Basingstoke Area Strategic Partnership
Working together for our communities

Our Place

The newsletter of the Basingstoke Area Strategic Partnership

May 2010

Moving forward.

At the end of last year the *Our Place* newsletter updated partners on major changes to the partnership's structure.

The partnership changed its focus to be clearer on 'what it is about' and also changed its name.
Since then lots of work has gone on to create a fresh vision for the area. This work has involved a variety of partners and the priority action groups have been busy delivering against their objectives to make sure that the work of the partnership makes a difference to people's lives.

This newsletter will give you a short update on what's happened so far in 2010.

Clear sight about a shared future

A shared long term vision has now been endorsed which will guide the borough in how it plans for the future.

It gives direction on the type of place and type of community we want to be. It also acts as the overarching statement that steers the planning of our land use, as well as organisational and partnership plans in the borough.

This vision says that:

In 2026 Basingstoke and Deane's people, communities and businesses will be flourishing - enjoying an excellent quality of life and environment which has been improved through well planned growth that draws on our strengths and secures vital improvements.

Regenerating our towns and estates, and enriching the character and vitality of our villages and outstanding countryside will support Basingstoke as a major vibrant centre, leading north Hampshire and fulfilling an influential role in the region.

We will be:

prosperous and thriving - where:

- a regenerated state-of-the-art Basing View, along with easy transport connections, attracts a range of new business to the town
- links with higher education stimulate innovative business growth
- a strong learning culture encourages young people to aim high and achieve more
- residents can readily improve their skills and play their part in and benefit from the area's prosperity.

connected and vibrant - where:

- we create inviting places and communities where people want to live, feel they belong, and it is easy to meet everyday needs
- we feel and are safe, active, and healthy, and we look out for the needs of the most vulnerable, so that no-one is left isolated
- people can connect, enjoy their lives, and get involved, creating a strong community spirit
- new homes meet local needs, and bring improved and new local facilities.

environmentally responsible and distinctive – where:

- we live and work in harmony with the natural elements and systems on which we depend, and are responding to the challenge of climate change
- the local built and natural environments are in tune and continue to provide opportunities for the economy and people's enjoyment; they are well managed to provide for the future
- we enrich the different characters of and links between towns, villages and the countryside, in the way we plan, such as the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the River Loddon area
- we insist on the highest quality design and environmental standards to demonstrate pride in our place.

Making a difference

Our five priority action groups bring together public services, other professionals, voluntary and community associations and businesses to focus on doing things that matter to our customers.

Some of the areas we are focussing on and delivering are:

- For **children** a new partnership is bringing together welfare and education to help improve attendance at school and to involve children and their families in shaping their future.
- Top priorities for **community safety** are to reduce the fear of crime but also to reduce violent and drug related crime. Successes to date include reducing violent crime by 6.5%, launching the true fingerprint of crime initiative and reducing incidents of anti-social behaviour by over 20%.
- **Health and wellbeing** is focussed on keeping people independent, looking at how to tackle issues around obesity and promote physical activity and wellbeing.
- Partners working together on **housing** have increased the supply of affordable housing in the borough and have also successfully prevented local residents from becoming homeless due to debt problems through a number of support initiatives.
- Supporting people to improve their **skills and employability** has helped residents during a difficult time including individual training for people facing redundancy and training for those who have been unemployed for more than six months.
- Other groups are looking at how we can work together to improve the **natural environment.**
- **A little can go a long way.** Funding has been given to community organisations to help them support events and projects locally, including **The Making's** project to celebrate world arts. **Basingstoke Voluntary Services** has used their funding for a music and media project which has successfully engaged young carers and **The Shaw Trust** has been working with disabled people at an allotment site in Oakridge to prepare the soil and grow their own produce.
- Postcards giving tips on **promoting a healthy lifestyle** have been distributed across the borough. They encourage people to be active, discover new things through learning and give something back by doing something for others.
- New schemes offering housing with 'extra care' to older residents to allow them to remain in their homes are being developed through the **Housing Partnership Board,** which is also working on projects to adapt housing to meet the needs of people with disabilities.
- Skills surveys have been carried out using external funding from the **Learning and Skills** Council, accessed by the Skills and Employability Group.