

# DRAFT Cherwell Rural Strategy 2009 – 2014

**February 2009**

Final consultation draft

## Reader Notes

- The first draft of the Cherwell Rural Strategy was consulted on between July and October 2008. 57 written responses were received and analysed, as well as many discussions with respondents, service delivery and CCPP partners. This final draft of the Rural Strategy is a revised version, taking this feedback into account.
- Aims identified in this strategy are addressed through actions in the accompanying delivery plan (the draft 2009/10 Delivery Plan is appendix II to this document). The delivery plan will be reviewed each year to assess progress and add new actions.
- Please note that wherever Parish Councils are referred to in this strategy, this includes Parish Meetings, unless specified otherwise.

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## CCPP Partner logos

Cherwell District Council

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils

Oxfordshire PCT

Thames Valley Police

Oxfordshire County Council

Oxfordshire Economic Partnership

Faith Forum

Kidlington Parish Council

Banbury & District Council for  
Voluntary Service

Oxford & Cherwell Valley College

Banbury Town Council

Bicester Town Council

Banbury & District Chamber of  
Commerce

Bicester Chamber of Commerce

Kidlington Voice

Cherwell Community Planning Partnership

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## Foreword

The purpose of the Strategy is to provide a framework for improvement and support across Cherwell's rural communities and countryside. The Cherwell Community Planning Partnership's overall vision for rural Cherwell is:

**"Inclusive, sustainable rural communities in an inclusive, sustainable countryside".**

An inclusive, sustainable rural community is an active community where everyone has the opportunity to participate and can access the services and facilities they need. An inclusive, sustainable countryside is a productive and commercially viable countryside, where the needs of farming, conservation and development are appropriately balanced and where everyone has the opportunity to enjoy accessible outdoor recreation.

This is a strategy for the Cherwell area and whilst Cherwell District Council has a co-ordinating role, many of the specific actions will be taken by or in partnership with others. Substantial elements of "self-help" are included, encouraging rural residents to take steps to improve their own communities.

A Delivery Plan sets out the detailed actions that will contribute to delivering the overall vision up to 2014. It will be updated annually to reflect achievements and new initiatives. Rural communities are partners in delivering this strategy and their views and suggestions will be actively sought as delivery of this strategy progresses.

**Mary Harpley, Chair of Cherwell Community Planning Partnership**  
**Cllr. Nigel Morris, CDC Portfolio Holder for Urban & Rural Services**

## Executive Summary

The need for a Rural Strategy for Cherwell stems from the fact that Cherwell is predominantly rural in character and one third of the District's people live in its 73 rural parishes. In order to keep rural communities and the countryside thriving, their specific needs must be assessed and addressed.

A set of five underpinning principles sets out aims that apply across all parts of the strategy. The most important is "Rural Proofing" which is a commitment to examine and modify district-wide services and targets to ensure they will not unfairly disadvantage rural people or the countryside. The other four are commitments to adopt a locality based approach and maintain community engagement, ensure fairness for vulnerable & disadvantaged people and have regard to the issues of sustainability, climate change and resource use.

The main part of the strategy is arranged in five key themes, they are: A - Improve Rural Services and Facilities, B - Develop Thriving, Inclusive Rural Communities, C - Provide Village Homes and Secure Village Infrastructure, D - Support a Thriving Rural Economy, and E - Protect, Enhance & Increase Enjoyment of The Rural Environment. These themes are divided into 15 objectives, setting out aims to address identified issues.

In addressing issues such as economic development, recreation, community safety and biodiversity, the Rural Strategy shares common ground with other, more specifically focused strategies. The value of this cross-cutting approach is to gather up the broad range of issues affecting rural communities and the countryside, and where necessary to add "rural proofing" actions and targets.

## Introduction

### *Profile – Rural Cherwell*

Two thirds of the population live in the urban centres of Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington. The remaining third (about 44,000 people) live in Cherwell's 73 rural parishes

The land area of Cherwell is predominately rural in character. Its landscape is varied and of high quality in a mainly agricultural setting. The River Cherwell and its valley form a distinctive central spine to the landscape, through which are routed the Oxford Canal and railway. The M40 motorway also runs through the district from north to south. The landscape has four distinct character areas, the central Cherwell Valley, Ironstone Downs to the west of Banbury, Ploughly Limestone Plateau to the north of Bicester and flat Vale of Otmoor to the south.

Cherwell has around 700 farms. Compared to the rest of Oxfordshire, a higher percentage of land is used for permanent grass compared to arable and woodland. Cherwell has the lowest percentage of woodland in Oxfordshire, which is itself the least wooded county in south-east England.

Rural settlements range in size from the six smallest, totalling under 500 residents between them, to the six largest, with over 2,000 each. Two thirds of Cherwell's villages have populations of less than 500. Unlike other Oxfordshire districts, there are no rural market towns to act as hubs for local rural economies.

Most of rural Cherwell's economically active residents commute to their workplaces. Less than a quarter of them work within 5km of home. However, rural Cherwell also has a relatively high proportion of home-based workers (28% of total rural workers, which is above the county and regional averages). Car ownership overall is high, but the people most likely to be without a car are pensioners.

House prices in rural Cherwell are high in relation to average earnings. In the decade to 2007 there was a trebling in the values of Cherwell's cheapest (lowest quartile) market housing. The house price falls of 2008/09 have done little to improve affordability due to the accompanying economic decline and more cautious lending policies.

Over the next 20 years the proportion of older people living in rural Cherwell is expected to increase significantly. The population group aged 75 and over is expected to grow by 81% over the period. This trend is similar to that expected nationally and is driven by increasing life expectancy and the current age profile of the population.

### *Rural Priorities in Context*

Since the publication of the previous Cherwell Rural Strategy in 2002, national rural policies and delivery mechanisms have changed significantly.

The national *Rural Strategy 2004* had cross-cutting themes of sustainability and of devolving rural responsibilities and delivery closer to rural communities. It set out the Government's three priorities for rural policy as:

1. Economic and Social Regeneration – supporting enterprise across rural England, but targeting greater resources at areas of greatest need.
2. Social Justice for All – tackling rural social exclusion wherever it occurs and providing fair access to services and opportunities for all rural people.
3. Enhancing the Value of our Countryside – protecting the natural environment for this and future generations.

Also published in 2004 was “*Planning Policy Statement 7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*” (PPS7). This set out policies to guide regional and local planning authorities in preparation of their Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks.

In 2006 the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act extended to all public bodies and statutory undertakers a duty to ensure due regard to the conservation of biodiversity across all their activities.

In 2006 a partnership of organisations and local authorities began to develop a rural evidence base to inform local priorities in Oxfordshire. The resulting Oxfordshire Rural Framework (ORF) was published in July 2007.

In June 2008 the Commission for Rural Communities (CRC) published a pamphlet titled “*Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities*”. It outlined the six key policy issues that the CRC regards as most important to the development of sustainable communities in rural England. These are:

- 1 - The economic potential of rural communities should be promoted and supported much more vigorously at all levels in order to provide a greater range of well paid, secure employment.
- 2- Affordable housing remains a serious problem for rural communities despite decades of research, analysis and policy interventions.
- 3 - Many rural services continue to decline. Although there are great opportunities for IT-based services such as home shopping, or assistive technologies such as computerised health diagnoses, there is a longstanding trend towards the concentration of key facilities in urban areas.
- 4 - Rural transport; there has been no convincing strategic approach to developing a more integrated transport system which links rural areas to wider regional and national networks.
- 5 - Ensure that policies addressing climate change and the carbon challenge do not treat rural areas unfairly, and indeed recognise and promote the contribution which rural areas can make.
- 6 - Cohesive, empowered and active communities in which people can influence the decisions that affect their locality are at the heart of the Government’s vision for Britain. We must ensure that the policies and processes for realising this vision really work for rural England.

### *Community & Spatial Planning*

The long term vision for the Cherwell area is expressed through the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and the Local Development Framework (LDF).

The SCS is, as its name suggests, primarily a communities plan, identifying objectives that will help residents and businesses to access services, prosper, live healthy lifestyles and be involved in their local communities. The Rural Strategy is one of a series of medium term (5 year) plans which implement the themes and priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The LDF is a spatial plan, identifying (in line with the SCS vision and objectives) the types and amounts of development and infrastructure that will be appropriate in different parts of the district. The LDF identifies five key issues, all of which have a bearing on Rural Strategy objectives.

LDF Key Issue 1: The need to ensure convenient access to services and facilities

LDF Key Issue 2: The need to protect and enhance Cherwell’s built and natural environment

LDF Key Issue 3: The need to promote a prosperous and sustainable economy

LDF Key Issue 4: The need to ensure full and timely provision of housing, including affordable housing

LDF Key Issue 5: The need to promote the role of town centres and local shopping facilities

For the LDF the idea of village clustering has been examined to help understand the relationships between villages that have physical, social and economic linkages with each other. Some of these villages can have common needs and issues that could be jointly addressed in the interests of improving the access to services and facilities. This work is one way the LDF may be able to help deliver objectives in the Rural Strategy.

### *Structure and Delivery of the Cherwell Rural Strategy*

The evidence base for this strategy has been gathered from many sources, including local consultation events, the ORF, census statistics, national rural research evidence, survey data, Parish Plans and, as well as responses to a consultation on the first draft of this strategy. A list of evidence sources, consultations and background documents can be found in appendix I

At the start, a set of five “Underpinning Principles” sets out cross-cutting aims that are addressed throughout the strategy. The rest of the strategy is divided between five themes (A-E), each of which is divided into broad objectives. Aims under each objective address specific issues.

The broad ranging nature of this strategy means that other strategies and plans may already be addressing related issues. Under each objective, strategies and plans with common ground are signposted.

This strategy document is accompanied by a delivery plan which sets actions with specific, measurable targets over the five year life of the strategy. Each year performance against the delivery plan targets will be assessed, reported to the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership and published on the Cherwell District Council Website.

Development of the delivery plan actions will be influenced by feedback from the CCPP, Parish input, individual representations and changing circumstances. New actions will be added, or existing ones amended to reflect successes, lessons learned, and new opportunities.

To ensure access to national and regional rural development opportunities, the partnership will continue to engage with the South East Rural Forum and the Oxfordshire Rural Forum.

## **Underpinning Principles:**

Supporting the vision of “**Inclusive, sustainable rural communities in an inclusive, sustainable countryside**” are five principles that run through all themes of the strategy.

### **Rural Proofing**

**Aim: We will ensure that the rural dimension is explicitly considered in the development of all future strategic and service delivery plans.**

The idea of “Rural Proofing” is to examine and modify services and policies to ensure they will not unfairly disadvantage rural areas. Rural people should have fair access to services, even if they are not as simple or cost effective to deliver as they would be in urban locations. Organisations in the Cherwell Community Planning Partnership have many aims which apply across the district as a whole. Some already take rural delivery into account, for others, interim rural measures are added via this strategy.

### **Locality Based Approach**

**Aim: We will target resources at communities and areas by reference to their particular needs.**

Different communities in Rural Cherwell have different needs. These will be influenced by many factors including location, population profile, village history and existing facilities. Mapping the location of local services and facilities, as well as the people who might benefit from them, is an important first step to targeting support and action. Several targets in years 1 and 2 of the Delivery Plan are concerned with gathering and collating local information in order to inform subsequent delivery priorities.

### **Community Engagement**

**Aim: We will actively engage with and seek the views of rural residents and countryside users.**

Each of Cherwell’s rural communities rightly expects to have a role in defining and delivering its own improvement priorities. Similarly the views and aspirations of farmers, countryside users and visitors will be important in developing a thriving, inclusive and sustainable countryside.

### **Vulnerable and Disadvantaged People**

**Aim: We will seek to ensure equitable access to services and facilities for vulnerable and disadvantaged people. Where possible we will reduce vulnerability and the effects of disadvantage.**

It is difficult to identify and support vulnerable people scattered in small numbers across rural areas; in some areas the lower numbers of people at risk require a more specific and flexible response appropriate to their needs.

### **Sustainability, Climate Change & Resource Use**

**Aim: We will seek to improve the sustainability of rural communities and the countryside. We will seek to reduce impact on climate change and natural resources.**

Sustainability in rural areas is a balance between potentially conflicting pressures: they include the requirements of current versus future residents, productivity versus “quality of life” and conservation versus development.



## **Theme A: Improve Rural Services and Facilities**

Services and facilities available within villages have environmental benefits (fewer journeys required). They also promote community cohesion and capacity by providing opportunities for social contact and recreational activities.

The smaller a village is, the fewer permanent services and facilities are likely to be economically sustainable within it. For residents of more isolated villages, opportunities to use centralised services and facilities can be severely curtailed if they do not have access to a car. Village services and transport to access centralised services are issues raised in several Parish Plans.

Government planning guidance advises local planning authorities that they should “adopt a positive approach to planning proposals designed to improve the viability, accessibility or community value of existing services and facilities.” Research into the availability of services and facilities in all Cherwell’s villages has been undertaken for the LDF. This is an important factor in determining where development could be located.

- **Objective 1 – Retain & Improve Rural Services**
- **Objective 2 – Retain & Improve Village Facilities**
- **Objective 3 - Maintain & Improve Rural Transport**

### **Objective 1 – Retain & Improve Rural Services**

Some village services might have a permanent location (e.g. village shop, pub, school, GP Surgery) whilst some may visit the village, either on demand (e.g. supermarket delivery services) or from time to time (e.g. Health bus, mobile library, outreach Post Office). Visiting services may be self contained or they may require village facilities to operate from. Financial and information based services are increasingly available online.

**Signpost to Related Strategies:** Cherwell Local Development Framework

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Aims</b>
The number of permanent services is declining, especially in smaller villages, but access to specialist business support and advice has helped some village shops to remain viable.	1.1 - Support existing rural services to assist ongoing viability, and encourage the creation of new services.
Older people and disadvantaged people are less likely to own computers, and correspondingly less likely to benefit from web-based online services.	1.2 - Support rural communities in implementing improved ICT access for older and disadvantaged people

### **Objective 2 – Retain & Improve Village Facilities**

Village facilities (e.g. village halls, churches, recreation fields, play and youth activity areas) act as focal points for community activities, formal and informal recreation, and can provide bases for mobile and outreach services. The Cherwell Greenspaces Strategy and the Playing Pitches Strategy identify specific communities where shortfalls in recreation provision have been identified.



In villages where development will take place, developer contributions can go some way to addressing facility shortfalls. The Cherwell Recreation Strategy Action Plan contains several actions for improving specific village facilities.

**Signpost to Related Strategies:** Cherwell Recreation Strategy, Cherwell Green Spaces Strategy, Cherwell Playing Pitches Strategy, Cherwell Local Development Framework

Issues	Aims
Facilities for recreation, leisure and culture- including village halls, playgrounds and sports facilities are key parish plan issues.	2.1 - Support rural communities to provide recreational & cultural buildings that meet local needs and comply with regulatory requirements.
The Cherwell Green Spaces and Playing Pitch Strategies have identified shortfalls in allotments, play areas, courts and pitches in some parishes.	2.2 - Support rural communities to provide outdoor recreation facilities that meet local needs and comply with regulatory requirements.

### Objective 3 - Maintain & Improve Rural Transport

Increasing car ownership has brought benefits for many, but reduced the customer base for public transport. For the majority of rural residents the private car is the main means of transport. The minority who don't have regular access to a car (usually those on lower incomes, older people and younger people) often face difficulty gaining access to facilities such as health, education, employment and commercial leisure.

**Signpost to related strategies:** Oxfordshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan,

Issues	Aims
<p>In smaller and more isolated villages scheduled public transport can be infrequent or non-existent.</p> <p>Community transport initiatives and voluntary village schemes could help to reduce transport disadvantage in some villages.</p>	3.1 - Support & develop community transport initiatives alongside improvements to local public transport services
Targeted Improvements to public rights of way between villages could improve access to services, facilities and public transport connections.	3.2 - Improve links between villages for walkers, cyclists and equestrians

## **Theme B: Develop Thriving, Inclusive Rural Communities**

A sense of community spirit is one of the most valued aspects of rural life, it is characterised by a concern for ones neighbours, and a willingness to contribute to community life. A busy calendar of cultural, social and sporting events is an important characteristic of a thriving village community.

In rural areas there is a particular reliance on voluntary effort to create opportunities which in towns might be provided by public or commercial organisations.

- **Objective 4 - Support Parish Councils and Parish Democracy**
- **Objective 5 – Encourage Parish Planning & Community Engagement**
- **Objective 6 – Develop Recreational & Cultural Activities**
- **Objective 7 – Promote Health & Wellbeing**
- **Objective 8 – Improve Community Safety**

### **Objective 4 – Support Parish Councils and Parish Democracy**

Parish Councils are the grassroots tier of local government and have roles to play in almost every theme identified throughout this strategy. An active, engaged and representative Parish Council is a crucial ingredient of an inclusive, empowered and sustainable village community.

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Aims</b>
People are likely to appreciate and engage with their Parish Council if it is seen to be reflective of the community, active in community development and responsive to local concerns.	4.1 - Support Parish Councils to fulfil their statutory functions and be responsive to community needs and aspirations.  4.2 - Encourage people to participate in parish democracy
Many parish councils (especially smaller ones) struggle to adequately assess & respond to the volume of consultations, information and guidance that they receive from principal local authorities and statutory agencies.	4.3 - Work with Parish Councils to reduce the burdens of consultation and “red tape”.

## Objective 5 – Encourage Parish Planning & Community Engagement

Creating a Parish Plan helps a whole community to decide what is important to it. The key factor in parish planning is inclusiveness. A real effort is made to involve the whole community. It can help to foster community cohesion and interest in local democracy. Once engaged by involvement with the Parish Plan, people may go on to contribute to other aspects of community life.

Issues	Aims
A completed parish plan lets everyone know what the community's aims and priorities are, and who will be doing what to achieve them.	5.1 - Encourage and assist communities to identify and address local needs through parish plans.
A parish plan can distil and express concerns and aspirations with an unparalleled attention to local evidence. When several Parish plans are analysed they can highlight issues of common concern.	5.2 - Make effective use of parish plan data to inform community planning and the LDF.
People are more likely to become engaged with community life if they can easily find out what is happening in the community.	5.3 Deliver improved community information to rural communities, including through the development of online services

## Objective 6 – Develop & Promote Recreational & Cultural Activities

A busy calendar of cultural, social and sporting events is an important characteristic of an inclusive and sustainable village community. The Cherwell Recreation Strategy Action Plan contains many specific actions for sport and recreation developments in Cherwell villages.

**Signpost to Related Strategy:** Cherwell Recreation Strategy

Issues	Aims
Around 10,700 people in Cherwell are active volunteers giving £5m per annum in voluntary labour Voluntary organisations can be important to the culture and social cohesion of rural communities. They often provide services and opportunities that could not be delivered commercially.	6.1 - Support the voluntary infrastructure and individual voluntary groups in Cherwell's rural communities
The opportunities presented by village organisations (e.g. local history group, morris side, cricket team, scout group, gardening club amateur dramatic society etc.), enable villagers to form and maintain social bonds with one another. Regular participation in sport can help to improve and maintain health	6.2 Provide and support recreational and cultural activities in rural communities.  6.3 Increase participation in community based recreational & cultural activities

## Objective 7 – Promote Health & Wellbeing

People who live in rural areas are subject to the same illnesses, conditions and disabilities as urban dwellers. The rural population is relatively thinly spread over a large area though, making access to healthcare and advice more of a challenge for providers and potential recipients. Analysis of unpaid carers by age shows a difference between rural and urban Cherwell, with a higher proportion of older people living in rural areas providing unpaid care to spouses or family members

The Cherwell Joint Public Health Strategy recognises the need to specifically target health outreach services to rural areas

**Signpost to Related Strategy:** Oxfordshire Joint Public Health Strategy

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Aims</b>
It can be difficult to identify and support vulnerable people scattered in small numbers across rural areas. Where it is not practical to deliver healthcare to a rural location, consideration must be given to how a rural patient might access central facilities and services.	7.1 - Ensure local Health Care and Social Service Provision meets the needs of the local population particularly in relation to local accessibility
Healthy lifestyle choices should be available to all.	7.2 - Promote and support healthy lifestyle choices for Cherwell's rural residents

## Objective 8 - Improve Community Safety

Official crime figures show that Cherwell District as a whole experiences low levels of crime compared with similar areas in the Thames Valley and South-East England. Analysis of police data by parish shows that most crime recorded in Cherwell is concentrated in the urban areas.

Most road casualties in Cherwell occur on 'A' class roads in rural areas. Road safety issues are addressed in detail in the Oxfordshire Road Safety Strategy.

Climate change brings an increased risk of extreme weather events. Some of Cherwell's Rural communities may want to consider emergency planning measures in anticipation of flooding or other identified risks.

**Signpost to Related Strategies:** Cherwell Community Safety Strategy, Oxfordshire Road Safety Strategy

Issues	Aims
<p>Consultations and Parish Plans consistently show that policing, crime and anti-social behaviour are concerns for residents across rural Cherwell.</p> <p>The perception of crime in rural Cherwell doesn't match the low level of crime recorded</p>	<p>8.2 Reduce crime and fear of crime</p> <p>8.2 Reduce isolation and vulnerability</p>
<p>Parish Plans and Neighbourhood Action Group Priorities show that residents of rural Cherwell are concerned about speeding vehicles and dangerous driving</p>	<p>8.3 - Improve road safety</p>
<p>In rural areas community action may need to be the first response to an emergency situation.</p>	<p>8.4 – Increase community preparedness for potential emergencies</p>

## Theme C: Provide Village Homes and Secure Village Infrastructure

Planning Policy Statement 7 advises local Planning Authorities that “The key aim is to offer everyone the opportunity of a decent home. The needs of all in the community should be recognised, including those in need of affordable and accessible, special needs housing in rural areas.” It also states that “All development in rural areas should be well designed and inclusive, in keeping and scale with its location, and sensitive to the character of the countryside and local distinctiveness.” The detailed local application of these principles will be dealt with in the Cherwell LDF.

- **Objective 9 – Provide Good Quality, Affordable Rural Homes**
- **Objective 10 – Ensure Effective Infrastructure and Utility Services**

### **Objective 9 – Provide Good Quality, Affordable Rural Homes**

In the ten years to 2007 the cheapest (lowest quartile) market housing in Cherwell more than trebled in price. Properties in Rural Cherwell tend to cost more than those in urban areas. Even with a fall in property prices, open-market housing will still be out of reach for many rural families. The house price falls of 2008/09 have done little to improve affordability due to the accompanying economic decline and more cautious lending policies.

Affordable housing includes social-rented and intermediate (e.g. shared ownership) housing provided to specific eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. On new housing sites in villages a percentage of the new homes will be affordable housing and will be allocated to eligible people who have expressed a preference for a village home. Permission can sometimes be granted for affordable housing on sites that would not otherwise be released for housing. A local need for ‘rural exception sites’ must be demonstrated and arrangements put in place to reserve the housing for local people.

**Signpost to Related Strategies:** Cherwell Housing Strategy, Cherwell Homelessness Strategy, Cherwell Local Development Framework

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Aims</b>
<p>Affordable housing, especially for local families is consistently identified as a priority in Parish Plans and local consultations.</p> <p>A housing needs survey carried out for Cherwell District Council in 2004 recommended that 141 new affordable housing units per year were needed across rural Cherwell.</p>	<p>9.1 - Secure housing growth that meets Government targets and the needs of the District through an appropriate mix of market and affordable housing</p>
<p>In Cherwell it is older homes and homes in villages that are most likely to be unfit. In rural Cherwell there is an ageing population, pointing to an increasing need for adaptations and improvements.</p>	<p>9.2 - Improve the standard of housing, particularly for vulnerable people</p>
<p>People in rural areas can experience accommodation difficulties or homelessness just like urban dwellers, but they may find it more difficult to access the appropriate advice and support</p>	<p>9.3 - Ensure advice and support services to prevent homelessness and help tenancy sustainment.</p>

## Objective 10 – Work for Effective Infrastructure & Utility Services

Reliable utilities are important to the wellbeing of residents and the efficiency of local businesses.

**Signpost to related Strategies:** Cherwell Economic Development Strategy

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Aims</b>
Local consultation has identified utility services as a particular issue for some of Cherwell's rural residents. Certain villages have a perception of suffering unduly from power outages and other problems with utility services.	10.1 - Address local concerns over the reliability of electricity supply
Distance from telephone exchanges can mean that broadband internet access is slow or unavailable in some villages	10.2 Address local concerns over the speed and availability of broadband internet



## Theme D: Support a Sustainable Rural Economy

There is a strong interdependence of activities within the countryside - particularly the key relationships between farming, tourism and recreation. Rural Cherwell has a relatively low business density compared with the regional rural average. However, the level of home-based working is above the average for Oxfordshire and the South-East. Local employment and enterprise have social and environmental benefits, reducing car commuting and increasing the potential for community involvement. The need to promote a prosperous and sustainable economy is identified as a key issue in the Cherwell LDF.

- **Objective 11 – Support Rural Jobs & Businesses**
- **Objective 12 – Encourage Tourism that Supports the Local Economy and Communities**

### **Objective 11 – Support Rural Jobs & Businesses**

Farming employment in Oxfordshire has declined by almost 20% since 1990, however farming remains of vital importance to Cherwell's rural identity. In order to remain viable many farms are diversifying into tourism, recreation, food retail and other types of business.

PPS7 advises that planning authorities should "...be supportive of well-conceived farm diversification schemes for business purposes that contribute to sustainable development objectives and help to sustain the agricultural enterprise, and are consistent in their scale with their rural location." The Cherwell LDF will set out policies which allow and encourage appropriate farm diversification schemes.

As well as land based businesses requiring a countryside location, the Cherwell Economic Development Strategy recognises that, 'light touch' industries, especially in the creative sphere, will continue to be attracted to rural locations, taking advantage of communications connections to remain fully engaged in the economy while enjoying social and environmental advantages.

**Signpost to Related Strategies:** Cherwell Economic Development Strategy, Cherwell Local Development Framework

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Aims</b>
Diversified businesses have a high discontinuation rate, suggesting a need for start-up advice and ongoing support and guidance.	11.1 - Develop and promote initiatives to support farm diversification and the development of the rural economy
Increasing locally grown food will reduce the need for imports and the associated "food miles", and also support local farm businesses.	11.2 – Increase the value of local food and products and develop new markets.
Home working offers potential benefits and opportunities for local rural communities including reduced outward commuting and potentially increased involvement in local community activities and services.	11.3 - Support home-working and encourage home-workers to participate in community life.
Lack of people with the relevant skills can cause recruitment difficulties for employers in rural areas. The role of traditional rural skills is significant in maintaining the natural and historic environments.	11.4 - Improve access to skills development

## **Objective 12 – Encourage Tourism that Supports the Local Economy and Rural Communities**

Cherwell's rural tourism strengths are its distinctive rural characteristics, the Oxford Canal, and the range of outdoor leisure opportunities. The economic value of tourism to North Oxfordshire in 2006 was estimated at £250 million.

**Signpost to Related Strategies:** Cherwell Tourism Plan, Cherwell Economic Development Strategy, Cherwell Local Development Framework

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Aims</b>
Cherwell's Tourism Plan focuses on balancing the preservation of the local environment against generating tourism trade and economic wealth	12.1 - Encourage sustainable tourism
Local communities are a key resource for tourism employment as they hold valuable information and skills that can create added value during a visitor's stay.	12.2 – Increase tourists' engagement with rural communities and businesses

## Theme E - Protect, Enhance and Increase Enjoyment of the Rural Environment

- **Objective 13 - Protect & Enhance Biodiversity**
- **Objective 14 - Preserve & Enhance The Landscape & Rural Built Environment**
- **Objective 15 - Promote Enjoyment & Understanding of the Countryside**

Agricultural production used to be by far the most important factor determining the character of the countryside. Increasingly, biodiversity, landscape conservation and recreation are growing in importance, with the role of farming broadening to encompass them. Development in Cherwell's villages and countryside must strike a balance between potentially conflicting pressures: they include the requirements of current versus future residents, a balanced community versus "quality of life", and conservation versus development. The need to protect and enhance Cherwell's built and natural environment is a key issue for the Cherwell LDF, and it gives detailed consideration to these issues.

### **Objective 13 - Protect & Enhance Biodiversity & the Natural Environment**

In 2006 the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act extended to all public bodies and a duty to ensure due regard to the conservation of biodiversity across all their activities. There has been strong uptake of the Environmental Stewardship scheme, which pays farmers for conservation activities and sustainable practices.

**Signpost to Related Strategies:** Cherwell Environmental Strategy, Cherwell Biodiversity Action Plan, Cherwell Local Development Framework

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Aims</b>
The Cherwell Biodiversity Action Plan identifies actions needed to protect and enhance habitats and species that are particularly important within the district.	13.1 - Work with biodiversity partner organisations to deliver the Cherwell Biodiversity Action Plan
Over three quarters of Cherwell's countryside is under agricultural land use, but land owned by Parish Councils, churches, local trusts and individual householders can also have significant biodiversity potential	13.2 - Support farmers, landowners and local communities to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the Cherwell countryside
The effects of climate change on biodiversity and landscape will be most noticeable in rural areas.	13.3 – Support projects that reduce or mitigate the effects of climate change

## Objective 14 - Preserve and Enhance the Landscape and Rural Built Environment

Cherwell's combination of diverse landscapes and villages is rich in historic character. It is an economic asset (which helps to attract skills, income, businesses and visitors) and is valued highly by its residents.

**Signpost to related strategies:** Cherwell Local Development Framework, Cherwell Biodiversity Action Plan

Issues	Aims
The need to preserve and enhance a village's historic character is consistently mentioned in Parish Plans.	14.1 – Preserve and enhance Cherwell's rural built environments
Cherwell's countryside is valued by residents and is key to the preservation of biodiversity.	14.2 – Protect and enhance Cherwell's distinctive landscape characteristics and countryside

## Objective 15 - Promote Enjoyment and Understanding of the Countryside

Improving access to and understanding of the countryside helps to fulfil aims relating to health and tourism as well as recreation.

**Signpost to Related Strategies:** Cherwell Greenspaces Strategy, Oxfordshire Joint Public Health Strategy, Cherwell Recreation Strategy, Cherwell Tourism Plan, Oxfordshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Issues	Aims
The Cherwell Greenspaces Strategy recommends that access to natural and semi-natural greenspace should be increased.	15.1 - Make it easier for people to enjoy healthy recreation in the Cherwell countryside  15.2 – Explore the potential for establishing a country park
Cherwell has over 600 miles of public rights of way; they are the main means by which people get a countryside experience of the district.	15.3 - Improve access to a well maintained, joined up and improved rights of way and countryside network.
Interpretation of features, sites and routes can help to educate and inform users and enhance the user experience.	15.4 - Support & promote initiatives to improve public understanding of biodiversity, landscape and the countryside.

## **Appendix – I**

### **Consultations, Information Sources and Background Documents**

#### **Consultation Events**

The list below outlines consultations that contributed to the development of the Cherwell Rural Strategy.

- 19 July 2007 – **Consultation workshop event for Parish Councils** at CDC Bodicote House (32 attendees representing 22 parishes)
- 18 September 2007 – **Consultation workshop event for delivery partner organisations** at Exeter Hall, Kidlington (36 attendees representing 18 partner organisations)
- 18 June 2008 – **Progress briefing and Q&A session** at Cherwell Parish Liaison meeting
- 15 July 2008 – **Launch of public consultation on first draft strategy**, (publication of draft strategy on Cherwell DC website, sent to all Cherwell Parishes, all Cherwell DC Councillors all members of Cherwell Voluntary Organisations Forum, partner organisations and individuals)
- 01 October 2008 – **Close of public consultation on first draft strategy** (56 responses received)
- 03 December 2008 – **Rural Priorities Challenge** – Oxfordshire Rural Forum Steering Group (peer challenge based on CRC policy priorities)

In addition to these events there have been many discussions with service delivery partners, parish representatives and individuals.

## Information Sources

The list below outlines data sources used in scoping and writing the strategy.

Title	Description	Source
<b>Consultation responses</b>	Feedback from consultation on the first draft Rural Strategy	Consultation and analysis by CDC
<b>Rural Cherwell – Overview of Statistics 2007</b>	Discussion paper based on national and local statistics	Research commissioned by CDC from MM Consulting
<b>Oxfordshire Rural Framework</b>	Research paper and draft policy framework	Oxfordshire Rural Forum
<b>West Oxfordshire &amp; Cherwell Rural Strategies – a Critique of the Summary of Evidence</b>	Policy based analysis of the statistical overview and Oxfordshire Rural Framework	Research commissioned by CDC from Gloucestershire University
<b>Improving Rural Reach</b>	Report on BME communities in Rural Oxfordshire	Report of research project by ORCC
<b>Community-led Plans in Oxfordshire: their potential contribution to strategic planning</b>	Report of research into Oxfordshire Parish Plans	Research commissioned by Oxfordshire Partnership from Glos. University
<b>Cherwell District Council Customer Satisfaction Survey 2008</b>	Analysis of rural residents' responses to CDC's customer satisfaction survey	Research commissioned by CDC from Oxford Research Agency
<b>West Oxfordshire &amp; Cherwell Partnership Local Development Strategy 2008</b>	Bid document (jointly with WODC) for European rural development funding	Cherwell & West Oxfordshire District Councils
<b>South East Parish Plan Actions Database</b>	A database of all proposed actions from published Parish Plans in south-east England	South East Rural Partnership?
<b>Cherwell Tourism Development Study 2008</b>	Analysis of existing and potential tourism in Cherwell	Research Commissioned by CDC from The Tourism Company
<b>Rural Economies Recession Intelligence 2008</b>	Briefing paper for Minister for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	Commission for Rural Communities
<b>Planning Policy Statement 7</b>	National policy statement on development in rural areas	ODPM

## Background Documents

The list below outlines national and regional publications that have provided ideas or helped to set the context for the Cherwell Rural Strategy.

Title	Description	Source
The Taylor Report – Living, Working Countryside July 2008	National Review of Rural Economy & Affordable Housing	Matthew Taylor MP
Planning Policy Statement 7	National policy statement on development in rural areas	ODPM
A Charter for Rural Communities	Final report of the Carnegie Commission for Rural Community development	Carnegie UK Trust
Strong Counties and Vibrant Rural Communities	National report on County service delivery to rural communities	County Councils Network
Rural Challenges, Local Solutions	Report on the DEFRA “Rural Pathfinders” project	DEFRA
Rural Strategy 2004	National Rural Strategy for England	DEFRA
South East Rural Delivery Framework 2006	Regional rural delivery framework for south-east England	South East Rural Partnership
Local Strategic Partnership and Community Strategy Rural Checklist	Rural Proofing checklist for rural Local Strategic Partnerships	The Countryside Agency
Health, Place and Nature	Report into the health benefits of countryside recreation	Sustainable Development Commission
The Potential of England’s Rural Economy	Parliamentary report into the potential of England’s rural economy	House of Commons Environment, Food & Rural Affairs Committee
Thinking About Rural Transport	National Discussion paper	Commission for Rural Communities
Participation Inquiry – Strengthening the role of Local Councillors	Report & recommendations on the role of local councillors in rural areas.	Commission for Rural Communities
Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities – The Big Picture	An assessment of the main policy challenges for rural communities	Commission for Rural Communities



### Local Plans and Strategies Related to the Cherwell Rural Strategy

Below are listed strategies and plans published by Cherwell Community Planning Partnership and its partner organisations. Each document has a relationship to the Rural Strategy and is “signposted” under one or more of its objectives.

Title
Cherwell Community Plan (currently being revised into Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy)
Cherwell Local Development Framework (currently under development)
Cherwell Environmental Strategy for a Changing Climate 2008 - 2012
Cherwell Green Spaces Strategy 2008 - 2016
Cherwell Playing Pitch Strategy 2008 - 2016
Cherwell Community Safety Strategy 2008 - 2011
Oxfordshire Road Safety Strategy & Plan 2008 - 2009
Cherwell Recreation Strategy 2007 – 2012
Oxfordshire Joint Public Health Strategy 2007 – 2012
Cherwell Economic Development Strategy 2007 - 2011
Cherwell Homelessness Strategy 2007 - 2011
Oxfordshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2006 – 2011
Cherwell Tourism Plan 2006 - 2011
Cherwell Housing Strategy 2005 - 2011
Cherwell Biodiversity Action Plan 2005 - 2010

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## Appendix II – Delivery Plan 2009/10

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
<b>Theme A - Improve Rural Services &amp; Facilities</b>					
<b>1 - Retain and improve rural services</b>	1.1 Support existing rural services to assist ongoing viability, and encourage the creation of new services	Delivered through ORCC Village shops development worker	Support the retention and development of village shops with professional advice & guidance to rural retailers.	Target & measure to be determined during 2009/10 as part of ORCC SLA	ORCC, CDC
		Delivered through ORCC Village shops development worker	Through grant aid, support rural shops to develop their businesses	1 business development p.a. supported	ORCC, CDC
		Current delivery through Rural Access to Services Programme (RASP)	Draw on regional development funding to implement new, improved or replacement services	1 new service in 2009/10	ORCC, CDC
	1.2 Support rural communities in implementing improved ICT access for older and disadvantaged people		Assess patterns of ICT need, investigate best practice & develop targets for delivery subsequent years	Needs assessed & best practice investigated. Delivery target & measure for 2010/11	CDC
<b>2 - Retain and improve village facilities</b>	2.1 Support rural communities to provide recreational and cultural buildings that meet local needs and comply with regulatory requirements.	Through CDC's Community Hall, Recreation & Sports Facilities grant	Support and improve community/village halls through grant aid funding	8 Halls funded in 2009/10	CDC, OCC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
<b>2 - Retain and improve village facilities</b>		Delivered through Oxfordshire Rural Community Council	Provide a professional advice and guidance service to village hall managers (to include accessibility, safety, employment, maintenance, funding)	Target & measure to be determined during 2009/10 as part of ORCC SLA	ORCC
	2.2 Support rural communities to provide outdoor recreation that meets local needs and complies with regulatory requirements.	Delivered through Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association (OPFA) Community Development Officer	Provide professional advice and guidance to rural communities on the development and maintenance of play and sport facilities	Target & measure to be determined during 2009/10 as part of OPFA SLA	OPFA, CDC
		Through CDC's Community Hall, Recreation & Sports Facilities grant	Support and improve village play and multi activity areas through grant aid	7 play/multi activity areas funded in 2009/10	CDC
		Through CDC's Community Hall, Recreation & Sports Facilities grant	Support and improve village sports facilities through grant aid	5 village sports facilities funded in 2009/10	CDC
<b>3 - Maintain &amp; improve rural transport options</b>	3.1 Support & develop community transport initiatives alongside improvements to local public transport services		Investigate the potential, through Practice Based Commissioning, for a volunteer car scheme to access health related services.	Potential investigated and reported on during 2009/10	PCT, CDC
			Work with bus companies to align public transport services with local needs.	Target & measure to be determined during 2009/10	OCC, ORCC, CDC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
<b>3 - Maintain &amp; improve rural transport options</b>	3.1 Support & develop community transport initiatives alongside improvements to local public transport services		Promote information about community transport schemes, targeted at the people and groups most likely to benefit from them	Target & measure to be determined during 2009/10	ORCC, CDC
	3.2 Improve links between villages for walkers, cyclists and equestrians	through the OCC/TOE "Places for People" grant scheme	Improve public rights of way routes between villages	two funded improvement projects in 2009/10	OCC, CDC
<b>Theme B - Develop Thriving, Inclusive Village Communities</b>					
<b>4 - Support Parish Councils and Parish Democracy</b>	4.1 Support Parish Councils to fulfil their statutory functions and be responsive to community needs and aspirations.		Create and maintain a "Virtual Parish Clerk" web portal to be a central information resource for all Cherwell Parish Councils.	Initial version online & promoted to Parishes by end May 2009. Gather feedback & develop during 09/10	CDC
			Encourage Parish Councils to attain "quality parish" status	Programme & subsequent actions/targets agreed during 2009/10	CDC, OALC, PCs
			Continue to organise the twice yearly Parish Liaison meetings	2 meetings pa. >75% satisfaction rating	CDC
			Provide training opportunities to Parish Councillors and Clerks	6 training courses during 2009/10	OALC, CDC, PCs

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
<b>4 - Support Parish Councils and Parish Democracy</b>	4.2 Encourage people to participate in parish democracy		Action begins in 2010/11 (Assess baseline of parish council seats that were contested at their last election)		CDC
	4.3 Work with Parish Councils to reduce the burdens of consultation and "red tape".	2008/09 corporate plan action "Coordinated forward plan web-based consultation with parishes"	Co-ordinate and forward-plan consultations with Parishes. Agree protocols for timescales and formats.	Forward plan published, protocols negotiated and in place by end of March 2010	All CCPP Partners
<b>5 - Encourage Parish Planning and Community Engagement</b>	5.1 Encourage and assist communities to identify and address local needs with Parish Plans.	Provided through Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) Community Development Worker	Provide professional advice and guidance to Parish Plan groups	No. of Parish Plan meetings attended & draft plans assessed. Baseline 2008/09	ORCC
	5.2 Make effective use of Parish Plan data		Analyse and respond to all completed Parish Plans, offering assistance and signposting opportunities as appropriate.	No. submitted, No. responded to	CDC, ORCC, OCC
			Action starts in 2010/2011 (Establish publicly accessible database of parish plan actions, to aid identification of patterns and issues of common concern)		ORCC, OCC, CDC
	5.3 Deliver improved community information to rural communities, including the development of online services	Action & target from Corp Plan.	Support the development of village websites	Four new websites to include Parish Council and local events information	CDC, PCs

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
<b>5 - Encourage Parish Planning and Community Engagement</b>			Encourage Rural recreation & cultural providers to promote their events through CDC's new on-line "What's On?" guide	Establish baseline & determine targets for subsequent years. Measure = No. of events per year.	CDC
<b>6 - Develop &amp; Promote Recreational &amp; Cultural Activities</b>	6.1 Support the voluntary infrastructure and individual voluntary groups in Cherwell's rural communities	Action carried over from 2002/06 Rural Strategy	Increase rural representation on the Voluntary Organisations Forum	Promote the Voluntary Organisations Forum at the November 2009 Parish Liaison Meeting	CDC, BDCVS
	6.2 Provide and support recreational and cultural activities in rural communities.	Corp Plan aim "Provide community facilities & activities to meet local need" refers	Deliver and develop the "Live and Local" programme of rural touring arts events.	30 performances during 2009/10	CDC, PCs
		Corp Plan target. Main delivery through "Energise" sport roadshow holiday schemes.	Provide formal and informal recreation opportunities for rural young people	850 opportunities in 2009/10	CDC, PCs
			Action starts in 2010/2011 (Develop suitable villages as "Rural Sports Hubs")		CDC
	6.3 Increase participation in community based recreational & cultural activities	Corp Plan target 2009/10 is for district as a whole. Same target for 2010/11 & 2011/12.	Increase the numbers of rural older people participating in group activities by 3%	Baseline 2008/09. Measure= No. participating	CDC



Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
<b>6 - Develop &amp; Promote Recreational &amp; Cultural Activities</b>			Offer support and encouragement for villages entering the Calor Village of the Year competition	Determine the most useful forms of potential support. Develop follow on actions for 2010/11 onwards	CDC, ORCC
<b>7 - Promote Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>	7.1 Ensure local Health Care and Social Service Provision meets the needs of the local population particularly in relation to local accessibility		Take healthcare/support providers to older people, particularly using the Cherwell Health Bus to provide a regular range of services.	Baseline 2008/09. Measure = No. of rural people accessing healthcare via Cherwell Health Bus	PCT, CDC
	7.2 Promote and support healthy lifestyle choices for all Cherwell residents	Corp Plan action under aim "Make it easy for you to lead a healthy & active life through our countryside..." Same target for 2010/11 & 2011/12	Help increase participation in active recreation {among Cherwell's rural residents}	Target 1% increase. Measure= Sport England annual Survey	CDC
		Corp Plan action under aim "Make it easy for you to lead a healthy & active life through our countryside..." Same target for 2010/11 & 2011/12	Increase the number of new walkers participating annually in local rural health walks by 10%	10% increase on 2008/09 baseline	CDC, PCT
<b>8 - Improve Community Safety</b>	8.1 Reduce crime and fear of crime		Narrow the gap between reported crime and perceived crime by improving access to local crime figure information	Publish parish by parish crime statistics on the new "Cherwell CSI" website by July 2009	CDC, TVP
			Narrow the gap between reported crime and perceived crime by making crime reporting easier.	Facilitate and promote online reporting of minor crimes via the new "Cherwell CSI" website by July 2009	CDC, TVP

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
<b>8 - Improve Community Safety</b>	8.1 Reduce crime and fear of crime		Increase awareness of neighbourhood Action Groups and rural community policing - Reports received and action taken.	Neighbourhood policing reports published in 10 Parish Magazines/ websites during 2009/10	CDC, TVP
			Increase the percentage of rural residents who, when asked, say they feel safe at home and in the community	Target=79% Measure =District Survey or Place Survey	CDC, TVP
		Action from Corp Plan refers to district wide target of 10 actions.	Bring forward community safety initiatives arising from Cherwell's rural Neighbourhood Action Groups	3 initiatives in Rural Cherwell	CDC, TVP
			Increase membership and coverage of rural Neighbourhood Watch and Farm Watch schemes	Baseline and target established in 2009/10	CDC, TVP
	8.2 Reduce isolation & vulnerability	Aim from Health Strategy. Suggested action by KL	Action starts in 2010/2011 (Investigate best practise & consider setting up "good neighbour" schemes in Cherwell Villages)		CDC, PCT, PCs
	8.3 Improve road safety	From OCC Road Safety Strategy	Support speed reduction measures at locations where excessive traffic speeds cause community concern	No. requested, No. granted	OCC
		From OCC Road Safety Strategy	Analyse accident records to identify where revised speed limits may be helpful to improve safety, and appropriate given the character of the road.	No. of sites identified, No. of speed limits revised	OCC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
<b>8 - Improve Community Safety</b>	8.4 increase community preparedness for potential emergencies		Establish protocols and templates for Parish Emergency Plans	Best practise investigated. Subsequent actions & measures to follow.	CDC, OCC
			Action starts in 2010/2011 (Encourage Cherwell Parishes to adopt and maintain Emergency Plans)		CDC, OCC, PCs

<b>Theme C - Provide Village Homes &amp; Secure Village Infrastructure</b>					
<b>9 - Provide Good Quality, Affordable Rural Homes</b>	9.1 Secure housing growth that meets Government targets and the needs of the District through an appropriate mix of market and affordable housing	Aim is from Corp Plan.	Survey housing need in rural communities and bring forward affordable housing schemes.	4 need surveys and 2 schemes during 2009/10	CDC, ORCC
			Increase the number of affordable village homes available to people with a local connection	Review rural exceptions delivery and report to Parish Liaison meeting during 2009. Further actions to follow in subsequent years.	CDC
	9.2 Improve the standard of housing, particularly for vulnerable people.	Aim & action from Corp Plan.	Invest in better quality housing for vulnerable people in rural cherwell	Undertake a private sector stock condition survey in 2009/10. Further actions to follow on in subsequent years	CDC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
<b>9 - Provide Good Quality, Affordable Rural Homes</b>	9.3 - Ensure advice and support services to prevent homelessness and help tenancy sustainment.		Deliver home-based housing advice to people who find it difficult to travel to town for appointments.	Measure & target to be established during Yr1	CDC
<b>10 - Work for Effective Infrastructure and Utility Services</b>	10.1 - Address local concerns over the reliability of electricity supply		Investigate the reliability of electricity supply in Rural Cherwell	Monitor outages in 6 rural locations over a six month period	CDC
	10.2 - Address local concerns over the speed and availability of broadband internet		Continue to work on making broadband connectivity universally accessible across the District.	Indicator: Number of communities without broad-band quality access to the internet. Target (2011): 0	CDC
			Assess broadband speed across rural Cherwell	Monitor upload and download speed at 6 rural locations at various times of day during 2009/10	CDC
<b>Theme D - Support a Thriving Rural Economy</b>					
<b>11 - Support Rural jobs and Businesses</b>	11.1 - Develop and promote initiatives to support farm diversification and the development of the rural economy		Support farmers and rural businesses with one to one business development advice and guidance on funding options.	10 advice sessions to rural businesses during 2009/10	CDC
			Promote development opportunities to farmers and rural businesses in association with Business Link	20 attendees at Business Link rural business seminars during 2009/10	CDC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
<b>11 - Support Rural jobs and Businesses</b>	11.2 - Increase the value of local food and products and develop new markets.		Review support for the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Food Group	Support reviewed in 2009/10. Resulting actions to follow in subsequent years.	CDC
			Continue to support and promote the Farmers Markets at Banbury, Bicester & Deddington	Monthly farmer's market held at each location through 2009/10	CDC
			Action in 2010/11(Investigate establishing a Farmers' Market at Kidlington)		CDC, KPC
	11.3 - Support home-working and encourage home workers to participate in community life	Based on Env Strat target No.73 Scale down & make CDC target for HR?	Action in 2010/11 (Study a number of home-workers to provide case studies of successes and issues relating to implementing rural home-working.)		CDC
	11.4 - Improve access to skills development		Identify the skill needs of employers.	Undertake and analyse county-wide skills survey during 2009/10	CDC,OEP
			Assess the need for specifically rural skills and crafts (e.g. Hedgelaying, stone walling, woodland management)	Identify training providers and the potential market during 2009/10	CDC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
<b>12 - Encourage Tourism that Supports the Local Economy and Communities</b>	12.1 - Encourage sustainable Tourism	Based on Tourism plan action	Promote walk & ride routes to increase visitor awareness of the countryside as a resource for leisure activity.	All CDC routes promoted on & downloadable from the "visit North Oxfordshire" website	CDC, OCC
	12.2 – Increase tourists' engagement with rural communities and businesses		Expand and promote the "Eating Out" section of the "Visit North Oxfordshire" website	15 rural pubs / restaurants promoted	CDC
<b>Theme E - Protect, Enhance and Increase Enjoyment of the Rural Environment</b>					
<b>13 - Protect &amp; Enhance Biodiversity</b>	13.1 - Contribute to a net gain in Cherwell's biodiversity		Deliver & Update the Cherwell Biodiversity Action Plan	2009/10 Annual Delivery Plan and 2008/09 review published on 01 April 2009	CDC
		Delivery by TVERC under terms of SLA with CDC	Provide sites, species and habitats data to inform planning decisions.	Updated data collated and digitally distributed during 2009/10	CDC, OCC
		Delivery through Local Wildlife Sites Project	Identify new areas of nature conservation value.	1 new area identified in 2009/10	CDC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
<b>13 - Protect &amp; Enhance Biodiversity</b>		Corp Plan Action	Action in 2011/12 To establish an accessible community woodland on the edge of Bicester		CDC
	13.2 - Support farmers, landowners and local communities to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the Cherwell countryside	10 Surveys target is from Corp Plan. Provided through Local Wildlife Sites Project and Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre	Provide support and advice to owners of designated Local Wildlife Sites	10 surveys & 8 advisory visits during 2009/10	CDC, OCC
			Provide support and advice to local communities on the management of land with existing/potential biodiversity interest	5 community advisory visits undertaken during 2009/10	CDC
		Provided through Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) and Oxfordshire Woodland Project respectively.	Provide support and advice to farmers and landowners on the management of land with existing/potential biodiversity interest	12 farm advisory and 5 woodland advisory visits undertaken during 2009/10	CDC, OCC
	13.3 - Support projects that reduce or mitigate the effects of climate change		Action in 2010/11 (Support, where appropriate, local renewable energy production, including wood fuel, wind and solar energy.)		CDC
<b>14 - Preserve &amp; Enhance the Landscape &amp; Rural Built Environments</b>	14.1 - Preserve and enhance Cherwell's rural built environments		Regularly update Conservation Area appraisals to inform planning decisions	7 rural conservation areas appraised during 2009/10	CDC

Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
	14.2 – Protect and enhance the distinctive characteristics of Cherwell's landscapes	Part of the Parish of Epwell is within the Cotswold AONB	Protect and enhance the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.	Continued support for the Cotswolds Conservation Board during 2009/10	CDC, OCC
<b>15 - Promote Enjoyment &amp; Understanding of the Countryside</b>	15.1 - Make it easier for people to enjoy healthy recreation in the Cherwell countryside		Continue to publish, distribute and keep updated Cherwell District Council's 12 walks booklets and four riding route booklets in printed and electronic form	Wholesale orders fulfilled within 10 days. Amendments & warnings posted on website within two days of notification	CDC
			Monitor and maintain Cherwell District Council's 16 promoted walk and bridleway routes	Each route walked and waymarked at least once during 2009/10	CDC, OCC
			Publish detailed accessibility information for all CDC promoted recreational routes and countryside sites.	Information published on website by March 2010	CDC
		Corp Plan Action	First action is in 2010/11 (Establish & promote new recreational routes)		CDC
	15.2 - Explore the potential for establishing a country park	Suggested by Green Spaces Strat & LDF	First action is in 2010/11 (Identify potential sites and funding sources for a new Country Park. (subject to final LDF)		CDC
	15.3 - Improve access to a well maintained, joined up and improved rights of way and countryside network.		Analyse the public rights of way network to identify missing or poor quality links which could be improved to benefit public access.	Analysis and prioritisation completed in 2009/10. Follow on actions in subsequent years	OCC



Objective	Aim	Comment	Action 2009/2010	Measure/ Target	Delivery Partners
<b>15 - Promote Enjoyment &amp; Understanding of the Countryside</b>		North Oxfordshire Canal Partnership	Assess the need for improvements to the Oxford Canal towpath, which might eventually form a 'spine' for other radial routes.	Assessment completed in 2009/10. Follow on actions in subsequent years	OCC, CDC
			Improve the accessibility of Cherwell's promoted circular walk routes, to enable more people to enjoy the countryside	6 improvements in 2009/10	CDC, OCC
	15.4 - Support & promote initiatives to improve public understanding of biodiversity, landscape and the countryside.		Organise and promote a Countryside forum to discuss issues of interest and concern	Attendance >50, satisfaction rating >75%	CDC
		Delivered through Oxfordshire Rural Education Initiative ("Kids on Farms"), Warriner School Farm and RSPB Otmoor	Support initiatives that educate children about agriculture, biodiversity and rural life	Number of farm and reserve visits per year for Cherwell schools. Baseline and target to be established in 2009/10	CDC