

# growing our communities

HUNTINGDONSHIRE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2008 - 2028





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For a full list of partners involved in the Sustainable Community Strategy, please see back page.





# Introduction

I am delighted to present our Sustainable Community Strategy to you on behalf of the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership.

The strategy has been developed through a partnership of senior representatives from organisations including Cambridgeshire County Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, NHS Cambridgeshire, Cambridgeshire Police, town and parish councils, local businesses, the voluntary sector and Huntingdonshire Regional College. These agencies provide important services to the public such as health care, community safety, transport, education, environmental protection, leisure, economic development and planning.

The strategy is based on what people who live and work in the district have told us is important to them, both now and in the future. It sets out a shared long term vision for Huntingdonshire for the next 20 years (2008 - 2028).

By working together to deliver the ambitions outlined in the strategy, we will aim to make a real difference to the lives of people who live and work in Huntingdonshire.

Our aim is:

- to ensure Huntingdonshire is a place where current and future generations have a good quality of life;
- to enable people to make the most of opportunities that come from living in a growing and developing district;
- to ensure people enjoy the benefits of continued economic success; and
- to provide access to suitable homes, jobs, shops, services and things to do.

**Councillor I Bates**  
**Chairman of Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership**  
**Leader of Huntingdonshire District Council**





# What is the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership?



The Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership is one of five local strategic partnerships across Cambridgeshire. The partnership involves representatives from Cambridgeshire County Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, NHS Cambridgeshire, Cambridgeshire Police, town and parish councils, the Environment Agency, Huntingdonshire Regional College, local businesses, the voluntary and community sector.

All of these organisations have teamed up to work together more effectively to improve the quality of life for the people of Huntingdonshire. They do this by combining their activities to make the best use of resources and sharing knowledge and expertise. Their vision will be delivered through the Sustainable Community Strategy.





# What is a Sustainable Community Strategy?

Huntingdonshire's Sustainable Community Strategy shows how we will build a better future for Huntingdonshire. It reflects key district, regional and sub-regional strategies, specifically the Local Development Framework which will be the delivery mechanism for the spatial elements of the strategy. The complete list of documents that underpin the strategy can be found on the Huntingdonshire District Council website at [huntingdonshire.gov.uk](http://huntingdonshire.gov.uk) under the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership section.

It is based on a collective understanding of the current and future needs of Huntingdonshire, public consultation and the aspirations and priorities of those who live and work in the district.

The strategy is organised under six strategic themes:

- Growth and infrastructure
- Health and wellbeing
- Inclusive, safe and cohesive communities
- Economic prosperity and skills
- Environment
- Children and young people

For each theme, a series of outcomes (what we want to achieve) and objectives (how we will go about achieving the outcomes) have been identified. These outcomes and objectives will enable the partnership to address common priorities, set clear goals and share responsibility.

Each of the strategic themes has a five year delivery plan which will detail how the outcomes and objectives will be achieved. The delivery plans will have annual targets that will be reviewed each year.





# What does Huntingdonshire look like today?

Huntingdonshire is a large district characterised by four market towns which act as service centres for surrounding villages. The district's towns, villages and countryside offer diverse and attractive environments in which to live and work, each having their own distinctive character.

The population is currently around 166,000 people, with approximately half living in the four market towns of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey and the remainder in almost 100 villages. A number of large villages – key settlements - act as local service centres for surrounding areas, and there are also numerous smaller villages and hamlets.

The southern part of the district, including the towns of Huntingdon, St Neots and St Ives fall within the Cambridge sub-region and looks to Cambridge for many of the higher order services, while the northern part of the district is influenced by Peterborough.

The district has experienced considerable pressures for growth. Since the 1960s there has been rapid and extensive building of new houses. While the local economy has developed, the number of jobs has not matched population growth associated with new houses. As a result there is a net out-commuting pattern. Similarly the development of facilities, services and local infrastructure has been outstripped by population growth.

The district lies within the London/Stansted/ Cambridge/Peterborough growth area within the East of England Region. New development will generate additional demands on the district's physical and social infrastructure. A key challenge will be timely provision of adequate and appropriate new infrastructure to meet these demands. This is essential to create balanced, sustainable communities.



# Sustainable communities in Huntingdonshire

## What is a sustainable community?

Sustainable communities are places where people want to live, work and spend time, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, and provide a good quality of life.

Eight key components of a sustainable community are:

- active, inclusive and safe
- well run
- environmentally sensitive
- well designed and built
- well connected
- thriving
- well served
- fair for everyone

The extent to which Huntingdonshire meets these key components is shown in the following pages.







## Active, inclusive and safe

### Fair, tolerant and cohesive with a strong local culture and other shared community activities

Perceptions of community identity and belonging in Huntingdonshire are generally high. However, perceptions of strong community identity and belonging tend to be higher in communities where there is good access to facilities and services. Rural areas and the more deprived communities are more likely to feel a lower sense of identity and belonging.

Huntingdonshire is generally a safe place with a low level of crime. However, there are some communities where crime and anti-social behaviour is relatively high.



## Well run

### With effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership

There are some well established consultation and participation activities across Huntingdonshire, both seeking general perception views and service specific. However, there is not always a consistent approach and there is a need to establish effective feedback mechanisms. Working closely with the three tiers of local government, engaging communities and neighbourhoods and listening and communicating with residents will increase involvement in decision making and ensure that their views are used to improve services and inform the development of policies.



## Environmentally sensitive

### Providing places for people to live that are considerate of the environment

Huntingdonshire is at the heart of the East of England Growth Agenda and, as a result, we need to ensure that the development of places for people to live, work and visit enhances, rather than degrades our environment.

On a global scale there has been a growing realisation that the way we currently live our lives is unsustainable. In other words we are living beyond our means. Perhaps the greatest threat to our environment is that of climate change.

In order to address this global issue, we must act locally. Work is underway in Huntingdonshire to reduce emissions of carbon and other greenhouse gases and develop a long-term strategy to adapt to the climate change already taking place. As one of the lowest lying and driest parts of the country, the local consequences are likely to include increased risk of flooding and further stress to water resources.

Addressing the imbalance between our use of natural resources in building the new homes and services we require and the resulting waste produced, is a key challenge where progress is already being made. The protection and enhancement of Huntingdonshire's valuable natural environment and the maintenance of local distinctiveness are also vital to the development of a truly sustainable Huntingdonshire.

## Well designed and built

### Featuring quality built and natural environment

Huntingdonshire has a good built environment with a mix of quality historic and modern buildings. However a proportion of the housing stock does not meet modern standards for energy efficiency. Job growth has not matched housing and population growth and in addition there is a lack of affordable housing. The natural environment is varied and valued by local residents.





## Well connected

**With good transport services and communication linking people to jobs, schools, health and other services**

Access to market towns and other service centres has relied on a high dependency on cars throughout Huntingdonshire's communities which in turn has contributed to congested main roads at peak times. The need for improvements in transport services, communication links and access to services has been accepted.

## Thriving

**With a flourishing, diverse local economy**

Huntingdonshire has a strong and diverse local economy. To maintain this, jobs need to match the level of growth and skills for the future, particularly in key sectors, need to be achieved. The vibrancy of our town centres needs to match the demand of growth.

## Well served

**With public, private, community and voluntary services that are appropriate to people's needs and accessible to all**

Huntingdonshire has an extensive range of public, private, community and voluntary organisations providing valued and essential services in many communities. Residents have high perceptions of local services - 84% of residents stated that they were satisfied with their local area as a place to live (residents survey 2008).

## Fair for everyone

**Now and in the future**

Not everyone in Huntingdonshire has equal access to services or information. Huntingdonshire is made up of many different groups of people who have different needs and aspirations. It comprises many different communities; some of these communities represent a geographical location and others a shared interest of need. To make progress, resources must be targeted to meet the greatest need.









# A vision for



# Huntingdonshire



The Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership is working together to achieve a long term vision for Huntingdonshire as a place where current and future generations have a good quality of life and can:

- make the most of opportunities that come from living in a growing and developing district;
- enjoy the benefits of continued economic success;
- access suitable homes, jobs, services, shops, culture and leisure opportunities;
- realise their full potential;
- maintain the special character of our market towns, villages and countryside; and
- live in an environment that is safe and protected from the effects of climate change and where valuable natural resources are used wisely.





# Strategic themes, outcomes and objectives

## Growth and infrastructure

New development will place additional demands on the district's physical and social infrastructure. Dealing positively with this growth will help to deliver sustainable communities. It is essential that growth is appropriately directed and opportunities are maximised. A key challenge for Huntingdonshire will be to ensure that the infrastructure, transport network and community/leisure facilities in new or expanded communities meet demand and that the growth in jobs matches new housing and addresses previous imbalances. In order to deliver sustainable communities it is also important that growth in housing maximises the opportunities for affordable homes.

### What we want to achieve:

- Sustainable patterns of growth and development
- Sufficient housing to meet future needs
- Appropriate business infrastructure to support sustainable growth of the economy and reduce out-commuting
- An upgraded and managed transport network, including public transport to service existing and growing communities effectively and safely
- Enhanced market town centres that serve their surrounding area
- Appropriate flood risk management, sustainable water supply and sufficient provision of utilities, including the development of local renewable sources of energy
- Improved health, education/learning, training, community and leisure infrastructure and local and strategic open space through the appropriate provision of facilities to meet current and future needs
- New and upgraded homes and other buildings which are well designed, well maintained and contribute to lowering carbon emissions

### How we will achieve this:

#### **Sustainable patterns of growth and development**

- Ensure appropriate policies and plans are in place to meet the infrastructure needs
- Ensure effective and realistic delivery plans are in place

#### **Sufficient housing to meet future needs**

- Ensure an appropriate supply of new housing to at least meet RSS targets
- Increase supply of affordable housing (including key worker)
- To reduce the occurrence of homelessness
- Provide accommodation for gypsies and travellers as required by the emerging policy in the Regional Spatial Strategy

### **Appropriate business infrastructure to support sustainable growth of the economy and reduce out-commuting**

- Ensure land, premises and infrastructure are available for the development of key sectors to support economic growth, including:
  - High value manufacturing
  - Environmental, science and technologies
  - High tech industries such as telecommunications
  - Creative industries

### **An upgraded and managed transport network, including public transport to service existing and growing communities effectively and safely**

- Enhanced strategic highway capacity and safety
- Improved public transport
- Enhanced physical integration of bus/train/taxi/cycle/ pedestrian services (including provision for people with mobility issues)
- Increased cycle and footway networks (particularly to key services in towns and villages)
- Develop improved access to services and facilities by community-based transport

### **Enhanced market town centres that serve their surrounding area**

- Appropriate re-developed and new floor space to enable an improved mix of retail, leisure, commercial, cultural and public facilities
- Enhanced public realm
- Appropriate level of managed car parking

*“We are very proud of the Reserve; it is a wonderful asset to the district, very popular with residents and visitors alike”*

*(Executive Councillor for Operational and Countryside Services, Colin Hyams)*

### **Appropriate flood risk management, sustainable water supply and sufficient provision of utilities including the development of local renewable sources of energy**

- Appropriate flood risk management measures in place
- Develop capacity for renewable energy
- Sustainable water supply
- Develop utility provision including ICT (Broadband capacity)

### **Improved health, education/learning, training, community and leisure infrastructure and local and strategic open space through the appropriate provision of facilities to meet current and future needs**

Provide appropriate:-

- cultural, leisure and community infrastructure
- local green, recreational and open space
- networked strategic green open space
- health and social care infrastructure
- life-long education/learning and training facilities





**New and upgraded homes and other buildings which are well designed, well maintained and contribute to lowering carbon emissions**

- Ensure the building of new homes and commercial/public premises comply to zero carbon standards by 2016 and Lifetime Home Standards
- Improve energy and water efficiency of existing homes, commercial and public buildings
- Ensure design and location of public and community services as far as possible reduce carbon emissions
- Well maintained/decent homes
- Conserved heritage assets

*"The Oxmoor Action Plan has transformed community space, and more importantly, resident's perceptions of where they live. This has given a very clear message to residents about the commitment our organisations have to working alongside the community to improve the area"*  
(Diane Lane, Neighbourhood Manager, Cambridgeshire County Council)

**Oxmoor regeneration project**

The new heart for Oxmoor plan established a new Oak Tree Centre, the result of a unique partnership between the district council, the Primary Care Trust and the doctors at the Acorn surgery, which the new health centre replaces.

Part of the scheme is a neighbourhood centre with smart new shops and community facilities. The scheme also includes 300 family homes; a mixture of low cost ownership and affordable rented housing. Improved green open spaces, including the Coneygear community park and environmental improvements, provide a cleaner, safer and greener environment for people to enjoy.



**Paxton Pits Nature Reserve expansion**

Paxton Pits Nature Reserve, which is managed by Huntingdonshire District Council, is set to more than triple in size. This will make the site one of Cambridgeshire's largest nature reserves. The nature reserve currently covers 192 acres and will expand to over 700 acres through the phased release of quarried land over the next 10 years. It currently attracts over 120,000 visitors per year, a figure that is expected to rise with the expansion.

# Health and wellbeing

Promoting health and wellbeing, protecting health and intervening to improve health and high quality health care are key to maintaining sustainable communities. To achieve this, the partnership will need to address health inequalities, intervene to alter situations with negative health impacts, promote healthy lifestyles, ensure well maintained (decent) homes and provide/promote opportunities for active leisure and cultural activities.

## What we want to achieve:

- Appropriate culture and leisure opportunities
- Reduced health inequalities
- Individuals choose healthy lifestyles
- Reduced accidents
- Increased opportunities for vulnerable people to live independently

## How we will achieve this:

### Appropriate culture and leisure opportunities

- Develop culture and leisure opportunities
- Provide accessible opportunities - things to do, particularly children and young people and those with disabilities
- Address play needs as identified in the Play Strategy
- Address culture needs as identified in the Cultural Strategy
- Promote awareness of active leisure activities
- Improve access to the countryside and green space
- Provide arts and entertainment including performance exhibition spaces
- Enhance access to heritage
- Provide good quality and quantity of leisure services including modernisation
- Ensure sufficient quality and quantity of indoor and outdoor sporting infrastructure

### Disability Sports Programme

The Disability Sports Programme aims to increase the number of disabled people participating in sport and active recreation. Activities include holiday programmes, multi sport clubs, school events and festivals. The activities are delivered by the district council's leisure development team in partnership with the Hunts Disability Sports Forum, leisure centres, schools, and voluntary sports clubs.

### Reduced health inequalities

- Narrow the gap of inequalities between areas in the district

### Individuals choose healthy lifestyles

- Reduce the number of people who smoke
- Tackle obesity – improve nutrition and physical exercise in children and adults
- Promote active and healthy lifestyles
- Improve sexual health
- Promote mental health well being
- Reduce teenage conceptions

*“The day was great fun and really made people feel included and accepted. Unfortunately the rain did cut the day short, but well done to everyone involved for organising such a great event.” (Outdoor festival July 08)*



### Reduced accidents

- Reduce workplace accidents
- Prevent falls by older people
- Prompt and efficient disabled facilities grants/adaptations

### Increased opportunities for vulnerable people to live independently

- Promote the independence of older people
- Increase provision for homeless and young people
- Support the housing needs of other vulnerable groups where appropriate

*"I thoroughly enjoy the walks and have regained a fitness level I thought I'd lost forever. As I don't feel comfortable walking alone, I sincerely hope the group walking continues."*  
(Annual Survey 2008)

### Health Walks

Huntingdonshire Health Walks aims to increase the number of people walking across the district both independently and as part of the led walks programme. Approximately 40 walks per week are

delivered across Huntingdon, St Ives, Ramsey, St Neots and Yaxley. The programme is delivered by volunteers, managed by the district council's leisure development team and in partnership with NHS Cambridgeshire.



# Environment

To effectively mitigate climate change, we must reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. To achieve this we must influence the way energy is used and produced in the district. By focusing our efforts on vulnerable groups we help protect them from the impacts of fuel poverty. We must also focus on developing a more balanced transport system, with an emphasis on reducing travel demand and increasing sustainable modes of travel.

As climate change is inevitable, we need to consider how we can adapt to climate change by planning for changes in average weather and preparing for more extremes of weather. It is important that we make the most efficient use of natural resources such as water to prevent shortages and look at the environmental impact of the food and products we buy, while ensuring we continue to reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill.

It is also important to safeguard both the urban and rural heritage of the district, and our green and open space which is home to many species of plants and animals of international and national importance, as well as those which are characteristic of our district. We must ensure this environmental capital is available and accessible to present and future generations, while realising its economic potential for the benefit of visitors and residents.

We all have concern for our local environment – the places in which we live, work and play. We must maintain our local environment to a high standard, as a neighbourhood free of litter and graffiti, with adequate provision of quality open space and low fear of crime is generally considered to be a valuable environment in which to live.

## What we want to achieve:

- Mitigate and adapt to climate change
- Efficient use of resources
- An environment that is protected and improved

## How we will achieve this:

### Mitigate and adapt to climate change

- Increase energy efficiency
- Encourage renewable energy
- Reduce travel and emissions to air
- Adaptation to climate change

### Efficient use of resources

- Encourage sustainable purchasing
- Efficient water use
- Make the best use of land
- Reduce waste

### An environment that is protected and improved

- Reduce contaminated and polluted land
- Protect and enhance biodiversity and open space
- Protect and enhance urban and rural character
- Maintain a clean and safe Huntingdonshire





*"Countryside with abundant wildlife and pleasant places to walk is of prime importance to my quality of life."*

### Godmanchester Nursery Project

The Godmanchester Nursery Project is running as a pilot project.

The key areas of work are a tree nursery of local provenance, vegetable and orchard areas and greenhouses to provide some of Huntingdonshire District Council's own plant needs.

The nursery is managed by a part time member of Huntingdonshire District Council's staff and is supported by volunteers with various special needs.

### Sustainable Homes Project

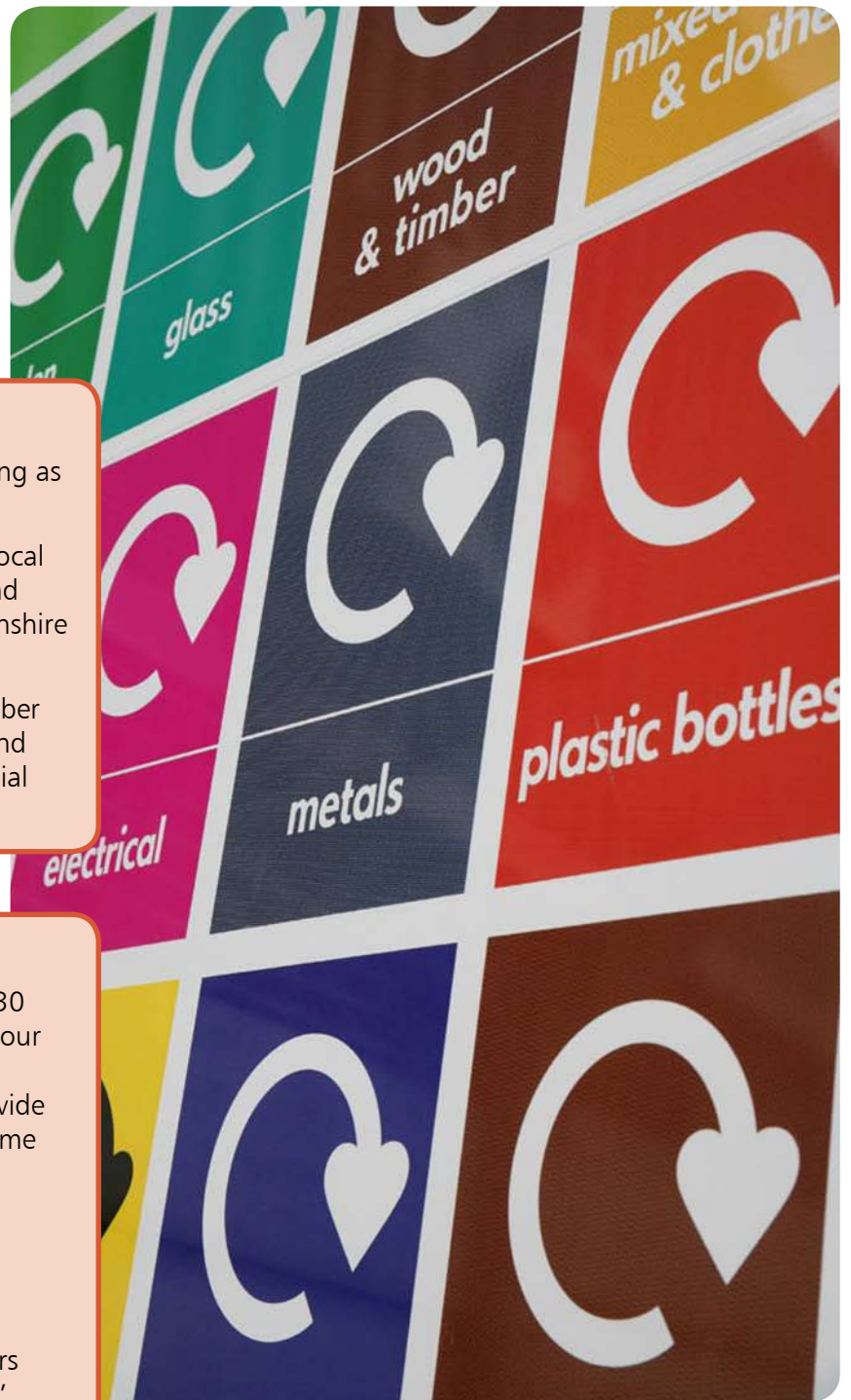
This project will involve the construction of 30 'exemplar' homes (a mix of two, three and four bedroom units) will take place enabling the development of a council owned site to provide affordable housing for rent and low cost home ownership.

The council will provide the land and the development will be required to achieve an overall minimum rating of 'four stars' under the Code for Sustainable Homes. Some of the properties will be accessible to developers and other interested parties and 'cost in use' studies will be conducted to demonstrate how sustainable construction can be achieved.

The development will maximise the level of energy efficiency achieved through sustainable design and construction.

The development will be required to demonstrate sustainability in accordance with the following design categories contained within the Code for Sustainable Homes;

- Materials
- Surface water run off
- Waste
- Pollution
- Health and wellbeing
- Management
- Ecology



*"I would like to think I'm learning more about my own carbon footprint and how to therefore make my own contribution to the environment viable."*  
(Quotes from residents who completed the environment questionnaire)

# Children and young people

Children and young people have played an integral part in identifying outcomes for this section of the strategy. A key challenge for Huntingdonshire is to ensure we continue to develop services that take into account children and young people's needs and preferences.

This strategy will provide the framework to ensure that there is sustained support for families and carers and tangible improvements for children and young people across Huntingdonshire.

## What we want to achieve:

- Services that are designed and evaluated by children and young people
- Effective and sustained support is available for all parents and carers especially those that are vulnerable
- Safe, accessible, positive activities for children and young people
- A safe, clean environment for children and young people
- Positive images of children and young people
- Education and training opportunities for all children and young people

## How we will achieve this:

### Services that are designed and evaluated by children and young people

- Develop structures to facilitate children and young people's active involvement
- Encourage and support children and young people's active involvement in the implementation of the Sustainable Community Strategy
- Monitor the impact of children and young people's active involvement; ensure feedback and develop an evidence base

### Effective and sustained support is available for all parents and carers especially those that are vulnerable

- Develop sustainable support for vulnerable parents/carers and families
- Develop frameworks for involving parents and carers in the delivery of services and monitor impact
- Develop a balance of one to one and group support

*"I like the information centre – it's somewhere to go. I like the flexible attitude of the staff."*





### Safe, accessible, positive activities for children and young people

- Increase the range of opportunities for children and young people to meet in informal and safe environments
- Improve access to existing facilities
- Provide opportunities for leadership and volunteering and peer mentoring for young people

### A safe, clean environment for children and young people

- Address fear of crime

### Positive images of children and young people

- Bridge the generation gap
- Encourage positive images of children and young people

### Education and training opportunities for all children and young people

- Raising the aspirations of children and young people
- Develop training and employment opportunities based on the needs of young people

### A safe clean environment for children and young people

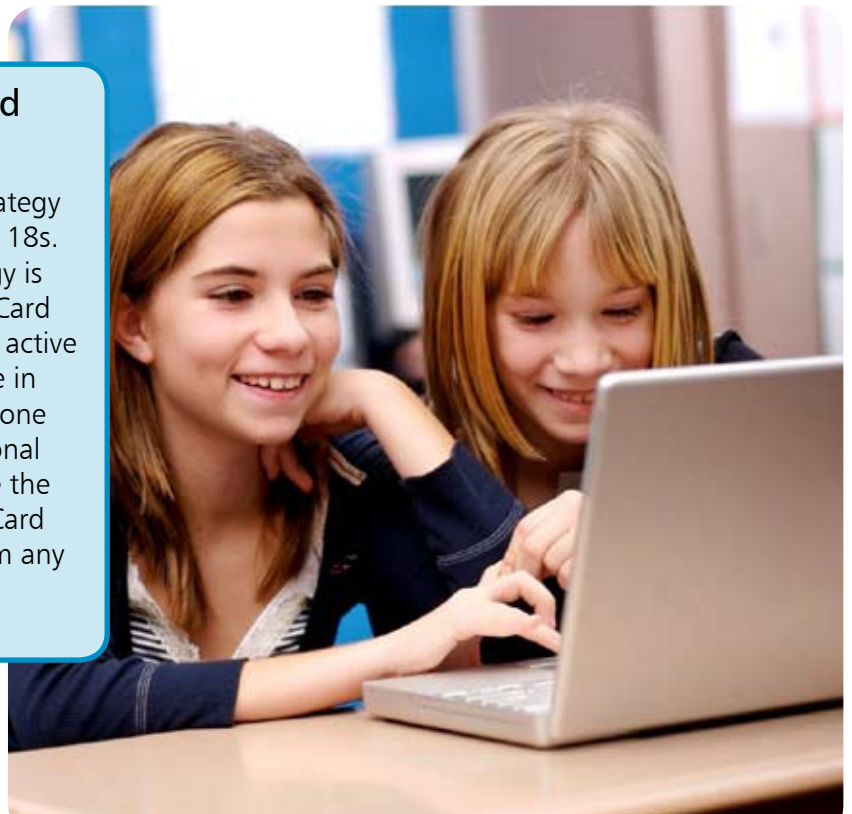
Huntingdon Network of School (HuntsNet) used year six representatives to lead a series of consultation projects with other young people in their school to find out their views on safe, clean parks and open spaces. A more in-depth project involving students studying their local parks and open spaces and identifying specific issues was carried out, and findings were presented to local councillors and officers. New actions taking place as a result of this work include:

- consideration of junior PCSO's
- consideration of placing contact information on litter bins so people can let us know when bins are full
- consideration of re-introducing signage at all of Huntingdonshire District Council's parks and open spaces (e.g. this park is owned and maintained by Huntingdonshire District Council).

*"Experts coming in to talk to us about setting up my own business would be useful."*

### Services designed by children and young people

The Cambridgeshire Teenage Pregnancy Strategy aims to reduce conceptions amongst under 18s. One of the initiatives included in the strategy is the Cambridgeshire C-Card scheme. The C-Card provides access to free condoms to sexually active young people under 19 years. To participate in the scheme young people have to attend a one to one consultation with a trained professional who will assess their health needs and issue the C-Card if appropriate. Once they have a C-Card young people can access free condoms from any venues displaying the C-Card logo.



# Inclusive, safe and cohesive communities

Huntingdonshire has relatively low levels of deprivation. However, there are some small pockets of deprivation that need to be addressed. Huntingdonshire also experiences relatively low levels of crime but, in order to make our communities 'safe', we need to reduce crimes such as burglary, violence against the person and acquisitive crime and address anti-social behaviour and reassurance. In order to create successful cohesive communities it is important to promote active communities with opportunities for cultural, leisure, community and volunteering activities. It is vital that we ensure the delivery of good transport services and communication, linking people to jobs, health facilities and other services, and that we ensure the availability of information, advice and guidance.

## What we want to achieve:

- Accessible services for all
- Appropriate community transport
- Vibrant and cohesive communities
- Reduced anti social behaviour
- Reduced crime
- Reduced fear of crime
- Good opportunities for life long learning
- Effective neighbourhood management in appropriate communities
- Better working with young people
- Appropriate lifestyle opportunities for older people

## How we will achieve this:

### Accessible services for all

- Increase access to services
- Promote different ways of providing services in communities
- Ensure access to information, advice and guidance

### Appropriate community transport

- Affordable transport for job seekers, young people and those on low incomes

### Vibrant and cohesive communities

- Promote community based/run activities
- Promote community involvement
- Address the needs of migrant workers and non-settled communities including gypsies and travellers
- Address the needs of existing communities where a change in population occurs
- Engage with new and developing communities
- Provide specialist support





### Reduced anti social behaviour (including criminal damage)

- Reduce alcohol related anti social behaviour
- Address anti-social behaviour
- Reduce vehicle related anti social behaviour

### Reduced crime

- Reduce alcohol and drug misuse
- Reduce re-offending
- Reduce the incidences of violence against people including domestic violence

### Reduced fear of crime

- Promote Safer by Design

### Good opportunities for life long learning

- Support and increase the capacity of learning communities and facilities for out-reach learning
- Increase access to formal and informal learning opportunities
- Provide opportunities for family learning
- Address the lack of basic skills
- Promote opportunities for local people to improve or gain skills through cultural, leisure and volunteer activities

### Effective neighbourhood management in appropriate communities

- Implement neighbourhood management in Ramsey, Oxmoor and Eynesbury
- Investigate neighbourhood management in other communities
- Promote the engagement of communities in the provision and running of services

### Fusion

Fusion is a diversionary activity scheme held during the summer from 1pm–8pm during the week for young people aged between 11 – 21 years. The scheme is free of charge and welcomes young people from the Huntingdon area to participate in a variety of activities. The scheme operates from three sites and is run by the county council's Office of Children and Young People Services, with many partner agencies contributing by funding the project or through staff time. The scheme is an example of best practice and discourages young people from becoming involved in anti social behaviour.

### Street style skate facility

After receiving complaints about young people skate boarding, in line skating and BMX riding in Huntingdon town centre, a piece of work was commissioned with the Youth Service by the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership to work with these young people. As a result Hunts Skaters was formed. The group identified that they used the town centre to skate because they had nowhere else to go. Over five years £180k has been raised to build the first street style skate facility in the country. The facility is to be built in the Stukeley Meadows area of Huntingdon and will provide a facility that can be used by all age groups in a safe environment.

### Better working with young people

- Engage with young people
- Reduce the risk of young people being victims
- Reduce the risk of young people perpetrating crime

### Appropriate lifestyle opportunities for older people

- Provide opportunities for involvement in service design
- Provide opportunities for lifelong learning



# Economic prosperity and skills

To maintain a flourishing and diverse local economy, it is vital that we increase investment. Dynamic job and business creation will benefit the local community and provide a wide range of employment opportunities. It is important that we maintain a high level of business support, promote the development of key growth sectors, maintain the economic viability and vibrancy of our town centres and ensure that skill levels support economic prosperity. Previously, housing and population growth has outstripped job growth and it is important that this imbalance is addressed to maintain and develop our flourishing economy.

## What we want to achieve:

- A comprehensive level of business support
- An appropriate physical infrastructure to support sustainable growth of the economy
- Skills that support economic prosperity
- Vibrant town centres
- Increased visitor numbers
- Well developed key growth sectors

## How we will achieve this:

### A comprehensive level of business support

- Co-ordinate the delivery of advice and support for new start ups
- Ensure the availability of general business services and advice across the district
- Ensure specific business advice, for key growth sectors, rural businesses, young people, migrant workers and businesses looking to re-locate to Huntingdonshire
- Enable the growth of small and medium sized businesses
- Ensure appropriate (de) regulation
- Promote strong business to business networks
- Develop appropriate services and support for businesses already in the district and those looking to locate within Huntingdonshire

### An appropriate physical infrastructure to support sustainable growth of the economy

- Improve public transport
- Improve transport networks for business
- Ensure land and premises for economic growth
- Improve ICT broadband/capacity

*“The Economic Forum is working closely together in the true spirit of partnership to develop a comprehensive set of services for businesses in Huntingdonshire.”*  
(Huntingdonshire Chamber of Commerce)





### Skills that support economic prosperity

- Meet skill shortages
- Address skills for the future, particularly in key growth sectors
- Maximise opportunities for workplace learning and training
- Promote learning and training opportunities for people in deprived communities and those who are long term out of work
- Seek investment opportunities for learning and skills development
- Increase retention of young people in learning and training
- Promote vocational opportunities for young people
- Ensure the readiness and transition of young people to work

### Vibrant town centres

- Increase the number of people using town centres
- Encourage residents and businesses to buy local produce and services
- Increase the retail offer and mix
- Improve the evening economy
- Enhance town centre environments

## creativeXchange

Creative Exchange is a unique office building located on land adjacent to a local secondary school in St Neots. It is the result of a partnership between the district council, Longsands College, the Department for Communities and Local Government and the East of England Development Agency. It is aimed at businesses within the creative industries, such as marketing and advertising, architecture, software development and fashion design.

The high specification, four storey, state of the art office building has a striking, unusual design and is set in mature parkland. A 'working garden' on the roof allows great views over the beautiful green space of Priory Park. It offers a choice of 14 enclosed units plus an open plan area with hot desks. Its environmental credentials are outstanding and it has been designed and built with future generations in mind.

*"In spite of the current economic downturn Huntingdonshire still has a prosperous, vibrant economy which reflects the diversity of the area, making the district a better place to work, start a business and encourages a dynamic job market. The district has some of the largest market towns in Cambridgeshire containing a breadth of business sectors and types allied to great transport links which all contributes to the great potential that the area has."*  
(Steve Clarke, Business Link)



### Increased visitor numbers

- Encourage local people to visit local attractions
- Encourage business visitors
- Market Huntingdonshire to prospective businesses
- Improve the mix of attractions, facilities and leisure opportunities
- Develop attractions and services for visitors, specifically overnight stay visitors

### Well developed key growth sectors (creative industries, environmental science, technologies, high value manufacturing and hi-tech enterprise)

- Develop business support and promote training for individuals and businesses
- Improve the development of networks for collaboration and the fostering of supply chains
- Cultivate a dynamic cluster within each key sector
- Harness the world-class expertise of our key sectors and utilise for growth
- Encourage employment creation within each sector both in the market towns and rural areas of our district

*“Across our market towns we have a framework in place which encourages close partnership working and delivers initiatives which address the individual needs of the towns.”*

(Malcolm Lyons, Federation of Small Businesses)

### Huntingdonshire Food Festival 2008

Huntingdonshire’s food and drink festival celebrated the array of good quality local food available in Huntingdonshire, with the aim of encouraging people to buy local produce and reducing their food miles to help the environment, as well as promoting a healthy diet.

The festival’s main event, Food Fest 08 was an outstanding success as crowds flocked to the Wood Green Arena where local producers and businesses exhibited their produce. A hog roast, real ales, special homemade fudge, organic vegetables and a wide selection of cheeses, meats and homemade breads were just some of the treats on offer.

Other festival events included The Huntingdonshire 2008 Food and Drink Awards, special menus at participating restaurants, the hunt for the best sandwich in Huntingdonshire competition and a young chef’s competition.





# Implementing and reviewing the Sustainable Community Strategy

Underpinning each of the strategic themes is a delivery plan. Each delivery plan details how the outcomes and objectives will be achieved. The delivery plans will identify measures and targets so that achievement can be reported and reviewed by the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership.

For more information please visit [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk) under the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership Section.















