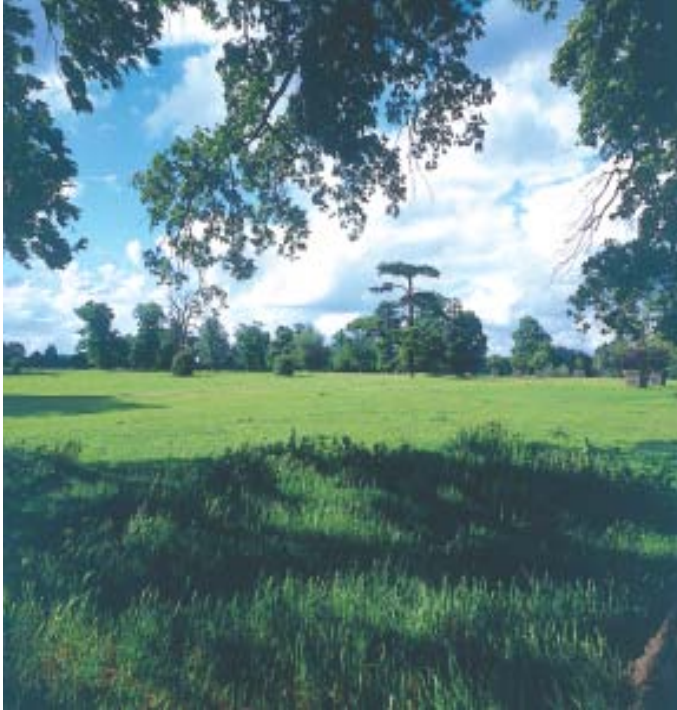


A Vision for South Bucks

The South Bucks Partnership



Foreword by Diane Rutter, Chair of The South Bucks Partnership

By the year 2016, many things will have changed and there will have been many threats to the way of life here in South Bucks, but also many opportunities to improve it. This Community Plan is founded on the town and parish appraisals, which have been carried out throughout the District. Together with individual consultations and input from all public sector organisations operating in South Bucks, the voluntary and community sector, business and representatives of the faith community.

It's aim is to blend those views into a deliverable and achievable plan for the future, which will have a real chance of shaping this district to be what residents want it to be in 2016.

One of the main reasons we believe it will be deliverable is that it is a partnership plan - all those who have contributed to it, are committed to achieving it and will use it to focus their efforts on a long-term improvement to our way of life here in South Bucks.

A word about the previous Community Plan. The Shape of Things to Come - South Bucks 2006-2016 follows an existing Community Plan that has been replaced by this new version. That Plan was quite ambitious but virtually every goal it set has already been achieved and the ones that are still in progress, have been incorporated into the new version.

This Community Plan will play a major part in providing the sort of community our residents want to live in but crucially, it will also make a major contribution to ensuring that the community is sustainable. In other words, our way of life should be capable of being maintained well beyond 2016 and the work being carried out in the meantime is geared to supporting and enhancing that long-term sustainability.

Please take some time to read through the Plan. We welcome your involvement and ideas and especially any views on how we can achieve the vision and targets.

Members of the Partnership:

- Buckinghamshire County Council
- Buckinghamshire Economic Partnership
- Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services
- Bucks Forum of Faiths
- Buckinghamshire Lifelong Learning Partnership
- Chiltern and South Bucks Primary Care Trust
- Government Office of the South East
- South Bucks Association of Local Councils
- South Bucks Chamber of Commerce
- South Bucks District Council
- South Bucks Youth Forum
- Thames Valley Police Wycombe
- Voluntary Action (Chiltern and South Bucks)

The South Bucks Partnership

Individual organisations have a range of targets, plans and strategies that they have to deliver.

All too often though, we have found that our actions could be more effective if services were better co-ordinated. For this reason, the South Bucks Partnership was formed and brings together local authorities, parishes, health, the police and representatives from the education, business, youth, faith and voluntary sectors.

The South Bucks Partnership has developed this Community Plan, but community planning requires us to do more than just produce a document. The real challenge is to change the way in which things are done, in order to achieve our ultimate goal of improving quality of life in South Bucks for all its residents.

Developing the Community Plan

This Community Plan has been developed from a wide range of research and consultation, involvement of key agencies and the community and voluntary sector working in the District. Many of these organisations came to a Visioning Event on 1st July 2005, where the priorities for the Community Plan were identified.

Further consultation took place via a leaflet to every household and organisation in the District and this final version incorporates the comments received back. More detailed Action Plans will be developed and updated throughout the life of the Community Plan.

So please read on to find out how our proposals tackle the issues local people are concerned about.

The Shape of Things to Come - South Bucks 2006-2016

By 2016 we think that you will want South Bucks to be a place with:

1. Falling crime and fear.
2. Greater community pride and a sense of belonging.
3. A sustainable and thriving community.
4. Green space, character and the environment of the District preserved and enhanced.
5. Public services flexible and meeting diverse needs of our community.
6. Improving health and well-being, especially for those in deprived groups.
7. Improvements in traffic congestion, road safety and public transport.

1. FALLING CRIME & FEAR

The current situation

South Bucks is a safe place to live, but the fear of crime is a very real issue for many residents. Burglaries and theft from vehicles are particular problems and we suffer from a lot of drug related crime that spills over from adjoining towns.

To deliver the vision we need to ensure:

- Drug, alcohol and substance use and misuse are reduced.
- Property related crime (including domestic and business property and vehicle crime) are reduced.
- Increased police resources for South Bucks, to reflect support provided to other Thames Valley areas.
- Fear of crime reduced by promoting crime prevention, reducing anti-social behaviour and recognising the reassurance of visible policing.





2. GREATER COMMUNITY PRIDE & A SENSE OF BELONGING

The current situation

There is a strong identity for many communities in South Bucks, and across the District many volunteers help to support a wide range of activities. But more volunteers are needed. We need to look at making sure everyone can be encouraged to be involved in their communities, to volunteer and feel involved in local decision-making.

To deliver the vision we need to ensure:

- High levels of community identity, supported by community and local events, and community information.
- Active citizenship fostered by encouraging volunteering and allowing people to have a say in decision making:
 - Support all members of the community to volunteer, including our older generation, children and young people, and those from Hard to Reach Groups
 - Encourage businesses in South Bucks to help employees to volunteer
 - Encourage and support engagement in forums and consultation, such as Youth Councils and Older People Action Groups.

3. A SUSTAINABLE & THRIVING COMMUNITY

The current situation

The District is a popular but expensive place to live and work. Local house prices are increasingly beyond the means of key workers and some local people, and there are high levels of commuting both of residents outside of the District, and commuters accessing London and surrounding large towns.

To deliver the vision we need to ensure:

- That appropriate housing and support is available, for affordable housing for local people entering the housing market, key workers and an ageing population.
- That consideration is given as to whether any land which would not normally be available for housing, should be made available for affordable housing.
- Engagement with local businesses to ensure the local economy can continue to thrive, including ensuring skills levels and provision of training and education can meet those needs.
- Encouragement of more home working through housing and planning policies.

4. GREEN SPACE, CHARACTER & ENVIRONMENT OF THE DISTRICT PRESERVED & ENHANCED

The current situation

South Bucks enjoys large areas of attractive countryside and 87% of the District is Greenbelt. There is strong support for recycling and environmental initiatives. However, parts of the countryside are in need of enhancement. Our towns and villages are also (as a result of Government Policy) subject to greater pressure for development than they were in the past.

To deliver the vision we need to ensure:

- That we maintain strong policies to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development.
- That we bring about improvement to damaged land without the need for inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Vision

- That we protect the overall character of towns and villages, whilst recognising and supporting appropriate development.
- That we support a range of other initiatives which all have a bearing on character and the environment, including the designation of new Conservation Areas, and proactive support to reduce waste going to landfill.

5. PUBLIC SERVICES FLEXIBLE & MEETING DIVERSE NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY

The current situation

Much of South Bucks is rural, and residents are able to enjoy attractive countryside and landscape. But this can also affect how residents can access services, particularly as many of the services are placed outside the District, such as major hospitals. Although overall the District is affluent, there are areas and communities of relative disadvantage; this could be due to a number of reasons such as income, disability, health, and diversity. It is important that all South Bucks residents are able to access the services and support they need.

To deliver the vision we need to ensure:

- All residents are able to access services and support.
- That comprehensive information on support and services is available to everyone.

6. IMPROVING HEALTH & WELL BEING, ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE IN DEPRIVED GROUPS

The current situation

Generally residents are healthy compared to the national average. But it is clear that there are some parts of the district and some residents and groups with particular problems.

To deliver the vision we need to ensure:

- Support for tackling health inequalities including:
 - cutting teenage pregnancy rates
 - reducing obesity particularly in young people
 - smoking cessation
 - improving mental health.

7. IMPROVEMENTS IN TRAFFIC CONGESTION, ROAD SAFETY & PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The current situation

Traffic congestion on main routes forces large volumes of traffic, and increasingly lorries, onto local roads and country lanes, damaging the environment and living conditions. Congestion on major routes will also become more pressured with the development of around 19,000 new homes over the next 15 years in the north of Buckinghamshire and the expansion of Heathrow.

Car ownership is high, but for those without a car, public transport is difficult, both for links across the District and in rural areas. This limits access to services and activities, particularly for the older population, young people and those that are less mobile.

To deliver the vision we need to ensure:

- Improved road safety and road and footpath conditions.
- Reduction in the rate of traffic growth and congestion, including use of HGVs through villages, and encourage more car sharing.
- Better local transport links between places in the District, looking at both public and community transport.

