

ROCHFORD PARISH COUNCIL

2004 VISION STATEMENT



Parish Sign

VISION STATEMENT 2004

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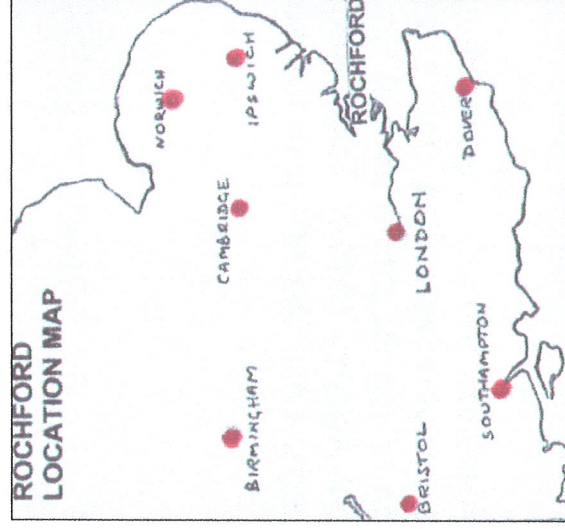
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THE FUTURE OF ROCHFORD TOWN

Introduction to Thames Gateway

Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership has identified a set of objectives which will transform both the image and the reality of life for those who live, work and invest within the Region.

The Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership had designated Rochford as an Arts and Crafts Centre, together with Southend as the Cultural and Tourism hub for South Essex. However, it is important that in future Rochford is recognised as a town with particular focus on a variety of small specialist shops, businesses and offices. This would benefit the local economy so that it would not be so reliant on Government employment through the Rochford District Council and the NHS. This said, the Parish values the contribution that these organisations make to the well being of Rochford we would be disappointed to see this create an imbalance in employment provision.



Map showing location of Rochford

FUTURE OF ROCHFORD MARKET SQUARE

Rochford Parish Council also considers that the Georgian building, Connaught House in the Square, has the potential to be used more imaginatively. The Spar building and the library also have the potential for continued regeneration of the Rochford Market Square. It is suggested that funding from East of England Development Agency Market Town Regeneration Fund could be used to develop and enhance these buildings, once the effect of the supermarket development has been assessed.



Convenience Store



Connaught House



Rochford Market Day

REGENERATION OF ROCHE CLOSE

The Parish Council are supportive of the in-town Supermarket, flatted accommodation and other new facilities on the hospital site, but recognise that this site should be linked for the long term benefit of Rochford Town with other major developments taking place in the centre of Rochford. It is anticipated that the 150 or so additional homes on the site will bring increased trade to the Town Centre. The management of additional traffic and parking should be addressed with the introduction of the new parking regulations in late 2004.



Rochford – Roche Close



Rochford – Roche Close

ROCHEWAY – A HEALTHY LIVING CENTRE

The Castle Point and Rochford Adult Community College now occupies the former Roche School Building. The school was opened in 1937 and well before the 1944 Education Act became the foundation of our education system. It had to close as a School because of its location under the flight path of the London Southend Airport, once known as the Rochford Aerodrome when it was a RAF Airfield. It was subsequently used as a youth facility before becoming a college. It is a very successful Adult College with a high reputation both in the County and among those who have studied there.

The Parish Council believes, however, that the campus could provide even more facilities than there are at present. The Parish Council would like to see a healthy living centre for Rochford and youth and sports facilities added to it.

We believe that the campus is large enough to include these facilities.



Castle Point and Rochford Adult Community College

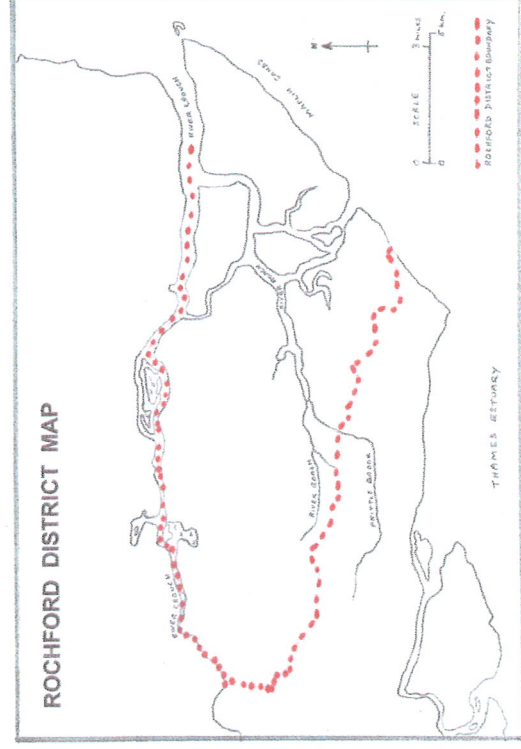
ROCHEWAY – A HEALTHY LIVING CENTRE (continued)

We recognise that it is owned by the County Council and operated by the Education Services Department of the County Council and some form of partnership agreement will be necessary but we feel that the citizens of Rochford would be the beneficiaries. We accept that the teaching of the knowledge and skills both in the fields of basic skills learning and leisure pursuits is important and that the College does this well but given the concerns over obesity, for example, the need to embrace more healthy lifestyles is equally important. The value of sport in this context should not be underestimated, nor should the social value of sport and games in the context of engaging young people.

The campus is on the fringe of the town, near to open country and we are firmly of the opinion that the expansion in the utilisation of the campus we are proposing can be of true benefit to the people of Rochford, both young and old. We see it as a means of building a more inclusive and sustainable community in which the education, employment skills, leisure health and social cohesion of the citizens will be enhanced.

DEVELOPMENT OF ROCHFORD'S RIVERS

In mediaeval times, Rochford was on the pilgrim's route from Canterbury, over the Thames to Prittlewell Priory and onwards north through Rochford to finish at Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk. Its ancient importance is shown by being the centre of the Rochford Hundred in the Domesday Book and by the Whispering Court held in Kings Hill in East Street. As a market town it was the centre of a productive farming community, with access to river transport and coastal marshes giving opportunities for trade with London, Kent and across the North Sea.



Map of Rochford's Rivers

Rochford Hall, famous for its association with Anne Boleyn, is evidence of Rochford's importance as the focal point for South East Essex, prior to the arrival of rail to Southend (the "south end" of Prittlewell) and the establishment of the artillery ranges at Shoebury in the 1800s.

DEVELOPMENT OF ROCHFORD'S RIVERS (continued)

Much of the District of Rochford lies at or below sea level and depends on the protection of sea walls for the character and productivity of the land as we know it to-day. Besides defending the land and villages from flooding, the sea walls also provide safe access to the rivers, allowing opportunities for communities such as Fambridge, Wallasea, Paglesham and Stambridge to develop water-based industry and sporting activities over the years.

The Purdeys Industrial Estate has an important yacht building company and, on the north bank of the Roach, Stambridge Mills has only recently ceased milling local and imported wheat, some of which came by ship, for the baking industry.

For the future, we look to support these activities through the Crouch and Roach Management Plan and promoting increased use of the river mainly down stream of Rochford for leisure use, always mindful of not spoiling its peaceful character.

A collection of postcards shows that "Rochford on Sea" or Rochford Beach near Stambridge Mill circa 1920 was a favourite venue for family outings.

Potential partners in this Vision would be the Crouch Harbour Authority, Rochford District Council, freeholders and developers, together with Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership.



View towards Stambridge Mill

HISTORY, HERITAGE AND LIVING MUSEUMS

The Parish Council is aware of the rich historical heritage of this corner of South East Essex situated as it is at the mouth of the Thames. The whole of the South East corner of Essex has a wealth of past history, and as a Parish Council we believe that this should be embodied in a central museum to include contributions from all over the Rochford District. The old brickworks site in Cherry Orchard Way (B1013) and Connaught House, Rochford Square could be developed as living museums of local history and the Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership might be the vehicle for progressing this.

It should be noted that the brickworks site is opposite the Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park, which is being developed by Rochford District Council in the Parish of Rochford for the long term benefit of future generations as a conservation and leisure area.



Connaught House



Cherry Orchard Brick Works

LONDON SOUTHEND AIRPORT

Southend Airport has been an operational airport since May 1915 when it was a defence base for the Royal Flying Corps. During the 1940s Spitfires were based at Southend and in the 1950s, after the RAF withdrew, Freddie Laker built a substantial factory on the Airport to build his Carvair aircraft.

In the 1960's, 70's and 80's Southend Airport was a busy commercial airport with a wide range of passenger and cargo flights operating 24 hours a day.

There is also a long history of operating holiday flights to Europe and the Channel Isles. For example, in 1967, 700,000 passengers passed through the Airport.

As an employer, London Southend Airport is one of the largest in the area with much of its workforce of 1200 being highly skilled, with ancillary businesses.



View of London Southend Airport

LONDON SOUTHEND AIRPORT (continued)

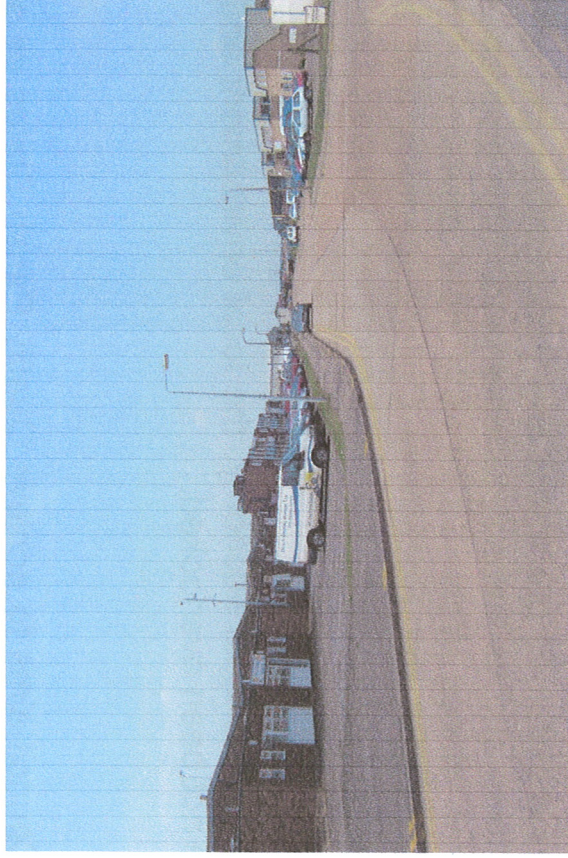
With Environmental controls in place to limit noise, London Southend Airport Co. Ltd. is committed to meeting the aviation needs of the whole community and is seeking to modernise the Airport to comply with the latest Safety Regulations from the CAA before passenger flights can be reintroduced.

Rochford Parish Council welcomes the resolution of the Southend Airport runway issue. We value the Airport and its adjacent industrial estate as a provider of general and specialised employment, and its potential for tourism. We believe that it should continue to operate within a locally agreed and determined framework.

We note the recent submission to Rochford District Council of final details for the development of the station and terminal which, with certain safeguards, is supported.

RECYCLING

Rochford Parish Council is aware of the need for Waste Management Practices which meet the Government's targets for recycling. It is therefore suggested the setting an amenity site dealing with all recyclables is set up on Purdeys Estate . This would benefit both the Parish and the wider community of Rochford District. Sustainability targets could be met and the movement of vehicles reduced.



View of Part of Purdeys Industrial Estate

SUMMARY AND PARISH OBJECTIVES

In summary, the Parish Council's vision is of a vibrant township, in which the present trends for securing employment are maintained but where new opportunities can present themselves through the development of the town and its immediate hinterland. This embraces the regeneration of the town centre, the market place, West Street, the new developments in Roche Close, the enlargement of the facilities at the Rocheway College campus and a proposal for recycling provision. The vision extends to cover the river complex, London Southend Airport and other proposals to encourage tourism.

The inter-related aspects of the local economy, the local environment and the social needs of the people of Rochford have not been overlooked.

To these ends:-

- 1) Rochford Parish Council aims to achieve Quality Parish Status as soon as feasible and will pursue these aims within a set framework. Members consider this would benefit the Community of Rochford, being in line with recent Government Statements on future local authority structures.
- 2) Councillors appreciate challenges will occur through new Regional Planning Guidance but would expect any future proposals to reflect the value of Rochford Parish Council's positive contributions.
- 3) The Parish Council is committed to work positively with all of the partners necessary to secure this vision for Rochford and at the same time engage, consult and inform the parishioners, the organisations and other stakeholders who live and work in the Parish.



After the 2004 Parish Ramble



Doggetts Wildlife Area



Rochford Lawn Cemetery



War Memorial, Weir Pond Road

Acknowledgements:

Maps of Location of Rochford and Rochford's Rivers drawn by Mrs. J. Marshall
Plans of Roche Close Development reproduced by kind permission of Housecherry Limited.