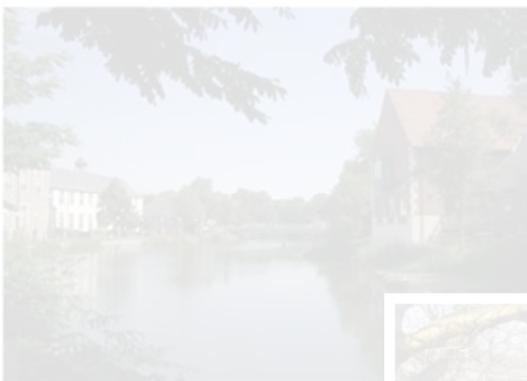




A Vision for Chippenham

Final Draft



Executive Summary

Chippenham is recognised as the largest historic market town in Wiltshire with a population of over 40,000. It is an important centre for employment in North Wiltshire, with its Community Area hosting 47% of total employment in the district (22,600 jobs), and the town alone accounting for 29% of North Wiltshire jobs (some 13,600). Studies indicate the town centre is also by far the most important comparison goods destination within the district, accounting for over half of all the retained expenditure.

It is statistics like these that encouraged the local authorities to proactively lobby the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) to recognise the importance of Chippenham not only to the county, but also to the South West region, successfully resulting in the designation of Chippenham as a Strategically Significant Town (SSTC) in the latest Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for up to the year 2026. As such, Chippenham is expected to receive a housing allocation of approximately 5,500 new dwellings, 6,200 new jobs in the Chippenham Travel to Work Area and provision for 42ha of employment land.

With these considerable growth projections comes an essential need to ensure that community and infrastructure developments are managed in such a way as to be positive, sustainable and resilient so that Chippenham and its villages are best placed to benefit from growth economically, socially and environmentally.

In January 2006, Chippenham Chamber of Commerce initiated a project to develop a Vision for the future of Chippenham, mindful of the approaching RSS and conscious of similar initiatives in Wiltshire's major towns and competitive retail and employment centres such as Swindon, Bath & Bristol, which already sucked considerable spend and resources away from the local community, harbouring the unwelcome prospect of Chippenham becoming a mere dormitory town.

The time was right, therefore, to motivate the townspeople and undertake a critical analysis of Chippenham that identified its existing problems and more importantly, the opportunities for improvement.

Through the Chamber of Commerce, and with partnership from Chippenham Town Council (CTC) and North Wiltshire District Council (NWDC), a Vision Steering Group was established and consultation events staged to present local stakeholders with a picture of the towns existing and future prospects, and gather feedback on the need for a Vision and what it should entail.

The results of these consultations were captured in an observation report by commissioned architects Sutton Griffin and, following a series of presentations to community groups, town and district authority committees, formed the basis of an evolving Vision for Chippenham.

As the Chippenham Vision project gained momentum it gained the support and advice of most notably Cllr Jane Scott, leader of Wiltshire County Council (WCC); and membership of the Steering Group increased to include the appropriate stakeholders and policy-makers that could help manage the process and turn the Vision into reality. In July 2007 that project gained matched funds of £50,000 and management resources from the SWRDA and the Wiltshire Strategic Economic Partnership (WSEP).

Since the committed involvement of SWRDA, WSEP, WCC, NWDC, CTC and other partners including Wiltshire College and the Chippenham Area Partnership, the Vision Steering Group has been proactive in commissioning the necessary evidence-based reports and developing a strategy and outline action plans for the Vision for Chippenham – the results of which are now presented in this document.

Within its pages we have identified Key Issues, Opportunities for Improvement and Priority Areas for Action, including:

- More available employment land and opportunities
- Improved traffic systems, transport links & parking
- An enhanced riverside for leisure and tourism
- A quality performance venue / leisure complex
- Improved appearance of heritage buildings and raise aspirations towards high quality architectural and urban design within the town
- Scope for a range of quality retail, diverse restaurants, and choice hotels

Lots more work is required however, and we have identified priority actions where further study work and public consultation is soon needed, some of which can be completed within existing budget and some which will require further funding:

1. Prepare Development brief for Bath Rd/Bridge Centre site to attract retail led occupancy that offers improvements to the public realm, high quality design, and integration with the existing town centre in accordance with the aspirations of this document
2. Update the Conservation Area Management Plan and produce a list of the most urgent projects
3. Update the Wood Lane and Riverside Development Brief to achieve a riverside leisure facility
4. Prepare a development brief for Station Hill to include the potential development sites around the station and linking to Wiltshire College, the park and town centre
5. Produce a Comprehensive development brief for Chippenham town centre to include fringe sites, leading to a comprehensive strategic Masterplan for the town centre
6. Prepare a Marketing & Communications Strategy & Plan for the Vision
7. Undertake a detailed Feasibility Study of a Hydro Scheme on the Avon
8. Produce an Analysis & Pilot Study Proposal for Traffic Flow Improvement
9. Undertake a Parking Survey of the town centre
10. Produce an Analysis of the Leisure Facility needs of the town
11. Engage with the Wiltshire Council Workplace Strategy

We are keen to achieve early and productive engagement with the appropriate Wiltshire Council Service Directors and Portfolio Holders to progress the above.

Our outline Vision is for Chippenham to be a great place to live, work and visit:

- 'A town with self-confidence and pride'
An active riverside town for all ages, with its own excellent & accessible facilities
- 'Attractive, Active, Inclusive'
A progressive town with its heritage at its core
- 'Affordable, Accessible, Alive'
An attractive location for businesses
- 'On the move'
Freely accessible by car, cycle and on foot
- 'A Gateway to the South West'
A thriving tourist destination
- 'Bags of choice, bags of style'
A retail location of quality and choice for all ages
- 'A centre for learning'
A home of excellent education facilities for business and the local community
- 'Green & Clean'
A regional centre for the Environment

We very much hope this document presents a positive and practical case for achieving this, and gains the vital support necessary for the good work of many people in the Chippenham community and its local authorities to progress.

The Chippenham Vision Steering Group

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1 Introduction

1.1 Chippenham's Past

The foundation of Chippenham is around the 7th Century and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records the town as CIPPA HAMME derived from Cyppa who first settled here with his kin.

King Alfred had a hunting lodge in the town in the mid 9th Century; but it was not until 1554 that the town was given its first charter by Queen Mary

The town's economy grew with the woollen industry in the 16th Century, making good use of the river for fulling mills, and the island for drying the cloth on racks or tenter frames.

Trade in the new town was further advanced with the building of a canal spur off the Wilts and Berks canal in 1798. The principal trading commodity arriving at the wharf (now the site of the bus station in Timber Street) was coal from Somerset. Further stimulus to the town's trade occurred with the construction of the Great Western Railway from London to Bristol, which reached the town in 1841. Many new industries arrived in the town and created a need for new housing to the north of the railway line. As the new industries of iron founding for the railway, wagon makers, brewing, farm machinery and butter churns grew, the cloth industry entered its final decline.

By the mid-19th Century agricultural products of milk, cheese and ham, and then the Nestlé's factory, utilised the railway to export products. The area to the north of the railway station prospered as railway engineering works, with the arrival of Rowland Brotherhood in 1842. In 1894 Evans O'Donnell Limited took over part of his works and in 1904 they joined up with Saxby & Farmer, who eventually merged under the name of Westinghouse Brake and Saxby Signal Company Limited. In 1935 the name was changed to Westinghouse Brake and Signal Company Ltd, who was the main employer in Chippenham in the 20th Century.

Chippenham expanded from the 1950's onwards with new housing areas and a band of new manufacturing industries initially on the edge of the town with Wavin and Bath Road Industrial estate. Later in the 1980's and 90's the west side of Chippenham all kinds of manufacturing, commercial and retail growth has added to the diversification of the town's employment and its character as a market town.

Ref- CHIPPENHAM living memories of your town. Mike Stone (2002) ISBN: 978-1845891213

1.2 Chippenham Today

Today, Chippenham is recognised as the largest historic market town in Wiltshire with a population of over 40,000. Located between Bath and Swindon on the M4 corridor, Chippenham is part of the South West region, the fastest growing region of the UK (in employment terms at least). Further, it is situated on the edge of one of the UK's fastest growing and entrepreneurial regions, the South East. The area also benefits from direct motorway and rail linkages to the UK's economic powerhouse, London.

Location

Nestled on the banks of the River Avon, Chippenham lies between the Marlborough Downs to the east, the Cotswolds to the north and west, and Salisbury Plain to the south. Surrounding the town are a number of stone-built villages, including the filmmakers' favourites of Lacock (National Trust), Biddestone and Castle Combe. The great houses and art treasures of Longleat, Bowood, Lacock Abbey, Dyrham Park and Corsham are within easy reach.

The town is just four miles south of the M4 motorway, giving easy access to London, Bristol and South Wales. The A4 coach road from London provides an alternative route to Bristol via Bath; the A420 and B4069 take you to Bristol and Oxford.

Chippenham is on the mainline rail route from London Paddington to the West Country and is famous for its railway arches and other buildings associated with Isambard Kingdom Brunel when he built the Great Western Railway. Bus services to Bath and Trowbridge are operated by First Bus and Faresaver; to Swindon by Stagecoach; to Calne by Stagecoach, Faresaver and APL; and to Devizes by Stagecoach and APL.

National Coach services connect daily at Chippenham to London, Wales and the South West, Midlands and East Anglia. Cross-town minibus services, plus additional local services linking neighbouring villages to the town are provided by a number of private operators.

Employment

Chippenham is an important centre of employment in the district of North Wiltshire. The Chippenham Community Area hosts 47% of total employment in the district (22,600 jobs) from a population base of 32%. The town of Chippenham alone accounts for 29% of North Wiltshire jobs (some 13,600).

The Chippenham Community Area accounts for 37% of all businesses (some 2,193) located in North Wiltshire (5,986 businesses), of which some 1,172 firms or 20% of all district firms are located in the town of Chippenham. Interestingly, around 47% of all businesses in the Chippenham area are located outside the town itself which reflects on the importance of fringe business parks and rural-based enterprise.

Major employers in the area include Herman Miller (office furniture), Wincanton (logistics & supply-chain management), Westinghouse (signalling & control systems), Wavin (pipe systems and solutions), SunGard (ICT networks), Scisys (ICT services), Stronghold (safety workwear) and IP Wireless (ICT technologies).

Retail

Retail provision in Chippenham is primarily focused on the town centre High Street and its adjoining shopping centres of Borough Parade and Emery Gate, providing a mix of national-chain and independent outlets. Further, although minimal, retail is situated on New Road, Hathaway Retail Park and Bumpers Farm.

Chippenham is the largest town centre in North Wiltshire and, studies indicate, is by far the most important comparison goods destination within the district, accounting for over half of all the retained expenditure.

Education

Chippenham has excellent schools including Abbeyfield School, which has specialist school status for business and enterprise; Sheldon School, which recently achieved a perfect Ofsted inspection report by being judged 'outstanding' in all 38 assessment categories, and which has specialist school status for science and sports; and Hardenhuish School, which has specialist school status for mathematics and computing.

Chippenham is also a main campus site for Wiltshire College, the main provider of further and higher education in the county catering for over 3,300 full and over 6,000 part-time students. Wiltshire College has recently announced plans for a £22m redevelopment of its Chippenham campus to provide a state-of-the-art centre for learning.

Lackham Farm & Estate, part of Wiltshire College, is on the fringe of the town to the South. Within its 725 hectares are three working educational farms, run on thoroughly commercial lines; historic buildings; a museum and animal park. The College farm plays two roles: firstly it demonstrates 'good commercial practices' and is farmed to produce profits. This enables the education departments to teach commercial production on a successful farm.

Health

Chippenham Community Hospital provides a range of health and dental services managed by Wiltshire Primary Care Trust and Royal United Hospital Bath NHS Trust, including maternity services that have received the prestigious UNICEF Baby Friendly Award.

There are three GP surgeries located in Chippenham and in the nearby villages of Yatton Keynell and Sutton Benger.

Leisure

Chippenham has an extensive and varied recreational base offering a wide range of sporting and leisure facilities.

Neeld Hall

The Neeld Hall was built in 1850 as an extension to the Town Hall. Recently, the hall has been extensively modernised, which has included the installation of new acoustic curtains to the interior walls, which has improved the sound quality in the auditorium. The hall benefits from an impressive stage and magnificent proscenium arch and offers a venue to host theatrical performances, corporate and community events. As a theatre it lacks wing space and a scenery dock, but it has benefited recently from additional lanterns and stagecloth tracks funded by the Chippenham Area Partnership.

The hall is licensed under the Licensing Act 2003 for public entertainment, theatre, cinema and the sale of alcohol, but is also licensed for Civil Ceremonies and can comfortably seat up to 300 people (theatre style).

John Coles Park

John Coles Park is a public park that retains its original Victorian splendour and is laid out with a large grassed area, displays of bedding plants, colourful flowers and has a collection of mature trees. A large number of animals and birds live in the park, including foxes. The park welcomes visitors throughout the winter and summer months, who are encouraged to stroll and relax or sit and listen to a band concert.

Stanley Park

Stanley Park Sports Ground is Chippenham Town Council's newest facility and is located to the south east of Chippenham.

The Environmentally friendly 47 acre site is Wiltshire's largest outdoor sporting facility and provides local sports teams', organisations and individuals with state of the art facilities to enjoy their chosen sporting pastime. The site primarily caters for football, offering 17 first class playing surfaces, training areas, supreme players and officials changing accommodation and a warm and friendly refreshment area.

Olympiad Leisure Centre

The Olympiad Leisure Centre in Monkton Park provides a range of facilities including an indoor swimming pool with flume rides, a whirlpool and four 25 metre lanes. The Olympiad also has a fully equipped sports hall, squash courts, large fitness room and social facilities. It is also the venue for a variety of sports clubs and classes. Creche facilities are also available.

Other Facilities

In addition to the above facilities, Chippenham is well-catered for other sports and leisure activities held in public and private facilities including: badminton; table tennis; gymnastics; five-a-side football; tennis; hockey; cricket; golf; bowling and rugby.

Chippenham and District Constitutional Club, the Gladstone Liberal Club and the West End Working Men's Club have among their facilities, pool, snooker and other games. Skittle alleys are available at these and several other licensed premises in the town.

The Astoria Cinema in Marshfield Road screens the latest film releases and there is also a Social and Bingo Club on the same site. Residents of all ages also enjoy and support a variety of dramatic, choral, musical, dance and orchestral clubs and societies.

2 Background

2.1 Why do we need a Vision?

Chippenham has a great array of natural advantages and assets, but is thought by many not to have found its identity since it lost its original role as a market town following its significant expansion from the 1980's onwards

Recent (August 2007) representations on the future of Chippenham from local businesses and community have highlighted concerns. The main issues including:

- **Primary zone retail** rents deterring local traders in the town centre.
- Strong competition from Bath and Swindon is seen as the reason for Chippenham's **poor retail offer**.
- There is concern over the town simply being a **dormitory** to main centres.
- **Small retail unit** sizes deter main retailers from coming to Chippenham.
- There are **mixed perceptions** that **car parking** is either **under provided** for in the town, or is **full** of car parks – pointing to their management being uncoordinated
- No current **retailers association** championing and demanding a better environment for retailers and customers.
- There is currently no Chippenham “**Brand**” or “**USP**”
- For young adults active nightlife centres around alcohol consumption in a **narrow variety of venues**.
- The **library building** is not of the quality that a town such as Chippenham should expect for a public building.
- The **Western Arches dominate the back-drop view** whilst the **railway line divides the town** and is penetrated at very few locations.
- Existing **river frontage is inactive** and dominated by service areas and is a widely ignored asset, with little activity and linked access.

A report on Chippenham Employment Provision (2007) commissioned by the Chippenham Vision Steering Group and produced by King Sturge concluded that Chippenham is ‘punching below its weight’ and, without a Vision, is in danger of becoming just a dormitory town for Swindon, Bath & Bristol, without facilities and an identity in its own right.

Retail competition is fierce and is set to increase with existing and new developments in Bath, Bristol, Swindon. Neighbouring towns are also providing improved leisure and cultural opportunities, whilst a lack of employment land in the area threatens to restrict the growth and expansion of our local businesses – with some of our most important and high-profile employers already raising concerns and threatening to add to the decline in industry and employment opportunities that the town has suffered in recent years.

Chippenham has been identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), which governs the way development will be managed in the South West until 2026, as a Strategically Significant Town (SSTC) and as such is expected to receive a housing allocation of approximately 5,500 new dwellings, 6,200 new jobs in the Chippenham Travel to Work Area and provision for 42ha of employment land.

With the planned growth in the number of homes, there needs to be an increase in the number of employment opportunities available to existing and future residents to prevent Chippenham becoming a dormitory town. Approximately 50,000 workers out-commute from Wiltshire every day – we don't want to add to this number. The Chippenham Employment Provision report identified that existing employment site allocations in the current Local Plan are not considered to offer deliverability; and by 2026 Chippenham area will need as a minimum and additional 20.4 ha (50 acres) of employment land.

Furthermore, any increase in population and employment needs an equitable increase and improvement in the number and range of facilities available to the community, including retail, leisure, health, transport and the environment.

The town's status in the RSS means that development must be strategic and planned to ensure a joined-up approach to the town's future and sustainability. The timing of the RSS provides an opportunity to make positive change starting now.

A Vision for Chippenham represents the potential to which all can aspire. However, it is recognised that it must also be achievable and be the best vehicle for capitalising on the Town's present assets and what can be realistically achieved.

Many studies and surveys have now been done into different aspects of Chippenham such as transport, employment, retail, and conservation; and, although it is recognised additional work is required to identify evidence-based problems and practical opportunities, we can now start to pull the various strands together to propose this Vision for Chippenham.

2.2 What exactly is the Vision?

The Vision for Chippenham is a framework of improvement and change to local infrastructures, facilities, environments and economic opportunities to ensure Chippenham has a positive future as an active, balanced and sustainable community.

The Vision takes a holistic view of the town and its surrounds in the context of current environments and future developments. It identifies key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats affecting a range of factors, and proposes a number of individual projects for attention in the short-, medium- and long-term that it is believed will positively improve the living, working and leisure environment of Chippenham for the existing community and employers as well as those of the future.

2.3 How has the Vision been produced?

The concept of a Vision for Chippenham started with Chippenham Chamber of Commerce and its concern over the adequacy of employment land for growth, strength of the local economy, attractiveness of the built and natural environment, and future living and employment prospects within the town.

Following initial discussions with North Wiltshire District Council, a Steering Group was established involving the Chamber and officers and members from NWDC and Chippenham Town Council. This Steering Group began to formulate a Vision, referencing previous regeneration proposals, particularly the 'River Green Millennium Bid' and 'Chippenham Area Conservation Plan'; inviting additional community representatives to become involved and have their say; and lobbying relevant bodies such as Wiltshire County Council and the South West Regional Development Agency for support for the Vision.

In February 2006, the Chamber met with architects Sutton Griffin, a Newbury-based practice, and received a presentation on the Newbury Vision, in which they played a key voluntary and commercial role. The similarities between the state of Newbury and Chippenham in terms of retail competition; town environment; employment prospects; and aspirations, were striking. As a result, the Chamber commissioned Sutton Griffin to undertake an initial appraisal of the town and present thoughts on what it could become, with reference to similar towns.

In July 2006, the Chamber organised a presentation and workshop for local stakeholders where Sutton Griffin presented initial thoughts and facilitated discussion on Chippenham's current state and prospects. The results of this consultative workshop were taken forward as the basis for a Vision and individual projects within it.

A series of presentations to the Town Centre Business Forum, District Council Area 3 Committee and Community Area Partnership followed, where the results of this workshop and a call for support for a Vision were presented, with much success.

The Steering Group expanded and strengthened, adding representatives from other key stakeholder organisations and developing its Vision before the Chamber of Commerce organised a second workshop where Sutton Griffin's report conclusions and recommendations were presented in August 2007.

With funding support from SWRDA and under the Chairmanship of the Wiltshire Strategic Economic Partnership (WSEP), the Steering Group has continued to meet regularly to progress the Vision proposals and meet with stakeholders. An Employment Provision Study was commissioned from consultants King Sturge, which provided evidence of the need for employment land and has contributed to the Vision.

Running parallel to the Vision Group, the Chippenham Area Partnership has produced the Chippenham Area Community Plan, much of which reflects the ambitions of the Chippenham Vision. This Plan needs to be updated with more action focus in time for the Unitary Authority vestment, so there is great opportunity to align this work with the Vision. Indeed, the work undertaken thus far by both groups is now being merged and the Community Area Partnership has lead representation on the Vision Steering Group.

2.4 Studies & Surveys

In developing a Vision for Chippenham, a number of studies and surveys have been undertaken by partners; and which capture current thoughts and feelings about the town's present status and future opportunity, and to provide an evidence base for improvement and change.

- RiverGreen Millennium Bid - NWDC, Town Council et al, 1999
- Chippenham Conservation Area Statement (2004) and Management Plan(2007) - North Wilts DC et al
- Chippenham Area Community Plan - Chippenham Area Partnership, 2005
- Outline survey of Chippenham potential - Sutton Griffin for Chamber of Commerce, 2007
- Retail Needs Assessment Survey - Roger Tym & Partners for NWDC, 2007
- Chippenham Employment Provision Study - King Sturge,SWRDA sponsored, 2007
- Chippenham Area Transport Needs Survey - Community First, 2008

The conclusions of these studies and surveys are presented in the Key Issues section of this report.

2.5 Consultation

Throughout the development of the Chippenham Vision consultation has been a priority to ensure that concepts and plans fully reflect the needs and aspirations of the whole community. To this end, work in progress has regularly been presented to local government, business and community partners with opportunities to respond to presentations and engage in workshop activities.

However, we recognise that further consultation is required to take the Vision proposals into the general public domain and receive the views of the citizens of Chippenham and villages. To this end, the opportunity to feedback on the Chippenham Vision will be included in forthcoming consultations for the development of the new Community Plan. In addition, we will be developing a communications and marketing campaign aimed at engaging all sections of the community and encouraging their feedback.

3 The Wider Context

3.1 The Regional Spatial Strategy

The Regional Spatial Strategy or RSS is a new kind of plan for the South West for up to the year 2026.

The objective of the RSS is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The RSS, incorporating a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), provides a broad development strategy for the region for a fifteen to twenty year period. The RSS also informs the preparation of Local Development Documents (LDDs), Local Transport Plans (LTPs) and regional and sub-regional strategies and programmes that have a bearing on land use activities.

Essentially, the strategy decides how much development there should be, how it will be spread around the region and how it will be delivered.

It should make a difference to what happens locally to the

- Environment,
- Infrastructure,
- Transport,
- Housing,
- Economic development,
- Agriculture,
- Minerals
- Waste.

The Regional Spatial Strategy sets a framework for all local development frameworks in the region. As such, it is of great significance to the future of the local area.

After much lobbying by the local authorities, Chippenham was identified in the revised RSS as a Strategically Significant Town (SSTC) and as such is expected to receive a housing allocation of approximately 5,500 new dwellings, 6,200 new jobs in the Chippenham Travel to Work Area and provision for 42ha of employment land.

3.2 Sustainable Communities

In 2003 the government set out a long term programme for bringing about improvements to the places where people live. This programme is designed to strengthen the links between work, leisure and home by creating what are called sustainable communities.

These are defined as:

“ . . . places where people want to live and work now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.”

The sustainable communities programme lists a number of specific components that the government suggest are essential if a community is to be sustainable. They are:

Active, inclusive and safe

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

Environmentally sensitive

Providing places that are considerate of the environment in which people can live

Well designed and built

Featuring a high quality built and natural environment with homes that people can afford

Well connected

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

Thriving

With a flourishing and diverse local economy

Well served

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

Fair for everyone

Including those in other communities, now and in the future

Well run

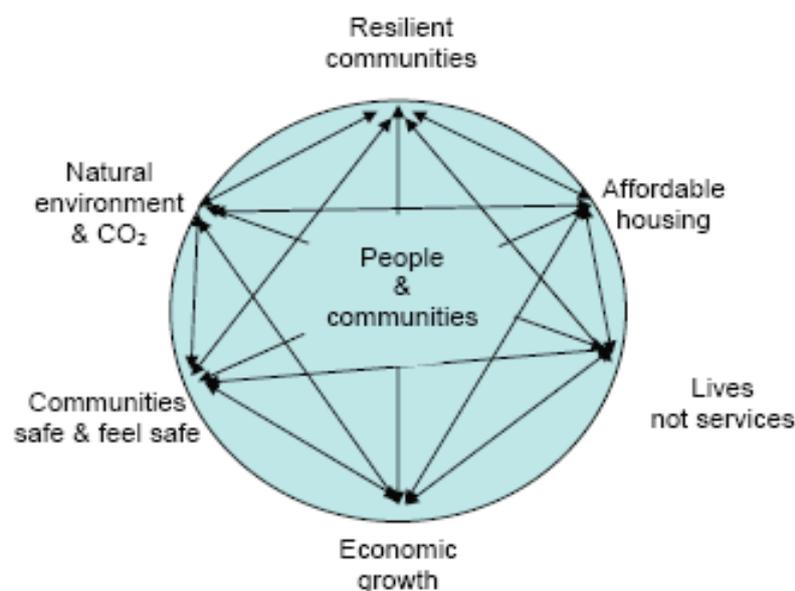
With effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership

3.3 Wiltshire Local Area Agreement

The Local Agreement for Wiltshire identifies action between partners to take forward the agreed Ambitions for Wiltshire, flowing from issues raised within the Sustainable Community Strategy for Wiltshire. In April 2009, the new single local authority for the County, Wiltshire Council, will be responsible for taking forward these ambitions.

Wiltshire's Ambitions are:

1. Build 'resilient communities' with high social capital through people feeling socially included, enabling people and communities to build skills, abilities, knowledge and confidence to take effective action and play leading roles in the development of their communities and so enhance their quality of life.
2. Improve affordable housing
3. 'Lives not services' - support more people to have independent and fulfilling lives as part of their local community; support families to provide the strong foundations for children and young people's development; enable individuals to make informed choices to improve their long term health and well being
4. Wiltshire exhibiting a positive and sustainable environment for economic growth
5. Reduce particular crimes, change behaviours and inform the public to bring about communities that are safe and feel safe
6. Environment: Tackle climate change and promote a high quality, natural environment that enriches the lives of people
7. Work together to achieve the ambitions, including new governance arrangements for the 'family of partnerships' and the establishment of community area boards.



The Vision for Chippenham aims to reflect the Local Agreement for Wiltshire by providing practical applications of its Ambitions.

4 The Vision for Chippenham

4.1 Outline Vision Statement

Our outline Vision is for Chippenham to realise its significant potential, building on its distinctive strengths to become a great place to live, work and visit:

- **'A town with self-confidence and pride'**
An active riverside town for all ages, with its own excellent & accessible facilities
- **'Attractive, Active, Inclusive'**
A progressive town with its heritage at its core
- **'Affordable, Accessible, Alive'**
An attractive location for businesses
- **'On the move'**
Freely accessible by car, cycle and on foot
- **'A Gateway to the South West'**
A thriving tourist destination
- **'Bags of choice, bags of style'**
A retail location of quality and choice for all ages
- **'A centre for learning'**
A home of excellent education facilities for business and the local community
- **'Green & Clean'**
A regional centre for the Environment

We recognise that many towns in Wiltshire, and indeed the country would state similar aspirations. Therefore, there is a need to further define Chippenham's unique selling points to develop a distinctive, relevant and memorable Vision statement – and see this as part of the work required from a proposed marketing and communications plan, perhaps involving the opportunity for local schoolchildren, residents etc to enter their suggestions via a competition, which would further engage the community in the Vision project.

4.2 Key Issues

The various studies and surveys have been analysed and subjected to professional consideration, under the following subject areas:

- The Public Realm
- Business & Employment
- Transport
- Leisure & Tourism
- Retail, Shopping & Food
- Education, Skills & Training
- The Environment
- Policy & Vision

A summary of this analysis appears below, and is presented in terms of the Town’s existing strengths and the opportunities for improvement by planned action. The final section – Policy & Vision – draws strategic messages from the other sections.

4.2.1 The Public Realm

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
Attractive historic town environment in riverside setting, with naturally beautiful hinterland and settlements	Ensure that development within and around Chippenham enhances the urban realm and integrates well with the existing town centre, surrounding development and pedestrian routes, and link to and enhance the network of public open space.
Proximity of Monkton Park green open space to town centre	Town centre land is valuable to the quality and potential growth of the town, and should be used efficiently to provide a mix of uses and a varied and integrated public realm. Large areas of ground floor parking will not meet this aim.
Pedestrianised high street during the daytime	Ensure that the quality of urban experience for pedestrians and other stakeholders is enhanced, particularly throughout the town and from the town centre to all its transport links and interchanges.
Strong core of attractive historic architecture	Ensure that all developments within and adjoining the town centre respect and continue the vitality of urban experience through the creation of human scale, varied and well designed retail and other frontages.
	Accommodation mixes should reflect the needs and aspirations of the local community, and town centre living should be encouraged over and together with commercial uses to add to the vitality of the town centre and the evening economy.
Active daytime retail core	Promote the expansion of the town centre retail and central business area through new edge of centre developments offering a range of retail and commercial floor areas within high quality and well serviced buildings which maintaining the urban pattern of varied street frontages, linking well to main transport hubs and the existing and possible future public realm.
	Encourage the highest design quality for all developments throughout the masterplanning, design and procurement process.
	Encourage a flexible approach to planning policy and requirements for affordable housing and other planning contributions to enable a comprehensive rather than piecemeal approach to be taken to developments urban design terms where the opportunity exists.

4.2.2 Business & Employment

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
Great access by road and rail	Identify potential employment land for expansion within the WC Workspace Strategy and unlock existing land bank
Affordable rent and housing	Supplement declining manufacturing base with high growth businesses
Good economic base	Introduce communication structures and support local business
Workforce availability, cost and quality	Develop a clear vision of future mix: some mfg + office + logistics + innovation
Important sub-regional economic location	Undertake a co-ordinated thrust to attract new businesses & promote innovation to ensure long term economic health
	Encourage rural enterprise, promoting villages as attractive residential and small office locations, with Chippenham as an accessible & flexible business hub
	Encourage investment in broad-appeal retail

AMBITION TO BE: "AFFORDABLE, ACCESSIBLE, ALIVE"

4.2.3 Transport

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
Road & Rail links - as far as the Northern gateway	Review and improve travel between outlying businesses and town centre: Bumpers Farm, Methuen Park
Borough Parade Car Park successfully remodelled	Encourage a fully accessible public transport fleet, e.g. low-floor buses
	Introduce green public transportation
	Improve car parking signage, and introduce pay-on-exit system
	Reduce bottlenecks and improve traffic with changes in traffic management - optimised by computer modelling and validated by pilot schemes, and take traffic issues into account in the locations of any new development
	Introduce integrated public transport system, with potential transport hub and co-ordinated services

AMBITION TO BE: "ON THE MOVE"

4.2.4 Leisure & Tourism

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
Good access by road & rail. Less expensive than nearby towns.	Develop Riverside for leisure & café culture, removing the eyesores through sensitive intervention and encouraging high quality architecture and public space.
Riverside, Monkton Park, Cycle & walking routes, John Coles & Stanley Park, Olympiad.	Develop a focussed and expanded pitch for Chippenham as a tourist centre for the town and nearby attractions
Heritage – railway & architecture	Attract investment to develop 3* hotels and conferencing facilities
Villages & attractions within easy reach	Review and develop diverse cultural and leisure facilities that appeal to all generations e.g. skate park and quality performance venue
History centre attracts many visitors	Capture greater share of consumer spend with improved and broad-appeal retail and leisure facilities
Folk Festival, some other events	Attract greater support to annual events through public and private sector sponsorships and improved marketing & promotion
Film tourism	

AMBITION TO BE: "A GATEWAY TO THE SOUTH WEST"

4.2.5 Retail, Shopping, Food

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
Chippenham identified as the most important 'comparison goods' centre (clothing, household etc) in N Wilts	Develop sustained retail strategy to attract investment in good quality and broad-appeal retailers, restaurateurs and hoteliers
Attractive topography & riverside setting	Encourage evening town centre use and vibrancy with improved retail, cultural & leisure facilities and public safety measures, and encouraging mixed use development and occupancy
Bath Road & Bridge roundabout - development site	Encourage occupancy of vacant units with focussed marketing and possible incentives for new and local businesses
New Tesco is open to assisting the Community	Regenerate Emery Gate shopping centre & car park to enhance choice, accessibility and appearance
Planned population growth offers opportunity	Retain and attract greater consumer spend through improved facilities and focussed marketing initiatives
	Investigate scalable rent structure to be proportionate to footfall, as an incentive to investment
	Preliminary public consultation has strongly indicated the need to encourage additional quality retailers and restaurants to the town (Waitrose and Marks and Spencer were heavily favoured)

AMBITION TO BE: "BAGS OF CHOICE, BAGS OF STYLE"

4.2.6 Education, Skills & Training

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
Good schools	Promote the availability of certain skills sectors for investment and recruitment
Proximity to universities in Bristol, Bath (2) & Swindon	Provide new skills development & training for ex-manufacturing people
Wiltshire College has support & training facilities	Provide a focus to college courses that complement a forward view of business mix
Major investment in new Wiltshire College Chippenham	Facilitate greater engagement between schools & business through enterprise initiatives, placement schemes etc
Wiltshire College Lackham devt into HE & Environment	Support the improvements of Wiltshire College facilities and Chippenham and the promotion of Wiltshire College Lackham as a centre for environmental, land-based & industrial training

AMBITION TO BE: "A CENTRE FOR LEARNING"

4.2.7 The Environment

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
The River	Introduce initiatives to improve the environment between the river and the town centre; and designate a Riverside environment & Country Park, based on Hygrade, Wessex Water sites & Westmead playing field, and possibly Berks & Wilts Canal
Home of Good-Energy – 100% renewable energy	Improve existing, unattractive weir and introduce a hydro generator
Fair Trade Town	Implement a clean up town and river campaign
	Designate Chippenham as a 'Transition town'
	Wiltshire College Lackham environmental centre development
	Encourage the future sustainability of the town through appropriate measures

AMBITION TO BE: "GREEN AND CLEAN"

4.2.8 Policy & Vision

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
Great accessibility by road & rail – ‘M4 Corridor’ town	Improve perceptions of the town and attract investment through a marketing campaign that promotes positive change and opportunity potential
River is a major if under-utilised assets	Promote Chippenham area as a tourist potential with support from the Destination Management Partnership
Economically prosperous, planned for growth (‘SSCT’) – will bring ‘roof tax’	Position and promote Chippenham as an excellent place to do business
Affordable property & rent	Explore potential to designate Chippenham as a transition town – a centre for the environment
Good pool of workforce incl. Entrepreneurs	Scope and deliver early projects for limited investment that can win hearts & minds by demonstrating positive change
	Ensure the rural villages are linked to, and benefit from Vision improvements supporting sensitive development to aid their vibrancy and economic wellbeing
	Produce Urban Framework Plan and Programme
	Produce a detailed Implementation / Action plan for the period up to 2020

AMBITION TO BE: “A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND VISIT”

4.3 Defining the Priority Areas for Action

The analysis above was then used to derive the following list of priority areas for action.

The list is in two sections: input priorities for early action, which then enable the output objectives to be pursued.

4.3.1. Input priorities – for early and continuing action

- More available employment land and opportunities
- Improved traffic systems, transport links & parking
- An enhanced riverside for leisure and tourism
- A quality performance venue / leisure complex
- Improved appearance of heritage buildings and raise aspirations towards high quality architectural and urban design within the town
- Scope for a range of quality retail, diverse restaurants, and choice hotels

4.3.2. Output priorities – relying to an extent on the above

- Attract new businesses to the town
- Become an attractive tourist location and visitor hub
- Become a centre for the Environment
- A town that generates well-being for its citizens

4.3.3 Way Forward

The main aim of this Vision document is to analyse the evidence of work to date, and derive the potential that Chippenham can achieve –

- What are its considerable natural and present strengths?
- What can it aspire to achieve?
- What are the areas that require priority for regeneration?

This has been the subject for the sections of the document to this point.

Looking forward, we need to separate the areas of activity into

- i) Those that require further study before project activity in appropriate
- ii) Those that are well evidenced, and move to project activity to advance the achievement of the Vision

These are now taken in turn.

4.3.4 Further study work and public consultation recommended

1. Prepare Development brief for Bath Rd/Bridge Centre site to attract retail led occupancy that offers improvements to the public realm, high quality design, and integration with the existing town centre in accordance with the aspirations of this document
2. Update the Conservation Area Management Plan and produce a list of the most urgent projects
3. Update the Wood Lane and Riverside Development Brief to achieve a riverside leisure facility
4. Prepare a development brief for Station Hill to include the potential development sites around the station and linking to Wiltshire College, the park and town centre
5. Produce a Comprehensive development brief for Chippenham town centre to include fringe sites, leading to a comprehensive strategic Masterplan for the town centre
6. Prepare a Marketing & Communications Strategy & Plan for the Vision
7. Undertake a detailed Feasibility Study of a Hydro Scheme on the Avon
8. Produce an Analysis & Pilot Study Proposal for Traffic Flow Improvement
9. Undertake a Parking Survey of the town centre
10. Produce an Analysis of the Leisure Facility needs of the town
11. Engage with the Wiltshire Council Workplace Strategy

4.3.5 Funding for further study work

The RDA has generously allocated £50,000 for work on the Chippenham Vision, with matched funds of £50,000 in officer time from North Wilts District Council.

About half of this funding has been spent on the work to reach this point. It is recommended that the balance is invested in the above studies.

The Rural Renaissance Partnership has some transition funds that may be applicable to the above work. Study work is suitable for this fund, as it has to be completed by the end of March 2009.

4.3.6 Project activity that is sufficiently well evidenced to proceed

Projects that proceed will clearly have to satisfy the following criteria before they proceed:

- Evidence of community support
- Any planning permissions in place
- Funding in place
- Project delivery vehicle in place
- Project management team in place

Subject to these criteria, the following candidate projects represent a list that could be suitable to go ahead.

It is recommended that a further document is prepared, that examines the feasibility of these projects and puts those that should go ahead in a priority and timescale.

Many projects will impact favourably on more than one priority area. (For example, improvement of the riverside environment in the town will benefit, resident well-being, businesses and tourism.) Such projects would attract a higher priority.

Some of the listed projects, that do not involve significant funding or outside stake-holders, may proceed without further analysis.

4.4 Candidate Projects by Priority Area

4.4.1 The Public Realm

- Through the further study work and public consultation recommended in section 4.3.4, to bring a considered approach and high aspirations to bear on the public realm and any new developments within and around the town centre

4.4.2 Business & Employment

- Identify available employment land and release for potential development
- Enter negotiations and secure long-term commitment from existing major employers seeking to expand or leave
- Improve communications to and between business through regular consultative forums, website, newsletter etc
- Formalise the North Wiltshire Economic Consultative Group to become an Economic Partnership with a role similar to that in West Wiltshire
- Implement a marketing campaign aimed at attracting more employers to the town, encouraging business start-ups and entrepreneurial activity

4.4.3 Transport & Spatial

- Provide for additional access/egress to Bumpers Farm and Methuen Park to counter regular traffic congestion
- Consider the opportunities and benefits of developing an Eastern and Southern bypass to the town
- Improve management and coordination of parking facilities through the use of roadside electronic signage
- Improve public transport & cycle routes between business areas, the railway station and the town centre
- Low-floor buses, to ease getting on/off for the elderly, parents with buggies etc

4.4.4 Leisure & Tourism

- Enhance the riverside environment with a clean-up campaign, fencing of unsightly car park access, display of public art works etc
- Improve buildings whose service areas back on to the river – Bar-Reva opportunity?
- Promote a series of riverside events such as festivals, regattas, nature walks, public art trails etc
- Implement a marketing campaign to position Chippenham as a highly accessible centre for tourism, and a gateway to the south west
- Implement a marketing campaign to attract hotel & leisure investment in the town
- Provide community leisure Riverside facilities on Hygrade / Wessex Water site
- Countryside Park beside National Cycle Route 4 (Chippenham Borough Lands project) with entrance at the above Riverside site
- Quality assess accommodation , ‘tourist ambassador’ training.
- Refine and resubmit the Neeld Hall phase two lottery bid to provide raked seating and better stage access.

4.4.5 Retail, Shopping, Food

- Improve town centre and retail environment by face-lifting heritage buildings and preparing and adopting planning guidance for shop fascias and signage
- Implement a marketing campaign aimed at encouraging occupancy of empty retail units
- Implement a marketing campaign aimed at encouraging more shoppers into the town
- Consider the opportunity to expand the market size, frequency and variety, e.g. farmers market, flea market etc

4.4.6 Education, Skills & Training

- Support Wiltshire College’s development proposal
- Promote grant-funded learning opportunities in the town through campaign targeted at businesses for staff training & up-skilling
- Use the curriculum at Wiltshire College Chippenham to strengthen the industrial and environmental Vision
- Use the development of the new Wiltshire College Chippenham to create an integrated and modern environment between the railway station, Monkton Park, the Olympiad, the river and into the town centre
- Improve links between business, local schools and Wiltshire College

4.4.7 The Environment

- Develop and promote an Environmental Plan for Chippenham, building on the FairTrade status, River, Wiltshire College Lackham, Green-Energy etc
- Make Chippenham a ‘Transition Town’
- Finalise consultation on, and adoption of the Chippenham Conservation Area Management Plan
- Restore and reface the Western Arches in cooperation with Network Rail
- Replace existing sluice gate with a mini-hydro scheme and visitor facility
- Support ‘CAVE’ campaign to make Chippenham a ‘plastic-bag free’ town and help in promotional activities
- Support ‘CAVE’ campaign to offer a carbon footprint to homes and businesses

4.4.8 Policy & Vision

- Implement a marketing campaign to promote the Chippenham Vision and encourage wider community engagement and consultation
- Develop a website and prospectus promoting the Chippenham Vision

4.5 Funding for Projects

The above projects are so diverse that it is difficult to give more than general advice about funding at this stage. Chippenham has the status of a Strategically Significant Town in the Regional Spatial Strategy (SST), which gives it the benefit of future planned growth – a source of Section 106 income for example - but it is recognised that the Regional Development Agency for the South West (SWRDA) has no special funding for Chippenham.

A large project will typically be funded by a mixture of public and private sector, possibly topped up by grant funding. The support of the community, of all tiers of government, and a presence within this Visioning process, as well as highly competent financial plans, will be highly beneficial in obtaining funding.

The following sources of funding have been identified. This list is not exhaustive.

- WCC / 'Council for Wiltshire' funds
- NWDC funds
- Commercial developers' investment and planning gain
- Section 106 'Roof Tax'
- Public borrowing against future Section 106
- European Social Fund
- Community Spaces Fund
- Grants – see for example South West Funding Advisers Forum

5 Partners

Many organisations have actively worked with us on the development of the Vision. The majority are members of the steering group that oversees the implementation of the Vision and we will work with them and others to deliver the Vision.

5.1 South West Regional Development Agency

The South West of England Regional Development Agency was established in 1999. Its most important role is to ensure the long-term economic success of the region. As such the Agency is responsible for providing regional economic leadership and its activities are focused on gathering and sharing the best intelligence for the benefit of everyone in the region, and promoting the South West both in the UK and abroad.

5.2 Wiltshire Strategic Economic Partnership

The Wiltshire Strategic Economic Partnership (WSEP) is a private sector led organisation which promotes the economic well-being of Wiltshire. Its membership is drawn from a range of private, public and third sector bodies.

WSEP is a Company Limited by Guarantee, but it is a strategic body without resources of its own to deliver economic development and regeneration activity. Its partners are therefore responsible for taking forward agreed areas of work to develop and improve the economy of Wiltshire.

The Partnership is the main strategic interface between Wiltshire and regional organisations such as SWRDA, Government Office for the South West and South West Regional Assembly. It is responsible for overseeing delivery of the economic ambition within the Local Agreement for Wiltshire. WSEP chairs the Chippenham Vision Steering Group and has secured funding from SWRDA to support development of the Vision.

5.3 Wiltshire County Council

Wiltshire County Council makes a significant contribution to maintaining our successful local economy, both as a service delivery and policy making body, providing infrastructure and services to meet the needs of the business community and also as the county's largest employer.

The authority provides a range of business support, development and information services in its own right and works with partner agencies to develop and deliver regeneration and sector development initiatives across the county.

Town and Country planning functions are currently sub-divided between County and District Councils. This applies to Forward Planning (the preparation of planning policy - which provides the basis for considering planning applications) and Development Control (the processing and determination of planning applications, and law enforcement action against development that does not comply with permissions)

In April 2009 these functions will be delivered by Wiltshire Council, the new single local authority for the County.

5.4 North Wiltshire District Council

The District Council has responsibility at present for Spatial Planning, Development Control, and leading on physical regeneration projects in Chippenham.

The District Council have ownership and long term investments in Borough Parade, Emery Gate and the Riverside open space. The District Council is currently progressing feasibility works on the hydro-power in the river Avon; and with Wiltshire County Council on Marketing Bath Road car park and the Bridge Centre.

The District and County Council merge as one council in April 2009 as Wiltshire Council.

5.5 Chippenham Town Council

Based in the Town Hall, Chippenham Town Council primarily provides town based amenities and facilities. It is responsible for the Grade I listed Yelde Hall which houses the Tourist Information Centre, Grade II listed Town and Needle Halls, the Grade II listed Museum and Heritage Centre, Stanley Park Sports Ground, Chippenham Information Point, CCTV John Coles Park, rivers route, town markets, children's playgrounds, allotment sites, the London Road Cemetery, the town centre floral arrangements, top-up street cleaning, additional road gritting and oversees a number of traditional Civic and Ceremonial events, including Civic Sunday, Mayor Making and Remembrance Day.

The Council is composed of 22 members (Councillors) representing the wards in the town of Chippenham. All Councillors are elected by the people of the town in a single election held every four years. The most recent election was held in May 2007. The Officers are the Council's paid employees and work for the authority as a whole.

5.6 Chippenham Chamber of Commerce

Chippenham Chamber exists to be the voice for business in Chippenham and District, providing an apolitical platform for consultation and the provision of business services and information. The Chamber represents approximately 100 businesses in the town and surrounds, including sole traders, SME's, large corporates and multi-nationals.

Its main objectives are to increase business involvement in the local community, to promote and represent its members, and to work closely with the Chippenham Town Council, North Wiltshire District Council, Wiltshire County Council and its MP in the promotion and development of the town.

5.7 Chippenham Area Partnership

The Chippenham Area Partnership (ChAP) is made up of:

- Local residents and volunteers from the area
- Representatives from Parish, Town, District and County Councils
- Service providers
- Representatives from public, voluntary and private sector organisations

All of these people work together to produce the Community Plan for the area. The Plan seeks to influence and inform local authorities and service providers about the priorities for people in the Chippenham Community Area. Partnership volunteers are now working to raise the profile of and deliver the aspirations of local people identified in the plan.

Community Planning has become increasingly important within Local Government, as a valuable method of enabling local people to influence the services that will be provided for them. The Community Plan is produced through collaboration between local residents and representatives of public, voluntary and private sector organisations and businesses. The aim is to improve the quality of life for all who live, work or visit the community area.

Wide consultation has been carried out, and identified the main needs and aspirations of the community. The findings have been grouped together under specific headings or themes, which the County and District partnerships have used in their community strategies.

5.8 Chippenham Civic Society

Chippenham Civic Society was formed in 1974 and is registered with the National Civic Trust. Its main aims are to ensure that Chippenham remains a pleasant town to live in, that its interesting buildings are protected and new developments are sympathetic to its historic market town character. The Civic Society monitors planning applications and makes comments to the local councils whose job it is to grant or refuse permission for development, demolition, change of use etc. The Civic Society is a registered charity and a voluntary group.

5.9 Wiltshire College

The college was formed in 2000 and is now, following the merger with Salisbury College in January 2008, the main provider of further and higher education in Wiltshire, with an excellent reputation for quality provision, innovation and student care.

There are 4 main campuses and 9 smaller centres throughout the county; the college offers a spectacular range of courses ranging from media arts to horticulture, construction and catering. over 3300 full-time students and 6000 part-time students attend the college.

The college is currently preparing proposals for the redevelopment of its Cocklebury Road, Chippenham campus. The £22m scheme will provide a new college designed to meet the requirements of students and staff to modern standards and meet the needs of the town and its surrounding area for further education in the future.

The next few years will be an exciting time for Wiltshire College Chippenham. The redevelopment and transformation of the campus will become a reality as the modern and inspiring new building emerges to create a state-of-the-art centre for learning.

The latest technologies will be deployed within the new workshops and classrooms to ensure that stimulating and relevant training is provided to give our students the skills needed by employers in the 21st Century.

5.10 Learning & Skills Council South West

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) exists to make England better skilled and more competitive.

The LSC have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to ensure a workforce of world-class standard.

The LSC is a non-departmental public body which began work in 2001, taking over the roles of the former Further Education Funding Council and Training and Enterprise Councils.

The LSC is responsible for planning and funding high quality education and training for everyone in England other than those in universities. A national office in Coventry and nine regional offices oversee the work of local partnership teams throughout the county.

The LSC's major tasks are to:

- raise participation and achievement by young people
- increase adult demand for learning
- raise skills levels for national competitiveness
- improve the quality of education and training delivery
- equalise opportunities through better access to learning
- improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the sector.

The LSC's vision is that by 2010, young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce.

6 What will success look like?

Ultimately we will have been successful if we achieve our Vision for Chippenham - for it to be a great place to live, work and visit, and:

- 'A town with self-confidence and pride'
An active riverside town for all ages, with its own excellent & accessible facilities
- 'Attractive, Active, Inclusive'
A progressive town with its heritage at its core
- 'Affordable, Accessible, Alive'
An attractive location for businesses
- 'On the move'
A convenient and accessible location
- 'A Gateway to the South West'
A thriving tourist destination
- 'Bags of choice, bags of style'
A retail location of quality and choice for all ages
- 'A centre for learning'
A home of excellent education facilities for business and the local community
- 'Green & Clean'
A regional centre for the Environment

Success also means keeping our promise to make sure that Chippenham becomes a truly sustainable community and not simply a dormitory town.

If we are successful there will be a number of significant economic, social and environmental benefits for the town, its people, villages, and for the wider Wiltshire community. Success means an improved quality of life for residents, an improved experience for visitors and an improved economic environment for businesses. Success can be assessed and objectively measured against the input and output priorities derived earlier in the document.

The list above captures the core aspirations of the Vision, based on research and consultation conducted thus far. However, our first job on publishing this draft Vision report is to invite further comment from the wider community, review the headline ambitions and ensure that the individual projects that make up the Vision reflect the majority view, and are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed.

By doing this we will be able to critically monitor our progress and, therefore, ensure that we really do bring about the changes needed to deliver the Chippenham Vision in line with the aspirations of the community.

6.1 Monitoring and review

The Chippenham Vision is a long-term plan for the period 2008 – 2020. We will continuously monitor activity against the delivery initiatives and review progress annually. Where appropriate each annual review will also look at the strategic objectives and amend or adjust them if this is thought necessary for the achievement of the overall Vision for Chippenham. These reviews will also examine the local, regional, national and international environments to make sure that the Vision and strategic objectives are still valid.

7 The Vision Steering Group

The Chippenham Vision Steering Group has met regularly since its inception, adding stakeholder representatives as required and working together to develop the Vision. The list below includes current members of the Steering Group, but it is important to also acknowledge those who have also contributed to the process, and they are listed below.

South West Regional Development Agency

Steve Richards, Head of Business Development – Wessex Team

Wiltshire Strategic Economic Partnership

Caroline Lewis, Manager

Wiltshire Council

Alistair Cunningham, Service Director for Economy & Enterprise

North Wiltshire District Council

David Stirling, Assets Design and Regeneration Manager

Caroline Lightfoot, Senior Regeneration Officer

Chippenham Town Council

Laurie Brown, Town Clerk

Chippenham Chamber of Commerce

David Purton, Lifespace Solutions

Claire Purton, Lifespace Solutions

Gareth Jones, Glennie McIntosh

Kit Harding, Dreweatt Neate

Tom Jacques, Jacques Partnership

Chippenham Area Partnership

John Clark, lead, Economy Special Interest Group

Chippenham Civic Society

Roger Backway, Secretary

Wiltshire College

David Holdsworth, Vice Principal – Corporate Resources

Learning & Skills Council

Sue Watkins, Area Manager

Contributing Members

Adrian Whitbread, Chippenham Chamber of Commerce

Charlotte Watkins, Chippenham Chamber of Commerce

Marc Willis, Chippenham Chamber of Commerce

Nynke Hunter, Chippenham Chamber of Commerce

Jane Scott, Wiltshire County Council

Lachlan Robertson, North Wiltshire District Council

Philip Allnat, North Wiltshire District Council

Ross Henning, North Wiltshire District Council

Andrew Noblet, Chippenham Town Council

8 Moving Forward

This paper has analysed various studies and surveys, to derive the current and inherent strengths of the town of Chippenham from the viewpoints of residents, business and tourism, and also the priority areas that require work for the town to realise its full potential.

It is proposed that certain areas are sufficiently well researched for regenerative project work to be started, while in other areas, further study work is considered necessary.

Some sources of funding have been identified. It is proposed that unspent Vision monies from the RDA (and the matching funds from NWDC) are spent on the further studies, while projects will have to raise the necessary funds from public and private source, grants etc.

In moving forward, it will be necessary to identify enterprises that will be responsible for taking the various studies and projects forward. Such enterprises could be Wiltshire County Council, North Wilts District Council (up to March 2009), Chippenham Town Council, Chippenham Chamber of Commerce, Chippenham Civic Society, and/or Chippenham Area Partnership (who are forming an action team entitled New ChAPTER).

The Chippenham Area's Community Plan is currently under revision in time for the vesting of the new Unitary Authority for Wiltshire in April 2009, and the work that has gone into the Vision document, and its conclusions will be enshrined in the Plan. The Area Partnership proposes to launch 'New ChAPTER' as a volunteer action force to help deliver projects.

The Vision Steering Group expects to work very closely with the new Wiltshire Council to realise Chippenham's Vision, and to help the Unitary Authority deliver their Local Agreement.

A further likelihood is that a Master Plan or Urban Development Framework will be necessary, to map the coherent spatial activities planned under the Vision for Chippenham.

There is a strong will from the participants in this Vision, that a visible difference in the town shall be made by the end of 2009.

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'A Vision for Chippenham'

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