

Andover has long been a trading and travelling crossroads of England, linking London with the South West and the North with the South Coast ports.

ANDOVER TODAY

From the annual Weyhill Fair, which started way back in the 13th century (for the county-wide trade in sheep and hops) to the hugely popular Continental and Farmers' Markets of today, this ancient town has always been a centre of exchange – particularly of food and drink. Indeed, since it was first settled as a prehistoric route across the River Anton on the way to Stonehenge, Andover has been an important resting or connecting point on countless people's journeys.

The Andover Vision is very much about moving us forward from a town that sometimes sees itself as only functional rather than enjoyable. Perhaps the best way to describe it is moving from a town which is OK, to a town in which we want to live, one that develops potential, raises aspirations and ambition and states confidently that only the best is good enough for the people of Andover.

We already have a lot going for us – good town centre access, beautiful natural surroundings, low crime rates and relative prosperity compared to some parts of Hampshire. However, our town also has wards that experience significant levels of disadvantage and deprivation. The Andover Vision has these communities at its heart. Tackling the host of inequalities in health, educational attainment, employment opportunities and other life chances is vitally important if all the people of Andover are to benefit from a better town.

Importantly, the Andover Vision cannot deliver a better town without you. This will only be possible if **we all** play a part in some way. The opportunities to help are endless and many of us already make a tremendous contribution. Perhaps you can help teach a child to dance, or help someone to learn to read. Perhaps you can help raise aspirations amongst our young people or provide activities that bridge the gaps between the generations in our town. Could you, in some way, help increase levels of engagement within and between our neighbourhoods? These are not easy tasks but add them all together and they make an enormous difference to the quality of life for so many people.

'Passionate Participation' is not only a guiding principle of the Andover Vision it is also the means to an end.

ANDOVER



Town centre from the Church spire

ACTUALLY...

Andover has never been short of entrepreneurs. During the Industrial Revolution the Tasker family started an iron foundry at Abbots Ann (renamed Waterloo Ironworks) that became famous for manufacturing steam traction engines, cast iron bridges and swivel-headed ploughs.

INTERESTINGLY...

the Guildhall was first built on the present site in 1461 after the great fire of 1435 when over 2500 men, women and children fled for safety to the River Anton. The present building is the third version and cost £9000 to build in 1825. Originally the ground floor was open for the corn market and upstairs was the Council Chamber.



Charlton lake at sunset