

# **West Lindsey Sustainable Community Strategy 2006-2016**



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## Introduction

West Lindsey is a unique area with a great deal to offer residents, visitors, businesses and employees. The purpose of this Strategy is to identify the top level priorities on which partners should focus, in order to improve further the environmental, economic and social well-being for the people of West Lindsey. The Local Strategic Partnership seeks to celebrate, and build on, the successes evident in West Lindsey, in a way that addresses the specific needs of the locality, as well as linking with the broader County-wide issues and Local Area Agreement objectives. The purpose of the Strategy is to improve the quality of life of everyone in the District, for now and for future generations.

The Sustainable Community Strategy is intended to be a 'living document' that is reviewed formally every three years, and on a more frequent basis, as required – it should evolve in order to reflect the changing needs of the District. It is designed to dovetail with the targets and strategies currently helping to shape West Lindsey. Although the issues affecting the area are wide-ranging, this Strategy focuses on the key aspects to address, as identified through consultation with those who live and work in the District, as well as through evaluation of key statistical evidence. It is intended that the Sustainable Community Strategy will be delivered through its supporting Action Plan and the ongoing work of partnership agencies. The aim of the Strategy is to highlight the areas where partnership working will result in greater successes and improved quality of life for West Lindsey residents, than if organisations were to work alone. In focusing on achieving this aim, West Lindsey Strategic Partnership seeks to align themselves with the following over-arching vision and statements of principle:

### **The vision is that West Lindsey is seen as a place where people want to live, work, invest and visit**

- ◆ West Lindsey contains a rich mix of urban and rural areas encompassing: bustling historic market towns; thriving, functional waterways and rich farmland. The Partnership works to promote the unique advantages of the District for living and working, while seeking to protect and enhance its diverse environment
- ◆ West Lindsey has a number of distinct benefits in terms of its history and culture - the area is one in which the traditional is blended with the modern. The Partnership wishes to facilitate access to the employment and leisure opportunities provided by the District's fusion of traditional industry - fishing, agriculture, aviation and manufacturing - with exciting new developments, such as those in the fields of life-long learning and the arts.
- ◆ West Lindsey Local Strategic Partnership is focused on promoting social inclusion by embracing principles of diversity and equality to enable all residents and visitors to participate in sustainable community living.

## **Development of the Strategy**

### **Consultation**

West Lindsey Local Strategic Partnership guided the development of West Lindsey's Community Strategy. This was informed by:

- ◆ stakeholder consultation that comprised telephone and face-to-face interviews involving a range of partners across the District<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ resident consultation, whereby a sample of residents were interviewed about their views of living and working in the District in 2005; and
- ◆ review of relevant demographic information and key indicators - the supporting evidence-base can be found in Appendix 1.

### **Priorities**

In developing this Strategy, West Lindsey Local Strategic Partnership wished to reaffirm its commitment to delivering against not only its statutory obligations, but also to tackling specific issues of local concern. This will be achieved through: multi-agency partnership working; creating relevant, meaningful action plans; and, defining clear lines of accountability.

The Strategy is divided into three sections:

- ◆ Healthy communities
- ◆ Safer, stronger communities
- ◆ Economic development

These headings reflect broadly the priority issues identified through analysis of stakeholder and resident feedback, as well as being aligned with the Local Area Agreement structure. The aspirations, evidence and outcomes associated with each section are underpinned by two central cross-cutting themes: children and young people; and, those most at risk of disadvantage, specifically, maximising inclusion of people in at-risk groups and promoting social justice or fairness for all.

## **Principles of developing and delivering the Strategy**

The Local Strategic Partnership will work to the following principles when developing strategies or action plans and when delivering the outcomes identified in the Strategy:

- ◆ Evidenced based and data led approaches: all the outcomes set out in the Community Strategy will be linked to supporting evidence.
- ◆ Sustainability Appraisals and Rural Charter: We will follow the principles of sustainability and rural proofing where possible. The LSP will be aiming to build sustainable communities in the District through joint environmental, economic and social improvement. Rural proofing involves evaluating policies and actions to ensure they take account of rural needs. To achieve this we will use the East Midlands Integrated Toolkit (EMIT).
- ◆ Strategic Environmental Assessments: We will carry out Assessments in accordance with the statutory legislation.
- ◆ Partnering Framework: The County Council has commissioned a partnership framework. The principles of the framework will be adhered to by the Local Strategic Partnership.

## **Monitoring and Communicating the Strategy**

The Community Strategy will be monitored by the LSP Executive, and supported by the LSP. The performance management framework will be developed to monitor the progress against the agreed outcomes.

The Strategy will be sent to a comprehensive list of organisations that have an interest in the District. Copies will be available at the District Council's Offices (including its web site) and other organisations.

Information on progress made and future reviews will be provided through a range of methods, including council newspapers, local media, website and Area Forums.

## Healthy Communities

### Strategic Aim 1: Residents of West Lindsey Enjoy Good Physical and Mental Health, and Emotional Well-Being

Evidence	Outcome Measures
<p>There is inequity between the levels of health experienced by West Lindsey residents and those in other parts of the County. For example, the District has a statistically higher proportion of low birth-weight babies than for peer group districts nationally. West Lindsey also has a significantly higher proportion of premature death rates from circulatory disease<sup>2</sup>.</p> <p>Local stakeholders have identified the need to work together to tackle health issues, in order to help break the cycle of deprivation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Delivering primary care services in West Lindsey is a particular challenge, given: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the dispersed population; over three-quarters of West Lindsey residents live in rural areas<sup>3</sup></li> <li>- the limited provision of public transport; and</li> <li>- challenges in attracting NHS practitioners, in particular, dentists to the area.</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ Regional Sports Strategy identifies the need for adults (aged 16 or over) to take part in sport or physical activity (sport, active recreation and walking) at least 3 times per week for at least 30 minutes, at moderate intensity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Reduced health inequalities, as measured by key health indicators, between West Lindsey residents and residents of other Lincolnshire districts, and the UK: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased life expectancy</li> <li>- Reduced proportion of low birth-weight babies</li> <li>- Reduced proportion of residents reporting limiting long-term illness</li> <li>- Decreased number of deaths from circulatory disease.</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ Increased access to Primary Care Provision. Reduced health inequalities, as measured by key health indicators, between West Lindsey residents and residents of other Lincolnshire districts, and the UK.</li> <li>◆ 4% increase in physical activity.</li> </ul>

**Strategic Aim 2: West Lindsey Residents are informed about the ways in which they can improve and sustain their own Health and Well-Being.**

Evidence	Outcome Measures
<p>Health promotion work is considered to be central to empowering people to sustain their own good health<sup>4</sup>, given that the 'cycle of deprivation' that can lead to poor health is evident in the District<sup>5</sup>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Residents access health promotion information in a range of community settings, and through the use of technology, in a number of different ways<sup>6</sup>.</li> <li>◆ Increased reported satisfaction with community healthcare services.</li> <li>◆ Multi-agency health and well-being activities and awareness-raising campaigns implemented, targeting hard-to-reach groups, and children and young people, focusing on a range of issues of importance to West Lindsey stakeholders and residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- alcohol and drug misuse</li> <li>- the socio-economic determinants of health and well-being</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Safer, Stronger Communities

### **Strategic Aim 3: Empowered Communities, Engaged with Partner Agencies, Helping to shape Local Service Delivery**

Evidence	Outcome Measures
<p>There is evidence of some good work taking place in terms of community engagement, such as the Area Forums<sup>7</sup>, but there does not appear to be a systematic approach to undertaking work in this area, nor is there a clear process for dissemination of good practice information.</p> <p>There is also a need to ensure that hard-to-reach groups are represented in decision-making processes<sup>8</sup>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Clearly defined programme of engagement focused on providing a range of relevant, specific mechanisms for hard-to-reach communities, faith groups and youth councils to provide feedback and to shape the local community.</li> <li>◆ A shared approach to community engagement and consultation with at least two partners in the Local Strategic Partnership.</li> <li>◆ To increase levels of community engagement.</li> <li>◆ To support the preparation of Parish Plans</li> </ul>

### **Strategic Aim 4: To improve the quality of life by promoting a culture of partnership with the local community to improve the local environment and reduce the incidents of Environmental Crime.**

Evidence	Outcome Measures
<p>Satisfaction surveys show that local people consider dealing with environment crime as important.</p> <p>New statutory powers can improve enforcement of such activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ To reduce the time taken to deal with, and reduce the number of incidents of environmental crime. Use measures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- education</li> <li>- enforcement</li> <li>- publicity.</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ Development of the eight Neighbourhood Policing Panels in West Lindsey and the Joint Action Group to deal with local community safety issues.</li> <li>◆ Work closely with Local Councils to promote awareness of the new laws.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Aim 5: Residents Feel Safe

Evidence	Outcome Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Overall, West Lindsey experiences lower levels of crime than elsewhere in the country<sup>10</sup>, however, stakeholder evidence suggests there is a comparatively high level of fear of crime.</li> <li>◆ Stakeholder evidence suggests there is a need to 'bridge the gap' between young people and older people. Specifically, there is a perception in West Lindsey that many young people are involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.</li> <li>◆ National evidence suggests that 70% of parents and young people perceive crimes to be committed because young people have insufficient diversionary activities<sup>11</sup>.</li> <li>◆ Crime Audit demonstrated that young people are more likely to be the victim of crime and the offender.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ To improve public reassurance and reduce the fear of crime.</li> <li>◆ Established schemes to enable young people and older people to learn from each other, through activities that benefit the community.</li> <li>◆ Evaluate and analyse satisfaction with diversionary activities for children and young people.</li> <li>◆ Increased participation in local democracy and decision making for young people.</li> <li>◆ To reduce the:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) numbers of young people becoming a victim; and/or</li> <li>ii) the likelihood of young people becoming an offender of crime.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Schemes include the Prevent and Deter of the Priority and Prolific Offender Scheme targeting 8 - 16 year olds.</p>

## **Strategic Aim 6: West Lindsey Provides Affordable, Sustainable Housing**

<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Outcome Measures</b>
<p>There is a need to increase the amount of affordable housing in West Lindsey<sup>12</sup>, particularly for young people, older people and those on lower incomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Increased number of affordable homes developed, on an ongoing basis.</li><li>◆ Reported satisfaction with the opportunities provided to enter the housing market in West Lindsey.</li><li>◆ Evaluation of property-buying activity undertaken over time, reporting:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- increased number of homes purchased by first-time buyers</li><li>- decreased proportion of young people seeking to buy outside of the District.</li></ul></li><li>◆ To ensure any new housing incorporates sustainability principles.</li></ul>

## Economic Development

**Strategic Aim 7: A positive Economic Environment for West Lindsey:**

- ◆ Business and employment are diverse
- ◆ New businesses are attracted to the area
- ◆ Existing businesses are growing
- ◆ Economic activity is strong
- ◆ High number of residents are economically active

Evidence	Outcome Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Nearly one quarter of economically active residents are employed in the manufacturing or agriculture industries<sup>13</sup>.</li> <li>◆ West Lindsey District Council has established an Economic Development Unit to: help businesses access funding; provide information; provide planning guidance and support; and create and develop community networks.</li> <li>◆ Unemployment levels are higher than the county average and there is a particular concern with long-term unemployment<sup>14</sup>.</li> <li>◆ There is a relatively high level of economic inactivity, with a high proportion of retired residents<sup>15</sup>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Increased number of new businesses established in the District based on year-on-year VAT registration figures.</li> <li>◆ Decreased proportion of disused retail spaces in urban areas.</li> <li>◆ Business development and planning aligned with sustainability agenda.</li> <li>◆ Diversification of industry.</li> <li>◆ Innovative activity developed and implemented to promote economic inclusion, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- support for hard-to-reach groups and those with challenges relating to access</li> <li>- increased partnership working for the development of novel employment/training schemes</li> <li>- targeted support for school leavers; long term unemployed; and the over 50s.</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ Increased proportion of economically active residents.</li> <li>◆ Increase the number of users on the "Wheels to Work" Project and consider longer term funding from April 2008.</li> </ul>

**Strategic Aim 8: There is a diverse skills-mix among local residents**

Evidence	Outcome Measures
<p>Stakeholder evidence suggests that there are few opportunities to raise the benchmark in terms of skill level in West Lindsey.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Higher skilled, higher paid jobs created in the District.</li><li>◆ Opportunities to access training and education in West Lindsey mapped out.</li><li>◆ Existing provision for skill development evaluated, to inform a district-wide model for lifelong learning, taking into account:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- provision for all age groups</li><li>- how best to cross-fertilise the skills particular to different sections of the community</li><li>- different models of teaching and learning</li><li>- industry-specific training</li><li>- generic skill training</li><li>- provision for people with disabilities</li><li>- provision for people with access issues</li><li>- minimum entitlement in terms of training</li><li>- increased availability and use of technology.</li></ul></li></ul>

**Strategic Aim 9: West Lindsey balances economic growth with principles of sustainability particularly environmental sustainability**

Evidence	Outcome Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ West Lindsey LSP has identified environmental issues as a main priority area.</li> <li>◆ Public support through the Area Forums that we should identify and conserve features of environment, culture and heritage which make West Lindsey a lifestyle choice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ High levels of public satisfaction with the local environment recorded.</li> <li>◆ Derelict land assessed and plans developed for the regeneration of available space for the provision of: affordable housing; leisure facilities; and/or new business.</li> <li>◆ Conserving and funding important landscapes in particular Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and natural features with community volunteers.</li> <li>◆ Restore lost landscape features.</li> <li>◆ Conserving the best of our past and finding new uses.</li> <li>◆ Increased recycling levels.</li> </ul>

**Strategic Aim 10: West Lindsey is Accessible in the Broadest Sense**

Evidence	Outcome Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ West Lindsey LSP has highlighted its intention to work in accordance with the Lincolnshire County Council Community Travel Zone scheme, as well as to link up with other districts.</li> <li>◆ There has been some expansion of the public transport system in recent times, for example, the mini-bus scheme that links up with a main bus route, however, use of public transport to access work, for example, is still low in relation to other areas<sup>17</sup>.</li> <li>◆ Given the considerable rural dispersion, services can be located some distance from residents' homes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Extended public transport infrastructure, providing a more flexible, responsive, needs-led system that takes into account: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- particular access needs of different community members at different times, e.g. young people wishing to commute to the urban areas to access leisure facilities during the evening</li> <li>- the need for integration between public services and public transport</li> <li>- the need for a coordinated approach to infrastructure-related planning, aligning local priorities with broader strategic planning.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Key Partners and Key Documents

### Healthy Communities

Key Partners	Key Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Residents of West Lindsey</li> <li>◆ Council for Voluntary Services</li> <li>◆ Government Office for the East Midlands</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire County Council</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire Districts Equality and Diversity Project group</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire Sports Partnership</li> <li>◆ Local Councils</li> <li>◆ Supporting People Partnership</li> <li>◆ Sure Start</li> <li>◆ West Lindsey District Council</li> <li>◆ West Lincolnshire PCT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Health Improvement Plan</li> <li>◆ Supporting People programme</li> <li>◆ West Lindsey Local Plan</li> <li>◆ West Lincolnshire PCT patient and public involvement strategy</li> <li>◆ Children and Young People's Plan</li> <li>◆ Sport England East Midlands Audit and Research of Performance Sport in the East Midlands</li> </ul>

## Safer, Stronger Communities

Key Partners	Key Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Residents of West Lindsey</li> <li>◆ Area Forums</li> <li>◆ Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership</li> <li>◆ Community Council for Lincolnshire</li> <li>◆ Council for Voluntary Services</li> <li>◆ Government Office for the East Midlands</li> <li>◆ Job Centre Plus</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire County Council</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire Districts Equality and Diversity Project group</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire and Rutland Learning and Skills Council</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire Police and Police Authority</li> <li>◆ Local Councils</li> <li>◆ West Lindsey Community Safety Partnership</li> <li>◆ West Lindsey District Council</li> <li>◆ Youth Offending Team</li> <li>◆ Connexions Lincolnshire and Rutland</li> <li>◆ Housing Providers (such as Housing Associations)</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire Sports Partnership</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire Probation Service</li> <li>◆ Voluntary and Community Sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Connexions business delivery plan</li> <li>◆ Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy</li> <li>◆ Drugs Treatment Plan</li> <li>◆ Local Policing Plan</li> <li>◆ Respect agenda</li> <li>◆ Rural Action Plan</li> <li>◆ Sustainable communities agenda</li> <li>◆ West Lindsey Local Plan</li> <li>◆ Youth Justice Plan</li> <li>◆ West Lindsey Housing Strategy</li> <li>◆ Young People and Persons Plan</li> <li>◆ Learning and Skills Council Local Annual Plan</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire and Rutland LEA, LSC, Connexions and CfBT 14-19 Learner Entitlement Plan</li> </ul>

## Economic Development

Key Partners	Key Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Residents of West Lindsey</li> <li>◆ Area Forums</li> <li>◆ Business Community for West Lindsey</li> <li>◆ Business Link</li> <li>◆ Community Council for Lincolnshire</li> <li>◆ Connexions Lincolnshire and Rutland</li> <li>◆ District Councils</li> <li>◆ Environment Agency</li> <li>◆ Gainsborough Academy</li> <li>◆ Gainsborough Learning Partnership</li> <li>◆ Government Office for the East Midlands</li> <li>◆ Job Centre Plus</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire &amp; Rutland Learning and Skills Council</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire County Council</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire Districts Equality and Diversity Project group</li> <li>◆ Local Councils</li> <li>◆ Rural Transport Partnership Officers</li> <li>◆ Transport Providers</li> <li>◆ West Lindsey District Council</li> <li>◆ Voluntary Sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Lincolnshire Bio-diversity Action Plan</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire Structure and Mineral Plan</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire County Council Economic Development and Tourism Strategy</li> <li>◆ Regional Development Strategy</li> <li>◆ Rural Policy</li> <li>◆ Sustainable communities agenda</li> <li>◆ Waste Management Strategy for Lincolnshire</li> <li>◆ West Lindsey Local Plan</li> <li>◆ West Lindsey Economic Development Strategy</li> <li>◆ Learning and Skills Council Local Annual Plan</li> <li>◆ Lincolnshire and Rutland LEAs, LSC, Connexions and CfBT 14-19 Learner Entitlement Plan</li> <li>◆ Connexions Lincolnshire and Rutland Business Plan 2006/07</li> </ul>

# **Appendix 1**

## **1. Background Information**

**Produced by OPM**

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## Introduction

This report supports the development of West Lindsey's Community Strategy. The majority of this information has been extracted, as agreed, from the Stage One Literature Review for the Lincolnshire Community Strategy. This data has been supplemented with additional desk research focused on the West Lindsey district.

## What makes a good community strategy?

ODPM has produced a guide to preparing community strategies (ODPM, 2000). The aim of the community strategy is to improve the quality of life for residents of local communities and allow them to develop their social, economic and environmental well-being in a sustainable way. Four principle objectives were defined. The guide states that achievement of these objectives is essential for the success of any community strategy, which must seek to:

Enable the citizens of a local community to express their '*aspirations, needs and priorities*';

Promote effective and coherent working, between the various agencies and organisations operating within the community;

Promote effective devolved management of central resource streams, to meet local needs; and,

Ensure that development is sustainable, both at the local level and on the broader scale.

The strategy should contain a long-term vision and should be supported by an action plan, to which all partners are committed. It should also be reviewed and updated regularly.

Community strategies should be developed keeping the need to engage and involve the local people in mind. In addition, they should allow for active participation of councillors and be based on a comprehensive assessment of both local needs and available resources.

The Local Government Association guidance that was developed to support the ODPM document (LGA, 2000) highlighted the importance of not creating a document that is seen to be '*just another plan*'. To this end, it is beneficial to be aware of the importance of community involvement in the development of the strategy. Indeed, consultation exercises and events comprised part of the process for devising the strategies of each of the Lincolnshire district LSPs.

### 3. Local Strategic Partnerships

#### How does West Lindsey compare to the other districts?

##### Population

There are seven district Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) in Lincolnshire: Boston; East Lindsey; Lincoln City, North Kesteven; South Holland; South Kesteven and West Lindsey<sup>1</sup>. Some key facts about each district are detailed in Table 1<sup>2</sup>.

Table 1

LSP	Population	Geographical area	Population density (people/km <sup>2</sup> )
Boston	57,900	362 km <sup>2</sup>	158
East Lindsey	136,200	1760km <sup>2</sup>	76
Lincoln City	86,500	36km <sup>2</sup>	2410
North Kesteven	100,500	922km <sup>2</sup>	107
South Holland	80,700	742km <sup>2</sup>	107
South Kesteven	127,700	943km <sup>2</sup>	134
West Lindsey	84,000	1158km <sup>2</sup>	72

Lincoln City is, by far, the most densely populated area. West Lindsey is the most sparsely populated area in Lincolnshire, housing the third lowest number of residents in the second largest geographical area. The population density of West Lindsey is less than one fifth that of the UK average (383 people per square kilometre<sup>3</sup>) which makes it the 17<sup>th</sup> most sparsely populated in England. It is also significantly less densely populated than the average location in the East Midlands which is occupied by 272 people per square kilometre<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Lincolnshire County Council (2005)a

<sup>2</sup> ONS (2004)

<sup>3</sup> ONS (2005)a

<sup>4</sup> South Holland District Council *Our Community, Our Future*

## Key facts

West Lindsey is a predominantly sparsely populated rural district, in which two-thirds of the population live outside of the three main market towns – Caistor, Gainsborough and Market Rasen – in rural locations. Gainsborough is the largest centre of population, with 18,000 residents, with the next largest settlements populated by somewhere in the region of 3,500 people.

There has been evidence of population growth and there is predicted to be an increase from the 2003 population by 2012, when population projections suggest that the number of people in the district will increase by 9.78%<sup>5</sup>. This is slightly lower than the percentage change in population predicted for Lincolnshire as a whole (10.55%) but higher than that of the East Midlands (6.32%) and the National Average (4.83%).

Table 2<sup>5</sup>

Projected population change (10 year projection) (2003-2012)	
District	%
South Kesteven	6.32
South Holland	14.99
North Kesteven	19.19
Lincoln	2.09
East Lindsey	12.88
Boston	8.57
West Lindsey	9.78
East Midlands Average	6.32
National Average	4.83

Unemployment levels are higher than the county average and there is a particular problem with long-term unemployment. 22.4% of the workforce is involved in manufacturing or agriculture, both of which are on the decline as industry sectors. As with other districts, transport is a particular challenge and over 5,700 households do not have a car.

<sup>5</sup> ONS (2003)

## **Structure and development of District LSPs**

All the LSPs in Lincolnshire have produced Community Strategies and are in the process of completing accompanying Action Plans. A range of other documents and initiatives are also at varying stages of development. These vary in accordance with the agreed way forward defined by each LSP. In West Lindsey's proposed new structure, the LSP Executive will commission groups to look at specific issues, rather than having a number of Theme Groups working on individual actions plans as was the case previously. It is expected that the LSP Executive will take the lead of delivering and commissioning actions.

The Theme Groups are each responsible for tackling one of the priority areas contained within the current community strategy, from implementation of action, through to monitoring and reporting on progress. <sup>6</sup>.

West Lindsey LSP holds thrice-yearly area forums in each of the following locations: The Lincoln Fringe; Gainsborough; and, The Wolds. These are open meetings, the purpose of which is to engage local residents and service users in the delivery of LSP work.

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<sup>6</sup> West Lindsey LSP (2005)

## Vision and priorities

The vision and priorities of West Lindsey are outlined in Table 3 below and discussed in more detail in the section that follows.

	VISION STATEMENT	PRIORITY AREAS	BROAD THEME(S) <sup>7</sup>
WEST LINDSEY	<b>Gainsborough</b> <i>'Gainsborough will be a thriving, modern market town on the River Trent providing a diverse range of quality services to a network of inclusive village communities. Respecting its history of river trade and engineering, it will be home for people and businesses which will attract visitors because of its special character and sense of place'</i>	Transport	TRANSPORT
		The environment	ENVIRONMENT
		Community safety	SAFETY
		Economy	ECONOMY
		Health and housing	HEALTHY COMMUNITY HOUSING
		Community development and culture	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/ SOCIAL INCLUSION
	<b>Wolds</b> <i>'The Wolds contains an area of outstanding natural beauty which will be available for residents and visitors to enjoy. Access to the Wolds will be facilitated by the principal market towns and villages which will provide modern services and an exceptional example of English County life.'</i>		LEISURE AND CULTURE
		Learning and skills	EDUCATION
	<b>Lincoln Fringe</b> <i>'The settlements around the City of Lincoln have a character of their own. Their residents look to the city for work, shopping and recreation, while preferring to live in a rural atmosphere. Ease of travel to the City is therefore essential, as well as the development of local community facilities so that community and recreational groups and organisations can continue to flourish.'</i>		

Table 3

## Priority areas

### Community Development/ Social Inclusion

West Lindsey is ranked as the 164<sup>th</sup> most deprived ward in England (out of a total of 354 wards)<sup>8</sup>, in respect of its Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

*‘Protecting and improving community life in West Lindsey is at the heart of everything we do.’<sup>9</sup>*

The District Council has identified that the way to achieve the vision summarised above is to work effectively with partner organisations and empower communities to achieve their own objectives. To this end, the LSP work already focuses on the key issues summarised below.

Consulting and engaging citizens – in order to promote community involvement, West Lindsey has established three area fora, one for each of the geographical regions within the district. These fora consist of Gainsborough and its catchment area, the Wolds and the Lincoln Fringe. Each area has its own specific vision and Themed Groups related to the LSP priorities.

The LSP has recognised the importance of promoting, developing and securing cultural activities in West Lindsey. They seek to help the area establish a *‘district cultural identity’* through the use of cultural activity, which is seen to *‘enhance the quality of people’s lives by contributing to community safety, regeneration, neighbourhood renewal, healthy communities and lifelong learning.’* They also wish to engage a range of faith groups, community groups and work through the youth council in order to gain an understanding of need in this area. They will also link any future work with the existing Arts and Sports Strategies, as well as creating a new Play Development Strategy. Furthermore, there is significant work being undertaken to analyse existing feedback available from previous public consultation and use this as a benchmark by which to measure progression. This is the case in West Lindsey, where the LSP will be looking at the results of the former Viewpoint Citizens’ Panel and the District Council’s General User Survey.

### Economy

Office of National Statistics data<sup>10</sup> reveals the following information about residents aged 16-74 years old in the District:

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<sup>8</sup> ODPM (2004)

<sup>9</sup> West Lindsey District Council (2005)a

<sup>10</sup> Office of National Statistics (2005)

37.8% were in full-time employment, compared to an East Midlands figure of 41.1% and 40.6% in England & Wales;

34.4% were economically inactive. The district figure is slightly higher than the regional figure (32.9%) and the England & Wales figure of 33.4%. The majority of this group were retired (17% of residents aged 16-74). This was the same regionally and in England & Wales, where the percentages were 14.1% and 13.6% respectively;

6.9% of West Lindsey residents are economically inactive and looking after the home and/or family. This is very slightly higher than the regional and England & Wales figures (6.2% and 6.5% respectively)

The District had an employment rate equivalent to the England & Wales average, during the period from June to August 2004 (75% of people aged 16-74).

The majority of the working age residents of the District are employed within 'Public Administration, Education and Health (PAEH)' (29.3%), with the next largest employing sector being 'Manufacturing (22%)'. These figures are higher than the respective data for the region and England where the greatest proportion of people are employed within the PAEH sector (25.9% and 25.3% respectively), but where the next largest area of employment is 'Distribution, Hotels and Restaurants' (25% of working age residents both regionally and in England).

In relation to the Employment Indicator, West Lindsey is ranked as 205<sup>th</sup> most deprived district in England<sup>11</sup>

West Lindsey wants to encourage and support newly established businesses in the district. The Greater Lincoln Partnership was founded to promote economic development opportunities in North Kesteven, Lincoln City, Lincolnshire County and West Lindsey councils. There are also a range of agencies working to support local business in the area, including, among others, the East Midlands Development Agency, Business Link and the Government Office for the East Midlands.

West Lindsey Council is seeking to '*create a sustainable future for all*'. The Council has established an Economic Development Unit specifically to help with the establishment, expansion and/or relocation of business in the area. This is done by various means, including:

- helping businesses to access funding;
- providing information;
- providing planning guidance and support; and,
- creating and developing community networks.

The Unit has also facilitated a range of specific projects in local areas, for example, the Caistor Townscape Heritage Initiative (a regeneration scheme), as well as the

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<sup>11</sup> ODPM (2005)

Wheels2Work project – a scooter loan service to help those living in rural areas to travel to work<sup>12</sup>.

Closely interlinked with the issue of economy is transport. This has been identified as a priority area by the West Lindsey LSP. The main challenges faced by the District appear to stem from its geographical diversity, the environmental impact of transportation, road safety, and the affordability of public transport. In terms of improving transport services West Lindsey LSP has highlighted their intention to work in accordance with the Lincolnshire County Council Community Travel Zone scheme, as well as to link up with other districts.

## Education

Office of National Statistics data revealed the following information in relation to education in the district<sup>13</sup>:

The percentage of residents aged 16-74 in full time education is aligned with the figure for England as a whole, at 5%.

During the 2003-2004 academic year, 57% of school pupils achieved five or more GCSEs graded A\*-C. This is higher than the national average (England) which was 54% for the same year.

There was evidence to suggest that primary school attainment in Maths and English had improved during the five years from 1999-2004.

29.9% of residents of West Lindsey aged 16-74 yrs have no qualifications. This is very slightly higher than the England & Wales average of 29.1%, but lower than the regional figure, which is 31.6%.

Just over three-quarters (76%) of 16 and 17 year olds continued on in full-time education after school (from Census 2001 data). This was 2% lower than the same figure for England & Wales.

The key issues relating to the broad theme of Education are as follows:

Accessibility – as was the case with Community Development, there are a range of ways in which accessibility can be improved for local people. For example, some targets in this area relate to the provision of structured childcare facilities, such as the development of the Sure Start programme in West Lindsey.

Increasing participation of 14-19 year olds – this is an important area of work for a number of LSPs. Objectives in this category are based on increasing take-up rates of post-school education, as well as increasing the number of people who are able to gain the

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<sup>12</sup> West Lindsey District Council (2005)b

<sup>13</sup> ONS (2005)b

requisite qualifications to continue into formal Higher Education. West Lindsey seeks to provide all young people in the district with '*personal advisors*'.

## Environment

West Lindsey LSP has identified environmental issues as a main priority area. The key themes emerging from the environment-related priorities are as follows:

Conservation – there is a need to preserve the natural beauty of the rural Lincolnshire areas. In West Lindsey, LSP representatives will assess the proportion of derelict and previously developed land, in order to measure progress in increasing the number of, and conserving existing, green spaces.

Waste reduction – a number of LSPs in the County have identified the increase in levels of waste over recent years and are seeking to tackle these within the Community Strategy. In West Lindsey, the recycling targets will be increased and public satisfaction with their environment will be measured.

## Healthy Community

Available data illustrates the following health indicator information about West Lindsey.

In West Lindsey, the life expectancy at birth for females is aligned with the average for England at 80.7 years. Females in the East Midlands overall, however, have a slightly lower average life expectancy at 80.5 years. The same figure for males is slightly higher than the regional and England average at 76.4 years (East Midlands figure: 76.3 years and England figure: 76.2 years)<sup>14</sup>.

Just over two-thirds (68.3%) of West Lindsey residents would describe their general health as 'good' – slightly higher than the average proportion of residents in the region that would say the same (67.6%) but fractionally lower than the England & Wales average of 68.6%.<sup>15</sup>

18.7% of West Lindsey residents consider themselves to have a limiting long-term illness. This is higher than the regional and national figures of 18.4% and 18.2% respectively. Of working age residents, 13.7% of both the district and the region have limiting long-term illness, which is closely aligned to the England & Wales average of 13.6%.<sup>16</sup>

For the period from 2001-2003, teenage conception figures were statistically significantly lower in West Lindsey than the regional and national average<sup>17</sup>. The figure for the District was 31.6 conceptions per 1000 women aged 15-17 (compared to 40.4 per 1000 in Lincolnshire and 42.6 in England & Wales).

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<sup>14</sup> ONS (2005)c

<sup>15</sup> ONS (2005)b

<sup>16</sup> ONS (2005)b

<sup>17</sup> DfES (2005)

West Lindsey has a statistically higher than average proportion of low birthweight babies<sup>18</sup>.

The current Community Strategy focuses on promoting and maintaining healthy living for the people within the district to tackle real health inequalities. Key themes include:

Improved housing –West Lindsey all make specific reference to the need to improve and maintain good quality, affordable housing. The average house price in the District in 2003 was £119,190. The lowest average house prices in the County at this time were to be found in Lincoln (£101,507) and the highest in South Kesteven (£141,357)<sup>19</sup>.

Improved lifestyles – one of the objectives of West Lindsey LSP's current Community Strategy relates to developing the same measures as those used by the PCT to monitor community health.

## Safety

Community Safety is a priority area. From consultation, it was clear that residents of Lincolnshire districts need to feel safe and secure in their homes and communities.

Perceived safety – it is important to understand the damage to social cohesion that can be caused as a result of perceived lack of community safety. The West Lindsey strategy aims to reduce not only crime but the '*fear of crime*.' To help monitor progress in this area, the West Lindsey LSP plan to survey residents on how they feel '*both during the day and at night*'. Data for the period from January to March 2004 illustrates the following key statistics in relation to crime and safety in West Lindsey<sup>20</sup>:

In terms of 'all crime', there was an average of 17.3 offences committed, per 1000 population during this period. This figure is lower than that for England & Wales, which was 27.8 offences per 1000 population.

There was an average of 3 burglary offences per 1000 population in the District, compared to a figure for Lincolnshire of 2.9 and an England & Wales average of 3.7 per 1000 population.

In terms of criminal damage, the data for West Lindsey illustrated a rate of 4.6 offences per 1000 population during this period, again, lower than the County-wide and national (England & Wales) average, which were both 6.1.

Vehicle-related crime accounted for 5.9 offences per 1000 population during this period, compared to a Lincolnshire figure of 7.2, and 10.3 offences per 1000 population in England & Wales.

In terms of reducing anti-social behaviour in West Lindsey, the LSP has highlighted its plans to establish and support youth councils, in order to promote and increase active citizenship in young people.

<sup>18</sup> EMPHO (2005)

<sup>19</sup> ONS (2005)d

<sup>20</sup> Home Office (no date)

## Moving towards Local Area Agreements

The Government has developed a ten-year strategy to forge strong links between, and better coordinate the work of, central and local government. Local Area Agreements (LAAs) play an important role in this plan. The guide to LAAs, produced by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM, 2004), highlights how LAAs aim to facilitate partnership working while *'achieving local solutions that meet local need'*. LAAs, it is hoped, should also improve the quality of local services and allow for greater flexibility in the devolved management of resources. 20 agreements have been signed as part of the first round pilot stage. The second phase of agreements will be negotiated over the next few months, after which, LAAs will be rolled-out across all upper tier authorities. The Local Authority and LSP are central to the successful implementation of the LAA (Rousseau, 2005). The Rousseau study in Sheffield found that *'effective LSP governance and partnership structures provided a strong foundation to build [the] LAA'* It may be useful, therefore, to consider the specific implications for LSPs, in order to identify how the introduction of LAAs might possibly shape the development of community strategies.

A process evaluation of a sample of pilot LAAs (ODPM, 2005) made a number of recommendations for potential roll-out authorities. Many of these have implications for the work of the LSP and, therefore, could usefully be considered in conjunction with any planned review or development of Community Strategies. Some key issues are summarised as follows:

The report recommended that localities *'should be allowed to develop a themed agreement around the Community Strategy, instead of within pre-defined blocks.'* Whichever way this is developed in the extended roll-out, the LSP will need to consider how the key issues relating to the District are to be framed.

Generally, it was found that successful implementation is likely when founded on strong existing partnerships where flexible management plays a central role. Pilot sites were advised to be *'well-prepared'* and that effective coordination, strong leadership and *'excellent communication'* would be required.

It would be beneficial to forge strong links with partners in order to maximise engagement early on in the process, particularly at the LSP level. It is also thought to be important that all partners work to develop a shared understanding of the nature and context of the LAA. In order to facilitate partner engagement, it was recommended that *'timing should be linked to planning and budgeting cycles, including those of partners.'* This helps to ensure that all partners feel their particular priorities have been acknowledged and that they feel valued.

In particular relation to economic development, it would be useful to establish an increased number of links with the private sector. Private sector involvement has been typically less evident previously.

LSPs' performance management systems outside the NRF areas and at county level were identified as being '*typically embryonic*'. First round pilots were provided with the opportunity to review performance management systems. There may be some useful information-sharing resulting from the development of systems, which could feed into extended roll-out of LAAs.

The report highlighted the fact that '*in some two-tier areas, district LSPs feel disempowered*'. It might be useful to take this into consideration when assessing, and looking to develop, governance arrangements within two-tier authority areas.

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## **– Appendix 2**

### **Stakeholder Engagement Summary Report**

**produced by OPM**

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## 1. Introduction

West Lindsey District Council commissioned the Office for Public Management (OPM) to undertake a range of stakeholder engagement activity, as part of the development of the West Lindsey Community Strategy. This work comprised: face-to-face interviews; telephone interviews; meeting attendance; and, questionnaires (see Annex 1 for methodology and details of participating groups). This report summarises the key findings from this work, in terms of some of the priority themes to be considered when formulating a Community Strategy.

## Priority themes

*‘The new Community Strategy’s going to come out and that’s going to be ‘The Bible’*

The following issues are illustrative of the recurring priority themes obtained during the stakeholder engagement process.

### Economy

The Community Strategy ought to link in with existing work on economic development, in particular, the Lincolnshire Economic Strategy. Specifically, comments relating to economic issues fell into the following broad categories:

### Employment

Generally, the population is low-skilled and while there are some job opportunities at this level, there appear to be more limited numbers of opportunities to obtain higher-skilled, higher-paid employment. There is a need to ensure that young people leaving education are provided with ample opportunity to develop their skills, gain well-paid employment and, therefore, have some incentive for remaining in the District. Connexions and the Job Centre Plus were thought to be central to supporting work in this area, but, in order to be most effective, need to be working in conjunction with other agencies, towards shared objectives.

The Lincolnshire Showground event was cited as a good example of how employers, education, training providers and voluntary agencies can be brought together in one place to make it easier for young people to have access face to face with opportunity providers from across the region to discuss employment and training issues and, at the same time, gather information and access advice and guidance. It would be useful for funding to be made available so that more events like this might take place.

At present, there is a limited range of employment in the District. A Community Strategy could make provision for more 'work tasters' to be available in the area – linking in with the need both to attract more diverse industry to the District and up-skill the population. Indeed, the need to support and grow new and existing businesses was reported to be a key issue. One respondent suggested that the Local Authority could take a lead on this work, recognising that it requires a multi-faceted approach, involving a wide variety of different partners to undertake different, integrated strands of work.

West Lindsey, as a district, it was thought, struggles to compete with the financial incentives offered to businesses in other areas to establish themselves.

### **Education**

A Community Strategy ought to mention the successes of the Gainsborough Academy – an initiative aimed at improving the range of learning opportunities and skills base of the population - and, it was suggested, perhaps outline a vision for its expansion across the District. One of the strengths of this partnership was perceived to be the way that it brings together different learning related organisations in the area.

Access to opportunities for education by young people are thought to be of primary importance. The distances that young people need to travel to schools and colleges can be great and there is a need to improve accessibility to learning opportunities and increase the number of young people able to develop their skills<sup>21</sup>. A Learner Entitlement for young people aged 14-19 is being developed in partnership by Lincolnshire and Rutland LEAs, the Learning and Skills Council, Connexions and CfBT to ensure that at least a minimum level of learning provision is accessible in the local community. In addition, the 'wheels to work' scheme was highlighted as being an innovative approach to resolving access problems, but was reported to suffer from funding difficulties.

The Community Strategy could make provision for increased use of Information Technology to maximise access to learning.

### **Culture**

There was reported to be a vicious circle of deprivation: low skills; low wages; low aspirations. There was a sense that there is a poor self-image among local people. This was perceived as indicative of a need to raise aspirations and empower West Lindsey residents to demand better services, more opportunity for higher-paid employment and an improved quality of life. One respondent felt that a sign of success would be an increased 'feel good' factor across the District.

### **Social Inclusion**

It is essential that the Strategy maximises opportunity to minimise social and health inequalities. Related to this, the Strategy needs to be underpinned by the fundamental

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<sup>21</sup> See also Infrastructure; Access to Services

principles of equality. To this end, the LSP is being '*encouraged to sign a joint statement on equalities*'<sup>22</sup> and the Community Strategy ought to embrace the objectives and targets relating to equality and diversity, and undergo regular review to ensure that the work and focus of the LSP and its partners maximises the opportunity to '*promote equality of opportunity*' and '*eliminate unlawful discrimination*.'<sup>23</sup>

## Crime

### Perception of crime

It was generally accepted that there was a relatively high fear of crime in West Lindsey. Feedback in this respect tended to fall broadly within two categories. There were those people who felt that the perception of high crime was justified. There was also, however, those who thought that, although the perception of crime was that it was relatively prevalent, this was not actually the case in reality. It was also thought to be important to consider the types of crimes that are relevant to local people:

*'...it's petty crime...it's not major crime but it's crime that people feel quite strongly affects their quality of life....anti-social behaviour...speeding...'*

Perceptions of crime, it was thought, could be mediated by the dissemination of information about the actual facts and figures, so residents are aware of the reality of crime levels within West Lindsey. It was also suggested that increased levels of visible policing may help to reduce fear of crime, and that preventative action in terms of tackling causal factors, would be worthwhile.

*'There is a sense that the authorities don't do enough to identify and control it and improve the situations that cause it in the first place.'*

### Youth crime

It was suggested that there is a perception of high youth crime and underage drinking and that, irrespective of whether or not this is a justifiable view, young people '*do not have anywhere to go*'.<sup>24</sup> There could usefully be some work undertaken to help 'bridge the gap' between young people and older generations and that the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership might have a role to play in this work.

## Services and facilities

Although there were comments relating to the improvement of specific facilities, such as the Market Rasen swimming pool, it was also suggested that there is not so much a need

<sup>22</sup> Leask, S. (2005) *Lincolnshire Districts Equality and Diversity Project Reporting for West Lindsey District Council* [unpublished document]

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*

<sup>24</sup> See also Services and Facilities; Young People

for increased spending on building new facilities so much as informing residents more widely about those that exist already.

The majority of feedback relating to facilities in West Lindsey tended to focus on provision for the younger generation.

### **Young people**

It was felt by many that there needs to be more facilities and diversionary activities provided for children and young people, of all age groups. One of the inherent challenges is likely to relate to the recruitment of sufficient adult volunteers to help staff new schemes for children and young people.

*‘...this is essential. They haven’t got the facilities we had when we were young...in the rural areas you’ve got youngsters who’ve got nothing. The nearest town is...miles away, to get there you need their parents taking them there.’*

In order for work in this area to be successful, young people need to be involved throughout the process, from the generation of ideas to the development and implementation of projects. It was thought to be important to listen to young people, as well as to engage and empower them, perhaps through providing them with mechanisms to bid for funding. There was reported to be a youth council at Gainsborough, but it was suggested that this needs to be more focused on meeting the needs of young people, in terms of even getting them involved in the first place.

*‘...Gainsborough has got a youth council, but they’re [i.e. young people] not going to come to a meeting full of adults, you need to go to them on their territory. It’s important we get the thoughts of the youth.’*

There is a need to ensure that villages and towns have enough green space and parks for children and young people, to prevent them having to ‘*hanging around the street corners*’ where the perception may be that they are a nuisance.<sup>25</sup>

### **Health services**

There was a focus on the provision of health services for young people, in particular. This is linked with the wider children and young people agenda, and also with the need to break the cycle of deprivation. To this end, it was thought that the Strategy could help to tackle:

Teenage pregnancy;

Sexual health;

Drug and alcohol misuse.

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<sup>25</sup> See also Crime; Young People

## Adults

For the adult population, one of the issues that seemed to be of greatest concern was access to services, both in terms of infrastructure, and also availability, most notably in respect of the reported paucity of NHS dentists. In terms of access to health services generally, there appears to be a need to provide '*sustainable community based solutions for the management of long-term conditions / limiting long term illness*' in order to reduce reliance on acute healthcare services. It was also recognised that '*public involvement*' should be central to the development and delivery of any healthcare service activity.

## Infrastructure

Wider consultation feedback<sup>26</sup> (2004) raised a range of general and specific infrastructure-related issues, including, for example: development and maintenance of footpaths and cycle routes; expansion of public transport system; increased funding for school transport; the need to improve accessibility to employment, education and services generally; and, expansion of road network system. These comments were closely aligned to stakeholder feedback on the Community Strategy.

## Access to services

Rurality was frequently cited as a key issue to be addressed in a community strategy. The dispersion of communities has implications for accessing a wide range of services, facilities and opportunities. There is a need to effectively manage service planning and development, to ensure that there are adequate transport connections to link residents to services<sup>27</sup>. Rurality is of particular concern to older people.

## Public Transport

There has been some improvement in public transport evident to interviewees over recent times, although there is still a strong sense that public transport is inadequate.

'...[there's] *virtually no public transport...we've got no buses..*'

The dial-a-ride minibus service was highlighted as a success, as was the Grimsby to Lincoln bus link. The timings of the main bus services, however, was cited as being problematic, in terms of providing inadequate connections to major towns. One example provided by a number of respondents related to the fact that current transport provision, particularly in the evenings, does not make it easy for young people who wanted to take

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<sup>26</sup> Community Consultation via Area Forums (2004)

<sup>27</sup> See also Services and Facilities; Young People

advantage of the facilities of neighbouring towns and cities, to commute from, and back to, the rural areas<sup>28</sup>. One respondent suggested organising subsidised transport.

A Community Strategy, it was suggested, could usefully bring together different bodies to lobby for, and support the development of, a more integrated approach to public transport delivery. Another option raised was to identify alternative public transport providers.

### **Roads**

One respondent felt that the quality of roads was not so much of an issue as the extent of the road network. Although some of the issues in relation to roads are very long-term, it was thought that '*highways and bridges*' generally could be raised as a priority area in the Strategy but that this should link with ongoing planning activity, such as the Gainsborough Masterplan

### **Environment**

There was thought to be a tension between environmental concerns and the need to expand the economy and improve the infrastructure of the District. There may be a need to reassure people about sustainable development issues and the centrality of the environmental agenda in relation to, for example, road network expansion.

Other issues highlighted in relation to the environment included:

Housing development and regeneration – the need to provide more, good quality, sustainable housing for local people<sup>29</sup>

The gas storage plan

Wind farms – it may be necessary to take into account the political factor when considering this issue, i.e. that a District Council might lobby against the establishment of wind farms because local people object, but that this might not be based on informed decision-making, and may in fact, require more mature debate to reach consensus.

Litter problems

## **Organisation and structural issues**

### **Partnership working**

There was a sense that, although there is some good multi-agency working in place, the District generally has not been effective at partnership working and that, consequently, there is a need to drive forward the move away from silo-thinking. The Community Strategy, it was thought, might help to tackle this cultural shift, by promoting partnership working in a way that moves beyond that of 'talking shop' aims. In an ideal world, the Strategy would enable West Lindsey to be an exemplar of joint-working; *'the partnership of*

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<sup>28</sup> See also Services and Facilities; Young People

<sup>29</sup> See also Organisation and Structural Issues; Engagement

*partnerships*'. At the moment, it was suggested that some District partnerships do not buy in fully to the LSP.

*'I think the main one [issue] would be to ensure that every single person within West Lindsey understands the concept of partnership...'*

*'Ensuring that all stakeholders in the future of the District work together in a cohesive and co-ordinated manner to deliver a set of mutually agreed objectives'*

It was thought that there could usefully be more co-ordinated working. The Strategy needs to align with existing Plans and Strategies, in particular the West Lindsey District Council Corporate Plan, and there could be improvements in the working relationships between:

The LSP Executive and the Area Forums – although it was felt that communication between the LSP and the groups was satisfactory, there could be some improvements in terms of working practices, for example, the cycle of LSP meetings should dovetail with Forum meetings

The LSP and the community and voluntary sector – one suggestion for a measure of success was a raised LSP profile in the community. The perceived lack of co-ordination in the voluntary sector is, it was suggested, a barrier to its inclusion in LSP decision-making. There was reported to be no single voice representing the views of the voluntary sector and that this was of great detriment, given the important role of voluntary sector services in rural areas.

It was felt also that partnership working needs to be properly structured to avoid *'meeting fatigue'*. IT programmes could be developed and used more widely to share information and maximise productivity.

*'...we'll sit at a meeting and discuss problems but then when we come back it doesn't have the impetus it should have...'*

*'We have to look at what others are doing and try to fit in with what they're trying to achieve.'*

Furthermore, partnerships need to be structured so that all partners are able to feel valued and to have input. It was said that some working groups can feel *'council-led'*, formal and as though they are dealing with *'council business rather than something for the community.'*

In terms of strategy development, the County's and West Lindsey's strategies need to be mutually supportive. While the West Lindsey Strategy ought to provide a strong local flavour, it should also be closely aligned with the wider county context, by including shared objectives. This work should be supported by increased information sharing, again, possibly through expanded use of IT systems.

## Engagement

It was also felt that the LSP needs to increase, and sustain, its engagement with the local community to maintain focus on issues of priority to local people. One suggestion as to how this could be done was for the Area Forums to expand their role. Another suggestion was that there could be more parish capacity building, in order to address *'the democratic deficit.'*

*'...if members of our community have problems then they have to be addressed...they're the ones paying...'*

It was thought to be important to ensure that local people are particularly involved in any planning and development decisions relating to their District. The Britannia Centre was highlighted as a good example of pre-planning consultation, however, in other instances, it was felt that local people, as well as the private sector, have insufficient input.

There is also the issue of sharing success with local people. Gainsborough, for example, was provided as an example of a place within the District where there is *'lots happening....[it] needs to be shouted about a bit more.'* As aforementioned, there were reports of the population being almost overshadowed by a cycle of deprivation – promoting success may help support work to tackle this problem.

*'We need to advertise our success....we need to be good at that...and utilise it to the full.'*

## Governance and accountability

There was evidence to suggest that stakeholders considered the LSP to have improved under the auspices of the new Executive and that it was recognised as having great benefit.

*'[The LSP is a] brilliant example of Community Development...empowering capacity building...'*

One respondent felt that the LSP had benefited from improved resourcing and management. In the case of any refocusing of priorities, there was concern that the ongoing good work of the effective Theme Groups should not be lost.

One respondent stressed the need to develop and maintain a *'corporate identity for West Lindsey'* similar to the *One Lincolnshire* 'brand'. This identity would be unique to the area, while also drawing upon the good work of existing cross-district partnerships.

*'...large chunks of West Lindsey identify with Lincoln City...lots of organisations are in partnership with Lincoln...'*

*'...there's a bigger partnership outside of West Lindsey. West Lindsey is not the be all and end all...'*

It was thought to be important to delineate more clearly the lines of accountability in terms of Area Forums and the LSP. One suggestion in this respect was that Forum Leaders and Chairs are more proactive in seeking responses to public queries from agency representatives, in order to then assess priorities and develop clear action plans. These action plans could then be submitted to the Executive who will align priorities with the Strategy and produce District-wide guidance in terms of how to respond. In addition, it was suggested that forum feedback needs to be reported to Action Groups promptly and that there is a designated Action Group lead responsible for planning and prioritising outputs.

Related to the issue of accountability, the planning of activity was thought to be important, with one respondent stating that there has been *'benign and negligent neglect in this area'* by the Local Authority in previous times. There can be confusion about which body is responsible for which task, particularly given the two-tier system and there needs to be more clarity generally about who should do what, and when.

*'...it's just about accepting responsibility...it's just getting that through to individual staff and accepting ownership...'*

## Annex 1.

### Methodology

#### Stakeholder interviews

West Lindsey District Council suggested suitable interviewees, taking into consideration the need to obtain sufficient representation from: local government; a range of agencies; County- and district-level partnerships ; and, the voluntary sector. We undertook 12 interviews in total, 10 by telephone and two as face-to-face conversations. Interviewees represented one or more of the following organisations:

West Lindsey District Council

Lincolnshire County Council

West Lindsey Local Strategic Partnership Executive

National Farmers' Union

Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils

Connexions

Wolds Area Forum

Chamber of Commerce

West Lindsey Community Safety Partnership

Job Centre Plus

Lincolnshire Development

The interview guide can be found in Annex 2.

#### Questionnaire

OPM designed and distributed a questionnaire (see Annex 3) to stakeholders identified by West Lindsey District Council. These were people with whom it was not possible to undertake telephone or face-to-face interviews. The questionnaire was distributed, via email, to 9 stakeholders, representing one or more of the organisations listed below:

Environment Agency

Lincolnshire Police Authority

West Lindsey Local Strategic Partnership Executive

Lincolnshire County Council

West Lincolnshire PCT

West Lindsey District Council  
Community Council of Lincolnshire  
Lincolnshire Local Learning Partnerships  
Liberal Democrat Councillors Group

### **Meeting Attendance**

Catherine Staite, the Project Manager of this work, from OPM, attended the following meetings, in order to supplement the knowledge base underpinning the Community Strategy development:

Senior Management Team Meeting, West Lindsey District Council, 17.01.06  
LSP Executive Meeting, West Lindsey, 31.01.06

### **Limitations**

It is worth noting that the sample sizes are relatively small and therefore conclusions should be treated as illustrative rather than representative. We have not undertaken statistical significance testing on the data.

## Annex 2.

### Question framework for interviews

OPM is working with West Lindsey District Council to support the development of the Community Strategy.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help establish the issues that stakeholders consider to be important in the development and implementation of a Community Strategy. We also wish to gain an understanding of the key priorities that need to be taken into account throughout this process, in order to improve both access to services and quality of life for West Lindsey residents.

We will report the main themes and issues of the questionnaire to the District Council but we will **not** be including any information that identifies you or your organisation.

(ASK IF INTERVIEWEE HAS ANY QUESTIONS)

#### 1. Key priorities

**1.1 Thinking about how to improve life for residents of West Lindsey, what does your organisation consider to be the top three priority issues to address?**

PROBE FOR:

The organisation's experience of working in relation to the three issues cited

How a Community Strategy might help to address the areas in question

**1.2 What are the top three issues you think the residents of West Lindsey would like to see addressed?**

PROBE FOR:

Examples of how the organisation has gained feedback from the public about the areas in question

How a Community Strategy might help to address the issues

**1.3 Overall, what do you think is the most important theme to address in a district-wide Community Strategy?**

PROBE FOR:

Reason for response

How a Community Strategy might help to address the issues

**1.4 Thinking about West Lindsey, what does your organisation perceive to be the biggest challenges facing the district?**

PROBE FOR:

Reason for response

How a Community Strategy might help to address the issues?

(ANY QUESTIONS?)

(THANKS)

## Annex 3.

### Questionnaire

OPM is working with West Lindsey District Council to support the development of the Community Strategy.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help to establish the issues that stakeholders consider to be important in the development and implementation of a Community Strategy. We also wish to gain an understanding of the key priorities that need to be taken into account throughout this process.

We will report the main themes and issues of the questionnaire to the District Council but we will **not** be including any information that identifies you or your organisation.

It would be very helpful if you could complete the questionnaire attached and return it to us by email by **1<sup>st</sup> February 2006**. If you have any queries, please contact Beth Anderson on 020-7239-0807 or [banderson@opm.co.uk](mailto:banderson@opm.co.uk).

**Thank you very much for your help**

## 1. Key priorities

### 1.1 Thinking about how to improve life for residents of West Lindsey, what does your organisation consider to be the top three priority issues to address?

PLEASE CHOOSE THREE OPTIONS FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST.

PLACE A '1' IN THE BOX NEXT TO THE OPTION THAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU, A '2' NEXT TO THE OPTION THAT IS 2<sup>ND</sup> MOST IMPORTANT AND A '3' NEXT TO THE THIRD MOST IMPORTANT OPTION.

Housing	
Parks and green spaces	
Schools	
Adult education and learning	
Employment	
Crime prevention and safety	
Public transport	
Environmental issues, e.g. recycling; renewable energy	
Health services	
Leisure/ culture	
Support for local businesses	
Improving accessibility of services	
Other, please provide details..... .....	
Other, please provide details..... .....	
Other, please provide details..... .....	

## 1.2 What are the top three issues you think the residents of West Lindsey would like to see addressed?

PLEASE CHOOSE THREE OPTIONS FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST.

PLACE A '1' IN THE BOX NEXT TO THE OPTION THAT YOU THINK RESIDENTS WOULD MOST LIKE TO SEE IMPROVED, A '2' NEXT TO THE OPTION THAT WOULD BE 2<sup>ND</sup> MOST IMPORTANT AND A '3' NEXT TO THE ISSUE YOU THINK RESIDENTS WOULD SEE AS THE THIRD MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE TO ADDRESS.

Housing	
Parks and green spaces	
Schools	
Adult education and learning	
Employment	
Crime prevention and safety	
Public transport	
Environmental issues, e.g. recycling; renewable energy	
Health services	
Leisure/ culture	
Support for local businesses	
Improving accessibility of services	
Other, please provide details..... .....	
Other, please provide details..... .....	
Other, please provide details..... .....	

**1.3 Thinking about the work undertaken by your organisation, which one of the following themes would you highlight as being most important area to address in a Community Strategy for West Lindsey.**

PLEASE TICK **ONE** BOX

Community development and social inclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consumer choice	<input type="checkbox"/>
The environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increasing skills and knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>
Building healthy communities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leisure and culture	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport	<input type="checkbox"/>

**1.4 What does your organisation perceive to be the biggest challenges facing the District?**

PLEASE TYPE YOUR ANSWER IN THE BOX BELOW

**1.5 How might a Community Strategy help to overcome these challenges?**

PLEASE TYPE YOUR ANSWER IN THE BOX BELOW

**2. Any other comments**

Please use the box below to make any other comments you consider relevant to this research.

**Thank you for completing this questionnaire**

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## **– Appendix 3**

### **Table of References**

**Produced by OPM**

The following table contains details of the references cited within the main body of the West Lindsey Sustainable Community Strategy.

No.	Reference
1	For details of stakeholders engagement work, see Appendix 2
2	Salzano, S., Smith, K. & Langley, J. (2005) <i>Health Inequalities Report for Lincolnshire County</i> [online] East Midlands Public Health Laboratory
3	Defra, Rural Statistics Unit (2004) <i>West Lindsey. Census 2001 and Access to Services Focus on Rural Areas</i> Crown Copyright
4	Department of Health (2004) <i>Choosing Health: Making healthy choices easier</i> pp118-150 Crown Copyright
5	ODPM (2003) <i>The English Indices of Deprivation 2004 (revised)</i> Norwich: HMSO
6	A range of case studies highlighting some of the benefits of increased use of IT in health can be found on <a href="http://www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/casestudies">http://www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/casestudies</a>
7	The three area forums in West Lindsey cover Wolds, Gainsborough and the Lincoln Fringe.
8	In accordance with the objectives underpinning the <i>Lincolnshire Districts Equality and Diversity Project</i> . Details available online via West Lindsey District Council website: <a href="http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/section.asp?catId=646">http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/section.asp?catId=646</a>
9	<i>West Lindsey Draft Statement of Community Involvement 2006</i> was disseminated for consultation in early 2006. This is available online at: <a href="http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/upload/public/attachments/587/DRAFT_SCI_Jan_06.pdf">http://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/upload/public/attachments/587/DRAFT_SCI_Jan_06.pdf</a>

No.	Reference
10	<i>All crime for West Lindsey Apr 2003 - Mar 2004</i> [online] Home Office Crime Statistics for England and Wales Crown Copyright Available at: <a href="http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk">www.crimestatistics.org.uk</a>
11	Home Office (2006) <i>Respect Action Plan</i> Crown Copyright Available online at: <a href="http://www.respect.gov.uk/whats-being-done/action-plan/index.html#activities">http://www.respect.gov.uk/whats-being-done/action-plan/index.html#activities</a>
12	In accordance with: East Midlands Rural Affairs Forum (2006) <i>Rural Action Plan. Consultation Draft</i> Available online at: <a href="http://committee.west-lindsey.gov.uk/committee/documents/PL/Reports/PL0178R.htm">http://committee.west-lindsey.gov.uk/committee/documents/PL/Reports/PL0178R.htm</a>
13-15	Office of National Statistics (2005) <i>Neighbourhood Statistics; Neighbourhood Profile West Lindsey Economic Activity</i> Crown Copyright [online] <a href="http://www.statistics.gov.uk">www.statistics.gov.uk</a>
16	In accordance with: East Midlands Rural Affairs Forum (2006) <i>Rural Action Plan. Consultation Draft</i> Available online at: <a href="http://committee.west-lindsey.gov.uk/committee/documents/PL/Reports/PL0178R.htm">http://committee.west-lindsey.gov.uk/committee/documents/PL/Reports/PL0178R.htm</a>
17	Office of National Statistics <i>Census 2001; Profiles; West Lindsey</i> Crown Copyright [online] <a href="http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/profiles/32UH-A.asp">http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/profiles/32UH-A.asp</a>

If you require this Community Strategy in another format, eg large print, please contact:  
Customer Services on 01427 676676  
by email [customer.relations@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:customer.relations@west-lindsey.gov.uk)  
or by asking any of the Customer Services staff.

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