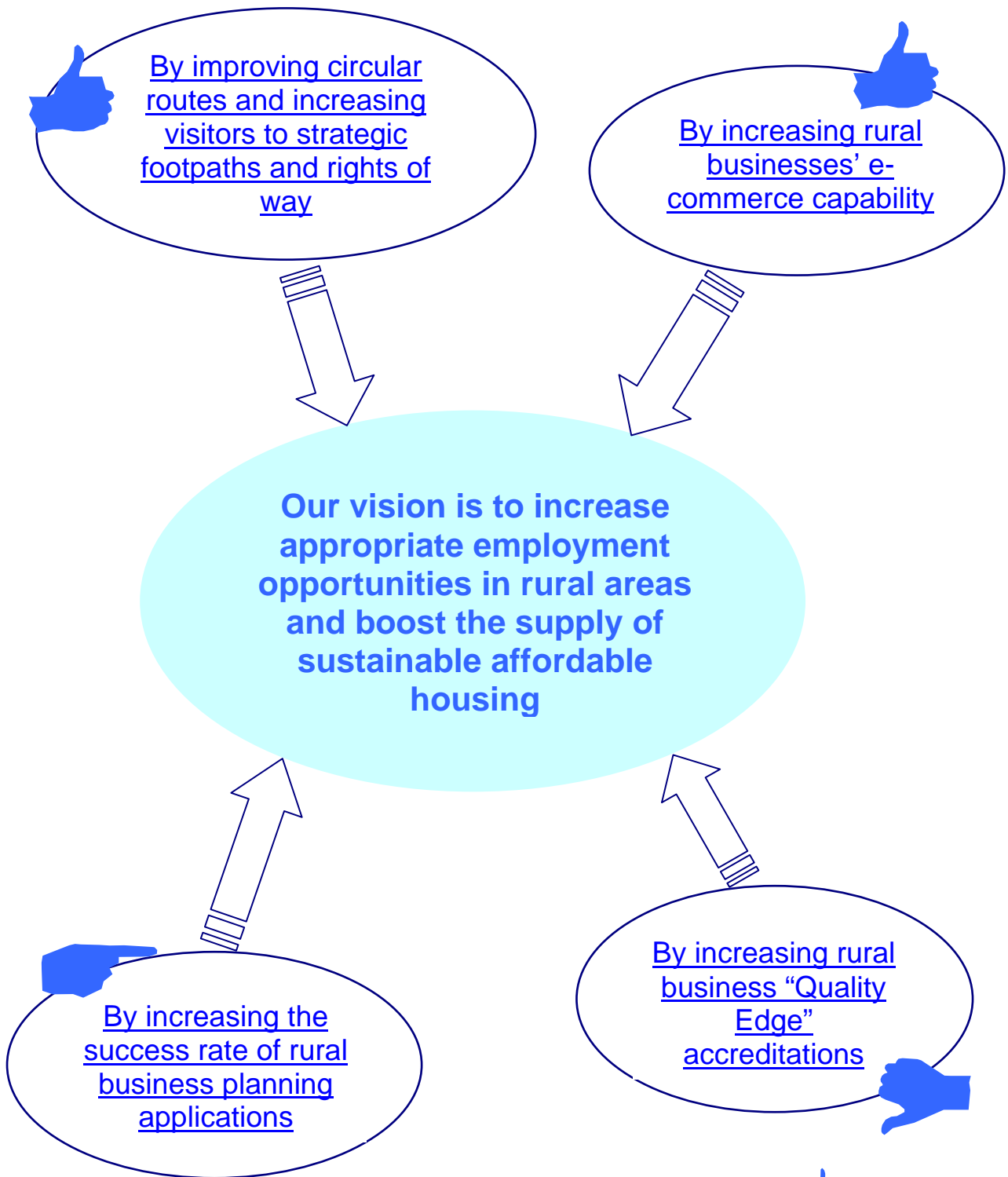





Regenerating Rural Communities



-  On or exceeding target
-  Progress unclear
-  Not yet on target



Regenerating Rural Communities

Target 1: Improving circular routes and increasing visitors to strategic footpaths and rights of way



What did we say we would achieve?

We said we would:

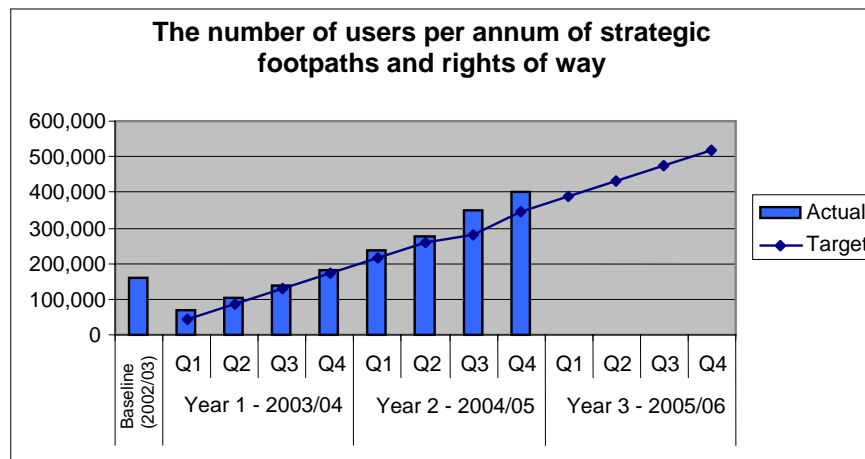
- Improve up to 50 circular routes, amounting to 25% of the strategic rights of way network
- Co-ordinate marketing of these routes and develop a website
- Increase the number of visitors to strategic footpaths and rights of way over three years

How does this target help achieve our vision?

Improved rights of way bring people into the countryside potentially providing more customers for local businesses.

What did we achieve?

By April 2005, we had increased the number of visitors to strategic footpaths and rights of way to 402,145 - an increase of 241,709 since 2002/03, which exceeds the target and means we are on track to achieving over 500,000 visitors by March 2006.



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Target 2: Increasing the success rate of rural planning applications



What did we say we would achieve?

We said we would increase the success rate of rural business planning applications by 30%



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How does this target help achieve our vision?

Helping businesses set up and expand in rural areas plays an important part in regenerating deprived rural communities.

What did we achieve?

Unfortunately, after setting this target, we found it very difficult to establish a baseline and accurately monitor the success rate of all rural business planning applications.

Consequently, we have concentrated on monitoring the rateable value added to rating lists due to loss of agricultural exemption. This shows the level of diversification from farming into other activities which is taking place in our rural areas. We have managed to exceed our hoped for target of a 15% increase year on year, compared with 31 March 2003, and have actually achieved a 39.25% increase as at 31 March 2005.

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Target 3: Increasing the percentage of rural businesses at level 3 e-commerce capability



What did we say we would achieve?

We said we would increase the percentage of rural businesses with significant e-commerce capability.

Significant e-commerce capability means having achieved a minimum threshold, which consists of elements such as e-mail and internet access, plus capacity, measured against the "UK online for business ladder", to undertake e-messaging, e-marketing, e-ordering, e-procurement, e-payment and e-order processing.

How does this target help achieve our vision?

The ability of businesses to thrive in rural areas is vital to the economy of East Sussex, as well as to keeping rural communities alive. However, access by public and private transport can often be relatively slow. The development of fast and reliable internet connections and e-commerce capability is therefore very important, reducing reliance on physical transport and enabling speedy communications and trading via the web.

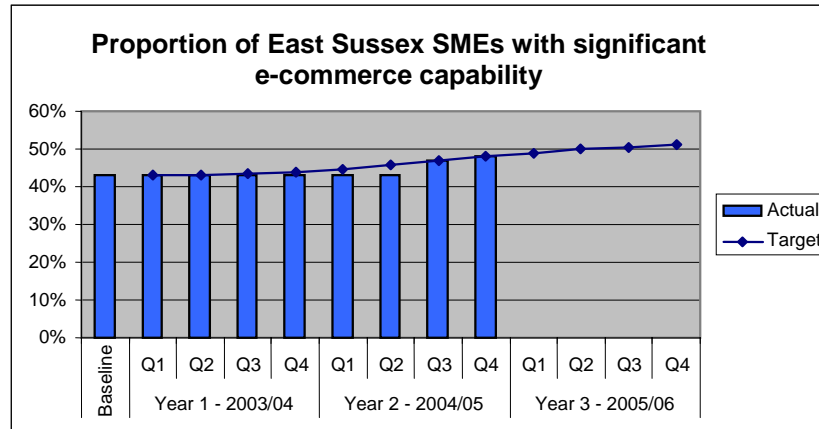
What did we achieve?

By April 2005, we had increased the proportion of small and medium-sized enterprises with significant e-commerce capability to 48%.



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Target 4: Increasing the uptake of “Quality Edge” accreditation by rural businesses



What did we say we would achieve?

We said we would increase the uptake of “Quality Edge” accreditation by rural businesses by training 120 delegates by March 2006.

How does this target help achieve our vision?

The ability of businesses to thrive in rural areas is vital to the economy of East Sussex, as well as to keeping rural communities alive. Knowing that customers can trust the quality of local businesses will help develop local markets and ensure their survival.

What did we achieve?

By July 2005, we had 62 delegates from small and medium sized enterprises in East Sussex trained under the Quality Edge Programme.

We expect to meet our original target by March 2006 and continue to promote the scheme through leaflets distributed in libraries, tourist information centres, local attractions, and through organisations such as local businesses, local colleges, Sussex Enterprise, local authorities and Action in Rural Sussex.

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