

Living together

**Community Cohesion
Strategy
for Slough**

2013 – 2015

DRAFT

Living together
A Community Cohesion Strategy for Slough

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Living together - a Community Cohesion Strategy for Slough

Community Cohesion is about supporting diverse groups of people to live, study and work successfully alongside each other. If people are secure, feel a sense of belonging, are respected and able to express themselves and celebrate their identity and beliefs, they will not be threatened by or negative toward others who are different from themselves. A key component of this is promoting understanding and harmonious relationships between existing residents and newcomers to the borough and developing a shared sense of belonging.

We know that for most people Slough is a good place to live, study and work, but we can't take this for granted. Community cohesion often breaks down not because of differences between and within different groups of people, but because of the social, economic and environmental challenges that people face and which can, if left unchecked could help to undermine feelings of trust and security.

Living Together sets out Slough's Community Cohesion Priority Delivery Group's (CCPDG) plans for addressing these challenges and supporting, strengthening and promoting community cohesion across the borough for the next two years. It includes a comprehensive programme of targeted actions which are evidence based, take account of the views and aspirations of local people and are firmly rooted in locally identified issues.

This Strategy does not just belong to the CCPDG, or to its individual members or partner organisations. It reflects the commitment and dedication shown by thousands of local people – in faith groups, voluntary, community and tenants' organisations, sports clubs and youth projects, in tackling inequalities, promoting fairness and empowering confident communities. For these reasons, in endorsing this Strategy, I want to thank local people for the contributions they have made, and continue to make, in helping to create a borough that is a safe, welcoming and cohesive place for people to live, study and work.

[insert details/photo of chair of PDG]

Introduction

Slough needs strong, resilient and harmonious communities that can respond effectively to the increasing pace and scale of economic, social and cultural change in the 21st Century.

Living Together - a Community Cohesion Strategy for Slough 2013 – 2015 is part of the Slough Wellbeing Board's commitment to achieve a fair and just society, in which local people are empowered to determine their own lives and to shape the communities in which they live, study and work. The Board's aim is to:

- promote equality, and
- enhance civic responsibility and community cohesion

This Strategy focuses on some of the main issues that could impact on local cohesion and sets out a programme of targeted actions and interventions that will help support, strengthen and promote the borough's cohesiveness over the next two years.

What does community cohesion mean?

“Community Cohesion is what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. A key contributor to community cohesion is integration which is what must happen to enable new residents and existing residents to adjust to one another”¹.

Community cohesion is often linked with integration but they are not the same thing.

Community cohesion looks to bring people together on the basis of shared values while also celebrating the diversity of our communities². Cohesive communities are ones that make better use of informal support and care structures, are better equipped to resolve their own problems without state intervention and demonstrate higher levels of volunteering, social support networks and charity.

Integration is about making spaces and places for people from different backgrounds to interact and enable existing and new residents to adapt and contribute to changing circumstances.

It's also important to recognise that community cohesion is not just about the relationship between different ethnic groups. It is also about the relationships between and within different communities, for example young people and older people, disabled people and people who are not disabled, people who have lived here a long time and new arrivals, people from different neighbourhoods or wards, straight communities and gay communities, affluent and poor, and so on.

Slough has a great reputation for community cohesion both in this country and abroad. Our communities have a long established history and tradition of welcoming newcomers to the borough and in working collaboratively together on issues that matter to them. And, where these issues have emerged in the past, there are

¹ Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC) 2007

² See Annex A for a summary of Slough's demographics

countless examples of local people coming together and standing up and fighting for tolerance and respect. Becoming complacent is, however, one of the quickest paths to a breakdown in community cohesion. Cohesion often breaks down not because of differences between and within different groups of people - but because of the social, economic and environmental problems that undermine feelings of trust and security. That is why the CCPDG remains committed, in this Strategy, to narrowing the gap between the most and least deprived areas of the borough, in order to reduce the scope for distrust and conflict and in promoting a fairer, safer, healthier and more cohesive community for everyone to enjoy.

New challenges and issues also lie ahead – some more visible than others – and this Strategy will help the CCPDG to manage and mitigate these challenges as they arise. Some of these challenges – which can be self imposed – are not always visible. They often come about as a result of how much money people have, their health or the confidence they have in taking part in social or civic activities. Sometimes the challenges are more tangible - such as discrimination – which does not always take place along ethnic or religious lines.

This Strategy therefore places a strong emphasis on embracing these differences and undertaking activities that support, strengthen and promote inclusion as a means of building successful, cohesive communities. It recognises the importance of not only welcoming new arrivals to Slough but also in helping some of our more established communities to cope with the pace of change.

Why community cohesion is important?

People who feel insecure themselves, or who feel they are not treated fairly, are less likely to feel positive towards others – and may even resent them. We know that to be able to get on well with other communities, people need to feel safe themselves, and they need to have a sense of belonging in their own neighbourhood and the borough as a whole. But some communities can become stereotyped by others and myths and misunderstanding can develop. At its worst, weak community cohesion can lead to tensions between communities, and sometimes even hatred. For example, young people are often stigmatised because of the anti-social behaviour of a few - yet Slough's young people are one of its great strengths. Another example is that today's new arrivals to the borough often face social and language barriers which can often make it difficult for them to settle in and get on in life. Settled communities can feel resentful towards newer communities due to a perception that they are better able to access housing and employment opportunities.

Community cohesion is at its strongest when people have the opportunity and the capacity to participate in their community as fully as they wish and on an equal footing with others. And whilst we acknowledge that everyone is different, with differing needs - everyone should have the same or similar opportunities.

National context

The Government's approach to achieving a more integrated society is set out in its **“Creating the Conditions for Integration”** report, which focuses on creating the conditions for everyone to live and work successfully alongside each other. This

report argues that integration can only be achieved by neighbourhoods, families and individuals coming together on issues which matter to them. It also argues for the rebalancing of activity - from centrally-led to locally-led action and from the public to the voluntary and private sectors. It challenges local public, private and voluntary sectors to work together to bring about a change in society by taking long term actions that challenge intolerance, undermine and reject extremism and counter marginalised extremists.

In addition to this report, there are also many pieces of national legalisation around community cohesion issues: These include:

- The **Education and Inspections Act 2006** – under this legislation schools have a legal duty to promote community cohesion.
- **The Equalities Act 2010** - For public authorities, including local government and the police, the duty to promote community cohesion is set in the more general context of promoting equality. The promotion of equality and fair access to public services and employment are key components of cohesion. Real or perceived inequity is a major barrier to feelings of cohesion and belonging in local communities. The General Duty of the Equality Act has three aims. Public bodies in all their operations *must have due regard to the need to:*
 - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation,
 - advance equality of opportunity between people from different (equality) groups, and
 - foster good relations between people from different (equality) groups.

The Act also defines age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation as protected characteristics

- Under the **Public Sector Equality Duty** (specific duties under the Equality Act 2010), all public authorities must publish equalities data on their workforce and services, and 4 yearly Equality Objectives. The publication of both qualitative and quantitative data on how public authorities are improving equality outcomes is seen as a being a key mechanism for myth busting and transparency over performance.
- The coalition Government has also been creating new policies through its **Localism** agenda, to devolve greater power and freedoms to local authorities and neighbourhoods, and to enable the establishment of powerful new rights for communities. New initiatives are emerging from these policies, such as the **Big Society** initiative, which is aimed at supporting and encouraging social responsibility, volunteering and philanthropy and in making it easier for people to come together to 'give something back' to the community and help one another.
- The coalition Government is also supporting the creation and expansion of **mutuals, co-operatives, charities and social enterprises**, which aim to enable these groups to have much greater involvement in the running of public services.
- A **National Citizen Service** is also being introduced which is a programme for 16 year olds to give them a chance to develop the skills needed to be active

and responsible citizens, mix with people from different backgrounds, and start getting involved in their communities.

These new policies and initiatives represent opportunities which can be harnessed by the CCPDG to empower our communities and promote cohesion. This Strategy reflects these opportunities and sets out our joined up, cross cutting and co-ordinated approach to supporting, strengthening and promoting community cohesion across the borough.

Our vision for Slough

The Slough Wellbeing Strategy identifies the following vision for Slough, that by 2028:

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

This Strategy therefore supports the delivery of the coalition Government and the Slough Wellbeing Strategy’s vision of an integrated and cohesive community, where local people are treated fairly and equitably.

This vision of an integrated and cohesive community is based on **three foundations**:

- that people from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities,
- that people know their rights and responsibilities, and
- that people trust one another and trust local institutions to act fairly

and **three ways of living together**:

- a shared set of values and a common sense of belonging,
- a focus on what new and existing communities have in common, alongside a recognition of the value of diversity, and
- strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds.

In order to realise this vision the CCPDG has, after consulting widely³ and analysing the comments and concerns of local people, identified five priority areas or **outcomes** for this Strategy which are discussed in more detail in each of the following chapters:

- Outcome 1: People feel a sense of pride and belonging
- Outcome 2: Better life opportunities for all
- Outcome 3: Diversity is valued
- Outcome 4: Positive relationships within and between communities
- Outcome 5: We all take responsibility

³ These outcomes were identified at a number of work shops and discussions held with key members of the CCPDG and the other thematic Partnership Delivery Groups (PDGs) reporting into the Slough Wellbeing Board during 2012/13. They have also been subject to public scrutiny by a wide range of voluntary and community sector organisations and members of the public in order to ensure their relevance and consistency. They have also been informed by market research carried out by MEL Independent Ltd between Jan and April 2013 on behalf of the CCPDG in order to find out how cohesive Slough’s communities are.

We have also identified a broad range of **objectives** and **actions** for delivery under each of these outcomes in order to help manage and mitigate a broad range of issues that local people feel most strongly about⁴.

In this way, we have constructed a broad basket of desired outcomes and objectives that, when viewed collectively, will provide a firm foundation on which the CCPDG can confidently manage its community cohesion activities. The examples of actions included in each chapter have been deliberately drawn from a wide range of Partnership areas in order to illustrate this point.

Links with other strategies

Particular attention has been paid in each outcome chapter to ensure that this Strategy is consistent with the Slough Wellbeing Strategy, which sets out what and where the Council and its partners want Slough to be by 2028. In addition to the Slough Wellbeing Strategy there are literally hundreds of detailed targets and priorities outlined in dozens of individual Partnership strategies, policies and service plans that have either a direct or indirect bearing on community cohesion. We have not sought to reproduce these here. Instead, our approach has been to identify and signpost local people to these key strategies and plans and to focus on ways of working and what can be done, rather than duplicate how this will be done.

OUTCOME 1: PEOPLE FEEL A SENSE OF BELONGING

There are many ways a person's sense of pride or belonging can express itself e.g. by supporting the local football team, by participating in a recycled teenagers group, by volunteering in a borough-wide festival or by practicing a religious faith. But these identities are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Such bonds and relationships must be encouraged to flourish within local communities in order to promote community cohesion. If people have self-esteem and share a sense of pride in their neighbourhood, they are far more likely to welcome links with other groups and communities with similar aspirations. There is a long and proud history of collaboration and co-operation across the borough. The challenge now is to work with communities in order to identify, promote and uphold an inclusive set of values and principles that promote a shared sense of pride and belonging locally.

Objectives

- A shared sense of belonging

⁴ Issues such as:

- the experience of poverty, deprivation and social exclusion - which can be linked to lower levels of cohesion within economically deprived communities and a result in people perceiving that they are competing for scarce resources,
- the perceived threat of increasing immigration into the UK, most recently from EU member states and the African and Indian sub continents and the perception that increased migration causes additional housing pressures in areas where there may already be high demand for affordable homes,
- the way that some benefits are now calculated - which could result in some inner London boroughs becoming increasingly unaffordable for anyone on housing resulting in some families from inner London looking to relocate to Slough and the knock on effect that that might have on the borough's existing housing stock, school places and welfare services,
- the perceived threat, particularly in a recession, of increased competition for jobs between new arrivals and our established communities leading to an increase in community tensions, and
- the increased global terrorist threat and the concern that disaffected and excluded individuals could become radicalised.

- Responsive services that meet local needs and which are open and accessible to all
- A greater understanding of the borough's rich heritage
- Attractive neighbourhoods that have a clear sense of identity and where people are proud to live, study and work
- Neighbourhoods where people value one another, support the vulnerable and help those most in need
- The direct involvement of local people in decision making about local services and increased participation in local democracy
- A good quality well maintained environment

Some examples of what we intend to do

- Develop a shared set of community values based on local peoples rights and responsibilities so that everyone knows what is expected of them and what they can expect in return
- Increase the number of contracts and services secured and delivered by the local community and voluntary sector
- Support residents into good quality accommodation that is appropriate to their needs and provide support to help them sustain their tenancy and their home
- Use ward and neighbourhood profiles to better understand community needs and implement community development initiatives where they will have the most impact
- Promote electoral registration, voting and other opportunities to participate to all sections of the community
- Create and reinforce positive messages that limit the opportunities available to stereotype and reinforce negative perceptions about the borough
- Develop and publicise a Community Cohesion Charter for leaders, organisations and for local people in the borough to pledge their active support for building community cohesion in Slough
- Increase the opportunities for local people to get involved in local decision making structures and processes

What can the community do?

- Know your rights and responsibilities
- Be accountable and responsible for your own behaviour and actions
- Promote the borough and be a champion for your local area
- Respond to consultations and give your feedback on services
- Vote in national and local elections
- Participate in local community and neighbourhood groups
- Positively encourage others to take part in consultation and engagement opportunities

Supporting Strategies or Plans

- Community Engagement Policy
- Housing Strategy
- Allocations Policy
- Housing Tenancy Strategy
- Procurement Strategy

- Customer Service and Contact Strategy
- Housing Management Service Plan

OUTCOME 2: BETTER LIFE OPPORTUNITIES

Inequalities in health, employment, housing, education and income can be found in differing degrees in most communities, although certain neighbourhoods and groups in Slough face much higher levels of disadvantage than others. For this reason most people recognise that promoting equality of opportunity does not literally mean that everyone gets exactly the same all the time. That is why disadvantages within and between different communities in Slough must be tackled head-on in order to promote community cohesion. Historic and deep-rooted inequalities can generate resentment and frustration - which if left unchecked, can all too easily lead to disengagement, disenfranchisement and possibly conflict.

Recent legislation such as the Equalities Act places a legal duty on public bodies to address inequalities in these areas. Similar legislation applies to the provision of services e.g. in housing and education. However this commitment to equality must go beyond that of mere compliance with the law. This is best illustrated by the Council's commitment to providing services to people on an equitable basis "*no matter who they are or what their circumstances*". That is why cohesion is a borough-wide concern for the Slough Wellbeing Board in its entirety.

Objectives

- Narrow the gap between the most and least deprived areas of the borough
- Accessible schools, community facilities and employment opportunities
- Year on year improvements in the determinants of deprivation e.g. ill health, mortality, unemployment, literacy, mental health and school performance
- Improve social and economic wellbeing across the borough
- Promote employment and training opportunities to under represented, disengaged, vulnerable and hard to reach groups and individuals
- Raise people's aspirations for them selves, their neighbourhood, their communities and the borough
- Increase the number of local people who volunteer

Some examples of what we intend to do:

- Promote and provide employment and training support and opportunities to older workers, women, low skilled, disabled and young people
- Support the provision of language programmes for those local people whose first language is not English
- Deliver training for tenants to give them the knowledge and skills to be effectively involved in monitoring, review and testing of housing service performance and resident's experience of housing service delivery
- Develop and promote buddying and mentoring opportunities for young people and community groups
- Promote the benefits of volunteering and improve access to, and accessibility of, volunteering opportunities for people of all ages
- Increase the number of people undertaking sport and physical activity

What can communities do?

- Encourage your children to develop their skills and take up the educational opportunities on offer to help realise their full potential
- Take part in activities that promote personal and skills development
- Learn how to use the NHS wisely
- Be involved in patient participation groups
- Keep healthy by eating and drinking sensibly and exercising regularly
- Volunteer to help local community groups

Supporting Strategies or Plans

- Slough's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Health Strategy
- Adult Learning and Skills Strategy
- Housing Management Service Plan

OUTCOME 3: DIVERSITY IS VALUED

Labels and stereotypes always distort reality. But by respecting and valuing the diversity of talent, life experiences and identities in Slough's communities we can overcome the negative impact that these labels can have. We can also see that despite our apparent differences, together we form part of the "bigger picture" of the borough as a whole. This principle lies at the heart of the way in which the Council operates. Neighbourhood forums have been set up precisely in order to reflect the diverse needs, priorities and characteristics of different areas of the borough. In turn, these forums and their various working groups are helping to play a key part in shaping the borough's policies and priorities.

Valuing diversity also helps to combat the myths and prejudices that surround us, as well as developing a collective commitment to the lives of others and the borough as a whole.

Objectives

- A focus on what new and existing communities have in common, alongside a recognition of the value of diversity
- Zero tolerance for all forms of discrimination
- Workforces that are reflective of the wider community across all sectors and at all levels
- Promote and celebrate the rich heritage and cultural diversity of the borough's local people
- Create strong, positive relationships between people from different backgrounds

Some examples of what we intend to do:

- Promote diversity, pride in oneself and respect for others
- Challenge negative stereotypes and myths about newcomers to the borough
- Ensure public sector bodies deliver statutory requirements
- Monitor media coverage and challenge myths and stereotypes
- Use residents profiling data to tailor housing service delivery to meet the needs of individual local people

What can communities do?

- Welcome newcomers to the borough
- Respect your neighbours whatever their background or beliefs

Supporting Strategies or Plans

- Children and Young People's Plan
- Workforce Strategy
- Safer Slough Partnership Strategic Assessment
- Housing Management Service Plan

OUTCOME 4: POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN AND BETWEEN COMMUNITIES

No one wants to live, study or work in a community where fear and distrust are widespread. That is why it's essential that special efforts are made to address issues such as crime, racist abuse and anti-social behaviour. If action isn't taken to tackle these issues, public confidence in "the system" can become eroded, creating a downward spiral from which many people feel unable to escape. Positive relationships cannot flourish in these circumstances. This is not, however, simply a question of promoting good relations between and within different communities, important though that is. It is equally important, for example, to build positive relationships between young and older people, between children and young people from different schools and between new and established communities.

Opportunities to come together, exchange ideas and share experiences do not happen by themselves. That is why particular efforts have been – and will continue to be made - to build bridges between and within different communities across the borough. For the same reason, it is equally important to ensure that these opportunities and experiences are positively promoted through the local media and other publications.

Objectives

- Reassure and empower local people to tackle anti social behaviour
- Improve cross cultural, interfaith and community understanding
- Strengthen and improve relationships between older and young people
- Support children, young people and families
- Ensure community cohesion is actively and effectively monitored

Some examples of what we intend to do:

- Work with children and young people and parents to change attitudes towards bullying and antisocial behaviour in schools colleges and community groups
- Ensure anti social behaviour is resolved vigorously through community liaison, prevention and where necessary enforcement
- Publically recognise outstanding sport, cultural, social and educational programmes and initiatives which support and build good social behaviour between and within communities
- Host and support community events that bring different groups together to meet, network and debate topical issues

- Teach respect for others as part of the national curriculum
- Hold an annual council tenants' conference to agree local priorities and understand local peoples experiences of, and expectations for, their neighbourhood and community
- Work with local businesses and their employees to improve their perception of the borough
- Identify ways to monitor and understand the impact that population turnover and increasing local diversity will have on the delivery of local services

What can communities do?

- Report anti social behavior to the relevant authorities
- Make sure your family knows what behaviour is and is not acceptable
- Make sure that visitors to your home know what behaviour is and is not acceptable
- Respect your neighbours and keep noise to a minimum
- Attend community events

Supporting Strategies or Plans

- Safer Slough Partnership Strategic Assessment
- Anti Social Behaviour Service Standards
- Housing Strategy
- Allocations Policy
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Parenting Strategy
- Slough's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy
- Housing Management Service Plan

OUTCOME 5: WE ALL TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

No single organisation or agency can single-handedly create or sustain community cohesion. In order to realise this Strategy's vision we not only need the active involvement of the voluntary and community sector but also local people. If local people are involved in local decision making and feel they can influence how services are delivered, they are more likely to work together to improve the quality of life in their neighbourhood and across the borough as a whole.

Local people also need to play their part, alongside local politicians and other key figures in their communities, to actively challenge all those who provoke distrust, division and hatred between and within our communities. Slough could become an even more cohesive place if we all put aside our differences and work to tackle the difficult issues together.

Objectives

- A robust and proactive response to all forms of discrimination, prejudice, racism and hatred
- Political and inter-agency consensus about how difficult issues should be tackled
- Increased community control of appropriate neighbourhood assets and delivery of some services

- Local people empowered to take responsibility and accountability for their homes, their neighbourhoods and their communities
- Effective democratic neighbourhood representation
- Maximise community engagement opportunities for local people to get involved and have their say

Some examples of what we intend to do:

- Adopt a robust zero tolerance approach to hate crime
- Support and empower communities to tackle isolation and extremism
- Work with children, young people and families to actively challenge and eliminate distrust, isolation, division and hatred
- Improve safeguarding services to ensure children and young people, the vulnerable and elderly are safe and secure
- Take swift, effective and proportionate action against residents who cause harm, nuisance or annoyance to others
- Identify ways to map, monitor and resolve conflicts and tensions between and within communities
- Build on work engaging the police with particular communities to increase dialogue and improve relations
- Develop a multi agency approach to tackling problems that arise within and between communities

What can communities do?

- Take active responsibility for your own safety and reduce the risk of becoming a victim of crime
- Respect your neighbours whatever their background or beliefs
- Act lawfully
- Participate in jury service
- Give evidence in court
- Report hate crime to the relevant authorities
- Be accountable and responsible for your own behaviour and actions
- Challenge discrimination and prejudice when you encounter it
- Participate in community events
- Give your feedback on consultations and services

Supporting Strategies or Plans

- Safer Slough Partnership Strategic Assessment
- Children and Young People's Plan
- Children's Safeguarding Improvement Plan & Adults Safeguarding Plan
- Housing Management Service Plan

Mainstreaming community cohesion

No one organisation or agency can undertake all of the actions and activities set out in this Strategy single-handedly, nor can legislation by itself make any of these changes happen.

In order to achieve the Slough Wellbeing Board's vision for Slough, this Strategy's outcomes, objectives and actions will be delivered by a variety of different players in a variety of ways:

- **Across the council** – the council as a member of the CCPDG has an important role to play in making Slough a good place to live, study and work. It cannot do this alone - but it can set a good example.
- **Through partnership working** - The Slough Wellbeing Board regularly receives information and items concerning community cohesion issues. Partners share knowledge, ideas and information on all aspects of community cohesion and community engagement issues to help inform their work programmes and delivery aspirations and to tackle cross cutting community cohesion issues where appropriate.
- **By working with public sector organisations** - who are already undertaking a great deal of work that supports local cohesion, much of which may not be specifically aimed at cohesion (for example in providing well managed social housing, community education and leisure services) and can ensure that the way they do things supports integration and understanding has a positive impact on cohesion and doesn't undermine it.
- **By working with the voluntary and community sector** - Community groups working at the heart of the community can reach out to other community groups from different backgrounds to help build bridges and can provide first hand knowledge about local issues.
- **By working with local people** – local people can reach out to people from different backgrounds in their daily lives and take the trouble to learn about and mix with people from different backgrounds. Local people also have an important civic role to play in helping to improve the borough's cohesiveness for the benefit of everyone who lives, studies and works here.
- **By encouraging new and emerging communities** to take the time to learn about the borough and how things here work.
- **By working with businesses** - to ensure that employees from different communities within their workforces are well integrated.
- **By working with the media** - Local people have told us that the image of the borough is important to them and they often feel frustrated with the way it is portrayed in the media - often by people who don't know or have never even visited the borough. The media can ensure that it doesn't portray certain communities or the borough in a negative way.

Monitoring and evaluating community cohesion

This Strategy's outcomes and objectives are being developed into a detailed action plan showing how the CCPDG plans to work with others to achieve its aspirations over the next two years. It will:

- develop a baseline so that the progress and impact of any projects undertaken in the community can be effectively monitored and evaluated
- identify and share good practice, key policy issues and innovative thinking relating to community cohesion,

- publicise and raise the profile of community cohesion and celebrate diversity in the borough,
- advise and support partners on what could be done to minimise the risk of community tension developing and help to build stronger and more cohesive communities.

Responsibility for the co-ordination and delivery of this Strategy (and its forthcoming action plan) rests with the CCPDG. Responsibility for monitoring the impact of this Strategy (and its action plan) also rests with the CCPDG. The Strategy will be evaluated annually to find out if:

- community cohesion has increased over a period of time since the introduction of this Strategy (discounting other factors, such as the impact of the recession), and
- if particular actions and initiatives intended to increase community cohesion have been effective at a partner level.

This will enable the CCPDG to build a picture of the progress that is being made across the partnership and beyond in supporting, strengthening and promoting cohesion across the borough.

What will success feel like?

If the CCPDG is successful Slough will be:

- **safe, vibrant and inclusive, with a shared sense of local identity and social solidarity.** Unless local people feel safe in their homes and their communities they will not have the confidence or desire to participate in community activities.
- **vibrant** - in the sense that there are a range of activities available in which a variety of local people can participate. Inclusivity is key because a cohesive community is one where everyone has the opportunity to access services and participate in community life if they wish.
- **strong and resilient** – local people will be empowered to develop solutions for their own problems – rather than rely on the state to manage things for them.
- **sustainable** - a place where people want to live, study, work and prosper, and where our communities' rich cultural heritage, local character and distinctiveness combine to create a shared and inclusive vision of the future.

What happens next?

This Strategy is intended to be a 'Live' document which means that it will continue to be updated as work around community cohesion continues.

How to contact us

If you have any questions or comments about this Strategy, or would like to receive a copy in an alternative format, please contact:

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ANNEX 1: SLOUGH - THE LOCAL CONTEXT

Slough is a predominantly urban area within the south east which is officially home to 140,700⁵ residents. A further 40,000 people regularly commute into and out of the town centre for work on a daily basis. Gender is split evenly between men and women (50%).

The borough has a younger than average population, with the highest proportion of 0-4 year olds (9.1%), 5-9 year olds (7.1%), 30-34 and 35-39 year olds (10.1% and 8.3% respectively) amongst any of the South East local authorities. Official population projections from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) also predict a further growth in both the numbers of children and young people, and the proportion of the total number of residents accounted for in these age groups. These projections predict a further 35,500 0-19 year olds by 2014, growing to 38,600 by 2020, and 41,400 (27.1%) by 2030. This increase in numbers will clearly have an impact on the future availability of public services required by this age group and the ability of some communities to improve their lives.

Slough also has the lowest proportion of residents in the 60 years and above age bands (12.9%) than anywhere else in the south east.

Slough's growing population also includes a large number of new arrivals, not only to the town, but to the country, and is very diverse. In recent years there has been significant immigration from Poland, the EU Accession States, as well as some parts of Africa (including Somalia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Kenya and South Africa) and the Indian subcontinent (including Hong Kong, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan). We are also one of the most ethnically diverse towns in the UK. 2011 Census figures reveal that Slough, at 34.5%, has the lowest percentage of residents defining themselves as "White British" outside of London. Nearly 10% of residents define themselves as "White Other", with the two other largest ethnic groups being Asian/Asian British: Pakistani (17.7%) and Asian/Asian British: Indian (15.6%).

Over 75 languages are also spoken in Slough schools and whilst many households have at least 1 member who speaks English as a main language, 15.5% of households do not yet include anyone for whom English is their first language. Yet despite these differences, 81% of local people from different backgrounds still feel they get on well together, and 86% said they felt their ethnic diversity is respected in their local area.⁶

⁵ Census 2011

⁶ Research carried out by MEL Independent Ltd between Jan – April 2013.

Slough is also a religiously diverse town and has the lowest number of people declaring that they have “no religion (at 12.1 %). 41.2% of residents are Christian, 23.3% of residents are Muslim, 10.6% are Sikh and 6.2% are Hindu, 0.5% are Buddhists and 0.1% of Slough residents are Jewish.

This rich diversity is strength and we are proud of the way our communities work together in a positive way, but the demands that this can sometimes place on service delivery could pose some difficulties in managing scarce and diminishing resources in the future.

Further information about the strengths and challenges of the borough is available in the ‘Slough Story’ which includes key statistics and information about Slough and is available on the council’s website at <http://www.slough.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/slough-story.aspx> .

ANNEX 2: GLOSSARY

Anti social behaviour (ASB) – is defined as “*any aggressive, intimidating or destructive activity that damages or destroys another person’s quality of life*”. This is a deliberately broad definition as antisocial behaviour is subjective and may vary from person to person and community to community. The Anti -social Behaviour Act 2003 defines anti social behaviour as “*a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household (as perpetrator)*”. This is the definition that must be used, for practical purposes, when dealing with the judicial process. Whatever the definition - it is clear that anti social behaviour includes criminal activity as well as behaviour that is destructive to neighbourhoods - but does not actually break the law. Anti social behaviour can also be unconscious and it is therefore important that it is challenged appropriately by the community. ASB can include:

- Dumped rubbish and fly tipping
- Abandoned vehicles
- Noise nuisance
- Vandalism
- Graffiti
- Soliciting for purposes of prostitution
- Rowdy behaviour
- Dangerous dogs
- Harassment
- Drug dealing
- Begging
- Neighbour disputes
- any other type of behaviour or perceived behaviour which has a negative impact on people’s daily lives.

BME/BAME – Black and Minority Ethnic or Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic is the terminology normally used in the UK to describe people of non-white descent.

Community cohesion - As a concept this is difficult to define and even harder to measure. There is also no single universally shared understanding of what the term community cohesion means. The term 'community' itself is used by people for different purposes - including to describe the people living alongside each other in a residential area (even neighbourhoods where people have little interaction), or to refer to particular groups of people who come together because of shared interests and experiences. It can also convey a sense of regional, national and or international identity.

Here in Slough we think community cohesion means communities from different backgrounds getting on well together - where everyone has an equal chance to participate and has equal access to services. It is about valuing difference and focusing on the shared values that join people together. It conveys a sense of acceptance and of developing shared values. It is also about supporting communities to work together to tackle tensions within and between particular communities should they arise.

Culture - The symbolic and expressive aspects of human behavior. The total range of social values, beliefs and behaviors of an identifiable group of people with a shared background and traditions, which influence and characterise members of that groups or society's core outlooks and activities. As such, culture is often used as a group identifier, by the group itself or by non-members. Where "culture" is employed in "racial" contexts its focus often tends to be on specific customs, beliefs and practices which distinguish a group or people in a minority, stereotypic or exotic sense, for example, in such fields as religion, social mores, or relations between the sexes or generations.

Discrimination Where prejudices and stereotypes are converted from belief or thought to action. Racial discrimination is treating of a particular group of people, or individuals belonging to that group, less favorably than others on grounds of their supposed race, colour, nationality, or ethnic or national origins. In Britain, the Race Relations Act (1976) and its Amendment (2000) make both direct and indirect discrimination illegal. The Equality Act 2010 provides new common definitions for direct and indirect discrimination. The definitions below are taken from the Equality Act 2010.

- *Direct discrimination* - A person discriminates against another if, because of a protected characteristic¹, that person treats the other less favourably than they treat or would treat others. An example would be where prospective Asian buyers of a house are denied the right to purchase it on the basis of their "race".
- *Indirect discrimination* - A person discriminates against another if they apply to another a provision, criterion or practice which is discriminatory in relation to a relevant protected characteristic of the other person(s). An example would be not addressing a "sub-culture"/long-established practice of conducting informal course-related meetings in the university union bar, thus excluding those who avoid places where alcohol is sold and consumed.

Diversity - A variety of something such as opinion, colour, or style. When used to promote social inclusiveness, this term is often used to mean diversity within society

of colour, culture, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic status, type of area (urban/rural), age, faith and/or beliefs.

Equality - The state of being equal.

Equal opportunities - A descriptive term for an approach intended to give equal access to an environment or benefits or equal treatment for all. For example, access to education, employment, health care or social welfare to members of various social groups, some of which might otherwise suffer from discrimination.

Ethnic/Ethnicity - "Ethnic" means "relating to or characteristic of a human group having certain key features in common". According to the House of Lords (Mandla v Dowell Lee, House of Lords, 1983) an ethnic group would have the following features:

- a long shared history of which the group is conscious as distinguishing it from other groups and the memory of which it keeps alive,
- a cultural tradition of its own including family and social manners, often but not necessarily associated with religious observance,
- a common, however distant, geographical origin,
- a common language and literature.

The term "ethnic" is much more commonly applied to minority or marginalised groups than to the ways of the perceived majority population. The fact that every person has an ethnic identity is often overlooked.

Ethnic minority - The term "ethnic minority" is mainly used to denote people who are in the minority within a defined population on the grounds of "race", colour, culture, language or nationality.

Inclusion - The act of including or the state of being included. This has to go beyond physical inclusion to inclusion at social, cultural and institutional levels.

Hate incident – is defined as *"any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate."*

Hate crime - is defined specifically as *"any hate incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate."*

Racism - Broadly used to refer to the ideology of superiority of a particular race over another. This notion of superiority is then applied to and embedded in structures, practices, attitudes, beliefs and processes of a social grouping which then serve to further perpetuate and transmit this ideology. Racism appears in several, often interrelated, forms, e.g. personal, cultural, and institutional:

- *Personal racism* - This refers to the negative/antagonistic thoughts, feelings and actions which characterise the outlook and behaviour of racially prejudiced

individuals. It may also refer to the effects of such perspectives and activity on those against whom they are directed. Personal racism can have a significant effect on reproducing inequalities, particularly if the individual concerned is in a position of power. Personal racism can be open and explicit or covert and implicit. People who are personally racist and who hold positions of power and influence, e.g. (head) teachers or managers, may have considerable negative impact on those against whom they act out their prejudices. Examples of personal racism include:

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- being racially abusive/harassing,
 - engaging in physical attacks,
 - allowing personal assumptions, prejudices or stereotypes on racial issues to influence decisions regarding recruitment and selection of staff or students,
 - condoning a culture which tolerates racist language and jokes in the workplace.
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- *Cultural racism* - This occurs when a particular culture perceives itself as superior to others. When such a culture impose its values on others (e.g. via content, attitudes, or control of what is transmitted as real knowledge) then systematic cultural racism can take place. The dominant culture then imposes its patterns, assumptions and values on others often in a manner that many do not even notice. This becomes the “commonsense culture” that is taken for granted as part of everyday life’s norms and leads to continuation of practices which purposely or inadvertently put up barriers to full inclusion just because “things have always been done this way”.
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- *Institutional racism* - The common definition for institutional racism now used across the UK is derived from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report written by Lord Macpherson. The Macpherson Report⁷ defines institutional racism as “*the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people. It persists because of the failure of the organisation openly and adequately to recognise and address its existence and causes by policy, example and leadership.*”
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Responsibilities - Having rights (see above) also brings responsibilities, such as respecting the rights of others and being loyal. This means abiding by the law as a responsible citizen and participating in certain civic duties such as voting, jury service and giving evidence in court.

Rights - Anyone who is in the UK for any reason has fundamental human rights which the government and public authorities are legally obliged to respect. These rights, which are enshrined in UK and international law (in the Human Rights Act

⁷ Macpherson, W. (1999) the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. *Report of an Inquiry by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny*, London: Stationery Office, Chapter 6, para. 6:34

1998 and the European Convention on Human Rights), not only impact matters of life and death, but they also affect the rights you have in your everyday life - what you can say and do, your beliefs, your right to a fair trial and other similar basic entitlements. Most rights have limits to ensure they do not unfairly damage other people's rights. However, certain rights, such as the right not to be tortured, can never be limited by a court or anybody else.

Social behaviour- is defined as *“any activity by an individual or a group that helps build a community or neighbourhood in which people support one another and have a particular regard to those most in need”*. Most social behaviours are unconscious as people engage in them all the time – often without realising it.

Values – these are important and lasting beliefs or ideals that are shared by members of society about what is good or bad and desirable or undesirable. Values have major influence on a person’s behaviour and attitude and serve as broad guidelines in all situations. Some common values are fairness, equality and community involvement.

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