A Sustainable Strategy for Wiltshire -
"Creating a County Fit for our Children"

2006-2016

A draft framework document for consultation

September 2006

Introduction

The Wiltshire Strategic Board (WiSB), the local strategic partnership for the County, is pleased to present a draft of the framework for its second, revised, community strategy.

The Board would welcome your comments and suggestions **by the deadline of Friday 10th November 2006.**

Please send your comments to David Maynard, whose contact details are at the end of this document.

This consultative draft framework document provides a strategic analysis describing Wiltshire's current strengths, and prospects, as well as the problems it faces. It sets the context for the Strategic Board's plans, and those of its partner organisations, for the next 5-10 years. It also starts to consider what actions the Board can take, with others, to tackle the issues identified here.

These actions will be reflected in a 'Local Area Agreement' between the Board and the government, and in other key plans and strategies produced by partners. The Agreement will provide the opportunity for the interests represented on the Board, from public, voluntary and business sectors, to describe what we together can do for Wiltshire and how we can work with others to create **strong and sustainable communities** in Wiltshire.

By 'strong communities' we mean communities with these features:

- Communities where people want to live and work. People are there by choice.
- Communities which are inclusive. People of different backgrounds, ages and beliefs feel part of the community, not separate or marginalised.
- Communities which are lively, busy places. People get together to tackle local concerns and to socialise. People readily volunteer and feel encouraged to do so. There are many social 'networks' between individuals and families.
- Communities where people feel safe.
- Communities which have effective political processes, marked by trust, high political participation, and effective relations between public, voluntary and business sectors.

These features are sometimes brought together in the term 'social capital'. Communities with social capital are stronger. They thrive.

By 'sustainable communities' we mean communities where current life styles do not threaten future ones. For example, people and businesses will:-

- actively minimise their waste
- make travel decisions which minimise CO2 emissions, and the need to travel
- make purchasing decisions that reflect the actual human and environmental costs of producing, and eventually disposing of, goods and products, including purchasing local goods and services where this makes sense
- adopt sustainable construction standards for new buildings , and seek to improve the energy efficiency of existing buildings
- do not build on land that has a high environmental or wildlife value
- use water wisely and sparingly

There is an increasing awareness and concern that current lifestyles in the UK and other countries are not sustainable. One way of expressing this is to assess the impact on the world's resources, the 'ecological footprint'. The current consumption patterns of Wiltshire's communities are currently consuming twice their 'share' of the world's natural resources, ie. if everyone in the world lived like we do, then there would need to for 2 Earths to meet those needs. To reduce Wiltshire's 'footprint' requires action by Councils and other public bodies, by voluntary organisations, business, and individuals and households.

Strong communities, rich in social capital, are well placed to respond to the challenge of becoming sustainable communities, by having the organisational skills and will to change and adapt lifestyles and behaviour.

How can the Strategic Board support strong and sustainable communities in Wiltshire?

- By offering this draft analysis of the strengths, opportunities and problems facing the County: if we can agree about what needs to be done, we can work together to achieve it.
- By sharing the analysis with interested parties throughout Wiltshire: many issues cannot be tackled solely or principally at the County level, they require action at other levels too, District, town and neighbourhood. Responding to the challenge of waste minimisation, for example, involves changes in County policy and in the behaviour of individual households and businesses.
- By describing in our Local Area Agreement what the organisations represented on the Board are going to do, and what others can do as well: maintaining jobs and competitive businesses, for example, involves training provided by colleges and other providers under the direction of the Local Learning & Skills Council, as well as commitment by individual businesses and employees.
- By explaining the services which can be provided by councils and other public organisations, and the limits on public expenditure, and the scope and level of public services. We are all familiar with the challenges connected with the changing relationship between the individual and the state in relation to an increasingly aging population, such as changes in the retirement age and pensions provisions, the need for individuals to protect their own health through diet and exercise, measures to support informal care provided by relatives and friends, and to increase the contribution of volunteers, etc. Similar issues arise for all age groups in relation to health and social care, public transport, and community safety. Strong and sustainable communities work through a shared understanding of the respective roles of the state, the individual, the private sector and voluntary associations in tackling the issues facing those communities. The Board's community strategy is intended to foster this understanding, through consultation and debate.

If we are successful, in ten years Wiltshire will be a place of stronger and more sustainable communities, an example to the rest of the country of how public, voluntary and private interests can work together in the interests of our communities.

The Strategy that follows seeks to apply these principles to Wiltshire, and will provide the overall strategic framework to guide the development of detailed actions within:

- The Local Area Agreement 2007-2010
- Thematic and partnership plans
- Local communities, and households

Everyone has a part to play in its implementation.

Working in partnership in Wiltshire

The 'social, economic and environmental well-being' of Wiltshire covers a wide range of issues and activities. Many organisations and individuals, both within and outside the county, have contributions to make.

Although the Strategic Board is producing a "Strategy for Wiltshire", the Board accepts the principle of subsidiarity such that the action taken at each geographical level reflects what is best done at that level. The Strategy is intended to act as a catalyst for local action. By no means everything has to be done at the County level.

The Strategy will act as **an open invitation** to all organisations, community and voluntary groups, parish and town councils, community area planning partnerships, district local strategic partnerships, private businesses, families and individuals of all ages to suggest ways in which the chosen issues and challenges can be addressed, and to develop, undertake and test projects and initiatives themselves. Many of the issues can only be solved if people change their lifestyles, and this will require commitment and leadership by example.

What is changing Wiltshire?

Contrasts in income levels and social need are apparent:

- The pervasive effects of generally increasing levels of wealth underpin almost all other trends;

- But poverty, as measured by Council Tax and Housing Benefit take-up, is still a widespread though often hidden problem in Wiltshire. The greatest concentrations of claimants are in particular neighbourhoods in towns, but there is a more dispersed incidence throughout the rural parts of the County;

- Towns and villages lack affordable housing so it is hard for young people to stay in their communities without remaining in their parental homes; there is associated difficulty in recruiting people to certain, especially lower paid, jobs;

- Our aging population creates capacity issues for social and health care, and for supported accommodation; as well as the growth in single person elderly households; increasing levels of dependency due to increased longevity; escalating costs of care; organisational challenges associated with increased joint working between social and health care services. Also the requirement to adjust to later retirement, and all the attendant implications of this trend;

- Current pressures on hospitals and Primary Care Trusts are notable, linked to NHS resource issues and restructuring;

In – migration and development is changing Wiltshire:

- Attractiveness of Wiltshire to in-migration, for work and retirement, particularly from London and the adjoining South East region is identifiable, as well as Bristol/Bath; plus continuing growth in outcommuting to surrounding towns and cities which enjoy high rates of job creation, and higher salaries;

- The future expansion and role of Swindon as a business, learning and residential location will have an impact. The town has a major impact on business, housing demand and transport in the northern half of Wiltshire. The University of Bath in Swindon is planned to grow. The proximity of the area to Heathrow (where the fifth terminal will, over time, increase passenger levels by 40%), the M4 and the Great Western railway line will continue to generate further development pressure. Regional Planning identifies Swindon as a particular focus for future growth;

- Continuing Military restructuring, with expansion in the south of the county (eg Project Allenby), and relocation, reuse or disposal in the north (eg RAF Lyneham).

There are factors that impact on local governance:

- Lack of public trust in local government and other government agencies – surveys have consistently shown that the public do not have trust in the system of local governance. This is a crucial issue, as this system cannot achieve its aims through direct service provision alone, but requires the commitment of local people to change their behaviours and lifestyles.

- The appointment of a Minister for the Third Sector within the Cabinet Office signals the Government's intention to strengthen the voluntary and community sector's role in creating wealth through enterprise, in delivering public services, and in strengthening communities. This

emphasis is likely, over time, to lead to a change in the way public services are delivered in Wiltshire;

- Increasing importance of regional bodies and strategies is leading to a weakening of county and district roles.

Some trends are taking effect in a wider context but they all have local impacts:

- High levels of economic participation result in more time spent commuting and working, and less time (apart from the retired) for voluntary and community work, or participation in democracy e.g. parish councils; impacts on family life and routines including an increased usage of child care facilities; increasing recruitment problems for some jobs;

- Increased car ownership and use means that there is less reliance on the local community for work, shopping and social life; more traffic congestion; more individualised and dispersed lifestyles/social networks; pressure on public transport which, especially in rural areas, cannot match flexibility of private car, and is a factor in loss of village shops;

- Ever increasing consumer sophistication and international marketing will focus much consumer spending on nearby urban areas several of which are outside the county, and increasingly, on the internet, for shopping, leisure and entertainment. This increased consumerism, in conjunction with the increased number (and smaller size) of households in Wiltshire, will lead, amongst other things, to an increase in waste production, although this trend may be affected by strengthened Government incentives to reduce waste, and by growing public awareness and concern about the issue;

- The weakening of locality is linked to the increased mobility of people for work, leisure and social life, coupled with television, the Internet, e-mail, and international travel have weakened people's links to local cultures, communities and governance. This has both positive and negative effects, but does challenge individuals to shape their own identity and career, and this will be stressful to some. It also represents a challenge to those (e.g. local government and farmers) who, by definition, have a long-term commitment to the county, to preserve existing, and promote new, forms of local distinctiveness, identity and community;

- Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform, and ongoing World Trade talks, will add to current pressures on the farming sector from global competition on commodity production and fiercely competitive purchasing by supermarkets, which are increasingly establishing chains of smaller local outlets in addition to their larger stores. These pressures will affect the structure of the agricultural sector, and of food retailing in Wiltshire. The appearance and quality of the landscape will also be affected, although this latter impact is intended to be counter-balanced by the environmental schemes introduced as part of the reforms. Other factors include the impact of developments in biotechnology, increasing climate change, and the growing demand for renewable energy from biofuel crops and wind turbines;

- Globalisation – reducing the local roots of businesses in local communities e.g. UK manufacturers moving their production to lower cost areas in the world, or foreign manufacturers out competing those which stay in the UK. Nationally, a high percent of GDP is produced by foreign or internationally-owned companies. Also, labour market changes will lead to an increased presence of trans-national workers. This puts a high premium on Wiltshire having a highly skilled workforce, especially with respect to the use and application of ICT, and modern plant and business practices. Competition for global resources – oil, gas and raw materials – will become increasingly intense, with cost implications for businesses and consumers.

> Wiltshire is already a place where people want to live and work, and so before looking at its weaknesses, we need to **celebrate** its considerable strengths. Against most measures of sustainable development Wiltshire already performs well

Wiltshire is already a good place in which to live, work and visit

The Strategy for Wiltshire inevitably concentrates on seeking to address issues which are currently causing concern, or longer term problems which can be anticipated. It is therefore important that such a Strategy celebrates what is good about Wiltshire, and put the problems in perspective.

The following sets out some of the positive aspects of Wiltshire life about which residents can be justly proud.

Economy
- Productivity - GVA (Gross Value Added) per job filled is the fifth highest of SW authorities
- High levels of economic participation 85% (June 04 – May 05)
- Lowest unemployment level of any authority in the SW – 1.1% (May 06), with a low claimant count of 0.9% compared to a national rate of 2.4% (Oct '05)
- Highly entrepreneurial , with above average growth in VAT registered businesses and in employment
- Above average proportion of graduates, and those with equivalent qualifications, in the working age population
- Agricultural still provides 3.9% of jobs in 2003, which despite recent declines, is still above the national average.
- Similarly, Wiltshire has not suffered as much as nationally from the decline in manufacturing employment, and still has a larger than average 14.1% employed in manufacturing
- Wiltshire has all its telephone exchanges broadband-enabled, providing coverage for the majority of the County
- Median gross full-time annual pay for Wiltshire residents is £23,220.This is just below the England median, but well above the SW
- Tourism - Many attractions in Wiltshire are of national significance, eg. Longleat House, Wilton House, Salisbury Cathedral, Stourhead House and Gardens, Bowood House, Lacock village and abbey, Malmesbury Abbey, Kennet and Avon Canal, and Stonghenge and Avebury, etc. Visitor figures show that Stonehenge attracts over 750,000 visitors a year, and that Stourhead is the National Trust's second most visited of its paid entrance properties.

Social

- Second safest county in England, as measured by overall levels of recorded crime (March 2006)
- Above average school examination results at GCSE, and at A'level
- Health - On the vast majority of indicators, Wiltshire people are healthier than the national average. In particular, premature deaths from heart disease and strokes, and from cancers in Wiltshire are lower than the England rates, and falling
- Life expectancy – Male life expectancy (78.4 years) and females (82.1 years) are better than the English average, and rising
- In the national Index of Multiple Deprivation, none of Wiltshire's 281 super output areas (somewhat smaller than district wards) ranked amongst the most deprived 10% in England, and only 3 are amongst the most deprived 20% deprived
- Public transport – Bus passenger journeys increased from 9.3M in 04/05 to 9.7M in 05/06. In 2005/06, 90% of the rural population had access to a daily or better weekday bus service.
- Public libraries- Physical visits to libraries, against the national trend, increased from 2.648m in 2004/05 to 2.746m in 2005/06. Virtual visits, via the internet, significantly increased over the same period from 0.377m to 0.708m
- By 2005/06, a 16% reduction from the 94-98 average was achieved in the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents in Wiltshire
- Wiltshire achieved national Beacon status for its work in 'Getting Closer to Communities'. Also 41% of secondary schools have an active youth council (05/06)

Environment
- Cultural Heritage –Wiltshire contains a wealth of archaeological and architectural treasures, including the combined World Heritage sites of Stonehenge and Avebury, Salisbury Cathedral, and more recent industrial features such as the Box railway tunnel, and the Kennet and Avon Canal. The County contains nearly 20,000 archaeological sites ranging from the prehistoric through to Roman to medieval times. Wiltshire also has one of England's 43 battlefields, the civil war battlefield at Roundway Down. There are also approximately 14,000 listed buildings, 37 historic parks and gardens, and more than 250 conservation areas.
- Landscape – the County's landscape is one of national importance. three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB's) cover 43% of the county, and the south tip of the county is included as part of the recently designated New Forest National Park.
- Biodiversity –Wiltshire is an important area for biodiversity and contains either in full or part, 10 Special Areas of Conservation and 2 Special Protection Areas, these being of European significance. There are 136 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and 7 National Nature Reserves.
- Waste –Wiltshire is in the top quartile of local authority performance for the amount of household waste it recycles and composts which currently stands at 31.6%.

> If we apply the principles of sustainable development to Wiltshire, what aspects of our social, economic, and environmental life show up as having important weaknesses which over time will produce damaging consequences for the county?

What aspects of Wiltshire life are not currently moving in a sustainable direction?

The Economy

- There is evidence of an increasing polarisation of skills and earnings levels. This needs to be reduced if certain social and economic consequences are to be avoided.

- Industrial activity in the Wiltshire economy has not restructured over the last 20 years in a way which will enable it to remain competitive in the long term

Other aspects which contribute to the unsustainability of this situation are:

- o High percentage of the workforce without any qualifications.

- o Too many low skilled, routine jobs in the economy.

- o Vulnerability of low skilled manufacturing to national and international re-location and competition. This particularly affects the North and West Wiltshire district areas.

- o Increasing levels of economic inactivity, including the roughly 5% of 16-19 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

- o High, and increasing, numbers of Wiltshire residents out-commuting to higher paid jobs in adjoining, and more distant, employment centres. The difference between Wiltshire workplace and residence-based earnings is most marked in the West Wiltshire and Kennet districts.

- o High value added sectors under-represented in the Wiltshire economy.

- o Tourism is not currently fulfilling its potential to contribute to a wide range of aspects of Wiltshire life

- o Workplace average weekly earnings are lower than regional and national averages

- o Shortage of suitable employment sites and premises, and aging premises.

- o Levels of personal debt.

       o Increasing numbers of people without adequate pension provision and on low incomes in retirement.

Transport

- Commercial pressures to reduce rail services, despite increased usage.

- Subsidised public transport services costs increasing significantly, and may lead to reductions in service, and to less support for voluntary and community transport schemes affecting, especially, young people and elderly people.

- Road and pavement maintenance backlog and lack of resources to significantly invest in sustainable transport solutions.

- Increased traffic volumes deterring cyclists and walkers, as well as creating community severance, air quality and road safety problems in some areas.

- Increased access issues due to closures of village shops and post offices, and community hospitals, etc.

- Significantly higher levels of multiple car ownership per household than in the SW region, and England as a whole

Environment

- Ongoing breaking up of wildlife habitats into smaller, isolated areas.

- Increasing water demand as a result of new developments, and lifestyles.

- Road traffic growth, and higher than average domestic energy usage, leading to higher CO_2 emissions, and impacts from climate change.

- Reduction in livestock leading to difficulties in maintaining characteristic landscapes that need to be grazed.

- Household waste continuing to grow.

- Profitability of farming is depressed, with knock-on effects to land management capacity.

- The environmental acceptability of providing 1.85 million tones of aggregate per year to 2016 (as outlined in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy) is untested.

Housing

- Local house prices are not affordable for a growing section of Wiltshire residents, particularly young people. Also there is a shortage of private rented housing at affordable rents.

- The energy efficiency of most homes, even new ones, is still too low.

Health and Social Care

- Budgetary pressures are leading to a reduction in services and facilities, with attendant access issues and increased pressure on those providing informal care, at a time when demand for services is increasing, due to the growth in the elderly population and to increasing numbers of younger people with disabilities and complex health needs.

Community Protection

- Even though the County is one of the safest, current levels of anti-social behaviour, alcohol and drug misuse, and crimes against the person, are making residents feel unsafe.

- Deliberate and accidental fires, together with casualties on Wiltshire roads, continue to harm

families and businesses, and represent a drain on resources that could be used elsewhere.

Skills and Learning

- Skills shortages in the workforce coupled with a lack of employer engagement in accredited training
- Skills shortages on recruitment
- Low skills levels in relation to forecast skills requirements of the knowledge economy

Governance

- Government proposals involve restructuring over the next few years for Primary Care Trusts, the Probation Service, the Learning and Skills Council, and possibly local government. This amount of change could destabilise local service delivery, and partnership working in the County.

- Local service providers are still not integrated enough around the needs of the customer, or sufficiently customer-centred. This creates barriers to access, weakens customer service, and drains resources from front-line delivery.

- Voting levels and public satisfaction with public services are reasonable by national standards, but nevertheless lower than desirable to support social capital in the County.

Future Investment

- Government funding for the public sector in Wiltshire is low on some comparisons, and indications are that financial settlements will be increasingly tight over the next few years with implications for service scope and levels, and for support for the voluntary and community sector.

- The draft Regional Spatial Strategy directs most development and associated infrastructure investment to selected Principal Urban Areas (PUAs), including Swindon and Bristol/Bath, over the next few decades. There is a danger that the vitality and self-containment of Wiltshire's towns and villages will be affected by the lack of infrastructure investment in the County, at a time when Wiltshire is still trying to catch up with the effects of high levels of population growth over the last decade.

> If this analysis is accepted, what should be the aims of a Sustainable Community Strategy for Wiltshire?

Economy

- Create a more competitive business base, operating within a culture of innovation
- Support the development of more globally competitive, sustainable businesses within the food and farming sector
- Ensure that the current, and potential, workforce is effectively developed and supported to meet labour market demands, whilst ensuring equality of opportunity for disadvantaged and other under-represented groups
- Develop a flexible and responsive locally resident workforce meeting current skills needs, and anticipated skills future needs of employers
- Promote greater entrepreneurial activity to effect local purchasing solutions
- Support the development of a network of vibrant strategically significant centres (Trowbridge, Chippenham and Salisbury), and other market towns, meeting the needs of residents and enterprises, including the rural hinterland
- Develop an effective system of engagement of businesses, and business representatives, at a strategic level
- Develop more competitive tourism businesses
- Ensure that the contribution of older people is valued and increased in relation to paid and voluntary work, and that they are enabled to enjoy a flexible retirement, and to maximise their income

Transport

- To improve access to key services for all sections of the community, particularly those living in rural areas, and those without access to a car:
- Sustainable travel modes will be encouraged and supported to reduce reliance on the car and improve travel choices
- Traffic growth on County Roads to be limited

- Protect, if possible, current levels of bus and rail services

- Work with the Police, Highways Agency, Health Authority, Fire Service and other services and other partnerships so that the number of people killed and seriously injured on Wiltshire's roads continues to fall

- Improve Wiltshire's roads and maintain current journey times on key routes (completion of these improvements are dependent upon continuing Government support)

- Promote essential road improvements, including

  - constructing a Westbury by-pass, so that the town centre environment of Westbury can be improved, and the future of the West Wilts Trading Estate and the wider economic health of the West Wiltshire corridor are secure (Completion is dependent upon statutory processes and continuing government support)

- To improve facilities for cyclists and pedestrians, particularly in urban areas

- To promote and encourage the adoption of effective school and workplace travel plans

- To reduce the impact of traffic on people's quality of life and Wiltshire's built and natural environment, including tackling areas of poor air quality

Health and Social Care

- **To become the healthiest county in which to live by 2014 –this is a Wiltshire Strategic Board priority**

- Achieve a consensus on the future pattern, and on-going affordability and accessibility of interlinked health and social care services in Wiltshire.

- Encourage communities, households and individuals of all ages to be more proactive in protecting their own health and welfare by adopting healthy and active lifestyles, and by planning for their futures.

- Improve Health and Reduce Health Inequalities - reduce:
  - ∗ levels of binge drinking, drinking in excess of recommended government targets, and underage drinking
  - ∗ rising trend of obesity (increase physical activity, improve diet);
  - ∗ incidence of smoking

- *Improve health and well-being by giving opportunities for school children and public sector employees to give up smoking, increase the amount of exercise taken, and to encourage a healthier diet – LPSA target (2005-08)*

- Create a situation where more older people are able to enjoy healthy active aging, and maintain independence

- *Improving the health, quality of life and independence of people aged 75 and over by offering support at home to prevent hospital admission as a result of a fall –LPSA target (2005-08)*

- Improving the health and educational attainment of Looked after Children and Young People (LACYP) and young care leavers

- Increase opportunities for disabled children and young people in Wiltshire to achieve their full potential

- Improve the emotional well-being of children & young people

Crime and Community Protection

- Despite Wiltshire being one of the safest areas in the country, there is still a need to reassure the public in relation to crime and drugs, anti-social behaviour, and the criminal justice system

- *Improve the street and lane scene by reducing alcohol-related re-offending; and*

    reducing the % of the public that perceive that anti-social behaviour is increasing – LPSA targets (2005-08)

- *Improve the safety of victims of domestic violence and their children – LPSA target (2005-08)*

- *Reduce accidental fires and arson – LPSA target (2005-08)*

- Increase the safety of people, places and property

- Reduce the harm caused by substance misuse

- Continue to develop partnerships that improve fire and road safety, especially for those people shown to be at higher risk.

- Create a situation where more older people are socially included and actively participate as valued citizens in their local communities and neighbourhoods

- Encourage more older people to become actively engaged in developing community safety strategies, and in reducing the fear of crime

- Make sport and recreation (including alternative sports that appeal to disengaged youngsters) more accessible so as to provide positive diversions from anti-social behaviour

Skills and Learning

- **To improve adult skills for life (formerly called adult basic skills) – is a Wiltshire Strategic Board priority**

- *Improve the basic skills of adult learners. The target group is public sector workers of all kinds in participating organisations (but excluding the Armed Forces) – LPSA target (2005-08)*

- *Improve school attendance – LPSA target (2005-08)*

- *Improve educational attainment of children who are 'looked after' by the County Council – LPSA target (2005-08)*

- *Reduce % of young people aged 16-18 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) – LPSA target (2005-08)*

- Continue to improve basic skills attainment figures for those of working age population

- Encourage employers to engage in training, particularly where it leads to qualifications, eg through the Train to Gain brokerage service
- Raise the skills levels of individuals and those in work, including at leadership and management level
- Enable individuals to benefit from learning opportunities both for self development and for work

- Promote accessibility to Lifelong Learning and ensure the improvements of the skills base in the workforce (NEET's 16-18 year olds)

- More older people benefit from life-long learning and opportunities for personal development

- Improve the educational and vocational attainment of 14-19 year olds especially for those who are likely to seek local employment, and by so doing also reduce the number of young people

who are not in employment, education and training (NEET).

Environment

- **To become the most waste efficient county by 2014 is a Wiltshire Strategic Board priority**
- Improve waste efficiency through minimising the rate in growth of household waste arisings and maximising the total tonnage of household waste recycled and composted

- *Reduce the amount of household waste generated (as measured through five individually monitored waste minimisation projects connected with home composting, community composting, schools composting, unwanted mail, and disposable nappies) – LPSA target (2005-08)*

- *Improve the street and lane scene by improving the cleanliness of land within local authority control – part of a LPSA target (2005-08)*

- Protect, maintain and enhance the County's biodiversity

- Seek to re-build landscape scale habitat areas.

- Maximise the landscape management and biodiversity benefits for Wiltshire of the recent Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reforms.

- Address climate change by reducing CO_2, and other greenhouse gas emissions, through the adoption of energy efficiency, and renewable energy approaches, and the development and promotion of sustainable transport options. Also to put in place appropriate adaptations to predicted changes in local climate

- Through publicity, education, and demonstration projects to raise the public's understanding of the need to protect the environment.

- Improve children & young people's environmental awareness

Countryside

- Promote local food, and more generally, the profitability of Wiltshire farming.

- Take reasonable steps to protect village shops, post offices, pubs, and village halls.

Governance and Stronger Communities

- Investigate the whole issue of the equity of national funding allocations to Wiltshire's public sector organisations, as there are indications that it is low.

- Need to make the case for increased infrastructure investment in Wiltshire to catch up with significant growth over the last decade, and to prepare for future planned growth, in a sustainable way.

- Narrow the gap of disadvantaged neighbourhoods

- Social Capital, created by building capacity in the community and voluntary sector

- Find practical and affordable ways to integrate the needs of an increasingly elderly population into all aspects of Wiltshire life.

- Develop a consensus on the distinctive role, and future sustainable development trajectory of each of Wiltshire's towns.

- Empower local people and communities (including young people and other hard to reach groups), and with the voluntary sector, to have a greater choice and influence over local decision making and a greater role in public service delivery

- Respond to opportunities and problems connected with the changing roles of military communities in Wiltshire, and in particular to help realise the community benefits of Tidworth's status as a super garrison

- Emphasise positive contribution of trans-national workers, but address associated issues of integration.

- Seek to ensure that any public sector restructurings in Wiltshire are justified, and that any new structures retain a Wiltshire focus, and are implemented at a speed which is manageable.

- Ensure that more older people are socially included and actively participate as valued citizens in their local communities and neighbourhoods

- Take steps through joint service design and co-ordinated service delivery to better integrate public services around the needs of the customer

Housing

- Increase the supply of affordable housing – especially for young adults, with a particular focus on the least affordable areas of the County, which statistics consistently identify as the Salisbury and Kennet district areas.

- Ensure that developments, both in scale, layout and design, reinforce the distinctive character of the diverse settlements in the County.

- Ensure that the standards of sustainable housing design incorporated in the Regional Spatial Strategy are implemented in Wiltshire.

- Ensure a 'home for life' strategy is developed which enables older people to retain choice and control over where they live, while maintaining independence

- *Reduce homelessness among vulnerable young people (16-17) – LPSA target (2005-08)*

Culture

- Achieving one body that can speak for the Wiltshire cultural community raising the profile and the contribution of the cultural sector

- Encouraging both the statutory and voluntary cultural sectors to strengthen and develop networks that can help support development and delivery and links between all stakeholders

- Ensuring that the cultural contribution in terms of the economic and social benefits are recognised and that future developments acknowledge and utilise these strengths

- Building on the achievements of sport and activity in the county for all ages and developing a county wide strategy for the provision of sporting and recreational facilities so that initiatives to change attitudes towards exercise do not fail due to lack of accessible facilities.

- Creating modern libraries that occupy a distinctive niche in the information, learning and cultural marketplace, and which cater particularly for the needs of sections of the community that cannot access equivalent commercial services and products

- Promoting the new Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre as the centre for excellence for heritage issues

- Enriching individuals' lives, strengthening communities and improving places where people live through culture including arts, sport, libraries, the historic environment and other methods.

- Increasing activities and facilities for young people.

- Valuing the role of community venues as access routes to cultural activity

- Achieving higher levels of access and participation in cultural activity across the county

Are the member organizations of the Wiltshire Strategic Board practicing what they preach?

Leading by Example

A key strand in delivering the priorities the Board has chosen to champion on making Wiltshire the healthiest county in which to live, to improve skills for life, and to make Wiltshire the most waste efficient county, has involved the development of the concept of 'Leading by Example'. This involves the Board's member organisations in "putting their own house in order" with respect to these aims, and by doing so, setting an example that others can follow. The approach also involves demonstrating the business case for undertaking these actions, for instance, minimising an organisation's waste is environmentally beneficial, but it also saves money. Similarly, healthier employees will have less time off work, and so improve the organisation's productivity.

The Board is seeking to share its good practice with other businesses and groups, and try and inspire them to follow suit within their organisations, and to pass the message on to others. It is also seeking to learn from other organizations in the County.

How does the Board intend to move its Strategy into action, and
how will it monitor and report on progress?

Conclusion

The Board itself will promote and support the actions described here in several ways:

- By agreeing a Local Area Agreement with government, which will act as a three year action plan for selected aspects of the Strategy

- It will champion action to meet the four ambitious goals regarding health, waste-efficiency, 'street scene' and skills for life.

- It will support other partnerships in the County by considering how all the members of the Board can contribute to meeting each others' goals and targets, and setting out the commitments resulting from this discussion in relevant thematic strategies

- It will ensure that consultation and involvement of young people, and older people, will be an integral part of the way that this Strategy for Wiltshire is further developed and implemented. In particular this will involve working more closely with the Wiltshire Assembly of Youth (WAY), and the emerging Wiltshire Strategic Group for Older People's Issues, to achieve this.

- The Wiltshire Rural Executive, and the Wiltshire Social Inclusion Partnership will assist the Board by proofing the Strategy for Wiltshire, and actions associated with it, against the requirements of the rural needs of the county, and the equality and diversity requirements of Wiltshire's residents, respectively.

- It will promote its Strategic Analysis of the challenges facing Wiltshire, and the actions it has chosen to tackle those challenges.

- It will actively encourage voluntary and community organisations, and parish and town councils to take local action, and to develop and test new solutions in support of the Strategy for Wiltshire, and to identify priorities at the grassroots level and feed them into the process.

- It will liaise with partnerships at District and Community area levels, to ensure that we work in a co-ordinated and effective way.

The Board will be accountable:

- To its partners through its annual conference.
- To the Wiltshire public through its annual report, and its web pages.
- To its constituent organisations, through their members on the Board.
- To Government through monitoring of Wiltshire's Local Area Agreement, and Local Public Service Agreement.

What happens next?

- An action plan, in the form of a Local Area Agreement, will be negotiated with Government for the period 2007-10, detailing how the Board intends to progress selected outcomes in the Sustainable Strategy for Wiltshire.
- The Board will continue to promote action to implement the Local Public Service Agreement targets it has negotiated for the period 2005-2008, and will regularly monitor progress in their implementation.
- Progress on implementing the Sustainable Community Strategy will be reported in the Board's Annual Report, and on its web pages
- It is acknowledged that the Strategic Board may, over time, need to adjust the level of its targets if the funding of its constituent bodies significantly alters, but the overall policy directions set out in this Strategy will continue to be pursued.
- A more detailed review of the Strategy will be done as the need arises, about every three years.

Please contact David Maynard if you have any queries, or require further information, about the Wiltshire Strategic Board, and the Strategy for Wiltshire. He can be contacted on 01225 713118 or by email at davidmaynard@wiltshire.gov.uk. Or by post, at the following address: David Maynard, Corporate and Library Services Department (Development Services), Wiltshire County Council, County Hall, Trowbridge, BA 14 8JN