



safe & well

OXFORD COMMUNITIES

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

Monday, December 1st, 2025

10:00 a.m.

Oxford County Administration Building – Room 129

1. Call the Meeting to Order
2. Review of Agenda for meeting of December 1st, 2025
3. Review of Minutes of October 6th, 2025 meeting ([attached](#))
4. Business Arising from the Minutes
 - Use of Space Policy
 - Canadian Index of Well-Being Survey
 - Updated Community Safety and Well-Being Plan ([attached](#))
5. Action Coalition Updates (Round Table)
 - Oxford Housing Action Collaborative – on hold
 - Oxford Mental Health & Addictions Network - Peter Heywood (no update)
 - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Coalition - Ayesha Sajid ([attached](#))
 - Domestic Abuse Resource Team – Ashley Brown ([attached](#))
6. Next Steps & New Business:
 - Police updates at Steering Committee meetings – consideration of a standing agenda item
 - Oxford County Grant Program

7. Upcoming Meeting Dates – Oxford County Administration Building – Room 129:

- January 26th, 2026

8. Adjournment



1:00 p.m.

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4. Business Arising from the Minutes

- DEI Charter follow-up – Norwich
 - Given that the new Plan is being developed, it was agreed to remove this as a standing item on the agenda and address any concerns through the new Plan.
 - P. Heywood suggested that DEI be part of the fabric of the overall Plan rather than a separate Coalition or action item.
 - The DEI Action Coalition will connect with Norwich staff to provide support in achieving outcomes as desired.
- 2025 Summit – Mt. Elgin: November 7, 2025
 - Formal invitations will be sent to allow for RSVPs.
 - Detailed plans and an agenda for the meeting will be developed the week of October 13.
 - The Summit will be used to present a draft of the Plan to stakeholders and receive additional feedback. The Committee noted that it would be beneficial to highlight the milestones and successes of the previous plan at the Summit, building upon the work that has been accomplished.
- Use of Space Policy Update
 - Processes are being finalized.
- Canadian Index of Well-Being Survey
 - Results have been shared with StrategyCorp as a key piece of data for the new Plan.
 - A summary of the findings will be shared with the Steering Committee and various stakeholders. Committee members noted that numerous groups and organizations could benefit from this information. P. Heywood advised that SWPH might be able to play a role in analyzing some of the results.
- Oxford County Grant Program
 - Staff are reviewing applications and will make recommendations for funding.
- Updated Community Safety and Well-Being Plan
 - Engagement is underway, including focus groups with people with lived experience.
 - A survey was sent to all school Principals in Oxford County.
 - A draft of the Plan will be circulated to all area municipal Councillors ahead of the Summit to provide feedback in advance of finalizing the Plan.

5. Action Coalition Updates (Round Table)

- Oxford Housing Action Collaborative (on hold)
 - Rebecca Smith was in attendance to provide an update.
 - An action item included in the Oxford County Homelessness Response

Strategy is to establish an Action Collaborative as part of SWO. The Collaborative has not been initiated yet as the plan is to eventually transition the group working on the HART Hub into this Collaborative, as many of the partners would sit on both.

- A new Homeless Support Centre is currently a top priority.
 - There is currently a call for applications for \$500,000 for community partners to help move people out of homelessness.
 - Finkle Street units are being transitioned into supportive housing units.
 - Progress is being made on the Rent Supplement Program.
- Oxford Mental Health and Addictions Action Coalition (Peter Heywood)

Oxford Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy Refresh Workshop

- On September 10, the OMHAAC hosted a pivotal workshop to advance the refresh of the Oxford County Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy. This session marked a significant step in ensuring our local approach to substance use and mental health remains relevant, evidence-based, and responsive to emerging community needs.

Workshop Overview

- The workshop brought together a diverse group of community partners, service providers, and individuals with lived and living experience. Facilitated by Brooke and Ashley, participants were encouraged to engage in open dialogue and explore key issues in depth.

Purpose and Goals

- The refresh aims to:
 - Integrate a mental health promotion lens for a more holistic, person-centred approach.
 - Revalidate the eight core themes of the strategy.
 - Review over 80 existing recommendations, identifying completed actions, outdated items, and new priorities.
 - Incorporate innovative practices and address emerging trends in substance use and mental health.
 - Update local data and trends using resources like the Community Health Profile reports.

Key Focus Areas Discussed

- Participants engaged with questions designed to shape the refreshed strategy, including:
 - Overall Direction: What's changed in Oxford County? Where are the gaps in services, interventions, and policy? How can the strategy better align with other local initiatives (e.g., housing, poverty, youth wellness)?
 - Action and Implementation: Which actions have been successful, and what new steps are needed?
 - Prevention and Early Intervention: What strategies are most needed,

and which populations require more support?

- Low-Barrier Supports and Access: How can we reduce barriers such as transportation, intake requirements, and waitlists? What would a truly “low barrier” system look like?
- Treatment and Wraparound Services: How can treatment better integrate substance use and mental health supports, including peer support and trauma-informed care?
- Community Safety and Partnerships: How can partnerships be strengthened to promote safety and reduce harms? What role should first responders and community agencies play?
- Integration of Mental Health Promotion: How can resilience-building and trauma-informed education be embedded into prevention initiatives, especially for youth and families?

Next Steps

- All feedback from the workshop will be compiled into a stakeholder engagement summary report, which will directly inform the updated strategy. The refreshed Oxford County Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy will provide clear direction for the years ahead, supporting both current residents and future generations. It is expected that the refreshed strategy will be published in the second half of 2026.

Planet Youth

- Planet Youth will be moving forward with Year 1 data collection. Year 2 and 3 funding is not in place.
 - First data points are planned to be collected before the end of the year.
 - Findings of the report will be shared with SWO and other stakeholders.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Coalition (Ayesha Sajid)
 - The Coalition members have approved the DEI postcard. These postcards will be used at the Summit to promote DEI and the DEI Action Coalitions' work.
 - In previous DEI Action Coalition meetings, concerns were raised by the community regarding recent interactions with local police services. After consulting with WPS and OPP and considering the interests of Coalition members, the Coalition plans to invite police services to the meeting in October.
 - The Coalition will be changing from a monthly posting of Article of the Month to bi-monthly.
 - Domestic Abuse Resource Team (Ashley Brown)
 - The Coordinator roles at DART are being transitioned and will be in place by January 2026.
 - The DART table has been restructuring to bring more focus, direction, and stronger coordination to the meetings. B-SAFER training was offered to

community partners in June, including police, women's shelters, CAS, and Welkin. We also hosted the Blanket Exercise for DART members to build knowledge and understanding Indigenous history in Canada to better understand Indigenous experiences of gender-based violence.

- We are developing our MARAM Table and community protocol. We are excited to be at the stage of running mock cases, which helps us build capacity, improve efficiency, and refine the process.
- In September, DART organized the Take Back the Night March in Tillsonburg. The event was well attended and supported by the community.
- We continue to offer training and public workshops for the general public in Oxford County, including sessions at the Tillsonburg Library and WERC.
- Looking ahead, DART is training our members on the rise of strangulation in our community, with a particular focus on youth. We plan to launch a Spring 2026 public education campaign on strangulation prevention.

6. Next Steps & New Business

- iHEAL Program
 - The Committee reviewed the information and noted its connection the Gender Based Violence priority risk area.

7. Upcoming Meeting Dates – Oxford County Administration Building – Room 129

- Remaining 2025 meetings:
 - October 27th
 - Summit – November 7th
 - December 1st

8. Adjournment

Resolution No. 3 Moved by: P. Heywood
 Seconded by: B. Martin

RESOLVED that the Safe and Well Oxford Steering Committee meeting adjourned at 1:49 p.m.

DISPOSITON: Motion Carried

A large, thick blue circular graphic that is partially visible on the right side of the page, framing the central text.

Safe & Well Oxford Communities | Draft Framework

Oxford County

November 2025



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Safe & Well | Proposed Guiding Principles

Note: The original ten principles remain the same as they still resonate and reflect the intention of Safe & Well Oxford Communities. We have added one additional principle based on feedback.

1. Builds on the remarkable and diverse range of assets, programs, and strengths found across Oxford's municipalities.
2. Leverages and complements all existing system-wide strategies and action plans that are in place to address risks to community safety and well-being.
3. Promotes broad and wide-ranging multi-sector and multi-disciplinary collaboration and coordination of strategies, services, information, and resource sharing for collective impact.
4. Engages and mobilizes individuals, families, service providers, government, associations, and organizations, to come together and share, learn and strategize to optimize community safety and well-being.
5. Reflects voices and experiences of the people we serve, such as youth, families, seniors, and vulnerable populations and provides solutions that are relevant and sensitive to the lived experiences of a diverse range of individuals and groups.
6. Prioritizes social development and risk prevention and mitigation strategies, with a focus on causes. By proactively implementing evidence-based situational measures, policies, or programs to reduce priority risks to community safety and well-being we can improve outcomes and reduce crime, victimization, and harm.
7. Is culturally responsive, guided by the diverse voices, experiences, backgrounds, and needs of the many people we serve.
8. Is inclusive and holistic, recognizing the critical importance of the social determinants of health and inequities in building a safe and well community. The main determinants include race/racism, gender, ability, income, and social status, education and literacy, employment and job security, childhood experiences, housing, food security, social supports, and coping skills, access to health services, social safety net, and early childhood development.
9. Incorporates a place-based approach, allowing us to allocate resources and attention to specific groups or geographic areas within Oxford County where there is a greater need. For example, focusing on a particular neighbourhood or age group, such as youth or seniors.
10. Is owned by each community member and acknowledges that each person has a role in bringing the plan to life and making our communities safe and healthier places to live, play and work.

11. Strengthens outcomes measurement through shared accountability, transparent reporting, clearly defined roles, and ongoing communication about progress toward community safety and well-being goals.

Summary of Revised Priority Risk Areas and Goals

Mental Health and Well-Being: Improve mental health and well-being across all stages of life by strengthening early intervention, system coordination, and community capacity to promote resilience and recovery.

Housing for All: To ensure alignment and avoid duplication, support the implementation of Oxford County's Housing for All: Housing and Homelessness Plan 2024–2033, Homelessness Response Strategy, and Master Housing Strategy, rather than creating separate housing goals or initiatives.

People and Belonging: Build on ongoing efforts to ensure Oxford County is a community where everyone, regardless of age, geography, background, or identity, can live with dignity, belonging, and equitable opportunity.

Substance Use and Addictions: Reduce substance-related harms and improve pathways to prevention, treatment, and recovery through coordinated community responses and expanded access to supports.

Gender-Based Violence: Prevent gender-based violence and strengthen safety and recovery.

Affordability and Economic Stability: Improve community resilience by mitigating systemic economic barriers and supporting residents living on limited or fixed incomes in meeting basic needs.

Priority Risk | Mental Health and Well-Being

Goal: Improve mental health and well-being across all stages of life by strengthening early intervention, system coordination, and community capacity to promote resilience and recovery.

Initiative(s):

- Facilitate early identification and referral by strengthening coordination among community organizations (e.g., primary care, childcare, schools) to connect residents, particularly children, youth, and seniors, to mental health support before crisis.
- Promote mental wellness and prevention through community-based education and mental health literacy initiatives that reduce stigma, **build resilience at both the community and family level**, and encourage help-seeking among all age groups.
- Support the HART Hub/Wellness Centre to build a more coordinated, system-wide approach that reduces service duplication, strengthens integration across partners, **expands harm-reduction supports** and enhances the overall impact of mental health and addiction supports.
- Support a trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and **consistent** approach by coordinating shared training and knowledge exchange among relevant County staff (e.g., Human Services Department), educators, service providers, **police**, and first responders, with attention to the unique experiences of Indigenous, newcomer, and 2SLGBTQIA+ residents.
- **Improve equitable access to mental health supports for residents in rural and smaller municipalities by addressing geographic and service availability barriers through collaborative community and system planning.**

Intended Outcomes

- Proportion of residents accessing community-based mental health supports before crisis increases, while emergency mental health visits decrease annually.
- More clients report a positive experience with mental health supports annually.
- Increase community awareness and comfort discussing mental health.
- Access to mental health and well-being supports becomes more equitable across Oxford County, with expanded reach and utilization in rural and smaller municipalities.

Priority Risk | Housing for All

Goal: To ensure alignment and avoid duplication, support the implementation of Oxford County's Housing for All: Housing and Homelessness Plan 2024–2033, Homelessness Response Strategy, and Master Housing Strategy, rather than creating separate housing goals or initiatives.

Intended Outcomes

- Reduce homelessness through prevention.
- Improve housing stability through **enhanced** collaboration.
- Maintain and improve the existing housing portfolio.
- Increase affordable and rental options.

Priority Risk | People and Belonging

Goal: Build on ongoing efforts to ensure Oxford County is a community where everyone, regardless of age, geography, background, or identity, can live with dignity, belonging, and equitable opportunity.

Initiatives:

- Advance accessibility and age-friendly communities by collaborating with municipalities, service providers, and community groups to remove barriers to participation and improve access to programs, spaces, and services for older adults (65+), youth, families, and people with disabilities.
- Create more opportunities for residents across all ages and backgrounds to connect, reduce loneliness, and build a stronger sense of belonging through community-building events, neighbourhood activities, and relationship-centered programs.
- Strengthen inclusion and belonging through education and dialogue by coordinating awareness campaigns and community programs that build empathy, challenge discrimination (e.g., geographic, cultural, language, age) and promote respect for diversity across all communities.
- Champion and operationalize inclusivity by coordinating shared training and leadership development initiatives that build a diverse, culturally competent, and equitable workforce across sectors.
- Expand youth access to prosocial activities and cultural programming across different parts of the County.

Intended Outcomes

- Residents across all ages, backgrounds, and identities report a stronger sense of belonging, safety, and inclusion in their communities.
- Inclusion and understanding are promoted through community education and outreach activities.
- County, area municipality, and community partner organizations demonstrate progress in advancing inclusivity through training and leadership practices that strengthen cultural competence and workforce diversity.
- Barriers that limit community participation for priority populations (e.g., older adults, youth, residents in rural communities) are identified and reduced.
- Increased engagement with rural and smaller communities, as well as Indigenous, newcomer, 2SLGBTQIA+, youth, and older adult organizations, strengthens trust, representation, and co-design in community initiatives.

Priority Risk | Substance Use and Addictions

Goal: Reduce substance-related harms and improve pathways to prevention, treatment, and recovery through coordinated community responses and expanded access to supports.

Initiatives:

- **Deepen** coordination among County programs and community organizations (e.g., HART Hub/Wellness Centre, social service providers, health partners) to increase the alignment of prevention, harm reduction, and treatment efforts and support more equitable access and timely supports for youth, older adults, rural residents, and marginalized populations.
- Promote community-based prevention and education initiatives that reduce stigma, build resilience, and encourage healthy coping strategies, with a focus on early prevention among children and youth.

Intended Outcomes

- Residents have improved access to prevention, harm reduction, and treatment services within their communities.
- Deaths, hospitalizations, and emergency response interventions from overdoses decrease annually.
- Education and awareness initiatives provide residents and service providers with knowledge and tools to understand and reduce stigma related to substance use and addiction.

Priority Risk | Gender-Based Violence

Goal: Prevent gender-based violence and strengthen safety and recovery.

Initiative(s):

- Promote early intervention and education initiatives that increase awareness of healthy relationships, consent, and gender equity among youth, workplaces, and community organizations.
- Improve access to safe, trauma-informed, and culturally appropriate services by supporting outreach, shelter capacity, and survivor-centered programming for rural, Indigenous, newcomer, and 2SLGBTQIA+ residents.

Intended Outcomes

- Education and awareness initiatives equip residents with knowledge and tools to recognize, prevent, and respond to gender-based violence.
- Survivors have equitable access to safe, trauma-informed, and culturally appropriate services across all parts of Oxford County.

Priority Risk | Affordability and Economic Stability

Goal: Improve community resilience by mitigating systemic economic barriers and supporting residents living on limited or fixed incomes in meeting basic needs.

Initiative(s):

- Enhance food security through **more strategic** collaboration among municipalities, food networks, and community organizations to improve access to affordable and nutritious food options across the County.
- **Help residents build skills, reduce barriers to finding work, and connect to steady, good-paying jobs through continued collaboration between local schools, training programs, job agencies, and community partners.**
- **Make it easier for people with low or fixed incomes, such as seniors and people with disabilities, to get the financial help, services, and social supports they need by enhancing outreach, sharing clear information, and coordinating local supports.**

Intended Outcomes

- Improved access to affordable, nutritious food through coordinated community food programs and expanded distribution in all municipalities.
- Increased employment stability as more residents gain access to training and upskilling opportunities.



Action Coalition Update

Meeting Date:	Dec 1 st ,2025
Action Coalition:	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Coalition
Representative:	Ayesha Sajid
Update:	Coalition members shared their feedback on the revised draft of the Community Safety & Well-Being Plan. Ayesha has discussed the feedback in detail with Sarah, who has forwarded it to the Strategy Corp. Members have approved the DEI Postcard draft and were happy with its final look. Tami Murray has stepped down from the Coalition, and Katie Schuett, Vice President of Oxford Pride, will replace Tami.



safe & well

OXFORD COMMUNITIES

Action Coalition Update

Meeting Date:	December 1 st ,2025
Action Coalition:	DART Oxford
Representative:	Ashley Brown
Update:	October Training – Strangulation Awareness DART hosted a strangulation-awareness training facilitated by St. Joseph’s Hospital. The session focused on recognizing signs and symptoms of strangulation, understanding potential complications, and outlining recommendations for service providers. Thirty-two participants attended the session. This training was developed in response to emerging trends in Oxford County. As a next step, the table has initiated a Strangulation Working Group to support a broader county-wide campaign planned for Spring 2026. November – Mock Case Review DART facilitated a mock case review with both the Leadership and Operations Tables to strengthen shared understanding of the High-Risk Table process and the associated privacy filters. The review generated meaningful dialogue and helped partners better visualize the High-Risk Table’s purpose, limitations, challenges, and practices. Oxford Femicide Prevention Table Also in November, the Oxford Femicide Prevention Table launched its working group. Approximately six members participated, including representatives from the OPP, Probation and Parole, VAW services, and the Community Health Centre. The group is collaboratively developing a shared protocol and operating agreement. December 6th Vigils – National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women DART, in partnership with the Oxford County Community Health Centre, will be hosting two December 6th Vigils: Friday, December 6th at the Woodstock Courthouse, and Monday, December 8th at Theatre Woodstock. We welcome community members to join us in honouring victims of intimate partner violence and reflecting on our collective commitment to prevention and safety.