Pride in our Place
The Community Strategy for Basingstoke and Deane

2006 - 2016
A strategy for a sustainable community
Cllr John Leek
Leader of the Borough Council
“I want all the residents in the Borough to have the same chances in life. I want to be sure that where you live or where you come from makes no difference to the opportunities you have. The Community Strategy can help us achieve this.”

Martin Nurse
Chief Executive - Sentinel Housing Association
“Making sure everyone has access to high quality housing plays a key role in helping us build strong communities. Without a safe place to live people find it almost impossible to get an education, hold down a job, or contribute to the community they would like to be part of. The Community Strategy helps link housing into all the other work that needs to take place for us to build strong communities”

Gordon Holdcroft
Chief Executive - Borough Council
“I believe that the Borough is a fantastic place to live in and that the complex challenges that face it can only be resolved through the effective working of the LSP in developing and delivering the Community Strategy.”

Christine Steer
Chief Officer - Basingstoke Voluntary Services
“Voluntary and community groups work within every aspect of life in Basingstoke and Deane, and cover every geographical area of the Borough. There are more of them than we currently know about and they have the potential to impact on every outcome described in the Community Strategy. When voluntary groups are involved in partnerships they bring local knowledge and understanding, trust and added value.”

Mary Edwards
Chief Executive - North Hampshire Hospital
“The LSP and the Community Strategy is a great vehicle for bringing all partners together to focus on making our area a healthy place to live.”

Paul Netherton
Chief Superintendent - Hampshire Constabulary
“I feel that a key part of making Basingstoke a safer place in which to live and work is about finding new ways to work with local communities and other organisations in the Borough. The LSP and the Community Strategy offers us a unique opportunity to do this is in a much more coordinated way”

Debbie Glenn
Chief Executive - Primary Care Trust
“Leading a healthy lifestyle is the key to everyone’s long term health and well-being. Enabling people to do this is something that can only be achieved by all partners, including the local NHS, working jointly with local people.”

Cllr Roy Perry
Executive Member – Hampshire County Council
“The County Council sees the LSP as an effective channel for liaison with both the Borough Council and other partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors. Effective communications will be key to the delivery of the Community Strategy, the document that aims to align our work to ensure the people we all serve lead safe and fulfilling lives.”
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I first came to work in Basingstoke from the north west of England about 11 years ago. Nobody I spoke to up in Warrington about my new job knew where Basingstoke was and many confused it with Basildon. Once I started working here, however, I became very quickly aware of how sensitive many people were to Basingstoke’s image and the fact that it was felt to be locally famous as the butt of that “music hall joke”. The people of Basingstoke themselves seemed to think it was known for its roundabouts; for the Anvil, in some quarters; and for the AA.

What impressed me about it was its youthfulness, the way in which it readily welcomed people from all over the country and beyond, its prevalent “can do” attitude and, of course, the people themselves, especially its young people, many of whom were students at the College. At the same time, I could see why it suffered from a reputation it did not deserve. The people were reticent about themselves and many had low levels of aspiration, certainly by comparison with other parts of the country. Basingstoke was surrounded by a great deal of snobbery in other towns, but also among people in different parts of the Borough itself – and I am not merely talking about relationships between the town and the rural parts of Basingstoke and Deane. The reputation, it is true, was not helped by the behaviours of some people, including those who take over the town at night every weekend.

But Basingstoke and Deane, it seems to me, has the potential to become renowned for its truly fine qualities. Look, for example, at where it could stand in relation to the current agenda for social inclusion. There is no doubt that, in spite of the advances made in the latter half of the last century and the early years of this century towards equality of opportunity and improving standards of living for everybody, there remain unacceptable inequalities and resultant injustices in the United Kingdom as a whole and also at the
level of its smaller communities. The Borough of Basingstoke and Deane, however prosperous overall, does not escape such inequity.

Basingstoke, however, is well placed to become for boroughs of its size in the UK, if not the rest of Europe, a model of social inclusion. Its people are warm-hearted, free from bigotry and ready to seize opportunity. It is strong, lively and optimistic. It is ready to embrace the challenges of the future with a commitment to valuing equally all of its people and neighbourhoods and to improving aspirations among all ages, while removing impediments to progress for all.

Take the notion of social inclusion seriously and we can commit to creating a community in which no-one is to be disadvantaged by where they are born or brought up. We will be able to show the rest of the country what can be achieved by celebration of diversity, as everyone in our communities is supported in her or his legitimate aspirations for personal improvement and well-being, from whatever part of the world, including the new member states of the European Union, they originate. Such a notion of improved quality of life for all goes beyond material wealth: our people should thrive in work, leisure, health, cultural and spiritual well-being in a borough famous for public debate of some substance in the context of a shared commitment to the good of all.

The future is potentially filled with pride in our environment, both built and natural. We have started to create magnificent public spaces and can do much more of even better quality in the near future. Across the Borough we have extraordinarily beautiful countryside and rural villages. We know how to provide impressive and affordable homes and ready access to services and facilities of the highest quality.
The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

The LSP is a system of partnerships. These partnerships, through the organisations they represent, will play a key role in delivering the Community Strategy.

Representatives of the partnerships come together through the LSP Board. The role of the LSP Board is to improve collaboration between partners, help to coordinate activity and exert influence beyond the Borough boundaries.

The LSP is one of the mechanisms through which we are all able to come together to write a document like the Community Strategy.

More information on the LSP can be found on the LSP website. www.basingstokelsp.org

Key roles in the LSP family:

**The Board** - to advise and influence, especially beyond the Borough boundaries

**Network Partners** - to coordinate activity and advise the Board

**Organisations** – to identify and deliver their contribution to the Community Strategy

Why do we have a Community Strategy?

The Community Strategy aims to describe a vision of the Borough we want to be living in 10 years from now and what is needed to achieve this. It describes how we intend to deliver social, economic and environmental well-being in a way that is both sustainable and accessible for all the residents of the Borough.

We need a document like the Community Strategy to help all organisations in the Borough to align their work. This will include large corporate bodies like the Council and Police Service and small voluntary groups like community associations and sports clubs. By agreeing and describing outcomes that we all agree on we can be sure that we are all contributing to common goals; helping us to work together rather than in isolation.

The review of the Community Strategy in 2006 built on the 2003 strategy and aims to improve the way we monitor the progress we make in delivering the strategy and be much clearer how organisations are making a contribution.
Our Vision for the Borough

Basingstoke and Deane will become famous for social justice, well-being and prosperity for all: alert to its heritage and its responsibility to improve the built and natural environment, it will be held up as a beacon for others to see what can be achieved with courage and ambition by talented, welcoming and confident people working together.

Why do we have a vision?

The vision describes a picture of the Borough we want to live in. It is a statement that gives us something to align ourselves to. As everyone takes the opportunity to promote the vision it will act as a focus for our work and provide a common goal.

We will deliver the vision through the Community Strategy and through other strategies and plans about the Borough. The vision is a statement that all strategies can embrace because we are confident that it goes right to the very heart of every strategy and plan we write.

Achieving the Vision

The Community Strategy takes forward the vision by dividing our aspirations into six themes. These themes lay out and describe six outcomes which, if we can achieve them, will mean we have also made significant progress towards achieving the vision.

The six themes and their outcomes are:

• **A Safe Borough:**
  Our Borough is a place where people feel safe and at ease.

• **A Healthy Borough:**
  In our Borough everyone takes a role in improving and maintaining good health; and healthy life-styles are promoted.

• **A Learning and Creative Borough:**
  Our Borough is a community where learning opportunities exist for everyone and creativity is encouraged.

• **An Economically Prosperous Borough:**
  Our Borough is a place where people can and will want to work, and a variety of urban and rural businesses thrive.

• **An Environment that’s good to live in:**
  People have high quality, affordable homes and value our Borough as a clean, attractive and varied place to live.

• **An Inclusive Borough with Strong Communities:**
  Everyone has the opportunity to lead their lives the way they want, feel they belong to the Borough’s communities and can influence decision-making that affects their lives.
Delivering the Community Strategy

The Community Strategy is based on an **Outcomes Framework**. The Outcomes Framework challenges us to answer seven questions (see page 9). Through the vision, and the outcomes described in the following pages, this strategy sets out to answer the first two questions.

**Quality of Life indicators** will be used to monitor progress against the Community Strategy outcomes. These indicators, and other data, help us to paint a picture of the Borough and answer the third and fourth questions.

For example most residents in the Borough have a high quality of life, but there are pockets of deprivation which are masked by our overall prosperity. In other words some people are disadvantaged by where they live. The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy explores this issue in much more detail and outlines what we plan to do about the disadvantage some of our communities face. This provides some of the answers to the final three questions. Another challenge for the Borough is our ageing population. By 2016 the number of residents aged over 65 will increase by a third. The Older Persons Strategy ‘Promoting Quality of Life for Older People in Basingstoke and Deane’ explores this issue in much more detail and outlines what we plan to do to both support our older residents, and to make use of the expertise, experience and knowledge they can provide. This provides more of the answers to the final three questions.

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**Network Partners**
- Health Partnership
- Housing Partnership
- Chamber of Commerce
- Community Safety Forum
- Voluntary Sector Forum
- Learning Consortium
- Local Business Partnership

**LSP Structure**

- Annual conference for the partnership
- The Local Strategic Partnership Board (30 members - meets quarterly)
- Partnership Manager
- Executive Group (9 members - 8 meetings a year)

**Network Partners**
- Older Persons Partnership
- Cultural Forum
- Youth Partnership
- Natural Environment Forum

**LSP Sub - groups**
- Communications Group
- Coordinators Group
We also need to consider how to best protect, enhance and develop both our built and natural environment. The Local Development Framework (LDF), the group of documents which lays out our policies and plans for future building work in the Borough, will impact on all of the Community Strategy themes. It will take account of the aspirations in the Community Strategy to ensure the Borough can grow without losing its unique mix of urban and rural features (see page 14).

The Community Strategy and the LSP provide the framework for bringing together plans and people to focus our attention on the key challenges our Borough will face in the future. The Community Strategy does not set out what we will do, the detailed planning will be provided by supporting documents; it sets out to describe the type of place we want Basingstoke and Deane to be in the future and focus our attention on the issues we will need to address to achieve this.

In order to provide a picture of what we are doing we will prepare and routinely review an Actions Summary document. This will summarise the actions proposed in the various documents that support the Community Strategy.

The Actions Summary will help us be confident that we are doing what is necessary to achieve the future the Community Strategy describes for us.

Outcomes Framework

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Theme 1
A Safe Borough

Outcome
Our Borough is a place where people feel safe and at ease.

How will we know when we have achieved this?

S1 Residents have increased confidence in feeling safe
S2 Levels of crime are reduced
S3 Levels of antisocial behaviour are reduced
S4 The Borough has a positive self-image
S5 Ways to prevent accidents and crime are routinely considered by all organisations

Example work: The Community Safety Forum is a very active partnership in the LSP and coordinates the delivery of the Community Safety Strategy. This forum developed the Community Wardens Scheme which has recently been expanded and is planning further work to improve community safety and reduce the fear of crime.
Theme 2
A Healthy Borough

Outcome
In our Borough everyone takes a role in improving and maintaining good health; and healthy life-styles are promoted.

How will we know when we have achieved this?

H1 Access to good health and social care advice, treatment and facilities is improved for everyone
H2 Homes and communities are improved in ways that reduce causes of poor health
H3 Health and healthcare for older people is improved
H4 Work-life balance is improved across the community
H5 High levels of participation in cultural and leisure activities are maintained for all age groups

Example work: The LSP plans to develop a partnership to promote healthy lifestyles. The Older Persons Partnership is looking at ways to help people return to their homes more quickly after spending time in hospital.
Theme 3
A Learning and Creative Borough

Outcome
Our Borough is a community where learning opportunities exist for everyone and creativity is encouraged.

How will we know when we have achieved this?

L1  Provision for quality early years activities and childcare is increased
L2  Access to a wider range of opportunities for learning and creativity is increased through improved information, reduced costs and access via a wide range of locations
L3  Support for adults to improve basic skills is increased
L4  Support for young people is increased through good schools and colleges and other appropriate learning opportunities
L5  There is an integrated approach to community learning in partnership with providers and the business community

Example work: The LSP has identified the need to develop a partnership to encourage people to continue developing their skills throughout their lives by building on the ‘Partnership for Success’ Strategy.
Theme 4
A Prosperous Borough

Outcome
Our Borough is a place where people can and will want to work, and a variety of urban and rural businesses thrive.

How will we know when we have achieved this?

P1 Individual and workforce skills are increased
P2 Key workers are attracted to, and retained in, the area
P3 The wider world has a positive image of Basingstoke
P4 Barriers to employment and investment are reduced
P5 The Borough has thriving town centres which contribute to a broad economic base

Example work: A prosperous business sector and the well-being of the wider community are intrinsically related. Strengthening the links between the two is essential if we are to take forward the aspirations in the Community Strategy. Promoting Basingstoke as a place to live and work is a key part of maintaining the prosperity of the Borough.
Theme 5
An Environment that’s good to live in.

Outcome
People have high quality, affordable homes and value our Borough as a clean, attractive and varied place to live.

How will we know when we have achieved this?

E1  The variety and quality of the built environment is protected, enhanced and well designed
E2  The diversity and quality of the natural environment is protected and enhanced
E3  Access to affordable and appropriate housing is improved
E4  Residents can access the services they need without the use of a car
E5  We are effectively using our natural resources and minimising waste and pollution
E6  Access to the countryside and public open space is improved

Example work: It is essential that we consider how the Borough will grow if we are to provide all the services that our communities need, at the same time as protecting our heritage and our natural environment for future generations. The Local Development Framework (LDF) will set out how we plan for this to happen; taking into consideration things like climate change and population changes. The partnerships that make up the LSP will help ensure this framework takes account of the views of the wider community.
Theme 6
An Inclusive Borough with Strong Communities

Outcome
Everyone has the opportunity to lead their lives the way they want, feel they belong to the Borough’s communities and can influence decision-making that affects their lives.

How will we know when we have achieved this?

C1 Levels of deprivation and poor housing at a neighbourhood level are reduced

C2 Communities and individuals are routinely involved in the planning of both the physical environment and services that affect their lives

C3 Signposting and access to support agencies is improved

C4 Neighbourhoods have strong networks which are accessible to all residents and help them take responsibility for their communities

C5 There is a thriving voluntary and community sector that benefits the community

C6 Diversity is celebrated and discrimination is eliminated

Example work: Ensuring that everyone in the Borough has the same opportunities is the goal of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy which aims to ensure that no one is disadvantaged by where they live or where they come from.
How we developed the Strategy

The content of the original Community Strategy was based on an extensive consultation with residents and organisations in the Borough which was undertaken during 2002 and 2003. The consultation identified issues which were divided into six themes.

The review of the strategy with partners considered that these six themes were still relevant, but that we needed to be able to better describe what the outcomes in the themes would look like and what we were doing to achieve them.

The review also takes reference from the Borough Profile which provides a statistical analysis of the Borough. It helps us understand how the Borough of Basingstoke and Deane compares to other local authority areas and, more importantly, how different parts of the Borough compare to each other. It also helps us understand what it is we will need to do to achieve the outcomes we have identified.

A picture of the Borough

Geography

- The Borough covers over 245 square miles of which more than 90% is agricultural or woodland.
- Nearly a third of the Borough is part of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). There are other important natural sites in the Borough for both landscape and wildlife, including the 19 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, such as the River Test.
Population

- The Borough population was estimated at 157,000 in 2006
- 94,000 (60%) of the population live in Basingstoke town
- 63,000 (40%) of the population live in the predominately rural area outside of Basingstoke town
- 24,000 (15%) of the population live in settlements of less than 3,000 people
- The population of Basingstoke is forecast to grow by 10,000 people over the next 5 years
- The Borough currently has a young age profile, however the number of over 65’s is forecast to grow by a third by 2016

Economy

- The Borough has a thriving economy
- The unemployment rate is 1.2%
- We have a local workforce of over 80,000, two thirds of whom are employed in the Borough, mainly in Basingstoke town.
- Out- commuting to work in other areas is matched by a similar level of in-commuting
- Growth industries and high technology activities are well represented in the local economy
- A higher proportion of people aged 16-74 are in work compared to most other parts of the country

Where we live

- The Borough has over 65,000 households
- Over 73% of the Borough households own their own homes
- Over 17% of the Borough households rent from Housing Associations
- Over 1000 flats have been built in Basingstoke between 2003 and 2006
- Many people not already in their own home cannot afford a mortgage or market rent
- House prices are high in relation to earnings which results in recruitment difficulties

Communities

- There are estimated to be over 1000 voluntary and community organisations in the Borough
- Pockets of deprivation exist – certain parts of the Borough are within the 20% most deprived in England in terms of crime and disorder, education and skills, and access to services.

The Borough Profile can be found on the Council website www.basingstoke.gov.uk
Key Principles of the LSP

Establishing these principles in our day to day way of working will be at the heart of the work of the LSP.

We will:

Build strong relationships
We believe that only by building relationships between partners which demonstrate trust, honesty and an inclusive approach can we effectively work together.

Build a common purpose
We believe that working towards outcomes which we have clearly stated and described will help us align our work and thinking, and enable us to develop a common purpose which all partners can identify with.

Learn through doing
We understand that working in partnership is not easy and that sometimes we will make mistakes. We will not let this prevent us from taking action. We believe that we can learn far more by doing than we can by talking.

Meet our responsibilities
We believe that it is only when partners take responsibility for identifying and delivering their contribution to the Community Strategy will we be able to achieve the outcomes identified in this strategy.

Monitor progress
We believe that being clear how we monitor our progress is essential if we are to deliver the outcomes described in this strategy.

Focus on delivery
We understand that what matters to the residents of the Borough is what services are available to them, rather than who delivers them or who pays for them.

Take account of the actions of others
We understand that the work of one partner will impact on the work of another and will strive to make these impacts complementary, not competitive.

Consider the future
We will take account of the needs of future generations by developing both spatial and community plans that mitigate the impact of issues such as population changes and climate change.
Community Involvement

If the Community Strategy is to be effective we will need to ensure we are involving the community directly in decisions that affect them. Some of the ways in which the community is engaged are through the:

Youth Council

Over 55s Forum

Whitchurch Association

Oakridge Project

We are working to develop more efficient mechanisms to ensure neighbourhoods and communities of interest can both influence the Community Strategy, and contribute to its delivery.

Many of the best and most cost efficient solutions to issues local communities face are to be found in the communities themselves. We will only hear these ideas if we have developed ways of listening to our residents’ views.
Progress and success stories from the last three years

How the LSP has exerted influence on behalf of our communities

In the last three years the LSP has developed a good reputation. Bodies such as the county council, regional and national government are interested in our views.

During 2005 our LSP:

• Developed a response to the South East Plan consultation, which will determine how the region will grow and develop.

• Has been invited to be part of a working group which developed the draft guidance “Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping our Future”

• Coordinated the Borough consultation on the Children’s and Young Persons Plan (CYPP) on behalf of the County Council

These examples demonstrate how the LSP exerts influence beyond the Borough boundaries in order to help deliver the Community Strategy.

How partners in the LSP are delivering Services

Partners represented on the LSP Board have also been working to deliver services that make a difference to residents directly.

Examples from the last three years include:

Initiating the Community Warden Scheme

which aims to provide residents with a “trusted friend” who can help them find support when they need help. They act as the eyes and ears of the community, and enable the organisations represented on the LSP to respond much more quickly to issues residents identify.
Supporting the Furniture Project
which re-uses furniture and electrical goods, and in doing so reduces waste, provides work and training opportunities for disabled people and offers a cheap source of furniture and electrical goods to people in need.

Developing the 55Plus guide to essential services
in response to the consultation with older people who expressed concern that it was difficult for them to find out what opportunities and services were available to them.

These are just some of the examples of work that takes place in the Borough which contributes to not just one, but several of the outcomes identified in the Community Strategy.
Doing things differently.

The LSP recognises that to deliver the Community Strategy we have to work in new ways. One of the dilemmas that we have faced is how do we talk with people in ways that captures their attention and helps them express their views.

One of the approaches we have taken is to use audience participation equipment so that we can capture the views of people attending events immediately and respond to them. Using the same equipment that is used in the TV show “Who wants to be a millionaire?” we are able to pose questions to an audience and immediately see their answers.

A presenter can ask a question of the audience at the beginning or end of an event, or even in the middle of a presentation.

Members of the audience can then respond to the questions using an electronic voting box.

The views of the audience can then be displayed for all to see.
In this way speakers immediately receive feedback from the audience. This influences the discussion at the event. 

The feedback the equipment captures has proved to be very useful, especially on occasions when the feedback has not been fully supportive of the ideas being presented. It has encouraged further debate and led to proposals being changed.

How do you find out more about the LSP and the Community Strategy?

Visit the LSP website: www.basingstokelsp.org

The LSP website provides details on:

- LSP Board members – contact details and a profile of each member
- The Actions Summary – what we are doing to deliver the Community Strategy
- A Guide to the LSP – More details on how LSPs work
- LSP meetings and events – dates, times, papers and feedback
- Other partnerships in the LSP family – what they do and how to contact them

Contact details for the LSP Manager and LSP Chair

LSP Manager
01256 845243
Lsp.manager@basingstoke.gov.uk

LSP Chair
Lsp.chair@basingstoke.gov.uk

This strategy is available in different formats such as large print, spoken word and braille on request.
The Six Themes of the Community Strategy

A Safe Borough
Our Borough is a place where people feel safe and at ease.

A Healthy Borough
In our Borough everyone takes a role in improving and maintaining good health; and healthy life-styles are promoted.

A Learning and Creative Borough
Our Borough is a community where learning opportunities exist for everyone and creativity is encouraged.

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Our Borough is a place where people can and will want to work, and a variety of urban and rural businesses thrive.

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