

## **Core Strategy Issues and Emerging Options Topic Papers**

# **VISION FOR LEWES DISTRICT**

### **Background and Aims**

The Introductory Topic Paper provides the background to the Local Development Framework (LDF), the progress made on the Core Strategy for Lewes District to date and how the content of all the Topic Papers has been formulated. This included engagement with District Councillors and representatives from Town and Parish Councils.

The aim of this consultation stage is to present the emerging work on the Core Strategy and seek the views of the public and key stakeholders on the various elements of this work. The consultation will last **8 weeks**, running from the 21st May 2010 to the 16th July 2010. At the end of this paper there are a number of questions that we are keen for individuals and organisations to respond to. Details on how to respond can also be found in this part of the paper.

### **Purpose of this Topic Paper**

The Core Strategy needs to provide a spatial vision for how Lewes District will look in 2026 (i.e. the period that the Core Strategy will plan up to). The vision brings together the 'characteristics' and 'issues/challenges', as identified in Topic Papers 1 and 2. Underpinning the spatial vision are a set of strategic planning objectives (see Topic Paper 4) that have been drafted with the aim of delivering this spatial vision and provide the direction for the spatial strategy and policies.

The spatial vision for Lewes District, which will be expressed in the Core Strategy, clearly needs to support the vision that has been established by the Sustainable Community Strategy, which was produced and is now being implemented by the Lewes District Local Strategic Partnership (Local Voices, Local Choices). The vision of the Sustainable Community Strategy is as follows:

*"Our long term vision is of vibrant, distinctive, safe and sustainable communities where everyone who lives, works, visits or studies in the District supports one another and takes care of the environment – **a community we can all be proud of.**"*



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Within the context set by this complementary strategy, and reflecting the priorities and concerns addressed through the consultation process to-date<sup>1</sup>, the draft vision contained within this Topic Paper is proposed as the guiding or principal aim for the Core Strategy.

The purpose of presenting the vision in this Paper is to invite comments from the public and key stakeholders. Given that the vision is spatial in nature, in that it goes beyond land-use planning, to achieve it will require the cooperation and joint working of a large number of individuals and organisations. We are therefore keen to understand whether or not, those individuals and organisations are able to 'sign up' to this vision to aid in its delivery.

As demonstrated by the characteristics and key issues, which are identified in Topic Papers 1 and 2, Lewes District is very diverse with areas having characteristics and issues that are unique to themselves, within the context of the District. For this reason, an over-arching vision has been set for the whole District, with a vision then identified for each of the differing character areas. To bring about the following vision, multi-agency and cross boundary working will be essential.

**District wide**

*By 2026 the District and its residents will have responded to the challenges of climate change, through a reduction in the District's carbon footprint and by adapting to the consequences of climate change. This would have been done through a variety of means, such as sustainable construction techniques, utilising alternative travel options to the private car (including the reinstated Lewes to Uckfield railway line) and increased production of green energy. Measures to reduce risk to the District from the increased frequency and severity of flood events will have been introduced, particularly in the urban areas. Despite the risk of flooding posed by the rivers, the recreational opportunities presented by these key environmental features will have been realised.*

*The parts of the District within the South Downs National Park will have been conserved and enhanced under the leadership of the National Park Authority, and the area will be better understood and enjoyed by both residents and visitors. Elsewhere, the unique, distinctive and general high quality built and natural environment of the District will have been preserved, and in some instances enhanced, particularly through urban regeneration along the coastal fringe. Enhancements to the biodiversity of the District, including the further creation of a high quality network of habitats, will have been established and the relative tranquillity enjoyed by many parts of the District will have been retained.*

*Improved employment opportunities will have reduced the need for out commuting thereby supporting local services such as the retail centres. To enable this, businesses, including homeworking, will be supported by the provision of modern business accommodation and access to high quality and high speed e-communications.*

*Recent development in the District will have contributed to making existing communities more sustainable and addressing some of the previous imbalances in the standard of living across the District. The timely delivery of key infrastructure requirements, including accessible health care and education facilities, will have been key to achieving this.*

*The provision of appropriate affordable housing, in appropriate locations, will have enabled those who wish to live in the District to do so.*

<sup>1</sup> This includes consultation undertaken on the aborted Core Strategy that reached the Preferred Options stage in September 2006.



## Newhaven

By 2026, Newhaven will have undergone significant regeneration and developed and strengthened its economic base. Building upon the success of the Enterprise Centre the town will have become the focus for enterprise and training within the District, with links being utilised with the two universities in Brighton. Much of the economic regeneration will have centred upon port generated activities, high-tech industries and the tourist



industry with the town acting as the continental access to the National Park. The regeneration of Newhaven will have resulted in an enhanced and more accessible town centre, with an improved public realm and a greater range of retail choice. The improved accessibility of the town centre will have been aided by a high quality public transport corridor along the A259.



## Peacehaven and Telscombe

By 2026, the regeneration of Newhaven will have directly and indirectly improved the vitality of Peacehaven and Telscombe. The A259 will have a high quality public transport corridor, thereby improving the accessibility of this part of the District to neighbouring coastal towns and cities, where the higher order services and facilities exist. The provision and quality of recreational and community services both here and in the towns of Newhaven and Seaford will have been enhanced.





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### Seaford

By 2026, Seaford will have made greater use of its coastal location through a regenerated seafront that is easily accessed from the town centre and key transport hubs, such as the railway station. The retail provision on offer in



the town will have been improved and advantage will have been taken of the opportunities presented by the National Park. This will have included the improved provision of tourist facilities and accommodation that have improved the town's economic base, whilst maintaining the relative tranquillity of the town that is valued by residents and visitors alike.

### Lewes town

Whilst embracing and achieving the National Park and Conservation Area objectives, by 2026 the town of Lewes will have had its role as a County town strengthened and will be seen as desirable to those who live in the town, those who visit and the businesses that exist or wish to establish themselves in the town. The provision of affordable housing and a range of premises to meet modern businesses' needs will be key to this. Such a range of premises will have ensured that whilst the public sector and the tourism industry forms an important part of the town's economy, it does not dominate it. The economic and recreational opportunities presented by the historic characteristics of the town, including the Castle, the Priory and the historic battlefield, will have been utilised.





### The rural area of the Low Weald

By 2026, the Low Weald villages and wider countryside would have retained and, where possible, enhanced their attractive character and identity. Although the majority of recent development would have been directed to the urban areas of the District, development that meets local affordable housing need and supports the rural economy will have been sensitively accommodated, particularly in those settlements with the best range of community services and facilities and ease of access to employment opportunities. With the London to Lewes railway line passing through this part of the District, linkages to the stations of Plumpton and Cooksbridge will have been improved, thereby improving the accessibility to and from this part of the District by sustainable means. Although travel by the private car will still, in many instances, be the only practical way of accessing and travelling around this part of the District, improvements to road safety, including the lowering of speed limits in the villages, will ensure that this form of transportation is undertaken in the safest possible manner.

As a result of significant growth at the nearby towns of Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath, the demand for informal recreation and leisure facilities will have increased and been met in this area where appropriate, which will have resulted in better facilities for the Low Weald communities and a much needed stimulus to the economy in this area.

### The rural area of the South Downs

By 2026, the highly valued character of the South Downs will have been protected and, where possible, enhanced. Development to meet the social and economic needs of the existing communities, including the provision of affordable housing, will have been sensitively accommodated. The area will perform an important tourism, heritage and recreational role within the region while having due regard to the conservation of wildlife and the cultural heritage of the South Downs.



The needs of residents and the increased number of visitors to this part of the National Park will have been sustainably managed. This will have included enhanced accessibility to and around this area, including the use of an enhanced sustainable transport network and improved linkages between the Downland villages. Leisure, recreation and education opportunities associated with the Community Stadium at Falmer will have been realised, not just for the residents of this part of the District, but for the wider area as well.



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This is your opportunity to shape your local area and input on how the District develops over the next 15 years. The Council would appreciate and value any comments you have on this document. With regards to this Topic Paper we would particularly appreciate your answers to the following questions:

- *Do you consider the draft vision to be achievable, realistic and relevant to Lewes District?*
- *Do you consider the vision to be locally distinctive to Lewes District?*
- *Do you agree with the different character areas identified in the vision?*
- *Are you an individual or organisation that could help achieve this vision, if so how and are you happy to 'buy in' to this vision?*
- *Does the draft vision complement the vision contained within the Sustainable Community Strategy?*

## Obtaining additional copies of the Issues and Emerging Options Topic Papers

- Downloading it from **[www.lewes.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.lewes.gov.uk/corestrategy)**
- Emailing **[ldf@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@lewes.gov.uk)**
- Visiting Lewes District Council at Southover House
- Telephoning the Planning Policy Team on **01273 484417**

## How to respond to the Core Strategy Issues and Emerging Options Topic Papers

Views are invited to the questions that are located at the end of each of the Topic Papers. You need only reply to any part of the questions that are of interest to you, or you may introduce other comments.

### Comments may be sent to the Council by:

By email to: **[ldf@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@lewes.gov.uk)**

By fax to: **01273 484452**

By post to: Lewes District Council  
Planning Policy Team  
Southover House  
Southover Road  
Lewes  
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*Comments must be received by the 16th July 2010*

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**This leaflet can be made available in large print, audiotape,  
disk or in another language upon request.**

**Please telephone 01273 484141 or  
email [lewesdc@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:lewesdc@lewes.gov.uk)**

