

Bromsgrove Partnership

Our vision is to "make Bromsgrove District the place to live, do business and to visit."

About Bromsgrove District

Geography and Population

Bromsgrove District is in the north of Worcestershire and over 90% of its 217 square kilometres is greenbelt. The population is estimated to be almost 93,400 (1) and nearly 20% are aged over 65, which is 3% higher than the national average (2). This proportion is set to increase which is likely to significantly impact on policy and planning for the district.

Economy and Employment

The economic picture is comparatively positive and business survival rates remain above the national average (3). The district's median household income is the highest in the county (4) and the Claimant Count Unemployment Rate has been consistently lower than regional and national figures since October 2007 (5). However, the highest claimant rate is in Charford, followed by Sidemoor and Catshill Wards (6) and the same three wards have high claimant rates for 18-24 year olds, putting them in the top ten wards in the county (7).

Bromsgrove town centre is a major area of economic concern and its extensive redevelopment is underway. Improving shopping and other facilities has come up as a key issue for residents.

Health and Wealth Inequalities

The health of people in Bromsgrove District is generally better than the England average according to the District's Health Profile 2011. However, the profile also points out that 16.8% of Year 6 children and 24.9% of adults are classified as obese. There were 1,710 hospital stays for alcohol related harm in 2009/10 and there are approximately 140 deaths from smoking each year. The Profile states that priorities in Bromsgrove include obesity, alcohol misuse and falls in older people.

Although over 46% of residents are classed as 'Wealthy Achievers'(8) there are pockets of deprivation, most notably in Charford. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2007 (specifically income, health and education indicators) show Charford and Sidemoor as the areas of greatest need.

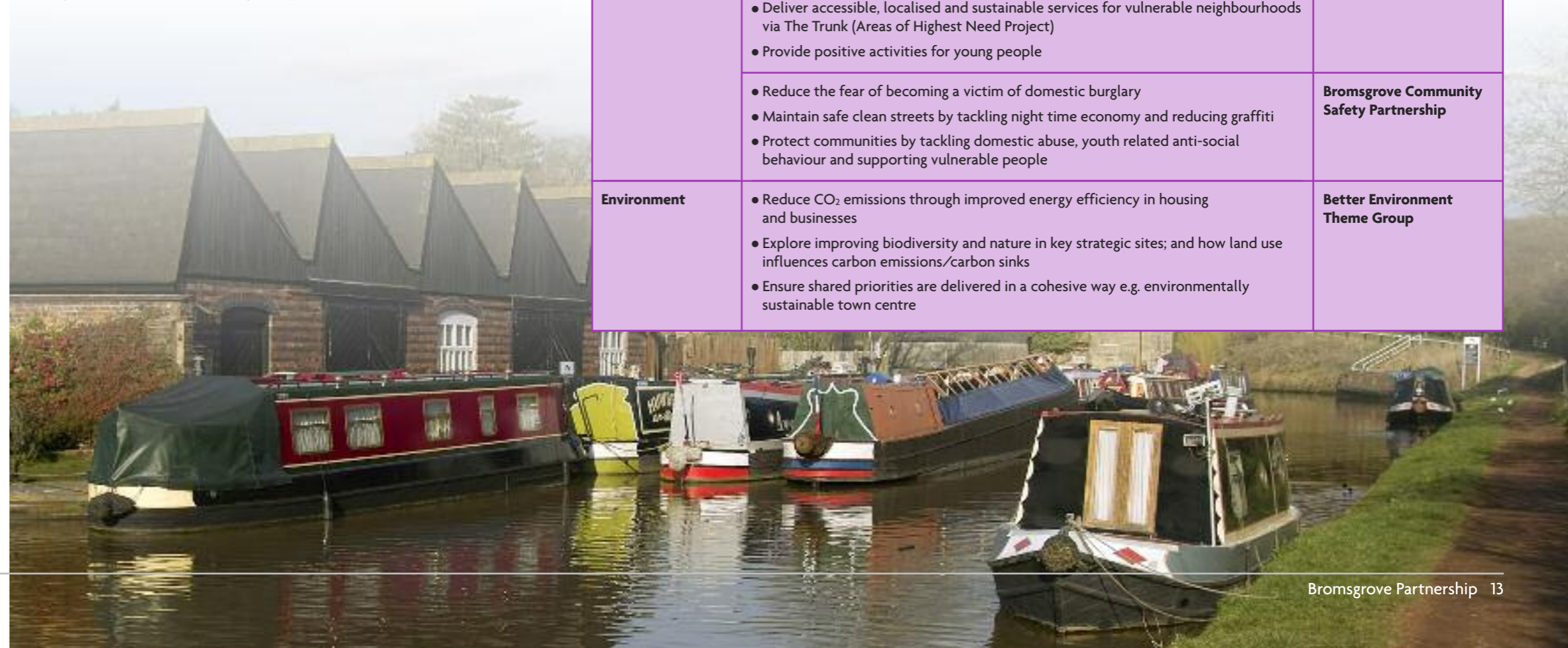
The demand for property within the district has had a significant impact on property prices which are higher than the county average. Therefore, affordability is an issue and suitable housing for the elderly is also a concern.

Crime

Bromsgrove District is a low crime area; however, domestic burglary rates have been high at times and the district's proximity to a large conurbation and its excellent motorway links are unfortunately contributing factors. Reported crime and disorder in Bromsgrove town centre is relatively low, and it is important that it remains this way as its landscape evolves through its regeneration. Anti-social behaviour continues to be high on the national agenda and recent research has also identified domestic abuse as a key concern.

Environment

The district is rich with biodiversity, geodiversity and attractive landscape. It has approximately 37,772 households (9) and most CO₂ in Bromsgrove is produced from housing, followed by transport and businesses. With the cost of fuel increasing, more people are likely to suffer fuel poverty which has social and health implications. Good energy management makes good environmental and economic sense. Reducing CO₂ emissions is a considerable challenge and remains a national priority.



Bromsgrove Partnership Priorities

The Bromsgrove Sustainable Community Strategy for 2010-13 and the priorities within that were based on an understanding of the available evidence and the views of the public. These priorities were reviewed in 2011 and simplified to the top three priorities. Key outcomes agreed for each priority and the Theme Groups responsible for delivering on those priorities, are shown in the table below.

Bromsgrove Partnership operates a Board and four Theme Groups and it is those Theme Groups which are the delivery arm of the Partnership. Theme Groups will decide the best way to meet the agreed priorities and their measures of success. Any barriers to delivery which they face will be dealt with by the Board. As many of the issues being tackled overlap across more than one Theme Group, all cross cutting challenges and identified gaps will be considered at Board level to ensure a truly effective and cohesive partnership approach is taken.

The Trunk is the Bromsgrove Partnership's Areas of Highest Need project and is a multi agency partnership which began in 2009. EPIC, a community interest company, was commissioned by Bromsgrove Partnership to run The Trunk and it is now delivering a programme of learning, skills acquisition, support activities and community resources for the residents of Charford and Sidemoor primarily with an outreach programme for Catshill residents. We will continue building on the project's success to ensure sustainability for the future.

With many organisations seeing a reduction in resources, Bromsgrove Partnership believes good partnership working is now even more crucial. Therefore, we will continue to work hard to meet the existing and future needs of our local community in the most effective and efficient way.

Priorities	Key Outcomes	Theme Groups
Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regeneration of the town centre Effectively market Bromsgrove District Encourage business growth (including retention of businesses) 	Economic Development Theme Group
Balanced Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce alcohol misuse and smoking, encourage healthy diet and exercise and improve perception of mental health issues Implement an age well scheme and focus on falls prevention Deliver accessible, localised and sustainable services for vulnerable neighbourhoods via The Trunk (Areas of Highest Need Project) Provide positive activities for young people 	Balanced Communities Theme Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the fear of becoming a victim of domestic burglary Maintain safe clean streets by tackling night time economy and reducing graffiti Protect communities by tackling domestic abuse, youth related anti-social behaviour and supporting vulnerable people 	Bromsgrove Community Safety Partnership
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce CO₂ emissions through improved energy efficiency in housing and businesses Explore improving biodiversity and nature in key strategic sites; and how land use influences carbon emissions/carbon sinks Ensure shared priorities are delivered in a cohesive way e.g. environmentally sustainable town centre 	Better Environment Theme Group

1&2. Office of National Statistics, mid-year estimates, 2010 (R&I Unit, Worcestershire County Council)

3. Office of National Statistics 2010, Business Demography 2009 (Local Economic Assessment Profile)

4. CACI Ltd, 2010. PayCheck (Worcestershire County Economic Assessment 2010-II)

5. Office of National Statistics, 2010. Claimant Counts downloaded from NOMIS (Local Economic Assessment)

6. Worcestershire County Economic Monthly Summary - July 2011

7. Office of National Statistics, 2010. Claimant Counts downloaded from NOMIS (County Economic Monthly Summary - July 2011)

8. Acorn, CACI, 2010 (Local Economic Assessment Profile)

9. Figure derived from CLG (Bromsgrove District Profile, R&I Unit, Worcestershire County Council)

Malvern Hills Partnership

Our vision is "to build a district where people live in supportive communities; travel without reliance on owning a car; feel free from crime and the fear of crime. A place where the rural character and beauty of the area is looked after, where people can enjoy a good standard of living and health and well-being, have secure, well paid and fulfilling jobs and live in an affordable home that suits their needs."

About Malvern Hills District

The Malvern Hills District covers 577 square kilometres of west Worcestershire. A predominantly rural area it is sparsely populated, consisting of many hamlets and villages. It is due to this rurality that over 32,000 (45%) of our residents live in areas which are amongst the 10% most deprived areas nationally in terms of geographical barriers to services, such as GP surgeries, general stores, primary schools and post offices.

A generally affluent and content district, with a cohesive community living in excellent surroundings and satisfied with the local public services it receives, the area can be characterised as a good place to live and work. However, there are pockets of deprivation. The ward of Pickersleigh has a number of areas which are in the worst 10% nationally in terms of income deprivation. Unemployment levels are also at their highest in Pickersleigh, followed by Priory, Chase, Hallow and Baldwin and Lindridge.

With an already elderly population, projected to increase even more over the next 20 years, there will be greater demands on health, council and community services. The district already has 25% more hip fractures amongst the elderly than the national average, with a prediction that hospital admissions due to fall or hip fracture, which currently sits at around 1,630 per year, will increase to 2,500.

Further to that, some of the things that make the district such a seemingly idyllic place to live; such as the close vicinity to the River Severn and the River Teme, whilst adding to the rural beauty of the district, means that the area is prone to flooding. Major floods occurred in 2000 and again in 2007, with a number of households and businesses displaced. The town of Tenbury was hit particularly badly due to a brook, which runs alongside the town's high street, overflowing onto the road. With no flood defences in place, the town has remained vulnerable, with over 200 properties rated as having a real risk of flooding.

The natural beauty of the area - the Hills themselves are classified as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - together the close proximity of the towns to major road networks and transport links, and the fact children and adults enjoy healthier and more active lives, has made the district a desirable place to live. Decent affordable housing is regularly rated as one of the top five things that most need improving according to our residents. This will only intensify as the population lives longer; with older people occupying properties that have outgrown their needs.

Malvern Hills Partnership Priorities

The Malvern Hills Partnership has recognised that there are a number of challenges that cannot be tackled by one organisation alone. Instead, in order to add real value, issues must be addressed collectively in order to be truly effective.

Our priorities are:

- **To reduce the impact of rurality on our local communities**
- **To tackle issues associated with inequalities, including health inequalities**
- **To raise awareness of key environmental issues and to drive down our reliance on fossil fuels**
- **To protect residents and businesses from the impact of flooding.**

Rurality

The Malvern Hills Partnership will ensure residents have better access to the services they need. In understanding the issues facing those living in rural areas; particularly with regards to transport and access to health services, the Partnership will work to ensure current and future services are more accessible. This includes meeting the specific needs of older residents and helping them to engage with public services so that they receive the support they need, as well as working with people throughout their lives to maximise the length of disability free life. Work in this area will lead to improved satisfaction and importantly, will reduce the deprivation rating for our rural residents.

Inequalities

The Malvern Hills Partnership will increase the ambition and aspiration of the residents living in our most deprived wards, starting with Pickersleigh. By building confidence and establishing projects and services right from the heart of the community, the partnership will have a positive impact on the lives of residents. Reducing levels of inequality will, in the medium to long term, drive down the fear of crime, whilst improving health outcomes, increasing employment and encouraging more resident involvement in positive activities. In turn, this will lead to more residents feeling a real part of their local communities.

Climate Change

The Partnership, through its support of Transition Malvern Hills and by the example set by partners, will seek to reduce carbon and greenhouse gas emissions. This partnership working will lead to a reduced carbon footprint for the district and an increased public understanding of what can be done to tackle climate change.

Flood Protection

By continuing to petition Central Government and by working together to identify and promote flood protection solutions to river and surface water flooding, the Partnership can collectively achieve more than one organisation alone. In time, this will mean a district where people can live without the fear of flooding.



Redditch Partnership

The Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy is built around a shared vision for the Borough. It is envisaged that by 2026 "Redditch will be successful and vibrant with communities that have access to good job opportunities, good education, good health and are communities that people will be proud to live and work in".

About Redditch District

Redditch is situated in the north east of Worcestershire and lies 15 miles south of the West Midlands conurbation. The Borough covers a total of 54 square kilometres, and is comprised of several communities focused around district centres. Redditch was designated a New Town in 1964 and since then the population has increased dramatically from 32,000 to around 78,700 (mid 2010).

Compared to other areas of Worcestershire, the Borough has a higher proportion of young people aged 0-17 (22.4% compared to 20.8% in the county), and a smaller proportion of individuals aged 65 or over (14.1% compared to 18.7% in the county). Redditch has the largest proportion of ethnic minority groups of Worcestershire's six districts with 8% of the population from minority ethnic groups.

In 2009, the then Government's performance assessment regime, the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) gave Worcestershire a 'red flag'. This red flag was given specifically for the differences in the quality of life for people living in Redditch compared to people living in the rest of Worcestershire. Particular areas highlighted included: lower life expectancy; high levels of smoking; poorer GCSE exam results; more people reliant on benefits; and more families on a low income.

Health Inequalities

In broad terms the health of people in Redditch is similar to the England average; however, there are significant differences in health and well-being between Redditch and Worcestershire. Inequalities particularly exist in lifestyle choices including smoking, physical activity, and alcohol.

Nationally, alcohol abuse has been flagged as an issue and Redditch is no different. Approximately 19.3% of people in Redditch are considered to be "binge drinkers" and there are approximately 1,629 hospital stays per year for alcohol related harm. Levels of smoking have also been identified as an issue of concern for Redditch. The prevalence of adults who smoke is estimated at 22% which is just below the England average of 22.2% and the worst in the county. According to the 2010 Health Profile, 29.9% of adults in Redditch are classed as obese. The percentage of adults classed as healthy eaters has decreased since 2009 from 24.3% to 21.7% and is now significantly worse than the England average.

Educational Attainment

Educational performance of pupils in Redditch has been recognised as an issue over many years. Redditch has consistently fallen behind Worcestershire in the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* to C. Data from 2009 and 2010 shows that while average results are getting better in Redditch, they are still behind those of the county as a whole.

The Economy

Job losses for people living in Redditch have increased the most and recent statistics from the Office for National Statistics show that more people are out of work with the overall unemployment level in Redditch at 8.7%. This is 0.6% lower than the regional average, but 0.8% higher than the national average. The gap between the unemployment level for Redditch and Worcestershire is 4.2% with Worcestershire's unemployment level at 4.5% (as at March 2010).

Pockets of Deprivation

According to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2007, from the district level summary (where 1 is the most deprived) of the average deprivation score, Redditch is ranked 131st out of 354 areas nationally. This is the most deprived area in Worcestershire. Redditch is in the top 40% most deprived districts in the country.

The most deprived areas in Redditch include parts of Winyates, Church Hill, Batchley and Woodrow. Winyates housing estate is the most deprived area in Redditch, and is the sixth most deprived area in the county. Based on this evidence, Redditch Partnership decided to focus its Areas of Highest Need project on Winyates Centre and the immediate surrounding area.

Redditch Partnership Priorities

- 1. Health inequalities - focus is on three issues: smoking; alcohol; and obesity/health lifestyles**
- 2. Education attainment and raising aspirations of young people - focus is on three issues: improving literacy and numeracy; raising aspirations; and improve statistical levels of attainment**
- 3. The economy of Redditch with a focus on providing a larger and more diverse job offer - focus is on three broad issues: promotion of Redditch as a business location; jobs and worklessness; and fostering economic ambition in young people**
- 4. Areas of deprivation with an initial focus on Winyates and Church Hill - Winyates project focuses on: enhanced security measures for residential areas in Winyates Centre; and community engagement in the area.**

Four action plans have been produced which focus on the four priority areas. They contain actions which are to be undertaken in partnership and which are not already being undertaken by partner organisations as part of their core business. Delivery of the action plans is driven by the Theme Groups with regular reports up to the Redditch Partnership Management Board. The action plans are viewed as 'live' documents which can be altered and amended as new projects come on stream or if circumstances change.

The actions listed are just the start and Redditch Partnership must develop and build on these over the next three years, responding to new ideas and developing innovative solutions to meet the vision it has set out for Redditch. The yearly meeting of Redditch Partnership will formally review overall progress towards achieving the vision and also hold the Partnership Board to account.



Worcester Alliance

The Worcester Alliance vision is to make Worcester a “First Rank Cathedral and University City”. This means developing the services, the infrastructure and the quality of life for local people to the level that one would expect of Europe’s best historic cities.

About Worcester City

Worcester is an historic and thriving city on the banks of the River Severn. It is the county town for Worcestershire and is a key regional centre of economic and social activity. The total population of Worcester is 94,721. The distribution of age is broadly in line with the UK average with the majority of residents in the 20-55 age bracket. About 5% of Worcester’s population is made up of black and minority ethnic communities.

Worcester is already a great place to live, work and visit surrounded by an outstanding natural environment. It has a vibrant retail economy which is important for the city’s future and tourists and visitors make a significant contribution to the local economy. In 2010, they generated around £80m of spend and sustained around 2,000 jobs with an estimated 1.3m trips. The city is home to over 2,300 businesses in a range of industrial and commercial sectors and important future plans include the delivery of the Worcester Technology Park. However, the city also has the lowest rate of business births in the county and needs to grow more of its own businesses to ensure a sustainable economy with a balance of local and national and global businesses.

The new Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) will play a key role in the future development of the city’s economy through its role in encouraging inward investment, stimulating the local economy, identifying barriers to growth and promoting schemes, for example to meet transport infrastructure demands, that will remove or reduce these barriers.

Average household income in Worcester in 2010 was £35,000 which is lower than both the county and national average and more households in Worcester City fall into the lowest income bracket, earning less than £10,000 per year. In Worcester 3.9% of the population aged 16-64 were claiming Job Seekers Allowance in July 2011, slightly higher than the average for Worcestershire of 3.2%. However, this figure rises to 7.6% in Gorse Hill and 7.2% in Warndon. Overall employment rates are only slightly lower in the city than the county average at 74.2% compared to 74.3% and higher than the England average of 70.4%. 65% of residents work in or around the city.

There is still a great disparity between the quality of life for people living in different localities in the city, which ranges from some of the highest to some of the lowest in the country in terms of prosperity, health, crime and educational attainment. The percentage of residents aged between 16-74 years who have no qualifications has reduced since 2007, 27.6%, lower than both the Worcestershire and England average 28.1% and 28.9%, respectively, ensuring that all young people in the city have access to education, training and employment opportunities remains a priority. A slightly higher percentage than the county and national average have achieved higher level qualifications at 20.4% compared to 19.3% and 19.9% respectively.

We need to work together as partners to ensure that the city continues to grow and provide the jobs, homes and infrastructure that will enable it to successfully compete with larger centres in the West Midlands. A vision and plans for future growth and development are being developed through the South Worcestershire Development Plan and a new city centre masterplan.

Worcester Alliance Priorities

Priority One - Economy

- To have the right infrastructure in place to support a successful and growing economy.
- To support business growth and expansion and attract new businesses which provide a diverse economy and more, higher paid, quality jobs.
- To ensure the city has a vibrant retail offer.
- To make sure that people have the right skills for existing, growing and new businesses.
- To develop plans to reduce the numbers of young people not in employment or education and encourage more apprenticeships.

Priority Two - Communities

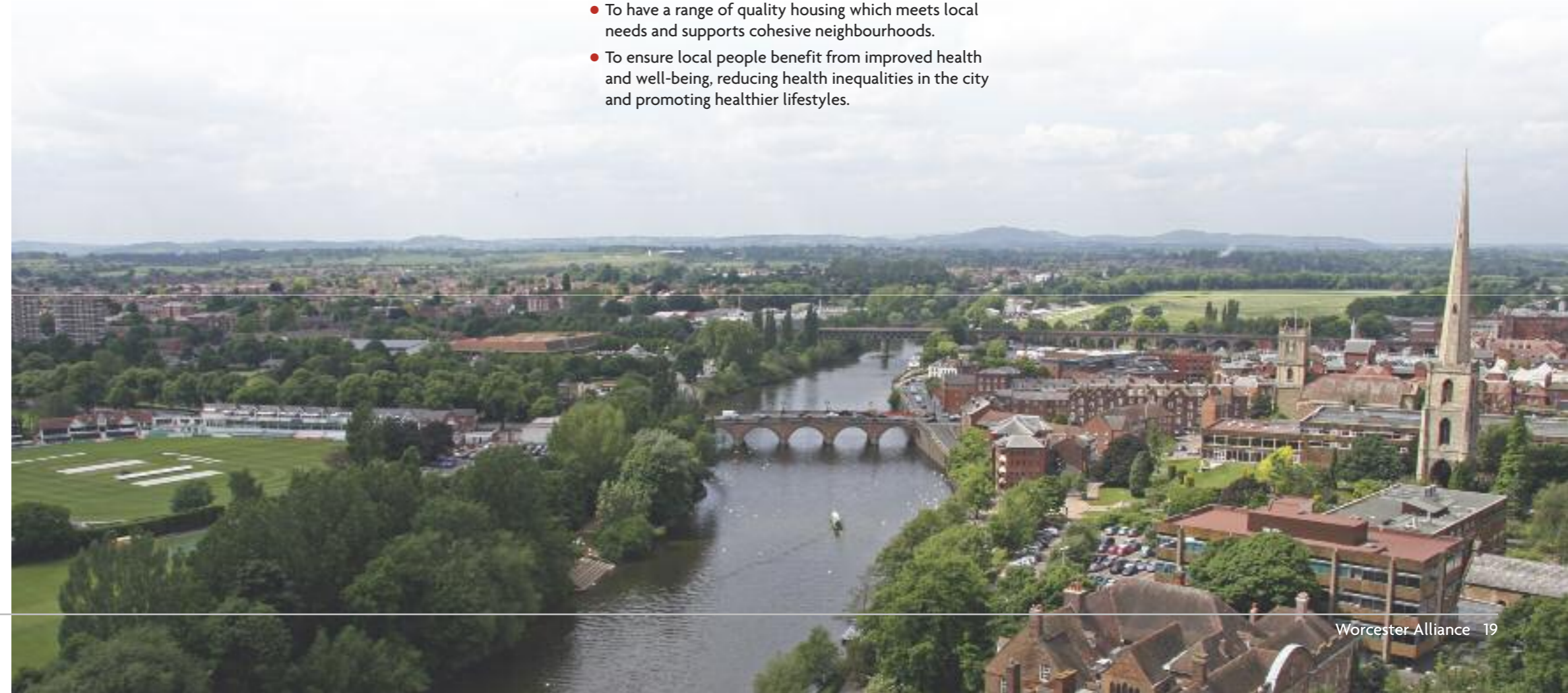
- To improve the quality of life for local residents across the city as a whole and with a focus on areas of highest need.
- To work creatively and innovatively in partnership with local communities to tackle local issues and meet local needs and build resilience.
- To have a range of quality housing which meets local needs and supports cohesive neighbourhoods.
- To ensure local people benefit from improved health and well-being, reducing health inequalities in the city and promoting healthier lifestyles.

Priority Three - Environment

- To ensure Worcester continues to be an attractive place to visit, work and live in, enhancing and protecting open and green space which is seen as important.
- To help make the city resilient to flooding, climate change and extreme weather events.
- To promote strong planning policies and work with partners to minimise the impact of development on the natural environment.

The Worcester Alliance recognises that if we want to improve the lives of local people we need to work in partnership, joining up services and bringing agencies and communities together to tackle issues.

In Autumn 2011 the Worcester Alliance will review how it works as a partnership and how it links to the wider Worcestershire Partnership. We will build on the work that has already been undertaken through Worcester Forward, the previous Sustainable Community Strategy, for example the Areas of Highest Need (AOHN) project.



Wychavon Strategic Partnership

Our vision is of "a strong, vibrant district with a thriving and distinctive local economy. A place where people live in decent, affordable homes and people are healthy regardless of which area they live in. A place where people are involved in their local communities; where older people feel supported and young people have positive things to do and decent prospects."

About Wychavon

Wychavon covers 664 square kilometres of the southern and eastern parts of Worcestershire. It is the largest of the six Worcestershire districts. The three main towns of Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Pershore, along with the village of Broadway, account for almost half of the district's population. The rest of the district is more sparsely populated and includes nearly 100 smaller villages and hamlets.

The Wychavon district has a population of around 117,000. This is predicted to increase, at a faster growth rate than the national average, to 124,700 by 2026. The proportion aged under 16 is set to fall to below 15% by 2026, whilst the proportion aged over 60 is due to increase to 37%. An increasingly ageing population will place greater demands on health, housing and other public services.

The district is a good place to live and work, with a rich natural environment, historic heritage and low crime levels. 87% of residents are satisfied with the local area as a place to live and 69% feel they belong to their neighbourhood. Activities for teenagers are residents' second highest priority for improvement.

There are approximately 51,500 homes in Wychavon. Levels of home ownership are high at 76%. Wychavon has over 2,250 housing register applicants in housing need - the highest levels in Worcestershire. With the mean cost of a dwelling eight times the average household income, there is a significant shortage of affordable housing to buy and rent. This will increase as the population lives longer and older people occupy properties that have outgrown their needs.

Wychavon is home to over 5,000 businesses. A significant percentage of the workforce is employed in manufacturing, hotels and restaurants, agriculture, food distribution and the public sector. Since 2007 there has been a significant fall in business creation rates and in 2009 enterprise deaths exceeded births by around 30%.

Unemployment levels, which have been traditionally very low, are currently around 3%. 8% of working age people are claiming key out of work benefits. 18% of 16 to 64 year-olds are economically inactive, or classed as 'workless'. 9.7% of the population have no qualifications. There is a skills gap in the Droitwich area, which is related to the lack of a local college.

Overall, the district is relatively well-off and lies in the bottom third of most deprived local authorities in England. But three areas are in the top 30% most deprived nationally and 15 areas are among the 10% most deprived nationally in terms of barriers to housing and services. This is related to the rural character of the district and limited public transport options in some rural areas. There are also smaller pockets of deprivation in parts of the district.

Wychavon has the second highest average household income in Worcestershire; but income levels vary significantly across the district. Overall, 12% of children are living below the official poverty line. However, there is a wide geographic variation in levels of child poverty across the district. In one Droitwich ward, levels are nearly 51%.

80% of residents consider their health to be good or very good. Life expectancy is above the England average. Death rates from heart disease, stroke and cancer have fallen over the past ten years. However, the gap in life expectancy between people in the most and least deprived areas has widened. People from the least deprived areas can expect to live around six years longer than those in the most deprived areas. Wychavon has one of the highest proportions (24.8%) of overweight or obese children in reception year in the county and nearly a third of children in Year 6 are overweight or obese.



Wychavon Strategic Partnership Priorities

Wychavon Strategic Partnership recognises that a number of the challenges described cannot be tackled effectively by one organisation alone. We have identified seven priorities where we will work together to make a real impact, with sustainability as an overarching principle:

These are:

- 1. Supporting and improving the local economy**
- 2. Developing skills and lifelong learning**
- 3. Delivering housing that meets local needs**
- 4. Reducing health inequalities and promoting healthy lifestyles**
- 5. Supporting older people**
- 6. Providing positive activities for young people**
- 7. Supporting people to play an active role in their communities and to take responsibility for improving their lives.**

Partners on the Wychavon Strategic Partnership will seek to deliver these priorities as sustainably as possible through action to:

- Support urban and rural businesses, boost town centre economies, promote tourism, raise income levels, encourage environmental technology and local distinctiveness

- Increase employability and work-based skills, family learning, adult literacy and numeracy, and language skills
- Build more affordable housing, better match homes to needs, bring empty homes back into use and improve the condition of existing homes
- Take action to reduce the incidence of heart disease, diabetes and alcohol consumption, and tackle obesity in children and health inequalities in deprived areas
- Support older people within their own homes, encourage independent living, health and well-being, and quality of life
- Encourage volunteering, personal and social responsibility and enable change in neighbourhoods.

We will also deliver some of the priorities through the Opportunity Vale of Evesham project. This is providing help to around 1,430 hard pressed households in 11 small areas in the Vale of Evesham. Through this project we are improving skills and confidence, reducing fuel poverty and improving health.

Wyre Forest Matters

Our vision is "to build a district which people want to live in and visit; where they feel free from the fear of crime and a place where the unique rural character and beauty of the area is looked after by all. A district where children can thrive and look forward to the possibility of suitable employment following their education. Where business is actively encouraged and the economy becomes stronger and where the population are healthy whatever their age."

About Wyre Forest

The area takes its name from The Forest of Wyre, once a medieval hunting forest, now a popular visitor attraction. The three main towns of Kidderminster, Bewdley and Stourport-on-Severn and several surrounding villages like Arley, Rock, Chaddesley Corbett and Wolverley make up the district. The area is both rural and urban and there are pockets of wealth and deprivation throughout the district.

The area has some of the best attractions in the Midlands from an exciting safari and leisure park to Britain's premier steam railway.

The district has an estimated population of 98,100 people (mid 2010) and is situated in north Worcestershire. Of the six Worcestershire districts, Wyre Forest has the smallest proportion of young people (aged 0-19). Worcestershire as a whole is characterised by an ageing population, with a declining proportion of young people (aged 0-19) and an increasing proportion of older people (aged 65 or more). Among older people, there is a gradual but entirely predictable increase in the number of people aged 85 years or more.

There is a strong and direct correlation between the increase in the proportion of elderly people and the number of those with disabilities and other medical conditions.

There are an estimated 3,000 people, or 3.1%, who are from a minority ethnic origin. Wyre Forest has a distinctive community of 500 people of Bangladeshi origin, by far the largest in the county, owing its foundation historically to the availability of work in the Kidderminster carpet industry. There is also a well-established gypsy and traveller community living locally, many now settled in houses, but no reliable data exists on numbers.

50.8% of the Wyre Forest population are women. The Census 2001 showed that women were far more likely than men, in a ratio of 9:1, to live in lone-parent households with dependent children, and, if working, to work part-time. Wyre Forest had 2,048 lone-parent households with dependent children, of which 89.2% were headed by women, with 31.8% of those women in part-time work.

Of the six Worcestershire districts Wyre Forest has the lowest proportion of economically active people and people in employment.

Wyre Forest has the highest proportion of economically inactive people with nearly 20% of the county's claimants for Job Seeker's allowance. It also has the lowest rate of gross weekly pay at £405, almost £50 less than the county average, £150 less than for Bromsgrove, and £260 less than for Malvern Hills.

The major causes of death, circulatory diseases and cancers, are lifestyle related. To maintain the reductions in death rates, Wyre Forest will need to reduce smoking and alcohol consumption, and tackle obesity through a better diet and more physical activity.



Wyre Forest Partnership Priorities

- A. To boost the economy and encourage employment within the district**
- B. To encourage better health and well-being**
- C. To help to provide education as a means to employment**
- D. To improve the local environment.**

Wyre Forest Matters has recognised that there are a number of challenges that cannot be tackled by one organisation or project alone. Instead, in order to add real value, issues must be addressed collectively in order to be truly effective.

We aim to:

- Continue with a strategic, business-led approach to regeneration via the ReWyre initiative. To work towards improved infrastructure and connectivity including improved road links with the motorway network and promoting our high capacity broadband advantages to potential new businesses. Assist partners to boost the economy within the district using various methods including promoting and increasing tourism, helping local businesses to use local suppliers and encouraging employment by linking in with local businesses and promoting programmes such as apprenticeships.
- Improve the health and well-being of the district by promoting healthier lifestyles and encouraging young people to improve their fitness levels through differing

methods. We will also be promoting the advantages of staying fitter to older residents in order to maintain health in older age. The partnership will focus on assisting partners in their projects to reduce obesity and alcohol dependency in people of all ages.

- Improve the local environment and continue to make Wyre Forest a desirable place to both live in and to visit. The partnership will promote the work being done by partners to restore local heathlands and rare plants and insects as well as encouraging public participation in the running of local spaces such as parks. The partnership will be active in assisting the Community Safety Partnership and Prevent team to make sure Wyre Forest remains a safe place to live in. This partnership will also lead to an increased public understanding of what can be done to tackle climate change.
- Improve education as a means to gain employment in the district. The partnership will work together to provide a link between business and education in the district and to reduce the gaps in skills and knowledge for those seeking employment at all ages but will focus on school leavers, those recently made redundant and those out of work with low skills levels. This in turn will help to raise aspirations and improve recruitment and retention levels in local businesses.



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