



Oadby and Wigston  
Borough Council

## Oadby and Wigston Borough Council Economic Development Strategy 2009-2014

A prosperous and successful economy  
in Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston





**Oadby and Wigston  
Borough Council**



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# FOREWORD

By the Leader of the Council



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A thriving economy is fundamental to a prosperous Borough. Oadby and Wigston Borough Council recognises its vital role in achieving this. The overall aim of the Economic Development Strategy is to promote economic well-being for all local residents and businesses. The Strategy is based upon extensive research and analysis of trends in the local, regional and national economies and highlights our strengths and opportunities as well as the weaknesses and challenges that the economy of the Borough faces in the future.

It is our aspiration that the Borough of Oadby and Wigston is a place where businesses start-up, grow and expand, where there is a wide range of local employment and training opportunities and where our town centres are vibrant and thriving. It is essential that all residents have equality of opportunity and are able to access high quality employment and training.

The Council fully appreciates the important role played by individuals, businesses and organisations who share our aim to improve the local economy and recognises that this Strategy cannot be delivered, in isolation, by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. This is the start of our journey together where the business community, residents and partner organisations in the public and voluntary sectors, share a common aspiration for a successful and prosperous local economy.

Councillor John Boyce



Leader of the Council

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# SECTION 1

A New Economic Development Strategy for Oadby and Wigston



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- **WHAT IS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE ROLE OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL?**

The Local Government Act (2000) recognises the leadership role of local authorities in promoting the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area whereby they undertake a wide range of activities to improve the quality of life of local residents and businesses and the experience of those who commute or visit the area. Indeed, local economic development can be supported, directly and indirectly, by many activities undertaken by local authorities and other partners as they seek to achieve and sustain economic prosperity for all and to enabling local business to grow.

The Borough Council's Corporate Plan (2006 – 2016) sets out an ambitious plan for the future of Oadby and Wigston to create a better quality of life for all citizens. The plan recognises how a successful and sustainable economy can have a positive impact upon the quality of life of residents and businesses in the Borough. 'A successful economy' is one of three corporate priorities for the Borough.

The function of this Economic Development Strategy is to set out a clear understanding of the economic challenges and opportunities facing the Borough and to put forward our vision and a coherent plan for the future development of Oadby and Wigston. It will highlight the tasks, responsibilities and milestones and will guide the Borough Council's annual Business Plan.

Whilst the Strategy has been led by the Borough Council, economic development cannot be viewed as an activity that takes place in isolation. Economic prosperity in the Borough means addressing issues such as education, crime, transport provision, health and social issues and the Strategy requires the active commitment of numerous external partners working together to take forward our vision for the Borough.

The Strategy is intended as a framework for supporting and influencing the various partners and stakeholders who will be involved in delivering economic development locally and attracting additional funding to projects which can bring economic success.

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## • AN INTRODUCTION TO OADBY AND WIGSTON BOROUGH

The Borough of Oadby and Wigston is situated at the south-eastern edge of Leicester and covers an area of 23.52 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 56,500. It is adjacent to the districts of Blaby and Harborough and to Leicester City and is mainly urban in character with the majority of the population living in or around the three towns of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. There is a small cluster of residential properties located at Kilby Bridge to the south of the Borough.



The Borough is situated less than 3 miles from the M1 and M69 motorways and has a number of important employment areas including Oadby Industrial Estate, Chartwell Drive Industrial Estate, Cornwall Road and Gloucester Crescent industrial areas and Magna Road.

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## THE VISION FOR OADBY AND WIGSTON 2009 – 2014

**To be recognised as a vibrant Borough with a strong and diverse economy which contributes to increasing prosperity for all.**

**An economy that can support sustainable business growth, investment and attract new businesses as well as encouraging entrepreneurship.**

**Sustainable communities in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston with equality of opportunity in education, skills and employment.**

# SECTION 2

## Economic Baseline of Oadby and Wigston



	Oadby and Wigston	Leicestershire	UK
Population	56,800	641,000	59,216,200
Working Age Population	60.40%	62.10%	62.20%
Economically Active	79.50%	82.80%	78.80%
Unemployment Rate	1.70%	2.30%	2.30%
Job Seekers Allowance Claimants	2.40%	2.30%	3.40%
Population with NVQ 4 or above	40.4	27.3	28.6
Gross Weekly Pay	£445.2	£479.90	£479.30
Number of Vat Registered Businesses	1,470	23,575	-
Job Density	0.65	0.79	0.88
<b>Employee Jobs by Industry</b>			
Manufacturing	20.40%	16.30%	10.60%
Construction	4.70%	6%	4.90%
Services	74.80%	75.40%	83%

All Statistics 2007 unless otherwise stated and available at Nomis.  
 For more in depth economic analysis of statistics please visit [www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk](http://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk)

## SWOT ANALYSIS OF OADBY AND WIGSTON'S ECONOMIC PROSPECTS

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Strategic geographical location close to the City of Leicester and with good transport links to M1/M69 motorways</li><li>◆ Potential development sites coming forward through Area Action Plans for Oadby and Wigston Town Centres</li><li>◆ Proximity to and quality of Higher/Further Education institutions.</li><li>◆ Desirable location to live with ten designated Conservation areas</li><li>◆ Highly skilled resident workforce</li><li>◆ Diverse population</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ High employment in declining sectors</li><li>◆ High levels of commuting out of Borough to work</li><li>◆ Low levels of inward investment</li><li>◆ High commercial vacancy rates in town centres</li><li>◆ Lack of space for future provision of employment land</li><li>◆ Shortage of readily available land and premises for high quality and prestige occupiers</li><li>◆ Shortfall of incubator and expansion facilities for high growth SMEs</li><li>◆ Low level of graduate retention and loss of young qualified people to other centres of employment</li><li>◆ Concentrations of deprivation in South Wigston ward and areas of Wigston</li><li>◆ Industrial areas poorly located adjacent to residential areas</li><li>◆ Low levels of speculative developments</li></ul>

## OPPORTUNITIES

- ◆ Focus on Economic Development by the Borough Council
- ◆ Employment land allocations brought forward through the Local Development Framework
- ◆ Business Support Simplification Programme which will give rise to a more streamlined approach to Business Support giving businesses more opportunities to grow and develop.
- ◆ Potential of new mechanisms to raise funds such as Business Improvement Districts, Supplementary Business Rates, Community Infrastructure Levy.
- ◆ Review of Sub-national Economic Development and Regeneration by Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform
- ◆ Multi-area agreements
- ◆ Oadby and Wigston Town Centre Masterplan Area Action Plans
- ◆ Knowledge based employment
- ◆ Trade links with foreign investors via East Midlands Business Bureau
- ◆ Economic downturn

## THREATS

- ◆ Pressure on employment land for non-employment uses.
- ◆ Low business confidence in the manufacturing sector
- ◆ Lack of land available for expansion by existing businesses
- ◆ Shortage of available premium development may deter knowledge economy inward investors
- ◆ Further job losses in manufacturing industry
- ◆ Continued out-migration by younger people and particularly graduates
- ◆ Ageing population
- ◆ Capacity of Borough Council to deliver programmes in Economic Development
- ◆ Regeneration in Leicester City and developments in neighbouring Harborough and Blaby Districts providing good quality business spaces which businesses may migrate to.
- ◆ Impacts of climate change – both environmentally and economically.

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## SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- Higher proportion of population aged above retirement age
  - Overall deprivation in the Borough is low but there are some areas such as South Wigston ward which experience more severe levels of deprivation including unemployment and low skills attainment
  - Relatively low unemployment rates but still amongst the highest rates in the County
  - Worklessness and higher unemployment rates concentrated in some wards.
  - Still a strong reliance on manufacturing industry
  - A significant proportion of the Borough's residents travel outside of the Borough for work.
  - Low annual numbers of business start-ups and business survival rates. Relatively small increase in annual business stock.
  - High skills attainment in the Borough but lack of jobs in the knowledge economy and high value sectors providing appropriate employment opportunities within the area
  - Low levels of graduate recruitment and retention to Oadby and Wigston
  - Lack of employment land in the Borough
  - Low levels of inward investment
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# SECTION 3

## Economic and Social Regeneration Policy Drivers



This Economic Development Strategy is influenced by national, regional and sub-regional economic policy which is summarised in this section.

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## NATIONAL STRATEGIC AND POLICY CONTEXT

### **HM Treasury Review of Sub-National Economic Development and Regeneration (SNR) July 2007**

This sub-national review suggests that in order to increase prosperity and tackle effectively concentrations of disadvantage, responsibility should be devolved to the regions and local authorities.

In essence the SNR seeks to empower local authorities to promote economic development and neighbourhood renewal. It proposes that local authorities should take a leading role in their area and strive to work in partnership through Local Area Agreements (LAAs), Multi Area Agreements (MAAs) and Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs).

The remit for sub-regional and regional working is also strengthened with the SNR ensuring that Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) can have a stronger focus on promoting economic growth. It is further expected that RDAs will devolve responsibility for delivery to Local Authorities.

Regional Assemblies will be phased out from 2010 with their planning functions specifically the production of the Regional Spatial Strategy, transferring to the RDA which will have the responsibility to produce a combined Regional Spatial Strategy and Regional Economic Strategy document. This single integrated Strategy will combine measures relating to employment, economic growth, planning, housing and environmental objectives in a co-ordinated way.

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### **Leitch Review of Skills: Prosperity for all in the global economic – world classskills (December 2006)**

This review sets out the Government's ambition that the UK becomes a world leader in skills by 2020. It argues that skills are fundamental to maximising economic prosperity, productivity and reducing social inequality.

The report evaluates the UK's long-term skills requirement and the main recommendations are:

- Improve adult skills across all levels.
- Route all public funding for adult vocational skills in England, apart from community learning, through 'Train to Gain' and Learner Accounts by 2010.
- Strengthen the employer voice.
- Increase employer engagement and their investment in skills.
- Launch a new 'Pledge' for employers to voluntarily commit to train all eligible employees up to Level 2.
- Increase employer investment in Level 3 and 4 qualifications in the workplace.
- Create a new integrated employment and skills service
- Raise people's aspirations and awareness of the value of skills to them and their families.

The Leitch Review is of particular relevance to Oadby and Wigston where skills issues and worklessness are significant barriers to increasing productivity and economic prosperity in the Borough.

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## REGIONAL POLICY AND STRATEGY CONTEXT

### Regional Economic Strategy for the East Midlands

Emda is the East Midlands Development Agency and is responsible for promoting economic growth throughout the East Midlands. It is one of eight regional development agencies established by the government in 1999. The ninth, in London, was established in July 2000. Their brief includes job creation, skills development, improving competitiveness and tackling social exclusion. They produce the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) that sets out the framework for ensuring the long term sustainable economic growth of their region.

'A Flourishing Region: Regional Economic Strategy for the East Midlands 2006-2020', produced by Emda, sets out a clear vision to ensure that the East Midlands is a flourishing region characterised by sustainable growth, economic well-being and a high quality of life.

**"By 2020, the East Midlands will be a flourishing region. Increasingly prosperous and productive, we will enjoy levels of sustainable economic well-being and a quality of life higher than the European average and comparable with the best in the world."**

The three main themes and strategic priorities of the RES are summarised below:

- Raising productivity: To increase wealth by making the East Midlands and its people more productive.
  - Ensuring sustainability: To develop and enhance the region's communities, and its assets of physical infrastructure and the natural environment to ensure they contribute effectively to the region's productivity and economic wellbeing, both now, and into the future.
  - Achieving equality: To reduce economic inequalities and increase productivity by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from the region's sustainable economic growth.
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## Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS8) is a statutory plan prepared by the East Midlands Regional Assembly. It sets out Regional Planning Guidance which establishes the context for development plans and local development frameworks.

There are 10 key objectives for the East Midlands region:

- To reduce social exclusion
- To protect and enhance the environmental quality of urban and rural settlements
- To improve the health of the region's residents
- To improve economic prosperity, employment opportunities and regional competitiveness
- To improve accessibility to jobs, homes and services
- To protect and enhance the environment
- To achieve a step change increase in the level of the region's biodiversity
- To reduce causes of climate change
- To reduce the impact of climate change
- To minimise the adverse environmental impact of new development and promote optimum social and economic benefits

The Regional Spatial Strategy will be incorporated with the Regional Economic Strategy into a single Integrated Regional Strategy that will guide economic development and spatial planning priorities across the region from 2010.

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## SUB-REGIONAL POLICY AND STRATEGY CONTEXT

### Leicester Shire Economic Partnership

The sub-regional delivery mechanism for the East Midlands RES has been through Sub-regional Strategic Partnerships (SSP). The SSP covering Oadby and Wigston is the Leicester Shire Economic Partnership (LSEP), which also covers Leicester City and the districts/boroughs in the County of Leicestershire.

The current arrangement sees funds from emda allocated to projects that will help deliver the Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Strategy.

Vision 2020 proposes "Leicestershire will have a prosperous, enterprising and dynamic economy characterised by innovative businesses and creative people, developing attractive and sustainable communities".

Three core economic development themes have emerged, to which priorities and actions have been identified:

- Business and Enterprise
- People, Employment and Skills
- Infrastructure

There are two enabling themes: Climate for Innovation and Image. Sustainability is a cross-cutting theme in terms of both the environment and communities.

From April 2009, LSEP will be subsumed into a new Economic Development Company for Leicester and Leicestershire.

### Leicestershire Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)

The Sustainable Communities Strategy proposes priorities for improvement in Leicestershire over the 5 years, 2008-2013. It was produced by Leicestershire Together, the Local Strategic Partnership for Leicestershire.

The Local Area Agreement (LAA), LAA 2, which was signed in June 2008 to cover the period 2008 – 2011. It is the key delivery framework for the wider Sustainable Community Strategy. The action plan, The Way Forward for a Successful Economy in Oadby and Wigston, set out in this strategy will contribute to meeting these targets. Under the 'Economic Development and Enterprise' theme, there are the following priority and sub-priority outcomes:

#### Priority Outcome

- **A Prosperous and dynamic economy driven by innovation**

#### Sub-priority outcomes:

- Increased number of business start-ups
- Increased business survival and growth rates

#### Priority Outcome

- **An improved image for business and tourism and recognition as a centre for innovation**

#### Sub-priority outcomes:

- Increase number of new businesses attracted and key sectors developed.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More people to visit and they stay longer</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Outcome</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quality employment sites and premises are more widely available</b></li> </ul>
Sub-priority outcomes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased provision of premises for employment use</li> <li>• Earlier release of land for employment uses</li> <li>• Increased re-use of brownfield land for employment uses.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Outcome</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>A highly skilled, motivated population and more people in high valued jobs</b></li> </ul>
Sub-priority outcomes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased young people and adults qualified to level 2, adults with level 3 qualifications and people progressing to higher levels skills (beyond Level 3)</li> <li>• Increased number of people with basic skills</li> <li>• Increased number of people taking apprenticeships</li> <li>• Increased number of young people and adults equipped with employability skills.</li> <li>• Increased number of graduates retained in local labour market.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Outcome:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increased employment rate</b></li> </ul>
Sub-priority outcomes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce gap between the unemployment rate amongst disadvantaged places and groups and the overall rate</li> <li>• Increased employment rate of disadvantaged groups</li> </ul>

### **Leicester and Leicestershire Multi Area Agreement (MAA) 2009-2020**

The Leicester and Leicestershire MAA proposal is complementary to the City and County LAAs. It focuses on local priorities which are potentially tackled best at a sub-regional level. It is a mechanism to deliver these sub-regional priorities in order to improve economic performance and to deliver efficiencies across public agencies in Leicester and Leicestershire

The vision is: 'In 2020 Leicester and Leicestershire will have a prosperous, enterprising and dynamic economy, characterised by innovative businesses and creative people, attractive places and sustainable communities'.

The key outputs will be:

- Increased employment
- Higher skill levels
- Business growth

### **Leicester and Leicestershire HMA Employment Land Study (2008)**

Key findings from the report relevant to Oadby and Wigston were that the Borough has a lack of modern premises and there is a lack of new available employment land.

The study confirmed the limited availability of employment land in the Borough. As a result, it is vital that all existing employment land and especially identified employment land in the Borough is protected for employment use, wherever possible. There is likely to be a significant shortfall in land supply compared to forecasted demand and there will inevitably be the possibility that the Borough could lose larger-scale investments to neighbouring districts.

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## THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT AND LOCAL POLICY

### **Oadby and Wigston Sustainable Communities Plan**

The Sustainable Communities Plan for Oadby and Wigston sets out the collective aspirations and vision for the Borough.

It is developed and delivered through the Oadby and Wigston Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The LSP contains members from public, private and voluntary bodies at a local level. The Plan will complement the Leicestershire Sustainable Communities Strategy and will focus on working towards Local Area Agreement targets in the Borough.

### **Our Borough, Our Future 2006-2016 - Oadby and Wigston Corporate Plan**

The Corporate Plan was developed in consultation with residents and business, setting out an ambitious plan for the future of Oadby and Wigston. The vision of the Corporate Plan is:

**'That the Borough will be a place where people aspire to live because of its attractive and secure environment, its prosperous and vibrant economy and because of the peaceful and harmonious relationships between its residents'**

Three corporate priorities underpin this vision and the actions and priorities contained within this Economic Development Strategy will contribute to achieving them all:

- A good quality of life for all residents
- A clean, green and safer environment
- A successful economy

### **Oadby and Wigston Local Plan**

The Local Plan makes specific land use provision for the supply of employment land and establishes the planning policy context for employment land use. This is currently being replaced by the Local Development Framework (LDF) for Oadby and Wigston Borough.

### **Oadby and Wigston Local Development Framework (LDF)**

The LDF, once adopted, will cover the period to 2026 and provide the spatial context and associated policies for the Borough. The Economic Development Strategy will help inform and link into documents under the LDF which is currently in preparation.

# SECTION 4

The Way Forward for a Successful  
Economy in Oadby and Wigston Borough



## INTRODUCTION

The previous section outlined the economic profile of the Borough and raised some of the key issues that the Economic Development Strategy will need to focus on. This section outlines the priority actions necessary to deliver the strategic objectives for Economic Development in Oadby and Wigston for the period 2009-2014.

Delivering the Economic Development Strategy and achieving the vision requires long-term commitment from the Council and partners.

There are three main strategic priorities which cover different aspects of economic development in the Borough from town centre enhancement to skills, business support and entrepreneurship.

Strategic Priorities for Economic Development in Oadby and Wigston

EDS1: Developing a sustainable and successful business base and encouraging sustainable economic growth

EDS2: Supporting and developing the local workforce

EDS3: Town Centre regeneration

In addition, there is a cross-cutting theme of 'Accessibility and Sustainability' which underpins the whole of the Economic Development Strategy. It seeks to ensure that all businesses, residents and other organisations can benefit from the actions contained within the Economic Development Strategy and that actions are sustainable, ensuring a successful economic future for the Borough.

There is also a supporting theme of 'Strategic Management (EDS4)' to ensure the successful implementation and delivery of the Strategy.

## Strategic Priorities for Economic Development in Oadby and Wigston:

### **EDS 1: DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE AND SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS BASE AND CREATING DIVERSE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Ensuring business success in the Borough is key to improving the quality of life for the community. Existing businesses should be supported and encouraged to grow and the Borough should be promoted as an excellent location for inward investment.

#### **A: 'Supporting Oadby and Wigston's established and prospective businesses and encouraging sustainable growth'**

The Council wants to actively support local businesses in the Borough. Over 10% of the Borough's employment is still in manufacturing industries and with recent declines in this sector due to economic restructuring in recent years, it is essential that the Council supports businesses in any way that it can. The Council wants to engage in a two-way dialogue with businesses so it can effectively respond to changing economic circumstances and provide support when and where it is needed.

It is important that the Council deals effectively and professionally with business enquiries and the various services that come into contact with businesses share information effectively to avoid duplication and improve customer service.

#### **B: Marketing and improving the attractiveness of Oadby and Wigston as a key business location**

Oadby and Wigston Borough has not been very successful in attracting inward investment in recent years. Most employment growth and new job creation has been by existing businesses expanding.

Attracting high value inward investment is essential in creating a dynamic and diverse business base and the Council will focus on promoting Oadby and Wigston as a great place to live as well as to do business, promoting the Borough as a sustainable business location.

## Action Plan

### EDS 1: Developing a sustainable and successful business base and creating diverse employment opportunities

#### A: 'Supporting Oadby and Wigston's established and prospective businesses and encouraging sustainable growth'

Action	Monitoring	Partners
Provide high quality advice and information to all businesses – signposting on legal, licensing, environmental health, planning etc.	Customer Feedback	Business Link; OWBC Departments
Support local business support organisations and work with key partners to develop and improve the co-ordination of business support services available locally	Customer Feedback; Business Survey Responses	Business Link; Chamber of Commerce; Creative Leicestershire; Welland Enterprise Agency; LeicestHERday Trust
Organise business forums and events to act as a liaison group between OWBC and the business community, as well as an information sharing network in relation to issues affecting the business community	Attendance numbers at forums; feedback forms; frequency of events	OWBusiness Community
Produce and distribute to the business community and key partners a quarterly newsletter (Business NOW) to share success stories about businesses in the Borough as well as communicating the work of the Council and its partners to businesses.	Quarterly editions of Business NOW magazine; distribution numbers and feedback received	Business Community; All other partners.
Establish, maintaining, improving and updating a local business directory for Oadby and Wigston	Number of registered businesses; user feedback	Webmaster; business community.

Action	Monitoring	Partners
Update and continually improving the Business Webpages on Oadby and Wigston's Council website <a href="http://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk">www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk</a>	Website hits (business pages) and user feedback	OWBC Webmaster; Business Community; Business Link
Liaise more closely with local businesses in order to understand their needs and future requirements.	Annual Business Survey results	Business Community
Work to safeguard existing employment land and bring forward new land through appropriate land use policies and commenting on planning applications in respect to employment land	Annual Monitoring Report Employment Land	Forward Plans; Development Control, local developers.
Work with Prospect Leicestershire to respond to inward investment enquiries and provide specific local information on request	Inward Investment figures	Prospect Leicestershire
Work with Prospect Leicestershire to make available a quarterly vacant commercial property guide and provide links from the Council website to Prospect Leicestershire website.	Number of commercial premises	Prospect Leicestershire
Work more closely with local commercial estate agents and Prospect Leicestershire to increase investment in the Borough	Inward investment	Commercial property agents
Work closely with the Investor Development team at Prospect Leicestershire	Number of businesses supported	Prospect Leicestershire

Action	Monitoring	Partners
Conduct an Oadby and Wigston Business Survey to better understand the key concerns and priorities of businesses in the area	Annual Business Survey	Business Community; OWBC Departments
Improve links with local universities and businesses in Oadby and Wigston in order to encourage innovation, research and development and graduate retention; working with Prospect Leicestershire on the 'Three Universities for Business' initiative. Graduate retention rates	Graduate retention rates	Local Universities; Prospect Leicestershire; Business Community, Prospect Leicestershire
Hold local job fairs and employability events in conjunction with local employers, other Council departments such as housing, benefits and community development and other employment and skills organisations	Number of Jobs Fairs held; number of attendees and businesses involved	Neighbourhood management; Other Council departments and stakeholders; business community
Facilitate the setting up of local business groups/forums on industrial estates	Local Business Forums	Business Community; Business Link
Work with OWBC Accessibility Partnership and other agencies to promote equality in the workplace	Local Business Forms	Business Community, Business Link; Job Centre Plus
Work closely with and support the actions of Business Link, Creative Leicestershire, UKTI and other business support agencies to assist local businesses and promote the availability of loans and other support.	N/A	Business Link; Creative Leicestershire; UKTI; other business support agencies

Action	Monitoring	Partners
Promote the interests of businesses in Oadby and Wigston by providing intelligence and information to enable organisations to make informed decisions on policy and practice effecting their businesses	N/A	OWBC Economic Development
Promote improvements to infrastructure and transportation routes within the Borough to further support economic development	N/A	OWBC Economic Development
Undertake work to improve the quality of premises and the environment in the Borough's industrial areas	Improvements to industrial areas	OWBC Economic Development; Business Community; external funding agencies
Investigate funding opportunities to provide new start-up business units in the Borough	Starter unit provision	OWBC Economic Development; External funding agencies
Support local stakeholders to maximise potential opportunities arising from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games	Local businesses gain contracts	LSEP, emda, Business Link

**B: Marketing and improving the attractiveness of Oadby and Wigston as a key business location and developing the visitor economy**

Action	Monitoring	Partners
Develop a clear policy position regarding the protection, release and redevelopment of employment land in the Borough through the emerging LDF	Annual Monitoring Report for LDF, Employment Land Availability.	OWBC
Support and promote the Pride of the Borough campaign within the business community.	Numbers of businesses involved in campaign	OWBC
Support the economic development aspects of the Oadby and Wigston Masterplan Area Action Plans.	Investment in town centres and town centre unit vacancy rates	OWBC
Produce periodic Economic Profiles of Oadby and Wigston Borough and increase the information available to businesses in the area and to potential investors.	Annually updated Economic Profile produced	LSORA, Prospect Leicestershire
Support the Oadby and Wigston Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to reduce the level and fear of crime.	Oadby and Wigston Crime Figures	Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership; LeicestershirePolice
Produce and distribute a quarterly newsletter (Business NOW) to the business community and key partners in order to share success stories and information.	Quarterly editions of Business NOW magazine; distribution numbers and feedback received	Business Community; All other relevant partners.

Action	Monitoring	Partners
Update the Business Webpages on the Oadby and Wigston Borough Council website <a href="http://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk">www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk</a>	Website hits (business pages) and user feedback	OWBC Webmaster; Business Community; Business Link
Contribute to local and regional publications to raise the profile of Oadby and Wigston as a business location	Number of media references.	OWBC Prospect Leicestershire
Develop good working relations with Leicestershire Promotions to develop the visitor economy in the Borough, with particular emphasis on business tourism in the Borough	Tourism figures; number of hotel rooms; conference rooms.	OWBC; Leicestershire Promotions; business community
Support the development and implementation of the Grand Union Canal and River Soar Strategy	Projects and improvements along the Oadby and Wigston section of the River Soar and Grand Union Canal	British Waterways; Emda; other Leicestershire LAs

## EDS 2: SUPPORTING THE LOCAL WORKFORCE

Supporting the local workforce means helping people in the Borough fulfil their potential, whether by starting a new business, engaging fully in further learning and training opportunities or maximising their development opportunities in work. The Borough has a relatively low unemployment rate. However there are areas in the Borough which have a high proportion of economically inactive residents. These are predominantly within the priority neighbourhoods of Wigston and South Wigston. The Council will particularly focus on these priority areas and will work together with the Neighbourhood Management Team.

### **A: 'Upskilling the local workforce to help residents of Oadby and Wigston to fulfil their learning and employment potential'**

Although skill levels across the Borough are generally high, the employment profile suggests many highly skilled people commute out of the Borough to work or eventually leave the area permanently. This Strategy will seek to increase the number of employment opportunities in highly skilled, knowledge sectors within the Borough.

### **B: 'Promoting entrepreneurship in the Borough and supporting new business start-ups'**

New business start-ups provide opportunities to create new employment and can help diversify the local economy. Compared to other Leicestershire Districts, new business start-ups are relatively low and the overall number of businesses only increases slightly year on year.

**Action Plan**

**EDS 2: Supporting the local workforce**

**A: 'Upskilling local workforce to help residents of Oadby and Wigston to fulfil their learning and employment potential'**

Action	Monitoring	Partners
Support the work of the Leicestershire and Leicester City Learning Partnership (LLCLP)	Annual monitoring report from LLCLP	LLCLP
Encourage the local authority and local employers to invest in their workforce encouraging participation and commitment to the LSC's 'Skills Pledge', Jobcentre Plus, Local Employment Partnerships, 'Train to Gain' and Apprenticeships.	Skills attainment figures for the Borough; number of companies signing up to the LSC Skills Pledge and 'Train to Gain'.	LSC; Business Community
Support Leicestershire Adult Learning Service in promoting their free courses and advice sessions. Programmes include Skills for Life (Maths and English); Get Back into Work; Skills for Jobs; Learn 2 Earn	Number of residents taking part in courses and entering employment	Leicestershire CC; OWBC Neighbour-hood Management
Work closely with Neighbourhood Manager for Priority Neighbourhoods in Borough to actively promote training and employment opportunities directly into these areas including publication of a regular newsletter	Feedback from residents; Priority Neighbourhood monitoring statistics	Leicestershire CC; OWBC Neighbour-hood Management
Work more closely with the Further Education providers in the vicinity to advertise potential opportunities to residents and businesses	Skills attainment figures for the Borough	Further Education providers

**B: 'Promoting entrepreneurship in the Borough and supporting new business start-ups'**

Action	Monitoring	Partners
Support East Midlands Business (EMB) and its contractors to market and deliver 'Business Link' branded free start-up courses in the Borough and one to one advice to business start-ups	Number of Business Start-ups in Borough	EMB, Welland Enterprise Ltd.
Investigate the provision of a permanent part-time base for a Business Link advisor to work from the Borough.	Number of Businesses engaged with	EMB, Welland Enterprise Ltd.
Support the development of a pre-start/ start-up business network for Oadby & Wigston/Blaby areas	Number of attendees at network event	Welland Enterprise Ltd; Creative Leicestershire; Blaby Borough Council
Actively contribute to the Business Support Simplification Programme in order to simplify support in the Borough for existing and new start-up businesses	Number of grants and funding mechanisms available	Emda, BERR,
Provide high quality advice to people wanting to start a new business in the Borough	Number of business start-ups in the Borough; user feedback	Business Link; All business support agencies
Support Creative Leicestershire to promote specialist business advice and courses to creative industries.	Numbers of creative business start-ups in the Borough	Creative Leicestershire

## EDS 3: TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

The regeneration of towns is a key issue of national planning policy and is seen as central to the economic prosperity of the Borough. Towns are not only hubs of economic activity but provide the centrepieces for social interaction. They can be the key to the creation of an attractive Borough where people want to live, work, play and visit. It is important to create distinctive roles for the three town centres.

**A: 'Regenerating Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston's town centres as vibrant places to live, work and play and visit'.**

### **Oadby and Wigston**

Town Centre Masterplan Area Action Plans have been developed for the two key towns of Oadby and Wigston which will serve to identify areas of opportunity within the towns, including investment opportunities for private developers and opportunities to improve the public realm, transport and other facilities in the town centres.

It is anticipated that the plans will be adopted as Area Action Plans towards the end of 2010.

### **South Wigston**

The third town centre in Oadby and Wigston Borough is South Wigston. It acts as more of a local centre. In contrast to Oadby and Wigston Town Centres, South Wigston still has manufacturing and associated employment in close proximity to its retailing core. Decline in these traditional industries has impacted on trade levels in and around Blaby Road and it is a key objective of this Strategy to reverse this decline.

The recent arrival of the Tesco Superstore has left the independent retailers along Blaby Road with a new set of challenges to face. However, impetus and opportunity to change is now provided by the move of South Leicestershire College from Wigston to a site adjacent to the town centre on Blaby Road.

A Masterplan was undertaken in 2004 which looked into how regeneration in the community could take place. Some actions from this process are still ongoing.

## Action Plan

### EDS 3: Town Centre Regeneration

#### **A: 'Regenerating Oadby, Wigston's and South Wigston's town centres as vibrant places to live, work and play and visit'.**

Action	Monitoring	Partners
Follow up and investigate further the development of Business Improvement Districts in town centres following the successful completion of emda BID's Academy in 2008.	Update feasibility report into BIDs; feedback from town centres businesses	Town Centres Businesses
Provide economic input to the emerging Oadby and Wigston Town Centre Masterplans	Adoption of Town Centre Masterplan	OWBC
Identify, promote and support emerging investment and development opportunities in the three town centres	Sites coming forward for development; inward investment; number of pre-application meetings with applicants	Prospect Leicestershire; local developers
Investigate funding streams and lead on implementation of initial regeneration schemes in the three town centres such as public realm improvements, signage, street furniture to create an environment for further investment	Implementation plans for Masterplans	Leicestershire CC, LSEP, emda
Explore the possibility of holding regular farmers and/or speciality market in Oadby, Wigston or SouthWigston Town Centres	Establishment of markets	Leicestershire CC, local retailers.
Complete biennial Town Centre Healthchecks in accordance with PPS 6	Health Check Indicators and report	Local retailers

Action	Monitoring	Partners
In South Wigston, assist and act as a point of contact for Retail Regeneration of Retail Workshop and implement a strategy for ongoing support after January 2009.	Retail Workshop final report, South Wigston Annual Traders Survey	South Wigston Traders Assoc. Local Retailers
Investigate options for a dedicated town centre regeneration assistant or town centre manager to work on retail issues and partnership development in the three town centres	Town centre regeneration assistant/town centre manager in post	Borough Council, town centre traders.
Support the South Wigston Association of Traders	Annual reports and events	South Wigston Association of Traders
Support and encourage the development of town centre partnerships and forums in Oadby and Wigston	Establishment of partnerships	OWBC; Business Community
Work with OWBC Community Development Section and other Town Centre Managers around Leicestershire to put on town centre events and activities to encourage people into the town centres. Work with the town centre businesses to promote events and encourage their participation.	Town centre events	OWBC, Community Development; Business Community; Leicestershire Town Centre Managers Group

## Supporting Theme

### EDS 4: STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

#### A: 'Ensuring the successful implementation of Economic Development Strategy'

It is essential that the Economic Development Action Plan developed for this new Economic Development Strategy makes a positive difference to Oadby and Wigston Borough and is implemented, monitored and reviewed regularly.

The Council recognises that co-ordinated work across the Council as well as with external partners is essential to deliver the Economic Development Strategy and is committed to working closely and effectively with all agencies in the common cause of creating a successful and prosperous economy in Oadby and Wigston.

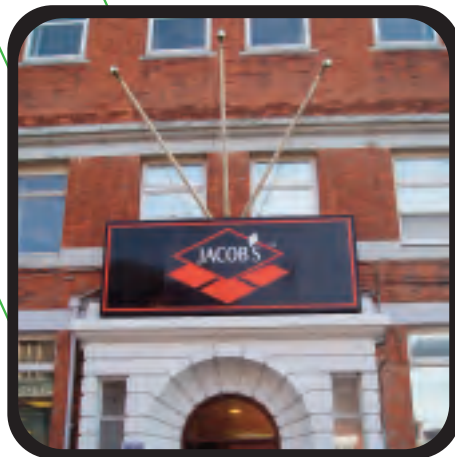
Action Plan		
EDS 4: Strategic Management		
A: 'Ensuring the successful implementation of economic development strategy'		
Action	Monitoring	Partners
Manage and monitor the Economic Development Strategy by the production of an annual review and through meetings of the Economic Development Member Working Group.	Annual Review	OWBC Member Working Group.
Effectively communicate activities and actions to residents and the business community alike	Annual Review made available to business community	Business Community
Attend and contribute to Leicestershire's Economic Development Officers Network (LEDON) meetings to share good practice and keep up to date with County-wide developments in Economic Development	Attendance at Quarterly meetings	All Leics Authorities.
Monitor local and national economic trends	Update local economic profile and indicators annually	LSORA

# GLOSSARY

Of Abbreviations and Acronyms

Of Key Terms

Contact information for key partner organisations



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## GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>BERR</b>	Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform
<b>BID</b>	Business Improvement District
<b>CLG</b>	Department for Communities and Local Government
<b>EDS</b>	Economic Development Strategy
<b>EMDA</b>	East Midlands Development Agency
<b>EMRA</b>	East Midlands Regional Assembly
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FE</b>	Further Education
<b>GOEM</b>	Government Office of the East Midlands
<b>HE</b>	Higher Education
<b>JCP</b>	Job Centre Plus
<b>JSA</b>	Job Seekers Allowance
<b>LAA</b>	Local Area Agreement
<b>LCC</b>	Leicestershire County Council
<b>LDF</b>	Local Development Framework
<b>LEDON</b>	Leicestershire Economic Development Officers Network
<b>LLCLP</b>	Leicestershire and Leicester City Learning Partnership
<b>LPL</b>	Leicester Shire Promotions Limited.
<b>LSC</b>	Learning and Skills Council
<b>LSEP</b>	Leicester Shire Economic Partnership
<b>LSP</b>	Local Strategic Partnership
<b>LSORA</b>	Leicester Shire Online Research Atlas
<b>MAA</b>	Multi Area Agreement
<b>OWBC</b>	Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
<b>RDA</b>	Regional Development Agency
<b>RES</b>	Regional Economic Strategy
<b>RSS</b>	Regional Spatial Strategy
<b>SME</b>	Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

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## GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

### **Business Improvement Districts (BIDS)**

A Business Improvement District is a partnership between a local authority and the local business community to develop projects and services that will benefit the trading environment within the boundary of a clearly defined commercial area and subject to raising additional funds via a levy placed in businesses.

### **Sustainable Community Strategy/Community Plan**

Under Local Government Act 2000, Local Authorities are required to prepare a Community Strategy with the aim of improving social, environmental and economic well-being.

### **Core Strategy**

Sets of the key elements of the planning framework for an area. It comprises of strategic objectives for the area and a spatial vision. All other development plan documents of the Local Development Framework must be in conformity with it.

### **Economically Active**

People who are either in employment or unemployed.

### **Economic Activity Rate**

People, who are economically active, expressed as a percentage of all people.

### **Elementary Occupations**

Elementary sector job listings are wide ranging and encompass many disciplines including: farm workers, storeman, warehouse assistant, hotel porter, postal workers, waiters, traffic wardens and bar staff etc.

### **Inward Investment**

Process by which companies based outside a country or region then invest in economic activity within the region.

### **Job Density**

The numbers of jobs per resident of working age (16-59/64). For example, a job density of 1.0 would mean that there is one job for every resident of working age. A jobs density figure that is greater than 1 indicates that there are more jobs in an area than people of working age to fill them. Areas with relatively high jobs densities, therefore, clearly offer potential job opportunities for residents of the area

### **Labour Force**

The number of people potential available for work in an area.

### **Local Area Agreement (LAA)**

Agreements made between central and local government in a local area. Their aim is to achieve local solutions that meet local needs, while also contributing to national priorities and the achievement of standards set by central government.

### **Local Development Framework (LDF)**

A folder that contains the local development documents for the Borough replacing the Local Plan System. This includes documents such as Core Strategy, Development Plan Documents, etc. which contain planning policies.

### **Local Strategic Partnership**

A non-statutory, multi-agency body bringing together public, private and voluntary sectors to help shape the future of services and priorities within areas.

### **Long Term Unemployment (LTU)**

Proportion of those claiming unemployment benefits that have been out of work for at least a year.

### **Multi-Area Agreements (MAA)**

A multi-area agreement is designed to be cross-boundary local area agreement (LAA). They bring together key players in flexible ways to tackle issues that are best addressed in partnership – at a regional and sub-regional level and can tackle issues including skills deficits, housing market imbalances, transport and infrastructure projects and economic development.

### **Qualifications**

Definitions and equivalents of NVQ Classifications.

**NVQ 1 equivalent:** e.g. fewer than 5 GCSEs at grades A-C, foundation GNVQ,

**NVQ 2 equivalent:** e.g. 5 or more GCSEs at grades A-C, intermediate GNVQ,

**NVQ 3 equivalent:** e.g. 2 or more A levels, advanced GNVQ,

**NVQ 4 equivalent and above:** e.g. HND, Degree and Higher Degree level qualifications or equivalent

### **Skills Pledge**

The Skills Pledge is a voluntary, public commitment by the leadership of a company or organisation to support all its employees to develop their basic skills, including literacy and numeracy, and work towards relevant, valuable qualifications to at least Level 2 (equivalent to 5 good GCSEs). The purpose is to ensure that all staff are skilled, competent and able to make a full contribution to the success of the company/organisation

### **VAT Registered Businesses**

VAT registrations and de-registrations are the best official guide to the pattern of business start-ups and closures. They are an indicator of the level of entrepreneurship and of the health of the business population. As such they are used widely in regional and local economic planning.

### **Working age population**

This includes males aged 16 to 64 and females aged 16 to 59.

