

Slough's Sustainable Community Strategy

VERSION CONTROL

Version	Revision Date	Summary of Changes
1	180711	1st draft
2	160811	Draft circulated for comments following discussion on 080811
3	190911	Incorporated consultation feedback
4	230911	Edited draft for Commissioners & Directors
5	230911	Version without performance indicators
6	290911	Overview and Scrutiny draft

Foreword

In 2007, partners from across Slough came together to agree a fresh vision for Slough. This vision underpins our aspirations for the town until 2028 and is summed up in this, our Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). The SCS was refreshed in 2011 to reflect the changing national and local picture, but retaining the overall Vision agreed in 2007:

“People are proud to live in Slough where diversity is celebrated and where residents can enjoy fulfilling, prosperous and healthy lives”

In this document, we set out what and where we want Slough to be in 2028 and how collectively, as agencies and organisations working together in partnership with local communities, we will provide the focus and leadership needed to steer us towards our long-term goals.

Slough today is characterised by both continuity and change. The town continues to be an economic hub with a strong culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship. It also continues to be a location of choice for so many communities, from all parts of the world.

At the same time, the town is competing in a social and economic environment that is radically different from the past. This has led to new challenges around ensuring that local people have the right skills to obtain local jobs, healthy living, improving the quality and amount of affordable housing, regenerating the town and local community areas and the need to maintain economic competitiveness in a globalised market.

This strategy sets out how we hope to meet these challenges and continue to maintain Slough’s reputation as an excellent place to live, work, learn and play. It is a combination of numerous pieces of work and has been informed by working with communities and interested stakeholders within the town.

However like all strategies, it should not be seen as fixed - it is part of a continuing process and the role of communities in shaping and delivering this strategy should not be underestimated.

Whether this contribution comes in the shape of involvement in the formal partnerships and groups which form the Local Strategic Partnership or joining in the actions or projects, or responding to a particular consultation – there is scope for everyone to be involved in bringing into reality the vision for Slough.

We look forward to your contribution.

Rob Anderson
Chair of Slough Forward

Slough Sustainable Community Strategy

A sustainable community is a place where people want to live and work. It is safe and inclusive, well planned and serviced and offers equality of opportunity to all citizens.

The purpose of a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) is to create the positive Vision that will deliver that sustainable community. It is the product of consultation with local stakeholders, members of the community and the voluntary sector.

This is a refreshed version of the SCS agreed in 2008, which was developed after extensive consultation. Much has changed since that time, particularly the economic climate and subsequent reductions in public sector funding. There has also been positive change as we have successfully tackled a variety of challenges facing the borough and its residents.

The opportunity was taken to review the SCS during the spring and summer of 2011, using a comprehensive evidence base brought together in the Slough Story 2011 and consulting organisations and individuals in the community and voluntary sector. As a result we have agreed the priorities of:

- Economy and Skills
- Health and Wellbeing
- Housing
- Regeneration and Environment
- Safer Slough

We also have two cross-cutting themes of civic responsibility and promoting the image of the town. Both of these are woven throughout the Strategy.

Civic responsibility is the part that residents can play in delivering the Strategy and in improving Slough for the benefit of everyone. Under each priority we have set out some suggestions about what local people can do.

The image of the town is important for all of us. Residents have told us that they are frustrated by the reputation that Slough has with people who do not know and have not visited the town. We need to find ways to improve that image and promote the many benefits of living and working in Slough.

Action Plan

We will agree an Action Plan which will be reviewed annually setting out how we will measure performance against the aims and objectives included in the Strategy.

We know that with limited resources across the public, voluntary and private sectors, now more than ever we need to focus our efforts on the key actions to deliver change across more than one priority. We see those key actions as being:

- Protecting and improving our economic position by improving our infrastructure and the skills of local people
- A clearer focus on reducing health inequalities and increasing life expectancy
- Improving the availability and quality of housing
- The Heart of Slough and targeted neighbourhood regeneration
- Reducing anti-social behaviour and crime

Slough Forward – the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

Slough Forward brings together the views of the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. It is responsible for directing resources and coordinating local activities to deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy. Although there is no longer a statutory performance framework for the SCS, partners have agreed to commit to a number of targets in order to deliver the priorities of the Strategy and Slough Forward will monitor performance against these targets.

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Economy and Skills

Vision:

By 2028, Slough will be an accessible location, competitive on the world stage with a sustainable and varied business sector and strong knowledge economy, supported by a local workforce who have the skills to meet local businesses' changing needs.

What the evidence says:

Despite the recession Slough has many economic strengths. The Slough Trading Estate provides a strong focus for employment but at the same time, all of the town centres in East Berkshire have seen a marked contraction in employment. This has been particularly dramatic in Slough town centre where a 20% reduction in employment (between 2003-2008) equates to almost 4,000 jobs.

Over the period 2003-2008, however, VAT registration levels in Slough marginally exceeded the England and Wales average but registrations are behind the South East average. Levels of economic activity and employment are lower in Slough than is average sub-regionally and regionally. Local economic inactivity and unemployment rates have also risen at a higher rate than average over the recessionary period. Economic inactivity rates are particularly high in Slough for females which may be a reflection of the cultural characteristics of some ethnic groups.

Conversely a recent report by the Berkshire Observatory on the Gross Value Added contribution of the six unitaries that comprise Berkshire found that Slough's productivity (GVA per job) remained relatively consistent during the period 2001-2011 despite the economic downturn. Slough's total GVA is expected to increase by 65% by 2030 (to £6,500 million) outstripping the national projection of 57%.

Slough's employment is expected to increase to 96,000 by 2030 (an 8% increase – three percentage points less than anticipated nationally). Although contractions are anticipated in all sectors apart from financial, business, and other market services, hotels and distribution and non market services.

Slough's local economy is also dependent upon the supply of highly skilled labour from surrounding local authority areas. Without the presence of this, the area would struggle to retain and attract investment. However, the areas providing the highly skilled labour – areas such as the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead are currently dependent upon Slough to provide suitable jobs for their residents. In the absence of these, highly skilled and mobile residents would move elsewhere. Conversely, a high number of lower skilled Slough residents commute out of the Borough to work, to locations such as Heathrow.

Despite Slough being a relatively compact geographical area, it is clear that there are communities living in relative proximity but with contrasting economic fortunes. In terms of Job Seeker Allowance (JSA) claimants Chalvey (7.3%), Central (5.2%) and Britwell (4.3%) all still have higher JSA claimant rates than the town average.

What local people have told us

- They want to improve local skills and increase local employment opportunities.
- Maintain grow and attract business in the town.

What we are aiming to do:

1. Attract and retain jobs and businesses, particularly in the knowledge sector.
2. Improve the skills of residents to enable local people to secure local jobs.
3. Improve Slough's infrastructure in terms of transport and telecommunications to ensure it is an international gateway for goods, people and services.
4. Improve Slough's retail offer so that it is consistently in the top five UK towns as measured by the Experian Retail Ranking.
5. Raise the profile and improve the image of Slough ensuring Slough is a destination of choice for inward investors.

What residents can do

- Use and develop your skills to the best of your ability
- Take up the educational opportunities on offer to realise your full potential
- Support your local shops
- Pay your Council tax on time and online

Supporting Plans and Strategies

Local Economic Assessment

Health and Wellbeing

Vision:

By 2028, Slough will be healthier, with reduced inequalities, improved wellbeing and opportunities for our residents to live positive, active independent lives.

What the evidence says:

The health and wellbeing of Slough's population is influenced by a wide range of factors, including social, economic, cultural, psychological and environmental. The main concerns for Slough's residents include obesity, physical activity levels, smoking, diabetes, TB and multiple deprivations and are linked with the broader determinants of health and wellbeing, such as access to transport, employment and economic issues.

Cardiovascular Disease mortality in Slough is statistically significantly above the national and regional rates, although it is falling, in line with regional and national rates. However, CVD mortality rates in Slough remain higher than neighbouring areas, the region and nationally.

Slough showed a rapid increase in cancer mortality in under 75's between 2007 and 2008. This meant that the rates were not only higher or equivalent to neighbouring areas and the region, but getting closer to the national average.

Slough has the highest rates of TB in Berkshire East and the TB incidence rate was nearly 3.5 times that of the rate in the UK and more than 6 times the incidence rate of South-East England. The wards of Chalvey, Britwell and Baylis and Stoke accounted for 22.5% (69 of the 306 cases) of TB notifications from Berkshire East from 2006-09.

In Slough diabetes prevalence is 7.13% and is statistically significantly above the national 5.40%. Diabetes prevalence is projected to rise to approximately 9.5% by 2030. Slough rates are high due to the higher risk in people of South Asian origin.

An estimated 23.7% of adults are obese. Obesity reduces life expectancy by, on average, nine years and leads to health problems including coronary heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and some cancers. About 21.4% of Year 6 children are classified as obese and 10.8% of reception year pupils, considerably higher than the relative national averages at 18.7% and 9.8%.

Smoking is the largest single cause of preventable death and health inequality. An estimated 21.0% of adults smoke and there are 136 deaths from smoking each year. Slough's rate of smoking-attributable deaths is in the top five local authorities in the South East and smoking rates are particularly high amongst Slough's minority communities.

In terms of life-expectancy, a child born in Slough today is predicted to live until the age of 78.4 years (if male) and 82.5 years (if female). These life expectancies have improved markedly over the past decade, and now exceed those for the UK as a whole. However, life expectancies for Slough still lag behind those of other neighbouring areas and are also 8.3 years lower for men and 6 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Slough than in the least deprived areas.

With regards to sexual health over the last ten years there has been a sharp increase in the numbers of people diagnosed with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and syphilis, and steady rises in genital chlamydia and the numbers of diagnoses of genital herpes and genital warts. HIV prevalence in Slough is 3.64 per 1000 population and PCT prevalence is 1.75 per 1000 population. The overall aim of the PCT is to ensure that people in Slough have the information and advice they need to be sexually healthy, along with easy and efficient access

to local sexual health services.

What local people have told us:

- They want to increase the life expectancy of local people.
- They want to improve the health and quality of life of local people including by reducing risk factors.

What we are aiming to do:

1. Improve local people's health, quality of life and life expectancy by reducing risk factors and health inequalities.
2. Reduce obesity and the diseases associated with it by improving diets and nutrition and increasing the level of physical activity undertaken by residents.
3. Reduce the number of adults who smoke.
4. Reduce the number of respiratory related hospital admissions and the numbers of residents dying from cardio pulmonary disease, pneumonia, heart attacks and strokes.
5. Improve the sexual health of adults and young people.
6. Improve the mental health and well being of adults, children and young people.
7. Reduce drug and alcohol misuse.
8. Implement and improve take up of screening programmes including cancer and tuberculosis.
9. Improve opportunities for independent living for older people and people with disabilities, including the use of personalised budgets.
10. Ensure that local schools provide a high quality of education and that standards are maintained where they are high and improved where necessary.

What residents can do

- Keep healthy by eating sensibly and exercising regularly
- Make use of the towns parks, open spaces and leisure facilities and events
- Rent an allotment or make over your garden to grow your own food
- Use your local community, groups, community centres
- Consult your local pharmacist for routine medical advice.

Strategies and Plans

- Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2009/13
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2010 (JSNA) (NHS Berkshire East and Slough Borough Council)
- Slough Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011, (Education and Children's Services, Slough Borough Council) [BEING UPDATED]

- Carbon MANGEMNST Plan and Climate Change Strategy
- Supporting People Plan
- Personalisation Strategy
- Commissioning Strategy for Adult Social Care
- East Berkshire Dementia Strategy

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Housing

Vision:

By 2028 Slough will possess a strong, attractive and balanced housing market which recognises the importance of housing in supporting economic growth.

What the evidence says:

Despite increased levels of satisfaction in the provision of the Council's housing services between 2007 and 2010, the 2010 Attitude Survey cited affordable and decent housing being high on the list of factors determining how nice a place was to live in with 46% of respondents registering this. 17% of respondents also stated that the affordability of decent housing needed to be improved compared to 16% in 2007. The Council is spending £65m upgrading local authority housing to the decent homes standard, but the standard of privately rented accommodation remains a concern.

The housing experience differs across communities. In the wards of Britwell, Kedermister and Foxborough there are relatively high levels of residents in social housing, but only 9.7% of residents in Langley St Mary's and 11.8% of residents in Upton rent from a social landlord. The Slough average for this indicator is 20.9%. This is on par with the national average (19.2%) but is well above the Berkshire average of 14%.

A further barometer of the pressure on housing in Slough is the number of people on social housing waiting lists which currently stands at 6138 (as at 1 April 2011), an increase of 20% over the past 12 months. The highest increase in demand in 2009 was for 1 and 2 bed properties, although the demand for family size units also remains high with families having the longest wait.

There is a high demand for privately rented housing. A survey found in June 2009 that there were approximately 3,500 houses in multiple occupations across the town. Some of these are in a poor condition and the urgently need to be improved. A further reflection of the very high demand for private rented housing across the borough is the "Slough Shed" phenomena (i.e. landlords accommodating tenants in outhouses and garages in gardens). These structures are erected generally without planning or building control regulations. So far the Council has inspected in excess of 2,500 of such structures and the most appropriate enforcement action has been taken for those which are found to be occupied.

We want Slough to have sufficient quality homes to meet the needs of local people, including a buoyant privately rented sector as well as social housing and high quality owner occupied homes in which people will aspire to live when their financial circumstances allow.

What local people have told us:

- They want to improve quality and condition of council and privately rented housing
- They want to increase the amount and quality of housing, particularly large family properties

What we are aiming to do:

1. Improve housing standards, choice and affordability.
2. Increase the amount of affordable housing for rent and sale to support regeneration and promote tenure diversity.

3. Develop a mix of housing in terms of tenure and size to meet the needs of all of the current and future population.
4. Work with landlords in the private rented sector to become accredited and improve the standards of accommodation, particularly house in multiple occupation.
5. Increase choices for home-seekers, offering sustainable housing options and aiming to prevent the risk of homelessness.

What residents can do

- Respect your home and neighbourhood
- Keep your neighbourhood clean and tidy
- Respect your neighbours by keeping noise to a minimum

Strategies and Plans

- Slough Housing Strategy 2005-1010, (Housing Services, Slough Borough Council)
- Slough Homelessness Strategy 2008-2011 (Housing Services, Slough Borough Council)

Regeneration and Environment

Vision:

By 2028, Slough will be distinctive from our competitors, harnessing the diversity and creativity of our people and our cultural and physical fabric to create an attractive local environment for our residents and businesses.

What the evidence says:

Slough has wide ranging ambitions to regenerate the Town and neighbourhood centres for the benefit of the local communities. This includes improving the image of the Town, by harnessing good urban design standards, but also to build upon the town being a sub-regional gateway to and from London. To achieve this, the Council is creating a £500m joint venture entity with the private sector.

The Heart of Slough is a £450m scheme to redevelop 29 acres in the centre of the town including improved public transport facilities, highways improvements, new homes, retail and leisure facilities including and a new cultural centre. The sub-regional cultural centre will include a new library, adult learning facilities and cultural activities and performances.

Britwell is being regenerated to replace dated and unpleasant concrete buildings with new housing and community facilities. Local community areas are also being created in Chalvey with plans also for Langley. New libraries are or have been opened in Colnbrook, Chalvey and Wexham Lea with a further new library to open in the Britwell Community Hub. We also want to create a new home for Slough Town FC within the north of the Town.

The Council's Parks and Open Spaces Strategy identifies actions that the Council will take to ensure that its open spaces parks resources are fully utilised to deliver benefits across many service areas, including regeneration and the enhancement of the town's environment.

Slough has made good progress in recent years to improve the local environment and is now one of the cleanest boroughs in the South-East.

The town still suffers from poor air quality and traffic congestion whilst the standard of the built environment needs to improve. Proximity to Heathrow as well as major motorways such as the M40, M25 and M4 aggravates problems especially in relation to air quality although they help to secure the town's economic position.

Slough will pursue steps to move up the waste hierarchy to increase the amount of waste recycled, reduce the overall amount of waste produced and reduce dependency on landfill for final waste disposal. The Council will encourage home composting and continue to provide a dedicated scheme to collect green garden waste. The priorities for this work and the key legislation, economic and environmental drivers will be identified in the guiding document Slough Waste Strategy 2012 – 2022. The Council has set itself the target of recycling 60% of its waste by 2028 which will be a major driver behind the Waste Strategy.

What local people have told us:

- They want to improve local transport infrastructure including road and rail
- They want to regenerate the town centre and neighbourhoods.

What we aim to do:

1. Facilitate the regeneration of Slough Town Centre to become a thriving sub-regional hub for public transport, retail, culture and living.
2. Optimise the value and use of council owned assets for the benefit of the local community.
3. Encourage private sector investment to create employment and economic activity that will increase the viability and vitality of the town district and neighbourhood shopping centres and maintain their variety and distinctiveness.
4. Focus development in the town centre, district and neighbourhood centres; encourage innovative and high quality urban design; and make the best use of existing buildings, previously developed land, existing and proposed infrastructure.
5. Maintain and improve access to recreational and leisure facilities, including parks and open spaces, where local people will gain most benefit and find easy to use.
6. Improve recycling rates and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.
7. Improve public transport, cycling and walking facilities to increase use of sustainable forms of transport.
8. Reduce energy and water use and the amount of carbon emissions.

What residents can do

1. Promote the Town and be a champion for the area.
2. Participate in the planning process
3. Use public transport or cycle or walk rather than use your car
4. Insulate your home
5. Reduce your water consumption
6. Reduce, reuse and recycle whether at home or around the town
7. Volunteer for community clean up campaigns
8. Compost your food and garden waste at home

Strategies and Plans

- Parks and Open Spaces Strategy (being developed)
- Heart of Slough Masterplan
- Britwell Regeneration Masterplan
- Asset Management Plan
- Local Development Framework, Core Strategy
- Slough Waste Strategy 2012 – 2022 (being developed)
- Local Transport Plan (LTP 3) / Air Quality Action Plan
- Waste and Recycling Communications Plan 2011 - 12

Safer Communities

Vision:

By 2028, Slough will be one of the safest towns in the UK, having reduced crime and disorder, improved residents' perceptions of their safety, and increased community engagement and cohesion to encourage communities to play an active part in making Slough a better place to live, work and visit.

What the evidence says:

Over the seven year period April 2003 to March 2010, all crime in Slough fell by 17%. Particular success has been achieved in addressing property crime. Some types of violent crime have increased and others have decreased, but the overall level of violent crime has remained relatively stable.

However, despite falls in recorded incidents in many categories, the crime and safety profile of Slough continues to be an area of key concern for both the Local Strategic Partnership and the local community. Results from the recent 2010 Attitude Survey identified level of crime as being the single most important factor in making somewhere a good place to live (66%), this represents an (2%) increase on the level recorded in 2007 (64%). Respondents also identified level of crime as the one thing most in need of improvement.

Consultation has identified five top priorities, enforcement work to arrest drug dealers, serious violent crime, domestic abuse, sexual offences and burglary.

Slough also has a drug problem, exacerbated by its good transport links to the rest of the country. When assessing drug misuse in Slough, cannabis is the main volume drug, but treatment has been traditionally directed at Class A drug use. With regards to Class A misuse, the main drug used by the Slough treatment population in 2009/10 was dual use of opiate and crack. This dual use is below the regional and national averages, as are opiate on their own, other stimulants and cannabis, but, crack alone is a bigger problem in Slough than regionally or nationally.

We want to create a town which is safe for residents to live, work and play. We want a town where local agencies work collaboratively to tackle crime and its underlying causes, and where there is a pro-active approach to tackling crime with the emphasis on preventative and diversionary work.

Slough, like most local authorities across England, has seen increases in activity rates for children's safeguarding over the last 3 years. Overall, intervention across the local authority services for children in need, child protection and looked after children was at its lowest level in 2007, since when there has been a rapid increase in activity across many of the indicators.

Adult safeguarding is also an area of growing concern and partners want to ensure that older people, people with physical disabilities and learning difficulties all live in safe environments.

What local people have told us:

- They want to reduce high volume crime e.g. acquisitive, and violent crime and anti-social behaviour
- They want to reduce the fear of crime
- They want to safeguard children and adults

What we are aiming to do:

1. Reduce crime, the fear and perception of crime, antisocial behaviour and substance misuse.
2. Monitor, map and analyse crime statistics to inform our response.
3. Safeguard and support vulnerable adults and children in our communities.
4. Promote cohesive open communities that value diversity, encourage a sense of belonging and engender a sense of local pride.
5. Promote volunteering and community engagement.

Key indicators [indicative, to be developed in Action Plan]

1. Maintain the level of "All Crime" at below 18,277 (the annual average between 03/04 and 09/10).
2. Reduce violent crime – 12% reduction in assaults without injury, wounding and serious violence and increase the detection rate to 42%
3. Reduce serious sexual offences – 25% reduction
4. Reduce property crime - 5% reduction in burglary and personnel robbery and increase the detection rate to 15%
5. Maintaining the number of problematic drug users in effective treatment at 8% above the 2007/08 baseline and increasing the number of drug users leaving treatment drug free by 4% from the 10/11 baseline.
6. 90% of callers to the ASB hotline are satisfied with the service they receive

What residents can do:

- Act lawfully
- Report crime and anti-social behaviour
- Take active responsibility for your own security and reduce the risk of becoming a victim of crime
- Respect your neighbours whatever their background or beliefs
- Welcome newcomers to the town
- Participate in your local community and neighbourhood groups
- Vote in local and national elections
- Give your feedback on local services

Strategies and Plans

- Strategic Needs Assessment 2011 (Safer Slough Partnership, Slough Borough Council)
- Safer Slough Action Plan
- DAAT Adult Drug Treatment Plan
- Adults Safeguarding Action Plan

What happens next?

Slough Forward will monitor the progress of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) every year to make sure we are on track and are continuing to meet the needs of local people.

For queries relating to these documents, or any other aspect of Slough Forward, please contact:

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Email the Partnership at: lsp@slough.gov.uk

Look on the Internet at: <http://www.slough.gov.uk/aboutus/articles/12948.aspx>

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