

Milton Keynes Local Strategic Partnership

MK: new futures

Milton Keynes Community Strategy: Our Handbook for Change 2004-2034

© EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To follow in Final Draft, designed as stand-alone, user-friendly, Plain English overview for wider distribution

© FOREWORD

To follow in Final Draft, to be signed by all LSP members (or LSP Board at least)

INTRODUCTION

● **A powerful statement**

This is our Community Strategy for Milton Keynes. It is a powerful statement of our vision and commitment for success as the UK's most modern, new city. We want to create sustainable communities in the Milton Keynes area. This is our handbook for the work we have to do together to champion quality of life as the next 30 years bring continued, and substantial, growth in our area's size and complexity.

<Map of whole borough and context>

● **Our guiding role**

As the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) we believe our role is to guide a united approach in delivering a sustainable and exciting future for Milton Keynes. By 2034 Milton Keynes will be the engine of a vibrant city-region; with potentially 80,000



more inhabitants than we have today in 2004. Change on this scale requires careful management, strong leadership and outstanding partnership across today – and tomorrow's – complex map of agencies, strategies and plans. That is our job. Our role as the LSP for the Milton Keynes area is to provide the forum through which citizens, businesses and service-providers work collaboratively to secure the quality of life to which we all aspire.

● **The strategy's purpose**

MK: new futures articulates the values we believe to be fundamental to life in Milton Keynes and the standards by which we want to judge our quality of life. Its purpose is to set the framework for the way we work together in achieving sustainable development, making good

and effective decisions to achieve our common goals. It therefore identifies the issues the LSP is best positioned to lead or champion, and provides a set of clear actions against which progress can be constantly monitored and shared.

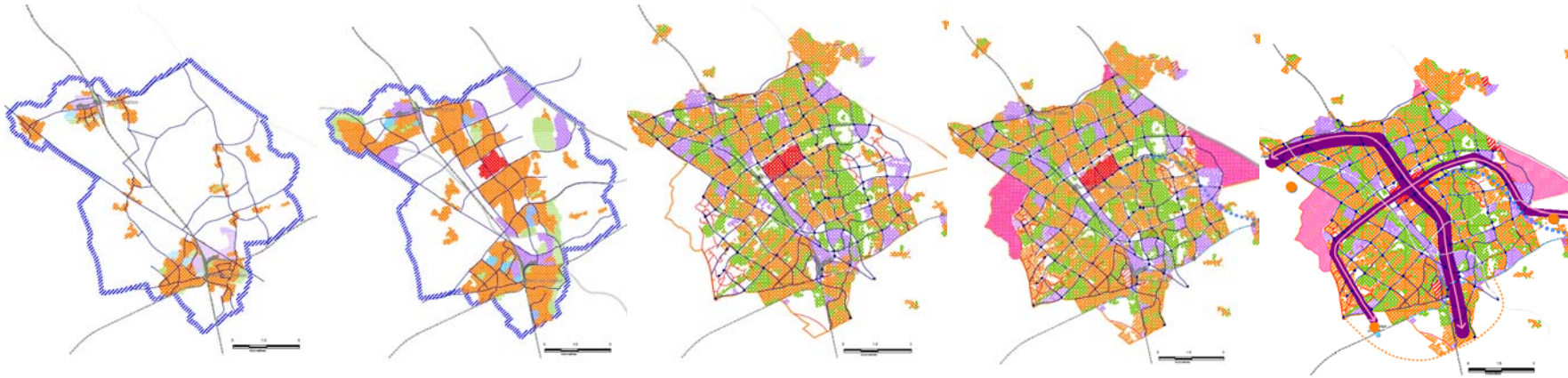
● **Our visioning process**

Working with our consultants, we have listened to a wide range of organisations and residents within the borough to shape our vision as 'one voice'. A visioning summit of key leaders and a series of focus groups and community planning events were key drivers of our vision and strategy. Designed as a flexible tool for managing change, we will monitor and update the strategy on a regular basis during its lifetime – ensuring that we continue to engage, listen, share and debate together as we do so.

HOW WE'VE GOT HERE

● **Historic growth of a unique new town**

Milton Keynes is at a pivotal moment in its history. Over 30 years ago the vision of planners and politicians gave birth to Milton Keynes, a new concept in urban living. Now with further growth planned – including over 30,000 new homes – as part of the Government's plan for creating new sustainable communities in the South East, our area faces a new set of challenges in the 21st Century.



The Designated Area As Existing At April 1969

The First Ten Year Plan in 1980

The Plan in 2001

The next 10 years (up to 2011)

The Next 15 years (up to 2016)

The Designated Area, as defined by the Minister of Housing and Local Government in 1967, is almost 9,000 hectares (22,000 acres). It includes the then existing towns of Bletchley, Stony Stratford, Wolverton and New Bradwell, together with thirteen villages and the Brickfields to the south west of Bletchley.

The city has grown from around 40,000 in 1967 to nearly 175,000 in 2001 (nearly 210,000 in the Borough as a whole) with a commercial and retail hub serving 31 million shoppers each year. It is also now a major employment centre with over 5,200 businesses and over 96,000 jobs.

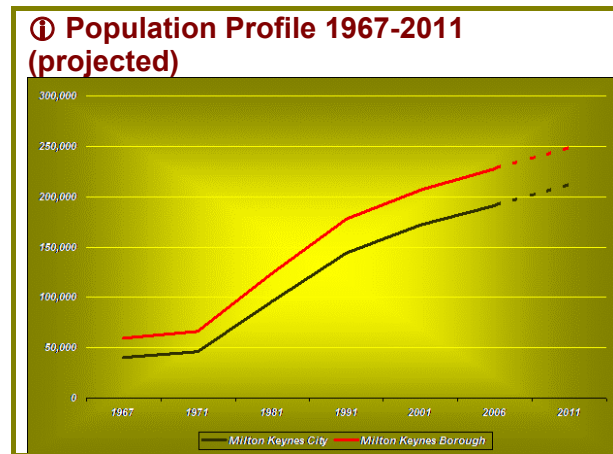
● **The original 1970 plan for MK**

The original New Town Master Plan concept established a flexible framework for development rather than a predetermined proposal. Neighbourhoods were planned as far as possible.

Planning of the new city was related to clear and explicit social, economic and physical goals that describe and define the character of the life that the new city should aim to provide. The plan featured these six goals:

- Opportunity and freedom of choice;

- Easy movement and access and good communications;
- Balance and variety;
- An attractive city;
- Public awareness and participation; and
- Efficient and imaginative use of resources.



● **The plans for the next 30 years**

Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG, March 2001) identified the general area of Milton Keynes and the South Midlands as one of the 4 potential growth areas in the South East of England. The Milton Keynes and South Midlands Study commissioned in July 2001 and

published in September 2002 concluded that the study area has considerable potential for sustainable economic growth over the next 30 years that will be of both local and national benefit.

The Government's Sustainable Communities Plan (February 2003) sets out where the new and expanded communities are needed. These should be sustainable, well-designed, high quality and attractive places in which people will choose to live and work.

A draft Sub-Regional Strategy at the time of writing is being considered by a Panel, following a Public Inquiry. If adopted, it recommends an additional 33,900 homes by 2016 in our area.

A Local Delivery Vehicle (LDV) – the Milton Keynes Partnership Committee (MKPC) – has been established to co-ordinate and implement the delivery of future growth in Milton Keynes. It will be given powers to oversee the planning of the major growth areas.

● **How was this strategy prepared?**

Our consultants spent considerable time with the people who live and work here to

understand local values and aspirations for our area. Workshops with representatives of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors were held in September 2003. This was a time of listening; considering what matters most to people in planning the next 30 years, and what issues might undermine success. Focus Groups with residents, young people, older people, family groups and faith communities were also facilitated, focusing on the values different parts of our community thought should characterise Milton Keynes in the future. The ‘pinnacle’ of this community and stakeholder involvement process was a Visioning Summit of city leaders and a roadshow of community planning events.

● Visioning Summit

The *MK: new futures* Visioning Summit brought together senior representatives from organisations as diverse as the local Chamber of Commerce, Police, NHS, Parks Trust and Council of Voluntary Organisations in January 2004 for an intense day and a half of creative thinking. *“Milton Keynes is a pioneering city; a city in adolescence...now is the time to be bold again and to mature...”* was the opening message at the summit. The event was energetic, and generated radical thinking

about the next 30 years based on shared visions. <Append summary, *Summit Soundings*>



The summit was held at a pivotal time in the development of the Community Strategy. Conversations evolved into four core ideas, creating a ‘value framework’ for the strategy:

- ☺ **Plug in** – accessibility, opportunity, engagement
- ☺ **Flex** – contemporary, adaptive, inventive
- ☺ **Play** – smart risk, convivial, long game
- ☺ **Grow to learn** – physical capacity and better platforms for social and intellectual capacity.

● Community Roadshow

Taking with it the emerging concepts and priorities from the Visioning Summit, the consultant team toured neighbourhoods and villages around our area, attracting a wide variety of people of all ages and views. Culminating in Central MK, a major event was held in March 2004 incorporating interactive zones, voting games and a ‘graffiti stage’ highlighting the future of neighbourhoods, public services and citizen engagement.



● What did people say?

A wealth of ideas and opinions was gleaned from the whole dialoguing process. These stand out:

- ☺ Better public transport, i.e. faster, safer, more affordable, more frequent, longer operational hours;

- ☺ Neighbourhoods lack a physical and community heart; MK lacks a cultural heart worthy of a city
- ☺ Maintain the greenness of MK – its key attractor to many people
- ☺ A real city also needs a university and its own football league team;



- ☺ More leisure centres, social places and community facilities especially for young people and children;
- ☺ Need new or improved hospital and expanded doctors' services;
- ☺ Lack of decent and quality affordable housing; and

- ☺ Creating 'community' needs to be an integral part of future housing and infrastructure.

Further analysis is given in Annex A.

OUR VISION FOR MILTON KEYNES

Sustainable development, successful economy and satisfying services

We will work together to create a sustainable City that will grow and mature into one of Europe's premier cities, leading the way in environmentally-responsible development and exemplar services.

It will be the economic driving force and cultural heart of a prosperous rural hinterland and city-region with a high quality of life for all.

It will be a City whose reputation for innovation and talent is extended globally.

Cohesive communities, collaborative spirit and creative energy

We will work together in Milton Keynes to create confident, cosmopolitan and cohesive communities, engaging them in everything we do.

We will proactively support diversity and equality of opportunity among our communities, giving priority to those areas or social groups in greater need.

We will do this in an attitude of co-operation, openness and honesty, developing the pioneering culture and creative energy by which we wish Milton Keynes' people, businesses and services to be known and experienced.

Fresh space, fun places and frontier design and technology

We will work together to sustain the City and its rural hinterland as safe, clean, fresh and green.

Its towns, villages, neighbourhoods and spaces will be desirable, fun, affordable and accessible places for living, working, playing and visiting, connected with each other by a network of energy-efficient routes and community hubs.

Our places will demonstrate world-class distinctive, inventive and sustainable design and be flexible to allow for spontaneity, cutting-edge technology and future uncertainties including climactic change.

We will plan and design together to ensure they are demographically balanced, mixed-use living areas with a clear sense of identity and wellbeing for all. They will be soulful not soulless.

© OUR APPROACH – VISION INTO ACTION

● Foundation principles

Our vision and common goals are based on the following foundation principles that we have established through our visioning process. We will apply these to all that we do and create, whether collectively or individually:

- ☺ **Connecting** – making it easy to ‘plug in’ to MK, transforming accessibility, promoting opportunity and facilitating dialogue among citizens and businesses
- ☺ **Adapting** – being flexible, contemporary, inventive and adaptive in how we behave, and in what we do and build
- ☺ **Innovating** – experimenting and taking intelligent risks, behaving convivially, and being committed to the ‘long game’ (that is, to 2034)
- ☺ **Learning** – learn to grow and grow to learn in MK, listening to our customers and citizens, developing our area’s physical and social capacities, and continuously learning from what we know and do as our population expands.

We will align our respective strategies, plans and programmes to reflect these foundation principles and will champion them among those we serve and those we do business with, including the Milton Keynes Partnership Committee.

● Priority pillars

In particular, we will work in partnership to apply our foundation principles to priority areas of action. We call these ‘priority pillars’ as they will support the achievement of our vision and common goals. We have identified the following four:

1. **Reinventing our City, Places and Spaces** – promoting and positioning MK as a leading UK city in our globalising world; developing distinctive, high quality and healthy environments locally which support sustainable, cohesive communities
2. **Delivering Exemplar Services** – developing and delivering responsive, high quality services which encourage social inclusion and good quality of life for those who live and work here; involving citizens proactively in service management
3. **Facilitating Active Communities** – supporting opportunities for everyone to be involved fully in all aspects of life in Milton Keynes and in decision-making about its future
4. **Managing Change** – establishing a clear process for the LSP to effectively implement and monitor this Strategy; promoting an open and transparent approach to ensure success in achieving our vision.

© OUR STRATEGY AT-A-GLANCE

This section shows how we have used the four foundation principles to help us identify some clear priorities and activities for each of the four priority pillars.

	Connecting	Adapting	Innovating	Learning
Reinventing our City, Places & Spaces	Designing and Planning Together Working together to promote sustainable development	Tackling the Problem Parts Improving existing areas and promoting modern community facilities	Being a Modern City Developing facilities appropriate to needs of a modern city	Creating New Places & Spaces Fostering public knowledge and involvement in design
Delivering Exemplar Services	Getting About Easily Tackling our current and future transport challenges	Adaptive & Responsive Services Connecting with service users and making decisions locally	Delivering Better Services Improving services and tackling social exclusion	Cross-Agency Efficiencies Innovation through joint working and procurement
Promoting Active Communities	Active Citizens Empowering people to get involved	Enterprising Cultures Promoting enterprise and skills	A Vibrant Third Sector Supporting our voluntary and community organisations	Being Cohesive and Welcoming to All Promoting community cohesion and supporting new communities

● Priority Pillar 1: Reinventing our City, Places and Spaces

Developing high quality environments for our city, towns and neighbourhoods

	OUR ASPIRATIONS	ACTION STREAMS
CONNECTING	<p>1.1 Designing & Planning Together We are committed to working in partnership to build our competency in sustainable development. We want to move to speedy implementation of the new planning system, particularly effective engagement with local communities. The new LDF will provide the structure and approach to much of what follows in this part of our Community Strategy.</p>	<p>1.1.1 Preparing the new LDF & SCI 1.1.2 Championing sustainable development 1.1.3 Decent and affordable housing</p>
ADAPTING	<p>1.2 Tackling the Problem Parts Parts of our local towns and neighbourhoods have aged badly, or are no longer working as well as they could. We intend to ensure that planning our new areas goes hand in hand with maintaining - and improving - the older parts. . Our consultation indicates some particular issues with the Redways. Are we making the best use of this unique asset? The public also appear worried about the lack of a sense of community within residential neighbourhoods. We need to take a fresh look at how we plan facilities in neighbourhoods to optimise opportunities for connection between people and their lives, but which reflect the needs and ways of modern community life.</p>	<p>1.2.1 (a) Adapting the Redways (b) Landmark Community Hubs 1.2.2 Supporting Regeneration 1.2.3 Placemaking Tools/Design Frameworks 1.2.4 Neighbourhood Facilities</p>
INNOVATING	<p>1.3 Being a Modern City We aspire to be a modern, vibrant city centre with sporting, educational, retail, cultural and leisure facilities appropriate for our growing population and our sub-region. We recognize the strength of public pride and enjoyment in MK's unique setting and natural environment - the most important aspect of quality of life raised during the consultation on this strategy. We will work proactively to maintain and enhance this unique aspect of our city.</p>	<p>1.3.1 Image & Branding 1.3.2 City & Cultural Facilities 1.3.3 Protecting and Managing our Environment & Green Spaces</p>
LEARNING	<p>1.4 Creating New Places and Spaces We want to engage proactively with our communities in creating high quality new places and spaces in Milton Keynes. We all need to learn together about the importance of design and how to create successful places with higher densities and diversity. We need informed and open debate and to work with professionals who have a proven understanding of the built environment.</p>	<p>1.4.1 Architecture Centre/public learning and debate 1.4.2 Media Strategy</p>

Priority Pillar 2: Delivering Exemplar Services

Promoting social inclusion and delivering quality, responsive services

	OUR ASPIRATIONS	ACTION STREAMS
CONNECTING	<p>2.1 Getting About Easily Access to transport provision is one of the most important aspects in the planning of Milton Keynes for the next 30 years. Concerns about public transport and accessibility stood out above all others in public consultations. Improving transport provision must lead urban growth in a way that improves accessibility for all sections of our community, promotes economic development and good quality of life. It is appropriate for the LSP to take a strategic lead in looking at how to accelerate improvements in accessibility.</p>	<p>2.1.1 MK Transport Action Plan 2.1.2 Accessibility planning</p>
ADAPTING	<p>2.2 Adaptive and Responsive Services To help us to be responsive, flexible and adaptive in the way we provide public services to our citizens, we are committed to our service users being closely involved in decision-making at the most local level possible. We are uniquely fortunate in our Parish Councils which offer substantial opportunities for improving local democracy.</p>	<p>2.2.1 Making decisions locally 2.2.2 Public views count</p>
INNOVATING	<p>2.3 Delivering Better Services As our city grows, we intend to instigate genuine improvements to the quality of local services, especially in the more deprived parts of our communities where, whilst people have the greatest need, resource levels are often under the greatest strain. We cannot rely on special funding to do this, and so must drive forward the efficiencies we believe we can gain by taking a cross-cutting approach.</p>	<p>2.3.1 Social Inclusion Strategy 2.3.2 Effective Partnerships</p>
LEARNING	<p>2.4 Cross-Agency Efficiencies We recognize that the financial resources available for the delivery of public services will be a continuing challenge. We like a challenge, and our response is to grasp the opportunities of our LSP to drive innovation in joint procurement, maximizing the benefits of modern technology. The more we work together, the greater our overall financial effectiveness – to use the language of our Visioning Summit, we can co-produce' to better value.</p>	<p>2.4.1 Preparing the Way</p>

Priority Pillar 3: Promoting Active Communities

Supporting people and organisations to be active and enterprising

	OUR ASPIRATIONS	ACTION STREAMS
CONNECTING	<p>3.1 Active Citizens Putting local people at the heart of all our actions is the key to successful sustainable development. We have a responsibility to ensure that all citizens are supported and enabled to play their part in both visioning and delivering our Community Strategy, much of which is dependent on a culture of active citizenship for success.</p>	3.1.1 Empowering and enabling
ADAPTING	<p>3.2 Enterprising Cultures A thriving and diverse local economy is the bedrock for our future success. We intend to build and attract small business entrepreneurs and promote opportunities for both our new and incoming populations. In parallel, we will work to raise the aspirations of our younger population to embrace the learning culture and gain the skills required to meet the future needs of our businesses.</p>	3.2.1 Supporting entrepreneurs 3.2.2 Skills improvements
INNOVATING	<p>3.3 A Vibrant Third Sector We are proud of our rich and diverse voluntary sector and the vibrancy of our community organisations and intend to do more to support their fuller involvement in promoting quality of life, active and enterprising communities and the delivery of excellent services.</p>	3.3.1 Strong and supportive infrastructure 3.3.2 Enterprise and sustainability
LEARNING	<p>3.4 Being Cohesive and Welcoming to All MK is a modern, multi-racial, multi-faith society with strong, collective values of tolerance, understanding and respect. The concept of community cohesion lies at the heart of safe and strong communities, and we positively embrace issues of diversity in all our work. The LSP will lead on ensuring that we all adapt positively to changing demands and circumstances as our population expands and its profile becomes more complex and diverse.</p>	3.4.1 Community Cohesion 3.4.2 Community Development

● Priority Pillar 4: Managing Change

Implementing and monitoring our Community Strategy

	OUR ASPIRATIONS	ACTION STREAMS
CONNECTING	<p>4.1 Working Together We will operate as an effective and inclusive partnership with sound and transparent processes of decision-making, supported by good communication. All partners will work together to implement the vision and actions set out in our Community Strategy, aligning their own strategies and plans to contribute to achieving the outcomes we seek.</p>	<p>4.1.1 Annual Review of Membership and Structure 4.1.2 Self-assessment Review 4.1.3 Engagement and Influence</p>
ADAPTING	<p>4.2 Monitoring Progress & Achievements We are collectively committed to excellence in the performance management of our Community Strategy. We will set clear and concise targets for the outcomes we are seeking to achieve, and continuously monitor our progress towards their achievement. The Community Strategy will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure it can fulfil its role in promoting economic, social and environmental wellbeing in Milton Keynes.</p>	<p>4.2.1 Performance Management Plan 4.2.2 Indicators for Sustainable Communities</p>
INNOVATING	<p>4.3 Safeguarding Sustainable Development We have a unique responsibility to contribute effectively to the work of the Sub-Committee in steering the opportunities afforded by plans for the further growth of Milton Keynes. We will communicate our investment and service needs in a timely and constructive way, working at all times to the principles of sustainable development.</p>	<p>4.3.1 Working with the Local Delivery Vehicle 4.3.2 Planning Gain Policies 4.3.3 Communications Plan</p>
LEARNING	<p>4.4 Doing More of What Works We will operate as a learning partnership, recognizing the responsibility we all have to improve our knowledge and skills, seeking to identify which of our actions are most effective in achieving the outcomes we seek, and ensuring that these are embedded in our mainstream activities.</p>	<p>4.4.1 LSP Learning Plan</p>