



SOUTH BUCKS
District Council

Helping Build a Better South Bucks Community & Wellbeing Plan 2017 - 2020



Foreword

The district council plays a huge role in protecting our quality of life and in ensuring everyone has opportunities to take responsibility for their own wellbeing. Our Community and Wellbeing Plan 'Helping Build a Better South Bucks', provides a clear vision of how South Bucks District Council will support communities over the next three years, working with other agencies and local voluntary groups. Empowering and supporting our diverse communities is at the heart of this plan, and there is no limit to what we can achieve when our communities are supported and encouraged to make a difference in addressing local priorities.

South Bucks has a long and proud tradition of strong, active and dynamic community groups. This plan builds on our strengths by supporting residents, businesses and voluntary groups to be directly involved in shaping their community. There have been some fantastic improvements to sports, play, environmental and community facilities as well as an ongoing growth and strengthening of community-run activities. The provision of Walking Football sessions in Burnham and Stoke Poges, Yoga in Denham, Pilates in Fulmer, Outdoor fitness in Wexham and Iver, have all proved immensely popular in keeping our communities healthy and reducing social isolation. The rollout of the "Safe Place Scheme" in Beaconsfield, Burnham, Farnham Common, Gerrards Cross, Iver, Iver Heath, Richings Park, and Stoke Poges has produced safe havens for our most vulnerable people. Promotion of the National Citizen Service in South Bucks has raised opportunities for young people to volunteer on local projects and learn new skills. The launch of a South Bucks-wide credit union helps to deter the use of loan sharks or payday lenders.

As evidenced throughout, this plan has been written to serve all of South Bucks, so your involvement and views are imperative to its success. As Leader of South Bucks District Council, I recognise the important role that the council plays, as a community leader. The six strategic aims detailed in this plan will improve the health and wellbeing of people in South Bucks, stimulate the local economy, keep our streets safe and ensure that South Bucks remains a great place to live.



Councillor Ralph Bagge

Leader of South Bucks District Council

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Executive Summary

South Bucks District Council's Community and Wellbeing Plan seeks to further develop resilient and independent community assets that play such an important role in providing local services and facilities. Working in partnership with local community groups, developing community assets is embedded throughout this plan and imperative to achieving its key aims and objectives.

Buckinghamshire's 2014 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment recognises how the wider determinants of health and wellbeing such as education, employment, and housing need to be considered and addressed to have a significant influence on improving health and well-being. These determinants have a significant impact in predicting the overall physical, mental health and wellbeing of communities as lifestyle choices influence risk to common medical conditions including heart disease, strokes, diabetes and depression.

South Bucks' new community and wellbeing plan '*Helping Build a Better South Bucks*' outlines the council's approach to help support and enable communities, towns and villages to better support these wider determinants. This is why this plan is closely aligned to and supports a range of key district and county-wide strategies (see below) which aim to make South Bucks a better place to live and work:

- Chiltern and South Bucks Recreation and Open Space Strategy
- Chiltern & South Bucks Sustainable Community Strategy
- Chiltern & South Bucks Community Safety Partnership Plan
- Draft Chiltern and South Bucks Economic Development Strategy
- Buckinghamshire Physical Activity Strategy
- Buckinghamshire Health & Wellbeing Strategy
- Buckinghamshire Children and Young People's Plan

Enabling a strong and resilient community helps to build a sense of belonging and civic pride, all essential ingredients to living in cohesive and active communities. Local communities are best placed to identify the services and facilities they value and wish to develop and protect. To help achieve this, the plan includes a diverse range of projects, all of which are aligned to six cross-cutting strategic aims.

If you would like to know more information about this plan please contact South Bucks' Principal Leisure & Communities Officer, South Bucks District Council, Capswood, Oxford Road, Denham, Bucks UB9 4LH Tel: 01494 732110 or email: community@southbucks.gov.uk

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Building on Strong Foundations

Community participation enables residents and local voluntary organisations to work collaboratively to identify local priorities and so implement solutions that address local issues. Over recent years this has become even more pronounced as a result of an aging population and the pressures on social and health service budgets. Active, cohesive and vibrant communities offer an effective solution to address such challenges enabling residents to be active, involved, engaged and happier.

Sustainable communities are places in which people want to live now and in the future. They help improve the quality of life for all communities whilst safeguarding the environment for future generations. South Bucks District Council considers that to achieve sustainable communities, all members of the community have a role to play in identifying what is important and requires protection for the future, what are the priority needs of the community and how these needs can be effectively met.

Strong and cohesive communities are a key ingredient in helping bring people together. 'Helping Build a Better South Bucks' supports South Bucks Council's key objective of working towards "*safer and healthier local communities*" as well as supporting the five strategic themes of the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Sustainable Community Strategy.

Progress in delivering this strategy will be reported through an annual update report, covering each of the plan's six strategic aims detailed below.

Aim Number	Summary Description
Aim 1	Facilitating community participation, engagement and action, through established and new community networks, to develop sustainable communities.
Aim 2	Supporting services that improve opportunities for older people to live fuller, safer, more active and ultimately more fulfilling life styles and become more integrated into local communities.
Aim 3	Improving the health and well-being of the population and reducing health inequalities.
Aim 4	Providing an environment for young people to enjoy, stay safe, be healthy, active, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being.
Aim 5	Helping to stimulate and support a vibrant local economy whilst protecting the environment.
Aim 6	Encourage collective working to promote and support the rich and diverse wealth of cultural heritage in South Bucks.

The plan aims to build on the strong foundations of previous community

development interventions which, as evidenced below, have been instrumental in helping the community to deliver a broad range of successful local community projects.

Key achievements

1. The South Bucks District Council Chairman's Community and Volunteering Award ceremonies were held to celebrate and recognise the achievements of local volunteers.
2. Since 2014 over £119,500 has been awarded to local community groups, associations and charities, helping them to improve and develop local services and facilities. This has helped support a total of £4.1 million worth of projects being delivered to the community.
3. Supported the establishment of South Buckinghamshire Community Bank (M for Money) credit union in South Buckinghamshire.
4. Promotion of the National Citizen Service in South Bucks has raised opportunities for young people to volunteer on local projects and learn new skills. An annual professional visit by young people to South Bucks District Council provides an insight into Local Government and the world of work generally.
5. Implementation of the Active Bucks programme and the Council's outreach sports development programme in South Bucks through our partnership with Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL), has led to the provision of walking football sessions in Burnham and Stoke Poges, yoga in Denham, outdoor fitness in Wexham and Iver, pilates in Fulmer and gardening in Stoke Poges memorial gardens.
6. GLL also provide the 50+ programme at the Beacon Centre in Beaconsfield which offers Short Mat Bowls, Badminton and Walking Football. The annual Club Games saw teams from South Bucks compete in Badminton, Table Tennis, Pickleball & Walking Football. Disabled customers are provided with a multi skills class for children from 5-13 with learning difficulties
7. GLL also deliver an annual inter-schools indoor rowing competition (13 schools, including 4 special schools); Young carers baseball festival hosted at Farnham Park with 25 young carers taking part; a women's-only session in

netball hosted at the Beacon Centre; a satellite Basketball sports club set up with the Beaconsfield School in partnership with South Bucks Comets and a Sports Club Forum hosted at Gerrards Cross Memorial Centre which attracted 20 clubs.

8. Through the GLL Health Wise initiative we have supported the 'Buckinghamshire Falls Prevention' programme which helps older people to improve their health and fitness through a programme of chair based exercise, pilates and walking.
9. We have invested in the South Bucks' leisure centres including the refurbishment of gyms, reception areas, exercise studios and changing rooms.
10. Invested in and promoted the 'Simply Walks' programme to operate in South Bucks helping to provide twenty health walks in the district attracting 7,400 visits per annum.
11. Raised £150,000 funding from the Big Lottery for a new club house at South Buckinghamshire Golf Club which now attracts over 36,000 rounds of golf per year, with the youngest player being just six and the oldest being in her early 90's! It is estimated that the average golfer will walk about five miles per round of golf. There are now two golf clubs based at the course (South Bucks Golf Club and Farnham Park Golf Club) with a combined membership of nearly 600 players, the majority of whom are over 60 years of age.
12. Farnham Park Playing Fields is home to a number of rugby and football teams, including Farnham Royals RFC, Phoenix Old Boys FC, Slough Town FC and a number of local football clubs. They are also home to Baseball Softball UK (BSUK) who now have four dedicated baseball/softball fields and will have a new clubhouse opening in 2017. Events have attracted over 500 players for weekend tournaments and International Softball matches involving the GB Softball team took place in 2015 and 2016.
13. The rolling out of the "Safe Place Scheme" in Beaconsfield, Burnham, Farnham Common, Gerrards Cross, Iver, Iver Heath, Richings Park, and Stoke Poges has produced safe havens for people feeling vulnerable.
14. In partnership with Thames Valley Police the council has supported "Have your Say" meetings in Burnham, Gerrards Cross and Iver Heath.

15. Launched the "Dementia-Friendly Communities" initiative in Burnham, Denham and Iver during 2015 and "Dementia training for Burnham Businesses" in October 2016.
16. Introduced the "Community Cards" scheme into South Bucks' schools encouraging school children to find out about their communities.
17. Undertaken a proactive approach to support communities at risk of inequalities helping to improve access to a range of services including; family support and intervention, domestic violence advice and assistance, homelessness prevention, debt and benefit advice and access to learning.
18. Provided grants and loans to help vulnerable people maintain their home, invest in security and undertake disabled adaptations.
19. Raised the standards of food producers and retailers through training, advice and information as well as introducing the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme that provides customers with information on the level of food hygiene compliance.
20. Continued to support communities in their desire to minimise the impact of HS2, Crossrail and other national infrastructure projects proposed for the district in order to help protect the local environment and improve the quality of life.
21. Assisted communities to mitigate the impact of surface water and river flooding in the district.

Aim 1

Facilitating community participation, engagement and action, through established and new community networks, to develop sustainable communities.

Summary

Continuing to develop and improve the local community infrastructure is important so that communities are empowered to identify and communicate their local priorities and work *with* public services in ensuring their communities receive the services they need. In South Bucks District community engagement and participation is facilitated through working in partnership at a local level with Parish Councils, Resident Associations, Business Associations, faith groups and other community groups such as the Burnham Health Promotion Trust.

Successful projects already delivered by the community include: the establishment of community libraries and youth clubs, investment in play areas, improved sporting activities and facilities for young people, community clean ups and environmental improvement projects, improved community facilities, reductions in anti-social behaviour, development of business forums to target economic regeneration, and improved community information sources such as newsletters and websites.

Future objectives

1. To build community infrastructure and resilience through the towns and parishes, community and business associations and voluntary organisations.
2. To provide support and assistance to individuals and groups to get involved in local decision-making by identifying local needs and solutions and in the delivery of projects benefiting the community.

3. To increase the number of volunteers in the community by promoting the benefits of volunteering, helping local groups access funding and providing essential training that will improve capacity and resilience in community organisations.

Key actions for 2017 to 2020

1. Build community infrastructure and resilience through working with the towns and parishes, community associations and community groups.
2. Promote opportunities for communities to become more involved in the prevention of crime, and or support environmental, heritage and wellbeing community events.
3. Support the CCG community engagement strategy and Buckinghamshire County Council's Local Area Forum (LAFs) priority themes joining up projects and initiatives to improve local services.
4. Work in partnership with Community Impact Bucks to improve volunteer recruitment and voluntary organisations' access to information, advice, support and training in fundraising, creating social enterprises and good governance.
5. Identify ways to recruit volunteers from the newly-retired marketplace and support young people to access volunteering opportunities.
6. Run an annual community awards event to celebrate the contribution of local volunteers across South Bucks.
7. Deliver the council's community grants scheme and support community organisations to deliver local initiatives that improve the quality of life for residents across the district.
8. Continue to support the local Citizen Advice Bureau service.
9. Support the Armed Services Community Covenant so that Service families are more integrated into the wider community.

10. Support the setting up of Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, Street Associations and Good Neighbour Schemes to help build resilient communities.

Aim 2

Supporting services that improve opportunities for older people to live fuller, safer, more active and ultimately more fulfilling life styles and become more integrated into local communities.

Summary

In later life older people are more likely to experience greater challenges in relation to their physical health and mental well-being. This is particularly relevant when experiencing social isolation through bereavement or a change in life circumstances. With an aging population, South Bucks District Council along with Bucks County Council, Public Health Bucks and third sector organisations must continue to work collaboratively to address this challenge, creating more early intervention opportunities to enable elderly residents to live independent and fuller lifestyles, preventing and delaying the need for more intensive support and care. Playing an active role in their community and keeping an active network of friends, colleagues and leisure partners assists older people to remain active and improve their mental and physical well-being.

The continued growth in the University of the Third Age (U3A) groups, local church lunch and social clubs, faith groups, Older People Action Groups and other older people's networks have helped support this process. These groups bring a significant number of elderly residents together, providing a platform that enables them to input what and how local services are delivered as well as a forum where older people can socialise, make friends, feel welcome and ultimately belong to their local community.

This plan advocates a more proactive and early intervention approach in supporting vulnerable older people. To address this South Bucks District Council is working in

conjunction with Bucks County Council's Prevention Matters Team and Community Impact Bucks to support a range of early intervention initiatives including, Men in Sheds, Active Bucks, Good Neighbour and Care Homes in the Community schemes. For example, Good Neighbour Schemes have recently been set up in Iver and Denham.

Future objectives

1. To work in partnership with key agencies including NHS Bucks, Buckinghamshire County Council, GLL BETTER, L and Q Housing, Age Concern, Faith Groups and voluntary organisations to improve services for older people and also make best use of available resources.
2. To reduce the number of older people who are isolated within their homes.
3. To provide opportunities for older people that enables them to raise issues and concerns which they deem as important.
4. To increase opportunities for older people to live healthy and active lives through the provision of information, advice and assistance.
5. To enable older people to access a wide range of leisure and social activities and/or to participate in volunteering.

Key actions for 2017 to 2020

1. Support Older Persons' Action Groups to help provide opportunities for older people to socialise, access relevant information, advice and access appropriate services.
2. Support Bucks County Council Prevention Matters project which identifies those at risk of isolation and direct them to voluntary sector and statutory support.
3. Enable communities to get involved in volunteering, intergenerational activities, Street Associations and Good Neighbour Schemes in order to reduce social isolation.
4. Support the development/continuation of community based transport schemes.

5. Develop older people's service guides for the Beeches area, Beaconsfield, Gerrards Cross and Denham, Wexham and Iver.
6. Address the loneliness experienced by some care home residents by encouraging local neighbourhood residents, schools, youth clubs and voluntary groups to engage with care homes.
7. Support the local Citizen Advice Bureau to extend its outreach support across the District.
8. Operate regular community safety awareness events to improve home security, reduce scams and doorstep crime, and reduce the fear of crime amongst elderly residents.
9. Develop and support activities that encourage greater interaction between older and younger people, including events related to commemorating the Word Wars, local history projects, environmental initiatives, using Information Technology or addresses social isolation.
10. Promote and develop Community Impact Bucks Pub lunch clubs.
11. Support the development of Dementia-friendly communities and promote the Safe Place scheme.
12. Assist older people to access local community based activities through the GLL BETTER outreach programme eg. Tai Chi in Burnham Library, Walking Football in Burnham and Stoke Poges, promotion of their 50+ programme at the Beacon Leisure Centre (Short mat bowls, Badminton, Walking Football and Pickleball) as well as the annual Club Games for the Over 50s.
13. Support GLL BETTER to deliver the "Healthwise" programme which is the GP referral scheme offering exercise, weight management and falls prevention programmes.
14. Raise community awareness of the need to safeguard vulnerable adults and to report concerns as they arise, signposting the voluntary sector to suitable safeguarding training.
15. Address housing conditions and safe access to housing through the provision of disabled facility grants and assistance to tackle cold homes.

Aim 3

Improving the health and well-being of the population and reducing health inequalities.

Summary

Overall the health of South Bucks' residents is generally very good when compared to national data. Life expectancy and most health and lifestyle indicators are better than the national average and over the last ten years the death rate from all causes has fallen in line with national trends. Two thirds of local residents come from the top 20% of most affluent communities against national population data but there is still a major issue of low levels of physical activity amongst children and young people. There is also an increasing incidence of Dementia amongst the elderly population. Bucks Health and Wellbeing Strategy outlines the importance of addressing the wider health determinants and adopting a preventative approach to health care.

South Bucks District Council in partnership with Public Health and a range of community groups will deliver a range of initiatives that will impact positively in encouraging healthy lifestyles. Examples include helping raise awareness of local services for elderly residents by developing local older people service guides, organising local health fairs, roll out and expansion of the BETTER Health-wise programme, supporting "Active Bucks" activities, developing local community activities, supporting dementia-friendly communities, improving facilities and access to parks and open spaces.

The council participates in the countywide work to reduce the incidence of fuel poverty ie. the inability to heat the home on a limited budget. Through the assistance provided by the National Energy Foundation and Citizens Advice Bureau, residents can access fuel pricing advice, benefits support or access to insulation and heating scheme as appropriate.

Beacon and Evreham leisure centres offer a wide range of facilities including sports halls, fitness suites, dance studio, MUGA and theatre attracting over 196,000 visits per year. Both younger and older people are encouraged through various schemes to increase access to exercise, helping to reduce the risk of obesity, heart disease,

mental illness and diabetes.

The 2017 – 2020 Chiltern and South Bucks Recreational and Open Space Strategy identifies the wealth of open space provision that is available to encourage residents to live more active life styles. Together with the towns and parishes, South Bucks District Council manages woodland and common land often used by ramblers and visitors to the area. Local walks, cycle routes and bridleways have been developed to maximise the use of these facilities, whilst at the same time helping to improve community participation and healthy living. These natural resources are vital in helping to achieve the objective of the new [Bucks Physical Activity Strategy](#), namely to remain physically active throughout life.

Future objectives

1. To support communities at risk of deprivation, identify their needs and improve access to services including leisure, community safety, education and learning, welfare, and housing assistance.
2. To use data to support communities in identifying health inequalities and to target health and wellbeing interventions to reduce these inequalities.
3. To work in partnership with Public Health, BETTER (GLL), Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Sports Partnership (LEAP), and other voluntary sector organisations to increase levels of physical activity through improving access to low cost leisure initiatives.
4. To make the best use of resources by working in partnership with Chiltern Clinical Commissioning Group, BCC Public Health, and the voluntary sector.
5. Further develop the District Council's Workplace Health and Wellbeing strategy.
6. To identify and help obtain external sources of funding for local community groups to support local initiatives that help reduce health inequalities.
7. To proactively assist families and individuals access support services to prevent a crisis intervention.

Key actions for 2017 to 2020

1. To support the Healthy Communities Partnership Board deliver its strategic priorities through Buckinghamshire Health & Well-being Strategy.
2. Support the implementation of Public Health's Active Bucks programme and encourage 1,000 adults become more active from 2016 to 2018.
3. By 2020 attract 220,000 annual visits in South Buck's leisure centre facilities.
4. Enable communities to become active and reduce the risk of social isolation by the provision of community events at Beacon and Evreham Leisure Centres, the Curzon Centre Beaconsfield and Wycombe Sports Centre.
5. Provision of The South Buckinghamshire Golf course and redevelopment of the original Golf Academy site into an open space leisure facility.
6. Provision of Farnham Park Playing Field – Softball and football pitches.
7. Support the Simply Walks initiative to attract 1000 additional walk participants from 2016 to 2018 as well as supporting other community walk initiatives.
8. From 2016-2018 enable 90 residents who have suffered a coronary or stroke medical condition to complete the GLL BETTER Health-wise exercise referral programme.
9. Undertake a South Bucks-wide leisure needs assessment to determine future indoor leisure needs between 2020 -2045
10. Use the key findings of the leisure needs assessment to develop a cohesive leisure facilities strategy identifying the key developments 2020-2045.
11. Support Community and Workplace health activities e.g. health and wellbeing fairs, dementia awareness events, promoting healthy lifestyles.
12. Manage the provision of a workplace health and wellbeing programme including physical activity and alternative therapies such as lunchtime walks, yoga, pilates, acupressure massage and reflexology.
13. Assisting communities to deliver against the Open Space strategy - Play areas, playing pitches nature parks & outdoor education

14. Providing advice and assistance to reduce debt and manage finances through the operation of the CAB and the promotion of the South Buckinghamshire Community Bank (part of the M for Money Credit Union).
15. Support voluntary run sports, leisure & culture groups including community associations and their activity programmes, libraries, youth clubs, older persons clubs.
16. Work in partnership with Thames Valley Police and other key partners to reduce crime and disorder and raise awareness of the risk of abuse in all its forms.
17. Maintain the 'Safe Place Scheme' in Beaconsfield, Holtspur, Burnham, Farnham Common, Gerrards Cross, Iver, Iver Heath and Richings Park.
18. Support the delivery of Bucks County Council's Prevention Matters scheme.
19. Support businesses improvement and growth through advice, coaching and publication of food hygiene ratings. Support businesses to provide nutritional menus through the "Eat Out Eat Well" scheme.
20. Build an effective Local Air Quality partnership to review and enhance the air quality action plan improving air quality and reducing NOx and CO2 emissions within the district.
21. Provide housing advice and assistance to prevent homelessness or maintain decent housing standards or support households to access disability adaptations.
22. Improve safeguarding of the general public by enforcing regulatory controls and the use of health impact assessment tools to better protect the environment and human health.
23. Organise one annual health and well-being fair to promote the broad range of local services that are available to older people within the community.

Aim 4

Providing an environment for young people to enjoy, stay safe, be healthy, active, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being.

Summary

South Bucks District Council is committed to helping provide an environment where young people lead a happy and healthy life and where they can fulfil their potential. As a member of the Chiltern and South Bucks Children's Trust Partnership the Council works with and supports various organisations at a county and district level to achieve this.

South Bucks District Council has provided support to educational establishments to access sports facilities through its contract with BETTER. The council also supports a diverse range of local groups who provide services to young people through the provision of project advice and funding. This includes the many youth clubs within South Bucks which provide a range of diversionary and intergenerational activities.

Many of the Council's services are targeted at the most disadvantaged communities ensuring assistance is delivered to those most in need. Running along targeted services are opportunities for all to benefit such as the opportunity for young people to access apprenticeship placements at the Council's Leisure Centres.

Future objectives

1. To work with young people to identify their needs and so develop appropriate activities that help them contribute to the community in which they live.
2. To work proactively with agencies including Action4Youth and Local Children and Young People Partnership Boards to improve access into leisure provision for children and young people who have additional and complex needs.

3. To celebrate and acknowledge the contribution children and young people make to their local community.
4. To stimulate and support intergenerational activities to create activities between younger and older people.

Key actions for 2017 to 2020

1. Utilise the Recreation and Open Space Strategy to support local community groups and parish councils improve play provision
2. Continue to provide junior courses at Evreham and Beacon Leisure Centres e.g. trampolining, football and basketball.
3. Through our partnership with BETTER provide activities for 16-25 year olds: e.g. dance, basketball, gym studio at Evreham and Beacon leisure centres as well as organising the inter-school rowing tournament. Also provide inclusive activities for children and young people with physical and learning difficulties.
4. Offer discounted community rates across South Bucks leisure centres for local clubs' junior sections through different promotional packages and campaigns.
5. Run discounted school holiday activity programmes in South Buck's leisure centres in partnership with BETTER.
6. Alert local youth clubs to new funding opportunities and provide project advice where required.
7. Host the South Bucks Community Awards ceremony in 2017 and 2019 including a category for young people.
8. Develop intergenerational projects for young and adult people so that they understand their differences, needs and aspirations, share their skills and develop a greater sense of community spirit.
9. In Partnership with BETTER, local secondary schools and other key educational establishments, expand apprenticeship opportunities for young people aged between 18 – 25 years.
10. Increase opportunities for young people to volunteer and learn new skills by supporting schemes such as the National Citizen Service.

11. Work in partnership with BETTER, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Sports Partnership (LEAP), and other voluntary sector organisations to increase levels of physical activity of young people.
12. Promote the existence of local safeguarding training including Prevent to adults working with and for young people.
13. Through our Community Safety team, help prevent child sexual exploitation, drug and alcohol abuse, bike theft and all forms of abuse via mobile phones, social media and the internet.
14. Deliver the Community Card Scheme in primary schools encouraging health and wellbeing, community integration, cyber safety and money management.
15. Ongoing training of taxi-drivers in relation to safeguarding and the prevention of child sexual exploitation.

Aim 5

Helping to stimulate and support a vibrant local economy whilst protecting the local environment.

Summary

South Bucks District has traditionally had a vibrant economy and a skilled workforce. Supporting and sustaining this economic well-being of the local area is important to maintaining the quality of life for the people who live and work in South Bucks.

The district's location within the South East of England and close proximity to London makes it a popular place to live and work, resulting in great pressure to provide more housing and employment. The district is, however, predominately rural in character with 87% of the district being classified as Green Belt land. Its countryside setting forms the Green Belt around Greater London and includes several large areas of parkland: Colne Valley Regional Park, Black Park Country Park, Langley Park Country Park and Dorney Lakes. These areas are a natural asset to the district that contribute to people's quality of life but it also means that the supply of land for building on is severely constrained. A balance is therefore required that meets the social and economic needs of local residents whilst protecting the environment.

The Draft Economic Development Strategy for Chiltern and South Bucks sets out the councils' economic development priorities for 2017-2026. Some of the actions it includes that influence this plan are as follows:

Connectivity: continued investment in broadband for business premises as well as wireless and mobile services.

Enterprise and business growth: promotion of business support provision including networking, training and signposting. Maintain dialogue with large employers.

Skills and employability: support services that forge links between employers and education as well as encouraging work experience and apprenticeships. Promote youth enterprise as a route to employment as well as helping older workers remain economically active.

Tourism and town centres: support tourism initiatives to convert day visits to overnight stays as well as helping town centres to maintain their vitality.

Through the planning system, the Council seeks to protect existing employment sites from change of use, so these sites are maintained to meet future demand. It supports the re-development and extension of existing premises on existing employment sites and the provision of flexible business units that can be easily adapted to accommodate a variety of uses. Sustainable working practices, particularly those that reduce the need to travel to work by car are also promoted through planning policy.

The economic vitality of localities is dependent on the provision of a variety of services and facilities. In addition the image of an area can be affected by issues such as crime or perceptions of crime together with its overall appearance. Through the planning system and work with its partners and local communities the council will seek to protect and enhance existing community facilities, support the role of retail outlets and promote high standards of design that minimise the risk of crime. With the majority of the district being rural in character, the Council has a responsibility to support the rural economy and will allow agricultural diversification where it benefits the local community, does not impact on the local quality of life and is not harmful to its rural setting.

South Bucks District Council helps local retail business and community groups to access information and training on the new legislative controls involved in licensing, food safety and health and safety. These schemes are designed to support the ability of the community to access a range of learning opportunities, develop opportunities for the voluntary and community sector to operate as social enterprises and deliver public services.

The council is an active member of the Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership whose remit is to "*build conditions for sustainable economic growth in the entrepreneurial heart of Britain*". Such growth will enable more skilled job opportunities, protect the area's existing economic and environmental qualities and encourage a shift to cleaner environmental technologies and businesses.

South Bucks District Council works in partnership with voluntary and community organisations, towns and parishes, Buckinghamshire Strategic Tourism and Tourism South East, to promote the locality. Tourist information is made available from the Council's website, local and regional Tourist Information Centres such as Wycombe and Marlow but also from the village information centres in local libraries, pubs, restaurants and accommodation facilities in the district.

The protection of the distinct environment offered in South Bucks with its diverse market towns and small villages, means it is important to maintain the local economy

both in terms of local businesses and retailers.

The lack of affordable housing is a key constraint to economic growth in the district: The Council is working in partnership with a range of organisations to support a balanced housing market. The Council's Housing Strategy seeks to develop affordable housing options; return empty dwellings to use, and support older and younger people with their housing needs across all tenures.

Future objectives

1. To improve access to learning, skills development and work experience in order to meet the needs of the local economy.
2. To promote the development and growth of local businesses by signposting them to specialist business support including advice on scaling up.
3. South Bucks District Council to act as the local energy efficiency champion for the area celebrating and promoting best practice throughout the district.
4. To support sustainable development initiatives to protect and enhance the local environment and reduce the effects of climate change and national infrastructure projects.

Key actions for 2017 to 2020

1. Support the delivery of Chiltern and South Bucks joint Local Plan, a document that forms part of the South Bucks Development Framework that sets out the Council's broad planning policies for achieving sustainable development in the district up to 2036.
2. Support the delivery of the Chiltern and South Bucks Economic Development Strategy which has the vision of creating a District with "prosperous and diverse economies that encourage local employers and small businesses".
3. Promote local events and high street diversification that will encourage greater footfall in the district's high streets eg. Small Business Saturday / Chinese New Year / St George's Day/ pre-Christmas activities.
4. Work with Parish Councils, business associations and community groups to convert tourist day visits to overnight stays.

5. Support the development of broadband and mobile technologies as they are introduced into the District.
6. Reduce carbon emissions from South Bucks District Council's operations.
7. Actively promote the Flexible Loan scheme to householders and local traders helping support older people access low interest loans to undertake home repairs, adaptations and improve security.
8. Work with the Local Enterprise Partnership to develop joint procurement procedures which can support local employment opportunities, raise environmental standards and protect the environment.
9. Promote and support schemes to enable homeless and key workers secure housing they can afford (including the private rented sector).
10. Work to return empty homes to use, revitalise the areas of poorer housing and work wherever possible to return vacant employment sites or contaminated land sites to use.
11. Provide opportunities for local businesses to access food safety, licensing, and health and safety courses targeted to their needs.
12. Work in partnership to improve energy efficiency, identify and implement greener travel initiatives and identify ways in which we can live more sustainably within the District.
13. Work with partners and the community to reduce CO2 emissions and the impact of climate change.
14. Ensure that national infrastructure projects (HS2, Crossrail, Western Rail Link to Heathrow, Heathrow Expansion, M4 Smart Motorways etc.) are managed sustainably and enhance local economies.

Aim 6

Encourage collective working to promote and support the rich and diverse wealth of cultural heritage in South Bucks.

Summary

South Bucks District has a rich heritage with its towns and villages steeped in history and tradition. This heritage is typified by the wide and varying range of distinctive festivals, fetes and fairs which contribute to defining South Bucks as both a unique and charming place to live. Examples of annual events include the Burnham Donkey Derby, the Beaconsfield Country Fayre, Gerrards Cross Fun Run, Iver Heath Apple Day and all the pre-Christmas celebrations that take place in the towns and villages.

In addition, there are one-off events that welcome the community to attend such as the "Celebration of Shri Jayanti" at the Anoopam mission as well as events at the Fulmer mosque. These local community festivals and fetes encourage and enable communities to come together, strengthening common understanding and foster a sense of pride within local towns and villages. The events also provide the council and other agencies with a perfect opportunity to promote and consult on policies and to publicise facilities and services.

Celebrating the rich heritage and cultural diversity of South Bucks not only promotes and encourages a distinct sense of place but is also a vital ingredient in helping to bring different communities together and create community cohesion. The building of trust between communities is the cornerstone of meaningful and effective community cohesion and therefore diversity in language, culture and religion needs to be celebrated and used productively to help stimulate meaningful interaction between different faiths, cultures and generations.

Future objectives

1. Support town and parish councils, schools and community organisations to celebrate South Bucks's diverse and rich local heritage.
2. Celebrate the diverse range of faiths and cultures within the South Bucks district.
3. Support the development of community cohesion activities across South Bucks, enabling communities to develop respect and understanding of each other.

Key actions for 2017 to 2020

1. Through the council's community grants programme support community groups to deliver festivals/ fetes that celebrate their area's local history and heritage.
2. Support community groups across South Bucks commemorate the World War I Centenary.
3. Enable communities to take ownership of their environment e.g. community managed foot paths and woodland, promoting "Walkers are welcome" routes.
4. Help to preserve the character of our landscapes and conservation areas by working in partnership with local conservation groups.
5. Assisting communities celebrate their heritage e.g. Eid and national day events as well as supporting countywide activities such as Bucks Art of Islam Festival.
6. Support "Beyond Difference" to help facilitate better understanding between the different religions in Chiltern and South Bucks.
7. Work with faith organisations to support community development.

Conclusion

'Helping Build a Better South Bucks' recognises that local people are the most valuable resource of South Bucks District and the importance of working in partnership with a range of organisations including Thames Valley Police, Buckinghamshire County Council, Chiltern Clinical Commissioning Group, BETTER and Parish/Town Councils.

We have been able to join up central government policy and in doing so maximise the resources and initiatives available for local communities. By working with the voluntary sector, the council continues to seek additional external resources and will increasingly look for opportunities to work in partnership encouraging joint delivery to sustain or improve services to the community.

There is a clear requirement to constantly challenge how the council develops services and to be receptive to what residents are saying across the district. "Helping Build a Better South Bucks" will continue to empower communities to reflect on the services that they receive and help inform the council and its partners on ways to continually improve. Our proven track record of joint working over many years will continue to demonstrate our commitment to work with partners and residents to:

- Create sustainable communities embodying the principles of community development at a local level
- Improve both the range and quality of services available across the district
- Improve the quality of life in the district
- Ensure that cross-cutting issues are addressed in a joined up way

This plan will continue to reflect and deliver the council's vision of delivering great value, customer-focused and sustainable services. We recognise that it cannot be a static document and that it will evolve as circumstances change and dictate. Therefore, this plan will formally be reviewed in 2020 with the action plans associated with the six strategic aims reviewed annually.

Appendix A

Community profile

South Bucks is relatively small at 141 square kilometres and lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt area, with 87% of the land designated as green belt. There are many small towns and villages, with the largest being Beaconsfield, Burnham and Gerrards Cross. These three towns have the best infrastructure and facilities. Most of the towns and villages have historical roots which are preserved through the use of conservation areas and listed buildings. The larger towns of High Wycombe, London (Hillingdon), Maidenhead and Slough border the District. These centres provide shopping facilities and services not available within the District as well as some jobs for residents. In return, South Bucks provides the open spaces which help meet the recreational needs of these larger centres. There are good links to London via the Chiltern Railway, M40 and M4.

Changing Demography

The population of South Bucks was recorded as 66,867 in the 2011 Census with the latest ONS estimates being 69,120. More than 19.4% were aged 65 or more, and this is projected to grow to more than 28% of the population by 2026. 15.7% of the total population in South Bucks were from a Black or Asian Ethnic Minority Population, against only 6.6% in 2001 and the 2011 England average of 14.3%. This includes the 7th highest concentration of people of Sikh religion in England at 4.7% with those of Muslim and Hindu religion each totalling 2.5% of the population. 4.5% of households are lone parent households and 0.4% of households are from the Gypsy and Traveller communities, the 7th highest in all of England.

Our impact on the environment

South Bucks's residents are keen recyclers. The recycling rate for the district rose to nearly 54% in 16/17 from 34% in 13/14 according to figures compiled by DEFRA. It has also been named as the most improved Local Authority in England for recycling in the latest DEFRA league tables.

The 2013 carbon footprint of South Bucks (latest available from Department of Energy and Climate Change) ranks 193 out of 405 UK local authority areas (first place has the lowest emissions), the equivalent to an average of almost 45,000 kilowatts per resident. Usage is broken down to Domestic, Industrial and Transport sectors, and it is the Transport sector which has the highest emission levels, ranking 353 out of 406 UK areas. This is because South Bucks has a network of major roads with both the M25 and M40 running through it as well as being crossed by the M4.

Combined with several 'A' roads and the proximity to Greater London making it a busy part of the commuter belt, it will be a challenge to reduce the overall carbon footprint, requiring national initiatives to reduce overall emissions.

Some parts of the district, particularly around the rivers, are prone to flooding. This needs to be taken into account when planning development close to these locations.

South Bucks' communities

South Bucks has cohesive communities with evidence of strong community spirit, high levels of volunteering and active community groups. Like much of Britain, statistics show South Bucks' society is becoming more diverse so it is important that we maintain cohesive communities and help people to live together.

There is a long history of conformist and non-conformist faith communities being active in South Bucks over the past 1,000 years which continues to this day. Currently there are many churches across the district, the Al Muhassin Mosque in Fulmer, the Annapam Mission for Hindus in Denham and Sikh temples in Slough and Southall used by South Bucks residents. People from all the faith communities make significant positive contributions to local life and wellbeing, often leading activities which support residents, engenders community spirit and creates a sense of personal responsibility. In particular many of them run a range of activities for young people inside and outside school, and many of the holiday schemes are church led.

Although crime levels are comparatively low in South Bucks there have been periods when acquisitive crime increases, mainly caused by offenders travelling into the district from other areas. The fear of crime in South Bucks is also disproportionate to the actual level of crime which may partly relate to a relatively larger elderly population.

South Bucks has a strong voluntary and community sector with greater than average volunteering levels. There is good local engagement and provision of local community activities. Results from the Buckinghamshire County Council Residents' Survey 2011 were that around 23% of respondents help in the community to give personal care, run or manage a youth group, or help out at a local day centre or library. 42% said they already helped out by doing a favour for a neighbour such as help with shopping, whilst 62% said they would be prepared to do so. 32% said they would consider volunteering. Things most likely to encourage volunteering were flexible hours and a low time commitment coupled with more information on what was available.

Turnout for elections is consistently higher than the national average for district, county and general elections.

Health, Wellbeing and deprivation

South Bucks is undoubtedly a pleasant place to live and regularly ranks within the top 20 of the Halifax Quality of Life Survey. However, not everybody benefits as much as they should do, and there is much to be done to address the deprivation found in small pockets in the district.

In the overall IMD 2015 results, the three most deprived areas in the district were Wexham and Fulmer, Burnham Church and Beeches and Iver Village and Richings Park. The three least deprived areas were Beaconsfield North, Beaconsfield West and Gerrards Cross. Department of Health figures for 2012 showed 1,100 children in South Bucks living in poverty.

The 2014 Fuel Poverty figures, published in 2016 by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, show that South Bucks has 6.9% of households living in fuel poverty. This is measured by taking fuel costs and income into account.

Although the district's population is comparatively healthy with life expectancy significantly above the national average at 85.1 years for males and 89.8 years for females, there are differences in health between the most and least disadvantaged. The difference in life expectancy between the lowest and highest deprived areas is 6 years for females and 7.1 years for men and there is a significant burden of preventable disease. Mortality rates relating to heart disease and stroke have fallen and are better than the England average, with better than average adult 'healthy eating', smoking, alcohol-related harm and obesity rates. However, South Bucks is worse than average in relation to the incidence of malignant melanoma, increasing and higher risk drinking, winter deaths and physically active adults. South Bucks is above average for road injuries and deaths. The 2011 Census highlights that in South Bucks 6% have long-term health problems or disability that limits their day-to-day activities. Percentages vary across South Bucks from 3.4% in Gerrards Cross South Ward through to 12% in Denham North Ward. One in 10 residents provides some form of unpaid care for someone with an illness or disability.

Wealth, economy, skills and affordability

Buckinghamshire prides itself in being the entrepreneurial heart of Britain, with a significantly higher than average level of new business start-ups. Bucks Business First (BBF) reported in 2015, that 12.6% of working residents in South Bucks were self-employed. There were 5400 businesses in the district. The most significant sector is Professional, Scientific & Technical at just under a quarter of all businesses, with the next highest being Construction at around one tenth of all businesses. Only 6% of employees work in the public sector with South Bucks ranking the lowest overall

authority in this respect. South Bucks has a high proportion of businesses with large turnovers, with almost one in five having a turnover greater than £0.5 million.

Residents are highly qualified, with 53.8% having a degree or equivalent qualification, against the national average of 37.1%. This is reflected in the 2015 gross median full-time earnings of £34,305 for South Bucks against the England average of £26,800. 28% of residents both live and work in South Bucks (BBF, 2011). The next highest percentages of workers commute to Slough, Hillingdon and Wycombe.

School performance is also strong with 75% of 15+ year olds achieving five or more GCSE results at grades A-C.

Unemployment is still relatively low but has been gradually rising since December 2015 with the Job Seekers Allowance claimant count for December 2016 being 300 people which is 17.8% up on last year.

More than 40% of homes in South Bucks are detached and rank highest in the country for numbers of rooms (6.4) and bedrooms (3.2) compared to all other local authorities. South Bucks ranks in the top 5% of authorities for the prevalence of caravans, mobile homes and other temporary structures as a proportion of all housing. In South Bucks, mean average private rents are the most expensive outside London and 11th overall, at £1,573 per month. With the average house price in the UK at £190,275 (Land Registry, March 2016), they averaged £650,659 in South Bucks, making South Bucks the most expensive area outside of Greater London. According to ONS figures South Bucks also saw the strongest growth of all areas in average house prices last year at 22.7%.

South Bucks' level of affluence, its popularity as a place to live and the limited availability of developable land, leads to the high house prices. Demand for affordable housing in the district is above what can be met in practice. At the same time the higher ongoing costs of goods and services also reflect the ability of an affluent population to pay higher prices generally. These elements, when combined, create significant problems of affordability for essential workers, young people, those in lower paid employment and those living on state benefits. The difficulty in recruiting key workers is also exacerbated by the higher wages paid in London.

Transport, infrastructure & accessible services

The three main settlements in the district all have good rail and road links to London and many people commute to work in the London and city region. The bus links between the main urban areas are good but residents have expressed concern about the availability of public transport in the rural area and therefore the limited access to services. South Bucks has high car ownership and high levels of commuter flows in and out of the district. This puts pressure on the local road network and congestion

occurs, particularly during the morning and evening, on roads and junctions running close to capacity.

The most recent road traffic accident information relates to 2014, when there were 66 people Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) in South Bucks. This reflects higher traffic levels in the South East, with South Bucks having more KSIs because of the motorways within the district.

Residents' priorities

From the Buckinghamshire County Council residents' survey in 2011, the top three personal priority areas for residents of South Bucks were: 1) the condition of the roads; 2) tackling crime and anti-social behaviour; 3) parks and open spaces. This changed when asked for the top priorities for the local community, with tackling crime and anti-social behaviour becoming the number one priority, followed by the condition of the roads, creating job opportunities and economic growth' and primary, secondary and special schools.