

Draft Sustainable Community Plan 2010-2026

To: Tunbridge Wells Together

Author of report: Raymond Warren, Interim Head of Community and Corporate Planning

Executive Summary

In 2006 Tunbridge Wells implemented its Sustainable Community Plan 2006-11 to *“work in partnership to improve the quality of life for all”*. This Plan has now been in place for three years and a number of actions have already been met.

Since that time, the Local Strategic Partnership has been reinvigorated (now called *Tunbridge Wells Together*), and has worked on developing a long-term vision for the area. This vision has been based on a wide range of consultation data, demographics data and future trend projections.

Tunbridge Wells Together has agreed to refresh the Plan in light of the new vision.

This reports sets out the process to this point, the next stages of refreshing the plan and a first draft of the strategy.

Background/Introduction

1. In 2006 Tunbridge Wells implemented its Sustainable Community Plan 2006-11 to “*work in partnership to improve the quality of life for all*”.

This Plan has now been in place for three years and a number of actions have already been met.

Since that time, the Local Strategic Partnership has been reinvigorated (now called *Tunbridge Wells Together*), and has worked on developing a long-term vision for the area.

This vision has been based on a wide range of consultation data, demographics data and future trend projections.

In addition to this, the Kent Partnership is now into the second round of Local Area Agreements called the Kent Agreement 2. The partnership has negotiated a set of indicators and targets with central government for delivery over the next three years.

Drivers for refreshing the Sustainable Community Plan

2. There have been a number of drivers for refreshing the SCP. These include:
 - the newly agreed long-term vision for the LSP
 - the medium to long-term challenges of the current economic circumstances
 - new central government obligations
 - existing sources of research, consultation and engagement
 - Kent Agreement 2 requirements
 - the borough’s Local Development Framework
 - requirements associated with the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)

Progress

3. The Sustainable Community Plan has made good progress in delivering its actions. Over 80 per cent of indicators from the Sustainable Community Plan are being achieved or have been achieved.
4. At the *Tunbridge Wells Together* meeting in November 2008, it was agreed to look toward refreshing the Sustainable Community Plan in 2009 to reflect current circumstances and to enable it to concentrate more on strategic issues and less on short-term actions. This was reaffirmed at the Public Services Board meeting April 2009 meeting.
5. The template for the refreshed plan was developed in light of best practice from elsewhere, via the IDeA communities of practice examples and various Audit Commission reports detailing best practice examples.
6. Since then, the 8 Thematic Delivery Groups have been working on their sections of the refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy and have followed the following principles, as agreed by the LSP:

- To create a shortened version of the SCP to focus on achieving the vision towards 2026
 - Link the Local Development Framework (LDF) more effectively
 - Focus on around 15 indicators to ensure there is greater focus on the strategic direction of the borough
 - Make the strategy 'more real' for the people of Tunbridge Wells
 - Ensure that the strategy is predominantly electronic to provide value for money and enable it to be more flexible when it is reviewed on a 3-year cycle.
7. The sections of the sustainable community plan have been considered by each of the Thematic Delivery Groups over the past three months. In total, over fifty partner organisations have had an input into the draft strategy.
8. Each Thematic Delivery Group had a detailed resource base on which to base their considerations. This included summaries of the detailed work of the Local Futures visioning report, TWBC's Vision, the Vision for Kent, the Kent Agreement 2 local action plans, and results from the 2006/07 BVPI General Survey, the 2008 borough-wide survey and the boost surveys. The latest economic data was also used.

Timetable

9. The draft Sustainable Community Strategy will be considered on the following timetable:

- LSP Meeting - 5 October 2009
- TWBC Corporate Services Select Committee - 3 November 2009
- PSB Meeting - 10 November 2009
- TWBC Cabinet - 17 December 2009
- TWBC Cabinet - 4 February 2010
- LSP Meeting - 9 February 2010
- TWBC Council - 24 February 2010

10. Consultation will occur between October and November where the Local Strategic Partnership will ensure that specific groups are consulted on the contents:

Activity	Date and times	Target audience	Staff lead
10 minute presentation at the Access Group Meeting	28 th September	Partners	Raymond Warren
Ward Walks feedback event in Hawkhurst	21 st October	Local residents	Lizzie Goodwin
Ward Walks feedback event in Benenden	10 th November	Local residents	Lizzie Goodwin
Thematic delivery group meetings	Throughout the autumn	LSP partners	All thematic leads
Town and Country Housing Group residents' day	17 th October 10am -2pm	All sections of the community	TBC

St John's leisure centre	We can decide on a day and time	All sections of the community	Lizzie Goodwin
CSP face the people event	1 st October	Local residents	CSP team
International day of older persons	1 st October	Over 50's	SBH
Young peoples' PACT	28 th October	12 – 17 year olds	CSP team
Faith Forum	Next meeting	Ethnic minorities	Raymond Warren
OTWL	Every two weeks	staff	Lizzie Goodwin
LOCAL	5 October for articles End of November print	All residents	Lizzie Goodwin

11. A further round of consultation will then occur in January/February 2010 following approval from TWBC's Cabinet in December 2009.

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12. At its July 2009 meeting, the Public Services Board agreed to focus the refreshed strategy on the principle of *Love Where We Live*. The PSB agreed this would help put a 'real face' to the strategy and clearly helped to articulate agreed vision work competed by Local Futures. This would also help to form an 'agreement' with the public. Namely that Tunbridge Wells Together can deliver services and help people, but it cannot do it alone. This vision of shared responsibility and community empowerment has driven the first draft of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
13. The Thematic Delivery Groups have now all agreed a draft version of their sections for the Sustainable Community Plan. They have done this either at their meetings, or virtually and has involved over 50 partner organisations. In doing so, they have also agreed to focus on a core set of indicators for the long-term which will help measure how Tunbridge Wells Together is achieving its vision towards 2026. These are currently in draft format but can be summarised as follows:

Safer Communities:

- All reported crime levels
- Feelings of safety of the people of Tunbridge Wells

Stronger Communities:

- Civic Participation in the Local Area
- Regular Volunteering
- Engagement in the Arts
- Young People's Participation in Positive Activities

Children and Families:

- Children reporting more engagement with their family and are happier at home
- An increase in positive reporting of the behaviour and participation of children and young people in their communities

Health and Older People:

- Life expectancy rates and infant mortality rates

- Monitoring and improving the levels of satisfaction amongst local older people

Housing:

- The number of homeless households (1) applying for and (2) accepted for help with housing under the homelessness legislation
- The % of vulnerable people living in non-decent homes (including homes that are non-decent due to poor thermal insulation) in the private sector (owner-occupied and private rented)

Economy, Skills and Transport:

- Increase and improvement in the number of sustainable transport schemes
- GVA per head
- Increase in wider curriculum, out-of-school and apprenticeships

Cleaner and Greener:

- Carbon emissions – A reduction in the per capita CO₂ emissions in the area in line with the national targets in Climate Change Act 2008. (currently National Indicator 186)
- Local Environmental Quality – Improved street and environmental cleanliness (currently National Indicator 195)

14. These indicators are a mixture of Kent Agreement 2 indicators and those set locally. By focusing on this smaller number, the LSP will be able to maintain its focus at a more strategic level and performance manage the achievement of its vision more effectively. At the Thematic Delivery Group level, more indicators and action plans will be implemented. This layered approach to performance managing the Sustainable Community Plan will mean that implementation will be monitored and managed at the right level and will therefore be more effective.
15. To translate these high-level indicators into 'real' actions, the partnership has drafted a 'pledge'. This will become the public face of the strategy and will ensure that the achievement on the Tunbridge Wells Together vision will be more meaningful to our communities.

...we will help to:

- reduce crime
- make Tunbridge Wells feel even safer
- increase opportunities to volunteer on a regular basis
- enable young people to be more involved in positive activities
- enable young people to be more engaged in family life
- enable young people to be more involved in their communities
- give opportunities for people to improve their life expectancy
- improve the prospects of older people in society
- increase the number of people in decent homes
- move people from homelessness into homes
- improve the added value of the local economy by encouraging business to start-up
- increase the number of jobs in the borough
- keep the streets clean by collecting your waste and recycling and tackling 'grot-spots'

...you can help by:

- taking crime prevention measures yourself

- seeking to make use of volunteers in your community or even volunteer yourself
- encouraging young people to take part in positive activities
- getting to know your neighbours and look out for your neighbours
- encouraging family involvement by having dinner together and taking part in community activities as a family
- eat, live and promote healthy lifestyles – take part in physical activity for 30 minutes per day
- looking after older members of your family or older friends
- recycling and composting more of your waste
- saving energy in your home – it can save you money!
- Reporting highway defects so they can be repaired quicker
- Picking up litter - if you do it, others will soon do so too
- Report flytipping so it can be removed within 24 hours
- Reporting anti-social behaviour so it can be solved quickly
- Loving where you live!

Cross cutting issues

Legal

16. *The 2000 Local Government Act charged local authorities with “preparing a local community strategy” with their partners in the local strategic partnership (LSP). The community strategy was intended to outline a long-term vision for improving the quality of life and services in the local area”. Following the recommendations of the Egan Review, community strategies were renamed Sustainable Community Strategies to emphasise the importance of sustainable communities and environmental sustainability. More recently, the Government has consulted on the future of LSPs, in the 2006 Local Government White Paper, and prepared the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill.*

In the legislation, explicit reference is made to the importance of housing strategies and the Local Development Framework. Due to this, the refreshed Sustainable Community Plan explicitly highlights this link on page 7.

Finance and other resources, including ICT

17. The basis of achieving the refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy is predicated on the view that Tunbridge Wells Together will utilise its existing resources. No additional costs have been assumed in preparing this strategy. This reflects the current economic climate and the assumption that public finances will be shrinking in future years.

Staffing

18. N/A

Value for money

19. Achieving the vision of the draft Sustainable Community Strategy will deliver value for money in the long-term as services are delivered more efficiently and a larger degree of responsibility is borne by the public.

Risk Management

20. Once a draft has been agreed by the LSP, risk management will be incorporated into the performance management of the delivery plans to achieve our vision.

Equalities

21. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be completed on the draft plan.

Safer & Stronger Communities

22. There are specific sections in the Strategy which deal with safer and stronger communities.

Environment / Sustainability

23. A sustainability impact assessment will be completed during the consultation phase of the refresh.

Human Rights Act

24. N/A

Communication and Consultation

25. Please see details in section 10.

Conclusion

26. An initial early draft of the refreshed Sustainable Community Plan has been completed by the Thematic Delivery Groups and is now available for consultation. The aim is to have the newly agreed Sustainable Community Strategy in place for the start of the 2010/11 financial year.

Recommendation(s):

27. The following recommendations are proposed:

- i) Approve the first draft of the refreshed Sustainable Community Plan 2010-2026 for the initial consultation phase to enable all partners to have more detailed input. This will inform a revised draft in December 2009.

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