



**DACORUM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
STRATEGY 2009-2012**





**Dacorum is very well placed to play a major role in the country's economy. It is located on the edge of London with excellent road and rail connections to all economically important parts of the country. With its proximity and easy access to the major London airports it also has ready access to international markets. Dacorum has huge potential for further development.**

**Dacorum aspires to be a first choice location for business and employment, whilst at the same time to lead on protecting and enhancing the environment. We want Dacorum to be a place where people will want to come to live and work and will be able to do so safely.**

**This Economic Development Strategy is ambitious and will lay down the foundations for future growth. This can only be achieved by the creation of sustainable and cohesive communities, which can fully participate in the economy. This in turn will require the enabling of the necessary skills and training for local workers, fit for the challenges of the next century. It will require convenient and sustainable means of transport to be available to enable people to get to their place of work.**

**We plan to regenerate the Maylands Business Park and will encourage a high standard of design and construction to ensure an attractive work place. We will also work with partner agencies to enable Renewable Energy to be produced locally.**

**Working in partnership with other stakeholders will be an important element of this strategy. We will be working to deliver common goals in the context of national and regional policies such as the East of England Plan and the Sub National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration as well as the Sustainable Community Strategy.**



Councillor Ian Reay

Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration

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*The action plan can be found at:  
[www.dacorum.gov.uk/business](http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/business)*

*Contact details are shown on the back  
of this document*





## 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The economy of Dacorum has great potential. This potential will be realised by the businesses, employees and residents of the area and by delivering the ambitious plans set out within this and other strategic documents.



Dacorum is located on the edge of London and on direct routes to all other major parts of the country, including the recent widening of the M1 motorway, as well as easy access to the international markets of Europe and beyond. The area is ripe for further development to achieve the Council's aspirations as a borough and as part of the thriving Herts and Regional economy.

Through the delivery of the five priorities set out in this strategy, Dacorum will position itself to access the best from both regeneration and growth opportunities and maximise the potential for the area.

### **Objective 1** **The regeneration of Maylands**

Work with the Council's Regeneration and Implementation Team and the Maylands Partnership to deliver the outcomes from the Hemel 2020 Vision including the Maylands Master Plan

### **Objective 2** **Supporting the business community**

Work with partners to provide a business support framework, which will encourage competitiveness and growth

### **Objective 3** **Promoting green and sustainable growth**

Meet the aims of the Sustainable Community Strategy and work to facilitate a sustainable and prosperous economy and growth

### **Objective 4** **Attracting and retaining business**

Ensure that Dacorum has a buoyant economy by attracting and retaining a diverse range of local employers and encouraging enterprise and business start up activity

### **Objective 5** **Developing our skills base**

Developing skills to meet business needs now and into the future

## SWOT analysis of Economic Prosperity in Dacorum

### Strengths

- Great location
- Low unemployment
- High numbers of businesses
- Good skills levels
- Long term commitment to Economic Development
- Good engagement with high numbers of business
- High level of entrepreneurialism
- High numbers of people who both live and work in Dacorum
- High employment participation rate
- Track record of working in partnership

### Weaknesses

- Ageing New Town
- Lack of marketing resources
- Appearance of Maylands
- Slow visible delivery of outcomes
- Rise in unemployment due to credit crunch
- Aftermath and continuing effects of Buncefield
- Basic skills need
- Traffic congestion
- Road improvements needed
- High house prices relative to local wages

### Opportunities

- Growth
- Regeneration
- Public Sector Partners committed to the area
- Environmental Agenda
- Delivery of exciting new projects
- Land available for development
- Ambitious Plans to regenerate the New Town/Hemel 2020 Vision
- Emerging Local Development Framework
- Growth in population at Hemel Hempstead

### Threats

- Credit crunch
- Competition from Hatfield, Milton Keynes, Watford, London etc.
- Competition from M4 corridor and Thames Gateway
- Slow visible delivery – people lose interest
- Lack of funding to deliver expectations
- Drop in speculative investment
- Ability to attract high quality office accommodation
- Transport infrastructure needs investment



### 3 THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND AIMS

Economic Development needs to be embedded into the Hemel 2020 Vision, Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Development Framework. Delivery of these ambitious plans must ensure that Dacorum remains a prosperous place to live, work and visit.

The purpose of an Economic Development Strategy is to ensure that Dacorum remains a thriving and prosperous area where the Council and local businesses can gain maximum economical benefits from activities at a local, sub regional and regional level – on its own and with a number of active partnerships.

This is particularly important as the area begins to undergo regeneration and expansion to ensure that economically balanced and sustainable communities are maintained and created.

This can be achieved through a key role in strategic economic development, working closely with other Council departments such as Planning and transport, and with robust inward investment, care and communication with indigenous business, retention actions and activities, as well as engaging with the private sector.

A plethora of partnership working with many other organisations supports and complements this work. By using available funding streams to deliver key projects the Council with its partners can address local economic issues and work towards the delivery of the future aspirations.

This document will set out the strategy and deliver the key action plan to contribute and deliver those outcomes. It is vital to note that this strategy works alongside other strategies and vision documents such as the Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Development Framework and Hemel 2020. This document seeks to dovetail into these work streams rather than work in isolation. A large amount of economic data and links to other major strategies can be accessed through the Council's web site:

[www.dacorum.gov.uk/business](http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/business)



## 4 CONTEXT FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

### 4.1 THE LOCAL CONTEXT

The Borough of Dacorum in West Hertfordshire covers an area of 210 square kilometres. It borders with St Albans City and District to the east, Bedfordshire to the north, Buckinghamshire to the west and extends from the outskirts of Watford in the south along the valleys of the Gade and Bulbourne rivers northwards to the Chiltern Hills and beyond into the Aylesbury Vale. The three main towns are Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring with a total population in Dacorum of 137,807 (Census 2001), a 4.2% increase from 1991.

Excellent road and rail communications make Dacorum a prime business location. Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring are situated on the West Coast mainline rail route which links Dacorum in approximately 30 minutes to London (Euston) in the south and Milton Keynes, Birmingham and beyond to the north. The M1 and M25 motorways skirt the eastern and southern edges respectively. From nearby St Albans, access to St. Pancras station and on to Eurotunnel is quick and efficient.

All four London airports are in close proximity with London Luton being only 20 minutes drive from Hemel Hempstead. This close proximity to the London airports ensures that the area has a role as a major international gateway to Europe and the rest of the world. Many foreign owned businesses have located in

the area to provide them with a platform to reach European or other markets.

Dacorum has seen enormous changes during the last 50 years, firstly with the development of Hemel Hempstead New Town in the 1950s and 1960s and, more recently, with traditional industries such as paper making (John Dickinson) giving way to modern technological businesses.

Retailing has changed in line with customer and trader needs in the main town centres but also with the development of edge of town shopping. Hemel Hempstead town centre was modernised through pedestrianisation in the early 1990s and was expanded with the high quality Riverside scheme, which opened in 2006.

The area is a mix of urban and rural environments and while each of the towns and villages and the surrounding countryside has their own character and local economics, the geography and location of Hemel Hempstead in particular has attracted major firms such as Kodak, Northgate, DSGI and 3Com.





## Dacorum's Local Development Framework

The Government introduced major changes to the planning system in 2004, which require local planning authorities to replace their Local Plans with new Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). Once adopted, the LDF will form the statutory development plan for the area, alongside the East of England Plan, which covers the whole of the eastern region. The LDF will be an important delivery mechanism for the objectives set out within this Economic Development Strategy by:

- Establishing policies and proposals for development and use of land within the Borough for the period to 2021 (and beyond); and
- Setting out a vision for the future of Dacorum, including specific objectives and targets which developments must meet to secure that vision. This vision will reflect the aspirations of the adopted Sustainable Community Strategy.



## 4.2 THE HEMEL HEMPSTEAD 2020 VISION

Hemel Hempstead is a Mark 1 New Town developed in the immediate post war period. The town is now 50 years old and is, arguably, one of the more successful of the original new UK towns. However, it is now at a time of life where a regeneration vision is needed to build upon its successes and strengths in order to create new opportunities and to craft the right legacy for future generations.

Dacorum Borough Council launched the Hemel 2020 Vision in February 2006. It has been endorsed by the Dacorum Local Strategic Partnership, which has adopted "Rejuvenating Dacorum" as a cross-cutting theme in its Community Plan 2006 which is supported by local businesses, residents and community groups. English Partnerships (EP) and the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) have also given active support towards achieving the vision.

Hemel Hempstead is characterised by a series of residential areas with neighbourhood centres at their core, plus the provision of a series of parks and open spaces and several significant business areas: the Maylands Business Park being by far the most significant. In common with all of the early new towns there is an increasingly urgent need for regeneration and improvement; much of the ageing infrastructure needs upgrading and some areas of the town have become "tired". Hemel 2020 addresses these issues and establishes the overarching agenda for the town's rejuvenation.

Hemel 2020 aims to capture the wealth of opportunities offered in the town. The strategy sets out to enhance the quality of life, provide more homes, create and attract new businesses and employment opportunities and enhance the environment. The strategy is intended to raise the profile of Hemel



Hempstead as an exciting town in which to live, work, play and visit and underline the reality that it is an attractive place for investment.

### **The 2020 Vision is built upon the following themes and aspirations:**

- Enhancing lives through regeneration projects to promote social inclusion, equality and diversity and improve community safety. These initiatives support and enhance the many projects aiming to improve both the built form and green spaces of Hemel Hempstead
- To provide a high standard of development, particularly housing and affordable housing, which meets both development and community needs in an environmentally sustainable way, supported by an appropriate infrastructure
- To provide an exciting, thriving, safe and clean town centre environment that provides the right visitor experience for both residents and visitors so that Hemel Hempstead becomes a regional destination in its own right
- To improve the natural and historic environment, including provision of open spaces and recreational areas that are attractive, well used and valued
- To rejuvenate the Maylands Business Park to achieve a vibrant, dynamic and premier business led community and first choice inward investment location



### **4.3 THE DACORUM PARTNERSHIP (Local Strategic Partnership)**

The Dacorum Partnership have produced *Towards 2021 – a Sustainable Community Strategy* for the Borough. The partnership vision is that the Borough “works together to make Dacorum a happy, healthy, prosperous and safe place to live, work and visit.”

The Economic Development strategy will work alongside this document and aim to deliver those targets contained within the Sustainable Community Strategy, particularly under the theme of Encouraging Business and Local Employment and additionally contributing to many other themes contained in the plan, under the following headings:

- Reducing crime and creating a safer Dacorum
- Improving social care and health
- Delivering lifelong learning
- Meeting housing needs
- Encouraging community involvement
- Creating a cleaner and healthier environment
- Encouraging business and local employment
- Meeting the needs of older people
- Promoting culture, arts, leisure and tourism
- Meeting the needs of children and young people

*More information on the Sustainable Community Strategy can be found at:*  
[www.dacorumpartnership.org.uk](http://www.dacorumpartnership.org.uk)



#### 4.4 THE IMPACT OF THE EXPLOSION AND FIRE AT BUNCEFIELD OIL DEPOT

The fire at the Buncefield Oil Depot in December 2005 has added to the challenges faced by Hemel Hempstead. Maylands Business Park is one of the largest concentrations of businesses in the East of England and the area represents the main location for employment in the town.

The explosion (the largest in peacetime Britain) and subsequent dislocation of business threatened redundancies on a massive scale. Fortunately, doomsday scenarios have been avoided, but the future prospects for Maylands remain finely balanced.



Commercial success within Maylands lies at the heart of Hemel Hempstead's continuing prosperity. We sit at the cusp that separates a re-energised and vibrant future from potential decline; work carried out during the ensuing months and years will be critical to the continuing prosperity of Hemel Hempstead and beyond.

The delivery of the Maylands Master Plan – adopted by Dacorum Borough Council in September 2007 – will considerably improve the business area over the coming years, both in appearance and functionality and also ensure that the impact on the environment is considered as part of future planning.

*Full details of the Maylands Master Plan can be found at: [www.maylands.org](http://www.maylands.org)*

#### 4.5 THE GROWTH AGENDA FOR DACORUM AND HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

Hemel Hempstead has been identified as a 'Key Centre for Development and Change [KCDC]' in the East of England Plan, which is the Regional Spatial Strategy for the Eastern Region (May 2008).

Policy H1 of the Plan requires the provision of at least 12,000 additional dwellings over the twenty years from 2001 to 2021, with much of the potential growth going to the east of Hemel, just within the boundary of St Albans City and District. If this continued rate of growth is combined with the need to undertake a Green Belt review to cover the period to 2031, the implication is that growth in the order of 17,000 dwellings will be demanded in the area over that period.

Put simply this is the largest rate of growth to be seen in Hemel Hempstead since the completion of the last new town neighbourhood of Grovehill and its private sector neighbour of Woodhall Farm. We will need to achieve a step-change in the rate of housing delivery from around 350 units to almost 700 per annum.

Policy LA2 of the Plan provides detail on the strategic framework for Hemel Hempstead. The main requirements of this policy are:

- Consider expansion into land within St Albans City and District
- A need to consider the 'constraints and opportunities' arising from decisions on Buncefield
- Coordination of Development Plan Documents with St Albans City and District Council
- Strategic review of the Green Belt
- Substantial employment growth based on:
  - Strategic links to centres such as Watford, Luton, London, Milton Keynes
  - Regeneration of Maylands
  - Reconstruction and rationalisation' of Buncefield



- A more attractive and vital town centre
- Action to raise the quality of life of local residents
- Strategic transport planning
- Improvements to the quality of the town's built fabric, public realm and green spaces

The East of England Plan provides a clear set of requirements from which to plan the growth. The Council is bound by the Plan. We cannot provide the step-change in housing provision allocated in the Regional Spatial Strategy/East of England Plan without ensuring that an appropriate range and level of employment opportunities are also available within the town, and the Borough as a whole.

A major effort is being made through the Maylands Master Plan, adopted by the Council, to ensure future prosperity. Updating the Employment Space Study is a critical element of our understanding of the wider picture across the Borough and will help Hertfordshire authorities to better understand and plan to allocate jobs growth around London.

While most employment areas outside of Maylands will also be needed in the future, there is some scope to explore the capacity of the Borough's employment areas to accommodate some residential uses or mixed-use regeneration schemes. The 'Heart of Maylands' in Hemel Hempstead's main business area has already been highlighted as a suitable location in the Maylands Master Plan and the Council wishes to accelerate land assembly in this location to unlock this potential.





## 4.6 THE SUB REGIONAL CONTEXT

Dacorum Borough Council cannot and does not operate in a vacuum. The economy and its impacts span over administrative boundaries and therefore the Council is committed to playing an active role within the context of both the sub region (Hertfordshire) and the region (East of England). In preparing the Economic Development Strategy for Dacorum, full regard has been given to the opportunity to work within the framework established at the regional and sub regional (county) level. This includes attracting investment and resources into the area but also recognising the different requirements and responsibilities operating at these levels (e.g. infrastructure, inward investment, education and transport). See diagram on following page.

In addition, opportunities for working across Borough boundaries, to achieve greater economies of scale and to benefit from exchange of best practice or shared priorities will be fully exploited. Dacorum also falls within the “London Arc” sub region and the strategy recognises that there are significant longer-term trends, which will impact upon the Borough.

It is highly likely that options for groupings of districts who share “functional economic geographies” – common issues and aims, such as high commuting levels, efficient use of land to reduce pressure on greenfield land and improving the area as a location for business (some of which may span over county or regional boundaries) – will work closely together in the coming years to deliver successful growth which will serve a very different catchment area than those which local authorities currently work within.

During this year (2008-9) there is a Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration

being consulted upon, which suggests an enhancement in the relationship between the upper tier authority (Herts County Council) and all the District Councils in relation to economic development activity. The review aims to ensure that funding for Economic Development is directed through an appropriate strategic body and is able to make the best impact at a local level. There will also be new requirements of the upper tier authority (Herts County Council) to assess the economic situation in all its districts and seek ways to address any issues which become apparent. This review will no doubt enhance the partnership working between all districts and the County Council. Outcomes of the review will be known in 2009 and may impact on this strategy’s structure and delivery. Such partnership working may well lend itself to potential pathfinder projects in the days ahead.

A draft Economic Development strategy for Hertfordshire County can be found at:

[www.hertsobservatory.org.uk](http://www.hertsobservatory.org.uk) However, this too is likely to be revisited following the outcomes of the sub national review.



## 4.7 THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) were set up with statutory purposes to encourage economic development and regeneration; promote business efficiency, investment and competitiveness; promote employment and enhance the development of skills relevant to employment; and contribute to sustainable development.

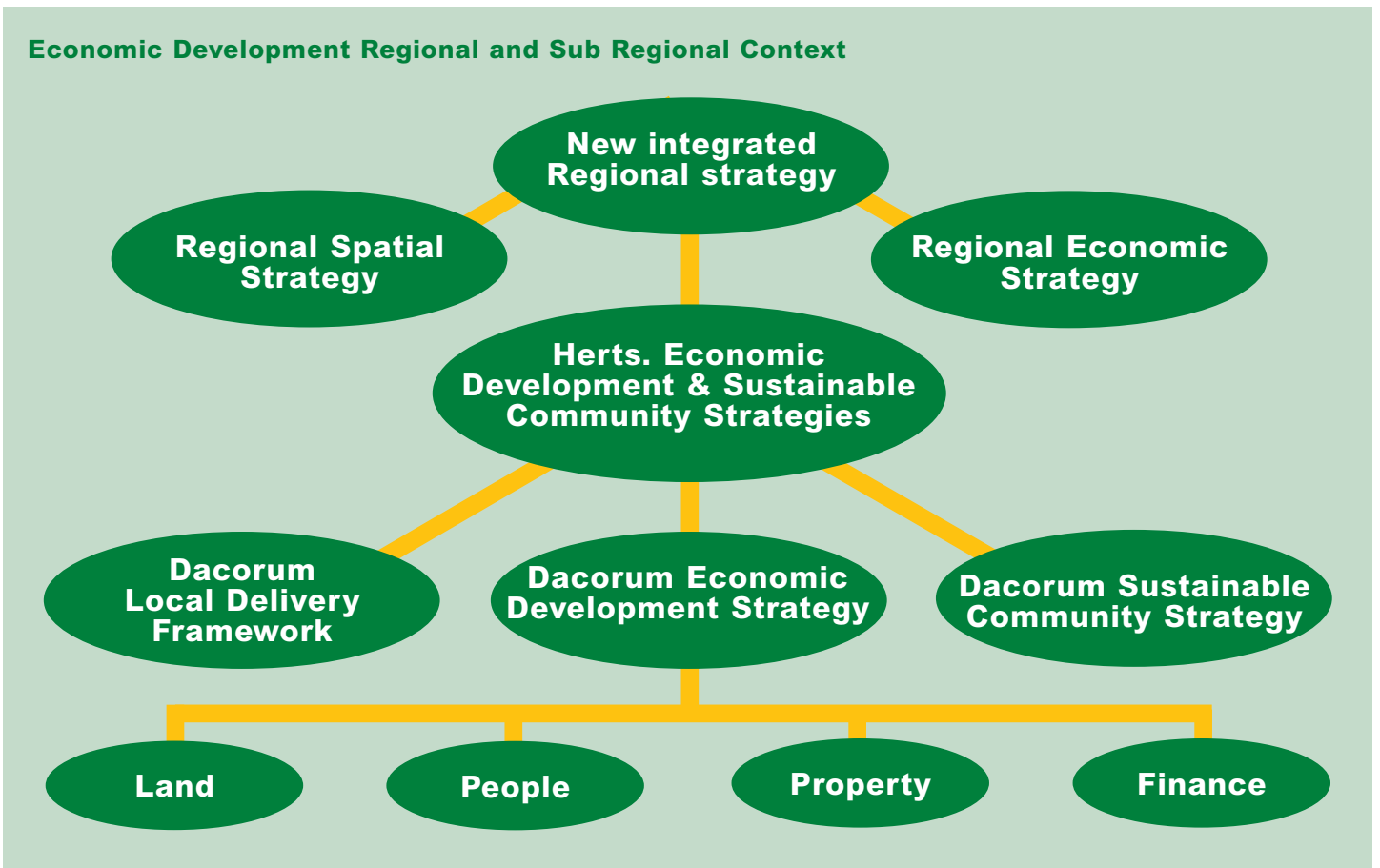
Dacorum sits on the western side of the Eastern Region and borders both the London area and the South Eastern Region. Influences from both these regions have an impact on the economy in Dacorum and have to be considered within the functional economic development for the Dacorum economy.



More recently RDAs have been given enhanced roles relating to transport, tourism, housing and planning and the Sub National Review will also widen these roles further.

The review will also bring alignment between the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) and the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) into one document in order to achieve more effective delivery on the ground. This will form the basis of a Regional Implementation Plan to deliver a long-term vision and delivery plan for growth within the region.

*The Regional Economic Strategy can be viewed at: [www.eeda.org.uk](http://www.eeda.org.uk)*



*The diagram above shows how regional strategies filter down to local government and are absorbed as part of the service delivery at a local level.*

## 5 THE CURRENT SITUATION IN DACORUM

### 5.1 DACORUM ECONOMIC PROFILE

In order to provide for business growth and development plus support for regeneration and sustainable well-paid employment, economic development should help to encourage and secure high quality, locally distinctive, sustainable jobs. Following the Buncefield explosion, the motivating factor in the Maylands Master Plan is that the Maylands Business area will be rejuvenated and business confidence restored. Improvements to the district's economic infrastructure including tourism, rural regeneration and diversification will help support this objective.

In December 2006, Dacorum Borough Council commissioned The Local Futures Group to benchmark the Borough against a number of economic and social indicators. The report identified the following headline characteristics:

- Dacorum is ranked 327th out of 408 districts for growth
- There has been a slight reduction in job numbers since 1999 against a backdrop of growth nationally of 7%

- The district performs comparatively well on education and skills, being ranked 101st of 408. However employability skills (NVQ level 2) fall below the Hertfordshire average and the UK skills base generally lags behind international competitors
- There is a relatively high proportion of knowledge workers, ranking 157th of 408
- Dacorum has suffered low growth in terms of commercial and industrial floor space, ranking 295th out of 356 districts in England and Wales. Recent increases have been sluggish (2.2%) compared the national average (8.6%). Growth in office space is just 25% of the national norm
- The proportion of Dacorum residents working elsewhere is the lowest in Hertfordshire
- The proportion of jobs taken within Dacorum by non-residents is lower than the rest of Hertfordshire
- Dacorum ranks in the bottom 20% nationally against the set of 'Economic Change' indicators employed by The Local Futures Group (e.g. in relation to job growth which has been poor)

*More detailed economic data (updated March 2008) can be found at the Council's web site: [www.dacorum.gov.uk/business](http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/business)*



There is a fairly strong enterprise culture. The rate of new business formation in Dacorum is higher than the region but lower than the sub region; self-employment is also lower than that of Hertfordshire, but higher than the region and Britain.

Dacorum's 'self containment', low growth (particularly in knowledge-based employment) and relatively weak economic performance support the need for new investment to stimulate employment growth, particularly in the knowledge-based sector. The delivery and implementation of the Maylands Master Plan will seek to address this and improve performance in the future.

Taken as a whole, the indicators suggest that the Borough is ripe for investment to develop commercial and office space. Past under-investment has not enabled Dacorum to maintain the pace of progress enjoyed elsewhere. Improvements in economic prospects are particularly important because the local labour market is comparatively self-contained. Relative self-containment supports sustainability by minimising commuter traffic and reducing the associated carbon footprint, however current figures from DEFRA show that Dacorum has the highest carbon emissions in the industrial and commercial sector (Kilotonnes of Co2 emissions per annum). This is most likely due to the high numbers of businesses in the area.



<b>Dacorum</b>	<b>376</b>
<b>Welwyn Hatfield</b>	<b>355</b>
<b>East Herts</b>	<b>341</b>
<b>North Herts</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>Stevenage</b>	<b>276</b>
<b>Hertsmere</b>	<b>265</b>

## 5.2 DEVELOPING OUR SKILLS BASE

In the East of England as a whole, at a broad sectoral level, the Local Futures Group research showed that job losses are expected in the primary sector and utilities, manufacturing and construction. However gains are expected in distribution, transport, business and other services, and non-marketed services.

- Primary sector and utilities: losses will be concentrated among males; rate of loss highest of all English regions. Manufacturing: long-term decline continuing. Herts expected to have slowest loss in region (0.7% p.a.)
- Construction: small loss across region, stable in Herts. Some losses in jobs among males, and gains by females
- Distribution, transport etc: growth especially in retail distribution, with additional 35,000 jobs (0.6% per annum increase) across Region: hotels and catering projected to increase by 0.8% (higher than average for UK). Female employment will rise faster than male
- Business services: largest projected job growth, especially in Herts (1.5% p.a., compared with 1.2% for England). 15% increase in jobs for males, 10% increase for females
- Non-marketed services: expected to rise by average of 0.6% p.a., as in UK as a whole

As far as occupational/skill levels are concerned, growth is predicted in managers and senior officials, professionals, associate professional/technical, personal service, sales and customer service. There will be job losses in administrative, clerical and secretarial, skilled trades, machine and transport operatives, and elementary occupations.

- Managers: gains in corporate management, decline in managers and proprietors
- Professional: gains in teaching and research, science and technical professions, health
- Associate professional and technical: 1% p.a., slightly greater than average for England, mainly culture, media and sports, but also business and science and technology. Gains divided equally between males and females
- Administration etc: loss of 0.8% per annum, slightly lower than UK average, majority women
- Skilled trades: loss of 0.3% p.a. across East of England. Main losses in skilled metal and electrical trades. Gains mainly in skilled construction and building trades
- Personal service occupations: expected to increase by 2% p.a., especially in caring services and leisure, almost all for women
- Sales and customer service: growth in Herts predicted to be 1.8% p.a. (cf 1.5% for UK)
- Machine and transport operatives: loss of 0.5% jobs p.a., especially for women
- Elementary occupations: 0.85% loss p.a. in Herts, mainly among women



### Skills needs in Dacorum:

Although adult qualification levels in Dacorum are above average for Hertfordshire and England (only 5.4% adult working age population have no qualifications, average for Hertfordshire is 10.2%), this still means there are 4,600 people of working age without any qualifications, and 11,000 below NVQ level 2.

- There is a particular need for very basic numeracy skills
- Skills shortage in Hertfordshire is highest in associate professionals and skilled trades

### Skills needs in particular sectors (Herts):

- Retail: oral communication, customer handling, team work and personal attributes (especially important for small businesses)
- Construction: low qualification base. Need for skills in oral communication, problem solving and management. Need to increase numbers on construction apprentice schemes, and strong need for qualified managers
- Health and Social Care: management and leadership; numeracy, literacy and ESOL (English as a second language); ICT skills; increase numbers with level 2 or 3 qualification; training for voluntary sector
- Hospitality: customer handling; literacy, numeracy and (increasingly) ESOL. High staff turnover has negative impact on employers' attitudes to investing in training

- Land based industries: oral communication, management, technically specific skills; also growth in need for new skills due to changes in rural economy – environmental conservation, horticulture, equine industries and landscaping, all requiring problem solving, ICT, sales and strategic business skills

- Engineering and Manufacturing: for all sector skills, councils cite the need to attract more young people, need for ESOL, numeracy

- Logistics: rapidly growing area, needs: improved management practice, customer service, ICT, team working, oral and written communication

### Other points:

- Distribution and Banking/Financial Services are among the two largest sources of employment in Dacorum
- Dacorum's large number of SMEs has implications for skills development, since SMEs have less resources to invest in training staff





## 6 DELIVERING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN DACORUM

This section contains details of the proposed Economic Development activities that the Council and its partners will be involved in (both preparation and delivery), relating to the long-term strategic plan for the prosperity of Dacorum. The Economic Development Strategy cannot deliver these objectives alone. The Local Development Framework will be a key mechanism – through the establishment of policies that reflect the objectives and allocation of land.



There are five objectives which have been identified following recent changes and needs within the Borough. Together these have the aim of delivering our future aspirations.

Further detailed plans of how these objectives will be delivered annually and over the next three years are shown on the Council's web site.

### **Objective 1** **The regeneration of Maylands**

Work with the Regeneration and Implementation team and the Maylands Partnership to deliver the outcomes from the Hemel 2020 Vision including the Maylands Master Plan

### **Objective 2** **Supporting the business community**

Work with partners to provide a business support framework, which will encourage competitiveness and growth

### **Objective 3** **Promoting green and sustainable growth**

Meet the aims of the Sustainable Community Strategy and work to facilitate a sustainable and prosperous economy and growth

### **Objective 4** **Attracting and retaining business**

Ensure that Dacorum has a buoyant economy by attracting and retaining a diverse range of local employers and encouraging enterprise and business start up activity

### **Objective 5** **Developing our skills base**

Developing skills to meet business needs now and into the future

## 6.1 OBJECTIVE 1 THE REGENERATION OF MAYLANDS

Work with Maylands Regeneration and Implementation Team (MIT) and the Maylands Partnership to deliver the outcomes from the Hemel 2020 Vision including the Maylands Master Plan

	Activities	Key partners	Performance measure
a) Maylands Gateway	Development brief to be agreed to begin land assembly for the Gateway.  Alternative site for caravan club identified by March 2009	MIT & DBC Spatial Plans Team  EEDA EP  Maylands Partnership	2020
b) Heart of Maylands	Feasibility study on potential for mixed use development to be carried out by May 2009. Profile future actions depending on outcome of study to scope the future for the area as part of Growth Action Plan.	MIT  Maylands Partnership LDF Team	2020
c) Restore confidence through the delivery of the Maylands Master Plan post Buncefield	Deliver the Phoenix Gateway Sculpture by Dec 2008. Deliver ongoing physical improvements to the area through the BID campaign to support the Business Improvement District.	EEDA  Maylands Partnership LDF team	2020 and SCS
d) Attract and commit external funding to deliver aims of the ED strategy including delivery of the Maylands Master Plan	Maximise effectiveness of funding available to deliver outcomes by enhanced coordination of activities and by the identification of possible sources of funding for each year.	GAF CLG EEDA ERDF	

## 6.2 OBJECTIVE 2 SUPPORTING THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Work with partners to provide a business support framework, which will encourage competitiveness and growth

	Activities	Key partners	Performance measure
a) Research and evaluate options for Dacorum Borough Council and agree a forward plan relating to the Sub National Review of Economic Development	Ensure that local service delivery is aligned to the delivery within the context of Hertfordshire and the region. DBC can "punch above its weight". Represent DBC in enhanced working through partnership across districts and at a county level to achieve effective results.	HCC HEDOG EEDA Other Districts	Changes and new structures in place by April 2009
b) Ensure that Dacorum inputs into the county LAA for the Economic Development blocks	Ensure that Dacorum can contribute to the delivery of LAA outcomes and highlight local issues to include in strategic planning at county level by attendance at county meetings.	Herts Forward LAA Economic Development ED&E Block LSP	Ongoing
c) Ensure that business can access a range of partner support opportunities to encourage growth	Arrange regular meetings with partners to ensure best practice relating to customer service and raise awareness of the offering through regular information channels and networking with businesses.	Business Link Wenta HEDOG HCC HCCI	BSSP
d) Continue partnership working with key stakeholders relating to the economy	Support and input into key partnerships across Dacorum and Hertfordshire (e.g. Maylands Partnership, Corporate Social Responsibility CSR group).	Maylands P'ship Connect Dacorum HCC, Planning Other districts	Ongoing
e) Development of a business centre and business incubation for start up businesses	Development of the Axis Point project to provide improved partnership working and delivery, and support and encourage new business	EEDA Business Link Wenta HCCI	By March 2010
f) Business continuity	Work at a local and a county level to raise awareness of the need for robust business continuity planning – attend Steering Group to help deliver county targets.	Herts Resilience Jenny Young (DBC)	Achieve annual targets for BC awareness to local business

### 6.3 OBJECTIVE 3 PROMOTING GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Meet the aims of the Sustainable Community Strategy and work to facilitate a sustainable and prosperous economy and growth

	Activities	Key partners	Performance measure
a) Help business to reduce their negative impacts on the environment	Maintain and increase the Dacorum Green Business Club and delivery of informative seminars, which help business (particularly SME's) to be more proactive in tackling the Green agenda. Hold four events throughout the year.	DGBC RES HCCI	SCS
b) Support sustainable economic growth through ERDF Bid – low carbon growth	Encourage good business practice around energy efficiency, waste, recycling and renewable energy through information, referral and awareness raising.	ERDF HEDOG	SCS
c) Development of the Green Energy Park at Maylands	Identify funding for feasibility study to establish whether there is potential for the production of renewable energy to service the Maylands area. Carry out study to indicate if project will be practical and able to progress.	Renewables East	2020 and SCS
d) Sustainable Procurement which will encourage local and ethical sourcing	Investigate the feasibility of adopting a Sustainable Procurement Strategy, which will include involvement with social enterprise, local business and third sector.	ERDF LAA LSP – Dacorum Partnership	SCS
e) Fair Trade Status	Work to achieve Fair Trade Status for Hemel Hempstead and surrounding villages by June 2009 and extend Fair Trade Status for Dacorum Borough by September 2009.	DBC Fair-Trade Steering Group	Status achieved for Hemel Hempstead Status achieved for Dacorum
f) Begin to tackle the transport issues affecting business, including more sustainable options for travel to work	Develop a Green Travel Plan for the Maylands area (and possibly beyond) as part of an holistic aim to improve green travel across the Borough. Identify through the Master Plan the feasibility of the Park & Ride at Maylands. Establish progress by March 2009.	HCC	SCS





#### 6.4 OBJECTIVE 4 ATTRACTING AND RETAINING BUSINESS

Ensure that Dacorum has a buoyant economy by attracting and retaining a diverse range of local employers and encouraging enterprise and business start up activity

	Activities	Key partners	Performance measure
a) Raise the profile of Dacorum as a first class location for business	Work with a mix of partners to ensure that Dacorum is included as a location of choice. Attract a diverse range of business to the area.	PR Marketing Communication	
b) Deliver a proactive Inward Investment programme and ensure Dacorum is branded as a place for business to flourish	Respond proactively to all enquiries either direct or through partners. Supply current and relevant information to all location enquiries. Maintain and improve web site regularly. Prepare branded materials for publicity of the area. Ongoing support service throughout location process and on moving in.	EEI Commercial Agents Press/PR PI's	SCS NI 171
c) Proactive care and retention of indigenous business through meaningful business engagement	Maintain regular engagements with businesses through communication and Information service e.g. Monthly Business Update and information and referral service. Maintain and develop business networks by regular referrals and attendance. Work with at-risk employers to gain commitment to the area and refer to organisations who can assist or help influence decisions. Maintain an ongoing programme of visits to local business on request and incorporate signposting to partner organisations when appropriate.	HCCI DGBC Press/PR	SCS
d) Encourage pride in the business community and competitiveness	Continue to deliver the Business Achievement Awards – now in their 10th year – as a high profile, well-publicised event	Gazette	Increase in the number of entries
e) Facilitate and enable enterprise activity and support start up businesses	Develop options for Axis Point project including an agreed delivery plan – provision of incubator space for fledgling small business. Develop and agree SLA with Wenta investigating future ways to make the service self financing through project funding. Work with Business Link Enterprise Development Managers and encourage businesses to take up the Business Development services available.	EEDA Wenta Business Link	EEDA SCS SLA
f) Screen East SLA	Work with Screen East to increase number of locations and shoot days in Dacorum. Seek commitment to make Dacorum more “Film Friendly” to facilitate an increase in shoot days within the Borough by March 2009.		SLA
g) Neighbourhood feasibility	IKON study outcomes – potential for mixed use redevelopment – development of an overall action plan for the neighbourhoods by March 2009.	IKON LHC EP LDF team	2020

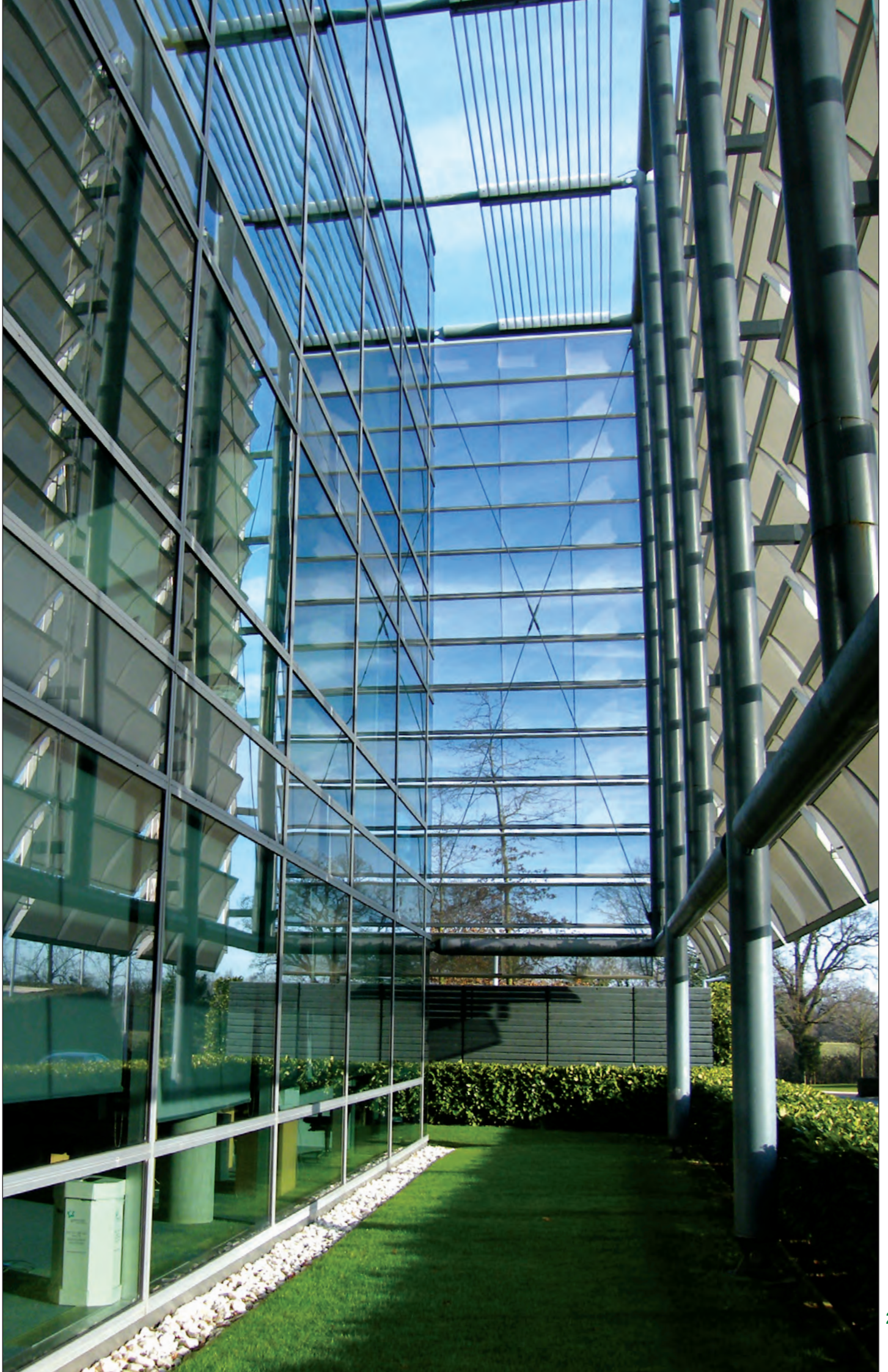
## 6.5 OBJECTIVE 5 DEVELOPING OUR SKILLS BASE

Developing skills to meet business needs now and into the future

	Activities	Key partners	Performance measure
a) Support and promote skills analysis, advice and training for businesses and employees	Promote skills audits, advice and training availability, using communication channels and opportunities at business events and visits.	Business Link Train to Gain Nextstep/Adult Advancement and Careers Service AACs (see glossary)	
b) Link business and education	Develop the enterprise skills of the future workforce. Encourage businesses to support/promote enterprise activities in schools.	Wenta Herts University Specialist schools	Annual SLA
c) Meet the skills demands of the future	Conduct research into local learning/training needs. Facilitate work in economically/educationally deprived communities to improve skills and employability. Promote local and national events to encourage adult learning. Raise aspirations (and achievement) through information, advice and guidance. Identify and link together the demand and supply of specific skills and link with the action plan from the Learning Partnership team and the Dacorum Learning Forum. Dacorum Careers Fair to identify future employer needs and engage local schools.	Dacorum Learning Forum Cementaprise Business Link IIC West Herts College Herts Careers Service	Event Nov 08
d) Social Enterprise	Support Social Enterprise through sustainable procurement policies and business support partners.	Third Sector Business Link	
e) Princes Trust	Agree SLA for support to young people in business start up and training.	Princes Trust Wenta	Annual SLA









## 7 RESOURCES, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### 7.1 BUDGET AND RESOURCES

Dacorum Borough Council has resourced an Economic Development service for over ten years to include working with business, town centres and Lifelong Learning and skills. The service was based at The Bridge Business and Training Centre for ten years, however following the re-structuring of services and the expiry of the lease for that building, Economic Development activity is now located at the Civic Centre.

This move will enable the aspirations from this strategy to be more integrated with the large scale and ambitious plans for Dacorum in relation to housing and employment growth and the planned regeneration through the Hemel 2020 ambitions and vision. To enable this service to be delivered, the Council's budget for delivery is shown alongside, however it must be noted that additional funding is actively sourced, attracted and managed to deliver local projects on the ground. Recent examples of this additional external funding are also shown, however availability of funding fluctuates throughout funding cycles and cannot always be guaranteed. However, external funding enables the Council to maximise its resources and gain excellent value for money for its businesses, residents and visitors.

In particular, the level of external funding available from EEDA has increased since the Buncefield explosion in response to the emergency, and for working towards the improvements in the Maylands area because of its significant importance to the region's economy.

Dacorum core budget	Budget amount
Marketing for the service	£2,700
Support for Business (resources/staff)	£55,600
Business Awards	£4,000
Business Development and Networks	£1,300
Business Events	£2,150
Business Support Enterprise Agency (Wenta SLA)	£18,000
Inward Investment (inc SLA with Screen East)	£5,000
Princes Trust (SLA)	£3,000
Support to Employees	£2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£93,750</b>

External Funding achieved 2005-8 in Economic Development	
Development of Maylands Web Site (EEDA)	£40,000
Signage and improvements 2005-6 (EEDA)	£40,000
Axis Point Business Centre for Maylands (EEDA 2007-10)	£2,872,000
The Phoenix Gateway (EEDA 2007-8)	£320,000
Maylands Partnership Director (EEDA 2006-7 and 2007-8)	£207,300*
Maylands Master plan (HCC and EEDA 2006)	£240,000*
Communications and PR following the Buncefield Explosion (EEDA 2006)	£70,000*
The Cement Construction Training Project (EQUAL – ESF2005-8)	£2,200,000
ANPR Cameras for Maylands (Herts Police 2007)	£11,000
Maylands Business Team (2008-9) from EEDA	£126,000*
<b>Total</b>	<b>£6,126,300</b>

\* Funding given by EEDA post Buncefield explosion to react to the emerging needs

Additional funding attracted and implemented through Learning Partnerships	
Computing in the Community (ESF/LSC) Basic IT skills to level 2 for unemployed and those in low-skilled jobs 2005-6	£144,000
Ways to Work (ESF/LSC) 2005-7, training in IT and skills for employment	£48,000
Buncefield Job Club (IiC/EEDA) 2006	£20,000
Workforce Development Project (ESF/LSC) 2006-7 (IT, customer service and management training for SMEs)	£46,300
Next step funding for advice on work and training 2007/8	£19,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£277,300</b>

The Maylands Partnership (now an independent organisation, i.e. company limited by guarantee), has also accessed some additional external funding for the development of the Business Improvement District (BID) 2007-2009 of approximately £300,000.

The Partnership, working in conjunction with the Council will hold a ballot on the Business Improvement District in February 2009.

This will provide a sustainable source of funding for improvements to the area paid by supplementary business rates levied on businesses located in the area.



## 7.2 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The actions included within this Strategy will be incorporated, as appropriate, within the Annual Service Plan for the Council's Planning and Regeneration Service as one of the work streams under the Hemel 2020 vision/initiative. Progress will be monitored at quarterly intervals and at the end of each financial year. An exceptions report will be produced for the Hemel 2020 board explaining, if necessary, the reasons for any slippage in targets and actions.

External funding milestones and targets are also reported on to the funder as required depending on the requirements relating to that area of work. Additionally, there are targets to be delivered in relation to a variety of other work contained within stand alone projects (e.g. the Phoenix Gateway) and also targets set by the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreements.

Several of the delivery targets which are commissioned through Service Level Agreements (SLA's) are monitored against targets on a quarterly basis and payment is made to the organisation, subject to these targets being delivered.

## 8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, WHO'S WHO AND ACRONYMS

### Sources of research

Market Measures Profile of Dacorum  
March 2008 (updated annually)

Market Measures Business Intelligence Report  
April 2008 (updated annually)

Herts Economic Overview  
March 2008

Tribal – Herts Vitality Profile  
April 2008

National Employers Skills Survey  
2007

Life Chances: Supporting people to get on in the  
labour market DWP/DIUS/Cabinet Office  
March 2008

NIACE Survey on Adult Participation in Learning  
2008

Local Needs Assessment, LSC East of England  
Research Team 2007

Working Futures 2004-2014 Spatial Report



*For further information on this strategy, action plan  
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[www.maylands.org](http://www.maylands.org)*



Glossary and who's who		
Adult Advancement and Careers Service	AACS	New advice service (replacing Nextstep), entitlements for 20+ year olds
Apsley Paper Trail		Local industrial heritage site
Business Link		Organisation supporting businesses with advice and training through brokerage
Communities & Local Government	CLG	Government department responsible for local government
Cement/Cementaprise		A social enterprise which uses construction training to re-access employment
Dacorum Green Business Club	DGBC	Network of Businesses with environmental interests
Dacorum Learning Partnership	DLP	Local network of organisations concerned with adult learning and training
Dacorum Partnership		Dacorum Local Strategic Partnership
East of England Development Agency	EEDA	Regional Development Agency
European Regional Development Fund	ERDF	Funding for low carbon growth initiatives
East of England International	EEL	Regional organisation for international Inward Investment
Fair Trade Foundation	FT	Organisation who monitor Fair Trade
Growth Area Funding	GAF	Government funding to deliver housing growth
Gazette		Local newspaper
Herts Adult Learning Partnership	HALP	Provides a strategic and authoritative voice on adult learning in the County
Herts Economic Development	HEDOG	Herts-wide Council Officers Group
Herts Careers Service		Careers advice and support, redundancy support, skills analysis
Herts County Council	HCC	County Council
Herts Chamber of Commerce & Industry	HCCI	Partner Chamber of Commerce
Herts Forward		Herts Local Strategic Partnership
Herts Prosperity	HP	Sub Regional Economic Partnership
Herts Resilience		Herts Emergency Planning
Learning and Skills Council	LSC	Agency who are responsible for adult skills development
Local Development Framework	LDF	Policy for the future development of Dacorum
Local Area Agreement	LAA	Targets to address community issues
Local Strategic Partnership	LSP	Partnership of key organisations in an area
Local Housing Company	LHC	Private sector partner to provide housing delivery
Maylands Partnership	MP	Partnership of Public and Private sector
Maylands Implementation Team	MIT	Internal group to drive the Maylands Master plan
Performance Indicator	Pi	A measure of achievement towards a target
Public Relations	PR	Raising awareness of an event, service or product
Princes Trust		Support for young people to start business
Service Level Agreement	SLA	A contract to deliver outcomes on behalf of DBC
Sustainable Community Strategy	SCS	A document of aspiration for an area
Train to Gain		Government funded employee training, especially qualifications below Level 2
University of Hertfordshire	UH	Nearest university (Hatfield)
Wenta Business Services	Wenta	Local Enterprise Agency who support start up business
West Herts College	WHC	Local college

*This publication is about Dacorum Borough Council's Economic Development Strategy 2009–2012.*

*If you would like this information, or you would like to contact the Council in any other language please call 01442 867213.*

*If you would like this information in another format, such as large print or audio tape, please call 01442 867805.*

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