

Thame in Trust

A Vision and Action Plan

2004 - 2007

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PHOTOGRAPH OF THAME HIGH STREET AND TOWN HALL TODAY:

1. INTRODUCTION

History and Development of the Town

Our knowledge of the town's history begins in the Anglo Saxon period, thanks to evidence revealing a possible Saxon settlement by the River Thame, a theory strengthened by stray finds of jewellery and pottery.

It is probable that Roman contact existed at Thame, the evidence including a coin of Julius Caesar, found in the Recreation Ground in the early 1870s and, various artefacts found during works near the British Oxygen site.

The Norman Conquest in 1066 brought about some expansion for Thame. So enormous was the diocese of Lincoln that its bishops divided it up into a number of prebends for its better administration at a time when travelling was an adventure not to be lightly undertaken. Thame was one of these prebends and the Prebendal was built to house the reeve or bishop's representative.

Thame's significance as a market town was established in 1219 when the Bishop of Lincoln, keen that any traveller should patronise his market, obtained a licence to divert the Oxford-Aylesbury road so that it passed right through the market place. The Bishop stood to gain a sizeable sum in the way of tolls, stall fees and the fines of unruly attenders.

There is little evidence of the town's development during the later Middle Ages although North Street appears to have been in existence by the 15th century. The present St Mary's Church was built in 1241. There is evidence of a church on the same site in the late

600's, which was subsequently replaced by the Normans. The position of Thame as the market town for the neighbourhood meant that there was a full range of trades and crafts, from fishmonger and horsemonger to saddler and parchment-maker, with the bakers and brewers probably predominating. The craft for which Thame gained a wider reputation was that of glass painting, much of the glass in Merton College Chapel being made by Thame glaziers.

William Forrest, one of the monks at Thame Abbey, has been portrayed as a 'minor' poet, and "Grysilde the Second", written in 1558 gives an account of the divorce of Henry VIII. It describes the journey of the King and Anne Boleyn through Thame – "that gentle market towne" – at Michaelmas 1530, with Katherine of Aragon following behind."

Following the dissolution of the monasteries and the disposal of much of the Church land, the 16th century was a period of increasing prosperity and development in the town. The market brought great numbers of people to the centre, encouraging secondary trades, notably innkeepers and victuallers (of whom there were 20 in 1587).

Lord Williams, who had been a minor figure in Elizabethan political history, was nevertheless a major figure in Thame and in the county of Oxford. As a landowner, Member of Parliament and Sheriff he represented both nationally. In his will of 18 March 1559, Lord Williams bequeathed property to sustain 'a free school in the town of Thame'. He also founded the attractive black-timbered almshouses in Church Road.

By all accounts, the 16th century schoolboy at Lord Williams's had a

hard life. Pupils were expected to attend school from 6 am to 11 am and 1 pm to 6 pm (an hour earlier in winter). The boys had to pay for candles to light their gloom during those dim hours, for cleaning materials, and for 'rods' to be punished with. Knowledge was frequently beaten in rather than imparted, although the statutes contained a specific instruction that chastisement was to be confined to the nether quarters and not the head.

The Civil War in the 1640's saw Thame as a "no-man's land" between opposing forces, the King and Rupert holding Oxford, while the Parliament held Aylesbury. John Hampden, the great Parliamentarian (and cousin of Oliver Cromwell), had been a pupil of Lord Williams's. He died in Thame in 1643 after being wounded at the Battle of Chalgrove.

The Civil War did not affect the importance of the market and in the early years of the 17th century the rise of wool stapling contributed to Thame reaching the peak of its wealth and importance as a prosperous market town. The peak soon passed. The lack of any staple industry and the consequent dependence on agriculture caused a rapid decline in the town's income during the last part of the 18th century and particularly later between 1815-1888 because of a slump in agriculture.

(PHOTOGRAPH HERE: 1960's SHOWING LARGE SPACE FOR MARKETS)

Paradoxically, the relative poverty of the town and the lack of any large-scale redevelopment have led to its current fortune in possessing several examples of timber-framed buildings from the late Middle Ages.

Thame Today and Tomorrow

Today, Thame is an attractive and expanding market town.

During the 1970s and '80s Thame grew rapidly. New homes were built to the north and east of the town and according to the 2001 Census the population exceeded 11,000.

The long boat-shaped main street remains remarkably wide and lined with a remarkable number of ancient inns and houses in a variety of styles and materials, creating a scene that has been described as 'picturesque in an unpretentious way'.

Market towns always have challenges to face and the Town Council continuously strives to keep abreast of those challenges and plan for the future. In response to concerns about recreational and community facilities and, in particular, to address the needs of young people in the town, a group was formed in 1996 to produce a Community Plan for Thame, which was revised in 2000.

Voluntary groups have instigated a number of actions from that plan but further progress has been difficult to assess because the plan required updating.

This Market Town Healthcheck will produce an Action Plan to replace the old one. The plan will be comprehensive, with regular monitoring and feedback.

Community Plan 2000 Objectives

a) ‘to investigate the provision of a swimming pool’

A primary objective of the previous Community Plan consultation was the provision of a swimming pool in Thame. This had been identified in the South Oxfordshire Local Plan in 1997, and came after forty years of lobbying by local people. The Town Council worked in partnership with the District and County Councils to provide a swimming pool. A site was identified on the edge of the town adjacent to a thriving sports centre now known as Thame Leisure Centre.

The Earl and Countess of Wessex officially opened the Jubilee Pool in January 2003. Construction of the pool was funded by the sale of the Town Council land known as Pickenfield, which was purchased by Wates Homes for a housing development. The public open space lost by the sale of Pickenfield was replaced by new playing fields created at Church Farm beside Thame’s northeastern link road.

Insert photo Countess Wessex opening pool

b) ‘to establish a youth council.’

The Town Council invited young people to an informal gathering in April 2003 to gauge the enthusiasm for forming a **youth council**. At the end of the meeting six young people expressed their interest in creating a steering group to further the formation of a youth council. Adult members included Councillors, the Head of Sixth Form at Lord Williams’s School and the Leader of the First Thame Scout Group. The Youth Council was launched in November 2003.

c) ‘to increase local knowledge and understanding of Thame’s heritage’

In 1992, reorganisation of the magistrates’ service led to the closure of many of the smaller courthouses in England and Wales and Thame was no exception. Despite a vigorous appeal by the County Council, it finally closed in January 2003 and all magistrates business was transferred to Oxford City. The building lay empty for about a year and was then offered for sale by the County Council.

Meanwhile, the Thame Historical Society, which had been searching for a building suitable for a **local museum** for some years, approached the Town Council about the possibility of purchasing the Court House. A Museum Working Group was formed with a number of partners who worked hard to achieve the purchase of the building by the Town Council in March 2004. Subsequently a Museum Trust was formed and is responsible for overseeing the conversion of the building to a museum expected to open in 2005.

d) to develop an outdoor recreation site

March 2002 saw the opening of a **skate park** at the Church Farm site. In July 2004 a new ramp was installed there, providing the opportunity for more advanced skateboarding.

Insert photo skate ramp

2. HEALTHCHECK

In early 2003, Thame Town Council applied to the Countryside Agency for Market Town Initiative funding for a Healthcheck. This would offer an excellent opportunity to update the good work of the earlier Community Plan (2000) and to involve the whole community in influencing the future of the town.

At the same time, Princes Risborough Town Council was also applying for funding. As the two towns were near to each other and on county borders, the Countryside Agency awarded joint funding for what was planned to be a combined Market Towns Initiative. Thame Town Council would work in partnership with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council; Princes Risborough Town Council would work with Wycombe District Council and Bucks County Council.

The Launch

Thame Town Council invited members of the public to attend a launch meeting on 15 July 2003 – ‘Your Town Your Future’ – to explain the background to the project (Community Plan) and to invite residents to participate in and influence what they saw as the town’s future challenges and opportunities. More than 60 people came along and there was a good response from those wishing to be involved further, either as steering group members or as supporters with a special interest.

A Coordinator was recruited in October 2003 to assist both communities in identifying the towns’ economic, social and environmental health and to offer guidance on producing an Action Plan that would identify projects, resources and funding to achieve a vision. All of this would complement the initiatives

that had evolved from the Thame Community Plan.

The theme ‘Towns in Tandem’, was inspired by the Phoenix Trail that links the two towns – a Sustrans cycle trail – and a symbolic meeting highlighting the link between the two communities took place on the Phoenix Trail on 21st October 2003.

Public Consultation

Volunteer work-groups were recruited to gather facts and opinions, using a wide range of worksheets that looked at four key areas:

- economy
- environment
- social and community
- transport and access

To review and update the 2000 Community Plan, a questionnaire was compiled and circulated to find out public opinion on new and outstanding issues. A ‘Sticker Stop’ event was held in November 2003 at Thame Town Hall.

Members of the public were invited to comment on local issues by placing stickers on large colour-coded boards representing the four Healthcheck categories. Additional comments were added using ‘Post-it’ notes.

Information from a range of statutory, voluntary and private sector organisations provided interesting and thought-provoking displays. A local supermarket donated wine and cheese, and approximately 50 civic-minded people attended.

A second public consultation took place on 16 January 2004 at the Barns Centre, with three separate meetings throughout the day. These consist of a 15-minute presentation by the Coordinator followed by discussion groups on the four key areas.

During a meeting in March 2004, youth councillors helped compile a healthcheck questionnaire for distribution to Lord Williams's Lower and Upper Schools and other formal and informal groups of young people.

In the first six months of the Healthcheck, however, it became clear that the two towns had different problems and opportunities and the joint aspect of the project was limited to managing the funding and sharing the Coordinator.

For various reasons the focus of the working groups declined but it is fully recognised that if the promotion of Thame is to succeed, the initiative has to involve the combined efforts of local people.

The challenges identified through the recent Healthcheck process include the following:

The current **library** is nearly 50 years old and was built for a population less than a third the size of Thame today. The County Librarian informed the Town Council early in 2003 that although Thame had gone through a project appraisal process for a new library, headway would depend on a great many factors.

It was thought that setting up a Friends of Thame Library Group, to be run as a freestanding body and totally independent of the Town Council, could be helpful, and the Group held its inaugural meeting in June 2003. Later that year a survey commissioned by the town council to gauge public demand for a museum, sparked a spontaneous and significant demand for a new and bigger library.

In the late 1990's a joint church and local authority venture saw the completion of Thame Barns Centre, a

community facility with several multi-purpose rooms available for hire by charities and small performance groups. However, there is a growing need for an **open access community centre** in the town especially in view of the absence of any indoor facilities at Lea Park, the largest housing estate in the town.

The **public conveniences** in Market House (owned by SODC) are a cause for concern regarding their general maintenance and their cleanliness. All complaints are reported to the Public Amenities Department at SODC. A small working group has been formed to consider a site for an automated public convenience unit. The Public Amenities Department will be advising the Town Council.

The future of the historic **Market House** itself is in some doubt. Its owner, South Oxfordshire District Council, has identified it for potential disposal. The building is too small to accommodate its present tenants, the **Tourist Information Centre** and the **Citizens Advice Bureau**, and both organisations wish to relocate subject to availability of sites and funding.

Insert photo Market House

As a result of the planned relocation of Rycotewood College, a specialist FE college and adult learning facility, the need for a **purpose-built adult learning centre** has been highlighted.

A site has yet to be found following the planning application for a new 60-bed **residential home for the elderly** on Thame United's Windmill Road site being rejected by the District Council. A number of the residents at Meadowcroft share rooms without en suite facilities, contrary to government standards. The current site is too small

and other potential sites are being actively researched.

The future of the **Cattle Market** site continues to be a cause for speculation. The site is allocated in the Local Plan for mixed use. Both the Town Council and the Cattle Market Action Group are committed to the site being developed for community use offering, for example, arts and social facilities, a cinema and affordable housing. The Thame Farmers Auction Mart is keen to relocate away from its current site in the centre of the town, which has restricted space and parking facilities.

In late 2002 the Town Council received representations from local residents and businesses concerned about the increase in areas of the town centre being used as meeting places to drink alcohol.

The Community Safety Officer at South Oxfordshire District Council consulted with Thames Valley Police, and enquiries were made to see how other towns had tackled this problem. The Town Council quickly supported the introduction of a **Designated Drinking Area Order**. Wide consultation was carried out and the area covered by the proposed Order - 24 streets - was agreed in November 2003. The Order finally came into force in May 2004; it is the first of its kind in South Oxfordshire and it is too soon to know just how effective it will be in controlling anti-social behaviour.

In addition, the **Thame Community Safety Group** has been formed to tackle drugs, anti-social behaviour and vandalism. The group recognises that community safety and crime reduction is not the sole responsibility of the police, and includes representatives from the town and district councils, the Chamber of Commerce, Lord Williams's School, primary schools, the

youth service and South Oxfordshire Housing Association.

The production of this Action Plan and the opportunity for the public and interested groups to attend a public meeting will be the start of the second phase of the Market Town Healthcheck process.

Re-engaging with those people who have an interest in Thame's future is fundamental to achieving the aims in this new Action Plan and securing further funding from the Countryside Agency.

Thame Partnership

The setting up of a Thame Partnership will help ensure that the town's community, as a whole, participates in the town's well being and development. The partnership will be represented through the Chamber of Commerce, the Local Employers Network (LEN), voluntary organisations, community groups, youth interests and churches as well as all levels of local government.

Its aim will be to help create a balanced community in Thame where businesses are helped to thrive and a quality of life is maintained for its residents that takes full advantage of the location and preserves the best of its past.

The Partnership will seek to influence and support local government and other decision making bodies ensuring that creative and "joined up" solutions are found for planning and development issues, as well as social and educational initiatives.

The importance of partnership cannot be over-emphasised. Quite simply, it is critical to the success of this project.

The process of the Market Town Healthcheck has been invaluable in helping the town to complete an up-to-date audit of community aspirations.

The process has helped to identify the key issues for the residents of Thame. It has revealed some short to medium term projects that could be quickly implemented to improve the quality of life in the town and create a vision for the future.

The forming of a partnership will require the commitment of those involved to achieve the longer-term aspirations and will provide a forum for monitoring and reviewing the Thame in Trust Vision and Action Plan.

Thame Catchment Area Map (*insert here*)

The catchment area shown in this map includes areas of population using Thame for shopping, education and leisure activities.

KEY FINDINGS

3A ECONOMY

Shopping is a major aspect of Thame's primary character as a market town, and there are no competitive edge-of-town supermarkets or other retail outlets. A few national multiples, together with an abundance of shops selling speciality and luxury goods, distinguish the shopping experience in Thame.

The Waitrose and Co-op supermarkets play an important role and there are street markets every Tuesday, a farmers' market on the second Tuesday of the month, and livestock markets on Wednesdays and Fridays.

It is generally acknowledged that the physical attributes of the town are an important part of the shopping experience, and the Town Council, in partnership with SODC and OCC, has been able to pursue various environmental improvement schemes.

Training and education in the town is considered to be adequate. The local schools, and Lord Williams's in particular, are of a high standard and the GCSE and A level results compare well with the national average. There are adult education opportunities at the Thame Adult and Community Learning Centre at Lord Williams's Lower School, although space is severely restricted at this location. The availability of Internet learning within schools and libraries is considered to be good and Internet facilities have recently been provided for public use at the Town Hall.

Rycotewood College, a long established centre specialising in agricultural and vehicle engineering, fine craftsmanship and design, closed in July 2004. The 7-acre site is allocated primarily for housing in the Local Plan 2011, and the loss of this

college together with its adult learning facilities causes concern.

The Thame & District Twinning Association was formed in 1999 and successfully twinned with Montesson, France in 2001. A number of joint events have taken place and it is hoped that future initiatives will involve the respective Fire Brigade and Police Forces and the youth of both towns.

Thame is not, at present, a prime tourist destination, although the town is widely regarded as an attractive and historical market town. Likewise there are a number of tourist destinations within a short distance of the town. This provides significant opportunities to promote Thame as a destination in its own right, and a centre from which to visit many nearby attractions.

Key Findings:

- High business rates
- Difficulty for small businesses to attract staff at affordable rates
- Commercial associations between town and countryside need strengthening
- Lack of affordable housing
- Strategy needed to ensure local shops meet local needs
- Marketing strategy needed to encourage both visitors and businesses
- A review of the Tourist Information services needed
- Further promotion of Town Twinning
- Parking strategy needs revising
- Potential for the evening economy to be developed
- Little promotion of the street and farmers' markets
- Livestock market unable to develop on its present site
- Need for a purpose-built adult learning centre
- Larger Post Office required

- Further promotion of Town Twinning

3B ENVIRONMENT

This ancient market town owes its name to the river Thame, the word derived from the Celtic root, *tam*, meaning spreading, quiet, still. This may have been an allusion to the extensive and frequent flooding historically caused by the river flooding the water meadows that border its meandering course.

The Tuesday market was established and confirmed by Royal Charter in 1215. Held on land formerly under the plough, the market was originally sited in the Buttermarket and Cornmarket areas (the Buttermarket being on the cooler north side, the Cornmarket on the south). Subsequent building plots followed the shape of the ploughed furrow – a reverse S curve – to be seen today as curved burgage plots behind many buildings in the town centre.

Just five minutes walk from Thame's High Street lies what is arguably one of Thame's most valuable but also most under-used resources. The Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve, with its 27 acres of varied habitat, is in need of further promotion. Its 10th anniversary this summer was celebrated with an art exhibition and photographs dating back to the early 20th century. There were tours of the reserve and a host of learning activities for children. This was a tremendous milestone for the reserve but further consideration must be given to its long-term management. The Cuttle Brook volunteers carry out much of the practical work at the reserve.

Key Findings:

- No overall strategy for conserving or enhancing the historic ambience of the town
- Conservation Area not promoted
- War Memorial and gardens in need of restoration
- Pearce Memorial needs reinstalling
- Gateways to the town need enhancing
- Number of 'A' boards on pavements needs monitoring
- Elms Park in need of development
- Number and condition of public conveniences needs addressing
- Marketing strategy required for Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve
- Volunteer recruitment programme required
- Dog fouling widespread concern
- Additional dog bins required particularly in green spaces
- Sponsorship of roundabouts needs developing
- Improvement of footpath to Long Crendon
- Develop river walk by River Thame

3C SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY

It is clear from the Healthcheck that Thame is an active community with an impressive range of voluntary organisations. These groups are working to improve the quality of life in the town, from its physical and social environment to its health, education, culture, leisure and recreational facilities.

There is much that can be done to help these organisations further develop and promote themselves and to recruit new volunteers. Establishing a community centre in the town may help to co-ordinate and strengthen this aspect of the community.

Developing the Youth Council, formed early in 2003, will give young people the opportunity to get involved in town developments and projects. Youth-led initiatives will require support from the adult community, which will add an element of continuity to the work of the Youth Council.

Lord Williams's is recognised as a very good secondary school in the town. However, with the closure of Rycotewood, a specialist FE college and adult learning facility, the need for a purpose-built adult learning centre has been highlighted.

A site has yet to be identified for a new 60 bed residential home for the elderly. The current accommodation at Meadowcroft is unsuitable with residents having to share rooms and there are no en-suite facilities. The planned expansion of Thame Community Hospital also needs to be monitored. Within the town and surrounding area, the provision of national health services, particularly dental, is under pressure.

Crime levels are low in Thame but the fear of crime still needs to be addressed. The Community Safety Group meets regularly to assess the needs and opinions of residents and CCTV is currently being considered for the town centre.

As became clear in the Local Housing Needs Survey, the provision of affordable and suitably sized accommodation should be a prime consideration at the planning stage. Any further development in or around the town will need to address the infrastructure to support them.

The provision of a new library to meet the requirements of Thame remains a top priority. The development of the Cattle Market site would not seem to be imminent and therefore other options must be considered. The CAB and Tourist Information Centre are a further concern, as their premises are inadequate and under threat through the sale of the Market House.

Key Findings:

- Inadequate residential care accommodation for the elderly
- Not enough sheltered housing
- Not enough affordable and key-worker housing
- Insufficient consultation and engagement with young people
- Purpose-built adult learning centre needed
- Larger, better-equipped library needed (ideally purpose-built)
- Open-access community centre needed including cultural and entertainment facilities such as an auditorium, gallery and cinema
- Sport and recreational facilities require auditing with a view to improving provision
- Community Safety Group needs support and monitoring

3D TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

Situated 14 miles east of Oxford, 10 miles south west of Aylesbury and 47 miles from London, Thame is easily accessible from a wide area. The M40 motorway lies about 4 miles to the south of Thame and the A418, which runs from Oxford to Aylesbury, bypasses the town.

There is a need to reduce the use of cars in the town and promote sustainable transport such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport. The Thame Walking and Cycling Campaign, as well as local schools and the town and county councils actively promote that aim. Through the "Better Ways to School" Programme, funded by the County Council, several crossings and cycle facilities have already been provided to encourage walking and cycling.

Thame has four main public car parks. Parking in Upper High Street and the lower High Street is managed by Thame Town Council under an agency agreement with Oxfordshire County Council. Parking is time-limited but free of charge. The District Council manages the Southern Road and Cattle Market car parks with one hour free. The addition of the private car parks owned by the supermarkets means that Thame has adequate facilities for short stay users but long-stay parking is a major problem, particularly on market day.

Haddenham and Thame Parkway Station, two miles from Thame, is on the Birmingham to London line and the 280 bus links the station with Thame and Aylesbury. There are buses to Aylesbury and Oxford and less frequent services to a number of other destinations.

Most of the former Princes Risborough/Thame railway line to develop has been developed by Sustrans as a cycle/pedestrian route called The Phoenix Trail. This extremely popular seven-mile path forms part of the National Cycle Network. In 2002 the trail won an Arts and Business Award and was awarded a Certificate of Distinction from the European Commission as a European Greenway in 2003. Leisure cycling has increased as a result of the Phoenix Trail, causing a marked increase in cycle use within Thame and also between Thame and Princes Risborough.

Phase 1 of a Thame Parking Review, currently being carried out by Oxfordshire County Council, is looking at on street parking restrictions in various roads where the high level of parking needs to be addressed. It is hoped that a final scheme will be drawn up by the end of 2004.

Key Findings:

- Pedestrian priority in the town centre should be extended
- Not enough cycle racks
- No safe cycle path through the town
- Not enough long-term parking
- Inadequate disabled access to buildings
- Shop-mobility scheme should be explored
- Inadequate public transport to Health Centre & Community Hospital
- Poor signage to places outside the town centre
- Bad condition of roads and pavements in some areas
- Lack of bus service from Lea Park
- Lack of safe cycle path between Thame and Haddenham & Thame Parkway Station

- Footpath between Thame and Long Crendon needs improvement

4 THE VISION

The results of the Healthcheck have been evaluated through a SWOT analysis of the worksheets to identify the wants and needs of Thame and the surrounding countryside.

The aims of the vision are ambitious yet practical and realistic. They are designed to inspire everyone concerned with Thame's future – residents, workers, visitors and members of the wider community.

In order to identify what needs to be done and how long it will take, a number of practical steps have been developed from the vision and its aims. These form the basis for the draft Action Plan that follows.

The Vision Statement

To enhance the historic market town of Thame by protecting its past and promoting its future as a vibrant and flourishing centre serving the whole community.

Aims

- 1 Increase the vitality of the town**
- 2 Conserve and promote the town's heritage**
- 3 Improve communication in and around Thame**
- 4 Enhance the town's buildings and approaches**
- 5 Improve social, cultural and recreational facilities for all ages**
- 6 Protect and enhance the town's natural environment**
- 7 Provide suitable accommodation for the whole community**
- 8 Promote an efficient and sustainable transport system**

5. The Action Plan

The Action Plan highlights particular themes that will contribute to achieving the aims.

At this stage the Action Plan is in draft form. Following the formation of the Thame Town Partnership, members will be asked to join a working group to review and compile a comprehensive list of actions with timescales, funding requirements and priority levels.

The success of implementing the Action Plan will depend on a number of factors. Initially, the formation of the Partnership and the appointment of a steering group and chairman will be of prime importance in keeping the momentum going until a project implementer is appointed.

Timing is also crucial to meet the funding timescales of the Countryside Agency and other contributing organisations. Producing a draft Action Plan at this stage enables the process to continue whilst the actions are refined and agreed.

Aim 1: Increase the vitality of the town**DRAFT**

Theme	Actions	Leader/ Partners	Timescales	Funding / Resources	Priority
1a Develop a strategic approach to tackling the town's future challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a Partnership with representatives from community, business and local authority groups, and produce a Partnership database 	TTC, TTC, LEN, Community Groups, SODC	6 months	Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_urbanpolicy/documents/page/odpm_urpol_608378.csp	H
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a marketing strategy to promote the town to visitors and businesses and local people 	TTC, TCC, TIC Businesses	1 year	SEEDA Market Towns Initiative	H
1b Promote Thame as a business and shopping location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a business directory and database 	SODC, TCC, LEN		SEEDA Market Towns Initiative	H
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify gaps in local provision of goods and services and actively recruit to address 	SODC, TCC		SEEDA Market Towns Initiative	M
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate a Thame delivery service 	TCC, TTC		SEEDA Market Towns Initiative	M
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the street and farmer's market and organise other markets i.e. continental market 	TTC, Market Traders		DEFRA	H
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate shop mobility 	TTC, SODC, OCC		South Oxon DC/Oxfordshire CC/Private sponsorship	L
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise special shopping experiences throughout the year 	TCC, Businesses, TIC		None at present	M
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market the restaurants, cafes and pubs 	TCC, Business, TTC, TIC,		Some EU funding – would have to discuss further as would need to be part of a much larger project	M
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a shopping leaflet, detailing shops and offering links to website and tourism initiatives 	TCC, Businesses, TTC, TIC, SODC,	1 year	ESF Direct http://www.govse.gov.uk/gose/euroFunding/?a=42496 .	M
1c Develop the evening economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange evening events 	TCC, TTC		None at present	H
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage initiatives offering evening entertainment in the town centre 	TTC, TIC, Community Groups	Ongoing	None at present	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote living over the shop 	SODC, TCC		Inland Revenue Capital Allowances Scheme	H
1d Encourage visitors to Thame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve Tourist Information facilities and service 			Rural Enterprise Scheme DEFRA 24 May 2006	M
1e Tackle antisocial	Develop a strategy with the police and other agencies including more	SODC, TVP, TTC, TCC			H

Aim 2: Conserve and promote the town's heritage					DRAFT
Theme	Actions	Leader/Partners	Timescales	Funding/ Resources	Priority
2a Protect Thame's historical background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify historic buildings 	THS, TTC, TIC, Schools, Residents		Local Heritage Initiative http://www.hlf.org.uk/English/HowToApply/OurGrantGivingProgrammes/LocalHeritageInitiative/	H
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and protect buildings at risk 	CAAC, THS, TTC		Ditto	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Blue Plaque Scheme for historical places and buildings through a public awareness campaign 	THS, TTC, Local Press, CAAC		Ditto	L
	•				
2b Promote Thame's heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support the development of a local museum 	Museum Trust, TTC, SODC		Local Heritage Initiative http://www.hlf.org.uk/English/HowToApply/OurGrantGivingProgrammes/LocalHeritageInitiative/	H
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create Historic Town Trail 	THS, TIC, TTC, SODC, OCC		Local Heritage Initiative http://www.hlf.org.uk/English/HowToApply/OurGrantGivingProgrammes/LocalHeritageInitiative/	M

Aim 3: Improve communication in and around Thame					DRAFT
Theme	Actions	Leader/ Partners	Timescales	Funding/ Resources	Priority
3a Improve communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and develop the One Stop Shop in the Town Hall 	TTC, SODC, OCC		British Retail Consortium Foundation http://www.brc.org.uk/defaultnew.asp	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and promote a website portal for Thame 	TTC, SODC, OCC		Vodafone Foundation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote public access to the internet and access points in the Town 	TTC, OCC, TIC		None at present	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage development of an internet café 			Private sponsorship/chain investor	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and improve public notice boards 	TTC, SODC		Chilterns Sustainable Development Fund (see email attachments)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with ORCC to establish better links with the surrounding villages 			Chilterns Sustainable Development Fund (see email attachments)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate production and distribution of a town newsletter 	TTC, TCC		Vodafone Foundation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve coverage of Thame news by Thame Gazette and other local newspapers 			Vodafone Foundation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate production and distribution of a "welcome pack" for residents/people new to the area 			Chilterns Sustainable Development Fund (see email attachments)	

Aim 4: Enhance the town's buildings and approaches					DRAFT
Theme	Actions	Leader/Partners	Timescales	Funding/Resources	Priority
4a Improve visual appearance of the town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with retailers and encourage shop front improvements 	TCC, SODC, TTC			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise an annual theme competition for retailers 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a building design guide 	TTC, SODC			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult residents to produce a town improvement plan 	TTC, Local Press			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-ordinate and improve street furniture including seats and planters 	TTC, SODC			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and monitor standards for the upkeep of the town 	SODC, TTC, OCC, TCC			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce retailers guide to good practice 	TCC, LEN, Businesses			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor empty properties 	SODC, TCC			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enter national competitions e.g. Best Kept Town 	TCC, LEN, Business, TTC			
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4b Improve gateways to the town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess and produce improvement plans for gateway to the town 	TTC, LEN, SODC			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instigate sponsoring of roundabouts 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a bulb/flower/shrub planting scheme 	Thame in Bloom, TTC, SODC, OCC			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review signage and Thame's branding 	TTC, TCC, LEN, TIC			

Aim 5: Improve social, educational, cultural and recreational facilities for all ages
DRAFT

Theme	Actions	Leader/Partners	Timescales	Funding/ Resources	Priority
5a Improve cultural and social facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to research potential locations and push for a library suitable for Thame 	TTC, OCC, Friends of the Library			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage development of a purpose-built adult learning centre 	LWS, OCC, ACL			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage development of social and community facilities on the Cattle Market 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage development of arts and cultural activities centre in the town 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate provision of a town-centre cinema 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the use of the Town Hall as a community venue 	TTC			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the need to relocate the Cattle Market and redevelop the North Street site 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the need to relocate the Fire Station 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate future of the old Post Office building and planned relocation of the sorting office 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a directory of community groups 	TTC, SODC			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise a Community Charities Fair 				
5b Improve recreational facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an audit of existing facilities 	TTC, Local residents, LWS Community Sport Co-ordinator, Community Groups			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a plan and timescales to address gaps in provision 	TTC, Local residents, LWS Community Sport Co-ordinator, Community Groups			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consult with young people and residents on further sports facilities at Elms Park				
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Aim 6: Protect and enhance the town's natural environment					DRAFT
Theme	Actions	Leader/Partners	Timescales	Funding / Resources	Priority
6a To protect and enhance the physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify areas most at risk 	TTC, SODC, residents		LIFE III http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/life/home.htm	H
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renew efforts to set up groups of volunteers to work at Cuttle Brook and other identified areas 	TTC, Cuttle Brook Committee		Countrywide Stewardship Scheme http://www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/schemes/css/default.htm	H
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approach businesses and schools to identify and be involved with projects 			Countrywide Stewardship Scheme http://www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/schemes/css/default.htm	H
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate development of river walk by River Thame 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a tree trust 				M
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise an Environmental stand at the Thame Show promoting local sites 				M
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively promote conservation area 				L

Aim 7: Provide suitable accommodation for the whole community					DRAFT
Theme	Actions	Leader/ Partners	Timescales	Funding / Resources	Priority
7a To provide suitable accommodation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the housing needs survey completed by SODC 	TTC, SODC			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work closely with developers and SODC to provide homes suitable for local people particularly more sheltered care homes for the elderly 	TTC, SODC			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage provision of a new residential care home for the elderly 				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore initiatives to provide affordable homes and homes for key workers 	SODC, TTC			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aim to bring empty privately owned houses back into use 	SODC			

Aim 8: Promote an efficient and sustainable transport system					DRAFT
Theme	Actions	Leader/Partners	Timescales	Funding / Resources	Priority
8a Improve transport provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a transport needs survey for Thame and surrounding villages 	OCC, TTC			H
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote awareness of existing services 	OCC, TT, Operators			M
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage co-ordination of bus and rail services 	TTC, OCC, Operators			M
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate bus route from Oxford via Thame to London 	OCC, TTC			M
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate cycle racks on buses 	TTC, OCC			L
8b Minimise traffic problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower traffic speeds 	OCC, TTC, SODC			M
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access for the disabled 				M
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the need and co-ordinate parking provision 	OCC, TTC, SODC			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage car sharing work schemes 	LEN, TCC, SODC, OCC			L
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve traffic signs to remove unnecessary through traffic 	OCC, TTC, SODC			H
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify gaps in provision 	TTC, OCC			M
8c Encourage walking and cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce and market a leaflet promoting cycle and walkways 	TTC, TIC			M
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly monitor need for cycle tracks and appropriate locations 	TTC			M
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess and improve crossing points in the town 	OCC, TTC			L
	Continue to develop the safe cycle/pedestrian network	TTC, Sustrans, OCC, SODC			M