

# LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

## STRONGER COMMUNITIES THEME

### *SCS/LAA Outcome - Leicestershire is cohesive and inclusive* *LAA Indicators - NI 1, NI 2, and NI 4*

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In LAA 1 the Stronger Communities Board initiated a project to “measure and enhance Social Capital in Leicestershire”. 20 target areas were chosen by District Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) with each district choosing one rural (except Oadby & Wigston), one high on indices of multiple deprivation and one average area. A social capital survey was undertaken in June/July 2006 and will be repeated in the same communities in February 2009.

In the intervening period a half-time “Neighbourhood Worker” was employed in each district to work with the target communities.

In LAA 2 the Board proposes to concentrate on the 19 LAA Priority Neighbourhoods for the main work of enhancing Social Capital. 7 of those Priority Neighbourhoods are in the existing target areas so the surveys there will be the baseline for the work across all 19, with Focus Groups being formed in each of those areas, together with the employment of Neighbourhood Workers.

Outside of these areas the Neighbourhood workers will undertake ‘exit’ work from the 13 target communities in LAA 1 not included in LAA 2.

In all other communities, the Rural Community Council will develop a ‘Social Capital’ element into new Parish Plans, revisit previous areas with a ‘Social Capital’ refresh and engage with communities which have not undertaken a Parish Plan.

A few urban areas do not fit into any of these categories and the Stronger Communities Board will continue to discuss those.

The Board will develop Social Capital Awareness Training, which will be initially aimed at Neighbourhood Action Teams (NATS) in the Priority Neighbourhoods, including identification of a key Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) organisation to undertake the role of Community Anchor.

A Stronger Communities Co-ordinator will be required to lead on this work, as well as on the existing Information and Administration Post established in LAA1. An initiatives fund will be required to engage other agencies and institutions in the work as and when required.

The targets for these indicators will be measured by the Place Survey in 2008 and 2010.

## OUTCOME DELIVERY PLAN CONTENTS

### SCS / LAA Outcome

Leicestershire is cohesive and inclusive

### LAA Indicator, Baseline and Targets

National Indicators 1, 2 and 4.

- NI1 % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area.
- NI2 % of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood
- NI4 % of people who feel they can influence key decisions about their locality

The baseline for these indicators is to be established in spring 2009 via the Place Survey. The targets will be a 5% increase for each.

<b>Geographic Area Covered</b>	County wide	Yes
	Other	Emphasis will be on Priority Neighbourhoods
<b>Any District or local targets</b>		None

<b>Outcome Delivery Lead Officer</b>	Martin Gage (Chief Executive, NWLCVS)
<b>Outcome Delivery Partnership(s)</b>	Leicestershire Stronger Communities Board

**What do we do now to deliver the outcome?**

*Please give a brief description of the current approach used to deliver the outcome/target and the partners involved. Estimate of current resources used.*

Currently, work to measure and enhance Social Capital is taking place in 20 areas of Leicestershire. Each district LSP chose one rural area (except Oadby & Wigston), one area high on indices of multiple deprivation and one average area. Following the participative social capital survey in Summer 2006, a Neighbourhood Worker based at each of the 7 district Voluntary Action Centres has worked with communities to help them enhance their Social Capital. This work includes creating opportunities for people to meet, for trust to be built and voluntary and community groups to network.

Community Development Officers employed by the Rural Community Council currently work alongside communities across the County. The Community Development Officers support the parish planning process and other community consultation, helping communities identify their needs and take ownership of their future.

## What options are there to deliver on the new target?

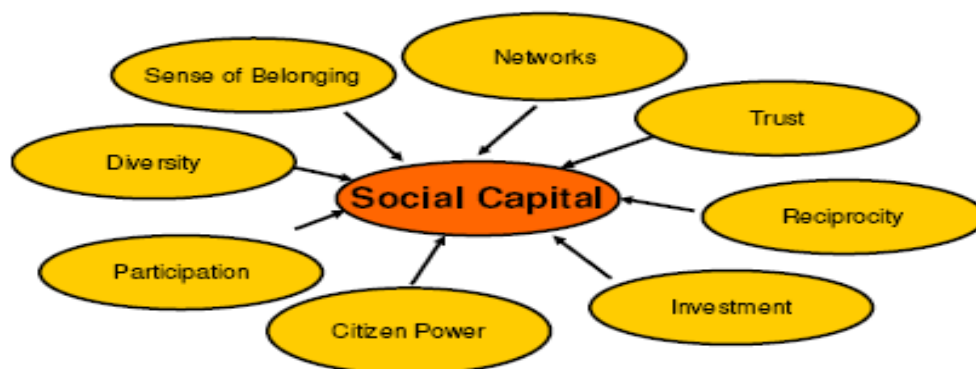
*The options suggested to achieving the outcome/targets – what new interventions/services could be commissioned?*

The main option is to now concentrate the social capital enhancing work in the Local Authority Priority Neighbourhoods, networking with local voluntary and community organisations and volunteers, identifying Community Anchors and working as part of the Neighbourhood Management structure. Supporting work in the rest of the county would come from the Rural Community Council's Community Engagement work enhanced by an increased emphasis on social capital.

This work is aimed at strengthening communities through engaging local social, economic and environmental issues with all residents, especially those on the margins. Many of these issues are to do with Community Cohesion, which can be described as the "glue" that holds communities together, but this project uses Social capital as the measure as this goes further than Community Cohesion. Social Capital can also be described as the "glue" that holds communities together, but also provides the "resources" to help them move on. Thus the enhancement of social capital is key to developing stronger communities.

Social Capital based work attempts to encourage a community to develop by harnessing a number of elements that give it strength among which is diversity. So this work goes further than community cohesion work as rather than just trying to hold a diverse community together, it recognizes diversity as a strength and a commodity and encourages a diverse community to mutually invest their valuable commodities like diversity, trust, networks, volunteering, reciprocity and citizen power to the benefit of the whole community. This is illustrated in the following diagram:

### Social Capital Framework



© Boeck 2002

Therefore by putting Neighbourhood Workers onto the streets of the Priority Neighbourhoods and developing a higher Social Capital element to Parish Plans and rural community engagement, this project releases this investment energy to benefit all members of the community, especially the marginalized and creating cohesive communities that not only tolerate diversity, but value it highly.

### **What could we stop doing, do less of or better to focus on this target?**

*What options are there for reconfiguring or decommissioning other services to refocus on the priority outcome?*

Benefits could be enhanced if staff of Leicestershire Together partners delivering to communities were more aware of the impact they have on Social Capital. A programme of Social Capital Awareness Training will be devised to address this. The training will be implemented initially through Neighbourhood Action Teams in Priority Neighbourhoods.

### **What alternative providers exist?**

*Commissioning – what alternative delivery agencies or partners exist?*

The Voluntary and Community Sector is the appropriate vehicle for this work, specific organisations will be determined by the Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure Review process.

Lead agencies will be in the Voluntary and Community Sector, specifically the new Countywide Infrastructure Organisation (CIO), Voluntary Actions in each district and the Rural Community Council. All other agencies will be engaged through the link with Neighbourhood Management and the implementation of Social Capital Awareness Training.

### **What is the recommended approach and reasons why?**

*Options appraisal and recommendations on preferred option. Also include the extent to which the approach will contribute to other SCS/LAA outcomes?*

The basis of the work is the enhancement of Social Capital. In LAA1 the presence of the Neighbourhood Workers has had an impact in almost all the locations and list of examples is attached as Appendix A. However whether this has had a lasting impact will not be known until the survey is re-done in February 2009.

Building stronger communities based on existing Voluntary and Community Sector networks and volunteering opportunities within different communities provides the basis of this approach. The approach also strengthens Neighbourhood Management and service delivery possibilities by the voluntary and community sector across the Local Area Agreement. It also has a wider effect as identified by Robert Putnam (the leading expert on Social Capital) in his article "Lesson from An Italian Experiment", Appendix B.

All elements of the SCS and LAA will benefit from Stronger Communities. Volunteering is an immediate link as the Neighbourhood Workers and the RCC would be promoting involvement at local level. Equalities and access to services are key issues that are addressed by enabling stronger communities. Strategically the delivery plan undergirds the whole of the LAA. Put simplistically it sits underneath and builds from the bottom up whereas the rest of the LAA delivers from above. They meet at neighbourhood level and to some extent at Community Forums and District LSPs.

The whole delivery is based on the Stronger Communities Strategy devised and

approved by the Stronger Communities Board during the period June 2007-August 2008. The Strategy is attached as Appendix C.

### What is delivery of the target dependent on?

*Include the assumptions being made in terms of preferred delivery option?*

The target is dependent on secure and consistent funding enabling constant engagement of the Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure.

The approach to all three targets is the same, the enhancing of Social Capital, but elements of the programme will address the individual targets as follows:

<p>NI1 % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area.</p>	<p>The whole basis of the work is to enable people to meet, but the emphasis is on informality ie over coffee, in the pub, at the bus shelter, school gate, the mosque, during choir rehearsals, outside the geographical community, or at other meetings. The aim is to meet people where they meet, and if they do not meet give them opportunities to meet. However in LAA2 there will be formal Focus groups in the Priority Neighbourhoods.</p>
<p>NI2 % of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood</p>	<p>A sense of belonging is enhanced as people feel their neighbourhood is worth belonging to, brought about by knowing and valuing their neighbours and being able to socialise, support and achieve in collaboration.</p>
<p>NI4 % of people who feel they can influence key decisions about their locality</p>	<p>People's voices are best heard when channeled through groups and organisations. The neighbourhood Workers will work with groups to build their capacity to engage.</p>

### What are the risks to delivery?

*Include Key Risks to Delivery – likelihood/impact on target delivery and action required to mitigate.*

Key risks include insecure or inconsistent funding and lack of interest from the local community in the target areas. The risks are mitigated partly by being part of the Neighbourhood Management process and partly by strengthening the Voluntary and Community Sector at local level.

## **Milestones/Timescales – Outline Implementation Plan**

*Include key delivery actions and milestones – by when?*

April 2009	Staff in post
April - May 2009	Results of the 2008 Place Survey and 2009 Social Capital Survey
Summer 2009	Community Anchors identified and Focus groups established in each Priority Neighbourhood
October 2010	Place Survey

## **What resources are being provided by Lead/Partner Agencies.**

Leadership and management will be provided by Voluntary and Community Sector infrastructure alongside management and policy support from partners.

## **Financial and other resources (if any) sought from LT for delivery?**

*Please provide estimate of costs and new resources required to deliver on preferred option.*

The major investment is in the Priority Neighbourhoods where the workers will have the time to engage with new and existing groups, volunteering opportunities, parish councils, Neighbourhood Forums, Neighbourhood Action Teams.

The work of the Rural Community Council, outside of the priority neighbourhoods will have more of a Social Capital focus and so it is important to support that work.

The central Information and Administration post has been essential to the Performance Management of the process.

The Central Coordinator post is essential to develop the strategy and engagement with partners, a task that has been done as an add on to the day job of the lead officer for Stronger Communities. 3/5ths of the post is allocated to this delivery plan.

An initiatives budget is essential because it is not possible to predict what issues and processes are going to be thrown up during the term of the project. This fund will range from research ( and all three county Universities are very interested in being part of what we are doing) to funding a countywide initiative (for instance we funded activities in all target areas around Volunteers and Carers weeks in June 2008), carrying out a survey in a community of interest (as we did with VISTA and Mosaic around disability and social capital) to support for local projects (the Youth Community Radio project had a £3000 shortfall which we supported).

A draft budget is shown below:

Function	LAA Indicator	Funding 2008-09	Funding 2009-10	Funding 2010-11
Voluntary Action Neighbourhood Workers	1, 2, 4 & 6	-	£390,000	£390,000
Neighbourhood Work Information and Administration Officer	1, 2, 4 & 6	-	£30,000	£30,000
Leicestershire & Rutland Rural Community Council Community Development Officers to undertake new style Parish Plans	1, 2, 4 & 6	-	£100,000	£100,000
Stronger Communities Co-ordinator	1, 2, 4 & 6 + LI on Parish Councils	-	£30,000	£30,000
Initiatives with other organisations (eg Communities of Interest, Research programmes with Universities)	1, 2, 4 & 6 + LI on Parish Councils	-	£120,000	£120,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£670,000</b>	<b>£670,000</b>

### Who is involved?

*Agencies that will be involved in contributing to target delivery.*

The Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure will be leading. All partners will potentially be involved particularly through Neighbourhood Management and Neighbourhood Action Teams. This will require discussions with District LSPs as they lead on Neighbourhood Management.

### What contributions are expected from partner agencies?

Contributions expected from partner agencies include staff time. There is also potential for a 'partnership pot' of funding, to which all Leicestershire Together partners are invited to contribute. All LTg partners will have an opportunity to be proactively involved, however key partners are the District Councils, County Council, Primary Care Trust and the Police.

### What are the communication channels?

*Identify arrangements to communicate progress on the outcomes.*

Progress on the outcomes will be communicated through the Information and Administration Officer via the Stronger Communities Board.

## **Range of examples of work by Voluntary Action Neighbourhood Workers in each area**

### **Blaby District**

#### **Braunstone Town**

After initially meeting voluntary and community groups in the area, the Neighbourhood Worker found that there were several groups with higher Black and Ethnic Minority membership. These groups had not been known to the Voluntary Action before and therefore had not had the same opportunities as other groups in the area. Neighbourhood Worker has been finding new ways for the Voluntary Action to work with groups according to their needs. A Feelgood Fair in the Neighbourhood, organised by the Neighbourhood Worker was a good opportunity for people from groups in the area to meet each other. 20 people from those new groups she had been working with attended. A coffee area was funded through Stronger Communities to provide an environment for people to meet and talk.

**“All the groups seemed happy in the area. I thought, let’s look for somebody who’s isolated and see what their point of view is. From this, I’ve gradually been engaging with Black and Minority Ethnic groups. It shows there are communities that are hidden.”**

Voluntary Action Neighbourhood Worker (2008)

### **Sharnford**

Different people in Sharnford had been concerned with the amount of heavy vehicles going through their village, but many felt helpless to change things. The traffic was becoming dangerous and was dividing the village, for example the local school were no longer able to take children to the church across the road. The Neighbourhood Worker for this area put key people in touch with the Community Speed Watch project, Blaby District Council and the Highways Agency and gave them funding advice. The Sharnford Traffic Action Group then produced a DVD called ‘Death by 1000 Trucks’ to help explain their cause to statutory and commercial organisations. After no action still, they went national and sent the DVD to a range of organizations, including councils around the country, the media and the Arch Bishop of Canterbury. After their plight was shown in national news on television the leader of the County Council agreed to meet with them and there has now been a speed limit imposed on the area.

### **Whetstone**

Voluntary Action Blaby District are working with a new recycling warehouse in Whetstone run by the charity MIND. The warehouse has provided an opportunity to engage new and existing volunteers in an exciting new project.

### **Charnwood Borough**

#### **Hastings**

The Community Association in Hastings is a strong one and with the help of the Neighbourhood Worker they have utilised the project on Social Capital. The Association

organised local volunteers to carry out the first survey and are now organising volunteers for the second. They are keen to know the results of the survey to inform their work and to use as evidence.

### **Syston**

In Syston the Neighbourhood Worker recognised that there was an abundance of active voluntary and community groups in the area, but that they often ran in isolation of the others. Through two events organised by the Neighbourhood Worker and others in the community, groups came together to help each other address local issues in a collaborative way. A prominent local issue in Syston was the need for more facilities for young people. At one of the events, volunteer committee members were found for a local youth project making a full committee.

**“There was a nice buzz about the meeting. More people were together by the end than when they had come to the meeting.”**

Voluntary Action Neighbourhood Worker (2007)

### **The Wolds**

As part of Carers Week the Neighbourhood Worker helped to organise a walk in Burton on the Wolds for people from the surrounding area. The Walk began in Burton on the Wolds and ended with a meal for everyone. A shorter walk around the community plantation in Burton was also organised. In total 27 people came along, lots of whom had not met each other before. They also got to know about the Burton Plantation which owned by the community, maintained by volunteers and open to the public.

### **Harborough District**

#### **Fleckney**

The Neighbourhood Worker has been involved in various groups, especially the Parish Planning Group in Fleckney. In most instances, his direct and continued participation was not needed and he then helped to link key contacts together, for example, contacts from faith organisations and the District Council. The Neighbourhood Worker has also been involved in the movement of activities addressing anti-social behaviour in the village to organising provision for young people, including a skatepark.

**“Involving young people in planning provision gives them a sense of belonging. There has been a noticeable downturn in anti-social behaviour in Fleckney by different agencies.”**

Voluntary Action Neighbourhood Worker (2007)

### **Primethorpe**

The Neighbourhood Worker for this area helped the local secondary school in setting up a volunteering scheme. Key links were made between the school and the local volunteer centre.

### **Tilton on the Hill**

A tea dance was held in Tilton on the Hill as part of Carers Week. The tea dance attracted many people who would not have come to other events typically held in the evening.

## **Hinckley & Bosworth Borough**

### **Earl Shilton**

In Earl Shilton the role of Neighbourhood Worker is joined with Neighbourhood Management. This combined capacity has enabled substantial projects to be developed. One project is the establishment of Radio Earl Shilton by a group of young people. With this community radio facility the possibilities for the community strengthening are vast, including, volunteering, training and communication. With the station going live in January 2009, local groups are now being invited to look at the facilities. Another project launched in the area is Neighbourhood Watch Super Strength. The Super Strength factor comes from a range of extra aspects to Neighbourhood Watch, such as collaboration of co-ordinators, training of co-ordinators and a process of cascading information. There is now a new worker in place to co-ordinate this work.

**“Training for the street co-ordinators will help increase their confidence and give them the opportunity to get to know each other creating a strong network.”**

Voluntary Action Neighbourhood Worker (2008)

### **Markfield**

The Neighbourhood Worker for Markfield brought in the Rural Community Council to help Markfield Community Association with a Planning for Real exercise. This became a day full of community activities at Markfield Community and Sports Centre, including a barbeque in the evening. The day was named “We Love Markfield”.

### **Sheepy and Twycross**

Early into the Stronger Communities project Neighbourhood Workers mapped voluntary and community groups in each area. Information on the villages of Sheepy Magna and Twycross, for example, was then available to the Voluntary Action for Hinckley and Bosworth to build a picture of activity in the area, to make contact with and share as required.

## **Melton Borough**

### **Bottesford**

A group of young people in Bottesford asked their Neighbourhood Worker for help. The group had been building dirt jumps on disused railway paths in Bottesford for BMXing over the last three years. The dirt jumps were now condemned and will have to be destroyed. The Neighbourhood Worker is supporting the project and providing funding information and contacts. With the help of the Skatepark Committee, the group of young people now hope to lease land from Railway Paths Ltd.

### **Egerton**

A need was identified for a community centre, as previously, residents had to meet outside the area. A housing association offered to build a community centre along with being able to build flats in the area. Through Neighbourhood Management, the Neighbourhood

Worker has worked with residents to influence the design of the community centre and undergo training in how to contribute to community groups and projects. Through Leicestershire County Council, the community centre has now become a two storey multipurpose children's centre. From this, other work has cascaded and further projects have developed. The local residents group has strengthened and volunteer youth workers have been established. A graffiti project also took place for young people to do artwork on the building site. The process is working very well and the model will now be replicated in another area of the borough. The Neighbourhood Worker believes the perception of the neighbourhood has already changed and participation in local community activities has increased. The community centre recently opened with a street party and now provides a space for residents to mix and to feel ownership.

**“The perception of the neighbourhood has already changed and participation in local community activities has increased.”**

Voluntary Action Neighbourhood Worker (2008)

### **Wymondham**

As well as providing some training events such as funding advice and first aid, which have provided networking opportunities as well as capacity building for the various groups in the village, the Neighbourhood Worker has forged strong links with the primary school. Volunteering was celebrated at a recent anniversary event at the school, with free daffodil bulbs being donated to the school as new volunteers were recruited. Also very active new group has been set up to look at providing sport and recreational facilities in the village to make use of large underused playing fields.

### **North West Leicestershire District**

#### **Heather**

The Neighbourhood Worker for Heather held a coffee morning as part of Volunteers Week and Carers Week. It was held at the local Football Club, who provided the refreshments and volunteers to serve them. Eleven people attended the coffee morning and new contacts were made. Information was provided from the district's Council for Voluntary Service and two new people were interested in the Carers Project and in volunteering. People there also participated in a quiz and light entertainment.

#### **Hemington & Lockington**

The HemLock Social Club met regularly at the local pub and members were now all retired citizens. On meeting members, the Neighbourhood Worker gave the group advice on obtaining funding for their trips out and accessing services, like the Community Transport Scheme. The Club later folded, as a key organiser of the club was unable to continue his role. The Neighbourhood Worker then investigated services for older people in the area. The church has now stepped in and organises regular lunch meetings for those members and others in the same pub.

**“You don't always know what impact you're having. One man said, ‘thank you for those wonderful emails you send. We've had £2,500 funding from those over the last 2 years’.”**

Voluntary Action Neighbourhood Worker (2008)

## **Measham**

Through the Neighbourhood Action Team, the Neighbourhood Worker for Measham was involved in organising a makeover of their Millennium Gardens. Eleven local people turned out to pick litter, tidy the area and dig the garden beds. They were joined by a probation team who joined in and passers by provided encouragement. More people then joined in to do a litter pick around their estate and later provided a barbeque and games at the community centre for the volunteers.

## **Oadby & Wigston Borough**

### **Oadby**

From a local meeting arranged by the Neighbourhood Worker it emerged that the nearby park was in need of attention. The Neighbourhood Worker got involved and helped the community establish the Friends of Iliffe Park Group. The Council were said to be redeveloping the park as part of a rolling programme with a budget of £80,000. In partnership, there was a consultation with residents on how they would like to park to be renewed, including leaflets through doors, a questionnaire and an event on the park. Following this, the Friends of Iliffe Park Group organised a Funday on the park involving a range of groups and activities. These included, the Police, Firebrigade, a climbing wall, bouncy castle, Sunflower Radio, Oadby Gurdwara, Voluntary Action Oadby & Wigston, the toy library, and Neighbourhood Watch and the local Muslim Association. Since the consultation, the renewal of the park has not happened and there are fears that the existence of the park might be at threat altogether. The Friends of Iliffe Park group is now campaigning to keep and renovate the park.

**“The group is hoping to lift the perception of the neighbourhood and people’s sense of belonging to the area. When events have been held on the park, residents have said they can’t believe this is happening in their area.”**

Voluntary Action Neighbourhood Worker (2008)

### **Wigston**

The Neighbourhood Worker has arranged for a toy library service to be set up on this estate, where the majority of households are on a low income. The service was launched earlier this year.

**LESSONS FROM AN ITALIAN EXPERIMENT – Robert Putnam**

Beginning in 1970, Italians established a nationwide set of potentially powerful regional governments. These 20 new institutions were virtually identical in form, but the social, economic, political, and cultural contexts in which they were implanted differed dramatically, ranging from the preindustrial to the postindustrial, from the devoutly Catholic to the ardently Communist, from the inertly feudal to the frenetically modern. Just as a botanist might investigate plant development by measuring the growth of genetically identical seeds sown in different plots, we sought to understand government performance by studying how these new institutions evolved in their diverse settings.

As we expected, some of the new governments proved to be dismal failures--inefficient, lethargic, and corrupt. Others have been remarkably successful, however, creating innovative day care programs and job-training centers, promoting investment and economic development, pioneering environmental standards and family clinics--managing the public's business efficiently and satisfying their constituents.

What could account for these stark differences in quality of government? Some seemingly obvious answers turned out to be irrelevant. Government organization is too similar from region to region for that to explain the contrasts in performance. Party politics or ideology makes little difference. Affluence and prosperity have no direct effect. Social stability or political harmony or population movements are not the key. None of these factors is correlated with good government as we had anticipated. Instead, the best predictor is one that Alexis de Tocqueville might have expected. Strong traditions of civic engagement--voter turnout, newspaper readership, membership in choral societies and literary circles, Lions Clubs, and soccer clubs--are the hallmarks of a successful region.

Some regions of Italy, such as Emilia-Romagna and Tuscany, have many active community organizations. Citizens in these regions are engaged by public issues, not by patronage. They trust one another to act fairly and obey the law. Leaders in these communities are relatively honest and committed to equality. Social and political networks are organized horizontally, not hierarchically. These "civic communities" value solidarity, civic participation, and integrity. And here democracy works.

At the other pole are "uncivic" regions, like Calabria and Sicily, aptly characterized by the French term *incivisme*. The very concept of citizenship is stunted there. Engagement in social and cultural associations is meager. From the point of view of the inhabitants, public affairs is somebody else's business--*i notabili*, "the bosses," "the politicians"--but not theirs. Laws, almost everyone agrees, are made to be broken, but fearing others' lawlessness, everyone demands sterner discipline. Trapped in these interlocking vicious circles, nearly everyone feels powerless, exploited, and unhappy. It is hardly surprising that representative government here is less effective than in more civic communities.

The historical roots of the civic community are astonishingly deep. Enduring traditions of civic involvement and social solidarity can be traced back nearly a millennium to the eleventh century, when communal republics were established in places like Florence, Bologna, and Genoa, exactly the communities that today enjoy civic engagement and successful government. At the core of this civic heritage are rich networks of organized reciprocity and civic solidarity--guilds, religious fraternities, and tower societies for self-defense in the medieval communes; cooperatives, mutual aid societies, neighborhood associations, and choral societies in the twentieth century.

These communities did not become civic simply because they were rich. The historical record strongly suggests precisely the opposite: They have become rich because they were civic. The social capital embodied in norms and networks of civic engagement seems to be a precondition for economic development, as well as for effective government. Development economists take note: Civics matters.

How does social capital undergird good government and economic progress? First, networks of civic engagement foster sturdy norms of generalized reciprocity: I'll do this for you now, in the expectation that down the road you or someone else will return the favor. "Social capital is akin to what Tom Wolfe called the 'favor bank' in his novel, *The Bonfire of the Vanities*," notes economist Robert Frank. A society that relies on generalized reciprocity is more efficient than a distrustful society, for the same reason that money is more efficient than barter. Trust lubricates social life.

Networks of civic engagement also facilitate coordination and communication and amplify information about the trustworthiness of other individuals. Students of prisoners' dilemmas and related games report that cooperation is most easily sustained through repeat play. When economic and political dealing is embedded in dense networks of social interaction, incentives for opportunism and malfeasance are reduced. This is why the diamond trade, with its extreme possibilities for fraud, is concentrated within close-knit ethnic enclaves. Dense social ties facilitate gossip and other valuable ways of cultivating reputation--an essential foundation for trust in a complex society.

Finally, networks of civic engagement embody past success at collaboration, which can serve as a cultural template for future collaboration. The civic traditions of north-central Italy provide a historical repertoire of forms of cooperation that, having proved their worth in the past, are available to citizens for addressing new problems of collective action.

Sociologist James Coleman concludes, "Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence. . . . In a farming community. . . where one farmer got his hay baled by another and where farm tools are extensively borrowed and lent, the social capital allows each farmer to get his work done with less physical capital in the form of tools and equipment." Social capital, in short, enables Hume's farmers to surmount their dilemma of collective action.

Stocks of social capital, such as trust, norms, and networks, tend to be self-reinforcing and cumulative. Successful collaboration in one endeavor builds connections and trust--social assets that facilitate future collaboration in other, unrelated tasks. As with conventional capital, those who have social capital tend to accumulate more--them as has, gets. Social capital is what the social philosopher Albert O. Hirschman calls a "moral resource," that is, a resource whose supply increases rather than decreases through use and which (unlike physical capital) becomes depleted if *not* used.

Unlike conventional capital, social capital is a "public good," that is, it is not the private property of those who benefit from it. Like other public goods, from clean air to safe streets, social capital tends to be under-provided by private agents. This means that social capital must often be a by-product of other social activities. Social capital typically consists in ties, norms, and trust transferable from one social setting to another. Members of Florentine choral societies participate because they like to sing, not because their participation strengthens the Tuscan social fabric. But it does.

## **A Strategy to build Stronger Communities Leicestershire LAA 2008-2011**

Leicestershire Together co-ordinates various partnerships and providers of public services to make the quality of life better for people who live work and play in this county.

Many agencies have strategic plans, which seek to deal with improving aspects of Leicestershire, all wanting people to feel better.

This strategy seeks to empower communities, first to define themselves, so that the members identify with each other, to recognise other communities, and to engage with the authorities, which plan and provide public services, in order to improve the lives of everyone in Leicestershire.

It is being developed by the Stronger Communities Board, one of the seven themes of the Leicestershire Local Area Agreement, LAA, to contribute to the Sustainable Community Strategy to be approved by Government in 2008.

Accompanying papers explain existing work to improve social capital in target areas within each district in the county. This strategy will then build on those foundations to expand and cover everyone in Leicestershire.

The actions proposed require sustained investment in community development, using measures of enhancement in social capital to evidence impact achieved. Existing Voluntary and Community Organisations will be funded to employ staff who will ensure both communities of place and of interest are enabled and empowered to develop.

Ideally, each district will have staff based locally, co-ordinated through the emerging central support service hub, so that efforts are primarily focussed on areas of greatest need, but still achieve benefits for all.

Over and above existing infrastructure funding, this will cost £1m per year, sustained over at least the 3 years of the next LAA.

Neil Lambert  
Chair, Stronger Communities Board, October 2007

# Stronger Communities Strategy for Leicestershire

2008-2011

**This strategy is based on enabling communities to develop from the (local) community outwards. The implementation may well come at any level, but all in support of stronger, engaged, empowered communities with a high level of Social Capital. (definitions follow)**

We have resisted defining the size of a community or neighbourhood. The community is seen as different areas or groups by different people. It could be a cul-de-sac of 8 houses, a whole village, a large estate or a community of interest. We therefore hope that whenever we use the term community or neighbourhood it can be interpreted by all people from wherever they are, and the activities suggested are applicable.

## Background

In the first 2 years of Stronger Communities under the LAA we have worked with 20 communities across Leicestershire. In order to gain a cross section of the County, three areas in each district were chosen<sup>1</sup>, one rural, one 'average' and one high on the index of multiple deprivation. In each area a survey was carried out to measure the level of Social Capital. Neighbourhood Workers based at Voluntary Action Centres in each district were then appointed to support those communities in enhancing their social capital. Rather than imposing a framework for building stronger communities, there has been an innovative partnership which enabled communities to define, explore and develop the meaning of stronger communities. It has then been for each community to decide what action they wished to take, from which a range of creative projects have evolved.

Part of the Stronger Communities block has also been the Rural and Social Community Programme of Defra which has supported:

- Community Consultation
- Social Inclusion and Rural Stress
- Rural Housing Enabling
- Promotion of Rural Social Enterprise

Two other pieces of work have been part of Stronger Communities block:

§Development of a Leicestershire Council of faiths

§Support for Parish Councils through the Leicestershire Association of Parish Councils

The Stronger Communities Board now feels something should be offered by the strategy that enables all Leicestershire communities to benefit, but the emphasis should shift more fully to the LAA target Areas in order to participate in the desire to combat deprivation. Therefore it is proposed to place the major element of resource in these areas.

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<sup>1</sup> Except Oadby & Wigston where there is no rural area

**To understand this strategy the Stronger Communities Board suggests these definitions:**

<b>Stronger Community</b>	A community that is strengthened by those who make up the community, by the activities and relationships of its members.
<b>Community Engagement</b>	The process through which a community makes links between itself and other agencies in pursuit of empowerment.
<b>Community Empowerment</b>	A community taking responsibility and decisions for itself.
<b>Social Capital</b>	The glue that holds a community together and the resources and relationships to help it move on.
<b>Bonding Social Capital</b>	Family, friendship and professional relationships within peer groups or formal groups that provide a sense of belonging.
<b>Bridging Social Capital</b>	Closer network between groups or neighbourhoods creating links with people outside immediate circles. Broadening opportunities.
<b>Linking Social Capital</b>	Closer network between community and external agencies. Access to influential others and power structures.

**The delivery agents of strong communities are:**

**Frontline Delivery**

- Parish Councils/Neighbourhood Forums/Local Development Groups
- Local Voluntary and Community Groups
- Faith Groups
- School organisations
- Local businesses/Social Enterprises

**Support Services**

- District and County Councillors
- Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Organisations
- Neighbourhood Police
- Statutory and Voluntary Sectors Community Development Workers
- Neighbourhood Managers
- Voluntary Sector Service Providers
- Funding bodies

**Strategic Partnerships**

- All Leicestershire Together Partners
- District LSPs
- Community Forums and support staff
- Leicestershire Rural Partnership and other partnerships

(The following table is a précis of ideas for enhancing the different types of Social Capital by different stakeholders. These were suggested at consultation at meetings around the County and on-line plus discussion at the Stronger Communities Board. The first sentence in each box is the priority action for the organisations concerned)

**What needs to happen to enhance Social Capital is:**

	<b>Frontline Delivers</b>	<b>Support Services</b>	<b>Strategic Partnerships</b>
<b>Bonding Social Capital</b>	<p><b>Identify meeting and information places in every community</b></p> <p>Using meeting and information places</p> <p>Forming common interest groups</p> <p>Opening up local groups</p>	<p><b>Enable/improve two-way communications</b></p> <p>Knowing what is going on</p> <p>Making sure local communities are aware of their services</p> <p>Enabling funding</p> <p>Promoting volunteering and involvement</p> <p>Sharing good practice</p>	<p><b>Communicate the purpose of each partnership</b></p> <p>Making themselves more visible</p> <p>Using a variety of good communication systems</p> <p>Clarifying funding and resource strategies – criteria, priorities</p>
<b>Bridging Social Capital</b>	<p><b>Establish local network of groups in each community</b></p> <p>Groups resolving not to work in isolation</p> <p>Local groups working together for the community – common objectives</p> <p>Being prepared to form new groups around focus/need</p> <p>Putting on joint events, promotion and publicity</p>	<p><b>Facilitating people coming together</b></p> <p>Highlighting common issues</p> <p>Celebrating the work of volunteers and local groups</p> <p>Tackling practical barriers e.g. Transport needs</p> <p>Supporting event co-ordination</p>	<p><b>Agencies reaching out to local communities together</b></p> <p>Coming out to local communities (different agencies)</p> <p>Collecting good intelligence/evidence</p> <p>Tackling practical issues e.g. public transport</p>
<b>Linking Social Capital</b>	<p><b>Community determining their relationship with external bodies</b></p> <p>Strengthening the role of the Parish Councils</p> <p>Making voice heard with campaigns</p> <p>Determining their relationship with external bodies e.g. Parish Plan Protocol.</p>	<p><b>Gather and share information with other organisations</b></p> <p>Collating Parish plans/evidence and local development groups</p> <p>Facilitating forums to represent views</p> <p>Improving the "will" to share information with other organisations</p> <p>Providing links with countywide and national bodies</p>	<p><b>Coordinated consultation and engagement</b></p> <p>Letting the community decide who they link with</p> <p>Using shared intelligence</p> <p>Providing common resources e.g. funding toolkit</p> <p>Providing a mechanism of support e.g. planning process, signposting, arranging meetings with key people.</p>

**The Stronger Communities Board proposes the following actions:-**

- Focused social capital measurement and enhancement in LAA target areas, in partnership with Neighbourhood Management
- Continued support and enhancement in Social Capital target areas from LAA that are not LAA target areas.
- Social Capital influenced Parish plan and community consultation work
- Capacity Building work with Parish Councils
- Specialist work on volunteering, affordable rural housing, new growth housing and financial inclusion and their impact on Stronger Communities.
- Social Capital Awareness Training rolled out across all Leicestershire neighbourhoods plus statutory and voluntary agencies, and strategic partnerships

**Social Capital Awareness Training**

This basic service across the whole of Leicestershire would provide Social Capital Awareness Training to groups and teams across the County such as

- Parish Councils,
- Parish Planning Groups,
- Neighbourhood Action Teams,
- Neighbourhood Forums

and in areas where there is no Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum, local faith groups would be engaged to become the catalyst for this training to be provided to local Voluntary and Community Organisations.

The training would be delivered by Neighbourhood Workers employed by Voluntary Action Centres, the Rural Community Council's Community Development Officers, Neighbourhood Managers, Faith representatives and Parish Council staff.

**Countywide coverage**

Appendix One illustrates what every parish or town can access from this strategy.

B

Categories	Parishes	NW	RCC CDO	Neigh Man.	PC	Faith	Local Voice	SCAT
LAA Target area	Ashby-de-la-Zouch (part); Bagworth and Thornton; Castle Donington(part); Coalville, Thringstone and Whitwick; Earl Shilton and Barwell; Enderby; Ibstock; Moira;Greenhill; Hinckley and Burbage (St Catherine);Loughborough East; Loughborough West; Market Harborough (part);Measham;Melton Mowbray (part); Mountsorrel (part); Oadby and Wigston (part);Syston and Thurmaston (Part)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Social Capital areas	Parts of the following:  Bottesford; Braunstone Town; Broughton Astley; Earl Shilton; Fleckney; Heather; Lockington cum Hemington; Loughborough Hastings; Markfield; Measham; Melton Mowbray; Oadby; Sharnford; Syston; Tilton; Twycross; Whetstone; Walton on the Wolds; Wigston; Wymondham.	√	√		√	√	√	√
General	Ab Kettleby; Allextion; Anstey; Appleby Magna; Arnesby; Asfordby; Ashby-de-la-Zouch (part); Ashby Magna; Ashby Parva; Aston Flamville; Bardon; Barkby; Barkby Thorpe; Barlestone; Barrow upon Soar; Beeby; Belton; Belvoir; Billesdon; Birstall; Bittesby; Bitteswell; Blaby; Blaston; Breedon on the Hill; Bringhurst; Broughton and Old Dalby;; Bruntingthorpe; Buckminster; Burbage; Burton on the Wolds; Burton Overy; Cadeby; Carlton; Carlton Curlieu; Castle Donington; Catthorpe; Charley; Chilcote; Clawson, Hose and Harby (as "Clawson and Harby"); Claybrooke Magna; Claybrooke Parva; Cold Newton; Coleorton; Cosby; Cossington; Cotes; Cotesbach; Countesthorpe; Cranoe; Croft; Croxton Kerrial; Desford; Drayton; Dunton Bassett; East Goscote; East Langton; East Norton; Eaton; Ellistown and Battleflat; Elmesthorpe; Foxton; Freeby; Frisby;		√		√	√	√	√

	<p>Frisby on the Wreake; Frolesworth; Gaddesby; Garthorpe; Gaulby; Gilmorton; Glen Parva; Glenfield; Glooston; Goadby; Great Bowden; Great Easton; Great Glen; Grimston; Groby; Gumley; Hallaton; Hathern; Higham on the Hill; Hoby with Rotherby; Horinghold; Hoton; Houghton on the Hill; Huncote; Hungarton; Husbands Bosworth; Ilston on the Hill; Isley cum Langley; Kegworth; Keyham; Kibworth Beauchamp; Kibworth Harcourt; Kilby; Kimcote and Walton; King's Norton; Kirby Muxloe; Kirkby Bellars; Knaptoft; Knossington and Cold Overton; Laughton; Launde; Leicester Forest East; Leicester Forest West; Leire; Little Stretton; Loddington; Long Whatton; Lowesby; Lubenham; Lutterworth; Marefield; Market Bosworth; Medbourne; Misterton with Walcote (as "Misterton"); Mountsorrel; Mowsley; Nailstone; Narborough; Nevill Holt; Newbold Verdon; Newtown Linford; Normanton le Heath; North Kilworth; Oakthorpe and Donisthorpe; Osbaston; Osgathorpe; Owston and Newbold; Packington; Peatling Magna; Peatling Parva; Peckleton; Potters Marston; Prestwold; Queniborough; Quorndon; Ratby; Ratcliffe on the Wreake; Ravenstone with Snibston; Rearsby; Redmile; Rolleston; Rothley; Saddington; Sapcote; Saxelbye; Scalford; Scraftoft; Seagrave; Shackerstone; Shangton; Shawell; Shearsby; Sheepy; Shepshed; Shoby; Sileby; Skeffington; Slawston; Smeeton Westerby; Snarestone; Somerby; South Croxton; South Kilworth; Sproxton; Stanton-under-Bardon; Stathern; Staunton Harold; Stockerston; Stoke Golding; Stoney Stanton; Stonton Wyville; Stoughton; Stretton en le Field; Sutton Cheney; Swannington; Swepstone; Swinford; Swithland; Theddingworth; Thorpe Langton; Thrussington; Thurcaston and Cropston; Thurlaston; Thurmaston;</p>							
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	Thurnby and Bushby; Tugby and Keythorpe (as "Tugby"); Tur Langton; Twyford and Thorpe; Ullesthorpe; Ulverscroft; Waltham on the Wolds and Thorpe Arnold; Wanlip; Welham; West Langton; Westrill and Starmore; Wigston Parva; Willoughby Waterleys; Wistow Cum Newton Harcourt (as "Wistow"); Withcote; Witherley; Woodhouse; Worthington; Wymeswold;							
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**Appendix One**

Categories	Urban	NW	RCC CDO	Neigh Man.	PC	Faith	Local Voice	SCAT
LAA Target area	Mkt Harborough, Coalville, Greenhill; Loughborough; Melton Mowbray; South Wigston, Hinckley	√		√		√	√	√
Social Capital areas	Loughborough Hastings, Oadby, Wigston, Melton Egerton,	√		√		√	√	√
General	Hinckley;					√		√

**Key**

- NW** Stronger Communities Neighbourhood Workers
- RCC CDO** Rural Community Council’s Community Development Officers
- Neigh Man** Neighbourhood Management
- PC** Parish Councils
- Faith** Faith organisations
- Local Voice** Existence of a recognised mechanism which enables a local ‘voice’
- SCAT** Social Capital Awareness Training