

*The Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire*



*working towards*

***A Better Future***

*A Community Strategy for North West Leicestershire*

**CONSULTATION DRAFT**

March 2003



***Member Organisations:***

Charnwood & North West Leicestershire Primary Care Trust  
Faith Communities  
Job Centre  
King Edward VII College  
Leicestershire Chamber of Trade & Industry  
Leicestershire Constabulary  
Leicestershire County Council  
North West Leicestershire Association of Parish Councils  
North West Leicestershire Council for Voluntary Services  
North West Leicestershire District Council  
North West Leicestershire Health Forum  
North West Leicestershire Partnership in Safer Communities  
Stephenson College

The organisations represented on the Partnership have not yet considered this Draft Strategy. They will do so as part of the public consultation process. This means that they have not pre-judged the outcome of the public consultation process and will be able to consider the recommendations of the Partnership on consultation responses with an open mind when the formal strategy is produced.

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## *Consultation*

This Draft Community Strategy has been produced for public consultation. It has been drawn up by a Local Partnership representing a cross section Local Authority, Service and Community interests.

It is very much a 'draft' and we would like to know whether you think we have identified the real issues that need to be tackled jointly in North West Leicestershire. We have included a number of 'targets'. Some of these are based on service information – but others are rather speculative because we do not yet have the 'starting point' information.

Since this is a 'Strategy', which deals with a wide range of activities and services, it has to be fairly broad in its approach. So the next stage will be to draw up detailed action plans to identify exactly what needs to be done and who will be doing it.

### *What we would like you to do*

We would like you to tell us:

- Whether you think we have identified the most important things to tackle in North West Leicestershire. Have we missed out anything important?
- Are there any specific initiatives, activities or improvements that you think need to be tackled in your own local area or for the benefit of particular groups of people with specific needs?
- What are the **three most important** things you would like to see done or improved?

We can then make any necessary amendments to the Strategy and start to draw up more detailed action plans for the Partnership and for local areas.

***Please use the response form at the end of this document if possible. You can photocopy it or obtain further copies from us.***

*Comments can be sent by post, e-mail or via the N W Leicestershire web site:*

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Please mark clearly **Community Strategy  
Consultation**

**e-mail** [community.strategy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:community.strategy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk)

**Web** [www.nwleics.gov.uk](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk)

This Strategy is also available to view on the website - you can submit your comments via the web site.

We would like to receive your comments as early as possible so that we can start work on the action plans.

**The consultation period will run until 30<sup>th</sup> May 2003.**

## *Introduction*

The Government has asked every local authority in the country to develop a Community Strategy. The District Council is responsible for developing a local strategy, in partnership with others and the County Council is responsible for developing a countywide strategy. In North West Leicestershire we have brought together public, private, voluntary and community organisations to form a Local Strategic Partnership. We have called this the "*Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire*". The Partnership's job is to develop and agree a Community Strategy for North West Leicestershire and to prepare an Action Plan to implement it. The Community Strategy is intended to take account of the needs and aspirations expressed by local people – but it must also reflect the Government's policies and priorities and co-ordinate economic, social and environmental action.

Our *Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire* was created in 2001. We have looked at the public consultations that Partnership members have carried out. We have also carried out further consultations with a wide range of local organisations and we have held a series of area meetings with people representing a cross section of local interests to find out what local people think needs to be done.

The result of the work so far is this Draft Community Strategy which has been produced for wider public consultation. In this Draft Strategy we have set out the **Purpose** and limits of the Strategy, our **Vision** for the District in the coming years, the **Challenges** that we face and our broad **Strategy** for tackling these challenges. We have also set some broad **Aims** and some specific **Targets**. We have also identified some of the major **Actions** that we believe will need to be taken to help create a better life for the people of North West Leicestershire.

We are consulting on this Draft Community Strategy before developing an Action Plan to implement it. This is to make sure our approach has the broad support of organisations and individuals who live and work in the District.

When the Community Strategy is finally agreed it will drive the timetables and priorities of many organisations and will help to deliver local priorities in local communities. It will form the backbone for the submission of projects for external funding and grant aid, including those that arise from local community groups. Without it we will not be able to tap into national and european resources.

We will also need to monitor progress to make sure that the Strategy and Action Plans really do bring about the changes intended – and if necessary re-focus the Strategy if different issues or priorities emerge.

## *Statement of Purpose*

***By working together in an agreed way the Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire will be more effective and have greater influence to help create a better life for the people of North West Leicestershire.***

All service providers endeavour to respond to local needs and aspirations. They also have to deliver National Policies and meet National Targets. They seek the views of the people they serve and try to respond to their wishes as far as they can. Our Partnership can share what it has learnt from various consultations so we can develop a strategy that reflects local concerns and aspirations as well as delivering wider government policies and national targets.

Both National and Regional Governments play a significant role in setting targets and priorities for local public organisations. The County and District Councils, the Police, and the Primary Care Trust, all have to deliver national policies as well as meeting local needs. For example the Primary Care Trust is responsible for how government money for health services is spent locally. All these are members of the *Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire*. These public organisations already work closely together. They also work closely with voluntary and private sector organisations. They produce a variety of Strategies and Action Plans to help direct their work to meet these targets. For example, the North West Leicestershire Partnership in Safer Communities has developed a strategy for tackling crime. This partnership includes the Police, The County and District Councils and voluntary organisations such as Victim Support and the Council for Voluntary Services.

This Community Strategy does not set out to duplicate or replace the roles or targets that individual organisations and partnerships have established. The purpose of the Community Strategy is to put things into a wider context and help co-ordinate activities at the local level. This means that individual organisations will continue to develop and deliver their programmes of work to meet their targets but they will also take action, where possible, to meet the broader objectives set out in this Community Strategy.

We believe that by working in partnership we will be more effective. We will be able to work more closely together to take action on a broader range of inter-related issues. We will identify ways that different organisations can work together so that their actions compliment each other. By working together we should be able to achieve more than we could individually - making the whole add up to more than the sum of the parts. By working together as a partnership we will also be able to bid for additional funding to help deliver what we need.

However, we cannot do it all on our own. We need to work together - with individuals and organisations from across the district. Whilst individual service providers can play there part, there are many factors that affect our quality of life that only we as individuals can influence. By working together in an agreed way we hope to make that influence more effective to create a better life for the people of North West Leicestershire.

## *Vision*

***This Vision is a description of how The Partnership would like North West Leicestershire to be by 2010. Working with the community and other organisations we believe this is possible.***

### *Our Vision*

Imagine it is the year 2010.

There is a high level of civic pride in North West Leicestershire. There is a close working relationship between the members of the *Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire*, and between the Partnership and the wider community. Partnership working for the benefit of all is well established and the Community Strategy is widely supported. Community and Voluntary Sector groups are well developed and play a prominent role in the continued improvement of people's quality of life in the District.

People's physical, spiritual and mental health has improved and there are lower rates of coronary heart disease and teenage pregnancy. Levels of crime and the fear of crime are significantly lower than 7 years ago, helped by the reduced levels of drug abuse.

The local economy is buoyant with high levels of employment providing household incomes at the average for the region. Formal education, vocational and workforce training has produced a better skilled workforce and a closer match between those skills and the needs of local employers.

In 2010 North West Leicestershire has achieved a good reputation as an attractive district to live in and to visit. The local environment is clean and safe and the District as a whole is making its contribution to reducing global environmental problems by using resources efficiently.

Public services such as, doctors, dentists, libraries, schools, leisure and cultural facilities are accessible and opportunities are equally available to everyone. Facilities are close to where people live or are accessible through improved public and community transport. Information about these services is easy to find and their provision is responsive to local needs.

Overall, our communities are more sustainable than in the past and economic and social inequalities are significantly reduced.

## ***Challenges Facing North West Leicestershire***

***To achieve the sort of conditions and quality of life set out in the Vision, the Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire and other organisations and individuals will have to work together to overcome a range of challenges.***

### ***Where are we now?***

North West Leicestershire is a pleasant rural area served by 2 market towns, Coalville and Ashby de la Zouch along with 4 principal villages, Castle Donington, Measham, Ibstock and Kegworth.

The A42 from Birmingham and the West Midlands forms the main spine road through the district, joining the M1 and the Stoke-Derby link in the north of the district, near Kegworth and Castle Donington,, providing good access to the East Midlands Airport and Donington Park motor racing circuit.

We have succeeded in improving the unsightly areas around Coalville and in the south western part of the District left by the coal mining industry. There has been a considerable amount of new industrial and housing development on former mine sites – whilst others have been reclaimed and landscaped. The principal tourist attraction is the National Forest and Visitor Centre at Moira, to the west of Ashby, along with the Snibston Museum and Discovery Park in Coalville. We have high levels of employment. The District is a very pleasant place in which to live and work.

### ***What we need to do***

Whilst unemployment levels in the District are below the national average, there is still a great deal to be done to improve the quality of life of people living and working in the District. Average household income is the lowest in Leicestershire. We need to attract a wider variety of better quality jobs – and make sure that the people of North West Leicestershire have the opportunity to be trained to take advantage of them. Although the District has good road and air transport links to the rest of the country, the lack of good local rail links tends to encourage people to travel by car, adding to the congestion on the A42 and M1.

There are still a number of areas where there are concentrations of high unemployment, low incomes and other social problems that develop under these circumstances – drug abuse, crime, ill health, low staying-on rates and poorer educational attainment at some schools, along with high levels of teenage pregnancy in some areas.

These things do not just affect the people concerned; they affect us all. They can only be tackled by the co-ordinated efforts of everyone involved - in the public, private and voluntary sectors. Many of these problems are inter-related. That is why we need a Community Strategy. We need to have a co-ordinated approach and agreed priorities in order to tackle problems such as these.

But there are also less evident things we need to tackle which affect large numbers of people in North West Leicestershire. Many people living in rural areas have difficulty in getting to some



services and facilities – particularly essential services. We need to look at more imaginative ways of bringing services out into the community – perhaps by sharing premises or sharing staff – and also at ways of providing better public transport links between rural areas and service centres. It is no good having bus services if they do not take people to services or leisure facilities at the time they need to use them – and get them back!

Our Town Centres are showing signs of decline. There are a number of empty shops in both Coalville and Ashby. Town Centres not only serve our needs but they can make a big impression on people and firms thinking of moving to the area. So it is important that we continue to improve the range of services and shops as well as the physical environment and character of our centres. Better standards of building design, well maintained public and private spaces and good public art would all help to improve the attractiveness of our centres. Shop owners and major retailers need to play an active part in the promotion of our town centres, as do cultural and leisure organisations – particularly for the evening economy.

We also need to look at the needs of young people, old people and people with disabilities. Young people are the country's future resource. We need to understand *their needs* and the pressures they face. We need to do all we can to establish true community values in young people at an early age – this means that a wide range of organisations, both public and voluntary, will need to work together in a co-ordinated way. There is a considerable amount of effort already being put in by a large number of people, including the development of a Youth Council, but the things we do are not always co-ordinated to achieve the best effect.

### ***The Challenge***

All service providers, and indeed the *Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire*, have the challenge of understanding and responding to local concerns. One of the biggest challenges is to find effective ways to gather balanced views and ideas from all sectors of the public – not just from those who are able to shout the loudest. At the same time, many of the members of our Partnership, as well as other service providers, have to meet obligations and targets set by National Government. These include the contribution we are expected to make towards tackling global issues, such as climate change, pollution and the wasteful use of resources. Things that can also affect people outside the confines of North West Leicestershire.

## *Our Strategy*

***The North West Leicestershire Community Strategy sets out how we intend to work together on four themes: Community Spirit and Involvement, Personal Well Being, An Attractive Place to Live and Work, and how to improve Access to Services. There are many links between these themes. Achieving success in any of them will reinforce progress in the others.***

### *Key Issues*

A large number of consultations and discussions have taken place with local people, local organisations and voluntary groups over the past 18 months. We have looked at the main areas of concern that people feel need to be addressed if we are to continue to improve our quality of life.

The following key issues have emerged from the consultation process as the most important things to tackle overall. Some need to be addressed primarily at the local level; others have wider implications and will require public, private and community service providers to reassess how they deliver their services, to ensure that they take into account people's needs and priorities.

- *A desire to have greater **Community Spirit** and involvement*
- ***Access to Services** – both providing transport such as buses to the right place at the right time and improving the availability of services generally*
- *Better facilities and opportunities for **young people***
- ***Revitalisation of town centres** and preventing the decline of village centres*
- ***To feel reassured** that we live in a safe place*
- ***A better street environment** for all.*

### *Local Issues*

Major local concerns included noise and traffic related to East Midlands Airport and the Racing Circuit, the availability of doctors' and dentists' surgeries and access to health facilities, providing for the needs of older people, young people and people with disabilities, and concerns about areas affected by localised flooding.

There was also a general desire to promote more sustainable living by improving recycling facilities and minimising waste.

### ***Our Approach***

These issues and concerns have been brought together in the Community Strategy under 4 main headings

- **Community Spirit and Involvement:** The need to improve community spirit, responsibility and involvement of local people in supporting their community.
- **Personal Well Being:** The need to tackle crime and disorder, drugs, generally improve our health, and tackle things that affect on our sense of well being.
- **An Attractive Place to Live and Work:** The need to tackle environmental problems – particularly traffic dangers and noise, and to improve the street environment.
- **Access to Services:** The need to improve access to services and facilities, including better public transport and improved information.

All these things are interconnected. Even though we have separated out four key themes in our strategy, tackling any one of them is likely to help make improvements in the others.

Our intention is to bring about real improvements and make sure that we provide fair and equal opportunities for everyone. That does not just mean local authorities and public service providers. It also means local firms and businesses, voluntary organisations – and not least, each one of us as individuals.

## ***THEME ONE: Community Spirit and Involvement***

Community Spirit is a difficult thing to measure or identify. There is a perception that there is a lack of community spirit in some areas. People say that it needs to be improved.

*Getting involved* A reluctance of people to get involved in community activities and support local initiatives seems to be an underlying theme emerging from discussions with local people. In part this may be a reflection of people's lifestyles – changing patterns of shopping, working out of the area, more choices of entertainment and people moving further from family and friends. The substantial amount of new housing development that has taken place in some areas is also felt to have resulted in an imbalance some communities.

*Decision Making* There is a feeling that decisions that affect us are made without us really having an effective way of making our own feelings and desires known. Different generations also seem to have different social values and behaviours. This can create divisions between people of different age groups.

*Projects and Activities* A feeling of Community Spirit often comes from working on projects and activities in a collective way, such as building or improving a Village Hall, taking part in community celebrations like fetes, becoming a school governor or being informed about what is happening locally. This sort of involvement brings different people together and can create a sense of belonging and an understanding and acceptance of different attitudes.

*Individuals* Creating a sense of community spirit and belonging is really down to each of us as individuals. But there are also things that the *Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire* can do that will encourage and foster a sense of community and belonging. This could include supporting volunteering, making sure advice is available about organising and funding community projects and finding better ways of including people in decision-making through consultation. The Community Strategy can help provide the framework – but only local people can make the difference.

### ***Aims***

- To increase people's ***sense of belonging*** and involvement in their community and contribute to peoples enjoyment.
- To develop a strong sense of ***Civic Pride*** in North West Leicestershire.
- To develop strong communities where people feel that they ***have a say in the future.***

### ***What's Already Happening?***

*Community appraisals* There is already a great deal of activity in many local communities that is helping to foster community spirit. Many villages are developing Village Appraisals and Parish Plans setting out what local people feel should be done to improve their communities. A similar approach is now being taken in our two towns with the development of the Ashby and Coalville Market Town Initiatives. These will bring people together to agree how these town centres could be improved.

*Clubs and Groups* There are a large number of local clubs and community organisations in North West Leicestershire. These rely on local people putting in a lot of time and effort. Many are helped and supported by grants from local authorities and other organisations such as the Leicestershire Rural Partnership, as well as the private sector. There are tenants and residents associations, neighbourhood watch schemes, and a large number of sporting clubs as well as local history and natural history groups.

*Community Events* Community events, sports and arts are promoted and supported throughout the District, including events such as 'Picnic in the Park' and Christmas in Coalville. Some villages hold annual fetes, theme weeks and processions, but these often rely on a small number of individuals.

*Voluntary Sector* The voluntary sector, through the Council for Voluntary Services in particular, organises and supports a wide range of services and contributes to getting people interested and involved.

*Consultation* There is also an increasing amount of consultation with local people about all sorts of activities and decisions. This could be developed further.

### ***Targets***

The *Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire* has set some targets, which will contribute to increasing the sense of Community Spirit and involvement in the district by 2010.

The Partnership would like to:

- Increase turn-out at Parish, District and County Council Elections to above the East Midlands average.
- Increase by 10% the number of young people (14 –19 year olds) represented on Management Committees of voluntary organisations. (provisional target)
- See 95% of all Parent and Community School Governors posts filled.
- Every village and urban neighbourhood to have completed a village appraisal or similar local assessment.
- Increase the number of successful bids by local voluntary and community organisations to funders such as the Lottery by 20%. (provisional target)
- Increase the number of hours given by volunteers by 20%. (provisional target)
- Increase the percentage of people involved in a voluntary community activity by 20% (for example involvement in

Tenants and Residents Associations Neighbourhood Watch or local group). (provisional target)

## *Actions*

Some of the most significant actions that we are proposing are to:

- Create a co-ordinated approach to consultation between members of *our Partnership* and others to get a better cross section of community views and aspirations.
- Further develop a support system for local organisations to assist them in developing projects and winning the money to make them happen.
- Consult and actively involve Young people in identifying & providing for their own needs. (For example by improving their representation on organising and decision-making bodies).
- Implement the recommendations of the North West Leicestershire Cultural Strategy – “Growing Together”
- Continue to develop new and flexible ways for people to vote at elections.
- Promote volunteering and in particular to create opportunities for company volunteering schemes.
- Develop an events and tourism infrastructure and increase the capacity for local communities to hold local events, meetings and activities.

## ***THEME TWO: Personal Well Being***

There are many things that affect our personal sense of well-being. Personal circumstances such as family relationships, how well we get on with our neighbours, our state of health, how much we earn, the quality of our housing - all affect our sense of well-being. Some people have to deal with a disability, or are particularly vulnerable because of mental health or learning difficulties. There are also other more general things that affect the way we feel - the level of crime the availability of opportunities for education and the ability to participate in social activities like sport, play, art and evening classes.

As the *Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire* we believe there are four main areas where we can take action to help improve people's personal well-being;

- improving health,
- reducing the fear of crime and improving people's safety,
- improving education and training achievements, and
- improving the local economy.

*Equality* We recognise the need make the opportunities created available to everyone whatever their background or circumstances - particularly vulnerable and disabled people and their carers.

*Personal Health* North West Leicestershire has a higher than average rate of coronary heart disease, long term disability and teenage pregnancy. There are also significant health inequalities. Public and voluntary sector service providers can help to improve health by working together to promote healthy living and better diets and by informing and educating people about healthier lifestyles. We can promote exercise, access to leisure centres and other facilities. But it is only by health agencies, schools, , youth workers, faith communities and voluntary organisations working together that we can make a real difference.

*Fear of Crime* Crime and the fear of crime can also affect our well being. Even if we do not suffer directly from crime ourselves, there is the stress and worry that we may be affected either at home or in the street. That means making our streets and built environments safer through better lighting, CCTV, and by providing reassurance through community workers, wardens, policing and neighbourhood watch schemes. It also means tackling safety on the roads and reducing the number of serious injuries and fatal accidents.

*Education & Training* Improving employment prospects in the district also means tackling education and training. The educational attainment of our young people in some areas, such as Coalville, is below the County average. There is also a relatively low take up by local businesses of programmes such as 'Investors in People', which encourages and supports businesses in providing appropriate training and development for their staff. Finding ways to encourage businesses to support their workforce will have an impact on people's sense of personal well-being as well as on the local economy.

*Income* Our well being also depends on having a reasonable income to support our families and ourselves. Although North West

Leicestershire has low levels of unemployment our average household income is below the regional average, and that is in a region where average household income is also lower than the national average. Working with agencies such as the East Midlands Regional Development Agency (*emda*) and the Leicester Shire Economic Partnership, we can find ways of attracting businesses that provide higher quality jobs with better pay. This could include attracting modern businesses such as internet, media and design companies. We can also contribute by making sure that those in most need take up the benefits they are entitled to.

### *Aims*

Our aims are to:

- Improve the physical, mental and spiritual health of people in North West Leicestershire.
- Reduce inequalities in health between different groups and areas in the District.
- People to feel reassured and safer on the street and at home.
- Improve the skills and knowledge of people in the District.
- Ensure an adequate supply of quality affordable housing with high energy efficiency.
- Attract and develop new businesses that provide long-term and higher paid jobs.
- Make sure we treat everyone fairly and understand people's different needs, whatever their background and circumstances.

### *What's Already Happening?*

*Health* There is already a huge amount of work being undertaken in the District to help improve people's personal circumstances. The recently established Primary Care Trust is working with the County and District Councils and others, for example, to provide more sexual health counselling in schools and youth clubs. There are initiatives like *Resolution* to help and support people in giving up smoking cigarettes - a major factor in coronary heart disease. There is also a Health Forum which brings different agencies and service users together to co-ordinate health improvement activity. There is an excellent GP referral scheme where GP's prescribe physical activity programmes at local leisure centres, rather than drugs, for a range of physical and mental health problems.

*Crime & Safety* The North West Leicestershire Partnership in Safer Communities, formed four years ago, has established a range of projects aimed at tackling key community safety issues through the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy. There has been an increase in the number of police hours spent in the community, the introduction of closed circuit television(CCTV) and a programme of placing speed safety cameras at accident hot spots.

*Housing* Clear links have been established between the quality of housing and the health of the population. North West Leicestershire is making a good progress in meeting the Decent Homes Standard for all public housing. The Council's planned maintenance



programme concentrates on works to improve energy efficiency. A stock condition survey is to be carried out to determine levels of unfitness and energy efficiency in the private sector.

*Education* Responsibility for schools rests primarily with the County Council, which has identified Coalville as an Education Improvement Zone. Over £100,000 of additional funding has been secured to help tackle low attainment levels and low staying on rates at schools in this area. Adult education is provided through a variety of means and the Learning and Skills Council is working closely with local schools and colleges to encourage the take up of courses that lead to qualifications.

*Project Partnerships* Partnership working between different agencies is well established. For example, a Community Action Zone and partnership has been established in the Greenhill ward in Coalville – one of the 20% most deprived wards in the country. The Greenhill Community Action Zone is developing new ways of working to tackle a range of social and economic issues to help create a better life for the people who live there.

*Credit Union* Significant quality of life improvements have been achieved through a range of projects and initiatives both locally and more generally, including the development of a Credit Union.

*Jobs* The development of the local economy has recently focussed on attracting higher quality jobs and increasing tourism in the District, building on the presence of the National Forest. This is already creating jobs and attracting other new businesses. Strategies are also to be developed for Ashby and Coalville to attract and retain businesses.

### ***Targets***

The *Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire* has set some targets, which it believes if met will contribute to everyone's well being by 2010. These are to:

- Reduce conception rates in teenage girls (under 17) each year to achieve a target reduction of 45% within 10 years.
- Work towards the reduction in the number of deaths of those under 75 with circulatory disease (from a rate per 100 000 population of 100.8 to 91.9).
- Reduce the rate of smoking by 1% per year for women continuing to smoke throughout pregnancy and by a similar rate for other specific groups.
- Achieve a target of 70% in influenza immunisation in people aged 65 and over.
- Improve GCSE results to support the achievement of the County-wide target that at least 63% of 16 year olds should obtain 5 or more GCSEs by 2005.
- Increase the % of residents who regularly participate in sport & physical activity to above the national average.
- Increase the level of reassurance and feeling of personal safety to 90% (to be established from a community reassurance survey).
- Reduce road casualties involving death or serious injury by 40%.

- Increase average household income in the District to the regional average.
- Increase the energy efficiency of the housing stock (private & public) to above the national average.
- Three business a year to introduce an Investors in People Programme for all their staff (provisional target).

### *Actions*

Some of the most significant actions that we are proposing are:

- Develop additional drug treatment centres and facilities.
- Take measures to improve roads with a focus on improving their safety, including introducing speed cameras.
- Continue to develop "Safe Routes to Schools".
- Seek to secure funding and Recruit 10 Community Custodians (which may include special constables, neighbourhood wardens, and volunteers).
- Continue to develop a co-ordinated health promotion campaign focussing on exercise, diet & drugs, (including cigarettes and alcohol).
- Provide sexual health advice and support in schools and youth clubs.
- Work with East Midlands Development Agency and the Leicester Shire Economic Development Partnership to attract high quality jobs.
- Promote the establishment of the National Forest Railway line and a link to the main rail network.
- Develop Community Action Zones in those areas with multiple social and economic needs.
- Support the implementation of Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy.
- Carry out a housing stock condition survey by June 2003.
- Prepare a private sector housing strategy by July 2003.

## ***THEME THREE: An Attractive Place to Live and Work***

*Leisure* Living, working and enjoying our leisure time in attractive surroundings has many benefits. We feel better, we're likely to work harder and we're likely to get more enjoyment from our leisure time. Businesses too benefit from an attractive environment. It encourages more people to use our services and spend their money in the district rather than elsewhere. An attractive and clean environment also benefits our physical and mental health.

*Our Environment* We all want to enjoy a pleasant and attractive environment, litter free, with well maintained verges and pavements and no graffiti or fly posting.

A pleasant and attractive environment outside our front door is one of the first things we want to see - free of litter and with well maintained verges and pavements. That is what we all expect. The quality of buildings also contributes to an attractive environment. We also want safe and pleasant places to walk and to cycle. It is also important to have safe and stimulating places where children can play and grow up. Trees, good public open spaces, town squares and village greens and "Public Art" all add to the attractiveness of the District.

*Natural Environment* The quality and diversity of the natural environment is also important. Having attractive countryside, good quality parks and recreation grounds, which are easy to get to and pleasant places to take friends when they come to visit, helps to make us feel where we live is attractive. A lot of progress has been made in improving the environment especially clearing up industrial dereliction. The development of the National Forest and the creation of ecological sites and habitats have made a big difference to the area.

*Built Environment* The quality of the built environment is also extremely important - not just for our enjoyment but also for our economy. The attractiveness of Town and Village Centres can encourage visitors. This helps to support local businesses. The creation of good quality Civic Space such as town squares - and the presence of public art, can make a significant contribution to the attractiveness of the District. An attractive environment can also influence investment decisions - for example, where a company wishes to locate.

*Noise and Pollution* There are also the things that we cannot see that make a difference, such as having low levels of pollution, knowing that we are contributing to protecting the wider environment by recycling and reducing emissions of gases that contribute to climate change. Noise is another factor that can reduce the attractiveness of the places we live and the quality of our lives. East Midlands Airport and Donington Race Circuit are both places that generate noise that causes concern but at the same time they provide jobs and opportunities as well as facilities for other businesses.

*Action as Individuals* Tackling some of these issues requires everybody to play their part. Litter, for instance, doesn't just appear - people drop it. It

would be better if we could stop the problem rather than have to pay to clear up the mess that we make. Similarly recycling, reducing air pollution and using less energy to protect the global environment, are things that we can take action about ourselves.

*Partnership Action* There are also things that the *Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire* can do to help people protect the attractive District that we live in. We can promote higher standards of building design. We can take the lead by seeking to reduce the energy we use and we can look at ways of using renewable energy. We can develop more cycle routes and footpaths. We can provide information about how people can use the countryside without disrupting the lives of people who live and work there. We can create the conditions that discourage people from dropping litter and we can encourage people to recycle by providing better and more convenient facilities.

### ***Aims***

Our aims are to:

- Improve the physical street environment.
- Improve the quality of parks, open spaces and other public places and provide better facilities for play.
- Make the local environment more 'friendly' - particularly for people with disabilities and children.
- Protect and improve the physical and natural environment.
- Minimise the impact of noise from East Midlands Airport and Donington Race Circuit.
- Improve the physical appearance of Town and Village Centres.
- Make North West Leicestershire an even more desirable place to live and visit - a place we can be proud of.

### ***What's Already Happening?***

*Litter* The District Council already undertakes a large amount of work to maintain the street environment and to remove litter, fly posters and graffiti from public spaces.

*Open Spaces* The District and Parish Councils maintain parks and play areas. A range of Country Parks have been developed by the County Council and by private landowners through National Forest initiatives. The National Forest contributes massively to the attraction of the District and plays a significant role in promoting the area as an attractive place to visit.

*Recycling and Pollution* There are a wide range of facilities that enable people to recycle - including Kerbside Collections of paper and other recyclable materials in some areas. The Local Transport Plan has actions to help reduce pollution from travelling by seeking improvements to public transport and by improving cycling facilities. Businesses, schools, and individuals can also get support and advice to help them reduce the impact they have on the environment, particularly by reducing energy consumption and using materials more efficiently.

*Noise* Whilst East Midlands Airport helps to contribute to the local economy there are major concerns about the impact of noise at night. Although the Secretary of State has recently declined to

take action himself to control night noise, *the Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire* will press for controls and improvements to provide an acceptable environment for local people.

### ***Targets***

The *Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire* has set some targets, which it believes if met will increase the attractiveness of North West Leicestershire for people who live and work here.

- Recycle 33% of household waste and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill by 20% by 2010, compared to 2000 levels.
- 20% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions (in the district) below 1990 levels by 2010 (provisional target).
- Increase visitors to North West Leicestershire by 10% by 2010.
- Increase people's satisfaction with parks and open spaces to 90%. (provisional target)
- Three business a year to write and publish an environmental policy (provisional target).

### ***Actions***

Some of the most significant actions that we are proposing are:

- An audit and needs assessment of the open space, play and recreation needs of the District.
- More Kerbside Recycling and Green Waste Collections.
- Additional cycle paths (multi use trails) and improvements to footpaths (following the cycling strategy and network plan).
- Develop a Play Strategy
- Promote and develop tourism.
- Develop initiatives for promoting arts in the community.
- Develop a "Best Kept Ward" competition sponsored by local businesses in urban areas.
- Implement the recommendations of the North West Leicestershire Cultural Strategy "*Growing Together*"
- Develop an "Environmental Buildings Standard" for new development that promotes energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy.
- Promote Workplace Travel Plans for larger businesses to help reduce car usage, pollution and road congestion.
- Contribute to the National Forest Tree Planting Target to secure 500 hectares of new planting each year in the National Forest, by promoting schemes within North West Leicestershire.

## ***THEME FOUR: Access to Services***

Being able to get to local services, such as shops, dentists' and doctors' surgeries, leisure facilities, libraries and schools, when we need them, is critical for everyday life.

*Local Services* There are a number of things that affect how easy it is to get access to services - how close the services are to where we live, the availability of public transport to get us there and back - and of course the cost. This is particularly important to young people, older people who are less mobile and people with disabilities - and people without access to a car.

*Knowing about Services* Knowing what services are available and how to find out about them is essential if we are to be able to make best use of them. Information also needs to be accessible to people with visual and hearing impairments. Being able to make use of several different services on the same trip, because they are close together, is also important. The opening times of services are also important so that we can make use of them at convenient times. Buildings and all forms of public transport need to be physically accessible to people with disabilities, parents with pushchairs and people who are less mobile.

The need to improve access to services has emerged from our consultations as an important priority for people in North West Leicestershire.

*Access to Services* There are a number of things that could be done in the coming years to improve access to services. Bringing services closer to where people live and at the same time improving the provision of public transport to provide access to more distant services will have an impact. Making sure that information about services is more easily available and accessible to everyone and that the services themselves are accessible to disabled people will also help improve people's ability to get the most out of these services.

### ***Aims***

Our Aims are to:

- Improve access to public services and local shopping for everyone, especially people who have difficulty in getting to them.
- Improve access to service information for everyone.
- Increase the range of shops and services available.

### ***What's Already Happening?***

*Service Improvements* The District Council, The Primary Care Trust, Leicestershire County Council, The Police and other public service providers, including voluntary and community organisations, already work extremely hard to provide good access to the services that they provide. Many of these organisations have detailed consumer service plans to improve their services and their availability. New initiatives like Sure Start have been developed to provide support to families with children under four years old.

The County Council is seeking to improve all its services through its *Better Access to Better Services Initiative*, so that all

Leicestershire people can access services in the way they prefer. The District Council is also consulting people about its services to make them more responsive to people's needs. The Primary Care Trust is constantly trying to make health services more convenient and accessible. Organisations such as the Leicestershire Rural Partnership and Rural Community Council play a vital role in delivering practical projects, which can make a real difference to people living and working in rural Leicestershire. There are also a number of "One-Stop-Shops", such as those at Ibstock and Measham, which provide a wide range of local and service information in one place. Internet facilities and training is provided for local people at Measham, Moira and Appleby in addition to facilities at local colleges.

*Public Transport* There is a range of initiatives to improve public transport in the District. The voluntary sector runs a Dial-a-Ride scheme, the District Council has provided transport to Leisure Centres when there has been sufficient demand. Special needs transport is provided by the County Council. Subsidies are available for public transport in rural areas and grants are available to Parish Councils to develop innovative community transport projects. Many of these initiatives are promoted by the county-wide Local Transport Plan.

*Market Towns* The Market Towns Initiatives for Ashby and Coalville are also looking at how to improve these market towns as hubs for business, shopping and services. We will also be looking at the main villages, which provide services for rural areas.

*Schools and Colleges* The facilities at community colleges and some schools are open outside school hours for use by the community, some in partnership with the District Council. There are also programmes such as "Leisure Link" which provide subsidised or free leisure activities for those on means-tested benefit.

*User Forums* Planning and delivering services is often complex. Services often have to be provided with very limited resources. Service users are consulted about the best ways to manage and deliver services through Forums such as the Health Forum and the Disability Forum.

### ***Targets***

The Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire has set some targets, which it believes if met will make services more accessible by 2010.

- 95% of all households within 13 minutes walk of an hourly or better bus service by 2005/6.
- Seek to secure more convenient and accessible public or community transport to market towns and other service centres and key community facilities at the times they are required, where there is sufficient demand to sustain such services.
- Getting through to the right person in a public agency to answer a query will take no more than two phone calls.
- All public buildings will be accessible to people with disabilities by 2004 and will comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.

*Actions*

Some of the most significant actions we are proposing are:

- Extend services like dial-a-ride and other innovative forms of community transport.
- Develop a directory of services available for people in North West Leicestershire, and make this available "on-line".
- Make an "on-line" service directory available to all service providers.
- Extend the hours that leisure and community centres, schools and colleges open their facilities to the wider community at affordable prices.
- Develop a network of publicly accessible Internet facilities.
- Work with businesses to promote our two Market Towns and principal service villages and develop their facilities and services.
- Develop the shared use of facilities by different service providers, increasing "one-stop" use.
- Support the implementation of the local Transport Plan.
- Improve services and facilities for young and elderly people.



**..... and in Conclusion**

If we really want to make things happen - and make a difference, we will all have to play our part - as service providers, as local organisations, as voluntary groups and as individuals.

The requirement to produce a Community Strategy means that, for the first time, local people and organisations have a clear route, through the *Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire*, to get their views across to service providers and policy makers.

By working together we should be able to combine resources and co-ordinate activities to best effect - so that as ordinary citizens we get a better deal and work towards agreed changes and improvements.

We all have the opportunity to contribute to the strategy - and to making things happen.

*The Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire*

*List of Members*

The Partnership for Improving North West Leicestershire Board is responsible for producing this draft strategy. The members are listed below.

Cllr John Fisher (Chairman)	North West Leicestershire District Council
Rev. G Glasius	Voluntary Sector Representative
Mick Wells	Charnwood & North West Leicestershire Primary Care Trust
Vacant	Secondary Education Representative
Mr Max Boden	Leicestershire Chamber of Trade & Industry
Inspector Jez Cottrill	North West Leicestershire Partnership in Safer Communities
Chief Superintendent I.R. Stripp	Leicestershire Constabulary
Mrs G Smith	NW Leicestershire Association of Parish Councils
Cllr F Straw	North West Leicestershire District Council
Mr D Raith	Higher Education Representative
Reverend J Stevenson	Faith Representative
Mr J Lee	Job Centre (District Manager)
Cllr Lesley Pendleton	Leicestershire County Council
Cllr Alison H Harrop	NW Leicestershire Health Forum

This membership may change as the partnership becomes more established.

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Please return to:  
Customer Care  
NWLDC  
FREEPOST  
MID22264  
Coalville  
LE67 3RK  
or  
goto [www.nwleics.gov.uk](http://www.nwleics.gov.uk)

## Community Strategy Response Form

1. How well do you think the Draft Strategy covers the most important issue for North West Leicestershire?

Very Well      Well      Not Well      Not Very Well

                

2. Have we identified the most important things to tackle in North West Leicestershire?

Yes      No

    

3. Please tell us about anything important we have missed?

4. Please list the three most important things you think need to be tackled locally.

1

2

3

5. Please tell us about any **specific** parts of the Strategy that you disagree with.  
(see the following page for specific comments)

<p>Community Spirit &amp; Involvement</p> <p>Aims</p> <p>Targets</p> <p>Actions</p>	<p>Personal Well-Being</p> <p>Aims</p> <p>Targets</p> <p>Actions</p>
<p>An Attractive Place to Live &amp; Work</p> <p>Aims</p> <p>Targets</p> <p>Actions</p>	<p>Access to Services</p> <p>Aims</p> <p>Targets</p> <p>Actions</p>



