



# Community plan

Southend

**TOGETHER**

Local Strategic Partnership

‘**SOUTHEND –  
setting the  
standard**’



March 2003

# Welcome...

*...to our first Community Plan for Southend-on-Sea. This plan is important. It is about the future of Southend-on-Sea and sets out how, over the next ten years, the Southend Strategic Partnership will strive to achieve the agreed priorities and targets to help to bring about a better Southend.*

*We have developed our plan through consultations with the community and by having regard to the national and regional priorities. It was from these consultations and discussions that the vision for Southend has been generated.*

*I would like to thank everybody who has contributed to the plan's development and trust that together we can continue to improve our quality of life in Southend-on-Sea.*



**Councillor Howard Briggs**

*Chairman of Southend Together*



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# A Community Plan...

# What is it about?

*Our vision for the future of Southend is guided by three overriding principles:*

## **1** Sustainable development

Sustainable development is embodied in everything that is contained within the plan. It is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." *Bruntland Report 1987.*

## **2** Equality of opportunity

Southend is an increasingly multicultural community and valuing the ethnic and cultural diversity is essential to securing our vision. The local authority is committed to achieving the Commission for Racial Equality Standard level one by 2003 and level three by 2007.

## **3** Social Inclusion

The Government's definition is that "Social exclusion is a short hand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown." Tackling these issues is essential to securing our vision.

**T**his is not just another plan – the Community Plan brings all our existing plans and strategies for Southend-on-Sea together.

**Local councils are required by law to draw up a long-term plan to improve the economic, social and environmental well being of their town and areas in consultation with local people and other interested organisations.**



This will lead to a more co-ordinated approach to improving our Borough. When listening to local people's views on the future we came across many different opinions on what was most important.

For some, it was the environment and green issues. For others, it was jobs, our cultural heritage or education. But everyone wanted to make Southend a better place.

In drawing up this plan we have been ambitious but we also have to be realistic. There are things we are unable to change on our own and we either have to learn to live with them or campaign for changes in national policy.

However, there are opportunities to help us make the town even more desirable. For example, Southend is part of the Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership – the national priority for regeneration. The Partnership's vision for Southend is for the town to be a cultural and intellectual hub



and a higher education centre of excellence for South Essex. Thames Gateway is already delivering new

investment in the infrastructure of the town including a new university campus. Those we consulted set us a challenge - to make the most of what Southend has got and to work in partnership locally, regionally and nationally to ensure that improvements are achieved.

Our vision for Southend-on-Sea is...

***A vibrant coastal town and a prosperous regional centre where people enjoy living, working and visiting.***

*We will work hard to achieve our vision and we will make measurable progress on the inter-linked themes that are detailed in this plan. All of them contribute to providing an equitable, inclusive and sustainable town...*



In drawing together the key themes from other plans, this community plan includes strategic targets. However, it does not include all targets related to, for example, Learning or Healthy. These detailed targets can be found in the action plans.

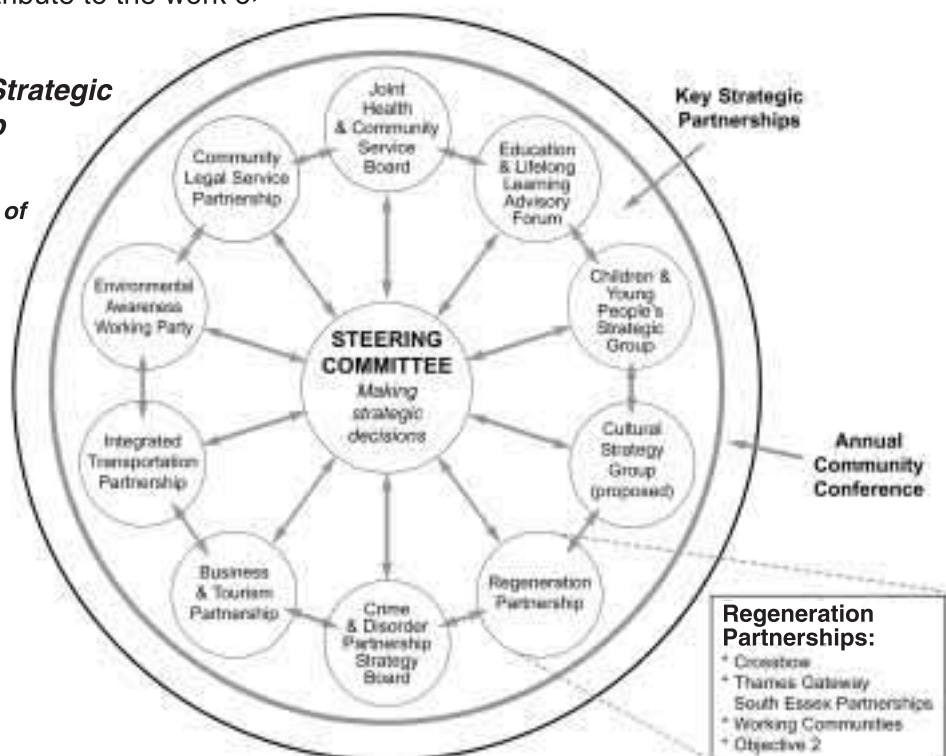
# Southend Together— Southend Strategic Partnership

## What does the Strategic Partnership for Southend-on-Sea look like?

**Southend Together** operates at three levels - a steering committee, key strategic partnerships (and their sub groups) and the community conference. Everyone who lives or works in Southend-on-Sea can contribute to the work of

**Southend Together.** For instance, by taking part in a Neighbourhood Watch Group or being a member of a local residents' forum, the work that you are doing will help and contribute to achieving the vision for Southend. **Southend Together** is a partnership of partnerships. The diagram below shows the structure.

### Southend Strategic Partnership Structure A Partnership of Partnerships



## How will Southend Together work?

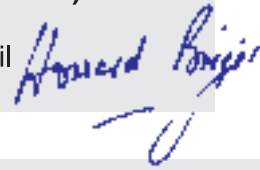
The steering committee co-ordinates the partnership activity, agrees on priorities and

ensures targets set out in this plan are achieved. Representation on the steering committee comprises people from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors so that all voices can be heard.

## Member organisations of the Southend Together Steering Committee

### Councillor Howard Briggs (Chairman)

Leader of  
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council



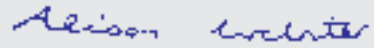
### David Horsley

South Essex  
Chamber of Commerce



### Alison Webster

Learning and Skills Council, Essex



### Maureen Frewin

Southend Association  
of Voluntary Services (SAVS)



### Jan Hodges

Principal,  
South East Essex College



### Chief Superintendent

Michael Thwaites  
Southend Police



### Julie Garbutt

Chief Executive  
Southend Primary Care Trust



### George Krawiec

Chief Executive and  
Town Clerk  
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council



### Frances Neil

Representing Headteachers  
St Mary's Prittlewell  
(Church of England assisted Primary)



Glenn Ashdown  
Southend Tenants  
and Residents Federation



Andreas Anastasiou  
Ethnic Minority Forum



Representatives are being sought from umbrella groups  
representing residents and faith communities.

## Observers

### Sue Walsh

East of England  
Economic Development  
Agency (EEDA)



### Mike Goddard

Thames Gateway South Essex  
Partnership Limited



Other observers include Thames Gateway Strategic Executive  
and the Government Office for the East of England.

**Key strategic partnerships** feed into the steering committee. Most already exist and play an important role within Southend. They will continue to lead on their area of responsibility.

The table below provides a brief explanation of the key strategic partnerships:

<b>Joint Health &amp; Community Service Board</b>	This board co-ordinates health and social care services to ensure that seamless services are provided to the community.
<b>Education &amp; Lifelong Learning Advisory Forum</b>	This partnership provides a means through which the main stakeholders and users of education and lifelong learning in Southend can inform and influence each other.
<b>Children &amp; Young People's Strategic Group</b>	This group seeks to develop a range of initiatives to meet the needs of vulnerable children living in Southend.
<b>Regeneration Partnerships</b>	
<b><i>Crossbow</i></b>	This partnership is responsible for the delivery of the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) funded 'Learning for Living' Programme.
<b><i>Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership</i></b>	This drives forward regeneration, growth and prosperity in South Essex as a key part of the Thames Gateway, the national priority for regeneration.
<b><i>Working Communities</i></b>	This partnership delivers the regeneration programme, funded through the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) tasked with enhancing the quality of life in Shoeburyness.
<b><i>Objective 2 Local Area Group (LAG)</i></b>	This is a local forum to ensure Southend maximises the opportunities presented by the European Objective 2 Programme within the designated Southend-on-Sea programme area.
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder Partnership Strategy Board</b>	The Board brings together all key agencies in the Borough whose remit impacts on crime and disorder.
<b>Business &amp; Tourism Partnership</b>	This is a forum for discussion on topical issues that affect local businesses and the local economy.
<b>Integrated Transportation Partnership</b>	This comprises over 200 representatives from the local resident and business communities, transport operators and users.
<b>Environmental Awareness Working Party</b>	This co-ordinates the identification and management of environmental issues in the Borough.
<b>Community Legal Service Partnership</b>	This brings together statutory and voluntary agencies to improve access to legal advice, which can include help with welfare benefits, debt, housing, education and consumer matters.

These are top level partnerships. They are supported by a range of other forums in which individuals and groups from the community play an active part. An example of where special interest groups are represented e.g. disabled

people is through the Environmental Awareness Working Party and the Community Legal Service Partnership. In this instance a member of the Community Legal Service Partnership is from the Disabled Information Advice Line (DIAL).





## Turning the vision into reality

To ensure this happens **Southend Together** will hold a community conference every year. This will feedback the progress that is being made on the action plans contained at the

back of this document and to review and update them where necessary. If you would be interested in attending the next community conference please complete and return the form contained at the back of the document.



# Prosperous Community

Our ambition – *'A prosperous local economy'*

**S**trong wealth creation is essential to any successful town and Southend has a strong entrepreneurial spirit. It is a major centre for employment, shopping, leisure and culture facilities and is located 40 miles east of London. Due to its proximity to the capital, the economy in Southend is largely service based and a percentage of the working population (16%) commute to London.

## Did you know?

- There are approximately 6,000 companies operating in Southend, employing 84,000 people, including ten major employers with over 500 employees each.
- Services are in place to help and support local businesses. Business Enterprise Agencies and the Small Business Service are examples of this.
- The Southend Business and Tourism Partnership is led by the business community and has established clear priorities.

## Achievements so far

- Unemployment has dropped steadily from 6.9% in July 1998 to 3.9% in July 2002. This means a reduction of 2,150 people claiming unemployment benefits. Initiatives such as New Deal, local training projects and Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) community projects, in areas of Southend, are helping the unemployed to find the skills and opportunities they need.
- Southend has traditionally had a higher unemployment rate than the East of England regional average. This difference has narrowed from 3.7% in July 1998 to 1.7% in July 2002.
- The number of local jobs has increased by 18%, in line with the fall in unemployment. Steady investment by local companies and new businesses coming into Southend has helped. An example of this is the ENHANCE Project (Educational Needs Helped and Advanced by Networking with Commerce and Enterprise).
- Innovative 'Business Champions' scheme to mentor new businesses through the early stages of starting up.
- The redevelopment of the A13 London Road (Phase 1) involved working closely with businesses in London Road and Hamlet Court Road to improve road safety, accessibility and the economy.

You said that you would like to see:

Quality support and strong leadership for local businesses and for Southend to be an attractive, successful business location.

## Challenges we face

- To increase the rate of business survival and the quality of business support services.
- To undertake a comprehensive regeneration of the town centre.
- To reduce unemployment and increase the quantity, quality and range of local jobs.
- To retain and attract the skills of the brightest young people and create a business environment in which high technology businesses can flourish.

## What is planned for the future?

- Establishing a Business Support Consortium in 2003 equipped to deliver an integrated and comprehensive package of business support.
- Regenerating the town centre and building on current initiatives
- More efficient processing of planning applications to encourage appropriate developments.
- Maximising the benefits from Thames Gateway, EU Objective 2 and SRB initiatives.

## Our targets

- To **increase** business survival rates.
- **Completion** of the Pier infrastructure and the High Street refurbishment.
- To **increase** the proportion of people of working age in employment or full-time education.
- To **reduce** the proportion of people of working age who are economically inactive.
- To **reduce** the number and proportion of people claiming unemployment benefit who have been out of work for more than a year.
- To **increase** the number of local jobs.
- To **meet** the Government targets for dealing with planning applications submitted to the Council.



Full details on how the community priorities will be achieved and their link with the national priorities can be found in the **'Prosperous Community – Action Plan'** contained at the back of the document.



# Learning Community

*Our ambition – ‘Opportunities for learning for all and a highly skilled work force’*

**E**ducation and learning is of concern to the whole community. The statutory agencies and businesses in the town are keen to ensure that access to education and learning is provided to all people who require it. The Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership identified Southend as a cultural and intellectual hub and a higher education centre for South Essex.

## Did you know?

- That 26,000 pupils and students attend the 59 state funded schools in Southend.
- 5.1% of children in the primary sector and 2.8% of children in the secondary sector have English as an additional language.
- 2.6% of the school population aged 5-16 have a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN).
- The adult education service is provided through Southend Adult Community College, based in Ambleside Drive.
- The Youth Service operates across Southend from Youth Centres in Leigh, Westcliff, Central Southend and Shoeburyness and in 2001/2002 over 43,000 contacts/attendance's were recorded.
- Southend Marine Activities Centre, which is located on the Eastern Esplanade, provides a range of marine and shore-based activities.
- South East Essex College offers a wide range of full and part-time learning opportunities for some 2,700 young people and 10,000 adults every year.
- The University of Essex and the South East Essex College have formed a partnership to develop additional higher education opportunities for local people with plans for a new campus in the centre of Southend.



You said that you would like to see:

Learning opportunities for all and for Southend to have a high record of educational attainment.

## Achievements so far

- Exam results in Southend continue to improve above the national average.
- More 16-year-olds are staying on in full-time education and more adults are enrolling on adult education courses.
- All three-year-olds in 2002 were offered free nursery places.

**Educate children to make choices to be citizens.**  
*Local Resident*

- In 2002/2003 Southend-on-Sea Borough Council passed on nearly 90% of its education budget to local schools. This is the third highest percentage in the country.
- South East Essex College and Prospects have been recognised as Centres of Vocational Excellence and the College achieves pass rates well above national averages.
- There are a number of community projects providing skills and training to local people. Barons Court Community Library and Information Centre (CLIC) and Children's Activities Parents Out Working (CAPOW) are examples of this.

**Opportunities to reach potential for all.**  
*Local Resident*

- A wide range of programmes are provided by the Youth Service designed to support and reach young people. These include work with young carers, young people with learning disabilities and young people who are under-achieving at school.
- The AdVance Partnership – a partnership between Southend Association of Voluntary Services (SAVS) and Southend Adult Community College provides community and voluntary sector training.



## Challenges we face

- To ensure all those living in Southend have full access to the highest quality opportunities for learning and access to information.
- To continue the rise in standards of achievement in schools.
- To increase and widen participation and achievement of young people and adults and promote life long learning.
- To work in partnership with stakeholders and employers to deliver quality education and a skilled workforce for Southend.
- To ensure equality, entitlement, access and inclusion in education and learning in Southend.
- To provide quality services.
- To make Southend a higher education centre of excellence for South Essex.



## What is planned for the future

- Promoting social inclusion and equality of opportunity for all abilities.
- Raising attainment across all areas in primary and secondary education, especially in English, Maths and ICT.
- Ensuring all schools are successful and that no schools are categorised as “failing”.
- Improving the quality of teaching in all settings.
- Improving staying-on rates in education and training.
- Raising standards of achievement for young people up to age 19.
- Offering a wider, more flexible range of vocational routes for 14-19 year olds.
- Offering a wider range of more flexible and accessible courses for adults in the workplace.
- Introducing extensive adult basic skills training in the workplace and in the community.
- Improve the achievement of vulnerable individuals.
- Developing the partnership for higher education between the University of Essex and South East Essex College and develop a University Campus.



## Our targets

- To **increase** the percentage of 11 year olds achieving level 4 and above in Maths and English.
- To **increase** the percentage of 14 year olds achieving level 5 or above in English, Maths, ICT and Science.
- To **increase** the percentage of 16 year olds achieving 5 or more GCSEs A\* - C (or equivalent).
- To **increase** the percentage of 16 year olds achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\* - G (or equivalent).
- To **ensure** that no schools are categorised as being in need of special measures.
- To **reduce** unauthorised absence in schools.
- To **reduce** the number of exclusions from schools.



- To **increase** the percentage of young people in structured learning and achieving level 2 and 3 qualifications by age 19.
- To **increase** the percentage of adults participating in learning and achieving level 2 and 3 qualifications.
- To **increase** the proportion of adults with NVQ level 3.
- To **develop** effective higher education facilities by expanding on the new Southend town centre campus.
- To **increase** the percentage of young people and adults accessing higher education in the Borough.
- To **increase** the percentage of companies engaging in workforce development.
- To **raise** adult literacy and numeracy skills.

Full details on how the community priorities will be achieved and their link with the national priorities can be found in the '**Learning Community – Action Plan**' contained at the back of the document.



# Safer Community

Our ambition – *‘Reduction in crime, disorder and offending’*

**S**outhend is becoming a safer place. Over the last six years all reported crime across the Borough has steadily decreased by over 20%. However certain types of crime and anti-social behaviour are still a problem, particularly in the town centre.

## Did you know?

- 270 police officers are working in Southend.
- There are 493 Neighbourhood Watch groups as at March 2002.
- The Youth Offending Team (YOT) works with young people aged 10 to 18 years that have offended, or are at risk of offending. Their work involves confronting young offenders with the consequences of their offending and supervising those who are required to compensate for damage caused by their actions.
- There are three support services for victims of domestic violence. These include the Womens Refuge, the Dove Project (drop in centre) and Fledglings Child Contact Centre.
- There are multi-agency partnerships - Crime and Disorder Partnership and the Domestic Violence Steering Group.
- Juvenile Fire Setters scheme, co-ordinated by the Fire and Rescue Service, provides assistance in preventative counselling for children up to the age of 18 who have an interest in fire setting.
- A dedicated vehicle crime team has been set up to tackle the problem of vehicle crime.
- The Borough Patrol was launched in March 2002. Although initially based in the town centre the scheme will be progressively rolled out across the Borough. The purpose of the Borough Patrol is to manage and better enforce against those things that spoil people's enjoyment of the town, for example litter, dog fouling and cycling on the pavement.
- There is a dedicated Graffiti team.
- The CCTV Control facility is regarded as one of the best in the country.

You said that you would like to see:

A reduction in the amount of visible anti-social behaviour and an increase in the amount of visible policing.



## Achievements so far

- In 2001/2002 13,793 offences were committed in Southend, this was down from 14,551 in the previous year, compared to an increase in the rest of Essex.
- In one particular area where burglary was high – York Road – a concentrated partnership effort achieved a reduction of 72%. Overall burglary has reduced in Southend in the year to March 2002, by 27.8% compared to an increase of 2.9% in Essex and 6.8% in England and Wales. In 2001/ 2002 24,336 hours of foot patrol were performed.
- The Message in the Bottle scheme reassures vulnerable and elderly members of the community who live alone that details of their next of kin, medical conditions and doctor are available in the event of an emergency or an accident.
- 99% of people in Essex who completed a fire report following an incident during 2000/2001, felt that Essex Fire Authority's handling of the incident was very good. This was an increase of 8% compared to 1999/2000.

- Ten non-advertising bus shelters (with clear glazed roofs) and lighting were installed during 2001/2002.
- The Borough Neighbourhood Watch website was launched and is linked to the Essex County and National Neighbourhood Watch Associations.

*I want to feel safe walking  
in the streets at anytime.*  
Local Resident

## Challenges we face

- To reduce the level of crime and offending.
- To reduce the fear of crime.
- To reduce the level of re-offending and support sentences where offenders for relevant crimes are subject to community based orders.
- To reduce the danger from fire for those who live or work in Southend.



## What is planned for the future

- Reducing the amount of anti-social behaviour in the town.
- A co-ordinated approach to addressing excessive alcohol consumption and violence in the town centre through the multi-agency Town Centre Crime Reduction Working Party.
- Extending the CCTV network.
- Increasing public awareness concerning measures taken to address street crime, 'con-men' vehicle crime and the success of these measures.
- Increasing the use of 'reparative justice' where offenders pay back to the community for crimes they have committed.
- Achieving the national target for arson reduction.

## Our targets

- To **reduce** the number of vehicle crimes committed per 1,000 population.
- To **reduce** the number of domestic burglaries committed per 1,000 households.
- To **increase** the number of violent crimes detected.
- To **increase** the percentage of residents who feel safe when alone outside in Southend.
- To **reduce** the rate of reconvictions of all offenders punished by imprisonment or by community supervision.
- To **reduce** the rate of reconvictions of all young offenders.
- To **reduce** the number of incidences of arson.



Full details on how the community priorities will be achieved and their link with the national priorities can be found in the

'Safer Community – Action Plan' contained at the back of the document.

# Healthy Community

Our ambition – *'Improved health and well being'*

You said that you would like to see:

Improved health care in terms of access, information and care and better joined up working between agencies.

**H**ealth is everyone's business. When thinking about improving the health and well being of a population, many

people focus on individual lifestyles, or on providing primary and secondary health care services. Whilst these are important, it is recognised that there are other factors outside of the control of the National Health Service that influence health and health inequalities. The health of Southend's population can be affected by these 'wider determinants of health', which include income, poverty, housing, employment, the environment and transport.

Agencies in Southend are working together, and in partnership with the community to improve the health of the local residents and reduce health inequalities.

## Did you know?

- There are 39 GP practices in Southend comprising of 84 GPs and 81 practice nurses who provide primary care services for residents.
- There are 39 pharmacies, 24 dental practices and 26 opticians.
- 108 district nursing staff, 18 occupational therapy staff and 49 health visiting and school nursing staff.
- Acute services are provided by Southend Hospital NHS Trust situated close to the centre of Southend. The hospital employs 108 consultants, 187 other doctors, 979 nurses and midwives and 240 other health professionals. The Trust provides a full range of general services, plus specialist ones such as:
  - kidney dialysis
  - ophthalmology
  - cancer services (recognised cancer centre)
- There is a website offering help and advice on substance misuse: [www.southenddat.org.uk](http://www.southenddat.org.uk)

**A** healthy community is not just about health services, there are other universal services and facilities that help contribute to a healthier lifestyle. For instance in Southend there are:

- 568 hectares of parks and open spaces which provides opportunities for recreation.
- Five sports and leisure centres, which provide a range of exercise programmes and activities.
- Environmental Health Services, which aim to remove the risk of poor health of residents and visitors to the Borough from public health nuisances or pollution to land, water, air and the built environment.

### Achievements so far

- A new smoking cessation service has been set up, and increased numbers of health professionals are being trained to provide advice and support to smokers.
- Southend has over 90 community development projects. These projects address the wider determinants of health. Examples are the St Luke's Community Information Shop, and Town Centre 2000 scheme.
- A Teenage Pregnancy Strategy has been launched and evidence of partnership and community working is emerging.
- Local schools are being recruited to the National Healthy Schools scheme.
- A range of intermediate care services have been put in place to prevent avoidable admissions of older people to hospital.
- Partnership arrangements in place with South Essex Partnership Trust for older people with mental health needs.
- Infant mortality rate in Southend is below the national rate of five deaths per 1,000 live births.
- Waiting times for serious substance misuse have been reduced from approximately ten months to less than six weeks.
- Enhanced Government monitoring of Mental Health Services removed.
- The 'school walking bus' and healthy walk scheme for office workers.



*Joined up working  
between the agencies,  
informing and involving  
the patient.*

*Local Resident*

### Challenges we face

- To **reduce** hospital waiting times and improve access to health services.
- To **tackle** the risk factors for major causes of death - including heart disease and cancer.
- To **reduce** the teenage pregnancy rate, which is the highest across South Essex.
- To **support** a high elderly population and prevent avoidable hospital admissions.
- To **reduce** waiting times to under four weeks for all substance misuse services.
- To **increase** support to people with mental health needs and their carers.
- To **increase** the number of secondary schools engaged in the Healthy Schools programme.



## What is planned for the future

- Reducing the hospital waiting times and improving access to a doctor and nurse.
- Encouraging people to adopt healthier lifestyles and reducing the number of people who smoke.
- Increasing the number of women who attend cervical and breast screening.
- Improving sex education and relationship education for young people and increasing access to Self Esteem projects and Family Planning to facilitate reduction in teenage pregnancies and terminations.
- Expanding intermediate care services for the elderly.
- Expanding substance misuse services into Southend from their current base at Rochford.
- Increasing the number of mental health workers to support people in the community and providing more breaks for carers of people with mental health needs.
- Targeting secondary schools to participate in the Healthy Schools Programme.

## Our targets

- To **provide better** access to healthcare in line with Government targets.
- To **reduce** the death rates from major killers, for example heart disease and cancer.
- To **reduce** the conception rate of under 18 year olds.
- To **increase** the number of older people supported intensively to live at home.
- To **reduce** the percentage of people under the age of 25 reporting the use of Class A drugs.
- To **increase** the participation of problem drug users in drug treatment programmes.
- To **increase** the number of breaks provided to carers of people with mental health needs.
- To **increase** the percentage of secondary schools participating in the Healthy Schools programme.

Full details on how the community priorities will be achieved and their link with the national priorities can be found in the **'Healthy Community – Action Plan'** contained at the back of the document.



# Environmentally Aware Community

*Our ambition – ‘Improved transport and infrastructure and a quality environment’*

**S**outhend is part of the largest urban conurbation in the East of England and, at 42 dwellings per hectare, has one of the highest population densities. It also has some outstanding examples of Victorian and Edwardian architecture, mature parks and gardens, and wildlife sites of national and international importance. The town suffers from severe traffic congestion and accessibility problems, which are having a major impact on the local economy and on the quality of life of its residents and visitors. Improved and integrated transport services are

therefore required, which will make the town and its facilities accessible, and which will allow people to move around more easily, safely and in a less environmentally damaging way. At the same time, Southend must create and maintain a high quality urban and natural environment, which safeguards the Borough's natural and built assets and provides attractive, high quality buildings and public places. Sometimes there will be tensions between these requirements, and difficult decisions will have to be made.

## Did you know?

- On average 61,000 vehicles use the A127 every day, equivalent to traffic flows on the M11 and A12.
- Southend is served by two main railway lines linking the town with London, and the majority of its population lives within one mile of one of its nine railway stations.
- 97% of Southend households are within 400 metres of a bus stop.
- That the Southend Foreshore Local Nature Reserve is the largest in England.
- There are 568 hectares of parks and open spaces and 697 hectares of green belt land.
- There are three very different Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) within Southend – the Foreshore, Belfairs Nature Reserve and Shoebury Old Ranges at Gunners.
- The town has 13 conservation areas and an annual design award scheme to encourage examples of quality urban design.
- There are ranges of recycling initiatives including kerbside recycling.
- There is a Noisy Party Patrol.
- The Thames is one of the most commercially significant tideways in the United Kingdom and one of the busiest water recreation areas in the country.

## Achievements so far

- Southend has worked to protect nationally rare biodiverse target species, examples include the heath fritillary, deptford pink and the shrill carder bee.
- 14.5% of waste was recycled in 2001/2002.



- The beach between the Pier and Lynton Road has been recharged to improve sea defences and leisure and tourism.
- Three Blue Flag awards have been awarded for Shoebury Common Beach, Three Shell Beach and Leigh Bell Wharf Beach.
- New seafront cycle track (national Sustrans route) extending the whole length of the route to 3.5km, and improvements to the A127 cycle track.
- Six affiliated and three support members 'signed up' to the Southend Business TravelWise to develop Travel Plans affecting over 10,000 employees.
- 12 schools are benefiting from Safer Journeys to School schemes.
- The percentage of main roads in need of repair has reduced from 25% to 13%.
- A wide range of road safety and improvement schemes implemented, achieving reductions in casualty figures and improved facilities especially for children, the disabled and other vulnerable highway users.
- Implementation of Variable Message Signs around the town centre and seafront to reduce congestion and provide for the efficient management of traffic seeking available car parking spaces.

You said that you would like to see:  
*The development of sustainable neighbourhoods with an improved transport infrastructure.*

- 100% of additional housing is provided on previously developed land and through the conversion of existing buildings.
- Quicker response to remove abandoned vehicles. For example in the year 2001/2002 on average 9.5 vehicles were moved each working day, compared with 4.7 vehicles in 2000/2001.
- 100% noise complaints were responded to within the targeted time during 2001/2002.

## Challenges we face

- To protect and enhance wildlife reserves and sites and encourage the care for wildlife.
- To reduce waste and increase recycling.
- To reduce congestion and improve accessibility to and from the town.
- To improve transport services and widen travel choice through quality integrated facilities and services.
- To enable the airport to prosper without adverse effects on the environment and our heritage.
- To improve the safety for users of all modes of transport and accessibility to everyday facilities.
- To achieve quality new development and significant improvement in the public realm.

## What is planned for the future

- Implementing the local biodiversity action plan, which will identify targets and actions for a range of wildlife habitats and individual species.
- Implementing the Essex and Southend Waste Local Plan and Waste Management Strategy, in particular through waste reduction and significant increases in the level and amount of recycling and composting.
- Implementing and reviewing the five-year Local Transport Plan to 2005/2006 and its subsequent reviews, including completion of the Major Scheme (A13/A127), quality improvements to public transport provision, completion of the cycling and walking networks, and expansion of the successful walking bus scheme as part of the Safer Journeys to School programme.
- Developing and implementation of major transport improvements as part of the Thames Gateway initiatives and regional Transport Strategy.
- A decision on the future of the airport.

Full details on how the community priorities will be achieved and their link with the national priorities can be found in the **'Environmentally Aware – Action Plan'** contained at the back of the document.

## Our targets

- To **meet** the targets for the protection and enhancement of a range of individual species and wildlife habitats within the Local Biodiversity Action Plan over the next 10 years.
- To **increase** the proportion of household waste recycled or composted.
- To keep **traffic growth below 11%** from its 1999 level of 1.5 million vehicle kilometres per average weekday.
- To **reduce** the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents.
- To **increase** the number of bus passenger journeys.
- To **have** workplace travel plans in place at the town's major employment sites and School Travel Plans at 35 schools in Southend.





# Supportive Community

Our ambition –

*‘Better life chances for vulnerable people’*

You said that you would like to see:  
*The quality of life for vulnerable people in Southend improved.*

There are many vulnerable people in Southend. For example, people with a disability, older people, children and young people and the homeless, who in certain times of their life need extra help and support.



## Did you know?

- During 2001/2002, a total of 4,684 adults received services for disabilities, comprising 2,905 for physical and sensory disabilities, 1,331 for mental health disabilities and 448 for learning disabilities.
- There are approximately 15,000 carers in Southend.
- On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2002, 249 children were being looked after and 74 children were on the Child Protection Register.
- There are approximately 75,000 dwellings within the town.

The statutory agencies and the voluntary sector are working together to provide services to vulnerable residents through the Joint Health and Community Service Board and the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership. Our approach is to help vulnerable people to live independently, to achieve their potential and to enable them to contribute to the success of our town. Our services include, and are not all aimed exclusively at, vulnerable people:

- Six day centres and residential homes in Southend that provide care and support for adults with a physical, sensory, learning and mental health disability.
- Eight community centres.
- 6,491 council houses and flats in the town.
- 2,882 housing association houses and flats within the town.
- Five homeless hostels with 68 bed spaces.
- 808 dwellings were let by the Council and housing associations to those in housing need in the Borough in 2001/2002.
- Three Area Housing Offices where residents can obtain advice and information on housing issues and pay their rent and Council Tax.
- Advice services, including the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), Victim Support and Relate.
- Private sector housing services include the management of empty homes, property condition, houses in multiple occupation, disabled adaptations and nuisance in the private sector.



### Achievements so far

- Established an Area Child Protection Committee, which introduced robust child protection procedures.
- A new Foster Care scheme and an Adoption scheme for older children has been launched.
- An increase in the number of children, looked after by the Council who left school with a qualification.
- After Care and Youth Support Team established offering support and assistance to care leavers and vulnerable young people.
- OneVoice - a unique young persons consultative forum has been established engaging young people to have their say.
- Reduction in the number of people whose transfer from hospital was delayed.
- Development in intermediate care facilities – helping adults young and old to recover more quickly from hospital treatment and getting them back home.
- Learning Disability Partnership Board established to develop services and opportunities for local people.
- Access to low floor buses at all bus stops and disabled facilities at 96% of crossings in Southend.
- Council Tenant Participation Compact in partnership with tenants' groups has been produced.
- Council Tenants' handbook has been produced.
- Increase in the number of homeless households rehoused in secure accommodation.
- Range of information is available to support residents e.g. leaflets on services for looked after children, Rough Guide to Services for Young People, Teenage Pregnancy card, a housing and money advice service for all residents.

## Challenges we face

- To provide services to vulnerable people in a fair and accessible way.
- To provide services that promotes independence.
- To provide more joined up working between personal and universal services.
- To engage disaffected young people.
- To meet the national Decent Homes Standard.
- To provide more public and private accommodation and to reduce homelessness.
- To improve the management and quality of the housing stock in the town.
- To recruit and retain social care staff.
- To improve private sector housing conditions to enable decent homes to be available for all.

## What is planned for the future

- Protection of vulnerable children and young people to be continued.
- Providing high quality care for adults to help them live independently and in their own homes.
- Providing better access to public transport and buildings for people with disabilities.
- Initiatives to identify young people who are at risk of becoming disaffected.
- Recruiting more social care staff.
- Improving the Council's and social housing stock to meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2010.
- Promoting more choice in the allocation of Council housing and developing a strategy for affordable accommodation to meet the town's housing needs.
- Preventing families from being placed in bed and breakfast accommodation.
- Implementing a survey on the private sector property condition to inform the new Housing Assistance Regime.
- Effective advice and information for all.



## Our targets

- To **increase** the percentage of care leavers who have been supported in terms of education, training and employment.
- To **increase** the percentage of children and young people who are looked after by the Council who have obtained at least 1 GCSE at grades A\* - G or GNVQ.
- To **increase** the adoption of children and young people who are looked after by the Council.
- To **maintain** at 100% the percentage of child protection cases that have been reviewed.
- To **reduce** the number of properties that do not meet the national set decent home standard.
- To **reduce** the number of families living in bed and breakfast accommodation.
- To **reduce** the proportion of unfit private sector dwellings.
- To **increase** the number and range of affordable homes available to reflect the level and range of identified housing need.



Full details on how the community priorities will be achieved and their link with the national priorities can be found in the **'Supportive Community – Action Plan'** contained at the back of the document.

# Cultural Community

Our ambition – ‘A cultural capital of the East of England by 2010’

**S**outhend-on-Sea has a unique cultural character and is a diverse community. The town is home to many faith communities and ethnic minorities including Indian, Chinese, Pakistani and Bangladeshi, as well as providing residence for refugees from all over the world. In addition there is a large and active voluntary arts, sports and cultural sector, which is supported by the Southend Arts, Sports and Play Councils. Southend-on-Sea is situated on seven miles of sea and foreshore with award winning open spaces, gardens, heritage and conservation sites such as Old Leigh, Shoebury Ranges and Prittlewell Priory.

You said that you would like to see:

The image of Southend improved and what it has to offer promoted and enhanced.

The town has a wide range of sports, leisure and cultural facilities, which are a mix of public, private and voluntary sector provision. Many are of regional significance and already contribute to Southend's ambition to become a regional cultural capital. They attract over 5.4 million visitors a year.

## Did you know?

- Southend Pier is the longest pleasure pier in the world.
- There are three theatres in Southend - the Cliffs Pavilion, the Palace Theatre and the New Empire.
- Southend has four museums, an art gallery and the regionally renowned Focal Point Gallery and Digital Workroom.
- The foreshore is used to host a range of major events, for example Southend Carnival, the Illuminations and the largest 'free' airshow in Europe.
- There are a wide variety of attractions, for example Adventure Island, Sealife Adventure, the Kursaal, Southend Discovery Centre and three casinos Westcliff, Spielers and the Rendezvous.
- Southend has one of the country's top-performing library services.
- The town has its own professional football team, Southend United Football Club, called the Blues.
- The Thames estuary provides a magnificent setting for a variety of water based sports and activities.
- English is not the only language that is spoken in the town. Other languages frequently spoken include Shona, Cantonese and Punjabi.

## Achievements so far

- An increase in the volume and value of tourism to Southend. For instance in 1998 the Economic Impact of Tourism identified 4.4 million day visits and 869,000 bed nights spent by staying visitors, with a total spend of £136 million. By 2000 this had increased to 5.4 million day visitors and 1,200,000 bed nights spent by staying visitors, with a total spend of £185 million.
- Significant financial investment in the Pier including a new RNLI Lifeboat Station and sundeck.
- The creation of a new Jubilee beach between the Pier and Lynton Road which has not only improved sea defences, but has also delivered an important new leisure resource and attraction for the town.

*All our local treasures need to be up lifted, the Pier, parks and Old Leigh. Look at our assets.*  
Local Resident

- An electronic parking management scheme giving details of car parking spaces available in the town centre and seafront.
- 'Being Here', an Arts Generate social inclusion project involving young people, has been identified as a model of national good practice. The projects are designed to target deprivation and boost regeneration through arts activity and tackle issues like drugs, alcohol abuse and teenage pregnancy.
- Gold Medal at the Chelsea Flower Show in 2002/2003 and Anglia-in-Bloom and Britain in Bloom awards.
- Green Flag awards for Priory, Chalkwell, Belfairs and Southchurch Parks.
- Recognition by the Best Value Inspection Service of Southend-on-Sea Borough Councils parks and open spaces section, for providing a good, two star service with excellent prospects for improvement.
- Three Blue Flag awards for Shoebury Common Beach, Three Shells Beach and Leigh Bell Wharf Beach as well as Beach Management Awards.
- Four Quest accredited Sports and Leisure facilities.

## Challenges we face

- To be recognised as a regional cultural capital by 2010.
- To re-develop and enhance the Pier and the foreshore to become a world class recognised landmark.
- To secure investment to maintain and improve our cultural assets and infrastructure.
- To improve the positive image and perception of Southend and South Essex.
- To ensure arts activity makes an improved contribution to the social regeneration of Southend.
- To sustain and increase the impact, value and volume of tourism in the Borough.



## What is planned for the future

- Re-developing and regenerating the Pier and creating an internationally significant tourist and leisure attraction – an icon for the Thames Gateway in the 21st Century.
- Regenerating the historic Southend Cliff Gardens.
- Re-developing the Cliffs Pavilion to become a No.1 receiving house and a landmark statement of cultural and artistic excellence.
- Investing in the leisure and cultural infrastructure including swimming and sports facilities.
- Developing and implementing a Tourism and Marketing Strategy.
- Installing major pieces of high quality image breaking public art, which will signal Southend's new identity as a vibrant creative town.
- Working in partnership with the East England Arts to deliver the Arts Generate programme including the expansion of the 'Being Here' project to other areas in Southend and creating a major new regional Design Fair.
- Creating new hotel facilities and the upgrading of guest house facilities.
- Attracting major conferences to the town.

## Our targets

- New Pier entrance to be **completed**.
- Further development of the Pier to be **secured**.
- The **restoration and regeneration** of the historic Southend Cliff Gardens to be completed.
- **Redevelopment** of Cliffs Pavilion (Phase 2) to be completed.
- New swimming and sports facilities to be **developed**.
- To **increase** the number of green flag awards for parks in Southend.
- Major pieces of public art to be **commissioned and installed** in the town.
- 'Being Here' project to be **rolled out** to cover Kursaal, St Lukes, Victoria and Shoeburyness.
- Design Fair to be **created, delivered** and it's success criteria met.
- At least one new quality hotel to be **completed and opened**.
- Major conferences to be **attracted and held** in the town.

Full details on how the community priorities will be achieved and their link with the national priorities can be found in the '**Cultural Community – Action Plan**' contained at the back of the document.





