

# Community Strategy Community Strategy **Community Strategy**



**SEDGEMOOR - Our District Our Voice Our Future**



# Community Strategy **2nd Edition - March 2006** Community Strategy



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# What is the Community Strategy?

The purpose of the Community Strategy is to promote the Economic, Social and Environmental wellbeing of Sedgemoor. It is produced by the **Sedgemoor in Somerset Partnership** – our membership is listed on the back cover.

This is the second edition of the Community Strategy for Sedgemoor. This new edition is being issued following an extensive review of the first Community Strategy for Sedgemoor, which was published in July 2003.

As part of the review, we have reported progress against our Actions and Targets from the first edition. This is published in a report called: "Community Strategy: Review Report, September 2005."

As well as providing an opportunity to update and improve the Community Strategy, the review also highlighted the need for more fundamental changes to be made.

This revision, therefore, is published for the purpose of providing an improved and updated Community Strategy for Sedgemoor. However, we are beginning to develop a new Sustainable Community Strategy in line with emerging Government guidance, which we plan to publish in March 2008.



**The Community Strategy for Sedgemoor draws together the main issues for the District into the following vision:**

“ *Everyone working together to make Sedgemoor a safer, cleaner, healthier, more pleasant and vibrant district in which to live, work, learn, invest or visit* ”

## Changes since the First Edition

The 7 themes from the First Edition have been retained because we believe they still reflect the important issues for our communities within Sedgemoor.

However, we have updated the contents of each theme. We have replaced the “Actions” and “Targets” from the First Edition with “Activities” and a section called “How We Will Measure Success”. This improvement will help us to more effectively monitor and report on progress over the life of the Strategy.

### Monitoring and Review

The 2nd Edition has been published after a comprehensive review of the original Community Strategy. We have introduced a number of improvements aimed at ensuring that the Community Strategy is more effective in achieving its purpose. These improvements include:

- Updated information about Partners’ activities, developments and projects
- Updated measures of success have been introduced to assist in future monitoring
- An electronic information management system has been set up to assist in monitoring progress for future reviews

Progress against this 2nd Edition will be reported back prior to the publication of our new Sustainable Community Strategy in 2008.

As a Partnership, we have been leading the way on some major projects that combine more than one of the Themes, and which will make a significant impact on quality of life for our residents, businesses and visitors.

### Parrett Sluice

Proposals to provide a tidal sluice on the River Parrett downstream of Bridgwater have been the subject of discussion for over 100 years. If a “penning sluice” is constructed, which could permanently exclude the tide, this could not only help prevent flooding but could also enable the river to be kept at a constant height, bringing opportunities for waterside regeneration in Bridgwater and new leisure and tourism opportunities to the Somerset Levels and Moors. The project has gained new momentum since the Strategic Partnership agreed to take the lead in developing the project in December 2004. This is a long-term project, which is dependent on making a robust economic and environment case to various Government agencies and securing significant levels of external funding. Various studies are being carried out to establish the viability of the project, which will also form part of a “Living Landmark” lottery bid seeking £50 million in lottery funding towards water-based regeneration in Somerset.

### Newtown and Victoria Springboard Centre

Partners have been working together to provide a £6 million innovative neighbourhood centre in one of the most deprived areas of Sedgemoor.

With major funding already secured from a range of partners, the Centre will eventually host a GP Surgery/Medical Centre, a new Children’s Centre, a community café, sports and activity halls as well as providing accommodation for a range of community groups and small businesses.

The Centre is being built to high standards in design and energy efficiency, and is a national pathfinder project. Construction work is planned on a phased basis, with Phase 1 - the Children’s Centre - opening in July 2006, with other phases to follow.

### Living In Sedgemoor website

The Living in Sedgemoor website was built using funds obtained from Government to demonstrate that ‘joined-up’ information from Partner organisations could be presented on a single web site. The approach developed by Sedgemoor has now been taken up at a national level by DirectGov, at [www.directgov.gov.uk](http://www.directgov.gov.uk). The Council’s E-Government Advisor has joined the National Project Group that is looking to connect local services into the DirectGov portal. In the meantime, at a more local level, the Partnership supports both the SomersetOnline portal and the Somerset Gateway, which provide similar information. SomersetOnline currently shows information from the County Council, the five District Councils, and the Police. The Somerset Gateway provides information about parishes, clubs and voluntary organisations. The intention is that information from the two sites will eventually be joined up.

Community Planning in Sedgemoor has been taking place on a local area level, with parishes and towns developing their own community plans and action plans.

Key issues identified from this process are being fed into the overall district Community Strategy.

Parish Plans have been completed in 10 areas of Sedgemoor:

**Berrow • Cannington • Cheddar • East Huntspill  
North Petherton • Over Stowey • Spaxton  
Wedmore • West Huntspill • Woolavington**

**Axbridge** is currently working on its Parish Plan.

As well as Parish Plans, the larger towns in Sedgemoor have also been developing action plans.

## **Bridgwater**

The Bridgwater Community Plan is in development. Research has been undertaken to build a profile of Bridgwater town's main concerns, priorities and trends, and the aspirations held for its future. It is important to acknowledge that this Plan is a living document. It is only the first step in an ongoing process, identifying and bringing together the main issues for the quality of life in Bridgwater and seeking ways to address them. Community Planning work has been done alongside neighbourhood regeneration programmes such as:

**Hamp Single Regeneration Budget (SRB).** This programme has brought £3.2 million into the estate over the last 6 years for projects to improve community safety, employment, training and youth recreational facilities.

**Newtown and Victoria Springboard.** Sponsored by the Sedgemoor in Somerset Partnership and the South West Regional Development Agency's 'Building Communities' programme, the project will see the construction of an innovative £6 million community facility in one of the most deprived areas of the town.

**Sydenham SRB.** This programme bought £6.8 million into the area over the course of the programme, and had positive outcomes for community safety, youth and recreational facilities and employment. Community development work continues on the estate.

**Northgate.** This key site is currently occupied by various council buildings, offices, car parking and Splash leisure centre. Sedgemoor District Council, in partnership with Somerset County Council, has employed a team of consultants to examine potential development options for the site. The consortium is researching a variety of ways the site can be redeveloped for the maximum benefit of the community. Options will be developed in consultation with local people and take into account a survey of all present businesses and services on the site, a detailed examination of broader factors such as vacancy rates, turnover of retail representation, site accessibility and other business data. A marketing package for the site will then be produced to encourage interest from developers. Alongside this work, the consultants will also produce a similar strategy for the Eastover area of town, in consultation with local traders and residents.

## **Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge**

A Market and Coastal Towns Initiative, running since 2002, has resulted in an Action Plan for the towns, with a range of projects planned and underway that aim to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the towns.

Proposals developed include redevelopment of the Esplanade and the creation of a Learning and Cultural Quarter.

Success has already been achieved through the creation of a cycle track that joins the two towns along the River Brue, as well as improvement schemes to parks and open spaces. Work is continuing to secure funding to implement projects in the future.

## **Cluster Areas**

We are currently identifying issues that we will seek to address across our Parish Cluster Areas. The Cluster Areas in Sedgemoor are:

### **Cheddar Valley**

**Axbridge, Badgworth, Chapel Allerton, Cheddar, Compton Bishop, Mark, Shipham, Weare and Wedmore**

### **Coastal**

**Berrow, Brean, Brent Knoll, Burnham-on-Sea & Highbridge, Burnham Without, East Brent, East Huntspill, Lympsham, Pawlett and West Huntspill**

### **Moors**

**Bridgwater Without, Chedzoy, Lyng, Middlezoy, North Petherton, Othery, Thurloxton and Westonzoyland**

### **Poldens**

**Ashcott, Bawdrip, Burtle, Catcott, Chilton Polden, Cossington, Edington, Greinton, Moorlinch, Puriton, Shapwick, Stawell, Sutton Mallet and Woolavington**

### **Quantocks**

**Broomfield, Cannington, Chilton Trinity, Durleigh, Enmore, Fiddington, Goathurst, Nether Stowey, Otterhampton, Over Stowey, Spaxton, Stockland Bristol and Wembdon**



# Transport and Access

## Aim

**“Recognising that Sedgemoor is a mainly rural area, an efficient transport system, accessible to all, is vital to the social and economic well being of the District”**

Overall traffic volumes are increasing, but there is no evidence of a matched increase in public transport use, particularly in rural areas. We need to develop innovative transport solutions, such as community transport schemes, to replace declining rural bus services.

A balance needs to be struck between the desire of individuals to use private cars and the needs of other road users, such as cyclists, pedestrians and heavy goods vehicle operators. We want to ensure that services are accessible to all, not only through improved roads, but also through schemes that will reduce the need to travel. We need to encourage the development of new ways of service provision, such as mobile services.



## Sedgemoor Key Facts

- In a recent Quality of Life survey across Somerset, 66.9% of Sedgemoor residents gave the main reason for using their own vehicle as being ‘public transport is not practical or available’. This was a slight improvement from 69.3% in the previous survey
- In the same survey, people were asked the main reason for rarely using a bicycle, and 47% of Sedgemoor residents said that it was because the roads were too busy
- According to the UK Expenditure and Food Survey 2004/5, transport accounts for the largest proportion (14%) of living expenses, with the average household spending £60 per week on transport costs



- Sustrans has worked with partners to provide cycle routes along the canal towpath, a track on the east bank of the River Parrett, the former railway cutting between Bawdrip and Cossington, and a link between Highbridge and Burnham-on-Sea along the River Brue
- According to the Somerset Traffic Data Report in 2004, overall traffic increased in the County by 1.6% between 2003 and 2004
- The same survey reveals that 0.9% of primary school children and 5.6% of secondary school children travel to school by bicycle

## Activities

- Support initiatives that promote the use of public and community transport
- Support the promotion of safe driving practises among young people
- Support projects that promote and improve facilities for cycling and walking
- Support initiatives aimed at reducing travel to school or college by car
- Continue to develop a good working relationship between the freight haulage industry, local businesses and Somerset local authorities
- Support initiatives that promote rail travel
- Continue to implement car parking improvements
- Support rural housing schemes in villages that have access to good public transport

## How we will measure success

- Reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on roads by 40% by 2010
- Reduce the number of children killed and seriously injured on roads by 40% by 2010
- Increase the use of buses by 10% by 2010
- Increase the number of people who are satisfied with bus services by 7% by 2010

## How you can find out more

- Visit Somerset County Council's transport page, to find out about the Local Transport Plan, Safe Routes to Schools and a range of other transport and highways matters:  
[www.somerset.gov.uk](http://www.somerset.gov.uk)  
or phone: 0845 345 9155
- Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity. Visit them at:  
[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk) or phone: 0845 113 0065
- To find out about cycle routes and other walking and cycling activities, visit the official tourism site for Sedgemoor at:  
[www.somersetbythesea.co.uk](http://www.somersetbythesea.co.uk)  
or phone: 0845 408 2540



## How you can help

- Support your local shops and facilities to minimise traffic flows
- If you are elderly or have reduced mobility, use Sedgemoor Community Transport services available throughout the district. Phone: 01278 434881
- If you are 16 –19 years old, live in a rural area and need transport to get to a job or training course, you could use the Moped Loan Scheme. Phone: 01278 722300
- Car share wherever possible. Join the Somerset Car share scheme, phone: 01823 355598
- Support safe routes to school for your children, which aims to provide safe paths and cycleways so that students can travel to school on their own in safety. For more information, phone: 01823 355412

## Aim

***“To encourage active local communities, with everyone having the chance to play their part in making Sedgemoor a better place to live”***

A strong sense of community is an important feature of life in Sedgemoor. The area has a rich tradition of activity involving whole communities such as Carnivals, Harvest Home Suppers and Arts Festivals. However, there are concerns that the pressures of modern life have weakened community life. Voluntary organisations working within Sedgemoor have reported increasing difficulties in recruiting volunteers. Turnout in local elections has also declined. Many Parish Councillors are elected without contest due to shortage of candidates.

Community Planning aims to achieve a greater level of community control and involvement in all aspects of life. It also gives a greater voice to local voluntary organisations. The opportunities for local people to play a real part in decision-making are now greater than ever before.

## Sedgemoor Key Facts

- According to the Somerset Environment and Quality of Life Survey 2004, 88.7% of Sedgemoor residents were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live, an improvement of 5.7% since the previous survey in 2002
- The 2004 survey also tells us the following facts about Sedgemoor residents:
  - ◆ 66% agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together
  - ◆ 38.4% felt they were unable to influence decisions affecting their local area
  - ◆ 54.6% agreed with the statement: “by working together, people in my neighbourhood can influence decisions that affect the neighbourhood”

- ◆ 19% had considered representing their area as a parish, town or district councillor, while only 3.1% actually had taken up positions
- ◆ Residents were asked whether they thought their neighbourhood had got better or worse over the last 2 years. The largest proportion (69.8%) felt their area had stayed the same. However, the results showed some improvement from the previous survey, with 8.5% feeling their area had got better (compared to 6.5% in 2002) and 19.8% feeling their area had got worse (compared to 21.5% in 2002)

- According to the Sedgemoor Volunteer Bureau Annual Report 2004/5, there has been a 31% increase in the number of volunteers registered at the Bureau over the last year, and a 60% increase in volunteer enquiries
- The largest proportion of registered volunteers (36.8%) are within the 35-50 year age group



## Activities

- Support Community Planning and Community-led regeneration schemes
- Help local groups to flourish through grant aid
- Support projects that promote volunteering
- Consult and involve the public in projects and issues relevant to their communities
- Support projects that promote and encourage local democracy
- Support initiatives that aim to involve "hard to reach" groups in arts activity, as participants and audiences, including the young and the old, the disabled and the socially isolated

## How we will measure success

- Complete local Parish and Community Plans for all areas of Sedgemoor by 2010
- Hold one 'celebrating volunteers' event in Volunteer Week by 2008
- Implement a minimum of one action or target from each Parish or local area Community Plan by 2008
- Increase the number of people from selected target groups who have been actively engaged in meaningful arts activity
- Increase the number of volunteers registered

## How you can find out more

- Visit the Community Council for Somerset website on: [www.somersetcc.org.uk](http://www.somersetcc.org.uk) or phone: 01823 331222. They work to support rural communities to develop and regenerate, including developing Parish Plans.
- The Citizens Advice Bureau provides free, confidential, impartial advice to everyone. To find out more, visit: [www.bridgwater.net/Town/Services/CAB/cab](http://www.bridgwater.net/Town/Services/CAB/cab) or phone: 01278 455236
- Volunteering England promotes volunteering and offers a range of resources for volunteers. Visit them at: [www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk) or phone: 0845 305 6979
- To find out about grants available to community groups, phone: 01278 435234, or visit Sedgemoor's Grants Programme web page at: [www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/grants](http://www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/grants)  
The page provides links to other grant giving bodies including the Big Lottery, Arts Council and Awards For All
- The Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation is a UK charity specialising in community participation, training and development. They work with local authorities, housing associations, voluntary agencies and community groups. Visit them at: [www.nif.co.uk](http://www.nif.co.uk) or phone: 0870 770 0339
- The Community Development Foundation aims to help communities gain greater control over the decisions that affect their lives. Visit them at: [www.cdf.org.uk](http://www.cdf.org.uk), or phone: 020 7833 1772
- Creating Excellence is a learning network for community regeneration. Visit them at: [www.creatingexcellence.org.uk](http://www.creatingexcellence.org.uk) or phone: 0800 328 3234



## How you can help

- Become a local Councillor and represent the views of your community. For further information contact Sedgemoor District Council, phone: 0845 408 2540
- Find out whether your village is preparing a Parish Plan or Village Appraisal. If yes, get involved. If no, why not encourage them to prepare one. For further information, contact the Community Council for Somerset, phone: 01823 331222
- Find out about Community Planning and regeneration projects in your area.  
**Urban** - (Bridgwater, Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge), phone: 01278 435265  
**Rural** - phone: 01278 435425
- The Volunteer Centre has details of all sorts of volunteering opportunities. Find out more by contacting the Centre, phone: 01278 457685

## Aim

***“To make Sedgemoor a more prosperous and attractive place to live, work, visit and invest in.”***

The rapid increase in Sedgemoor’s population confirms that the district is a desirable place. The M5 spans the entire length of the district, making Sedgemoor a highly accessible business and tourist location. As a result, Sedgemoor has seen recent major investment from sectors like commerce, distribution, manufacturing and tourism. Sedgemoor currently has a high employment rate, and a strong local economy. However, the district suffers from low wage rates and a high proportion of the workforce employed in low skilled jobs, which could have a negative impact on quality of life for some. For example, this restricts local people’s access to the housing market, a situation that is made worse by a limited supply of affordable housing.



## Sedgemoor Key Facts

- Sedgemoor offers prime business sites at several locations adjacent to the district’s 3 motorway junctions, including:
  - ◆ Express Park
  - ◆ Huntworth Business Park
  - ◆ Isleport Business Park
  - ◆ Cheddar Business Park
- Sedgemoor has 3 Tourist Information Centres, at Bridgwater, Burnham-on-Sea and Cheddar. Both Cheddar and Burnham TICs have won regional awards for excellent customer services
- Sedgemoor TICs handled over 178,00 enquiries in 2005. August was their busiest month, with the centres averaging 1000 enquiries per day

- According to the Labour Market Profile for Sedgemoor on Nomisweb:
  - ◆ Sedgemoor has an economic activity rate of 79.4%, compared to 80.8% for the South West
  - ◆ Unemployment in Sedgemoor is lower than the national average at 3.1%, compared to 4.8% for Great Britain
  - ◆ The average weekly wage for people working in Sedgemoor is £348.40, compared to £422.30 for Great Britain
  - ◆ Sedgemoor has 3,850 VAT registered businesses, 28 of which are major employers employing over 100 staff
  - ◆ The largest proportion of Sedgemoor’s workforce work in wholesale, retail and trades (19.6%) and in manufacturing (17%)

- ◆ A high proportion (44.9%) of Sedgemoor’s workers are employed in low skilled jobs (occupational groups 6-9), compared to 34.6% nationally
- ◆ Sedgemoor has a much higher than average proportion of people who are self employed (14.4%) compared to 9.1% for Britain and a higher rate of part time work (35.5%) compared to 31.9% for Britain
- Trade figures for the Port of Bridgwater show that 79 ships brought over 105,000 tons of cargo to Dunball Wharf in 2004 - an increase of 4% on 2003 figures

## Activities

- Identify, allocate and provide land that can be used for business or industrial parks within Sedgemoor
- Promote Sedgemoor as an all year round business and tourist destination and develop our town centres
- Develop web-based marketing of the district as a tourist and business location
- Proactively attract funding and investment into the district
- Assist Sedgemoor's farming and land-based industries within the traditional and organic sectors
- Support businesses facing difficulties by assisting the workforce in finding new jobs
- Ensure effective marketing and promotion of the area, reflecting Sedgemoor's special qualities
- Enable a high-quality visitor experience, and encourage repeat visits

## How we will measure success

- Increase the local average wage, relative to the Somerset average
- Decrease the percentage of the workforce employed in low-skilled jobs (occupational groups 6 to 9)
- Improve the percentage of people of working age in employment to 83%, by 2007
- Achieve a 10% increase per year in the number of tourism enquiries received electronically at Tourist Information Centres
- Maintain or improve the proportion of business planning applications decided within 8 weeks

## How you can find out more

- For information about the area as a business location, visit the Sedgemoor Business website (currently under construction) at: [www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/business](http://www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/business) or phone: 0845 408 2540
- For a wealth of information about events, attractions and tourism information in Sedgemoor, visit the official tourism website for the district at: [www.somersetbythesea.co.uk](http://www.somersetbythesea.co.uk) or phone: 0845 408 2540
- To find out about a range of support services for businesses, including information about finance, marketing, management and grants, visit Business Link Somerset at: [www.businesslinksomerset.co.uk](http://www.businesslinksomerset.co.uk) or phone: 0845 721 1112
- The Small Business Service is operated by the Department of Trade and Industry. To find out more, visit: [www.dti.gov.uk](http://www.dti.gov.uk) or phone: 020 7215 5000
- Business In The Community is a group of the UK's top businesses who are committed to businesses having a positive impact on society. Visit them at: [www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk) or phone: 0870 600 2482
- Shell Livewire helps 18-30 year olds to set up their own business. More information is available by visiting: [www.shell-livewire.org](http://www.shell-livewire.org) or phone: 0845 757 3252
- The Inland Revenue offers a wide range of advice and support to businesses and the self-employed. Visit: [www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk) or talk to the Self Employment Contact Centre. Phone: 0845 915 4655

## How you can help

- Support your local economy by buying local products and services, shopping locally and supporting local events and attractions, such as Carnivals
- Develop or improve your business using a range of support services, including grants. Contact: Business Link Somerset, phone: 08457 211 112
- Celebrate your business's success through getting an award or accreditation, such as:
  - ◆ Investors in People, phone: 020 7467 1900
  - ◆ VisitBritain rating, phone: 01392 353 222
  - ◆ BITC Awards for Excellence, phone: 0870 600 2482
  - ◆ National Customer Service Award, phone: 020 7378 1188
  - ◆ Growing Business Award, phone: 020 7368 7123
- If your business makes use of new or emerging technologies, consider applying for funding under the Government's Technology Programme, phone: 020 7215 5000

## Aim

### ***“To value the unique environment of Sedgemoor and to protect it for future generations”***

Sedgemoor’s natural environment is unique. As well as having 12 miles of coastline, the District is home to “Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty” in the Mendip and Quantock Hills, along with the Somerset Levels which are classed as internationally important wetlands.

Local development, tourism and farming practices can all affect the quality of our environment. We also face worldwide changes such as global warming. This, along with changes in land-use, can increase excessive flooding in low-lying areas of Sedgemoor. Our consumer society has led to growing demands for energy and natural resources, and the production of more waste. We need to find ways of improving our quality of life without spoiling the environment for future generations.

## Sedgemoor Key Facts

- Land is developed in accordance with the Development Plan for Sedgemoor. The Plan contains policies to protect and improve the environment and provide for public open space
- The Housing Land Requirement for Sedgemoor over the District Local Plan period 1991-2011 is 9,200 dwellings
- The Sedgemoor Biodiversity Action Plan provides a record of the district’s wildlife species and habitats and identifies action to care for them
- Sedgemoor has 24 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), 3 Nature Reserves and almost 20% of the District lies within an environmentally sensitive area



- In the Somerset Environment and Quality of Life Survey in 2004, Sedgemoor residents ranked the “Loss of green open spaces”, “the percentage of household waste recycled” and “wildlife and habitat conservation” among the top six indicators of quality of life
- In the same survey, over 90% of people said that they were worried about climate change
- Our countryside and coastline bring important economic benefits to our district, with over 3 million visitors coming to the District each year

## Activities

- Encourage residents to use the kerbside recycling and garden waste collection services
- Encourage parishes to undertake Village Design Statements to identify qualities valued by residents and to help ensure that any changes are sensitive to village character
- Set up Community Flood Warden Schemes in areas of flood risk, and protect properties through good management of river catchments and flood defences
- Promote energy efficiency within businesses and homes
- Work with local conservation agencies to manage local nature reserves, promote biodiversity and protect targeted wildlife sites and habitats
- Promote good environmental practice and advise about sources of funding for environmental projects
- Continue to support the Somerset Landscape Scheme
- Promote and protect Sedgemoor's natural environment as an asset for local communities and visitors
- Improve the quality and safety of parks and public open spaces

## How we will measure success

- Increase the recycling rate to at least 21% in Sedgemoor by 2007/8
- 44% of new housing development to be on previously developed (Brownfield) sites to be achieved over the life of the Development Plan (to 2011)

## How you can find out more

- To get some handy hints to minimise the effect that you have on the environment and make your household more environmentally friendly, visit: [www.recycle-more.co.uk](http://www.recycle-more.co.uk) or phone: 0845 068 2572
- Visit the Environment Agency website to find out about a range of environmental issues, such as flood risk, conservation, water quality and various environmental facts and figures. Go to: [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk) or phone: 0708 506 506
- To find out more about recycling, visit Sedgemoor's Waste Management web page at: [www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/waste](http://www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/waste)
- Find out about countryside services offered by Somerset County Council, including the Somerset Landscape Scheme, by visiting: [www.somerset.gov.uk/somerset/ete/countryside/index.cfm](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/somerset/ete/countryside/index.cfm) or phone: 0845 345 9188



- Improve the coverage of flood warning services to 77.5% of properties in flood risk areas by 2007
- Achieve a Green Flag Award for Apex Leisure and Wildlife Park by the end of 2006

## How you can help

- Use your green box and purchase a composter. Phone: 0845 408 2543
- Parishes can produce a Village Design Statement. Guidance is available from Sedgemoor District Council, Phone: 01278 435244
- Report pollution and flytipping incidents to the Environment Agency. Phone: 0800 80 70 60
- Are you at risk from flooding? Find out what action you should take - ring the Environment Agency Floodline number, Phone: 0845 988 1188
- Ask for a free energy survey for your home from Bristol and Somerset Energy Advice Centre. Phone: 0800 512 012
- Encourage wildlife in your garden - contact Somerset Wildlife Trust for their Wildlife Gardening leaflet. Phone: 0870 036 7711 or Sedgemoor Action Group for our Environment, phone: 01278 435425
- Are you a farmer or landowner and want to restore or create a landscape feature? Contact Somerset Landscape Scheme, Phone: 01823 355617
- Advice on land management schemes for farmers is available from the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Phone: 01823 355427

## Aim

### **“To provide high quality and accessible education for all residents of Sedgemoor”**

Education is not just about exam results. Involvement in education at any age (lifelong learning) is to be positively encouraged, whether it is to achieve qualifications, for personal development, or just for leisure or cultural reasons. Childcare provision, transport, cost of courses and access all have to be adequate and appropriate, so that all people who want to take part in learning don't face unhelpful barriers.

Taking part in educational activities contributes to people having the necessary skills and confidence to play a full part in society.

Education is also not just about formal learning in a classroom. A wide range of opportunities are available, including leisure and cultural opportunities.

Continued learning is an important factor in maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and active mind.



*Bridgwater College*

## Sedgemoor Key Facts

- Bridgwater College provides the main progression route for school leavers in Sedgemoor, with over 3000 full and part-time 16-18 year old students enrolled each year. The College also has over 16,000 adults enrolled on higher education and other training courses
- Bridgwater College had an A Level pass rate of 99% - well above the national average of 97%. Thirty four subjects had 100% pass rates
- 4000 adult learners attend Adult Learning & Leisure courses in Sedgemoor each year  
Of these:
  - ◆ 30% are aged over 60
  - ◆ 70% are women
  - ◆ 10% have a learning difficulty/disability
  - ◆ 5% are from minority ethnic groups



- Sedgemoor suffers from below average educational attainment, with almost 31% of the working age population not having any qualifications
- As well as 6 Library and information facilities in Sedgemoor: Bridgwater, Burnham-on-Sea, Highbridge, North Petherton, Nether Stowey and Cheddar, there is a mobile library service for rural areas

- In the Somerset Environment & Quality of Life Survey 2004, Sedgemoor residents were asked how easy they find it to access certain education and cultural facilities. Schools came top, with 84.4% of respondents saying they found them easy to access. Libraries scored well too, with 75.6% of respondents finding them easy to access. Childcare scored 59.2% and Museums/Heritage Sites scored 49.1%, meaning people were less likely to find these facilities easy to access
- According to the same survey, 32.8% of residents regularly use library services, and 13.3% regularly use Adult Learning and Leisure services

## Activities

- Support the work of Community Learning Partnerships
- Support the work of Specialist Schools
- Support projects that promote Adult Learning
- Develop and promote Museums and other historical or educational sites
- Support initiatives that provide activities for young people in Sedgemoor by better promotion of our heritage
- Support the use of libraries, meeting places and halls for cultural and learning activities

## How we will measure success

- Increase the percentage of 15 year olds achieving 5 A\* to C grades in GCSEs to 61.3%, by 2008
- Increase the percentage of 16 to 18 year olds in education, employment or training
- Increase the percentage of library users who found the information they wanted to 73%, by 2007
- Increase the visits/usage of museums

## How you can find out more

- Learn more about the Somerset's Education, Learning, Library and Cultural services by visiting: [www.somerset.gov.uk](http://www.somerset.gov.uk) or phone: 0845 345 9166
- Find out about the range of courses and opportunities available at Bridgwater College, by visiting: [www.bridgwater.ac.uk](http://www.bridgwater.ac.uk) or phone: 01278 455464
- If you are over 50 and want to keep an active mind, find out more about the University of the Third Age. Visit them at: [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk)
- If you are aged between 13 and 19 and interested in learning for career or personal development, visit Connexions online. To find out what service they could offer you, visit: [www.connexions-direct.com/index.cfm](http://www.connexions-direct.com/index.cfm) or phone: 0808 001 3219
- Somerset Learning and Skills Council is responsible for post-16 education and training within Somerset. To find out more, visit them at: [www.lsc.gov.uk/somerset/Corporate/default.htm](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/somerset/Corporate/default.htm) or phone: 0870 900 6800
- Learn Direct runs over 2000 centres across the country, offering flexible on-line learning. Visit them at: [www.learnirect.co.uk](http://www.learnirect.co.uk) or phone: 0800 100 900 (free)



## How you can help

- Encourage your local school to have a school council. Phone: 0845 456 9428
- Become a school governor. Contact Somerset Governor Service, phone: 01823 356664
- Enrol on a course at your local Adult Learning Centre:  
Bridgwater, phone: 01278 431281  
Burnham-on-Sea, phone: 01278 783057  
Cheddar, phone: 01934 744939
- Over 50? – then contact your local U3A:  
Berrow, phone: 01278 792618  
Bridgwater, phone: 01278 422878  
Burnham-on-Sea, phone: 01278 781439  
Highbridge, phone: 01278 783780
- Enrol on a leisure or educational course at Bridgwater College, phone: 01278 455464
- Visit your local library for a range of information and cultural services

# Crime Reduction

## Aim

**“Crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour are priorities you say should be tackled in our community”**

Our Safer Sedgemoor Partnership has been set up to tackle priority areas that you say are important. The Police, District Council and County Council together with 13 other local agencies are jointly committed to a Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy at a local level. The Strategy has flexibility to respond to new issues whilst balancing short, medium and long term reduction measures.



Sedgemoor GrafArt community art project

## Sedgemoor Key Facts

- The Safer Sedgemoor Partnership is placed as a “family group” with 14 other partnerships with a similar demographic profile to ours. Currently, Sedgemoor is the top performing Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in its family group for total crime. Sedgemoor, therefore, is a safe place to live.
- According to iQuanta Police performance data, there has been a reduction in all major crime categories between 2004 and 2005:

### Category

### Sedgemoor

**Criminal Damage**

down by 22%

**Vehicle Crime**

down by 17%

**Domestic Burglary**

down by 11%

**Cycle Theft**

down by 4%

- The 2004 crime audit revealed your views on crime. The areas most people are concerned about are **burglary, violent crime, anti-social behaviour, vehicle crime, road safety, bicycle theft** and **drug/alcohol related disorders**. The Partnership has set up working groups to address these concerns.



### Activities

- Encourage residents and businesses to protect their property
- Support activities that aim to reduce domestic violence
- Support projects that encourage safer pubs and clubs, and improve the night time economy
- Use deployable CCTV cameras to fight crime in areas not covered by fixed CCTV
- Support activities which aim to reduce anti-social behaviour
- Support drug education for young people, parents and carers
- Support community activities for young people to divert them from crime, disorder and drugs
- Carry out and disseminate findings from a Crime and Disorder Survey in 2007, to include a section about fear of crime
- Support links with agencies, such as Somerset Partnership Against Racial Harassment, Somerset Gay Health, Somerset Racial Equalities Council and Victim Support with the aim of reducing the incidence of hate crime
- Support the progress of drugs intervention programmes
- Support initiatives that aim to prevent homelessness and provide supported housing to "at risk" individuals and groups

### How you can find out more

- To find out about crime reduction activities including CCTV and street lighting, or to download a copy of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy, visit: [www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/crime](http://www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/crime), or phone: 0845 408 2540
- Visit Avon and Somerset Police Constabulary online to find out about crime figures and other Police services in your local area. Go to: [www.avonandsomerset.police.uk](http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk) or phone: 0845 456 7000
- To find out about information and resources to do with crime reduction, including links to local voluntary groups, visit: [www.crimereduction.gov.uk](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk) or phone: 020 7035 4747
- The Somerset Drugs Service provides specialist assessment and treatment for substance misuse for adults. To find out more, visit them on: [www.somerset.nhs.uk/services/mental\\_health/specialist\\_services/drugsservice.html](http://www.somerset.nhs.uk/services/mental_health/specialist_services/drugsservice.html) or phone: 01278 434293
- To find out about domestic abuse and burglary reduction in Somerset, visit the County Council's community safety web page at: [www.somerset.gov.uk/somerset/communityliving/](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/somerset/communityliving/) or phone: 0845 345 9166

### How we will measure success

- Achieve the Safer Business Award by the end of 2005
- Reduce domestic burglary by 15% each year
- Reduce vehicle crime by 6% each year
- Reduce the level of total crime by 15% by 2008
- Reduce the levels of road fatalities and serious personal injuries within Sedgemoor by 10% by 2008
- Reduce the level of total criminal damage by 20% by 2008

### How you can help

- Report crime and suspicious incidents: Crimestoppers, phone: 0800 555 111
- Become a Special Constable: phone: 01823 363313
- Check your home, business and vehicle security. Seek advice from experts: phone: 01823 363302
- Join a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme: phone: 01823 363348
- Communicate with your community and local Community Beat Manager: phone: 01275 818181, or visit: [www.avonandsomerset.police.uk](http://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk)
- Encourage discussion about the fear and reality of crime amongst your community
- Get involved in your Local Action Team (LAT). For more information, contact the LAT Co-ordinator, phone: 01823 363338

## Aim

### **“Helping people at all stages of their lives to enjoy the best possible health and quality of life”**

Health is about more than just access to good doctors and hospitals. It is important to prevent ill-health, as well as treat it. Many things can determine how healthy we are. Education, unemployment, poverty and low income, housing and the environment significantly affect physical and mental health. These factors are not evenly distributed across society, and have an unequal influence on health. We aim to improve the health of all, but will target additional health-improving activities at the areas where the need is greatest.

In Sedgemoor, we want to make the district a healthy community for all its residents. The Sedgemoor in Somerset Partnership has a key role to play in achieving this aim by improving access to health and leisure facilities, tackling disadvantage and deprivation, the provision of affordable housing in the right areas, and by supporting people to adopt a healthy and active lifestyle.



## Sedgemoor Key Facts

- Life expectancy in Sedgemoor is higher than the national average at 79.9 years. However, there are areas of Sedgemoor that life expectancy is lower – Bridgwater Victoria is the lowest at 75.7 years, a difference of 4.2 years
- According to the Somerset Health and Social Needs Analysis 2004:
  - ◆ 90% of residents felt their health was “good” or “fairly good”
  - ◆ However, 34% of households have people with long term limiting illnesses
  - ◆ Nearly 1 in 5 residents of Sedgemoor are aged 65 and over, and 15.3% households are made up of single pensioners

- According to the Director of Public Health in 2004, the highest rates of preventable death due to cancer occur in : Sydenham, Woolavington, Burnham South and Axbridge, and for coronary heart disease in: Eastover, Victoria, North Petherton, Highbridge, Puriton and Knoll
- The National Statistics Neighbourhood Profile shows that in Sedgemoor, there was a total of 46,228 dwellings in April 2004, of which 2.9% were vacant, and 1.8% were classed as unfit. This compares to an “unfit” rate of 4.1% for the South West



- In the 3 years to March 2006, Somerset Coast Stop Smoking Service had a target to help 2240 people quit smoking. By January 2006, they had already supported 2500. Of those that seek support, 76% are successful through the crucial 4-week stage

## Activities

- Support the provision of affordable housing, in the right areas
- Provide grants to improve rented and private homes within Sedgemoor
- Provide information and advice about benefit entitlement
- Continue to support active and healthy lifestyles
- Support initiatives that promote healthy eating
- Support initiatives that aim to improve access to facilities

## How we will measure success

- Reduce the death rate in under 75s from cancer by 20% and heart disease by 40% by 2010
- 75% of private dwellings and 100% of social housing to have achieved the Government's Decent Homes standard by 2010
- Reduce the gap in life expectancy between the worst fifth of wards and the District average by at least 10% by 2010 in line with national targets
- Reduce the rate of smoking, contributing to the national target of a reduction in the rate in manual groups from 32% in 1998 to 26% by 2010; 710 smokers from all groups successfully quitting at the 4 week stage per year in Sedgemoor
- Deliver a 1% reduction per year in the proportion of women continuing to smoke throughout pregnancy
- Reduce the rate of under 18 conceptions by 50% by 2010
- Increase the proportion of adults achieving at least 30 minutes of sports and recreational physical activity on at least three days per week by 3%, year on year
- 50% of all schools to achieve National Healthy Schools status by the end of 2006, and 100% to be engaged by 2009
- Provide 35% affordable housing on all suitable new development sites

- Support initiatives that aim to promote independence in the home
- Support projects aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles in the 50+ age group
- Support projects that promote activities aimed at people recovering from illness.
- Support initiatives that promote healthy and active lifestyle among younger people
- Work co-operatively to support programmes aimed at ensuring people have adequate housing and related support appropriate to their needs, including tenancy support services

## How you can find out more

- You can download a guide to local health services, from the Somerset Coast Primary Care Trust (PCT) website. Visit: [www.somerset.nhs.uk/pdf/somcoast/yourguide.pdf](http://www.somerset.nhs.uk/pdf/somcoast/yourguide.pdf) or phone: 01278 432000
- To find out more about healthy living, including support groups, health campaigns and accident prevention, visit Somerset Health and Social Care at: [www.somerset-health.org.uk](http://www.somerset-health.org.uk)
- Visit the Sedgemoor Leisure and Lifestyles information pages to learn more about leading an active and healthy lifestyle, including links to leisure centres and local sports clubs. Go to: [www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/leisure](http://www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/leisure) or phone: 01278 435217

## How you can help

- Take up a new sport or leisure activity. To find out about the wide range of local clubs, phone: 01278 436439
- To find out about the benefits of giving up smoking, phone the NHS Smoking Helpline free of charge, phone: 0800 169 0 169
- Take some regular exercise. Find out what is on at your local sports/leisure centre or swimming pool:
  - ▼ Chilton Trinity, Bridgwater. phone: 01278 429119
  - ▼ King Alfred, Highbridge. phone: 01278 786868
  - ▼ Kings of Wessex, Cheddar. phone: 01934 744939
  - ▼ East Bridgwater. phone: 01278 456087
  - ▼ Burnham Pool. phone: 01278 785909
  - ▼ Sedgemoor Splash, Bridgwater. phone: 01278 425636
- Walking is a great form of exercise and an excellent way to meet new people. Find out about local walk programmes, phone: 01278 436439
- If you are aged 50+, there are a range of exercise classes to suit your needs. Contact Age Concern Somerset, phone: 01278 785702, or Sedgemoor's Sports and Active Lifestyles Officer, phone: 01278 436439, to find out more.
- Eat healthily. To find out about healthy eating for you and your family, phone the Somerset 5-A-DAY information line on 01823 344263
- Contact Somerset Healthy Schools Co-ordinator, phone: 01823 447128

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**E-mail:** [customer.services@sedgemoor.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@sedgemoor.gov.uk)

**Tel:** 0845 408 2540

**or from information points throughout the District**

## **SEDGEMOOR IN SOMERSET PARTNERSHIP**

**Sedgemoor District Council**

**Somerset County Council**

**Somerset Coast Primary Care Trust**

**Dorset and Somerset Strategic Health Authority**

**Age Concern Somerset**

**Avon and Somerset Constabulary**

**Bridgwater College**

**Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB)**

**Churches Together in Bridgwater**

**Community Council for Somerset**

**Environment Agency**

**Government Office for the South West (GOSW)**

**Jobcentre Plus**

**Levels and Moors Partnership (LAMP)**

**National Farmers Union**

**Sedgemoor Action Group for our Environment (SAGE)**

**Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC)**

**Sure Start - Bridgwater**

**YMCA**

**Young Somerset**