Our expectation is that key agencies will reflect the Vision and priorities in their own corporate plans and in their resource allocation so we ensure that we deliver the vision.

It's a plan of action for the **Oxfordshire Partnership** - a group of public sector, local businesses and voluntary and community organisations across the county.

**Oxfordshire 2030** is about working together to tackle the issues that are important to local people – for example, helping our young people to succeed, reducing crime, strengthening the economy and protecting the environment - and it's based on what you've told us matters most to you. There are three main strands within the strategy:

- Geographic – where housing and other development will be concentrated (pages 8-9)
- Thematic – Largely centred on economic and community well being (pages 10-20)
- Cross cutting – Tackling inequality and responding to climate change (pages 18-22)

*Oxfordshire 2030* has been developed by the Oxfordshire Partnership – this is the overarching strategic partnership for the county and provides the forum for setting the strategic vision for the county and for capturing the vision in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The main objectives of the Oxfordshire Partnership are:

- To develop a Sustainable Community Strategy for Oxfordshire.
- To strengthen partnership working to ensure that everyone is working in the same strategic direction, sharing resources, information and expertise to address key issues and local priorities.
- To promote equality, respect and diversity and improve the quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in, or visits Oxfordshire.

In developing the strategy the partnership looked at the long-term social, economic and environmental trends issues and other plans and strategies affecting the future of the county. Organisations from the partnership, including the police, health services, businesses, the voluntary and community sectors and elected members of local councils were invited to events in 2007 to debate the implications of these trends. They then agreed priorities for action for wider consultation with the public. **See the website for more information on the role of the Oxfordshire Partnership and the development of the strategy** [www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk](http://www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk)

## Have your say

With this document you will find a questionnaire to gather your views. Please return this to ADDRESS by DATE.

# Understanding Oxfordshire

Detailed information on the trends and issues affecting Oxfordshire can be found in annex 1.

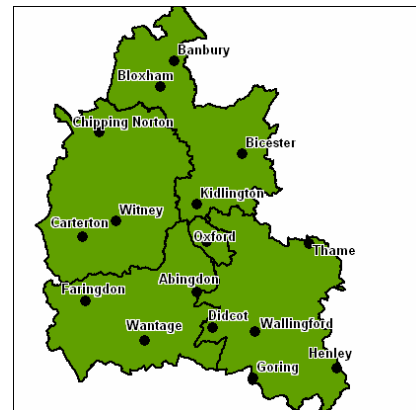
Oxfordshire is a county alive with enterprise, learning and history. It has become internationally renowned as a place of architectural and natural beauty, a centre of excellence for higher education, research and innovation and a designated European Centre of Culture.

The county includes three areas of outstanding natural beauty: the Cotswolds, the Chilterns and the North Wessex Downs and is crossed by the River Thames and its tributaries. The internationally famous city of Oxford is at the hub of the county, surrounded by numerous historic towns and villages set in beautiful countryside. Oxfordshire is at the north-western edge of the South East region and, with its central location in England, has strong links to London and the Midlands, as well as west to the Cotswolds and along the M4 corridor.

Economic prosperity and the quality of the environment make Oxfordshire an attractive place in which to live and work. People in Oxfordshire in general live long and healthy lives.

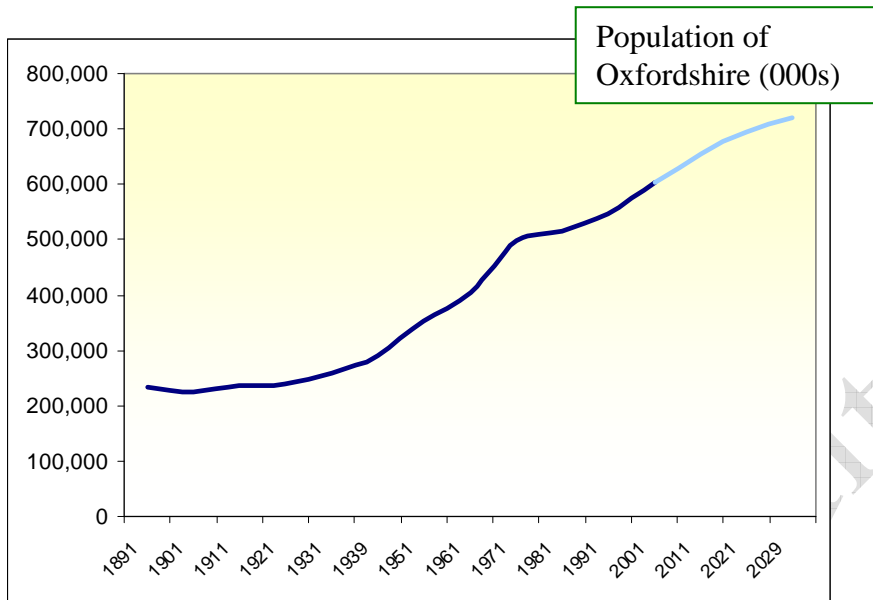
## Oxfordshire in context:

- In 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, with 42,500 students attending either Oxford University or Oxford Brookes University (Total students, Higher Education Statistics Agency- not students in residence)
- Around one-third of the population lives in our market towns.



## Population growth

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



Source: Census data to 2001, and 2004 revised ONS sub-national population projections

	mid 2001	mid 2026
Oxfordshire	607,300	711,800
Cherwell	132,000	165,900
Oxford	135,500	171,100
South Oxfordshire	128,300	135,000
Vale of White Horse	115,800	127,700
West Oxfordshire	95,700	111,900

Source: 2004 revised ONS sub-national population projections

- Between 2006 and 2026 Oxfordshire's total population is forecast to grow by over 12%, whilst the number of people aged 75 and over is projected to grow by 60% over the same period. This trend is similar to that expected nationally and is driven by increasing life expectancy and the current age profile of the county.
- 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.

## 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% in the 10 year period to 2006
- 10.2 tonnes of carbon dioxide per person were emitted in Oxfordshire in 2005: 26.5% of the emissions were from domestic sources i.e. our homes, 38.2% from industry and 35.3% from road transport.

Draft for consultation

## A vision for the future

*By 2030 we want Oxfordshire to be recognised for its economic success, outstanding environment and quality of life; to be a place where everyone can realise their potential, contribute to and benefit from economic prosperity and where people are actively involved in their local communities.*

### Our main strategic objectives are

1. **A World Class Economy:** We need to build on Oxfordshire's vibrant economy and make sure that everyone has an opportunity to be included in that success.
2. **Healthy and thriving communities:** Oxfordshire is a great place to live for most but not all, and we need to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour, health inequalities, lack of housing and congestion instead of transport and respond effectively to the demographic challenges we face over the next 20 years. We also want our City, market towns and villages to be communities with a heart.
3. **Environment and climate change:** Responding to the challenges of climate change, minimising the effects of flooding, looking after our environment, reducing waste and use of energy are all important in improving the quality of life for Oxfordshire's people.
4. **Reducing inequalities and breaking the cycle of deprivation:** Whilst Oxfordshire is a pleasant and prosperous place to live and work, there are pockets of deprivation typified by some or all of the following
  - **Low educational attainment**
  - **Family breakdown**
  - **Worklessness**
  - **Crime and anti-social behaviour**
  - **Poor health**
  - **Poor housing**

These problems are linked and mutually reinforcing. They can combine to create a complex vicious cycle. Central to our vision is ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed in life. The Partnership will work together to reduce inequalities and narrow the gap between the least and most deprived individuals and communities in Oxfordshire.

## Delivering results

*Oxfordshire 2030* is a strategy for the next 20+ years and whilst it is difficult to look ahead with certainty over that period we expect many of our goals to remain constant through the long term. Nonetheless we will review the strategy in 2009 to take on board Government changes to the South East Plan and then at 5 year intervals.

The strategy is supported by a Delivery Plan (**web link**) setting out specific and measurable medium term priorities for the Partnership. For example: targets to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour, improve health, housing, transport, educational attainment and workforce skills; increase the number of people who volunteer, reduce waste and CO2 emissions, reduce the risks of flooding and many other actions on issues that concern local people.

The Delivery Plan includes a number of improvement targets for the next three years which have been agreed with the Government as being important for improving quality of life for people in Oxfordshire (the Local Area Agreement).

Progress on these priorities will be monitored by the Oxfordshire Public Service Board (**web-link**) who report to the Partnership and to the public on progress.

In addition the Oxfordshire Partnership will review quality of life indicators on an annual basis to ensure that action being taken is having a beneficial effect on the lives of local people.

## Planning for better places to live, learn and work

Oxfordshire has to balance the need to protect and enhance its special environment, both urban and rural, with the needs for more housing and other development. There is also a need to ensure that physical and social infrastructure—such as public transport, health services and schools – are provided at the right time. Only by balancing these requirements will the county be able to achieve its objectives of securing a world class economy and healthy and thriving communities whilst tackling climate change and addressing environmental issues.

Currently the framework for the overall spatial planning strategy for Oxfordshire is provided by the Structure Plan ([www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)). However, this will change very soon when the South East Plan is approved by the Government later in 2008/09. Below the regional level there will be Local Development Frameworks prepared by each of the five district councils.

A draft South East Plan was prepared by South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) and submitted to the Secretary of State in March 2006 and was subjected to a public examination in late 2006/early 2007. The panel's report into the examination was published in August 2007.

In the draft South East Plan maintenance of the green belt around Oxford was proposed to preserve the city's special character and landscape setting, prevent ribbon development and urban sprawl, prevent the coalescence of settlements, protect the countryside and assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. However, following the public examination the Inspection Panel recommended a review of the green Belt to the south of the City.

After the preparation of the South East Plan the government invited submissions for a number of 'eco towns'. Weston Otmoor between Weston on the Green and the M40 is one of 15 sites across the country currently under consideration. A decision is expected later in 2008/09.

### *Links to Local Development Frameworks*

All 5 district councils are developing a Local Development Framework – a collection of policies and plans to guide building development in a local area. These Frameworks, 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.

### *Housing:*

Housing demand is high in the South East and the Draft South East Plan anticipated housing growth of 2360 dwellings each year until 2026 but the

Inspection Panel recommended an increase to 2730 pa. The draft plan proposes that at least 50 per cent of all new houses (which applies to the Central Oxfordshire sub region) should be 'affordable' to meet the needs of young people and those on low incomes. A number of growth points have also been designated within the County and these are Oxford and Didcot.

*Community:*

The South East Plan embraces the concept of 'lifetime neighbourhoods' with inclusive, well designed living environments for all ages. A lifetime neighbourhood would provide all residents with the best possible chance of health, wellbeing and social inclusion, particularly as they grow older. This would require an accessible and pleasant built environment in which residents of all ages are not unnecessarily excluded by age, physical or cognitive ability, and remain able to work, socialise and participate for as long as possible. We will work to respond to older people's needs and experiences for example, in relation to the use of public transport, access to shops, amenities and leisure space, their perception of security, neighbourhood and place, and the desire to congregate, socialize and participate.

*Employment:*

The main locations for the provision of additional land for employment will be at Bicester and Didcot, in particular to provide for the education, scientific and technological sectors and the expansion and relocation of existing local firms. In Oxford development for employment will take place mainly on previously developed land.

*Traffic congestion:*

Road traffic has grown rapidly in Oxfordshire, particularly on the M40 and A34, and congestion is a significant problem. The County Council, in partnership with Network Rail and the Highways Agency is promoting a package of measures called 'Access to Oxford' designed to ease congestion around the county. However, further management and development of transport networks will be needed.

*Natural Resources:*

Thames Water, through its resources management plan, has proposed a major new reservoir to the south west of Abingdon near the village of Steventon, although the need for this is still being examined. Consultation on the water resources management plan runs for 16 weeks from May, ending August 08.

Oxfordshire has extensive deposits of sand, gravel and limestone and is an important producer of aggregate minerals for construction work mostly within the county. Aggregates are needed both for new development and to maintain the existing built fabric and infrastructure. The draft South East Plan sets out plans for extraction rates but following central government guidelines are now being reviewed.

*Waste Management:*

Oxfordshire has to significantly reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill over the next few years, or face stringent Government financial penalties which would impact on council tax payers. The county and district councils working together through the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership are seeking to ensure that the amount of waste produced by each household does not grow, and if possible reduces; and to increase recycling and composting rates significantly.

Draft for consultation

## A World Class Economy

Oxfordshire's success is underpinned by its vibrant economy. We are well placed for the future but global markets are intensifying competitive forces. Over the long term we need to make Oxfordshire's economy even stronger but without undue environmental impact. **Key issues** will include:

- Sustaining our high technology industry base.
- Improving infrastructure and in particular transport.
- Improving educational attainment and skills within the workforce.
- Providing opportunities and incentives to encourage lifelong learning opportunities.

### We pledge to:

- Collaborate across public, business and voluntary sectors to build on Oxfordshire's economic success.
- Create the conditions for everyone to have access to jobs.
- Ensure that educational attainment and skill levels are well above the national average so we provide a well qualified, motivated workforce to meet the needs of business.
- Achieve a sustainable balance between jobs, housing and environment.
- Tackle traffic congestion particularly on trunk roads and around Oxford City and other hotspots.

### Current position

Oxfordshire's economy has sustained continued growth over an extended period and is recognised as an economic powerhouse within the south-east and UK and also on the world stage. It has an exceptional concentration of research and development (7.9% of the workforce compared with 2.9% for the South East) with world renowned establishments such as Oxfordshire University's Chemistry Department and the Diamond Synchrotron on the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus. The County also has strong tourism, motorsports, and publishing industries.

In terms of gross value added Oxfordshire performance ranks in the top 10% for the UK, having increased more than Cambridgeshire, but significantly less than Berkshire since 1995. Oxfordshire GVA per head has been consistently above the South East average.

Oxfordshire is the most rural county in the South East and its pleasant rural landscape, the high quality of its built environment and culture make it a place

where businesses want to operate and people want to live and work. These features also underpin our strong tourist industry.

Our many historic rural towns and villages provide access to a wide range of goods and services and a base for both established and new businesses from thatching to software engineering and local retail, financial services and distribution. Business is everywhere in the county from isolated rural parishes to high tech business parks near our major road and rail routes.

High quality cultural, sport, leisure and recreational activity is a key factor in making Oxfordshire a good place for business. Not only does it provide employment but it improves the quality of life of everyone in the county. There are more than 70 festivals, world class museums and heritage attractions including the Ashmolean and Blenheim Palace; high quality theatre, art galleries and sporting events and access to the countryside, parks and rivers.

However, as global competition intensifies, maintaining growth and prosperity becomes more and more challenging. We are focusing on several priorities:

**Economic regeneration** – the major projects being:

- Urban renaissance of Oxford's West End.
- Seeking to fulfil the potential of the Southern Oxfordshire Quadrant (The Quadrant is an area of economic growth in southern central Oxfordshire whose future is defined by four points – Harwell science and innovation campus, Milton Park, Didcot and Grove) as an international centre for innovation and enterprise through the Quadrant Partnerships; and
- Developing the Bicester economy with greater emphasis on a high value, high wage, and high tech economy.

**Workforce Skills** – we need to improve productivity further but also to sustain innovation. Although the county has the highest concentration of degree level qualifications of any county, a significant proportion of the working age population are without qualifications and are therefore inadequately equipped to meet the needs of businesses operating in very competitive markets. Educational attainment in our schools is a cause for concern with performance not as strong as in comparable areas of the country. There is a need not just to raise GCSE performance in schools, but for young people in the county to share in the sense of opportunity which its economy provides.

**Infrastructure** – Investment in transport and housing infrastructure lags behind the pace of economic development. This has contributed to increasing levels of congestion and shortages of affordable housing. The lack of affordable housing is especially a problem for those in essential service jobs not sharing in the high wage economy.

Oxfordshire is in a strong position to sustain economic growth. There are some things that Oxfordshire has right and should treasure – the balancing of economic and environmental interests and the links between universities, science, innovation and entrepreneurship

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

By 2030 we expect:

- Education and skills levels to have risen well above the national average.
- GVA (gross value added) to be in the top 10% nationally.
- The ratio of housing supply to demand and the quality and affordability of housing to be improved.
- Those who are of working age but not in work, full time education or training and those not actively seeking work, to be the lowest in the country.
- Oxfordshire to be known throughout the world as a centre of science and innovation excellence.
- Should a transport indicator be included e.g. traffic congestion to be less severe than in the rest of the country?

### **Our priorities for action:**

Details of actions planned for the medium and longer term are set out in the accompanying Delivery Plan – see web link.

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

Oxfordshire Economic Partnership  
Learning & Skills Partnership

## Healthy and Thriving Communities

*Healthy and Thriving Communities imply three things:*

- *We want our towns, neighbourhoods and villages to be communities with a heart.*
- *We want to support and protect vulnerable groups including older people and those with disabilities.*
- *We want people to be healthy and live longer.*
- *We want Oxfordshire to be a place where people feel safe and welcomed. Our foundations are strong – there are concerns about anti-social behaviour but generally our City, towns and villages are safe and pleasant places in which to live.*

However, there are significant challenges ahead.

- Housing has become unaffordable for many young people.
- Older people and those with disabilities want more choice and control over their care, wish to live independently and have access to high quality services when they need them.
- Community engagement and self help is less strong than it once was and the voluntary sector needs strengthening.
- Crime is relatively low but fear of crime and concern about anti-social behaviour and increasing alcohol abuse are concerns for many people.
- Life expectancy is improving year on year but there are growing concerns about the effects of unhealthy lifestyles.
- The gap between the least and most deprived is significant and needs to be reduced.

**We pledge to:**

- Work with local people and the voluntary, community and faith sectors to sustain and build supportive cohesive, resilient and well planned communities, for example where local people play an active role in decisions that affect their community.
- Ensure the provision of more affordable housing.
- Tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Work to reduce, isolate, prevent and defeat violent extremism.
- Ensure every child gets every opportunity for a good start in life.
- Improve support and opportunities for independent living.
- Promote healthy lifestyles.

**Current Position:**

Oxfordshire is a diverse county both in the terms of the range of urban and rural environments but also its ethnicity. A quarter of the total population live in the city of Oxford with a similar proportion in our market towns and half the population live in rural areas. The population is ageing with substantial growth in the proportion of the population aged 85 and over. There is also a growing proportion of people with learning disabilities.

Black and minority ethnic communities are 5% of the population for the County overall and 13 % in the city of Oxford with sizeable populations in Banbury and Didcot.

Although our population is generally healthier than elsewhere, with life expectancy above the average, there are significant variations and inequalities between local communities. This is reflected in the wide gap in life expectancy between the best and worst off.

### **A sense of community**

People want to live in communities with a heart: communities where services are well planned and coordinated; where the local centre provides good shopping provision; where there is access to high quality culture, sport and leisure and access to public services. We also want places where local people help shape the future for their city, town, village or neighbourhood and who work to contribute to the solution of local problems.

We acknowledge the difficulties with people commuting longer distances to work and people working longer hours which have an impact on the amount of time people have available to input into their communities. Despite this we know that there are around 3,000 voluntary and community groups in Oxfordshire and many people are involved and working hard to make life better for local people and their communities. However we are heavily reliant on those who are community spirited and active in our communities and we need to engage more people to build on that good work in the future.

A feeling of identity and 'sense of place' is critical to making Oxfordshire an even better place. Oxfordshire residents have a strong affiliation to the county and to their local community and there is a real sense of community and belonging.

Distinctive local activities and events – such as the popular game of "Aunt Sally", the rural touring programme which brings live arts events to local community spaces, the annual Leveller's Day in Burford as well as one off special events and festivals like "Luminox" in Oxford reinforce this sense of identity and provide occasions for a whole community to come together.

Our voluntary, community and faith organisations are vital to the well-being of local people and communities as are our parish, town, district and county councils who

provide local services and local democratically elected representation to make sure that services are responsive to local people's needs.

Participation in culture, sport, leisure and recreation are also important to how people experience and perceive the place and the community in which they live. It contributes to a distinctive identity, engenders pride and a sense of belonging, and helps create community cohesion. It supports individual's well-being, health and enjoyment. A strong local cultural life and a choice of leisure and recreational opportunities deliver benefits which strengthen communities and contribute to a rich quality of life for all while having a positive impact on the economy, tourism, educational attainment and community safety.

We would like Oxfordshire to be a community where:

- People feel they have a say in their own communities but also put something back in terms of neighbourliness, running local projects e.g. neighbourhood watch, fund raising, event organizing etc.
- There are strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the community.

Oxfordshire communities are well thought of with over 90% of the people in Oxfordshire saying they like living in their local communities. A recent analysis of parish plans also shows that a growing number of local people are working with their parish council to actively plan for the future of their community. Similar arrangements are being made for neighbourhood planning in Oxford City. Typically community-led plans reveal concerns about the 'environment' with 'access to services and travel', 'affordable housing and activities for young people' also raised.

In some areas of the City and our market towns there is a need to better join up activity as well as requirements for more active engagement to break the cycle of deprivation.

**Our challenges are to:**

- Involve people and groups in decision making - including those who have not been involved in the past (for example, young people, from different cultures and backgrounds).
- Target energy and resources in the areas of greatest need to make a real difference.
- Put resources into preventing ill-health, crime and other problems and help people to help themselves.
- Encourage a new generation of volunteers who can sustain community effort.
- Value culture, sport, recreation and leisure as being vital to maintaining good quality of life.

- Actively support the communities who are experiencing more rapid change due to development or where the community isn't flourishing.

### **Demographic Change:**

One of the key areas of change facing us all is the ageing of our population. As a result of our improved longevity and declining fertility there is a profound shift in the structure of our population. Older people make an important contribution to economies and communities as consumers and for their expectations as citizens. Improvements in income, health care and healthier lifestyles have led to more people living longer. This has led to an increase in the number of relatively fit and active older people, many of whom are and want to continue to be active contributors in employment, in their families and communities as volunteers, employees and carers. It also means more people will need support to remain independent in later life.

However, the distribution of income amongst the older population is very uneven. Older people have one of the highest risks of poverty of all age groups and experience social exclusion due to a range of factors including reduced social contact, poorer health, low income and lack of mobility. The greatest consumers of health and social care are those over 85 which is the section of the population growing at the fastest rate. There is also an increase in the number of younger people who have experienced some form of learning or physical disability from birth, or who have survived a trauma. These groups will support and this will place increased financial pressure on both the County Council's adult care services and the Oxfordshire NHS.

There is a real danger that our healthy population will become less healthy over the next 20 years. The incidence of obesity is rising and so is alcohol consumption. Apart from the health implications, excessive alcohol consumption amongst people also gives rise to anti-social behaviour and so increases fear of crime.

Responding to these challenges will involve a renewed emphasis on prevention and provision of support to individuals to live their lives independently and successfully. We will also need to emphasise even more strongly than we do now the importance of family carers and the support they need to carry out this role effectively and with due regard to their personal needs. We want to shift the emphasis to prevention so that we can intervene early, providing a little bit of support to help the person stay independent and delay the need for costly intensive support for as long as possible.

### **Safer Communities:**

Oxfordshire does not have high crime levels, indeed parts of the county have very low crime levels. Nonetheless alcohol fuelled anti-social behaviour is a problem in

some areas and generally fear of crime is disproportionately high in Oxfordshire. Statutory and voluntary agencies are working with the Police to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour but we also need local communities to work with statutory agencies to provide voluntary effort and help find local solutions.

### **To sustain thriving communities we will need to:**

- Tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Work across sectors and age groups to tackle problems caused by increasing alcohol consumption.
- Provide high quality outcomes for older people by improving their access to services and giving them choice and control over their support.
- Shift the emphasis to prevention of illness and promotion of health and well-being.
- Work together in key neighbourhoods to break the cycle of deprivation and close the equality gap.
- Strengthen the voluntary and community sector.
- Nurture cultural and leisure opportunities in rural as well as urban areas.
- Encourage and support local community planning and other initiatives that help build a strong sense of community.
- Improve access to information and services.
- Ensure that disabled people enjoy the same life chances as their non-disabled peers.

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

#### **By 2030 we expect:**

- Local people, including the young and those from different cultural backgrounds feel welcomed and safe in their local community.
- Volunteering and community self help to be stronger than the national average.
- People living longer and staying healthy.
- Narrowing the gap in outcomes between the best and worst off.
- Crime and anti-social behaviour to be lower than in the rest of the country.
- An increased number of communities across Oxfordshire have actively developed, implemented and reviewed a community-led plan and achieved a range of tangible improvements.

#### **Our priorities for action:**

Details of actions planned for the medium and longer term is set out in the accompanying Delivery Plan – see web link.

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

Health and Wellbeing Partnership  
Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership  
Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships  
Oxfordshire Voluntary Sector Development Partnership

*Draft for consultation*

## The Environment and Climate Change

*Our aspiration is to conserve and enhance our natural and built environment but balancing this against economic drivers and the impact of climate change will be a challenge. Key issues will be*

- *Reducing our carbon footprint and adapting to climate change.*
- *Ensuring that development is located to avoid urban sprawl and is sustainable.*
- *Preserving the character of the City, our market towns and villages.*

### **We pledge to:**

- Reduce the carbon emissions from public sector organizations and to set an example for businesses and others in the county.
- Reduce waste and increase re-use and recycling by households and businesses.
- Minimise the effects and risk of flooding.
- Ensure new development is built to high environmental standards.
- Promote efficient use of water and energy.
- Keep Oxfordshire clean and green.
- Preserve and enhance the biodiversity of the county.

### **Current position**

Our climate is changing. Temperatures are likely to rise by 1.8-4.0° C by the end of the century, depending on the extent of remedial action to reduce carbon emissions. The increase in the next 20-30 years (between 0.5-1.0° C here in the UK) will probably happen regardless of remedial action because of the impacts of carbon already emitted.

Within Oxfordshire we are privileged to enjoy an exceptional environment with beautiful countryside and outstanding architecture. Our environment is precious and the impacts of climate change will be wide ranging and have a huge impact on our lifestyles as well as our economy.

Tackling and adapting to climate change and protecting our environment are therefore two of the most important issues we face. Everyone can play their part, by reducing waste, energy and water consumption and minimizing car use.

We already experience water shortages, heat waves, intense winter storms and flooding. Climate change will increase the frequency, severity and cost of such events and could have devastating impacts, especially on those whose future is

dependent upon their environment. It is therefore important that we take measures both to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

### **Limiting our carbon emissions**

A number of public, private and voluntary and community sector organizations have developed action plans for reducing their carbon footprint. An increasing number of businesses are doing this too, recognizing that reducing carbon emissions is both good for the environment and can reduce financial costs.

Some of the measures to reduce emissions require investment, such as improved building insulation or better heating and lighting controls, but a great deal too can be achieved through changes in behaviour e.g. switching off electrical appliances when they are not in use.

Disposing of waste in landfill sites is not sustainable because of its effect on greenhouse gas emissions and the associated financial penalties which come from government. Therefore reducing waste and then finding better ways of dealing with it is vital. Oxfordshire's domestic waste levels are already low and recycling rates are high compared with the rest of the country, but international comparisons are less favourable. The Oxfordshire Waste Partnership has agreed a strategy for reducing waste and increasing reuse and recycling, but even if recycling rates matched the best in Europe there will still be a need for new waste treatment arrangements. The County Council is in the process of procuring treatment facilities for food, garden and residual waste. The latter waste will be burned in a new plant currently proposed to be built at an existing landfill site at either Ardley or Sutton Courtenay. The plant will provide electricity for the grid and potentially combined heat and power.

### **Protecting the Environment**

Oxfordshire has four National Nature Reserves, more than one hundred Sites of Special Scientific Interest, seven Special Areas of conservation, and many local nature reserves. There are three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; the Chiltern Hills, the Cotswolds and the North Wessex Downs. Oxford city provides an important historic environment and at the heart of the county, Blenheim Palace & Parks is a world heritage site, and there are over 200 conservation areas and thousands of listed buildings across Oxfordshire.

Oxfordshire currently has the most effective county biodiversity partnership in England. Almost everyone in Oxfordshire has access to wildlife through public rights of way and open green space, bringing well recognized benefits for health and wellbeing.

### **For the future our priorities are:**

- To address flooding risks.

- Reduce the landfill of waste.
- Reduce our carbon emissions and adapt to climate change.
- Dealing with the environmental impact of population growth and development while maintaining the character of our towns, villages and countryside.

**How will we measure success?**

By 2030 we expect:

- Commercial and domestic waste reduction, re-use and recycling comparable with the best in Europe.
- Public sector and domestic energy and water use below UK average.
- All new housing developments to include sustainable drainage.
- Oxfordshire's greenhouse gas emissions reduced to levels comparable with the best in the UK - a 50 per cent reduction in CO<sub>2</sub>, on 2008 levels by 2030.
- Oxfordshire's natural and built environment preserved.

**Our priorities for action:**

Details of actions planned for the medium and longer term is set out in the accompanying Delivery Plan – see web link.

**Key partnerships to develop the theme:**

Oxfordshire Waste Partnership  
Oxfordshire Environment Group  
Climate Change Partnership

## Reducing inequalities and breaking the cycle of deprivation

Oxfordshire is an affluent county but there are pockets of deprivation. It is important to tackle these problems for economic reasons, to ensure we sustain a stable and cohesive society and to give individuals every chance to succeed. Key areas for attention will include:

- Improving educational attainment and skills.
- Promoting healthy lifestyles.
- Working with local people to address local community concerns.
- Focusing attention on the localities in greatest need to make a real difference.

### **We pledge to:**

- Reduce the gap between the best and worst off.
- Increase educational attainment and skill levels.
- Tackle crime and anti social behaviour “hot spots”.
- Regenerate deprived local communities.

### **Current position:**

Oxfordshire is, in general, an affluent county with low levels of social exclusion compared with England as a whole. Unemployment, poverty, poor health, poor housing and crime are all significantly below the national average. But stubborn inequalities remain, within particular groups of people and specific geographical localities. We recognise that pockets of deprivation and groups of people experiencing inequality occur in rural as well as urban areas of the county and that rural deprivation is particularly difficult to address as it is scattered across a large number of often small settlements. In such communities there may be evidence of worklessness (those who are of working age but not in work, full time education or training and those not actively seeking work), poor housing and crime. Individuals may be living in relative poverty often related to low income, poor qualifications and skills and associated low self esteem. Lifestyles may also be unhealthy.

The cycle of deprivation is a description of what happens when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked factors including employment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, crime, poor health and worse access to services. The combination of several or all of these elements leads to disadvantage that can continue from one generation to the next. We recognise that extra effort is required to break this cycle so that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed and to achieve their full potential in life.

We also recognise that there is a high “turnover” of residents in some communities with people moving onwards to pursue jobs, secure the housing and access to services they need and this can undermine a sense of local community. This trend needs to be reversed if the aspiration for all our communities to be thriving communities is to be delivered.

### **Our approach will be focused on the following:**

- Raising educational achievement and skill levels – We want to raise educational achievement for all but there is a particular need to address the achievement of some BME communities, children in public care and children in deprived communities. We also want to raise skill levels in communities where people have few qualifications and in particular to equip local people with the skills needed by local businesses. Again those from deprived communities will be a particular target.
- Family support – to break the cycle of deprivation, work with families to promote the importance of education and skills, addressing parenting skills, and reduce teenage pregnancy and promote healthy lifestyles.
- Regenerating local communities – there are several areas of the City and of some of our market towns where statutory agencies need to work together and with local people to improve the area. This will include work to
  - Improve the quality and level of housing for those who require it and support the vulnerable including those experiencing homelessness
  - Reduce the impact of crime in identified “hotspots” and divert young people from antisocial behaviour
  - Identify other causes of inequality and work together to improve them

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

- No communities to be amongst the worst 10% in the county for aspects of deprivation.
- Educational attainment and skill levels to have risen well above the national average.
- Health inequality measured in differences in death and disease rates between the best and worst off will be reduced.
- Worklessness (those who are of working age but not in work, full time education or training and those not actively seeking work) to be the lowest in the country.
- Crime and fear of crime to be below the national average.

### **Our priorities for action**

**Summary of delivery plan / LAA targets which reduce inequality and break the cycle of deprivation**

[www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk/delivery-plan](http://www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk/delivery-plan)

**Key partnerships to develop the theme:**

Oxfordshire Voluntary Sector Development Partnership  
Children and Young People Partnership  
Health and Well-Being Partnership  
Community Safety Partnership  
Economy Partnership  
Environment Partnership  
Social Inclusion Reference group

Draft for consultation

## Local Distinctiveness

### Cherwell District

**MAP to be added**

Cherwell is 590km<sup>2</sup> in area; it offers a unique and successful combination: its fine rural landscape provides some of the most attractive and picturesque scenery in Oxfordshire, whilst thriving commercial and industrial centres brings prosperity and economic strength in a highly accessible and desirable location.

Cherwell is a relatively affluent area but there are significant differences in wealth distribution. Banbury in particular has pockets of severe deprivation, second only to Oxford in the County. Other forms of deprivation derive from rural isolation. There are 75 parishes and three main urban centres' – Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington – which contain 65% of the residents. So Cherwell's population is, perhaps surprisingly, mostly urban, which gives rise to challenges more often associated with urban areas, in addition to common rural issues.

#### ***District Community Strategy Vision:***

Delivering a better quality of life in Cherwell

#### **District Priorities:**

<b>District Priorities</b> See key issues from Annex A 'Oxfordshire in Context'	<b>Local Actions and Targets</b>
<b>Reducing inequalities and breaking the cycle of deprivation is a cross cutting theme</b>	
<b>A World Class Economy</b>  Make it easier for you to get where you need to go	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete transport studies and infrastructure needs assessment of the main urban areas and incorporate the results in the Local Development Framework</li> </ul>
Support business success by fostering innovation and helping to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create 6200 additional jobs by 2011</li> </ul>

recruit and retain skilled employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving educational achievements</li> </ul>
Improve local services and opportunities in rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete a review of planning policy through the local development framework</li> <li>Establish improved support initiatives for existing rural services to assist ongoing viability</li> <li>Encourage the creation of new services to rural areas to meet established demand and gaps in provision</li> </ul>
Develop the unique characters of Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington and engender a sense of pride, belonging to the community and heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2012 complete environmental enhancement schemes for Parsons Street, Banbury</li> </ul>
Secure housing growth that meets the Government targets and the needs of the District through an appropriate mix of market and affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve an annual average rate of new homes constructed of 600, of which 100 are affordable</li> </ul>
<p><b>Healthy and thriving communities</b></p> <p>Help you feel safe in your home and community, working to reduce further very low levels of crime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2012 reduce crime by 5% and achieve a perception of feeling safe in Cherwell by 80% of residents</li> </ul>
Make it easier for you to lead a healthy and active life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase participation in active recreation by 1% per annum</li> <li>Improve all age mortality rates in Banbury</li> </ul>
Co-ordinate, improve and provide more diverse and accessible health provision and advice through improved education, partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure local health care and social service provision meet the needs of the local population particularly in</li> </ul>

working, better local access and increased choice	<p>relation to local accessibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue determined efforts to retain the Horton Hospital's status as a District General Hospital.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and climate change</b></p> <p>Protect our environment, wildlife habitats and the countryside, by working with others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve a measurable improvement to biodiversity</li> </ul>
Keep streets and open spaces clean and free from litter, graffiti and abandoned vehicles and well maintained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2012 achieve 80% resident satisfaction with street and environmental cleanliness</li> </ul>
Help you recycle so we can reduce the amount of landfill waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2012 recycle 55% of household waste</li> <li>By 2012 reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill by 5000 tons</li> </ul>

Find out more at [www.cherwell.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk)

# OXFORD

## MAP to be added

Contemporary Oxford is an economic hub with a world-class knowledge economy and enterprise that underpins continued prosperity not just in the Oxfordshire sub-region but in the south-east of England and beyond. However, there is a need for continued sustainable growth and to improve the quality of life for all who live and work in the city.

In marked contrast to other parts of the county, Oxford is ethnically and culturally diverse with the third highest minority ethnic population in the South East. It is not just diverse but also youthful, mobile and continually self-renewing because it has the highest proportion of students in England and Wales because of its large student population.

Dynamic urban environments provide both great opportunities and difficult challenges. Oxford is no exception. The city is a densely packed urban space – covering 29 square miles – with very high levels of housing density. There are severe pressures on housing stock, with large concentrations of homes in multiple occupations and significant numbers of homelessness and other vulnerable groups. Some areas of the city suffer multiple levels of deprivation – low skills, low incomes, and high levels of crime. Central Oxford in particular suffers from traffic congestion and pollution.

This dynamic mix of opportunities and challenges is at the heart of the distinctive character of contemporary Oxford.

### ***District Community Strategy Vision:*** **Oxford Strategic Partnership**

#### **Vision:**

*Oxford will be a world class city for everyone.*

Priorities include:

- Building on the strengths of the city's knowledge and high tech economy and enhancing the quality of city's retail and cultural offerings.
- Improving access to affordable housing
- Challenging inequality and improving the health of our citizens
- Making our contributions to tackling climate change
- Creating a high quality environment for residents and visitors
- Building strong and cohesive communities with low levels of crime.

#### **District Priorities**

<p align="center"><b>District Priorities</b> See key issues from Annex A 'Oxfordshire in Context'</p>	<p align="center"><b>Local Actions and Targets</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Reducing inequalities and breaking the cycle of deprivation is a cross cutting theme</b></p>	
<p align="center"><b>A World Class Economy</b></p> <p>Managed and sustainable economic growth</p> <p>Improved position in the retail hierarchy</p> <p>Affordable housing</p> <p>Skills and employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing the Northern gateway site for employment uses.</li> <li>• Regeneration of the West End of the City and implementation of the West End Cultural Strategy. Creating an estimated 1,000 new homes and 5,000 jobs.</li> <li>• Ensure the development of 1,200 new and affordable homes in the City ( NI 154 and 155)</li> <li>• % population qualified to level 2 and level 3 (tbc)</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Healthy and thriving communities</b></p> <p>A thriving place to live and visit</p> <p>Improved life chances and life expectancy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that 85% of people are satisfied with their neighbourhoods (NI 5)</li> <li>• Raise the levels of adult participation in sport by 4% (NI 8)</li> <li>• Increase benefits take up by 20%</li> <li>• Reduce the age mortality gap between the best and worst areas within the City by % (tbc) (NI120)</li> </ul>

<p>Reduce homelessness</p> <p>Reduce crime and the fear of crime</p> <p>Community cohesion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim to reduce the use of temporary accommodation for the homelessness to below 50 households (NI 156)</li> <li>• Reduce the number of assaults with injury in domestic violence incidents, all alcohol related crime and violence.</li> <li>• Reduce concerns about antisocial behaviour.(NI 21)</li> <li>• Provide positive activities for young people in the most deprived areas of Oxford by investing £120,000 in free holiday activities for 5-19 year olds.</li> <li>• Number of people from different backgrounds who believe that they get on well together in their local area (NI 1)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and climate change</b></p> <p>Pollution / mitigation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the Council's CO2 emissions by 800 tonnes per annum (% reduction on 2005-06 levels (NI 185). (Getting Our House in Order – Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation plan maps a way to meeting our target of 25% reduction of CO2 emissions by 2010/11 and 3% year on year beyond 2010/11</li> <li>• Provide £100,000 of fuel poverty grants that will</li> </ul>

Adaptation	<p>improve energy efficiency and the health and comfort of residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Climate Change Action Plan (aim for level 3 of NI 188 by 2010/11)</li> </ul>
Congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to services, transport/cycling/walking(NI 175)</li> </ul>
Reduce waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce domestic landfill by 45% (NI 191 and NI 192)</li> </ul>
Improved public realm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the quality of our streets so that 90% reach the national quality standard (NI 195)</li> <li>• Achieve the Green Flag for 5 of our parks</li> </ul>

Find out more at [www.oxfordpartnership.org.uk](http://www.oxfordpartnership.org.uk)

Draft for Consultation

## SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE - received

### MAP to be added

South Oxfordshire is a mainly rural area of 253 square miles. It has beautiful countryside, which includes rolling downland, wooded hills, historic parkland, low-lying farmland and riverside meadows rich in biodiversity. Agriculture is the main land use in South Oxfordshire and the River Thames is an important feature in the district providing opportunities for recreation and the local economy.

About 65% of the district's population of almost 130,000 people live in the many villages of varying sizes, which are scattered throughout the district, the rest living in rapidly expanding Didcot, recently designated a New Growth Point, and South Oxfordshire's three historic market towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford. There is a strong sense of community in the district where 83 parish councils and parish meetings and many local groups support people's involvement in community life.

### **District Community Strategy Vision:**

*'South Oxfordshire should be an attractive, successful, vibrant and safe place where people choose to live, work and visit. It should be a place where everyone can enjoy a good quality of life and a strong sense of community.'*

### **District Priorities:**

<b>District Priorities</b> See key issues from Annex A 'Oxfordshire in Context'	<b>Local Actions and Targets</b>
<b>Reducing inequalities and breaking the cycle of deprivation is a cross cutting theme</b>	
<b>A World Class Economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improving the vitality of town centres and prospects for rural businesses</li><li>• Supporting the establishment of new small businesses to increase productivity</li></ul>
<b>Healthy and thriving communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increasing the supply of homes, including affordable homes</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promoting health lifestyles</li><li>• Tackling antisocial behaviour</li></ul>
<b>Environment and climate change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conserving environmental resources</li><li>• Maintaining and improving the quality of the natural environment and landscape</li></ul>

Find out more at [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk)

Draft for consultation

## VALE OF THE WHITE HORSE

### MAP to be added

The Vale of White Horse (the ‘Vale’) covers an area of 580 square kilometres and extends from the edge of Oxford in the north east almost to the edge of Swindon in the south west. Just over half of the Vale’s 117,000 residents live in the five main settlements of Abingdon, Botley, Faringdon, Grove and Wantage. The rest of the population lives in over 70 villages and hamlets, many of which are of considerable conservation importance.

The Vale is far more than its rural character might suggest: the two power stations at Didcot and the reservoir at Farmoor make major contributions to the power and water supply of the wider region. The UK Defence Academy at Watchfield, the Saïd Business School’s Executive Education Centre at Egrove Park, and Oxford Brookes University’s Westminster Campus all provide higher education facilities. There are extensive employment areas including Milton Park and the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus – one of the largest research centres in Europe. Together these two sites employ about 11,000 people.

### **District Community Strategy Vision:**

The Vale Partnership’s vision for the future of the Vale is to have:

*A sustainable Vale;*

- *With prosperous, inclusive and thriving communities that have good access to a range of housing, jobs and services;*
- *Where everyone can feel safe and enjoy life, and*
- *Where our needs can be met without compromising the natural and built heritage or the ability of future generations to meet their needs.*

### **District Priorities:**

<b>District Priorities</b> <b>See key issues from Annex A</b> <b>‘Oxfordshire in Context’</b>	<b>Local Actions and Targets</b>
<b>Reducing inequalities and breaking the cycle of deprivation is a cross cutting theme</b>	
<b>A World Class Economy</b>	<b>- maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment:</b>  Addressing economic needs; Building on our economic strengths,

	<p>and  Maintaining and enhancing the health and vitality of the Vale's market town centres.</p>
<p><b>Healthy and thriving communities</b></p>	<p><b>- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthier communities;</li> <li>• Improving quality of life for older people; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safer communities;</li> <li>• Fostering a greater sense of community;</li> <li>• A good understanding of local need;</li> <li>• Involving young people;</li> <li>• Helping those without cars to access jobs and services;</li> <li>• Affordable homes;</li> <li>• Good quality homes; and</li> <li>• Access to good quality green spaces, sport, cultural and leisure facilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Environment and climate change</b></p>	<p><b>- effective protection of the environment and wise use of natural resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A low carbon Vale;</li> <li>• Living with extreme weather conditions;</li> <li>• Using resources wisely;</li> <li>• Reducing waste and increasing recycling;</li> <li>• A high quality natural and historic environment;</li> <li>• Protecting the natural environment, and</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhancing the built heritage.</li></ul>
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Find out more at

[http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/community\\_support\\_and\\_advice/community\\_strategy/default.asp](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/community_support_and_advice/community_strategy/default.asp)

Draft for consultation

# WEST OXFORDSHIRE

## MAP to be added

West Oxfordshire lies to the west of the city of Oxford on the western edge of the South East Region and adjoins the County boundary with Gloucestershire. The upper reaches of the River Thames form the southern boundary and the Cotswolds Hills cover the north-western part of the District. Residents and visitors to the District enjoy a high quality environment with a strong sense of place derived from the character of its buildings set in attractive rolling countryside and river valleys. Tourism is an important part of the local economy and the attractions of Woodstock (with Blenheim Palace) and Burford (with Cotswold Wildlife Park) are situated within the District.

With a population of about 100,000 people and an overall density of around 1.4 persons per hectare, West Oxfordshire is one of the most rural authorities within the SE Region. A third of the District is in the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and 2% lies within the Green Belt surrounding Oxford City.

Main roads such as the A40, A44, A361 and A4095 provide access to larger centres outside of the District but within easy reach e.g. Oxford, Swindon, Cheltenham and Banbury. The 'Cotswold' and 'Cherwell' Valley railway lines also pass through the area.

The local economy performs well with above average levels of entrepreneurial activity, low unemployment and a tight labour market. The area is an attractive place to live for skilled staff with a diverse economy including clusters of certain high technology industry and a strong tourism sector worth over £200 million annually to the District's economy.

### ***District Community Strategy Vision:***

West Oxfordshire: One of the best places to live, work and visit.

### **District priorities:**

<b>District Priorities</b> See key issues from Annex A 'Oxfordshire in Context'	<b>Local Actions and Targets</b>
<b>Reducing inequalities and breaking the cycle of deprivation is a cross cutting theme</b>	
<b>A World Class Economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To sustain vibrant and economically prosperous towns and villages</li><li>• To campaign to improve the</li></ul>

	transport infrastructure
<b>Healthy and thriving communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To maintain and improve the health and wellbeing of all residents in West Oxfordshire</li> <li>• To further reduce crime and nuisance and the fear of crime across the District to improve the quality of life in our neighbourhoods</li> <li>• To support individuals and young families who want to stay in the area that they grew up in</li> <li>• To address the specific challenges of living in rural West Oxfordshire in terms of access to services and facilities</li> <li>• To support and assist young people to make the transition from childhood to adulthood</li> <li>• To support the elderly to maintain their independence and health</li> </ul>
<b>Environment and climate change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To keep West Oxfordshire as a clean, beautiful place of high environmental quality whilst seeking to reduce the causes of and adverse impact of climate change</li> </ul>

Find out more at [www.westoxon.gov.uk](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk)

**Information to be included as Annexes:**

- **Oxfordshire in context (Annex A)**
- **Oxfordshire Partnership – Membership**
- **Contacts for further information**
- **Consultation Questionnaire**

Draft for consultation