



Shaping South Somerset

A Strategy for Sustainable
Communities

2008-2026



South Somerset together

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Foreword from Chairman

Paul Robathan, Chairman of South Somerset Together



The South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy is a description of the nature of the community that residents and businesses want in 20 years time.

Over two years of planning, consulting and assessing, a huge range of information, has produced the evidence base contained in the companion document. Many hundreds of people have contributed to the creation of a broad description of South Somerset in 2026.

As we put the finishing touches to the Strategy, I am conscious that in early 2009, the future needs to be viewed through a

lens of realism and some concern in the short-term. These concerns are very real and will directly influence the Local Strategic Partnership and its partners, as we develop immediate actions and initiatives.

Within the overall context of a 20-year view, we will get to work on the issues that need to be addressed now – affordable housing, public transport, low cost green energy, wellbeing and all the other pressing immediate priorities.

We will always do this with the longer-term goals at the front of our mind and aim to get to the end point, by the most

effective route, whilst working to address short-term concerns.

I am confident that we have the best chance of tackling our key issues through this Strategy and look forward to all our partners using this Strategy as a prime source from which to create their medium-term plans.

When we refresh this 20-year plan, the world will have moved on. The Local Strategic Partnership will continue to bring together all the partners to ensure we make the best use of limited resources and respond to needs, in the most effective and timely way.

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Introduction



What is a Sustainable Community Strategy?

The South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy is a masterplan for how people in the district want to live and work, now and in the future

It captures what residents, businesses and organisations in South Somerset have said they want to see happen to improve the quality of life of everyone, whilst nurturing the natural environment. It makes no apology for being ambitious in its goals and was developed in the knowledge that it is better to aim high and achieve much, than aim low and miss this window of opportunity to make real changes in the way we live our lives, for a better future for our children.

We know you think it's important to make sure the economy can withstand global fluctuations. We know you think something needs to be done about carbon emissions and waste and you've also told us it's crucial to secure local jobs and invest in green business practice. These are just some of the things you want to happen and we agree that it makes sense to take care of everyone's needs, whilst respecting and preserving our world.

This document captures some of the

aspirations, ideas and plans expressed by **you** and sets out a framework of what **is** currently happening, what **will** happen if we do nothing and what we need to **do now** to change that to a better outcome.

This document is something that all the public sector organisations and many private and voluntary sector organisations in the district, have agreed to use as the blueprint on which their own corporate plans and delivery will be shaped, which is quite a commitment. It will change the way services are delivered by ensuring partners endorse a joined-up approach, which aims to make it easier for residents to access them and save public money.

What it will really do is make us all **stop and think!** How are you and I living our lives today? What do we need to change to stop the impact we are having on the planet? We know it's happening... climate change... even if the "experts" are arguing as to the cause, the effect is here! We know that global fuel and food

prices are fluctuating and that production and distribution can be at a huge carbon cost.

We all can make a difference. How? By each of us taking as much action as we can to change the way we do things... the way we travel to work, buying locally grown food, buying and renting houses built to high quality standards, sourcing energy from renewable sources, saving resources like water and producing less rubbish. Can't happen? But it has happened! We change all the time... roadside recycling was a dream a few years ago, now South Somerset is one of the best areas in the country for reducing waste to landfill.

It will take effort to make this Strategy happen. But once we start on this road, it will get easier. The thing about it is we are all going to do it together... living better lives with a better outcome for everyone, everywhere. It is about the future. It starts here, today.



South Somerset today

This Strategy has been developed using information from two places: what people in South Somerset have told us either directly or through their local community plans and from statistical data that shows us what is happening



The statistical data forms an evidence base for the goals, strategic priorities and actions in the Strategy and is available as a separate document. (See *Shaping South Somerset: Trends and Issues* document).

This information tells us what the big issues are. It includes the challenges people and businesses in South Somerset are facing now, what is making those things happen, what is likely to happen if nothing is done about it and what **you** think should be done.

There are issues that we can't address directly, such as the growing population (projections to 2028 suggest South Somerset will reach 181,400, an increase of 25,300 people). We can do something about the fact that nearly 90% of the population growth is expected in people over 50 (due to local factors including decreases in the birth rate, increases in migration of retired people, young people leaving the area for Higher Education, above average house prices and below average wage levels). How? By

improving local training, providing skilled work opportunities and more affordable housing to buy and rent.

These things will help, but it's important that we consider the fact that the ageing population will still be likely to need a 50% increase in provision of health and social care services by 2031.

The lifestyle choices people are making now (as seen by growing obesity rates, hospital admissions for alcohol misuse and substance abuse) will also increase demand on health services.



Trends such as smaller households, increases demand for housing, in addition to the ever growing demand for affordable housing, especially in rural communities.

Dependence on the car (only 2.4% of people use public transport) and HGV transport is increasing traffic congestion, casualties from road accidents and carbon emissions.

The district's economy (based on the manufacturing, distribution, hospitality and public services sectors) is affected by significant global and national trends, such as the recent squeeze on business loans by

banks, savings in production costs driving businesses overseas, less expendable income on leisure activities and more. In addition, businesses need to invest in carbon neutral practices, technology and staff training just when things are financially the hardest they have been for decades.

Fear of crime is high across the district, despite relatively low actual crime figures. The Strategy concentrates on reducing this gap, building confidence not only through neighbourhood policing, but also by working with young people and

families to reduce anti social behaviour and using restorative justice to reduce the negative effects on victims of crime.

In addition, there are places (including Yeovil, Chard and in some rural communities) and groups of people for whom quality of life can be poor. Despite consistent efforts to improve this, it is recognised that a better way has to be found to make a real difference.

The Sustainable Community Strategy aims to address all these issues and more.

The Vision - What will South Somerset look like in 2026 if this Strategy works?

The Vision is written as if you are in 2026

In 2026 South Somerset has...*thriving and resourceful communities where people live happy and rewarding lives and are committed to securing the future for generations to come*

In 2026 South Somerset is a largely rural area with a thriving range of settlements of some 181,000 people. Approaching 40% of the population live in Yeovil, a thriving, sub-regional business and retail centre for the South West, a leading centre for healthcare, sporting excellence, aviation and university level education, with a vibrant cultural and night-time economy. It is well-connected by road, rail, cycle routes and footpaths and supported by sustainable transport links to the surrounding market towns, villages and rural areas.

The rest of the population live in market towns, villages and dispersed rural hamlets. Each town is uniquely distinctive, based on its heritage, culture, assets and economy that local people continue to shape. The towns play a complementary role as service and employment centres for the surrounding rural area.

Balanced land use development, since 2008, ensures a mix of employment

land and housing options, which has reduced car journeys within the district and closed the housing price to income ratio. Significant investment into affordable housing, the quality of private sector housing and permanent and transit (temporary) pitches for gypsies and travellers, as well as a well-established Choice Based Lettings Scheme, has eliminated homelessness and contributed to a balanced housing market. Homes, open spaces and the public realm are accessible and provide a high quality environment for people of all ages to enjoy as part of their healthy lifestyle.

Technological advances have served to increase the levels of home-working and small business growth, including rural businesses, that have retained a competitive edge in a global market place. There is a variety of quality employment across the district, including knowledge-based businesses whilst retaining engineering, creative

and tourism businesses, all of which contribute towards fair wage levels.

A huge expansion in demand for locally sourced high quality fresh food and produce, has boosted farming, independent retailers and markets that will have retained a competitive edge against the supermarket nationals, whilst reducing food miles to a minimum.

Local neighbourhoods and communities are flourishing including areas in Yeovil and Chard and pockets of rural communities, where in 2008 there was health inequality and poverty. People have made real changes in their lifestyles; eating healthily, exercising regularly and reducing alcohol consumption, with substance abuse and smoking at an all time low. Crime levels remain low, but joint enforcement measures, restorative justice schemes and support for young people and families has increased cohesion, reduced fear of crime and helped people feel safe, especially in their own home.



The ageing population is partly offset by young people staying in the area as a result of increased opportunities for Higher and Further Education and a larger working age population, as a result of higher income employment. The district attracts people from other parts of the UK and the world, with younger migrants working in a greater variety of business sectors than in 2008, with all communities celebrating this multi-cultural diversity.

Strong local community action and close joint working by public agencies has sustained even the smallest rural community, which now boast of having facilities for, or access to, health, training, learning, recreational and cultural activities that contribute to individuals feeling they are reaching their potential.

Services are especially geared to meet the needs of those who may experience a barrier to access of one form or another. Public and private organisations demonstrate a strong commitment to the voluntary and community sector and

volunteering levels are high compared to other areas. Consistently improving turnout at elections and participation by residents, of all ages, in community led decision-making, is evidence of growth in civic awareness and strong leadership.

Energy use and carbon emissions have both reduced through positive actions by agencies, businesses and residents. Almost all of the district's energy is produced from renewable sources, with most communities achieving 'carbon neutral' status. Waste going to landfill is almost non-existent, with all packaging minimised and reused wherever possible and high levels of recycling and local energy generation from waste by businesses, schools, households, etc. There is a high level of awareness and commitment to sustainability.

All new buildings, including homes, meet and in some cases exceed government targets for sustainable construction materials and methods, increasing energy efficiency and reducing

fuel poverty in South Somerset. There is growing interest in traditional building techniques, countryside skills and sustainable land management.

The effect of climate change, including the risk of flooding, has been reduced through a range of mitigation and adaptation measures. Tree planting for carbon sinks and wood for fuel and timber has increased, whilst standards of environmental stewardship have risen. This has had a positive impact on biodiversity and the local environment, making people feel proud and glad they live in South Somerset.

What is the Local Strategic Partnership?

The Local Government Act 2000 required councils to work with other agencies in the area and other sectors, including major employers and voluntary and community organisations, to agree and deliver shared priorities

In 2001, the district council established a Local Strategic Partnership, or LSP, in South Somerset, which it continues to support. The LSP is called South Somerset Together and has a constitution, five themed subgroups, sub-committees to administer its business, an independent Chairman and a full-time Coordinator. It took a while to get going but the LSP agreed that it would not duplicate work being done by individual partners, but would focus on commissioning the delivery of genuine joint programmes that explore better services. Sometimes partners need to be sure about an issue and commission research, such as the Migrant Worker Study in 2006. This led to the creation of a multi-language website to help residents access information about services.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 outlined the importance of the role of the LSP to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy that told an accurate story

of the “place” as reflected by local people, the things they know about their communities and the things they wanted to see improved.

Many of those improvements could be actioned by local people themselves, agencies and organisations. The things that were harder to deal with, which needed a joined-up approach from a number of organisations or needed a strategic approach across a bigger geographical area, were sifted to form the basis of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The LSP partners are committed to working together on these really “wicked” issues, despite being in a climate of smaller budgets and tougher targets. In addition, the LSP partners realise that for sustainable communities there has to be a fundamental shift from “business as usual” to working in ways that challenge them but deliver what people want, whilst reducing carbon emissions and waste and conserving the environment.

South Somerset Together

- AgustaWestland
- Avon and Somerset Constabulary
- Business Link
- Connexions
- Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service
- Environment Agency
- Natural England
- RNAS Yeovilton
- Somerset Arts Promoters
- Somerset County Council
- NHS Somerset (Primary Care Trust)
- South Somerset Association for Voluntary & Community Action
- South Somerset Climate Action
- South Somerset District Council
- South Somerset Equalities Group
- South Somerset VCS Forum Reference Group
- Yarlington Housing Group
- Yeovil Chamber of Trade & Commerce
- Yeovil College
- Yeovil & District Citizens’ Advice Bureau
- Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Yeovil Federation

What methodology was used to develop the Strategy?

A robust methodology was used to develop the Sustainable Community Strategy and its evidence base, which also underpins the South Somerset Local Development Framework Core Strategy. In July 2008, the Government released *Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous*

Communities: Statutory Guidance, which outlined the process for developing a sound Sustainable Community Strategy. Although too late to directly influence the methodology for producing this Strategy, it confirmed that we had adopted a sound approach. There were several key parts to

the development, consultation and “testing” of the Strategy that are outlined below. The LSP established a Project Group made up of officers from a number of organisations and appointed LSP member Theme Leads with Theme Groups, to lead on the development of the Strategy.

Stage 1: Trends and Issues identified and tested

July 2006: A multi-agency Visioning Day was held that provided the initial focus on sustainability and current issues facing the district, county and region;

Autumn 2006: Theme leads gathered local, regional and national statistics. Research was done to form the evidence base and the extracted key issues and an audit of completed community (town and parish) plans was started;

January 2007: The trends that may affect South Somerset in the next 20 years were mapped and the key issues that cut across themes were identified with their supporting evidence;

February 2007: The issues were categorised into “social”, “economic” and “environmental” blocks, which were developed and tested with a wider reference group;

March 2007: Theme leads worked together to group key issues, summarised for consultation and linked to the Sustainability Appraisal evidence base for the Local Development Framework Core Strategy;

May 2007: Long-term goals were identified arising from trends and to correspond with the key issues. This incorporated data from the audit of all completed community plans across the district. A consultation document was compiled for testing with the wider community;

Summer 2007: Consultation of the Trends and Issues document included mailing stakeholders and an online questionnaire. Collating the consultation results from 64 respondents, of which 4% were from town councils, 35% from parish councils, 11% from Somerset County Council, 24% from South Somerset District Council, 14% from voluntary and community sector organisations and 12% from other statutory organisations.

Stage 2: Goals, Strategic Priorities and Actions developed and tested

October & November 2007: Multi-agency thematic workshops and an all-day plenary event, facilitated by Sustainability South West, were held to complete a gap analysis and the cross cutting issues and sustainable options and actions;

December 2007 to March 2008: Theme groups identified the Strategic Priorities and Actions, having analysed what partners and other organisations in the district were already doing and the baseline data that will be used to measure progress;

April 2008: The LSP Board held a Prioritising workshop resulting in the agreement of twelve Goals, each with four Strategic Priorities (medium-term objectives) and one or two linked Actions (short-term critical activities);

May to August 2008: Consultation of the Strategic Priorities and Actions included a range of workshops to align consultation on the Sustainable Community Strategy and the SSDC Corporate Plan Refresh (workshop for SSDC Elected members, two Stakeholder Events and SSDC Senior Managers Forum workshops), mailing copies of the consultation document and questionnaire to public, private and voluntary sector organisations (including all parish and town councils) and an online questionnaire. 124 individuals, representing 53 organisations, responded to this consultation;

September 2008: The LSP Board held a workshop to test the content of the final version of the Strategy;

September 2008: SSDC Elected members were invited to review the content of the final version of the Strategy.

Stage 3: Sustainability “testing”

March 2007: The key issues were linked to the Sustainability Appraisal evidence base for the Local Development Framework Core Strategy;

October & November 2007: Sustainability South West facilitated specific workshops and an all-day plenary session to ensure options

and actions identified are sustainable;

December 2007 to March 2008: Sustainability South West conducted a Sustainability Assessment of the draft Sustainable Community Strategy;

September 2008: Charles Couzens, from the Ecos Trust, facilitated a “carbon-neutral future” workshop with the LSP members, to test the final draft of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Stage 4: Adoption of the Sustainable Community Strategy

September 2008: SSDC's Scrutiny Committee examined the methodology used to produce the Sustainable Community Strategy;

September 2008: The LSP Board approved the final changes to the Sustainable Community Strategy and adopted the content of the document on 26th September 2008;

October 2008: SSDC adopted the Sustainable Community Strategy at a special meeting of the council on 30th October 2008.

Stage 5: The delivery plans for the actions in the Sustainable Community Strategy developed

September to November 2008: LSP Board members developed a range of projects that will pump-prime the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy's actions. Seven projects prioritised, funded and to be delivered by Autumn 2009;

December 2008 to March 2009: LSP partners worked together to develop delivery plans for the Sustainable Community Strategy's actions that will link with the Somerset Local Area Agreement (2008-2011). Actions agreed by partners are incorporated into their individual corporate and service plans.

How are you involved in all this?

Simply put: it cannot happen without you. The Sustainable Community Strategy has been developed with the help of the people of South Somerset



Many communities and neighbourhoods across the district, have been involved in identifying how to find local solutions for the local problems they face, through community planning activities. Some of those issues need a strategic and/or joint effort by agencies to tackle them, so they have been included in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

In addition, there have been a number of consultation events and questionnaires produced to test out the draft versions of the Strategy with a range of organisations, including parish and town councils. The Local Strategic Partnership established a Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Forum of community groups and organisations from across the district, which it regularly consults with.

As an individual, or business, you can make your views known through the Local Strategic Partnership's website and by coming along to their meetings and events. The website diary on www.southsomersettogether.org.uk will tell you what is happening.

But how are **you** involved in making this Strategy happen? The most important thing is that we shall all need to change the way we live to address sustainability. The South West's eco-footprint shows that if we replicated it worldwide, we would need two extra planets to sustain us. So we are currently consuming about three planets' worth of our natural resources. That is definitely not going to be able to continue for much longer.

The Government's National Sustainable Development Strategy *Securing the Future* (2005) recognised that, to make the necessary changes in our habits, people and organisations need to work through their model of Enable, Encourage, Engage and Exemplify. What does that mean? Well, it means that we have to talk about what can be done, listen and take it personally on board to do something; encourage and help each other through those changes; then tell everyone about it so it helps them change too.

Too hard? Well, no one said it would be easy, but what choice do we have? We have to do something. Now. At least you're not alone; we are all going to do this together.

Sustainability- the context

Sustainability can mean different things to different people and to some - nothing at all. So it is quite important to know what we are talking about in this document when we are aiming to make communities truly sustainable.

In 2004, Sir John Egan produced The Egan Review: Skills for Sustainable Communities.

Sustainable communities...

“ Meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, their children and other users, contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity and choice. They achieve this in ways that make effective use of natural resources, enhance the environment, promote social cohesion and inclusion and strengthen economic prosperity. ”

Sir John Egan

He identified components of sustainable communities that have been adapted to form the five Themes and twelve Goals in this Sustainable Community Strategy.

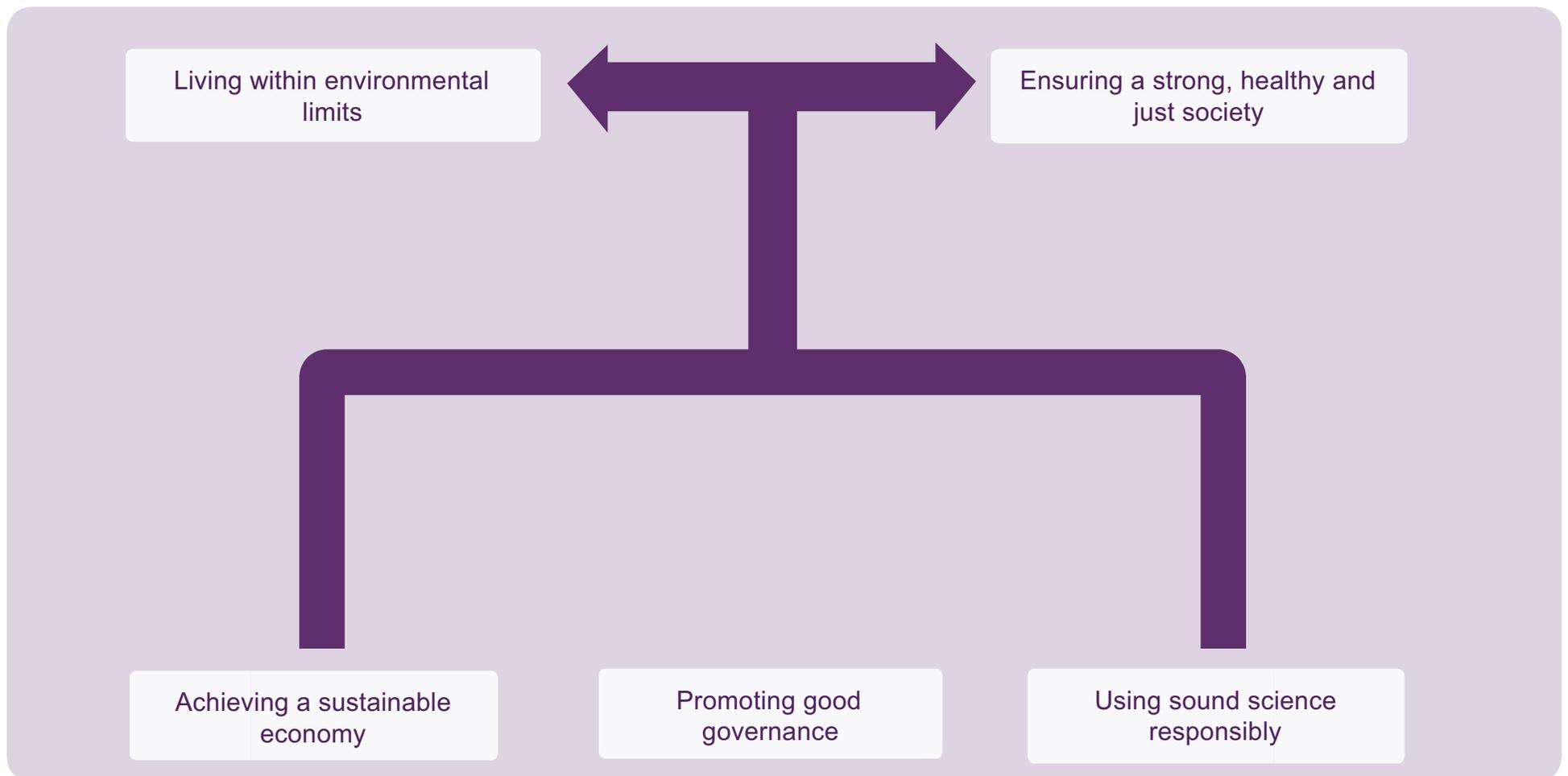


National Sustainable Development principles

In 2005, the National Sustainable Development Strategy *Securing the Future* highlighted “the goal of sustainable development is to enable all

people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life for future generations”.

The Strategy also gave five new guiding principles and four priorities for urgent action that also link to this Sustainable Community Strategy:



The four priorities for immediate action

1. Sustainable consumption and production
2. Climate Change and Energy
3. Protection of natural resources and environmental enhancement
4. Sustainable communities

The South West Region's response to the review of the National Sustainable Development Strategy, *Taking It On* (2004) identified four priorities for action within the region:

1. Manage a growing and ageing population in the most sustainable way;
2. Provide more affordable, sustainably sited and constructed housing;
3. Reduce the need to travel and distances travelled to access goods and services and thereby reduce CO₂ emissions;
4. Sustainably manage our natural and cultural resources (including libraries, museums and the historic environment) whilst adapting to climate change.

In taking these priorities forward, *Taking It On* identified that investment in sustainability leadership, learning, skills and innovation was paramount.

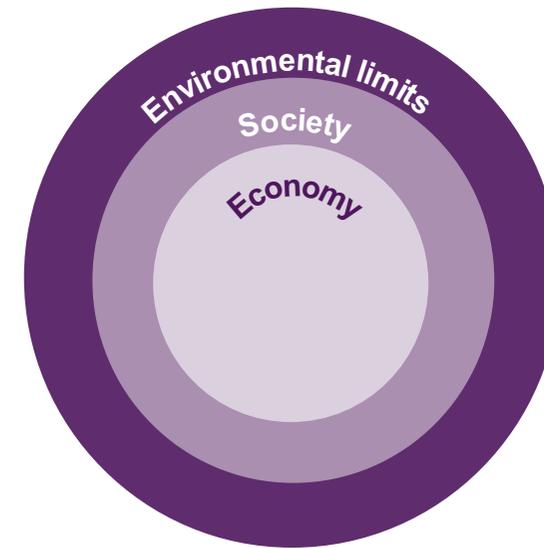
Sustainability South West carried out a Sustainability Appraisal on the draft Sustainable Community Strategy. They believe that sustainable development is

a positive and practical approach that delivers win-win-win outcomes for the economy, society and environment. The diagram helps illustrate the interdependent spheres of the economy, society and the environment.

Sustainability South West say that sustainability is "about the survival of people and the planet into the future. It does not privilege the environment over human beings, but recognises our dependence on natural resources and biodiversity for our own survival" and that "If something is sustainable, we can go on doing it indefinitely, if it isn't, we can't".

Sustainability South West developed the Regional Sustainable Development Framework (RSDF) otherwise known as the *Sustainability Shaper*, which provides a framework against which the sustainability of all regional and sub-regional strategies can be assessed.

These ten cross-cutting operating principles have been used to shape this Strategy, to fit with its definition of a genuinely sustainable community as "one which is healthy, socially just, productive and living within environmental limits".



The diagram helps illustrate the interdependent spheres of the economy, society and environment.

Sustainability South West's *Sustainability Shaper*



Be resource wise

Cut consumption of resources and adopt high energy, water and resource efficiency at home and at work; maximise the use of local, renewable energy; minimise waste and prevent pollution.



Develop sustainability learning and skills

Explain and promote the 'what', 'why' and 'how' of sustainability and develop 'systemic thinking', professional skills and leadership to support sustainable solutions.



Improve physical and mental wellbeing

Reduce health inequalities by supporting: healthy, balanced lifestyles; healthy homes and workplaces; clean, safe and green environments; and supportive and inclusive communities.



Support thriving low carbon economies

Boost competitiveness, business markets and employment opportunities by supporting a low carbon approach to innovation, enterprise and economic development in ways which meet local workforce needs e.g. local renewable energy, sustainable construction and renovation, environmental technologies and local/regional supply chains.



Reduce high carbon travel

Use, promote and plan for low carbon access/travel e.g. walking and cycling, home-working, mobile services, ICT/video-conferencing, online facilities, local multi-service centres, demand-responsive public transport and alternative fuels.



Use local and ethical goods and services

Use locally and ethically sourced goods and services - and strengthen local/regional supply chains - to boost our local economies and support people in other parts of the world.



Enhance local distinctiveness and diversity including biodiversity

Protect and enhance our natural resources and biodiversity, culture and heritage and celebrate diversity and distinctiveness.



Help everyone to join in public decision-making

Support wider, more informed participation in public and community decision-making to foster citizenship and involve people in the solutions to local and global challenges.



Take a long-term approach

Take into account the needs of future generations including mitigating and adapting to climate change. Ensure the genuine sustainability and success of what you do by pursuing integrated, lasting 'win-win-win' outcomes for society, the economy and the environment.



Improve equality in meeting basic needs

Reduce inequalities (prioritising those most in need) in access to: decent and affordable housing; essential goods and services; an adequate income; and safe and satisfying employment, learning and leisure opportunities.

How does this document work?

→ Theme

There are five overarching themes in the South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy.

→ Goal

There are twelve goals in the Strategy. Each goal is a long-term aim to be achieved by 2026. The goals are closely linked to the goals in the same theme and to those in other themes.

→ What do the sources of Baseline Data tell us about where we are now?

This information comes from statistical data held nationally, regionally and locally and from other sources such as local consultation. This gives us an idea of what the current situation is with regard to the areas covered by this goal. Sometimes there is a lack of reliable or up to date data and so research will be carried out to give a more accurate picture of the present. This baseline information is important because it helps us to measure progress and the impact of the specific actions taken to address an issue. More detailed information about what the data tells us is in the separate evidence document that accompanies this strategy: *Shaping South Somerset: Trends and Issues*.

→ Why is this goal important?

This summary outlines the understanding of the current view. It describes both positive and negative aspects as well as the future threats and opportunities that face us in South Somerset.

→ What are the main actions by partners, other partnerships and strategies that will contribute towards this goal?

This section helps us to see what is already happening locally, regionally and nationally to address the issues in this goal. It is important that the actions in this Strategy complement and add value to this work. This has required and will continue to require everyone involved in addressing the issue to work together more closely. The process to develop this Strategy has identified some gaps and so partners will focus on directly addressing these.

→ **What are the actions that South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) has already delivered that contribute to this goal?**

South Somerset Together has been working to address priorities for some time. This section lists some of the research, pilot projects and programmes that have been commissioned by South Somerset Together. Much of this work is now delivered as part of partner organisations' everyday work.

→ **What are the actions South Somerset Together will take to add value to this goal?**

This section outlines the key areas of work that this Strategy will address in the short to medium-term.

→ **Strategic Priority**

This medium-term objective is a key stepping stone to achieving the long-term goal. Where there are several strategic priorities in a goal, they cover different aspects that link together.

→ **What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?**

This section describes the strategic priority. It explains the wider issues and the people who need to be involved, either to deliver the action or as recipients of the action.

→ **Action**

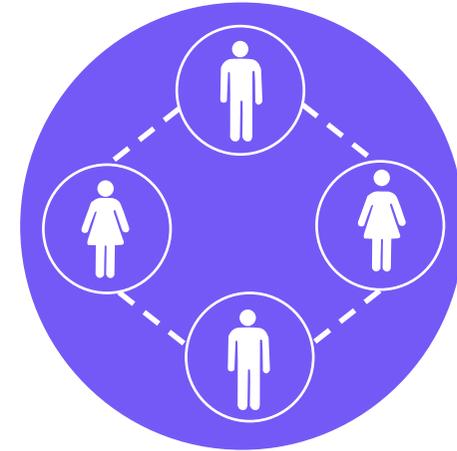
This describes what is going to be done in the short-term. It tells you when the action will be delivered, with most of them to be completed by 2012. These actions are a realistic first step to addressing the issue. Delivery plans will be developed by South Somerset Together to explain how this will happen, who will be involved and what resources are needed. The risk of the action not happening and the impact on other actions in the Strategy will also be assessed and monitored. South Somerset Together will regularly check progress against the targets set and the impact of the work against the long-term trend.



What are the priorities?



Wellbeing



Well run, well served & well connected



Environmentally sensitive



Thriving economy



Well designed & well built





Goal 1: Safe and inclusive

Safe, resilient, socially just communities with strong networks and confident people showing respect for each other

What do the sources of Baseline Data tell us about where are we now?

- South Somerset residents say crime and fear of crime is a priority for improvement (various town and parish plans);
- In terms of what makes a place good to live in, level of crime is a key priority for improvement; almost nine out of ten residents (85%) feel safe in South Somerset during the day; this falls to less than half (45%) after dark; levels of crime is one of the two key priorities for residents (Ipsos MORI 2006/7);
- 65% of people in South Somerset believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area (Ipsos MORI 2006/7);
- 984 Community Speedwatch sessions across South Somerset resulting in: 14,396 speeders recorded; 199 dealt with at roadside; 7,906 first letters; 1,472 final warnings; 15 intended prosecutions (April 2007 to end of March 2008);
- Strategic Partnership Against Hate Crime (SPAHC) dealt with 147 cases (including cases heard at more than one Partnership meeting) between May 2007 and March 2008;
- As a result of the Street Soccer programme delivered in Yeovil during three months in 2007, anti social behaviour statistics were cut by 69% in Birchfield, 35% in Westfield and 24% in Milford;
- The number of complaints received by SSDC Environmental Health about noise in domestic premises was 328 (2007/08). All but 4 of these were resolved without the need for formal enforcement action.

Why is this goal important?

A whole range of reasons (including an increasing ageing population, significant numbers of people moving into the area, greater social mobility and lifestyle choices) is breaking down traditional community bonds nationally. Although statistics tell us that there are relatively low levels of crime and disorder in South Somerset, zero tolerance remains the goal of agencies and residents, the latter saying this is a key consideration when deciding what makes a place good to live in (BMG Quality of Life Survey 2005; Ipsos MORI 2006/7). The real issues for South Somerset from both local authority and community sources, are:

- Fear of crime is high relative to actual reported crime levels;



- Victims of crime (including from anti social behaviour, harassment and domestic violence) across all age groups can experience a lower quality of life;
- Lack of respect and understanding between various groups in the community;
- Anti social behaviour and fraud (including internet and identity fraud) need reducing;
- Drug and alcohol supply and use;
- Vehicle speeding levels compromise safety in both rural and urban areas.

Limited Police resources especially in rural communities has led to innovative approaches including the use of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), Police Posts, responsive policing, targeted and preventative work in communities and neighbourhoods and improved partnership communication and enforcement. Recognising local aspirations and concerns about crime and fear of crime, Government approaches delegate more decision-making and delivery of actions (particularly preventative community development measures) to effective networks of local people. To achieve this, these local activists need to develop confidence and skills to gain the mutual trust of people in the community. Public bodies recognise and actively support this approach, because it can deal more effectively with the root causes of the problem and overcome barriers to changing behaviour. Also designing open spaces and buildings to be safe places will have a significant impact on this goal.

What are the main actions by partners, other partnerships and strategies that will contribute towards this goal?

- Avon and Somerset Constabulary's Annual Policing Plan gives guidance and targets, addresses satisfaction and confidence and tackles crime, promotes public safety, protective services and managing capability;
- Avon and Somerset Constabulary's Safer, Stronger Neighbourhoods (2008). Designed to assist police and partners in delivering Neighbourhood Policing - identifying and addressing neighbourhood priorities, improving engagement and delivering safer neighbourhoods where people are confident that police and partners are working with them to deal with the issues that matter to them;
- Avon & Somerset Constabulary recruits and sets up neighbourhood policing teams;
- Partnership and Communities Together (PACT) gives support to communities and neighbourhoods
- Mendip and South Somerset Community Safety Partnership's (CDRP) Community Safety Officers support local structures and funded projects to address local need;
- The Somerset Strategic Assessment is a partnership document that draws on information (statistics and public opinion) to identify the future community safety threats for the next 12 months;
- South Somerset District Council (SSDC) supports a community development and locality working approach through Area Development and Community Safety Teams;



- Avon & Somerset Constabulary and SSDC produced the joint Safe by Design Protocol adopted in 2008;
- The Strategic Partnership Against Hate Crime (SPAHC) which includes the Somerset Racial Equality Council (SREC) addresses racial incidents in South Somerset;
- Community Speedwatch groups reduce speeding in rural and urban areas across the district;
- SSDC Strategies (Playing Pitch, Play Policy, Arts, Sport and Active Leisure, and Young People's Strategy) and the Community Sports Network Action Plan, support a range of activities especially for young people;
- The large numbers of voluntary and community groups, clubs and organisations that provide activities and support for all age groups.

What are the actions that South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) has already delivered that contribute to this goal?

- Commissioned research into economic migration into South Somerset (2005);
- Developed the New to Somerset website (2007);
- Provided equipment for the Neighbourhood Policing Teams in Yeovil and Somerton Police Sectors (Avon & Somerset Constabulary) to support the effectiveness of Police Community Support Officers (2006/7);
- Funded a support package (PETA and B-Active Programme) for vulnerable/at risk young people (aged 8-19) to improve their life chances (2006/8);
- Neighbourhood Renewal Funding allocated to target wards in Chard and Yeovil to improve community cohesion (2006/7);
- Provided Headcams and support equipment for enforcement teams that include officers from Avon & Somerset Constabulary, South Somerset District Council and Yeovil Town Centre Management (2008);
- Piloted an outreach project in Yeovil demonstrating the potential impact of proactive approaches to reduce offending (2006/8).

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) will take to add value to this goal?

Strategic Priority 1: Ensure the long-term investment in activities that help prevent crime and disorder

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Involve young people in decision-making, exploring the impact of anti social behaviour through challenging activities that will build their confidence, self-esteem and respect for others;



- Work with young offenders and their families to help prevent the cycle of reoffending;
- Work with all parents and families, children and young people through schools, community groups, children/family/healthy living centres (such as the Balsam Centre in Wincanton and the Children's Centre, Chard) especially in rural and deprived communities;
- Work to increase respect between generations and groups of people in communities/neighbourhoods to increase mentoring opportunities and positive role modelling, a sense of belonging, pride of place and acceptance of each and every person;
- Work to improve the prospects for the next generation of parents, children and young people.

Action 1: Develop specific programmes of positive activities for children, young people (especially those already at risk of exclusion or offending) and families designed to reduce anti social behaviour by October 2010

Strategy Priority 2: Increase the effectiveness of all enforcement

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Enforcement defines the activity of any partner organisation that requires the public or organisations to comply with laws and regulations;
- Use examples of what works well in other places, adapting and applying them locally;
- Community intelligence and help to support enforcement and prosecution;
- Effective prosecution systems/processes that allow enforcement officers to free up time to raise awareness and educate;
- Enforcement officers build positive relationships with those at risk of offending through local activities;
- Restorative justice used to prevent reoffending in all age groups;
- Sentencing to be proportionate to the crime, so that justice is done.

Action 2: Develop joint planning and investment in the latest enforcement technologies and approaches by December 2009 and share in a specific enforcement approach by 2011



Strategic Priority 3: Increase the percentage of people who feel safe in their community and neighbourhood

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Work with vulnerable, disadvantaged or marginalised individuals or groups to bring them together and form links with the wider community;
- Target neighbourhoods which have high levels of crime and/or fear of crime;
- Reduce racial incidents and build trust by ensuring participation by people from different backgrounds and age groups in events, including sport, leisure and cultural festivals;
- Make sure people can be involved in making their community or neighbourhood feel safer by supporting them to set up local schemes that tackle a specific need such as Neighbourhood Watch or Community Speedwatch;
- Work with all sectors of the community including businesses, Chambers of Trade and parish and town councils to reduce crime and fear of crime.

Action 3: Develop and initiate a range of approaches and initiatives that build confidence and reduces fear of crime, by 2012

Strategic Priority 4: Work to reduce the effects of crime on victims and the number of perpetrators that reoffend

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Support all victims of crime including the victims of domestic abuse;
- Encourage and coordinate restorative justice (where currently perpetrators of low-level anti social behaviour meet their victims to confront the effects of their actions on victims and the community and to negotiate a just outcome) across the district ensuring suitable training methods and measures;
- Help perpetrators see the effects of their crime in a way that changes behaviour;
- Proactively prevent reoffending;
- Raise the awareness of residents and businesses of the success of restorative justice approaches.

Action 4: Build on existing restorative justice methods to increase the number of Panels in the district and widen the crimes for which the method can be used by 2011



Goal 2: Voluntary and Community Sector - VCS

A strong, vibrant, skilled Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) with high levels of volunteering and active citizens

What do the sources of Baseline Data tell us about where we are now?

- South Somerset Voluntary and Community Action (2002), Valuing the Voluntary Sector in South Somerset;
- Caller T (2006) Population and Ageing in South Somerset (SSDC) Age of older volunteers;
- Somerset Policy Commission for Voluntary Sector (2006), Research showed that between 9-11% of people in Somerset volunteer;
- Somerset Gateway database of numbers of voluntary groups;
- South Somerset Voluntary and Community Action's Volunteer Centre database identifies 164 organisations with 289 opportunities for volunteering, 240 people registered an interest in volunteering in 2007;
- An estimated 12.2% of the adult population of Somerset volunteer 2 or more hours weekly on a regular basis (Ipsos MORI 2006/7);
- Active People Data shows that 5.3% of the adult population (8,273) in South Somerset contribute at least one hour a week volunteering to sport. The sports sector is the single biggest contribution to total volunteering in England.

Why is this goal important?

The Third Sector (Voluntary and Community Sector or VCS) has a well-established tradition in South Somerset. The benefits of delivering services through the VCS are that they are often more effective in identifying and responding to community need and offer remarkable value for money that cannot be emulated by the public and business sectors to the same extent. Volunteering can be empowering, helping individuals to readjust to work after illness or difficult circumstances, but it should not be viewed as a means of setting up an unpaid workforce. New legislation, more retired people within the population and greater numbers of women in paid employment, have all affected the profile and pool of people willing to volunteer their time. There are a large number of groups and clubs in South Somerset's diverse and dispersed communities doing much to provide activities for all age groups but especially young people; in recent years they have found it a struggle to recruit and keep volunteers. Cuts in public funding have also destabilised some key voluntary sector organisations that have had to finance their activities in new ways, including tendering for public service contracts. This goal aims to identify and remove the barriers to informal and formal volunteering.



Anecdotal evidence shows that volunteering brings many benefits including:

- For individuals: increased confidence and mental wellbeing, opportunities to socialise and learn new skills, support to return to work
- For the economy: the third sector is a huge employer in South Somerset;
- For businesses: employees given time off to volunteer value their employer more and businesses gain recognition and respect for supporting social schemes;
- For voluntary and community organisations: by tapping into a diverse range of skills they are able to thrive and become more self-sustainable.

What are the main actions by partners, other partnerships and strategies that will contribute towards this goal?

- SSDC's Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2007-12) outlines the well-established partnerships between SSDC and third sector organisations such as SSVCA and Somerset Rural Youth Project and the prioritised actions these will deliver;
- SSDC's Grant Aid programme, Voluntary Sector Development Worker and Service Level Agreements with key VCS organisations, gives a flexible framework of support, funding and strategic direction;
- Somerset Compact (refreshed 2008) regularly reviews and strengthens the relationship between and the support given by the public sector to the third sector;
- South West of England Legacy Strategy for the 2012 Olympic Games: Strategic Flame 4 (cultural celebration) highlights plans to 'Encourage people to participate in cultural activities and get involved in volunteering', Strategic Flame 5 (community engagement) highlights plans to 'ensure the structures and processes are in place to increase participation in volunteering before, during and after the 2012 Games' actions: A communication campaign, a regional volunteering pilot and a series of regional events to encourage volunteering;
- Somerset County Council's Policy Commission multi-agency review of the impact of local public policy on the VCS in Somerset (2006) led to commissioning research (2007) which has informed a three year action plan (2008-2011);
- Volunteers support a range of SSDC activities, including the maintenance of the Ham Hill and Yeovil Country Parks;
- VCS organisations, including South Somerset Mind, train volunteers to qualification level helping people back into work in a supportive, empathetic way;
- SSDC hosts an annual South Somerset Sports Award for volunteers in sport;
- Examples of "hubs" exist locally (SCC's Care Direct hub and Citizens' Advice Bureau);



- SSDC Councillors, Area Development Teams, Voluntary Sector Development Officer, Equality Officer and other officers, work in communities to support the voluntary and community sector;

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) has already delivered that contribute to this goal?

- South Somerset Voluntary Sector Forum (sub-group of South Somerset Together) set up in 2007 to support a multi-agency approach to volunteering. A smaller Reference Group feeds views into relevant Strategies;
- Increased representation from the voluntary and community sector on South Somerset Together (LSP) Board;
- The Health and Wellbeing Partnership (sub-group of South Somerset Together) nurtures grass roots community action;
- Funding for innovative pilot programmes delivered by voluntary sector organisations in South Somerset.

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) will take to add value to this goal?

Strategic Priority 5: South Somerset Together partners support and nurture the voluntary and community sector through their own staff and staff development programmes

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Use existing and develop new volunteer programmes to build capacity, improve transferable skills and raise awareness of sustainability issues within the VCS;
- Seek and use local and national examples of good practice;
- Form stronger links with volunteer placement schemes to allow more individuals to volunteer.

Action 5: South Somerset Together partners agree a joint Volunteering Policy by the end of 2009 to allow their staff to volunteer more, to make sure their staff have the training needed to volunteer and to allow volunteers from voluntary organisations to join in their staff training and development

Strategic Priority 6: Stabilise and nurture VCS organisations

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Encourage longer term (a minimum of 3 years) funding for key voluntary sector partners;
- Expand the capacity of voluntary and community sector organisations in order to deliver services in a better way for residents and/or reduce costly public services;



- Enable the VCS to become more forward thinking about the services they can deliver;
- All South Somerset Together partners continually review services to identify whether extra services, preventative work or greater value for money can be achieved through funding VCS delivery;
- Support volunteers working with South Somerset Together partners to deliver local projects and programmes;
- Encourage VCS organisations and other South Somerset Together partners to work together to reduce funding needs, avoid duplication and share information and good practice;
- Work with local employers to recognise the value and to allow their staff to volunteer.

Action 6: Create a voluntary and community sector “hub” so that residents and organisations know where to go for help and advice by 2012

Action 6.1: Deliver two services through, or in partnership with, the voluntary and community sector by 2010

Strategic Priority 7: Increase levels of community involvement

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Find out who volunteers and who doesn't volunteer in South Somerset, what has helped those who successfully volunteer and what can be done to help those who have not volunteered;
- Raise awareness of the positive impact on the individual, the family and the community through involvement in community projects and activities;
- Commission a promotional campaign (using local groups such as the “Goldies” and national events such as the 2012 Olympic Games), to help more people get involved even for a small regular amount of time or for a short period.

Action 7: By December 2011, complete research into what makes people get involved in their community and into formal volunteering so as to target resources and support to increase involvement



Goal 3: Healthy and active

Develop a health enhancing environment and offer support to enable all residents to choose a healthy lifestyle

What do the sources of Baseline Data tell us about where we are now?

- Adult obesity is forecast to rise to 30% by 2010; Childhood obesity in 2-10 year olds in England has risen from 9.9% in 1995 to 14.3% in 2004. If the trend continues, 20% of 2-10 year olds will be obese by 2010 (Tackling Obesity: Future Choices (2007) Foresight; Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: A Cross-Government Strategy for England (2008), Cross Government Obesity Unit, Department of Health and Department of Children, Schools and Families);
- By 2029 it is predicted that over 90% of the increase in the South Somerset population will be through people aged 60+ (SSDC Population and Ageing in South Somerset 2006);
- South Somerset has the highest rate of alcohol related deaths in Somerset (10 per 100,000 head of population) and road accidents linked to drink driving are increasing. Binge drinking is a major contributor towards crime and anti social behaviour and in 2006/7 there were 1580 admissions to hospital specific to alcohol (Somerset Community Safety Strategic Assessment 2007);
- Residents in rural areas have difficulty in accessing services including health services (Health & Social Needs Analysis 2007);
- Considerable variation in life expectancy exists, especially in deprived wards and particular groups including Gypsies and Travellers (HSNA 2007);
- Somerset is the fourth best county for health status nationally;
- Active People Survey, Sport England (2006): South Somerset Physical Activity Rates: South Somerset has the lowest participation rates in the whole of Somerset for males and females aged 16-24 and 25-34 (based on 3 x 30 mins per week) as follows: Males aged 16-24 (South Somerset = 33.6% compared to 42.4% Somerset average); Males aged 25-34 (South Somerset = 27.4% compared to 35.5% Somerset average); Females aged 16-24 (South Somerset = 14.8% compared to 25.8% Somerset average); Females aged 25-34 (South Somerset = 23.4% compared to 26.4% Somerset average);
- South Somerset has a smoking prevalence of 21.3% with the poorest smoking families spending around 1/7 of their disposable income on smoking (for the period 2003-2005, modelled estimate from Health Survey of England 2003-2005).



Why is this goal important?

This section supports the healthy body, mind and spirit of the individual. Differences in opportunity and access to services and facilities, as well as the lifestyle choices people make, affect health. We need to focus our efforts:

- In the geographical areas in South Somerset where higher levels of deprivation mean residents find it difficult to make informed decisions about their health;
- On families and individuals in rural South Somerset with poor access to services and support;
- The growing elderly population that is already placing high demand on supported housing and public sector services including health and care;
- Particular groups of people where life expectancy is much lower than the norm such as Gypsies and Travellers.

In addition, South Somerset is a low wage area, with vulnerable individuals and groups feeling the impact sooner of nationally escalating fuel and food prices, increasing further the likelihood of fuel poverty and poor diet. The Government's target in the Fuel Poverty Strategy 2001, to eliminate fuel poverty for vulnerable households by 2010 and from the rest of households by 2016, is unlikely to be met unless new ways of addressing this issue are tried. The Somerset Health and Social Needs Analysis Group produced new data in 2007, which suggests that residents living in some wards within Yeovil and Chard and from certain social groups, suffer the highest levels of inequality. In addition to the high number of alcohol related deaths, binge drinking is a major contributor towards crime and anti social behaviour and in 2006/7 there were 1580 admissions to hospital specific to alcohol. Mental health and wellbeing is an issue that has far reaching implications since it affects relationships, job prospects, education, alcohol/drug abuse and is related to crime, poverty, poor physical wellbeing, people claiming benefits, etc. As well as improving services and support for people with mental health problems of all ages and those caring for them, preventative measures such as a healthy diet and regular exercise, access to quality green space in urban areas and the countryside in general and supportive family and community networks, are important.

South Somerset on the other hand, has many of the 'healthy community' building blocks in place with its country parks, cycle routes, healthy living centres, access to health related support groups and activities and sport and leisure facilities as well as the increasing work being done in neighbourhoods to address health inequalities. The emerging South Somerset Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2010) recognises the importance of designing the built environment to encourage physical activity even for people with limited mobility and for providing space for local food growing and recreation.

What are the main actions by partners, other partnerships and strategies that will contribute towards this goal?

- Somerset Primary Care Trust's (PCT) Strategy to Improve Health and Reduce Inequalities (2007) identifies what it will do to contribute towards the 'Choosing Health: Making Healthy Choices Easier' targets including 'reduce health inequalities by 10% by 2010, as measured by infant mortality and life expectancy;



- SSDC's Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2007-12) details priorities including Housing, Licensing and Law Enforcement (smoking and alcohol) and Active Lifestyles;
- NHS Somerset (PCT) Somerset Obesity Strategy (2008) identifies good practice approaches across key agencies in order to reduce obesity, for example by planning for active travel and joining up health and social care services;
- Tackling Obesity: Future Choices (2007) Foresight;
- Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: A Cross-Government Strategy for England (2008) Cross Government Obesity Unit, Department of Health and Department of Children, Schools and Families;
- SSDC's Strategy for Sport and Active Leisure in South Somerset (2006-2012);
- The delivery of planned activities towards the 2012 Olympic Games;
- Sport England's annual Active People survey measures the amount and type of structured activity people in South Somerset do;
- Natural England launched a health campaign in November 2006 that encourages people to enjoy the natural environment including by participating in outdoor physical activities;
- SSDC's Welfare Benefits Team supports the recommendations of the Acheson Report by contributing to tackling poverty (including the number of children living in poverty), fuel poverty and homelessness prevention;
- South Somerset Mind and other voluntary and community sector organisations supporting people of all ages with mental health issues and their carers;
- SSDC's South Somerset Playing Pitch Strategy (2008-2016), will succeed 'A Playing Pitch Strategy for South Somerset District Council 2002';
- SSDC promotes Careline that gives an essential service to elderly and infirm residents living on their own.

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) has already delivered that contribute to this goal?

- The Health & Wellbeing Partnership (sub-group of South Somerset Together) uses the Healthy Living Pooled Fund and other approaches to support healthy lifestyles;
- Funded a support package (PETA and B-Active programme) for vulnerable/at risk young people (aged 8-19) to improve their life chances (2006/8);
- Support for the continued development of Healthy Living Centres, the Balsam Centre and SHINE Project (2004-2009);



- Funded a Smartrisk programme to run in South Somerset (2008), which will be mainstreamed in the school academic year 2008/9;
- Funded the production of the new Somerset Health and Social Needs Analysis (2007);
- Supported the Citizens' Advice Bureau Welfare Benefits home visiting service (2007/8);
- Support to prevent homelessness through the Citizens' Advice Bureau County Court Desk (2007/8).

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) will take to add value to this goal?

Strategic Priority 8: Improve delivery of services through joined-up local approaches to address inequalities in health

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Invest in joint services and facilities;
- Develop joint programmes to address the needs of both urban and rural communities including:
 1. The health and care services for the growing number of older people;
 2. People of all ages with mental health problems;
 3. Families with disabled children;
 4. Carers of all ages;
 5. All groups including Gypsy and Traveller communities and transient/migrant workers;
 6. Promoting good sexual health practice, especially by young people;
 7. Reducing the rate of teenage pregnancies;
 8. People to access the benefits to which they are entitled;
- Understand and assess the impact and risk of all unrelated health factors.

Action 8: Develop a team approach to tackle health inequalities, to be piloted in Yeovil by December 2009

Strategic Priority 9: Reduce the prevalence of overweight and obesity in all age groups

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Maintain an understanding of the lifestyle choices people of all ages make and the barriers to physical activity and healthy eating, in urban and rural areas of the district, especially in neighbourhoods and communities where health inequalities have been identified in the past;



- Encourage farmers, food growers, manufacturers and suppliers to make sure enough food is grown to satisfy need and to help support a healthy diet;
- Raise the standard of and access to affordable sport and leisure facilities, offering a wide range of physical and cultural activities across the district, in towns, villages and rural areas;
- Offer incentives to encourage greater individual, family and neighbourhood/community participation in local physical activities, healthy cooking and eating and growing your own food in gardens and allotments;
- Ensure the design of the built environment encourages physical activity, especially by reducing the use of cars to access services and facilities.

Action 9: Develop a long-term (over 20 years) multi-agency commitment and action plan to reduce the number of children and adults that are overweight and obese and deliver one initiative by 2012

Strategic Priority 10: Reduce the prevalence of substance abuse, alcohol misuse and smoking in all age groups

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Commission local research into the causes of alcohol misuse including binge drinking and possible links to other substances such as smoking and drugs;
- Commission local research into substance abuse and smoking.

Action 10: Develop a campaign by the end of 2010 that encourages responsible/legal alcohol use and is anti-smoking and anti-substance abuse that uses the research to target the right people and places



Strategic Priority 11: Support the particular needs of the growing number of older people in the district

What are some of the things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Address the health and social care needs of a growing elderly population;
- Enable older people to meet their needs for lifetime homes, a healthy diet, safety, affordable warmth and financial security;
- Enable older people to work for longer, access training (including IT skills), live independently, enjoy physical and mentally stimulating activities with their own and other age groups;
- Encourage those with knowledge, skills and time to be more involved in the community and/or provide mentoring for local businesses and young people;
- Build the means of access into all services, to take account of the needs of older people;
- Talk to older people about their service needs in order to build more effective provision;
- Support community self-help initiatives with regard to the needs of older people.

Action 11: Work with existing groups that support older people and older people themselves, to look at their future needs and develop plans by 2011 to address these through a multi-agency approach

Strategic Priority 12: South Somerset Together partners to be exemplars in improving the health of their employees

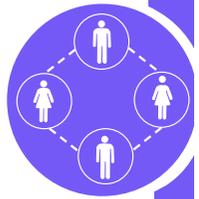
What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Encourage the development of on site facilities/opportunities for exercise/relaxation;
- Healthy (including locally sourced) food choices;
- Flexible working opportunities.

Action 12: Obtain commitment by South Somerset Together partners and local employers to adopt programmes to improve the health of their employees by 2011

Yeovil District Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust





Goal 4: Quality public services

Low carbon, quality services and facilities (including transport and ICT) are designed around the needs of the community, enabling everyone to have fair and equitable access to what they need

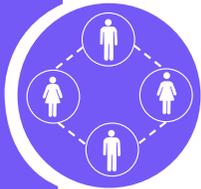
What do the sources of Baseline Data tell us about where we are now?

- SSDC Election turnout figures were 39.71% in the 2007 Election;
- 42% of the working population of South Somerset travel less than 5 kilometres to work (ONS 2001);
- 16% of households do not have access to a car/van (ONS 2001);
- 62% of people in South Somerset travel to work by car/van; 4% use public transport; 17% use bicycle or walk; 6% travel as a passenger in a car/van; 11% work from home (ONS 2006);
- 52% of residents use the internet regularly, only 22% had Broadband access (Quality of Life Survey 2005);
- 8.8% of South Somerset residents claim disability benefit: all public buildings should be accessible: SSDC buildings/car park facilities 86% compliant; Avon & Somerset Constabulary and Somerset PCT premises 100% compliant in South Somerset;
- 70% of residents did not feel they can influence (council) decisions (Ipsos MORI Survey 2006/7);
- Satisfaction with all facilities is higher than other districts in Somerset: sports at 60%, leisure at 58%, theatres and concert halls at 52%, museums and galleries at 42% (Ipsos MORI Survey 2006/7).

Why is this goal important?

Public services are facing unprecedented pressures to cut costs at a time when local residents' expectations are increasing for better run and new services, including in rural areas. Migration and demographic trends mean that services must adapt to meet the new and changing needs of a more elderly and diverse population. There is a high and rising dependency on car travel especially in rural areas where services continue to disappear.

New technologies offer good opportunities to improve services whilst keeping costs down, but have to be carefully planned with residents or run the risk of isolating those without computers from a range of services and social links. A wide range of organisations including all tiers of Local Government (county, district and parish/town councils) and voluntary and community groups (including faith groups) provide services. Changes in one service can have a knock on effect on others, so there is a real challenge to link the planning and delivery of services, especially across the public sector, to make the most of limited resources.

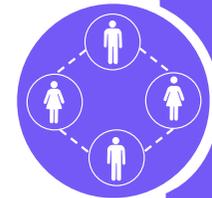


In 2006/7 a South Somerset District Council resident/customer satisfaction survey suggested that satisfaction with public services is relatively high despite only 30% of residents feeling that they can influence decisions that affect their lives and a turnout of only 39.71% in the 2007 elections. South Somerset District Council has national recognition for its leadership and democratic arrangements, making it easy for local people to engage with the council to consider and address the issues that matter to them. Expanding these arrangements to include Somerset County Council are underway.

Yeovil and the market towns have a key role as service hubs for the villages and rural areas around them. The creation and maintenance of local facilities and amenities in the community can be critical to quality of life and could be better linked to public services. Town and parish councils have a greater role to play in funding through the precept, the creation and maintenance of important local facilities and services. Making decisions at all levels requires strong leadership and determination to deliver what is needed; sometimes this calls for making hard choices that may not be immediately popular. Certain groups, including those without their own transport, are disadvantaged in accessing services or facilities, including jobs, learning, leisure and mental health services. Service providers need to take full account of peoples' needs when making investment choices in the way they run their services. The expected increases in the number of households and population, together with the pressures to secure a thriving low-carbon economy, stresses the importance of a well-planned and resourced transport infrastructure for residents and visitors.

What are the main actions by partners, other partnerships and strategies that will contribute towards this goal?

- SCC and SSDC community engagement and empowerment approaches enhance local community leadership and democratic accountability;
- SSDC's Community Led Plans leaflet provides guidance and explains how issues/actions identified will inform local and strategic plans;
- Increasing number of Youth (parish and town) councils, encouraging young people to get involved in democracy and civic activities;
- SSDC's Rural Strategy (2008) identifies key areas for policy and investment for villages and the countryside;
- Somerset Intelligence Network (SINE) gives readily available, high quality statistical data to inform better service planning;
- SCC's Somerset Accessibility Strategy (2006-2011) has been developed in partnership with the providers of key services (healthcare, shopping, employment, etc), identifies the areas of the county with poorest access to those services and sets out a programme of work for improvement;
- SSDC's Access to Services Strategy (2007) ensures equitable access to services through local offices and technology;
- The Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2010) will address the spatial needs for improved access to services, employment and housing;
- SCC's Local Transport Plan (2007-2012) sets out transport related improvements;
- SCC's Rights of Way Improvement Plan (2006), identifies the long-term actions to enhance the public rights of way network (on foot, cycle and horse riding), to promote visitors' and residents' enjoyment of a healthier lifestyle and cut car dependency;



- The Somerset Rural Youth Project runs a scooter loan scheme for young people;
- South Somerset hosts a variety of successful community transport models that give an important service to the elderly, disabled, people with no access to a car or public transport and people living in rural areas.

What are the actions that South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) has already delivered that contribute to this goal?

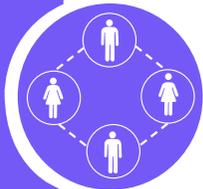
- Funded the Broad Places project which has delivered ICT infrastructure in village halls and community buildings across South Somerset;
- Funded Connecting Somerset to deliver the Chard Connect project, which set up ICT infrastructure to increase business access to technology;
- Commissioned research to create a performance management framework for the market towns across South Somerset (Market Towns Vision);
- Established the Market Towns Investment Group (as a sub-group of South Somerset Together);
- Established the Yeovil Vision Galaxy Group (as a sub-group of South Somerset Together);
- Established the Health and Wellbeing Partnership (as a sub-group of South Somerset Together);
- South Somerset Together included data from all completed town and parish (community/locality) plans in the Sustainable Community Strategy evidence base.

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) will take to add value to this goal?

Strategic Priority 13: Support the development of integrated, low carbon transport infrastructure

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Ensure all public transport, car sharing schemes and safe cycling/walking routes are affordable, well-promoted, efficient, linked to other public transport infrastructure and services, fully accessible (e.g. for wheelchair/buggies/pram users), reflect what local people need and cut car use, especially in town centres;
- Develop joint policies and investment solutions to continuously improve transport, including using new low carbon technologies as they become available;
- Promote to businesses alternatives to road transport for goods and distribution and continue to work with them to make improvements;



- Work with major employers to develop green travel plans.

Action 13: Identify options to maximise green travel by December 2009 and start one option by 2012

Strategic Priority 14: Increase levels of customer satisfaction with all South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) partners' services including how they engage with the community

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Develop a protocol for the assessment of local community led plans (including a sustainability review) and the mechanism for these to influence partners' actions to alter existing and/or develop new services and infrastructure in a joined-up, low carbon way;
- Support strong leadership that is able to negotiate a balanced approach to the essential changes needed for a carbon neutral future with conservation and respect for the natural and built environment;
- Support sub-district arrangements for multi-agency forums that include opportunities to deliver joint services that give better value for money;
- All South Somerset Together partners increase participation by people of all ages but especially young people in democracy and other civic activities, so they can influence decision-making at the local, strategic and national level (including through the mechanisms created by the Sustainable Communities Act 2008);
- Commit to supporting the voluntary run infrastructure in communities, especially rural communities, to make possible a flexible approach for future service delivery;
- Use technology to increase the reach of and cut the cost of services;
- Research and lobby for ICT infrastructure that cuts the digital divide;
- Make sure Broadband is available everywhere to improve access to services and facilitate home working;
- Examples of innovative approaches that work well in other places are used here such as timetable tracker screen at bus stops, text message telling you bus times, community transport automatically arranged for a doctor's appointment, key employers and providers including colleges provide transport and online learning and training and video conferencing facilities.

Action 14: South Somerset Together implements a protocol for joint community consultation and engagement by 2010

Action 14.1: Enable the continued development of multi-service hubs ("one stop shops") across South Somerset

Action 14.2: Identify options and an action plan by 2010 to deliver an innovative project to improve services using low carbon technology by 2011



Photo: Rosie Fairchild/ Sustrans



Pizza Pasta Ristorante Tel. 01935 700400

Gelati Café Bar Tel. 01935 700400

Newa's Doodles





Goal 5: High performance local economy

A competitive, high performing economy that is diverse, adaptable and resource efficient

What do the sources of Baseline Data tell us about where we are now?

- Economically inactive people in South Somerset (model based unemployed) is 3.3% with 0.9% claiming Job Seekers Allowance (ONS 2008);
- 3.11% of economically active people in South Somerset are disabled (ONS 2008);
- Increase in the speed of determination of business planning applications and approval rates (SSDC Development Control, Planning Application data);
- Workspace Demand Study for South Somerset (2008) proves a healthy demand for business land and premises in Yeovil and Ilminster;
- South Somerset's manufacturing sector (21.7% of all types) is nearly double that of the South West region at 11.4% (ONS 2006);
- 450 business VAT registrations; with 385 de-registrations; total for South Somerset in 2006 was 6,055 (ONS 2006);
- Economic activity rate (% of the working population) is higher than the county and Regional figure at 83.7% in June 2007 (ONS 2007).

Why is this goal important?

A thriving low carbon economy is at the heart of sustainable communities. Employment and wealth creation comes from the success of local companies so this goal aims to support businesses to adapt to the challenges of operating a successful business in a low carbon economy. A changing global economic environment means that the local economy must deliver products and services where they have a competitive advantage. The South West of England Regional Development Agency is already targeting some industries to raise employment opportunities in environmentally friendly businesses and business processes.

South Somerset's economy is based mainly on a relatively small number of large manufacturing companies in the food processing and engineering industries. Despite a low unemployment rate, with 0.9% claiming Job Seekers Allowance compared with 1.3% for the South West and 2.2% for the UK (NOMIS 2007), statistics also show that wages and educational qualifications are lower than the national average. With a resident ethnic minority population of only 1.1%, South Somerset has recently experienced a growing number of economic migrants from Portugal, Poland and other European countries.



Global trends including climate change, the increasing cost of commodities (especially fuel) and advancing technology, combine to produce a unique set of opportunities for rural and market town development in South Somerset. A key challenge for us today is to optimise infrastructure that allows businesses to adapt to low carbon processes, whilst remaining economically competitive. Despite the contribution South Somerset makes to the wider economy, regional and national agencies are not investing significantly in the regeneration of road and rail infrastructure because South Somerset is neither sufficiently economically deprived nor urban. This means we have to adapt present infrastructure, using land development and private sector investment as the main stimulants to make change happen. Since the success rate of each business sector alters over time, the aim is for economic diversity to give the local economy more chance of weathering storms and catching changes in comparative advantage. All of this is of even greater significance in 2009, as we enter into the deepest global economic recession since World World II.

What are the main actions by partners, other partnerships and strategies that will contribute towards this goal?

- South West of England Regional Development Agency's (SWRDA) Regional Economic Strategy (2006-2015) identifies the six key sectors for support in the Region, including aerospace and agriculture;
- Somerset Strategic Partnership's Somerset Economic Strategy (2005-2015) including Into Somerset; attracts inward investment opportunities by relocating businesses and prioritises actions to support and improve tourism and food/drink businesses;
- SSDC's Economic Development Strategy (Revised 2008) identifies detailed prioritised actions for economic improvement;
- SSDC, SCC and SWRDA development of the Yeovil Innovation Centre will support new technology businesses;
- Somerset Foodlinks organises and promotes producer markets and distribution networks to reduce food miles;
- Business Link Somerset Ltd runs a business advice programme for new and small businesses;
- SSDC's Business Ambassador Service and Business Account Manager Programme provides proactive links with Local Authority services;
- Regional Spatial Strategy (Regional Assembly, GOSW and SWRDA) will identify employment land requirements for the district and job growth targets (2008);
- SSDC's Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2010) will create a framework that gives business land allocations and infrastructure in market towns and rural areas, land for car parks in market towns, etc, secured from new development;
- Somerset Strategic Partnership, SCC and SSDC support for improving Broadband ICT links (through Connecting Somerset) ensures businesses have access to the most up to date technology for long-term security;
- SSDC Strategic Housing operates a key worker housing scheme;
- SSDC and SCC promote green travel plans and work to constantly develop the public transport system;



- SSDC's Workspace Demand Study (2008) used consultation to identify the business sector's need for premises and land which will feed into the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Local Development Framework;
- Somerset Federation of Small Businesses gives advice and support to small businesses;
- Yeovil Vision Delivery Plan (2007)

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) has already delivered that contribute to this goal?

- Held a series of discussions with businesses to find out the local factors that inhibit the diversification of the economy;
- Commissioned research into the make up of the workforce to better understand economic migration;
- Yeovil Vision's Galaxy Group set up (as a sub-group of South Somerset Together);
- Inward Investment Strategy delivered through Connecting Somerset to maximise the take up of Broadband technologies;
- Funded a grants programme aimed at rural businesses to improve ICT infrastructure.

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) will take to add value to this goal?

Strategic Priority 15: Improve the diversity and adaptability of businesses (including rural businesses) as we move towards a low carbon economy

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Engage with the Somerset Strategic Partnership to make sure that the Into Somerset organisation will promote South Somerset (including Yeovil, Chard, the other market towns and rural settlements) as a destination for new environmentally friendly and knowledge based businesses;
- Ensure potential inward investors understand and have access to the range of high quality services and support including awareness of the education and training available in South Somerset;
- Set up links with a range of organisations from Somerset and nearby districts and counties necessary to ensure a thriving economy in the area;
- Ensure continued support for the economic regeneration of Yeovil, Chard, the other market towns and rural settlements and their businesses;
- Encourage all towns and villages to gain Transition status with three communities meeting Transition status by 2012;



- Support skilled employment in all age ranges but especially in young people and 50+ age group;
- Streamline multi-agency support, advice and grants for all businesses;
- Encourage new businesses in key areas of growth such as low carbon, high technology industries and care services;
- Targeting new economic opportunities to those in most need;
- Work with farmers to increase local food production and distribution to address rising food costs and cut food miles and encourage people to grow their own food for a healthier lifestyle.

Action 15: South Somerset Together hosts a cross-boundary forum for multi-agency engagement with the private sector by March 2009, to identify the critical activities to be delivered

Action 15.1: Develop staggered milestones by 2012 of how to support the district's economy to meet its needs for goods (including food and energy) and services locally

Action 15.2 Set up a Business Mentoring Programme by 2011



Goal 6: Learning

An educated, skilled and well paid workforce which matches the needs of an increasingly low carbon economy

What do the sources of Baseline Data tell us about where we are now?

- 20% of working age people in South Somerset accessed job related training in 2006/7 compared to 22.9% in the South West (ONS 2007);
- A gender gap exists between male (£22,971) and female (£21,533) full-time gross annual earnings (ONS 2007);
- Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2008: Relationship between educational levels and wage rates (high financial return from education);
- IIP and other Regional and National studies on Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME): Survival/growth effect dependent on leadership/management training and mentoring;
- National and Regional Sector Skills Studies: Skills shortage increasing in key sectors (especially skills gained through apprenticeships);
- Number of 16-18 year olds achieving five GCSEs, Grade A* to C including English and Maths, lower in South Somerset when compared to the National average (Somerset Learning and Skills Council);
- Number of adult (19+) learners compared to the National average with a full Level 2 qualification and full Level 3 qualification (Somerset Learning and Skills Council);
- Truancy and low aspiration in young people (SCC Truancy measures);
- Number of people aged 18-30 years of age that leave South Somerset to study or work elsewhere;
- Low success rates from local Further Education colleges.

Why is this goal important?

- Education is vital to future economic, social and environmental growth and stability. It is the corner stone for generally improved quality of life. A better educated and skilled workforce will allow the economy in South Somerset to adapt to the growing knowledge and technology based industries needed in the 21st century, with the added bonus of helping people earn higher wages than at present.



Key strains on the economy include:

- Outward migration of young people as a result of limited Further and Higher Educational facilities locally;
- Lower than National average numbers of people of working age leading to a labour shortage;
- Skills shortages in some sectors with insufficiently attractive job opportunities to keep people with skills in the area;
- Low aspirations and low qualification attainment among young people.

Building on the well-established training and apprenticeship opportunities already available in Yeovil, there is a need to extend Further and Higher Education and vocational training opportunities locally. Taking advantage of advancing ICT technology, improved transport services and more local employment and training opportunities will reduce barriers to learning. This is especially important during the current economic recession.

What are the main actions by partners, other partnerships and strategies that will contribute towards this goal?

- SCC's Education Service delivers "Every Child Matters" and 14-19 Agenda Strategies;
- SCC's Local Delivery Teams in South Somerset work with schools to improve qualification achievement;
- Regional Skills Partnerships (including Somerset Learning and Skills Council and SWRDA) deliver the Developing Skills Agenda;
- Somerset Learning and Skills Council (LSC) supports FE provision and apprenticeships, including Yeovil College;
- University Centre Yeovil (HEFCE funding) delivers Foundation and Degree programmes locally;
- Somerset Business Link Ltd engages directly with businesses about skills need;
- Learndirect provision funded by University for Industry providing online programmes at various levels;
- Individual mentoring by the Prince's Trust;
- Informal and formal events through Chambers of Trade & Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses and professional Associations;
- Leadership Southwest provision;
- Into Somerset is working with key employers to identify issues for local businesses about skills shortage.



What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) has already delivered that will contribute to this goal?

- Support for workless individuals through the South Somerset (ViSTA) Apprenticeship Scheme (2008);
- Commissioned research with Yeovil College through employers into the makeup of the migrant worker community in South Somerset (2005);
- Commissioned Skills Mapping Research in South Somerset (2006);
- Started making links with major employers across South Somerset (ongoing);
- Yeovil Vision's Galaxy Group and Market Towns Investment Group (MTIG) as sub-groups of South Somerset Together.

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) will take to add value to this goal?

Strategic Priority 16: Improve the match between the skills employers' need and the employees available

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Carry out an audit to identify the skills needed to support existing and future businesses in South Somerset;
- Encourage links between local businesses and schools;
- Encourage links between local businesses and universities to give work experience for undergraduates and postgraduates;
- Promote the value of all training, especially skills training, such as technical and apprenticeship training;
- Promote skills training for all but especially to young people;
- Make use of the skills, knowledge and experience of the older population (50+ age group) in the district;
- Endorse a framework between key organisations (including local schools and Chambers of Trade & Commerce) that allows the skills need of businesses and their employees to be addressed locally;
- Ensure business skills match includes future and new needs as well as skills gap and surplus.

Action 16: The business forum developed by March 2009 (in Action 15 above) to undertake an audit to identify the skills needed by businesses and an action plan by 2012

Action 16.1: Increase the number of people in training year on year including young people between 19-30 and older people (50+)



Strategic Priority 17: Improve the availability, affordability and quality of training

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Address community concern for local poor GCSE attainment and aspirations especially in school leavers;
- Make sure technology allows people of all ages to access quality training;
- Ensure the availability of affordable, flexible training locally and through technology especially for part-time qualification and vocational courses that may help raise skill/ educational levels of working people in the district
- Endorse the expansion of Further and Higher Education provision locally including the creation of a virtual University of Somerset;
- Support a South Somerset Centre of Excellence in training as a “hub” to wider (geographically and by the curriculum offered) learning centres;
- Lobbying the Qualification & Curriculum Authority (QCA) and other qualification awarding bodies, to make sure that sustainability is built into course curricula

Action 17: The business forum developed by March 2009 (in Action 15 above) supports flexible delivery of training by local providers and implements at least three new options by 2012

Strategic Priority 18: South Somerset Together partners are exemplars in qualification and skills training

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- South Somerset Together partners adopt a framework that ensures their training and skills needs are identified and addressed collectively;
- South Somerset Together partners make sure opportunities are given to local people to help them reach their potential;
- South Somerset Together partners support undergraduates and postgraduates to develop work-based projects and research that will benefit the organisation(s) participating and the individual(s).

Action 18: South Somerset Together partners adopt a protocol by October 2009 for supporting all trainees and implement one recommendation by April 2010



Goal 7: Distinctiveness

A thriving Yeovil, market town and rural economy environment able to attract and retain visitors, consumers and high quality sustainable businesses

What do the sources of Baseline Data tell us about where we are now?

- Tourists spent £186 million in South Somerset in 2005; 6% (4531) jobs sustained by tourism; over 2 million visitor days and nights spent by visitors in South Somerset (South West Tourism Survey 2005);
- The largest business sector in South Somerset is distribution, hotels and restaurants at 26.2% (ONS 2006);
- The number of listed buildings in South Somerset totals 5,647 (of which 93 are Grade 1, 568 are Grade 2* and 5,286 are Grade 2);
- SSDC Retail Capacity Study (2007);
- Yeovil Town Centre Business Survey and Visitor Survey, (Yeovil Town Centre Management 2008).

Why is this goal important?

This Goal recognises the unique settlement pattern of towns within South Somerset and the important role they will play in the district becoming sustainable. Historically, the district's rich land based and manufacturing economy (including high quality textiles such as silk, flax and lace and more recently engineering and food products) was to the advantage of Yeovil, Chard and Crewkerne (the three largest market towns) all of which are on the A30 that used to be the main London to Plymouth road. Yeovil has developed as a sub-regional centre with the further ten market towns; each distinctive and all serving a rural hinterland. This large built environment boasts over 80 conservation areas and has higher than the national average of buildings and structures of historical significance, which together with the district's large and varied natural environment, makes it an area where people want to come and visit and stay, again and again.

This unique geographical structure and economic heritage gives a key opportunity for developing a low carbon economy that makes the most of each town's natural assets, including its many rural, artistic and cultural products and events. To successfully move towards Transition status (Transition is a recently coined term for communities that aim to address the dual challenges of climate change and peak oil, by adopting sustainable methods for reducing energy usage and waste, as well as increasing their own self-sufficiency in terms of employment, facilities and resources including food and energy) in the near future, the district will have to overcome some key challenges including:

- Improving public transport infrastructure and connections;



- Reducing car dependency and road congestion leading to cleaner and safer town centres;
- Improving the image and reputation of the town centres (especially of Yeovil and Chard);
- Attracting more and a wider range of retail and other services to maximise local spending and overcome competition from Taunton (within Somerset) and the cities of Exeter, Bristol, Bath and Bournemouth.

This is not helped by Yeovil (and Chard, Crewkerne and Wincanton) being geographically on the perimeter of the county and the district, which although is offset by attracting residents from Dorset, Devon and Wiltshire for work, shopping and Further Education, means it does not attract the investment in infrastructure that it should in comparison with other major towns in Somerset. The decline in the agricultural economy has stimulated many farm businesses to seek new ways to remain viable, which has led to real successes through tourism, adopting new crops or farming methods and developing a growing local produce market. As fuel and food prices soar, the viability of these local food markets should increase further. Major employers have an opportunity to maximise local procurement benefiting the local economy and reducing carbon consumption.

What are the main actions by partners, other partnerships and strategies that will contribute towards this goal?

- SSDC's Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2010), the Yeovil and Chard Urban Development Frameworks provide a structure to maintain and enhance the distinctiveness of Yeovil, Chard, the other market towns, villages and rural areas;
- Multi-agency support for the Yeovil Vision, Chard Vision and Market Towns Vision;
- Somerset Strategic Partnership's Somerset and SSDC's South Somerset Economic Strategies deliver prioritised actions ensuring new development balances the need for housing and economic growth;
- SSDC invested £300,000 in the delivery of the Market Towns Vision through the identification of strategic shared priorities and pump priming public sector investment;
- Specific support to rural business by Business Link Somerset Ltd, SCC and SSDC's specialist Agricultural Development Officer;
- SSDC's Tourism Strategy (2008-2011) will reflect the Somerset Tourism Partnership's emerging strategy (established 2006 as a partnership of the six Local Authorities in Somerset, North Somerset Council and private sector tourism organisations) promoting Somerset as a distinctive destination for tourism;
- SSDC supporting Community Planning through Area Development Teams and Area Development Plans (Service Plans) informing local regeneration opportunities;
- SSDC Workplace Demand Study (2008) identifies businesses' requirement for premises and land (as required by the Regional Spatial Strategy and to inform the South Somerset Local Development Framework);
- SSDC Retail Capacity Study (2007): Identifies the potential retail growth in Yeovil and market towns;



- SSDC's Yeovil Country Park Vision 5-year Delivery Plan (2008-2012);
- SSDC Streetscene supports Yeovil and Chard in Bloom competitions;
- SSDC's market town regeneration work facilitates a partnership approach on important business sites such as Parrett Works in Martock, Castle Cary Market House and the Boden Mill site in Chard.

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) has already delivered that contribute to this goal?

- Yeovil Vision's Galaxy Group (sub-group of South Somerset Together) working in partnership with Yeovil Market Town Centre Management Group and others to deliver the Yeovil Urban Development Plan and improve inward investment;
- Market Towns Investment Group (sub-group of South Somerset Together) delivers joint projects for the 10 market towns;
- Commissioned research into market towns which led to the South Somerset Market Towns Vision 2005 adopted by SSDC;
- Commissioned the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (Adopted 2008);
- South Somerset Together included data from all completed town and parish (Community/Locality) Plans in the Strategy database.

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) will take to add value to this goal?

Strategic Priority 19: Support the continued development of distinctive local economies

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Engage a wide range of suppliers and users including local shops, businesses, farmers, Business Associations and Chambers of Trade & Commerce, retailers, facilities, parish and town councils and service providers to sustain and improve the economic vitality of the market towns, villages and rural areas;
- Use the Transition and Keep it Local concepts as a marketing tool for generating green tourism including holidays that encourage cycling/walking and other physical activities for all age groups, use low carbon solutions to travel, promote locally sourced food and goods, raise awareness of the local countryside and heritage, etc and by endorsing low carbon methods of gaining information about the locality;
- Recognise that communities will develop individual ways to address Keep it Local and Transition;
- Increase the availability of local and ethical produce, goods and services;



- Make sure South Somerset Together partners adopt procurement policies that choose local goods, services and produce where possible;
- Support the development of local arts and crafts markets

Action 19: Develop a sustained and positive “Keep It Local” campaign by 2010

Strategic Priority 20: Deliver the Visions for Yeovil, Chard, the other market towns and rural communities supported by high quality community involvement

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Encourage civic pride by all age groups, but especially by young people, in local heritage and culture and the natural and built environment;
- Ensure sustainable design and construction principles are applied to buildings, business and public space include streetscape that enhances the distinctiveness of each community and that is well-maintained, clean and complemented by planting;
- Develop public space that allows for social interaction;
- Make sure public space is usable by people with all types of access needs;
- Ensure communities have good public/community transport links (including rail) to reduce carbon emissions;
- Incorporate new and updated data from town and parish plans and other relevant strategies and plans, to attract economic investment and regeneration that meets sustainability principles.

Action 20: Develop guidance that informs the Local Development Framework Core Strategy by October 2010 so that it supports the economic vitality of Yeovil, Chard, the other market towns and villages and makes the most of their distinctive built heritage

Action 20.1: Develop and support distinctive, balanced, local economies in South Somerset through a range of measures including the development of Transition Towns, with three communities meeting Transition status by 2012





Well designed
and well built





Goal 8: Quality development

Sustainably sited and constructed high quality homes, buildings and public spaces where people can live and work in an environmentally friendly and healthy way

What do the sources of Baseline Data tell us about where we are now?

- 75% of South Somerset residents are satisfied with the quality of the natural environment, with 44% satisfied with the built environment (Ipsos MORI 2006/7);
- Percentage of new/converted dwellings on previously developed land (Brownfield sites) was 75% (525 dwellings); eligible open spaces managed to a Green Flag Award standard was 250.1 hectares (74%); open space with Green Flag Award was 214.5 hectares (Ham Hill and Yeovil Country Parks); completed employment development was 3755 m²; completed retail (A1 and A2 Uses) was 0 m²; office (B1 Use) was 38 m² and leisure development (D2 Use) was 173 m² (Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report 2006/7);
- Resident satisfaction with parks and open spaces in South Somerset is at 76% (Ipsos MORI 2006/7);
- Approximately 1,025 miles of Rights of Way, 18.5 Km of cycleways (not including national cycle network or other signed routes), 131 play areas that meet standards and local facilities (including 101 village halls);
- 32% of properties in South Somerset will have a Hazard Category 1 under the Housing and Safety Rating System (Building Research Establishment (BRE) Survey 2007);
- The number of listed buildings in South Somerset totals 5,647 (of which 93 are Grade 1, 568 are Grade 2* and 5,286 are Grade 2);
- South Somerset has 14 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) from 9 wards that have fuel poverty above 7%. One of the two LSOA in Ivelchester Ward is the worst at 9.63%; with 1 of the 4 LSOA in Yeovil West Ward coming in second at 8.71%. The remaining 12 LSOA range from 7.1 - 7.82% (Equivalentised Basic Income data from the Centre for Sustainable Energy and the University of Bristol 2007);
- 4,529 vulnerable households live in non-decent homes in South Somerset (Building Research Establishment (BRE) Survey 2007).



Why is this goal important?

It is vital that high quality homes, buildings and public spaces are created in order to make a positive difference to people's lives; delivering homes, jobs and services, whilst protecting and enhancing the environment. Homes and jobs need to be located to cut commuting and car dependency; in addition, shops, health facilities, open spaces, schools and other key services should be provided either locally or made accessible, enabling the people of South Somerset to live and work in an environmentally friendly way and healthy way. Open spaces are important for individuals' and community gardens for recreation, reflection and food growing as well as sports and playing fields. Access to the countryside through the maintenance of Rights of Way and good quality cycleways in urban and rural areas for work and recreation are important.

The provision of high quality sustainable development is not just about traditional land use planning, if fully rounded environments and communities are to be encouraged. Spatial planning goes beyond land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes, which influence the nature of places and how they function. With Climate Change, there is an urgent need to assess the risk of flooding across the district including in urban areas and to adopt effective mitigation measures to protect essential infrastructure as well as property and lives. This good design will not only look good, but also creates places which are sustainable, healthy and safe to use and which reflect the needs of local people as expressed by this Strategy. This Strategy recognises the large number of private sector housing in the district that requires being brought up to decent homes standard urgently, as well as the importance of reducing fuel poverty through insulation and other improvements across all housing.

What are the main actions by partners, other partnerships and strategies that will contribute towards this goal?

- SSDC's Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy is programmed to be adopted in October 2010; it will manage development so as to create 'sustainable communities' with appropriate levels of growth directed to settlements, based upon their role and function;
- SSDC Policy Guidance on draft Regional Spatial Strategy Policy RE5 which requires 10% of the energy requirement for new developments of more than 10 dwellings or 1000m² of non-residential floor space to come from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources, unless it is not feasible or viable;
- SSDC's Carbon Reduction & Climate Change Adaption Strategy (2008) prioritises a range of actions to make sure development includes sustainable construction, micro generation and water saving measures by 2012, including a Sustainable Construction Award scheme for exemplar buildings;
- Conservation Area Appraisals are being prepared for the district's market towns;
- SCC's Somerset Local Transport Plan (2008-2011) actively promotes sustainable transport;
- SSDC's Building Control ensures compliance with the latest Government Policy on design standards to make all new homes carbon neutral by 2016;



- SSDC hosts monthly multi-agency pre-application surgeries to encourage high quality of design;
- The actions being pursued as a result of the Yeovil Vision, incorporating the Yeovil Urban Development Framework;
- The actions being pursued as a result of the Chard Vision, incorporating the Chard Urban Development Framework;
- SSDC Strategy for Sport and Active Leisure (2006-12), PPG 17 Sport and Recreation Facility Assessment (2007-2016) and Leisure Planning Obligations (Supplementary Guidance) make sure that new housing developments have adequate facilities;
- SSDC's Private Sector Housing Strategy (2007-12) details prioritised actions as to how the council will address non-decent standard homes and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO);
- SSDC's Planning Protocol with Avon & Somerset Constabulary to increase Secure by Design developments;
- A Countywide Local Authority Fuel Poverty Action Group (launched in October 2008) has been set up to tackle fuel poverty;
- SSDC works with the Centre for Sustainable Energy and the University of Bristol and promotes the Warm & Well Scheme to encourage energy conservation in the home;
- SSDC's Home Aid Partnership Scheme works to improve substandard housing occupied by vulnerable people;
- Somerset Private Sector Managers' Group developed the Countywide Private Sector Housing Strategy, HMO Strategy and Decent Homes Strategy (2007) and policies to address substandard housing across all 5 Housing Authorities in Somerset;
- Somerset Enforcement Group makes sure there is a consistent approach to housing standards enforcement across the 5 Housing Authority areas with particular emphasis on HMO licensing;
- The Wessex Reinvestment Trust is a partnership of 10 Local Authorities that give low cost loans to vulnerable people living in substandard housing;
- Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) makes recommendations for policy guidance on water conservation and use;
- SSDC Contaminated Land Strategy (2005) sets out how contaminated land is identified and inspected;
- SSDC Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will inform the Local Development Framework ensuring development is avoided in and directed away from areas of highest risk. Sustainable Drainage Systems will manage surface water in a way that mimics the natural environment when rain falls onto land;
- Environment Agency's Catchment Flood Management Plans for the Parrett, North and Mid-Somerset, Dorset Stour and East Devon catchments;
- SSDC's Open Space Strategy (2008) will ensure well-maintained open spaces for public use.



What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) has already delivered that contribute to this goal?

- Commissioned an Affordable Housing Site Identification Assessment (2008);
- Contributed towards the Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment for South Somerset and other Housing Authority areas in Somerset (2008);
- Yeovil Vision (as a sub-group of South Somerset Together) leading on the delivery of the Yeovil Urban Design Framework;
- Market Towns Investment Group (sub-group of South Somerset Together) leading on market town regeneration.

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) will take to add value to this goal?

Strategic Priority 21: Maximise and focus resources to achieve sustainable development and regeneration

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- The South Somerset Local Development Framework Core Strategy is produced by October 2010 and complements the Sustainable Community Strategy until 2026;
- Design and layout that make the best use of walking (Rights of Way) and cycling networks, which are connected to facilities (including new ones), safe and well-maintained public open spaces and improves access to the countryside;
- Urban areas should include well-maintained planting to protect from the sun, provide shade from heat and help with absorbing rainfall;
- Ensure all urban areas have adequate drainage to prevent flooding, especially when an area has proved at risk from extreme weather incidents;
- Encourage the use of local materials, local skills and local businesses/enterprises;
- Promote a 'Keep It Local' brand through directories of suppliers of local materials and goods.

Action 21: Ensure Master plans and development briefs produce exemplary design and layout of buildings, infrastructure and open spaces to improve access to services and facilities and stimulate business growth on new and re-used development land, starting in October 2010

Action 21.1: Ensure South Somerset Together partners adopt a policy for the sourcing of local materials, supplies and expertise in the design and construction of public spaces and buildings that reflect or are in keeping with the locality by October 2010



Strategic Priority 22: All new development applies sustainable construction principles and new and existing buildings move towards being carbon and water neutral

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Meeting and exceeding current sustainable construction targets;
- Development in urban and rural areas should be positioned to maximise accessibility, reduce reliance on individual car use wherever possible and minimise flood risk by including the latest Climate Change adaptation and mitigation measures and advice to protect essential infrastructure, as well as property and lives;
- Make sure materials, including recycled materials, are genuinely offering a more sustainable product whether locally sourced or not and construction methods are not only sustainable but also reflect the locality where applicable;
- Producing buildings that are energy and water efficient, with ambitious targets for onsite renewable energy generation (e.g. 20% or more);
- Scoring baseline for quality design to be commissioned by South Somerset Together;
- Improve the standard of all existing homes including privately rented accommodation and Houses in Multiple Occupation in the district, by a range of measures and approaches;
- Ensure that accommodation includes lifetime homes to meet the needs of all people;
- Improve the standard of existing housing stock including private housing;
- Ensure high quality design and construction of the public realm (the space between and within buildings that are publicly accessible).

Action 22: Make full use of the latest development and building regulations with other advisory sources, to make sure that all development conforms to the highest feasible standards of sustainable construction by October 2010

Strategic Priority 23: South Somerset Together partners are exemplars in sustainable development

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Ensure public sector procurement on new buildings specifies the use of locally sourced services and materials (that reflect or are in keeping with the locality) wherever possible;
- All relevant members of staff in partner organisations have up to date skills and access to National and International good practice models on sustainable development.



Action 23: South Somerset Together partners pledge that from 2011 all new standard buildings they develop should be to the highest rating possible aiming for the equivalent of Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) excellent rating or BREEAM Bespoke rating by 2015

Strategic Priority 24: Minimise fuel poverty by 2016

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Identify local, Regional, National and International examples of technologies and approaches that have worked in reducing household fuel poverty;
- Partners adopt policies and work together to help people especially the most vulnerable and those in rural areas, access the advice and financial support they need to have affordable warmth;
- Increase incentives and the awareness of the availability of existing support such as insulation grants, to help people in private homes (whether their own or rented accommodation) to improve energy conservation;
- Research and develop new ways to reduce household fuel poverty including through low carbon and innovative technologies and partnership approaches;
- The LSP to lobby for a variable household fuel tariff i.e. a low initial cost rising according to use/requirement.

Action 24: Deliver one new approach to reduce fuel poverty by 2012





Goal 9: Homes

A balanced housing market with a range of low carbon affordable housing with the flexibility to meet the changing needs of the population

What do the sources of Baseline Data tell us about where we are now?

- Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment (2008);
- The Common Housing Register has grown by 143% since 2001; 7413 people as at 1st April 2008;
- 1.1% of homes in South Somerset (766) are unoccupied furnished properties;
- House price to income ratio in South Somerset is 11.7 compared to 10.7 for England (2008);
- Under occupation in all housing sectors as a result of an above average ageing population (with 25% over 60 years);
- Supporting People Commissioning Body budget decreasing in the next 3 years by 15% plus inflation (24%) impacting on vulnerable adults and children;
- Average household size in South Somerset in 2001 was 2.32 people per household (compared to 2.31 for the Region and 2.36 Nationally); reduced from 2.71 in 1981 and 2.43 in 1991;
- 74% of dwellings in South Somerset were privately owned in 2001 (compared to 72% for the Region and 69% Nationally); Social Housing 14% (19% Nationally);
- Household type in South Somerset: Couples and children 27%; Couples with no children 21%; Lone parents with children 7%; Pensioners living on their own 29%; others 17%.

Why is this goal important

A balanced housing market, with a mix of housing types, tenures and price is key to achieving more sustainable communities. The South West generally and South Somerset in particular, is affected by a shortage of housing fuelled by high inward migration especially from people retiring from the South East of England. Combined with the low wage economy this results in South Somerset having a large and growing housing affordability gap, especially in rural areas. Government's Right to Buy policy resulted in 4664 homes being lost from the social housing stock since 1979 which has not been replaced by Registered Social Landlord development at the rate needed, especially in rural communities.



This has led to high numbers of people on the Common Housing Register, in temporary accommodation and homeless. People face limited housing choices due to high house prices, costly private rented accommodation and increasing household running costs with most of the impact affecting young people, the elderly, families and those on low income. The growing numbers of elderly people within South Somerset means there is a need for flexible and adaptable housing that is currently unmet. There is an escalating need for affordable homes especially in small market towns and villages and despite SSDC's policy on exception sites in rural areas and a number of parishes completing surveys demonstrating they have a need, very few sites have actually been completed. Identifying suitable sites and working with landowners, developers, Registered Social Landlords, Town and parish councils and communities to deliver a range of accommodation locally is essential. Encouraging self-build eco-homes in the district may address the needs of some, but not the majority of, people in housing need.

What are the main actions by partners, other partnerships and strategies that will contribute towards this goal?

- Government Policy: Code for Sustainable Homes and Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) implementation of design standards;
- Somerset Strategic Housing Partnership is developing the first Countywide Housing Strategy to be adopted in May 2009 by all the Housing Authorities in Somerset based on the evidence from the Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment (2008), the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2008) and the Building Research Establishment (BRE) Survey (2007);
- The adopted South Somerset Local Plan (2006) aims to ensure Planning Gain is negotiated on key and large sites to provide affordable housing;
- Somerset Supporting People Programme launching new 5 year strategy (2007) ensures vulnerable people are able to live independently;
- Somerset Homelessness Group developed the first Countywide Homelessness Strategy in 2008;
- Cross-boundary discussion forum within the Somerset Strategic Planning Conference;
- SSDC's Housing Strategy, Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Strategy, Private Sector Housing Strategy and Homelessness Strategy;
- Registered Social Landlords delivering affordable housing;
- Implementation of a Choice Based Lettings Scheme across the 5 Housing Authority areas in Somerset by end of 2008;
- Implementation of a Housing ICT system across the 5 Housing Authority areas in Somerset by the end of 2008;
- SSDC to develop a Young People's Accommodation Strategy by September 2009;
- SSDC will make sure 25 empty properties are brought back into use each year during 2009-12;



- SSDC provides grant aid and other assistance to landlords to create good quality affordable rented accommodation;
- SSDC will make sure that 80% of Houses in Multiple Occupation meet the decent homes and other relevant management standards by 2012;
- Yarlington Housing Group is building social housing at a higher sustainability standard than the Housing Corporation requirement;
- The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) requires all social housing to be built to lifetime standards

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) has already delivered that contribute to this goal?

- Commissioned an Affordable Housing Site Identification Assessment (2008);
- Contributed towards a Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment 2008;
- Funded the CAB County Court Desk to prevent homelessness

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) will take to add value to this goal?

Strategic Priority 25: Make sure there is enough land supply for housing development to better meet the identified needs of the district

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Use robust Section 106 Agreements to secure the maximum affordable housing from development schemes and monitor/enforce compliance by the developer;
- Develop mechanisms that allow land to be compulsorily made available for potential development and/or once planning permission is granted it is developed after an agreed period of time;
- Incorporate the findings of the Affordable Housing Site Identification Study (2008);
- Encourage information sharing between partners, specifically via mapping (GIS) to identify land and opportunities for development;
- Programmes providing dispersed housing types, tenures and prices across the district matching the needs of people;
- Incorporate lifetime housing standards that give flexible accommodation that can meet the needs of a changing population

Action 25: Explore existing and new mechanisms for procuring land for affordable housing by October 2009 that leads to the delivery of 597 units by 2011



Strategic Priority 26: Increase the number of affordable homes in the district to meet identified needs

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Make sure there are a range of accommodation choices that meet the needs of older people, young people, women and families needing refuge, single people, families, homeless people and people of all ages needing supported or specific accommodation;
- Provide enough night shelters and high quality temporary accommodation;
- Work to prevent homelessness;
- Work to reduce under occupation in all housing especially in social housing;
- Promote tested alternative procurement models including Community Land Trusts;
- Increase the availability, quality standard and affordability of privately rented accommodation, including Houses in Multiple Occupation by working with and supporting landlords through grants, loans and other incentive schemes;
- Promote housing schemes that contribute towards balanced and cohesive communities through good design and layout throughout the district;
- Incorporate the findings of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment for South Somerset (2008);
- Ensure housing schemes in rural communities have access to local employment, services and facilities by encouraging “parish clusters”.

Action 26: Enable the building of 597 affordable housing units by 2011

Action 26.1: Enable the development of 4 housing schemes in rural communities by 2012

Strategic Priority 27: Recognise and support the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- A shared partner approach to addressing the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers;
- Accommodation should be developed in areas that can meet broader needs such as health, schooling and jobs.

Action 27: Increase the number of residential pitches to 20 and transit (temporary) pitches to 10 in the district by 2011

Action 27.1: Work with Regional partners to explore a linked Regional network of transit (temporary) sites by 2012





Goal 10: Energy

Move towards a carbon neutral economy

What do the sources of Baseline Data tell us about where we are now?

- Total domestic and commercial residual waste in South Somerset increases by over 20% per annum (Somerset Waste Partnership 2007);
- South Somerset has the best performance Nationally of a Local Authority area for the lowest amount of residual waste produced per household at 322.63 kg per household in 2007/08;
- South Somerset Household Waste: Recycled 28.17% in 2007/08 (improved from 27.02% in 2006/07); Composted or treatment by anaerobic digestion 10,509 kg in 2007/08 (improved from 9,692 kg in 2006/07); Increase in population over 2% per year (ONS 2005);
- By 2026 South Somerset will need to accommodate 19,000 new households (CLG 2006) 40% more than predicted in the Regional Spatial Strategy;
- 62% of people in South Somerset travel to work by car/van; 4% use public transport; 17% use bicycle or walk; 6% travel as a passenger in a car/van; 11% work from home (ONS 2006);
- South Somerset has the highest level of CO₂ emissions in Somerset with an average of 6,056 kg of CO₂ per dwelling while the South West average is 5,396 kg per dwelling (Defra 2005);
- Consumption of electricity across the district is 459 GWhr per year (388 GWhr domestic, 459 GWhr commercial) (Defra 2008);
- 88% of SSDC staff that responded to the survey said they travel to work by car (SSDC Staff Travel Survey, 2006).

Why is this goal important?

A carbon neutral economy successfully balances the production and use of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. Currently CO₂ is emitted through transport, manufacturing, use of buildings and the increased use of high-energy products with a significant pressure in demand for energy and water use. South Somerset has high levels of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases, relative to average across the United Kingdom. Climate Change is also a major challenge leading to increasing risk of flooding, drought and storm damage causing wide-ranging problems for households, businesses and vital infrastructure. Peak Oil means that we have reached the limit of oil availability and economically viable cost of production, so alternatives to traditional fossil fuels are essential if we wish to maintain the standard of living we have. It is clear that our sources and usage of energy will have to



change including increasing the amount of electricity produced from renewables, considering low carbon forms of transport, adopting sustainable principles for new and existing houses while increasing our high performance in recycling by cutting further the amount of waste going to landfill. Although the current economic recession is cited as a possible reason for postponing actions to improve CO₂ emissions, taking action will save businesses money just at the time when it is important to secure productivity and jobs. By moving towards a carbon neutral economy we can seek to reduce the impact that human activities have on the environment.

What are the main actions by partners, other partnerships and strategies that will contribute towards this goal?

- The Somerset Waste Partnership is a Countywide, Local Authority partnership that works to maximise resource efficiency, renewable energy including energy from waste, alternative residual waste treatment options and minimise the overall impact of Somerset's economy on the environment;
- SCC's Climate Change Strategy (2008) sets out the challenges to Somerset and how SCC will adapt its own practice to reduce CO₂ emissions;
- SSDC's Local Development Framework Core Strategy to be produced by 2010;
- SSDC's Carbon Reduction & Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2008) sets out a detailed programme of actions to cut CO₂ emissions;
- SCC's Renewable Energy Strategy (2008) sets out how renewable energy technologies will be implemented across Somerset;
- SSDC has planted over 10,000 trees across the district since 2006 as carbon sinks;
- South Somerset Hydropower Project for water mills across South Somerset, providing electricity from renewable sources received the Green Apple Award (2006);
- 65% of the energy used in SSDC's buildings is from renewable sources;
- SSDC was the first council in Somerset to sign the Nottingham Declaration for Climate Change in 2006;
- SSDC is working with British Gas to promote energy efficiency in the home;
- SSDC gives grant aid for landowners creating carbon sinks.

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) has already delivered that contribute to this goal?

- South Somerset Together held workshops facilitated by Sustainability South West and commissioned a Sustainability Appraisal to develop the South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy;



- The Environment Agency, Natural England and South Somerset Climate Action are represented on the South Somerset Together Board.

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) will take to add value to this goal?

Strategic Priority 28: Year on year reduction in the district's carbon footprint towards a carbon neutral economy in 2030

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Increase businesses' awareness of resource scarcity (including peak oil) and the associated impacts on markets with examples of transferable adaptation methods;
- Encourage a range of renewable energy generation schemes near communities and businesses including 50 KW to 2 MW plants, advanced thermal energy (electricity and steam) from waste plant adjacent to business site(s), anaerobic digestion plant(s) on the edge of market towns taking food waste, large (2MW) wind turbines and support for the Severn Barrage Scheme;
- Encourage new and promote existing incentive schemes for reducing carbon, including current grants available for the development of carbon sinks;
- Signpost businesses to expert advice, support and mentoring providers and share information through existing channels like the Chambers of Trade & Commerce and Somerset Business Link Ltd of other business cost savings/increased profits by adopting carbon neutral operations;
- Support a local business sustainability accreditation scheme;
- Review the potential for new environmentally friendly businesses and business processes for subsequent promotion in the local economy;
- Mainstream sustainability support (including resource efficiency advice) through business advice programmes;
- Endorse and nurture champions within the district's key business sectors to involve them in mentoring programmes including successful transition to a low carbon economy;
- Identify areas of land owned by partners that could be used for carbon sinks and fuel material;
- Investment in the critical environmental support infrastructure to help businesses adapt to sustainability;
- Promote energy audits;
- Support the development of Transition towns and villages in South Somerset.



Action 28: South Somerset Together hosts a multi-agency forum including businesses (Action 15 above) by March 2009 and uses it to increase understanding for the need for Climate Change mitigation and adaptation and to agree staggered targets for reducing the district's carbon footprint year on year starting in 2010

Strategic Priority 29: Year on year reduction of residual waste

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Identify levels of business waste and set targets for reduction;
- Endorsing an economically viable business waste recycling market;
- Encourage businesses and manufacturers to produce less packaging with goods or use recyclable/reusable options;
- Encourage individuals and communities to use more recyclable/reusable bags and packaging;
- Strive to improve the South Somerset doorstep recycling collection scheme by increasing range of items collected where viable;
- Work with a range of businesses, including restaurants and schools, to use waste, including food waste, for local renewable energy production.

Action 29: Lobby Government to enforce businesses (including small and medium enterprises) to cut residual waste

Action 29.1: Work with the Somerset Waste Partnership by March 2009 to further reduce residual waste in South Somerset through the delivery of the Somerset Waste Minimisation Strategy

Strategic Priority 30: Produce 20% of the district's electricity and heat from renewable sources by 2015

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Encourage a range of schemes producing electricity and heat from renewable sources including Combined Heat and Power, Wind Farms and Landfill Gas;
- Incentivise small community/neighbourhood/individual heat and electricity schemes;
- Ensure new housing and business developments include schemes for producing electricity and heat from renewable sources;
- Foster new businesses that want to take advantage of proximity to schemes for producing electricity and heat from renewable sources.

Action 30: Support schemes producing electricity and heat from renewable sources and deliver three schemes by 2012

Goal 11: Environment

Protection and enhancement of our natural environment and biodiversity



What do the sources of Baseline Data tell us about where we are now?

- Existing environmental capital in South Somerset with the Somerset Levels and Moors, the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), two Green Flag awarded Country Parks (in Yeovil and the heritage site of Ham Hill), 35 Sites (2,789 Ha) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 3 National Reserves (NNR), 4 Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and 572 (6,209 Ha) Local Wildlife Sites (LWS);
- Nitrogen Dioxide is 40.7 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ at monitoring location Yeo 502; district target is maintaining or below 40 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ by 2011;
- Baseline data in South Somerset Local Biodiversity Action Plan's Biodiversity Action Reporting System (2008-2012);
- SSDC performance 2005-2007 on removing abandoned vehicles (100% removed in 24 hrs);
- 76% of South Somerset residents satisfied with parks and open spaces (Ipsos MORI 2006/7);
- 75% of residents in South Somerset are satisfied with the quality of the natural environment (Ipsos MORI 2006/7);
- SCC's Somerset Landscape Scheme data shows 113 environmental projects delivered in 2007/8;
- The number of potentially contaminated sites in South Somerset (2007/8) was 1,663; Number of contaminated sites dealt with through Development Control in 2007/8 were 9, 2006/7 19 and 2005/6 21 (SSDC).

Why is this goal important?

South Somerset enjoys a high quality natural environment, which is species rich in a varied landscape. Uniquely including the Somerset Levels and Moors, the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), two Green Flag awarded country parks (in Yeovil and the heritage site of Ham Hill), 35 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 3 National Reserves (NNR), 4 Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and 572 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS). Consultation with residents and visitors shows that maintaining this quality is very important. There is increased awareness of the threats to biodiversity from inappropriate land management, unsustainable development, pollution and Climate Change.



There is a clear link between the quality of the environment, people's health and wellbeing and a successful local economy through tourism. South Somerset is such an attractive place to live that people retire here and commute great distances for work, to allow their families to grow up in this lovely area. A proactive and strategic approach is needed to make sure that future generations can enjoy the clean air, water, productive soil, beautiful landscape and thriving wildlife that South Somerset boasts today.

What are the main actions by partners, other partnerships and strategies that will contribute towards this goal?

- SSDC's Local Development Framework Core Strategy to be produced by 2010;
- SCC's Climate Change Strategy (2008) sets out the challenges to Somerset and how SCC will adapt its own practice to reduce CO₂ emissions;
- SCC's Somerset Natural Environment Strategy (2011) will provide a strategic framework for protecting and enhancing the environment;
- Somerset Biodiversity Partnership's Somerset Biodiversity Strategy (2008-2012) delivers Local Biodiversity Action Plans;
- SCC's Somerset Highways Biodiversity Action Plan (2006) ensures biodiversity conservation and enhancement on the highways network across Somerset;
- South Somerset Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2008-2012) prioritises actions to deliver biodiversity gains within South Somerset;
- SSDC's Countryside Service Plan annually prioritises actions to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the environment;
- SSDC's Open Space Strategy (2009) will make sure there is good quality, accessible spaces for both people and wildlife;
- The Blackdown Hills Partnership's AONB Management Plan ensures the protection of the AONB and delivers social and economic regeneration;
- The Environment Agency South West Strategies including flood planning, biodiversity conservation and pollution control;
- The Environment Agency Climate Change Adaptation Plan incorporates the recommendations from the Pitt Review (2008) and identifies actions to mitigate the risk of flooding as a result of Climate Change;
- Environment Agency's Catchment Flood Management Plans for the Parrett, North and Mid-Somerset, Dorset Stour and East Devon Catchments;
- Somerset Strategic Partnership's Somerset Economic Strategy (2005-2015) includes actions that support tourism;



- SSDC promoted a public “Adopt a Tree” campaign that resulted in 500 trees being adopted in country parks in 2006/7;
- SCC administered 113 grants in South Somerset through the Somerset Landscape Scheme in 2007/8;
- SSDC’s Carbon Reduction & Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2008) prioritises actions that support adaptation to Climate Change such as using drought resistant plants in urban areas, planting trees for shade and providing temporary flood protection barriers for emergency use;
- SSDC’s Air Quality Action Plan (2005) and SCC’s Air Quality Strategy (2008) give a framework for how the district and county councils will address air quality;
- SSDC’s Contaminated Land Strategy (2005) sets out how the council will identify and inspect contaminated land;
- SSDC Ham Hill Country Park and Education Centre offers activities and courses that raise awareness of the importance of the environment and bio-diversity

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) has already delivered that contribute to this goal?

- South Somerset Together held workshops facilitated by Sustainability South West and commissioned a Sustainability Appraisal to develop the South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy;
- The Environment Agency, Natural England and South Somerset Climate Action are represented on the South Somerset Together Board;
- Funded the development of the new South Somerset Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2008)

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) will take to add value to this goal?

Strategic Priority 31: South Somerset Together partners are exemplars in protecting and enhancing the natural environment

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Sponsor the delivery of the South Somerset Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2008-2013)

Action 31: Explore options for biodiversity conservation and enhancement on land managed by South Somerset Together partners by 2012 and deliver biodiversity projects each year to 2026

Action 31.1: South Somerset Together partners map existing open spaces in rural and urban areas that can be used for a range of functions and develop a joint Open Space Strategy for South Somerset by 2012



Action 31.2: South Somerset Together partners agree land management plans with environmental targets and actions for their own estates by 2012

Strategic Priority 32: Promote sensitive land management approaches across South Somerset by 2010 and sub-regionally by 2020

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Showcase good practice of community involvement, such as the promotion of 'Rights of Way' conservation schemes, horticulture and community gardens and "wild places" for biodiversity;
- Actively encourage projects that link environmental work with wider goals, such as improving community cohesion by including excluded teenagers, those with mental health problems, ethnic minorities, those from economically deprived backgrounds, etc;
- Ensure soil quality is preserved even in small individual and neighbourhood gardens and allotments through information from advice organisations including the Soil Association;
- Make sure that increasing tourism and recreational activities in the countryside and river/waterways has the minimum impact on the environment and wildlife;
- Enhance biodiversity by promoting the creation of woodlands, wetland reserves and other habitat.

Action 32: Deliver a promotional campaign by 2010 that raises community awareness and involvement in environmental approaches and projects.

Action 32.1: Engage and educate landowners and developers of ways to mitigate flooding risk in urban and rural areas by 2010.

Strategic Priority 33: Assess the risks and opportunities in South Somerset that arise as a result of Climate Change

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- A continuous, robust approach to policy development that takes into account the need to mitigate and/or adapt to Climate Change;
- Make sure the latest Climate Change adaptation measures, based on Government guidelines and National and International examples of good practice are used to good effect in the district;



- Monitoring the effects of Climate Change on the landscape, wildlife habitats and species, etc;
- Ensure the effect of Climate Change on people, the built environment including heritage, the natural environment, the economy, finance, education and all aspects of life, is minimised.

Action 33: South Somerset Together partners agree a protocol by 2010 that ensures Climate Change adaptation is embedded in all relevant decision making processes especially in the planning and delivery of services across the district



Goal 12: Environmental education

Awareness about the importance of our natural environment, biodiversity and sustainable use of resources and satisfaction with the local environment

What do the sources of Baseline Data tell us about where we are now?

- Satisfaction with keeping land clear of litter and refuse is 68% (Ipsos MORI 2006/7);
- South Somerset has the best performance nationally of a Local Authority area for the lowest amount of residual waste produced per household at 322.63 kg per household in 2007/08.

Why is this goal important?

The natural environment of South Somerset is frequently given as an important reason why people choose to live, work and visit within the district, but public awareness of the threats that face the environment is often limited. The factors that adversely affect the environment are mainly through human behaviour either unknowingly or wilfully. This includes the effects of traffic, fly-tipping, vandalism, graffiti, dog fouling and litter dropping, all of which are high on the issues identified by residents that affect the quality of life in neighbourhoods. Educating people about the environment is a crucial part in meeting the challenges associated with sustainable development including responding and adapting to global and local changes. This encompasses the way we go about our daily lives. Although education and awareness of environmental issues is increasing, generally there is still an apathetic attitude to making real changes. This goal ambitiously aims to engage with people, businesses and service providers to change attitudes and practices that will contribute to our continued pride and satisfaction with the environment we all share.

What are the main actions by partners, other partnerships and strategies that will contribute towards this goal?

- Somerset Waste Partnership's SWAP team (based at the Carymoor Environmental Centre at Dimmer, Castle Cary) visit schools and community groups across the county to promote waste minimisation, reuse, recycling and composting;
- Somerset Biodiversity Partnership's Somerset Biodiversity Strategy and the South Somerset Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2008-2012) have specific actions about education;
- SCC's Charterhouse Centre runs a number of courses and activities delivering environmental education, including to businesses;
- SSDC's Ham Hill Education Centre has an Education and Access Officer until December 2009 to deliver courses and activities for children and adults that improve understanding about the environment;
- South Somerset Climate Action raises awareness about Climate Change locally;



- The Somerset Wildlife Trust runs educational programmes across South Somerset;
- SSDC's Conservation Unit runs courses on traditional skills such as stone wall building and hedge laying;
- SSDC's Carbon Reduction Strategy (2008) prioritises actions that educate staff and community partners on how to reduce CO₂ emissions;
- SSDC's Countryside sites have conservation land management plans that include working with volunteers.

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) has already delivered that contribute to this goal?

- Set up the South Somerset Together website (2007);
- Holds meetings, events and workshops open to the public on sustainability.

What are the actions South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) will take to add value to this goal?

Strategic Priority 34: South Somerset Together champions environmentally friendly approaches

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Use the South Somerset Together website to link websites belonging to LSP partners and other local, Regional, National and International sustainability and environmental educational sites to make access to information easier;
- South Somerset Together champions, acknowledges and promotes good practice examples by organisations, communities and individuals that contribute towards a sustainable environment.

Action 34: South Somerset Together provides a range of good practice examples that meet the sustainability needs of residents, businesses and organisations in the district through its website and events by 2011

Strategic Priority 35: Promote environmental education at all levels with all groups and communities

What are some things that need to be thought about when addressing this Strategic Priority?

- Increase South Somerset residents' satisfaction with their local natural environment by 5% by 2010;
- Engage individuals, neighbourhoods and communities to understand the importance of the environment and that the behaviour that leads to fly-tipping, dog fouling, litter and graffiti has a negative affect on people and can damage the environment;



- Work with a range of local partners including parish and town councils to give support, advice and funding for sustainability educational events and programmes;
- Take positive steps to make sure that those groups who are not normally aware of, or engaged with, the environment are encouraged to become involved;
- Use the media to raise awareness of sustainability and what it means in practice in South Somerset
- Raise awareness of the choices people can make with regard to the use of resources including energy from renewable sources, minimising waste, food and product sourcing (including ethical choices), the options for low carbon transport and many other aspects of life and work.

Action 35: Deliver a campaign by 2010 aimed at local businesses, communities and individuals to improve understanding of the impact of personal choices on the environment and options for “green living”.



3

The next steps



The Sustainable Communities Act 2007



The Act, which was launched in October 2008, places a duty on Government to assist local authorities in promoting the sustainability of local communities

To participate and put forward proposals, local authorities must put in place proper consultative approaches. South Somerset District Council welcomed the legislation. Steps are being taken to establish a process by which local people can suggest and be involved in the selection of ideas that can be fed through the local authority, the Local Government Association (LGA) as the “selector”, to central government. The scope of the Act is very broad, covering economic, social and environmental issues. It does not

limit the type of action that could be put forward, provided the action is within that broad scope. It is for local people to decide what they think needs to be done to promote the sustainability of their area. It is also designed to strengthen the role of communities and simplify the process for taking ideas generated locally, up to central government.

As it will not be possible for all suggestions to be put direct to central government, local authorities and the selector will have a “shortlisting” role. The government will consult the selector

and try to reach agreement on which of the proposals on the shortlist should be implemented. The government will respond to all of the suggestions shortlisted by the selector and will publish an action plan setting out how it will take forward the suggestions that it adopts. The lobby group who promoted the Act has its own website and summaries on: www.localworks.org.uk

The Delivery plans



The Sustainable Community Strategy lays out a blueprint of what needs to be tackled in the long-term to 2026

To make sense of this, the Goals are broken down into medium-term Strategic Priorities and short-term shared Actions. Most of the actions will be delivered by 2012. All the organisations represented on South Somerset Together (LSP) are committed to making the actions happen. The challenge is to coordinate all the contributions they can make through realigning their budgets or staff work to deliver what is needed, when it is needed.

This is quite hard because it is different to how things have happened in the

past, but it should make things better for residents and partners as well as save public money. Delivery plans are a record of what needs to be done and how and what measures need to be taken (before and after) to see if the actions taken have made any difference.

The key thing is to ensure the actions are delivered in a sustainable way. This can be really hard because it means the partners have to think about the way they deliver the shared actions as part of their normal activities, as well as how this can carry on being done without being an

endless drain on resources. They have to make sure their actions reduce CO₂ emissions and waste to landfill, make the best use of vital resources like water and minerals, support the use of local materials and food, help build skills for local people, include people from all walks of life, ages and abilities and so on.

No one said it would be easy to do this, but at least everyone agrees that it makes sense to do it this way.

Performance Management



Performance management is about knowing where you are at the moment, agreeing what needs to be done, doing it and seeing if it has made any difference.

This is all about having clear objectives (what we want to do), setting relevant targets (how we will know when we have achieved this), measuring what happens (how we are doing on the way, what have the benefits been of what we have done) and making adjustments in what you are doing if it needs it. It is quite straightforward.

The complexity is in the number of actions in the Sustainable Community Strategy and the number of organisations involved in delivering them. Most of these organisations have their own systems for monitoring what they do, measuring its effectiveness and reporting this internally

and to the public. South Somerset Together (LSP) will not replicate this but harness the evidence of progress against the Strategy's actions and report this to all the partners collectively. Performance management requires that a number of factors are taken into account including, as mentioned before, the internal business processes of all the partners involved in delivery, the money needed to help it happen, what the community really wants, what is new about what is being done and what we and other LSPs can learn from it. Since managing performance is so important (because we could all be working away but not actually making any

difference at all to the issue we wanted to tackle) it is vital to coordinate the reports on progress and for the LSP to react quickly to problems. For this very specific work, the LSP has a Performance Monitoring Sub-committee that meets regularly.

South Somerset Together wants to create a shared culture of seeking continuous improvement in setting and delivering results towards achieving the Vision for the district. From April 2009, auditors will conduct a Comprehensive Area Assessment in Somerset measuring how effectively partners are doing and requiring evidence of effective performance management.

Risk Management



There are huge risks to all of us if we fail to deliver this Sustainable Community Strategy, but especially for our children and our grandchildren.

Each of the delivery plans for the shared actions are measured against a range of things that could have a big impact on their success or the partners involved, immediately and on the long-term aims of the Strategy. So what could seem to be a small risk, if an action failed to happen, could have a far greater impact on the long-term effectiveness of the Strategy.

An example of this is Action 15, which is to set up a business forum. The businesses in the forum play a big part in making sure that the milestones and the actions needed to reduce CO₂ emissions and waste, helps them continue to grow whilst adapting to Climate Change and

failure to do that will have a big impact on everyone as well as businesses themselves. In addition, the forum will be involved in making sure the right skills are available for them or new businesses who wish to operate here. It is important that local, affordable training is available because it supports local jobs, improves the level of wages and may influence our children's decision to stay here to study and work or leave the area. If we fail to engage with businesses on these, as well as a range of other issues, it could have a knock on effect on the whole Strategy. So Action 15 is a hinge pin to a whole number of important things happening.

So how can we reduce risk? The answer is to manage it. First of all it is important to think of what the risks are and then to analyse the impact on delivery of the Strategy as a whole, the sustainability agenda, on the individual organisations involved, on South Somerset Together and on the people of South Somerset. It is important to assess what influence factors such as politics, legal and statutory requirements and technology could have on delivery. It is hard to second-guess everything that could happen; much of which may never happen anyway. But it needs to be done so that everyone at least is aware of the issues involved.

Equality Impact Assessment



The Sustainable Community Strategy has been written with people in mind. It should make a difference to everyone living and working in the district.

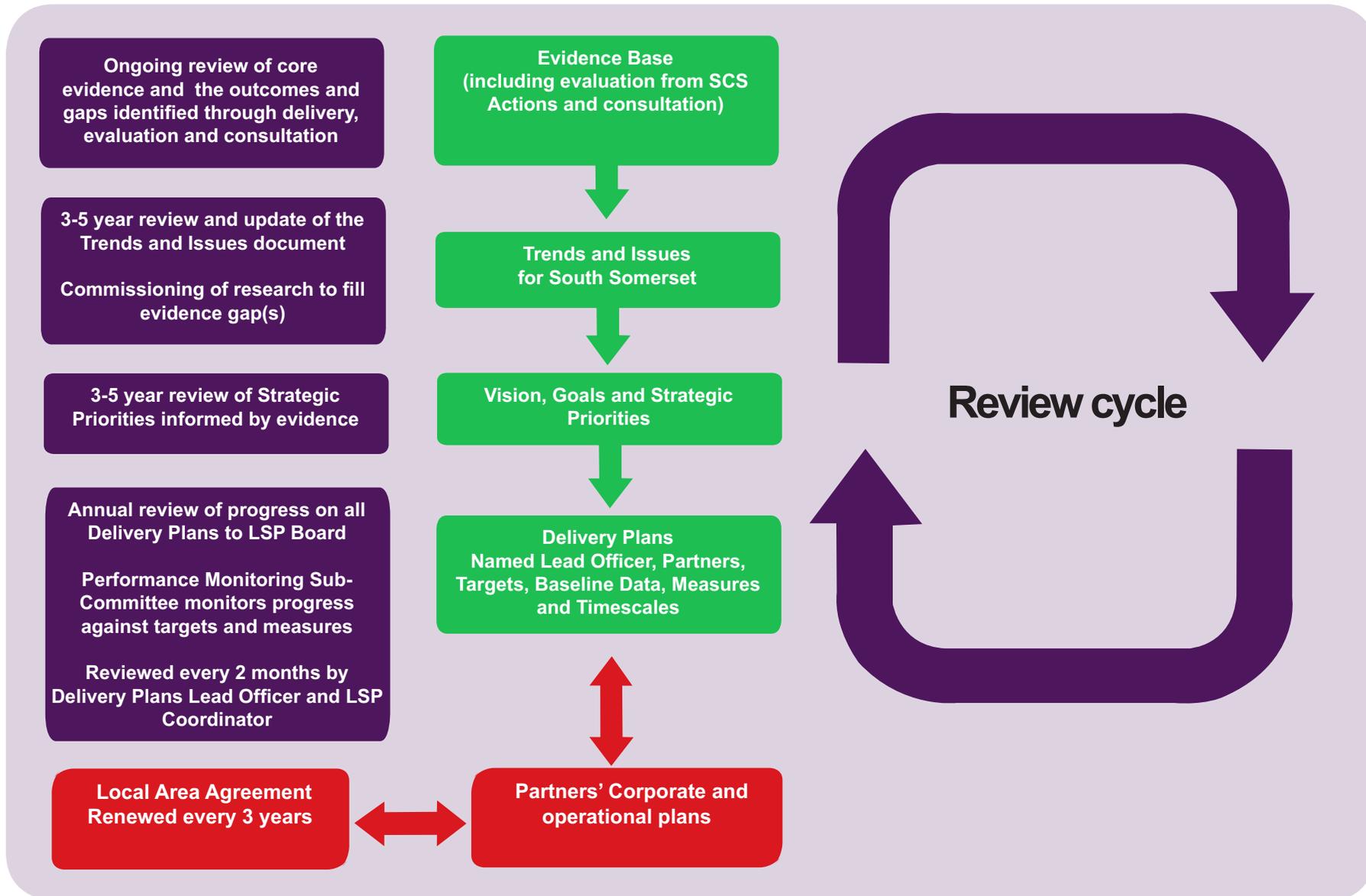
The Strategy makes reference to children, young people, families, parents and older people. This includes people with disabilities or illnesses including mental health issues. It takes into account people's sexual orientation, religion, culture and ethnic origin and their work, training, leisure and housing needs

whether in towns, villages or rural areas. South Somerset Together's mission is to improve the quality of life for all people in South Somerset.

What will make that mission happen? The delivery of actions in the Sustainable Community Strategy will take into account the needs of people by identifying and

analysing the potential impact on different groups, both positively and negatively. Obviously delivery partners need to manage the impact and make sure no one group of people is seriously disadvantaged. To be honest, this should never happen but it still is a good thing to make sure it doesn't.

Renewing the Strategy



Bibliography

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Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (2007); HM Government, Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG);

Shaping South Somerset: Trends and Issues (2008); South Somerset Together (LSP);

Strategy Securing the Future (2005); HM Government, Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs;

The Sustainable Communities Act (2007); Office of Public Sector Information;

Taking It On (2004); Sustainability South West; Response to Government consultation;

The Egan Review: Skills for Sustainable Communities (2004); HM Government, Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG).

Some useful websites

Audit Commission: www.audit-commission.gov.uk

Carbon Trust: www.carbontrust.co.uk

Department of Communities and Local Government: www.communities.gov.uk

Department of Energy and Climate Change: www.decc.gov.uk

Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: www.defra.gov.uk

Ecos Trust: www.ecostrust.org.uk

Energy Savings Trust: www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Government Office for the South West of England: www.gos.gov.uk/gosw

Local Works: www.localworks.org.uk

Office of Public Sector Information: www.opsi.gov.uk

Somerset Strategic Partnership (Local Strategic Partnership for the county):
www.somersetstrategicpartnership.org.uk

South Somerset District Council: www.southsomerset.gov.uk

South Somerset Together (Local Strategic Partnership for the district): www.southsomersettogether.org.uk

South West of England Regional Development Agency: www.southwestrda.org.uk

Sustainability South West: www.sustainabilitysouthwest.org.uk

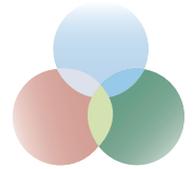
Glossary of terms

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BRE	Building Research Establishment
BREEAM	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method
CAB	Citizens' Advice Bureau
CDRP	Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership
CLG	Communities and Local Government
CLT	Community Land Trust
CO ₂	Carbon Dioxide
CPRE	Campaign to Protect Rural England
Defra	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
FE	Further Education
GIS	Geographic Information System
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GOSW	Government Office for the South West
G&T	Gypsies and Travellers
GW hr	Gigawatt, unit for measuring power per hour
Ha	Hectare, unit of surface area
HCA	Homes and Communities Agency
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England

HMO	Houses in Multiple Occupation
HSNA	Health and Social Needs Analysis 2007
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IIP	Investors in People
Ipsos MORI	Ipsos MORI, part of the Ipsos Group, is a leading multi-research company
Kg	Kilogram, measure of weight
Km	Kilometre, measure of length/distance
KW	Kilowatt, unit of power
LAA	Local Area Agreement
LDF	Local Development Framework Core Strategy
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LNR	Local Nature Reserves
LSC	Somerset Learning and Skills Council
LSOA	Lower Super Output Area
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership (known as South Somerset Together)
LTP	Local Transport Plan
LWS	Local Wildlife Sites
m	Metre, Measure of length
MTIG	Market Towns Investment Group
MW	Megawatt, Unit of power
NHS	National Health Service

NNR	National Nature Reserves	SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (businesses)
NOMIS	National Official Labour Market Statistics	SPAHC	Strategic Partnership Against Hate Crime
ONS	Office of National Statistics	SREC	Somerset Racial Equality Council
PACT	Partnership and Communities Together	SRYP	Somerset Rural Youth Project
Partners	Refers to the public, private and voluntary sector organisations that are members of South Somerset Together (the Local Strategic Partnership)	SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer	SSP	Somerset Strategic Partnership (the Countywide Local Strategic Partnership)
PCT	Primary Care Trust	SSVCA	South Somerset Voluntary and Community Action (formerly the CVS or Council for Voluntary Service)
PETA	Promoting Emotional Health Through Activities	SST	South Somerset Together (Local Strategic Partnership)
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance	SWAP	Somerset Waste Action Programme
QCA	Qualification & Curriculum Authority	SWP	Somerset Waste Partnership
RA	Regional Assembly	SWRDA	South West of England Regional Development Agency
RoW	Rights of Way	Third Sector	Voluntary and Community Sector
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy	VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector
SFSB	Somerset Federation of Small Businesses	ViSTA	Voluntary Sector Training Alliance
SCC	Somerset County Council	µg	Microgram, unit of weight
SHINE	Social & Health Initiatives Enterprise (Somerset) Ltd		
SINE	Somerset Intelligence Network		
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment		

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