

**Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy
Summary of Responses**

A summary of views from individuals and public, private and community organisations that have been collected as part of the formal consultation on the draft Sustainable Community Strategy.

The feedback received is summarised in relation to the section of the document it refers to.

The Vision

- Several responses suggested that the document was too ambitious or unrealistic, although some welcomed its inspirational nature.
- Several responses questioned the deliverability of the plan, particularly given the current economic climate.
- Some respondees welcomed the long-term approach

Suggestions for changes included:

- more about strong communities
- enhancing and improving biodiversity and not just protecting it
- doing more to halt global warming
- changing the word 'pledge' to 'objective'
- prefacing it with 'we envisage that..' as too euphoric as it is
- urban centres should be offering improved housing as well as better places to live
- need to aim for a diversification of the rural economy with more local job opportunities
- mention concept of 'liveable'
- clarify infrastructure both physical and social, make specific mention of emergency services' infrastructure
- make it clearer who the strategy is for
- be explicit on how partners should align their own priorities to those in the Strategy
- creation of safe communities should be a cross-cutting theme throughout the Strategy
- the vision should include specific long-term targets
- amplify the community safety, levels of crime and fear of crime targets in Oxfordshire 2030.

Introduction: sections 1.1- 1.5

Suggested changes included:

- Including locally produced food
- more support was needed for local businesses
- detailing the wider context for the plan e.g. Oxfordshire 2030
- setting out who sits on the Local Strategic Partnership
- regular reviews
- difficulties with understanding the long term nature of the plan when there is a 5 year focus
- reducing 'jargon'
- in 1.4 like to see 'biodiversity protected and actively encouraged'

Cherwell Today

Suggested changes included:

- Emphasising the need for more cycle paths
- Encouraging home based crafts and local shops
- Specific changes relating to Kidlington around skills and deprivation
- Several respondees mentioned the problems of traffic congestion in Banbury and suggested specific mention be made of a second M40 junction to serve Banbury, and a bypass/ring road for Banbury
- Securing the long term future of the Horton

Future Challenges: sections 3.1 - 3.8

Suggested changes included:

- Increasing the level of detail under each challenge
- Helping and encouraging young and older people
- The impact of climate change may be overstated
- Reducing the increasing obstacles to volunteering
- Including support for carers
- Stronger emphasis of the need for infrastructure before expansion
- More on the natural world

A diverse economy – the economic pledge

- Several responses suggest that the list of objectives is very ambitious, and that no promises can be made on achieving them
- Suggestion to check data that is now out of date and quote local data rather than Oxfordshire wide where this is available

Suggested changes include:

- emphasise the need for more locally produced food and increased self sufficiency, along with providing more allotments was mentioned by several respondees
- employing the older generation to educate the younger generation
- encouraging businesses to return to the area
- encouraging apprenticeship schemes
- with increased home working in rural areas need reliable broadband and mobile reception
- the implications of the internet on local businesses
- improved public transport in rural areas
- specific changes relating to Kidlington around commercial and recreational potentials, congestion and parking
- greater priority given to tourism because of its importance to the local economy
- In Banbury ensure that the lost manufacturing base is not replaced with low skilled, low employment generating industries, but attracts new jobs and highly skilled workers
- Bicester retail / village should be supported but the emphasis shouldn't just be there
- Include something on productivity at Cherwell District Council
- Provide additional cemetery facilities
- How can anyone other than local customers support local shops?
- Ensure terms 'localism' and 'appropriate evolution' are clearly understood
- Specifically mention the Central Oxfordshire sub region policies in the SE Plan to exploit the economic strengths of the County

Opportunities for all – the community pledge

Suggested changes include:

- resolving boredom of young people
- providing money to support community volunteers
- affordable housing in Bodicote
- higher Police visibility
- review of planning regulations in rural areas
- continuous consultation
- accommodation for the elderly in their own locations, particularly important in rural communities
- designated rural transport
- invest in community based and alternative transport solutions is relevant in both the rural areas and Banbury
- provide practical training opportunities for young people
- support aspirations but question ability to deliver
- include supporting those with a disability to live active and successful lives

- recognise some negative impacts on deliver are outside Cherwell's control
- link together the vast number of help groups in the area
- facilitate and help volunteers, including sports clubs
- ensure that low level crime isn't ignored
- addressing deficiencies in community facilities in Banbury as well as Bicester
- special measures for more deprived areas
- strongly agree young people need support, need to ensure effective support and care for all under-fives
- explicitly include sport within culture references
- increasing participation in sport and physical activity should be a priority rather than just delivering opportunities
- references to community safety do not go far enough
- delivering community safety should be a standalone pledge given the cross-cutting nature of the issue
- need explicit links to the LDF, stating how the LDF will deliver elements of the Strategy

Connected and Protected – the infrastructure and environment pledge

There is strong support from most for references to the environment 'environment makes the area, lose this and everything else will be lost', but several suggestions strengthen actions including:

- mentioning relevant Biodiversity Action Plans
- protecting existing wildlife habitat and developing ecological connections that are essential to maintaining the value of individual wildlife sites
- consideration of green infrastructure
- not just protecting the natural environment but actively encouraging its development
- one suggestion was to change wording to 'in addressing climate change, we need to protect our countryside and landscapes, and the biodiversity of our District' to ensure they aren't conflicts

Suggested changes include:

- tightening speed limits in villages
- operating 'park and ride' schemes
- providing excellent broadband and mobile phone services
- ensuring adequate water supply
- including reference to the eco-town
- further details on overcoming the housing shortfall
- securing affordable homes
- appropriate affordable housing in villages as key to sustainable communities
- exploring rail and new station opportunities in Kidlington

- reducing road congestion
- considering the whole picture when planning road improvements
- promoting clean energy supply
- more mention of bus services
- need firm line on the provision of strategic and local infrastructure
- greater emphasis on insulation and energy and water efficiency rather than traffic
- differentiate between major strategic infrastructure and local on-site infrastructure
- include specific mention to policing infrastructure and specify that this will be delivered through the LDF, the Police adequate facilities to accommodate growth and regeneration

How will we do it? – The leadership pledge

Suggestions for changes included:

- Accountability, transparency and keeping everyone informed featured heavily in many responses
- Holding annual meeting of all partners
- Talking to local businesses and landlords
- Earlier and more detailed reference to the Local Development Framework
- More explanation of Oxfordshire 2030 and the LAA
- Further details on how the community can be involved in the Local Strategic Partnership
- Need SMART targets and one person tasked with delivery
- Vital that local people should become more engaged in local affairs
- Improve perceptions of local government
- Very sceptical about the ability of local bodies to work and plan together
- Cherwell Community Sport Network should be a delivery arm of the LSP for sport and physical activity, NI 8 should be adopted by the LSP

Any other views on community leadership or the delivery of this strategy?

Suggested changes include:

- Being clearer about delivery and implementation plans
- making it shorter and more direct
- more on mental health
- leaders of all partners being proactive
- continual involvement of local organisations in strategic planning and accessing progress made
- stronger emphasis on affordable housing and how this will be achieved

In general would you or your organisation say you agree with the content of the draft sustainable community strategy?

- most people generally agree
- those disagreeing do so for differing reasons; these include tackling inequalities, more on mental health, and too aspirational
- several respondents disliked the term pledge
- TVP wanted an additional objective around community safety

Are there any important issues, challenges or priorities that have been missed out of the strategy that you would like to see added?

Suggested changes include:

- Several respondents mention rural transport schemes
- New cycle paths
- SMART targets
- Too many priorities
- Recommend caution in setting local priorities for specific areas
- No mention of local partnerships
- Some terminology needs to be corrected
- Biodiversity is mentioned but needs to be given more emphasis
- Document considered to be lightweight

Space for any other comments

Comments included:

- Protecting nature now
- Thanking for consultation
- Making sure document is delivered
- A document covering the next 20 years is crystal ball gazing and wasteful of resources
- Title changed to: Cherwell – our district, our future
- Comprehensive document which should now be adopted
- Villages feel things are being done to them, not for them
- Kept informed through email newsletters, articles in Cherwell Link and updated website
- Welcome and support the idea to set out a long-term overall aspiration or vision for 2030, even if the goals seem difficult to achieve at this stage