

Pride in our past, confidence in our future



County Durham's

Sustainable Community Strategy

2008-2023

DRAFT: Summary for Consultation

Passionate about County Durham

What is a Sustainable Community Strategy?

The Government want us to create thriving, vibrant, sustainable communities which will improve everyone's quality of life. We try to do this by setting out our ambitions for the county in our Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).

The 2008-2023 SCS sets the long-term vision for County Durham; it describes what we want the county to be like in 2023 and the types of things we will do over the next 15 years to make sure we achieve what we set out to.

The SCS is mainly focused the county's residents, but also looks at how we can improve the county for people who come here to work, study, visit and invest.

The county council and its partners have worked together as the County Durham Partnership to produce this SCS. The County Durham Partnership includes all County Durham Councils, Durham Police Constabulary, County Durham Primary Care Trust, County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service, JobCentre Plus, local partnerships and other public, private, community and voluntary sector organisations working together to improve the quality of life for the people of County Durham.

Working in partnership means we are less likely to duplicate work, saving tax-payers money, and allows us to focus our resources on the areas that need them most.

We have recognised seven important themes in our SCS that link to our vision:

We want County Durham to be a place where people are **healthy** and **safe**, able to **enjoy** their lives and **achieve** their potential, whilst making a **positive contribution** to their community and enjoying the opportunities that strong **economic growth** will bring. We recognise that the '**physical place**' (where people live) makes an important contribution to their quality of life and feelings of safety and wellbeing, so we will also focus on things like decent, affordable housing, a clean and green environment and accessible transport.

We also recognise our global responsibilities in County Durham's contribution towards tackling climate change.

A lot of work has taken place to identify the most important challenges for the county, that all partners want to tackle by working together, but now we need your help!

For the SCS to be a success we need to make sure that we are concentrating on the issues that matter most to local people. We want our residents to understand what we are doing and why we are doing it. That's why we're asking for your views.

The rest of this booklet gives you an idea of our long-term goals, the types of things we will do to achieve them and lets you know how you can get involved.

County Durham: 2008 to 2023...

Our vision...



A county where strong economic growth is matched with a community that believes in itself and aims high, and where everyone can achieve to their potential and enjoy a high quality of life



Our guiding principles...

place shaping

...everything we do should contribute to our vision of the kind of place we want County Durham to be, and what will make it different and unique from other places

equal and inclusive

... we will work to ensure that all individuals and communities are equally valued and treated fairly with services that are accessible and relevant to their needs

sustainability

...we want everything we do to have long lasting benefits for ourselves and future generations. We need to ensure that we don't improve some issues or areas at the expense of others

gap narrowing

...we want to reduce inequalities between different parts of the county and different sections of the community

aspirations

...we should aim to excel in certain fields, setting challenging but realistic goals, so that County Durham is known for its outstanding successes

How will we do it?

All members of County Durham Partnership are committed to making a real difference in County Durham. We want to improve the quality of life for all of our residents and make County Durham an even better place to be, now and in the future.

We have achieved many things by working together such as:

- ☆ attracting £35 million investment to the North East Technology Park (NETPark) in Sedgefield;
- ☆ reducing the number of 16-18 year olds not in employment, education or training by 50%;
- ☆ increasing life expectancy;
- ☆ setting up the County Durham Local Involvement Network (LINK) to help local people have their say in health and social care services;
- ☆ reducing the amount of household waste generated by local people.

But we still need to do more - We want to build on our achievements and make County Durham known for its outstanding successes. We have looked at lots of evidence about the county including areas where we can improve our performance; local people's views; had many debates and discussions (and much more) to identify the things we think need to change in County Durham over the next 15 years.

The Local Area Agreement

Every three years we will produce a Local Area Agreement (LAA) which will identify the most pressing priorities for the county.

We have just developed County Durham's second LAA which sets out improvement targets for the issues we need to tackle and we will direct our work and funding towards achieving these

The 2008-2011 LAA covers a wide range of issues including things like: tackling anti-social behaviour; reducing teenage pregnancies; improving street cleanliness and reducing children's obesity.

Developing and reviewing the LAA will allow us to concentrate on the issues that really need improving in County Durham and keep us on track to achieve our long-term goals and ultimately, our vision for County Durham in 2023.

You can view County Durham's 2008-2011 LAA at www.durhamlaa.org.uk.

Economic Wellbeing

Our long-term goals... We want County Durham to be a place with

- **a modern, dynamic and diverse economy**
- **improved employability and workforce skills**
- **an enterprising and entrepreneurial society**
- **improved competitive effectiveness of our major towns**
- **a reduction in poverty**

To do this, we will...

Make our businesses more competitive and productive by supporting a countywide, high quality business support service

Increase the number of businesses in the county by helping new and established firms to survive and grow

Attract more tourists for longer stays by supporting the development of quality tourism products across the county

Help more people to set up new businesses by encouraging the development of new businesses through the actions within the County Durham Enterprise Strategy

Increase the number of people who are self-employed by encouraging and supporting individuals and groups to set up in business

Improve the skills of the workforce and reduce worklessness by ensuring that more people are qualified to levels that will help them to get better paid jobs

Increase average earnings by improving the opportunities for those on out of work benefits to move into training and employment

Develop town centres so they are more attractive and successful by further developing the Durham City Vision, the regeneration of Seaham town centre and North Docks, the Barnard Castle Vision, Bishop Auckland Masterplanning and plans to improve Stanhope Market Town

Make sure communities can access the goods and services they need by using available funding to best effect and supporting long term, lasting improvements

Did you know...

☆ Business survival rates in the county, at both one and three years, exceed the national average

Achieve

Our long-term goals... We want County Durham to be a place with

- improved attainment in education and work
- more young people involved in employment, education or training
- increased levels of adult education and skills

To do this, we will...

Improve educational attainment for all young people (up to 19 years old) by helping young people to achieve during their school career and reach their full potential

Have high quality, accessible learning establishments by completing the Building Schools for the Future and Primary Capital programmes

Ensure all of our schools and learning establishments are performing well through a programme of monitoring, intervention and support

Support and encourage 16-18 year olds to take part in learning by providing high quality information, advice and guidance

Increase the number of employment opportunities with planned training by raising awareness with employers of the importance of workforce development and working to increase the number of apprenticeships available to young people

Offer a wider range of courses that are accessible to young people by effectively implementing the national diploma* programme

Support more adults to achieve a level 3 qualification (equivalent to A level standard) or higher by providing all communities with access to broadband and up to date IT facilities

Provide more opportunities for adults to take part in learning, further education and training by working closely with training providers, colleges and employers

Did you know...

- ☆ The county's improvement in GCSE results in 2007 was better than the national average for the eighth year running
- ☆ Two national initiatives, Building Schools for the Future and the Primary Capital Programme, are being implemented, aimed at rebuilding, remodelling or refurbishing our schools to create 21st century learning environments

* National Diploma courses are being developed to cover a wide range of subjects which are mainly work-related.

Physical Place

- Our long-term goals...** We want County Durham to be a place with
- a high quality, clean, green, attractive and accessible environment
 - a high quality local built and historic environment that meets the needs of communities
 - sustainable housing, both to buy and rent, that meets people's needs, in particular those of vulnerable groups
 - better choice and access to sustainable and co-ordinated transport networks
 - a balanced natural environment with a reduced impact on climate change

To do this, we will...

Improve public satisfaction with environmental and street cleanliness by reducing the amount of litter, graffiti and fly-posting

Develop and maintain a healthy natural environment by actively managing and improving local wildlife sites to support a wide range of animals and plant life

Make the county's countryside accessible to all by maintaining and publicising countryside routes

Make the centres of our towns and villages more attractive by continuing to develop the Urban and Rural Renaissance Initiative

Make sure building development is well-designed and provides good access to services for communities by encouraging and promoting good design standards; developing high quality plans for important growth and conservation areas; making sure local planning contributes to a good quality of life, both now and in the future

Look after and improve our historic sites and buildings by making sure we have effective local planning arrangements

Physical Place

To do this, we will...

Increase the number of warm, weatherproof homes with modern facilities by improving and replacing council housing that isn't up to standard; tackling fuel poverty

Offer a wide choice of affordable homes by improving the number and range available

Reduce the number of homeless people by helping people living in temporary accommodation into permanent homes

Provide a high quality and efficient road system by maintaining, improving and further developing the existing network to a high standard

Provide and promote accessible, sustainable and safe transport by improving access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling; carrying out the actions contained within the second Local Transport Plan

Protect our natural resources by working to reduce the amount of household waste and increasing recycling, re-use and composting

Reduce the amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere by working to reduce emissions from households, buildings and transport; developing and supporting low carbon businesses

Take steps to cope with climate change by reducing the risk of flooding and coastal erosion; developing ways to cope with extreme and unexpected weather events

Look after and improve the county's landscape and range of plants and animals by making the improvements set out in the county's Landscape Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan

Did you know...

- ☆ Community surveys show that local people see clean streets as a high priority in making their area a good place to live
- ☆ During 2005/06 partnership working through the Urban and Rural Renaissance Initiative saw the completion of 27 improvement schemes in major centres, smaller towns, villages and neighbourhoods in County Durham

Health and Wellbeing

Our long-term goal... We want County Durham to be a place where **all residents lead long and healthy lives**

To do this, we will...

Increase the number of residents enjoying physical wellbeing by helping more people to stop smoking; tackling obesity in adults and children through promoting physical exercise and healthy eating; addressing alcohol and drug misuse; continuing to reduce teenage pregnancy rates

Reduce death rates by tackling the major causes of poor health so that we start to have an impact on the biggest causes of death in the county - cancers, heart disease and strokes

Increase the numbers of residents enjoying mental wellbeing by helping people with mental health issues to access education, volunteering, training or employment so that they can play a full role in society

Ensure that we support and protect vulnerable people by helping people to continue living independently in suitable accommodation; providing first class care, support and rehabilitation services to all of our residents

Did you know...

- ☆ Life expectancy in the county is rising
- ☆ Older people have been working with a range of partners to develop the 'Living well in later life' strategy, which will deliver improved services to support older people's choices
- ☆ Smoking is the major cause of lower life expectancy and higher cancer and heart disease rates

Our long-term goal... We want County Durham to be a place where **everyone is safe and feels safe**

To do this, we will...

Make communities feel safer from crime and anti-social behaviour by working to address people's concerns about anti-social behaviour, parental control of children, drunk or rowdy behaviour and drug misuse in their area; reducing the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system; increasing young people's participation in positive activities

Reduce the number of violent crimes by focusing on assaults leading to injury and other serious violent offences

Tackle domestic abuse by increasing the number of Domestic Abuse Reduction Schemes across the county for high risk victims

Reduce harm caused by alcohol by working to prevent alcohol-related admissions to hospital and assaults leading to injury

Reduce re-offending by focusing on prolific and priority offenders, adults under probation supervision and young offenders; increasing the number of drug users in effective treatment; engaging young offenders in suitable education, training and employment; improving access to suitable accommodation for young offenders

Ensure we have safer roads to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in traffic accidents

Did you know...

- ☆ The Durham City Nightsafe Initiative is helping to manage the city's night-time economy so that problems are effectively dealt with and the streets are safer at night
- ☆ It is estimated that 10% of offenders are responsible for 50% of all crime committed

Enjoy

Our long-term goal... We want County Durham to be a place where **culture, leisure and sporting opportunities meet the needs and aspirations of the community**

To do this, we will...

Encourage and help more residents to take part in:

Leisure activities by ensuring all residents have access to a range of activities that meet their needs;

Cultural activities by developing high quality, accessible cultural facilities and activities that help to promote understanding, tolerance and respect between generations as well as between different social, ethnic and cultural communities;

Sporting opportunities by offering a range of activities, available to all residents, that meets their needs

Did you know...

- ☆ Local research consistently reveals that both young people and adults feel that there should be more places to go and things to do for young people
- ☆ Cultural regeneration and activity can bring economic benefits to an area, enhancing its attractiveness to businesses and their customers
- ☆ The Cultural Hubs Durham pilot, links young people, through their schools, into cultural 'treasures' of the region

Positive Contribution

Our long-term goals... We want County Durham to be a place with - **a vibrant and sustainable voluntary and community sector**
- **strong, close-knit communities**

To do this, we will...

Support the voluntary and community sector by investing in the organisations that support voluntary and community groups and involving them in planning and delivering local services

Encourage positive attitudes and behaviours in relation to diversity by encouraging respect and tolerance within and between communities

Ensure people can make a positive contribution to their local community by providing opportunities for all sections of the community to be involved in decisions that affect them; promoting and supporting volunteering; giving young people the chance to be involved in their communities and to have their views listened to

Did you know...

- ☆ There are around 1360 volunteers in County Durham with 33% of people saying that they volunteer between 2 - 5 hours per week - adding up to as many as 23, 800 volunteering hours per year
- ☆ More than 9,000 young people in Derwentside have been involved in the SPICE project, which is helping to nurture a new generation of informed, confident young people helping to shape the future of their communities. Derwentside District Council achieved Beacon Status for Positive Youth Engagement.

Thank You!

...for taking the time to read about our new Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).

During the consultation period (14 July - 30 September 2008) we want to find out what people think about the new Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) so we've set a number of questions, such as:

- ☆ Do you think that our long-term vision for the future of County Durham will make it an even better place to be?
- ☆ Do you think that the things we are going to do in each theme will help us to make County Durham a better place to be in the future?
- ☆ Is there anything that isn't covered in the SCS that you think will help us to make County Durham a better place to be in the future?
- ☆ Of all of the long-term goals in the strategy which ones would be your 'top 3' - The three things that you think will make the most difference in County Durham, and help us to make it a place where people want to live, work, study, visit and invest, now and in the future

If you'd like to **get involved and have your say** we want to make it as easy as possible for you.

You can either fill in a consultation questionnaire and post it back to us (our address is on the back of this summary), visit our website at www.durhamlaa.org.uk, email your views to countydurhampartnership@durham.gov.uk or call into your local library, where you can either go online for free or pick up a consultation questionnaire.

If you'd like to get involved then please send us your views by 30 September 2008.

We'll carefully consider all feedback that we receive and use it to help us develop the final SCS that we will publish in October.

Pride in our past, confidence in our future

If you'd like to get involved in our Sustainable Community Strategy consultation then we'd love to hear from you.

You can:

Visit our **website** at: www.durhamlaa.org.uk

Write to us at: Durham County Council, Corporate Communications, FREEPOST NEA109333, Durham, DH1 5BR (You don't need a stamp)

Call us on: 0191 370 8795

Email us at: countydurhampartnership@durham.gov.uk

A copy of the draft Sustainable Community Strategy, this summary and consultation questionnaires are available at your local library. Remember, you also get free internet access at your local library so you can send us your views online!

If you'd like to have your say, please get in touch before 30 September 2008.

If you need this information summarised in another language or format such as Braille or talking tape, please call the number below.

إذا اردت معرفت ملخص هذه المعلومات باللغة العربية اتصل علي الرقم التالي

Arabic

আকারে এই তথ্যটি পেতে নিচের নম্বরে ফোন করুন:

Bengali

假如您需要這份資料的中文摘要，請致電下面的號碼。

Chinese

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات اردو میں درکار ہیں تو اس نمبر پر کال کیجیے۔

Urdu

Jezeli potrzebujesz streszczenia tych informacji w jezyku polskim zadzwon prosze na ponizszy numer

Polish

ਜਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਿਚੋੜ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਥੱਲੇ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Punjabi

यदि आप यह जानकारी का संक्षेप हिन्दी में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निचे दिए हुए नम्बर में सम्पर्क करें।

Hindi



(0191) 370 8795