

# Draft Community Strategy for South Cambs

Set of six pictures  
down right hand side  
of page, reflecting  
the 6 Aims

## **Introduction**

Picture

Welcome to one of the most important projects in South Cambs – our Community Strategy.

This paints a picture of our district as we want it to become over the next 15 or so years, developing from how it is now, taking account of the changes and challenges facing the district, including a new town. It aims to provide a 'routemap' for the work we need to do to get there.

The Community Strategy has need produced by a partnership of different bodies. We have been working together over the last two years to develop this document, based on your views of the future.

I hope you will find that this addresses the key issues in South Cambs, and you can 'sign up' to working with us to achieve it.

Daphne Spink  
Chair of the South Cambs Strategic Partnership

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## **What is a Community Strategy?**

The Community Strategy sets out what people in South Cambs want to happen here, and how we aim to make these things happen. It is a single document that will help to set the agenda for all agencies working in the district over the next 3 years. The scope of the Community Strategy is set within the framework of the national, regional and sub-regional strategies, including the Regional Planning Guidance and the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan.

The Strategy is based on the vision that people have for the future in South Cambs. It has an action plan for the Councils, and other partners, to deliver improvements over the next 3 years, in order to help realise this vision. It is a practical document, facing the realities of life in the district, and working to improve it. It also links in with other key strategies of the partners, such as the Local Plan, the Local Transport Plan and the Housing Strategy, that play a key role in implementing the Community Strategy.

## **Why have we drawn up the Community Strategy?**

The government requires us to draw up the Community Strategy. This duty was placed on both the District and County Councils by the Local Government Act 2000, which says:

“Every local authority must prepare a community strategy for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being in their area and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom”.

Each district in Cambridgeshire is working on a Community Strategy; some are in preparation and some have already published one.

## **How has it been prepared?**

The Strategy has been the result of a partnership between the District and County Councils, working with the Health Services, the Police, the business and voluntary sector. These groups have come together in the South Cambs Strategic Partnership to produce the Community Strategy. The Strategic Partnership will continue to develop a joint approach to the important issues, whenever possible, and will oversee the delivery of the Strategy.

Partnership working doesn't mean that all the agencies agree on everything: each has its own responsibilities and requirements which may not be shared with other partners. But it does mean that the partners aim to work together wherever they can, and they are all committed to the aims and targets in this Strategy.

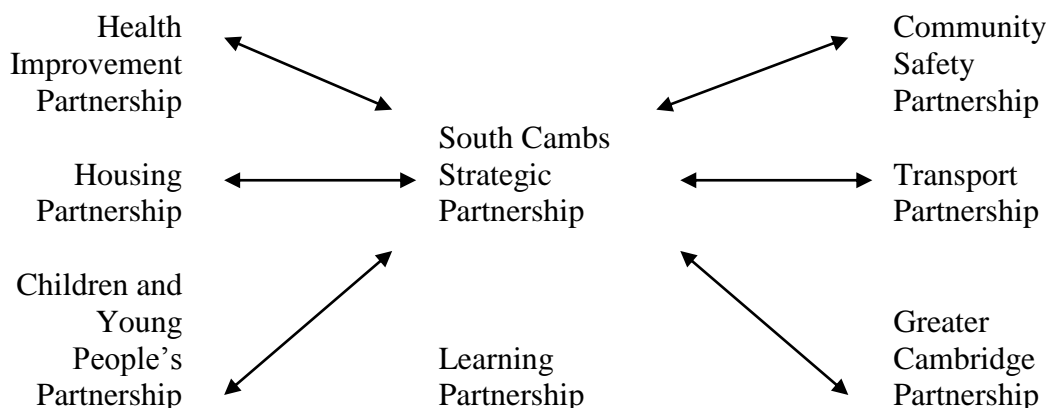
## **Who is involved in the partnership?**

The partners in the South Cambs Strategic Partnership are set out on page 14.

## Working in Partnership

The South Cambs Strategic Partnership provides a new focus for partnership working in the District. But it is not the first group to be brought together to agree and deliver services jointly between agencies. There are a whole set of partnership bodies working in different service areas, such as the Community Safety Partnership (involving the Police, the District and County Councils and the Primary Care Trust, plus others) or the Health Improvement Partnership (involving Primary Care Trust, the District and County Councils and other agencies) and the Infrastructure Partnership. Each of these partnerships has a specific agenda, and often have responsibilities defined by government regulations.

The Strategic Partnership is distinctive due to the breadth of its scope. It is not restricted in its focus: anything which affects the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of people in South Cambs is covered. This gives it a unique importance. The Strategic Partnership is in a position to affect the work of all the other partnerships, and to draw their work together. The diagram below indicates this situation.



The Strategic Partnership will not duplicate the work of any of the existing bodies. Its role is to :

- monitor what is already being done
- help coordinate between different aspects of work
- and add to them where appropriate.

This Community Strategy focuses on work which the Strategic Partnership can add to existing partnership work; this is set out on the following pages. But behind these targets there are a large number of others for the wider partnerships. As all these targets contribute to the improved well-being of people in the district, the Strategic Partnership will monitor their delivery. Where there are difficulties, its role will be to help to ensure they are overcome.

## **Your Views**

The Community Strategy is based upon the views of people in South Cambs. These views have been found through three processes:

- a review of the findings of consultation undertaken by the partners, including from a Quality of Life survey.
- direct consultation with residents, carried out through the South Cambs magazine in Spring '03, on the 'big issues' for the district.
- a telephone consultation with a balanced sample of residents on the suggested vision and actions for the strategy in autumn 2003.

## **Quality of Life Survey**

To follow

## **Surveys Vision and Priorities**

To follow

## **A Vision for South Cambs**

The vision of the district in 15 to 20 years time is for a place which has developed aspects of life which are already positive, and has tackled those aspects which currently cause most problems. The vision can be broken down into 6 aims

1. Good access to services and information
  - improved access for all sections of the community through community transport provision and improved local services.
2. Safe, healthy, and active communities
  - working with residents in local communities, and with the voluntary and community organisations which support them.
3. Quality homes for all
  - developing new affordable homes to meet local needs, and improving housing standards.
4. A successful, inclusive economy
  - a sustainable local economy with growth, jobs and skills that benefit everyone.
5. A high quality environment.
  - protecting and improving the countryside and our natural and built heritage, assisting access to it, and reducing the effects of waste and greenhouse gas emissions.
6. The creation of new communities in large developments.
  - working in partnership to develop integrated services, and creating communities with their own identity which enhance the district.

These aims are set out in more detail on the following pages, with details of targets to achieve them. The achievement of these targets are the key measures of success of the Community Strategy.

## Aim 1 Improving Access to Services and Transport

South Cambs is a very rural district. The major service centres which serve our residents are all in neighbouring districts, in Cambridge or the surrounding market towns. Accessing these major services requires transport, and for many without a car this is a considerable problem.

South Cambs villages vary in their services considerably. At Sawston and Histon/Impington there are a good range of shops and other services such as banks, sports and community facilities and employment opportunities. Village Colleges are some of the largest supplier of services and opportunities within the district, situated in our larger villages. But many villages are smaller with fewer services, and there are a considerable number of very small villages with few if any local services.

Public transport is at present limited. The main routes are radial routes to and from Cambridge; outside these there are few local services. Improving public transport is an issue of considerable concern, but with current practical constraints the options are limited.

### **Our vision for 2020**

All residents can access the services and information they need, whenever they are provided, in their village, a neighbouring village or in a town/city. The access is both through assistance to help get people to services, and through the development of local services.

In order to help realise this vision we will:

TARGET 1/1 Develop new **community transport schemes**, or develop and sustain existing schemes, to respond to local demand.

TARGET 2/1 Increase access to information, learning, cultural provision and partners' services through developing **'community information hubs'** in villages and new settlements.

TARGET 3/1 Create **new cycleways linking villages** to services, particularly from smaller villages to larger ones, to enable access by bike.

TARGET 4/1 Improve village **community and leisure facilities**, to increase local amenities and services, particularly for young people.

In addition the partners will work to:

- promote car sharing, car clubs and promote home working and the take-up of Travel for Work Plans.
- develop pedestrian routes and bridleways, and promote the use of cycleways.

## Aim 2 Supporting South Cambs Communities

Village communities are the heart of South Cambs. The individuals and social structures within villages are a key to the well-being of these communities, and the strategy aims to support them. Some groups are likely to need less support; the priority groups include older people, and children and young people. There may also be more marginalized groups, such as travellers, who may be a priority.

Local priorities are best established by consultation processes within village communities. The strategy will assist the process of drawing up 'Parish Plans' in order to find these priorities. While some villages have already undertaken this process, many others have yet to do so; by providing guidance and support we hope to enable many more to draw up their local priorities and an action plan for addressing them.

### **Our vision for 2020**

Local communities are vibrant, enterprising and environmentally friendly and our villages feel safe. Residents are healthy and skilled, and regularly take up opportunities to participate in local life. There is a flourishing and inclusive voluntary and community sector, which benefits from a thriving volunteer force.

TARGET 5/2 Develop a **Guidance Framework for Parish Plans**, and coordinate support for Parish Plan work, to assist more villages to prepare and implement plans.

TARGET 6/2 To **increase residents feelings of safety in villages** by tackling antisocial behaviour and establishing new Police Community Support Officers to provide an increased visible presence in villages.

TARGET 7/2 Assist the **development of the voluntary sector** in the district through establishing a Voluntary Sector Forum, and improving systems of funding and support for voluntary organisations.

TARGET 8/2 Increase **access for children and young people to quality learning and play opportunities** through parental support and childcare.

TARGET 9/2 **Promote healthier lifestyles** through work to promote physical activity, healthy eating and smoking reduction.

TARGET 10/2 Work with communities to **increase road safety** through safer driving and cycling and safer routes to school.

The partnership will also oversee other work to improve information provided to communities, to enable them to exercise choices, and to increase multi-agency advice services.

- Older people will be supported to live safely in their own homes.
- Work with travellers will be developed through establishing a Travellers Forum for the district, to increase support and address issues of concern.



## Aim 3 Quality Homes for all

Good housing is essential to our quality of life. The high house prices in the district make it very difficult for those not on the 'housing ladder' to find housing they can afford in South Cambs. Often young people have to move further from Cambridge to find homes, well beyond the borders of the district, although they may have key skills needed in the economy of the district. Consultation has shown that this is the biggest issue for people in South Cambs.

Some older houses in the district fall short of what is required and need to be brought up to standard for the safety and well-being of the occupants. For the increasing number of older people, adaptations may be required to make their home suitable, or support may be needed, to enable them to go on living independently.

### **Our vision for 2020**

An increasing supply of affordable housing enables local people to live in the same areas as their jobs. Existing homes meet quality standards to ensure safety and well-being, including energy standards to protect the environment. Home adaptation and support services are available to help older people to continue to live independently.

To achieve this vision we will:

TARGET 11/3 Increase the supply of **new affordable housing**, including Key Worker housing.

TARGET 12/3 **Bring homes up to the government's 'decent homes' standard**, including all Council housing and housing occupied by those requiring most support.

TARGET 13/3 Improve and develop services to **enable older people to continue to live independently at home**.

TARGET 14/3 **Promote safety in the home** through the coordinated work of all the partners.

In addition the partners will work to:

- Work with housing partners to develop affordable housing in new settlements, and where appropriate in villages.
- Ensure suitable temporary housing is available for homeless households, and improve access to permanent housing.
- Develop a Forum for Travellers who are settled in the district, to improve liaison and help address issues concerning encampments.
- Work to identify and assist vulnerable households affected by 'fuel poverty'.

## Aim 4 A High Quality Environment

The quality of the South Cambs environment lies in its cultural heritage, its countryside and its buildings. The strategy aims to protect and improve them, and to develop access by the local community.

The pressures for growth, to provide much-needed new housing and facilities to support them, will be met whenever possible using 'brownfield' sites, that is ones which have been built on before. Much of the growth will be concentrated in the new town of 'Northstowe', and on the urban fringes of Cambridge. These will be built to create high quality environments.

### **Our vision for 2020**

The quality of the environment in South Cambs is better than ever. There is good access to the countryside both in villages and in larger district facilities. Waste, pollution and emissions of 'greenhouse' gasses have been greatly reduced to contribute national and global sustainability. Everyone recycles most materials, and a large proportion of energy used has been generated from renewable resources.

The targets for the next 3 years to help achieve this are:

TARGET 15/4 Increase **recycling of waste** and promote waste minimisation schemes in the work of all the partners.

TARGET 16/4 Promote opportunities for **access to the countryside**, including creating local 'Greenspace' projects for wildlife habitat.

TARGET 17/4 Provide a lead on **tackling climate change** through action by the partners on their own use of energy, water and other resources.

TARGET 18/4 Reduce the effects of **fly tipping and abandoned cars** through action to deal with and prevent occurrence.

TARGET 19/4 Promote **smoke-free environments** throughout the partnership and in local facilities.

Other work will include:

- work with commercial domestic and voluntary groups on waste minimisation, and working for national support.
- We will promote: green procurement-buying renewable or recycled materials, and develop work to address the impacts of climate change on the community.
- The partners will also consider ways to improve access to the countryside through such measures as country parks serving a wide community.

## Aim 5 Sustaining the Local Economy

The economy in South Cambs is an integral part of the wider economy of the Cambridge sub-region, centred in the city and stretching out to include the neighbouring market towns. Any economic measures in the district have to be considered in that wider context, including the national and international significance of this area. In order to promote economic well-being in South Cambs, it is important to include all sections of the population of the district.

Economic development is focussed on groups needing help to develop skills and access the labour market. Much of this work is delivered by agencies outside local government, and especially the voluntary sector. Existing partnerships can be enhanced by improved working between the partners of the South Cambs Strategic Partnership.

### **Our vision for 2020**

There is a sustainable local economy with growth, jobs and skills benefiting everyone, reducing social exclusion and maximising the potential of science, innovation and social enterprise.

TARGET 20/5 Increase economic opportunities through developing access to Broadband for all homes and businesses.

TARGET 21/5 Develop skills through increasing the provision of work experience and apprenticeships amongst partners and businesses.

Other joint work of the partners will include:

- Reduce the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training, through a reduction of the skills gap.
- Promote partners referrals to Business Link 'workforce development' and environmental management' information.
- Consideration of measures such as advice or retraining to assist older people to return to work or use their skills.

## Aim 6 **Building New Communities**

Major new developments are being planned for the edges of Cambridge, and at the new town of ‘Northstowe’, in the area between Longstanton and Oakington. These sites, as well as the development of market towns just outside the district, will allow the growth the government has designated while largely protecting the village environments in South Cambs. The partnership work to develop them builds upon the experience gained in the growing new village of Cambourne.

In meeting the huge growth pressures, these developments need to provide much more than housing. New communities need to be created and helped to develop. This challenge is considerable; the housing is likely to be built to higher densities than in recent years, to make the most effective use of land, and to meet government targets. Appropriate facilities need to be planned to meet the needs of the incoming residents, and services will be required to support them to grow into mature, self-sustaining communities.

### **Our vision for 2020**

A new town and new extensions to Cambridge are developed, creating places with their own identity and sense of place. Strong new communities have developed in each, able to take their place in a district with urban as well as rural environments. High quality facilities and environments in the new developments enhance the built heritage and countryside of South Cambs.

TARGET 22/6 Ensure joint planning of the community facilities and services for the new developments through establishment of project management, responsible to the partnership for their planning and provision.

TARGET23/6 Promote high environmental quality in the design of new developments, including sustainable use of resources and energy.

TARGET 24/6 Promote the engagement of local residents in the social, cultural and physical development of new communities, and the growth of civic governance.

Other work which the partners aim to undertake:

- Develop a considerable proportion of affordable housing for rent, ownership or shared ownership in the new communities.
- Work jointly with the Cambridge City Strategic Partnership to coordinate planning and provision for developments on the fringes of Cambridge, starting with the Northern Fringe.
- Develop processes that will involve residents in the cultural provision of the development, such as in the creation of public art.
- Promote ‘best practice’ in development design to benefit local communities and the environment.

## **Timetable and Targets for Delivery**

A table with specific targets for 04/05, 05/06 & 06/07 to be worked up following approval of the aims and targets, and agreement of the local Public Service Agreement measures for South Cambs.

## **Reporting Progress**

The Community Strategy is due to be adopted during 2003/04 for implementation from April 2004. The Strategy covers a 3 year period, ending in March 2007. A second Community Strategy will be developed during the latter stages of this time, for implementation for the following period.

Progress on delivering the Strategy will be reviewed each quarter, for periods:

- April – June (quarter 1)
- July – Sept (quarter 2)
- Oct – Dec (quarter 3)
- Jan – March (quarter 4)

A report will be considered by the Strategic Partnership Board following the end of each quarter, detailing progress made, achievements and any significant problems encountered. Guidance has recently been issued on a Performance Management system for Community Strategies and the work of Strategic Partnerships. Once this guidance has been considered in more detail, it may be appropriate to adopt the recommended system, or some system similar to it.

The quarterly progress reports to the Strategic Partnership will be public documents. They will be available on the websites of the District and County Councils, as well as in libraries etc. It is anticipated that a Community Strategy/Strategic Partnership section of the District's website may be developed during the course of the strategy, providing more frequent updates and information.

An annual report is expected to be published around April 2005 and April 2006, setting out not only progress against the targets but also related information concerning the wider aims of the strategy. The annual report will also consider possible revisions to the strategy, in the light of changing circumstances. Any changes, such as new or altered targets, will need to be agreed by the Strategic Partnership before they can be included in future work and monitoring.

Further information on any aspect of the monitoring or reporting process can be obtained from the contacts listed on the next page.

## The South Cambs Strategic Partnership

South Cambridgeshire District Council  
Cambridgeshire County Council  
South Cambs Primary Care Trust  
Cambridgeshire Constabulary  
Cambridgeshire Assn of Local Councils `CALC` representing Parish Councils  
Cambridgeshire ACRE representing voluntary sector agencies  
Directions Plus ditto  
Cambridgeshire Ecumenical Council representing faith communities  
Village Colleges representative  
South Cambs Youth Parliament representing young people