

THE VIEW OF THE HILL

the Shaftesbury Area  
Community Action Plan

2005 - 2020

prepared by  
Shaftesbury District Task Force  
The Shaftesbury Area Community Partnership

Copies of "The View of the Hill" have been distributed to all the Parish Councils, Shaftesbury Town Council, local libraries, Swans Yard and the Task Force offices.

November 2005

# Contents

	Page Nos
The Shaftesbury Community Action Plan Vision	3
Chairman's Statement	4
Foreword	5
 The View of the Hill	
Part 1	
The Shaftesbury Area Community Action Plan	
Executive Summary	7
 1. Introduction and Background	 8-10
The Shaftesbury Area Community Action Plan	
The Community Partnership - Shaftesbury District Task Force	
The Shaftesbury Community Plan Area	
 2. The Community Action Plan	 11-13
a) Role and Function	
b) The Shaftesbury Community Plan Action Vision	
c) The Themes of the Community Plan	
 3. The Action Plan Themes and Principles	 14-28
Theme 1: Prosperity	
Theme 2: Quality of Life	
Theme 3: Community	
Theme 4: Character	
 4. Framework for Action	 29-31
a) Implementation and Managing the Future	
b) Resources	
c) Continuing Community Involvement	
 5. Monitoring and Review	 32-33
 6. Implementing the Action Plan	 34
 7. Priority Projects 2005 - 06	 35-37
 8. Appendix 1 - Potential Funding Partners	 38
9. Appendix 2 - Methodology	39-44
Appendix 3 - The Shaftesbury Healthcheck (separate document)	
Appendix 4 - Strategic Document Review (separate document)	
 10. The View of the Hill	
Part 2	
Action Plan Tables	46-58

# The Shaftesbury Community Action Plan Vision

## Shaftesbury 2020 - strong, safe and sustainable

In 2020 the Shaftesbury area will be thriving, centred on its Dorset market town, with a strong and distinctive character, with respect for its past and pride in its diverse built, natural and cultural heritage.

It will be an area where the community works together, firmly committed to securing a sustained and prosperous future, with a high quality of life and access to services, providing opportunities for ALL who live and work in the town and the surrounding villages'

## Chairman's Statement

It is my great pleasure as the Chairman of Shaftesbury District Task Force, on behalf of my fellow Directors and staff, to be able to present to you the Community Strategic Plan for our area.

This plan is the result of many hours of work by many people, most of whom are volunteers, and it has been prepared following a long period of consultation with groups, organisations, parish bodies and individuals in the town of Shaftesbury and its outlying villages and communities.

It has been prepared to record the wishes and aspirations of the community as a whole and sets out what you want the town and its environs to be like in the period up to 2020 and it details the actions which will contribute to achieving that vision.

The principal objective of the plan is to indicate to Parish, Town, District and County Councils what it is that their community sees as its priorities and the directions in which they want to go. It represents Community Planning as envisaged at national government level and will influence tiers of local government when they come to prepare plans and policies for their areas.

Like all long term plans, its content will have a limited lifespan. It will need to be updated on a regular basis to reflect the inevitable changes that occur in our society generally but it will form the basis for present and future policies to meeting your goals.

It will be one of the roles of the Task Force in the future to advise on and to assist in locating financial support for those groups who have presented projects which they wish to undertake to contribute towards the overall vision. The Task Force will also undertake the monitoring and updating of the Strategic Plan to ensure that the document remains relevant.

Finally, may I stress that the Plan is yours, it belongs to the wider community and I sincerely hope that as many of you as possible will make your views known to us at future consultation events and meetings.

We will undertake to administer the management of the Plan but your input is essential.

Thank you,  
Alan Walton, Chairman  
Shaftesbury District Task Force - 2004-2005

## Foreword

The Community Strategic Plan you are about to read is the culmination of three year's work by many local people. It is the blue print on which we can develop the future of our community whilst protecting its existing cultural history.

Too long ago, I was born in Castle Hill House in Shaftesbury - my parents were living in Bowmarsh at the time - and we then spent time living in Semley, Motcombe and East Knoyle. I finally settled in Enmore Green with my family and we are privileged to live in this close, vibrant community set in the most beautiful countryside imaginable - I wish to do all I can to keep it that way.

After many years working as an Engineer, I decided to work in my community as a decorator and Councillor. During nine years as a Councillor, last year as Mayor and three years as Task Force Chairman, I have witnessed volunteers putting in thousands of hours of work on our behalf; well done all of you.

Village life used to be built around working the land and supplying townfolk with many of their needs and the town returned the favour by supplying services. However, whilst working in local government I soon discovered that town and parish councils have little power to make decisions over matters which affect local life. Gradually we are being stripped of the ability to manage our own affairs.

What's to be done? - without thriving towns and villages, our wonderful community could go. When we see threats to community life we want to do something about it, but get frustrated and angry, and then, often give up - I nearly did just that.

Then "community planning" came along offering towns and parishes the opportunity not only to plan their future, based on local needs and priorities, but to deliver it too.

The Task Force was created to help us all to work together in partnership to bring back the power to town and parish councils, and local organisations and groups. We now stand at a crossroads - we have a 'living' Plan that can evolve as we move forward. You helped us with the content so I invite you to join us in making the Plan a reality.

Historically, Alfred the Great chose this area for his family and set in motion events and his vision for the future that have brought us here. As individuals we do not possess his sweeping powers, but by working together we have the opportunity to take back local decision making into local hands - **our vision for the future.**

Lester Dibben

Mayor of Shaftesbury 2004-2005

# THE VIEW OF THE HILL

## Part 1

# Shaftesbury Area Community Action Plan

## The Executive Summary

The area covered by "The View of the Hill" consists of Shaftesbury town and the surrounding 24 parishes in both North Dorset and the south west of Wiltshire - a population of approximately 22,000.

Although there have been other 'plans' for the town and the surrounding area dating back to 1968, this is the first Community Strategic Plan (CSP) drawn directly from research and consultation with local people, businesses and interest groups, which will form part of the North Dorset District Council's overall Community Strategy.

The CSP comprises the research and community evidence, collated into a number of supporting documents, and the all important Action Plan to influence and help to guide the successful development of Shaftesbury and the surrounding communities over the next 15 years, up to 2020.

The View of the Hill  
Shaftesbury in 2020: strong, safe and sustainable

- \* A strong and diverse local economy
- \* Safe and healthy local communities
- \* A sustainable and conserved environment

The View of the Hill Action Plan is divided into four interlinked themes:

**Prosperity** - covering issues of economic development, agriculture, transport, training, employment and waste management.

**Community** - covering issues to do with young people, older people, village and town life, access and local democracy.

**Quality of Life** - covering issues of housing, local services, health, safety, recreation and the arts

**Character** - covering issues of heritage, countryside, open space and the wider environment.

Delivering the actions and projects identified in The View of the Hill will require commitment and resources, both human and financial, from a wide range of organisations, groups and individuals working together to achieve a common goal - a Shaftesbury Area Community Partnership.

This new Partnership will evolve over the first year of the plan's implementation, building on the hard work of hundreds of volunteers and members of the Shaftesbury District Task Force who prepared the plan. The role of the Task Force will be redefined, within the new partnership to take account of the requirement to monitor implementation and provide capacity building/support to assist with project promoters.

The Shaftesbury Area Partnership needs people, groups and organisations willing to offer their skills and creativity, time or resources, but most of all commitment to securing a prosperous and sustainable future for the whole Shaftesbury area and the communities who live and work there.

---

# 1. Introduction and Background

In the year 2000 the Government passed legislation which required local authorities to prepare Community Plans as part of their overall Local Development Frameworks as set out in the revision of the planning system.

In North Dorset the District Council decided to make “Community Planning” mean exactly what it says - a plan prepared by the local community, addressing its local needs and priorities, rather than a district wide approach. It was agreed that the community plans should be based on the market towns and the parishes that surround them and for whom the towns are a focus for local services.

“The District Council has a duty to work with its communities and with other agencies providing and planning local services to produce a community strategy which sets out a plan of action for improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area. Community planning should engage and involve local people and improve the co-ordination of the services they receive. North Dorset District Council has a profound commitment to a bottom up approach to community planning and a longstanding enthusiasm for partnerships as a way of delivering local priorities. Consequently, the Council has welcomed community planning as a way of working”.

North Dorset District Council Corporate Plan”. (2004 -2008)

In Shaftesbury the process of preparing the Community Plan has been supported through the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTi) over 3 years. More information about the role of the MCTi and the process of preparing the Community Strategic Plan can be found in Appendix 2 Methodology, but in simple terms this support has been in 2 phases. The first was to establish the catchment area and subsequently to consult with local people and interest groups, businesses and service providers to determine priorities, demands and needs, and build up local understanding of the Plan and the capacity to implement it. The second phase was to prepare the plan itself and establish a local structure or organisation, a ‘community partnership’, to deliver the plan in the future. For the Shaftesbury area, the community partnership is being developed by the Shaftesbury District Task Force.



The Shaftesbury Area Community Action Plan is:

A plan of actions produced by the community to achieve positive benefits for everyone who lives, works, plays in or visits Shaftesbury and its surrounding area.

It is a “framework” for the future and tries to answer the all-important questions;

- \* What will the Shaftesbury area be like in 2020?
- \* What do we need to do to get there?

### The Community Partnership - Shaftesbury District Task Force

In 2001 the Shaftesbury District Task Force Ltd took on the role of managing the preparation of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) for the Shaftesbury area and to develop the Community Partnership that would be needed as the structure to implement the Action Plan. The Task Force was identified as an appropriate organisation to take on this role at the time, as it was already representing local community groups and a number of the key stakeholders in the area with the objective of developing a local action plan.

In developing and managing the CSP the Task Force does not ‘own’ the CSP or the Action Plan. The Plan is owned by the communities of the town and the surrounding villages. In the future the Task Force’s role will be within the Community Partnership itself where it will safeguard the integrity of the Plan as a whole on behalf of the community, and ensure that local community needs are identified and met. It will be responsible for sharing information and networking with local groups, and preparing and managing the implementation programme and monitoring progress of the plan.

The Task Force will act as the ‘custodian’ of the overall Plan and vision, but be accountable to all the Partnership members and the wider local community. The Partnership will monitor the progress of the whole Action Plan, lobbying political support for projects and programmes at the highest relevant level.

The Task Force is a private company, limited by guarantee, and has been supported financially by Shaftesbury Town Council, Dorset County Council, North Dorset District Council and the South West Regional Development Agency to prepare the CSP. During 2006 the Task Force will register as a charity, thus securing both its, and the Community Partnership's, independence and enabling it to access a greater variety of resources and finance. Throughout this document references to the Task Force are in its role managing the Community Partnership.

## The Shaftesbury Community Plan Area

The area covered by the Community Plan has a population of over 22,000 of which about one third live in Shaftesbury town and the additional population includes twenty four parishes, fifteen of which lie in Wiltshire and nine in Dorset.

### Parishes in Wiltshire

Alvediston  
 Berwick St. John  
 Berwick St. Leonard  
 Donhead St. Andrew  
 Donhead St. Mary  
 East Knoyle  
 Ebbesbourne Wake  
 Fonthill Bishop  
 Fonthill Gifford  
 Fovant  
 Sedgehill and Semley  
 Sutton Mandeville  
 Tisbury  
 Tollard Royal  
 West Tisbury

### Parishes in Dorset

Ashmore  
 Compton Abbas  
 Farnham  
 Fontmell Magna  
 Iwerne Minster  
 Melbury Abbas and Cann  
 Motcombe  
 The Orchards and Margaret Marsh  
 Sutton Waldron

Although Shaftesbury town provides services and is a centre for a number of parishes in south west Wiltshire, in statutory terms these parishes come under the authority of Salisbury District Council. These Wiltshire parishes have also been involved in preparing their own area based community plans with the support of the South Wiltshire Strategic Alliance and local part-time community planners. The local Wiltshire community plans were launched in January 2005 and the issues raised in those plans have been incorporated into the Shaftesbury Area Community Action Plan.

---

## 2. The Community Action Plan

### a) Role and function

The preparation of the CSP has involved extensive local consultation, policy examination and research, e.g. the preparation of a market town “Healthcheck”. The Healthcheck surveyed all aspects of community life, e.g. the economy, environment and transport, to provide the baseline information for developing the Action Plan. The Healthcheck itself is a separate document but forms Appendix 3 to the Plan and can be consulted at the Task Force, Shaftesbury Town Council and Swans Yard Community Office. Details of the programme of consultation and research can be found in Appendix 2 Methodology.

The analysis of all this research has provided the evidence-base of the CSP and its Action Plan.

The Action Plan as a whole has four main parts:

1. the overall plan, describing the long term vision, themes and issues of the plan;
2. the process for managing the implementation and how progress will be monitored and future priorities identified;
3. the all important Action Plan tables, which list all the action points raised from the research. The actions in the table will guide the implementation of the Plan, helping to define priority projects and the overall work programme for the Task Force and the Community Partnership.
4. the appendices and support documents prepared as the evidence for the Action Plan.

All these documents are available for inspection and reference at the Task Force offices.

The new strategic planning process for local government (the Local Development Framework) will incorporate the Community Plans from each of the Community Partnerships of North Dorset; and the county-wide Dorset Strategic Partnership, is able to provide some resources to help to implement the actions in Community and Parish Plans. The Community Action Plan is the community's chance to influence the future of the area at a strategic level and the Task Force, through the work of the Community Partnership, will co-ordinate the aspirations and actions of the Action Plan. Most of the actions identified in the Action Plan, and the resulting projects and initiatives will be delivered by organisations other than the Partnership alone.

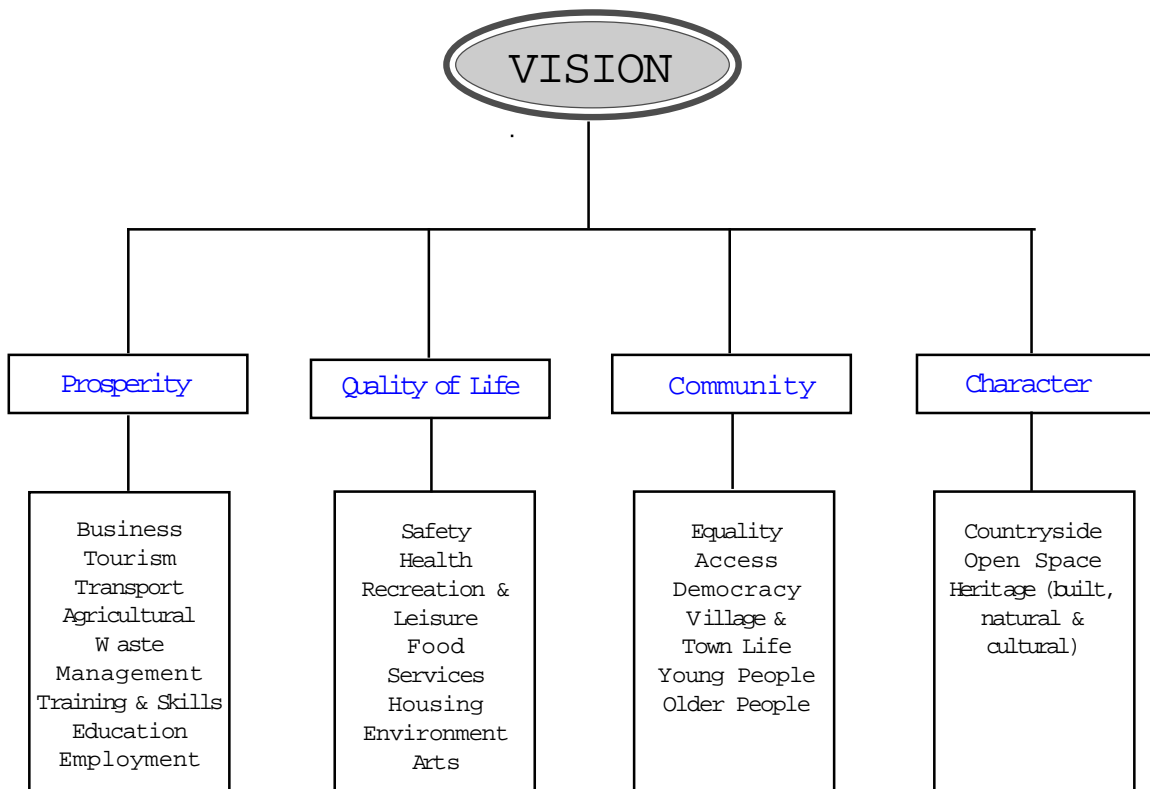
b) The Shaftesbury Community Action Plan Vision

**Shaftesbury 2020 - strong, safe and sustainable**

‘In 2020 the Shaftesbury area will be thriving, centred on its Dorset market town, with a strong and distinctive character, with respect for its past and pride in its diverse built, natural and cultural heritage. It will be an area where the community works together, firmly committed to securing a sustained and prosperous future, with a high quality of life and access to services, providing opportunities for ALL who live and work in the town and the surrounding villages’.

This Vision will guide the decisions on projects and programmes of activity to be supported by the community partnership members. These programmes and projects are grouped under four “themes”.

c) The Themes of the Community Action Plan



### 3. The Action Plan Themes and Principles

#### Theme 1: 'Prosperity'

Issues: Business, Tourism, Transport, Agriculture, Waste Management, Training and Skills, Education and Employment

Vision: 'To achieve and maintain in Shaftesbury area a level of local prosperity based on economic growth that is financially and environmentally sustainable'.

Economic development

The essential driver for prosperity in Shaftesbury is the local mixed economy. Those who live and work in the rural areas around Shaftesbury rely on the town as a centre for employment, retail, recreation and leisure facilities, culture and healthcare services. Maintaining a thriving economy depends on interdependence between



Angel Square

Shaftesbury town and the rural areas surrounding the town. Most of the retail sector for the area is based in Shaftesbury town. The economic impact of a major new supermarket in the town centre with the loss of free town centre parking has still to be assessed.

Shaftesbury town's economy, including the five major employers in the area, depends on both the town and the rural areas for its workforce, however public transport from the surrounding villages does not match work timings resulting in a high proportion of the work force having to rely on personal transport. It is important to remember that the majority of businesses operating in the area are small or medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and often run by sole traders.

Rural public transport between the villages and the town is limited, and access to the town for services, employment and recreation is highly dependent on personal transport.

Provision for parking for work and for tourists is currently inadequate. The demand for parking by working people and visitors puts extreme pressure on parking provision for local residents.

It is not realistic to anticipate that improved public transport can, on its own, solve the demand for car parking in Shaftesbury. A range of alternative measures needs to be considered. However, a comprehensive strategy for parking in Shaftesbury to meet the needs of employers, visitors and residents is essential, if the prosperity of the area is to be safeguarded.

The area's built and natural environment is also an economic asset and often cited as a reason why people choose to live in or visit the area.



Parking Congestion

Although unemployment is low in the area (3.7% in Shaftesbury town, 3% in the rural areas, compared to 5.8% nationally), and although the business park and industrial estate to the north of Shaftesbury town centre is thriving at present, it is important to recognise that further development of the economic base of the town is essential to ensure that the town will remain prosperous in the face of the inevitable economic challenges that will occur over the lifetime of the Plan.

Approximately 13% of Shaftesbury's businesses are centred in manufacturing and 6% of our rural areas economy is in agriculture. Both these industries are in decline. Small retail businesses in the rural areas, such as post offices, are closing and other local businesses, such as pubs, are becoming unviable with many premises being turned from business to residential.



Wincombe Business Park

The Plan will:

- \* Work to ensure and maintain a high quality and attractive environment crucial to economic stability in the town, as many visitors come to Shaftesbury specifically to enjoy the countryside, its open spaces and natural features such as trees, and to experience Shaftesbury town's unique heritage in its buildings and townscape.
- \* Recognise the economic and social interdependence of town and the surrounding parishes.
- \* Support the Shaftesbury Chamber of Commerce and other business groups to prepare and implement strategic and development plans that will secure economic stability and growth throughout the Shaftesbury area.



## Skills development

Diversification of the economic base is necessary, including attracting businesses from the newer, e-commerce industries that are not reliant on road or rail transport. Currently, 21% of the workforce in Shaftesbury is employed in unskilled or semi-skilled employment.

North Dorset does not have a major training and skills centre on a par with Salisbury, Bournemouth and Poole or the college at Yeovil. If the local economy is to grow and be successful, its workforce must have the skills necessary to complete successfully in the employment market.



Park Walk

Developing strong links between schools or other educational bodies and local businesses will be essential.

The Plan will:

- \* Address the need to develop skills locally, particularly in information and communications technology, to provide a ready pool of labour, and attract new businesses to the area.
- \* Ensure that a range of business accommodation is available for both incoming businesses and those already in the area which wish to expand.
- \* Identify the needs for on-going accessible training and skills development throughout the business sector, particularly for SME's.

## Agriculture

Concerns were expressed throughout the consultation process about the future of farming in the area. Nearly 6% of the local workforce is in agriculture and the Action Plan supports the principle that the industry has a continuing role to play in maintaining the countryside on which much of the area's appeal and tourism economy relies.



Forthill Gifford Vineyard

The Plan will:

- \* Support the new management plans for Cranborne Chase and Dorset AONBs.
- \* Support the farming community in undertaking diversification initiatives and schemes, in particular the re-use of redundant farm buildings for rural businesses, including tourism.
- \* Encourage initiatives that enable farmers, or those with mixed economies, to acquire additional skills to increase their incomes.

## Tourism

Tourism is a major economic factor in Shaftesbury and the surrounding area. Research has shown that it is important to not only increase visitor numbers but to increase 'visitor' spend and extend the length of visitor stay. Visitors need to be encouraged to stay in and around Shaftesbury rather than just pass through. To achieve this it will be essential that all facilities, services and attractions relating to tourism are of the highest possible standard and well publicised.

The Plan will:

- \* Promote the development of a green and cultural tourism in the area that celebrates the rich heritage and natural environment.
- \* Work with tourism associations and local authorities to develop a tourism 'brand' for our area that encourages visitors to use Shaftesbury as a base for retail shopping and from which to explore the rest of the area.
- \* Undertake a research programme to develop a strategy for tourism development that addresses the key factors of adequate and varied accommodation.
- \* Improve facilities for visitors, including parking, toilets etc. and new or improved attractions.

## Retail

The construction of a new supermarket in Shaftesbury has presented opportunities for the town but has also posed a potential threat to the economic viability of some of the traders in the High Street. Through developer contributions the new supermarket has brought with it some funding to support town centre improvements to roads, parking and pavements that will make the streets less congested and more accessible to residents and visitors to the town.



Shaftesbury Market

One of Shaftesbury's greatest strengths is the variety and quality of its independent High Street shops, a feature of the town recognised by communities within a wide radius. The opening of the Tesco supermarket in November 2004 was perceived by many traders as a threat to their individuality.

The Shaftesbury and District Chamber of Commerce (SDCC) has made the maintenance and promotion of this independent tradition a major objective in its 15 year strategy, adopted September 2004.

The Action Plan supports the objectives within the SDCC's 'Policy and Strategy Statement 2005-2020' and will work to assist the SDCC in developing schemes and initiatives which forward and help to realise these economic objectives.



[Entrance to Gold Hill](#)

The Plan will:

- \* Support the preparation of a strategy for retail development in the town in association with tourism and other commercial interests.
- \* Identify a programme of further improvements to the townscape of the town and improved accessibility, notably through improved signage, safety, visual amenity and promotion of a strategic approach for car parking to reduce congestion and meet the needs of residents, traders and visitors, following the principles of enhancement promoted by the English Historic Towns Forum and the "Save Our Streets" initiative promoted by the Women's Institute, English Heritage and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
- \* Work with local authorities for better integration of public transport to bring residents and visitors from the rural areas into the town for work, shopping and services in conjunction with improving parking and accessibility in Shaftesbury town centre.

---

## Theme 2: 'Quality of Life'

Issues: Safety, Health, Recreation and Leisure, Food, Services, Housing  
Environment, Arts

Vision: To achieve and maintain the best in environmental practice in Shaftesbury area and to create a society that is safe and healthy and where people live in good quality housing they can afford.

### Affordable housing

Affordable housing, for rent and to purchase, is one of the most important issues throughout the whole of North Dorset. The average price of market housing in the Shaftesbury area is more than seven times the average local annual salary or wage. The local authorities' planning policies which seek high proportions of affordable housing from developers are to be welcomed.

Pressure on affordable housing in Shaftesbury town may be eased if the planned development to the east of Shaftesbury proceeds and includes a high proportion of affordable homes, in line with the requirements of NDDC. The Enquiry by Design study in 2001-2 identified the importance of ensuring that these new homes are integrated into Shaftesbury by public transport links, walkways and open spaces. Where new development is permitted, including market housing, the developer contributions for community facilities are collected by NDDC. These contributions need to be targeted on the development area itself as the 'area of benefit'.

Demand for affordable housing is currently ten times the current planned provision and in the Shaftesbury area homelessness has increased by 34% in the last five years. The need for accommodation for first time buyers, young people and those trying to move up the housing 'ladder' is acute. In addition, the area has a significantly high proportion of older people. There is inadequate provision for sheltered accommodation which is compounded by the lack of resources to support older people remaining in their own homes.

The Plan will:

- \* Develop and support a 'design statement' for this area. It will encourage high quality design, the use of environmentally sustainable materials, high energy efficiency and local labour.
- \* Support parish councils and housing associations to secure affordable housing in villages to meet local needs as well as in Shaftesbury.
- \* Establish a Shaftesbury housing forum to lobby and campaign for an increase in number and delivery of social housing in line with the research document 'Forever Affordable'.



Fontmell Magna Surgery

## Healthcare

Consultations in the rural areas and the local community plans in Wiltshire for Nadder Valley, Mere District and Four Rivers identify the need to promote healthy lifestyles. A particular concern is the inconsistency of healthcare facilities throughout the area, including 24 hr access to GP services and access to NHS dentists. There is a particular need to address accessible healthcare services available to older people and in the rural areas.



The Plan will:

- \* Promote the improvement of healthcare provision for disadvantaged and isolated people throughout the district, in partnership with Primary Care Trusts integrated care teams.
- \* Support the improvement and development of new and additional local healthcare and hospital services for people in the Shaftesbury area.

### Recreation

While Shaftesbury has many areas of attractive and accessible open spaces, opportunities for more formal recreational activities are limited and provision for teenagers, both formal and informal, is particularly limited.

In addition, the lack or inconsistency of public transport makes it difficult or impos-



Shaftesbury Swimming Pool

sible for young people living in villages to use many of the existing facilities.

The Plan will:

- \* Work with partner groups, e.g. the Shaftesbury Open Spaces Group, Tree Group and residents' groups, to maintain and improve local community amenities, formal and incidental open space, commons and natural features such as trees and hedges throughout the town, surrounding villages and countryside.
- \* Encourage the development of recreational and "Sport for All" opportunities for all ages and abilities that promote health, reduce car dependency and increase access, e.g. cycleways and improved footpaths.
- \* Encourage the provision of new facilities for a wide range of entertainment and sports activities suitable for all ages and available to the community as a whole.
- \* Support efforts for local community management of the Shaftesbury Swimming Pool and the improvements to Barton Hill Recreation Ground.

## Arts

Consultations indicated that local people and village communities would like to see the work, facilities and accommodation of the Shaftesbury Arts Centre expanded to meet ever increasing demand. The existing Arts Centre is one of the highest membership organisations in the Shaftesbury area (over 7%). The Action Plan supports the Arts Centre's objectives to develop and improve opportunities for people throughout the Shaftesbury area to experience and take part in a wide range of high quality creative arts, activities and events.

Village halls and community venues in rural areas are seen as vital community facilities. Where they do exist they are used for an extensive range of social, arts, youth and cultural events. However, from parish plans, it is evident that many villages do not have halls, or have halls in a poor state of repair and are unsuitable for venues for arts events.

The Plan will:

- \* Promote the development of expanded arts and cultural opportunities including improvements to the existing arts facilities of all kinds throughout the Shaftesbury area.
- \* Support the expansion of accessible, high quality arts and cultural activities and events for all people regardless of age or ability, in the town and parishes throughout the Shaftesbury area.
- \* Investigate, with other partners, the feasibility of a new and large multi-use building to serve the needs of the people of the Shaftesbury area.



'We'll Eat Again' - Motcombe



## Theme 3: 'Community'

Issues: Equality, Access, Democracy, Village and Town Life, Young People, Older People.

Vision: To create a caring society that values and celebrates the contribution made by all who live and work in Shaftesbury, enabling everyone to participate actively in community life.

### Community groups

Community groups across the Shaftesbury area lack the infrastructure of paid staff time, local premises and access to training for volunteers and trustees that would help them to thrive. The Task Force, with the community partnership, can act as a facilitator for all local people

and community groups. This will enable them to come together to have a voice in decision-making in strategic partnerships across Shaftesbury area and, in particular, assist them to secure appropriate resources to develop their own structures and projects.



Swans Yard Community Office

### Parish Plans

The View of the Hill is only one of a number of plans and strategies being created by local communities in the Shaftesbury area. Parish plans are also integral parts of the overall community planning process in North Dorset and for the South Wiltshire Strategic Alliance (SWSA).

Where available the other community and parish action plans prepared by villages across the rural areas, as well as those of Shaftesbury groups have been incorporated into the actions and priorities for the Action Plan.



[Village Notices](#)

The Plan will:

- \* Create partnerships with communities and parishes across the Shaftesbury area to support parish and village plans and assist in their implementation.
- \* Assist parishes wishing to undertake new parish plans, in partnership with Dorset Community Action, Community First in Wiltshire and SWSA.
- \* Encourage people in the rural areas to bring forward new ideas in partnership with parish councils and village groups through monitoring of the Community Action Plan.
- \* Support village halls projects in parishes where new or improved village hall projects have been identified as part of a Parish Plan.
- \* Lobby for the retention of rural post offices, pubs, village shops and other small rural businesses and support communities in their efforts to find local solutions where local private businesses or public services fail.

## Theme 4: 'Character'

Issues: Countryside, Open space, Heritage (built, natural, cultural),

Vision: 'To promote and protect the past, embrace and celebrate the present, and anticipate and welcome the future.'

Consistently in consultations, local people and visitors emphasised the value of the character of Shaftesbury town centre including the variety of its shop fronts, Gold Hill, the views of the surrounding countryside, the natural and historic



Fontmell Down

features, trees and hedges, open spaces and the scale of the town. These elements are an essential part of Shaftesbury's character and tourism 'brand'.

Appropriate new development in the area, both residential and commercial is to be welcomed. However it is important the new development respects the integrity and character of the existing and historic fabric of the town and the wealth of natural features of landscape, topography, trees, woods, hedges, commons and field patterns which are all integral to the character of the area.



Salisbury Street

Central government guidance promotes high density housing in town centres, and it is important to balance new development with creating opportunities for 'green lung' open spaces and ensuring that they are well designed and managed.

**The Plan will:**

- \* Support applications for funding through the current North Dorset Liveability Fund and the work of the Environment Centre and BALDRIC (Building a Local Dorset Regeneration Initiative in the Community).
  
- \* Work with the Shaftesbury Civic Society to respect and conserve the existing character of the town with particular attention to the conservation area.
  
- \* Promote a continuing programme of enhancement to the townscape of Shaftesbury including the industrial, residential estates as well as the town centre.
  
- \* Work to ensure that all new building and refurbishment is of the highest possible quality design and, where possible, uses traditional materials, to integrate new development into the existing layout and local context.
  
- \* Undertake an audit of open space throughout the Shaftesbury area and encourage the preparation of management plans for open space.
  
- \* Identify programmes to improve or enhance the quality and accessibility of open space in the Shaftesbury area.
  
- \* Support the Shaftesbury Open Spaces group and the Tree group in protecting and promoting the conservation and enhancement of open spaces and trees in Shaftesbury, villages and the surrounding countryside and celebrating their historic and cultural significance.

---

## 4. A Framework for Action

The Shaftesbury Area Community Partnership, managed by the Task Force, will work with public, private and voluntary sector partners, many of whom already invest heavily in the area, to create working groups and local partnerships to deliver projects and actions that contribute to delivering the overall vision of the Community Action Plan. It will not be possible to guarantee the delivery of everything that is in the Plan. However, the Action Plan is a framework for the delivery and an expression of the community's aspirations, desires and hopes for the area. It is important that statutory organisations, groups and individuals in the public and private sectors who may be responsible for delivering parts of the vision and actions are aware of the community's aspirations when preparing their own plans and programmes.

There are, however, projects for which the Partnership will seek finance to implement directly. In these cases it will be essential that the projects and programmes continue to have a sound base of local involvement and accountability.

The Action Plan comprises four theme areas and their relevant issues. The proposed actions for each of these issues are set out in table form in Part 2.

### 4a Implementation and Managing the Future

The Plan attempts to 'phase' actions into

“Now” (to commence in 2005-2006)

“Soon” (to commence in 2007-08) and

“Later” (sometime in the future) timescales.

In some instances the actions will remain ongoing and relevant over the lifetime of the Plan.

These projected timescales may be modified in response to changing priorities, availability of resources and opportunities that may occur unexpectedly. Over the lifetime of the plan new projects will inevitably come forward that promote the objectives of the Action Plan. The Partnership will support new project champions and help them develop their project ideas to application stage for funding schemes, and/or develop their business plans.

---

## 4b. Resources

Examples of likely sources of funding and other forms of support include:

- \* DEFRA: Environmental, sustainability, economic, agricultural and rural development projects;
- \* Government Office for the South West: social, economic and some environmental projects, public transport and community capacity building;
- \* South West Regional Development Agency: mainstream economic and social economy projects;
- \* Small Business Service - small and micro enterprise development, social economy measures;
- \* Business Link - business advice and signposting of sources of help;
- \* Learning and Skills Council - vocational and workforce skills development;
- \* Heritage, Arts, Sports, Community Funds such as the Big Lottery capital and revenue programmes;
- \* Culture South West - cultural projects with regional significance e.g. arts and tourism;
- \* 'Future Builders', ChangeUp and other community and voluntary sector development funds;
- \* Trusts e.g. BT for environmental improvements; Tudor Trust for Youth and Community;
- \* Sport England;
- \* Local Authorities - Parish, Town, District and County Councils;
- \* The Liveability Fund and BALDRIC (Building a Local Dorset Regeneration Initiative in the Community). BALDRIC will be a free-standing regeneration trust covering all areas of economic, social and community well being throughout Dorset. BALDRIC's remit will be to work closely with the local community partnerships.

It is intended to build close relationships with all of these and other agencies and organisations, and to hold ‘Brokering Table’ meetings, where the outline proposals for actions and projects can be presented to potential funders.

The Brokering Table enables all agencies which might have an interest in funding and supporting specific projects or initiatives or otherwise making an investment in the future of the area to meet simultaneously.

#### 4c Continuing Community Involvement

Much of the Plan and its actions have arisen directly from local community consultation and concerns. The Partnership, with others, will continue to consult and involve communities, local councils and organisations in the implementation, review and the prioritising of projects over the lifetime of the plan to make sure it remains relevant and locally accountable.

Seeking the views of traditionally ‘hard-to reach’ groups, most particularly young people, the elderly and “working families”, needs to be addressed to be certain that their views are represented in the development of the Plan and its implementation.

## 5. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and adapting the Actions of the Plan and assessing priorities will be a regular part of the work of the Community Partnership. This will be undertaken through six monthly monitoring of the overall progress of the Action Plan and the projects, programmes and service improvements within it e.g:

- \* Progress on priority projects
- \* Identification of new projects/initiatives
- \* Delivery of actions
- \* Breadth of coverage in activity
- \* Identification of issues/actions needing to be targeted in following six months

In addition an annual review will take place with the production of an annual report highlighting the achievements of the Plan. All of this information will be readily available to the public.

Much of the work will be innovative, and the lessons learned during implementation of the Plan would be of value to local partners and other organisations elsewhere engaged in this type of work. For this reason, the Partnership will seek to share experience with key audiences through the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative Association. This will highlight lessons learned and suggest models of good practice as a continuous process.

Keeping people informed and ensuring that the Task Force and the Community Partnership are accountable for their actions will be crucial. It is proposed to:-

- \* establish regular public presentations, workshops and 'surgeries' in the town and villages;
- \* work with the community planners who support parishes in Wiltshire and the South Wiltshire Strategic Alliance;
- \* liaise with the local press and media;
- \* prepare reports on activities and research;
- \* revise the Task Force and Shaftesbury Community website and offer more interactive options in line with developing the new Community Partnership;
- \* establish new working groups, supporting particular aspects of the Action Plan or steering large initiatives that will bring together many communities of interest and individuals.



It is also proposed to hold an annual community event for residents and community organisations and other partners to highlight achievements and identify new and emerging issues for action.

All of this will require a great deal of volunteer and paid time, as well as a wide range of knowledge and experience. The whole process can only be effective if there is adequate support from the community to carry the process forward.

The Partnership will aim to establish a volunteer training fund and programme so that the necessary skills and capacity can be developed in the community.

## 6. Implementing the Action Plan

The tables in Part 2 are a comprehensive list of actions that were identified, through the consultation process and analysis, as needing to be carried forward to achieve the visions for each theme. The actions are grouped under the issues for each of the themes of the Action Plan, though some actions could contribute to many issues.

Some action points will become projects in their own right while others will be developed as a part of larger or more complex projects. Each action has a reference number to identify linked or related actions and to produce a “check” for monitoring the progress of the plan, both its achievements and future priorities. The reference number is the initial of the issue, e.g. B for Business, followed by a number. The numbering is not a ranking or to indicate relative importance; it is simple numerical listing. Priority projects will be those which address many action points or are the projects which have been agreed to be the most important within the proposed annual work programme. The reference numbers attributed to projects will help to identify areas where work has been started and to ensure nothing gets missed!

Project champions can use the reference numbers to identify areas in the Action Plan where their schemes can benefit from support from the Community Partnership, e.g. in grant applications.

However, not all the actions will be delivered at once or in the first year. The Action Plan is a living document that is flexible and can adapt to take up opportunities as they arise. It sets out initial timescales for the actions but these timescales will be reviewed regularly.

Annual priority projects will be agreed as a result of the six monthly monitoring and yearly review.

## 7. Priority Projects 2005-06

### Prosperity

- \* To develop a retail development strategy for Shaftesbury town centre, in accordance with the 2004 Chamber of Commerce strategy.

Action points: B1, B2, B3, B9, B11, B14

- \* To promote a comprehensive strategy for car parking, including disabled parking, to support town centre retailers, visitors and residents in Shaftesbury.

Action points: B12, T1, T9, Her2

- \* To support the preparation of a tourism development strategy with the Shaftesbury Tourism Association and the Shaftesbury Town Council Tourism sub-committee.

Action points: T1, T2, T3, T6, T9, B3, Her1, Her2, Her3, Her5

- \* To undertake a survey of business training needs based on the retail and industrial sectors and SMEs.

Action points: B6, B13, TS4, Ed2

- \* To promote the Employers Engagement scheme to provide financial assistance to employers who release staff for training or skills development, particularly local SMEs.

Action points: TS4, B5

- \* To explore with the Learning and Skills Council, the feasibility of establishing a centre for Business Skills and Training for North Dorset and the surrounding areas.

Action points: B2, B6, B11, B13, TS1, TS2, TS4, TS5, Ed2

- \* To establish a programme of 'real life' projects with local schools, including I.T., direct research and project development or volunteering, to support community initiatives and Citizenship in the National Curriculum.

Action points: Ed1, Eq.1, Eq2, Y1, Y3, Y5, Y7

## Quality of Life

- \* To support the resourcing and implementation of the redevelopment of the Barton Hill recreation area with support from “Liveability”, including the Community Swimming Pool and, in the longer term, support for the Band Hall improvements.

Action points: R1, R2, R3, OS1, Y4, Y7

- \* To establish a Shaftesbury Area Affordable Housing Forum, to investigate options for new affordable housing, e.g. Community Land Trusts, and lobby for the refurbishment or renovation of empty or defective properties.

Action points: H1, H2, H4, H7 Y9

## Community

- \* To support the refurbishment of Toby’s, the young peoples centre and the facilities and services provided for vulnerable or ‘at risk’ young people.

Action points: Y5, Y9, Eq1, Eq2, Se2, He3, Ed3

- \* To promote the preparation and implementation of Parish Plans throughout the Shaftesbury area.

Action points: De4, De1, Tr1, Tr2, Tr6, Tr8, TS5, He2, SE1, SE3, H3, H4, VT1, VT3

- \* To support the development of the North Dorset Older Peoples Forum.

Action points: OP3, OP1, OP2, H2, Se1

## Character

- \* To support the establishment of the Donkey Field Community Orchard, Enmore Green with funding from “Liveability”.

Action points: OS1, OS5, C3, Eq1

- \* To undertake a full audit of open space provision in the Shaftesbury area.

Action points: OS3, OS1, OS2, OS5, Her4

- \* To support the work of the current Town Centre Enhancement working party, and to undertake a full townscape appraisal as a means to developing further enhancement schemes for the town that will support economic development and conservation.

Action points: Her1-6, B12, Tr1, T9

# Appendix 1

## Examples of Potential Funding Partners

Shaftesbury District Task Force

Shaftesbury Town Council

Parish Councils

Shaftesbury & District Chamber of Commerce

North Dorset District Council

Dorset County Council

Salisbury District Council

Wiltshire County Council

Lottery Funds

Sport England

Natural England

Dorset Strategic Partnerships

South West Regional Development Agency

Rural Renaissance Initiative

Central government or other public agencies

Learning & Skills Council

Further Education colleges

Business Link

Private finance

Primary Care Trusts

Housing Corporation/Housing Associations

Dorset Community Action

Voluntary Organisations/volunteer activity and/or Trust

DEFRA

Charitable Trusts both local and regional

---

## Appendix 2

### Methodology

The Shaftesbury Community Strategic Plan was prepared with the support of the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative and using the process recommended by the Countryside Agency.

The term 'market town' refers to towns in rural England that have traditionally hosted an agricultural market. In more recent years this description has been extended to include seaside resorts, fishing ports, mining and farming communities.

These towns have an important role to play in meeting many of the needs of local people including providing access to a wide range of employment, retail, leisure, professional and public services.

The Government has been particularly concerned to maintain and enhance the role that market and coastal towns play in keeping the countryside alive by providing employment, shopping and other services for their surrounding areas.

Part of the Government's strategy involves local communities working with local authorities, local businesses and development agencies to consolidate and expand the role that market and coastal towns play in the socio-economic fabric of the countryside, to prepare plans to secure the future of their towns and the surrounding parishes and to build up the skills necessary to make these plans a reality.

To implement the Government's strategy, the South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) created a partnership of regional agencies, called the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTi) comprising:

- \* South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA)
  - \* Countryside Agency
  - \* English Heritage
  - \* Government Office South West
  - \* South West Regional Assembly
  - \* Housing Corporation
  - \* Lottery Funds South West
- and the South West Area Network of Rural Community Councils

This partnership has now broadened into an MCTi Association of regional agencies, with representation from MCTi towns and sub-regional MCTi fora.

The MCTi plan making process is divided into three broad stages:

Stage 1 - Comprises detailed consultations with the local community to create a 'vision' for the Shaftesbury area that will inspire and guide the area's regeneration and/or development.

Stage 2 - Involves the preparation of a detailed Plan for the area and the establishment of a structure or organisation. The Action Plan includes specific projects, programmes and activities that will help to achieve the overall 'vision' for the area.

Stage 3 - The implementation of the actions and projects identified in the Action Plan, "The View of the Hill".

Being part of the MCTi programme has provided the Task Force with the resources to prepare a plan that will encourage private and public investment, and through which its projects can be supported and implemented.

Public and private sector investment will be a major component in the area's development including, amongst others, Dorset and Wiltshire County Council, Salisbury District Council and North Dorset District Council.



Although the long-term vision for the Shaftesbury area will be consistent over the next fifteen years, the Action Plan will be reviewed and updated regularly, as new ideas and opportunities arise. Fundamentally, it will be vital to ensure that local community support for the Community Strategic Plan remains strong and enthusiastic.

The Action Plan will be of assistance to the two District Councils within whose boundaries the Plan area is located, North Dorset District Council and Salisbury District Council. Both Councils will be able to use the information contained in the Action Plan to inform their decisions.

---

## Community involvement and consultation

The “plan making” consultation involved many local people, local groups, businesses and local councils in developing ideas that have come together in the Plan. The community as a whole has been able to participate in preparing and agreeing the plan and in making it happen.

The Task Force has also worked closely with Shaftesbury Town Council, North Dorset District Council, Salisbury District Council and Dorset and Wiltshire County Councils.

Where possible, the plan making process has taken into account any relevant survey

The venues for these events were:

- \* Chalke Valley Sports Centre Opening
- \* Motcombe Village Fete
- \* Ashmore Filly Loo
- \* Tisbury Church Fete
- \* Ludwell First School Fete
- \* Semley Village Fete
- \* Gold Hill Fair
- \* Larmer Tree Festival
- \* Margaret Marsh Village Fete
- \* Sedgehill Fete at Pythouse
- \* Gillingham and Shaftesbury Show
- \* St Mary’s Church Fete, East Knoyle
- \* Fontmell Magna Fete

In addition to these general consultations with the public the Task Force has analysed surveys done by others and has sponsored specific consultations into key issues affecting the town.

These specific consultations and reports include:

Enquiry by Design (2001) As part of the design and development briefing procedure for the proposed Shaftesbury town eastern development area, NDDC and the prospective developers Westbury Homes initiated an ‘Enquiry by Design’ programme.

This was managed by The Prince's Foundation who brought the Task Force into the debate to act as the non-statutory representative of the local community. The Partnership, with Shaftesbury Town Council, organised a series of consultation meetings with the developers, North Dorset District Council planners, Shaftesbury Town Council and individual representatives of the local community and groups.

The Barton Hill Open Space Working Party (2002) of user groups agreed on a number of basic design principles to enhance the natural amenity of the area. The Town Council accepted the Working Party's recommendation to appoint a professional landscape architect to draw up a master plan for the Barton Hill site which will act as a blueprint for all the future development and landscaping.

The Task Force mounted an extensive consultation exercise in 2003 to gather the community's views on the various options being considered for Shaftesbury Town Centre.

The study into Leisure and Recreation in Shaftesbury and the surrounding area (2003) invited comments from residents, visitors and local school children on the future of the swimming pool, leisure and recreation provision and culture to shape North Dorset's Leisure, Recreation and Cultural Strategy.

The Shaftesbury Tourism Study looking at tourists' preferences was funded by the Task Force.

The Task Force has also completed a community 'Healthcheck' (Appendix 3) which looks in detail at the status of most aspects of the socio-economic condition of the area.

The 'Healthcheck' and other studies are available for inspection at the Task Force office.

In February 2004, Hannah Reynolds Associates (HRA) were appointed as consultants to undertake the analysis of the consultation and research materials and to review the policy framework within which the Community Action Plan was to be delivered. From this analysis the Community Action Plan, The View of the Hill, was prepared. HRA submitted a first draft of the Action Plan in December 2004.

This first draft underwent a series of revisions and amendments and a consultation draft and a summary of potential priority projects for 2005-06 went forward for public endorsement and comment in early June 2005. Closing date for comments was mid-August 2005.

Copies of the draft Action Plan were distributed to local partner organisations, stakeholders, local libraries, council offices and community offices.

The comments received from respondents and partner organisations have been incorporated into the final Action Plan.

A full display of the content of the Action Plan was exhibited at Gold Hill Fair and the Shaftesbury and Gillingham Show (July and August 05 respectively). At these venues people were able to identify the priority actions and these priorities are identified in the Action Tables in Part 2 of this document.

All the documents and reports that form the evidence base of the CSP are available for inspection at the Task Force offices, Longmead, Shaftesbury.



Gold Hill Fair 2005

# THE VIEW OF THE HILL

## Part 2

### Action Tables



