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People, Places & Prosperity

The Warwickshire we all want in 2026

A Sustainable Community Strategy for Warwickshire

August 2009 - March 2026

1- Chair's Foreword

A Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) is the long term vision for the area that provides the framework for all partners to work together to achieve. It recognises that there are many complex challenges facing society today and that a long term approach is required to tackle these in a way that is joined up, addresses inequalities, represents value for money and meets the needs of the communities of Warwickshire.

A date of 2026 has been set because it ties in with a number of regional strategies that provide a bigger picture of where the County, as part of the West Midlands, will be and look like in 2026. Equally many local strategies are looking to finish by then and it is important that these strategies work in tandem. A full list of these strategies, what they are and where they can be found can be viewed at Section 11.

Whilst the three year Local Area Agreement (LAA) will be a key mechanism for the delivery of the Vision for Warwickshire there will also be important references to plans for tackling inequalities within the County and through the localities agenda which will seek to empower communities and ensure that services are responsive and tailored to local need.

In the delivery of our objectives recognition will need to be given to our neighbours, particularly Coventry and Solihull, where a Sub-Regional response is required. This is especially true of matters relating to economic development, transport and housing.

It is also important to note that five sustainable community strategies exist at Borough/District (North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth, Rugby, Stratford and Warwick) level which further

reinforce local priorities and recognise the diverse nature of Warwickshire. The partnership has been assured that the strategies will complement each other through alignment and subsequent planning and delivery (including the development of a shared and synchronised timetable and approach to reviewing the six strategies).

It is very important that we all appreciate that this is a strategy for the County leading to a Vision of what we all want to see in 2026. Detailed information relating to workstreams and delivery plans are to be found within the Delivery Document which is a companion to this document.

This Strategy has been developed in accordance with the principles of sustainable development and aims to enable Warwickshire residents to meet their own needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life of future generations.

We intend to ensure that the development of the SCS builds on the considerable efforts already made by partners on the journey to a longer-term continuous process of improvement that will bring greater benefits to Warwickshire people and communities year on year.



Alan Farnell

Councillor Alan Farnell

*Chair Of The Warwickshire Public Service Board
August 2009*



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3 - Welcome to Warwickshire

So how could we describe today's Warwickshire in a sentence?

In essence, it remains a microcosm of England. The challenges and opportunities faced by the nation are reflected in our County. Here, we describe some of the main challenges we face in Warwickshire today and outline the drivers that will influence public sector service delivery during the lifespan of this Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).

Warwickshire in 2009 is a pleasant place to live and work with good quality of life for most. However, like elsewhere, we are a diverse County facing inequalities and differences in opportunities and achievements amongst our communities. This Strategy describes how we will work in partnership to address these issues.

Our population of Warwickshire is changing, growing, and getting older...

Our County has been growing at above average rates in recent years, and this trend is set to continue.

There are approximately 125,000 children and young people aged 0-19 years in Warwickshire, who make up just under a quarter of the total population of the County. Each year approximately 6,000 children are born. Population forecasts predict a two per cent rise in the number of young people in Warwickshire over the next five years. The majority of the maintained school population in Warwickshire are of White British ethnic origin (86%), and the largest minority ethnic group is Indian (3%).

Alongside the general growth in population will be a particularly high rate of increase in the numbers of older people living here. This clearly brings challenges in terms of service provision, particularly with regard to health and adult social care and the emergence of personalised service delivery. This will result in very significant changes to the manner in

which partners provide care and support services with the ways in which this happens becoming markedly different over the life-span of the SCS.

Along with the challenges, there is also opportunity, particularly ensuring that every effort is made to harness the skills and experience of older people as a legacy for the benefit of future generations, and, in relation to children and young people, ensuring their views and aspirations are taken fully into account by all services – especially through the progression of the Hear by Right standard across the public sector.

Inequalities persist...

Warwickshire is perceived to be a generally affluent County, providing good quality of life and a pleasant environment for its residents, and this is certainly the case for the majority. However, it is acknowledged that inequalities of **both opportunity and aspiration** exist among and within our communities and are visible across all aspects of community life, from crime rates to life expectancy, unemployment to educational achievement.

A challenge for agencies in Warwickshire over the next twenty years will be to put in place not only the tools and infrastructure to deliver sustained improvement for all of our communities, but also ensuring that future generations do not experience the same level of inequality that we see today.

Commonly called the 'Narrowing the Gaps Strategy', our challenge is to translate what is now a massive evidence base and set of aspirations into a coordinated programme of activity which will really make the difference that all partners and local people wish to see happen both in the short term and by 2026.



Reacting to the current economic downturn and planning for recovery...

Warwickshire has a long and proud tradition of commitment to the promotion of economic well-being. However, this Strategy has been produced in the context of an economic recession, and it is hard to consider long term objectives when the attention is on responding to immediate need. Partner agencies in Warwickshire, as elsewhere, will need to intervene where possible to reduce short term impacts of the recession.

The current economic downturn will not persist for the lifespan of this Sustainable Community Strategy, and a challenge for the County will be to position itself strongly for the medium to long term and react to opportunities that will arise during economic recovery. This includes making special efforts to ensure that we hold on to what are generally regarded levels of achievement and opportunity – for example the very good levels of young people in the County who are in education, employment or training.

This will involve anticipating the future needs of the labour market, and putting in place the training and skills to meet a different set of employment opportunities. It will also involve a willingness to embrace new industries, support innovation and understand that the profile of industry in the County must and will change in response to global drivers.

... and that's not all

Although the recent falls in house prices will have improved the situation slightly, housing affordability is still an issue, particularly in certain parts of the County. Those on the lowest incomes still find it difficult to find affordable properties; one impact may be that we find it increasingly difficult to recruit to key worker occupations and to develop specialist housing solutions for those members of our community who have particular and different

needs to the majority population.

The lack of affordable housing is also reflected in part by the sizeable waiting lists for social housing. While the demand for social housing has increased throughout recent years, the supply has remained relatively static. Given the anticipated growth in population over the next twenty years, we will need to respond now to ensure the issue is not significantly worse in 2026.

In doing this we must ensure that we do not look at housing growth as an isolated issue. It is of key importance to the future well-being of the County that the services likely to be needed by local people are considered alongside housing growth plans.

Another challenge for agencies to face is the discrepancy between the service needs we have to meet and the service wants our customers perceive to be important. Our communities tell us, increasingly, that the things that needs improving most in their neighbourhoods are activities for teenagers, road repairs and traffic congestion. Meeting the **expectations of our residents** while at the same time delivering core services such as education, social care, community safety, housing and support will continue to present a challenge during the lifetime of this Strategy.

While some of the issues and challenges described here are taking place on a national or global scale, there are measures we can take locally to influence their outcome in the Warwickshire context. We can influence the general distribution of population growth through spatial planning. We can ensure resources are dedicated to help reduce inequalities across the County. We can play a stronger role in the housing market, helping to bridge the gap between demand and supply. We are also carrying out further analysis to understand the differing spatial implications of these trends and how they will influence the types of services we deliver in the future. This Strategy describes how, together, we can respond to these challenges during the next twenty years and help Warwickshire flourish.



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4 - Vision for Warwickshire

In 2026, Warwickshire will be a fair, safe and prosperous place where:

- Inequalities that exist by geography or within communities are reduced;
- There is good access to services, choice and opportunity;
- Sustainability is pursued through balancing our current needs with those of future generations.

Tackling Inequality

In Warwickshire, inequalities exist on the basis of where people live, who they are or what their background is. As the County gets better; there is a need to ensure that no one is left behind through targeted work that puts the emphasis on prevention, access and the provision of choice. This in turn creates an urgency to see the quickest improvements in quality of life amongst the most disadvantaged.

Until recently, there was a tendency to explain these issues as a 'North: South' divide in the County. Whilst undoubtedly there is a prevalence of inequalities faced by some communities in the North of the County it is now agreed to be too simplistic simply to describe 'The Gaps' in these terms as inequality of opportunity and access to services are faced by a number of individuals and groups across the County.

So, the gaps faced by some local people and communities are present both in terms of geography and specific communities of need, including those people who may be disadvantaged through disability, age, long term illness or through personal circumstances such as caring for someone else.

Access

Warwickshire is a large diverse County with a significant mix of urban and rural areas. In seeking to improve the quality of life for people there is a need to ensure that there is good access to services through effective transport links and a need to explore new ways of service provision that makes effective use of technology, mobility, tailored to local need and unified in a manner that is dictated by citizen need and not by organisational structures. This must be supplemented by enhanced choice and opportunity to ensure that improvements to the quality of life are available to all.

Sustainability

This is a Sustainable Community Strategy and hence sustainability is at the heart of what we seek to achieve by 2026. The 2005 UK Sustainable Development Strategy entitled 'Securing the Future' outlined the following qualities of sustainability:

- (People): A just society that promotes social inclusion, sustainable communities and personal well being; and
- (Place): In a manner that that protects and enhances the physical and natural environment and uses resources and energy as efficiently as possible. At its heart is the need to balance current needs with those of the future and ensuring that future viability is built into the planning and provision of initiatives; and
- (Prosperity): A sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment.



5 - Achieving the Vision

Three themes, nine Outcomes

The vision for Warwickshire will be achieved through a focus on three themes of People, Places and Prosperity and nine Outcomes:



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How will we deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy?

Whilst the SCS provides a long term vision for Warwickshire; it is the Warwickshire Local Area Agreement (LAA) which is the delivery vehicle for the Sustainable Community Strategy. The LAA is a contract between central government and partners in Warwickshire to deliver the outcomes as defined in the SCS through partnership working and engaging with communities.

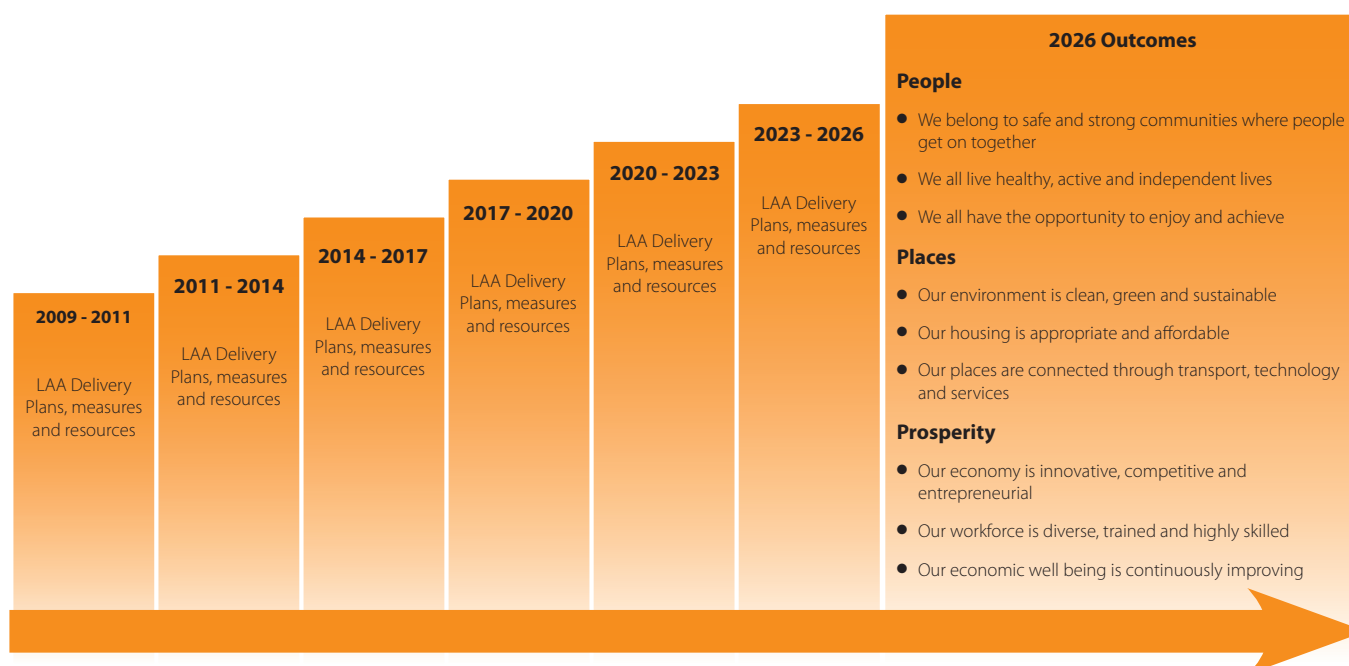
Engaging with communities is important because although the nine outcomes will provide the framework for partnership working from now until 2026 there is recognition that citizen participation in the following is essential in achieving the Vision for Warwickshire:

- Taking Responsibility
- Getting Involved
- Contacting Us
- Being Proud and Aspiring

The LAA measures of success and the actions that will underpin delivery together with the community's role can be found in the SCS/LAA delivery document available on the website : www.warwickshire.gov.uk/laa

Each LAA sets and agrees targets and actions to be delivered over a three year period and is refreshed annually to ensure that it remains focused on the needs of the community. Progress against these targets will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the relevant agencies and the Public Service Board.

Between now and 2026 the successful delivery of the actions and targets will incrementally take us towards the achievement of our agreed outcomes, as demonstrated in the diagram below:



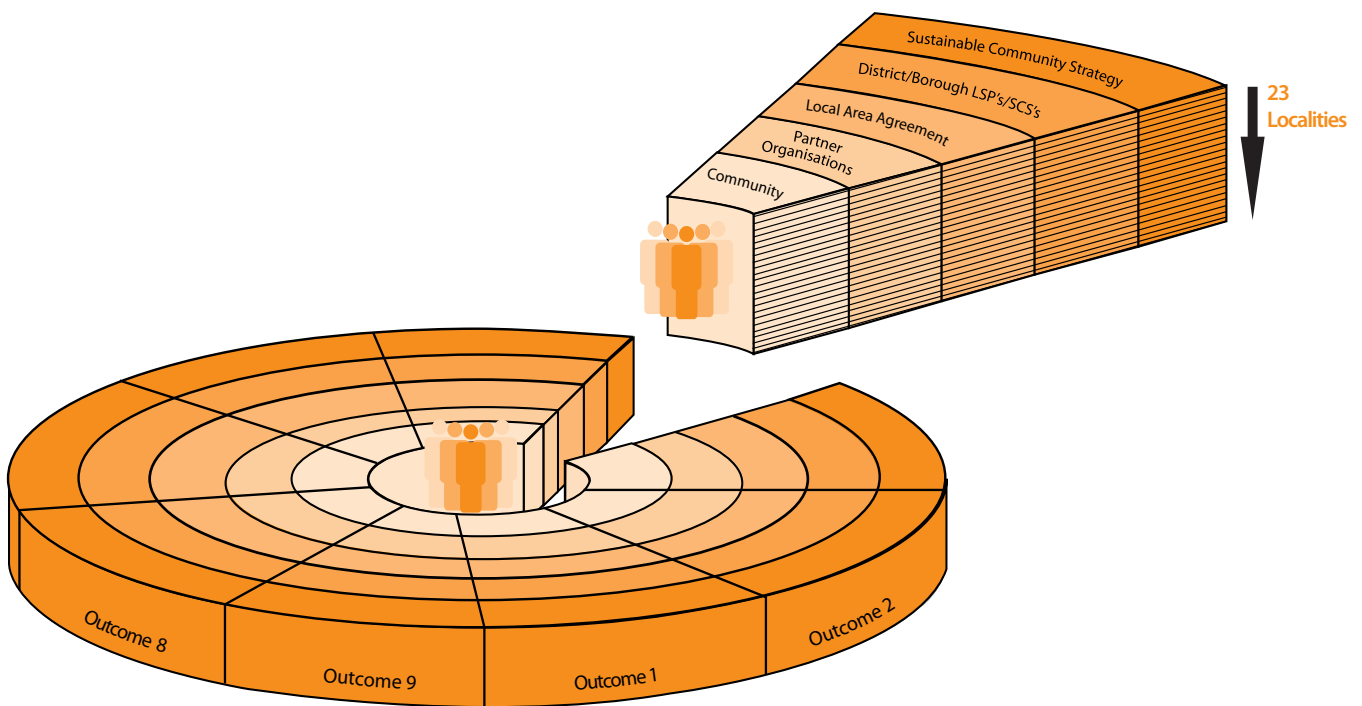
After each LAA has run for 3 years, we will be able to reflect on our achievements and review our direction to ensure that the vision for Warwickshire in 2026 resonates with local communities and takes account of changing developments in a dynamic world.

We will also take the opportunity to annually review the effectiveness of our partnership working in delivering the agreed outcomes.

How does this Strategy work?

Together the nine outcomes form the Sustainable Community Strategy for Warwickshire, which encompass and complement the District/Borough Strategies.

It is these outcomes which shape the content of our Local Area Agreement for Warwickshire and the work and contributions of the County’s public agencies and communities, as demonstrated in the diagram below:



As part of the intensive work involved in developing this Countywide SCS we have worked closely with and relied heavily on the commitment of colleagues in the five district Local Strategic Partnerships across the County to ensure:

- a) That there is the best fit possible between this Strategy and those at district level and;
- b) That there is a commitment to making sure that in the future there is an agreed and synchronised approach to the review and development of our Strategies. This approach will make things clearer and easier for partners and the citizens of the County.

The remainder of this strategy sets out where Warwickshire is now and where it needs to be and outlines what needs to be done and by whom. This is done under the three themes of People, Places and Prosperity. Each theme is then supplemented by three outcomes with the following information:

Where will Warwickshire be by 2026?

Under each outcome the Strategy sets out the aspirations for Warwickshire and what we can expect to see once all the activity has been delivered.

Where is Warwickshire now?

Progress is measured in terms of the starting point which in this case is the current picture in Warwickshire, future trends and the inequalities that need to be addressed during pursuit of the outcome.

What needs to be done?

This section summarises the actions that are required to achieve ambitions with particular reference to the core principles within the vision of tackling inequality, access and sustainability. More detailed information can be found in the SCS/LAA Delivery document at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/laa



6 - Key Outcomes (People)

Outcome 6.1: We belong to safe and strong communities where people get on together

Where will Warwickshire be by 2026?

By 2026, Warwickshire will be a safer place with all members of our community feeling able to walk the streets and go about their business in confidence, with a reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads. It will be a place where people from different backgrounds, ages and cultures are able to get on with each other, engage in play or leisure activity and work with each other to develop a sense of community and pride in the places that they live.

Where is Warwickshire now?

In overall terms, Warwickshire is already a safe place to live and visit. Crime levels are below the national average and have been falling during the past two years. However, there is often a mismatch between perception and reality, and the fear of crime can be unnecessarily high. According to the 2008/09 Place Survey, only 11% of our residents feel very safe when out in their local area at night. Furthermore, one in six of our residents have a high perception of the level of anti-social behaviour in their local area.

Community cohesion remains a difficult phenomenon to measure with any great reliability. It is a qualitative, well-being measure that is hard to define in terms of statistics. With this in mind, the recent Place Survey tells us that 81% of our residents feel people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area. Despite this, only six in ten residents feel they belong to their neighbourhood. Only one quarter of residents regularly engage in volunteer activity and a similar proportion feel they can influence decision-making in their local area. Despite that seemingly low figure, it is worth noting that only 24% of our residents want to be more involved in local decision-making.

What needs to be done?

- 1- Tackling Inequality:** Address long term causes of high level crime through work with families, young people and persistent and priority offenders. Target activity within those areas and communities where disproportionately high levels of crime occur with targeted priority policing areas with a multi agency approach. Ensure that capacity building and cohesion initiatives are targeted in areas of most need.
- 2- Access:** Ensure effective and joined up communications are in place so that partners and the community know what is being done in their area to tackle crime, anti social behaviour and community building initiatives. Ensure that there are well publicised and accessible community forums in local areas that provide a platform for discussion, action and agreement of local policing and community priorities.
- 3- Sustainability:** Through a thriving and vibrant voluntary and community sector in Warwickshire; ensure that community involvement and participation is enhanced through volunteering, projects and events.



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6 - Key Outcomes (People)

Outcome 6.2: We all live healthy, active and independent lives

Where will Warwickshire be by 2026?

By 2026, all Warwickshire residents will live healthier lives and health inequalities will be reduced. Older People and vulnerable people will have a choice to live independently within their homes and able to access the services that they need and participate within the communities that they live in. There will be a firm commitment to see that all issues relating to inequality and lack of equal access to services, especially health, have been addressed successfully.

Where is Warwickshire now?

Relative to national averages, Warwickshire already performs well across most health indicators. Life expectancy is above average. However, along with national trends, Warwickshire is facing an ageing population. Although overall life expectancy continues to increase, only a proportion of this increase is enjoyed in good health. More people are living to ages in which they are increasingly likely to experience chronic disease and disability. An ageing population brings increasing pressures, particularly in terms of adult social care and making effective links with other areas such as income maximisation, housing and support and dealing with climate variations (cold winters/hot summers).

The increase in life expectancy has not translated into an increase in healthy life expectancy. Problems associated with poor diet and inadequate exercise have manifested themselves in a variety of ways and the prominence given to childhood obesity both masks the fact that as a society we are becoming more obese and highlights the importance of ensuring that children's health is tackled now to avoid problems in the future. Obesity is a particular problem for Warwickshire where the County's population appearing high on regional league tables for obesity levels.

There are significant levels of mental ill health in the County across all age ranges – for example, in relation to children and young people, currently services supporting young people with these issues are working with almost 2% of the school population aged 0-16 years.

What needs to be done?

- 1- Tackling Inequality:** Address health inequality across Warwickshire through an emphasis on targeted and preventative work in areas of acute need.
- 2- Access:** Work in partnership with the private sector and the public to ensure that people have genuine access, choice and opportunity to engage in healthier lifestyles irrespective of geography and background. Ensure every older/vulnerable person in Warwickshire has access to high quality, flexible accommodation/housing and support that helps them to lead safe, dignified, well supported independent lives where care is personalised and tailored to individual need
- 3- Sustainability:** Provide the forum for communication, education and engagement that results in Warwickshire residents taking responsibility for leading healthy active and independent lives and to provide a supportive environment where the contribution of those who care for others is valued.



6 - Key Outcomes (People)

Outcome 6.3: We all have the opportunity to enjoy and achieve

Where will Warwickshire be by 2026?

Warwickshire people fulfil their learning potential to achieve and the gap between those currently achieving well and others has been reduced. By 2026 the lives of children, young people and their families who live in Warwickshire will be improved by an overall improvement of quality of life and life chances especially those currently disadvantaged.

Easily accessible and affordable learning opportunities are available to the whole population – with a recognition that informal and formal adult learning and the role of culture, leisure and active recreation directly influence the level of aspiration and achievement of the entire population.

Where is Warwickshire now?

Generally, Warwickshire has strong performance in many of the educational attainment indicators. In 2008, more than half of all pupils taking GCSEs gained five or more good grades including Maths and English, above the national average. Furthermore, the County has traditionally had low proportions of pupils not entering positive destinations (employment, education or training) upon leaving school. However, these overall measures mask some significant variations amongst certain groups. For example, only one in five pupils who were entitled to Free School Meals were able to obtain the aforementioned strong performance in their GCSEs. Achievement levels vary considerably across different areas of the County, with a pupil attending school in Stratford-on-Avon District more than 50% more likely to obtain good GCSEs than a pupil attending school in North Warwickshire.

What needs to be done?

- 1- Tackling Inequality:** Target specific areas and communities of interest where educational attainment/attendance levels are poor whilst at the same time improving the overall attainment of Warwickshire in relation to national trends. Ensure adequate multi agency family interventions are in place to ensure causes are tackled as well as consequence in a holistic manner.
- 2- Access:** Ensure that children, young people, families and carers have the opportunity to shape the way that services are delivered. Extend the traditional role of schools to provide a flexible range of services and act as a focus point for the community including those who wish to pursue adult learning opportunities.
- 3- Sustainability:** Foster a learning environment within Warwickshire that provides the basis for a community that is articulate and informed and both willing and able to take greater responsibility and control of their place. Ensure that culture, leisure and active recreation is harnessed for the benefit of the whole community as a shared learning experience.



7 - Key Outcomes (Places)

Outcome 7.1: Our environment is clean, green and sustainable

Where will Warwickshire be by 2026?

By 2026, Warwickshire will be a cleaner place, where green spaces are preserved and actions taken to preserve and enhance the environment for current and future generations. The quality of the built environment will be enhanced in a manner that celebrates our local heritage and fosters a sense of place.

Warwickshire public sector agencies will set a great example to all on the reduction of their own carbon emissions and actively work with communities across the County to reduce their emissions in line with national and regional targets to tackle climate change and increase the security of future energy supplies.

Plans for Housing Growth will be implemented as low or zero carbon developments to ensure adaptation to climate change.

Where is Warwickshire now?

Recycling and composting rates have improved dramatically and recycling rates now stand at 44%, whilst the total amount of waste produced by households has reduced. As a County a total of 8 tonnes of CO₂ per person per annum are emitted and this needs to be halved by 2026 to achieve national and international targets.

There has been investment in public transport facilities to provide alternative means of travel other than the car and there has been a 6% drop in the numbers of primary school children going to school by car (to 43%) and an increase in the number of children opting to walk. Additionally, the number of cyclists has increased by 16% since 2004.

What needs to be done?

- 1- Tackling Inequality:** Ensure that appropriate linkages are made between a clean green environment and the extent to which people feel safe and are proud of their communities.
- 2- Access:** Educate, enable and empower communities to reduce carbon emissions and improve recycling within their own communities. Work and Plan together to provide genuine choice alternatives to the car as a means of travel.
- 3- Sustainability:** Work Together to reduce public sector carbon emissions and work with the private sector to ensure adaptation to climate change. Ensure that planning and provision of services (including housing growth) is managed effectively to balance current needs with future demands.



7 - Key Outcomes (Places)

Outcome 7.2: Our housing is appropriate and affordable

Where do we want to be by 2026?

We aim to increase the supply of sustainable, affordable and high quality homes. We hope to enable access to support where required and build stronger, more sustainable communities.

Where is we now?

Whether we have good or bad housing has an enormous impact on the health and well-being of individuals, the sustainability of communities and the quality of life we all enjoy.

Much has been achieved across the county, but in both rural areas and towns there are still not enough homes that are affordable, warm, secure or appropriate for communities where the population is ageing or have support needs.

In 2008, the lower quartile property price in Warwickshire was, on average, more than seven times the lower quartile annual wage for a full-time worker in Warwickshire. In Stratford-on-Avon this figure increases to nine times the average.

The undersupply of affordable housing in Warwickshire results in increasing numbers of households seeking homes through District and Borough Council housing registers. Local strategic housing market assessments, Parish housing needs surveys and similar surveys also show increasing levels of unmet need.

Many houses, often the homes of the more vulnerable or older members of the community are not suitable for them; they may not be warm or secure enough; be poorly maintained or need adapting. Many households could emit less Co2 by installing more insulation.

In some communities there are empty houses that could be brought back into use to create much needed homes for households struggling to find somewhere to live.

What needs to be done?

- 1- Tackling Inequality:** Ensuring that there is an adequate supply of land for affordable housing. Ensure that those experiencing fuel poverty, living in non-decent, unsafe or insecure accommodation are identified and where appropriate assisted.
- 2- Access:** Ensure that there are good support and advice services accessible to those struggling to remain in their accommodation or seeking a new home. Ensure that people are better able to access housing appropriate to their needs.
- 3- Sustainability:** Seek favourable grant rates from national and regional sources. Work with our regional partners to ensure there is a co-ordinated approach to housing growth, infrastructure and the provision of services. Make sure that new housing is well designed, creates a distinct sense of place and is supported by a range of facilities and services that makes the new areas desirable places to live.



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7 - Key Outcomes (Places)

Outcome 7.3: Our places are connected through transport, technology and services

Where will Warwickshire be by 2026?

In 2026 all places in Warwickshire will benefit from improved access to transport, jobs, services and facilities, with an emphasis on improved service access in the most disadvantaged and dispersed communities. Access to services will not be dependant upon knowledge of the agency responsible for delivery of service. Technology will be harnessed in a manner that ensure that all places are accessible and connected through a diverse range of mechanisms that takes into account local need and the diversity of communities.

An effective transport network is essential in order to give people, in both the urban and rural areas of Warwickshire, access to the opportunities and benefits that contribute to the enjoyment of a better quality of life. Public transport needs will continue to be met by bus, passenger rail, community transport services or similar initiatives or any appropriate combination of these modes. Each of these activities and modes will have interlinked strategies and common aims and their provision will be integrated to provide the most effective transport service to Warwickshire's residents.

Where is Warwickshire now?

Not surprisingly, our more rural areas often face greater difficulties in accessing services, and a scan of the official Indices suggests that several of our rural communities face significant levels of deprivation in terms of barriers to services. However, simply living in a rural area does not necessarily translate as a problem of access to services; many of these rural communities have high levels of car ownership, are mobile, and do not perceive themselves to be experiencing difficulties. The latest Public Satisfaction Survey (2008/09) illustrated that residents in our more rural Districts and Boroughs (North Warwickshire, Rugby and Stratford-on-Avon) perceive themselves to have no significantly greater problems in accessing services such as local shops, GPs, parks and libraries than our more urban Districts/Boroughs.

There are, however, some rural communities where problems of lower levels of car ownership, more limited public transport, lower incomes and an ageing population combine to present challenges for us in terms of taking our services to the customer. Personal circumstances often present a greater barrier to accessing services than geographical distance.

An opportunity for the County over the duration of this Strategy will be to make better use of community venues such as village halls and community centres to deliver joined-up services and to improve awareness of the different ways we deliver services via word of mouth from both users and providers.

The latest research illustrates that poor broadband coverage and performance is not limited to rural areas. Although less than 1% of households cannot get broadband, there is still variation in the speed of



7 - Key Outcomes (Places)

service provided and several parts of the County, both urban and rural, are currently performing below the government's target of 2Mbps by 2012.

What needs to be done?

- 1- Tackling Inequality:** Ensuring that rural areas in particular are targeted to improve accessibility.
- 2- Access:** Ensure that access issues underpins the planning of our places and delivery of services.
- 3- Sustainability:** Ensure that in promoting access it is done so at low or no carbon cost and in a manner that does not lead to excessive depletion of resources.



8 - Key Outcomes (Prosperity)

Outcome 8.1: Our economy is innovative, competitive and entrepreneurial

Where will Warwickshire be by 2026?

By 2026, Warwickshire will be a County with a reputation for innovation and entrepreneurial spirit with a healthy balance of established businesses and a creative dynamism that encourages the indigenous development of new businesses and attracts interest and investment from elsewhere. Warwickshire businesses will have increased their competitive advantage in the global economy. There will be a marked improvement in the establishment of businesses in the most disadvantaged areas of the County and in rural communities.

Where is Warwickshire now?

Warwickshire already benefits from a relatively strong and diverse economy, with a growing presence in knowledge intensive sectors (such as ICT and gaming, creative industries, business services and environmental technologies) whilst retaining a strong core of manufacturing businesses. The County has seen strong employment growth over recent years, and has attracted significant inward investment. However, to remain competitive within a global economy, there must be continuation of growth of innovative and creative businesses.

The County as a whole has a strong record of new business start-ups, with new business registrations of 70.4 per 10,000 population – significantly higher than regional and national averages (55.5 and 60.1 respectively). However, across the County there are significant variations, with Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick districts having significantly higher levels of new registrations, and Nuneaton & Bedworth in particular with significantly lower levels. Broader measures of entrepreneurial activity within the County which look at people's attitudes and propensities towards enterprise also show a clear north/south split, suggesting lower levels of aspirations and business confidence in the north of the County.

What needs to be done?

- 1- Tackling Inequality:** Continue to build a more resilient economy that is better to withstand the effects of any future economic downturn. Seek targeted growth in areas of disadvantage with greater involvement of the 3rd Sector and Social Enterprises.
- 2- Access:** Encourage a climate that attracts new investment assisted by a marketing policy that promotes Warwickshire as a place to do business in.
- 3- Sustainability:** Support and help develop local businesses, especially in growing and high value added sectors of the economy. Ensure there is a robust and diverse business base with a healthy proportion of jobs that are skilled and well paid. Promote and support the shift towards a low carbon economy.



8 - Key Outcomes (Prosperity)

Outcome 8.2: Our workforce is diverse, trained and highly skilled

Where will Warwickshire be by 2026?

By 2026, Warwickshire will have a well skilled workforce that is equipped to meet local, regional and national challenges and where the incidence of low or no skills is greatly reduced. Skills in residents and the workforce are continuously developed. The public sector agencies in the County will be a beacon of good practice to all employers in the development and up-skilling of their workforces both within the County, regionally and nationally.

All local people, especially young people and those currently disadvantaged will have a strong sense of ambition and aspiration together with the opportunity to work flexibly in accordance with their life-style and family commitments.

Where is Warwickshire now?

Warwickshire's residents on the whole have generally high skill levels. The County has fewer than average people with low or no qualifications, and higher than average numbers of people with high level skills (i.e. degree level or above). However, this general picture masks significant variations across the County.

Broadly, the north of the County is characterised by lower levels of qualifications in particular, one in five of North Warwickshire's residents has less than a Level 2 qualification (equivalent to 5 GCSEs grade A*-C) and the south of the County is characterised by higher qualifications levels. In particular, Warwick District has the highest proportion of residents with a degree or equivalent qualification in the West Midlands, at 44.9% of the working age population.

What needs to be done?

- 1- Tackling Inequality:** Improve access to learning particularly amongst disadvantaged areas and groups and ensuring that physical or geographic access and isolation is not a barrier for either employers looking to expand or invest or for residents in taking advantage of employment opportunities.
- 2- Access:** Ensure provision of learning opportunities is accessible to all geographical opportunities and sections of the community.
- 3- Sustainability:** Talk to employers to identify the areas where there are skills gaps and, with partners in Colleges and Universities, find ways to plug them. Implement the public sector skills pledge within our own organisations as well as within the wider business community. Ensure we work with the universities and local employers to increase retention rates of graduates and higher level skills within the County. Explore the role of volunteering to improve skills particularly amongst the vulnerable and excluded members of our community.



8 - Key Outcomes (Prosperity)

Outcome 8.3: Our economic well being is continuously improving

Where will Warwickshire be by 2026?

By 2026, Warwickshire will be a County where people who face the biggest barriers to employment will benefit from employment growth, so they can access better jobs and have improved life chances for themselves, their family and the wider community.

Where is Warwickshire now?

Whilst Warwickshire on the whole has high levels of employment and below average unemployment rates, there are significant pockets of concentrated worklessness that can be found throughout the County. In some wards, more than one in five of the working age population are out of work and claiming income related benefits, and more localised areas have rates far higher.

Concentrations of worklessness can increase the various barriers to employment that may already exist within our priority groups (such as poor skills or health related problems) by reducing confidence and aspirations, limiting the flow of information about job opportunities, and limiting accessibility to employment. We also know that employment is positively related to broader priority outcomes, such as improved health, increased sense of place and community cohesion, reduced incidence of poverty and lower levels of crime.

What needs to be done?

- 1- Tackling Inequality:** Better understand the contribution that positive economic activity (jobs, training and up-skilling) has to all aspects of the County's economic and social landscape – leading to improvement in health; reduction in incidence of community safety, child poverty etc. Establish reasons and drivers behind people falling out of work or education and onto benefits. Work with partners to develop pro-active and pre-emptive interventions to enable the hard to reach and workless access, training and employment opportunities.
- 2- Access:** Ensure that barriers to employment such as transport, lack of basic skills, childcare needs etc are addressed. Ensure that appropriate training, work experience, and job opportunities within both the public, private and voluntary and community sector are made more accessible for priority customer groups – e.g. via Local Employment Partnerships with employers.
- 3- Sustainability:** Improve the coordination, alignment and integration of employment and skills provision across the County and develop a single 'Warwickshire Offer' for individuals and employers. Have a better understanding of the components of an aspirational culture and how such a culture can be created and sustained in areas/communities where historic disadvantage is present.



9 - Making it Happen

Working together

This Sustainable Community Strategy has been developed in partnership and provides a common and shared understanding of what public sector agencies in Warwickshire are aiming to achieve together.

Everyone has a part to play and our success will rely on continued engagement across all partners working together and within their organisations towards the achievements of agreed outcomes under a shared vision. A list of key organisations is highlighted within the table below but this will not preclude the partnership from reaching out wherever possible to ensure delivery of outcomes.

Warwickshire County Council (including Fire and Rescue)
Warwickshire Police Force and Police Authority
NHS Warwickshire, General Practitioners and the Health Provider Trusts across the County
North Warwickshire Borough Council
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
Rugby Borough Council
Stratford District Council
Warwick District Council
Town and Parish Councils
Warwickshire Rural Community Council
Warwickshire Association of Local Councils
Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action
Citizens Advice Bureaux
Warwickshire Race Equality Partnership
Age Concern Warwickshire
Warwickshire Probation Service
LINK – the Warwickshire Local Involvement Network
Warwickshire Schools, Governors and Children’s Centres
Sport England
Further Education Colleges, Universities and other educational providers
Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce
Connexions
Learning & Skills Council
Warwickshire Environment Trust
Warwickshire Welfare Rights Advisory Service
Coventry Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership
Connexions
Job Centre Plus
Warwickshire Investment Partnership
Business Link West Midlands and Warwickshire Enterprise Consortium
Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce
Job Centre Plus
Warwickshire Education Business Partnership



In seeking to deliver on our outcomes there will be a need to ensure that partnership and performance arrangements are proportionate to the level of activity required and help rather than hinder the achievement of outcomes.

Talking together

Working together will rely on effective and genuine two way communication between partners and the public to ensure that:

- The partnership is doing what it has said that it will do and that communities are aware of this
- There will be regular two way communication with communities to ensure that the partnership is doing what the community wants and is making a difference
- That the partnership responds to communities when asked to do so

A joined up approach to communications will be developed to ensure that the message sent out to communities is clear, honest and above all joined up. Recognising that 2026 is some time away and given the complexities and dynamic nature of the modern world, this approach will offer opportunities from time to time to test with communities whether the outcomes that have been agreed within this document are still relevant and whether there is a need to adapt and refine those in the light of a changing environment and ultimately what communities want.

Sharing Responsibility and Sound Communications

Effective partnership working is the key to tackling many of the challenges facing the County. Whilst most parts of Warwickshire can properly be seen as being relatively prosperous, there are many residents living in both urban and rural areas who experience significant levels of deprivation. These complex issues cannot be addressed by any one agency working in isolation and demand joined up and focused delivery through partnership.

All partners recognise that the public has a key role to play in achieving the vision – whether as a school pupil, a student, someone who works in the County or a local resident, our Vision cannot be achieved without combined support and effort.

Working Beyond Warwickshire

Although the primary focus within this strategy has been Warwickshire, there is a recognition in the partnership that there is a need to work with others beyond the boundaries of Warwickshire to achieve objectives. This is especially true of the Sub-Region that Warwickshire belongs to consisting of Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire. (CSW). Warwickshire Together will work with CSW on matters that transcend boundaries (such as economic development, housing and transport) and where economies of scale can be achieved by working better together.



10 - Glossary

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS): A long term vision for the area and how it will be achieved. In addition to the countywide strategy there are also 5 local SCS's

Local Area Agreement (LAA): The LAA is the 3 year delivery plan for achieving the SCS and is a set of agreed priorities between partners and central government.

Local Strategic Partnerships (PSB): The overarching partnership involving organisations from the public, private, voluntary and community sector. In Warwickshire the countywide LSP is known as the Public Service Board. There are also 5 local LSP's that exist at Borough/District level.

Narrowing the Gaps: All partners in Warwickshire are committed to Narrowing the Gaps. In essence this means reducing the inequalities that exist by geography or through communities of interest.

Localities Agenda: In 2008, Warwickshire was divided into 23 localities whose aim was to ensure multi agency co-operation at a local level. This is supplemented with 30 forums and the aim is connect with the public at a very local level

Hear by Right Standard: Hear by Right offers tried and tested standards for organisations to improve their practice and policy on the participation of children and young people.

Place Survey: The Place Survey is conducted every two years under Government Guidance. Its purpose is to capture people's views, experiences and perceptions to identify priorities and trends and ensure that solutions can reflect local views and preferences.

Public Sector Skills Pledge: An initiative encouraging the public sector to ensure the skills development of their employees to a minimum of NVQ Level 2 (the equivalent of 5 good GCSE's)

11 - Further Information

Warwickshire Together Website

Further details on all matters relating to the Sustainable Community Strategy can be found through accessing www.warwickshire.gov.uk/laa

In addition to electronic versions of this document the website also contains the public summary document and the detailed SCS/LAA delivery document.

The following is a list of documents that have assisted in the preparation of this document.

Source Documents

Warwickshire Sustainable Community Strategy –Meetings of the Public Service Board (September 2008-June 2009), Meetings of the Public Service Advisory Forum (13/1/09 & 29/6/09), Warwickshire LAA (2008-11), Warwickshire 2015 publication, Warwickshire Story of Place, Quality of Life Reports, Narrowing the Gaps & Policing Initiatives

District Sustainable Community Strategies:

North Warwickshire Sustainable Community Strategy (currently being developed)

Nuneaton and Bedworth Sustainable Community Strategy (Shaping Our Future 2007-21)

Rugby Sustainable Community Strategy (Tackling Rugby's Future 2009-26)

Stratford Sustainable Community Strategy (Improving the Quality of Life for Everyone 2009-26)

Warwick Sustainable Community Strategy (A Shared Vision 2009-26)

Regional

Regional Spatial Strategy

Regional Housing Strategy

Regional Economic Strategy

Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy

Solihull Sustainable Community Strategy

Other

Warwickshire Policing Plan

Strategy for a Healthier Warwickshire

Health Inequalities Strategy

State of Warwickshire Report

Warwickshire Local Transport Plan (2006-11)

Detailed information on data relating to Warwickshire can be found on

www.warwickshireobservatory.org



warwickshire together



If you would like this information in a different format, i.e. large print or audio, or a language other than English, contact the Interpreting & Translation Services Unit on 01926 412698.

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