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PARTNERSHIP TOWARDS
EXCELLENCE – THE SUSTAINABLE
COMMUNITY STRATEGY FOR
WORCESTERSHIRE

SECOND EDITION 2008 – 2013



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SECTION ONE – THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY FOR WORCESTERSHIRE

1.1. What is the Draft Sustainable Community Strategy for Worcestershire?

This document is the second edition of “Partnership Towards Excellence - A Community Strategy for Worcestershire 2003 – 2013”. The job of the sustainable community strategy¹ is to set out the strategic vision for the future of Worcestershire and to focus on activity needed in the short term (2008 – 2013) to make it happen. The aim is to improve the quality of life of people who live, visit or work in the County.

Crime, health, housing, jobs, learning, the environment and transport are some of the big issues that this strategy is concerned with. It deals with these issues at a *countywide* or wider regional or national level. In developing the county wide strategy we are not starting from scratch – we are “refreshing” and updating the work that was set out in “Partnership Towards Excellence” and building on a firm evidence base (see Appendices 1 and 2) to identify the priority issues that will need to be tackled over the next 5 years.

Each District and Borough Local Strategic Partnership has produced a community strategy that will tackle issues at the more local neighbourhood or District level. The 151 Town and Parish Councils, particularly those 48 (at October 2007) that have produced or are developing Parish Plans, are working at a more local level still. Parish Plans will have influenced the District Community Strategies, which have in turn influenced this county Strategy. The idea is that we identify where and how issues are best addressed, and encourage action and decision making at the most local level possible.

To emphasise this commonality of purpose each of the district sustainable community strategies in Worcestershire will address the following six themes:

- Communities that are safe and feel safe
- A better environment for today and tomorrow
- Economic success that is shared by all
- Improving health and well being
- Meeting the needs of children and young people
- Stronger communities - covering a range of issues including housing, culture and volunteering

Section 5 sets out the 30 priority outcomes that we will tackle together under these six themes in the years ahead.

¹ In this document when we say Community Strategy or Strategy we mean this Sustainable Community Strategy

1.2. What is the Worcestershire Partnership?

This Strategy has been produced by the Worcestershire Partnership. This is the countywide Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for Worcestershire.

The Worcestershire Partnership brings together local government, public services such as health, learning providers, police and probation, voluntary and community organisations and local businesses within Worcestershire. The work of the Partnership is based on a shared common purpose and good will. These agencies across the public, voluntary and private sectors – have committed themselves to achieve the vision and priorities that this strategy sets out.

Partnership working is not new in Worcestershire – and over time it has matured and developed to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose in a changing environment. You can find out more about the membership of the Worcestershire Partnership and how it is organised at Appendix 3.

Q1. Do we need more information about the Worcestershire Partnership here?

1.3. What is the Worcestershire Partnership's vision for the county?

Vision

Together we have developed a vision for Worcestershire. This vision is based on what Worcestershire residents told us was important to them in making our county a great place to visit, work or live in:

A County with safe, cohesive, healthy and inclusive communities, a strong and diverse economy and a valued and cherished environment
--

Values

The Worcestershire Partnership has agreed the following values. These values apply to all partners in their work for the Worcestershire Partnership. The values underpin everything we do. In order to join the Partnership individuals and groups must agree to subscribe to the values below.

In all our work and planning we will:

- Provide for the needs of all groups in society
- Treat people with equality and value diversity

- Build strong, cohesive communities and promote good community relations
- Remove barriers that prevent individuals from reaching their full potential
- Intervene early to prevent problems from becoming entrenched
- Take account of the needs of future generations
- Actively seek ways in which to improve people's health and well-being
- Work in partnership with others
- Provide high quality and value for money services
- Involve and listen to local people and local communities – these could be geographical communities or communities of interest
- Promote Worcestershire on the regional, national, European and international stage and maximise the opportunities available to the county.

1.4. How is this second edition of the Community Strategy different?

Since Worcestershire's Community Strategy was published in 2003 there have been changes to the county or new issues have emerged that have resulted in shifts in priorities.

This version of the strategy for example has a specific theme on children and young people. At central government level Local Area Agreements (LAAs) have been introduced that act as the delivery plan for the Community Strategy (see Section 12 for more information on LAAs).

The Partnership has also had considerable successes in tackling some of the problems that residents had highlighted in 2003. For example

- Worcestershire's Greenspaces and Community Partnership were awarded £3.4 million from the Government's Liveability Fund to carry out projects to improve public open spaces throughout the county
- £1.2 million has been drawn down from Big Lottery Fund to provide high quality play opportunities for children and young people in the county – picking up on a consistent priority for our residents of improving activities for teenagers
- Neighbourhood policing has been introduced across the county – bringing police officers closer to the communities that they serve
- We have developed joint standards across the county for street cleaning, litter control and investigation and clearing of fly tipping – eliminating any "postcode lottery" and responding to residents' concerns
- Bus passenger numbers have increased
- We have produced a "County Green Directory" which is full of tips and contacts to help us all live a greener lifestyle

- We have secured £725,000 from the £1 million available from Advantage West Midlands to implement our recovery plan from the flooding in Summer 2007
- “Destination Worcestershire” is a partnership initiative which brought together the tourism functions of the County Council and District Councils and key partners from the private sector.
- The incidence of coronary heart disease and cancer has reduced
- There has been an upward trend of pupils aged 16 gaining 5 or more GCSE grades A* - C, 2006/7 results showed that 57.6% achieved this result – the highest ever

You can find out more about what we have achieved by looking at the Partnership’s first Local Area Agreement. In some areas (like raising educational achievement, public transport and waste) we want to do more and so you will find that we continue our activity in these areas through this community strategy.

Q2. Is this section helpful? Do you have any suggestions of examples we could include here?
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1.5. How can you influence the draft Sustainable Community Strategy?

This document is intended for the many agencies, organisations and community groups that will shape and deliver the Strategy. At a later stage an “easy to read” summary version of the final Strategy will be produced.

The Strategy is still a “draft” and therefore open to change and amendment and your contribution and comments are invited and welcomed. The purpose of the draft document is to stimulate debate and further development of partnership actions for agreement by partners over the next 3 months. We have included some specific questions where your views would be particularly valuable.

There are a number of ways that you can contribute to the development of this draft:

- By joining in a workshop at the Worcestershire Assembly
- By submitting written comments on this Strategy², particularly your views on the consultation questions that we have highlighted (see back page for contact details)
- By emailing us on scsconsultation@worcestershire.gov.uk
- By logging your views on the consultation forum on our website <http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk/forum/>

Consultation closes on 14th February 2008

The comments submitted as part of this consultation process will be carefully considered by the Worcestershire Partnership Thematic Groups and the Management Group. You will be able to see the Management Group's response on our website.

We will also be carrying out an exercise to "rural proof" this Strategy and an Equalities Impact Assessment – to ensure that the needs and aspirations of all of Worcestershire's communities have been fully considered.

In November 2007 the Government will publish for consultation draft statutory guidance on "place shaping". This wide-ranging guidance refers to Community Strategies, and some of the issues that we have raised in this draft. We will be assessing the impact of the draft guidance on the Strategy and making any necessary changes.

The Worcestershire Partnership Board will decide on the final structure and content of the Community Strategy.

² The Worcestershire Partnership will hold the information that you provide. Responses from groups and organisations may be published on our website, individual responses will be anonymized prior to publication.

SECTION TWO - SHAPING THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

2.1 What are the factors that influenced this Sustainable Community Strategy?

The diagram below illustrates the many factors that have shaped this Strategy. These factors are further explained in this Section and in Section 3.

Figure 1 – Factors that have influenced Worcestershire’s Community Strategy



Q3. Can you think of any other factors that should have shaped this Strategy and which should be included in this diagram?

2.2 How did we find out Worcestershire's residents views?

The Worcestershire Partnership developed the six key themes of this Community Strategy in response to what Worcestershire residents have told us is important to them. There are a number of ways that we have found this out.

The Worcestershire wide **Citizens Panel** is a sample of about two thousand residents who are canvassed for their views on a wide range of issues. The findings of the Panel are "weighted" to ensure that they are reflective of Worcestershire's population. The Partnership commissioned Panel surveys in 2003 and 2005³ following the community strategy themes in order to identify and track "quality of life" issues in the county. A further survey in June 2007 asked some key questions to support this SCS review⁴. You will find reference to the Panel findings throughout this Strategy.

In addition this countywide strategy has built on the work of District LSPs and of the **District Community Strategies**⁵ – these have been produced using local knowledge and involvement, including that provided by the **Parish planning process**. District LSPs identified the priorities they believed this countywide Strategy should reflect. This has ensured that the local perspective has influenced this Strategy.

The findings of the **Best Value General Satisfaction Survey 2006** showed that across the county residents identified the level of crime, health services, clean streets, education provision and affordable decent housing as being the most important factors in making the county a good place to live. Further information about residents' priorities for improvement can be found in Section 2.4.10

2.3 How did we find out Worcestershire Councillors' views?

Worcestershire has a total of 285 elected councillors across the county council and six district councils in the county (there are 36 councillors who have been elected to both the County Council and a District Council). In addition we have 1,350 Parish and Town Councillors.

Councillors have a specific role in the Partnership. They provide a bridge between the councils, the partnerships and the people that they serve and are in a strong position to advocate community concerns

³ February 2003 and May 2005 Citizens Panel Surveys

⁴ June Citizens' Panel survey, a total of 1352 responses representing a response rate of 68%.

⁵ District LSPs have identified local priorities that they believe this countywide strategy should address

and issues. Their role is unique as they are democratically elected **by** communities to work **for** communities.

Councillors have a community leadership role - bringing people together, developing a vision for their area and delivering improvements in the quality of life for local people. In some circumstances councillors may need to lead and challenge communities as well as support them, for example to counter prejudice and to build social inclusion. Community leadership is often delivered through partnership, particularly when it is tackling cross-cutting issues.

Councillors' community leadership roles have been specifically acknowledged by the Worcestershire Partnership. All council leaders have a seat on the **Worcestershire Partnership Board** and parish and town councillors are represented through the County Association of Local Councils (the umbrella body for parish and town councils) on the Board and Partnership Task Groups.

In addition, one County Councillor and one District councillor sit on each of the Theme Groups. The Partnership has recently established **Member Reference Groups** (consisting of both county and district councillors) for each of the themes of this Community Strategy. This ensures that the work of the partnership is influenced by councillors' democratic mandate.

District Councillors' priorities for this Community Strategy have been reflected through District LSPs. County Councillors were asked for input and priorities through a briefing session. The Citizens Panel survey was also sent to all District and County Councillors to canvas views.

2.4 The Worcestershire "Story of Place"

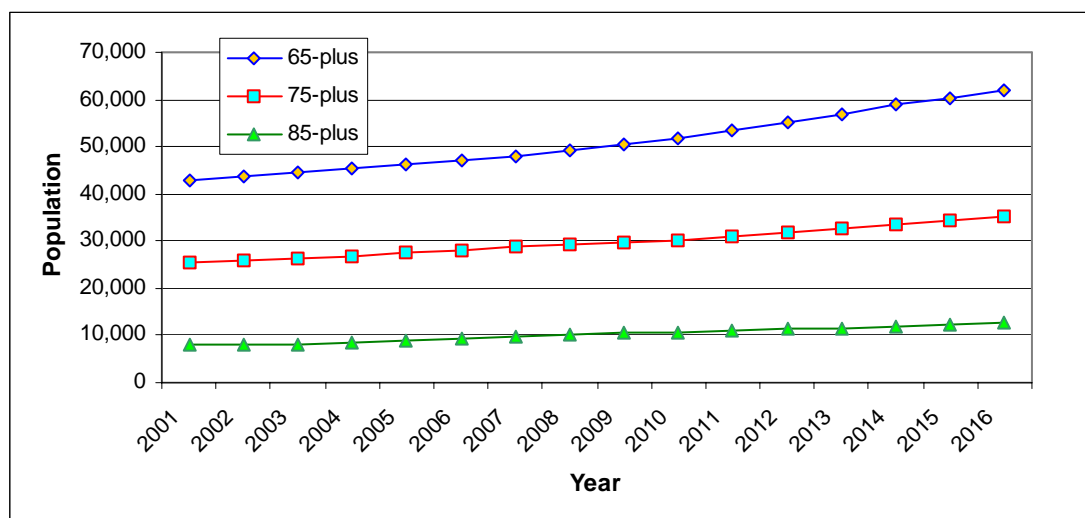
The County of Worcestershire is located in the heart of England. It comprises six Districts: Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Redditch, Worcester City, Wychavon and Wyre Forest. It has an outstanding and rich natural environment. It is home to spectacular features such as the Malvern Hills, and a large part of the county consists of a combination of fields, orchards, woodlands, meadow, ancient forests and rivers. Though agricultural land and open countryside dominate the landscape, 64% of the total population lives in urban areas. Worcestershire is adjacent to the major West Midlands conurbations and has generally good access to and from the national road network.

2.4.1 Population change

The population of Worcestershire is expected to increase by about 38,000 (or 7 per cent) by 2026 (Office National Statistics (ONS), 2004-based projections) to approximately 590,000. This compares with an estimated increase of about 10 per cent in England over the same time

period. Specifically, as is the case nationally, the most significant population growth in Worcestershire will be in the older age groups. The 65 and older population is expected to rise by 56 per cent to 151,000, with the 85+ population almost doubling to just over 24,000. The Centre for Census & Survey Research (CCSR) at the University of Manchester has undertaken a study examining the potential future change in the population of the County with a Limiting Long-Term illness (LLTI).

Figure 2 - Projected Numbers of Older People in Worcestershire with Limiting Long-Term Illness (LLTI) by age, 2001-16



Source: CCSR, University of Manchester

Figure 2 shows up to 2016 the number of people in the County aged 65-and-over with a LLTI is projected to rise to around 67,800, an increase of around 45% on 2001 levels. For the 85 plus age group, the increase between 2001-16 is set to rise at a rate of almost 60%, as this age group has the highest proportional population increase (see Section 9 for further information). Analysis by the Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Social Research, commissioned by Worcestershire County Council, indicates that the rate of increase in LLTI in the County was much greater than the national comparison since 2001. More than 160,000 people in Worcestershire may have some type of LLTI by 2026 if the same rate of growth continues. This will have major resource implications for public services.

In comparison, the 0-19 population is expected to fall by 9 per cent by 2026, whilst the corresponding projection for the 10-19 years age group predicts a 13 per cent reduction. This could have implications for the number of school places needed, and there is a need to develop strategies to retain school leavers in the County. In September 2005, University College Worcester was renamed the University of Worcester, after gaining full university status. It is the only Higher Education Institution in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, and is one of the fastest growing universities in the country.

An increasing population will have an impact on the County, creating additional demands for housing, along with increased pressures on existing infrastructure and public services. As an example, the Regional Spatial Strategy is currently being revised (see Section 3.1 for further detail). Worcestershire has higher than average house prices, but suffers from a major shortfall in the availability of affordable housing.

2.4.2 Deprivation

Worcestershire may not be regarded as having high levels of deprivation overall, but parts of the County do experience significant levels of deprivation. Worcester City is in the top half of most deprived local authorities in terms of education and crime (2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation for England).

Eleven areas in Worcester are in the top 20% most deprived nationally, and two areas are in the top 10%. These are the areas of Old Warndon and southwest Gorse Hill. The two areas experience multiple deprivation associated with income, employment, ill health, education, and crime, and are ranked as particularly deprived for education, being in the most deprived 1% of areas nationally. Areas of Challenge also cover Oldington & Foley Park, Horsefair, Broadwaters & Greenhill, Pickersleigh and Batchley, Greenlands and Central Redditch.

Deprivation concerns are not solely linked to the urban parts of Worcestershire. Some rural parts of the County are within the top 1 per cent most deprived areas in England in terms of geographical access to services. These include wards within Malvern Hills District Council at Lindridge, Teme Valley, the Tenbury area and Longdon.

2.4.3 Ethnicity

Table 1 – Ethnic Population of Worcestershire

Ethnic Group	Percentage of Total population – Worcestershire (%)	Percentage of Total population – England (%)
White-British	95.5	87
White-Irish	0.8	1.3
Other White	1.3	2.7
Mixed	0.7	1.3
Indian	0.3	2.1
Pakistani	0.5	1.4
Bangladeshi	0.2	0.6
Other Asian	0.1	0.5
Black or Black British	0.3	2.3
Chinese	0.2	0.5
Other Ethnic Group	0.1	0.4

Source: 2001 census

Around 2.5 per cent of the population of Worcestershire is made up of black and minority ethnic communities (non-White); this has increased from 1.5 per cent in 1991. By 2011, it is estimated that black and minority ethnic communities will account for 4.3 per cent of the population of Worcestershire (based on 2001 Census results and fertility, mortality and migration statistics for each ethnic group). The Asian community is currently the largest ethnic minority community in Worcestershire, making up 1.1 per cent of the population. The Pakistani population accounts for 0.5 per cent of the county's total population.

While not recorded by the Census, an increasing number of partners in Worcestershire are including separate categories for Gypsies Romany and Irish Travellers on their Ethnic Monitoring Forms. Gypsies and Travellers may be one of the oldest and largest Minority Ethnic Communities in Worcestershire and in the 2007 Citizens Panel survey were identified as the ethnic group most likely to face prejudice and discrimination.

In recent years there has been significant international migration into Worcestershire, particularly from the A8 European Union Accession countries. Since 2002/03, a total of 12,000 new resident migrants have been registered for National Insurance. The largest numbers are in Wychavon, Worcester and Redditch. Over the last 12 months (2006/07), more than half of the migrants have been from Poland and about three quarters were from Eastern Europe. Applicants from areas such as Portugal and India, which formed the highest proportion of registrations in 2002-03, have stayed fairly constant over this time-period. It should be noted that these figures show only **new** applicants for NINOs in each year, and do **not** show the length of time that applicants will actually stay in this country. It is entirely possible that applicants from earlier years have now departed. Migrant workers are bringing proven and welcome economic benefits to the County, and we will aim to maximise the use of this skilled migrant labour. By contrast, this also has to be considered in terms of how these groups can become successfully integrated, both within our indigenous communities and in the workforce (see Section 4.3.2 for further information).

2.4.4 Community Safety

Since 2003/04, crime reduction in Worcestershire has been amongst the highest in the country. In the financial year April 2006 – March 2007, the total number of recorded crimes fell by 2.1 percent in Worcestershire, compared with the previous 12 months.

The British Crime Survey (BCS) Comparator crimes (those crimes deemed to be the most likely to be reported) have fallen by 0.5

percent. Sexual offences fell by over 14 percent, whilst thefts of vehicles dropped by nearly 12.5 percent and racially aggravated offences were over 11 percent down. Some types of crime have however increased. Robberies went up by 22 percent whilst common assaults increased by 15.2 percent and drug offences rose by nearly 13 percent. (The rise in common assault is probably partly because of a change by West Mercia Police in the way they record this type of crime, and is not confined to Worcestershire). Although recorded crimes continued to fall in Worcestershire last year, this trend has flattened in recent years and it may be difficult to sustain in future.

2.4.5 Health

Worcestershire residents have generally good health, and life expectancy is increasing. Nevertheless there are a number of health issues that need to be tackled. We need to improve health and well being overall, and close the gap between the health of the worst-off and best-off in Worcestershire, where there are marked variations. There is a need to encourage and facilitate healthier lifestyles, developing projects with a focus on the most disadvantaged areas of Worcestershire (see Section 9.2. for further details).

In recognising that population growth in Worcestershire will be in the older age groups, we must support the commissioning and redesign of integrated older adults' services including preventive services. Worcestershire is currently producing a Joint Strategic Needs Analysis for Health and Well-being for the County Council and the Primary Care Trust.

2.4.6 Educational Attainment

The tables below show the most recent information on performance at the Key Stages by schoolchildren in Worcestershire. These results (from 2006) indicate that achievement in Worcestershire is, in general, slightly above the average for the maintained sector in England.

Table 2 - Percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 in Worcestershire and England, 2006⁶

Key Stage 1	Reading	Writing	Mathematics	Science
Worcestershire	87	84	92	91
England	84	81	90	89
Key Stage 2	English		Mathematics	Science
Worcestershire	80		75	89
England	79		75	86
Key Stage 3	English		Mathematics	Science
Worcestershire	74		78	76
England	73		77	72

⁶ All DfES data for 2006 is **provisional**; this is the latest data available at November 2007.

Historical data (shown in Table 3) indicates that, since 2002, the performance of Worcestershire children at Key Stage 1 has been slightly stronger than national performance. (This trend also applies, in general terms, to Key Stages 2 and 3).

Table 3: Percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels⁷ at Key Stage 1 in Worcestershire and England, 2001 to 2005

Subject	Worcs	England	Worcs	England	Worcs	England	Worcs	England	Worcs	England
Reading	84	84	85	84	86	84	86	85	87	85
Writing	86	86	88	86	83	81	82	81	85	82
Maths	90	91	91	90	92	90	91	90	92	91
Year	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	

Source: DfES, 2007

2.4.7 Economy

Total employment levels in Worcestershire are projected to increase by 0.2 per cent per annum during the period 2005-2010 and by 0.4 per cent per annum for 2010-2015.⁸ Forecasts suggest that between 2005-2010 there will be significant growth in the electricity, gas and water industry, whereas, agriculture will see a large decrease. In terms of occupation, between 2005-2010, there will be a forecast increase in personal, sales and customer service occupations as well as professional occupations. By contrast a decrease is expected in administrative, clerical and elementary occupations.

Between 2004 and 2005, there was a 2.4 per cent decrease in the number of jobs in the county with changes in all industries⁹. Most significantly, manufacturing has decreased by 13.6 per cent, whereas, banking, finance and insurance jobs have increased by 8.8 per cent.

Almost 15 per cent of Worcestershire's residential workforce is self-employed, an increase of 1.7 per cent since 2001¹⁰. It is also estimated that 15.1 per cent of the residential workforce are classed as home workers, over 3 per cent higher than regional and national figures¹¹. The vast majority of home workers use different places to work but use their home as a base.

Although overall Worcestershire has relatively good rates of skills achievement, there are specific geographical areas that are significantly below the national level of attainment. Considerable work will be required to ensure that sustainable employment is achievable for these locations. We will increase skill levels in the County's

⁸ Cambridge Econometrics, March 2007

⁹ Annual Business Inquiry 2004, 2005 DEFRA 2004,2005

¹⁰ Annual Population Survey

¹¹ Labour Force Survey 2005

workforce by securing greater numbers of NVQ qualifications at levels 2 & 3 and delivering programmes such as Skills for Life. This is critical if we wish to maintain high levels of employment in Worcestershire.

The average residents based household income for Worcestershire is £34,737, which is over £4,000 more than the West Midlands average and £500 greater than the figure for England¹². In 2006, people who lived in Worcestershire and worked full-time (either in or out of the county) earned £904 gross per annum more than the West Midlands average. By contrast those who worked full-time in Worcestershire earned £1,698 gross per annum less than the West Midlands average. Census data also tells us over 69,000 people travelled out of the county to work, compared to almost 37,000 people who travelled into the county to work

Claimant count rates (unemployment) in Worcestershire remain consistently below those recorded regionally and nationally¹³. The long-term claimant count rate for Worcestershire in June 2007 also follows this trend.

A case can always be made for directing resources to areas of higher than average unemployment. There are also sound arguments for supporting regeneration initiatives such as Bromsgrove town centre redevelopment. On the other hand there are a number of locations offering significant economic opportunities within the County (see 3.4 for further details).

2.4.8 Worklessness

Worklessness is a less familiar term than unemployment and extends beyond the unemployed. It includes those who are economically inactive, that is, those who are of working age not in: work; full time education or training; and not actively seeking work. Approximately 57,600¹⁴ of Worcestershire's residents of working age are classified as economically inactive, which equates to 17.5 per cent of the working age population. Reducing levels of worklessness is a real challenge for the County.

2.4.9 Environment

Worcestershire is one of the most environmentally diverse counties in Britain. It has a very varied geology and landform. The County encompasses the southern limit of many northern plant and animal species, and the northern limit of species found in the south, and is therefore exceptionally rich ecologically. Some of Worcestershire's landscapes, such as the Malvern Hills have been recognised nationally

¹² Based on PayCheck CACI Household Income Model

¹³ ONS June 2007

¹⁴ Job Centre Plus, Department for Work and Pensions 2007

as being amongst the most notable in the country and have been designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, giving them added protection against inappropriate development.

Our landscape cannot be taken for granted. The unseasonal and significant flooding that occurred in Summer 2007 has adversely impacted upon the County's residents and economy. This flooding was not just fluvial flooding (i.e. rivers bursting their banks) but also resulted in heavy rainfall and flash floods. This summer flooding was quite exceptional, and overall, approximately 6,000 properties were affected and approximately 3,500 residential properties were severely flooded. The economic cost to the County was estimated at £6.4 million per week during the height of the flooding.

Climate change has become a major issue, but at least part of the adverse impact of the exceptional summer floods was the result of human intervention. Worcestershire will address flooding as one of its priorities (see Section 4.1). It will be important to balance the demand for new development with the need to protect the natural environment.

2.4.10. Worcestershire Priorities – Best Value Satisfaction Surveys

The results below are based on the combined responses to the County Council Best Value Satisfaction survey and the six District Council Best Value Satisfaction Surveys, which were carried out in September and October 2006. In total, the results are based on 9,404 individual responses.

The Best Value Satisfaction survey asked respondents to identify their priorities for improvement in their local area. For residents in Worcestershire, road and pavement repairs are the top priority for improvement, followed by improving activities for teenagers and the level of traffic congestion. The top two priorities have remained the same since the survey was last conducted in 2003/04, however the third priority for improvement in 2003/04 was crime and is now traffic congestion. There are differences in priorities at the local level. Road and pavement repairs dominate as a priority in Wychavon, and tend to be the priority for many rural areas in Worcestershire. Traffic congestion is the top priority in urban areas such as Worcester City, Stourport and Evesham. Reducing crime is a priority for Worcester City and Redditch.

2.4.11. SWOT Analysis

In drawing together this "story of place" for Worcestershire, the Worcestershire Partnership undertook a SWOT analysis, identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the county. The results of this are shown in the table below.

TABLE 4 – WORCESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outstanding natural environment • Low crime rates • Diverse base of voluntary sector services • Mix of urban and rural • Proximity to both Birmingham and remote rural England • Good access to and from national road network • Principle disease trends are downwards, general good health and increasing life expectancy • High quality primary care infrastructure • Excellent range of opportunities to maintain health and wellness • Skilled, stable workforce • Strong sense of place in local communities • Good track record of partnership working • <i>Relatively</i> low traffic congestion • Central Technology Belt • Historical 'honey pot' e.g. Worcester Cathedral, Malvern Priority, Worcester Commandery, etc. • Below average unemployment rates • Low levels of income deprivation and child poverty in some districts • High level of grassroots community planning (Parish Plans) activity • People generally get on well together – good community cohesion • General quality of life is high 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate infrastructure to serve the proposed RSS additional housing demands and demands on local resources and services • Deprivation and poverty challenges in specific geographical areas, including rural areas • High cost and poor provision of public transport and limited access in some areas, particularly rural areas • Higher than average house prices and lack of affordable housing • Relatively low-wage economy • Poor rail links • Lack of identifiable Worcestershire 'brand' • Poor retailing provision • Poor youth provision • Few opportunities for art and cultural events in some districts • Under-developed tourism profile

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximising the use of skilled migrant labour • Developing businesses in the Central Technology Belt, including Qinetiq • Higher education opportunities, including expansion of the University of Worcester • Opportunities to grow businesses and attract entrepreneurs • Improvement of rail links, e.g. opportunities presented by Norton Parkway • Develop innovative approaches to improving and sustaining services in the most rural localities • Mobilise community enterprise to deliver neighbourhood services • Use good partnership track record to create new and nimble public bodies planning and commissioning local services • Develop partnership working around the South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy • Development of Worcester’s river frontage for leisure and tourism purposes • Tourism and heritage opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergence of new risks to health that are lifestyle-based, e.g. obesity and binge drinking • Increased risk of fluvial and localised flooding • Increasing elderly population • Inadequate transport infrastructure • Loss of intellectual resources as people migrate out of the county • Danger of becoming a dormitory county between Birmingham and Bristol • Consequences of poor rail links to London • Under-funding of public services • Emergence of global/local public health risks from climate change and pandemic disease • Lack of starter units for new enterprises • Lack (or confusion) of availability of business start-up packages • Balancing new development with protecting the natural environment

The above represents an initial view of Worcestershire’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. There will be further work done on this analysis at the Worcestershire Assembly meeting – and through the course of the consultation process.

- Q4. Can you recognise Worcestershire from the “Story” set out here?**
- Q5. Is there any other information that should be included**
- Q6. Do you agree with the points made in the SWOT analysis?**
- Q7. Do you have any points that you feel should be included in the SWOT analysis?**

2.5 Relationship Between The Community Strategy And Other Key Plans And Strategies

In putting together the Community Strategy we have had regard to the key plans and strategies for the County. You can see the full list at Appendix 2.

This demonstrates that in preparing this Strategy we have had regard to: -

- 36 National plans, strategies and documents
- 16 Regional plans, strategies and documents
- 5 Sub Regional plans, strategies and documents
- 51 Worcestershire plans, strategies and documents and
- 15 District and local plans, strategies and documents.

Q8. Do you know of any other plans, strategies or documents that should be included in Appendix 2?

SECTION THREE - THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND SPATIAL AND GEOGRAPHIC PLANS

3.1 Spatial Planning In Worcestershire

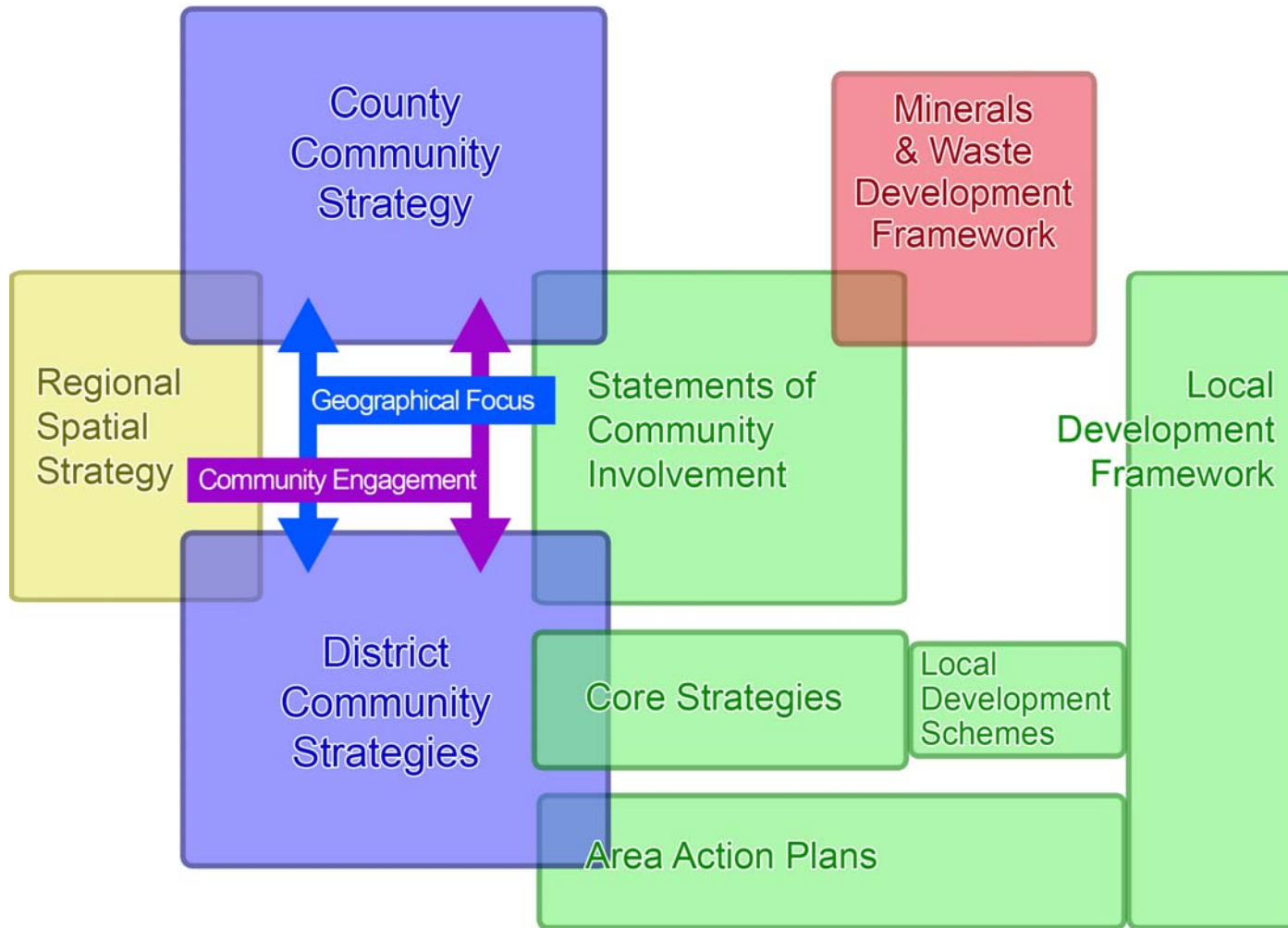
This Community Strategy is about the vision for the future of the county, covering the big issues over the next years, and inevitably these will have a spatial dimension. If for example we are making plans for our economy, considering future employment and the need to bring targeted industries to the county, expanding the University in Worcester or considering the need for new and affordable housing, health facilities and schools then all these facilities need to be located somewhere – and that is the role of spatial planning.

The diagram on the next page shows the relationship between these spatial plans and Worcestershire's Community Strategies. This shows how they are inter-connected. The rest of this Section tells you more.

Q9. Is this diagram helpful in describing these relationships?

In the future the Government proposes to merge regional spatial strategies and economic strategies – creating even greater synergies between these linked issues.

FIGURE 3 - RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPATIAL PLANS AND COMMUNITY STRATEGIES



3.2.1 The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)

In 2004 the Government introduced a new planning system to manage how developments take place across the country. **Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS)** set out the broad spatial planning strategy for how a region should look in 10 – 15 years time. Worcestershire is part of the West Midlands region.

The West Midlands Regional Assembly (WMRA) published the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy in June 2004. It is the statutory framework for development within the West Midlands Region until 2021 and beyond. It identifies the key challenges facing the Region and sets out policies designed to tackle them. It is also taking a closer look at some issues in more detail – this is being approached in three phases.

Phase One focused on the Black Country. Phase Two directly impacts on Worcestershire and focuses on a range of issues including housing figures, employment land, transport and waste, as well as which towns and cities should be the focus for development.

In January 2007 WMRA produced the “RSS Phase Two Revisions Options Consultation”. This presents a number of key issues for the county, and some options as to how these are addressed: -

- **Level of housing growth** - The West Midlands Regional Assembly (WMRA) is preparing a Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). It has identified a Preferred Option for the level of housing growth to be achieved in Worcestershire between 2006 and 2026 of 36,600 dwellings. This is to be focussed on Worcester and Redditch, but with some provision across the whole of the County. There is considerable Government pressure to raise the Region’s housing targets even higher in order to fully meet “demand”. Worcestershire Partnership has emphasised that housing growth should meet the full range of needs of residents and the workforce, including social, affordable housing as well as executive housing. Of particular concern to the Worcestershire Partnership is the ability to provide appropriate social, community and transportation infrastructure in advance of strategic housing growth. A focus on housing numbers alone will lead to unsustainable patterns of development with attendant social and economic problems, for example poor access to jobs and services. Unsustainably high levels of growth are likely to damage Worcestershire’s environment and lead to congested travel conditions, particularly if adequate priority is not given to public transport improvements.
- **Employment Land** – The RSS Preferred Option suggests that there is a need to identify a five year “reservoir” of 96 hectares of readily available employment land across the county with an

indicative long-term supply of 288 hectares. Worcestershire Partnership has highlighted the need to ensure that the allocation of new employment land must be directly related in size and location to the new housing allocations. We also want to ensure that a balanced portfolio of employment sites is available at district level to provide good quality jobs near to where people live and minimise the need for commuting. It is important that we attract employment in the growth clusters identified in the Regional Economic Strategy such as medical and environmental technologies. The Central Technology Belt stretching from Birmingham to Malvern will provide a focus for high technology industries.

- **Ensuring that growth is targeted appropriately-** The RSS Revision Preferred Option identifies Worcester City and Redditch as “Settlements of Significant Development”, with the majority of growth in the County to take place in and around Worcester. The Worcestershire Partnership wishes to ensure that the focus on Worcester City is sustainable, and does not detract from the rest of the County.

Worcestershire Partnership submitted a formal response in January 2007 to the Phase Two RSS Revisions “Strategic Options” consultation. We will again be responding to the RSS Preferred Option when it is formally published and submitted to the Secretary of State in January 2008. We will then be providing a written submission to the Public Examination into the Revisions programmed for October 2008.

The RSS Phase Three Revision is expected to commence in November 2007. It will be looking at critical rural services, recreational provision, regionally significant environmental issues and provision for gypsy and traveller sites.

We will continue to emphasise at every opportunity that Worcestershire’s economic and social needs have to be met by appropriate and sustainable levels of growth in focussed geographical locations that enhance and not threaten the unique qualities of our towns and villages and the surrounding countryside. We will also stress that climate change is of major concern to us, the more so in the light of the exceptional severe flooding events experienced in Worcestershire over the summer.

Worcestershire Partnership will act as one of the forums where these challenging and vital debates will take place, drawing on the visions and outcomes expressed in this Strategy.

Q10. Do you agree with the nature of the Worcestershire Partnership response to the RSS Phase Two Revision?
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3.2.2 Spatial Planning at the County level

Worcestershire County Council has the responsibility for producing plans on issues that affect the whole county such as the **Minerals and Waste Development Framework**. This involves considering issues over how and where we should dispose of our waste in an environmentally friendly and sustainable way. This will be set out in the **Waste Core Strategy**. Updated guidance on minerals, particularly hard rock, will also be produced. The County Council will continue to use its powers under the Planning Acts to advise the West Midlands Regional Assembly on all strategic planning matters affecting the county. It will also provide research and policy advice in key areas such as natural resources and historic built environment to support the District Council's more detailed **Local Development Frameworks**.

3.2.3 Local Development Frameworks (LDF) – Spatial Planning at the District Level

The LDF consists of a portfolio of documents (Local Development Documents or LDDs) that outline the spatial planning strategy for the local area. These documents are prepared by District Councils. They set out at District level how land will be allocated for housing, employment, and open spaces etc. Of particular importance in respect of the Community Strategy is the "Core Strategy". The **Core Strategy** plays a key role in the delivery of both district and county community strategies by setting out its spatial aspects and providing a long-term spatial vision. The Core Strategy should express those parts of the Community Strategies that relate to the development and use of land and outline that council's strategy for delivering strategic development needs including how and where new homes, schools, offices, roads, bridges and other structures will be built.

The three district Councils in South Worcestershire (Worcester City, Wychavon and Malvern Hills) are developing a Joint Core Strategy. The three northern districts and borough Councils – Wyre Forest, Bromsgrove and Redditch – are all in the process of developing their Core Strategies as individual authorities, although each of the Councils recognise the need to work together to address issues that cross administrative boundaries.

3.2.4 Statements of Community Involvement

A key component of both the Community Strategy and the spatial planning framework is community engagement and involvement. How this is achieved is set out in a **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**. These describe how councils will engage communities in the preparation of their LDDs. The aim is to ensure that

consultation begins at the earliest stage of document development so that communities are given the opportunity to participate and to make a difference to how their area develops.

In future years a partnership wide Community Engagement framework will be developed - which will influence the preparation of both community strategies and spatial plans. This initiative reflects proposals in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill / Act. The Partnership's approach to this is discussed further at Section 4.2

Q11. Is this explanation of the Spatial Planning Process helpful?

Q12. Does it explain the relationship between spatial and community strategies, and the links between them?

3.3 Examples Of Relationships Between the Community Strategy and Spatial Plans

The table below demonstrates the sorts of spatial policies that will relate to the Community Strategy Outcome Themes.

Table 5 – The relationship between Community Strategy Themes and Spatial Issues

Community Strategy Theme Outcome	Spatial Issues
Communities that are safe and feel safe	e.g. Support for CCTV or improving highway safety, housing design, housing location, sustainability, reducing car travel and tackling congestion
A better environment for today and tomorrow	e.g. Biodiversity and Geodiversity Action Plans, sustainable development, carbon neutral build
Economic success that is shared by all	e.g. Employment land such as the Stourport Road Employment Corridor, Longbridge site, Central Technology Belt and Bromsgrove Technology park
Improving health and well being	e.g. Siting of health facilities, identifying land for recreation and sport, providing integrated transport solutions and achieving a shift from car use to other sustainable modes, providing cycle paths and walkways
Meeting the needs of children and young people	e.g. Building skate parks siting of schools
Stronger communities	e.g. Siting of housing developments such as in the LDF Core Strategies e.g. making land available for an appropriate housing mix

Q13. Is this table helpful?

Q14. Can you identify alternative examples that can be included here?

3.4 Geographical Focus – Areas of challenge and opportunity

We know that quality of life in Worcestershire is generally high.

We also know that there are some specific geographical areas of the county that face **CHALLENGES**¹⁵ because of deprivation, health inequalities, worklessness or isolation from key services (see Section 2.4.2). These areas have been identified through statistical data and the District Community Strategies. They are highlighted here to signify the commitment of the Worcestershire Partnership to contribute to the improvement plans for these areas.

Warndon and Gorse Hill – Worcester City

Parts of Warndon and Gorse Hill are considered by the government to be among the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. The proposal is to develop a Community Forum for these areas bringing together public service providers and other interested parties to make a real difference.

Deprived areas in Kidderminster

Oldington and Foley Park have been identified as areas of particular disadvantage. They have been the focus of a Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder, which has been working with both residents and service providers to improve quality of life in the area. This approach has now been extended to the **Horsefair, Broadwaters, and Greenhill** areas in Kidderminster, where a partnership approach has been adopted to focus on improving quality of life.

The **Pickersleigh** area of Malvern has been the focus of a range of initiatives aimed at improving quality of life such as a family support scheme and an active residents group (the Elgar Regeneration Group). There is further work taking place to develop a “neighbourhood profile” in order to map local issues and identify future priority.

Deprived areas in Redditch

Statistical analysis has identified the **Batchley, Greenlands and Central** neighbourhoods of Redditch as areas of deprivation.

¹⁵ These are areas that have been identified through District SCS's – not an inclusive list of areas of deprivation in the county – a final Redditch LSP community strategy has not been received.

There are also areas of the county where there are **OPPORTUNITIES** to encourage sustainable development and bring real benefits to the county. These will usually be addressed through District Local Development Frameworks, and will require input from a range of partners.

The **Central Technology Belt** runs from Birmingham, through Bromsgrove and Worcester, to Malvern along the A38, and offers the opportunity to deliver economic development by moving away from a reliance on motor manufacturing and related industries towards new sectors, such as medical technologies.

A new £120 million **Worcester University/Library** city centre campus is currently being developed and will incorporate the first joint public and university library in the UK. This represents a rare opportunity for the County to use this facility as one of the vehicles for retaining and attracting young people to Worcestershire.

Q15. Is it useful to highlight specific geographical areas in the county wide Community Strategy? – or should a more strategic approach be taken with specific geographical issues being addressed through District SCSs?

Q16. If you think that these areas should be included are there any other geographical areas of challenge / opportunity that should be identified here, and what is the evidence for this?

SECTION FOUR - CROSS CUTTING THEMES

4.1 Tackling Environmental Challenges like Climate Change and Flooding

4.1.1 Why is tackling Environmental Challenges like Climate Change and Flooding Important?

Worcestershire is not immune to the global and national environmental challenges that are facing us. There is widespread acceptance that climate change is already happening, and further change is inevitable. We know that the climate has changed significantly over the last century.¹⁶ The extremity of change is expected to depend on such things as future levels of emissions of climate change gases such as carbon dioxide and methane (known as greenhouse gases).

The Citizens Panel survey¹⁷ showed that 60% of respondents agree that climate change is already having an impact on Worcestershire. 83% of respondents thought it was important that action was taken in Worcestershire to tackle climate change. The more we do now to reduce emissions, the less extreme the expected impact.

Section 2.4.9 described the impact of the flooding in Summer 2007 on Worcestershire. Mitigating the effects of climate change is a priority in Worcestershire. This includes considering the way that people manage the environment to alleviate rather than exacerbate flood risk and flooding.

Q17. Do you agree that tackling environmental challenges such as climate change and flooding should be a cross cutting theme?

4.1.2 Priority Outcomes

- Raise Awareness of the issue of Climate Change, flooding and other environmental challenges
- Reduce harmful Climate Change causing gas emissions across the County by 10% by 2010 & 20% by 2020
- Assist adaptation to the impacts of Climate Change and flooding on the County

Q18. Do you agree that these are the priority outcomes for tackling environmental challenges such as climate change and flooding?

¹⁶ Worcestershire Climate Change Impacts Study 2004

¹⁷ Worcestershire Citizens Panel, June 2007.

4.1.3 Actions on Tackling Environmental Challenges like Climate Change and Flooding

- Develop a Local Climate Change Impact Profile for the County
- Raise awareness of the issue of climate change through formal education, raising awareness amongst staff in organisations and businesses, using the local media and by incorporating climate change into other awareness programmes
- Reducing greenhouse gases by improving the energy efficiency of Worcestershire's housing stock and increasing the number of households that benefit from Warm Front Grants
- Reviewing our emergency response to flooding to learn lessons for the future
- Implementing our short and long term flood recovery plans
- Promoting new forms of surface water management, such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, soakaways, areas of porous paving, green roofs and the like to aid flood prevention, by minimising runoff into watercourses and sewerage systems
- Encourage new homes to achieve the Code for Sustainable Homes standard
- Promoting the creation of flood storage areas, upstream of towns, where appropriate
- Develop a local system to monitor and assess and provide guidance upon the impact of climate change, particularly flooding, upon the historic environment.
- Consider how the Worcestershire Partnership can use its influence to improve the management of the environment (for example flood defences, drainage, land use) to take account of the impact of climate change

Q19. Can you identify any further actions that the Partnership could take to tackle environmental challenges , particularly actions around adaption and resilience to climate change and flooding?

4.2 Community Engagement

4.2.1 Why is Community Engagement important?

The Partnership believes that better decisions are made, better services are provided and that places are more likely to be improved and transformed when individuals and communities are given a real say and are active in shaping the places that they live.

Community engagement is our two-way relationship with communities. It is how we obtain information from local communities and individuals, and how they receive information from us. Across the Partnership's agencies and organisations there is a wide range of activity that aims

to ensure that this happens. You can find out more about our approach and find examples of what already takes place at Appendix 4.

The role of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) is particularly important in enabling individuals to participate actively in their own communities through for example providing opportunities for volunteering, community development work and through delivering flexible and user focussed services. The Worcestershire Compact ensures effective partnership working between the VCS and public agencies in the county.

We recognise too the role of the sector in reaching groups who may be marginalised or excluded from the sorts of activities described above for reasons of disability, age, ethnicity, language, gender or cultural barriers. Across the partnership there are examples of specific targeted work to seek and hear these voices. For example partners were involved in Community Fairs held in Worcester, Redditch and Kidderminster – these multicultural events engaged with Black, Minority Ethnic and Eastern European communities to promote and publicise public services and gather views and opinions about community concerns. This work is important in developing cohesive communities (see 4.3 below)

Q20. Do you agree that Community Engagement should be a cross cutting theme?

4.2.2 Priority Outcome

- Empower local people to have a greater choice and influence over local decision making and a greater role in public service delivery.

Q21. Do you agree that this is the priority outcome for Community Engagement?

4.2.3 Actions on Community Engagement in Worcestershire

- Develop a framework for Community Engagement in Worcestershire – the framework should cover the whole spectrum of involvement (information, consultation, involvement and devolution), taking into account expected Government guidance
- Incorporate within the framework the work and learning developed through the Statements of Community Involvement described in Section 3
- Utilise a range of community engagement mechanisms - appropriate to the issue concerned and local circumstances.
- Ensure that community engagement is inclusive and that proactive steps are taken to reach communities that do not

traditionally participate in consultation and engagement mechanisms – see 4.3 below

- Where possible “join up” community consultation and engagement mechanisms across partners to avoid duplication (e.g. through the use of the Ask Me! Consultation Planner and Finder database)
- Develop a common framework across participating councils to respond to requests from community organisations to manage or own public assets
- Promote democracy and participation in the democratic process

Q22. Can you identify any further actions that the Partnership could take on Community Engagement?

4.3 Promoting Community Cohesion in Worcestershire

4.3.1 Why is Community Cohesion important?

The Worcestershire Partnership vision and values highlight our commitment to build communities that enhance individuals’ life opportunities, treat people with equality and value diversity and build strong cohesive communities and good community relations.

We have adopted the definition of cohesive communities developed by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion¹⁸:-

An integrated and cohesive community is one where:

- There is a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and different communities to a future vision for a neighbourhood, city, region or country
- There is a strong sense of an individual’s rights and responsibilities when living in a particular place – people know what everyone expects of them, and what they can expect in turn
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, access to services and treatment
- There is a strong sense of trust in institutions locally to act fairly in arbitrating between different interests and for their role and justifications to be subject to public scrutiny
- There is a strong recognition of the contribution of both those who have newly arrived and those who already have deep attachments to a particular place, with a focus on what they have in common
- There are strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and other institutions within neighbourhoods.

¹⁸ Our Shared Future – Final report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (COIC), June 2007

The small size of Worcestershire's BME communities (see Section 2.4.3) requires a pro-active approach to ensure that the particular needs and concerns of these communities are listened to and addressed. Worcestershire councils are engaged in a capacity building project that will enable us to tailor our Equality and Diversity Strategies to Worcestershire's particular circumstances. This two-year project will include work to ensure that we have effectively identified and mapped gender and ethnicity across the county, and the barriers that may affect these groups. A key element of the work will be to develop a participation strategy and to enhance opportunities for positive engagement. This will enable agencies to have a strong evidence base from which to specifically tailor their equality strategies to the needs and issues identified.

Building cohesive communities is about addressing perceptions and tackling myths as well as about identifying the facts. Perceptions of cohesion are linked to a complex range of factors – including individuals' experience of deprivation and discrimination; perceptions about levels of crime and antisocial behaviour, perceptions about the impacts of immigration, and perceptions about the fair allocation of public services and resources¹⁹

Looking at the BVPI General Satisfaction Survey²⁰ 77% of Worcestershire respondents agreed that their "local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together", slightly lower than the national average of 79%.

We asked our Citizens Panel²¹ "Compared with five years ago, do you think that different ethnic and religious groups mix with each other more or less or do you think there is no difference?" Only 11% felt groups mixed more with each other, most people (48%) said that there is no difference in the amount ethnic and religious groups mix with each other compared to five years ago, 15% felt there was less mixing, and 26% didn't know. This is important information as one of the components of cohesive communities is that there are strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds.

The longest established minority community in the county is the Gypsy Traveller community, with generations of some local families having lived in Worcestershire for several hundred years. Despite their deep roots within the county there is evidence that Gypsy Traveller communities experience prejudice and inequality²².

¹⁹ COIC – Our Shared Futures

²⁰ BVPI General Satisfaction Survey 2006

²¹ Citizens Panel June 2007

²² West Midlands (West Mercia's) The Forgotten Minority, Gypsies and Travellers November 2007

More recently migrant workers have been attracted to Worcestershire, particularly to the seasonal and manufacturing work provided by the counties agricultural industries (see Section 2.4.3).

Migrant workers across the West Midlands can be found in industries such as manufacturing, transport storage and communications, hotels and restaurants and agriculture. Businesses report that they are employing migrant workers to address labour shortages.²³ A regional study has evidenced the positive impacts on business performance from employing migrant workers – 47% reported a positive impact on business performance. Disadvantages were communication problems due to poor English²⁴.

In Worcestershire, as elsewhere, there may be social impacts from the growth in the numbers of migrant workers that have not yet been fully quantified. We asked the Citizens Panel²⁵ some specific questions about migrant workers. 45% of respondents believe that migrant workers are beneficial to our economy, 23% of respondents do not think they are beneficial, 27% neither agreed nor disagreed. Although 68% of respondents agree that we should respect the rights of migrant workers, only 33% think that we should do more to learn about the culture of migrant workers, and 31% disagreed with this.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that migrant workers may be displacing the Gypsy Traveller communities from seasonal agricultural work. Established Black and Minority Ethnic Communities have also expressed concern about competition for jobs, housing and resources from migrant workers.

Worcestershire's mix of urban and rural environments is an asset and a potential challenge. There has been successful work in the county to address rural isolation and to enable access to housing, training, jobs and services for people in rural communities – but community cohesion issues for people in rural communities may need to be more fully explored, for example the impact of second home owners on rural communities and possible fragmentation between established communities and "newcomers" to these areas.

The last Citizens Panel Survey showed that 30% of respondents identified "troublesome teenagers or children" as the third most important anti social behaviour problem. There may be a need to promote opportunities for inter generational activities in order to address perceptions and stereotypes that younger and older people hold about each other.

²³ *ibid*

²⁴ *ibid*

²⁵ Citizens Panel June 2007

The above commentary gives an indication of community cohesion issues for Worcestershire but further work is needed to strengthen the evidence base.

Q23. Do you agree that Community Cohesion should be a cross cutting theme?

4.3.2 Priority Outcomes

- To ensure the development of a strong evidence base through which we will identify the main community cohesion issues in Worcestershire
- To use this evidence to take action to address specific community cohesion issues in the county

Q24. Do you agree that these are the priority outcomes for Community Cohesion?

4.3.3 Actions on Community Cohesion

- Undertake more detailed community mapping to identify community cohesion issues in Worcestershire
- Conduct and audit of opportunities for cross- cultural and inter faith engagement in the county
- Consider the need for and development of an Integration and Cohesion Strategy for the County

Q25. Can you identify any further actions that the Partnership could take to support community cohesion?

Q26. Do you agree that these are the priority cross cutting themes, if not what do you think should be included here?

SECTION FIVE – COMMUNITY STRATEGY OUTCOMES

5.1 Priority Outcomes addressed by this Community Strategy

Partnership working is all about “adding value” - that is increasing the impact that we can collectively make to improving quality of life in Worcestershire over what can be achieved by working as separate individuals and organisations. The themes and outcomes in this Strategy have been selected precisely because they need this partnership approach, looking at the evidence and then identifying those issues where collectively we can make a difference; these are the difficult issues that cannot be solved by one agency alone.

The table over sets out the priority outcomes that this strategy will address.

Table 6 - Priority Outcomes for Worcestershire's Sustainable Community Strategy

<p>Communities that are Safe and Feel Safe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To reduce crime - To re-assure the public by reducing the perception of crime - To reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol - To build respect for communities and to reduce anti social behaviour 	<p>A Better Environment – for Today and Tomorrow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To protect and improve Worcestershire's natural and historic environment - To promote the prevention, re-use, recycling and recovery of waste - To address issues of water quality, supply, consumption and drainage in Worcestershire - To increase energy efficiency and increase the amount of energy generated from renewable sources
<p>Economic Success that is Shared by All</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To promote technology led growth benefiting all sectors and parts of the County - To support the sustainable development of the County through infrastructure development (in particular, transport infrastructure), and establishing Worcester as a sub regional focus - To remove barriers to employment and improve skills - To ensure that Worcestershire's economic interests are effectively represented at all levels 	<p>Improving Health and Well Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To support adults to lead healthy lifestyles - To reduce health inequalities - To improve the quality of life and independence of older people and those with a long term illnesses - To improve mental health and well-being
<p>Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To support children and young people to lead healthy lifestyles - To prevent bullying and support those affected by it - To raise educational achievement - To ensure children and young people have things to do and enjoy their communities 	<p>Stronger Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To provide decent, affordable housing which meets the diverse needs of Worcestershire - To improve quality of life in Worcestershire by providing vibrant, sustainable cultural opportunities for all - To support effective volunteering which is accessible to all - To reduce income deprivation, including child and pensioner poverty
<p>Cross – Cutting Themes</p> <p>Tackling Environmental Challenges like Climate Change and Flooding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To raise awareness of the issues of Climate Change, flooding and other environmental challenges - To reduce harmful climate change causing gas emissions - To assist adaption to the impacts of climate change and flooding on the county <p>Community Engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To empower local people to have a greater choice and influence over local decision making and a greater role in public service delivery <p>Community Cohesion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To ensure the development of a strong evidence base through which we will identify the main community cohesion issues in Worcestershire - To use this evidence to take action to address specific community cohesion issues in the county 	

5.2 Relationships between Community Strategy themes and outcomes

Although these outcomes are presented thematically here, in reality many of them have an impact on each other.

As part of the consultation process we will be using an “integration tool” to ensure that this Strategy has considered and demonstrated all the cross linkages between the different outcomes, and look at how themes and outcomes can contribute to each other.

This is the case in many areas of this strategy – in the final version of this document the process mapping work on that the Partnership is undertaking on addressing worklessness and how this impacts across the themes, will be used to illustrate this.

SECTION SIX - COMMUNITIES THAT ARE SAFE AND FEEL SAFE

6.1 Priority Outcomes

1. To reduce crime
2. To re-assure the public by reducing the perception of crime
3. To reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol
4. To build respect for communities and to reduce anti-social behaviour

Q27. Do you agree that these are the priority outcomes? If not what do you think should be the priority outcomes and what is the evidence for this?

6.2 Why are these the outcomes the priorities?

We know that the level of crime is for our residents the most important factor in making an area a good place to live.²⁶ In fact compared to national and regional figures since 2003/04, crime reduction in Worcestershire has been amongst the highest in the country (see Section 2.4.4. for further details).

The incidence of crime can be more concentrated in particular geographical locations (e.g. the urban centres of Redditch, Kidderminster and Worcester City). However, that does not mean that the significance of the impact of crime in other parts of the County is not treated seriously. We will continue to prioritise work to combat domestic abuse and hate crimes. Hate incidents could range from verbal assault or intimidation to the fortunately far more uncommon racially aggravated violence.

Overall 92% of our Citizens Panel respondents²⁷ feel safe in their neighbourhood during the day. After dark the figure changes to 62%. There is a significant difference between those respondents living in rural areas who feel safe after dark in comparison to those living in urban areas (73% and 57% respectively). We recognise that there is more to be done to reassure those that live, work or visit Worcestershire of the relative safety that we all enjoy. Encouragingly crime is no longer identified by most of our residents as one of the top three issues that most needs improving in the county – indicating that fear of crime is beginning to be addressed.²⁸

²⁶ Best Value General User Survey 2006 / 07

²⁷ Citizens Panel June 2007

²⁸ BV General Satisfaction Survey 2003/4 level of crime was a top three priority for improvement in Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest. In 2007 only Redditch included crime as a top three priority

We know that misuse of illegal drugs and alcohol can fuel crime and anti social behaviour²⁹. Between April 2006 and March 2007 drug offences increased by nearly 13 percent. It is estimated that there are 2500-3000 'problematic drug misusers' within the county;³⁰ and 146,369 harmful and hazardous drinkers³¹. We have a clear Strategy to reduce the harm of drugs and alcohol in the county.³² The West Mercia Fear of Crime Survey shows a slight reduction in the proportion of respondents in Worcestershire who think illegal drug misuse in their local area is a fairly or very serious problem (29% in 2007 compared with 31% in 2006).

We are concerned to tackle anti social behaviour – things like noisy neighbours, littering, abandoned and burnt out vehicles, vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property. Whilst these may be less significant problems in Worcestershire (27% of respondents to the Worcestershire Best Value General Satisfaction survey said this was a problem, compared with 39% nationally) they are issues that make a big impact on our quality of life and affect our perception about how safe we are in our neighbourhoods. Treating each other with respect and consideration is something for which we are all responsible.

Q28. Do you know of any other evidence relating to the outcomes that should be included here?

6.3. Actions over the next 5 years

- Tackling and reducing the level of crime and disorder with specific emphasis on:
 - criminal damage
 - burglary
 - violent crime
 - personal robbery and theft
 - vehicle crime
 - anti social behaviour
- Working together on a monthly basis to review the facts about crime and anti social behaviour to identify any geographical "hotspots" or emerging issues. This " multi agency tasking" enables us to respond early and quickly when problems are identified
- Implement the recommendations of the joint strategic review of domestic abuse services across Worcestershire including priorities to support the domestic abuse helpline, to develop multi agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC) and specialist domestic violence

²⁹ Alcohol misuse and related crime in Worcestershire Jan 2002 – Dec 2003, Worcestershire SMAT

³⁰ Frischer M, Heatlie and Hichman M (2004). Estimating the prevalence of problematic and injecting drug use for Drug Action Team areas in England

³¹ Reducing the harm of drugs and alcohol: A strategy for Worcestershire 2005 - 2008

³² ibid

courts (SDVC), to develop perpetrator programmes and to increase the range of provision to adults and children affected by abuse.

- Extending the Hate Incident reporting schemes - these put the victim at the centre of our concern
- Continuing to be responsive to our communities' concerns about crime through mechanisms such as:
 - Neighbourhood policing initiative – local policing teams have been established across the county to enable police to be easier to contact and more visible in the community
 - Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings – an opportunity for police, partners and communities to meet and agree local policing priorities and report back on progress
 - Responding to issues raised through Community Calls for Action³³
- Continuing to implement our strategy to reduce the harm of drugs and alcohol to both individuals involved and the wider community
- Developing action plans right across the county to build respect in our communities and to tackle anti social behaviour
- Raising awareness of the problems caused by littering and develop volunteer groups to help to tackle this issue
- Working together to reduce levels of graffiti and respond quickly to remove litter, fly tipping and abandoned vehicles
- Continuing to strengthen joint working on these issues by bringing together the three Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in the north of the county to form one North Worcestershire CSP

Q29. Are there any other partner actions relating to the outcomes that should be included here? If you are identifying actions that relate to these or any alternative outcomes please evidence that partners have agreed to the action proposed.

6.4 Benefits to Worcestershire

- Reductions in levels of crime
- Concerns about crime and community safety are listened to, understood and acted upon – people are re-assured and realistic about levels of crime in the county
- Reduction of the harm caused by drugs and alcohol to the individuals involved and to the community
- Reduction in anti social behaviour - which will improve quality of life for everyone
- Improvements to the environment with less litter and graffiti

Q30. Can you identify any other benefits that should be included here?

³³ A mechanism by which communities can raise issues of concern about crime with District Ward Councillors

SECTION SEVEN - A BETTER ENVIRONMENT – FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

7.1 Priority Outcomes

1. To protect and improve Worcestershire's natural and historic environment
2. To promote the prevention, re-use, recycling and recovery of waste
3. To address issues of water quality, supply, and consumption and land drainage in Worcestershire
4. To increase energy efficiency and increase the amount of energy generated from renewable sources

Q31. Do you agree that these are the priority outcomes? If not what do you think should be the priority outcomes and what is the evidence for this?

7.2 Why are these outcomes the priorities?

The quality of the county's environment is one of its most valuable assets, and includes a rich built heritage, varied and sensitive habitats and diverse landscape. Residents have repeatedly told us how much they value Worcestershire's environment.³⁴

Two habitats are of particular significance in Worcestershire - species-rich grassland and wetlands. The county is a national stronghold for species-rich lowland grassland, containing a significant proportion of the national resource. With three major rivers (the Severn, Teme and Avon) and numerous tributaries, wetland habitats such as wet grassland are also a major feature in the county. These habitats and others are included in the Biodiversity Action Plan for Worcestershire, which sets targets for their restoration and creation. Achieving these targets is a major challenge, which the county needs to meet if we are to retain our valued and valuable biodiversity in the face of future impacts such as climate change and urban expansion.

Worcestershire's archaeological sites and historic buildings are an irreplaceable asset that contribute to our understanding of the present and the past. They need to be considered within their surrounding landscape, which can itself be of significance in defining the character of the county

We have developed a process to annually report on and monitor the condition of the Worcestershire environment. At the end of each year,

³⁴ Citizens Panel Survey – 2003 and 2005

a State of the Environment Report is prepared to publicise the findings. The information collected aims to give a key indication of the State of the Environment in Worcestershire. The Report provides accessible and scientifically sound information to inform the preparation of policy, and has been used as the evidence base for the priorities included in this Strategy. It can be found at www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk.

The next two decades will continue to see waste management in the United Kingdom transformed. The changes presented by climate change, along with more stringent government targets, new UK and European legislation and a higher social awareness will drive these challenges. The cost of dealing with domestic waste in Herefordshire and Worcestershire in 2006/07 was £28 million and these costs are increasing. We need to divert waste from landfill sites. Landfill tax will increase from £24 to £56 per tonne within the next few years and new treatment facilities will be needed to treat our waste so that we can meet the changes in legislation.

Domestic waste is only about one fifth of the amount of commercial, industrial, construction and demolition waste produced in the county – these amount to about one and a quarter million tonnes of resources, less than half a million tonnes of which is currently recycled.

We must make tough decisions as to how we tackle the problem. We need to consider waste as a resource. Everyone can play their part by reducing, reusing, and recycling as much waste as possible. 77% of Citizens Panel respondents gave a high priority to increasing the range and amount of materials that are recycled.³⁵

Water is a vital natural resource, the management of which is fundamental to sustainable development. It plays an important role in the County in terms of its contribution to landscape character, as well as making a significant economic contribution, for example in agricultural irrigation and recreational use. There are a number of water issues facing the County including river water quality, rates of water consumption, infrastructure requirements in particular sewerage capacity linked to proposed new developments and flooding and other climate change impacts. This will be an important area of work over the coming years.

We are all aware of the contribution of “greenhouse gases” to climate change³⁶. A significant proportion of these greenhouse gases arise from our energy use and our dependence on diminishing and increasingly expensive fossil fuel reserves. Reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, together with increasing energy efficiency measures and

³⁵ All references to the Citizens Panel are from responses to the June 2007 survey

³⁶ See IPCC report on climate change

increasing the use of renewable energy, can make a significant contribution to reducing carbon emissions. 90% of the Citizens Panel support the generation of renewable energy in Worcestershire. 69% of Panel members gave a high priority to constructing extremely energy efficient buildings, 65% gave a high priority to improving energy efficiency in existing buildings and 51% of respondents gave a high priority to ensuring new developments generate renewable energy on site.

Q32. Do you know of any other evidence relating to the outcomes that should be included here?

7. 3. Actions over the next 5 years

- Continue to implement and develop the Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan³⁷ which aims to protect Worcestershire's variety of plants, birds and animals, the habitats in which they live and the interactions between them
- Establish a Geodiversity Action Plan for the county - geodiversity is the variety of rocks, minerals, fossils and soils which, combined with biodiversity, make up the physical landscape
- Identify and progress priorities to enhance and protect Worcestershire's landscape character, which has arisen as a result of a combination of agricultural uses, buildings, wildlife and local traditions as well as underlying geology
- Contribute to the regional agenda through the Landscapes for Living project dealing with biodiversity and landscape character
- Protect and enhance ancient woodlands by restoring these sites to native woodland and increasing the sustainable management of woodlands
- Develop a Worcestershire Historic Environment Action Plan which aims to protect Worcestershire's rich physical heritage of archaeological sites, historic buildings and historic landscapes and complements and interacts with Biodiversity and Geodiversity Action Plans, with an immediate focus on legislative change, development pressures and climate change
- Review and monitor the Joint Waste Municipal Management Strategy³⁸ and commission the required waste management facilities to increase recycling and recovery to ensure diversion from landfill
- Encourage prevention, re-use, recycling and recovery of waste through public awareness / information campaigns and for example by developing the re-use / recycling capacity of voluntary and community sector organisations

³⁷ Biodiversity Action Plan 1999 and Revisions 2007

³⁸ The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy is jointly produced by Hereford Council, Worcestershire County Council and all of Worcestershire's District Council's

- Improve water quality – all surface and ground waters should reach “good status” (this is achieved by meeting demanding environmental objectives) by 2015 as set out in the EU Water Framework Directive
- Ensure that issues of water, water use reduction, drainage and sewerage are taken account of in the spatial planning process.
- Promote the use of renewable energy in the county
- Developing a renewable energy paper to influence spatial planning in the county

Q33. Are there any other partner actions relating to the outcomes that should be included here? If you are identifying actions that relate to these or any alternative outcomes please evidence that partners have agreed to the action proposed.

7. 4 Benefits to Worcestershire

- Increased and improved understanding, management and use of the natural environment
- Increased wildlife, able to withstand pressures such as climate change
- Saving resources that are currently wasted, at considerable expense
- Appropriate facilities to manage a reduced quantity of waste
- Water will be conserved and its quality improved and new developments will avoid flood risk areas
- Increased take up of renewable energy technologies

Q34. Can you identify any other benefits that should be included here?

SECTION EIGHT - ECONOMIC SUCCESS THAT IS SHARED BY ALL

8.1 Priority Outcomes

1. **Business** – to promote technology led growth benefiting all sectors and parts of the County
2. **Place** – to support the sustainable development of the County through infrastructure development (in particular, transport infrastructure), and establishing Worcester as a sub regional focus
3. **People** – to remove barriers to employment and improving skills
4. **Powerful Voice** – to ensure that Worcestershire’s economic interests are effectively represented at all levels

These priorities reflect those of the Regional Economic Strategy.

Q35. Do you agree that these are the priority outcomes? If not what do you think should be the priority outcomes and what is the evidence for this?

8.2 Why are these outcomes the priorities?

“In ten years time, technology-led growth will have contributed to the sustainable development of Worcestershire and strengthened its role as an economic driver for the region – acting as a catalyst for all sectors of the economy and areas of the County to benefit and providing well paid and highly skilled jobs and a high quality of life for residents.” This is the bold vision for Worcestershire’s economy. Economic success underpins many of the other outcomes identified in this Strategy.

A key area of work is diversifying the county’s economic base and developing a knowledge driven economy. Worcestershire has a higher proportion of workers in low technology industries and a lower proportion of workers in knowledge based services compared with both the regional and national average.³⁹ Our objective is to create jobs and encourage employment in high technology industries to provide a sustainable base for the county’s economy in the long term.

Section 3 describes the level of housing growth identified for the county over the next ten years, and the focus for development on Worcester City. Location of employment opportunities near to housing development, tackling congestion, promoting sustainable integrated

³⁹ Worcestershire County Economic Assessment 2006 -2007 Table 2.18 Employees by industry as a percentage of all employees, Page 26

transport are all key to ensure that the building blocks are in place to enable sustainable development that protects quality of life. Residents consistently tell us that transport and road congestion are issues that are important and of concern to them.⁴⁰ Ensuring all Worcestershire residents can access key services including education, training and employment is a major part of a transport strategy to support the county's economic aspirations.

Worcestershire's unemployment rate is below the national and regional average⁴¹. However in order for residents to benefit from business diversification and to attract high technology industries there needs to be concerted action to improve educational and skills attainment across all age ranges. Section 10 sets out our aspiration to raise educational achievement. Worcestershire has an above the national average of 19 year olds who are not in employment, education or training.⁴² We aim to increase levels of participation for this age group. We also have a higher than the regional and national average of working age population at NVQ1 level⁴³.

Section 2.4.8 described worklessness in the County. People need support to rebuild confidence after a period out of the workforce and work is needed with employers to tackle barriers to employment. The Voluntary and Community Sector have a key role to play here.

Worcestershire also experiences considerable level of "churn" – whereby seasonal and low skill workers move frequently as employment opportunities become available.

To meet our vision for our economy we need to ensure that we have tapped into the talent pool in the county, and raised skill levels to enable people to take on the technical and supervisory roles that our economic strategy will attract.

Worcestershire's economic aspirations are ambitious. We are well placed to benefit from the outcomes of the Sub National Economic Review, which will devolve significant economic development to county level. Worcestershire will become a higher value added economy, making an important contribution to closing the £10billion regional output gap, by providing well paid jobs and a high quality of life for its workers.

Q36. Do you know of any other evidence relating to the outcomes that should be included here?

⁴⁰ Priority for county strategy from 4 of 6 District LSP strategic priorities

⁴¹ Economic Assessment 2006 –2007, Table 4.4 Unemployment by District, August 2006, Page 74

⁴² Annual Performance Assessment 2007

⁴³ ONS annual population survey (Qualifications Jan 2006 – Dec 2006)

8. 3. Actions over the next 5 years

- Working with the Central Technology Belt to maximise the potential for technology growth, linking to expertise in Malvern and Birmingham
- Encouraging environmental businesses to Worcestershire through demonstrating expertise in this area
- Reducing the reliance on private car travel through improvements to walking, cycling and passenger transport networks
- Ensuring the successful delivery of key physical developments that contribute to the economic prosperity of the county, such as the Worcester City Centre Masterplan, which outlines plans for the University of Worcester campus, the new Library & History Centre and the development of the riverside
- Improving transport infrastructure through the Worcester Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy to facilitate the sustainable growth of Worcester City.
- Ensuring that towns such as Kidderminster, Redditch and Bromsgrove have a strong robust future economy by improving the skill levels of local residents and creating good quality jobs.
- Ensuring that market towns continue to support their rural hinterlands by remaining as an attractive focus for business, residents and visitors
- Encourage visitors to Worcestershire, and work with providers in the tourism sector to ensure that visitors want to return
- Targeted work on those vulnerable young people who are not accessing employment, education and training, e.g. young offenders and pregnant teenagers
- Improving the skills of the existing workforce – particularly focusing on those at NVQ Level 2+ and below to move them onto NVQ level 3 & 4
- Utilise the skills, knowledge and resources of the voluntary and community sector to promote an active and vibrant social economy in Worcestershire, providing business solutions to meet community needs
- Working with AWM to demonstrate how economic development can be successfully delivered at the county level, including looking across county boundaries to identify opportunities to enhance the economy to mutual advantage

Q37. Are there any other partner actions relating to the outcomes that should be included here? If you are identifying actions that relate to these or any alternative outcomes please evidence that partners have agreed to the action proposed.

8. 4 Benefits to Worcestershire

- Increase in the numbers of and access to quality jobs in the County
- Increase in skill levels of people of employment age
- Increase in wage levels as a result of economic diversification
- Reduction in the numbers of people who are workless in the county
- Increase in the number of visitors to the County
- Minimise the impact of traffic congestion through reducing reliance on private car travel and improving opportunities to use sustainable transport
- Reduce the number of children who are not in employment, education and training.

Q38. Can you identify any other benefits that should be included here?

SECTION NINE - IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELL BEING

9.1 Priority Outcomes

1. To support adults to lead healthier lifestyles
2. To reduce health inequalities
3. To improve the quality of life and independence of older people and those with a long term illnesses
4. To improve mental health and well-being

Q39. Do you agree that these are the priority outcomes? If not what do you think should be the priority outcomes and what is the evidence for this?

9.2 Why are these outcomes the priorities?

If adults cannot be encouraged to lead healthier lifestyles the repercussions will affect not only particular individuals, but all of us because of the knock on implications for local services and the economy. Reducing smoking, obesity and alcohol consumption are all priorities nationally and regionally. Between 20 – 25% of adults smoke, this figure is higher in disadvantaged areas.⁴⁴ Smoking causes one fifth of deaths from circulatory disease and one third of all cancer deaths.⁴⁵ Obesity is another major cause for concern. Two thirds of adults are classified as overweight and obese⁴⁶ – and again these rates are higher in disadvantaged areas. Obesity is now a major cause of diabetes, heart disease and cancer. Alcohol misuse is responsible for social and health problems. One fifth of adults drink more than the safe limit⁴⁷ - highest rates being among young adults and those living in disadvantaged areas. The death rates from alcohol related liver disease are rising⁴⁸, as are the number of A&E attendances due to alcohol misuse - over 1,200 visits in 2006/07⁴⁹.

The above figures demonstrate that there is a clear link between areas of disadvantage and health. Detailed mapping work has been carried out to identify “hot spot” areas across Worcestershire⁵⁰ to enable targeted interventions to address health inequalities

⁴⁴ West Midlands Regional Lifestyle Survey, 2005, West Midlands Regional Observatory (WMRO)

⁴⁵ Smoking Kills – ONS General Household Survey 2003

⁴⁶ Regional Lifestyle Survey *ibid*

⁴⁷ Regional Lifestyle Survey *ibid*

⁴⁸ WMRO

⁴⁹ Hospital Episode Statistics 2006/07

⁵⁰ PCT Health Hotspots mapping, October 2007

Section 2.4.1 described the expected increase in the older population in Worcestershire. Almost half of the people aged 65 and over have a Limiting Long term Illness.⁵¹ Clearly ensuring that older people stay healthy with a good quality of life for as long as possible – and shaping services to maintain older people’s independence whilst addressing often complex needs is a key issue for the future.

About one sixth of people will suffer from a mental illness during their lifetime. There is much we can do to prevent mental health problems and to treat them early. We also need to ensure that people with mental health problems have access to high quality health services and opportunities for a full and productive life.

Q40. Do you know of any other evidence relating to the outcomes that should be included here?

9. 3. Actions over the next 5 years

- Increasing awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles.
- Increasing the capacity of the smoking cessation service and providing signposting into the service
- Development of a weight management service
- Increasing opportunities for sport and other physical activities
- Local projects to improve awareness and access to healthy food in disadvantaged areas
- Developing and implementing Healthy Transport strategies
- Development of a Health Trainers service to provide support for people in disadvantaged areas to develop healthier lifestyles
- Focusing mainstream service on disadvantaged areas to improve access
- Increasing the capacity of alcohol services, particularly for early interventions to prevent harm
- Maintaining work in Worcester, Redditch and Evesham through the WiNN project, which provides early intervention and low level support services that will help older people stay healthy, active and independent as long as possible
- Reviewing day services for older people to provide an appropriate mix of services depending on people’s needs
- Improving management of people with long term conditions
- Joint review and commissioning of mental health services

Q41. Are there any other partner actions relating to the outcomes that should be included here? If you are identifying actions that relate to these or any alternative outcomes please evidence that partners have agreed to the action proposed.

⁵¹ 2001 Census

9. 4 Benefits to Worcestershire

- There will be a reduction in the proportion of adults who smoke
- Overweight and obese adults will lose weight
- More adults will be participating in sport or other physical activities
- Death rates from circulatory diseases and cancers will fall.
- More services will be accessible on foot or bicycle
- There will be better access to services for people from disadvantaged areas
- Health will improve more quickly in the most disadvantaged areas and the health gap between these areas and the county as a whole will narrow
- There will be a reduction in hospital attendances for alcohol related conditions
- There will be fewer delayed discharges from acute and community hospitals

Q42. Can you identify any other benefits that should be included here?

SECTION TEN - MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

10.1 Priority Outcomes

1. To support Children and Young People to lead healthy lifestyles
2. To prevent bullying and support those affected by it
3. To raise educational achievement
4. To ensure children and young people have things to do and enjoy their communities

Q43. Do you agree that these are the priority outcomes? If not what do you think should be the priority outcomes and what is the evidence for this?

10.2 Why are these outcomes the priorities?

Leading a healthy lifestyle as a child / young person carries health benefits into adulthood. There has been a focus in recent years on promoting the importance of a healthy diet for children and young people. The number of overweight and obese children has risen steadily over the last 20 years. Nationally 13.4% of children aged 2 – 10 were defined as obese – indicative results for Worcestershire show the figure is lower but still over 10%⁵². Research shows that obese children are at risk from a number of serious health problems more usually seen in adulthood, including higher risk of heart attack and stroke, high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes⁵³. Concern about this agenda is reinforced by our Citizens Panel⁵⁴, where education for parents and educating children about healthy eating and exercise were suggested as ways of increasing the life expectancy of children and young people in Worcestershire. In addition, young people in Worcestershire report above average smoking and alcohol consumption levels.⁵⁵

The proportion of under 19s who are pregnant is reducing at a lower rate than the national target. These young women are less likely to achieve economic wellbeing for themselves or their children, which means their children get a poor start in life.⁵⁶

Bullying is a major national agenda, and was identified by the Children's Commissioner for England as the top agenda for young

⁵² Health Survey for England 2004

⁵³ Audit Commission – Tackling Childhood Obesity – First Steps

⁵⁴ Citizens Panel – June 2007

⁵⁵ Audit Commission TellUs 2 Survey 2007

⁵⁶ Ofsted Annual Performance Assessment Dataset for Worcestershire for 2007

people.⁵⁷ This concern is reflected in Worcestershire, where young people reported both an experience of, and concern about, bullying which was above the national average.⁵⁸

Educational achievement is a critical determinant of good life chances in adulthood. Although Worcestershire's performance remains above average, the gap with similar areas is narrowing and it still means that less than half of all young people do not achieve 5 GCSE's at A* to C grade including Maths and English.⁵⁹ Performance is also behind the stretch target for the Local Area Agreement.

Nearly half of all respondents (48%) to the June 2007 Citizens Panel survey do not think that children have enough opportunity to play safely and freely within walking or cycling distance of their home. Providing more activities for teenagers was also the top priority for improvement from the Best Value General Satisfaction User Survey.

Q44. Do you know of any other evidence relating to the outcomes that should be included here?
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10.3 Actions over the next 3 years

- As part of our new Obesity Strategy, children in year 6 and reception classes in school are being measured and weighed. This will establish a baseline against which further progress can be judged when year 6 and reception children are measured and weighed in future years.
- Continue rolling out the Healthy Schools programme to schools and assist 50 early years providers to work towards "Healthy Settings" status
- Continue working on the revised Teenage Pregnancy Plan Strategy
- Improve sex and relationship education in schools, with a particular focus on schools in areas of identified need
- Make sure all professionals working with young people are fully trained on how to talk to young people about sex and relationships issues
- Improving systems for collecting and electronically recording the incidence of bullying, ensuring there is consistent recording and reporting
- Use data on bullying and the results of ongoing consultations to further develop the anti-bullying strategy
- Develop systems for recording bullying and the impact of strategies in out of schools settings

⁵⁷ Bullying Today – Children's Commissioner Office, 2007

⁵⁸ Audit Commission TellUs 2 Survey 2007

⁵⁹ Ofsted Annual Performance Assessment Dataset for Worcestershire for 2007

- Training/briefing programmes on Anti-Bullying to be rolled out across all partners, including schools and school governors and review policy guidance in light of feedback from schools
- Develop and consult on an action plan to prevent bullying of vulnerable groups
- Work with schools to continue to improve performance at each key stage of education from foundation to post 16.
- Work with schools where there is evidence of underachievement, and intervene where necessary to ensure that problems are resolved and schools improve
- Continue to work with schools to increase the percentage of young people who achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C
- Implement the national improvement strategies for primary and secondary schools, and support schools where underachievement is apparent, so that children can achieve better at school
- Continue to show that young people's achievement improves as the progress through school [referred to as 'value added' measure]
- Increase the percentage of young people who achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C
- Continue to reduce the percentage of young people at Key Stage 3 / 4 who are permanently excluded from school.
- Put in place an integrated youth support strategy so that all young people have receive information, advice and guidance, are able to access positive activities and receive targeted support when the need arises
- Increase the number of 'Positive Activities for Young People' provided by all partners and the voluntary sector
- Establish a Play Strategy Action Plan for each District Council.
- Develop partnerships at a local level through the Community and School Clusters, so that there are local solutions to meet local needs
- Develop and make information for parents available through the Family Services Directory, particularly for children at the point they transfer to and between school, college or employment.
- Promote the www.plugandplay.org.uk website to coordinate, publicise and promote positive activities for young people across Worcestershire

Q45. Are there any other partner actions relating to the outcomes that should be included here? If you are identifying actions that relate to these or any alternative outcomes please evidence that partners have agreed to the action proposed.

10.4 Benefits to Worcestershire

- More children and young people with healthy diets
- Fewer women under 18 becoming pregnant
- Fewer children and young people are bullied
- More children and young people who are bullied are helped and supported
- A wide range of learning experiences are available, giving children and young people skills for life
- Better results at school, especially for those groups who usually do less well
- Greater access by children, young people and their families to community resources

Q46. Can you identify any other benefits that should be included here?

SECTION ELEVEN - STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Priority Outcomes for Stronger Communities

1. To provide decent, affordable housing which meets the diverse needs of Worcestershire
2. To improve quality of life in Worcestershire by providing vibrant, sustainable cultural opportunities for all
3. To support effective volunteering – which is accessible to all
4. To reduce income deprivation including child and pensioner poverty

Q47. Do you agree that these are the priority outcomes? If not what do you think should be the priority outcomes and what is the evidence for this?

11.1 To provide decent, affordable housing which meets the diverse needs of Worcestershire

11.1.1 Why is this a priority outcome?

A suitable, decent and affordable home is central to ensuring that local residents enjoy a good quality of life and contributes to the sustainability of our local communities. Housing impacts on a wide range of customers and service provision within the county and an inclusive, partnership approach is essential to achieve successful outcomes for local people.

The recent Housing Green Paper 2007 has highlighted the need for more homes to meet the growing demand, well designed and greener homes which are linked to good schools, transport and healthcare, and more affordable homes available to buy or rent. This is supported by recent local research into the housing markets that operate across the county and indeed the sub-region.

Government has set targets for achieving the Decent Homes Standard and to improve energy efficiency (Home Energy Conservation Act) in both socially rented and private homes and this is supported by local Stock Condition Survey evidence. There are proven links between property standards and health.

There is a strong commitment to ensure that vulnerable people within our communities receive the support they need to enable them to live independently where possible. This is supported by a robust partnership approach as set out in a range of countywide strategies that include Supporting People, Older People and Homelessness strategies.

Q48. Do you know of any other evidence relating to this outcome that should be included here?

11.1.2 Actions Over the Next five Years

- To work in partnership to evidence local needs and to use this to develop policy responses
- To maximise the development of new affordable housing in sustainable rural and urban locations to meet local needs whilst ensuring that new homes are well designed and more energy efficient
- To ensure that the needs of rural communities are met and sustained for the future
- To increase the range of housing options available for local people and prevent homelessness wherever possible but when this cannot be achieved to support people in temporary accommodation and to secure alternative housing
- To make the best use of the existing stock and ensure that choices are made available for people to live in good quality, suitable accommodation which meets their needs
- To tackle fuel poverty by improving affordable warmth and thermal comfort particularly for vulnerable people and those on low incomes
- To provide a range of housing and support options for older and vulnerable people to enable them to maintain their independence
- To ensure that housing related services contribute to other key policy areas such as community safety, health, social care, sustainability, regeneration and climate change

Q49. Are there any other partner actions relating to this outcome that should be included here? If you are identifying actions that relate to these or any alternative outcomes please evidence that partners have agreed to the action proposed.

11.1.3 Benefits to Worcestershire

- Reduced levels of homelessness and shared accommodation
- Increased levels of independent living
- More choice of housing and support options
- Improved standards of accommodation
- Less fuel poverty
- Improved health
- Less energy usage
- More mixed and sustainable local communities

Q50. Can you identify any other benefits that should be included here?

11.2 Improve quality of life in Worcestershire by providing vibrant, sustainable cultural opportunities for all

11.2.1. Why is this outcome a priority?

Access to culture, leisure and recreation have a key role to play in enhancing the quality of life in Worcestershire. Recent government research⁶⁰ shows that cultural and recreational activity have a positive impact on the way that people feel about the place that they live, as well as having personal benefits to individuals in terms of improved health, confidence, and providing opportunities for learning and self expression. Actions relating to this outcome contribute to many of the other themes in this Strategy.

Q51. Do you know of any other evidence relating to this outcome that should be included here?
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11.2.2. Actions over the next 5 years

- Through the countywide network of facilities and services, engage adults onto a wide range of high quality, challenging and inspiring programmes to enhance the physical, intellectual and emotional well being of individuals, society and for community cohesion
- Use innovative ways to broaden access to Worcestershire's heritage (museums, archaeology and archives) for everyone in the County to develop a sense of place and identity and a pride in where they live
- Enable all children and young people to access quality sport and play opportunities through the direct provision of facilities and services and the implementation and delivery of Worcestershire Play Strategy and Physical Education and School Sport Club Links Strategy and associated district action plans
- Develop and enable a wide range of opportunities for people within Worcestershire to take part in a visual or performing arts activity
- To increase access to and enjoyment of natural greenspace in both rural and urban areas through the provision, management and promotion of a network of countryside sites⁶¹, urban greenspace and rights of way⁶²
- Directly provide, or assist the voluntary sector in providing, high quality leisure events for our local communities
- Continue to support and recognise the significant contribution that our thriving voluntary and community sector make to Culture across Worcestershire, through the provision of grants, facilities,

⁶⁰ DCMS Culture on Demand

⁶¹ See Worcestershire Countryside Access and Recreation Strategy

⁶² See Rights of Way Improvement Plan

promotion and publicity of activities, information, advice and guidance appropriate to the array of clubs, organisations and groups within the County

Q52. Are there any other partner actions relating to this outcome that should be included here? If you are identifying actions that relate to these or any alternative outcomes please evidence that partners have agreed to the action proposed.

11.2.3 Benefits to Worcestershire

- There will be more opportunities for people to enjoy cultural activities
- People will feel more able to participate in society with improved confidence, health or education as a result of improved confidence, health, or education as a result of involvement in a cultural opportunity
- Worcestershire will benefit economically through increased tourism
- The cultural heritage of Worcestershire will be preserved for future generations to enjoy

Q53. Can you identify any other benefits that should be included here?

11.3. To support effective volunteering – which is accessible to all

11.3.1. Why is this a priority outcome

Volunteers make an invaluable contribution to the quality of life in Worcestershire. Their commitment benefits those they work with, the voluntary groups and services they support, local employers, the community, and the environment. Their activities also benefit the volunteers themselves, offering them new experiences and helping them develop new skills, in some cases providing an opportunity to “put something back” into society, in others a chance to re-build confidence and self-esteem.

Q54. Do you know of any other evidence relating to this outcomes that should be included here?

11.3.2. Actions Over the Next Five Years

- Reducing barriers to volunteering and ensuring that volunteering activity is valued, adequately resourced and well managed
- Promoting the importance, recognition and value of volunteering throughout Worcestershire

- Developing, promoting and continuously improving standards of good practice in working within voluntary organisations and in supporting all aspects of volunteering
- Promoting equal opportunity to volunteering
- Improving the accessibility and opportunities of volunteering
- Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of volunteer-placing organisations and those of individual volunteers
- Enabling leaders within the volunteering sector to work together throughout Worcestershire to unite as partners

Q55. Are there any other partner actions relating to this outcome that should be included here? If you are identifying actions that relate to these or any alternative outcomes please evidence that partners have agreed to the action proposed.

11.3.3 Benefits to Worcestershire

- Residents have opportunities to develop skills and employability
- Isolation is reduced, with opportunities to develop more and new social contacts
- Volunteers are engaged in their community
- Community cohesion is increased

Q56. Can you identify any other benefits that should be included here?

11.4 To reduce income deprivation, including child and pensioner poverty

11.4.1 Why is this a priority outcome?

A total of six areas in Worcestershire – the Old Warndon and South-West Gorse Hill areas in Worcester City, the Rifle Range and Horsefair areas in Kidderminster, Batchley in Redditch and part of the Westlands estate in Droitwich - have rankings in the top 10% most deprived in England for income deprivation affecting children. National research shows that the highest concentration of child poverty outside London is in the West Midlands.⁶³

A further fourteen areas in Worcestershire are within the top 10% most deprived areas nationally for income deprivation affecting older people. Eleven of these areas are in Redditch.

Poverty has a direct impact on the health of those affected. Problem debt can result in stress, depression or anxiety and cutting back on

⁶³ Households Below Average Income 1994/95-2003/04. DWP & National Statistics (2005).

food or heating also affects physical health.⁶⁴ Low household income in childhood can be at the root of many of the cycles of deprivation, often leading to poor education attainment and low self-esteem⁶⁵ and, in some circumstances, to crime and re-offending. Research shows that almost a fifth of prisoners in the UK experience problem with rent arrears, unpaid bill and fines; problems that many find worsen while they are in prison.⁶⁶

Q57. Do you know of any other evidence relating to this outcome that should be included here?

11.4.2. Actions Over the Next Five Years

- Establishing a County wide task group to tackle issues leading to child and pensioner poverty and develop an action plan
- Improving benefit administration, with the emphasis on benefit take-up, by joining up services and challenging negative perceptions
- Reducing over-indebtedness and financial exclusion by working alongside and building on existing work of organisations such as the Worcestershire Credit Union and Citizens Advice Bureaux
- Ensuring close links with existing initiatives to reduce worklessness, to support those who want to work but cannot due to incapacity or family pressure, back into employment.

Q58. Are there any other partner actions relating to this outcome that should be included here? If you are identifying actions that relate to these or any alternative outcomes please evidence that partners have agreed to the action proposed.

11.4.3 Benefits to Worcestershire

- Fewer children and pensioners living at or below the poverty line
- Increase in residents taking up the benefits to which they are entitled
- Fewer residents taking on unmanageable debt and reduced incidences of loan sharking
- Increase in levels of financial literacy in the County
- Reduction in health inequalities in the most economically disadvantaged parts of the County

Q59. Can you identify any other benefits that should be included here?

⁶⁴ Action on Debt: why it matters and what you can do. Social Exclusion Unit (2004), p. 4.

⁶⁵ Breaking the Cycle: taking stock of progress and priorities for the future. Social Exclusion Unit (2004).

⁶⁶ Through the Prison Gate: a joint thematic review by HM Inspectorates of Prisons & Probation, Home Office (2001).

SECTION TWELVE - IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

12.1. The Worcestershire Local Area Agreement (LAA)

The Local Area Agreement (LAA) is the primary means by which this Community Strategy will be delivered.

The LAA is an agreement between central government and public bodies in Worcestershire. It is prepared by the county council on behalf of the Worcestershire Partnership and negotiated with the Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM). In 2006 the Worcestershire Partnership signed its first LAA, which will run until 2009. The LAA follows the themes of this community strategy. It contains 39 outcomes with associated indicators and targets. This includes 13 reward targets. These targets encourage us to stretch our performance beyond what we would normally achieve. If we are successful by the end of the Agreement we will be rewarded with additional money.

The LAA is reviewed every six months. The Government have recently described a new role for LAAs as the delivery mechanism for SCS, and as the central delivery contract between central Government and local government and its partners. In future the LAA will draw on the outcomes set out in this Community Strategy to set specific measures for delivery. Some of the measures to be included in Worcestershire's LAA will be negotiated with GOWM to reflect national priorities, others will be driven by the Partnership and reflect our local issues and concerns.

The LAA will not specify HOW the partnership will deliver the outcomes – but will focus on WHAT the desired outcome will be, in a way that is precisely measurable. Once partners have agreed to a target in the LAA they are individually and jointly responsible for making sure that it is delivered.

It is expected that the LAA will contain up to 35 improvement targets for the area and 18 mandatory early years and performance targets from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

The next LAA will follow a new approach to allocating funding. Most funding for core services will come mainly from the Revenue Support Grant, which is not ring fenced. There will also be an Area Based Grant, which will contain funding streams from across Government Departments.

In addition other funding will come through specific grants, although the Government's presumption is against this approach. In some limited circumstances this will happen where funding allocations are difficult to predict and are uncertain (e.g. grants which are demand-led).

The full detail of funding of future LAA priorities is still being developed – up to date information can be obtained as it becomes available from the Worcestershire Partnership website and the "In Brief" Partnership bulletin.

The Partnership has set up an easy to use model that tracks progress against LAA targets using a "traffic light" system. Outcomes are reported as being on target (green), borderline (amber), or below target (red). This model enables the Partnership to check that we are on course for success – or to take corrective action.

You can find out more about the LAA at:

<http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk>

12.2. Worcestershire Partnership Management Group and Theme Groups

The Worcestershire Partnership Board recognised the need for a smaller group to manage the day to day running of the LAA and so the Management Group was formed, consisting of representatives from the key sectors on the Board.

The Management Group is responsible for performance managing the targets we set ourselves in the LAA.

The Partnership's Theme Groups lead on delivering the outcome measures. The people responsible for coordinating each of the thematic blocks of the LAA report to the Management Group on a rotating basis. This enables them to identify when problems arise and address these before it's too late. The Management Group has also appointed a performance management champion who closely monitors the performance of all partners responsible for delivering the agreement.

12.3. District Local Strategic Partnerships

All of our District LSPs will be delivering actions against the themes in this Community Strategy at the local level.

In addition District LSPs are represented on the Worcestershire Partnership Board, Management Group and Thematic Groups –

ensuring continuity and co-ordination of activity at the local and strategic level.

12.4. Local Development Frameworks

Section 3 of this Strategy sets out the relationship between the Community Strategy and spatial plans. Through these relationships the LDFs will provide the necessary spatial expression of this Community Strategy.

12.5. Through other agencies and partnerships

The Worcestershire Partnership aims to ensure that the county's needs and interests are advocated and recognised at the regional and national level.

The Partnership recognises that the whole Community Strategy cannot be delivered within the county. It will also influence the planning and decision-making processes of other regional and national agencies and partnerships over the coming years.

APPENDIX ONE – SOURCES OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION

1. Worcestershire Citizens Panel Surveys, February 2003, May 2005, June 2007, Worcestershire County Council
2. Best Value User Survey 2003/04, Audit Commission
3. Best Value User Survey, 2006/2007, Audit Commission – Results from Bromsgrove DC, Malvern Hills DC, Worcester Alliance, Wyre Forest DC, Wychavon DC Council Surveys and Worcestershire County Council
4. Office of National Statistics, Population Projections
5. Centre for Census & Social Research (CSSR), University of Manchester
6. Index of Multiple Deprivation for England 2004
7. 2001 Census
8. Number of National Insurance Number Registrations 2002 – 2007
9. British Crime Survey Comparator Crimes
10. Department for Education and Science data 2006 & 2007 (note some of this data is *provisional* at the time of writing (Nov. 07)
11. Annual Business Inquiry 2004 and 2005
12. Agricultural Census, DEFRA
13. Annual Population Survey, 2005 and 2006
14. Cambridge Econometrics, March 2007
15. DEFRA 2004, 2005
16. Annual Population Survey
17. Labour Force Survey 2005
18. PayCheck CACI Household Income Model
19. Job Centre Plus data
20. Department for Work and Pensions, 2007
21. Strategic Assessments (Crime and Disorder) for each District, North & South Worcestershire, 2007
22. Alcohol Misuse and Related Crime in Worcestershire Jan 2002-Dec 2003, Worcestershire SMAT
23. IPCC report on climate change
24. Worcestershire County Economic Assessment 2006-2007
25. ONS Annual Population survey
26. Worcestershire Health Profile, 2007, NHS
27. West Midlands Regional Lifestyle Survey, 2005, West Midlands Regional Observatory
28. Smoking Kills, ONS General Household Survey 2003
29. HES - Hospital Episodes Statistics 2006/07
30. PCT Health Hotspots mapping, October 2007
31. Health Survey for England 2004
32. TellUs 2 Survey, Audit Commission, 2007
33. Ofsted Annual Performance Assessment Dataset for Worcestershire 2007
34. Department of Work and Pensions, Households Below Average Income 1994/95-2003/04

35. Improving Community Safety, Fact Sheet, 2007 – 2008,
Worcestershire County Council
36. Strengthening Worcestershire's Economy, Fact Sheet, 2007 –
2008, Worcestershire County Council
37. Enhancing Services to Young People, Fact Sheet, 2007 – 2008,
Worcestershire County Council
38. Audit Commission Area Profile for Worcestershire, 2006

APPENDIX TWO – KEY PLANS AND STRATEGIES

European Plans and Strategies

1. European Landscape Convention, 2004, Congress of Regional & Local Authorities of the Council of Europe

National Plans and Strategies

1. Strong and Prosperous Communities, Local Government White Paper October 07, CLG
2. Our Shared Futures, June 07, Commission on Integration and Cohesion
3. Making Assets Work – The Quirk Review of community management and ownership of public assets, Quirk Review Team
4. Opening the transfer window: The government's response to the Quirk Review, CLG
5. Working together for well-being: from vision to reality, LGA
6. UK Climate Change Programme, 2006, DEFRA
7. National Community Safety Action Plan, 2006 –2009, Home Office
8. Crime and Disorder Act Review, 2006, Home Office
9. Together We Can Action Plan, June 2005, Home Office
10. Respect Action Plan, January 2006, Home Office
11. Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy, 2004, Cabinet Office
12. Cleaner Safer Communities, November 2004, ODPM
13. Tackling Drugs Changing Lives, Home Office
14. Cutting Crime: A New Partnership 2008-11, Home Office
15. Countryside Quality Counts – Tracking Change in the English Countryside, 2006, Natural England
16. National Planning Policy Guidance & Statements, CLG
17. Heritage White Paper, 2007, DCMS
18. Woodfuel Strategy for England, 2006, Forestry Commission
19. Developing our Water Resources Strategy for England & Wales, Consultation Document, 2007, Environment Agency
20. Waste Strategy, 2007, DEFRA
21. Energy White Paper, 2007, DTI
22. Delivering a Sustainable Railway: White Paper, 2007, DfT
23. Planning White Paper, 2007, CLG
24. Choosing Health: making healthy choices easier, 2004, DoH
25. Our Health, Our Care, Our Say, January 2006, DoH
26. Game Plan: a strategy for delivering Government's sport and physical activity objectives, 2002, DCMS
27. Tackling Childhood Obesity – First Steps, Audit Commission
28. Bullying Today, 2007, Children's Commissioner Office
29. Code for Sustainable Homes – a step-change in sustainable home building practice, 2006, CLG

30. Delivering Housing Strategy through Local Area Agreements, Chartered Institute of Housing & IDeA
31. Homes for the Future: more affordable, more sustainable. Housing Green Paper, 2007, CLG
32. Culture on Demand, 2007, DCMS
33. Culture & the Shared Priorities, 2004, DCMS/LGA
34. Action on Debt – Why It Matters and What You Can Do, 2004, Social Exclusion Unit
35. Breaking the Cycle, 2004, Social Exclusion Unit
36. Through the Prison Gate: a Joint Thematic Review, 2001, HM Inspectorates of Prisons & Probation, Home Office

Regional Plans and Strategies

1. WM Regional Spatial Strategy, 2004 and subsequent revisions, West Midlands Regional Assembly (WMRA)
2. WM Regional Spatial Strategy Phase Two Revisions Options Consultation, January 2007, WMRA
3. WM Regional Spatial Strategy Phase Two Revisions Preferred Option, October 2007, WMRA
4. Worcestershire Partnership response to WM Regional Spatial Strategy Phase Two Revisions Options Consultation, Worcestershire Partnership
5. West Midlands Economic Strategy Consultation Draft, May 2007, Advantage West Midlands (AWM)
6. Regional Skills Assessment, 2006, West Midlands Regional Skills Partnership
7. West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy, 2007, AWM
8. Regional Biodiversity Strategy, 2005, West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership
9. Green Infrastructure Strategy for the West Midlands, Forestry Commission
10. West Midlands Regional Energy Strategy & Adaptation Programme, 2004, Energy West Midlands
11. Regional Assembly Climate Change Action Plan, 2007, West Midlands Regional Assembly
12. Healthy Choice? You Decide: Developing a Regional Health and Well-Being Strategy, West Midlands Regional Health Partnership
13. West Midlands Regional Lifestyle Survey
14. Investing in Health, A Strategic Framework for the West Midlands, 2007 – 2012, NHS West Midlands
15. West Midlands Regional Housing Strategy, 2005, West Midlands Regional Assembly
16. Valuing People & Places: West Midlands Cultural Strategy, 2006, Culture West Midlands

Sub-Regional Plans and Strategies

1. Rural Regeneration Zone Implementation Plan, 2007-2010, AWM
2. West Mercia Divisional Policing Plan, 2005-2008, West Mercia Police
3. West Mercia Fear of Crime Survey, 2006, West Mercia Police
4. Severn River Basin District - River Basin Planning: working together, statement of steps and consultation measures for preparing Severn River Basin management plan, Environment Agency
5. Water for life and livelihoods – River Basin Planning: summary of significant water management issues (Severn River Basin District), 2007, Environment Agency

Worcestershire Plans and Strategies

Cross – Cutting Themes

1. Impacts of Climate Change in Worcestershire, 2004, Worcestershire County Council
2. Worcestershire Climate Change Strategy, 2004, Worcestershire County Council
3. Worcestershire Flood Recovery Plan, Worcestershire, August 2007
4. An investigation into the barriers to integration as perceived by young people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds in the Worcestershire area, Worcestershire Racial Equality Council
5. West Midlands Forgotten Minority, Meeting the needs of the Gypsy Traveller Community, November 2007
6. Economic Impact of Migrant Workers in the West Midlands, November 2007, LSC

Communities that are Safe and Feel Safe

7. Bromsgrove Community Safety Partnerships Strategy (CSP) 2005 – 2008
8. Redditch CSP Strategy, 2005 - 2007
9. South Worcestershire's CSP Strategy 2005 – 2008
10. Wyre Forest CSP Strategy 2005 – 2008
11. West Mercia's Divisional Policing Plans 2005 – 2008
12. Worcestershire Domestic Abuse Strategy
13. Worcestershire's SMAT Treatment Plans (Adult, young people)
14. Reducing the Harm of Drugs and Alcohol – A Strategy for Worcestershire, SMAT, 2005- 2008

A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow

15. Biodiversity – Endangered Wildlife of Worcestershire, 1998, Worcestershire Biodiversity Partnership
16. Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment, 1999
17. Biodiversity Action Plan for Worcestershire, 1999, Worcestershire Biodiversity Partnership

18. Worcestershire State of the Environment Report, Worcestershire Partnership Environment Group
19. Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire, 2004 – 2034, Worcestershire County Council, District Councils and Herefordshire Council

Economic Success that is Shared by All

20. Worcestershire County Economic Summary
21. State of Worcestershire Economy 2007, Worcestershire Partnership, Economy & Transport Theme Group
22. Worcestershire Economic Strategy, 2004, Worcestershire Partnership, Economy & Transport Theme Group
23. Destination Worcestershire Business Plan, 2007, Destination Worcestershire
24. Worcestershire Rural Action Plan, 2004, Worcestershire Partnership, Economy & Transport Theme Group
25. Worcestershire Food & Drink Action Plan, Worcestershire Partnership, Economy & Transport Theme Group
26. Strengthening Worcestershire's Economy Fact Sheet, Worcestershire County Council
27. Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 2, 2006 – 2011, Worcestershire County Council
28. Worcestershire Accessibility Strategy 2006 –2011, Worcestershire County Council
29. Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy, 2007, Worcestershire County Council
30. Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy, 14 Best Practice Reports, 2007, Worcestershire County Council

Improving Health and Well Being

31. Day Services for Older People, Draft Strategy, September 2007
32. Worcestershire Supporting People Five Year Plan
33. Worcestershire Joint Commissioning Strategy for Mental Health, 2007 – 2012, Worcestershire Mental Health Trust
34. Worcestershire's SMAT Treatment Plans (Adult, young people), Worcestershire SMAT
35. Reducing the Harm of Drugs and Alcohol – A Strategy for Worcestershire, SMAT, 2005- 2008
36. Worcestershire Suicide Prevention Strategy
37. Work to develop the Joint County Council / PCT Strategic Needs Assessment

Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People

38. Making life better: Every child and young person, every agency, one plan. Worcestershire Children and Young People's Plan 2006-2009, Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership
39. Raising Standards in Schools Fact Sheet, 2007, Worcestershire County Council

40. TellUs2 Survey of Children and Young People, June 2007

Stronger Communities

41. Worcestershire Homelessness Strategy
42. Living Life to the Full: A Cultural Strategy for Worcestershire, 2002-2007, Worcestershire Partnership Cultural Theme Group
43. Worcestershire Play Strategy
44. Worcestershire Arts Strategy, Worcestershire County Council
45. Physical Education and School Sport Club Links Strategy
46. Worcestershire Countryside Access & Recreation Strategy, 2007, Worcestershire County Council
47. Worcestershire Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Worcestershire County Council
48. Valuing Worcestershire Volunteers in 2007 and beyond – draft, 2007, Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium
49. Valuing Worcestershire Volunteers, 2006-2007, Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium
50. Worcestershire Compact, 2006 (and draft Volunteering Code of Practice, 2007), Worcestershire Partnership,
51. Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium 10 Year Strategy, 2006-2016, Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium

District⁶⁷ / Local Plans

1. Community Strategy for Worcester 2nd edition 2007 – 2012, Worcester Alliance
2. Shaping the Future Together, Wychavon Community Strategy, September 2007, Wychavon Core Group
3. Sustainable Community Strategy, Malvern Hills District, 2006 – 2016, Vision 21
4. Helping to Transform Your Life, Community Strategy 2007, Wyre Forest Matters
5. Your District, Your Future, Bromsgrove Sustainable Community Strategy, 2007 – 2010, Bromsgrove Partnership
6. Written submissions from Bromsgrove LSP, Vision 21 Malvern Hills, Worcester Alliance, Wyre Forest Matters, Wychavon Core Group about District LSP priorities for inclusion in the County SCS
7. Redditch Partnership Four Cross Cutting Priorities
8. Written submission from Wychavon DC and Worcester City Council
9. South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy, Draft, November 2007, Malvern Hills DC, Worcester City DC, Wychavon DC
10. Wyre Forest Core Strategy, Issues and Options Paper, July 2007, Wyre Forest DC
11. Bromsgrove Core Strategy, Issues and Options Paper, June 2005 (preferred option in development 2007), Bromsgrove DC

⁶⁷ NOTE – District SCS's have been built on a local evidence base that will refer to District, Neighbourhood and Parish Plans as appropriate – these references have therefore not been reproduced here.

12. Redditch Town Plan No.3 (core strategy in development 2007),
Redditch BC
13. Central Technology Belt Business Plan, 2002 onwards, CTB
14. University of Worcester Strategic Plan, 2007-2012, University of
Worcester
15. Community Housing Business Plan, Wyre Forest Community
Housing

APPENDIX THREE – WORCESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE

The Worcestershire Partnership structure chart (below) shows how the partnership is organised to deliver Worcestershire's Local Area Agreement and our Sustainable Community Strategy. The Worcestershire Partnership Board is the strategic body of the Partnership and develops the vision for Worcestershire. The Management Group ensures the continuous development of the Worcestershire Partnership as a driving force for change, picks up on key themes and issues from the theme groups and oversees the development of the Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement on behalf of Worcestershire Partnership Board. The Theme Groups are the 'engine rooms' of the partnership and are responsible for turning strategy into practice. There are also three task groups that focus on specific areas of interest.

Worcestershire Partnership Board

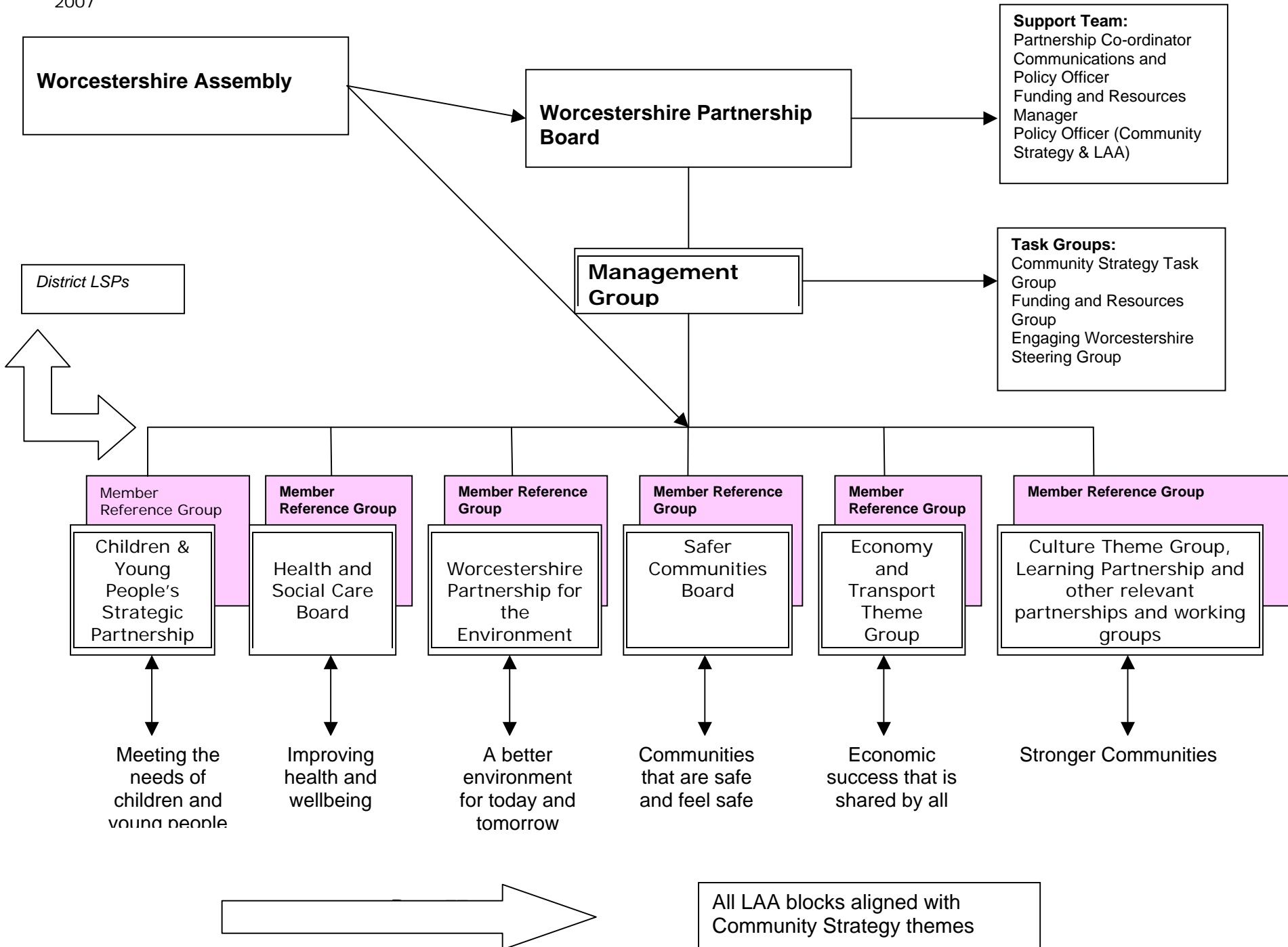
The Worcestershire Partnership Board is the strategic body of the partnership and is responsible for:

- Identifying and agreeing strategic priorities for the county
- Shaping the countywide Community Strategy and Worcestershire's Local Area Agreement
- Gaining partner agreement to the vision, values and outcomes of the partnership
- Agreeing the roles and responsibilities of the key elements of the wider partnership structure and delegating work to them
- Debating issues of mutual interest and concern
- Identify cross-cutting issues and gaps and overlaps in countywide provision
- Representing Worcestershire at a regional and national level.

Membership

- Worcestershire County Council
- Wyre Forest District Council
- Wychavon District Council
- Worcester City Council
- Redditch Borough Council
- Malvern Hills District Council
- Bromsgrove District Council
- Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils
- Wyre Forest Matters
- Wychavon Local Strategic Partnerships
- Worcester Alliance
- Redditch Partnership
- Vision 21
- Bromsgrove Partnership

- Worcestershire Primary Care Trust
- Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
- Chamber of Commerce
- Community First
- Diocese of Worcester
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire Learning and Skills Council
- Jobcentre Plus
- Local Development Agency Network
- Racial Equality Council
- Thomas Vale Construction plc
- University of Worcester
- West Mercia National Probation Service
- West Mercia Police Constabulary
- Worcestershire Wildlife Trust
- Worcestershire Partnerships NHS Mental Health Trust



Appendix 4 – Examples of Community Engagement in Worcestershire

Community Engagement can be best described by using a simple model **The Ladder of Participation**. The table below sets out each stage of the ladder, describes what it means and then gives some examples of work that is already happening in Worcestershire.

Table 6. Examples of Community Engagement in Worcestershire according to the Ladder of Participation

The Ladder	What does this mean?	Examples in Worcestershire
Informing	Telling people what is planned so that they are informed about what is happening.	e.g. Area Forums / Spotlights – county council and partner meetings that enable information exchange on specific topics for people in a particular location. e.g. Council Tax leaflets give information about how councils, police and fire and rescue services spend public money.
Consulting	Asking people’s opinion – Consultation should offer a number of options and listen to the feedback received. The decision is made taking account of the results of consultation alongside other factors.	e.g. Citizens Panels / Surveys – questionnaires that ask residents opinions on issues or topics – able to give a representative “snapshot” of opinion.
Deciding Together	Encourage people to provide some additional ideas and options, and to decide together the best way forward.	e.g. Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings - police led events linked to neighbourhood policing areas that enable residents to identify, prioritise and tackle issues of importance to them.
Acting Together	Not only do different interests decide together what is best, but also they form a partnership to carry it out. They are equally responsible for the outcome.	e.g. Oldington and Foley Park Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder – puts residents in charge of identifying the improvements needed in their area. e.g. Sure Start Childrens Centres – these projects aimed at pre school children and families include parents and residents in their management structures.
Supporting independent community initiatives	Help communities to meet their own needs - perhaps within a framework of grants, advice and support provided by a resource holder.	Community management and ownership of buildings – e.g. community organisations leasing community centres. Worcestershire Partnership Funding Portal – offers a single point for organisations to obtain funding advice. Grant aid / funding to voluntary organisations – this funding is levered in from a wide range of sources and enhances and supports quality of life across the county.

For further information about this Draft Sustainable Community Strategy please contact:

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**PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMMENTS ON THIS STRATEGY TO
JENNIFER BY:**

14TH FEBRUARY 2008