

**BIG** County **BIG** Skies **BIG** Future  
*shaping Lincolnshire together*

## **Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2030**

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## **Welcome**

Welcome to Lincolnshire's Sustainable Community Strategy. It is a very important part of the work that partners in Lincolnshire are engaged in to help deliver our vision of 'vibrant communities where people enjoy life'.

This short document sets out why we have a community strategy, how we developed it, and how we are working together to make it happen.

We hope you find it interesting. If you would like to find out more, please turn to page 16 to see where you can get more information.

There is a real feeling of partners wanting to work together for the benefit of our county so we're sure that this Strategy will lead to major improvements across Lincolnshire.

## Why have a Sustainable Community Strategy?

Every local council is under a duty to have a Sustainable Community Strategy to *'set the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of a local area – typically 10-20 years – in a way that contributes to sustainable development in the UK.'*

In Lincolnshire we are more ambitious than many other areas and not just doing this because we have to. We're aiming to develop a strategy and delivery plans that cover all of our activities to deliver the county wide vision.

It's really important to have that shared focus for nearly £3billion public money spent in our county every year by partners in the Lincolnshire Assembly.

Last year we agreed a three year Local Area Agreement. This is an agreement with national government aimed at improving performance in specific services. That Local Area Agreement will be absorbed into this Strategy.

In the future, when national government looks at how well public agencies are serving Lincolnshire, they will start by looking at priorities in this Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement that links with it.

## **How did we develop this Strategy?**

We were determined to make sure this Strategy was based on widespread research and engagement with people across the county.

We launched part one of our Big County, Big Skies, Big Future consultation in November 2007 to engage with people across the county on their Big Ideas for the future.

That was followed up by briefings to county groups, workshops to develop our Local Area Agreement, shared priorities from local strategic partnerships across Lincolnshire and pooled research between partners.

We have been developing a shared evidence base for partners based around the Lincolnshire Research Observatory. They have produced two major reports about 'drivers for change' in our county and specialist reports around priority issues. Those reports look at differences between parts of the county (people call these 'gaps' or 'inequalities') as well as a county wide view and have been used to inform this Strategy.

Part two of the 'Big Skies' consultation took place in August 2008. People confirmed that our draft priorities were the right things to aim for in this Strategy.

## **What does Lincolnshire look like today?**

*Summarised from 'Lincolnshire: Global change, local issues (2009)'*

In a recent national survey, Lincolnshire was rated 29<sup>th</sup> out of 122 areas based on the labour market, housing, the environment, crime, education and health.

As part of the Big County, Big Skies, Big Future consultation, top issues highlighted by local people were areas where we are already performing well, though some parts of the county have significantly poorer results on worklessness, skills, crime, housing, and the environment.

### **Communities**

Our population has grown by 7% since 2001 compared to 4% nationally. Although birth rates have risen, the main cause of this is people moving into the county. 10-15,000 additional people move here each year.

In addition, many thousands of international workers have identified and pursued employment opportunities, particularly in the south and east of the county.

It is this recent acceleration of population change that, in some communities, can lead to community cohesion issues. Most tensions arise from simple misunderstandings around cultural behaviours and traditions although from time to time more serious disturbances and attitudes can emerge.

Crime rates in the county are low but Lincoln City has a rate above the national average.

Although housing is relatively cheap, income is also low so affordable housing is an issue for many.

### **Health**

The numbers of older people coming to the county and younger people leaving is a key issue for us, particularly the strain placed on health and social care by the elderly. The proportion of people who are economically dependant compared to those who are economically productive is high in Lincolnshire.

Health inequalities persist across the county. People in the east are more likely to be diagnosed with diabetes or have an unhealthy weight. Lincoln residents are more likely to smoke or drink heavily and Boston has lower life expectancy for males.

## **Economy**

Our economy has grown consistently in recent years but still lags behind much of the UK.

County unemployment is below national and regional rates, but Lincoln is consistently higher and seasonal unemployment is a big issue in East Lindsey. There is a similar picture of incapacity benefit claimants.

School attainment is generally higher than national and regional rates with East Lindsey and South Holland lower than national average.

Working age people qualified to NVQ Level 3 remains low.

*As we have been working on this strategy, the world wide 'credit crunch' has happened. People have told us they are worried about the effect this will have on them now and for the future. We feel it is our responsibility to do what we can to respond to those concerns whilst we also plan to help Lincolnshire's economy emerge from current difficulties in a strong position to take advantage of any opportunities that arise by building on our strengths in food, farming, engineering and education.*

## What is our Vision for Lincolnshire in 2030?

Imagine **Lincolnshire** in 2030 ...

Ours is a Big County, with Big Skies that has a Big Future because Lincolnshire is the place where **everyone can find and enjoy the lifestyle that suits them best**. Those great lifestyles come from:

- Vibrant communities where people enjoy life
- Opportunities for good health
- One of the healthiest and most sustainable economies in Europe
- Good connections between people, services, communities and places
- Rich diverse environments, heritage and cultures that residents and visitors enjoy

Supported by organisations working together for Lincolnshire

Imagine Lincolnshire's **Communities** in 2030 ...

Lincolnshire has many **vibrant communities where people enjoy life.**

Our population comes from many backgrounds and these **people get on well and respect each other.**

**Everyone feels safe** in the places where they live and visit.

There are enough **homes in good condition that are affordable and suit people's needs.**

People's **local environments are well cared for.**

There are **opportunities for social, recreational, sporting and cultural activities.**

**People influence, contribute to and take part in their communities.**

**People have choices about their lives and are treated with dignity.**

Imagine Lincolnshire's **Health** in 2030 ...

Lincolnshire has continued to grow, with more people of all ages and health moving to our county and more living longer. Everyone, whatever their background or age, has **opportunities for good health**.

**More people enjoy good health for longer.**

**The gap between most and least healthy people has reduced.**

Local **people are actively involved in their own and other people's health and wellbeing.**

## Imagine Lincolnshire's economy in 2030 ...

Historic Lincolnshire has **one of the healthiest and most sustainable economies in Europe.**

**Clusters of economic excellence** in agriculture, food manufacturing, power engineering, leisure and creative industries are critical to the world's economy after the recession.

These clusters are part of a much **more diverse economy** supported by **high quality training for skills.**

Our **top 30 UK university** leads on research and transferring knowledge into the county.

## **Imagine Lincolnshire's 'connections' in 2030 ...**

Lincolnshire is one of the largest counties but with few large towns and many small communities so it is vital that there are **good connections between people, services, communities and places.**

There is **convenient access to services.** Increasingly, people are able to access these from their homes and local communities rather than travel farther away.

**Widespread use of digital technology** improves lives and life chances.

When people travel, they use a **safe, well managed transport network.**

## **Imagine Lincolnshire's Environment in 2030 ...**

Ours is a huge and varied county ranging:

From the Cathedral to the Coastline....

From the Fens to the Waterways.....

From the City to the Market Towns....

From the Wolds to the Wetlands ....

Lincolnshire's **rich diverse environments, heritage and cultures are recognised and enjoyed by all.**

Lincolnshire has been shaped by man for thousands of years. We are continuing to do so by **balancing the needs of people, our heritage, the economy and nature.**

We have **embraced the challenges of climate change.** Our innovative solutions balance the needs of traditional strengths like food production and manufacturing with our natural and man-made environments.

**Residents and visitors enjoy our heritage and environmental attractions.**

Alongside our flourishing economy, the **countryside, coastline and towns are much richer in biodiversity** than in 2000.

## **Imagine Lincolnshire's organisations in 2030 ...**

Our community strategy has set many challenges. We are making the best use of our resources by **working together for Lincolnshire** across public, private and voluntary sectors.

We have developed **creative and innovative approaches** to those challenges.

These are **focused on people and** based on knowledge gained by **involving people and communities**.

All this makes sure we are **spending money wisely** so Lincolnshire gets the best possible value for money.

## **How will we make it happen?**

This Strategy will not achieve anything unless there are resources and plans to make it happen.

Partners have made over £10million available to support the strategy this year until their resources are aligned more fully in 2010 onwards.

We have already developed detailed joint delivery plans for our Local Area Agreement. Government Office for East Midlands has highlighted this as good practice for others to follow.

We have learned from that experience and identified how to improve our approach when we develop detailed delivery plans for this Sustainable Community Strategy during the first half of 2009. In developing delivery plans we will take account of the fact that, whilst we want to work across the county, some parts need and deserve to improve more or faster than others.

This county wide Strategy will be reflected in local 'chapters' for each District Council's Local Strategic Partnership. Those chapters will link to this Strategy and pick up any purely local issues as well.

## **What makes our Strategy unique for Lincolnshire?**

Every local council area is encouraged to have its own Sustainable Community Strategy so many of them are very similar. We have thought very carefully about how to make sure ours is focused uniquely on Lincolnshire. There are several ways in which we'll do this:

Outcomes in the strategy cover issues that are particularly important for us, like connections between communities, climate change and flooding and road safety.

In every set of three year delivery plans we will identify and work on 'big ideas' to make major change in outcomes rather than just gradual improvements.

Sometimes there will be tensions between different parts of the strategy. For example, there could be conflicts between economic or highway developments and protecting our environment. The way we resolve them will be unique to Lincolnshire and probably different to predominantly urban areas.

## **How will we keep the Strategy up to date?**

We will manage performance of delivery plans every three months and take action where necessary.

Delivery plans will be reviewed every year to see if medium term targets need to change.

The whole strategy will be reviewed every three years to make sure it is up to date, or earlier if there is a specific need.

## **Where can I find out more?**

Please see [www.lincolnshireassembly.com](http://www.lincolnshireassembly.com) and follow the links to 'Local Area Agreement'.

\*\*\*The printed document will contain standard information on obtaining copies in other formats\*\*\*