PARTNERSHIP TOWARDS EXCELLENCE – THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY FOR WORCESTERSHIRE

SECOND EDITION 2008 – 2013

WORCESTERSHIRE
SOURCE OF EXCELLENCE

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SECTION ONE – THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY FOR WORCESTERSHIRE

1.1. What is the 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 Strategy**[1] 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 visit, work or live 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 countywide 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 Worcestershire's Story of Place in Section 2 and Appendix 1) to identify the priorities that will need to be tackled over the next five years.

Each district and borough Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) 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

[1] In this document when we say Community Strategy or strategy we mean this Sustainable Community Strategy for Worcestershire

Section 4 describes the **three cross-cutting themes** that underpin this Community Strategy. These are tackling the challenges of climate change, community engagement and promoting community cohesion. These themes act as a 'golden thread' that runs through the whole strategy.

Section 5 sets out the **29 priority outcomes** that we will tackle together in the years ahead

This document is intended for the many agencies, organisations and community groups that have been involved in shaping the strategy and who will deliver it. Its content has been influenced by responses to the **Draft Sustainable Community Strategy** that was produced in November 2007. You can find out more about this in Section 2.

An easy to read, **summary version** of this strategy will be produced and will be available through the Worcestershire Partnership website (www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk).

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 achieving 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 relevant in a changing environment. You can find out more about the membership of the Worcestershire Partnership and how it is organised at Appendix 2.

The **partnership's website** (www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk) is packed with information about the partnership and what it is doing – you can find out much more by using this link. If you do not have access to the web please get in touch via the contacts given at the end of this strategy.

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

Vision

In order to shape the first edition of 'Partnership Towards Excellence - A Community Strategy for Worcestershire 2003 – 2013' the partnership developed a vision for Worcestershire and a set of values that underpin the partnership.

This **partnership's 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

During the consultation process on the draft strategy a number of comments were made about the partnership's vision and values. This

refresh of the Community Strategy has not covered the vision and values; this will be done when the strategy is fundamentally reviewed in 2010/2011. Comments made during the consultation process will be taken forward to that review.

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 in the county and 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 to reflect an increased emphasis in national policy. Furthermore, **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). These developments make successful partnership working even more important for the future.

We have a strong base to build on. The partnership has had considerable success in tackling some of the problems that residents had highlighted in 2003. For example:

- Worcestershire's Greenspaces and Community Partnership was 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 the 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 young people.
- 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 and a new Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy is being established to deliver a sustainable passenger transport network for Worcestershire.
- We have produced a Green Directory that is full of tips and contacts to help us all live a greener lifestyle.
- We 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 that has 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 five or more GCSE at grades A* - C. 2006/7 results showed that 57.6% achieved this result – the highest percentage ever.
- Young people aged between 13 and 16 in the Oldington and Foley Park Junior Pathfinder Project have drawn up a charter to change the way that their age group is perceived in the community and help agencies work more effectively with them. The charter has been distributed to the area's 2,000 households.
- A Compact has been agreed governing the relationship between public bodies and the Voluntary and Community Sector in the county. The Compact is supported by a number of codes of practice making clear the roles and responsibilities of all parties.

You can find out more about what we have achieved by visiting the website, reading the regular newsletters and briefings produced by the partnership or by looking at progress against the targets in the first Local Area Agreement (www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk)

In some areas, for example waste, health and raising educational achievement, we want to build on what has already been achieved and do more, so you will find that we continue our activity in these areas through this Community Strategy.

SECTION TWO - SHAPING THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

2.1. What information did we draw on to develop the Sustainable Community Strategy?

The diagram below illustrates the many sources of **information and evidence** that have shaped this strategy. These are further explained in this section and in Section 3.

Figure 1 – The information that shaped Worcestershire's Community Strategy

2.2. How did we find out Worcestershire 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 2,000 residents who are canvassed for their views on a wide range of issues.

The findings of the panel are weighted to ensure that they reflect Worcestershire's population. The partnership commissioned panel surveys in 2003 and 2005[2] 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 review[3]. 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**. 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 and 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 the Story of Place (see Section 2.4).

2.3. How did we find out Worcestershire Councillors' views?

Worcestershire has a total of **285 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 gateway to the community and the people who elected them and are in a strong position to both advocate community concerns and support communities to raise concerns and issues for themselves. Their role is unique as they are democratically elected **by** communities to work **for** communities.

Councillors have a community leadership role to support communities to develop a vision for their area and bring neighbours and partners together to improve 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.

[2] February 2003 and May 2005 Citizens Panel Surveys
[3] June 2007 Citizens Panel survey, a total of 1352 responses received representing a response rate of 68%

The Worcestershire Partnership has specifically acknowledged councillors' community leadership roles. 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[4]. 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 and the formal consultation process. The Citizens' Panel survey was also sent to all district and county councillors to canvas views.

2.4. The Worcestershire Story of Place

Underpinning the development of the themes and priority outcomes included in this strategy and in our Local Area Agreement (see Section 12 for more information) we have developed a **strong evidence base**, which we have described as **Worcestershire's 'Story of Place'.**

The Sustainable Community Strategy sets out our vision and ambitions for Worcestershire, which is backed up by evidence and analysis contained within the Story of Place. The story draws on a wide range of **statistical information**, as well as **survey evidence**, to describe Worcestershire as it is now. It also highlights what the evidence tells us are some of the **strengths, opportunities, issues and threats** that face the county in the years ahead.

The Story of Place is a key piece of evidence underpinning our Community Strategy. It can be found at:
http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk/home/story_of_place_final_submission_march_2008-2.doc

[4] Due to statutory requirements, some theme groups have different Member representation arrangements. For example, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (a County Councillor) sits as a member and two further councillors, one appointed by the Leader of Worcestershire County Council and one appointed by the Leaders Group of the District Councils sit as advisors on the Joint Commissioning Board (the commissioning body of the Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership).

2.5. The relationship between the Community Strategy and other key plans and strategies

In November 2007 the Department for Communities and Local Government introduced **draft** Statutory Guidance on **'Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities'**. The draft guidance included reference to sustainable community strategies and their role in setting a long-term vision for the area based on local needs, and setting key priorities that can be achieved in the medium term. The community strategy is described as the overarching plan for the area, but it must have regard to other regional and sub regional plans, statutory plans and local and neighbourhood plans. Although the guidance was still in draft when this Community Strategy was approved we have had regard to key plans and strategies for the county.

Through the work of the **thematic groups** and through the **district sustainable community strategies** we have had regard to: -

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

You can see the full list at Appendix 1.

We have also addressed the requirement in the guidance to make the links between **spatial plans and community strategies** in Section 3 of this strategy, although in two tier areas this is often more appropriately done at district level.

2.6. Consultation on the draft Sustainable Community Strategy

In November 2007 a **draft Sustainable Community Strategy** (http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk/home/draft_6_-_final_version_for_consultation.pdf) was published for consultation.

There were a number of ways that individuals and organisations could comment on the draft in order to contribute to the development of this Community Strategy.

- **Workshops** to discuss each of this Community Strategy's themes were held at the Worcestershire Assembly that took place in November 2007. In total, over **200 people** attended the workshops.
- **Written / emailed comments** were requested on the draft strategy, including replies to specific consultation questions found throughout the draft document. In total **eight** individuals **and 40** groups responded in writing or by email to the consultation.
- A consultation forum was set up on the partnership's **website.** The forum covered seven topics. **Fifteen posts** were logged on the forum and the most popular topic was read by **315 people.**

Every consultation comment submitted was carefully considered by the Worcestershire Partnership thematic groups or the Partnership Management Group.

You can find a **summary of the comments** that we received, and the **partnership's response** on our website http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk

You can see that the partnership has made a number of changes to the draft in this final version of the Community Strategy as a direct result of consultation comments.

2.7. 'Rural Proofing' the draft Community Strategy

As part of the consultation process, the strategy was **'rural proofed'** by a group of officers from the County Council, district councils and the Rural Community Council. The group used a method recommended by the former Countryside Agency to ensure that the needs and aspirations of all of Worcestershire's communities – both urban and rural – have been fully considered.

2.8 Assessing the impact on all of Worcestershire's communities of the draft Community Strategy

An Equality Impact Assessment has also been undertaken, using a toolkit specifically developed for LSPs by the former Commission for Racial Equality (West Midlands Hub) and Race Equality West Midlands. This takes into account the impact of the priority outcomes on **everyone** living and working in Worcestershire, regardless of their age, disability, gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation or other difference.

The full results of both of these exercises can be found on the partnership website at http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk and have informed the drafting of the strategy, including its thematic content.

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 Worcestershire, 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.

In the future the Government proposes to merge regional spatial strategies and economic strategies – creating even greater synergies between these linked issues. This will be achieved by the introduction of a single integrated strategy for the region which will help to join up planning and economic policy and will establish closer links between strategies and implementation on the ground.

3.1.1. 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 to 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.

Following an initial consultation on strategic options in January 2007, in January 2008 the WMRA submitted its preferred option for the development of the region to 2026 to the Secretary of State. This presents a number of key issues for the county.

- **Level of housing growth**

The WMRA 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 and subsequent to the WMRA submitting its preferred option the Secretary of State established a further study to consider options for the region accommodating **additional housing growth**. The outcomes from this additional study will be considered alongside the Assembly's preferred option at an Examination in Public in Spring 2009.

The Worcestershire Partnership has emphasised that housing growth should meet the full range of needs of residents and the workforce, including social and 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. There is a concern within Worcestershire that 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 is 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, as well ensuring that local growth needs and aspirations elsewhere in the county can also be met.

The Worcestershire Partnership submitted a formal response in January 2007 to the Phase Two RSS Revisions Strategic Options consultation. We will be responding again to the RSS Preferred Option before the closing date for responses in December 2008. We will then be providing a written submission to the Public Examination into the Revisions programmed for Spring 2009.

The **RSS Phase Three Revision** has now commenced and is considering critical rural services, recreational provision, regionally significant environmental issues, minerals 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 in the summer of 2007.

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

3.1.2. 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 the historic built environment to support the district council's more detailed **Local Development Frameworks.**

3.1.3. Local Development Frameworks (LDF) – spatial planning at the district Level

The LDF is a portfolio of documents (**Local Development Documents** or LDDs) that outline the spatial planning strategy for the local area. District and borough councils prepare these documents. 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 and facilities 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 district 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.

3.1.4. 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 cover the whole spectrum of public involvement. The partnership's approach to this is discussed further at Section 4.2.

3.2. Examples of the relationship between the Community Strategy and spatial plans

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

Table 1 – The relationship between Community Strategy themes and spatial issues

Community Strategy Theme	Examples of Spatial Issues
Communities that are safe and feel safe	• Support for CCTV schemes or improving highway safety • Housing design and location to design out potential crime • Better facilities for younger people to reduce complaints of anti-social behaviour
A better environment for today and tomorrow	• Biodiversity & Geodiversity Action Plans and AONB Management Plans to protect the natural environment • Ensuring the use of sustainable building methods and materials and identifying opportunities for renewable energy within new and existing developments • Waste Core Strategy to identify the location and provision of landfill and recycling facilities
Economic success that is shared by all	• Appropriate location of employment land such as the Stourport Road Employment Corridor, Longbridge site, Central Technology Belt and Bromsgrove Technology Park • Provision of transport infrastructure to ensure employment land is accessible without over-reliance on the car • Planning resource management, e.g. provision of waste facilities, water supply and sewerage
Improving health and well-being	• Provision and appropriate location of health and social care facilities and housing that enables vulnerable people to remain independent • Planning an environment that supports healthy choices – for example walking, cycling and healthy eating • Identifying land for recreation and sport
Meeting the needs of children and young people	• Provision and appropriate location of places for young people to go, e.g. youth shelters, drop in centres and play areas • Location and provision of schools and other educational establishments
Stronger communities	• Making land available for an appropriate housing mix, including affordable housing and homes for vulnerable people • Provision of community buildings and other places where communities can come together • Ensuring access to cultural and sporting activities and events • Investment in more sustainable transport modes, such as passenger transport, walking and cycling

SECTION FOUR – CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

4. What is a cross-cutting theme?

A cross-cutting theme is one that runs through all of the sections of this Community Strategy. This section spells out the high level outcomes and some selected actions that relate to the cross-cutting themes. Each of the six Community Strategy themes will contribute to a greater or lesser extent to meeting the outcomes that relate to these cross-cutting themes. They act as a **'golden thread'** that runs through the whole strategy, connecting with many of our priority outcomes, and will be knitted into the actions set out in the themes. The table in Section 5.2 shows how the cross-cutting themes relate to the other outcomes in the Community Strategy.

4.1. Tackling the challenges of climate change

4.1.1. Why is Tackling the challenges of climate change important?

Worcestershire is not immune to global and national environmental challenges. 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[5]. 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). In 2004 Worcestershire produced around 5.4 million tonnes of carbon dioxide, much of which was produced by emissions from transport, industry and homes[6].

The Citizens' Panel survey[7] showed that 60% of respondents agree that climate change is already having an impact on Worcestershire. Eight three percent 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.

Adapting to the **effects of climate change** is a priority in Worcestershire. Worcestershire has experienced significant flooding which has adversely impacted upon the county's residents and economy[8]. There is a need to consider the way that people manage the environment to alleviate rather than exacerbate flood risk and flooding. The challenges of climate change are not only environmental but also have economic and social dimensions, such as the effects of extreme

[5] Worcestershire Climate Change Impacts Study 2004
[6] Worcestershire Climate Change Strategy 2004
[7] Worcestershire Citizens Panel, June 2007
[8] Further details can be found in Worcestershire's Story of Place
http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk/home/index/wp-laa.htm

weather conditions on people's safety and health. There is a need for services and businesses to consider preparation, response, recovey and lessons learnt from such events.

4.1.2. Priority outcomes

The partnership has already developed the Worcestershire Climate Change Strategy. This sets out how we intend to tackle the challenges of climate change in the county, and we are constantly reviewing and improving our practice in this area. The aims of the strategy are:

- To raise awareness of the issue of climate change
- To reduce harmful climate change causing gas emissions across the county
- To assist adaptation to the impacts of climate change on the county

4.1.3. Actions on tackling the challenges of climate change

- Continue to implement the Worcestershire Climate Change Strategy and to develop specific actions through the Climate Change Task Group
- 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
- Implementing actions throughout this strategy relating to tackling the challenges of climate change – see Table 3 in Section 5.2
- Consider how the Worcestershire Partnership can use its influence to ensure that the impacts of climate change are fully considered and planned for
- Consider how the Worcestershire Partnership can use its influence to improve the management of the environment (for example flood prevention and defences, drainage, land use) to take account of the impact of climate change
- Implement our short and long-term flood recovery plans

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 in which they live[9].

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 in Appendix 3.

The role of the **Voluntary and Community Sector** (VCS) and other locally based partners, such as parish and town councils, 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 aims to ensure 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 during 2007. 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).

4.2.2. Priority Outcome

- To empower local people to have a greater choice and influence over local decision making and a greater role in the planning, design and delivery of public services

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

[9] The Politics of Place, Leadership Centre for Local Government

- Utilise a range of community engagement mechanisms - appropriate to the issue concerned and local circumstances, including those provided by the Voluntary and Community Sector
- 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
- Implement actions throughout this strategy relating to Community Engagement – see Table 3 in Section 5.2

4.3. Promoting Community Cohesion in Worcestershire

4.3.1. Why is Community Cohesion important?

The Worcestershire Partnership's 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 Cohesion[10]: -

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

[10] Our Shared Future – Final Report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (COIC), June 2007

- There are strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and other institutions within neighbourhoods.

The Story of Place[11] describes Worcestershire and the different communities that live within it. The **evidence** suggests the following community cohesion issues for Worcestershire:

- The small size of Worcestershire's **Black and Minority Ethnic Communities** requires a pro-active approach to ensure that the particular needs and concerns of these communities are listened to and addressed.
- The longest established minority community in the county is the **Gypsy and 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 the Gypsy and Traveller communities experience prejudice and inequality[12].
- More recently **migrant workers** have been attracted to Worcestershire, particularly to the seasonal and manufacturing work provided by the county's agricultural industries. Businesses report that they are employing migrant workers to address labour shortages[13]. A regional study has evidenced the positive impacts on business performance from employing migrant workers – 47% reported a positive impact on business performance. Disadvantages include communication problems due to poor English[14]. Recent anecdotal evidence suggests that migrant workers are leaving the UK due to the economic conditions here, which could cause labour shortages in some industries. The potential social impacts from the growth of migrant workers in Worcestershire have not been fully quantified, but evidence so far does not suggest any heightening of community tensions.
- 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.
- Building cohesive communities is about **addressing perceptions** and **tackling myths** as well as about identifying the facts.

[11] Worcestershire's Story of Place can be found at http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk/home/index/wp-laa.htm
[12] The Forgotten Minority - Gypsies and Travellers November 2007
[13] Economic Impact of Migrant Workers in the West Midlands, West Midlands Regional Observatory, October 2007
[14] ibid

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 resources[15]. The partnership will remain alert to community cohesion issues and monitor any potential tensions and concerns.

4.3.2. Priority Outcomes

- To build more inclusive communities
- To improve integration in our communities

4.3.3. Actions on Community Cohesion

- Worcestershire councils are participating in a capacity building project that will enable them to tailor their equality and diversity strategies to Worcestershire's particular circumstances. This two-year project will include work to ensure that councils have effectively identified and mapped gender and ethnicity across the county, and the barriers that may affect these groups.
- Continue to encourage community groups to celebrate cultural diversity through community events and activities.
- Promote the implementation of the Worcestershire Gypsy and Traveller Partnership Manifesto for Change, covering housing choice, direct and indirect discrimination, consultation and engagement and ethnic monitoring.
- Consider the implications of the regional study on the economic impact of migrant workers (to which the Worcestershire Partnership contributed) and identify any further actions that need to be taken as a result of the report.
- Develop a website to provide a welcome to migrant workers, help them to settle into their new communities and develop mechanisms of communication between partners to identify any emerging tensions. Wyre Forest LSP is leading the work and the Worcestershire Partnership will investigate the potential of rolling this out across the county.
- Build on existing work to bring young people together with local faith leaders to jointly tackle issues of cohesion.
- Develop a programme in nine pilot schools in order to support other schools in developing community cohesion projects.
- Establish more opportunities for young people and their families from different communities to engage with each other.
- Continue to monitor and assess community tensions, and intervene early to diffuse any potential situations.

[15] COIC – Our Shared Futures

- Implementing actions throughout this strategy relating to building more inclusive communities and improving integration in our communities – see Table 3 in Section 5.2.

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 the 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 below sets out the **29 priority outcomes** that this strategy will address.

Table 2 - Priority Outcomes for Worcestershire's Sustainable Community Strategy

Cross–cutting themes that underpin the Community Strategy priorities
Tackling the Challenges of Climate Change
- To raise awareness of the issues of climate change
- To reduce harmful climate change causing gas emissions across the county
- To assist adaptation to the impacts of climate change on the county
Community Engagement
- To empower local people to have a greater choice and influence over local decision making and a greater role in the planning, design and delivery of public service
Community Cohesion
- To build more inclusive communities
- To improve integration in our communities

Communities that are safe and feel Safe - To continue to improve community safety and build confidence in communities - To reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol	**A better environment for today and tomorrow** - To enhance Worcestershire's countryside and urban greenspace and appropriate access to them while protecting the natural and historic environment - To maximise the diversion of waste away from landfill through prevention, re-use, recycling/composting and recovery - To address issues of water quality, supply, and consumption and land drainage in Worcestershire - To increase energy efficiency and increase the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources
Economic success that is shared by all - 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 establish Worcester as a growth point - To remove barriers to employment and improve skills - To ensure that Worcestershire's economic interests are effectively represented at all levels	**Improving health and well-being** - 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 illness - To improve mental health and well-being
Meeting the needs of children and young people - To support children, young people and families to lead healthy lifestyles - Identify and deal effectively with bullying, and support all children, young people and families who have been affected by it - To raise the educational achievement of all children and young people - To ensure children, young people and their families have access to positive things to do and enjoy in their communities	**Stronger communities** - To provide decent, appropriate and affordable housing that meets the diverse needs of Worcestershire - To improve quality of life in Worcestershire by providing vibrant cultural and sporting opportunities for all - To support effective volunteering that is accessible to all - To reduce income deprivation, including child and pensioner poverty - To deliver an accessible, affordable, safe, convenient, sustainable and integrated passenger transport network

The following sections address each of the themes and outcomes in detail and provide evidence about **WHY** these outcomes are a priority, the sorts of **ACTIONS** we will take to meet the priority outcomes, and the **BENEFITS** that there will be to Worcestershire from achieving the outcomes.

Section 12 of this strategy provides further information about how we will **implement and monitor the strategy,** including references to the main **delivery plans**.

5.2. Connections between the Cross-Cutting Themes and the Community Strategy Outcomes

All of our partners and theme groups will take account of the cross-cutting themes of tackling the challenges of climate change, community engagement and community cohesion in their delivery against all of the priority outcomes in this strategy. This matrix shows the key relationships but, of course, there will be many others.

Table 3 – Matrix showing the relationship between Cross-Cutting Themes and Community Strategy Outcomes

PRIORITY OUTCOME	TACKLING THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	COMMUNITY COHESION
Communities that are safe and feel safe			
To continue to improve community safety and build confidence in communities		✓	✓
To reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol		✓	✓
A better environment – for today and tomorrow			
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, and consumption and land drainage in Worcestershire	✓	✓	
To increase energy efficiency and increase the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources	✓	✓	
Economic success that is shared by all			
To promote technology-led growth benefiting all sectors and parts of the county		✓	✓

PRIORITY OUTCOME	TACKLING THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	COMMUNITY COHESION
To support the sustainable development of the county through infrastructure development (in particular transport infrastructure) and establish Worcester as a growth point	✓	✓	✓
To remove barriers to employment and improve skills		✓	✓
To ensure that Worcestershire's economic interests are effectively represented at all levels		✓	
Improving health and well-being			
To support adults to lead healthier lifestyles		✓	
To reduce health inequalities		✓	✓
To improve the quality of life and independence of older people and those with a long-term illness		✓	✓
To improve mental health and well-being		✓	✓
Meeting the needs of children and young people			
To support children, young people and families to lead healthy lifestyles		✓	
To identify and deal effectively with bullying and support all children, young people and families who have been affected by it		✓	✓
To raise the educational achievement of all children and young people		✓	✓
To ensure children, young people and their families have access to positive things to do and enjoy in their communities		✓	✓

PRIORITY OUTCOME	TACKLING THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	COMMUNITY COHESION
Stronger communities			
To provide decent, appropriate and affordable housing that meets the diverse needs of Worcestershire	✓	✓	✓
To improve quality of life in Worcestershire by providing vibrant cultural and sporting opportunities for all		✓	✓
To support effective volunteering that is accessible to all		✓	✓
To reduce income deprivation including child and pensioner poverty		✓	✓
To deliver an accessible, affordable, safe, convenient, sustainable and integrated passenger transport network	✓	✓	✓

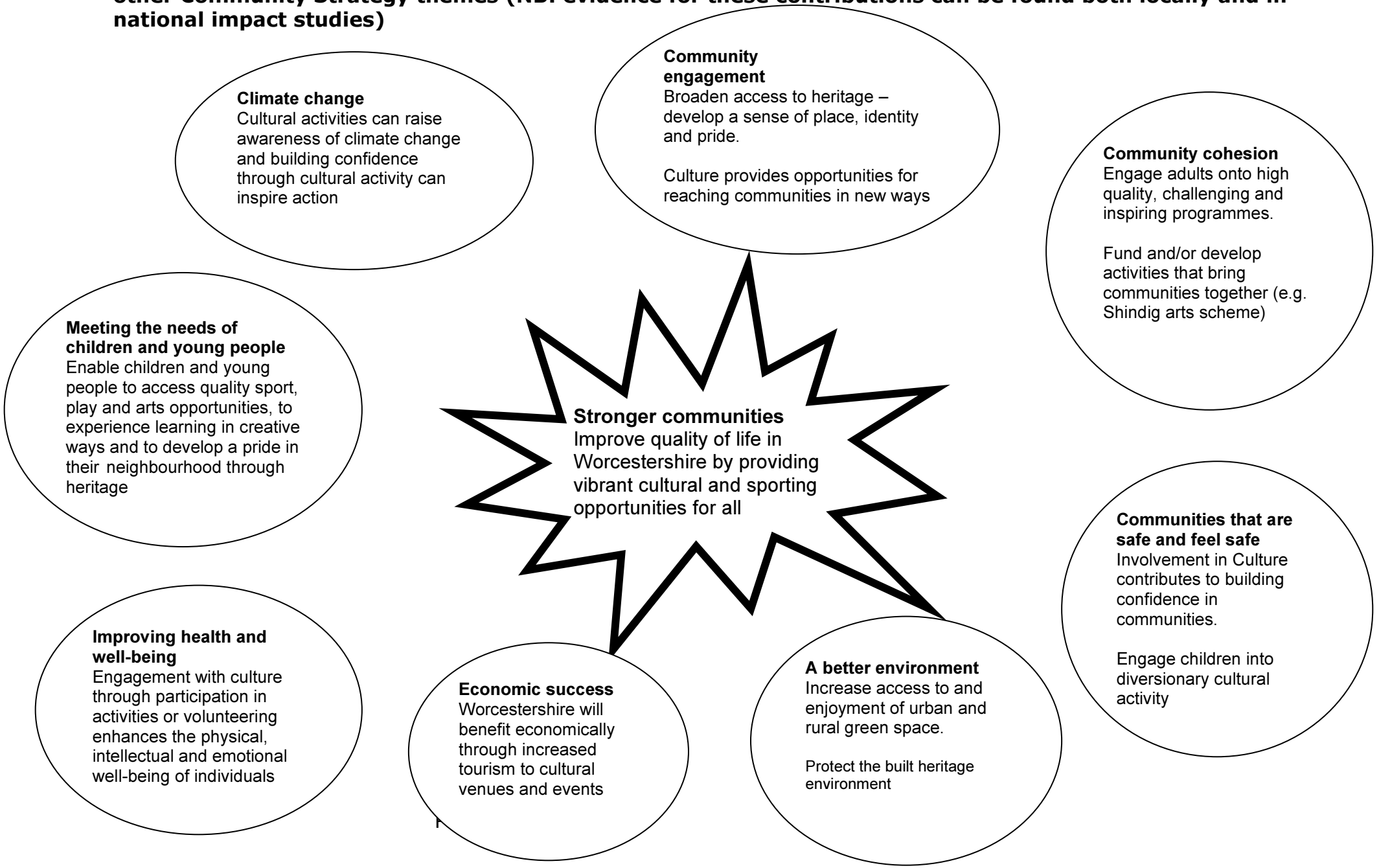
5.3. Connections between the different Community Strategy themes and outcomes

Although these outcomes are presented thematically here, in reality many of them have an **impact on each other**. We have already described in the table above how the outcomes throughout the strategy contribute to the cross-cutting themes. There are many other examples of how one priority outcome will make a contribution to meeting that expressed in another.

The diagram below serves to illustrate this by taking one of the outcomes this Community Strategy has prioritised within the Stronger Communities section - *"To improve quality of life in Worcestershire by providing vibrant cultural and sporting opportunities for all"* - and shows how this outcome makes a contribution to all the other themes[16].

[16] Note abbreviations of the Community Strategy themes and of the outcomes and actions including within the "Improving quality of life in Worcestershire by providing vibrant, cultural and sporting opportunities for all" have been used within the diagram. See Section 11.2 for full details

Figure 2 - Diagram showing some examples of the contribution of the priority outcome on culture to the other Community Strategy themes (NB: evidence for these contributions can be found both locally and in national impact studies)



SECTION SIX – COMMUNITIES THAT ARE SAFE AND FEEL SAFE

6.1. Priority Outcomes

1. To continue to improve community safety and build confidence in communities
2. To reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol

6.2. Why are these the priority outcomes?

We know that the **level of crime** is for our residents the most important factor in making an area a good place to live[17]. In fact compared to national and regional figures since 2003/04, crime reduction in Worcestershire has been amongst the highest in the country[18].

Overall 92% of our Citizens' Panel respondents[19] 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. The perception of a low level of crime is by far the most important factor residents of Worcestershire say makes their neighbourhood a good place in which to live (Worcestershire County Council, Best Value General Satisfaction Surveys 2006/07, 2003/04, 2000/01). Additionally, 35% of respondents to the 2006/07 General Satisfaction Survey said that litter and graffiti had a major influence on their perception of anti-social behaviour[20].

In addition to the need to address crime and the community's crime concerns, there is a need to address other issues affecting **community safety** and personal well-being. These include the impact of accidents, the well-being and safety of older and vulnerable people, and the impact of events such as traffic collisions, fires[21] and flooding.

It is also important to tackle crimes such as vandalism, arson and other forms of **anti-social behaviour** through education and other prevention work, in order to prevent escalation into potentially more

[17] Best Value General User Survey 2006 / 07
[18] At 31st March 2007 Worcestershire had seen a 24 per cent reduction in British Crime Survey Comparator Crimes since the 2003/2004 baselines were set.
[19] Citizens Panel June 2007
[20] BV General Satisfaction Survey 2006/07
[21] Deliberate fires now represent almost 3 out of 4 fires to derelict building or outdoors and 3 in 5 of all vehicle fires – H&W Fire and Rescue Service

serious crime. We also recognise the impact that the condition of the **built environment** - littering, abandoned and burnt out vehicles, graffiti - can have on people's sense of safety and well-being.

Partners recognise the interdependence of many of these issues and will work together to address them through a range of community safety, education and prevention initiatives.

It is understood that a relatively small number of offenders are responsible for a disproportionate volume of crime. Worcestershire has made significant progress with partnership activity regarding prolific offenders. An evaluation of the 'Catch and Convict' and 'Resettle and Rehabilitate' programmes showed a 65% reduction in the numbers of crimes committed by offenders engaged with this activity. However, this type of intervention is long-term. Worcestershire is currently reviewing structures to make sure they will continue to provide the most effective outcomes in the future.

We know that misuse of **illegal drugs and alcohol** can fuel crime and anti-social behaviour[22]. Between April 2006 and March 2007 drug offences increased by nearly 13%. It is estimated that there are approximately 2,750 'problematic drug misusers' within the county[23], and approximately 4% of the Worcestershire population drink alcohol at a harmful level[24]. We have a clear strategy to reduce the harm of drugs and alcohol in the county[25]. 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).

6.3. Actions over the next five years

- Work with the media to reduce the fear of crime and present an accurate picture of Worcestershire as a low crime area.
- Tackle and reduce the level of crime and disorder with specific emphasis on:
  - assault with injury
  - criminal damage, including deliberate fires
  - burglary
  - violent crime
  - personal robbery and theft
  - vehicle crime
  - anti-social behaviour.

[22] Alcohol misuse and related crime in Worcestershire Jan 2002 – Dec 2003, Worcestershire SMAT
[23] Frischer M, Heatlie and Hichman M (2004). Estimating the prevalence of problematic and injecting drug use for Drug Action Team areas in England
[24] Tackling Substance Misuse in Worcestershire: A Partnership Approach 2008 - 2011
[25] ibid

- Review and enhance partnership interventions to effectively target and address the most prolific adult offenders.
- Work 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 courts (SDVC), to develop perpetrator programmes and to increase the range of provision to adults and children affected by abuse.
- Extend the Hate Incident reporting schemes, which put the victim at the centre of our concern.
- Develop a range of community safety, education and crime prevention initiatives.
- Work together to reduce levels of graffiti and respond quickly to remove litter, fly tipping and abandoned vehicles.
- Develop partnership approaches to improve community safety outcomes, including harnessing the role of the Voluntary and Community Sector, housing associations, private businesses and other partners.
- Continue to strengthen joint working on these issues by exploring bringing together the three Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in the north of the county to form one North Worcestershire CSP.
- Continue to implement our strategy to reduce the harm of drugs and alcohol to both individuals involved and the wider community
- Continue to be responsive to our communities' concerns about crime and anti-social behaviour through mechanisms such as:
  - Neighbourhood policing initiatives – 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 Action[26].

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

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

- Reduction in anti-social behaviour which will improve quality of life for everyone
- Reduction in costs to the community of anti-social behaviour
- Improvements to the environment with less litter and graffiti and fewer deliberate incidences of burnt out vehicles and fires in open spaces
- Reduction in the harm caused by drugs and alcohol to the individuals involved and to the community

SECTION SEVEN - A BETTER ENVIRONMENT FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

7.1. Priority Outcomes

1. To enhance Worcestershire's countryside and urban greenspace and appropriate access to them while protecting the natural and historic environment
2. To maximise the diversion of waste away from landfill through prevention, re-use, recycling/composting and recovery
3. To address issues of water quality, supply, and consumption and land drainage in Worcestershire
4. To increase energy efficiency and increase the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources

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**[27].

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 contributes 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, 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

[27] Citizens Panel Survey – 2003 and 2005

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 http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk/home/index/wp-structure/wp-structure-theme-group/wp-structure-theme-group-env.htm

The next two decades will continue to see **waste management** in the United Kingdom transformed. The challenges presented by climate change, along with more stringent government targets, new UK and European legislation and a higher social awareness will drive these changes. 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 only accounts for between one fifth and one sixth of the amount of commercial, industrial, construction and demolition waste produced in the county[28] – 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 or composting as much waste as possible. Seventy seven percent of Citizens' Panel respondents gave a high priority to increasing the range and amount of materials that are recycled[29].

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 change[30]. A significant proportion of these greenhouse gases arise

[28] Minerals and Waste Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report 2006/07, WCC
[29] All references to the Citizens Panel in this section are from responses to the June 2007 survey unless otherwise stated
[30] See IPCC report on climate change

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 increasing the use of **renewable energy**, can make a significant contribution to reducing carbon emissions. Ninety percent of the Citizens' Panel support the generation of renewable energy in Worcestershire. Sixty nine percent 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.

7.3. Actions over the next five years

- Continue to implement and develop the Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan[31] 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.
- Support and promote the Management Plans of the Cotswolds and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) within those parts of the county that fall within their influence.
- Review and monitor the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy[32] and commission the required waste management facilities to increase recycling and recovery of municipal waste to ensure diversion from landfill.

[31] Biodiversity Action Plan 1999 and Revisions 2007

[32] The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy is jointly produced by Herefordshire Council, Worcestershire County Council and all of Worcestershire's District Councils

- Encourage prevention, re-use, recycling and composting and recovery of waste through public and business awareness and information campaigns; for example by developing the re-use / recycling capacity of voluntary and community sector organisations.
- 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.
- Provide advice and guidance on energy efficiency in the home.
- Promote the use of renewable energy in the county, including through the development of a renewable energy paper to influence spatial planning.

7.4. Benefits to Worcestershire

- The high quality of Worcestershire's environment contributes to economic and social well-being
- Increased and improved understanding and management of the natural and historic environment
- Enhanced access to and engagement with the natural and historic environment
- Increased wildlife, able to withstand pressures such as climate change
- Reduced quantity of waste going to landfill
- 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

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 establish Worcester as a growth point
3. **People** – to remove barriers to employment and improve 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.

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, which sees **technology-led growth benefiting the whole county and all sectors,** including agriculture and manufacturing.

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[33]. 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 10 years, and the focus for development on Worcester City. Location of **employment opportunities** near to housing development, tackling congestion and promoting sustainable integrated transport are all key to ensuring that the building blocks are in place to enable sustainable development that protects quality of life. Ensuring residents can access key services including education, training and employment is a major part of a transport strategy to

[33] Worcestershire County Economic Assessment 2006 –2007, Table 2.18 Employees by industry as a percentage of all employees, Page 26

support the county's economic aspirations. This strategy deals with transport - in particular, the choice and accessibility of more sustainable modes of transport – in more detail in Section 11.

Worcestershire's unemployment rate is below the national and regional average[34]. 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 average number of 19 year olds who are not in employment, education or training in comparison to our national statistical benchmarking group[35]. We aim to increase levels of participation for this age group. We also have a higher than the regional and national average working age population at NVQ1 level[36].

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. Tackling **'worklessness'** will be a key priority in the coming years

Worcestershire also experiences considerable levels 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 Development 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 £10 billion regional gap in Gross Value Added (GVA), which measures productivity, by providing well paid jobs and a high quality of life for its workers.

8.3. Actions over the next five years

- Develop and implement the actions identified within the Worcestershire Economic Strategy's Joint Investment Plan.

[34] Economic Assessment 2006 –2007, Table 4.4 Unemployment by District, August 2006, Page 74
[35] Annual Performance Assessment 2007
[36] ONS annual population survey (Qualifications Jan 2006 – Dec 2006)

- Work with the Central Technology Belt to maximise the potential for technology growth, linking to expertise in Malvern and Birmingham.
- Encourage environmental businesses to Worcestershire through demonstrating expertise in this area.
- Support the growth of existing and new local businesses - including rural businesses and those run by women - through better networking, clustering and business support initiatives.
- Reduce the reliance on private car travel through improvements to walking, cycling and passenger transport networks.
- Ensure 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 and History Centre and the development of the riverside.
- Improve transport infrastructure through the Worcestershire Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy and Worcester Transport Strategy to facilitate the sustainable growth of Worcester City.
- Ensure 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.
- Ensure that market towns continue to support their rural hinterlands by remaining as attractive focus for business, residents and visitors.
- Encourage visitors to urban and rural Worcestershire, and work with providers in the tourism sector to ensure that visitors want to return.
- Target work on those vulnerable young people who are not accessing employment, education and training, e.g. young offenders and pregnant teenagers.
- Improve the skills of the existing workforce – particularly focusing on those at NVQ Level 2+ and below to move them onto NVQ level 3 and 4.
- Reduce worklessness by removing barriers to employment - especially for those who are out of work due to their circumstances such as people with disabilities or family commitments.
- 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.
- Work 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.

8.4. Benefits to Worcestershire

- Increase in the numbers of and access to quality jobs throughout the county and across all sectors
- Increase in skill levels of people of employment age
- Increase in wage levels as a result of economic diversification
- Increase in Gross Valued Added (GVA) and a reduction in the regional £10 billion output gap
- Increase in competitiveness in key sectors
- Reduction in the numbers of people who are workless in the county
- Increase in the number of visitors to the county
- Minimised impact of traffic congestion through reducing reliance on private car travel and improving opportunities to use sustainable transport
- Reduction in the number of young people who are not in employment, education and training

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 illness
4. To improve mental health and well-being

9.2. Why are these outcomes the priorities?

If adults cannot be encouraged to take responsibility for their own health and to **lead healthier and more active 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 to 25 percent of adults smoke, this figure is higher in disadvantaged areas[37]. Smoking causes one fifth of deaths from circulatory disease and one third of all cancer deaths[38]. Obesity is another major cause for concern. Two thirds of adults are classified as overweight and obese[39] – 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 limit[40]- the highest rates being among young adults and those living in disadvantaged areas. The death rates from alcohol related liver disease are rising[41], as are the number of hospital admissions due to alcohol misuse - over 1,200 visits in 2006/07[42].

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 Worcestershire[43] to enable **targeted interventions to address health inequalities.**

Our Story of Place[44] describes the expected increase in the **older population** in Worcestershire. Almost half of the people aged 65 and over have a limiting long-term illness[45]. Our aim is that older people

[37] West Midlands Regional Lifestyle Survey, 2005, West Midlands Regional Observatory (WMRO)
[38] Smoking Kills – ONS General Household Survey 2003
[39] Regional Lifestyle Survey ibid
[40] Regional Lifestyle Survey ibid
[41] West Midlands Regional Observatory
[42] Hospital Episode Statistics 2006/07
[43] PCT Health Hotspots mapping, October 2007
[44] The story of place can be found at http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk/home/index/wp-laa.htm
[45] 2001 Census

stay healthy, active, with positive opportunities and good quality of life for as long as possible. Local organisations need to work together to develop the low level and preventive services that will enable this. When greater help and support is required this needs to be provided promptly by all the relevant organisations working together, and at the appropriate time to offer most benefit. When people come to the end of their lives, good quality services need to be provided.

Looking forward a major challenge is to enable more personalised services for all age groups – services that give people choice and control over how they maintain their independence and well-being, whilst complex needs are met.

In December 2007 there were just over 1,900 **adults with a learning disability** recorded on the combined caseload list of the Joint Learning Disability Service in Worcestershire. There is national evidence to suggest that the number of people with learning disabilities will increase[46]. We will be working together to ensure that appropriate services are available, particularly services that are based in the community. People with learning disabilities will be supported to live active and independent lives, including taking up employment opportunities where appropriate.

At any one time, about one sixth of people are suffering from a **mental health problem**. Mental health problems are a key cause of health inequalities. People with more serious mental health problems may find it difficult to access health and other public services, and to stay in work. They need medical treatment but they also need their broader health and social needs met in order to allow rehabilitation. 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.

We also acknowledge that those who care for others often require help and support themselves. We will build on existing services to support carers.

9.3. Actions over the next five years

- Increase awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles and providing more and better information to help people look after themselves.
- Providing local leadership to encourage and enable healthier lifestyles and overcome barriers to staying healthy.

[46] Further information and evidence can be found in Worcestershire's Story of Place

- Increase the capacity and activity of the smoking cessation service and providing signposting into the service.
- Develop a weight management service.
- Increase opportunities for sport and other physical activities.
- Fund local projects to enable people to take exercise and to improve awareness and access to healthy food, especially in the most disadvantaged areas.
- Develop and implement Healthy Transport strategies.
- Develop a Health Trainers service to provide support for people in disadvantaged areas to develop healthier lifestyles.
- Focus mainstream services on disadvantaged areas to improve access.
- Increase the capacity of alcohol services, particularly for early interventions to prevent harm.
- Reshape adult social care services as part of the Choice and Control programme including widespread use of individual budgets.
- Establish a Joint Health and Well-Being Team for older people to carry on the work of the WiNN project in providing early intervention and low level support services that help older people stay healthy, active and independent as long as possible.
- Increase the use of tele-care and tele-health to increase independence and well-being.
- Improve management of people with long-term conditions.
- Improve time taken to put care services in place.
- Develop an end of life care pathway.
- Continue to develop and expand services for people with dementia.
- Reshape day time services for people with a learning disability including the development of more employment opportunities.
- Increase opportunities for people with learning disabilities to live in the community rather than residential care.
- Jointly review and commission mental health services.
- Actively promote mental well-being.
- Ensure equality of access to mental health services across the county.
- Develop vocational/employment services for people with a mental illness.
- Continue strong partnership working and expand joint commissioning arrangements.
- Continue to develop support for carers in their caring role.

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
- More vulnerable and older people will be able to live independently, for longer and with a better quality of life
- Fewer people will suffer from mental illness and those who do will have better access to effective services
- More adults with learning disabilities or with a mental illness will be in employment

SECTION TEN - MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

10.1. Priority Outcomes

1. To support children, young people and families to lead healthy lifestyles
2. To identify and deal effectively with bullying, and support all children, young people and families who have been affected by it
3. To raise the educational achievement of all children and young people
4. To ensure children, young people and their families have access to positive things to do and enjoy in their communities

10.2. Why are these outcomes the priorities?

Leading a **healthy lifestyle** as a child or 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 nationally has risen steadily over the last 20 years. A programme of weighing children in reception classes (4-5 year olds) and in year 6 (10-11 year olds) commenced in 2007 in Worcestershire. This demonstrated that overall 15.10% of children in year 6 were overweight and 15.21% of children in year 6 were obese[47]. 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 two diabetes[48]. Concern about this is reinforced by our Citizens' Panel[49], 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[50].

The proportion of **under 19s who are pregnant** is reducing at a lower rate in Worcestershire than in comparable authorities[51]. These young women are less likely to achieve economic well-being for themselves or their children, which means their children get a poor start in life[52].

[47] Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Children, Young People and Families
[48] Audit Commission – Tackling Childhood Obesity – First Steps
[49] Citizens Panel – June 2007
[50] Audit Commission TellUs 2 Survey 2007, SHEU: Supporting the health of Young People in Worcestershire 2007 Survey
[51] Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Children, Young People and Families
[52] Ofsted Annual Performance Assessment Dataset for Worcestershire for 2007

Bullying is a major national agenda and was identified by the Children's Commissioner for England as the top agenda for young people[53]. This concern is reflected in Worcestershire, where young people reported both an experience of, and concern about, bullying which was above the national average[54].

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[55].

Nearly half of all respondents (48%) to the June 2007 Citizens' Panel survey did 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.

10.3. Actions over the next five years

- Implement Worcestershire's Children and Young People's Plan Action Plan 2008 – 2011.
- Continue the work of the Joint Commissioning Board of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership to implement its phased work plan to make best use of available resources, and to target resources effectively in those areas where children and young people are not doing so well.
- Measure and weigh children in year 6 and reception classes in school as part of our new Obesity Strategy. 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 to roll out the Healthy Schools programme to schools and assist 100 early years providers to work towards 'Healthy Settings' status.
- Continue to work on the revised Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting Action Plan.
- Improve sex and relationship education in schools, with a particular focus on young people attending 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 relationship issues.
- Improve systems for collecting and electronically recording the incidence of bullying, ensuring there is consistent recording and reporting.

[53] Bullying Today – Children's Commissioner Office, 2007
[54] Audit Commission TellUs 2 Survey 2007
[55] Ofsted Annual Performance Assessment Dataset for Worcestershire for 2007

- 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 school settings.
- Hold roadshows for practitioners, parents/carers and families in all communities and school clusters on how to address bullying.
- 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 supporting schools where underachievement is apparent, so that children can achieve more at school.
- Continue to show that young people's achievement improves as they progress through school (referred to as 'value added' measure).
- Put in place an integrated youth support strategy so that all young people receive information, advice and guidance, are able to access positive activities and receive targeted support when the need arises.
- Increase the number of educational and recreational leisure time activities for young people.
- Further develop Play Strategy Action Plans for each district council.
- Develop partnerships at a local level through the Community and Schooling 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.

10.4. Benefits to Worcestershire

- More children and young people with healthy diets
- Fewer women under 19 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

SECTION ELEVEN - STRONGER COMMUNITIES

The Stronger Communities theme differs from others in the Community Strategy in that it brings together five discrete outcomes, which taken together with the other themes in the strategy, are key in shaping the places that people live – and their experience of living in them. The Stronger Communities section deals with housing need and mix, increasing opportunities for participation in cultural and volunteering opportunities, addressing income deprivation and improving the passenger transport network.

Priority Outcomes

1. To provide decent, appropriate and affordable housing that meets the diverse needs of Worcestershire
2. To improve quality of life in Worcestershire by providing vibrant cultural and sporting opportunities for all
3. To support effective volunteering that is accessible to all
4. To reduce income deprivation including child and pensioner poverty
5. To deliver an accessible, affordable, safe, convenient, sustainable and integrated passenger transport network

11.1. To provide decent, appropriate and affordable housing that meets the diverse needs of Worcestershire

11.1.1. Why is this outcome a priority?

Suitable, decent and affordable housing helps to ensure that local residents enjoy a good quality of life and it also makes a significant contribution to the sustainability of urban and rural communities in Worcestershire. Housing impacts on a wide range of customers and services within the county and an inclusive, partnership approach is essential to achieve successful outcomes for local people.

More new homes, with a focus on affordability, is a Government priority. Ongoing assessments of housing need highlight this as a growing problem in Worcestershire and there is a clear aspiration to address this need through targets for housing completions. Those Worcestershire Partnership members who have land available for disposal have agreed to consider, where appropriate, its disposal to Housing Associations for affordable housing. As a result, additional general needs and supported housing schemes, which also attract Housing Corporation funding are now being developed. New homes need to be affordable, whether rented or for shared ownership, well designed and sustainable and must meet the needs of people now and

into the future. New housing can be a catalyst for economic growth and regeneration and help sustain and support local communities across Worcestershire.

The Government has set targets for achieving the **Decent Homes Standard** to improve conditions in both socially rented and private homes and this is supported by a range of funding and advice interventions by local authorities, and working with partners such as Housing Associations, private landlords and the Care and Repair agencies. There are proven links between property standards and health and there will be a focus upon improving energy efficiency, tackling fuel poverty and reducing domestic carbon dioxide emissions as part of the climate change agenda. It is vital to recognise the importance of our existing housing stock and to improve and preserve it for future generations.

There is a strong commitment to ensuring that **older and 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 which include Supporting People, Older People and Homelessness Strategies. Ensuring that a range of housing options are available and that there is a focus on **homelessness prevention** underpins the strategic approach to housing in Worcestershire.

11.1.2. Actions over the next five years

- Work in partnership to evidence local needs and to use this to develop policy responses.
- 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, more energy efficient and produce less carbon dioxide emissions.
- Increase the range of housing options available for local people and preventing homelessness wherever possible but, when this cannot be achieved, supporting people in temporary accommodation and securing alternative housing.
- Make the best use of the existing stock and ensuring that choices are made available for people to live in good quality, suitable accommodation which meets their needs.
- Tackle fuel poverty by improving affordable warmth and thermal comfort particularly for vulnerable people and those on low incomes.
- Provide a range of housing and support options for older and vulnerable people to enable them to maintain their independence.
- Ensure that housing related services contribute to other key policy areas such as community safety, health, social care, sustainability, regeneration and climate change.

11.1.3. Benefits to Worcestershire

- Reduced levels of homelessness and temporary accommodation
- Increased levels of independent living
- More choice of housing and support options for older and vulnerable people
- Improved standards of accommodation
- Reduction in fuel poverty
- More mixed and sustainable local communities

11.2. Improve quality of life in Worcestershire by providing vibrant cultural and sporting opportunities for all

11.2.1. Why is this outcome a priority?

Access to culture, leisure and recreation has a key role to play in enhancing the quality of life in Worcestershire. Recent government research[56] shows that **cultural and recreational activity** has a positive impact on the way that people feel about the place wher they live, as well as having personal benefits to individuals in terms of improved health, confidence, independence and providing opportunities for learning and self expression. Culture has a significant role to play in **regeneration and boosting the economy**, for example through the creative industries. Section 5 demonstrated how actions relating to this outcome contribute to many of the other themes in this strategy.

11.2.2. Actions over the next five years

- Through the countywide network of facilities and services, engage adults onto a wide range of high quality, challenging and inspiring learning opportunities to enhance the intellectual and emotional well-being and economic prosperity 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.

[56] DCMS Culture on Demand

- Work closely with professional and voluntary arts organisations and individuals to develop and enable a wide range of opportunities for all people in Worcestershire to take part in the arts in all its forms.
- Maintain and where possible improve standards on parks and countryside sites and routes through the implementation of the Worcestershire Countryside Access and Recreation Strategy and the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
- 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 makes to culture across Worcestershire, through the provision of grants, facilities, promotion and publicity of activities, information, advice and guidance appropriate to the array of clubs, organisations and groups within the county.

11.2.3. Benefits to Worcestershire

- There will be more opportunities for people to enjoy and participate in cultural activities
- People will feel more able to participate in society with improved confidence, health or education as a result of involvement in a cultural opportunity
- There will be increased quality of, and access to, the natural environment
- Worcestershire will benefit economically through increased tourism
- People will be better able to understand others through arts and culture, contributing to community cohesion
- The cultural heritage of Worcestershire will be preserved for future generations to enjoy

11.3. Support effective volunteering that is accessible to all

11.3.1. Why is this outcome a priority?

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[57]. 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.

[57] The value of the wider VCS in Worcestershire was evidenced by research carried out by Sustain Consultancy – Valuing the Voluntary and Community Sector in Herefordshire and Worcestershire – January 2007

11.3.2. Actions over the next five years[58]

- Reduce barriers to volunteering and ensuring that volunteering activity is valued, adequately resourced and well managed.
- Promote the importance, recognition and value of volunteering throughout Worcestershire.
- Develop, promote and continuously improve standards of good practice in working within voluntary organisations and in supporting all aspects of volunteering.
- Promote equal opportunity to volunteering.
- Improve the accessibility and opportunities for volunteering.
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of volunteer-placing organisations and those of individual volunteers.
- Enable leaders within the volunteering sector to work together throughout Worcestershire to unite as partners.

11.3.3. Benefits to Worcestershire

- More 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
- Skills and knowledge about volunteering are shared between partners and sectors

11.4. 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[59].

A further 14 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. Furthermore, the rural nature of

[58] Note these actions reflect the Worcestershire Volunteering Strategy and the Worcestershire Compact Code of Practice on Volunteering
[59] Households Below Average Income 1994/95-2003/04. DWP & National Statistics (2005).

large parts of the county can disguise smaller pockets of deprivation, often caused by isolation and poor access to services[60].

Poverty has a direct impact on the health of those affected. **Problem debt** can result in stress, depression or anxiety and cutting back on food or heating also affects physical health[61]. **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-esteem[62] and, in some circumstances, to crime and re-offending. Research shows that almost a fifth of prisoners in the UK experience problems with rent arrears, unpaid bill and fines; problems that many find worsen while they are in prison[63].

The Worcestershire Partnership recognises that poverty can affect a number of vulnerable groups in the county, including families living in deprived areas, people with disabilities and their carers, prisoners and migrant workers. By taking a joint approach to tackling issues of fuel poverty, unmanageable debt and financial exclusion and improving access to services across the county, the life chances of Worcestershire's residents can be improved.

11.4.2. Actions over the next five years

- Establish a countywide task group to take a coordinated approach to tackling issues leading to child and pensioner poverty and developing an action plan.
- Improve benefit administration, with the emphasis on benefit take-up, by joining up services and challenging negative perceptions.
- Build on the work of the Third Age Joint Worcestershire County Council and Department for Work and Pensions Team and the Signposting Service, to increase the take up of benefits amongst pensioners and help to alleviate poverty.
- Reduce over-indebtedness and financial exclusion by working alongside and building on existing work of organisations such as Black Pear Savings and Loans – Worcestershire's Credit Union and Citizens Advice Bureaux.
- Ensure close links with existing initiatives to reduce worklessness, to support those who want to work but cannot due to incapacity or family pressures, back into employment.
- Tackle fuel poverty by providing advice and guidance on energy efficiency in the home.

[60] Rural disadvantage: Reviewing the evidence. Commission for Rural Communities (2006)
[61] Action on Debt: why it matters and what you can do. Social Exclusion Unit (2004), p. 4
[62] Breaking the Cycle: taking stock of progress and priorities for the future. Social Exclusion Unit (2004)
[63] Through the Prison Gate: a joint thematic review by HM Inspectorates of Prisons & Probation, Home Office (2001)

11.4.3. Benefits to Worcestershire

- Fewer children and pensioners living at or below the poverty line
- Fewer children living in households in receipt of out of work benefits
- Increase in residents – particularly pensioners – 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

11.5. Deliver an accessible, affordable, safe, convenient, sustainable and integrated passenger transport network

11.5.1. Why is this a priority outcome

The "rural proofing" exercise carried out on the Draft Community Strategy and feedback from the consultation highlighted the importance of the transport network and in particular the **availability, integration and accessibility of passenger transport** as a key issue for the County. Public Transport (now more commonly known as Passenger Transport) was high on the list of priorities for improvement in Worcestershire according to the Best Value Performance Satisfaction Survey of 2006. In response this additional priority outcome has been included in the Community Strategy.

Transport is critical to the performance of the Worcestershire economy. It provides access to work, shops, education, health care and leisure facilities and services. In some areas this needs to be improved, particularly in respect of sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and passenger transport. Providing integrated passenger transport involves working with a wide range of partners and service providers to ensure that the different **passenger transport services and policies complement each other,** making it easier for the passenger to travel. So, for example, buses are scheduled to arrive at rail stations at times that reflect train arrivals, or one ticket can be used on different services.

Delivering a more accessible, affordable, safe, convenient, sustainable and integrated passenger transport network will improve the performance of the transport provision in Worcestershire. It will **increase the range of facilities and services accessible by passenger transport** opening up choices and opportunities for those without access to a car and providing a realistic alternative to the car

for others. This is fully in keeping with national and regional transport and land use planning policies, which require a balanced and integrated approach to transport planning.

This outcome is also consistent with the longer-term transport strategies for the County. The delivery of this outcome will require investment in additional and improved passenger transport services and infrastructure. Funding, including from external sources, will need to be sought and secured in order to deliver our long-term ambitions in this area.

11.5.2. Actions over the next 5 years

- Deliver the action plans set out in existing local transport policies, strategies and plans.
- Reduce the reliance on private car travel through improvements to walking, cycling and passenger transport infrastructure and services.
- Develop proposals for a high quality and accessible bus network (in line with the Worcestershire Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy), which will protect buses from the effects of traffic congestion, deliver higher quality buses, bus stops, passenger information and provide a higher quality service.
- Develop integrated ticketing options across different passenger transport services.
- Work with national and regional partners to implement wide ranging improvements to the local rail network, both facilities and services.
- Develop proposals for improvements to railway stations in Worcestershire, including Bromsgrove and Kidderminster, Worcester Foregate Street, Malvern Link and Hartlebury stations, and the development of Worcester Parkway.
- Work with bus and rail operators and other partners to improve information on passenger transport.
- Enhance existing and implement new walking and cycling routes and priority measures across the County.
- Develop Community Transport and other accessible services across the County.

11.5.3. Benefits to Worcestershire

- Improved choice for those without access to a car and a realistic alternative to the car for others, offering a genuine choice of transport options
- Enhanced cycling and pedestrian facilities
- More reliable, convenient and attractive passenger transport services

- Improved accessibility by passenger transport to jobs, services and facilities
- Safer and more accessible bus stops and railway stations
- Better information for the public
- Newer, more accessible buses
- Increased public satisfaction with the transport network
- Reduced congestion
- Environmental improvements for local communities

SECTION TWELVE - IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

12.1. Delivering the outcomes in the Sustainable Community Strategy

This table shows the key delivery mechanisms for each of the priority outcomes in this Community Strategy. There will be other sub-strategies and action plans, produced by theme groups and individual organisations, and these will constantly change and develop as the strategy is delivered. However, this table highlights some of the main places where you can find out more about how and when we will be delivering our priorities. You will find further explanation about these mechanisms below.

Table 4 – Delivery Mechanisms for Community Strategy Outcomes

PRIORITY OUTCOME	DELIVERY PLAN
Communities that are safe and feel safe	
1. To continue to improve community safety and build confidence in communities	Local Area Agreement Community Safety Partnerships' Crime and Disorder Strategies
2. To reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol	Local Area Agreement Worcestershire Substance Misuse Action Team (SMAT) Strategies
A better environment for today and tomorrow	
1. To protect and improve Worcestershire's natural and historic environment	Biodiversity and Geodiversity Action Plans AONB Management Plans District Local Development Frameworks
2. To promote the prevention, re-use, recycling and recovery of waste	Local Area Agreement Waste Core Strategy Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy Climate Change Strategy
3. To address issues of water quality, supply, and consumption and land drainage in Worcestershire	Local Area Agreement District Local Development Frameworks Environment Agency's Flood Management and River Basin Management Plans
4. To increase energy efficiency and increase the	Local Area Agreement Climate Change Strategy District Local Development Frameworks

proportion of energy generated from renewable sources	
Economic success that is shared by all	
1. To promote technology-led growth benefiting all sectors and parts of the county	Local Area Agreement Worcestershire Economic Partnership Joint Investment Plan
2. To support the sustainable development of the county through infrastructure development (in particular transport infrastructure), and establishing Worcester as a growth point	Local Area Agreement Worcestershire Economic Partnership Joint Investment Plan Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 2 Worcestershire Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy and Worcester Transport Strategy South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy District Local Development Frameworks
3. To remove barriers to employment and improve skills	Local Area Agreement Worcestershire Economic Partnership Joint Investment Plan
4. To ensure that Worcestershire's economic interests are effectively represented at all levels	Worcestershire Economic Partnership Joint Investment Plan
Improving health and well-being	
1. To support adults to lead healthier lifestyles	Local Area Agreement Public Health Business Plan Health Improvement Plan (in development)
2. To reduce health inequalities	Local Area Agreement Public Health Business Plan Health Improvement Plan (in development)
3. To improve the quality of life and independence of older people and those with a long-term illness	Local Area Agreement Worcestershire Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older Peoples Services Worcestershire Joint Commissioning Strategy for Learning Disability
4. To improve mental health and well-being	Local Area Agreement Worcestershire Joint Commissioning Strategy for Mental Health
Meeting the needs of children and young people	
1. To support children, young people and families to lead healthy lifestyles	Local Area Agreement Worcestershire Children and Young People's Plan

2. To identify and deal effectively with bullying and support all children, young people and families who have been affected by it	Local Area Agreement Worcestershire Children and Young People's Plan
3. To raise the educational achievement of all children and young people	Local Area Agreement Worcestershire Children and Young People's Plan
4. To ensure children, young people and their families have access to positive things to do and enjoy in their communities	Local Area Agreement Worcestershire Children and Young People's Plan
Stronger Communities	
1. To provide decent, appropriate and affordable housing that meets the diverse needs of Worcestershire	Local Area Agreement District Housing Strategies Worcestershire Homelessness Strategy Worcestershire Supporting People Strategy District Core Strategies
2. To improve quality of life in Worcestershire by providing vibrant cultural and sporting opportunities for all	Local Area Agreement Cultural Theme Group – Task Group Action Plans
3. To support effective volunteering that is accessible to all	Worcestershire Volunteering Strategy
4. To reduce income deprivation including child and pensioner poverty	Local Area Agreement Poverty Task Group Delivery Plans
5. To deliver an accessible, affordable, safe, convenient, sustainable and integrated passenger transport network	Local Area Agreement Worcestershire Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy Worcestershire Accessibility Strategy Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 2 Worcestershire Cycling Strategy

Cross-Cutting Themes	
1. To raise awareness of the issue of Climate Change	Climate Change Strategy All theme group and LAA delivery plans
2. To reduce harmful Climate Change causing gas emissions across the county	Local Area Agreement Climate Change Strategy All theme group and LAA delivery plans
3. To assist adaptation to the impacts of Climate Change on the county	Local Area Agreement Climate Change Strategy All theme group and LAA delivery plans
4. To empower local people to have a greater choice and influence over local decision making and a greater role in the planning, design and delivery of public services	All theme group and LAA delivery plans
5. To build more inclusive communities	All theme group and LAA delivery plans
6. To improve integration in our communities	Local Area Agreement All theme group & LAA delivery plans

12.2. Local Area Agreement (LAA) - The first Worcestershire Local Area Agreement

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 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 see this system and review the progress made on our first LAA at http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/ten/laa/index.html. The LAA is reviewed with GOWM every six months.

12.2.1. The Worcestershire LAA 2008-2011

The Government has described a new role for **LAAs as the main delivery mechanism for sustainable community strategies (SCS)** across the country, and as the central delivery contract between central Government and local government and its partners.

Worcestershire's new LAA was signed in June 2008 and draws on the outcomes identified in this Community Strategy to set specific **measures for delivery.** Some of the measures in Worcestershire's LAA have been negotiated with GOWM to reflect national priorities, others were driven by the partnership and reflect our local issues and concerns as expressed in the Story of Place and this Community Strategy.

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

To meet the reporting requirements of the LAA, we have agreed **13 priority outcomes,** compared to the 29 that are contained in the Community Strategy. In some cases, different wording has been used to express the outcome we are seeking to achieve. However, clear links can be made between LAA priorities and Community Strategy outcomes.

Worcestershire's new LAA contains **32 national** improvement targets for the area, **three locally defined** targets and **16 mandatory performance targets** from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). The LAA is reviewed with GOWM every six months and there is an opportunity to modify measures and targets on an annual basis.

This 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 another non-ring fenced grant, the Area Based Grant (ABG), which will contain funding streams from across Government departments.

In addition, other funding will come through specific grants. In some limited circumstances this will happen where funding allocations are

difficult to predict and are uncertain (e.g. grants which are demand-led).

There will also be a further round of rewards against the new LAA, although this will be lower than it has been in the past and will be awarded for performance against the whole agreement, rather than a limited number of identified targets.

You can see a full list of Worcestershire's improvement targets at http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk/home/index/wp-laa.htm.

12.3. Worcestershire Partnership Management Group and Theme Groups and District LSPs

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. Together they review progress against delivery plans, including how the theme groups are contributing to progress against our three cross-cutting themes. This enables them to identify when problems arise and address these before it is 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.

All of the **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 (LDFs)

Section 3 of this strategy sets out the relationship between the Community Strategy and spatial plans. The **LDFs** will provide the spatial expression of this Community Strategy and the district community strategies, as these are the documents that will detail how land will be allocated for uses such as housing and employment use.

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.

12.6. Through detailed strategies and action plans

The table above identifies some of the key plans and strategies that will contribute towards the delivery of this Community Strategy. Appendix 1 lists the **key plans and strategies** that we have had regard to in the development of this Community Strategy. Many of these documents (especially Worcestershire and district and local plans and strategies) will also enable the delivery of the Community Strategy, as they will contain more detail and specific actions that will be taken to address the themes and outcomes described in this document.

APPENDIX ONE – 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 2007,CLG
2. Our Shared Futures, June 2007, 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[64]

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. Worcestershire Citizens Panel Surveys (February 2003 and May 2005, June 2007)
5. Worcestershire Best Value General Satisfaction Survey 2006
6. 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
7. West Midlands Forgotten Minority, Meeting the needs of the Gypsy Traveller Community, November 2007
8. Economic Impact of Migrant Workers in the West Midlands, November 2007, West Midlands Regional Observatory

Communities that are Safe and Feel Safe

9. Bromsgrove Community Safety Partnership Strategy (CSP) 2005 – 2008
10. Redditch CSP Strategy, 2005 - 2007
11. South Worcestershire CSP Strategy 2005 – 2008
12. Wyre Forest CSP Strategy 2005 – 2008
13. West Mercia Divisional Policing Plans 2005 – 2008
14. Worcestershire Domestic Abuse Strategy
15. Worcestershire SMAT Treatment Plans (adult, young people)

[64] We recognise that, due to the linked nature of many of the Community Strategy outcomes, many of these Strategies and Plans will have impacts across the themes. However to avoid repetition they have been listed here only once

16. Tackling Substance Misuse in Worcestershire: A Partnership Approach 2008 - 2011

A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow

17. Biodiversity – Endangered Wildlife of Worcestershire, 1998, Worcestershire Biodiversity Partnership
18. Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment, 1999
19. Biodiversity Action Plan for Worcestershire, 1999, Worcestershire Biodiversity Partnership
20. Worcestershire State of the Environment Report, Worcestershire Partnership Environment Group
21. Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire, 2004 – 2034, Worcestershire County Council, District Councils and Herefordshire Council
22. Malvern Hills and Cotswolds AONB Management Plans 2004 – 2009 and subsequent revisions

Economic Success that is Shared by All

23. Worcestershire County Economic Summary
24. State of Worcestershire Economy 2007,Worcestershire Partnership, Economy & Transport Theme Group
25. Worcestershire Economic Strategy, 2004, Worcestershire Partnership, Economy & Transport Theme Group
26. Destination Worcestershire Business Plan, 2007, Destination Worcestershire
27. Worcestershire Rural Action Plan, 2004, Worcestershire Partnership, Economy & Transport Theme Group
28. Worcestershire Food & Drink Action Plan, Worcestershire Partnership, Economy & Transport Theme Group
29. Strengthening Worcestershire's Economy Fact Sheet, Worcestershire County Council
30. Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 2, 2006 – 2011, Worcestershire County Council
31. Worcester Transport Strategy

Improving Health and Well-Being

32. Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older Peoples Services 2008 - 2009
33. Day Services for Older People, Draft Strategy, September 2007
34. Worcestershire Supporting People Five Year Plan
35. Worcestershire Joint Commissioning Strategy for Mental Health, 2007 – 2012, Worcestershire Mental Health Trust
36. Worcestershire Suicide Prevention Strategy
37. Interim Carers Strategy April 2008/09
38. Countywide Strategy for Telecare 2007 - 2011
39. Joint Commissioning Strategy for Learning Disability
40. Work to develop the Joint County Council / PCT Strategic Needs Assessment

Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People

41. 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
42. Worcestershire's Children and Young People's Plan 2008 – 2011- Every child, Every Young Person, Every Agency, One Plan.
43. Raising Standards in Schools Fact Sheet, 2007, Worcestershire County Council
44. TellUs2 Survey of Children and Young People, June 2007
45. The Big Questionnaire, February 2008
46. Joint Strategic Assessment of Need for Children Young People and Families in Worcestershire, July 2008

Stronger Communities

47. Worcestershire Homelessness Strategy
48. "Unlocking the Door to Meeting Housing Needs in Bromsgrove District" – 2006 – 2011
49. Malvern Hills Housing Strategy 2006- 2009
50. Redditch BC Housing Strategy Statement 2005 –2009
51. Worcester City Council Housing Strategy 2004 – 2009
52. Wychavon Housing Strategy 2005 – 2008
53. Wyre Forest DC Housing Strategy 2004 - 2007
54. Living Life to the Full: A Cultural Strategy for Worcestershire, 2002-2007, Worcestershire Partnership Cultural Theme Group
55. Worcestershire Play Strategy
56. Worcestershire Arts Strategy, Worcestershire County Council
57. Physical Education and School Sport Club Links Strategy
58. Worcestershire Countryside Access & Recreation Strategy, 2007, Worcestershire County Council
59. Worcestershire Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Worcestershire County Council
60. Valuing Worcestershire Volunteers in 2007 and beyond – draft, 2007, Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium
61. Valuing Worcestershire Volunteers, 2006-2007, Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium
62. Worcestershire Compact, 2006 (and Volunteering Code of Practice, 2007), Worcestershire Partnership
63. Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium 10 Year Strategy, 2006-2016, Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium
64. Worcestershire Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy
65. Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy, 14 Best Practice Reports, 2007,Worcestershire County Council
66. Worcestershire Accessibility Strategy 2006 –2011, Worcestershire County Council
67. Worcestershire Cycling Strategy, Worcestershire County Council

District[65] / 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, Malvern Hills Partnership
4. Making a Real Difference, Community Strategy 2008-2014, Wyre Forest Matters
5. Your District, Your Future, Bromsgrove Sustainable Community Strategy, 2007 – 2010, Bromsgrove Partnership
6. Redditch Partnership Draft Sustainable Community Strategy Consultation Document, January 2008
7. 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
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
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

[65] 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

APPENDIX TWO – WORCESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE

The Worcestershire Partnership structure chart (see Figure 3 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 the 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
- Malvern Hills Partnership

- Bromsgrove Partnership
- Worcestershire Primary Care Trust
- Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
- Chamber of Commerce
- Community First
- Diocese of Worcester
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service
- 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
- Police Authority
- Worcestershire Wildlife Trust
- Worcestershire Partnerships NHS Mental Health Trust

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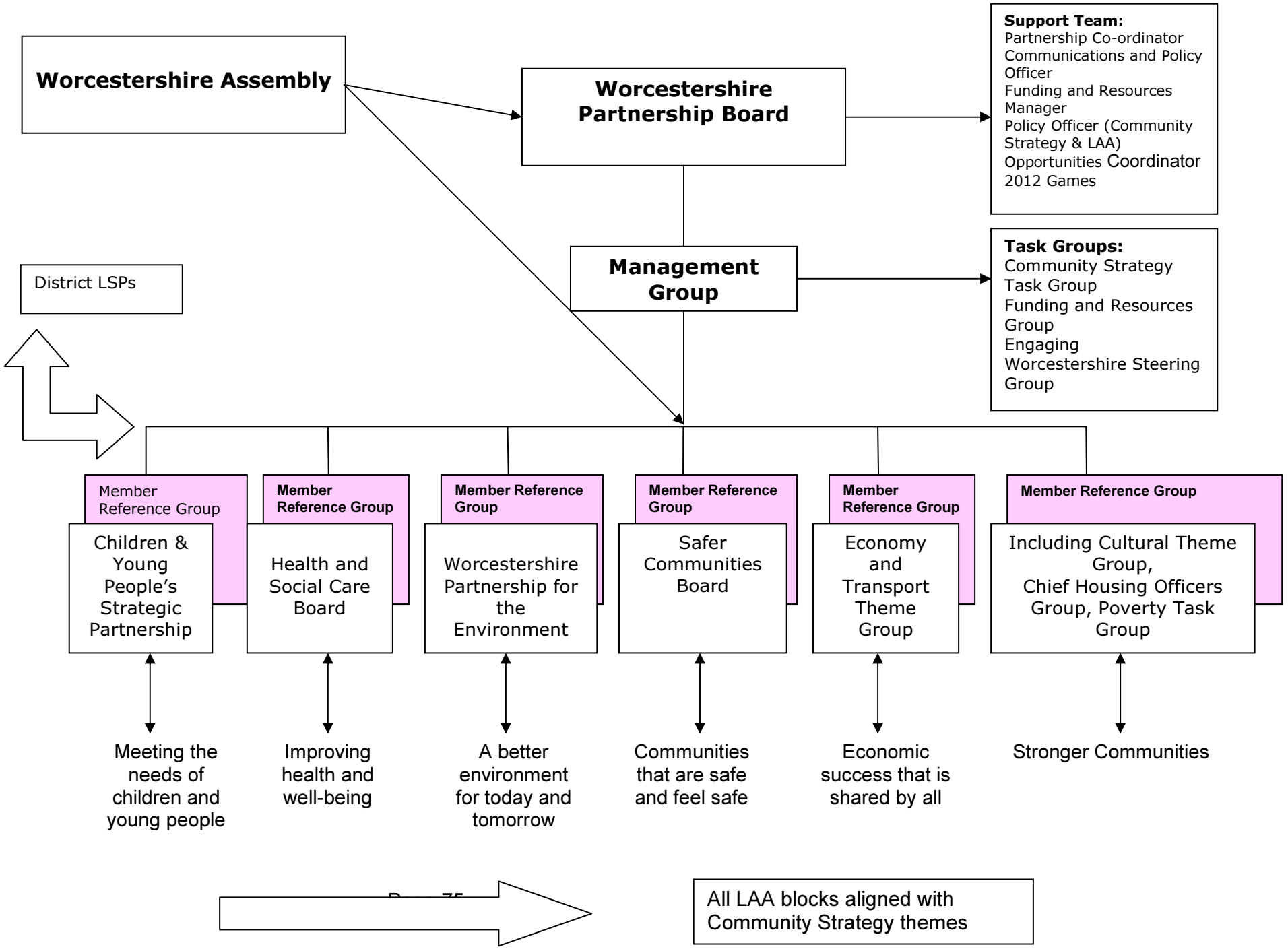

APPENDIX THREE – EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN WORCESTERSHIRE

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 5. 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. Partners 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. The Parish Lengthsman scheme – the County Council contracts with parish councils to carry out road maintainance tasks 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.

WORCESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP

For further information about this Sustainable Community Strategy and the Worcestershire Partnership please contact:

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WWW.WORCESTERSHIREPARTNERSHIP.ORG.UK