

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in **CIVIC SUITE 0.1A, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2017** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**Contact
(01480)**

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 5 - 14)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings held on 20th July 2017, 26th July 2017 and 31st August 2017.

**B Buddle
388169**

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary and other interests in relation to any Agenda item.

3. HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY (Pages 15 - 34)

To consider a report on the Council's provision for homelessness in line with the Homelessness Reduction Act.

**J Taylor
8119**

(Executive Councillor: Cllr R Fuller)

4. BUSINESS RATES - DISCRETIONARY REVALUATION RELIEF SCHEME 2017/18 (Pages 35 - 44)

To consider a report by the Head of Customer Services reviewing business rates relief.

**J Taylor
8119**

(Executive Councillor: Cllr J A Gray)

5. STRATEGIC REVIEW OF PARKING - PARKING VISION (Pages 45 - 122)

To consider a report outlining the vision of a strategic review of the Council's managed car parks.

**N Sloper
8635**

(Executive Councillor: Cllr J White)

6. GODMANCHESTER NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION OUTCOME AND PROGRESSION TO REFERENDUM (Pages 123 - 242)

To receive a report from the Planning Services Manager.

**C Kerr
8430**

(Executive Councillor: Cllr R Fuller)

7. SMALL LAND SALES POLICY (Pages 243 - 262)

To consider a report proposing a new policy outlining procedures on the disposal of small land parcels.

**C Mason
8157**

(Executive Councillor: Cllr J A Gray)

8. INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 1 (Pages 263 - 304)

To receive performance management information on the Council's Corporate Plan for 2016/18 and updates on current projects.

**A Dobbyne/ A Forth
8100/ 8605**

(Executive Councillors: Cllr J A Gray and Cllr S Cawley)

Dated this 4 day of October 2017



Head of Paid Service

Notes

1. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- (1) *Members are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests and unless you have obtained dispensation, cannot discuss or vote on the matter at the meeting and must also leave the room whilst the matter is being debated or voted on.*
- (2) *A Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest if it -*
 - (a) *relates to you, or*
 - (b) *is an interest of -*
 - (i) *your spouse or civil partner; or*
 - (ii) *a person with whom you are living as husband and wife; or*
 - (iii) *a person with whom you are living as if you were civil partners*

and you are aware that the other person has the interest.
- (3) *Disclosable pecuniary interests includes -*
 - (a) *any employment or profession carried out for profit or gain;*
 - (b) *any financial benefit received by the Member in respect of expenses incurred carrying out his or her duties as a Member (except from the Council);*
 - (c) *any current contracts with the Council;*
 - (d) *any beneficial interest in land/property within the Council's area;*
 - (e) *any licence for a month or longer to occupy land in the Council's area;*
 - (f) *any tenancy where the Council is landlord and the Member (or person in (2)(b) above) has a beneficial interest; or*
 - (g) *a beneficial interest (above the specified level) in the shares of any body which has a place of business or land in the Council's area.*

Non-Statutory Disclosable Interests

- (4) *If a Member has a non-statutory disclosable interest then you are required to declare that interest, but may remain to discuss and vote providing you do not breach the overall Nolan principles.*

(5) A Member has a non-statutory disclosable interest where -

- (a) a decision in relation to the business being considered might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing of you or a member of your family or a person with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the council tax payers, rate payers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the authority's administrative area, or
- (b) it relates to or is likely to affect a disclosable pecuniary interest, but in respect of a member of your family (other than specified in (2)(b) above) or a person with whom you have a close association, or
- (c) it relates to or is likely to affect any body –
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature; or
 - (ii) directed to charitable purposes; or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a Member or in a position of control or management.

and that interest is not a disclosable pecuniary interest.

2. Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings

The District Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its decision making and permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking and micro-blogging websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) to communicate with people about what is happening at meetings. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council and available via the following link [filming, photography and recording at council meetings.pdf](#) or on request from the Democratic Services Team. The Council understands that some members of the public attending its meetings may not wish to be filmed. The Chairman of the meeting will facilitate this preference by ensuring that any such request not to be recorded is respected.

Please contact Mrs Beccy Buddle, Democratic Services Team, Tel No. 01480 388169/e-mail Beccy.Buddle@huntingdonshire.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee/Panel.

Specific enquiries with regard to items on the Agenda should be directed towards the Contact Officer.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting as observers except during consideration of confidential or exempt items of business.

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website – www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk (under Councils and Democracy).

If you would like a translation of Agenda/Minutes/Reports or would like a large text version or an audio version please contact the Elections & Democratic Services Manager and we will try to accommodate your needs.

Emergency Procedure

In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 20 July 2017.

PRESENT: Councillor R B Howe – Chairman.
Councillors J A Gray, D Brown, G J Bull, S Cawley, R Harrison, R Fuller and J E White.

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs A Dickinson.

25. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

26. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Prior to the consideration of the item of business regarding Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner's Fire Governance Consultation, Minute No. 32 refers, Councillor R Fuller declared an interest as a Cambridgeshire County Councillor, having already voted on the matter in that capacity, and abstained from voting at the Cabinet.

27. PROCUREMENT OF A JOINT VENTURE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S CCTV SERVICE

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Community to which was appended the CCTV Development Overview and Draft procedure timeline (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book). Executive Councillors were presented with a commercialisation update to support the viability of procuring a joint venture to develop the Council's CCTV service. The Cabinet was reassured that this would not be a privatisation of existing services but a joint venture opportunity and that the completed business plan would return to Cabinet for final approval.

In order that the Council can proactively pursue its intention to be financially self-sufficient by 2020, it would be essential that the Council established the commercial vehicles necessary to provide opportunities to increase income and, where possible, reduce costs. The establishment of this joint venture company would enable the Council to protect its existing investment in CCTV services (people and equipment) whilst also creating opportunities to enhance the commercial potential of a business that is equipped to service a wider range of customers across the public, private and third sectors.

RESOLVED

- a) that the CCTV Development Overview presented a fair reflection of the broad potential benefits of establishing a partnership with an external joint venture partner;
- b) that the model described in the CCTV Development Overview be approved, as part of an EU compliant procurement process (Restricted Procedure with Competitive Dialogue), as the framework for negotiations with potential joint venture partners;
- c) that the Head of Community be authorised to undertake the procurement process, and to present information to the Executive Councillor for Commercialisation and Shared Services, and the HDC Ventures Ltd Board on the preferred partner; and
- d) that the Head of Community, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Shared Services and Commercialisation, and the HDC Ventures Ltd Board be authorised to determine the preferred partner, and award the Contract.

28. PROCUREMENT OF A JOINT VENTURE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S DOCUMENT CENTRE

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Customer Service to which was appended a Business Case (copies of which are appended to the Minute Book). Members were presented with a business case building the proposed basis for the procurement of a suitably qualified and experienced commercial partner to form a joint venture company to provide printing and related services. Executive Councillors were reassured that research showed that this was an area with growth and opportunities available for development.

In order that the Council can proactively pursue its intention to be financially self-sufficient by 2020, it would be essential that the Council established the commercial vehicles necessary to provide opportunities to increase income and, where possible, reduce costs. The establishment of this joint venture company would enable the Council to protect its existing investment in print services (people and equipment) whilst also creating opportunities to enhance the commercial potential of a business that is equipped to service a wider range of customers across the public, private and third sectors.

RESOLVED

- a) that the business case presented a fair reflection of the broad potential benefits of establishing a partnership with an external commercial print supplier;
- b) that the information presented in the business case provided a robust basis upon which to initiate a procurement process to identify potential commercial partners;

- c) that soft market testing continued in order to further develop the model set out in the business case, particularly in terms of evaluating market potential and projecting future sources and levels of income; and
- d) that the model described in the business case be approved, as part of an EU compliant procurement process (Restricted Procedure with Competitive Dialogue), as the framework for negotiations with potential commercial partners.

29. REVIEW OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

A report by the Internal Audit and Risk Manager to which was appended the Risk Management Strategy v14 (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book) was considered for approval. The annual review of the Risk Management Strategy was discussed with the amended option appraisal process explained in detail to Executive Councillors. Members were advised that due to the introduction of differing risk appetite levels it was no longer appropriate that risk treatment option forms are completed only for 'high' or 'very high' residual risks. It was noted that all risks that exceeded their risk appetite needed to be reviewed and a decision taken as to whether or not the level of residual risk was acceptable or not. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the annual review of the Risk Management Strategy be approved.

30. WASTE AND RECYCLING ROUND RECONFIGURATION

By means of a report by the Head of Operations appended to which were The Waste and Recycling Reconfiguration Project Milestones, the Communications Plan, The Customer Services Contact Report and the Missed Bins by Month (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book), the Cabinet was updated on the progress of the waste and recycling round reconfiguration. Executive Councillors had been informed that lessons had been learnt from the project and that a more robust middle management approach had been adopted as a result. The Cabinet was advised that the expected savings for 2017/18 were anticipated to be less than projected due to the need for transitional resources to support the significant change. Executive Councillors were interested to further explore further saving opportunities highlighted in the report relating to a seasonal approach to green bin collections and suggested that any further changes needed to meet expectations and level of service but maintain best value for the Council.

RESOLVED

- a) that the implementation report on the Waste and Recycling Round Reconfiguration and lessons learnt be received and noted; and

- b) that the Cabinet and relevant Officers be requested to undertake further investigation into potential savings opportunities relating to the scheduling of the green bin waste collections.

31. PEER REVIEW ACTION PLAN

Consideration was given to a report by the Corporate Team Manager to which was appended the Peer Challenge Action Plan Progress Report (copies of which are appended to the Minute Book). The Cabinet noted the twelve key areas which had been recommended for improvement following the Local Government Association Peer Challenge Team who undertook a review in 2016 and the progress made in each. Members were reassured that all actions were on course to be delivered.

RESOLVED

that the progress made in achieving the actions in the Peer Review Action Plan be received and noted.

32. CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S FIRE GOVERNANCE CONSULTATION

The Chairman announced that he proposed to admit the following urgent item in accordance with Section 100B (3) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 given there was a need an urgent decision being required.

Executive Councillors were invited to consider a report by the Head of Community to which was appended the Consultation on Fire Governance, Background Information provided by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority's Response (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book). The Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner had been consulting on the proposal to change the governance of the fire and rescue service in Cambridgeshire. This follows Government legislation to promote greater joint working between emergency service organisations.

The Chairman of the Fire Authority County Councillor K Reynolds was invited to address the Cabinet on the matter after which the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner District Councillor J Ablewhite was further invited to address Cabinet. Having heard arguments from both parties, a number of questions were put forward to both representatives.

The Cabinet considered that it was appropriate to respond to the Consultation on behalf of the Council as recommended by Overview and Scrutiny, whereupon it was

RESOLVED

that Option 3, the governance option, of the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) Fire Governance Consultation be supported: The Fire Authority is replaced by the Police and

Crime Commissioner who becomes the new Fire Authority as a corporation sole. This is referred to as a "PCC style FRA". The PCC would become the "Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner".

Chairman

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the SPECIAL meeting of the CABINET held in the Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 26 July 2017.

PRESENT: Councillor G J Bull – Chairman.

Councillors R B Howe, J A Gray, D Brown, S Cawley, Mrs A Dickinson, R Fuller and J E White.

33. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

34. APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS

RESOLVED

that the executive responsibilities for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2017/18 be allocated as follows:

Commercial and Shared Services	Councillor D Brown
Transformation and Customers	Councillor S Cawley
Community Resilience and Regulatory	Councillor Mrs A Dickinson
Deputy Executive Leader and Housing and Planning	Councillor R Fuller
Strategic Resources	Councillor J A Gray
Devolution and Growth	Councillor R B Howe
Operations	Councillor J E White

35. VARIATIONS TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF GROUPS

RESOLVED

- a) that the Executive Leader of the Council be appointed to serve as an ex-officio Member of the Employment Committee;
- b) that Executive Councillors be appointed to serve as ex-officio Members of the following:

Deputy Executive Leader	Development Management Committee
Executive Councillor for	Licensing and Protection

Community Resilience and Regulatory	Panel/Licensing Committee.
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- c) that Councillor R Fuller be appointed to replace Councillor R Harrison on the Development Plan Policy Advisory Group;
- d) that Councillor R Fuller be appointed to replace Councillor G J Bull on the Member Development Working Group; and
- e) that the Deputy Executive Leader with responsibility for Housing and Planning be appointed to serve as an ex-officio Member as Chairman of the Huntingdonshire District Council Growth and Infrastructure Thematic Group.

Chairman

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 31 August 2017.

PRESENT: Councillor G J Bull – Chairman.
Councillors D Brown, Mrs A Dickinson, J A Gray and J E White.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors R B Howe, S Cawley and R Fuller.

36. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary or other interests received at the meeting.

37. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

that the press and public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

38. COMMERCIAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Resources, an addendum and appendices (copies of which are appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) concerning a proposed investment in line with the Council's Commercial Investment Strategy. Permission for this item had been granted by the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Customers).

The Head of Resources advised Members of the financial returns and expected yield on the proposed investment. The Cabinet were also advised of the buoyancy of the property market in the area, the current tenant's good financial due diligence and that local letting agents had given assurance of ease of letting the units to future tenants. Members were reassured that the proposed purchase was in line with the CIS Strategy and provided a good mixture of assets to the Council, providing a profitable return which can be further invested in services to benefit residents of Huntingdonshire. Having considered the proposal and terms of investment and fully debated the matter, the Cabinet;

RESOLVED

that the Council's investments as detailed in the report now submitted be approved in line with the Commercial Investment Strategy.

Chairman

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Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Homelessness Strategy

Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 12th October 2017

Executive Portfolio: Cllr Ryan Fuller - Deputy Leader and Executive Councillor for Housing and Planning

Report by: Head of Customer Services

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

The Huntingdonshire Homelessness Strategy is a key document setting out how the Council intends to address homelessness issues within the district. It is a sub-strategy to the wider Housing Strategy that was refreshed earlier this year and it is a statutory requirement that the Council has a homelessness strategy.

The Strategy has four main purposes:

- To address the causes of homelessness in the area;
- To introduce initiatives to prevent homelessness wherever possible;
- To ensure that the Council provides sufficient temporary accommodation for those households that are or may become homeless; and
- To ensure that appropriate support is available for people who have previously experienced homelessness in order to prevent it happening again.

The Strategy gives a national and local context to homelessness, explaining the main trends, in particular the growth of homelessness primarily as a result of evictions from private rented sector tenancies.

It also explains the new legislative framework that will be introduced in 2018 when the Homelessness Reduction Act comes into force together with the Trailblazer initiatives being piloted with other agencies. The Trailblazer initiatives aim to re-focus prevention measures in an attempt to stem the flow of homelessness by earlier interventions through a range of agencies working with families.

The Homelessness Strategy, together with the Housing Strategy, explains the options that the Council will follow to deliver an adequate supply of housing providing a range of affordable tenures, to help meet local needs – another key component in the prevention of homelessness by helping households into new homes.

Recommendation:

That Cabinet adopts the Homelessness Strategy 2017

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Homelessness Strategy is a major policy item for the Council. The Strategy sets out the key role that the Council plays in preventing homelessness, assisting households where homelessness cannot be prevented and how homelessness can be resolved, primarily by ensuring that there are sufficient options within the private or social rented sectors to provide new homes. The Strategy includes a plan of the actions that the Council will deliver on to help achieve these aims.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY

- 2.1 There is a statutory requirement for all housing authorities to publish a Homelessness Strategy every 5 years. The refresh of this Strategy was due in 2016 but was held over pending the implementation of the new homelessness statutory framework, contained within the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The new legislation is due to come into force in April 2018 and much of the action plan focuses on what is required to prepare for the new Act.

3. COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 3.1 The Panel were informed that many of the actions proposed are expected to be delivered within the next 12 months and that innovative approaches through the Trailblazer project are likely to identify additional solutions. Actions will be reviewed regularly and the Strategy is a live document which is likely to be refreshed sooner than the 5 year statutory timeframe.

Following a Member's question asking if the Council has considered building homes itself as South Cambridgeshire District Council have done on exemption sites, the Panel were reminded that they are a stock-owning council and that it was generally accepted that the Council does not want to become a social landlord again. However, there are various options being explored through which the Council could help to provide more social housing. A range of options for housing, including modular housing units, are being explored through the Housing Strategy.

Members were concerned about the wider impact of homelessness on residents, with those losing homes often finding it difficult to access jobs, education and other services. The Executive Councillor for Housing and Planning stated that the Council is committed to tackling housing issues to reduce such issues for residents.

A Member raised concerns about the effect of Government changes and further housing development on private landlords as their investments can be affected by housing development where this affects house prices and impacts on their capital appreciation. When asked about how the need to build more housing should be balanced with the impact on private landlords, the Housing Needs and Resources Manager explained that both nationally and locally welfare reforms were making it increasingly difficult for people in private rented homes to move into alternative private rented accommodation when their tenancies end. The increased cost of private renting means that more people are looking for support from local authorities.

It was explained that the current policy for Housing Benefit payments is for payment to claimants but that regulations do allow direct payment to landlords in some cases, such as where there is a record of arrears. Universal Credit

regulations are stricter on when direct payment to landlords can be made so more claimants will receive monthly payments and have to manage their budgets and rent payments as the numbers moving onto Universal Credit increase. While the Council's Rent Deposit and Rent in Advance schemes have been very successful in the past, this solution is increasingly less viable as housing benefit payments are less than market rent for private rentals.

The Panel welcomed the draft Strategy and made a recommendation to Cabinet that they adopt the Homelessness Strategy.

4. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

4.1 Homelessness has a devastating effect on households and delivering on the actions contained within the Strategy will help to prevent homelessness and mitigate against its causes. The potential risks are that prevention measures are not successful and that the Council delivers insufficient numbers of affordable housing solutions for households requiring new homes. The Housing Strategy focuses on the delivery of affordable housing, amongst other things, and ensuring that the objectives of that Strategy together with the new Homelessness Strategy are met, will help contribute to the health and wellbeing of our residents, especially those faced with the threat of homelessness.

4.2 As highlighted within the Strategy, the welfare reform programme has been attributed to having an impact on rates of homelessness, particularly where households have been evicted from the private rented sector. With further welfare reforms due, in particular the roll out of Universal Credit, there is a risk that this will further impact homelessness. The full impact of future welfare reforms will need to be assessed as they emerge so that appropriate prevention measures can be investigated and implemented.

5. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Should the Homelessness Strategy be adopted by Cabinet, it will be effective immediately. A great deal of work has already begun as part of the Homelessness Trailblazer project to pilot new ways of working preventatively, and this work will continue to ensure that the Council is prepared for the implementation of the new legislative framework in 2018. The Action Plan will remain a 'live' document with further areas of work evolving from the pilot initiatives contained within the Trailblazer programme, ensuring that the Council focuses on delivering the most successful prevention activities and initiatives.

5.2 Providing appropriate levels of affordable housing, another key component to the prevention of homelessness, will be monitored through the actions contained within the Housing Strategy Action Plan.

6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND / OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

6.1 The Homelessness Strategy links to specific actions within the Corporate Plan:

- Prevent homelessness where possible by helping households to remain in their current home or find alternative housing (within the Enabling Communities Strategic priority); and
- Ensuring an adequate supply of housing to meet objectively assessed needs (within the Delivering Sustainable Growth Strategic Priority)

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Preparation of the Homelessness Strategy involves staffing resource that is met within existing budgets. However the Action Plan commits the Council to exploring various activities that will have resource implications, should the Council decide to pursue any of these options. These resource implications will be explored as part of the delivery against the Action Plan.

7.2 The cost of providing temporary accommodation for households that become homeless is a significant one. As homelessness has risen the Council has incurred increasing costs as more households have been accommodated in temporary housing. However the most significant resource implications are likely to be associated with the delivery of adequate numbers of affordable housing solutions through the Council's Housing Strategy Action Plan. The cost of providing successful prevention measures, together with these affordable housing solutions will need to be considered as proposals are brought forward.

8. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

8.1 The Council is required to publish a Homelessness Strategy every 5 years to review homelessness in the area and produce a strategy to say how it will prevent homelessness and fulfil its wider duties under the homelessness legislation.

9. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Homelessness Review & Strategy – September 2017

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

CONTACT OFFICER

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Huntingdonshire District Council

HOMELESSNESS REVIEW & STRATEGY

September 2017



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Introduction

The Council is required to review homelessness within the district and update its Homelessness Strategy every five years. This strategy comes at a time of increasing rates of homelessness both locally and nationally as well as the introduction of a new legislative homelessness framework due in April 2018.

In preparation for the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act the Council, together with our Cambridgeshire local authority partners, have successfully bid for funding to trial new ways of working across a range of organisations, to try and provide earlier assistance for households that may face the risk of homelessness. This strategy highlights our work as part of this Trailblazer project and underlines the Council's commitment to try innovative ways of working to find the best solutions to help prevent homelessness wherever possible.

The legal framework that we must consider when preparing this strategy is contained within the Homelessness Act 2002. The Act requires all Councils to formulate a Homelessness Strategy and in preparing this they must carry out a review of homelessness in their area. The strategy must then:

- address the causes of homelessness in the area;
- introduce initiatives to prevent homelessness wherever possible;
- provide sufficient temporary accommodation for those households that are or may become homeless; and
- ensure that appropriate support is available for people who have previously experienced homelessness in order to prevent it happening again.

The Council recognises the devastating effect that homelessness can have on households and that good quality housing providing a stable and secure home environment contributes to the health and wellbeing of our residents. The Council has included within its strategic priorities, contained within the Corporate Plan 2017-18, objectives and key actions that support the work that will flow from this strategy to help address homelessness:

Corporate Plan 2017-18:

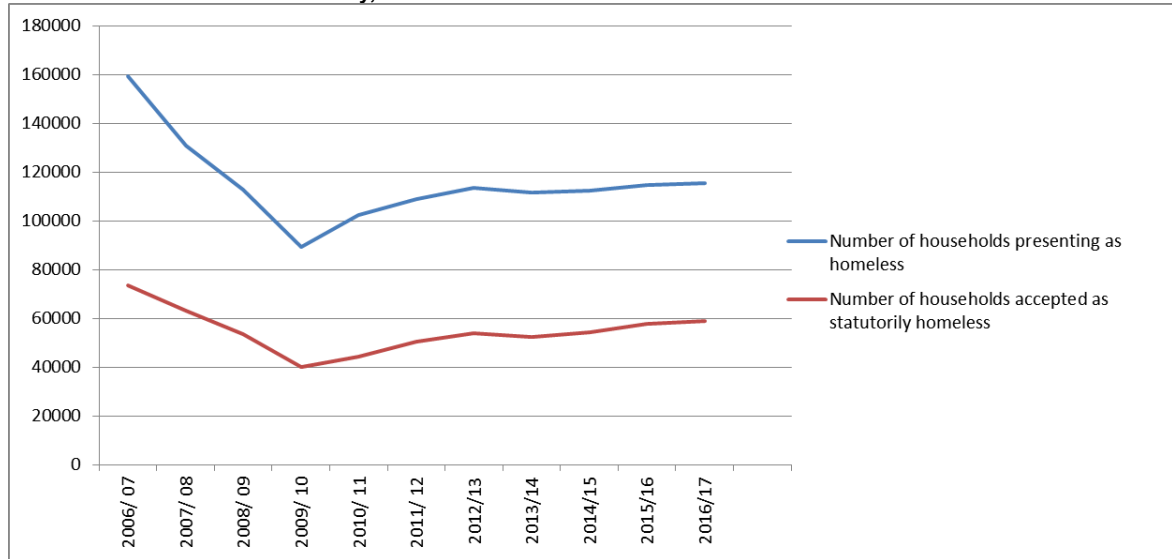
<i>Strategic Priority:</i>	<i>Enabling Communities</i>	<i>Delivering Sustainable Growth</i>
<i>Objective:</i>	<i>Support people to improve health and well-being</i>	<i>Improve the supply of new and affordable housing, jobs and community facilities to meet current and future need</i>
<i>Key Action:</i>	<i>Prevent homelessness where possible by helping households to remain in their current home or find alternative housing</i>	<i>Ensuring an adequate supply of housing to meet objectively assessed needs</i>

Homelessness in Context - The National Picture

The number of households approaching local authorities for assistance as homeless has increased from a low point in 2009/10, with councils in England accepting 40,200 households as statutorily homeless that year compared to 59,090 in 2016/17. This represents a 48% increase over a seven year period.

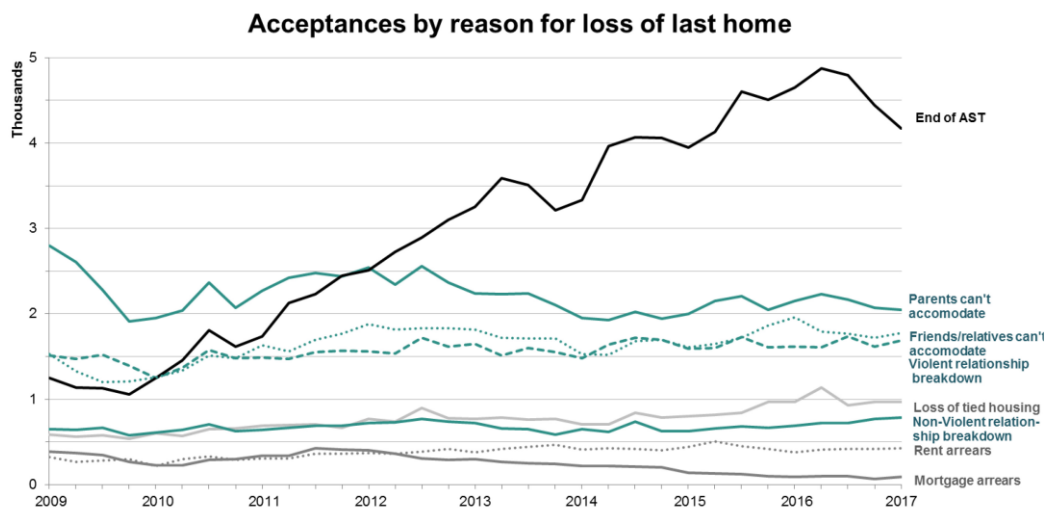
Although the growth of homelessness has been seen to be most significant in London, with a 92% growth in this period, the rest of England experienced a 34% increase in the number of households accepted as homeless over the same time period.

Graph 1: Number of Households presenting to Councils in England as homeless and the number then accepted as owed a main homelessness duty, 2006/07 onwards.



The most significant factor contributing to this trend is the number of households being evicted from private sector tenancies through no fault of their own. The last six years prior to the first quarter of 2017 has seen this becoming the cause of homelessness in 29% of cases whereas in 2009 it contributed to 11% of households accepted as homeless.

Graph 2: Households accepted as statutorily homeless by reason for loss of last home - for England between 2008/09 - 2016/17



The doubling of the size of the private rented sector between 2002 and 2015/16 may be a contributing factor to this becoming a greater cause of homelessness. However, during the early years of this growth homelessness continued to decline as local authorities managed to successfully prevent homelessness by assisting households into private sector tenancies. The growth of homelessness from private sector tenancies correlates to the introduction of the welfare reform programme, in particular changes to the Housing Benefit system. The indication is that this has led to affordability becoming an increasingly significant issue, as more households facing the end of a private tenancy are unable to find an alternative without assistance of local authorities.

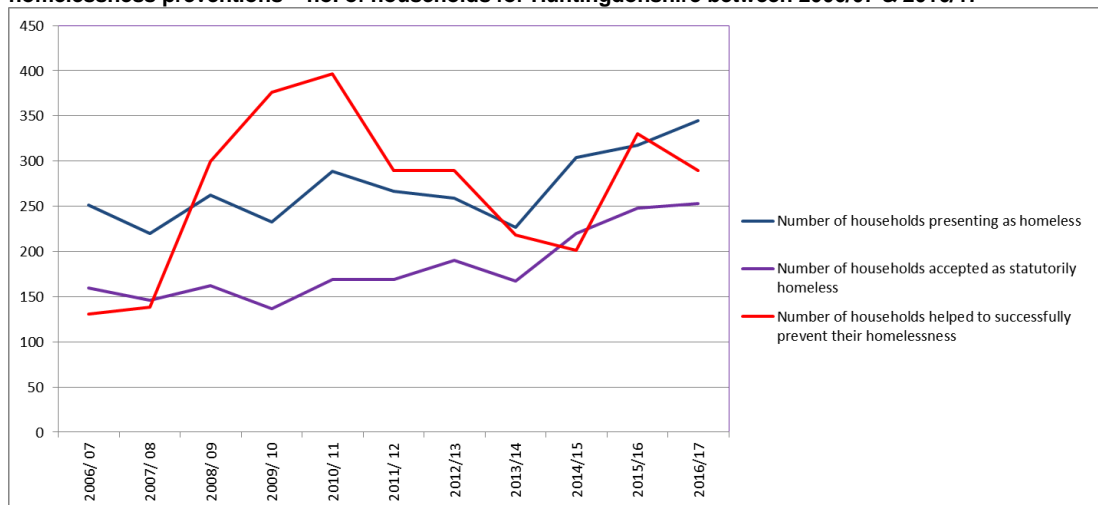
The Local Picture – a review of homelessness in Huntingdonshire

The trend in homelessness in the district has been similar to national trends, showing an increase in the number of statutory acceptances by the Council. The number of households accepted as homelessness increased from 169 in 2010/11 to 253 in 2016/17, a 50% increase.

As with the national picture, homelessness as a result of households being evicted from the private rented sector through no fault of their own is now the single biggest cause of homelessness and this has contributed to increasing rates of homelessness.

The welfare reform programme and continued increases in the cost of privately renting in the district has meant that more households see social/affordable rented housing as their only realistic option. This has undoubtedly contributed to the number of households applying to the housing register and approaching the Council for assistance when faced with homelessness. The lack of properties available within Local Housing Allowance rates in the private rented sector has meant that the opportunities to help households into this sector as a successful homelessness prevention strategy has reduced (see graph 3 below). This has affected households on low incomes as well as those not currently in employment.

Graph 3: Total homelessness decisions, those that were accepted as statutorily homeless and successful homelessness preventions – no. of households for Huntingdonshire between 2006/07 & 2016/17



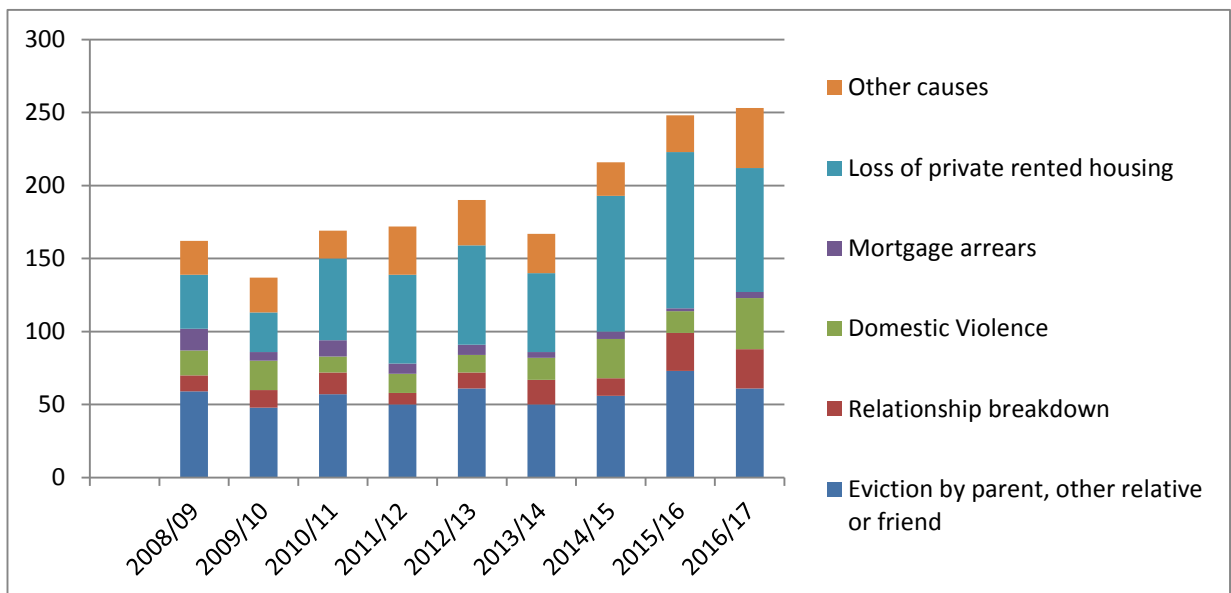
The wider impact of the welfare reform programme will potentially continue with the roll out of Universal Credit likely to be the next major event that may impact on housing implications for households in receipt of the benefit. Evidence considered by the Parliamentary Work and Pensions Committee suggests that where roll out has already taken place claimants are facing problems with increasing debt and a rise in rent arrears. This in turn has led to the threat of possession action by landlords as households struggle to make their rent payments due to delays in the receipt of their Universal Credit.

The Residential Landlords Association (RLA) has also reported issues with their recent survey of members showing that a third of private landlords with tenants receiving Universal Credit say they are owed rent. This is an increase of over 10% since last year and has the potential to further add to the growth in homelessness.

Significantly the RLA has highlighted to Government that these problems do not encourage landlords to house people needing to claim benefit – at a time when local authorities are working hard to encourage the private rented sector to work with them to help address increasing rates in homelessness.

The main causes of homelessness within the district are consistent with the national picture: eviction by parents, other relatives and friends and relationship breakdown (violent and non-violent) continue to be significant causes but as at the national level the end of private sector tenancies is now the single largest cause of homelessness and has been since 2010/11.

Graph 4: Households accepted as statutorily homeless by reason for loss of last home - for Huntingdonshire between 2008/09 - 2016/17



In terms of the type of households faced with homelessness, both nationally and locally approximately 70% are families either with children or where they are expecting their first child. This may lead to family upheaval with children being placed into temporary accommodation a distance from schools and families being moved away from their support networks.

Single people with mental health issues make up on average 8 to 10% of the households accepted as homeless, with people with a physical disability also making up approximately 8% of homeless households. There are no discernible trends with homelessness amongst differing household types and this picture is mirrored nationally. However, anecdotal evidence locally suggests that there are an increasing number of young people facing the threat of homelessness but successful prevention work with them, for example helping them into a placement in an appropriate supported housing scheme means that they may not appear in the homelessness statistics mentioned above.

New Ways of Preventative Working – The Homelessness Reduction Act

The Homelessness Reduction Act attracted Government and cross-Party support and gained Royal Assent in April 2017. The Act's main thrust is to refocus local authorities' efforts to prevent homeless. The Act has amended Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and its measures include:

- An extension of the period during which an authority should treat someone as threatened with homelessness from 28 to 56 days.
- Clarification of the action an authority should take when someone applies for assistance having been served with a section 21 notice of intention to seek possession from an assured shorthold tenancy.
- A new duty to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness.
- A new duty to relieve homelessness for all eligible homeless applicants.
- A new duty on public services to notify a local authority if they come into contact with someone they think may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

The Council fully supports this refocus on preventative measures and is preparing for the new duties that the Act will create when it comes fully into force, expected to be in April 2018. In preparation for this the Council, in partnership with the other Cambridgeshire local authorities, has created a Trailblazer programme looking at the best ways to re-define our prevention activities bringing these in line with the Act's new duties.

The Homelessness Trailblazer Project

Partners from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough prepared a bid for funding through the Government's Trailblazer scheme in September 2016. The vision of the partnership is that *"by empowering all public facing staff to identify the risk of homelessness and work together to prevent it, we make homelessness the "unacceptable outcome"*.

The partnership was awarded £736,400 of funding early in 2017 to cover a two year pilot which will deliver four distinct strands of work to improve homelessness prevention. These are:

1. A new homelessness prevention network that will:

- prevent homelessness upstream, including people who are not in 'priority need'.
- cement collaboration between all public sector agencies and partners to prevent homelessness.
- help staff identify early warning signs of homelessness and find new ways to prevent it.
- make sure every interaction counts.

2. A landlord rent solutions service.

As the loss of private rented accommodation is the single largest cause of homelessness this service will:

- provide a 'rent solution' service to help landlords maintain tenancies, resolve tenancy problems and reduce evictions which are leading to homeless acceptances.
- aim to attract landlords to use our trailblazer delivery vehicle through these interactions (see the business development service below).

3. A Business development service.

As securing private rented accommodation is one of the main ways to prevent homelessness locally the new Business Development Service aims to:

- help bring more good quality, affordable and suitable private rented homes into our housing market and help bring any less popular housing into better use, working in harmony with social lettings agencies and private sector leasing schemes.
- increase the supply of affordable housing options for households in need, co-operating with existing offers and exploring making furnished lets available.
- analyse existing data on rents, local housing allowance rates and housing turnaround times to identify any target areas.

4. Expanded web resources.

Through this we aim to:

- expand our web resource to help residents and partner agencies.
- introduce a new integrated budgeting application for the Building Better Opportunities website.
- help people avoid homelessness using web resources and by building better inter-agency knowledge, referrals and links.

The purpose of the Trailblazer is to test new, innovative approaches to prevent homelessness and to help build Government's evidence on what works, in particular testing the effects of these approaches in different areas. The work programme is being monitored through the Cambridgeshire Regional Housing Board as well as through update returns to Government and will feed into an evaluation of the different ways of working and the successes they deliver.

The Prevention Toolkit

The Council recognises that the prevention of homelessness by either assisting to keep a household in their current home, or helping them find a new home before homelessness occurs, provides the best outcome. These prevention principles have been applied for many years and have provided many successful outcomes. The challenge is to review, refine and where necessary reinvent prevention options to continue to provide successful outcomes and the Trailblazer project will help with this process.

The Council already has a number of prevention measures within its 'toolkit' and these are still relevant given the main causes of homelessness. They include:

- **A Court Advocacy service** – to help households defend possession claims, for example on grounds of mortgage arrears and rent arrears. The purpose of the service is to ensure that all steps are taken to try and resolve the issues so that the household can remain in their home and that eviction and repossession are the very last resort.
- **Homelessness Prevention Grants and Loans** - the Council considers making these types of payments through its Homelessness Prevention Budget where homelessness can be prevented and this provides the best outcome for the family, providing a longer term, affordable solution. It can be used in a number of different situations, for example, to help clear small amounts of arrears to stave off Court possession action, or to help a homeless household with some of the upfront costs of securing a tenancy if this is preventing them from taking up an offer that prevents or resolves their homelessness.

The use of preventative payments from a variety of public sector bodies is something that the Trailblazer project will look at developing, to supplement the use of Homelessness Prevention Grants. For example, where homelessness would result in a higher cost to the public purse compared to the imaginative use of prevention payments.

- **Discretionary Housing Payments** – helping clients apply for 'top up' payments where they may have a shortfall between their Housing Benefit entitlement and their rent. Use of these payments may make a property more affordable to a household in the longer term or be used as a short term payment to meet costs to give the household time to find a more affordable home.
- **Access to debt management/budgeting services** – the affordability of your home and managing your household budget so that you are able to meet the priority outgoings of your rent or mortgage is often one of the biggest challenges faced by many households. Many of our customers often face affordability problems when it comes to their housing and this is often linked to wider debt problems. Although the Council does not provide budgeting or debt management advice it is able to refer to other specialist agencies that can work with households on these issues. This includes

organisations such as the CAB who are co-located in the Council's main building. The Trailblazer programme will look at how access to these types of services may be increased given the relevance to helping meet the prevention agenda. This will be particularly important given the potential increase in problems faced by our customers as a result of the roll out of Universal Credit.

- **Negotiation and mediation with family and friends** – although evictions by family and friends is no longer the largest cause of homelessness in the district it is still a significant cause. Where there are issues that have led to a breakdown in relationships resulting in potential homelessness, the Council will negotiate with the family or friends to try and come to a 'managed' move on and try and alleviate the homelessness crisis. The Trailblazer programme and wider working with other agencies that are engaged with families will help identify where these types of relationship breakdowns may occur – allowing earlier interventions across a range of agencies to try and prevent a homelessness situation developing.
- **Rent Deposit & Rent In Advance Scheme** – the Council is able to provide a loan or bond to households threatened with homelessness to help with the up-front costs that may be preventing them from taking on a private sector tenancy. The Council has assisted significant numbers of households with this scheme over a number of years but the affordability issues for many households on low incomes, together with increasing landlords' reluctance to take on tenants that may be claiming Housing Benefit, means that the scheme is not helping as many households as previously. The scheme, together with the wider 'offer' of support or services that the Council may provide to private landlords and agents, will be reviewed as part of the Trailblazer programme.

The examples above are not an exhaustive list of the prevention measures and we will review these to ensure that they are relevant to the changing homelessness situations that households face. A further challenge is to highlight earlier 'warning signs' of potential homelessness, particularly with improved partnership working with other organisations, and this forms a major part of our Trailblazer programme.

Earlier interventions, rather than attempting these at the point of crisis, will help increase the chances of a successful outcome. The commitment from our Trailblazer partners to recognise that homelessness is the unacceptable outcome for all our customers is key to this success.

To help embed this with all partners the Trailblazer programme will use the tried and tested social care principles of forming a 'team around the family'. This will involve a team of professionals coming together to problem solve the issues that the household faces and produce a prevention plan ensuring that the right professionals are engaged with distinct pieces of work with the family at the right time. Having well defined pathways and referral mechanisms between all professionals working with households will help us achieve this.

Helping People Find A New Home

Where it is inevitable that someone will lose their current home and all appropriate prevention measures have been exhausted then it is important to consider what options are available to help that household find a new home. Ideally, if time allows this should be in advance of actual homelessness so that a crisis situation can be avoided. This should include all tenure options from privately renting, to home ownership options, to social renting.

Realistically, especially for many households on low incomes or not currently in employment, housing options are limited because of affordability problems. Social rented housing or the least expensive end of the privately rented market are the only options. It is essential that our housing market provides for these needs and the Council's Housing Strategy sets out the need for housing growth together with a high level of need for new affordable housing. The Housing Strategy commits the Council to exploring how to achieve this including whether new affordable housing can be provided on sites which the Council owns and/or whether the Council should create a private housing company or joint venture to facilitate the delivery of new affordable homes.

Accessing the Private Rented Sector

As outlined earlier, the Council's Rent Deposit and Rent In Advance scheme can assist homeless households with some of the up-front costs associated with taking on a private sector tenancy. The Council is committed to funding this scheme into the future as helping households into this tenure is still seen as one of the main options that help meet the housing needs of the district. This in conjunction with the delivery of greater numbers of genuinely affordable properties of this tenure, possibly through Council interventions in the market, will be key to providing realistic housing solutions for homeless households.

Partner local authorities within the Trailblazer partnership are moving towards a range of housing options provided through Council owned housing companies and social lettings agencies. The Council has access to accommodation provided through Cambridge City Council's Single Homelessness Service, into accommodation managed under their social lettings agency, Town Hall Lettings. The effectiveness of this option in meeting the needs of our single homeless customers will be reviewed as under the new Homelessness Reduction Act the provision of options for single people with no priority need under the legislation will be just as important as meeting the needs of those households that do have a defined priority need.

Access to low cost home ownership options (LCHO)

Low cost homeownership options will be considered as part of the full range of housing options for households threatened with homelessness. The available LCHO products are marketed and publicised through the zone agent, Help to Buy East, and are considered as part of a household's options list if appropriate. Although LCHO properties offer limited opportunities to homeless households in terms of helping with preventions, mainly due to affordability problems, they are delivered as part of the affordable housing element on new build sites and form

part of the Council's overall Housing Strategy to deliver increased numbers of affordable housing properties.

Access to social rented housing via the Home-Link scheme

Given the affordability problems of privately renting and home ownership, many households faced with homelessness see the social rented sector as the only remaining realistic option. Households that are under the threat of homelessness and those where the Council then accepts a duty to help with settled housing are prioritised for housing under the Council's Lettings Policy. This leads to an offer of social rented housing in order to help the household into a more settled property, thereby resolving their homelessness.

The availability of suitable numbers of social rented properties through our housing association partners plays a vital role in helping households accepted as homelessness into settled homes. The number of social rented properties fluctuates from year to year and depends upon vacancies arising within the existing social rented stock in the district together with the number of new build rented properties being delivered.

Over the life of the previous strategy the number of new build social rented properties built each year varied from in excess of 300 new build completions in 2009-10 and 2010-11 to 60 or less in three out of the following four years. This reduction in the rate of new build properties was as a result of the economic down turn with developers not bringing new sites forward for delivery. It had a significant impact on the Council's ability to help homeless households by reducing our opportunities to make offers of accommodation in advance of homelessness and leading to increased numbers of households in temporary accommodation staying there for longer.

The Council's Housing Strategy prioritises the delivery of larger numbers of new affordable properties with the recognition that a significant proportion of these must deliver rented accommodation in order to meet the needs of households on the housing register including those that are homeless.

Temporary Accommodation

The Council has a duty to provide certain homeless households with temporary housing whilst it attempts to help them resolve their housing difficulties. As with many high demand areas, the limited number of social rented properties available for letting and the increasing demands on these properties leads to homeless households having to spend longer than would be hoped for in temporary accommodation. Reducing the use of temporary accommodation and minimising the length of time households have to stay in this accommodation will remain a key priority for the Council in this Strategy.

The previous Homelessness Strategy recognised the early signs of increasing rates of homelessness together with a reduction in the number of social rented properties becoming available and that these factors would potentially lead to higher numbers of households staying in temporary accommodation for longer periods. Unfortunately, these trends continued to develop and as a result the

Council, as with many of local authorities across the country, has had to increase the number of temporary properties available to it in order to accommodate the homeless households seeking assistance.

As at the beginning of 2011-12 there were 76 households placed in temporary accommodation by the Council under a homelessness duty, with 20 of these being in bed and breakfast (B&B). At the beginning of 2017-18 this had increased to 129 households with 30 of these being in B&B and a further 7 in nightly paid self-contained accommodation. Over this period the Council has brought on line a number of alternative temporary accommodation units with our housing association partners to cope with this increasing demand.

The Council is committed to increasing the supply of new affordable housing and will also consider that a proportion of these units may need to be designated as temporary accommodation. A balance will, however, need to be reached between delivering sufficient numbers of settled homes to allow households to move on from temporary accommodation whilst at the same time ensuring that sufficient numbers of temporary units are provided to meet the increasing rates of homeless households that may have to be provided with this type of accommodation.

Of the Council's current supply of temporary accommodation, the Metropolitan Housing Association owned scheme at Coneygear Court provides the largest number of units at one location – 30 units with a mix of self-contained flats together with a main block of studio apartments with shared facilities. Metropolitan and the Council are considering the long term future of this scheme and have begun a project to consider options for its refurbishment, redevelopment, or re-provision elsewhere. This project, together with commitment to increase the number of temporary accommodation properties through the new affordable housing programme, will play an important part in making sure that the Council provides sufficient numbers of temporary properties, thereby reducing its reliance on the use B&B and nightly paid accommodation.

Risks/Barriers to Success

The Council's Housing Strategy identifies certain risks or barriers to successfully delivering on our priorities, particularly delivering new housing growth which in turn will deliver higher rates of affordable housing. As highlighted in this Homelessness Strategy, although it is not the only solution to homelessness prevention, delivering sufficient levels of affordable rented housing is one of the key ingredients to helping resolve the needs of many households faced with homelessness. Therefore not delivering new affordable rented housing at appropriate rates will impact our ability to assist those households threatened with homelessness.

The Government's welfare reform programme has also been attributed to having an impact on rates of homelessness, particularly the increase in homelessness as a result of private sector tenancies being brought to an end. A succession of reforms to the Housing Benefit (HB) system, including the reductions in the amount of Local Housing Allowance payable since April 2011 have affected the affordability of this sector for households reliant on the assistance of HB. This has

added to the number of households approaching Council's for assistance as social rented housing is seen as the only affordable tenure available to them.

Further welfare reforms, including the roll out Universal Credit and restrictions to the amount of HB for single people below the age of 35 years may potentially lead to higher levels of homelessness due to affordability issues and problems with arrears. The reform affecting HB claimants below the age of 35 years may also limit the Council's ability to assist with an offer of affordable rented housing. The rate of their HB entitlement will be below the rent levels of many social rented properties that they would otherwise be eligible for. This may mean that even the most affordable of tenures would be beyond the financial reach of certain single people if they are reliant on Universal Credit or the HB system to help them pay their rent.

Government policies aimed at helping people into work so that they are not as reliant on the benefit system will be key in helping them address their housing needs. The risk is that households are not able to find employment at a level that helps them afford housing in the area. We will, however, explore opportunities to work closely with the Job Centre Plus, which is due to be located in the Council's main building, to promote work opportunities for our customers which in turn may increase their options for accessing housing that they are able to afford.

The full impact of future welfare reforms will need to be assessed as they emerge so that appropriate prevention measures can be investigated.

Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2017

Strategic Priority – Enabling Communities			
Key Action - Prevent homelessness where possible by helping households to remain in their current home or find alternative housing			
	Action	Lead Team	Timescale
1	Implement the new regulations arising from the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.	Housing Needs	By April 2018
2	Review the existing prevention toolkit options to ensure that relevant and effective in context of homelessness causes.	Housing Needs	By June 2018
3	Agree defined pathways and referral mechanisms between key partners to ensure multi agency working towards homelessness prevention.	Housing Needs and Trailblazer Project	By December 2017
4	Increase the provision of temporary accommodation by providing an additional 10 units per year to help meet the needs of homeless households.	Strategic Housing and Housing Needs	March 2018
5	Review, with registered providers, the long term viability of temporary housing schemes within the district and prepare an options report for Scrutiny Panel examining the implications of rent caps on social tenancies and Housing Benefit subsidy changes.	Strategic Housing and Housing Needs	Options report prepared by March 2018
6	Review the effectiveness of the Single Homelessness Service in meeting the needs of non-priority need individuals to determine future funding levels.	Housing Needs	February 2018
7	Review the Council's Lettings Policy in light of the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act.	Housing Needs Home-Link Partnership	By March 2018
8	Prevent homelessness where possible by helping households to remain in their current home or find alternative housing. Target of 220 successful preventions.	Housing Needs	Annual target for 2017/18
9	Average length of stay of all households placed in B&B accommodation to be kept below 6 weeks.	Housing Needs	Annual target for 2017/18

Strategic Priority - Delivering Sustainable Growth**Key Action - ensuring an adequate supply of housing to meet objectively assessed needs**

	Action	Lead Team	Timescale for completion
10	Prepare an options paper on different models of housing companies and joint ventures to enable the council to explore the value of creating a Housing Company or entering into a joint venture to facilitate the delivery of affordable housing.	Transformation Project	End of December 2017
11	Work in partnership with the developers and housing associations to positively influence the development of the large strategic sites at Alconbury Weald and St Neots.	Planning Policy, Strategic Developments and Strategic Housing	Ongoing

Appendix A
Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Business Rates Discretionary Revaluation Relief Scheme 2017/18

Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 12 October 2017

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Strategic Resources – Councillor JA Gray

Report by: Revenues and Benefits Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

Business Rates are a tax charged on non-domestic properties. The amount payable is determined by a Rateable Value (RV) set by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) and a nationally set multiplier. The VOA is required to undertake a revaluation of RV data every five years, but the 2015 revaluation was delayed for two years to 2017.

The Government has established a £300m discretionary fund over four years from 2017/18 to support those businesses facing the steepest increases in their business rates bills as a result of the revaluation.

Billing authorities are expected to use their share of the funding to develop their own discretionary scheme to support businesses within their area that face the greatest need.

A scheme has been developed for 2017/18 after seeking Members' views through an options paper that was considered by the Policy Development Group. The scheme has been designed to award the maximum available funding of £345,000 to around 160 local businesses.

Funding decreases each year over the life of the four year scheme and so the policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that on-going support is given to small local businesses most affected by the revaluation.

A consultation exercise with the major preceptors and the combined authority has been undertaken on the proposed scheme to meet the conditions set out by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) prior to presenting the proposed policy to Members.

Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1) approves the Business Rates Discretionary Revaluation Relief Scheme for 2017/18
- 2) delegates authority to the Executive Councillor for Strategic Resources to agree the revised Business Rates Revaluation Schemes for the next 3 consecutive years

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 Business Rates are a tax charged on non-domestic properties; the liability is based on a combination of a nationally set multiplier and the rateable value (RV) for the property. The RV is determined by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), which compiles a Rating List for each billing authority area. Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) plays no role in setting the RV but is responsible for collecting the income.
- 1.2 The VOA is required to undertake a full revaluation of Rating Lists every five years to ensure that each RV is at an appropriate level reflecting the current economic climate and is broadly reflective of the rental value of the premises. The Government delayed the revaluation which was due in 2015 by two years, which means that the 2010 Rating List remained in use for seven years rather than five.
- 1.3 With every revaluation, the Government specifies a national scheme of Transitional Relief. This scheme sets limits on how much a ratepayer's bill can increase or decrease as a result of the revaluation.
- 1.4 Following the publication of the 2017 Rating Lists, the Government decided that the Transitional Relief scheme did not provide sufficient support for some businesses, and so the Chancellor announced three additional relief schemes as part of the Spring 2017 budget.
- 1.5 The remit and parameters of two of these schemes (Pub Relief and Supporting Small Businesses) were approved by a report that went to Cabinet on 9 February 2017 (National Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Rate Relief Policy). The third relief - Discretionary Revaluation Relief Scheme falls outside of the scope of the earlier report and needs to be considered and approved by Members.
- 1.6 In its role as a billing authority, Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) has the power to introduce discretionary reliefs for business rates in accordance with Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As a result of the 2017 revaluation process, the Government introduced three relief schemes in addition to the transitional relief scheme:
 - a) Pub Relief: Pubs with an RV of up to £100,000 will be awarded a business rates discount of £1,000 for 2017/18. We initially awarded relief to around 90 ratepayers within the District but as occupiers change throughout the course of the year, the scheme will allow any new occupiers to benefit from this relief. This relief only applies in 2017/18.
 - b) Supporting Small Businesses: Small Business Rates Relief (SBRR) is a national scheme which reduces the rates payable by occupiers of some small properties. As a result of the revaluation, some businesses no longer qualify for SBRR and so a transitional scheme was introduced to limit the impact of any increase. The scheme caps any increase to 5% + inflation for the first year and then set percentage increases each year up until 2021/22 unless the property drops out of the scheme. In 2017/18, around 50 ratepayers within the District benefited from this relief.

- c) Revaluation Relief: A £300 million fund for Billing Authorities to devise their own discretionary relief schemes to support local businesses most affected by the revaluation.
- 2.2 DCLG allocated funding for the Revaluation Relief to local authorities based on the total rate increases for properties where the bill increased by more than 12.5% following revaluation and the RV is less than £200,000.
- 2.3 HDC's allocation of this funding is £592,000 spread across the next 4 years. This funding is frontloaded for 2017/18.

Amount of discretionary grant awarded (£000's)					
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
HDC	345	168	69	10	592

- 2.4 DCLG has not issued any detailed guidance on how the scheme should be operated locally. The only conditions which have been set in order for relief to qualify for this funding are:
- The billing authority must consult with their major precepting authorities and combined authority
 - The scheme must provide relief only to ratepayers who have seen an increase in their business rates bill due to the revaluation
- 2.5 The Government will make grant payments to both HDC and the County Council to offset the cost of any relief under this scheme which meets these conditions. However, if the value of the relief granted exceeds the allocation shown above, the cost of any additional spend will fall on HDC.

3. ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Members' views were sought through an options paper that was considered by the Policy Development Group with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Resources taking the lead. This fed into the development of the proposed HDC policy which ensures that the reliefs awarded as a result of this grant meet local priorities and makes full use of the funding.
- 3.2 A mandatory consultation has also been undertaken with Cambridgeshire County Council, the Fire Authority and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. No responses were received from this consultation.
- 3.3 The proposed HDC policy (Appendix A) has been designed using the principles that determined the level of DCLG funding along with a number of other conditions that maximises the amount of relief that can be awarded to local businesses. The emphasis has been placed on supporting smaller, local businesses and so multi-national businesses are specifically excluded from the list of qualifying criteria.

The qualifying criteria are as follows:

- the business was liable for business rates on or before 31 March 2017;
- the rateable value for 2017/18 is less than £200,000;
- the increase in the rateable property's 2017/18 bill is more than 12.5% compared to its 2016/17 bill before reliefs;
- the property is occupied;
- the business is not part of a national or global organisation;

- the award must comply with State Aid requirements;
 - relief will be apportioned on a daily basis if the occupier vacates the property or a change in circumstances renders them ineligible for relief;
 - any relief will be calculated after all other reliefs have been applied and will not exceed the rate liability for the year.
- 3.4 Using this criteria, around 160 local businesses would benefit from a share of the £345,000 funding.
- 3.5 The scheme is designed to have a small underspend as a contingency that would enable HDC to make payments to a business adversely affected by the revaluation that does not meet the criteria set out above. A decision to make this type of award would be done on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.6 The Non-Domestic Rating (Discretionary Relief) Regulations 1989 (S.I. 1989/1059) require the Council to provide ratepayers with at least one year's notice in writing before any decision to revoke or vary a decision that increases the amount of business rates payable. Awards of discretionary relief under this scheme will be awarded for the period of one year only with the relief being specified for the period 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018 which negates the requirement for the year's notice.
- 3.7 The policy at Appendix B will be used to award support in 2017-18. Funding reduces significantly over each of the remaining three years of the scheme and although it is intended to use the same basic principles for schemes in future years, it may be necessary to change some of the parameters within the qualifying criteria to ensure that any award of relief granted is meaningful. Because it is intended that future schemes will remain inherently the same, it is proposed that the funding distribution for the years 2018-22 is delegated to the Executive Councillor for Strategic Resources.

4 COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 4.1 The comments of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel will follow.

5. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 It is proposed that the discretionary relief will be awarded to qualifying businesses in time for when the November 2017 instalment becomes payable. Relief will automatically be awarded to businesses that meet the necessary criteria.

6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND / OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 The Business Rates Discretionary Revaluation Relief scheme will help HDC to meet the strategic objective of developing stronger and more resilient communities.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 A mandatory consultation exercise has taken place with the major preceptors and the combined authority. No responses were received.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 HDC's funding allocation for 2017/18 is £345k. This is the total amount of relief to be provided to ratepayers. Under the 50% business rates retention system, the reduction in business rates receipts from the award of the revaluation relief will generally result in a reduction in local authorities' business rates income of 50% of the value of the relief. Government has undertaken to reimburse the cost of providing relief via a grant under s.31 of the Local Government Act 2003.
- 8.2 Any spend above the limit of the funding will be a cost to HDC.

9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 9.1 The proposed method of distributing the funding in line with the HDC Discretionary Revaluation Relief Scheme attached at Appendix B, gives the greatest amount of relief to small local businesses most affected by the Business Rates revaluation. This reflects the aims contained within the Government's consultation paper and helps to promote a strong local economy.
- 9.2 It is anticipated that the scheme for 2018/19 and beyond will retain the same basic principles as the scheme for 2017/18 but will be based on reduced funding. Therefore, once the initial policy has been approved by Cabinet, future adjustments should be minimal and so it is recommended that the decision on funding distribution is made by the Executive Councillor for Strategic Resources.

10. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix A – HDC Discretionary Revaluation Relief Scheme 2017/18

CONTACT OFFICER

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Email: amanda.burns@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

BUSINESS RATES DISCRETIONARY REVALUATION RELIEF SCHEME 2017-18

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Business Rates are a tax charged on non-domestic properties. The amount payable is determined by a Rateable Value (RV) set by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) and a nationally set multiplier. The size and use of the premises, along with open market rental data, are used to establish this RV.
- 1.2 VOA is required to undertake a revaluation of RV data every five years, although in 2015, this was delayed for two years by the Government, to 2017. This programme of review ensures that rateable values are set at an appropriate level, reflecting the current economic climate and value of properties on the rating list.
- 1.3 The outcome of the revaluation saw some businesses' RV increase. As a result, the Government introduced a number of measures to support those affected including establishing a £300 million local discretionary relief scheme for local authorities to support those businesses facing the steepest increase in their Business Rates bills.

2.0 Funding

- 2.1 Huntingdonshire District Council's (HDC) allocation of the Government's funding is £592,000 spread over the next four years.

Amount of discretionary grant (£000's)					
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
HDC	345	168	69	10	592

- 2.2 The funding allocation was calculated taking into account the total rate increases for properties where the bill increased by more than 12.5% following revaluation and the RV is less than £200,000.

3.0 Financial Impact

- 3.1 Under the 50% Business Rates retention system, the reduction in receipts resulting from the revaluation relief will generally result in a reduction in local authorities' Business Rates income of 50% of the value of the relief.

- 3.2 The Government will reimburse HDC for the cost of providing the relief through a grant under section 31 of the Local Government Finance Act 2003 up to the maximum amount of grant.

4.0 Legal Requirements

- 4.1 The Scheme will be administered through billing authorities' discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

5.0 Principles of scheme

- 5.1 The scheme is based on the Government's principles and assumptions used in the distribution of the grant funding but also takes account of Members' views and those obtained through a consultation exercise with major preceptors and the combined authority.
- 5.2 The aim of the scheme is to provide relief to local businesses who faced the steepest increases in their Business Rates bill as a result of the revaluation in April 2017 and is based on the following principles:
- the business was liable for Business Rates on or before 31 March 2017. Retrospective additions to the list will not be considered;
 - the rateable value for 2017/18 is less than £200,000;
 - the increase in the rateable property's 2017/18 bill is more than 12.5% compared to its 2016/17 bill (before reliefs);
 - the property is occupied;
 - the business is not part of a national or global organisation;
 - the award must comply with State Aid requirements;
 - relief will be apportioned on a daily basis if the occupier vacates the property or a change in circumstance renders them ineligible for relief;
 - any relief will be calculated after all other reliefs have been applied and will not exceed the rate liability for the year.
- 5.3 The amount of relief awarded to each qualifying business will be determined by the number of eligible businesses and be granted by reducing the Business Rates bill by a percentage. The cost of the scheme will not exceed the grant allocation.
- 5.4 An amount of the Government funding is to be retained to make awards to businesses adversely affected by the revaluation that do not meet the criteria above. Such decisions would be made on a case-by-case basis.

6.0 Period of relief

- 6.1 Relief given under this scheme will be granted for the period April 2017 to March 2018.
- 6.2 The Non-Domestic Rating (Discretionary Relief) Regulations 1989 require local authorities to provide ratepayers with at least one year's notice in writing before any decision to revoke or vary a decision that increases the amount of Business Rates payable. However, a local authority may still make decisions which are conditional upon eligibility criteria which allow the amount of relief to be amended within the year to reflect a change in circumstance.

7.0 Calculation of relief

- 7.1 The relief will be apportioned on a daily basis to account for changes that may occur during the award period such as the occupier vacating or a change in circumstances that would make the business ineligible for relief.

8.0 Notification of decision

- 8.1 Ratepayers will be notified that the relief has been awarded to them by issuing a revised Business Rates bill and a letter setting out the criteria used to award the relief.

9.0 Right of appeal

- 9.1 There is no statutory right of appeal against a decision not to award relief under this scheme as the award is discretionary. However, where a decision has been made not to award relief, the ratepayer can request a review of that decision.
- 9.2 The request must be made in writing and include reasons for the request along with any supporting documentation. The review will be carried out by the Head of Customer Services.

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**Public/
Key Decision - Yes**
* Delete as applicable

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Strategic Review of Parking – Parking Vision
Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 12th October 2017
Executive Portfolio: Cllr Jim White, Executive Cllr for Operations
Report by: Neil Sloper, Head of Operations
Wards affected: All

Executive Summary:

It was agreed at Overview & Scrutiny: Economy & Growth Panel (O&S:E&G) on the 6th April 2017 under the agenda item “Strategic Review of Parking - Project Overview” that a Member Task & Finish group should be established to deliver an agreed vision and strategic priorities for car park management and operation. The Task and Finish group membership and outline plan was agreed by the panel recognising the requirements to develop a vision for the parking service that would inform and provide clear direction for the development of a strategy to guide future courses of action.

The accompanying report presents a record of the work undertaken so far and the parking the parking vision for endorsement.

Huntingdonshire District Council - Parking Vision:

Huntingdonshire District Council will support the sustainability and growth of its towns and villages through the provision of convenient, easily accessible car park locations that focus on achieving our core priorities of:

- Providing and delivering security and safety for our users
- Providing and delivering clean and well maintained parking places
- Implementing technology that positively assists our car park users
- Promoting environmental sustainability by supporting alternative fuel and travel methods

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet endorse the Parking Vision developed by the members of the “Strategic Review of Parking” Task & Finish Group (T&F) to enable the group to progress to the development of a parking strategy.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1. To seek endorsement of the parking vision developed by the “Strategic Review of Parking” Task & Finish group (T&F).
- 1.2. To highlight the work undertaken so far to develop the car park strategy.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Overview & Scrutiny: Economy & Growth (O&S:E&G) agenda item “Strategic Review of Parking - Project Overview” discussed 6th April 2017 by O&S recognised that Huntingdonshire District Council has:
 - No agreed vision for the role of car park management and operation.
 - No agreed strategic priorities for car park management or operation.
 - No clear evidence base of user requirements or preference
 - Future investment and enhancements to car parks and their operation must be based on an evidence based vision and strategy.

3. KEY ACTIONS

6th April 2017

- The O&S:E&G panel agreed the purpose and membership of the T&F group for the agenda item “Strategic Review of Parking - Project Overview”.

30th May 2017

- The 1st T&F group meeting took place which saw:
 - The appointment of a Chairman (Cllr White)
 - The appointment of a Vice Chairman (Cllr Dickinson)
 - Discussion around the “Strategic Review of Parking” scoping document to ensure that a comprehensive approach is being taken
 - A review of the Parking Service “Service Profile Park” which provided an overview of all service resources and functions
 - Analysis of Stakeholders to identify who and when they need to be engaged with as part of the “Strategic Review of Parking”
 - A review of the proposed online “parking user survey” to ensure it captured all that was required

30th June 2017

- Finalisation of the Parking User Online Survey

3rd July 2017

- Parking User Online Survey “Go Live” date.

18th July 2017

- Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) feasibility study scope finalisation with RTA Associates
- HDC request RTAA to undertake additional “compliance” & “signs and lines” surveys

24th July 2017

- Parking Service initial discussion with “Inner Circle Consulting” undertaking the “Growth Masterplan for St Neots”

25th July 2017

- CPE feasibility study schedule for onsite surveys agreed (13th to 16th September 2017 - aim to capture “normal” term time behaviours)

26th July 2017

- T&F group brief of parking service financial information which sought to understand and separate:
 - Statutory costs
 - Operational costs (fixed)
 - Operational costs (income related)

28th July 2017

- Parking Service inception meeting with Steer Davies Gleave (SDG) to undertake the “Development vs Capacity” which saw:
 - Discussion into the aims for the study
 - An SGD brief on the tasks and approach to be taken
 - Agreement on a reporting deadline (end Oct 2017)

8th August 2017

- A meeting of the T&F group which saw:
 - A brief on HDC parking service discussion with consultants undertaking the “Growth Masterplan for St Neots”
 - An update on the ongoing works (CPE Feasibility study & SDG)
 - A visioning session comprising of 3 visioning exercises (see appendix 1)

29th August 2017

- Agreement for the T&F group to work smarter by developing a parking vision electronically

4th September 2017

- A meeting of the T&F group which saw:
 - A presentation by SDG on the Development versus Capacity Study.
 - Discussion around the presentation to ensure the study addresses all aspects the members of the group feel is required to develop an informed parking strategy

5th September 2017

- Parking Service debrief on the Parking User Survey (online)

11th September 2017

- Development of previous works by members of the T&F group towards the achievement of a parking vision

15th September 2017

- Delivery by member of the T&F group of a Huntingdonshire District Council Parking Vision.

27th September 2017

- A meeting of the T&F group which saw:
 - A presentation of the Parking User Survey results.
 - Discussion of the survey results, including how well car park user’s views are reflected in the parking vision. The group confirmed they were happy with the parking vision developed.

4. HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL - PARKING VISION

Huntingdonshire District Council will support the sustainability and growth of its towns and villages through the provision of convenient, easily accessible car park locations that focus on achieving our core priorities of

- Providing and delivering security and safety for our users
- Providing and delivering clean and well maintained parking places
- Implementing technology that positively assists our car park users
- Promoting environmental sustainability by supporting alternative fuel and travel methods

5. Next Stages

5.1. The next stages are:

- Return of CPE feasibility study and accompanying “compliance” & “signs and lines” surveys for the consideration of (possible) endorsement by the T&F group.
- Return of the “Development vs Capacity” study for the consideration of the T&F group.
- Discussion and consideration of the comments stakeholder on the Parking User Survey by the T&F group.
- Development of a parking strategy by the T&F group.

6. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

6.1. The comments of the Overview and Scrutiny (E&G) Panel will follow.

7. KEY RISKS

7.1. Failure to endorse a parking vision will impact delivery of a parking strategy by the T&F Group.

7.2. Failure to deliver an evidence based parking strategy will impact the direction and development of the parking service in its support of economic growth and development of our towns.

8. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

8.1. The Corporate Strategic Plan identifies the delivery of a car parking strategy that is supportive of residents, visitors and local businesses as a key action under delivering Sustainable Growth.

9. CONSULTATION

9.1. Car park users have been consulted as part of the development of the strategy. A “Parking User Survey” was undertaken from 3rd July 2017 for a period of 6 weeks. This includes the opinions of businesses and stakeholder organisations.

9.2. Additional Stakeholder consultation is underway to double check that the views expressed within the survey match the issues previously presented to Town & Parish Councils.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

10.1. An agreed vision is required to inform a parking strategy.

11. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 - Car Park Visioning
Appendix 2 - Parking User Survey Report

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Overview & Scrutiny: Economy & Growth Panel - Thursday 6th April 2017:
Strategic Review of Car Parking: Project Overview and T&F Scoping Document

<http://modern.gov.huntsdc.gov.uk:8070/documents/s85153/Strategic%20Review%20of%20Car%20Parking%20Project%20Overview.pdf>

13. CONTACT OFFICER

George McDowell, Parking Services Manager (Operations)
george.mcdowell@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

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Task & Finish - Car park visioning

Task 1

- Write 3 short, vivid, positive and innovative changes you would personally like to see by 3030 to the delivery of car parking
 - Discuss with your neighbour and agree one
 - Share with the group
-

STATEMENTS:

'able to find somewhere to park where and when you want at a price you chose'

- **Larger spaces (accommodate larger modern vehicles and making access/egress easier for less able drivers/passengers)**
- **Ability to locate spaces**
- **Improved system of payment (i.e. facility to pay for actual usage via smartphone)**
- Public/private transport harmonised
- Electric vehicle capability throughout
- Parking service linked to other services i.e. leisure use tech to cross-incentivise initiatives
- An initial "free" period or reduced cost parking
- Smarter technology (i.e. more apps)
- Any stay duration in any car park (no long or short)
- Coordination of all parking types i.e. on street / off street / private
- Peak time management of flow / usage
- Real time info on free spaces
- Better / easier enforcement i.e. CPE
- Pay direct from bank account

KEY EMERGENT AIMS:

= **Convenience:** access, location, availability, no-time pressure, use

e.g. car parks with capacity where needed in town, pay on exit not for a fixed parking term

= **Easy:** layout, payment options, design, location

e.g. larger spaces, payment in advance, by electronic means, improved flow and visibility

= **Assisting** (with technology): real-time information on availability most suitable place to park to meet your needs, payment choices

e.g. tools to advise where is free closest to your parking need and cost options with links to sat nav.

Task 2

- We are watching an LGA award ceremony, best innovative car parks
 - What are the key accomplishments of the winner?
-

STATEMENTS:

- Cost neutral
- Self-sustaining (i.e. solar/wind power generators, electric charging)
- Multiple uses for the space
- Rapid charge facilities
- Car to determine best place to park based on journey arrival time + purpose + length of stay
- Car drop off point with car parked for you by us

KEY EMERGENT AIMS:

Sustainability: Energy neutral design including future charging needs

e.g. solar powered energy for car parks, materials used in construction and maintenance

Cost Neutrality: Surplus invested? Or No surplus?

e.g. parking account used for technology trials and investment to be innovative

Sustainability of Towns: Protect our environment and health, driving innovation and not compromising our way of life.

e.g. Minimise pollution and congestion by helping/informing where to park in advance

Task 3

- We are interviewing customers about our award winning car park provision
 - What will they say?
 - What is valued and what is helpful?
-

STATEMENTS:

- Right location every time (i.e. space location apps)
- Advance booking (online / apps)
- Reserved spaces linked to number plate recognition
- Convenient locations
- Immaculately clean
- Car parks by retail needs (i.e. items you require)
- Shopping delivered to your car
- Free parking
- Space where I want it, when I want it every time
- Value for money
- Charge points for electric vehicles
- Good service
- Easy to use payment solutions
- Pleasant place to visit (including car park appearance)
- “green” car park (e.g. eco friendly)
- Park and ride automated system
- Car park in the right place
- Car park over occupied by season ticket users
- Car park too expensive
- Congestion too high

KEY EMERGENT AIMS:

Quality: Clean, well maintained, safe

Sustainability: Energy, technology, way of life, linked to transportation issues/aims
e.g. Minimise pollution and congestion by helping/informing where to park in advance

Ease of use: location, payment, advance planning

POTENTIAL OPTIONS FOR STRATEGY AND SOLUTIONS:

- Improved and simpler end user experience:
 - car park layouts
 - features and facilities available
 - wider variety of payment options available
 - easier to find a car park & space
 - stay until ready to leave
 - value for money

- Improved infrastructure:
 - designation to support end user requirements
 - more effective enforcement
 - better information on usage

Huntingdonshire District Council Car Park Survey: Research Results



5th September 2017





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BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES & METHODOLOGY



- ✓ Huntingdonshire District Council operate a number of different car parks across the district but are aware that they currently have no defined vision / strategy for the Council Parking Service.
- ✓ In light of this, a Task and Finish group has been formed to develop the strategy moving forward. The scope of group is wide ranging to ensure that a fully comprehensive Parking Strategy can be developed and implemented over the coming years.
- ✓ The Task and Finish group are ultimately looking to understand:
 - The needs, requirements and priorities of customer groups and any possible conflicts
 - The use and future requirements of parking provision
 - Contribution of car parking facilities to local infrastructures
 - Principles of car park operation and pricing
 - Standard of facilities provided
 - Occupancy/turnover of vehicles
- ✓ Whilst much of this information can be obtained from existing data, the council currently have little information on public opinion/perceptions of car parking provision and services. As such, they would like to conduct a customer satisfaction survey amongst car park users to fully understand this.



The **business** objective of this research is:

- ✓ To **understand public opinion** of the Huntingdonshire District Councils Parking Service to incorporate into the development of a Parking Strategy.

The specific **research** objectives, as understood and built upon by Cambridge MR, are as follows:

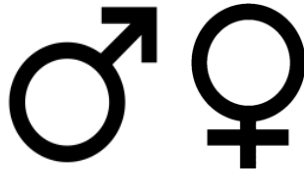
- ✓ To understand **customer behaviour** for car park usage within the Huntingdon District;
- ✓ To establish a hierarchy of **user priorities** when selecting a car park;
- ✓ To identify any **trends** in car park usage;
- ✓ To provide **recommendations** on the needs, requirements and priorities of the car park users.



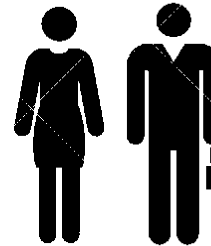
Sample demographics



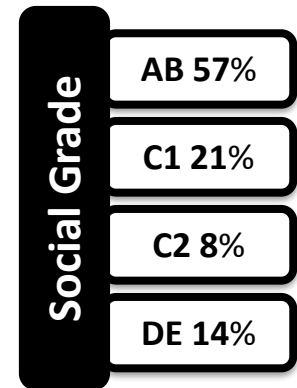
1177
users



42% Male
58% Female



Age: 18+ years
(18-24: 3%) (25-34: 15%) (35-44: 20%)
(45-54: 21%) (55-64: 20%) (65+: 20%)



60

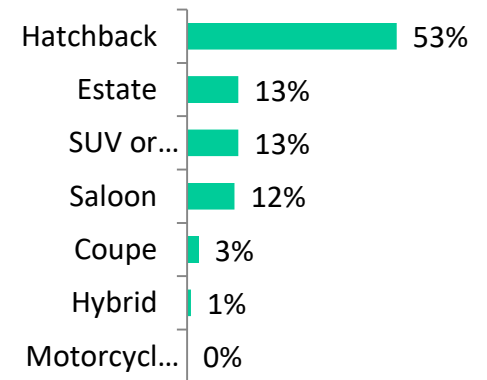
5% Blue Badge Holders

Family (children under 18 at home)	27%
Non family (no children under 18 at home)	73%



Vehicle ownership
(1: 34%) (2: 49%) (3: 11%) (4+: 11%)

Vehicle type



KEY FINDINGS





Overview

- ✓ A total of 1177 participated in the survey resulting in 4368 individual car park completions.
- ✓ Overall satisfaction with the car parks was generally high across the district with overall response similar between the towns and villages. A number of key trends were noted:

Usage trends

- ✓ There was a clear distinction between car parks used for retail purpose and those used on leisure occasions.
- ✓ Current usage of mobile payment systems (where available) is low.
- ✓ Car parks are generally used at least monthly with a high proportion used on a weekly basis.
- ✓ However, the average length of stay is low with most car parks used for 2 hours or less.
- ✓ Users predominantly have a PE postal code, typically more than 75% of the sample. There was a small percentage (less than 10%) with CB, NN, MK or SG post codes.



Satisfaction trends

- ✔ Convenience of location was at the top of the hierarchy when selecting which car park to use.
- ✔ Value for money was a key concern with this measure prompting the highest levels of dissatisfaction. Whilst an issue across the majority of car parks, it was particularly notable for the car parks in St Neots.
- ✔ To a lesser degree, car park security was also noted as a concern.

Convenience of location

- ✔ For more than a third, convenience of location was at the top of the hierarchy when selecting which car park to use.
 - More than three-quarters of users rated their satisfaction with location convenience as 'excellent/good' for car parks across the towns of Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots.
- ✔ Value for money, accessibility and purpose of visit complete the hierarchy in order of importance.





Retail vs. Leisure

- ✓ There was a clear distinction between car parks used for either retail or leisure purposes:
 - Car parks located in supermarkets, High Street / Market Square type locations were predominantly used when shopping.
 - The usage characteristics for these were typically high frequency, short stay, main day part.
 - Whilst overall satisfaction for these were acceptable there were more likely to be concerns with value for money.
 - Whilst, those in leisure e.g. Hinchingsbrooke country park attract less frequent but longer length stays and are largely considered better value for money

Potential improvements

- ✓ At an overall level across all car parks, more than a third expressed no opinion with regards to potential improvements.
- ✓ A similar proportion, however, indicated that wider bays for all vehicles would be welcomed.
- ✓ Verbatim feedback also indicates a dissatisfaction with current parking charges.



Whilst overall satisfaction with car parks across the Huntingdonshire District was acceptable there are issues which could be addressed.

- ✓ When prompted about potential improvements, a common theme across all car parks was a desire for wider bays for all vehicles.
- ✓ More cashless payment options would also be welcomed. Use of the mobile payment system (where available) is currently low indicating a potential awareness issue.
- ✓ Value for money: This measure records the highest levels of dissatisfaction but users placed this second in the hierarchy for selecting a car park so should be reviewed.
- ✓ Car park security was not highly rated across the district. Consideration of this issue could help to raise user satisfaction.



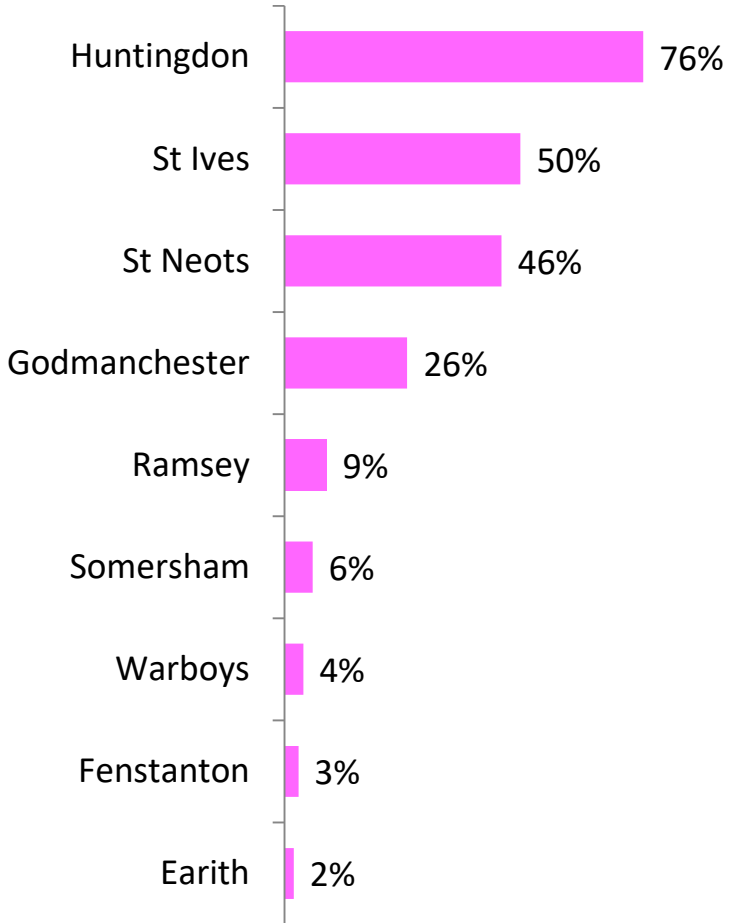
CAR PARK USAGE



Three-quarters of the sample had parked in Huntingdon in the last three months.

67

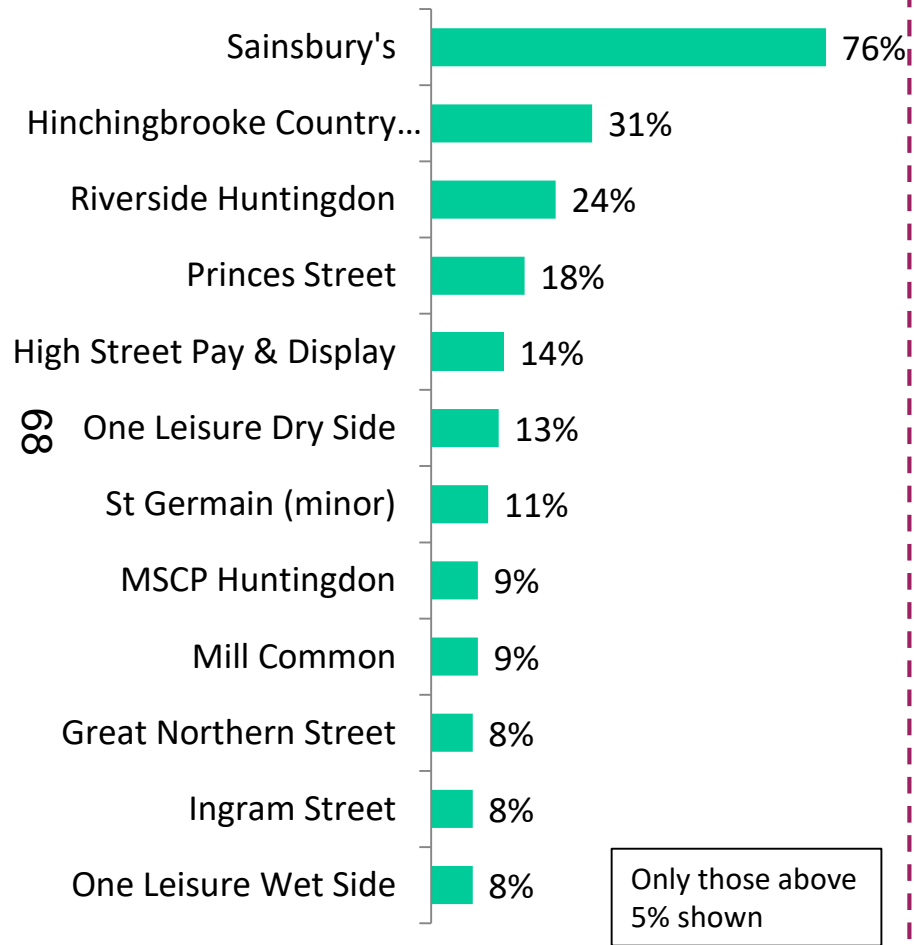
Towns parked in the last 3 months



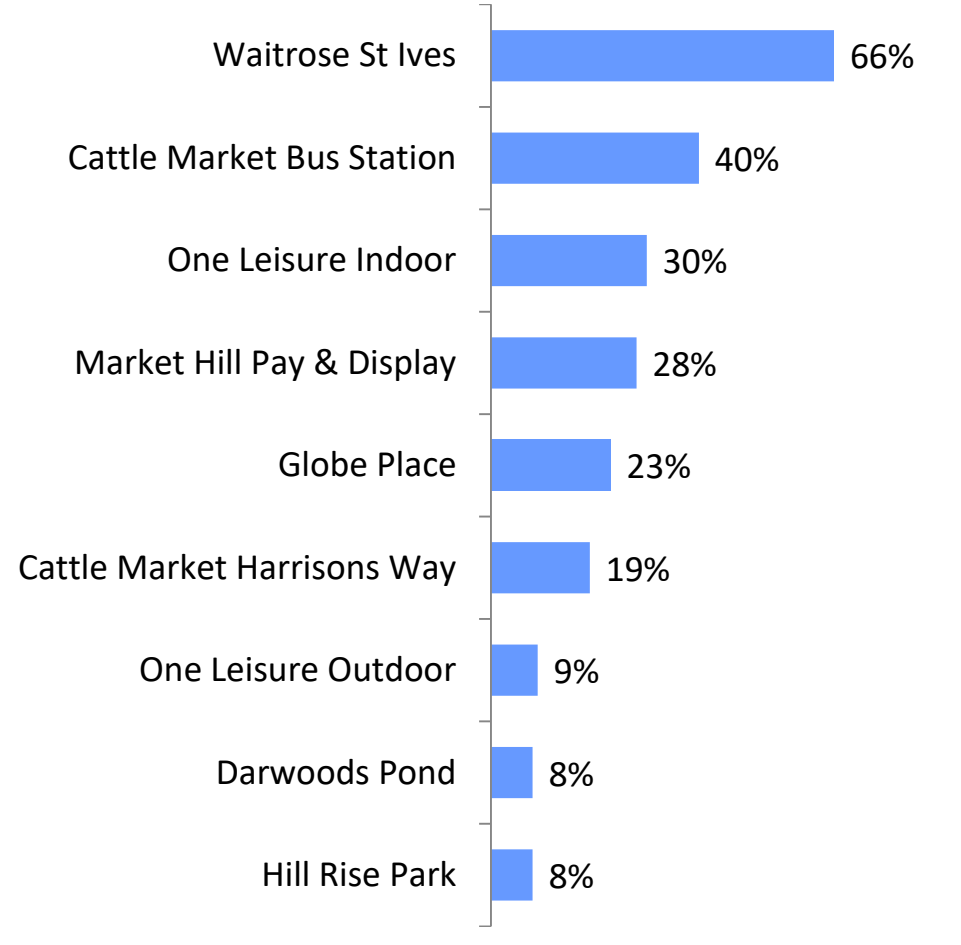
Q1. Please select the towns where you have parked in the last 3 months?
Base: Total sample (1177)

Three-quarter of those parking in Huntingdon used Sainsbury's. A similar pattern in St Ives with two-thirds having used Waitrose.

Car parks used: Huntingdon



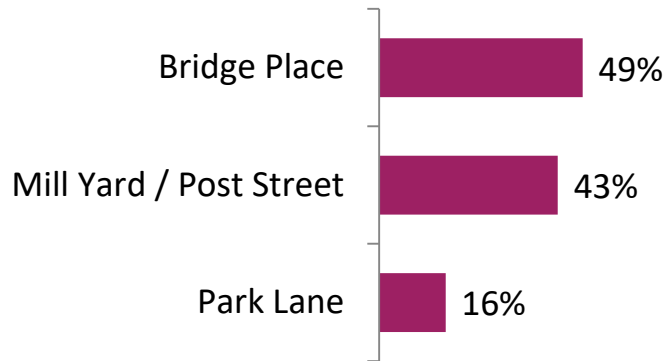
Car parks used: St Ives



Q2. Please select the car parks you use in Huntingdon / St Ives.
Base: Huntingdon car park users (891); St Ives car park users (592)

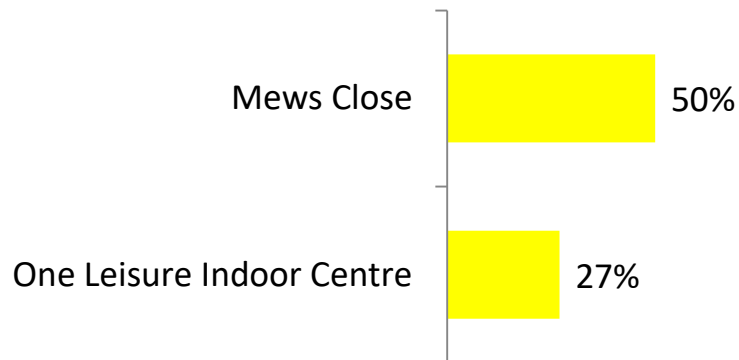
Bridge Place and Mill Yard most likely to be used in Godmanchester with Waitrose and Market Square in St Neots.

Car parks used: Godmanchester

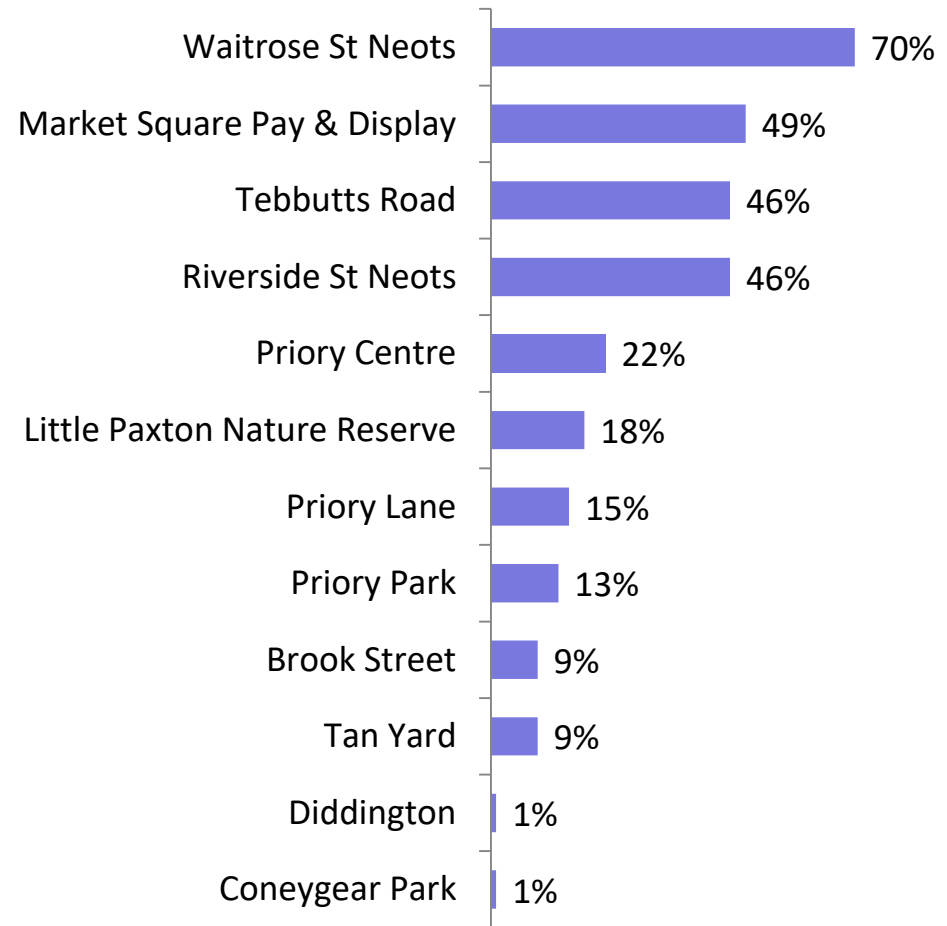


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Car parks used: Ramsey



Car parks used: St Neots

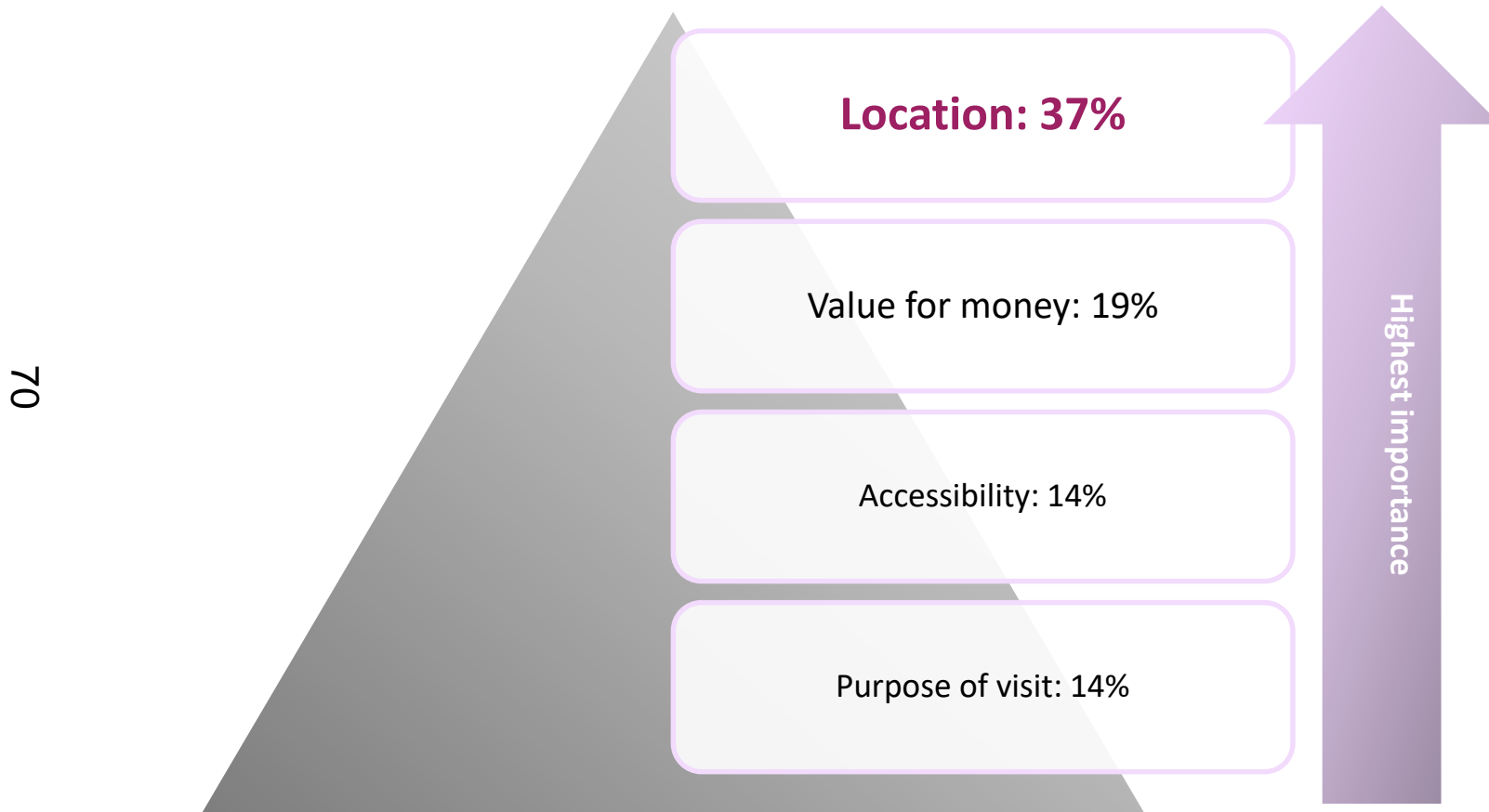


Q2. Please select the car parks you use in Godmanchester / Ramsey / St Neots.

Base: Godmanchester car park users (307); Ramsey car park users (106); St Neots car park users (538)

Convenience of location was the most important factor for more than a third when choosing where to park. However, value for money also plays a significant role.

Car park selection factors: Most important

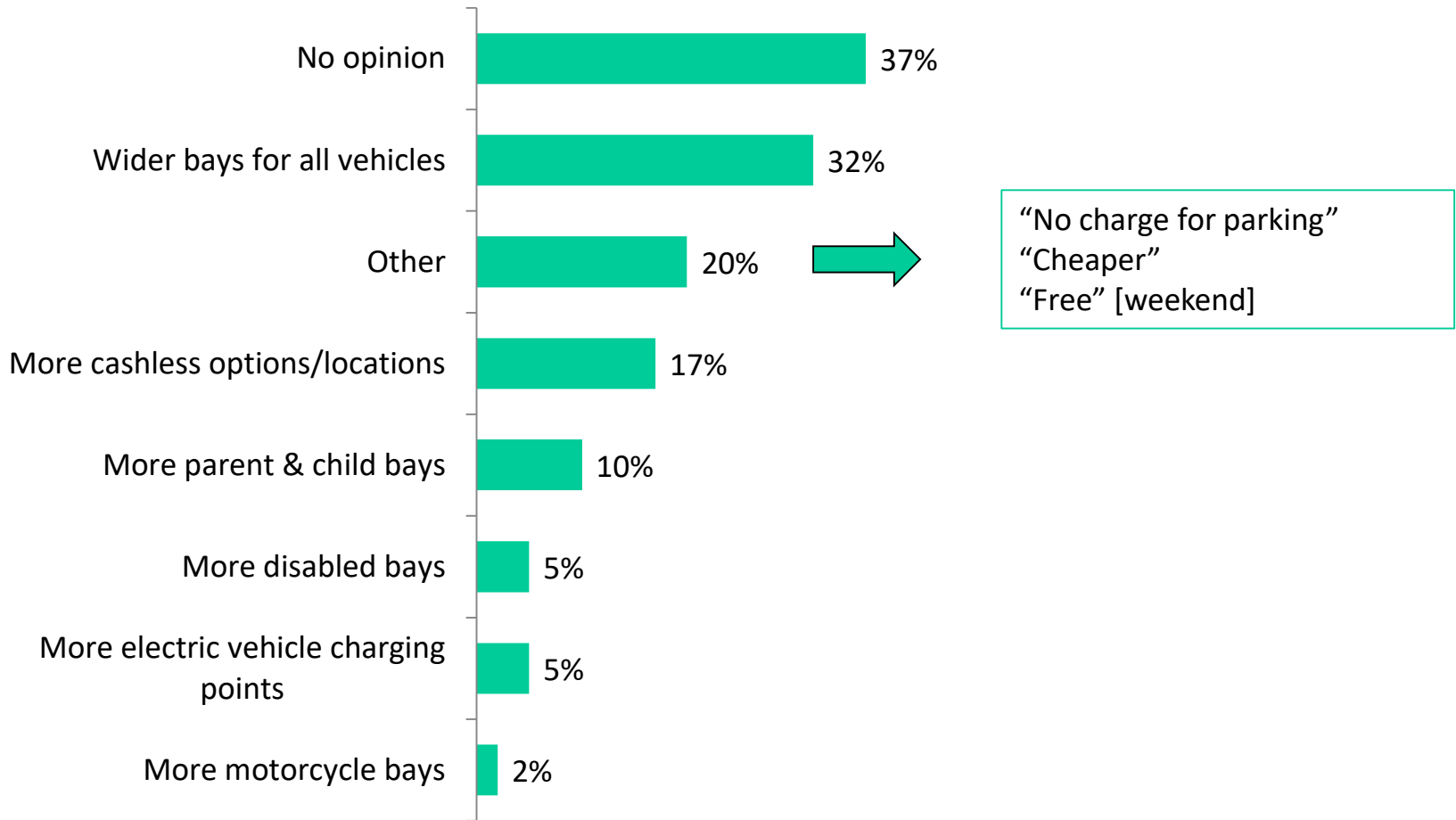


Q11. What is the most important factor to you when selecting your parking location?
Base: Total sample (1177)

Whilst a third were of no opinion about potential improvements, wider bays would be welcomed. Verbatim feedback also indicates a dissatisfaction with current parking charges.

Potential improvements: All car parks

71



Q10. How could this car park be improved?
 Base: All completes (4368)

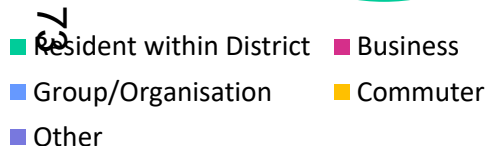
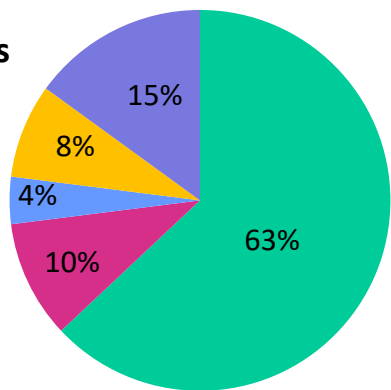
OVERVIEW BY TOWN



Across Huntingdon half the sample use car parks for retail purposes on a regular basis. The average length of stay is between 1-2 hours.

Huntingdon: All car parks

User status

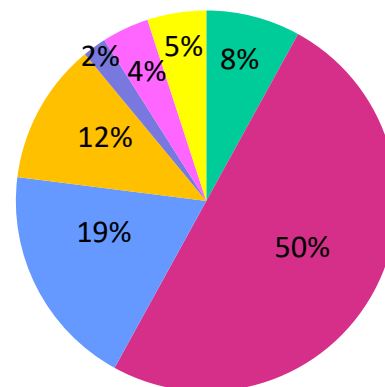


9%
with car park permit

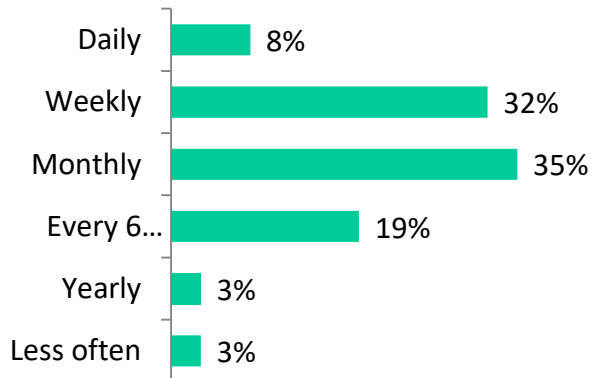
33%
on their own

8%
use the mobile
payment service

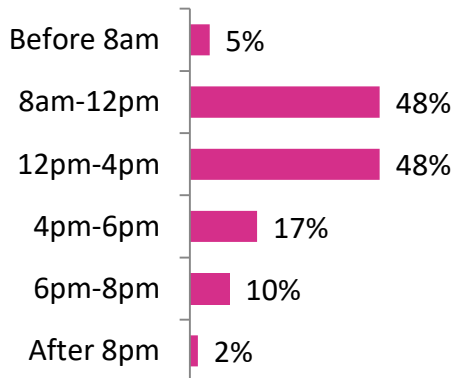
Main reason for use



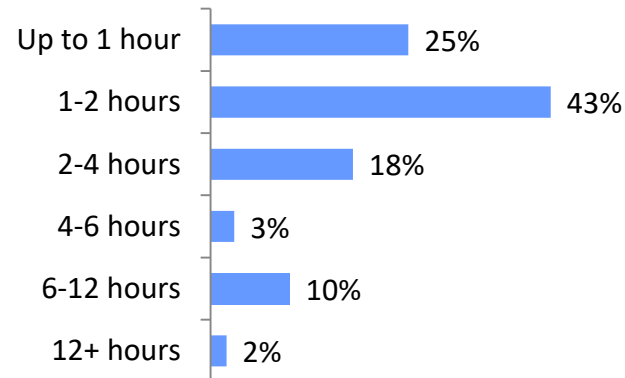
Frequency of use



Time of day



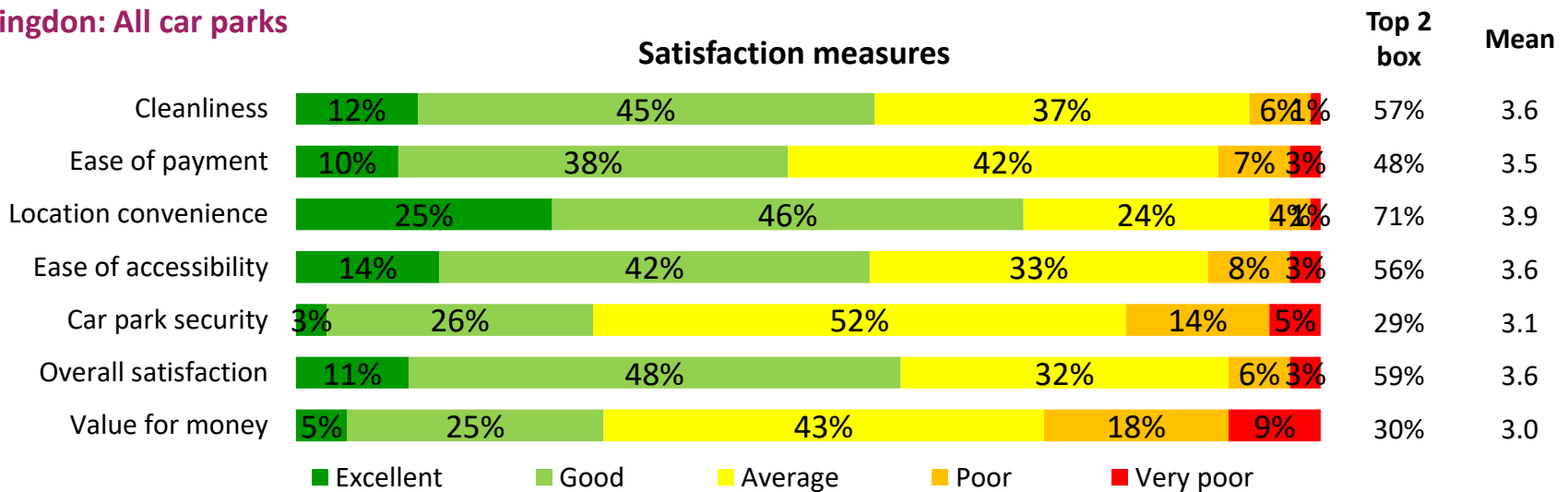
Average length of stay



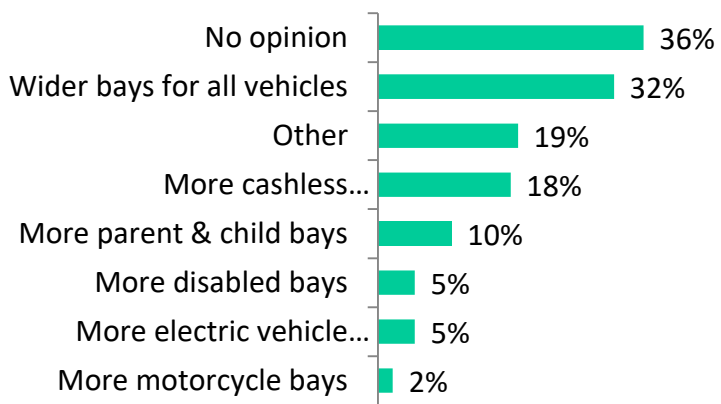
Whilst a quarter considered location convenience ‘excellent’ a similar proportion were dissatisfied with value for money. In terms of potential improvements, a third indicated a desire for wider bays.

Huntingdon: All car parks

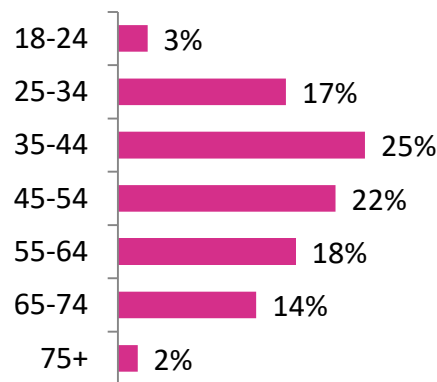
74



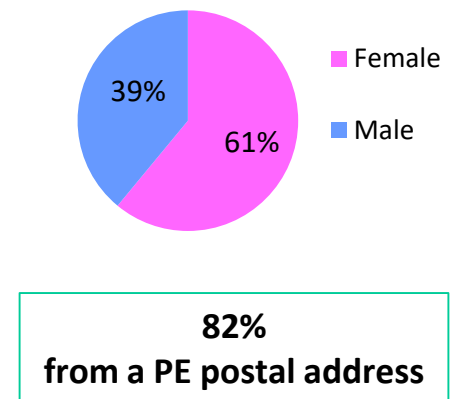
Potential improvements



Age



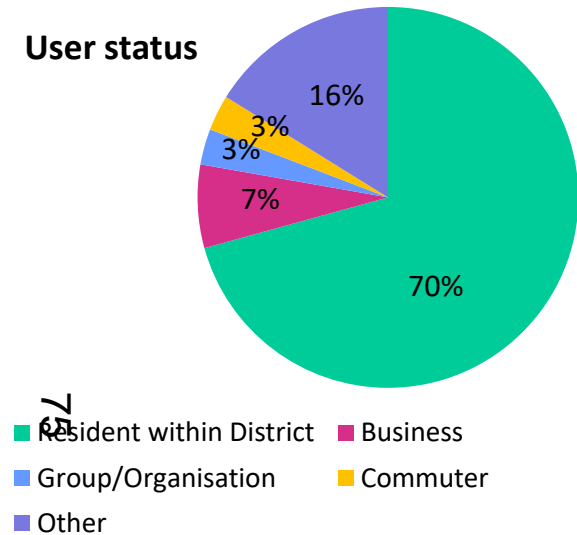
Gender



St Ives car parks are predominantly used for retail and by district residents. With frequent usage between 8am and 4pm, users generally stay for up to 2 hours.

St Ives: All car parks

User status

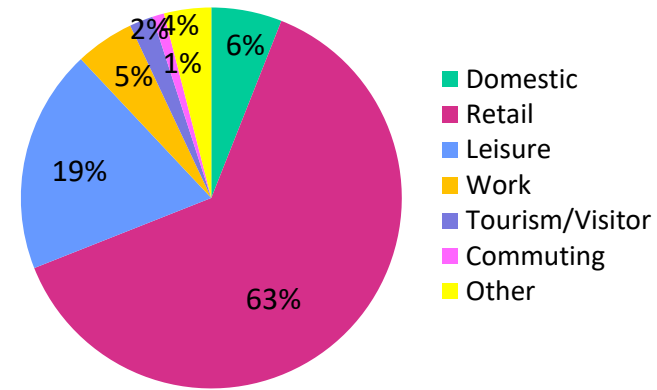


4%
with car park permit

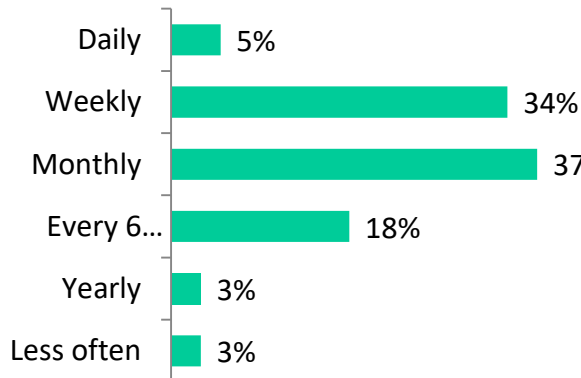
31%
on their own

6%
use the mobile
payment service

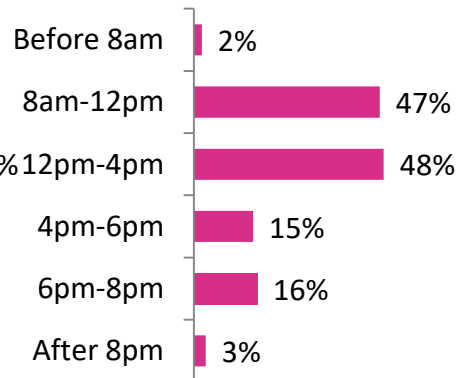
Main reason for use



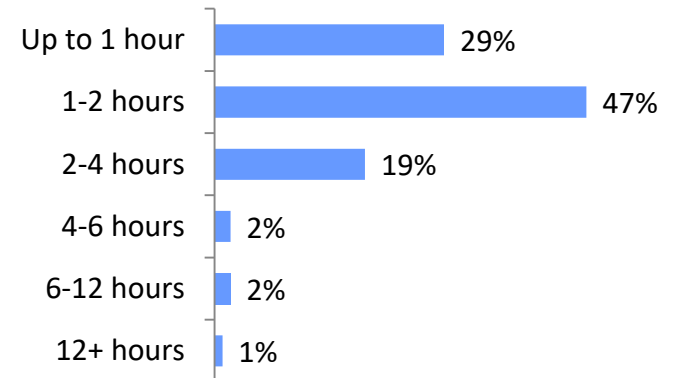
Frequency of use



Time of day



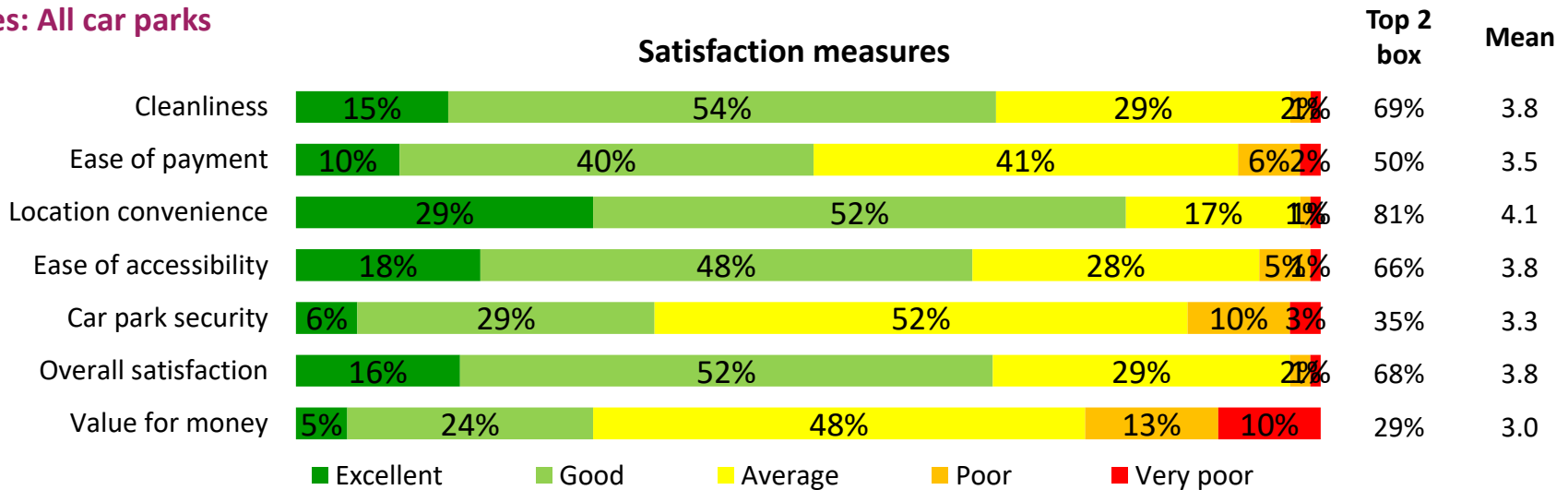
Average length of stay



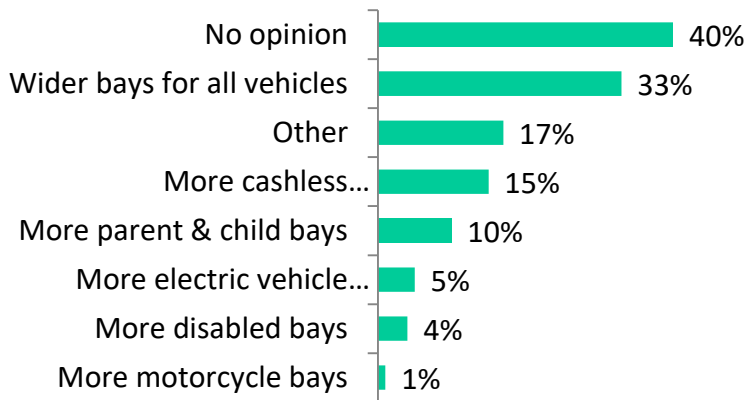
More than two thirds are satisfied with the car parks in St Ives with location convenience also highly rated. Value for money is of concern with 'cheaper parking' being requested as an improvement.

St Ives: All car parks

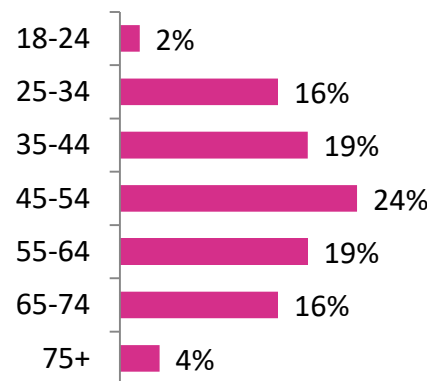
76



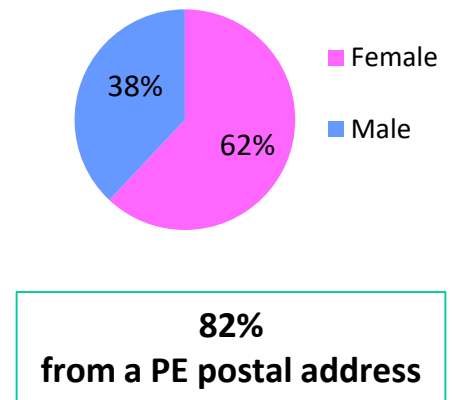
Potential improvements



Age



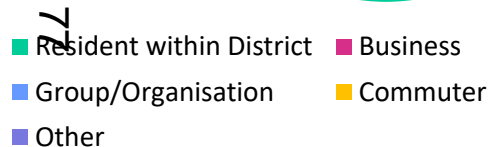
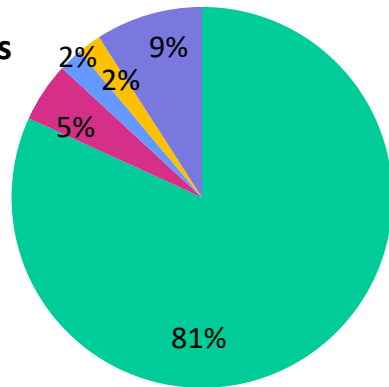
Gender



Retail and leisure account for more than three-quarters of usage occasions. On average, a third only park for up to an hour.

St Neots: All car parks

User status

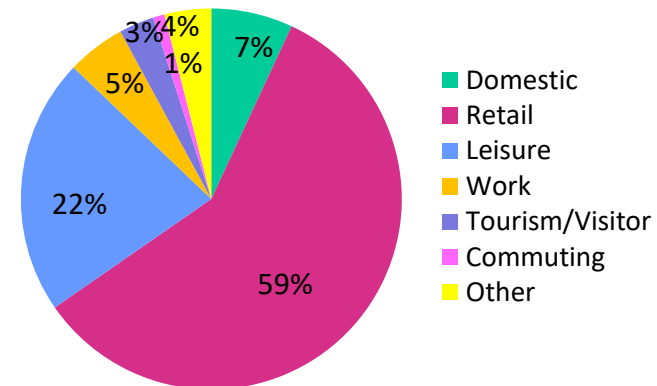


4%
with car park permit

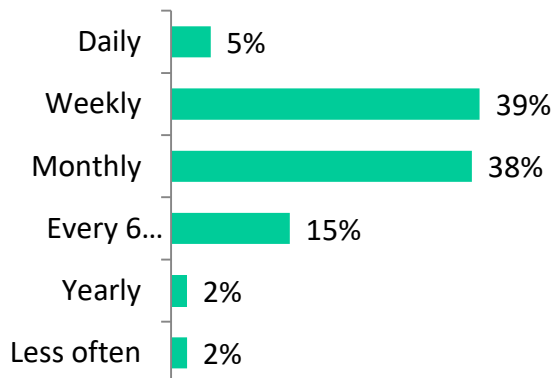
28%
on their own

5%
use the mobile
payment service

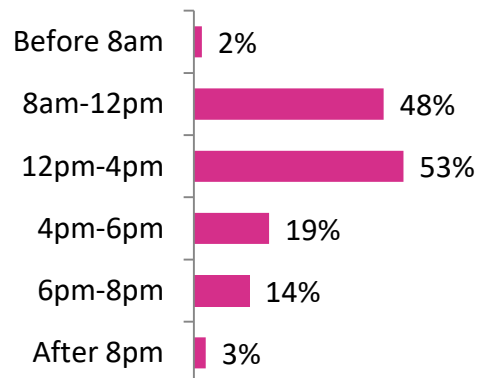
Main reason for use



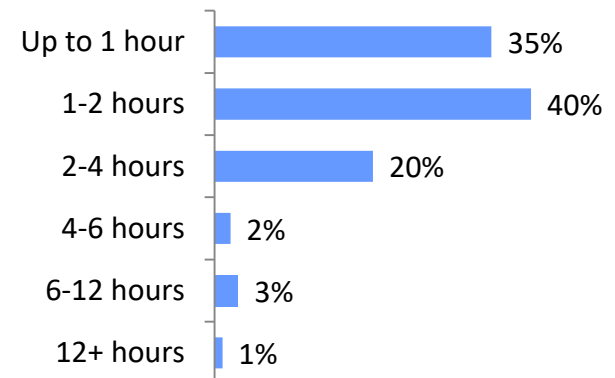
Frequency of use



Time of day



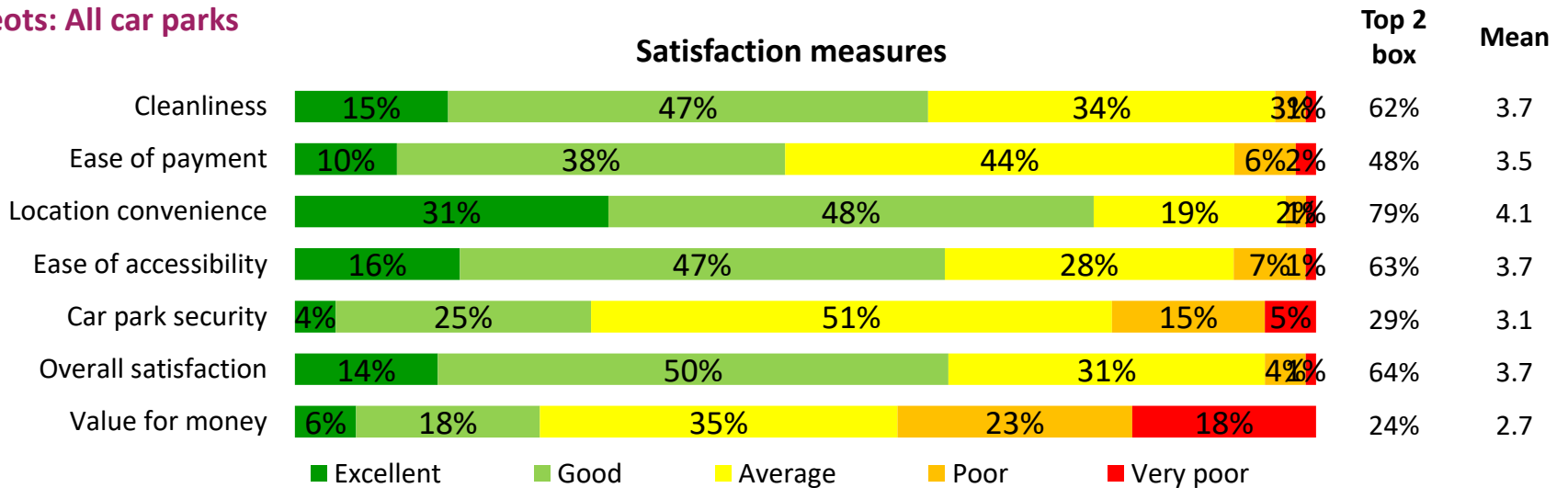
Average length of stay



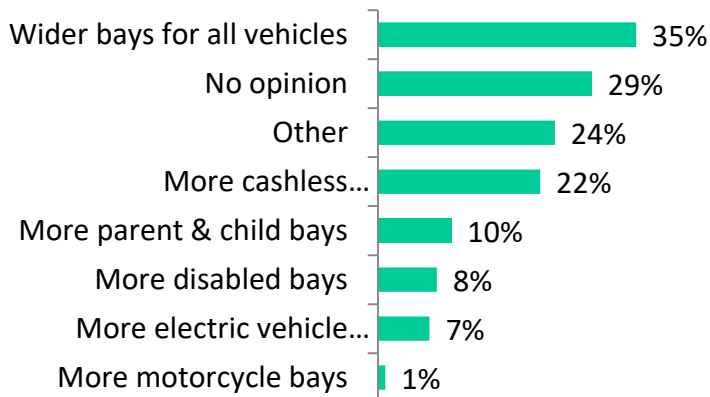
More than two-fifths rated value for money negatively, however, a third considered location convenience 'excellent'. Wider bays for all vehicles would be welcomed by more than a third of the sample.

St Neots: All car parks

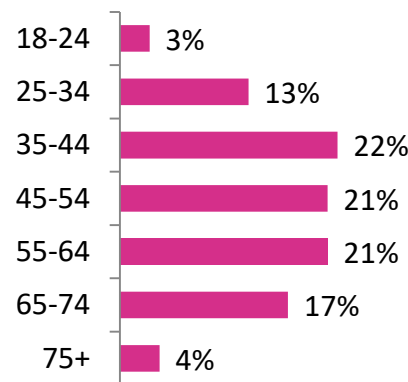
78



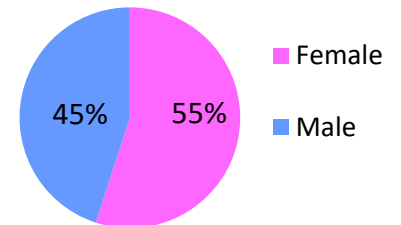
Potential improvements



Age



Gender



76%
from a PE postal address

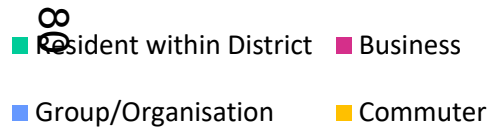
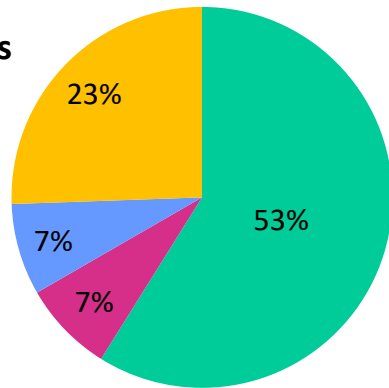


INDIVIDUAL CAR PARK OVERVIEW: GODMANCHESTER

A variety of uses albeit not very often. A third use the car park for 6-12 hours indicating this is potentially used by workers in the town.

Godmanchester: Bridge Place

User status

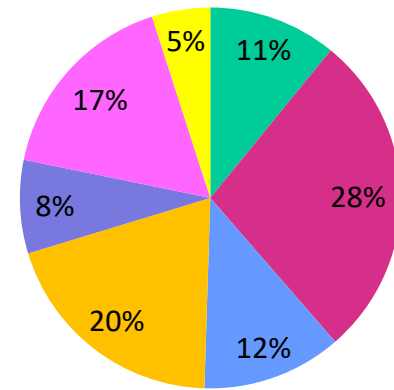


22%
with car park permit

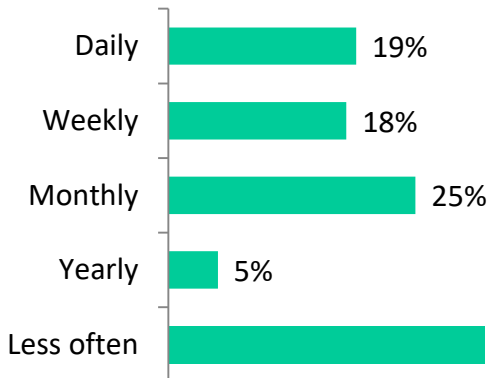
47%
on their own

14%
use the mobile
payment service

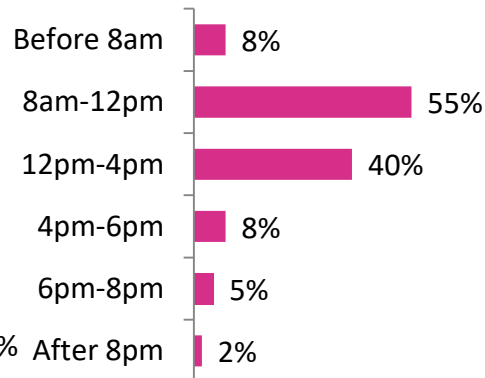
Main reason for use



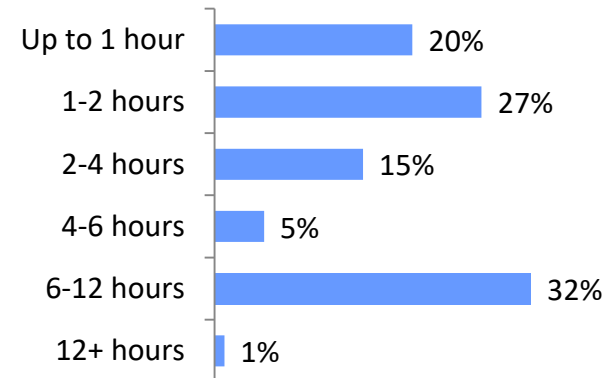
Frequency of use



Time of day



Average length of stay

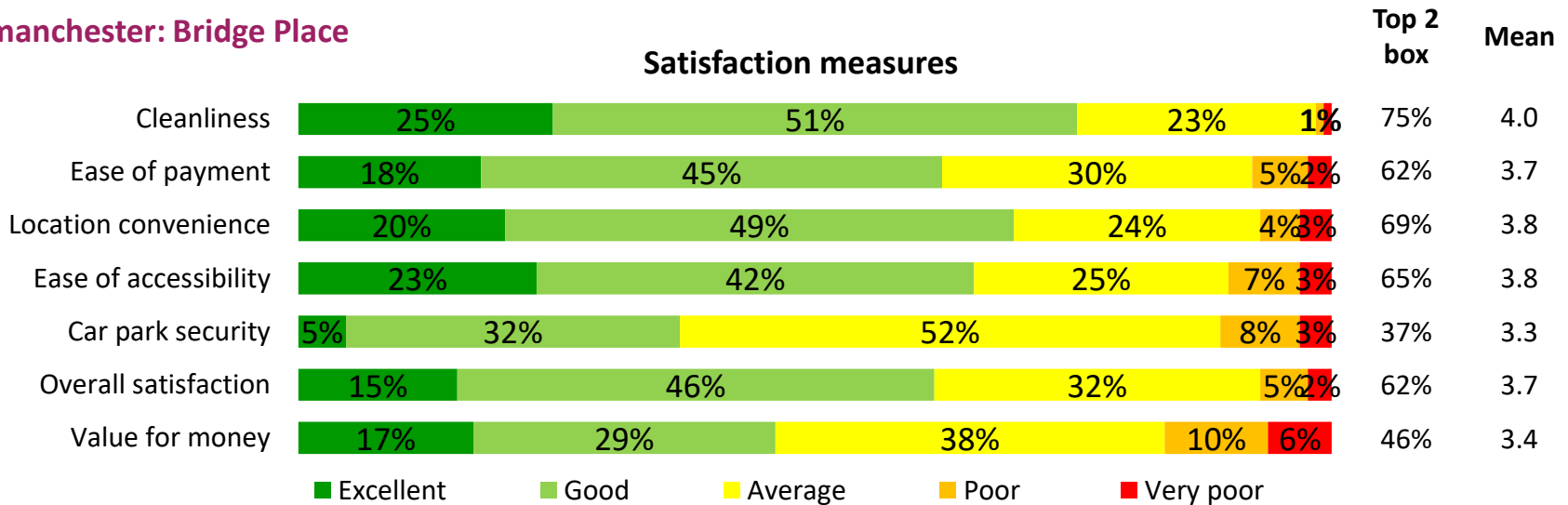


Overall satisfaction was high and this is reflected with more than half expressing no opinion for potential improvements.

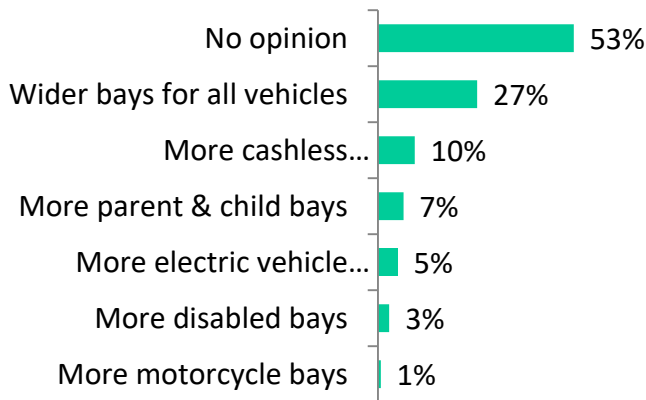
18

Godmanchester: Bridge Place

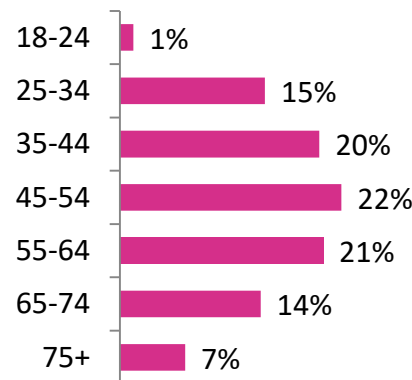
Satisfaction measures



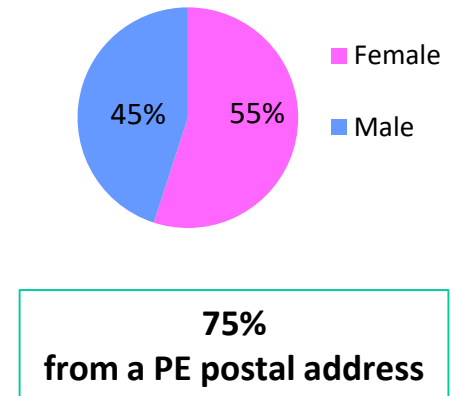
Potential improvements



Age



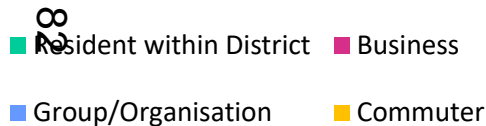
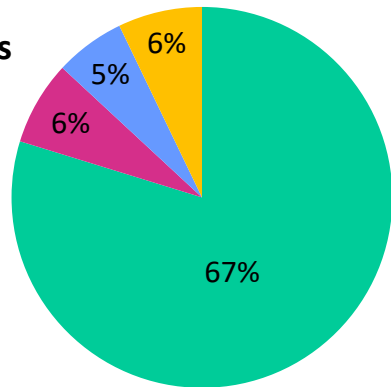
Gender



A short stay car park used by residents for domestic, retail and leisure purposes across a wide day part.

Godmanchester: Mill Yard

User status

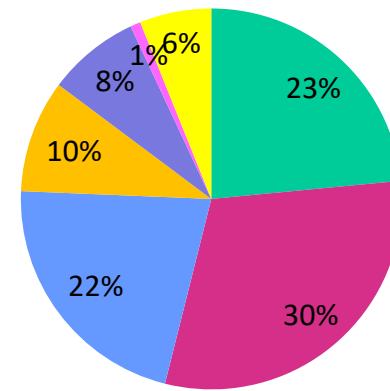


0%
with car park permit

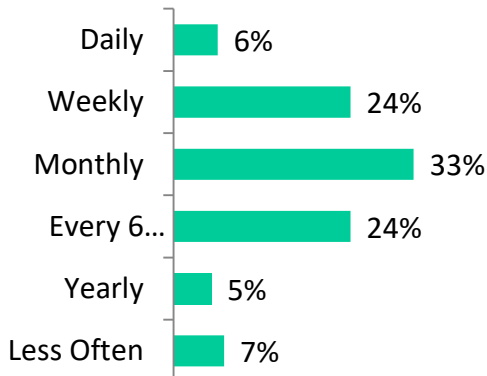
36%
on their own

No mobile payment
service available

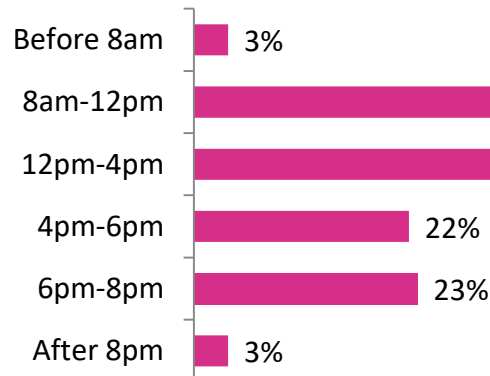
Main reason for use



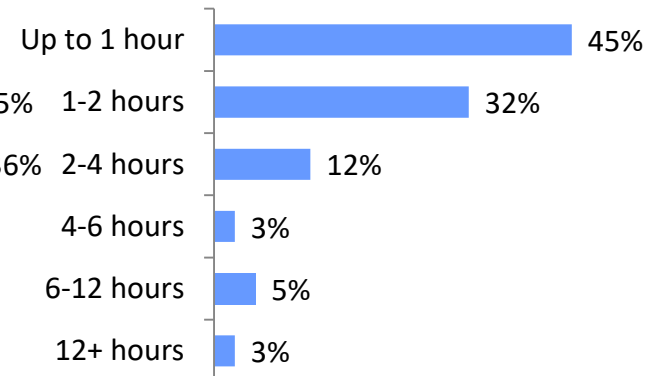
Frequency of use



Time of day



Average length of stay

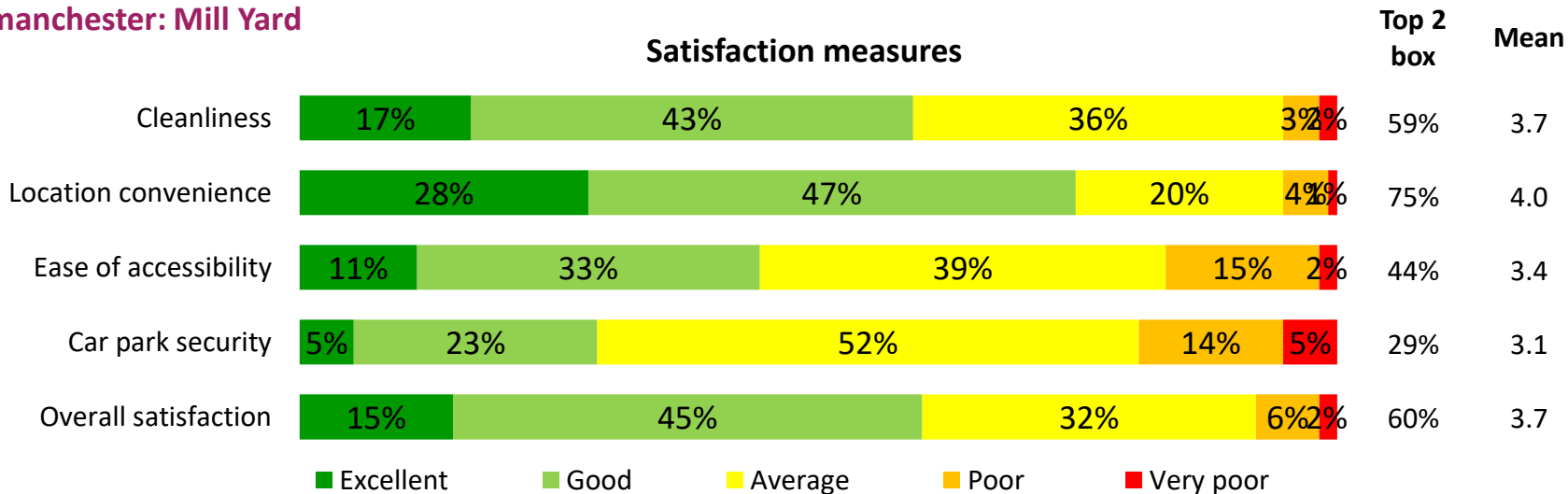


A convenient location with half offering no opinion on potential improvements.

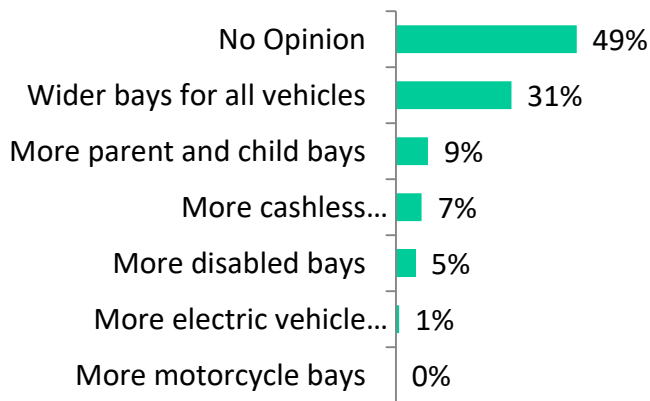
Godmanchester: Mill Yard

83

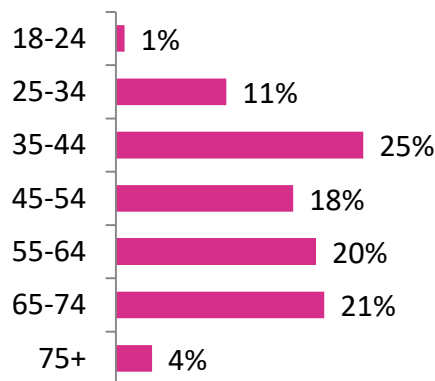
Satisfaction measures



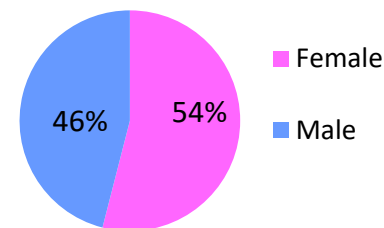
Potential improvements



Age



Gender



82%
from a PE postal address

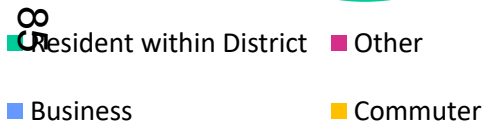
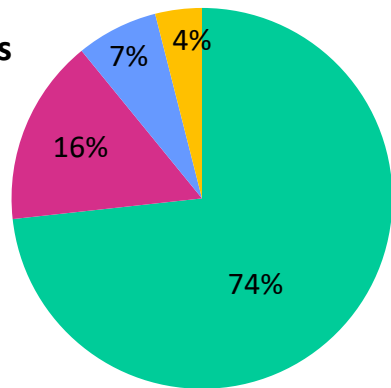


INDIVIDUAL CAR PARK OVERVIEW: HUNTINGDON

As expected for a supermarket car park, use is predominantly retail, short stay (2 hours) on a weekly or monthly basis.

Huntingdon: Sainsbury's

User status

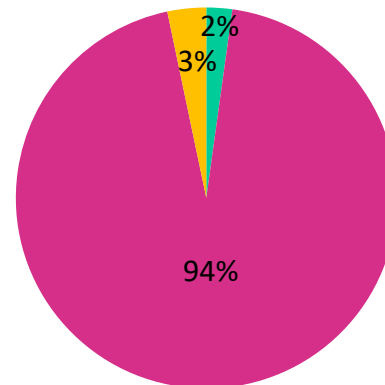


2%
with car park permit

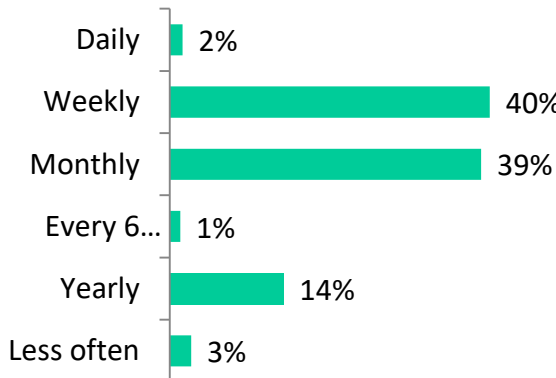
32%
on their own

No mobile payment
service available

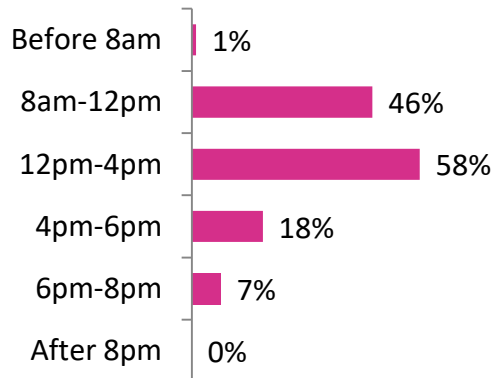
Main reason for use



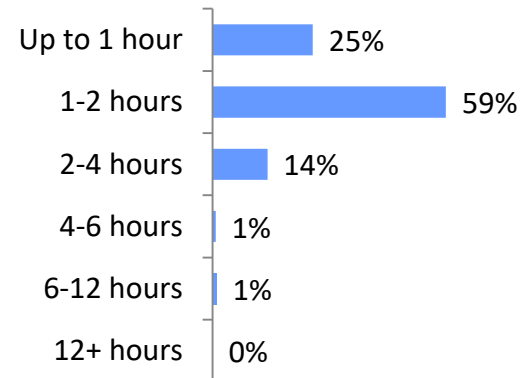
Frequency of use



Time of day

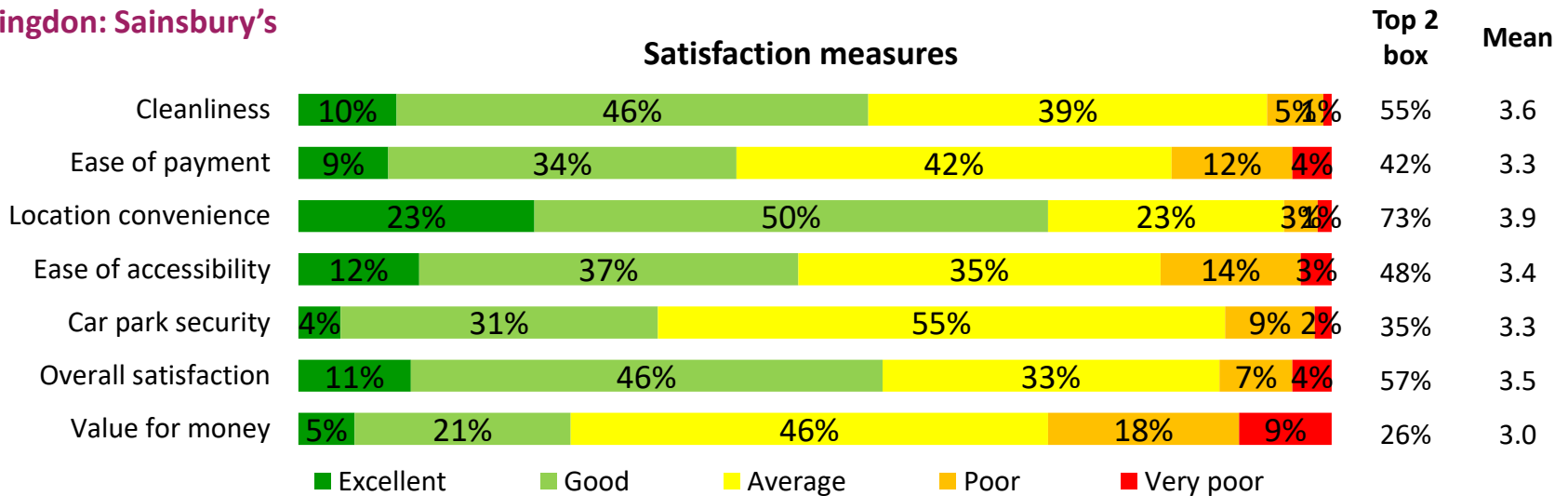


Average length of stay



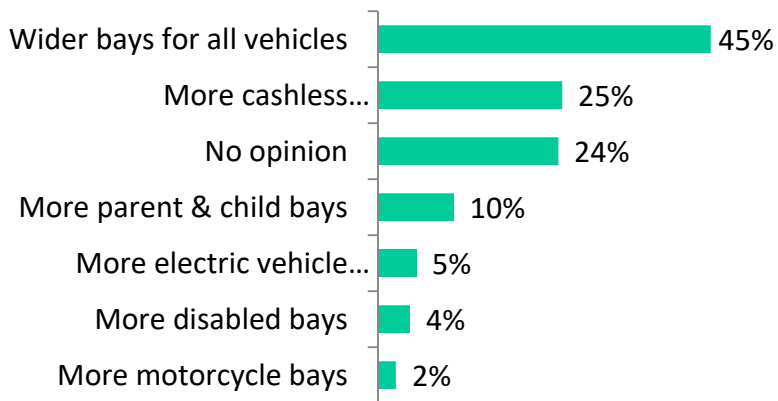
A convenient location but almost half would like wider bays for all vehicles. A quarter indicated a desire for more cashless payment options.

Huntingdon: Sainsbury's

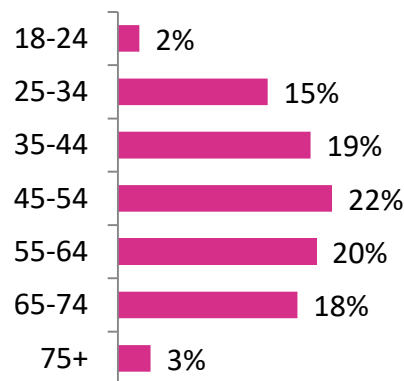


98

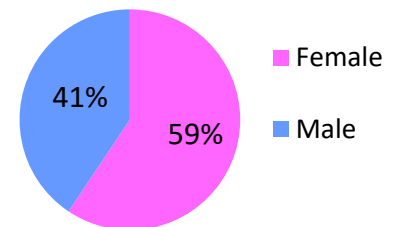
Potential improvements



Age



Gender

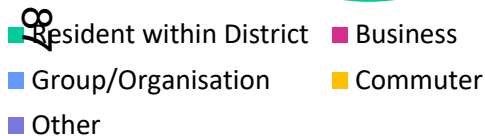
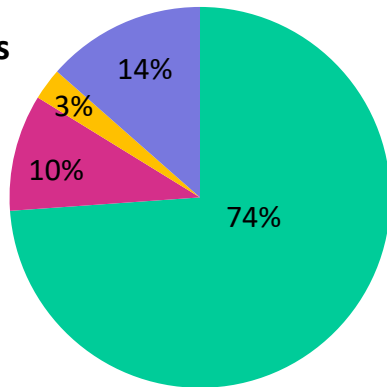


82%
from a PE postal address

Predominantly used by residents for retail purposes, 6 in 10 only stay for an hour with a third usually the sole car occupant.

Huntingdon: High Street

User status

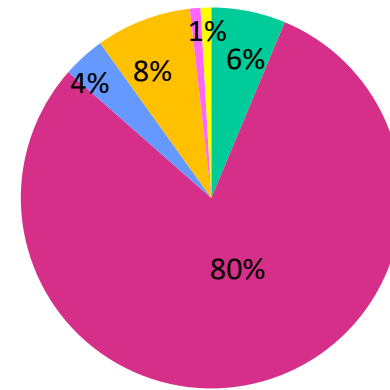


1%
with car park permit

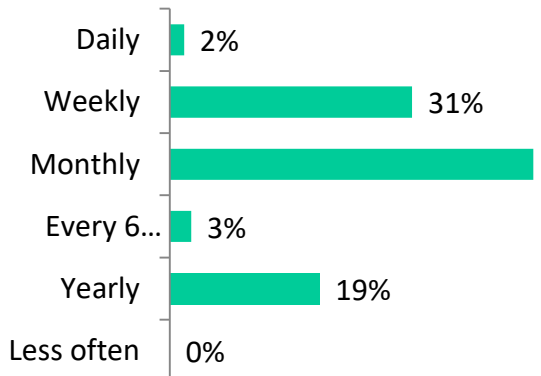
34%
on their own

No mobile payment
service available

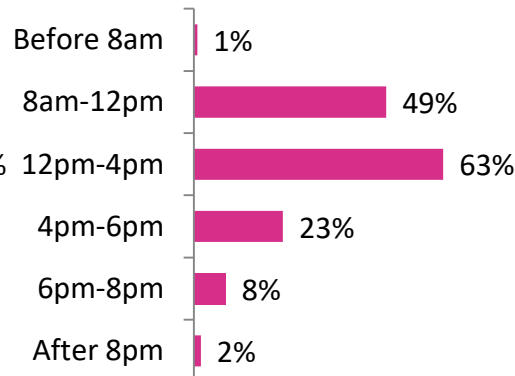
Main reason for use



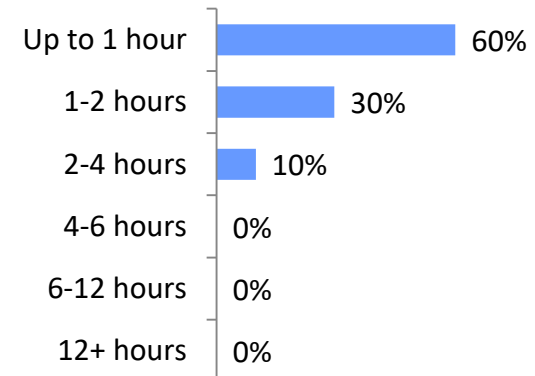
Frequency of use



Time of day

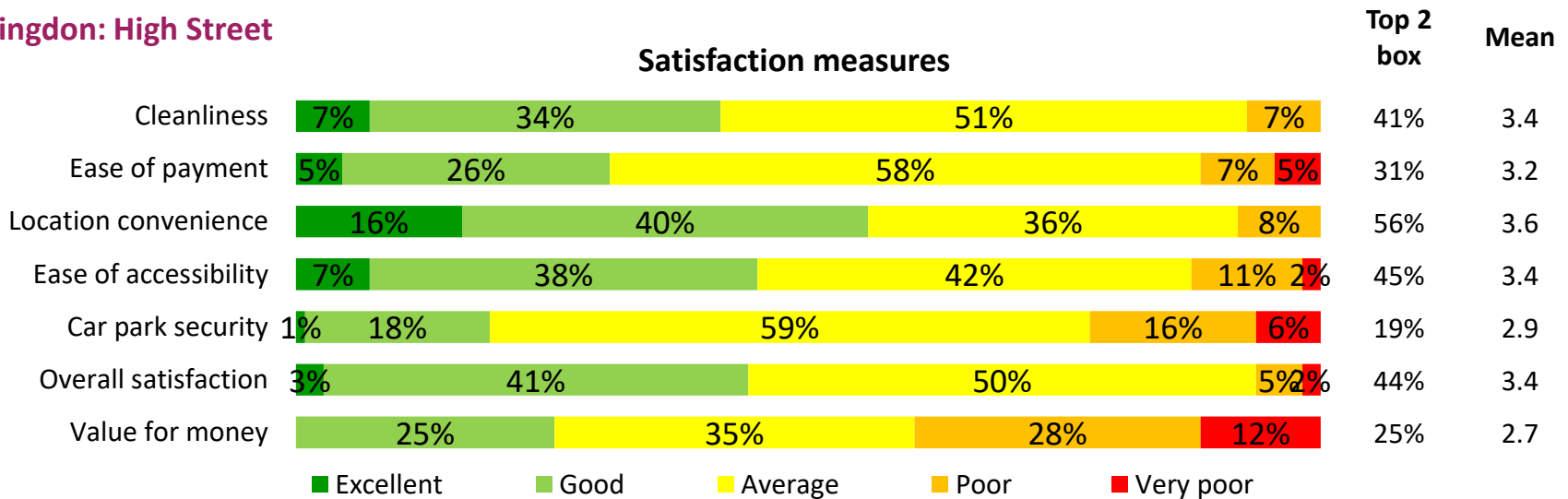


Average length of stay

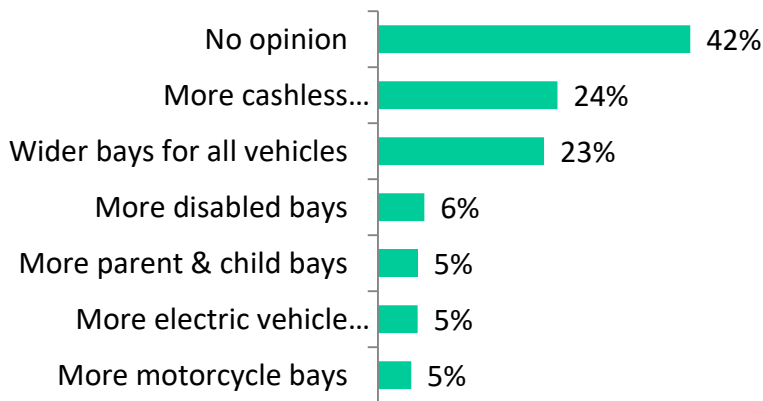


Poor value for money with concerns over car park security. Whilst 4 in 10 held no opinion on improvements a quarter would welcome more cashless payment options.

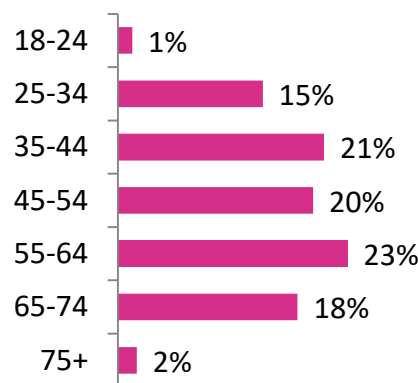
Huntingdon: High Street



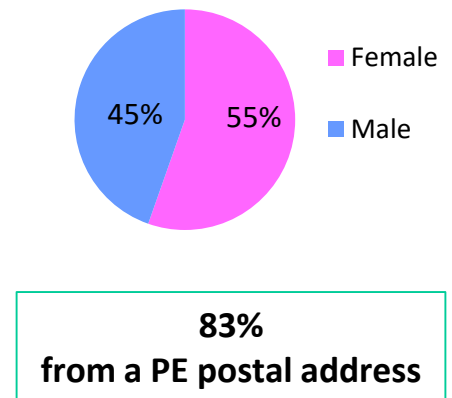
Potential improvements



Age



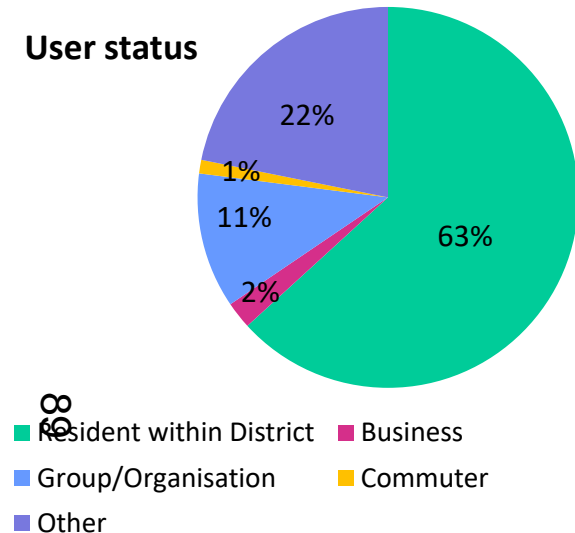
Gender



Higher usage of the mobile payment service than seen for other car parks and less likely to be on own given the location and reason for use.

Huntingdon: Hinchingbrooke County Park

User status

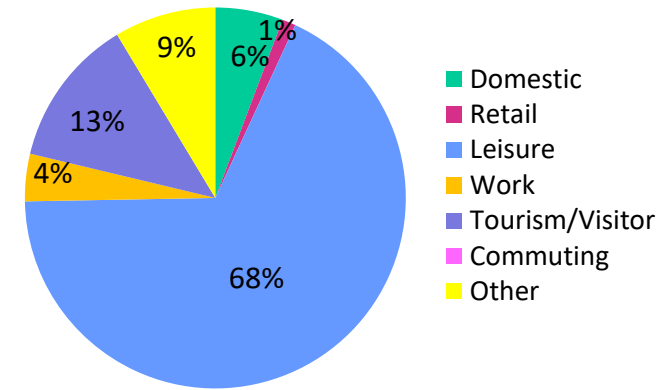


5%
with car park permit

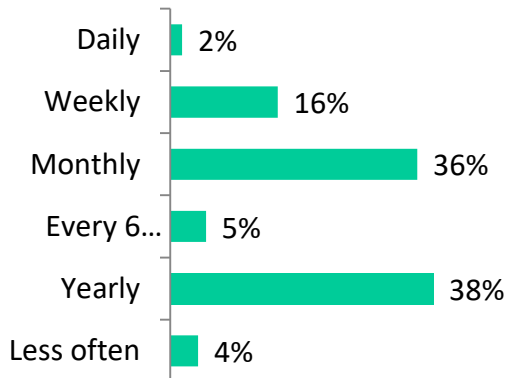
15%
on their own

14%
use the mobile
payment service

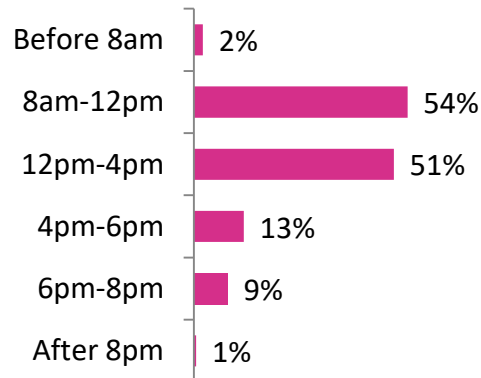
Main reason for use



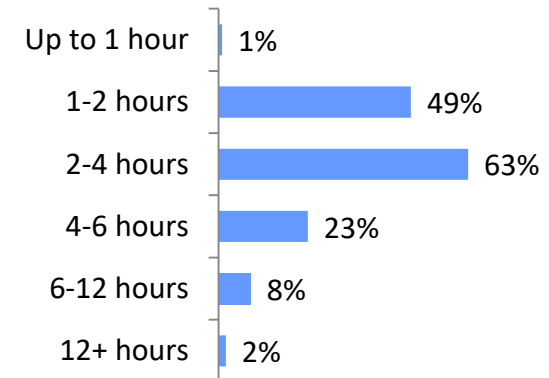
Frequency of use



Time of day



Average length of stay

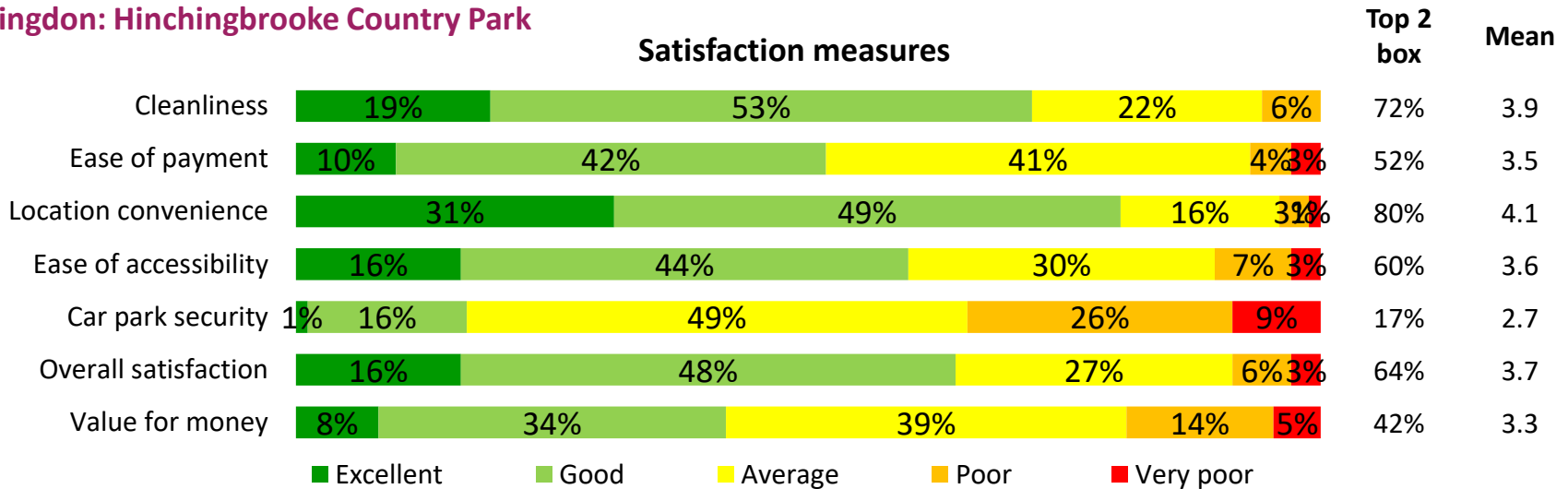


Convenient location for use of the country park, cleanliness, accessibility and overall satisfaction all highly rated.

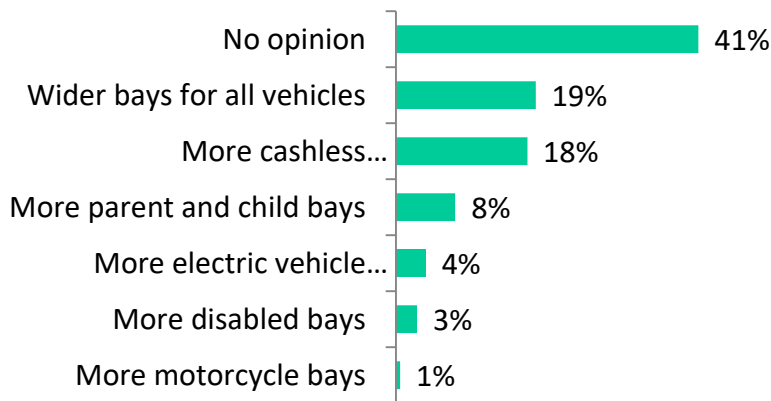
Huntingdon: Hinchingsbrooke Country Park

06

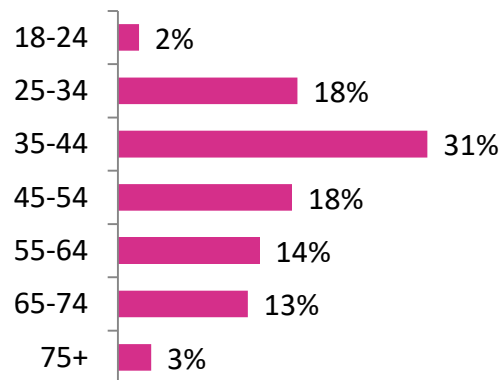
Satisfaction measures



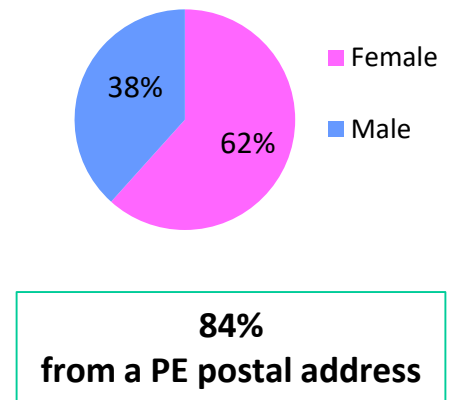
Potential improvements



Age



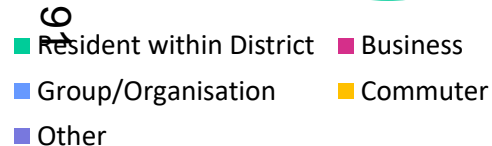
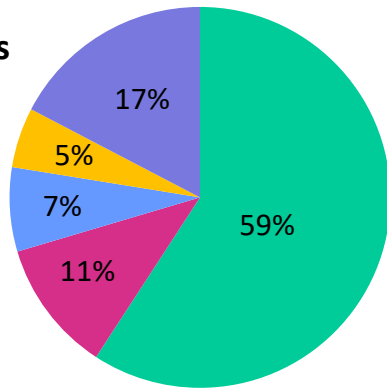
Gender



Predominantly used for leisure purposes, more than three-quarters stay for less than two hours although this spans a wide day part.

Huntingdon: One Leisure Dry Side

User status

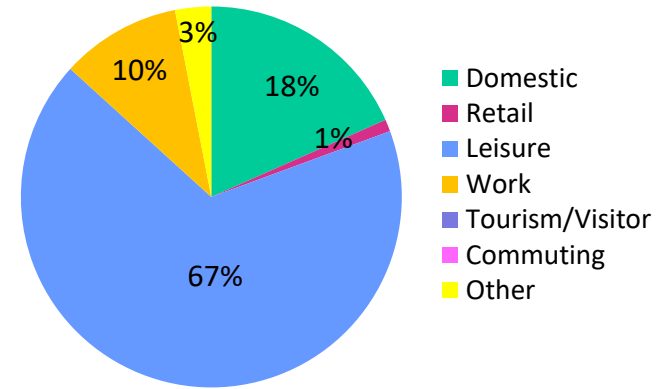


4%
with car park permit

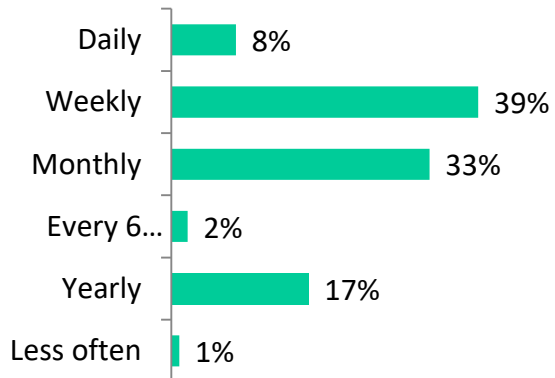
31%
on their own

No mobile payment
service available

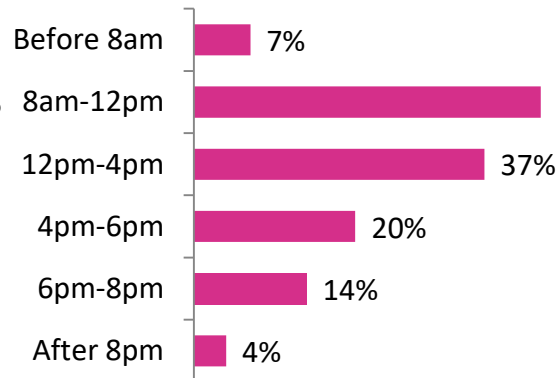
Main reason for use



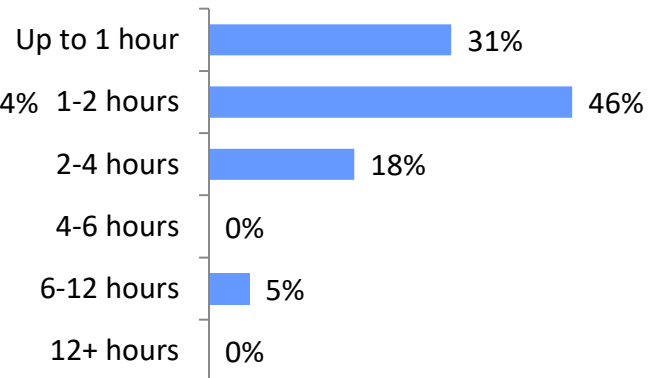
Frequency of use



Time of day



Average length of stay

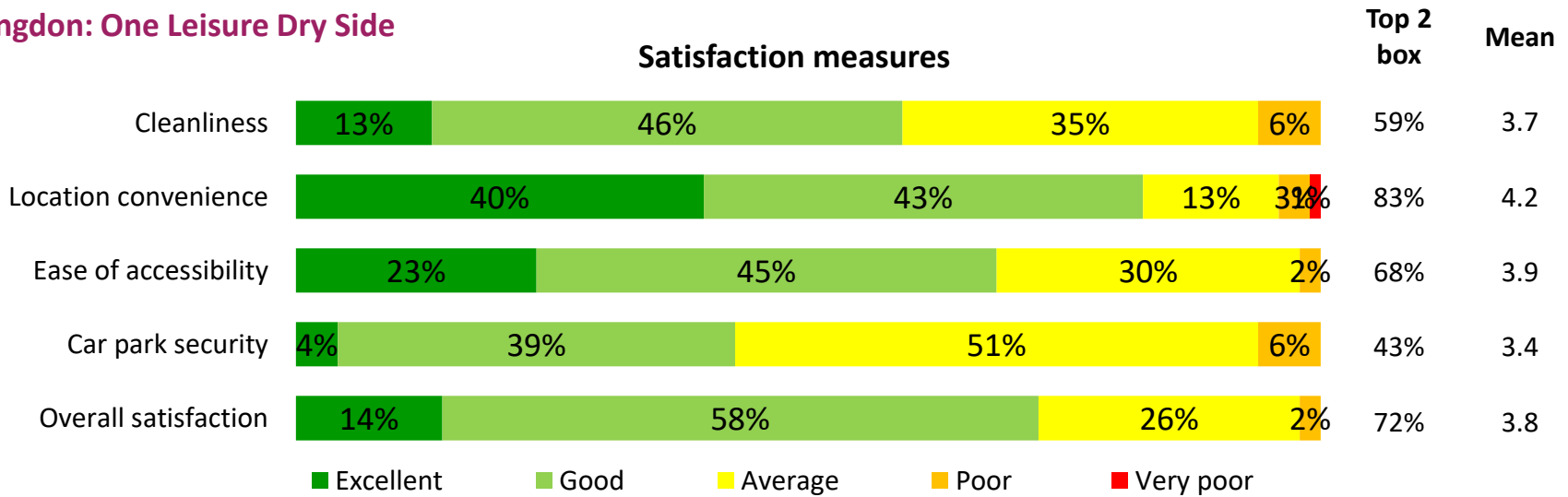


A highly convenient location for leisure with little negativity expressed for the satisfaction measures. More than half indicated no potential improvements.

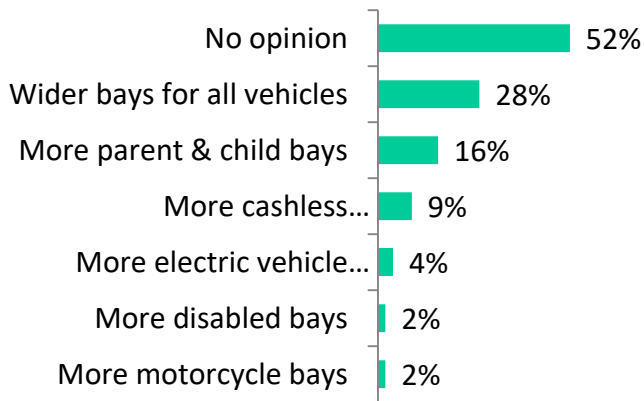
Huntingdon: One Leisure Dry Side

92

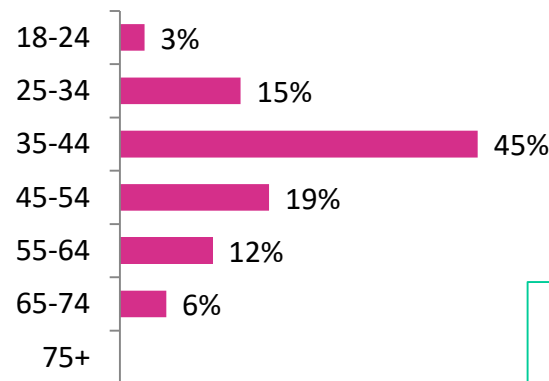
Satisfaction measures



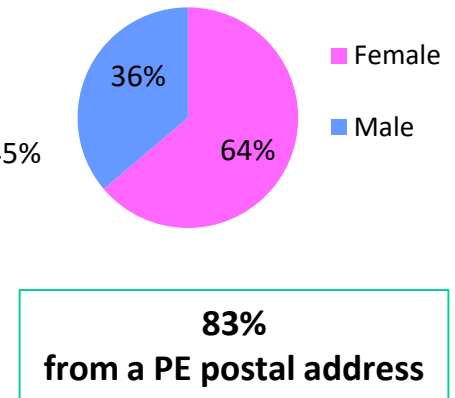
Potential improvements



Age



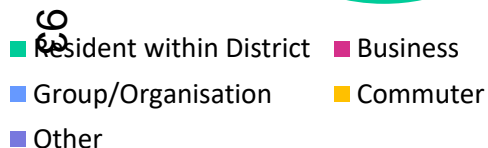
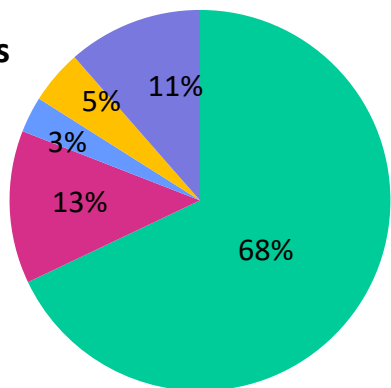
Gender



Most likely to be used for retail purposes, 2 in 5 are usually the sole occupant when parking in Princes Street.

Huntingdon: Princes Street

User status

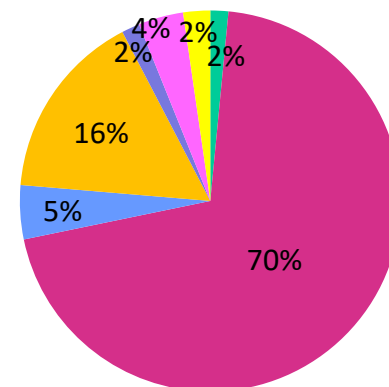


4%
with car park permit

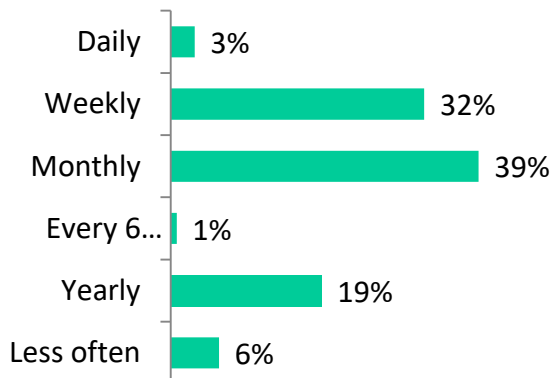
41%
on their own

15%
use the mobile payment service

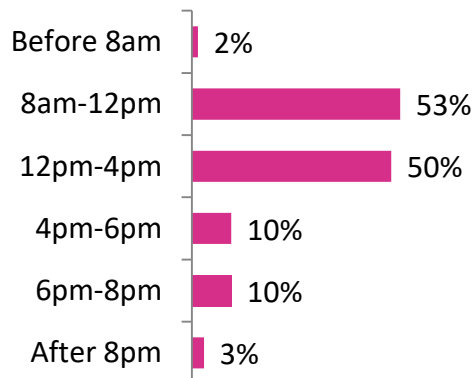
Main reason for use



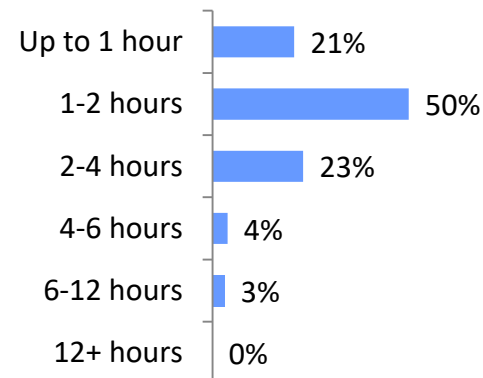
Frequency of use



Time of day



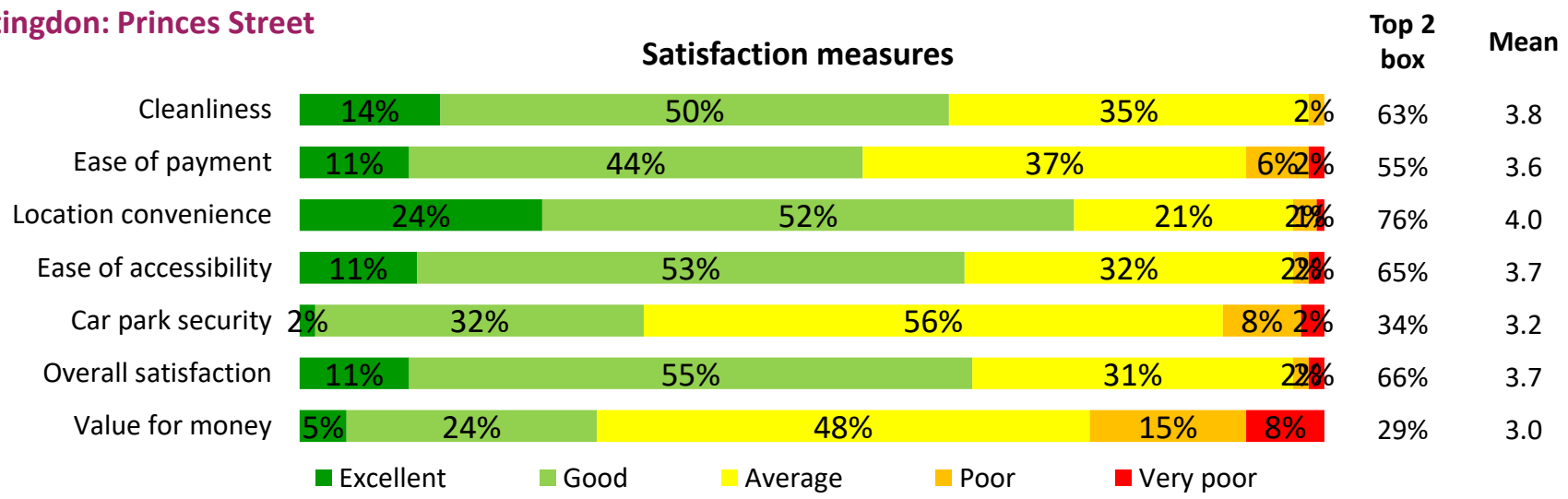
Average length of stay



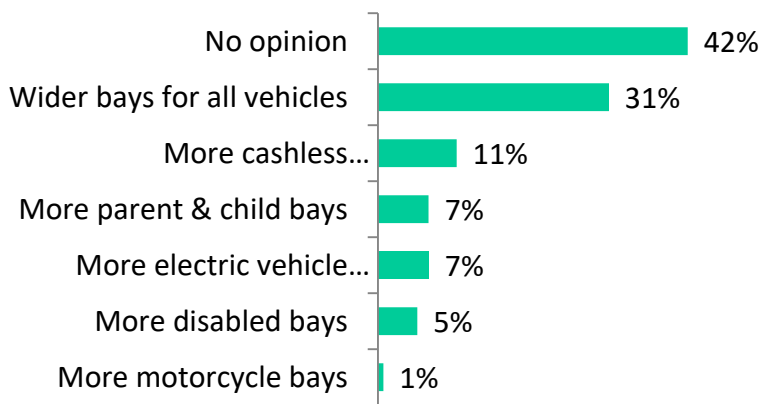
A convenient location with two-thirds satisfied with the car park. Higher level of dissatisfaction for value for money.

Huntingdon: Princes Street

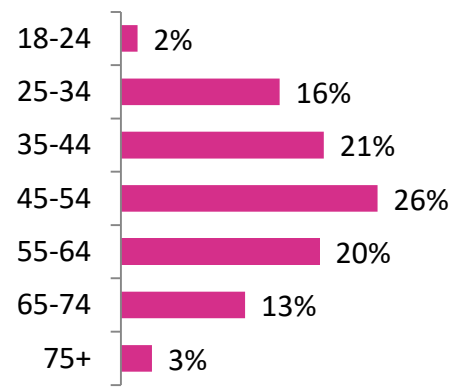
94



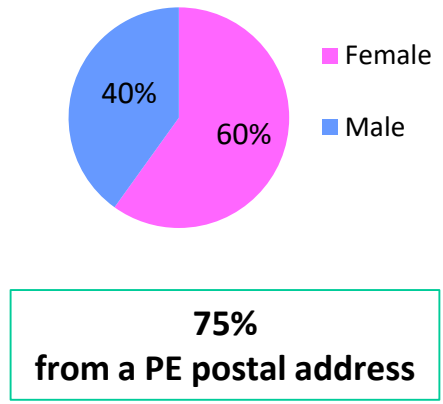
Potential improvements



Age



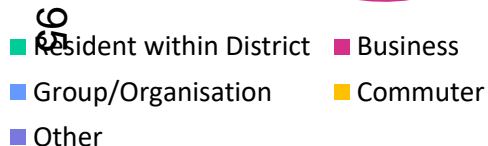
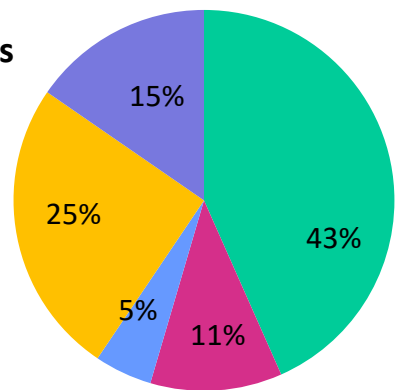
Gender



A higher level of car park permit holders with reasons for use and user type more varied than seen for other car parks.

Huntingdon: Riverside

User status

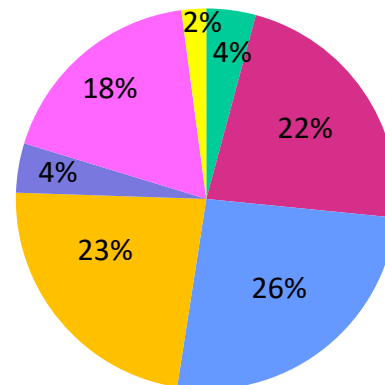


26%
with car park permit

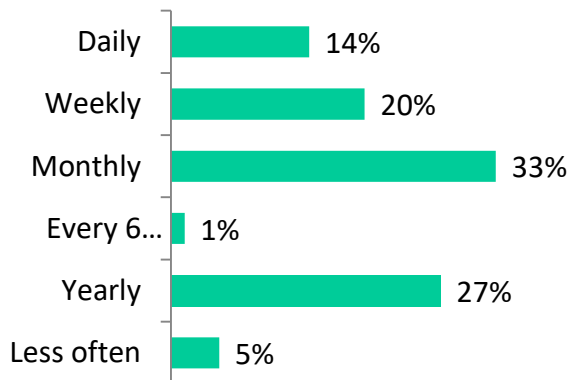
45%
on their own

13%
use the mobile payment service

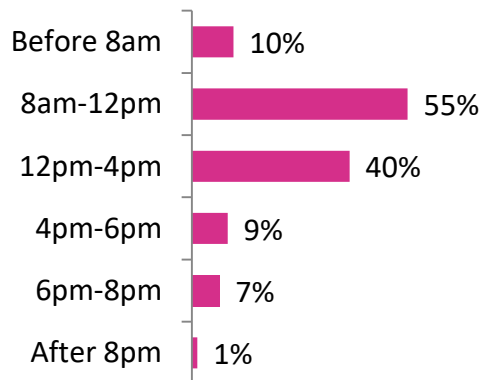
Main reason for use



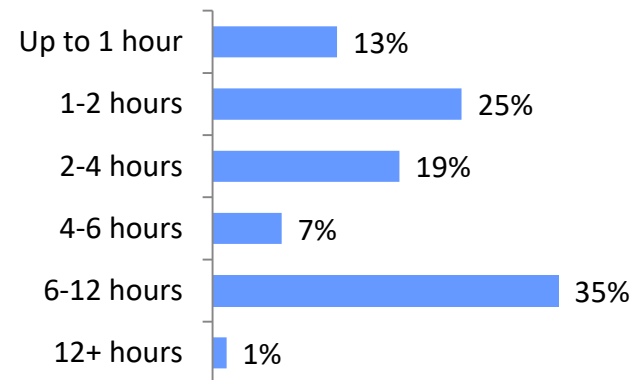
Frequency of use



Time of day

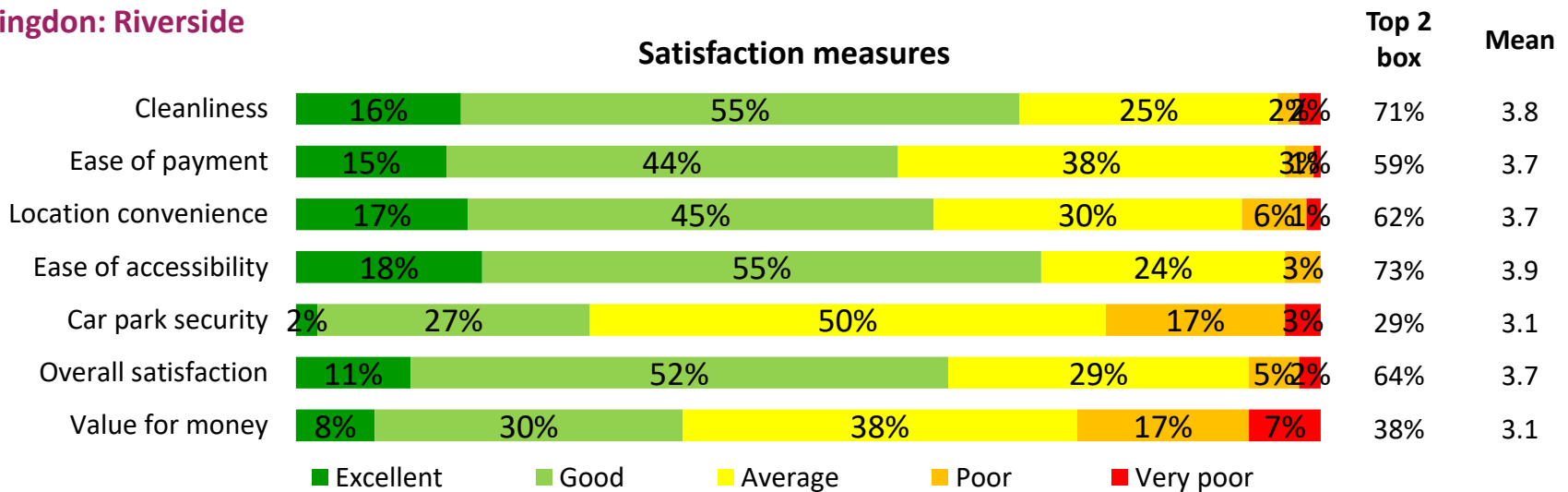


Average length of stay



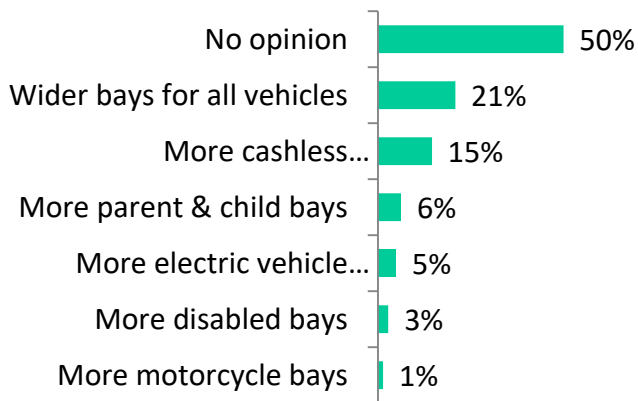
Solid response across the satisfaction measures although lower level of response for security and value for money. Half the sample held no opinion on potential improvements.

Huntingdon: Riverside

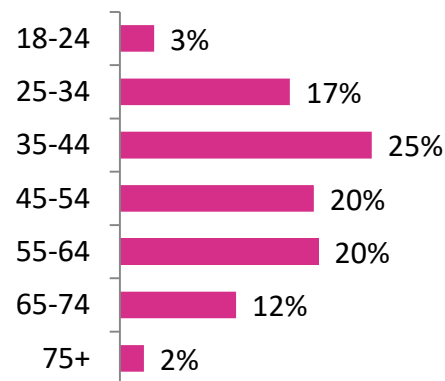


96

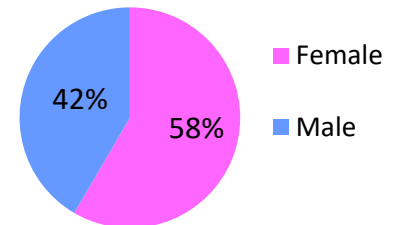
Potential improvements



Age



Gender



78%
from a PE postal address

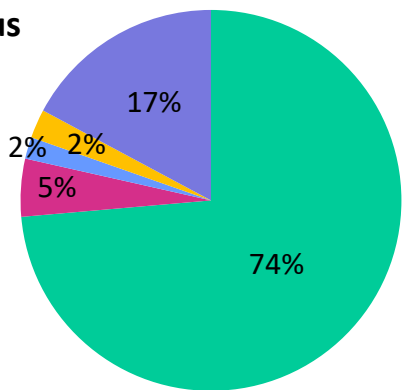


INDIVIDUAL CAR PARK OVERVIEW: ST IVES

Three-quarters use for retail purposes with frequency of use and length of stay reflective of this.

St Ives: Cattle Market Bus Station

User status



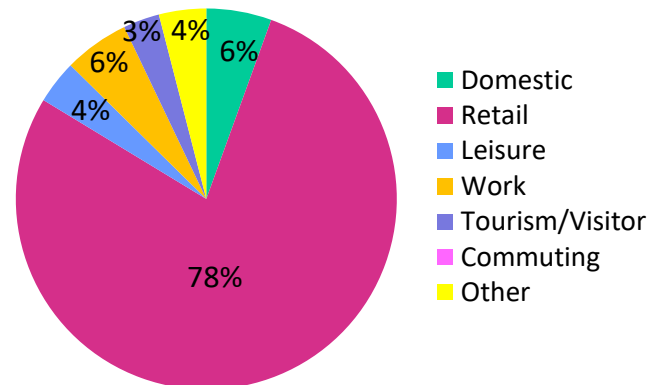
- Resident within District
- Business
- Group/Organisation
- Commuter
- Other

3%
with car park permit

27%
on their own

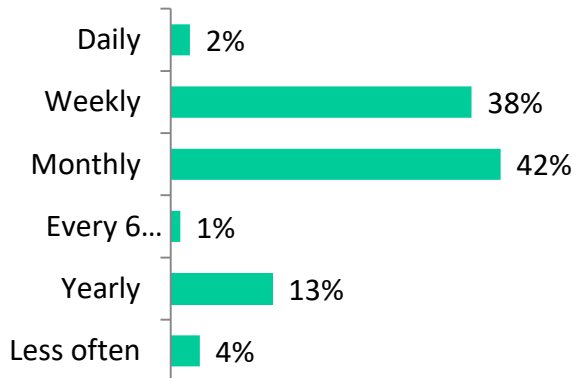
15%
use the mobile payment service

Main reason for use

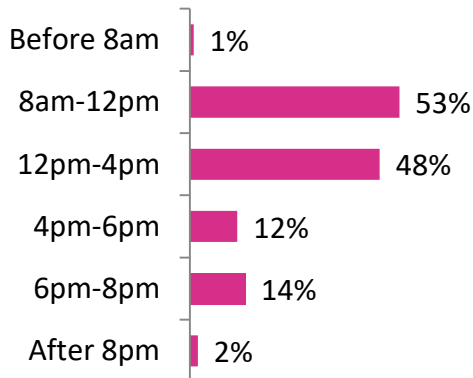


- Domestic
- Retail
- Leisure
- Work
- Tourism/Visitor
- Commuting
- Other

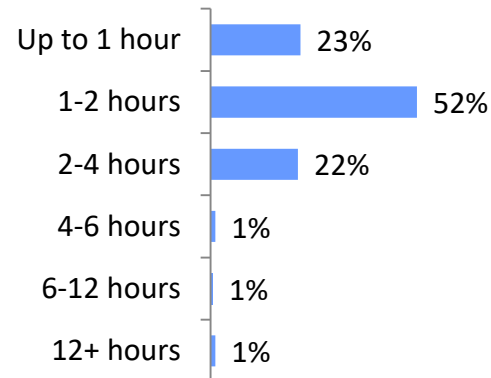
Frequency of use



Time of day



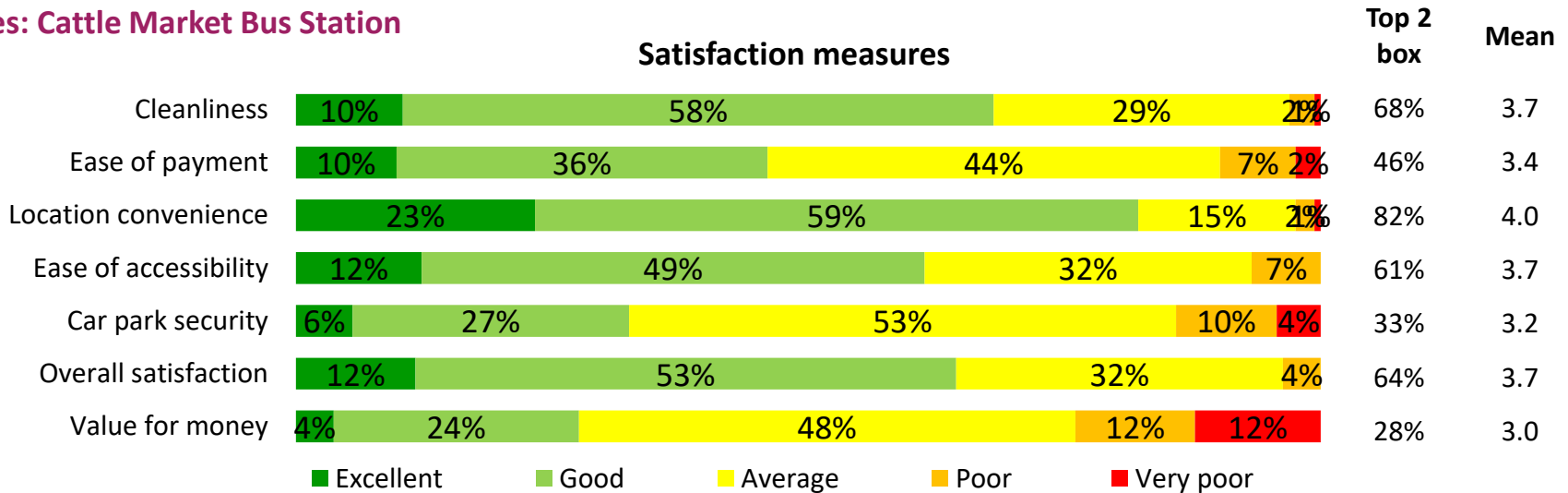
Average length of stay



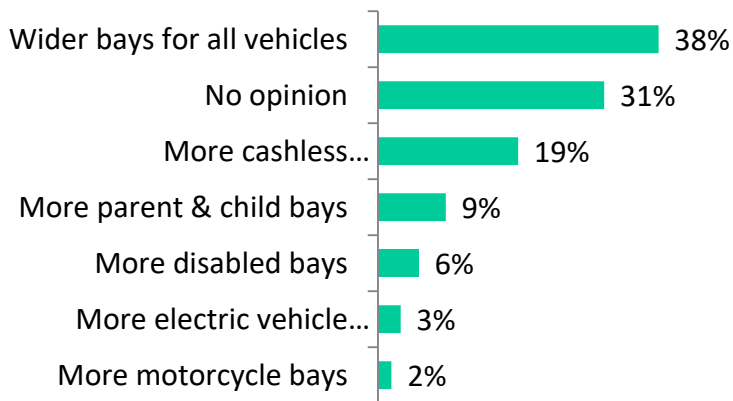
Almost two-thirds indicated positive overall satisfaction given location, accessibility and cleanliness. However, a quarter considered value for money poor.

66

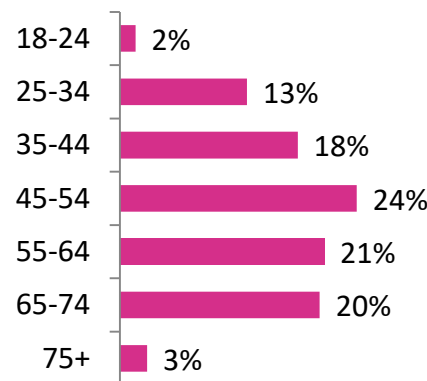
St Ives: Cattle Market Bus Station



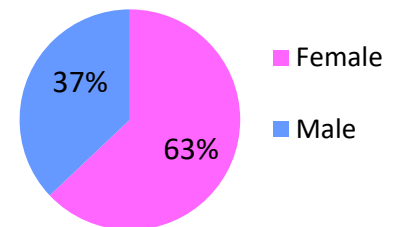
Potential improvements



Age



Gender

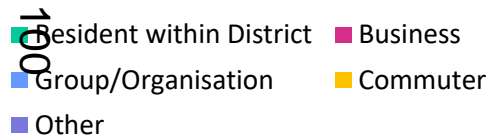
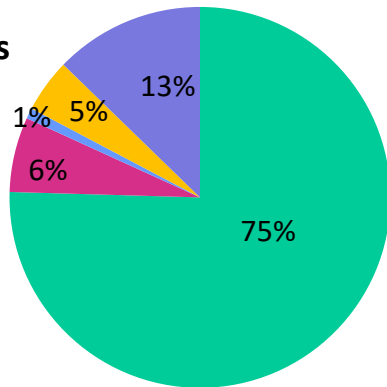


81%
from a PE postal address

Predominantly used by residents for retail purposes, two-thirds stay for less than 2 hours. More than 8 in 10 use at least monthly.

St Ives: Cattle Market Harrisons Way

User status

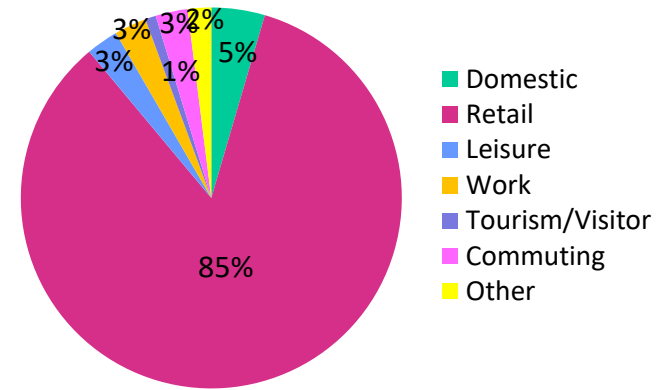


11%
with car park permit

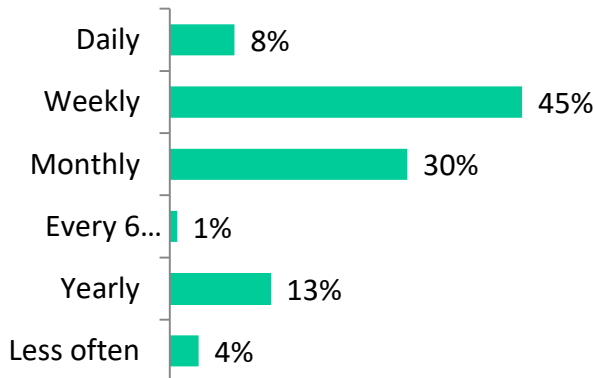
31%
on their own

16%
use the mobile payment service

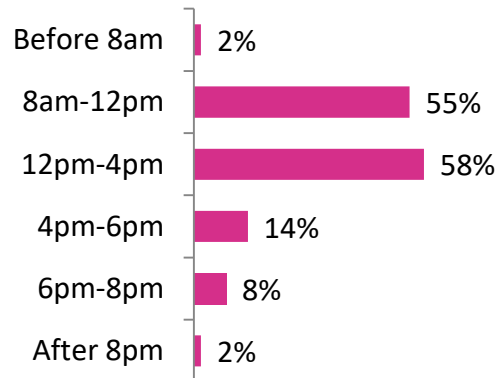
Main reason for use



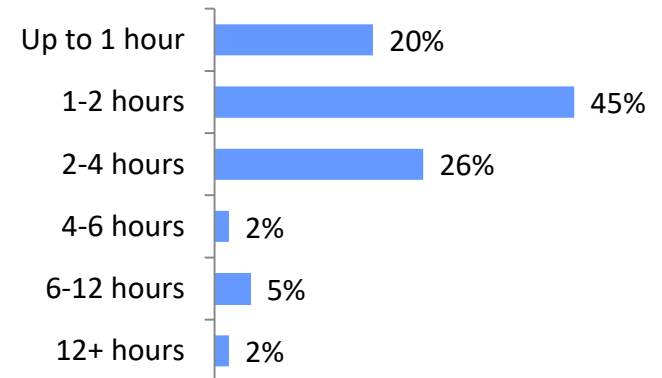
Frequency of use



Time of day



Average length of stay

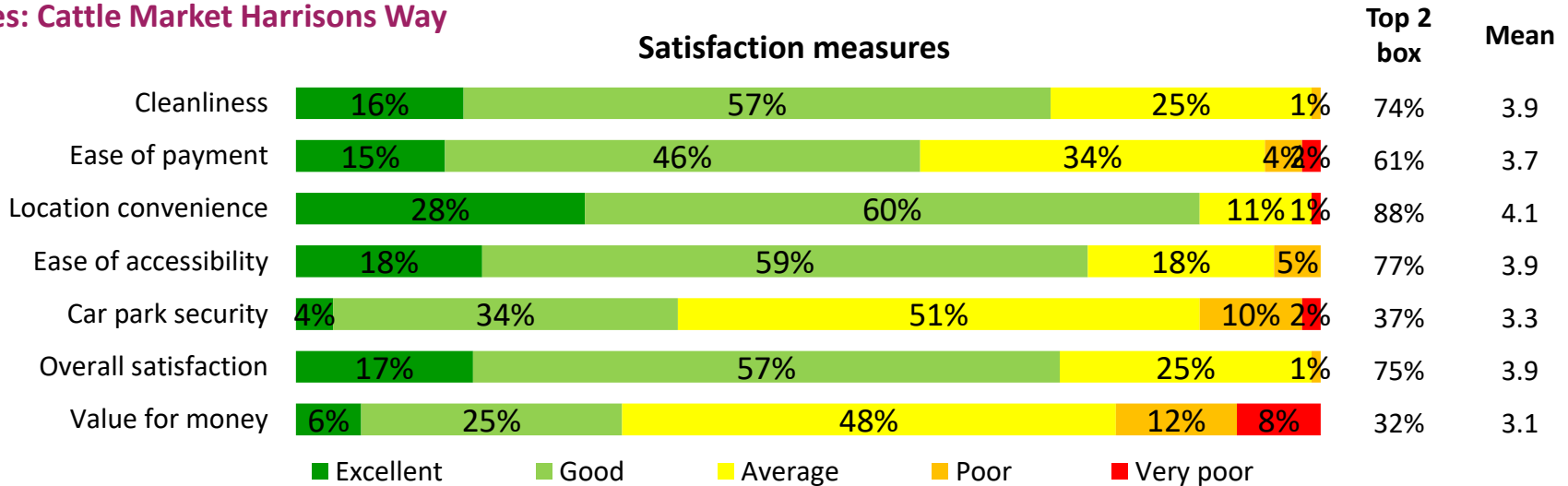


High level of overall satisfaction with more than a third indicating no opinion for potential improvements.

St Ives: Cattle Market Harrisons Way

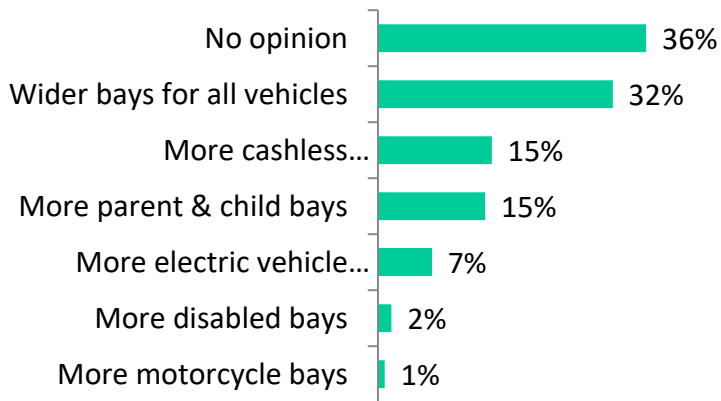
101

Satisfaction measures

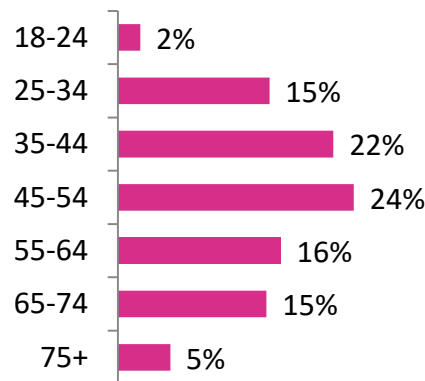


■ Excellent
 ■ Good
 ■ Average
 ■ Poor
 ■ Very poor

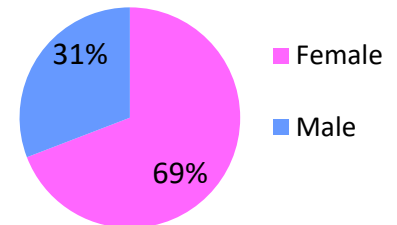
Potential improvements



Age



Gender

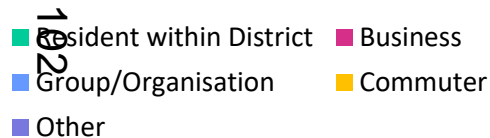
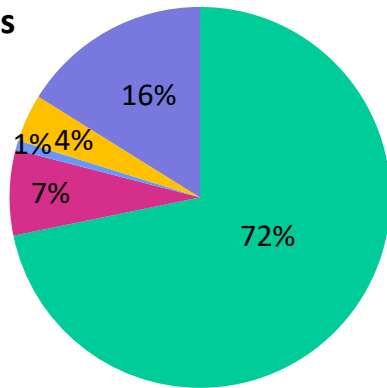


79%
from a PE postal address

Residents predominantly use this car park for retail. A quarter only stay for less than an hour but usage frequency is high.

St Ives: Globe Place

User status

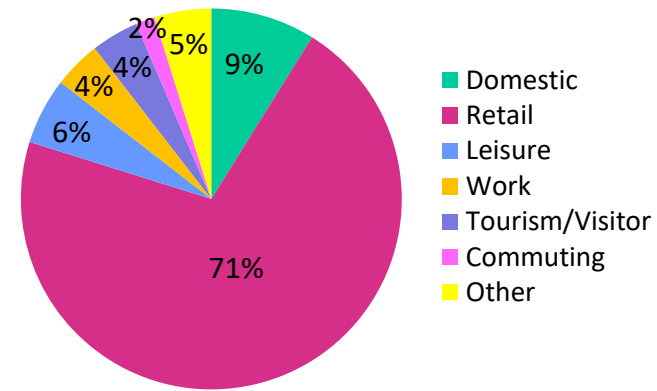


10%
with car park permit

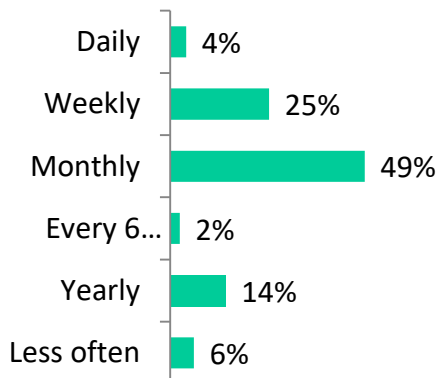
32%
on their own

12%
use the mobile
payment service

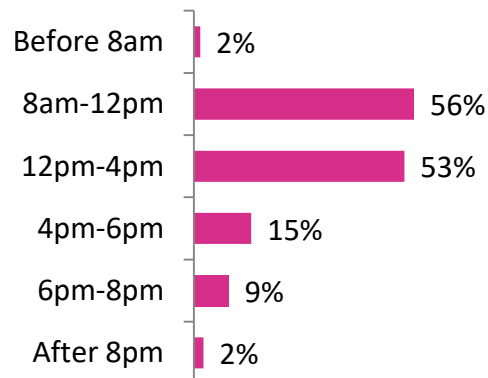
Main reason for use



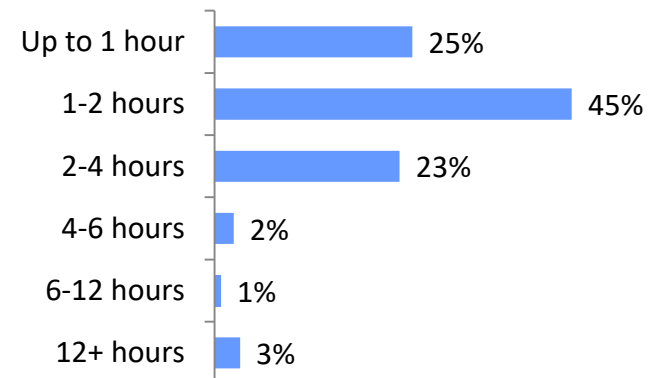
Frequency of use



Time of day



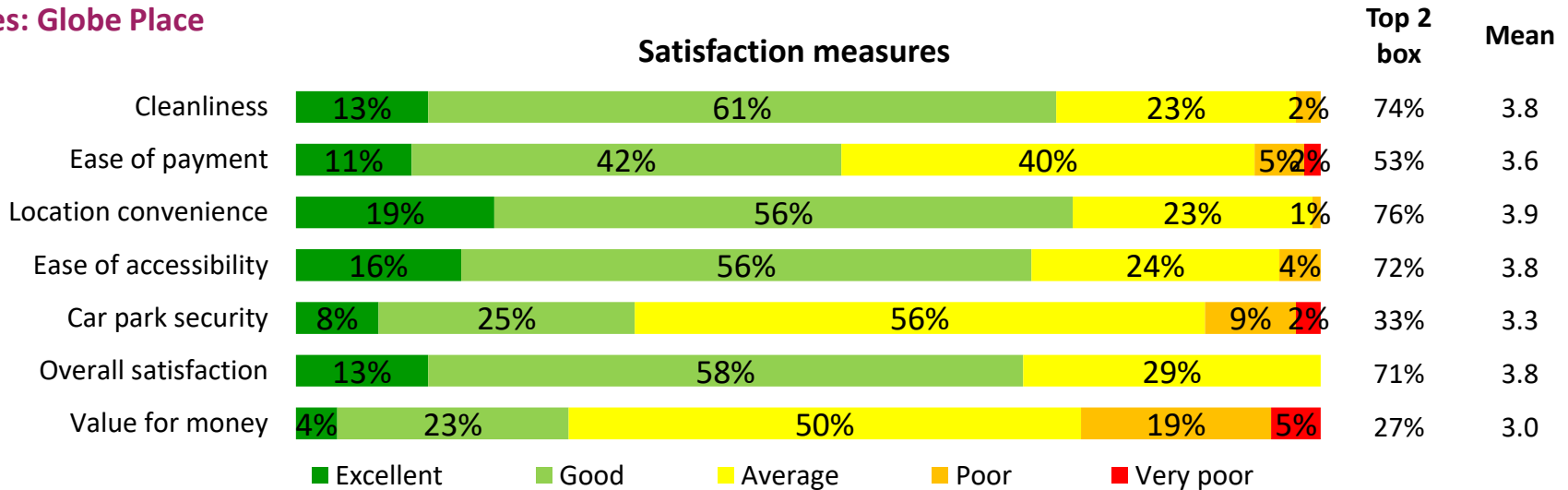
Average length of stay



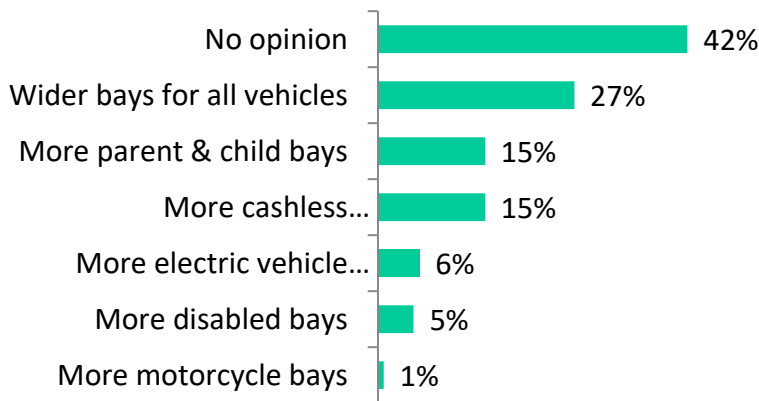
No negative response to overall satisfaction with 4 in 10 showing no opinion for potential improvements.

103

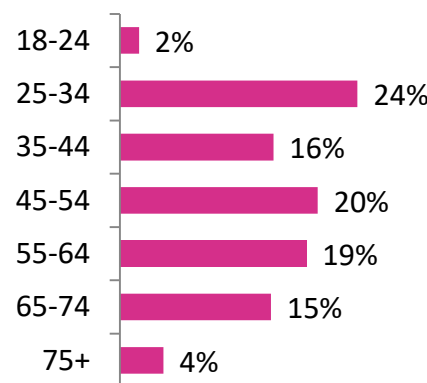
St Ives: Globe Place



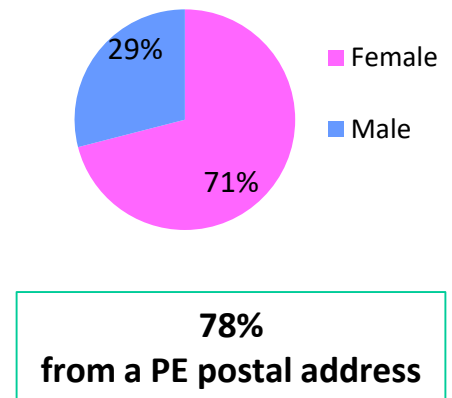
Potential improvements



Age



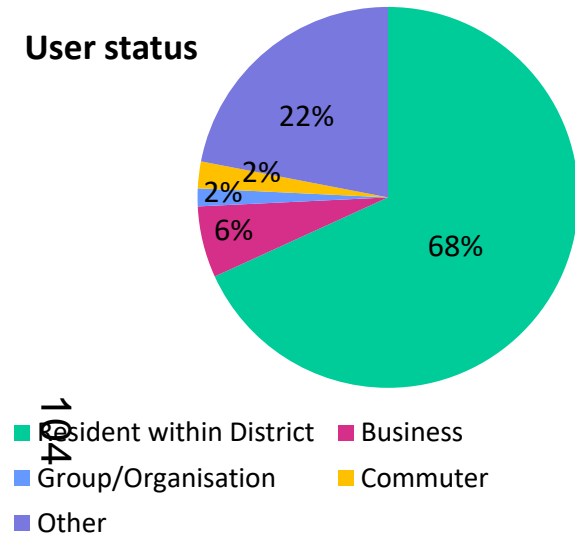
Gender



A short stay car park given location with almost 2 in 5 staying for less than an hour.

St Ives: Market Hill Pay & Display

User status

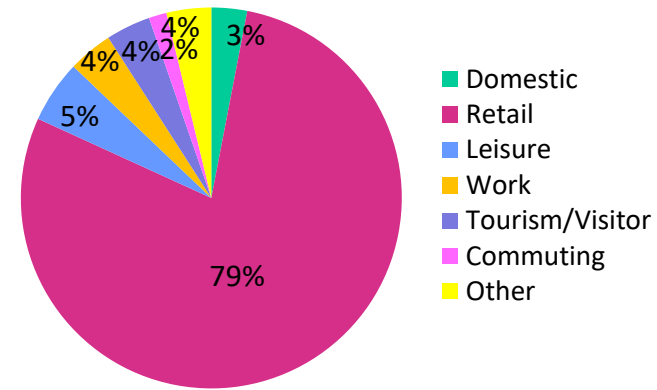


3%
with car park permit

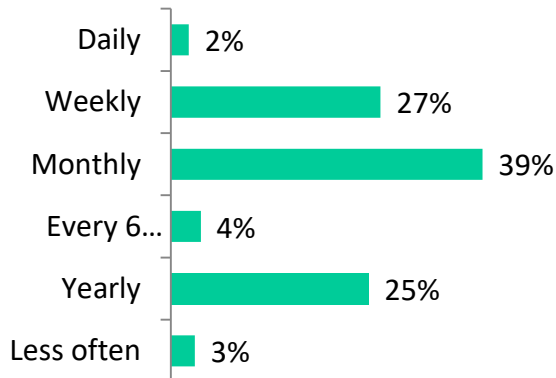
27%
on their own

No mobile payment service available

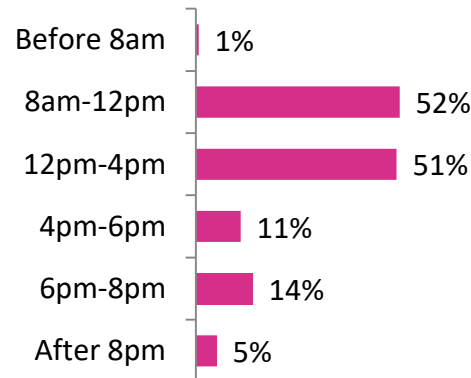
Main reason for use



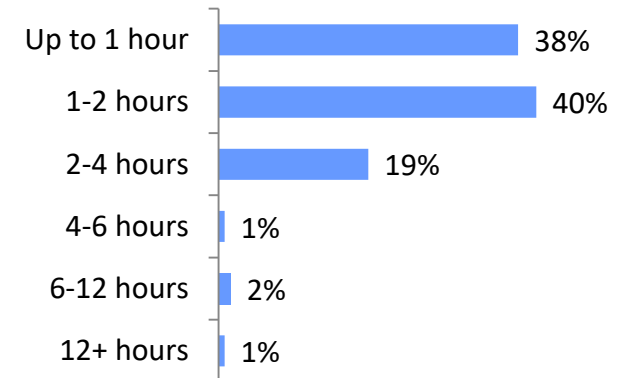
Frequency of use



Time of day



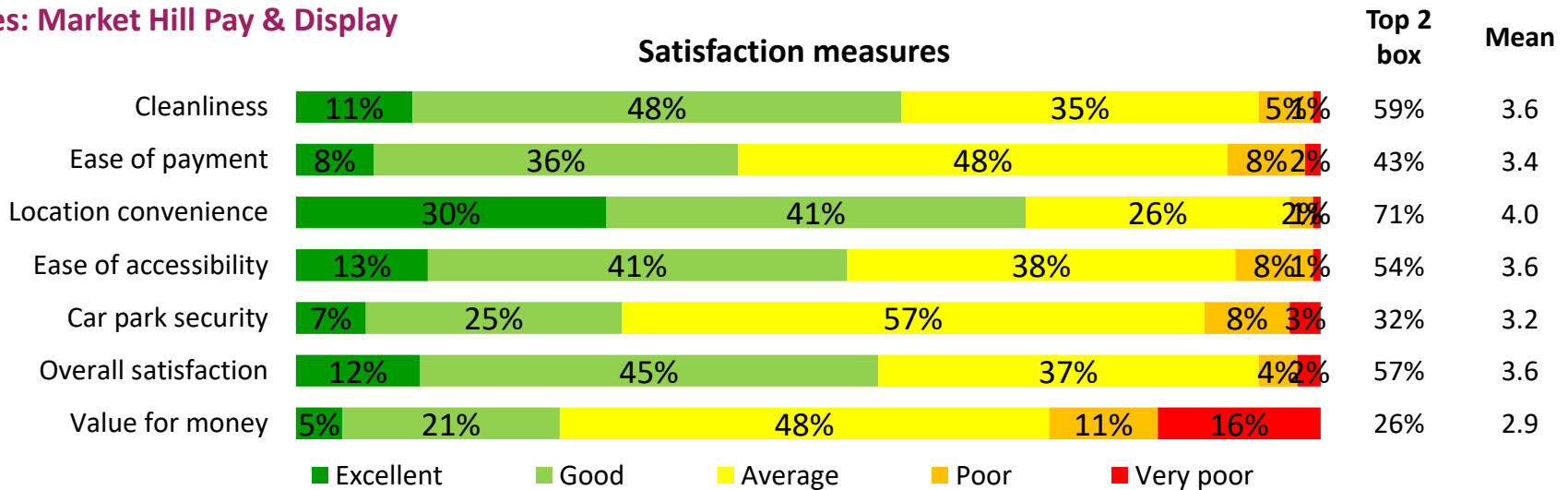
Average length of stay



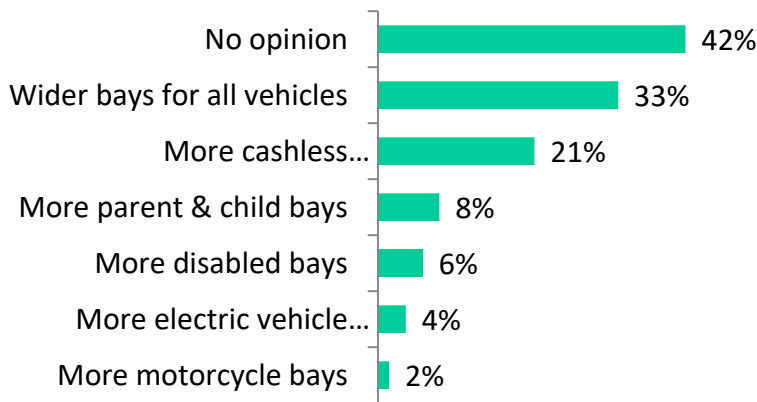
Poor value for money for a quarter but a highly convenient location. A desire for wider bays was expressed by those looking for improvements.

105

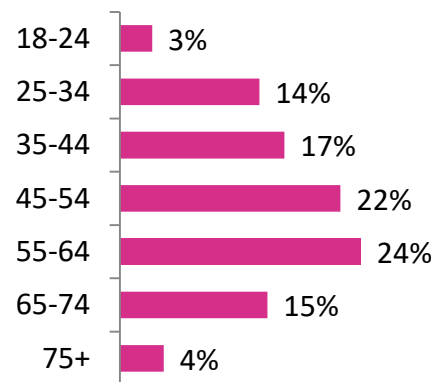
St Ives: Market Hill Pay & Display



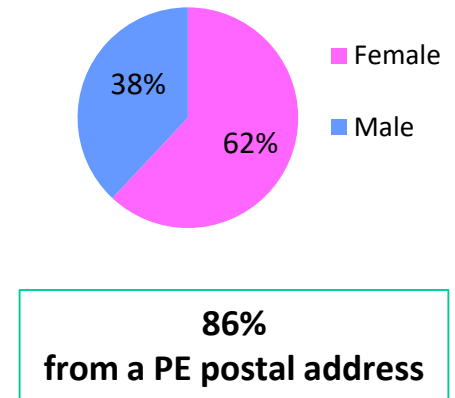
Potential improvements



Age



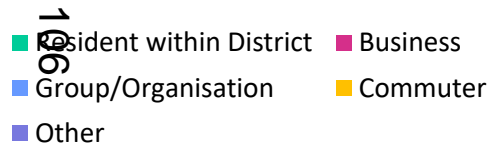
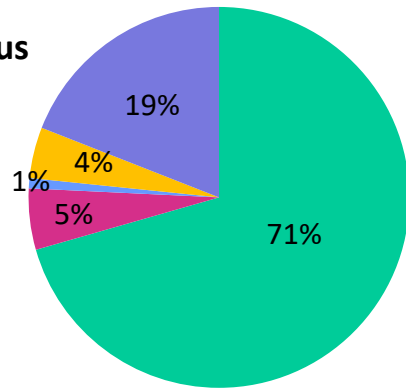
Gender



A retail based car park with the majority of the sample using for less than two hours.

St Ives: Waitrose

User status

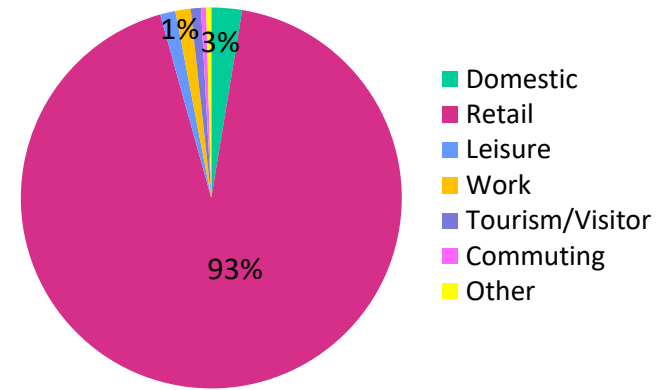


0%
with car park permit

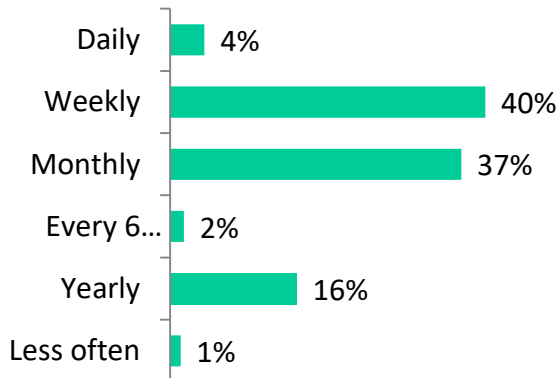
32%
on their own

No mobile payment
service available

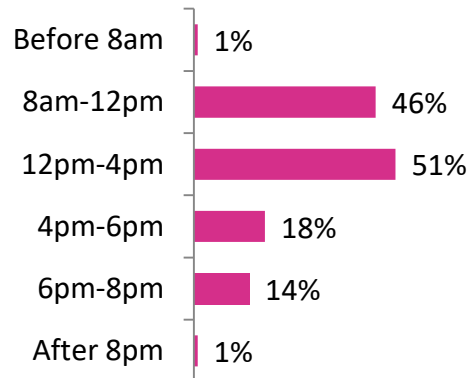
Main reason for use



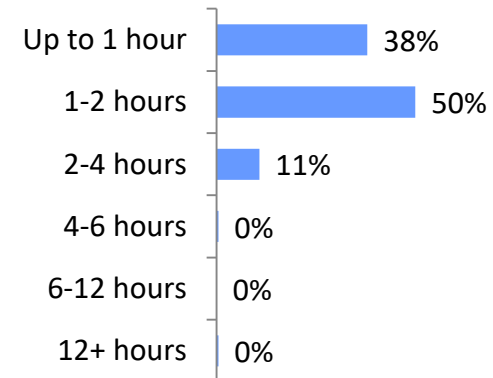
Frequency of use



Time of day



Average length of stay

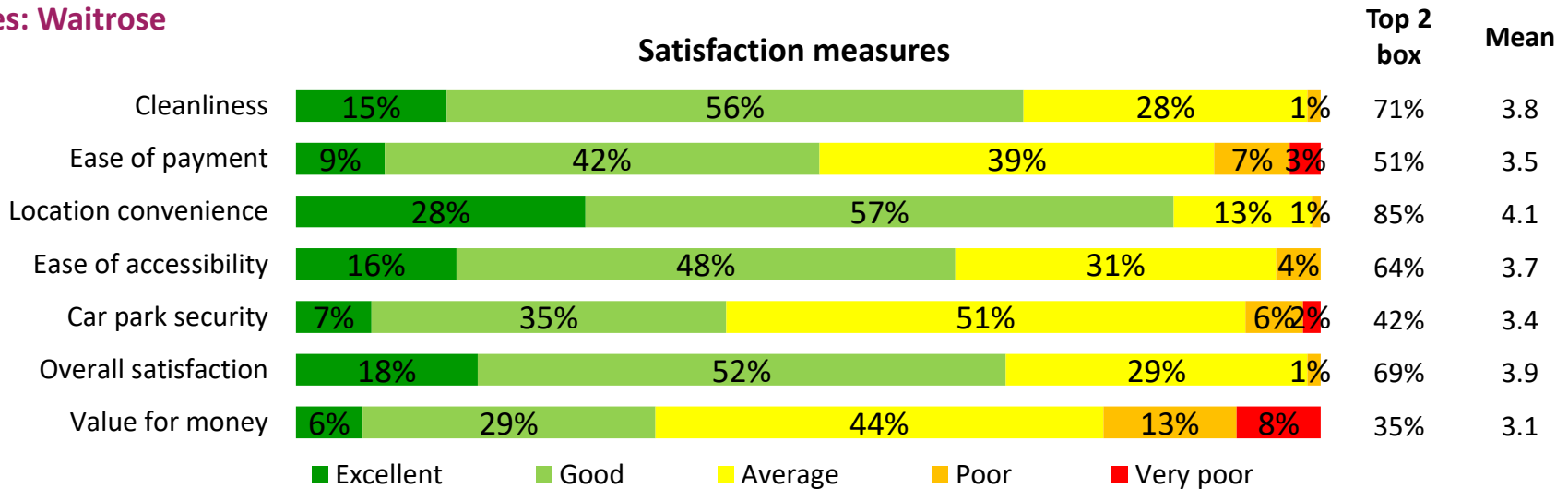


A convenient location with good accessibility. Users would like wider bays though.

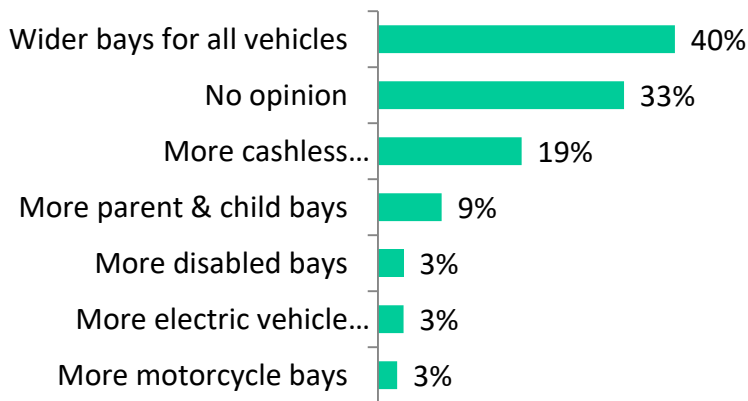
St Ives: Waitrose

107

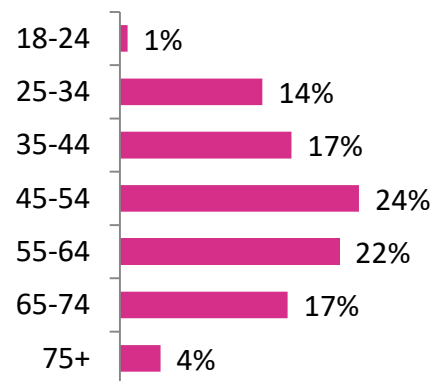
Satisfaction measures



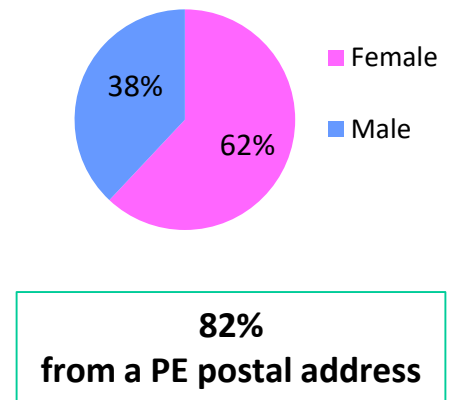
Potential improvements



Age



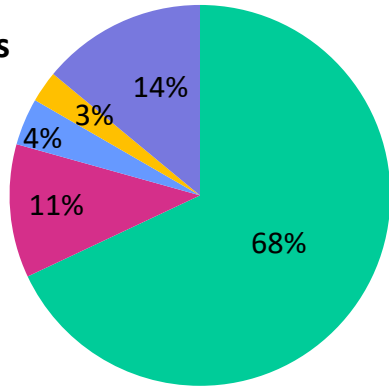
Gender



Used largely by residents for leisure purposes, half use at least weekly.

St Ives: One Leisure Indoor

User status



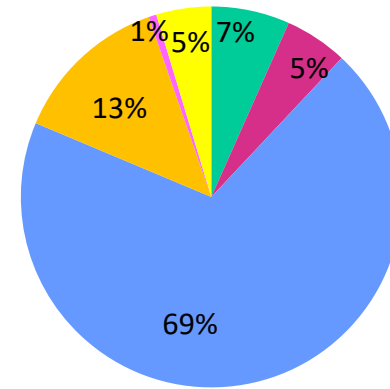
- Resident within District
- Business
- Group/Organisation
- Commuter
- Other

3%
with car park permit

39%
on their own

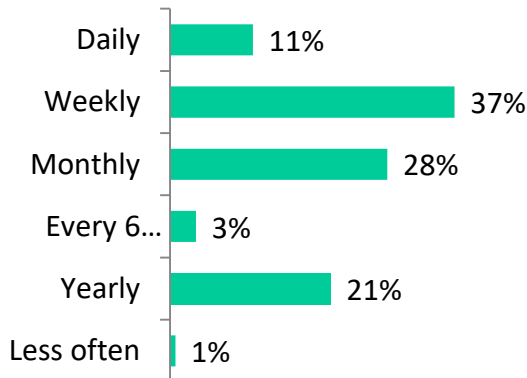
No mobile payment service available

Main reason for use

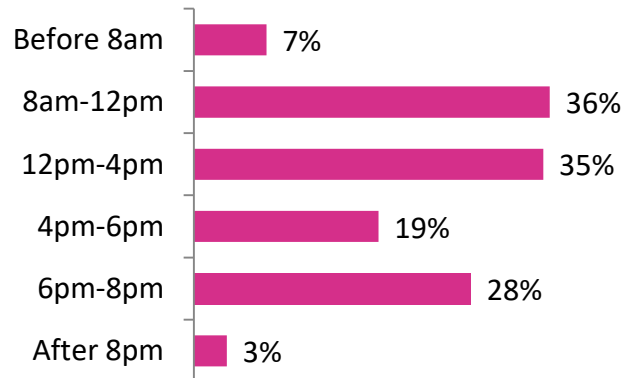


- Domestic
- Retail
- Leisure
- Work
- Tourism/Visitor
- Commuting
- Other

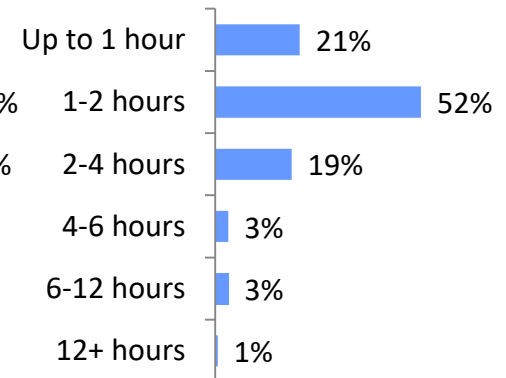
Frequency of use



Time of day



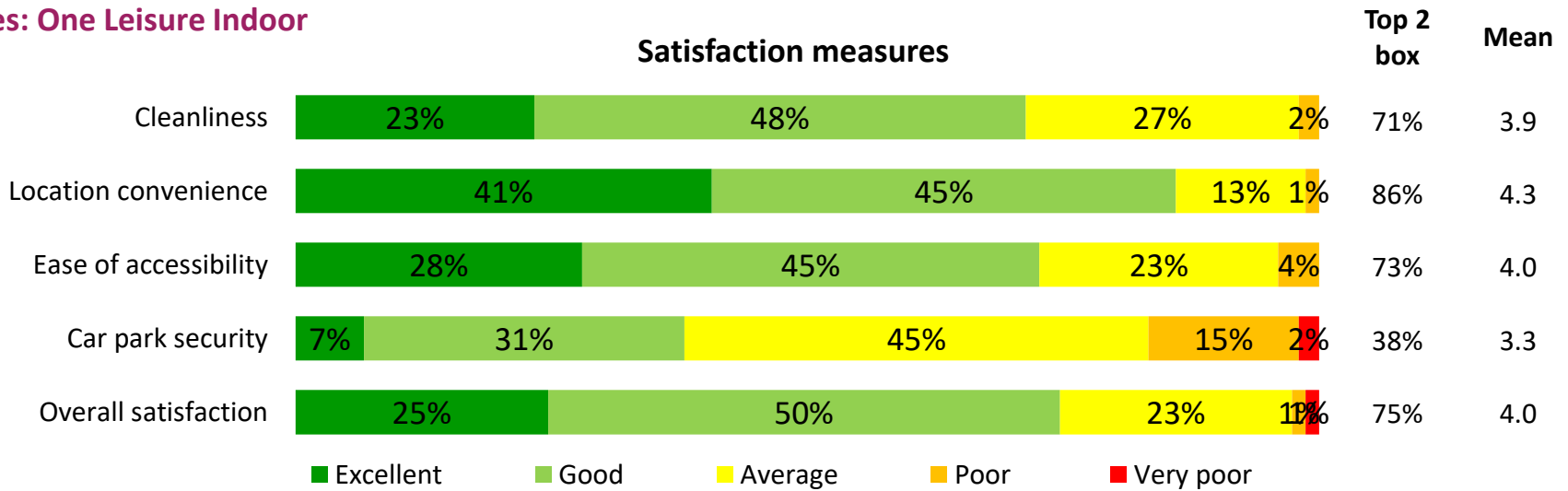
Average length of stay



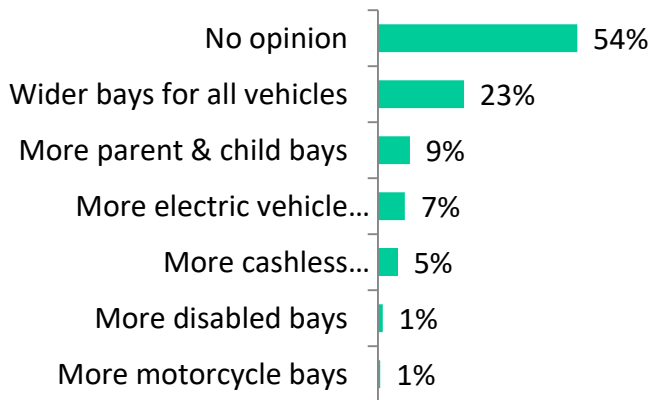
A strong level of satisfaction for this car park with only car park security of concern.

109

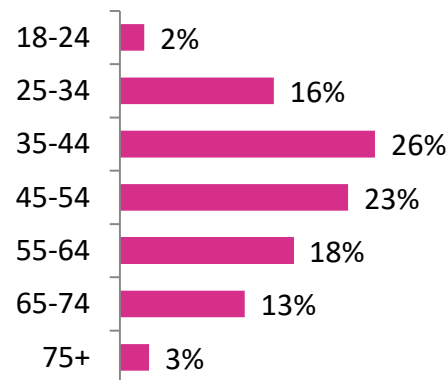
St Ives: One Leisure Indoor



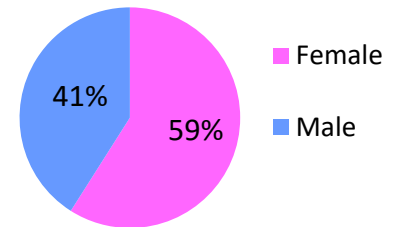
Potential improvements



Age



Gender



81%
from a PE postal address

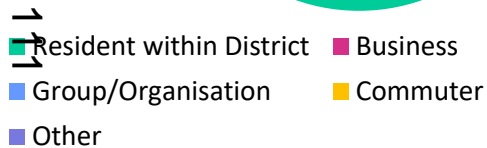
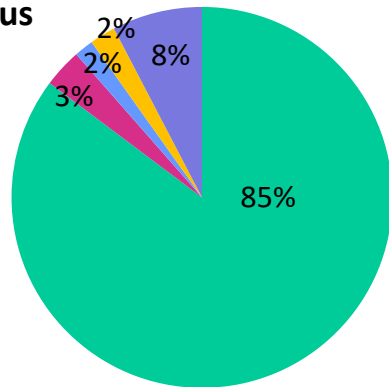


INDIVIDUAL CAR PARK OVERVIEW: ST NEOTS

Most likely to be used by residents for retail purposes, a short stay car park used on a regular basis during the day.

St Neots: Market Square Pay & Display

User status

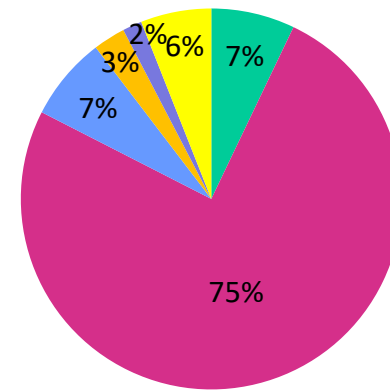


4%
with car park permit

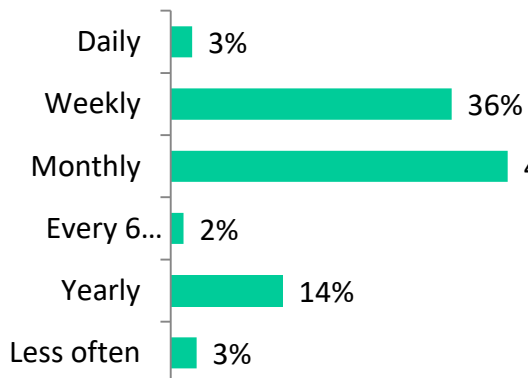
32%
on their own

No mobile payment
service available

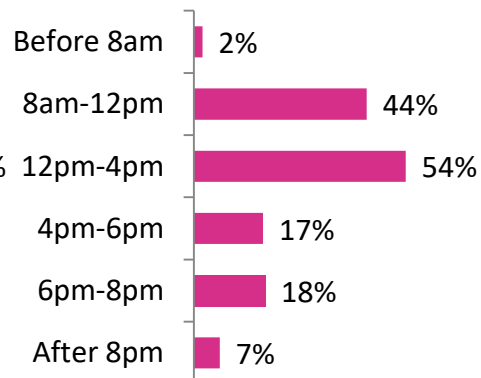
Main reason for use



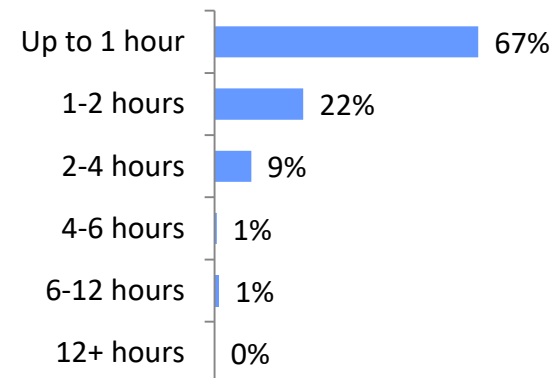
Frequency of use



Time of day



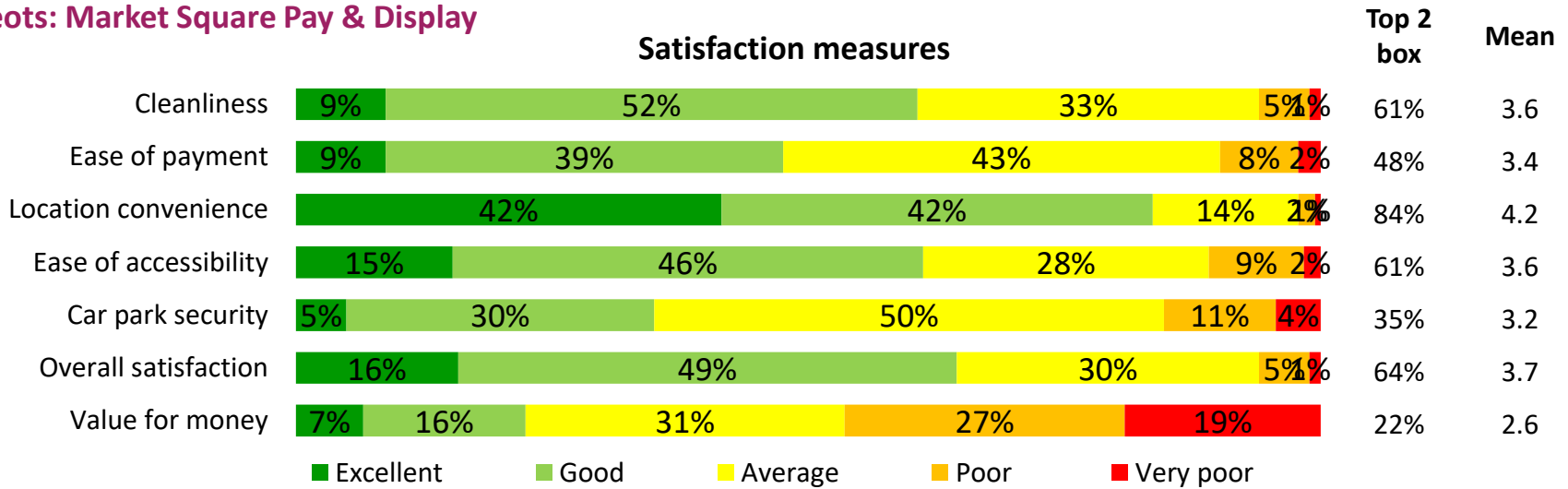
Average length of stay



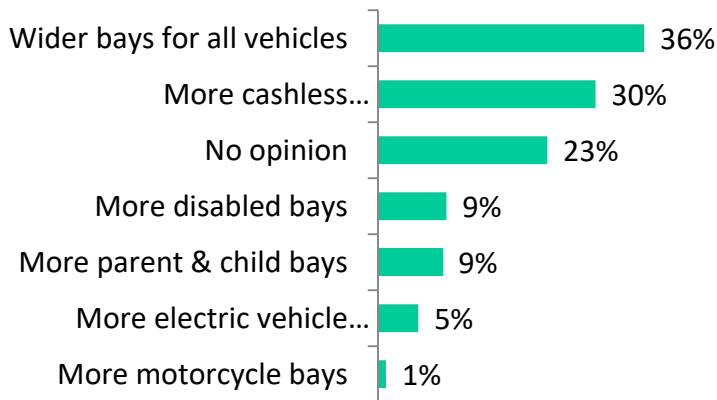
The highly convenient location of the car park was praised but almost half the sample indicated poor value for money. Wider bays & more cashless payment options were seen as key improvements.

St Neots: Market Square Pay & Display

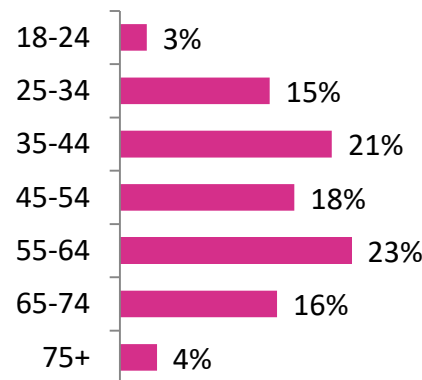
112



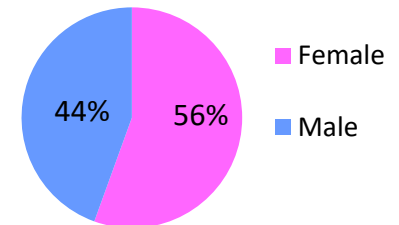
Potential improvements



Age



Gender

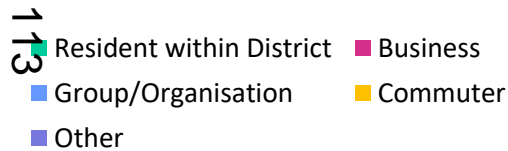
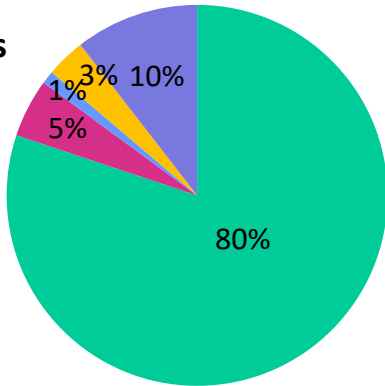


76%
from a PE postal address

With 7 in 10 using the car park for retail, average length of stay was less than 2 hours for the majority.

St Neots: Tebbutts Road

User status

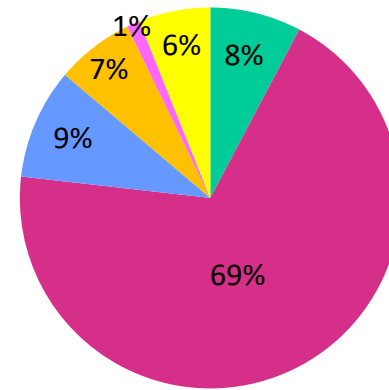


8%
with car park permit

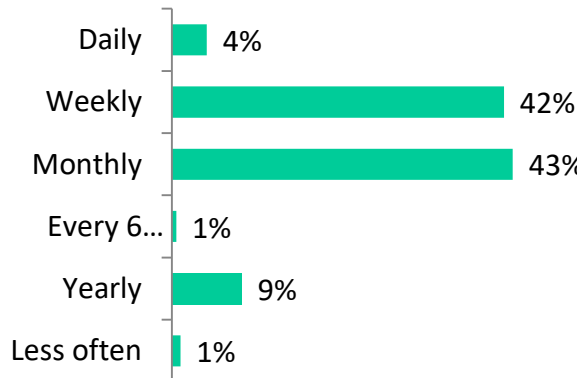
29%
on their own

12%
use the mobile payment service

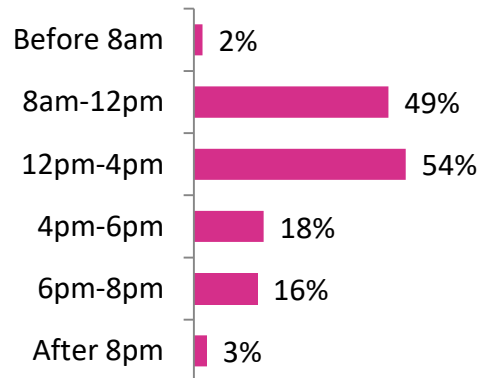
Main reason for use



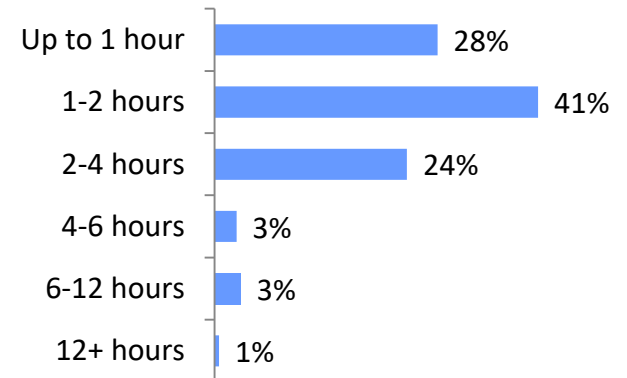
Frequency of use



Time of day

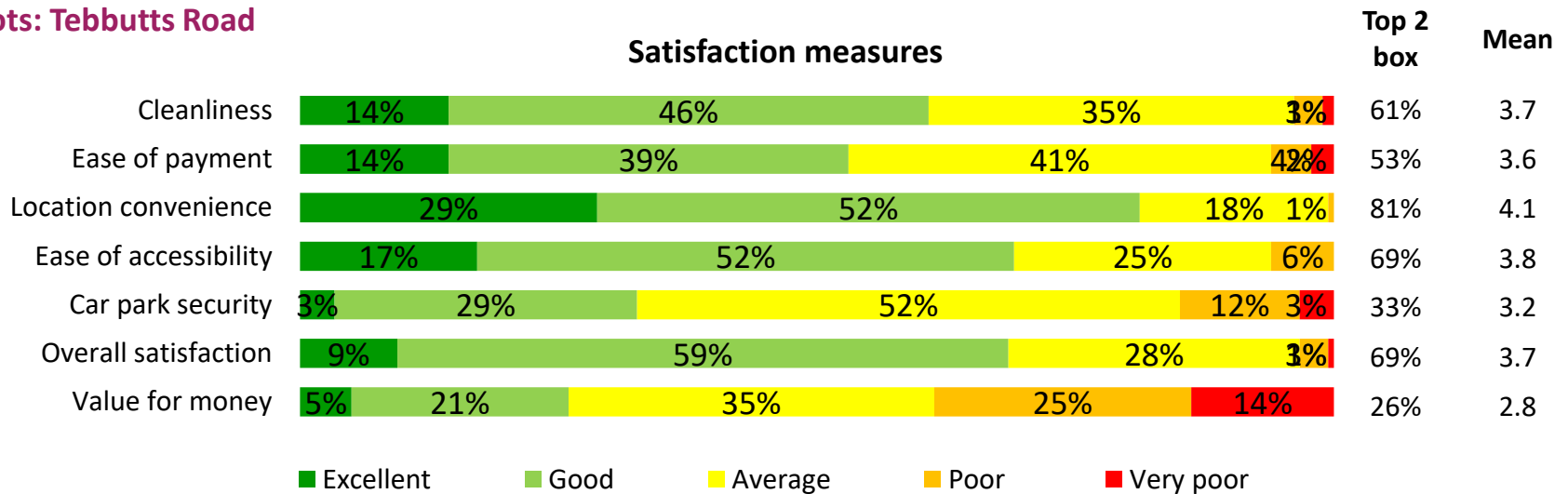


Average length of stay



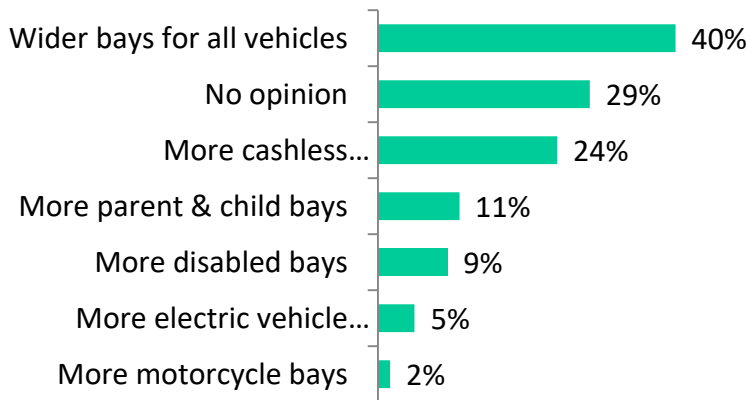
A convenient location but poor value for money. 4 in 10 would like wider bays for all vehicles.

St Neots: Tebutts Road

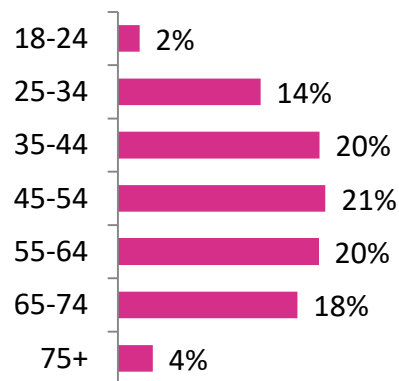


114

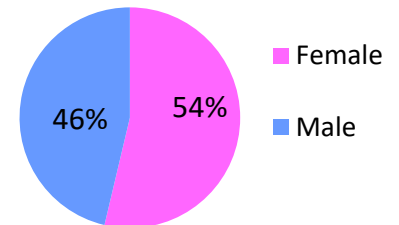
Potential improvements



Age



Gender

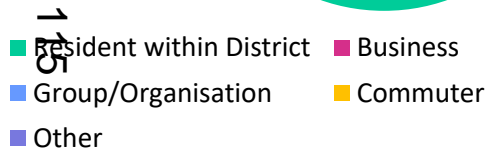
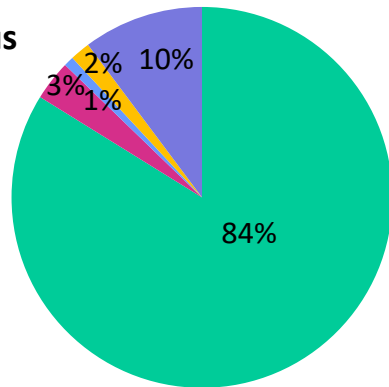


83%
from a PE postal address

A short stay car park (9 in 10 stay less than 2 hours), used predominantly for retail purposes.

St Neots: Waitrose

User status

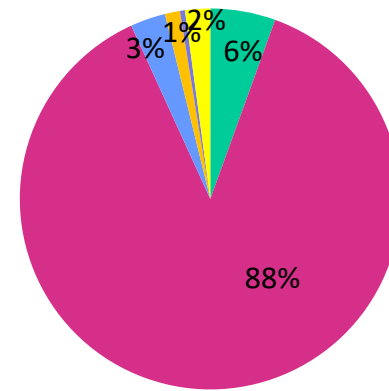


2%
with car park permit

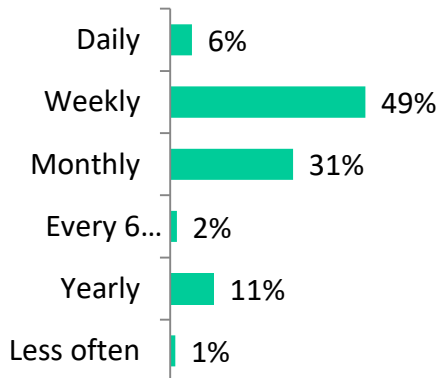
33%
on their own

0%
use the mobile payment service

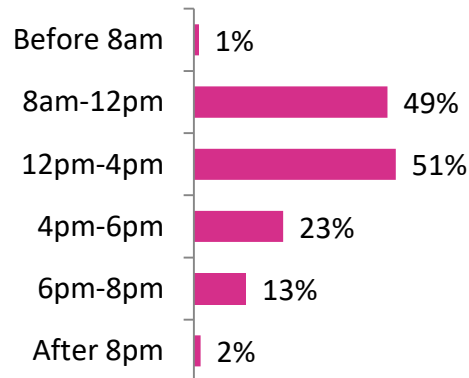
Main reason for use



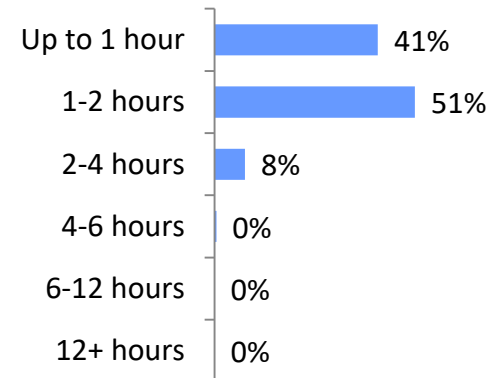
Frequency of use



Time of day



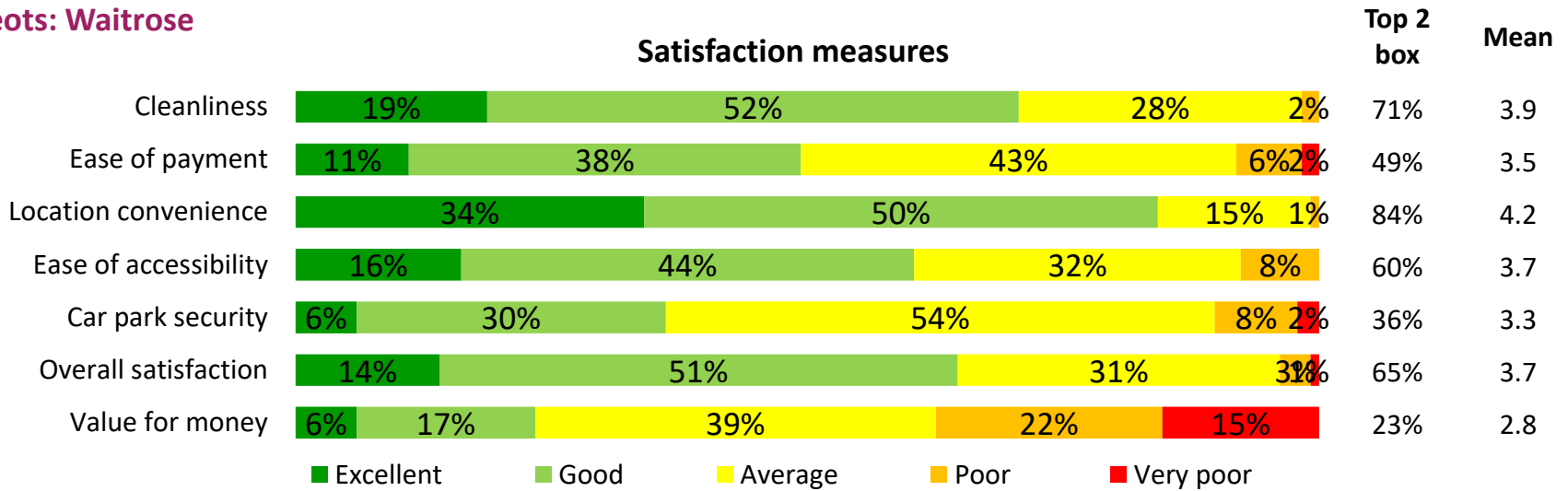
Average length of stay



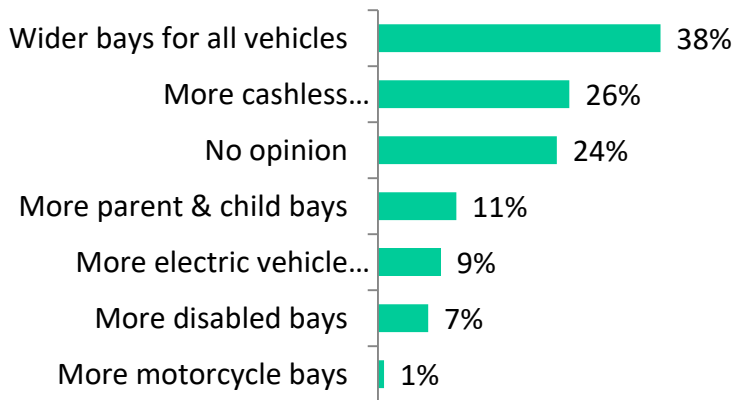
Two-thirds indicated positive overall satisfaction but concerns with value for money. A desire to see wider bays and more cashless payment options.

St Neots: Waitrose

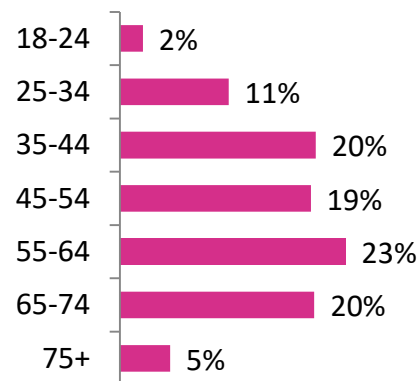
116



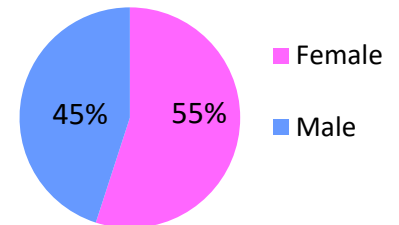
Potential improvements



Age



Gender

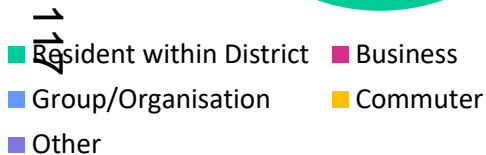
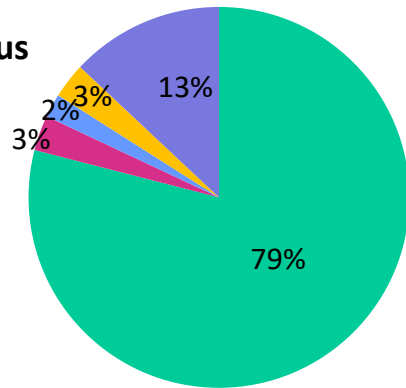


79%
from a PE postal address

With usage split between retail and leisure, stays range from less than an hour to up to 4.

St Neots: Riverside

User status

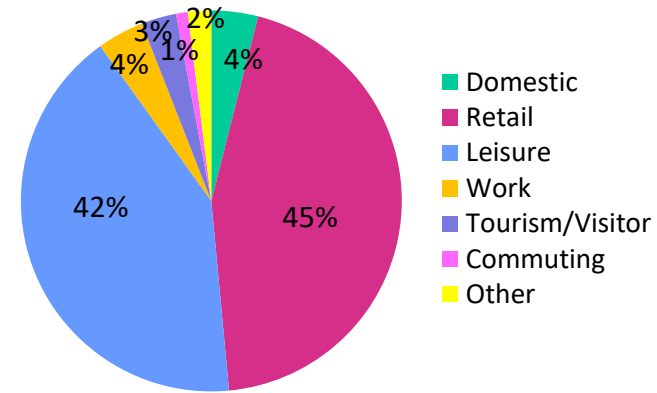


3%
with car park permit

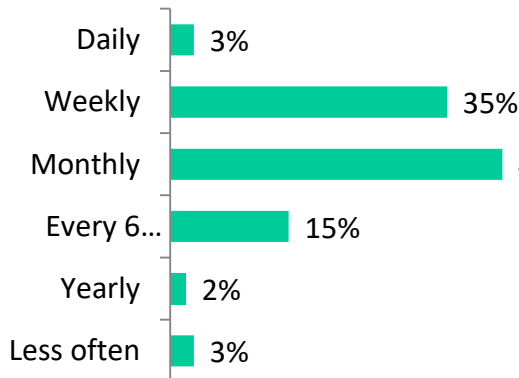
22%
on their own

7%
use the mobile payment service

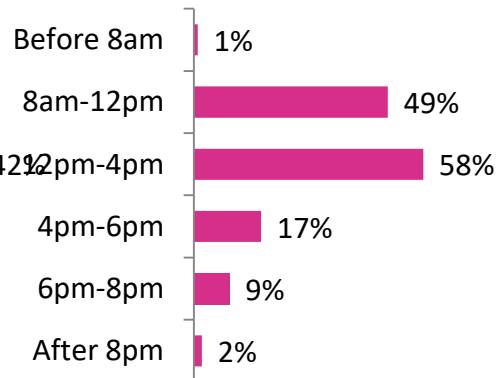
Main reason for use



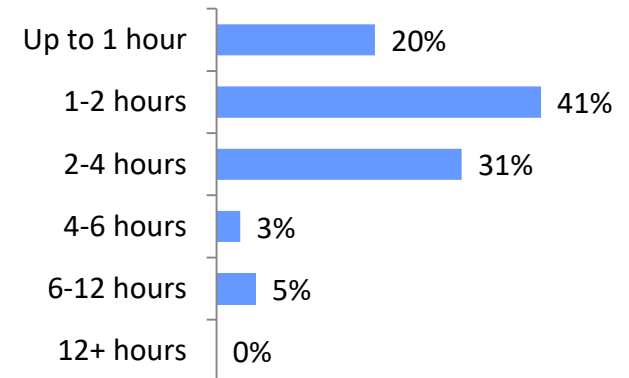
Frequency of use



Time of day



Average length of stay

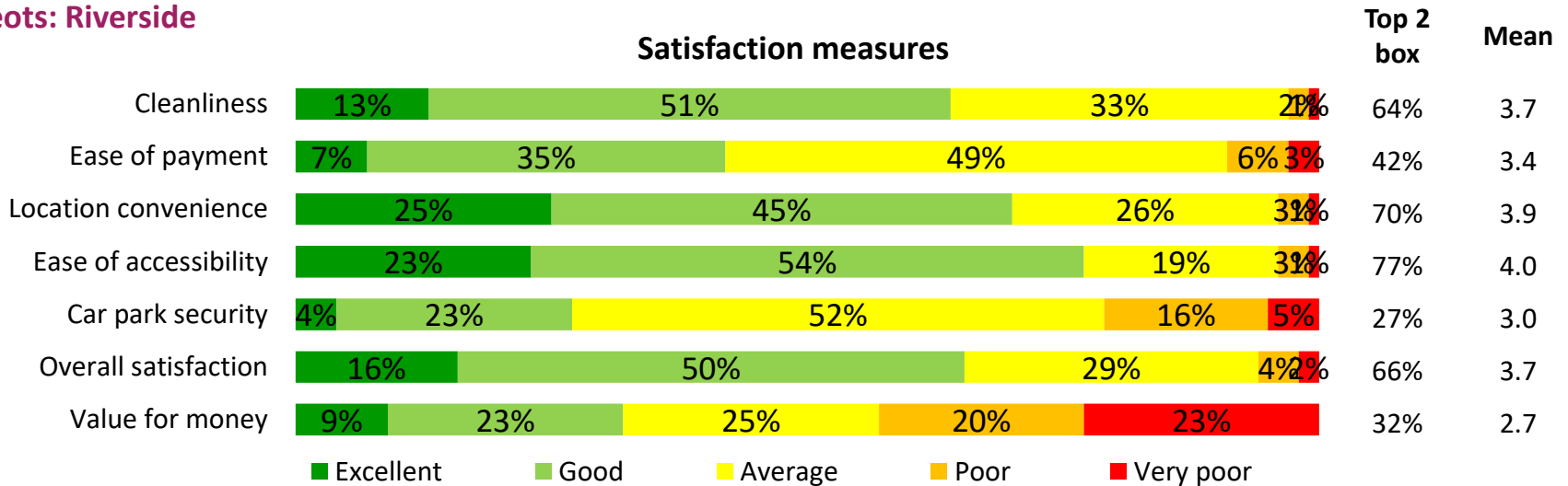


Whilst satisfied with location and accessibility, value for money is a key concern.

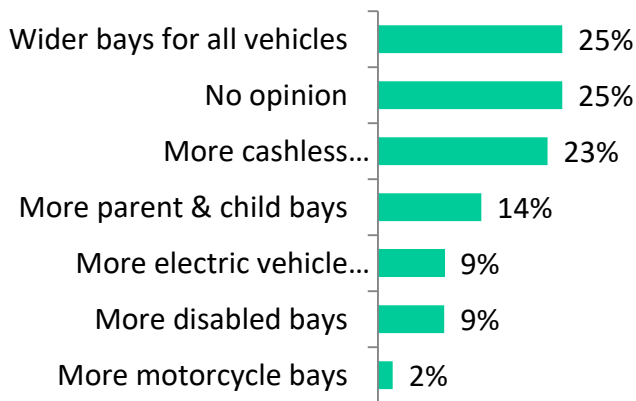
St Neots: Riverside

118

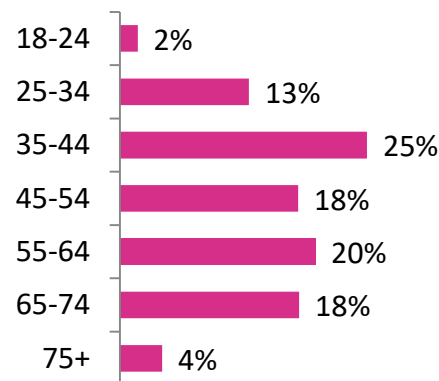
Satisfaction measures



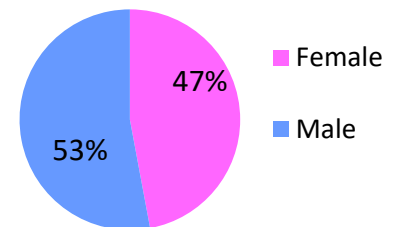
Potential improvements



Age



Gender



78%
from a PE postal address



RE-CAP: RECOMMENDATIONS



Whilst overall satisfaction with car parks across the Huntingdonshire District was acceptable there are issues which could be addressed.

- ✓ When prompted about potential improvements, a common theme across all car parks was a desire for wider bays for all vehicles.
- ✓ More cashless payment options would also be welcomed. Use of the mobile payment system (where available) is currently low indicating a potential awareness issue.
- ✓ Value for money: This measure records the highest levels of dissatisfaction but users placed this second in the hierarchy for selecting a car park so should be reviewed.
- ✓ Car park security was not highly rated across the district. Consideration of this issue could help to raise user satisfaction.



Thank you

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Tel: 01223 492 064

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Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan examination outcome and progression to referendum

Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 12th October 2017

Executive Portfolio: Growth

Report by: Senior Planning Policy Officer

Wards affected: Godmanchester

Executive Summary:

Following the examination of the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan this report proposes acting upon the Examiner's report to accept the modifications proposed and progress to referendum.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

1. Agree that the District Council should act upon the Examiner's report and recommended modifications, and progress the neighbourhood plan to referendum.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report seeks agreement to act upon the Examiner's report into the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan leading to a referendum on whether or not it should be brought into force as part of the statutory development plan. It also sets out a timetable for this process.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following the examination of a neighbourhood plan the Examiner sends their report to the local planning authority and the town/parish council preparing the neighbourhood plan. The examiner is required to set out one of three options:

- a) That the neighbourhood plan proceeds to referendum as submitted
- b) That the neighbourhood plan is modified by the local planning authority to meet the basic conditions and the modified version proceeds to referendum; or
- c) That the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to referendum as it fails to meet the basic conditions and/ or legislative requirements and cannot be modified to do so.

- 2.2 The local planning authority has limited options in how to respond to the examiner's recommendations:

1. Act upon the Examiner's report and progress the neighbourhood plan to referendum, whether or not the Examiner recommends modifications are necessary to meet the basic conditions;
2. Propose to take a decision substantially different from the Examiner's recommendation which is wholly or partly as a result of new evidence or a different view taken by the local planning authority about a particular fact; or
3. Decide not to progress the neighbourhood plan in light of the Examiner's report - this is only permissible where c) above is the case.

- 2.3 The Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan was examined between 3 July and 30 August 2017. The Examiner recommended that with appropriate modifications the neighbourhood plan would meet the basic conditions against which it is required to be tested and so should progress to referendum.

- 2.4 The Examiner proposed a number of modifications to the proposed submission neighbourhood plan. These have been discussed with representatives of Godmanchester Town Council. The recommended modifications and the proposed timeline (see section 3 below) were discussed and approved by Godmanchester Town Council met on 22 September 2017.

- 2.5 The modified version of the Neighbourhood Plan, the examiner's report and draft Decision Statement setting out the modifications considered by the Examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions are all included as Appendices. Having regard to the options set out in paragraph 2.3:

- It is considered that the modifications will enable the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan to meet the basic conditions required; and
- There is no new evidence or a different view taken by the local planning authority about a particular fact to indicate that option 2. in paragraph 2.3 should be followed.

3. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN

- 3.1 Following approval by Cabinet preparations will be made for a referendum to be held on the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the Regulations.
- 3.2 In addition to considering whether the neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions the Examiner is required to recommend on the area to be covered by the referendum. In this instance she recommended that the referendum area be the same as the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan area, approved by the District Council.
- 3.3 There is a statutory requirement for 28 working days' notice to be given before the referendum is held. There is also a requirement that the referendum is held within 56 working days of the decision that the neighbourhood plan should proceed to referendum, unless there is an existing planned polling opportunity that the referendum could be combined with which the qualifying body (Godmanchester Town Council) have agreed. A potential date for the referendum has been discussed with Democratic Services. Holding the referendum on 7 December 2017 is proposed, which would meet both time requirements. This provisional date has been discussed with representatives of Godmanchester Town Council, and they have indicated that they support this date.
- 3.4 At the referendum residents will be able to vote on the question: 'Do you want Huntingdonshire District Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Godmanchester to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'
- 3.5 If a majority of residents vote 'yes', Full Council will be asked to 'make' the neighbourhood plan at its next available meeting, which, assuming that the referendum is held on 7 December, would be on 13 December 2017. This would require a late report. The plan will then become part of the statutory development plan for Huntingdonshire.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 4.1 The comments of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel will follow.

5. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 5.1 Progressing the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan through to referendum links to the strategic objective 'To empower local communities'. It will help to achieve the action of working with parishes to complete neighbourhood and parish plans.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 A Neighbourhood Plan must meet the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Examiner's report has confirmed that Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan, as proposed to be modified, meets all the basic conditions. Officers are satisfied that there are no conflicts with the basic conditions and legislative requirements.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 An Extra Burdens Grant of £20,000 can be claimed following the referendum, intended to meet the costs of the referendum and other resources involved in supporting the production of the neighbourhood plan.

8. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 8.1 The recommended decision is necessary to enable the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to referendum.

9. RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 9.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1) Agree that the District Council should act upon the Examiner's report and recommended modifications, and progress the neighbourhood plan to referendum

10. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

- 1) The modified version of the Neighbourhood Plan
- 2) The examiner's report
- 3) The draft Decision Statement setting out the modifications considered by the Examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents>

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents>

Localism Act 2011
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2012/9780111525050/contents>

CONTACT OFFICER

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Email: james.campbell@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Godmanchester Town Council



Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036

Post Examination 2017 FINAL

How To Read This Document:

In writing a Neighbourhood Plan there are number of formal things that we have to include in the Plan document: these are covered in Section 1.

There are also issues that you have told us you think we should be trying to achieve through creating new planning policies: these are covered in Section 3.

There are the additional items that are either the detailed background or are detailed lists of other policies that we needed to include: these are included in the Appendices, Sections 11 – 14.

Finally, there is the list of activities and good ideas you told us were important to think about doing. They are not ‘planning policies’ therefore are not in the main Plan but because you told us they were important we have listed them here so the Town Council can consider taking them forward: these are detailed in Section 9.

You may have time to read all the pages and we would thoroughly recommend this. If you only have time to read a small amount, then the blue text boxes are the most important – these contain the policies that we think would make Godmanchester an even better place and on which you will be asked to vote on when we get to the Neighbourhood Plan Referendum.

What Happens Next

The independent Planning Examiner has now reviewed the Plan and advised as to whether the policies meet planning requirements. She has made recommendations that have now been included in the Plan. We are now ready to move towards a Neighbourhood Plan Referendum.

You Get To Vote

Huntingdonshire District Council will organise a Neighbourhood Plan Referendum on our behalf. The date will be advertised once it is known. At the Referendum, all residents who are registered to vote will be asked to say if they support the Plan. If more than 50% of those who turn out support it, then it becomes a legal planning document once ratified or ‘made’ by the District Council. Subsequently it will be one of the documents used to determine all new planning applications in the Town.

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1 Introduction

Purpose of the Plan

- 1.1** This document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for Godmanchester parish from 2017 to 2036. The Plan contains a vision for the future of Godmanchester and sets out clear planning policies to realise this vision.
- 1.2** The principal purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within the town and provide direction to anyone wishing to submit a planning application for development within this area. The process of producing a plan has involved the community as widely as possible. The different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Godmanchester, its residents, businesses and community groups.
- 1.3** Some of the Neighbourhood Plan policies are general and apply throughout the Plan area, whilst others are site or area-specific and apply only to the appropriate areas illustrated on the relevant map. Nevertheless, in considering proposals for development, the Town and District Council will apply all relevant policies of the Plan. It is therefore assumed that the Plan will be read as a whole, although some cross-referencing between Plan policies has been provided.
- 1.4** The process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan, and the feedback from engaging with residents, has identified a number of actions which have not been included in the policies sections. This is because these are not specifically related to land use matters and therefore sit outside the jurisdiction of a Neighbourhood Plan. These actions will be addressed by the Town Council outside of the Neighbourhood Plan process.



Policy Context

- 1.5** The Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan (GNP) is being prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 1.6** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It was published on 27 March 2012 and is now also supplemented by Planning Practice Guidance. The NPPF provides a framework which has been used to produce a locally distinctive Neighbourhood Plan which reflects the needs and aspirations of the community.
- 1.7** All new developments in Godmanchester have to be in accordance with the NPPF, the planning policies adopted by the local planning authority, Huntingdonshire

District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and, when adopted, this Neighbourhood Plan.

- 1.8** The policies in this Plan have been produced to be in general conformity with the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy 2009. In addition, the Plan has given due regard to the emerging Huntingdonshire Local Plan which, when adopted, will cover the period to 2036.

Developing the Plan

- 1.9** Godmanchester Town Council set up a Neighbourhood Plan Working Group which comprises five Town Councillors, including a District Councillor and a County Councillor and a number of local volunteers. The Plan has been written using feedback from public consultations and the Neighbourhood Plan survey to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan accurately reflects the aspirations of the community.
- 1.10** The Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan covers all Godmanchester parish. In preparing the Plan, there has been dialogue with the adjoining parishes as well as with Huntingdonshire District Council. An application for neighbourhood plan designation was approved by Huntingdon District Council in March 2015.



1.11 The map in Figure 1 below shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which is the same as the administrative boundary of Godmanchester parish.

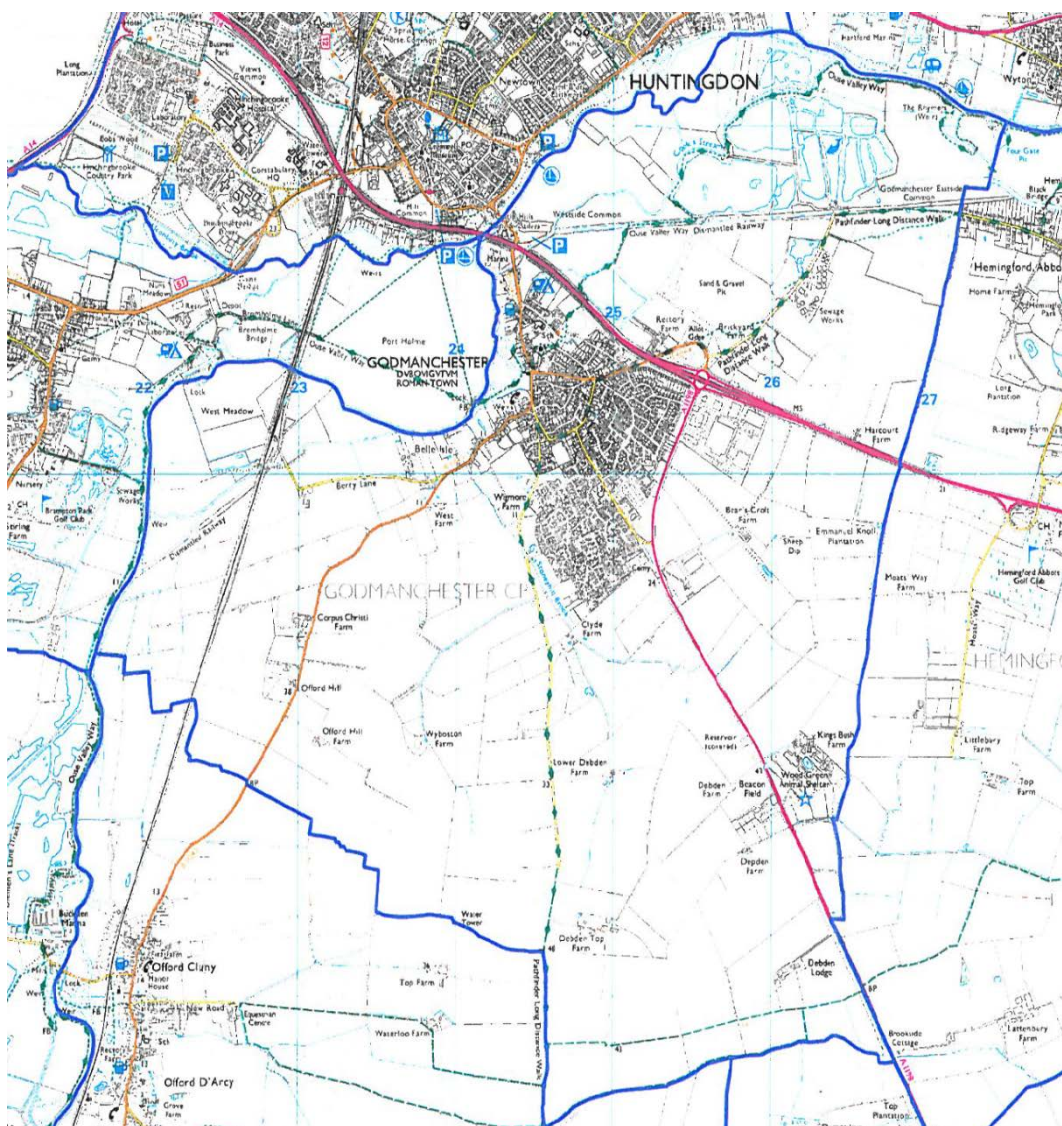


Figure 1: Godmanchester neighbourhood plan area/parish boundary

Monitoring the Plan

1.12 Godmanchester Town Council, as the 'Qualifying Body', will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to monitor delivery.

Community Action Plan

1.13 The consultation process identified a number of issues and potential projects that could not be addressed through the policies in this document. These are captured in Chapter 9 as a Community Action Plan. The Town Council will consider how these issues and ideas might be taken forward in partnership with other organisations.

2 Local Context

History of Godmanchester

2 Godmanchester is a Borough Town, chartered initially by King John in 1212. Its Town status is important to residents but for all intents and purposes the settlement has more in common with a large village in terms of its feel, connections, community spirit and facilities.

2.1 Much of historic Godmanchester is built on top of a Roman Settlement: sections of the road, temples and houses have been found and numerous artefacts are unearthed each year by householders.

2.2 Later, the Danes occupied the area and changed the shape of the Town by creating the area of water by the Causeway as part of the establishment of an inland port. Norman Godmanchester was a wealthy Royal Manor and became a thriving market town. All through the Middle Ages towards the end of the second millennium, the Town continued to benefit from its location on the London to York road. It served as a place to rest and change horses. The former proliferation of inns and taverns in the town is testament to this. The Great Ouse was also an important trade route and Godmanchester enjoyed the benefits of servicing river traffic.

2.3 In the last century or so, as rail then road became the primary mode of transport, Godmanchester remained and continues to be today a good focal point, being close to the East Coast main line and the A1, M11 and A14. Despite enjoying a rural (or at least semi-rural) location, Godmanchester remains close to major transport routes. In about 1909, the Wright brothers brought their flying machine to Britain and flew it at Portholme; the first manned flight outside of the US.

2.4 The Town's proximity to the once relatively quiet A604, now the A14 linking the north, the south and the east, has brought growth in neighbouring Huntingdon but traffic and noise to Godmanchester. Today we are in a fast-growing part of the country: there is increasing house building and business development. Our proximity to a number of major roads makes the Town an attractive location for developers wanting to build: the pressure to grow from a small rural Town to a large characterless urban sprawl is significant.



Profile of the Community Today

- 2.5** Huntingdonshire is one of the fastest growing parts of the United Kingdom as well as within Cambridgeshire¹. It is set to grow in terms of housing and businesses: a number of sites are already identified, including Alconbury Weald, Wyton and Wintringham Park. Whilst the infographics show that Godmanchester is currently fairly similar to the rest of Huntingdonshire in 2016, that is less likely to be the case as areas around us expand and become more populated between now and 2036.
- 2.6** Godmanchester is keen to retain its unique character of being a Town with the community feel of a large village. It will be important for us to retain the profiles set out below which characterise the Town.
- 2.7** The population of the Town has grown significantly since the 1990's, with a steep increase in numbers since 2010. In 2016 we have approximately 6800 residents. and Cambridgeshire County Council forecasts that we will have grown to 8600 residents by 2040². That is a 26% increase that is predicted for Godmanchester.



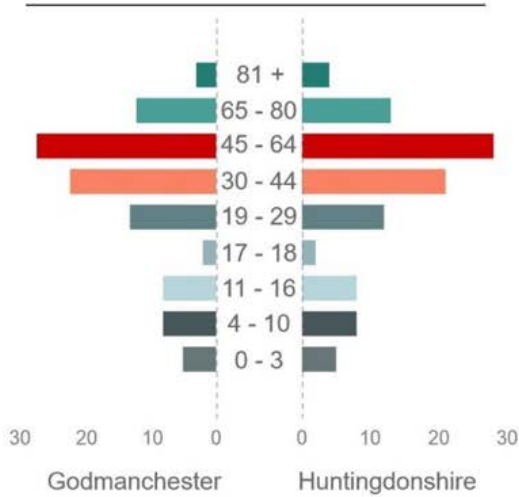
¹ Huntingdonshire District Council Marketing Strategy 2016

² Based on delivering all the sites in the HDC Draft Local Plan to 2036

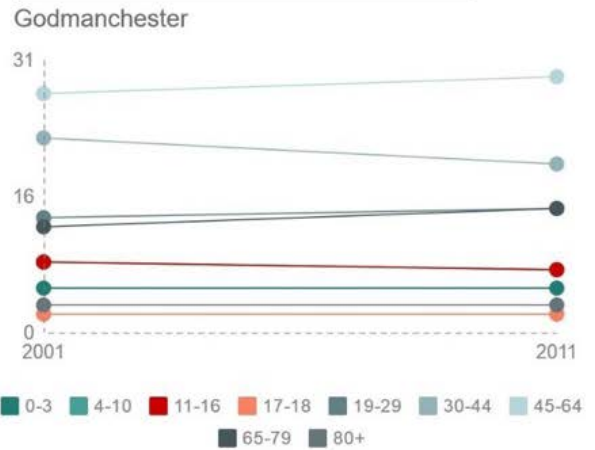
Total Population

6,711

Age Profile (%)



Age Profile Change 2001 - 2011 (%)



Housing Type

Godmanchester



Huntingdonshire

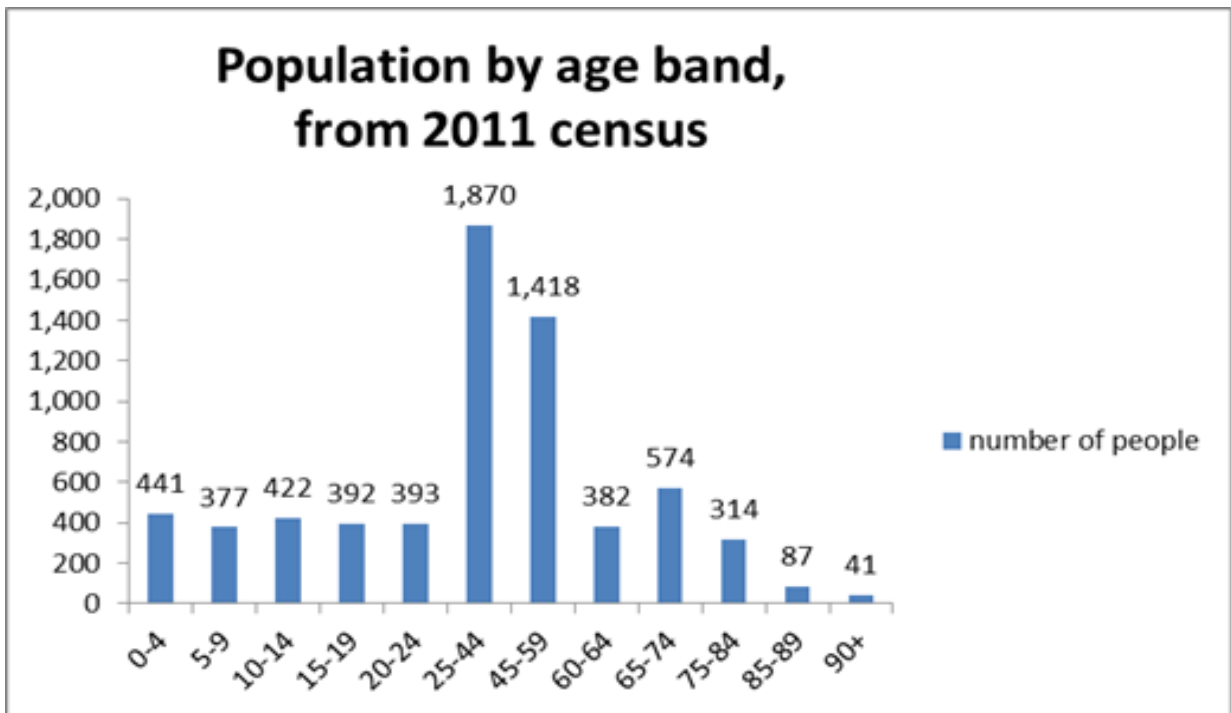


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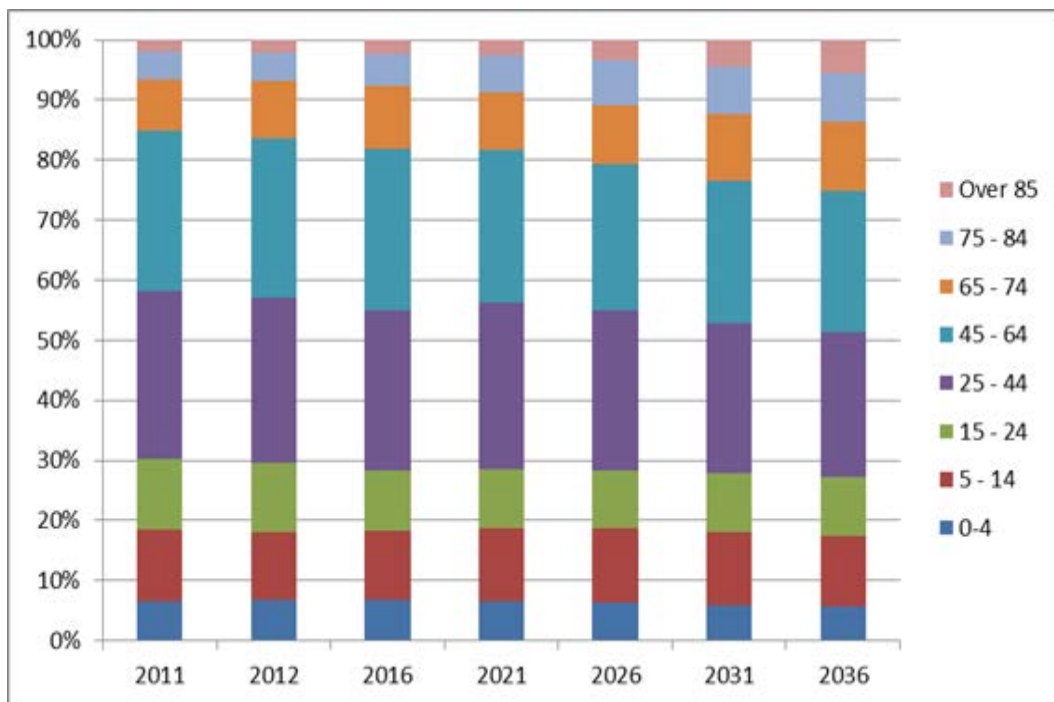
➤ Godmanchester has a similar population profile to Huntingdonshire district.

³ All data comes from the 2011 Census.

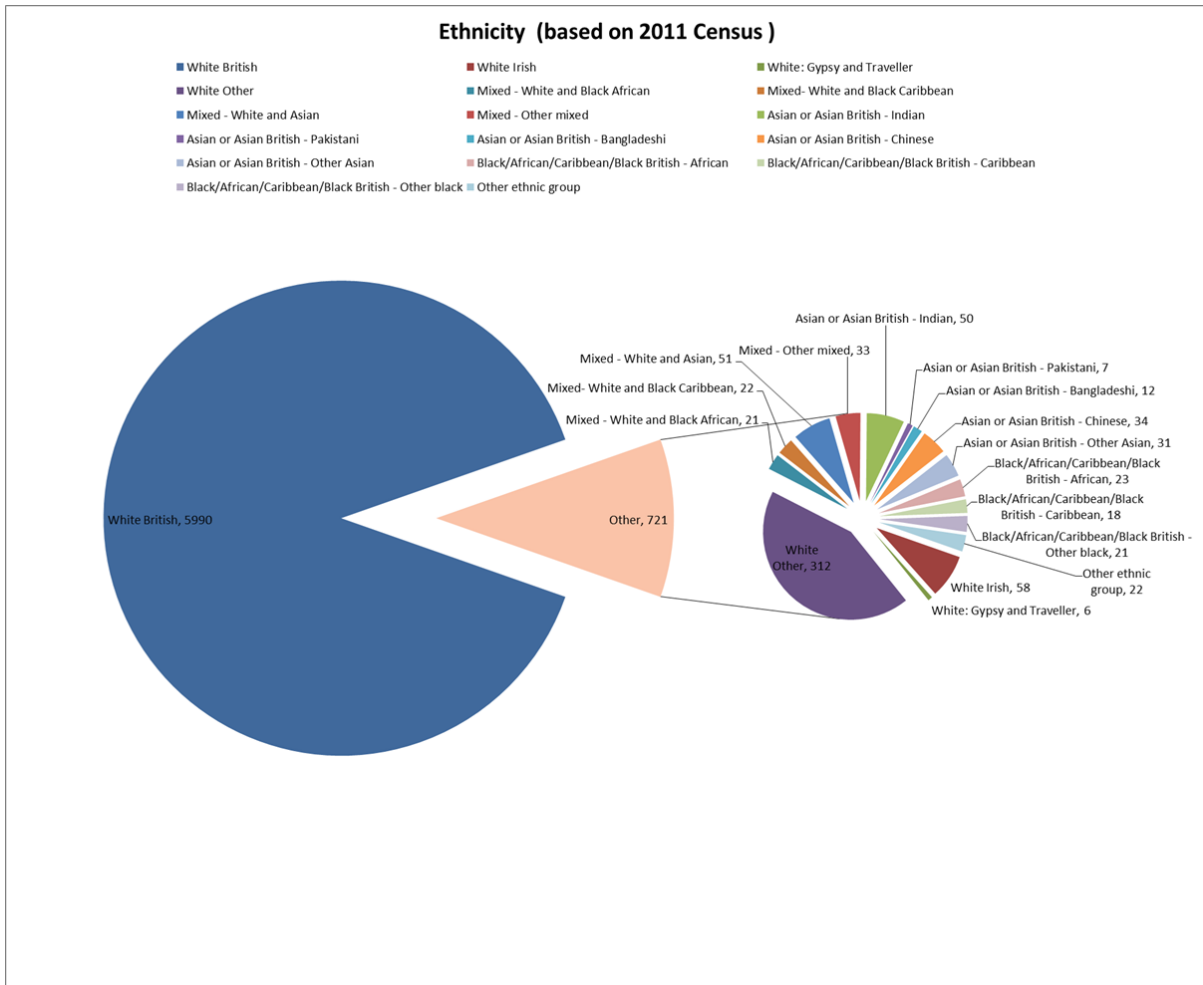
- At the 2011 census the biggest proportion of our residents were aged between 25 and 60 years.



- Since 2001 the main growth in Godmanchester's population has been those either moving towards or at retirement age.



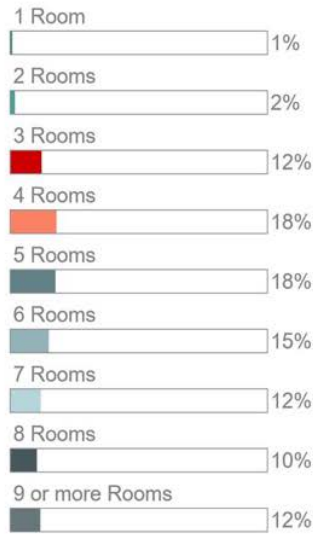
➤ The Town's population is ethnically diverse.



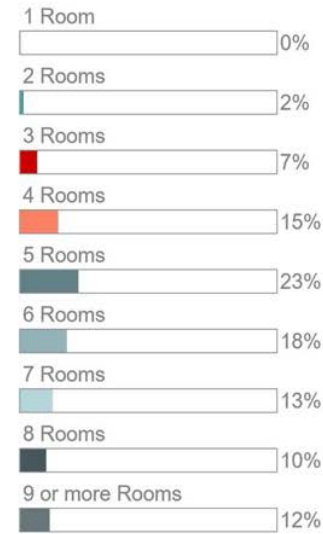
➤ Patterns of the method people use to travel to work are similar to those in Huntingdonshire but car ownership is lower. This reflects the historic pattern of development which limits space for parking in many parts of the Town and also the good access to services in Godmanchester and Huntingdon.

Number of Rooms

Godmanchester



Huntingdonshire



Housing Tenure

Godmanchester



Huntingdonshire



Method of Travel to Work (%)



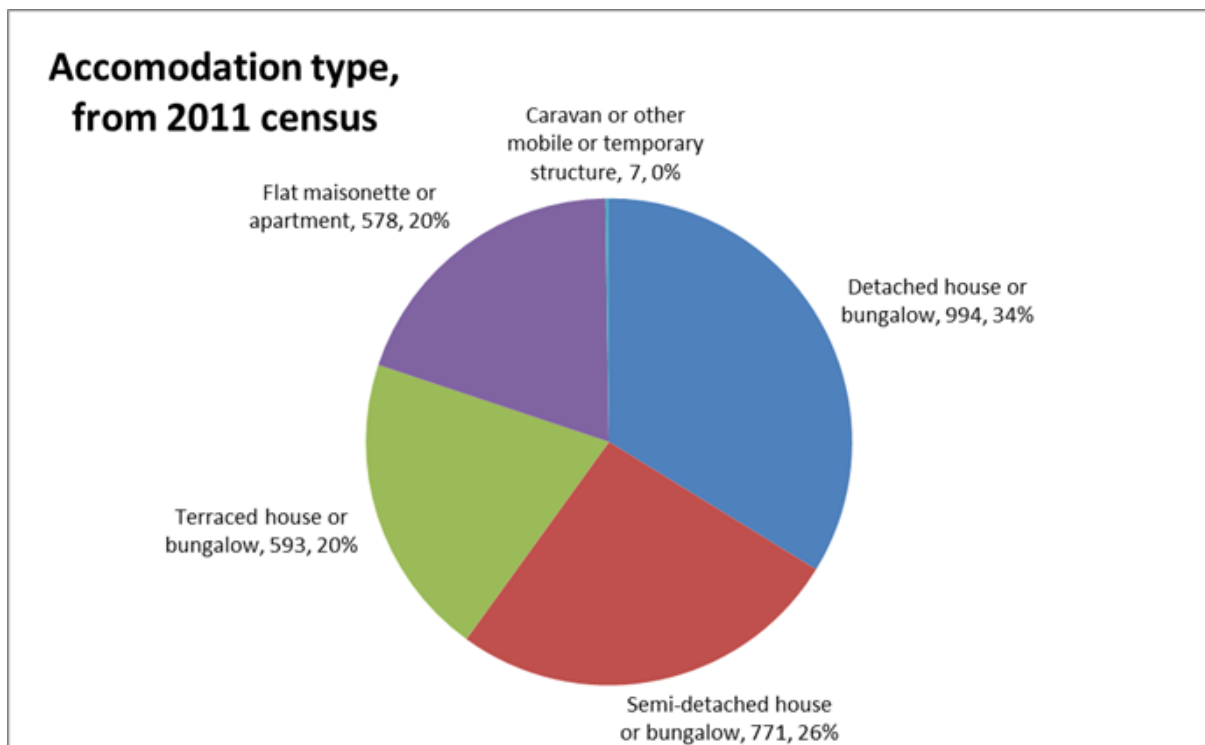
Average Cars per Household



- Due to the large proportion of flats, Godmanchester has a high proportion of smaller properties.

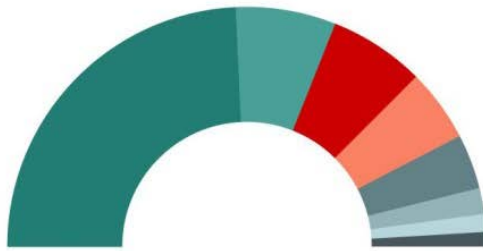


- Social rented properties are higher in Godmanchester than in Huntingdonshire, with ownership levels correspondingly lower.

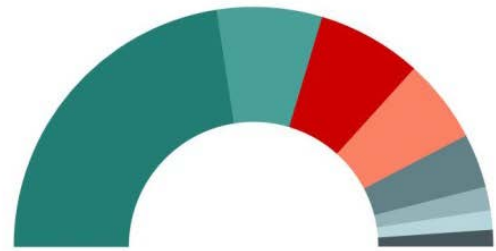


Economic Activity

Godmanchester



Huntingdonshire



Qualifications

Godmanchester



Huntingdonshire



- Godmanchester has high levels of economic activity, with many people in full-time employment.
- The overall level of qualifications of Godmanchester residents is high.

Employment Sector

Godmanchester



Huntingdonshire



- Godmanchester has a high proportion of people working in public administration, education and health (compared to Huntingdonshire), with low proportions working in retail services.

3 Visions and Objectives

Challenges for Godmanchester

3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address, as far as is possible, the challenges that face the community of Godmanchester. In summary, these challenges are:

Growing population

- 26% increase in population over the next 20 years⁴
- Help new people engage and enjoy living in the town;
- Ensure all homes are within walking distance of the “historic core”⁵
- Support a growing ageing population⁶;
- Support a population that may change as the local housing market changes, e.g. a growth in pre-school children
- Risk of Godmanchester becoming a dormitory town serving Cambridge and other nearby towns.

Increasing traffic on our narrow roads

- Existing rush hour congestion through the Town;
- More traffic from new development in Godmanchester and other development in the district;
- Broadly beneficial impact of A14 Improvement Scheme⁷ but with longer north bound route from Godmanchester.
- Increased demand for parking combined with some poor and dangerous parking

Protecting our unique heritage and surrounding countryside

- Maintain Godmanchester’s independence from Huntingdon and separation from surrounding villages and hamlets
- Increased pressure for more new houses making us too like a large sprawling Town and feel less like a historic “village”;
- More new development that detracts from the character of the “historic core” of Godmanchester.

Deteriorating public services

- Deteriorating roads with increasing numbers of potholes and poor pavements;
- More support for vulnerable people needed from families, volunteers and community groups.

Supporting local businesses to thrive

- Maintain the range of restaurants and shops;
- Ensure local services, e.g. Doctors have capacity needed.

Ensure that flood risk minimised

- Risk, albeit low, of flooding in the old Town area if the flood walls are overtopped.

⁴ Based on planning permissions granted in outline in July 2016 and the Draft HDC Development Plan 2036.

⁵ The “historic core” refers to the older part of Godmanchester centred on the Causeway and as shown on map in Section 10.

⁶ Based on forecast data provide by Cambridge County Council (p11) but also noting that new housing developments are not factored in.

Vision for Godmanchester

3.2 In consultation with the community, the established vision for Godmanchester is as follows:

By 2036, Godmanchester will be an even better place to live, work and visit than it is now:

- ***The town's historic core and rich architecture will have been protected and the beautiful open spaces, particularly along the Ouse Valley, enjoyed by residents and visitors;***
- ***The community spirit, amenity, recreational and spiritual facilities, and good educational opportunities will be the envy of surrounding parishes;***
- ***New residents at Romans' Edge (formerly known as Bearscroft), and in any other new developments, will have been welcomed and any further development will be within the town's existing built boundary;***
- ***Traffic flows through the town will have reduced as a result of the A14 bypass, therefore allowing more people to use buses, walk and cycle safely;***
- ***Developments elsewhere in the district have been planned and the necessary infrastructure has been provided to ensure Godmanchester remains unaffected by these developments in terms of traffic.***



Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

3.3 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan as identified through engagement with the community are as follows:

1. Protect and enhance our beautiful and tranquil countryside and open spaces.
2. Protect and enhance our historic heritage and improve the appearance of the Historic Core.
3. Provide a range of vibrant amenity and recreation facilities that are used by residents and visitors.
4. Ensure any new residential developments meet the housing needs of local people and benefit our Town.
5. Provide essential services and infrastructure.
6. Help local businesses thrive.
7. Help people get around more easily.



4 The Natural Environment and Open Space

- 4.1** It is our aim to ensure that the Town’s beautiful open spaces, particularly along the Ouse Valley, can be enjoyed by residents and visitors. These spaces, and the natural environment in which Godmanchester is located are key to make our Town an even better place to live, work and visit.

The Importance of the Countryside Setting

- 4.2** Godmanchester sits alongside the River Great Ouse which is a dominating feature of the landscape and responsible for much of the current patterns of settlement and land use. Especially evident is the impact of sand and gravel extraction as well as extensive and intensive agricultural use. Current and past major transport links, and the now redundant land fill site, also add to the variety of habitats. An additional and important feature within the Town of Godmanchester, are the areas of green space and urban landscaping which together with a number of large homes and gardens provide a rich diversity of habitats.
- 4.3** To the north, east and west of the town a crescent of river and floodplain habitats studded with open water, wetland woodland, scrub and grassland provide significant wildlife value much of which is in the process of being proposed as the Ouse Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty⁸. This strategically important ecological network forms a core component of the green infrastructure within the county and beyond. There is significant potential to further enhance the varied habitats present. Draft policy proposals that enhance the natural environment and the ecological networks, including land along the Ouse Valley, the Local Green Spaces and other designated sites, will be welcomed.
- 4.4** The agricultural land to the south has been improved by the informal linear Silver Street nature reserve.
- 4.5** Portholme Meadow Site of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI] and Special Area for Conservation [SAC] is of European significance as it is the largest area of lowland floodplain meadow in the country. Whilst it is in the neighbouring parish of Brampton and falls within their Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area, it is a significant local conservation and recreational resource. It is also a vital visual presence in the Historic Core of the Town.
- 4.6** Smaller areas of meadow and flood plain grassland occur within the Godmanchester boundary and are very significant features.
- 4.7** Godmanchester also has the East Side Common SSSI and the West Side Common both of which are used for grazing and both provide valuable habitats and amenities for the Town.

⁸ The Ouse Valley is also defined in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment 2007, HDC 2007

4.8 Along much of the valley, the river is flanked by large areas of open water, a legacy of sand and gravel mineral extraction. These sites are important recreational and biodiversity resources.

4.9 Whilst the agricultural value of the land around Godmanchester is classified as ‘very good’ to ‘good’⁹ it contributes much besides food production to the culture and scenic/recreational value of the Town. The meadows alongside the river are subject to flooding but the low, level grazing and cutting of these contribute significantly to the rural character of the area and form significant assets in regard to biodiversity and landscape. The fields to the east and south of the town are of lesser conservation value to those on the valley bottom along the river Great Ouse however in terms of the landscape. The gentle rising land forms an important backdrop to the Town and contributes significantly to view and impression that the visitor gets approaching from the south. “The high quality and distinctive character of this landscape make it vulnerable to changes stemming from developments of an unsympathetic design or scale.”¹⁰



4.10 The countryside around the built form of the Town is crucial in providing Godmanchester with its rural character and reflecting its historic past. It is a well-defined semi-rural settlement with a clear built-up form and boundaries. The separate nature of the settlement reflects its history as it pre-dates all surrounding settlements. Its character is derived from this separation and should be retained so that it remains a settlement significantly removed from neighbouring villages. Even the differences in the Medieval Bridge’s construction reflect Godmanchester’s independent nature, with arches that are different from those built from the Huntingdon side.

4.11 The new A14 route, whilst being publicised as having the potential to bring relief from congestion to Godmanchester, will have a significant impact on our surrounding landscape.

⁹ Defra’s agricultural land classification

¹⁰ Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment 2007, HDC 2007

- 4.12** It is imperative that development which may take place along the new A14 does not reduce the ‘open countryside’ gap between Godmanchester and the new A14. Similarly, it is important that growth in all local settlements, including Godmanchester, does not see the currently separate Towns and villages merge or the ‘open countryside’ gap reduced. The particular gaps of relevance are between Godmanchester and Hilton, Papworth, Papworth St Agnes, The Graveleys, The Offords and The Hemmingfords.

Policy GMC1: The importance of the countryside setting

Development in the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan Area shall be focused within or adjoining the settlement boundary as identified in the plan¹¹. Development outside the settlement boundary is classified as being in the ‘open countryside’.

Development in the ‘open countryside’ will only be acceptable where it is a use which is appropriate to the open countryside and should seek to preserve and protect our best and most versatile agricultural land and land of local environmental value including, but not limited to, The Godmanchester Nature Reserve at Cow Lane¹², The East Side and West Side Commons in Godmanchester and the Ouse Valley¹³

- 4.13** The Godmanchester Nature Reserve at Cow Lane (part of which is also known as the Peter Prince Memorial Nature Reserve), the Huntingdonshire Plant Nursery in Park Lane and the reclaimed land at the Cow Lane Landfill Site, are key open amenity spaces; the landfill site is being replanted and will become the new Neolithic Country Park. All of these areas provide important habitats for wildlife as well as important amenities for health and well-being of residents and visitors alike. Especially educational learning and skills development for school-age children and post-school individuals with additional or special educational needs; for recreational use by walkers, runners, cyclist and dog owners; bird watchers, nature enthusiasts and fishermen make use of the lakes. Additional facilities such as toilets, visitor centres, walkways, viewing points and visitor car parking will be important in making sites accessible to visitors. It will be important that such facilities should enhance their location as their prime purpose is to enable visitors to enjoy the wildlife whilst ensuring that those habitats are protected and enhanced.

Policy GMC2: Development of visitor and tourist facilities

Development proposals will be supported where they propose to develop visitor facilities that support the tourist and visitor attractions of the area, including those at our nature reserves and amenity spaces. Proposals need to be: of an appropriate scale for their location; be sympathetic to their location; be sustainable; have minimal impact upon their environment.

¹¹ As shown in Chapter 10 of this document

¹² Part of which is also known as the Peter Prince Memorial Nature Reserve

¹³ The Ouse Valley as defined and mapped in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment 2007, HDC 2007

Preserving the Semi-Rural Village ‘Feel’ Within the Town.

4.14 There are a number of green spaces within the built-up part of the Town. This Green Infrastructure¹⁴ is important to not only provide connection for wildlife but also is crucial to maintain the semi-rural village-like feel of the Town and for residential amenity, as demonstrated through our community consultations. These green spaces are set out in Appendix 1.



4.15 The Local Green Spaces within or adjoining the settlement boundary are listed in Appendix 1, and are demonstrably special to the local community of Godmanchester. Also in Appendix 1, are sites in the Parish designated for their national and international significance for wildlife and as registered Common Land. Thirdly, Appendix 1 lists other non-designated green spaces, many of which were allocated as public amenity spaces under planning permissions for development on neighbouring land. These are all sites of community value, i.e. they provide a valuable space for recreational activities such as walking, dog walking, informal play, sports or allotment gardening. They are an important feature in and around the town and contribute to its character, adding to the distinctive open feel and reinforcing the sense of a rural village rather than an urban area.

Policy GMC3: Local Green Spaces

Godmanchester's designated Local Green Spaces¹⁵ and other green spaces are set out in Appendix 1. Proposals for development on the Local Green Spaces will not be permitted

¹⁴ "Green infrastructure is defined as a network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities." Cambridgeshire County Council Long Term Transport Strategy

¹⁵ The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife; and
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. (NPPF p18)

Green Spaces as listed in Appendix 1. Where areas which maintain the semi-rural feel of Town are identified but cannot be classified as being Local Green Spaces they will be designated as Other Green Spaces.

unless it can be demonstrated that it is required to enhance the role and function of an identified Local Green Space. Proposals for development on other green spaces should demonstrate that alternative informal recreational space is available within walking distance for neighbouring and future residents, and the semi-rural 'village' feel within the Town will not be seriously compromised.

Greener Streets

- 4.16** Whilst Godmanchester has many attractive streets, there are some streets with comparatively little greenery. Trees and other vegetation improve the visual features of public spaces and add to well-being, as well as contributing to the wider character of the area¹⁶. These streets could be made far more attractive, and wildlife friendly, with more street trees and planting.
- 4.17** The green spaces around our built environment, including verges and hedges for example, are important to improving public amenity. It can be difficult to identify who maintains or owns these areas of land. and It will be important that where any new development takes place, there is a clear plan as to whom will maintain the area and that asset records are accurate and reliable so that ownership is clearly identifiable¹⁷.

¹⁶ "Urban trees can make a significant contribution to a sustainable, integrated infrastructure approach, promoting value and economic development, climate change adaptation and human health and wellbeing", Baroness Kramer, Minister of State for Transport 14th Sept 2014

¹⁷ Environment Agency in the Pre-Submission Consultation

Policy GMC4: Landscaping and planting to keep the semi-rural character of the Town

All new development should demonstrate a high quality of landscaping and planting that is in keeping with the surrounding area and which replicates and extends the semi-rural character of the Town. This may include, but is not limited to, replicating the local pattern of traditional hedgerow planting, the use of native species and the inclusion of open “village” style greens. It will be important to maintain and extend linked habitats for wildlife: green corridors should be maintained/created to enable wildlife to move from one habitat to the next.



- 4.18** The Town has a wide range of wildlife living in its green spaces, back gardens, hedgerows and verges. These features provide a vital link to the surrounding countryside, as well as forming individual habitats and are key to giving the Town its semi-rural feel.

The River

- 4.19** Arguably Godmanchester’s greatest asset and the element that defines the Town is the watery highway for both people and wildlife. This adds greatly to the rich diversity of wildlife in the Town and represents 3000 years of water transport and trade from Bronze Age to today. The flora and fauna are typical of the area and are a constant reminder and pathway to the countryside and the landscape beyond. The aquatic biodiversity of the Ouse and its tributaries is important.

4.20 The river is mainly used for recreational activities and “quiet tourism” such as pleasure boating, kayaking and canoeing. The low impact, low level noise, is important to maintain the tranquillity of the area and to promote the diversity of wildlife.



Policy GMC5: Making the most of our waterside assets.

Development proposals that promote use of the river for quiet and low-impact leisure, wildlife and tourists’ pursuits, with low risk to wildlife and habitats, will be supported. Proposals to protect, restore, replace and enhance public moorings and create new public mooring space to encourage safe access to the river and spaces for short stay¹⁸ visitors will be supported. Public access and use will be prioritised over private access and use. Proposals that will create activity on the river will be expected to demonstrate that such uses do not have a detrimental impact on the tranquil environment through the creation of excessive noise or pollution.

¹⁸ Up to 48 Hours as set out by the Great Ouse Boating Association

Play Areas and Recreation Spaces

- 4.21** Godmanchester has a reasonable amount of play area provision which is quite well distributed throughout the Town¹⁹



- 4.22** The new development at Romans' Edge will provide some additional play spaces. There is deficit in natural and semi-natural areas. A number of potential green space sites for example, Wigmore Meadow where the wildflower areas could be extended to provide the biodiversity element needed, have been identified.²⁰ Huntingdon District Council (HDC) have identified that we need more parks and gardens. It will be important to ensure that the balance of parks, gardens and play spaces is kept under review to ensure they meet the changing needs of the Town.



¹⁹ HDC Paper March 2016: Godmanchester & St Neots - Needs Analysis of Green Space & Play Facilities, A Merrick.

²⁰ HDC Paper March 2016: Godmanchester & St Neots - Needs Analysis of Green Space & Play Facilities, A Merrick.

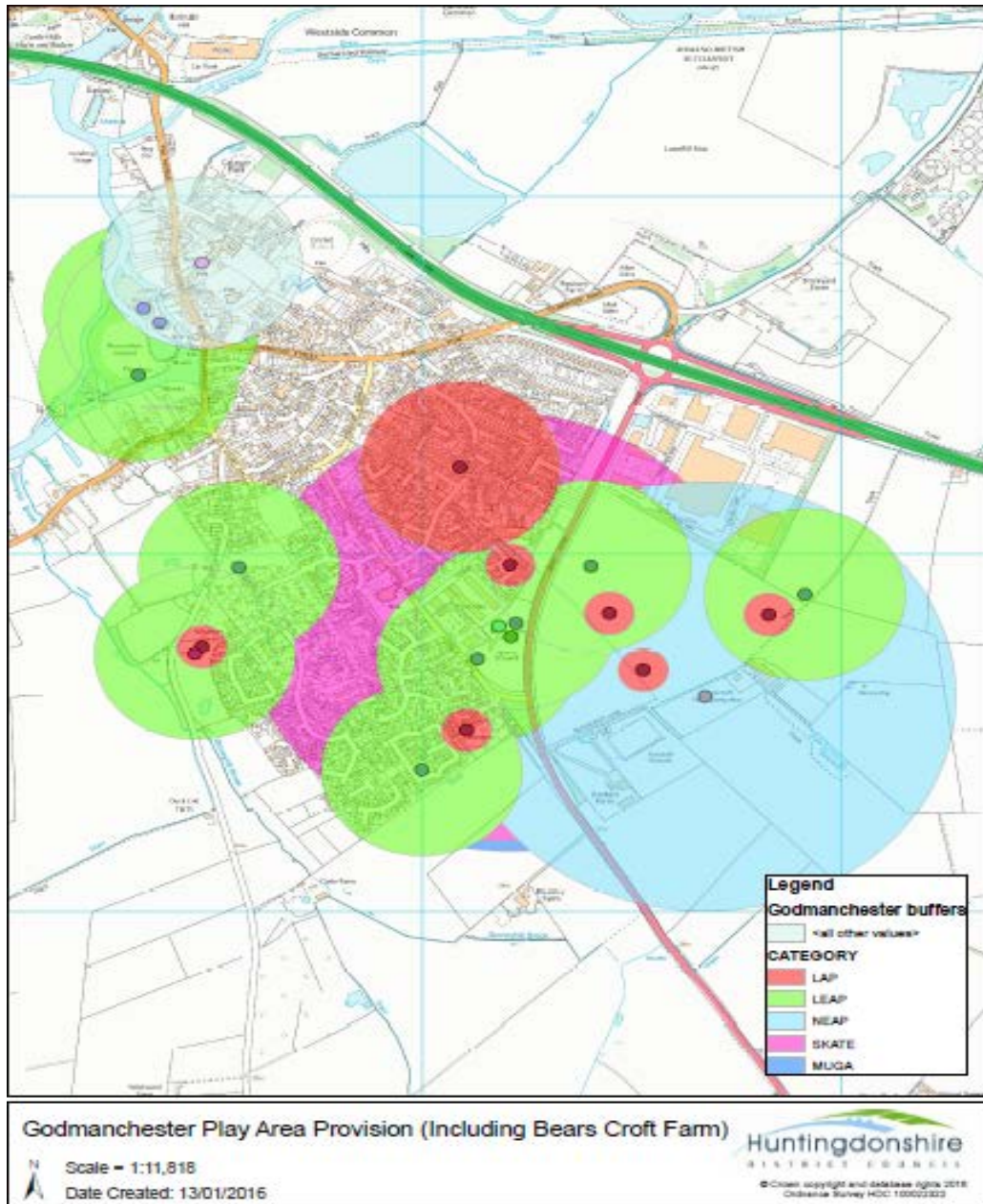
Figure 2: Green Space Provision as set out in Godmanchester and St Neots: Needs Analysis of Green Spaces and Play Spaces, HDC 2016²¹ A definition of what each heading means can be found in the footnote below.²²

Green Space Provision (ha)	Policy	Actual (ha)*
Parks & Gardens	3.27	0.09
Green Corridors	0.00	0.41
Natural & Semi Natural	1.57	0.00
Allotments & Community Gardens	2.18	3.52
Amenity Green Space	7.43	9.66
Total Green Space	14.45	13.68
Play Provision (ha)		
Total	1.70	0.57
* HDC, TC & PC and 3rd party ownership all included		

²¹ Godmanchester and St Neots: Needs Analysis of Green Spaces and Play Spaces, HDC 2016

²² *Parks and Gardens*: "This type of open space includes urban parks, formal gardens and country parks that provide opportunities for various informal recreation and community events, within settlement boundaries"
Natural and Semi-Natural: This type of open space includes woodlands, urban forestry, scrubland, grasslands (e.g. downlands, commons, meadows), wetlands, nature reserves and wastelands with a primary purpose of wildlife conservation and bio-diversity within the settlement boundaries. *Amenity Greenspace*; This type of open space is most commonly found in housing areas. It includes informal recreation spaces and greenspaces in and around housing, with a primary purpose of providing opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancing the appearance of residential or other areas. It also includes village greens. Amenity space is often the only type of provision found in smaller settlements.

Figure 3: Green Space Provision as currently available in Godmanchester and St Neots: Needs Analysis of Green Spaces and Play Spaces, HDC 2016



Legend terminology: LAP: Local Area for Play LEAP: Local Equipped Area for Play NEAP: Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play : SKATE: skate park; MUGA: Multi Use Games Area²³

²³ Defined by Fields In Trust and Play England.

- 4.23** Whilst the Town has a number of play areas, HDC have identified that we need more and the additional play areas proposed for the Romans' Edge will help address this.



- 4.24** It has also been identified that the north of the town would benefit from an additional play area. The area where there is sufficient space is to the side of the Cricket Pitch, near to Pavilions Close. "However, if there were an opportunity to upgrade a LEAP²⁴ play area to a NEAP²⁵ play area in the north-west the funding to increase the size and play designation of a LEAP to a NEAP would need to be financed through securing a Section 106 funding from local developments"²⁶.

Policy GMC6: Improving and increasing all our public Green Space²⁷

Development proposals will be supported which:

Improve our Green Spaces and increase the provision of "parks and gardens"²⁸ for public use; and

Create more natural and semi-natural²⁹ green spaces giving improved public amenity space for mental and physical health and educational use.

²⁴ LEAP: a local equipped area for play with a minimum of 6 play experiences

²⁵ NEAP: neighbourhood equipped area for play with a minimum of 9 play experiences

²⁶ HDC Paper March 2016: Godmanchester & St Neots - Needs Analysis of Green Space & Play Facilities, A Merrick.

²⁷ "Green spaces" refer to Local Green Spaces and Godmanchester's Other Green Spaces

²⁸ As defined in HDC Paper March 2016: Godmanchester & St Neots - Needs Analysis of Green Space & Play Facilities, A Merrick. *Parks and Gardens*: "This type of open space includes urban parks, formal gardens and country parks that provide opportunities for various informal recreation and community events, within settlement boundaries"

²⁹ As defined in HDC Paper March 2016: Godmanchester & St Neots - Needs Analysis of Green Space & Play Facilities, A Merrick. *Parks and Gardens*. "Natural and Semi-Natural: This type of open space includes woodlands, urban forestry, scrubland, grasslands (e.g. downlands, commons, meadows), wetlands, nature reserves and wastelands with a primary purpose of wildlife conservation and bio-diversity within the settlement boundaries."

- 4.25** Walking for pleasure and recreation is important for health and well-being and Godmanchester’s rural setting lends itself to this. There are several well-used local footpaths and walkways, including The Charter Way³⁰, that lead beyond the settlement boundary and out into the surrounding open countryside: this includes the Ouse Valley Way. It is important that new routes are provided over time to ensure that we retain our semi-rural feel and our connection to the open countryside around us.
- 4.26** Dog walking is part and parcel of daily life for many residents and yet there are no green spaces in the Town designated as “off-the-leash” spaces. The provision of public amenity space that would enable off-the-leash dog walking space will be supported.

<p><i>Policy GMC7: Improving access to the countryside</i></p> <p><i>Development proposals will be supported that provide walking routes and enable ongoing access to the wider countryside.</i></p>

Community Plant and Tree Nursery and Allotments

- 4.27** Godmanchester hosts the Huntingdonshire Community Plant and Tree Nursery (Park Lane) which provides plants and produce for HDC and the public. In addition, it also provides a social and learning space for adults and children (and has been used for pupils and young adults with Special and Additional Education Needs³¹). It is also a meeting point for HDC Health Walks. This space is listed as a ‘Asset of Community Value’ but there is a real possibility that it will be lost to development over time so it will be important to find a replacement site to enable this valued resource to remain within the Town.
- 4.28** There are currently 140 allotments covering 7.5 acres with more than 100 allotment holders. Those on the current site, on Cambridge Road, have been in use for nearly 100 years and are managed by the Allotment Association. There are more allotments allocated at the Romans’ Edge development. These allotments are a vital part of the town. The families and children involved enjoy an activity which is productive and healthy.

<p><i>Policy GMC8: Ensuring public amenity space is retained within the Town.</i></p> <p><i>Where public nursery and allotment space is lost through redevelopment for housing or other uses then an alternative easily accessible provision of equal scale and quality should be provided to the community within the parish.</i></p>

³⁰ Route to commemorate the anniversary of the Town’s Charter.

³¹ Used by local schools for enrichment (Pupil Premium) and SEN/Additional Needs support as well as for young people spending their Personal Learning Budgets.

Sports Facilities

- 4.29** Godmanchester has a range of sports on offer for residents, with some utilising dedicated spaces and others using local recreation spaces. Whilst many sports are not available in the Town, a significant number are on offer in the neighbouring Town of Huntingdon and the wider area. It remains important for health, well-being and a sense of community for sporting opportunities to remain and grow in the Town.
- 4.30** Godmanchester has a cricket ground which is owned by HDC and is run by a group of volunteers. The wooden Cricket Pavilion is reaching the end of its life span and will need to be replaced. This open space is also well used by residents for recreation and as a public amenity space. This is an HDC “Strategic Facility”³² and is listed as an HDC Community asset.
- 4.31** Godmanchester has a small swimming pool on the Community Academy site which currently offers swimming facilities and lessons to the school and is open to the public. This is a well-used resource and those using it travel from far beyond the Town.
- 4.32** The new development at Bearcroft Farm, now known as Romans’ Edge will have a green sports pitches. The final details are yet to be determined but it is hoped that these spaces will encourage an even greater number of sports and sporting opportunities on offer in the Town.
- 4.33** Godmanchester has a floodlit Multi- Use Games Area (MUGA) at Judith’s Field which is freely available for the community to use.
- 4.34** The Town is home to both a thriving running club and cycling club. These are community led groups and are run on an informal basis.
- 4.35** A number of martial arts groups meet in the Town’s community facilities and we have a gym operating from one of our industrial estates.
- 4.36** Whilst we are on the river, we do not have any water-based sports groups based in the Town: there are active boat clubs and a canoeing club in Huntingdon, a dragon boat club in St. Neots and sailing is offered at Graffham Water.

³² Huntingdonshire Sports and Leisure Facilities Strategy 2016-21

- 4.37** Godmanchester is home to an established football club, Godmanchester Rovers, and new affiliated youth football club, Godmanchester Town. The land where Rovers have their ground is leased from HDC and is accessed by the farm track, along Bearscroft Lane via the A1198. The site provides: two 11m by 11m pitches used by seven teams (three Rovers and four Town teams); a 9m by 9m pitch used by three teams (Town); a 7m by 7m pitch used by two teams (Town); and a mini-soccer school. The number of teams using in site in 2017 – 18 is set to increase to between 18 and 24. Although the team have invested in a club house and have significantly upgraded the facilities to meet league requirements (car parking, stands, turnstiles) they have a fundamental issue with the land on which the pitches sit: it routinely becomes waterlogged and is often unplayable. HDC note that ground would benefit from a 3G pitch³³, noting its impact on public participation and identifying it as local need. The football ground is now listed as an HDC Community asset.
- 4.38** The Town also hosts other youth football teams that train on the recreational spaces, including Judith’s Field but are unable to play matches due to the lack of available, appropriate pitches³⁴
- 4.39** Godmanchester Rovers are keen to convert their football pitches to the latest all weather pitches, which they would use as a wider community sporting facility. These would enable play all year-round and, as they would be lit, would enable longer hours of use in the darker months.
- 4.40** Godmanchester has a small Tennis Club which has been utilising the tennis courts at Godmanchester Primary School. HDC also note this in the Huntingdonshire Sports and Leisure Facilities Strategy 2016-21: “These areas have been identified on the criteria they are within large enough settlements to support additional facilities and there is an obvious discrepancy in level of provision compared to similar settlements”. However, these facilities are being used as a temporary home for the Bridge Academy. It would be good to find a new more permanent facility within the Town as they currently have no place in which to play.
- 4.41** The Royal Oak Bowls Club has a bowling green accessed via St. Anne’s Lane. This is an important community asset and is used for regular club sessions.

Policy GMC9: Ensuring a wide range of sporting and recreation facilities are retained and expanded within the Town

Development proposals to retain, improve and enhance current sports and recreation facilities and offer new additional facilities that extend the range of sports on offer will be supported.

³³ Huntingdonshire Sports and Leisure Facilities Strategy 2016-21

³⁴ This includes pitches which meet the needs of the Football Associations league requirements.

5 Heritage and the Built Environment

- 5.1 Godmanchester’s “historic core” and rich architecture is important to its character and is part of what makes it unique. This aspect of Godmanchester will need to be protected as the Town changes with time. However, what makes the Town special is its residents. To make our Town an even better place to live it needs to meet the needs of its residents. It is our aspiration that Godmanchester will have the community spirit, amenity, recreational and spiritual facilities, and good educational opportunities that will be the envy of surrounding parishes.
- 5.2 As many of Godmanchester’s historic and heritage assets are covered by national protection under legislation (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990), the shortness of this section does not reflect the value we place on them but rather seeks not to duplicate provision under planning law that already provide protection.

Heritage

- 5.3 Godmanchester is rich in history, archaeology and archaeological artefacts: its heritage is what makes it unique and provides its character. It is relatively unusual to have a settlement with such a long history which is still very much in evidence in its structure and buildings. The two conservation areas are full of listed buildings showing architecture from the last 400 years.
- 5.4 As the Town changes, archaeological investigations permit us a glimpse into our past: there are significant Roman sites around the Town³⁵, many of which are now shown through the interpretation boards near to these sites. In one location, we are able to see the original Roman Road - Ermine Street – visible only some two feet below the surface of the soil. In preparing for the new development at Romans’ Edge the archaeological work unearthed an iron age settlement. Under the former landfill site lie the remains of a Neolithic Temple It is important that we record the location of these sites and enable their story to form part of historical understanding of Godmanchester as a settlement.
- 5.5 The Museum has artefacts that date back to the Roman Town including a section of Roman Road. Currently the museum opens on a temporary basis in the Queen Elizabeth School: this means that exhibits can only be viewed on six occasions each year or by prior arrangement.

Policy GMC10: Promoting Godmanchester’s history and heritage

Development proposals that seek to promote and share the history and heritage of Godmanchester through development of the visitor economy and of tourist facilities will be supported. Proposals need to be: of an appropriate scale for their location; be sympathetic to their location; have low-impact and enhance their environment. Development proposals to provide a permanent home to the Museum within the historic core will be supported.

³⁵ As documented by Professor Upex, Archaeologist and Landscape Historian at Cambridge University in conjunction with the Porch Museum.

The Built Environment

5.6 The Town has a fine grade I* parish Church of mainly 14th Century construction. In 1853, the whole building was restored under the direction of the famous architect Sir G. Gilbert Scott RA. The Church is an important landmark in the Town and views to it are important to the local community. Plans are in hand to develop the internal space for greater use by the community.



5.7 There is also a Scheduled Monument in the plan area, a moated site 170m east of the church.

5.8 The focal point of the historic core of the Town is centred on School Hill, the location of Godmanchester's Chinese Bridge which is probably the Town's most photographed feature. The Queen Elizabeth School and the Town Hall, both Grade II* listed are here too.

5.9 The buildings along the Causeway are indicative of the character of Godmanchester. Fronting the old Viking harbour, are properties (commercial and residential) of architectural merit which are often photographed to illustrate the historic heritage.



5.10 Godmanchester has an unusually large number of listed buildings, the highest number in Huntingdonshire at 125 listed buildings and counting, marking it out as a place with a special heritage³⁶. There are significant buildings in the roads that radiate from the centre of the historic core including West Street, Cambridge Road Post Street and Earning Street. Properties here include large farmhouses from the 15th Century as well as bakeries, forges, cordwainers and a large number of former inns. In addition, in West Street, is Farm Hall, built in 1746 for the Recorder of Huntingdon. One of the Godmanchester's most imposing buildings is Island Hall, an elegant riverside mansion built in the late 1740s.



5.11 Godmanchester has two Conservation Areas: Post Street³⁷ and Earning Street³⁸. These are important nationally, as well as locally, as they demonstrate the history and heritage of the Town. (See Appendix 3 for a link to the list of all Grade I and II listings.)

Policy GMC11: Ensuring development maintains and enhances the character of the Town and reflects its heritage and history.

Development proposals within the historic core are expected to demonstrate that they are sympathetic to the surrounding buildings (including listed building), in terms of scale, design and amenity. Development proposals should reinforce the local character including the grain, scale, density and architectural distinctiveness.

³⁶ HDC Overview and Scrutiny Panel Report June 2015: A14 Joint Local Impact Report Statement Of Common Ground And Environmental Impact Assessment Matters

³⁷ HDC Godmanchester (Post Street) Conservation Area Character Statement 2002

³⁸ HDC Godmanchester (earning Street) Conservation Area Character Statement 2003

5.12 Godmanchester is not a living museum and the needs of its residents and businesses will change over time. It is important that historic buildings remain in use and are well-maintained. It is also important that as build uses change we do not lose the important features that tell us about the buildings past uses, and the Town's long and varied heritage.

Policy GMC12: Protecting and celebrating our heritage

In order to protect and celebrate Godmanchester's heritage, development proposals that seek to alter or extend listed or historic buildings and structures should retain any key features that show their past use.



6 Housing

- 6.1 Over the HDC Draft Local Plan period to 2036, most residential development will be delivered on the Romans' Edge site. With this site, currently in progress, there is little potential to influence the detail of the housing development that it provides. However, any subsequent housing developments in Godmanchester need to address some important principles that have been established as important by the local community. In summary, these must ensure that any new development enhances the Town and provides the right mix of houses for all residents with affordable, good quality homes for families and the elderly.



- 6.2 In writing the Plan, we are encouraged not to duplicate planning policies which already exist in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) or in planning policies already adopted³⁹, or proposed,⁴⁰ by HDC as the planning authority. Consequently, there may be housing policies that are not covered in this document as they already exist elsewhere: the Huntingdonshire District Council policies which apply are set out in Appendix 2.

³⁹ The HDC Core Strategy 2009

⁴⁰ The HDC Draft Local Plan to 2036

Residential Development

- 6.3** New housing development of a moderate or minor scale is defined in Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy as developments of 10-59 dwellings and up to 9 dwellings respectively. Back land development is defined as development on land behind the rear building line of existing housing or other development, and is usually land that has previously been used as gardens, open spaces and wildlife habitats.
- 6.4** Infill development involves the development of a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage. It usually consists of frontage plots only and often comprises side gardens of existing houses.
- 6.5** One of the issues raised by the community has been the concern that infill development would serve to inappropriately increase the density of development in the Town thereby having a detrimental impact.
- 6.6** The combined, cumulative effect of new development including back land and infill development is that it can change the character of a settlement: here that would mean from a semi-rural character to a much more urban character. This would not be appropriate in Godmanchester, where care and attention to the scale, design and layout of new housing and its site context must be given.

Policy GMC13: Residential development.

Residential development within or adjoining the settlement boundary⁴¹ of Godmanchester should reflect the character of the surrounding area and protect amenity of neighbours. Sites within reasonable walking distance of the Town's historic core will be favourably considered. Development should be of minor or moderate scale⁴², or represent infilling or back land development. Infilling or back land development should reinforce the character of the existing street scene by reflecting the scale, mass, height and form of its neighbours, as well as the grain and density of its location. It should also reflect the semi-rural nature of the Town with its historic core.

⁴¹ As defined on the Settlement Boundary map in this document

⁴² Moderate or minor scale is defined as developments of 10-59 dwellings and up to 9 dwellings respectively

Improving Parking in the Town

- 6.7** Godmanchester residents have a high reliance on cars for accessing employment as shown in Section 2 of this Plan. The average number of cars per household is 1.4. However, a high proportion of homes in the Town, mainly in the Historic Core, have little or no off-street parking due to their historic nature – quite simply, many were built long before cars were invented. A number of local business, as well as the doctors’ surgery, operate in this part of the Town and so the problem is compounded by individuals who need to park to access those services and amenities.
- 6.8** A further challenge is that as the roads came long before motorised vehicles many are narrower than a normal carriageway further reducing the opportunities for on-street parking. A number of our roads are major thoroughfares⁴³ and are marked out with double yellow lines to prevent parking so as to maintain traffic flows and safe passage. This further reduces the number of possible on-street parking opportunities.
- 6.9** Parking is a real issue for Godmanchester residents, whether it is in terms of amenity for householders or safety where parking is poor and causes obstructions. It is vital that changes to the Town do not make the situation worse than it is already.
- 6.10** There is limited on-street and off-street parking in the historic core of the Town with no easy solution given the physical constraints of the environment. Vehicles parked on pavements create a safety issues for pedestrians and drivers.



⁴³ As identified by CCC Highways

- 6.11** The two local primary schools (three with Romans' Edge development) occasionally require buses/coaches to park to load and unload pupils but these are relatively infrequent. However, parking for school visitors overflows into neighbouring streets and there is local congestion associated with parents dropping and collecting children.
- 6.12** Godmanchester has three public car parks; all of which are owned and operated by HDC. People working in Huntingdon mostly use the Bridge Place Car Park. The Mill Yard Car Park is largely used by commuters from outside of the Town and by residents who live on Post Street. The car park on Park Lane is used mainly by those visiting the primary school, children's centre and swimming pool.
- 6.13** Increasingly Godmanchester is being used by commuters from outlying villages who park due its free parking and bus links to Huntingdon Railway station and the Guided Bus Way link into Cambridge. These additional cars reduce parking for residents, businesses and visitors.
- 6.14** Whippet, the local bus operator, has recently withdrawn a large section of the Town's bus route, citing obstructions caused by poor parking as being such a significant issue that it was no longer feasible to maintain the service.
- 6.15** Some of our recent housing developments clearly demonstrate that sometimes parking designs simply do not deliver what residents need and this then leads to cars parking on the roadside and on verges and pavements⁴⁴. We also have restricted road access which causes issues for cars, bin lorries and, more importantly, emergency service vehicles. The community expressed a preference for new developments to avoid the use of parking courts where possible. These were felt to encourage anti-social behaviour and were often under-used, with residents choosing to park in front of their properties instead.
- 6.16** It is imperative that the additional vehicles associated with the new Romans' Edge development do not exacerbate the situation of unacceptable levels of on-street parking. It is also considered that there should be no reduction of existing parking provision, either off-street or on-street, unless it can be appropriately replaced with an alternative offer.

⁴⁴ HDC's Draft Design Guide 2016 utilises images from Godmanchester to exemplify where parking design does not work

- 6.17** New residential development in Godmanchester should include parking provision which is based on a careful assessment of the site's location and the character of the surrounding area, as well as the nature and form of the proposed development, and the size of the dwellings (number of bedrooms). Regard should be had for guidance on parking in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2017, when residential or other development proposals are put forward.
- 6.18** Cycling is addressed in a later chapter but it should be noted that all new development should provide adequate secure cycle parking provision.

Policy GMC14: For new residential development, plans should not exacerbate any pressure on 'on-street' parking and should provide numbers of off-street parking spaces appropriate to the site's location and the character of the proposal. The number of spaces should reflect the mix, size and type of housing.

Parking spaces can take the form of spaces or garaging/car port facilities, but must be permanently available for parking use and must meet the minimum standards for size as set out by the Local Planning Authority⁴⁵.

Development that results in the loss of existing off- or on-street parking will be resisted unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the amount of overall provision is adequate.

Proposals for new commercial development (A, B, or D-use class) must demonstrate that they can provide adequate off-road parking for their workforce, customers and deliveries and will not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring residential properties or existing businesses.

Proposals for new commercial activity that include for the provision of a Travel Plan will be supported, particularly where use of public and community transport is included.

Proposals that result in the loss of public car-parking facilities in the historic core will be resisted. Such proposals will only be acceptable if parking provision is made elsewhere within the historic core⁴⁶ that is at least of an equivalent size, quality and accessibility as the existing facility.

⁴⁵ Huntingdon District Council Design Guide 2017

Townscape

Street Furniture, Hard Landscaping, Lighting and Signage

- 6.19** Godmanchester is proud of its appearance winning ‘Best small town’ category of the Anglia in Bloom competition in 2014. In order to ensure that Godmanchester continues to have an attractive townscape, it is expected that the landscaping of new development should demonstrate that it is of a high quality and in keeping with the surrounding character. As part of this, any new planting should seek to use similar species to those used elsewhere in the town: this policy is already covered under the greener streets section.
- 6.20** It is important that the appearance of the street scene is enhanced where possible, not just by the soft landscaping but by the hard landscaping, street lamps, road signs and shop signs. Litterbins, benches and seats are welcomed where they are carefully located to serve the needs of residents and visitors and enhance public amenity. It is important that these reflect the semi-rural nature of the Town as well as its heritage and history.
- 6.21** HDC have already reviewed the hard landscaping in Town and consider that the “heavily engineered nature of the historic core”: would benefit from a review to consider whether there are other hard landscaping treatment that would be more sympathetic “than the “wall to wall ‘black-top’ hard surfacing across the street frontage. The roads that pass through the historic core⁴⁷ form some of Huntingdonshire’s most historic streets and are of major historical significance located within designated Conservation Areas and containing a wealth of Listed Buildings. Over many years, these roads have become more and more traffic-dominated to the detriment of its historic nature and indeed, the street scene is dominated by almost continuous carriageway and footway.”⁴⁸

Policy GMC15: Improving and enhancing the Town through street furniture lights and signage that reflect the Town’s character

The provision of street furniture⁴⁹, hard landscaping, lighting and signage will be expected to minimise the visual clutter in the Historic Core and to enhance its historic character. Where new provision is made, it should be in keeping with its surroundings, have regard to energy conservation and public safety and be sympathetic to the historic character of the Town. Signage which seeks to interpret and promote the Town’s heritage and history will be supported.

⁴⁷ Principally but not limited to: The Avenue, Post Street, the Causeway, West Street, Cambridge Street and Cambridge Road, Corpus Christi, London Street and Earning Street

⁴⁸ HDC Paper to Environmental Well-Being Overview and Scrutiny Panel 10 June A14 Joint Impact Report Appendix B

⁴⁹ Litterbins benches and seats

Flooding and Surface Water Flood Risk

- 6.22** Flood risk is an ever-present threat from the river but recent improvements to defences have reduced the risks from a 5% chance to a 1% chance or a 1 in 100 year risk from a 1 in 50 year risk Error! Bookmark not defined.
- 6.23** Significant parts of Godmanchester are still at risk from surface water flooding, as shown on the Environment Agency's flood maps:
- 6.24** Traditional drainage systems involve piping water off-site as quickly as possible are dependent on drains, sewers and ditches being kept clean. Increasingly detention basins and swales are being used to store excess water before it is then released into water management systems in a controlled way to avoid flooding. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) reduce flood risk by attenuating the rate and quantity of surface water run-off from a site, promoting ground water recharge and improving water quality and amenity.

Policy GMC 16: Reducing Surface Water Flood Risk

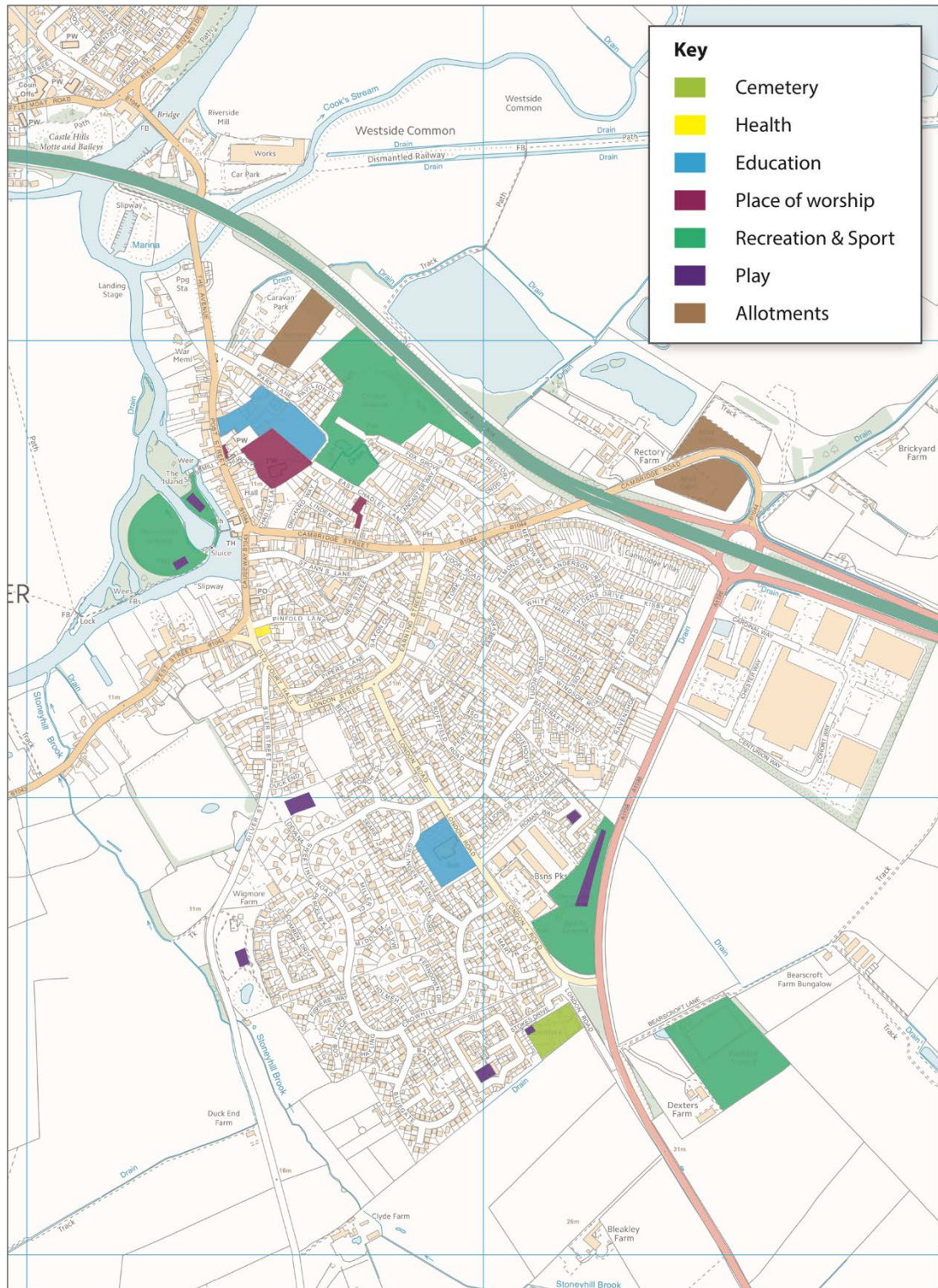
Development proposals will be expected to include Surface Water Management Systems (SuDS) in new builds and for retrofitting in order to reduce the existing surface water flood risk. Detention basins and dry swales provide a dual functionality and can be incorporated within the landscape and public green/open space. Provision for future adoption and maintenance will be essential.

7 Community Infrastructure and Businesses

- 7.1 For a community to thrive, its local infrastructure must provide for a range and choice of activities. It is important that what already exists within a community is protected and that additional infrastructure is provided to address the needs arising from growth.
- 7.2 One of the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan is to provide a range of vibrant amenity and recreation facilities that are used by residents and visitors. The way the Plan seeks to achieve this is by:
- improving existing indoor and outdoor recreational and sporting areas;
 - provide more facilities to reflect the changing needs of the community;
 - developing the community spirit in the Town;
 - developing moorings, fishing platforms and slipways to promote better use of the river;
 - ensuring our Town has sufficient good schools, health services, a wide range of local shops, and post office/banking services.



Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan | Map 1 - Community Facilities



Based on The Ordnance Survey Mapping. (C) Crown Copyright.

Protection of Existing and Provision of New Community Facilities

- 7.3** A range of community facilities have been identified as being needed by the residents. However, it is recognised that, over the plan period, it is likely that new or larger facilities will be needed to support the growth in the population or when ongoing maintenance is no longer financially viable. It is also recognised that needs and fashions change and the facilities may no longer be suitable, sustainable or well-used, needing to be updated, replaced, removed or a new facility offered.
- 7.4** This policy seeks to provide general support for the provision of such community facilities, as opposed to identifying a finite list or specific locations for the provision of amenities. It is recognised that the funding of such facilities is constrained and that the limited amount of residential development in the Parish means that developer contributions will also be limited. Therefore, it will be important that the local community uses its resources to lever in funds through grants and other means in order to fund the bulk of the cost of any new facility.

Policy GMC17: Provision of community facilities within the Town

Proposals that would result in the loss of community facilities will only be permitted if alternative and equivalent community facilities are provided, unless it can be demonstrated there is no longer a need or no reasonable hope of services being sustained.

Alternative community provision will be required to meet the following criteria:*

- *the scale⁵⁰ of the alternative provision must be at least of an equivalent scale to the existing provision; and*
- *the alternative site must be at least of equivalent standard in terms of layout to the existing provision; and*
- *the location of the alternative provision must be generally accessible by foot and within or adjacent to the built-up area of Godmanchester Town*

The provision of new community facilities to address the needs of the residents of the parish will be supported. These needs could relate to new recreation, leisure, spiritual, social, education and medical facilities.

**unless it can be demonstrated there is no longer a need or no reasonable hope of services being sustained.*



⁵⁰ Scale refers to range of facilities that are on offer rather than purely the size of the building or plot of land

Lawn Cemetery and Closed Church Yard

- 7.5** There is a “closed” churchyard, including a non-conformist burial ground, located at St. Mary The Virgin parish church. This means that it is no longer open for new burials. The Town Council is responsible for maintaining the Churchyard and non-conformist burial ground in conjunction with the Diocese of Ely.
- 7.6** The Lawn Cemetery is located adjacent to Stokes Drive and is managed by the Town Council. It provides burial plots and space for the interment of ashes. There is currently 50% space available for the future needs of the Town. In time additional space will be required: If the Town’s population grows at the current rate new space may be required from 2025. However, should the population change significantly that space may be required much earlier.

GMC18 Space for burials

Development proposals that provide additional burial space, including additional space at the Lawn Cemetery, will be supported.

Health Services

- 7.7** Godmanchester’s population is growing as our housing supply increases and so too is the demand for health services. Our population is statistically in good health (over 80%) and our average life expectancy age has risen to 85 years and with that come a higher level of long term health issues and disabilities^{Error! Bookmark not defined.}. We have steady birth rate but the growth of our community by a third with the new houses at Roman’s Edge may well see this increase.
- 7.8** Godmanchester is served by a single NHS doctors’ surgery (Roman Gate Surgery in Pinfold Lane) which is part of a practice serving Godmanchester and part of Huntingdon. The Roman Gate site is limited by the adjacent roads and building and there is already an issue with the lack of parking for staff and patients.



- 7.9** Godmanchester has not had a dental surgery from some years: the nearest NHS practices are in Huntingdon.
- 7.10** Godmanchester benefits from having Hinchingsbrook hospital within a short car journey, however there is no direct bus route. The hospital currently provides a range of services including an Accident and Emergency Department. Specialist services are offered at Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge, Peterborough City Hospital and Papworth Hospital (due to relocate to The Addenbrookes site).
- 7.11** It will be important to ensure that there is adequate provision of easily accessible health service within Godmanchester to reduce the need to travel for day-to-day health care such as GPs and dentists. However, recognising that those who need health care may also need to use cars it is vital that adequate off-street car parking is provided that is designed to grow as the demand for services increases with a changing population.

Policy GMC19: Provision of health services to meet the needs of residents

Development proposals that improve the availability of, and accessibility to, health services within Godmanchester, especially GP and dental services, will be supported.

Education

- 7.12** Godmanchester has a number of well used pre-schools and nurseries within the Town. The projected numbers of under-fives suggest that more pre-school place providers are needed. Nursery provision in Godmanchester is already set to grow with new places opening at the Bridge Academy. This should mean there are adequate numbers but as the Town changes it will be important that parents have easy access to high quality places.
- 7.13** Godmanchester is currently served by two primary schools (St Anne's and Godmanchester Primary Academy) with a new primary school (The Bridge Academy) being built as part of the Romans' Edge development. All schools offer education from Reception to Year 6 as well as hosting a wide range of other community based activities.
- 7.14** There is no secondary school in Godmanchester: Year 7 – 11 pupils travel to Huntingdon. The majority of secondary school age children attend Hinchingbrooke. St. Peters and the new secondary school that will be built as part of the Alconbury Weald development are the only two other state secondary schools within a five-mile radius. Some secondary pupils travel to Peterborough, Kimbolton or Cambridge to access religious or private (fee paying) schools. A recent survey indicated that parents would prefer to see school pupils travel less distance⁵¹.
- 7.15** Hinchingbrooke and St Peter's have sixth forms and, along with Huntingdon, Cambridge and Peterborough Regional Colleges provide a range of post-16 qualifications. In Godmanchester, the College of Animal Welfare and Stage Stars also offer post -16 vocational qualifications.
- 7.16** It would promote health and reduce traffic congestion if there are good and safe walking and cycling routes to all our education sites.
- 7.17** It will be important to see public transport routes made available to enable school pupils and college students to access education sites in time for registration each day, as well as to make the return journey home. It would promote more post-16 access if routes beyond the Town were connected and travel cards enabled for single ticket discounted journeys.

Policy GMC20: Provision of education facilities for residents

We would support proposals that improve the availability and accessibility of education facilities in Godmanchester, where they are identified and needed, and are or the benefit of Godmanchester residents.

⁵¹ Godmanchester Academy Trust Parental Survey 2016

Helping Local Businesses Thrive

- 7.18** In a small town such as Godmanchester with a limited employment base, the local businesses are an important part of the community infrastructure. They provide the services that support the population; without them there would be more journeys to Huntingdon and other surrounding areas, putting more pressure on the already stretched transport network.
- 7.19** Our priority is the support of businesses which provide local services and employment.

Providing for the Needs of New and Existing Businesses

- 7.20** One of the key themes in the NPPF is supporting a prosperous rural economy. Paragraph 28 states that, "Planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development."
- 7.21** There are over 33 listed businesses within the parish which does not include those working as sole traders. Over the plan period, it is considered vital to support local services and businesses in order that they may create employment opportunities for residents and local people.
- 7.22** In 2011 over 8% of the economically active population of Godmanchester parish was self-employed without employees, above the district average. In particular in a rural location it is considered most appropriate to encourage small scale businesses which develop and promote tourism and rural enterprise generally and/or benefit the local community. Many of these businesses will be start-ups and for these people, having access to low-cost premises on flexible terms is of paramount importance. The provision of such flexible space within the parish will therefore be supported.
- 7.23** The Romans' Edge mixed use development is required to deliver approximately five hectares of B-class employment land. This therefore represents a significant opportunity to provide appropriate accommodation.
- 7.24** Godmanchester is home to the Wood Green Animal Shelter at Kings Bush. This site houses a large number of cats and dogs, as well as other domesticated animals and pets. The location away from other settlements is key to its being able to operate safely. It also has a large arena space, outdoor spaces, conference rooms and catering facilities including a public restaurant. Its location on the A1198 does enable easy road access but the exit from the site is not ideal given that the speed of vehicles on this section of the road and is more congested than when the shelter was first established. The A1198 has no footpath or cycle way to the site and the nature of the trunk road makes any access other than by car very unsafe.

- 7.25** It is vital for the economic success of our community, as for residents' amenity, that there are good telephone services and high speed broadband services. Until 2017 we still had two parts of the Town with no fast broadband on offer as the infrastructure had either not be installed or it had not been connected.

Policy GMC21: Growing new capacity for small scale businesses in the Town

Development proposals to provide small-scale⁵² and "Micro-Business"⁵³ A2⁵⁴, B1⁵⁵ and D2⁵⁶ -class employment opportunities will generally be supported, in particular start-up space on flexible terms. This could either be through the following:

- o conversion of existing buildings across the Neighbourhood Plan area, subject to the impact of provision on the highway network and parking; or*
- o provision of new buildings or conversion of existing buildings within or adjoining the Settlement Boundary of the Town.*

Any such use will need to ensure that its impact on light, noise and air is acceptable and delivery, customer and employee access arrangements do not impact on public or neighbour amenity.

There will be a strong presumption against the loss of commercial premises or land which provides employment or future potential employment opportunities. Outside of permitted development rights, applications for a change of use to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that:

- o the commercial premises or land in question has not been in active use for at least 12 months; and*
- o the commercial premises or land in question has no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses and as demonstrated through the results both of a full valuation report and a marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least six months.*
- o All new development must have good telephone services and high speed broadband services provided.*

⁵² With a floor space of about 150 – 200m2

⁵³ EU definition of a Micro-Business = less than 10 employees & turnover under £2 million

⁵⁴ A2 Shops - Shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, undertakers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices, pet shops, sandwich bars, showrooms, domestic hire shops, dry cleaners, funeral directors and internet cafes.

⁵⁵ B1 Business - Offices (other than those that fall within A2), research and development of products and processes, light industry appropriate in a residential area.

⁵⁶ D2 Assembly and leisure - Cinemas, music and concert halls, bingo and dance halls (but not night clubs), swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums or area for indoor or outdoor sports and recreations (except for motor sports, or where firearms are used).

8 Getting Around

8.1 Godmanchester is a growing community. Transport and traffic are major concerns for residents and must be addressed in and through the future planning of the Town. The vision is to:

- make the roads in the Town safer by reducing vehicle speeds and minimising traffic congestion;
- improve sustainable travel in the Town by: making the Town safer for cyclists; developing a coherent network of cycle routes; improving physical access for pedestrians;
- ensuring there is a reliable, connected bus service that meet the needs of residents;
- manage parking better in the Town.

8.2 With the anticipated improvements to the A14 road in Huntingdonshire and the levels of growth planned across Godmanchester it will be important that developments each contribute towards addressing the needs of the Town. By helping to develop a coherent and cohesive transport system incorporating more sustainable transport measures and enabling people to get around more easily and safely, we should also be able to protect the historic and natural environment.

8.3 Cambridge County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2015 and the Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy seek to widen the choices available for environmentally sustainable transport, and manage the demand for transport, particularly private car use. All planning applications for development which would generate significant amounts of movement should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment, identifying the specific impacts of their proposals on the local transport network, and the measures needed to mitigate any adverse impacts. Measures should maximise opportunities for more sustainable transport e.g. promoting pedestrian and cycling, and improving public transport services. Travel Plans should be provided for all developments which would generate significant new movements.

Making the Roads in the Town Safer

- 8.4** The Town of Godmanchester routinely suffers from traffic issues associated with its proximity to Huntingdon (i.e. through traffic) and experiences congestion at peak times associated with its proximity to the A14 and its connectivity to the A1198, A428 and A1⁵⁷.
- 8.5** Whilst Godmanchester is a small town it has a high proportion of residents who commute for employment. The public transport services are not comparable to larger towns and cities in terms of frequency and coverage, so that many people are primarily cars users (52% of commuters' journeys are made by car against 5% by bus or train⁵⁸). The Romans' Edge housing development will see the population of the Town grow by 25% putting, potentially, a significant strain on the road network. The transport assessment and travel plan accompanying the planning permission (ref: 1200685OUT) are required to address this matter.
- 8.6** The Town has a number of businesses that receive deliveries from 7.5-ton vehicles. Part of the Town is marked as being restricted to these vehicles except for access. For the most part, vehicles delivering to Town businesses obey the limit restrictions. However, there is an increasing number of vehicles passing through the Town, without making deliveries, that are ignoring the restrictions. This includes an increasing number of articulated lorries attempting to use the weight restricted⁵⁹ weak Medieval Bridge to cross the river.⁶⁰
- 8.7** In addition the local roads are routinely used by buses, coaches, emergency services and agricultural vehicles as a through route to the A14 and other settlements. Future impacts of the new A14 and the de-trunking of the old A14 are unclear.
- 8.8** Speeding traffic is a well-known problem in Godmanchester. In 2015 the Police collected speed data which showed drivers in Post Street and The Avenue travelling at excessive speeds⁶¹. Monitoring of traffic has also taken place on London Road and West Street. The Police have undertaken ad-hoc enforcement activity relating to speeding in the Town.

⁵⁷ Whilst the A428 and A1 are outside of the parish they do have a direct impact on traffic through the Town as traffic diverts to continue its journey beyond Godmanchester.

⁵⁸ Source: 2011 Census

⁵⁹ Limited to 7.5 tonnes as "weak bridge"

⁶⁰ Emergency and public service vehicles, such as buses, are exempt from this restriction.

⁶¹ Report to Town Council: Cambridgeshire Police (Traffic) put in monitoring strips on the Avenue (near the traffic lights) for a week in late January 2015. The data shows that whilst some speeds were within the limits, there were many cars exceeding the speed limit including some where speeds exceeded the limit by an extra 20 mph. One vehicle reached 71mph in a 30mph limit.

8.9 Design changes to layouts that reduce the speed of traffic in and through the Town are welcomed⁶². There is an aspiration that a 20mph speed limit could be introduced for the historic core.

8.10 The Town suffers from severe congestion at peak times. This causes concern for residents in terms of pollution, ease of access and enjoyment of the Town. It will be important that solutions are sought to reduce existing issues and that new developments do not make things worse.



8.11 Godmanchester can become gridlocked when other trunk roads⁶³ are overloaded or blocked/shut. There is increasingly a justification to find a way of routing any diverted traffic away from residential areas when these situations arise.

8.12 On-street parking adds to the congestion at times. Traffic must negotiate pinch points caused by parked or loading vehicles and queues quickly form as the oncoming traffic is a relentless flow at peak times, offering little opportunity to pass. By reducing some of the on-street parking or managing its location better it may be possible to improve traffic flow.

8.13 Cambridgeshire County Council's Long Term Transport Strategy and their Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Strategy confirm these issues

Policy GMC22: Reducing traffic and congestion on Godmanchester's roads

Development proposals must demonstrate that they will not have a significant cumulative impact on the transport network. Where necessary, a transport assessment should accompany any planning application and traffic calming, improvements to public transport, cycling and walking routes, vehicle and cycle parking and other measures delivered which mitigate the impact of development, particularly through the 'historic core'. Where appropriate, a Travel Plan will be required, setting out how any adverse effects will be overcome, including through the promotion of use of more sustainable travel modes.

⁶² It is expected that the Town may make use of the "A14 Legacy Fund" to mitigate some of the A14 impacts.

⁶³ Including the A428, A1, A1198 and A14

Make the Town Safer for Cyclists

- 8.14** Godmanchester is a small town within 3 miles of the centre of Huntingdon, and within the relatively flat countryside of Cambridgeshire. It represents a highly suitable environment for cycling for people living and working locally, and for tourists and visitors. Currently 4% of commuter journeys are taken by bicycle (above the district and national averages) so it is important that this base is built on, particularly given the close proximity of a wide range of services in Godmanchester and Huntingdon. Cycling should be easily accessible, made safer and encouraged.
- 8.15** A significant proportion of secondary school children cycle or walk to Hinchingsbrook School. The shared cycle route along the Avenue and around the Huntingdon ring road is key to this access. However, there are problems with how pupils on cycles arrive at the route as it does not connect with the whole Town. Pupils (and their families) are intimidated by the volume of traffic, speeds of vehicles and parked vehicles on the highway and, as a result, cycle on pedestrian footpaths before arriving at the shared footpath section. Whilst they may make cyclists safer, it raises safety concerns for pedestrians. It is vital that the roads are made much safer so that cyclists feel able to use them and not the footpaths, or to provide new cycle routes/shared footpath alternatives to connect the Town and protect cyclists.
- 8.16** A particularly troublesome area highlighted is Post Street, from the Chinese Bridge to the Medieval Bridge into Huntingdon. This is already highlighted in County Council's Medium Term Transport Strategy⁶⁴
- 8.17** There are also concerns about the new Romans' Edge development having suitable routes for cycling to enable the safe crossing of the A1198, through the Town, and on to Huntingdon. Residents would like to see a suitable cycle crossing from Romans' Edge across the A1198, which ideally would not disrupt traffic flow, rather than the ground level crossings provided.
- 8.18** The footbridge over the River at Huntingdon causes a number of issues with cyclists not dismounting: there are routinely collisions between mounted cyclist and pedestrians. There is a pinch point and blind corner beside the Old Bridge Hotel which mean cyclists and pedestrians cannot see each other and have little space to pass each other. Cyclists, often secondary school pupils, resort to using the Medieval Bridge but do so with little care and attention, diverting from the carriage way onto the pedestrian island at speed and often against the flow of traffic. A dedicated cycle route over the River would be welcomed by cyclists.

⁶⁴ ...'traffic calming measures for Post Street and The Causeway' and 'Investigate feasibility for public realm improvements before delivery of the A14 scheme to encourage additional usage of Post Street by pedestrians and cyclists. More comprehensive schemes may be achievable after successful delivery of the A14 scheme, which may include, in the long term, discussions over closure of Godmanchester Town Bridge after due consultation with affected residents' Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy,

- 8.19** Householders who have doors opening straight onto the footpath are often faced with cyclists passing at some speed, which increase the risk of accidents. Shared footpath-cycle ways are not seen as being wholly successful, especially at school travel times. Residents feel there should be more cycle paths and safety measures to separate cyclists from the traffic flow as much as possible.
- 8.20** The link to the Ouse Valley Way is used by many cyclists from the Town for pleasure and to access employment in St. Ives. Leisure cyclists also use this route to visit the Town or to travel through it. Whilst cycle routes are marked, cyclists routinely report they do not think the markings are clear to them, or to pedestrians.
- 8.21** The Woodgreen Animal Shelter is part of the parish but with no off-road cycle route, or footpath, to link it to the Town it is rather disconnected and remains only safely accessible by vehicle. It is important that this connectivity is addressed.⁶⁵
- 8.22** Work has previously been undertaken by Sustrans and Cambridgeshire County Council⁶⁶ to look at cycle route options along Post Street. It was decided that the volume of traffic and on-street parking made this scheme undeliverable. If the A14 changes reduce traffic then it is hoped that similar scheme can be explored to provide a better route for cyclists along this road.
- 8.23** Increasing the number and coherence of safe cycling routes in the Town would encourage more people to leave their cars at home and to cycle as well as reducing the congestion of bikes and cars fighting for road space. A map of current routes is in the Maps Section.
- 8.24** There are several cycle parking racks around the Town but these are insufficient to meet demand. A lack of safe cycle parking does not encourage cyclist to visit the Town nor does it encourage residents to use their bike to access local services and amenities.

Policy GMC23: Improving cycling in Godmanchester

Development proposals that contribute to improvement of the network of cycle routes in the Town, or access to them, will be strongly supported. This includes the provision of safe crossing of roads for cyclists.

Development proposals to provide covered public cycle parking will be supported.

⁶⁵ Cambridgeshire County Council's Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Strategy 2016

⁶⁶ Cambridgeshire County Council and Sustrans schemes proposed between 2004 and 2006

Ensure Appropriate Public Transport Service to the Town

- 8.25** Godmanchester is in close proximity to the transport services that centre on Huntingdon, with bus, coach and train services all originating from Huntingdon.
- 8.26** Godmanchester is currently served by two circular buses, the 476 and 477, and a bus service which stops on route to Camborne and Cambridge, the X3 service. Other services are accessed via the Huntingdon Bus Station. However, the provision is patchy in terms of destinations that can be easily accessed. Some of the buses/coaches do not access workplace destinations or the railway station at appropriate times for commuter use.
- 8.27** Whilst bus and coach services are constantly being updated, they rarely offer easy access to local services from Godmanchester, including hospitals and schools, and where they do the local traffic congestion makes them a unreliable choice for those needing to arrive for a specific time. This means they are not a choice for travel for many. It is important that all areas of the Town have access to services and that these are reliable.
- 8.28** Many residents make use of the train, the close proximity of Huntingdon Station making this an attractive option for travelling to work. Connections accessed from the hubs of Peterborough, Stevenage and Hitchin allow for easy access to other parts of the wider rail network. Rail services from Huntingdon provide for a large number of London commuters who travel daily. Trains from Huntingdon enable: pupils to travel to schools and colleges in Peterborough; shoppers to access St Neots, Peterborough and London; and for local residents to access to a wide variety of leisure and recreation activities in the region and beyond. Whilst bus services are on offer for commuters many chose their cars to ensure connections can be made. There are increasing numbers who walk or cycle to the station.

Policy GMC24: encouraging greater take up and provision of public transport

Proposals to improve sustainable transport (public and community bus and coach services), including their connectivity with each other and with rail services, will be strongly supported. This may also include the provision of bus gates, laybys, 'real-time' information and shelters.

Improve Physical Access for Pedestrians

- 8.29** The Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan consultations regarding walking in the Town concluded that walking should be encouraged as much as possible for pleasure and for practical needs. Walking is a cheap and easy way to remain fit and healthy and encourages residents to leave their cars at home. Being able to walk to services and community facilities enables the community to be sustainably connected and helps to support a strong community feel.
- 8.30** Godmanchester residents are keen to see pavements being maintained, especially the link into Huntingdon, which is a popular route. Many footpaths in the Town are in a poor condition. Some pedestrian crossings suffer from standing water after rainfall making them difficult to use. Some of the leisure footpaths, including the Cow Lane section of the Ouse Valley Way, are in urgent need of attention. Residents are concerned about possible lack of lighting in some areas of Godmanchester including the parks, making these areas inaccessible at night.
- 8.31** Public Rights of Way are an important part of the transport network and need to be considered at an early stage of any development proposals. This will ensure that the needs of both the existing community and any future residents or businesses can be met in accordance with the County Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan.⁶⁷
- 8.32** Because of the limited amount of parking in Godmanchester, pavements often have vehicles parked partially or wholly on the pedestrian surface or blocking access to dropped kerbs which prevent them from functioning as they were designed to.
- 8.33** Equally, shared cycle paths/footpaths are challenging to use, with near misses for both types of user. It is important that more segregated paths are developed.
- 8.34** Ice can be an issue, especially on the sloping footbridge that crosses the Ouse beside the medieval bridge. As pedestrian and cycle routes are no longer gritted the provision of grit bins is becoming increasingly important to enable users to grit as required to ensure walking and cycling routes stay open and safe.

Policy GMC25: making it easier to get about on foot in Godmanchester

To ensure that residents can walk safely to the historic core, public transport facilities, schools and other important facilities serving Godmanchester town, all new developments should ensure safe pedestrian access to link up with existing footways that, in turn, directly serve the Walkway Routes⁶⁸. Development will not have an unacceptable impact on Walkway Routes, and provide a strategy to mitigate the impact of additional traffic movements on the safety and flow of pedestrian access. Proposals to enhance the identified Walkways will be strongly supported. Where possible, footpaths should be clearly delineated to separate them from roads and cycle paths. They should be constructed from hard-wearing materials and designed to be easy to maintain over time.

⁶⁷ Cambridgeshire County Council Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan

⁶⁸ See Appendix 4

9 Community Suggestions

This section reflects suggestions made by individuals and groups throughout the development of this Plan which we could not make into planning policies but which we did not want to lose as they are important to residents. It should be noted that this is not an agreed work plan. It is included here so that the Town Council, and others, can consider them as part of their work going forward.

Issue	To be considered	Which organisation might be best placed to lead or partner
Traffic	Reduce traffic	CCC Highways
	Consider options to reduce traffic: i.e. one-way system to alleviate congestion; close bridge	CCC Highways
	Consider options to reduce rat runs	CCC Highways
Speeding	Stop vehicles speeding	Police
	Consider reducing speed limits, including to 20mph in centre	CCC Highways and Police
Parking	Stop vehicles parking on pavements and on yellow lines- some of it is dangerous	Police
	More off-road parking is needed - consider what is possible	CCC Highways and Town Council
	Stop people parking on grass verges / green spaces	HDC, CCC Highways, Police
	Consider making existing parking work harder by introducing time limits	CCC Highways
Roads	In poor state of repair including lots of potholes	CCC Highways
Housing	More new housing that is cheaper to buy	HDC, The Local Enterprise partnership and the private sector
	More bungalows and one bedroom homes	HDC, The Local Enterprise partnership and the private sector
	When new houses are built (Roman's Edge), ensure we become one community - including the provision of welcome packs and street wardens	HDC, Town Council
Bus Services	Reliability of service and loss of part of route / some parts of the Town with little	Whippet Buses and CCC Passenger Transport Services

	or no service	
	Seek to improve local service to villages, hospital, train station, market towns and Cambridge	Whippet Buses and CCC Passenger Transport Services
Cycling	Consider a cycle route along the Causeway and Post Street, to Wood Green and to join up with other routes	CCC Highways
	Consider reducing speed and traffic to make cycling on the roads safer	Police and CCC Highways
	Stop cyclists on pavements	Police
	Consider adding more segregated cycle paths	HDC, CCC, Town Council
	Consider a new route along old railway line	HDC, CCC, Town Council
Community Events	More events as they make us a "community"	Community Association and Town Council
	More volunteers	Everyone, Town Council, Community Association
Play Equipment	More play areas and more play equipment, including more for teenagers - look at options	Town Council
	Skate park - look at options	Town Council
	More benches at play parks - look at options	Town Council
Sports	More sports on offer in the Town - tennis courts, sports centre, volley ball, archery, running track, indoor football and year round playing surfaces - see what is possible	HDC, Town Council and sports clubs and associations
	Sports changing rooms - see what is possible	Town Council
River	Encourage more boating opportunities, e.g. canoeing, kayaking	HDC, Town Council and local sports organisations and clubs
	Encourage better moorings and landing stages for boats	HDC, Environment Agency, Town Council
	Make more use of the river frontage: a boardwalk over the river, more cafes etc	Town Council, Environment Agency
	Reduce weed in river	Environment Agency
	Consider a fountain in Mill Lade / floating	Environment Agency

	pontoons	
Shops	A better range of local shops, including more shops for younger people and more to attract visitors	Town Council, HDC, private sector, Businesses In Godmanchester
Tourism	A Town map	Town Council
Paths and pavements	Many need resurfaced as they are uneven	CCC Highways
Community Facilities	Consider outside toilets at Judith's Field	Town Council
	Keep public buildings available for use, like Judith's Field and the Queen Elizabeth School	Town Council
	More places for young people to go	Town Council, HDC and private sector
	We need a community centre, more community use rooms	Town Council, HDC, business in Godmanchester
	Indoor play spaces	Local businesses
	Community cinema and music venue	Town Council
	Access to banking service in Godmanchester	Local banks, Post Office
	Keep the Plant Nursery	HDC, Town Council
	Water features in our green spaces, with seating	Town Council
Community Safety	More obvious and more frequent police presence	Police
	More CCTV	HDC, Town Council
	Better road crossings	CCC Highways
Infrastructure	Sort out drainage issues where they overflow	HDC, Highways, Anglian Water
Dog Fouling	Stop dog fouling on pavements	HDC
Improvements	Make the Mill Steps better	Town Council, HDC, Environment Agency, CCC
	Improve fencing in and around the Town where it is broken	Highways England, CCC Highways, HDC, Town Council, private landowners
	Remove old, unnecessary signage etc	CCC Highways, Highways England,
	Remove pigeons under A14 bridge (Cambridge Road) and keep it clean until then	Highways England, HDC

	Redevelop derelict sites e.g. Tyrells Marina	HDC, Town Council
	Consider relocation some rubbish bins and get others, which are rusting, replaced	HDC, Town Council
	More green spaces	HDC, Town Council
Weeds	Remove weeds more often and tidy overgrown areas	CCC, HDC, Town Council, Godmanchester in Bloom, volunteers,
Grass Cutting	Verges and green spaces need cut more often	HDC, Town Council, Godmanchester in Bloom, volunteers
Education	More school places and a secondary school	CCC Education
Trees	Plant more trees	HDC, Town Council, Godmanchester in Bloom, householders
Health	Another Doctors' surgery, with more parking	NHS, GP
	A dentist in Godmanchester	NHS
Wildlife	More habitats made available	HDC, Town Council and nature organisations
	New Neolithic Park on old Landfill	HDC, CCC, SITA, Godmanchester in Bloom
Museum and Heritage	A permanent home for the museum	The Porch Museum, Town Council
	Walking routes to explore Town's history	The Porch Museum, Town Council
Honours	Some way of honouring those who have given exceptional service to our community	Town Council
Antisocial behaviour	More patrols to reduce antisocial behaviour	Police
	Stop overnight lorry parking as causes littering	Police, CCC Highways
Litter	Reduce littering on roads	HDC, Highways England, CCC Highways, volunteers
Recreation	More clubs and activities in the Town	Town Council, HDC
	Online directory of What's On	Town Council, Community Association
Businesses	Encourage more businesses	HDC, Town Council, Business in Godmanchester, Local Enterprise Partnership

10 Maps

Settlement Boundary

The concept of settlement boundaries is to draw a policy line which separates built-up areas (within which development is, in principle, acceptable), from the countryside (within which, with limited exceptions, it is not). This is in conformity with the NPPF. Land within the settlement boundary may not be suitable for development due to other constraints, for example, flood risk zones, tree preservation orders, residential amenity, the protection of green space or townscape character.

In defining the settlement boundary for Godmanchester we have considered: current land and built form; land-use; landscape character; woodland cover; field pattern and settlement pattern using maps and aerial photographs. We have also considered: scale, enclosure and visual unity. We have made site visits and used local knowledge. The settlement boundary includes new development that has been allocated in the Core Strategy 2009 and in the HDC Draft Local Plan 2036.

Set out here is the methodology.

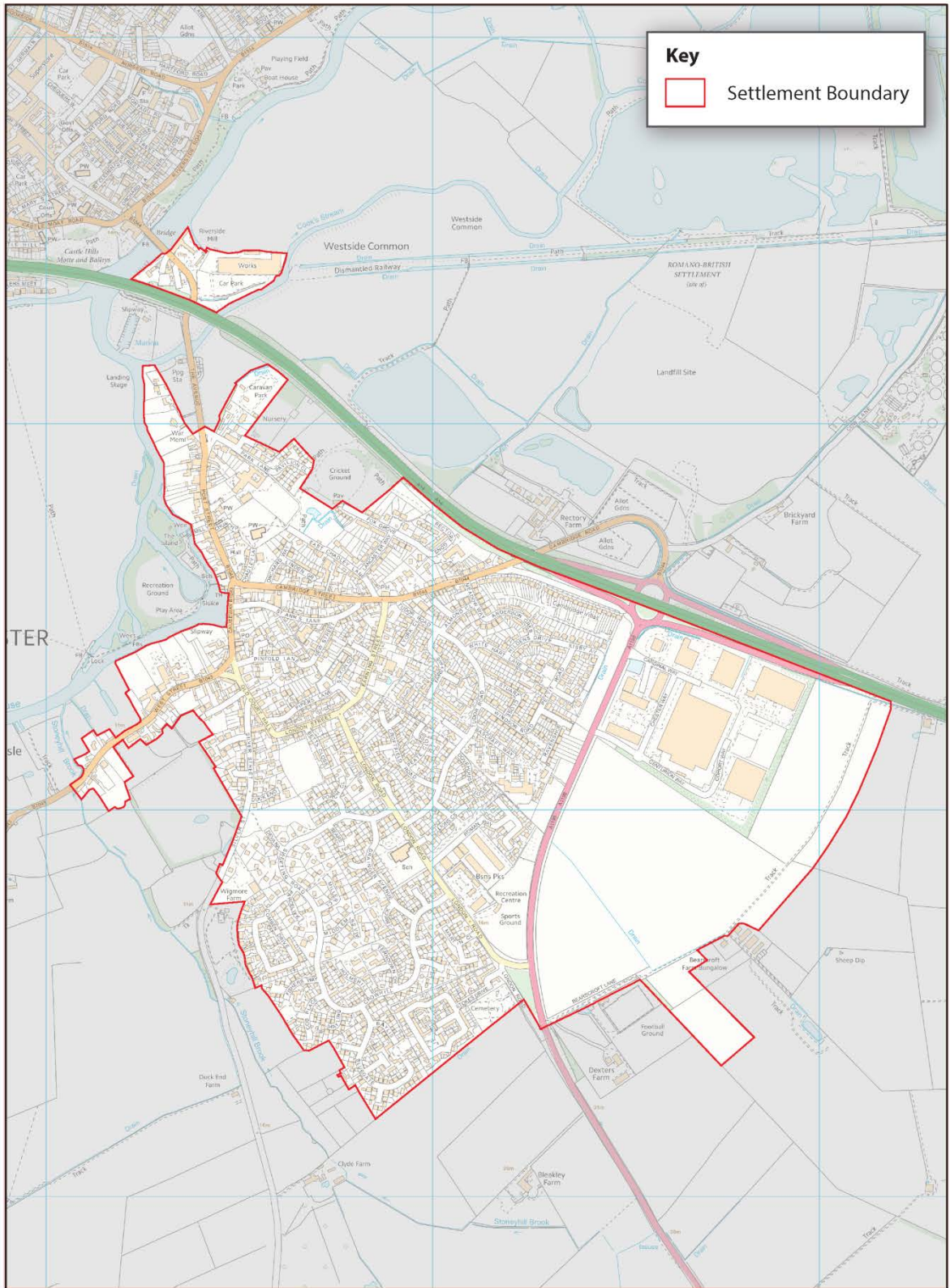
1.1 Guiding Principle	1.2 Implementation Notes
The built-up area boundary does not have to be continuous; any distinct group of 30 or more dwellings and their immediate surroundings may constitute a separate built up area within the parish.	Distinct areas of development may exist within the parish separated by areas of countryside. The remainder of the guiding principles provide advice on whether separate clusters of development constitute a separate built up area or are deemed to be isolated or sporadic development within the countryside.
The built-up area boundary will follow clearly defined physical features such as walls, fences, hedgerows, roads, field boundaries and property lines unless set out as exceptions below.	Where practical the built-up area boundary will include the whole curtilage of a property in recognition of the combined status of properties and their curtilages as a single planning unit. Exceptions are set out below for determining the boundary around extensive properties on the edge of the built-up area to reflect the difference in character between parts of the grounds closely related to the property, for instance containing garaging and tennis courts and that which has a more natural countryside character.
1.3 The built-up area will include:	
Residential, community, retail and employment buildings which are wholly encompassed by other buildings.	The majority of buildings within the built-up area boundary will fall within this category. It is included for the sake of completeness as most attention will be paid to determining where the edges of the built-up area are.
Existing commitments for residential,	Where development for residential,

community, retail and employment uses on sites which are physically/functionally related to the settlement.	community, retail or employment use has commenced or has outstanding planning permission the principle of development has been approved. The precise boundary around such sites should be determined with regard to the detailed guidance within this table. We have included sites already proposed in the emerging Local Plan to future proof this Neighbourhood Plan.
Greenfield land which is predominantly encompassed by and integral to the built-up area and defined by strong boundary features.	Some greenfield uses such as recreational or amenity open space, churchyards, wide grass verges and allotments, can form an integral and valuable part of the built-up area and its character. Typically, these should have buildings on at least three sides and have a clear physical and visual relationship with the built-up area rather than any adjoining countryside.
1.4 The built-up area will exclude:	
Open spaces and sports and recreational facilities, paddocks, allotments, caravan sites, churchyards and cemeteries which extend into the countryside or primarily relate to the countryside in form or character.	Areas of open space, sports and recreational facilities, paddocks, allotments, caravan sites, churchyards and cemeteries provide a visual buffer between the built form and the open countryside, softening the visual impact and linking the built-up area with its rural context. Such land is generally considered to primarily relate to the countryside where it is encompassed by built development on two sides or less.
Isolated properties and areas of ribbon and fragmented development which are physically or visually detached from the main built form.	To avoid areas of intervening countryside being unnecessarily included within the built-up area properties which are physically or visually detached should be excluded.
Farmyards and associated agricultural buildings which extend into the countryside or primarily relate to the countryside in form or character.	Agricultural buildings tend to relate more to the surrounding countryside when still in use for agricultural purposes. However, if the building comprises a long standing traditionally built building and is well related in terms of scale and positioning to eligible properties with a defensible boundary it may be included as it is likely to be deemed suitable for reuse under permitted development rights.
Sections of large curtilages of buildings which relate more to the character of the countryside than the built form.	Large curtilages with grounds stretching away from the rest of the built-up area are excluded to prevent sub-division of the plot for new development and protect any vegetation which is likely to shield views

	<p>into the plot from the public domain. Where practical the built-up area boundary will be drawn along physical features such as hedges and fences which sub-divide elements of the grounds that relate closely to the buildings, for instance formal gardens and ancillary parking from those with a more natural, rural character. Where no clear boundary features exist the built-up area boundary will be drawn 15 m behind the relevant wall to allow scope for minor alterations and extensions to the property.</p>
<p>Fingers of agricultural land, woodland, meadow, areas of water and natural habitats that penetrate the built form but primarily relate to the countryside in form or character.</p>	<p>These spaces can provide a visual buffer between built development and the open countryside, softening the visual impact and linking the built-up area with its rural context.</p>

Settlement Boundary Map

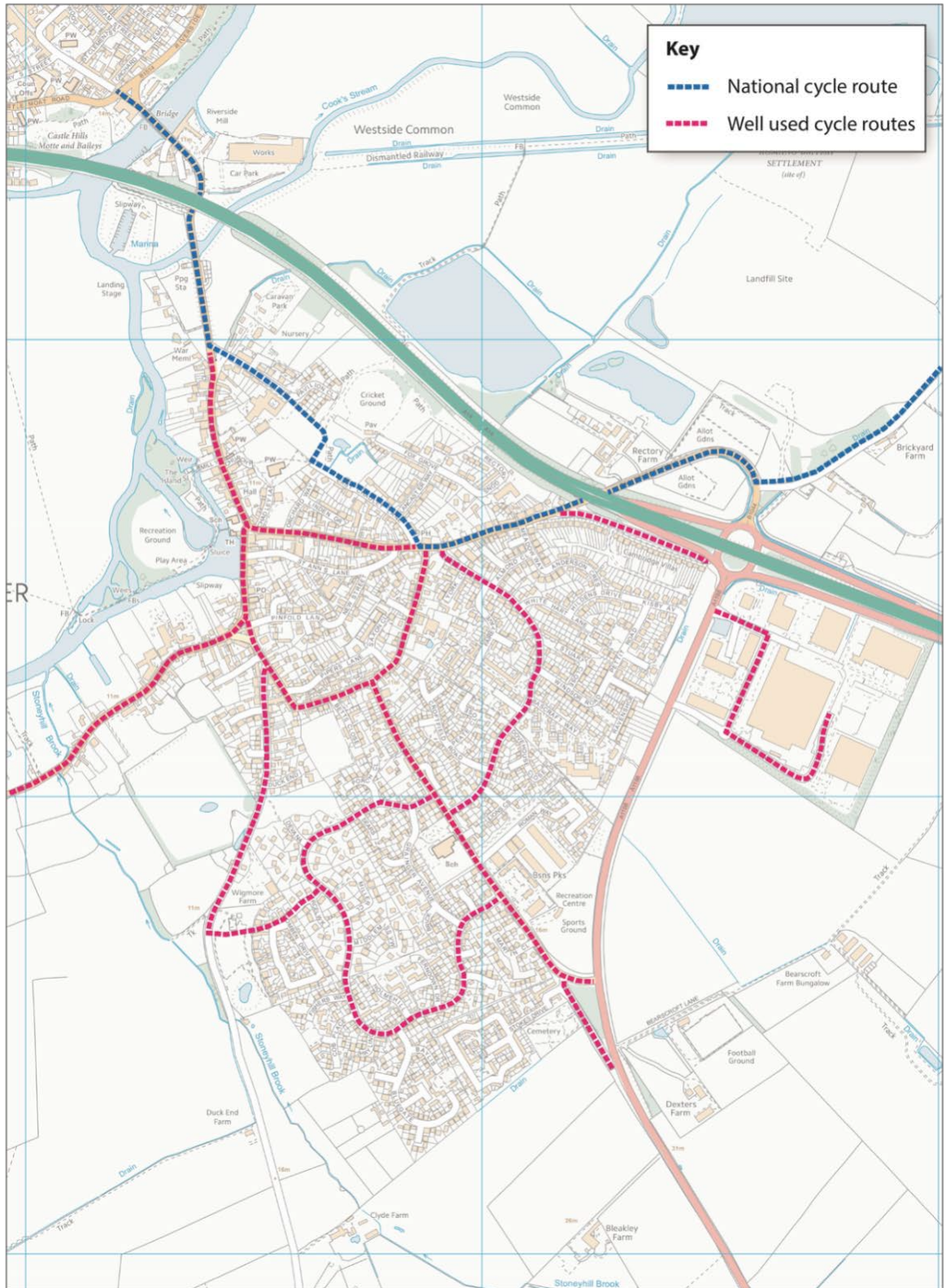
Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan | Map 6- Settlement Boundary



Based on The Ordnance Survey Mapping. (C) Crown Copyright.

Cycle Routes Map

Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan | Map 4 - Cycle Routes



Based on The Ordnance Survey Mapping. (C) Crown Copyright.

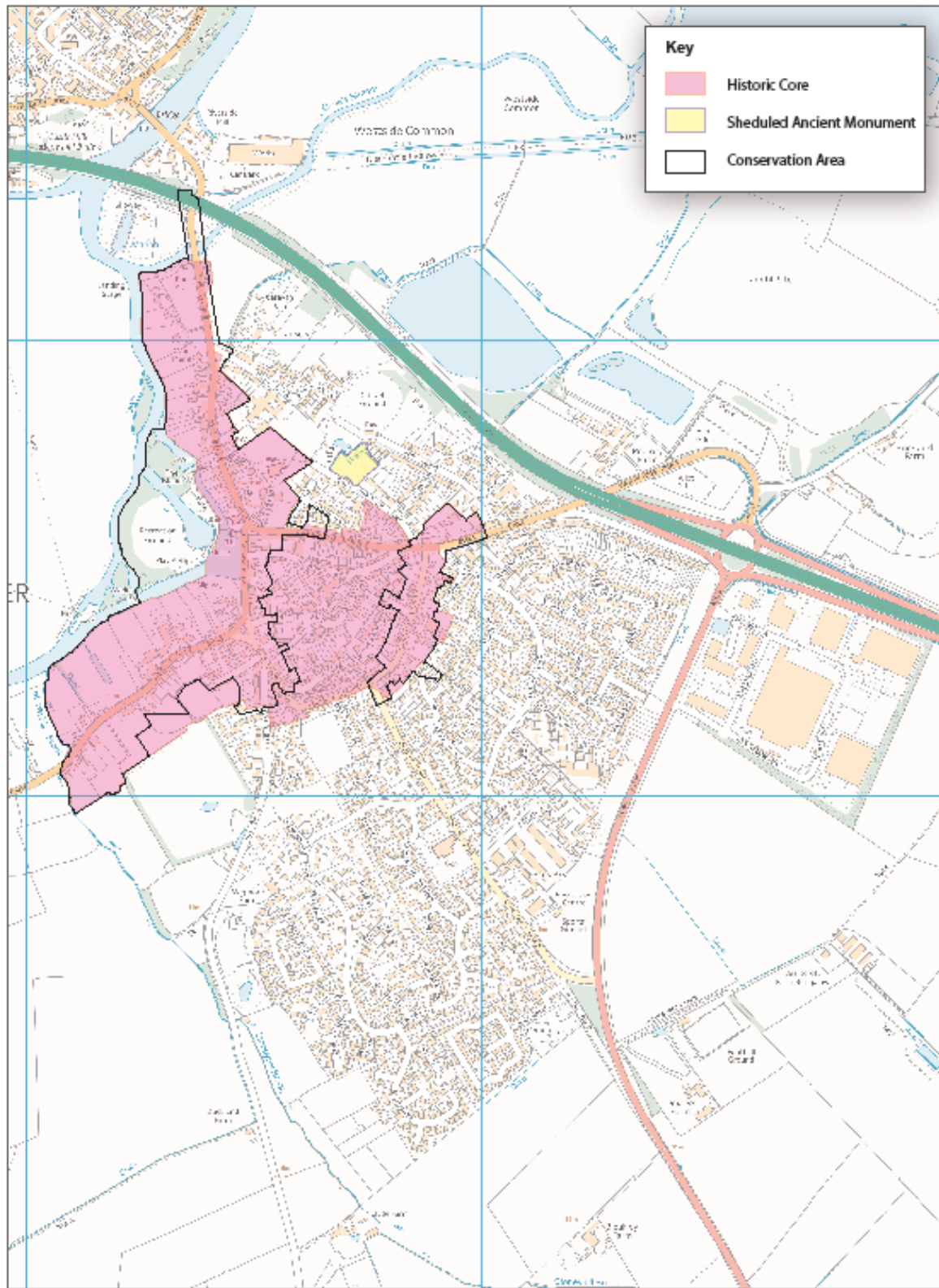
Walkway Routes Map

Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan | Map 3 - Walkways



Historic Core Map

Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan | Map 5 - Historic Core



Based on The Ordnance Survey Mapping. (C) Crown Copyright.

Appendix 1 – Green Spaces

Green Spaces in Godmanchester:

This list is made up of Designated Sites, Local Green Spaces and Other Green Spaces which are of value to the community. Please note that spaces marked with an asterisk are where landowners have yet to give their consent to the proposed designation. Maps showing all Green Spaces are shown below.

Designated Sites

1. Portholme Meadow SAC⁶⁹ and SSSI⁷⁰⁷¹
2. Eastside Common SSSI⁷²
3. Westside Common⁷³

Local Green Spaces

These are defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states: The Local Green Space designation...should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
 - where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife; and
 - where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
4. **The Cricket Pitch.** Special to the local community due to: its importance as a recreation space in the heart of the Town. It is the only green flat open area not prone to flooding large enough to host a cricket pitch.
 5. **The Green between Cob Place and Fishers Way:** Special to the local community due to: its importance as a recreation space and for providing views through to open countryside ensuring that this development maintained its connectivity to the open countryside beyond.
 6. **The green amenity and play space between Devana Close, Sweetings Road and Duck end known locally as Devana Park.** Special to the local community due to: its importance as a recreation space in the Town. This land includes a community planted orchard.

⁶⁹ SAC: Special Area for Conservation

⁷⁰ SSI: Site of Special Scientific Interest

⁷¹ This is covered by the Brampton Parish Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area. It is not part of the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan is, therefore, not covered by its policies. However, given its significance to the Town in terms of amenity, and flooding, it is noted here.

⁷² Designated as Common Land on the Commons Register

⁷³ Designated as Common Land on the Commons Register

7. **The green amenity space between Betts Close and Porch Close known locally as Buttermel.** Special to the local community due to: its importance as a recreation space in the Town retained as a quiet space.
8. **Judith's Field⁷⁴** Special to the local community due to: its importance as a recreation and play space in the Town with a purpose-built community use recreation building.
9. **The garden on the site of the Methodist Chapel off Cambridge Street.** The site of the former Methodist Chapel this site is special to the local community as it is a sensory garden for quiet contemplation which recalls the sites for historic significance in the Town.
10. **The War Memorial and the open space adjacent to it between The Avenue and Park Lane.** This site is special to the community as its forms part of the War Memorial space where we gather to remember those recorded on the memorial and where they are community seats.
11. **The allotments either side of Cambridge Road*** Special to the local community due to: its importance as a recreation/amenity space in the Town: these are the only allotments available for residents.
12. **The Football Ground at Bearscroft known locally as Rovers Football Ground.** Special to the local community due to: its importance as a recreation space in the Town: this is the only open space available for professional standard football in the Town. It also serves a wider football community.
13. **The Community Nursery (plant) off Park Lane.** This site is listed community asset and is well-used not only for providing a horticultural space but for providing an educational setting (schools and for post-16 years young people with additional and special needs). It has a strong group of supporters who enjoy its therapeutic benefits as well as the community and social events it offers. It's also a haven for wildlife and native species of flora and fauna, including a native species apple orchard and is an important "green lung" in over Town.

Godmanchester's Other Green Spaces

These are not defined within the NPPF but those listed here are mostly small scale public amenity, recreation and informal play spaces that are within the Parish and are important to the character of the Town, helping to provide a semi-rural feel. Many were allocated as public amenity spaces under planning consent for neighbouring properties.

14. **The Godmanchester Nature Reserve at Cow Lane, part of which is also known as the Peter Prince Memorial Nature Reserve.** Special to the local community due to: its richness of wildlife; its importance as a local habitat with close proximity to the Town; and its importance as a recreation space.
15. **The Cow Lane gravel pits, Huntingdon by-pass borrow pit, West Meadow and Westside pollarded willows, including 'Teddy's Lake'*.** Special to the local community due to: its richness of wildlife; its importance as a local habitat with close proximity to the Town; and its importance as a recreation space.
16. **The Recreation Ground including the green spaces leading up to the lock.** Special to the local community due to its importance as a recreation space adjacent to the river in the historic core. It is the largest open space in the Town and regularly hosts annual

⁷⁴ In Accordance with the lease to the Town Council

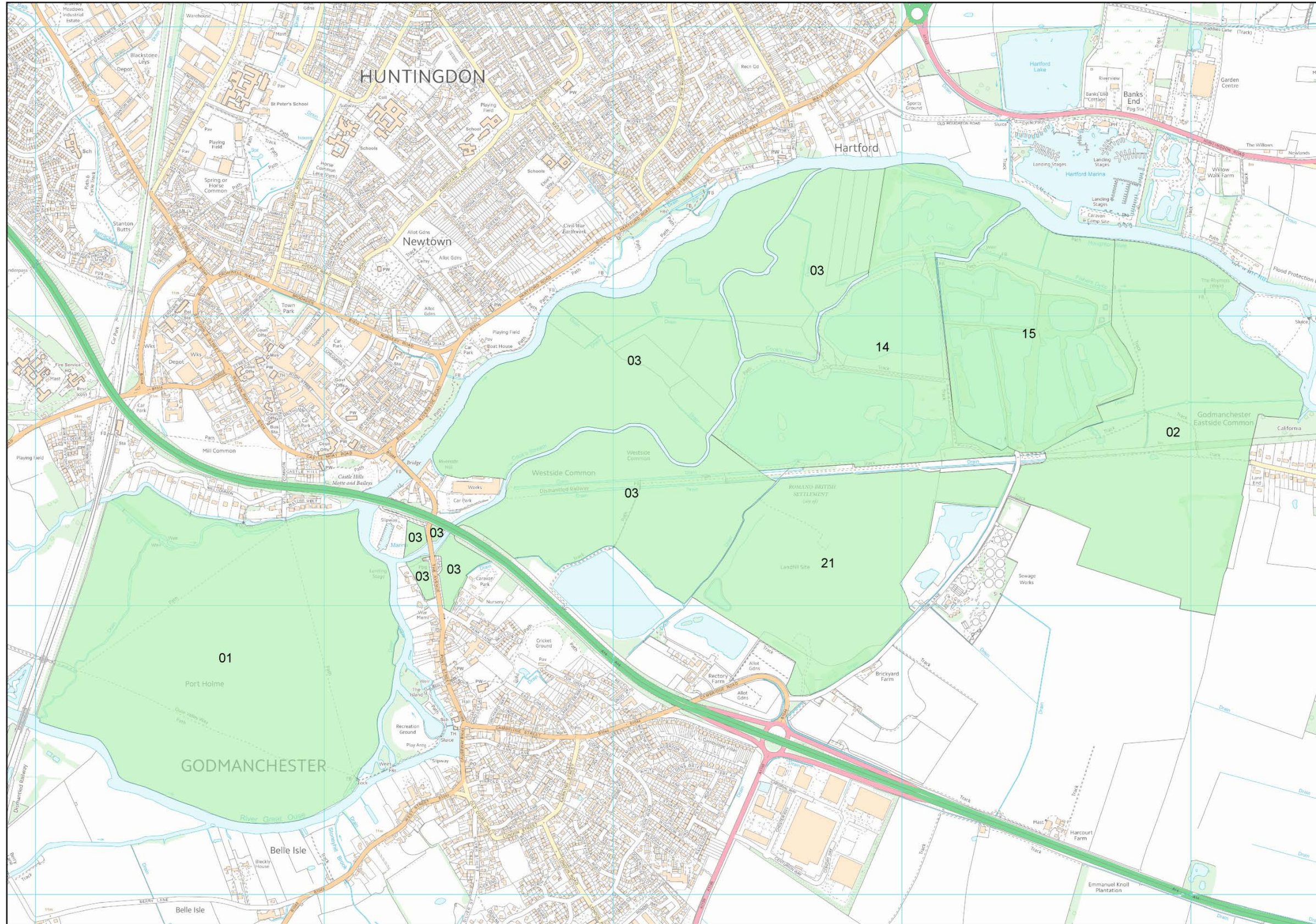
community events that could not be accommodated in any other location due to the size of the Town's population (Gala Day, Picnic in the Park)

17. **Queens Walk** Special to the local community due to: its richness of wildlife; its importance as a local habitat within the heart of the Town; and its importance as a recreation and play space adjacent to the river in the historic core.
18. **The green space adjacent to the Cricket Pitch, alongside Pavilion Close.** Special to the local community due to: its importance as a recreation space in the heart of the Town.
19. **The land between the school, the Church and East Chadley Lane.** Special to the local community due to: its importance as a recreation space in the heart of the Town. This land includes a community use pond.
20. **The green amenity and play space adjacent to Jarwood Walk and up to Silver Street, known as Wigmore Meadow.** Special to the local community due to: its importance as a recreation and play space in the Town. This land includes a community planted orchard.
21. **The proposed Neolithic Country Park*** This will be special to the local community due to: its importance as a recreation/amenity space and as its location on the site of a former Neolithic Temple.
22. Silver Street Nature Reserve
23. The green spaces along Bascraft Way:
24. The Green space along the bund between Roman Way and Lions Cross
25. The green walkways in Comben Drive
26. The green walkway between Ferndown and Brick Kilns\
27. The green walkway between Ruses Walk and Merton Walk
28. The Green at Earning Street adjacent to Pipers Lane
29. The extended verge on Pipers Lane
30. The extended verge in Sylton Close
31. The extended verge at the junction of Earning Street and Cambridge Road
32. The extended verges along London Road
33. The extended verges along The Avenue
34. The extended verges at the Windsor Road / Tudor Road junction
35. The extended verges along Ravenshoe
36. The extended verges between Hilsdens Drive and Anderson Crescent
37. The extended verges running in front of and between Cambridge Villas
38. The extended verges along Cambridge Road
39. The extended verge / green strip along Rectory Gardens
40. Extended Verges in Park Lane including where it meets Pavilion Close
41. The extended verges along and behind Centurion Way
42. The green walkway between Porch Close and London Road
43. The green at the Fox Grove, Lancaster Way junction
44. The Green at Pettit Road
45. The Green between Windsor Road and Ravenshoe
46. The Green between Tudor Road and Stuart Close
47. The green/play area at Roman Way
48. The green at Lions Cross*
49. The Green between Ferndown, Holmehill and Middlemiss View
50. The Green in Brick Kilns
51. The Green at Croftfield
52. The Green at Peate Close

53. The Green on Tudor Road adjacent to Field Walk*
54. The Green in Saxon Close*
55. The land adjacent to the slipway at The Causeway*
56. The Green in Granary Close*
57. The Green at Martin Close*
58. The wooded area opposite the lawn cemetery between London Road and the A1198*
59. The green at Field Walk*
60. The Green at Carnaby Close
61. The Green at Mowlands
62. The Green between Pettit Road and Kisby Avenue
63. The open amenity space in Rectory Gardens
64. The green and play space at Stokes Drive
65. The Green between Stokes Drive and Bayliss
66. The Green amenity spaces at Bearcroft Farm Housing Development / Romans' Edge⁷⁵

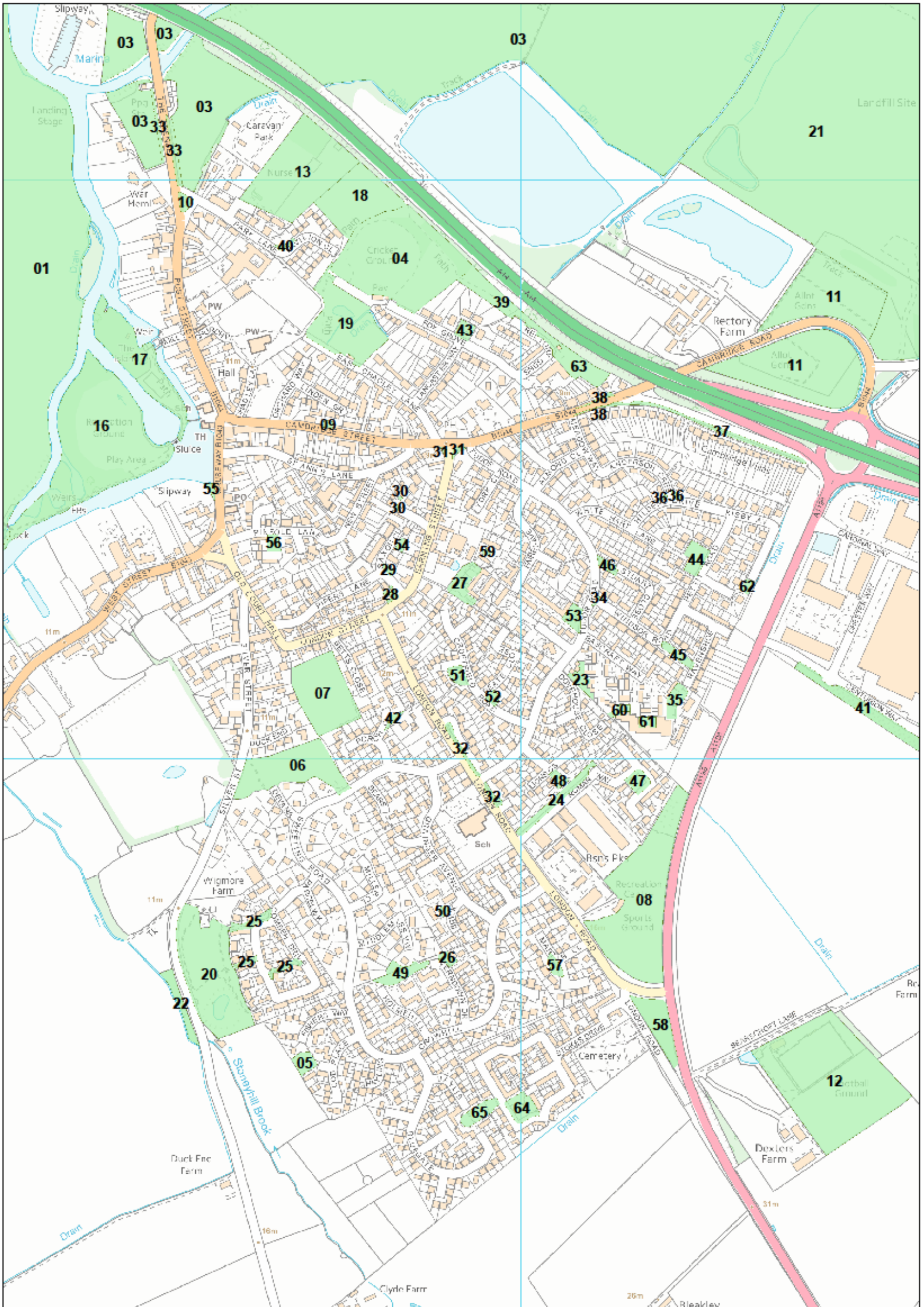
⁷⁵ At the time of writing we do not have names for all of the locations already approved through planning applications.

Godmanchester green spaces – wider area



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Godmanchester green spaces – town



11 Appendix 2 – Planning Policy - Housing

Existing Planning Policies as set out in Huntingdonshire, note the policy numbers in the emerging HDC Local Plan 2036 may change.

Issue	Existing/Emerging policy	Summary of policy
Quality of development and design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Plan 2002, Policy HL5: The Quality and Density of Development. Emerging Local Plan 2017, Policy LP 10: Design Context; Policy LP 11 Design Implementation; Policy LP 12 Strategic Placemaking. 	A high standard of design is required to create a strong sense of place. Reference should be made to the various Design Guides and Townscape Assessments for Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire.
Development within Conservation Areas/Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPPF, paragraphs 128-140. Local Plan 1995, Policies En5 (development affecting conservation areas) and En6 (high standard of design in conservation areas). Emerging Local Plan 2017, Policy LP 34: Heritage Strategy; Policy LP 35 Heritage Assets and their Settings 	Development affecting conservation areas should preserve and enhance its character and appearance. Development should consider the significance of heritage assets and their setting.
Housing Mix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging Local Plan 2017, Policy LP 24: Housing Mix 	Development should provide the mix of size, type and tenure of housing required by evidence of housing need
Affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core Strategy 2009, Policy CS 4: Affordable Housing in Development. Emerging Local Plan 2017, Policy LP 23: Affordable Housing Provision 	Requires a target of 40% of new homes on sites of 11 or more homes or 1,001m ² residential floorspace or more to be delivered as affordable housing. This should meet the identified need in the district.
Space in new homes	This is addressed through minimum requirements in national Building Regulations.	Details are contained in: DCLG (2015) <i>Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard</i>
Delivering 'Lifetime Homes'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is addressed through minimum requirements in national Building Regulations. Emerging Local Plan 2017, Policy LP 24: Housing Mix 	

12 APPENDIX 3 – LISTED BUILDINGS

Listed Buildings in Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire, England

<http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/england/cambridgeshire/godmanchester>⁷⁶

⁷⁶ To note, this list should include the new listing of 1 -11 Corpus Christi Lane which was added 25 Jan 2016 but has not been updated on the website.

13 APPENDIX 4 - WALKWAYS

Godmanchester has a number of walkways throughout the Town. These are:

- between Pavilion Close and East Chadley Lane
- between Pavilion Close and Fox Grove
- between Pavilion Close, across the cricket pitches, under the A14 and to join up with the route round the lake, across to Cooks Backwater, along Cooks backwater, along the Ouse to Houghton
- Cow Lane to Meadow Lane (Hemingford)
- Cow Lane to Cambridge Road
- Fox Grove to Rectory Gardens
- Besters Walk (Cambridge St to St Ann's Lane) to The Stiles (The Stiles to Pinfold Lane) to Pipers Lane
- Berry Lane to Brampton
- Silver Street to Comben Drive
- Silver Street to Devana Close
- Crowhill to Holmehill to Ferndown
- Holmehill to Ferndown
- Middlemiss View to Grainger Avenue
- Bayliss to Stokes Drive
- London Road to A1198 opposite Bearscroft Lane
- London Road, along Roman Way to Mowlands or Dovehouse Close
- Littlefield to Sears Close
- Porch Close to London Road
- London Road to Croftfield to Peate Close to Field Walk
- Earning Street to Field Walk to Tudor Road
- Lions Cross to Dovehouse Close
- Roman Way to Judith's Field
- Roman Way to Lions Cross or Dovehouse Close
- Field Walk to Fairy Avenue and Merton Walk
- The Close to Tudor Road
- White Hart Lane to Petit Road
- Petit Road to Kisby Avenue
- Ravenshoe to Ravenshoe
- Cambridge Villas to A1198 to Cardinal Park
- *Romans Edge to Kisby Avenue
- *Romans Edge to A1198 to London Road
- Romans Edge to A1198 to Cambridge Villas



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Intelligent Plans
and examinations

Report on Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036

An Examination undertaken for Huntingdonshire District Council with the support of the Godmanchester Town Council on the May 2017 submission version of the Plan.

Independent Examiner: Jill Kingaby BSc(Econ), MSc, MRTPI

Date of Report: 30 August 2017

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Main Findings - Executive Summary

From my examination of the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan and its supporting documentation including the representations made, I have concluded that subject to the policy modifications set out in this report, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

I have also concluded that:

- The Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body – [the Godmanchester Town Council];
- The Plan has been prepared for an area properly designated – the Neighbourhood Plan area which is the same as Godmanchester Parish as shown on Figure 1, Page 7 of the Neighbourhood Plan;
- The Plan specifies the period to which it is to take effect – [2017-2036]; and
- The policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to Referendum on the basis that it has met all the relevant legal requirements.

I have considered whether the referendum area should extend beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates and have concluded that it should not.

1. Introduction and Background

Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan 2017- 2036

- 1.1 Godmanchester is a small town, with some 6,800 residents in 2016, located south of Huntingdon and separated from it by the valley of the River Great Ouse. The town has a long history having been a Roman settlement, and a Borough Town chartered by King John in the thirteenth century. Godmanchester, containing more than 100 listed buildings and two conservation areas and with a waterside location, has an elegant and distinctive character. Its development over the centuries has been closely tied to its strategic position on the old Roman road from London to York. In the Middle Ages, it developed as an inland port and prosperous market town. With the East Coast main rail line and A1 road to the west and M11/A14 to the east, Godmanchester remains a highly accessible settlement. The town is fairly intensively developed and compact, but is surrounded by open countryside of high value for its biodiversity, agricultural land value, scenic beauty and landscape quality.

- 1.2 The Town Council started the neighbourhood plan process in January 2015 and the area was designated in March 2015. The Basic Conditions Statement, which includes the Consultation Statement, records a range of measures used to inform and involve the local community and stakeholders in plan-making. Regulation 16 consultation on the submission Neighbourhood Plan was carried out in May and June 2017 and the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan (GNP) was submitted for examination in July 2017.

The Independent Examiner

- 1.3 As the Plan has now reached the examination stage, I have been appointed as the examiner of the GNP by Huntingdonshire District Council, with the agreement of Godmanchester Town Council.
- 1.4 I am a chartered town planner and former government Planning Inspector, with experience of examining other neighbourhood plans. I am an independent examiner, and do not have an interest in any of the land that may be affected by the draft plan.

The Scope of the Examination

- 1.5 As the independent examiner I am required to produce this report and recommend either:
- (a) that the neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum without changes; or
 - (b) that modifications are made and that the modified neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum; or
 - (c) that the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to a referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.
- 1.6 The scope of the examination is set out in Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) ('the 1990 Act'). The examiner must consider:
- Whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions;
 - Whether the Plan complies with provisions under s.38A and s.38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) ('the 2004 Act'). These are:
 - it has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body, for an area that has been properly designated by the Local Planning Authority;
 - it sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land;
 - it specifies the period during which it has effect;

- it does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development';
 - it is the only neighbourhood plan for the area and does not relate to land outside the designated neighbourhood area;
 - whether the referendum boundary should be extended beyond the designated area, should the plan proceed to referendum; and
- Such matters as prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)('the 2012 Regulations').

1.7 I have considered only matters that fall within Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act, with one exception. That is the requirement that the Plan is compatible with the Human Rights Convention.

The Basic Conditions

1.8 The 'Basic Conditions' are set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the neighbourhood plan must:

- Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area;
- Be compatible with and not breach European Union (EU) obligations; and
- Meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.

1.9 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further Basic Condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the neighbourhood plan should not be likely to have a significant effect on a European Site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European Offshore Marine Site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 2007), either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

2.0 Approach to the Examination

Planning Policy Context

- 2.1 The Development Plan for this part of Huntingdonshire, not including documents relating to excluded minerals and waste development, is the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy adopted in September 2009; and saved policies from the Local Plan 1995 and Local Plan Alteration 2002. The Core Strategy sets out the spatial framework for Huntingdonshire's future to 2026. It is a legal requirement that the GNP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan and this is reflected in national policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 184.
- 2.2 Consultation is underway (July and August 2017) for Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036: Consultation Draft 2017. This emerging plan for the area is expected to be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination in March 2018. Although it does not as yet constitute part of the statutory development plan for the area, there are similarities with the GNP in respect of evidence bases and timescales. If an emerging Local Plan is in conflict with a neighbourhood plan, there is a risk that, when the Local Plan is adopted, it will undermine the effectiveness of that neighbourhood plan. Having regard for these factors and the advice in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)¹, I shall take the emerging Local Plan into consideration in this examination.
- 2.3 The planning policy for England is set out principally in the NPPF and the PPG offers guidance on how this policy should be implemented.

Submitted Documents

- 2.4 I have considered all policy, guidance and other reference documents that I consider relevant to the examination, including those submitted, which comprise:
- the GNP 2017-2036, Submission Version 2017;
 - Figure 1 of the Plan which identifies the area to which the proposed neighbourhood development plan relates;
 - the Basic Conditions Statement which includes the Consultation Statement, April 2017;
 - all the representations that have been made in accordance with the Regulation 16 consultation;

¹ PPG Reference ID 41-009-20160211.

- the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report prepared by Huntingdonshire District Council, April 2017; and
- The requests for additional clarification sought in my letters of 24 July 2017 and 26 July 2017 and the responses annotated on those letters by the Town Council².

Site Visit

2.5 I made an unaccompanied site visit to the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 20th July 2017 to familiarise myself with it, and visit relevant sites and areas referenced in the Plan and evidential documents.

Written Representations or Public Hearing

2.6 This examination has been dealt with by written representations. I considered hearing sessions to be unnecessary as the consultation responses clearly articulated the objections to the Plan and presented arguments for and against the Plan's suitability to proceed to a referendum. Godmanchester Town Council helpfully answered in writing the questions which I put to them in letters of 24 July 2017 and 26 July 2017.

Modifications

2.7 Where necessary, I have recommended modifications to the Plan (**PMs**) in this report in order that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. For ease of reference, I have listed these modifications separately in the Appendix.

3. Procedural Compliance and Human Rights

Qualifying Body and Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 3.1 The GNP has been prepared and submitted for examination by Godmanchester Town Council which is a qualifying body, for the parish of Godmanchester, an area that was designated by Huntingdonshire District Council on 11 March 2015.
- 3.2 It is the only neighbourhood plan for Godmanchester, and does not relate to land outside the designated neighbourhood area.

²View at: <http://gmccouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Examiner-Request-for-information-Godmanchester-002.pdf> and <http://gmccouncil.com/neighbourhood-plan-examiners-request-of-information-response/>

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Plan Period

- 3.3 The cover of the Plan specifies clearly the period to which it is to take effect, which is from 2017 to 2036. However, paragraph 1.1 refers to a plan period 2016-36, and should be modified to read "2017-36" to avoid discrepancy with the front cover. The Town Council informed me (in its response to my letter of 24th July 2017) that the Submission Version of the GNP was finalised in May 2017. **PM1** should be made to correct³ these key dates for the benefit of users and readers of the Plan.

Neighbourhood Plan Preparation and Consultation

- 3.4 The Town Council began preparing a neighbourhood plan in 2014/ 2015 following information in the Winter Newsletter delivered to all households and available on the Town Council's website in late 2014. The neighbourhood plan area was designated in March 2015, and reports on progress with planning were provided at the annual Council meeting in May 2015, and monthly thereafter. Appendix 2a of the Basic Conditions Statement accompanying the submitted Neighbourhood Plan lists the engagement activities undertaken to inform and involve local people in plan-making thereafter. These included face-to-face meetings and workshops with stakeholder groups, approaches to landowners and their agents, social media activities, events in Godmanchester such as Gala Day and Christmas Lights events, and contact with Schools and the Youth Club.
- 3.5 Pre-submission Regulation 14 consultation took place between November 2016 and January 2017, and 33 responses were received. Regulation 16 consultation on the submission Neighbourhood Plan was carried out between 8 May and 19 June 2017, and responses were received from seven parties including the late representation from Cambridgeshire County Council Transport Assessment Team. I accept that the Town Council has undertaken an extensive and prolonged period of engagement with the local community and stakeholders, as described in the Consultation Statement. I am satisfied that the consultation process has both met the legal requirements and had regard to the advice in the PPG on plan preparation, and is therefore procedurally compliant.

Development and Use of Land

- 3.6 The Plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in accordance with s.38A of the 2004 Act. However, Policy GMC7 does not relate wholly to the development or use of land and I have recommended modifications in paragraph 4.24 to make it legally compliant.

³ Paragraph 10(3)(e) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) provides for the recommending of modifications for the purpose of correcting errors.

Excluded Development

- 3.7 The Plan does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development'.

Human Rights

- 3.8 Huntingdonshire District Council has not stated that the Plan would breach Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998), and from my independent assessment I see no reason to disagree.

4. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

EU Obligations

- 4.1 The neighbourhood plan was screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) by Huntingdonshire District Council, which found that it was unnecessary to undertake SEA. Having read the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report April 2017, I am satisfied from my own consideration of this matter that this conclusion is correct.
- 4.2 The report also concluded that the GNP would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any internationally designated sites either alone or in combination with any other plans. Therefore, Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) would not be triggered. Natural England wrote in support of this conclusion, and as a result of my independent assessment I endorse this view.

Main Issues

- 4.3 Having regard for the GNP, the consultation responses and other evidence, as well as my site visit, I consider that there are three main issues relating to the Basic Conditions for this examination. These are:
- Whether the GNP, in particular its Vision and Policies GMC1 and GMC2, and its subsequent policies regarding housing and economic development, is sufficiently positive to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and meets all the Basic Conditions for neighbourhood planning;
 - Whether policies to protect the semi-rural character of the Town and the surrounding countryside are proportionate, taking account of the Town's history and heritage, and satisfy the Basic Conditions for neighbourhood planning; and
 - Whether policies for transport meet the Basic Conditions for neighbourhood planning, in particular for sustainable transport planning.

Issue 1: Housing and Economic Development

- 4.4 The NPPF's section 6, paragraphs 47 to 55, refers to delivering a wide choice of high quality homes and boosting significantly the supply of housing. The Spatial Vision for Huntingdonshire in the Core Strategy addresses Sustainable Patterns of Growth and Sufficient Housing to Meet Needs. It commits to playing "a proactive role in accommodating housing growth... required as part of the London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough growth corridor ..". Policy CS2 identifies the Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area, which includes Godmanchester, where 1,800 new homes will be provided between 2009 and 2026, including significant mixed use development on greenfield land adjoining Godmanchester.
- 4.5 Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy provides a settlement hierarchy "to manage the scale of housing development appropriate on unallocated sites". Godmanchester is categorised as a key service centre where development schemes of moderate and minor scale and infilling may be appropriate within the built-up area. Moderate scale development is defined as 10-59 dwellings, minor scale is up to 9 dwellings and infilling up to 3 dwellings.
- 4.6 Chapter 2 of the GNP advises that Huntingdonshire is one of the fastest growing parts of Cambridgeshire and the United Kingdom. With approximately 6,800 residents in 2016, Godmanchester is expected to accommodate around 8,600 by 2040, implying a growth rate of about 26%. Chapter 3 sets out the Challenges for Godmanchester which includes the theme that additional housing growth may create problems, such as the risk of Godmanchester becoming a dormitory town for Cambridge and other nearby towns. Other issues identified include Godmanchester losing its independence from Huntingdon and its separation from surrounding settlements, the exacerbation of traffic congestion and parking problems and adverse effects on the character of the Town's "historic core".
- 4.7 The GNP Vision begins by stating that, by 2036, the town's historic core, rich architecture and beautiful open spaces will have been protected for the enjoyment of residents and visitors. New residents in new developments will be welcomed, but any further development will be within the town's existing built boundary. The Neighbourhood Plan objectives arguably could be characterised as conservative, with the first two aiming to protect and enhance the countryside and open spaces, and the historic heritage. Any new housing development should meet the needs of local people and benefit the Town. Policy GMC1: The importance of the countryside setting states that development shall be focused within the settlement boundary, which is shown on Map 6 in Chapter 10 of the GNP.
- 4.8 Chapter 10 helpfully sets out the methodology for defining the settlement boundary. Importantly, in my opinion, the boundary includes sites for new development that have been allocated in the Core Strategy 2009, and

have been put forward in the emerging Local Plan for 2036. The emerging Local Plan Policies HU16 to HU19 envisage new mixed use development at Tyrell's Marina (with approximately 15 homes), mixed use development at RGE Engineering site (approximately 70 homes), residential development at Wigmore Farm Buildings (approximately 13 homes) and a mix of new uses at Bearscroft Farm, also known as Romans' Edge (approximately 750 homes). I accept that the additional 848 new homes planned for these sites by 2036 will be a discernible change for the Town and its residents, but they should contribute to a major uplift in the local housing supply.

- 4.9 Consultation responses on the submitted GNP indicated some criticism of the settlement boundary and its implications for new housing development. Savills, on behalf of the Church Commissioners, put forward a possible new housing site off Corpus Christi Lane, which would be just outside the proposed settlement boundary. An amendment to the settlement boundary was proposed to include the site, with changed wording to refer to "accommodating future housing development in and around Godmanchester...". Fairfield Partnership with an interest in the Bearscroft Farm site questioned whether the GNP would make a sufficient contribution to Huntingdonshire's housing requirement to 2036. It considers that land east of Romans' Edge would be suitable for future development and could help deliver the aims and aspirations of the GNP. Gladman Developments Ltd also saw the settlement boundary as "unnecessarily restrictive", and recommended that a criteria-based approach for determining where development should be permitted should be used, so as to "resolve problems with delineated boundaries" in the earlier Local Plan.
- 4.10 I shall not comment on the desirability or otherwise of permitting housing development on the Corpus Christi Lane site, or east of Romans' Edge, or other potential housing sites in the Parish of Godmanchester. Huntingdonshire District Council will determine any relevant planning applications on their particular merits. However, the town of Godmanchester is quite intensively developed already so that limiting new development to "within the settlement boundary" could prevent new housing development, even of a moderate or minor scale. Although 848 new homes are planned on the sites named in the emerging Local Plan, there is no certainty that all the sites will deliver these numbers in full; in my experience, implementation can be delayed, sites abandoned and plans changed over time. Assessments of housing need may also change over time. The GNP is looking 19 years ahead, which is a relatively long time period, some 10 years beyond the Core Strategy. I consider it essential that the Plan should provide appropriately for new housing in this area of high demand (see paragraph 2.5 of the GNP), and allow for some flexibility over future housing sites and numbers.
- 4.11 Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy seeks to secure sustainable development, reflecting environmental, social and economic issues. Policies GMC1 and GMC2 of the GNP are focused on the importance of Godmanchester's

countryside setting and preserving the semi-rural feel within the Town. I appreciate that new housing development should not be so great in future that Godmanchester becomes "a large sprawling Town" instead of a "historic village". Providing new homes within walking distance of the Town's historic core should reduce the need to use the car for some trips and bring important social and environmental benefits. I am also aware that the countryside around the Town is precious for its agricultural land value, wildlife habitats, and high quality landscape alongside the River Great Ouse.

- 4.12 Nevertheless, in my opinion, Policy GMC1 should be modified to state that "Developmentshall be focused within or adjoining the settlement boundary as identified in the plan." It should be made clear that any new development should be either infill or of a minor or moderate scale, so that the local distinctiveness of the settlement is not compromised. **PM2** should be made to achieve this flexibility and ensure that regard is had to the NPPF and the promotion of sustainable development. PM2 is also needed to ensure that the GNP will be in general conformity with the aims for new housing development in the Core Strategy and align with similar aims in the emerging Local Plan.
- 4.13 Chapter 6 of the GNP entitled 'Housing' is very brief, and includes no figures for the scale of new housing development expected over the plan period. Appendix 2 of the GNP lists policies in the development plan and emerging Local Plan for Huntingdonshire which relate to the character and type of permissible housing. Whilst Policy GMC13 of the GNP provides useful design principles for residential infill and back land development, there is currently no reference to minor or moderate scale development. Paragraph 184 of the NPPF is clear that neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies. I consider that Policy GMC13 should be modified to accord with this aim of the NPPF, to secure general conformity with the Core Strategy and alignment to the emerging Local Plan, and to make allowance for new housing proposals other than infilling and back land development. **PM5** should be made to achieve this, and to clarify that any new development should be designed to respect the character of the neighbouring streetscene and historic core. PM5 should also be made to secure support for new housing development within reasonable walking distance of the town's historic core.
- 4.14 On Pages 11-15 of the GNP, it is reported that Godmanchester has a high proportion of residents aged 25-60 years, and high levels of economic activity with many people in full-time employment. Overall, residents have a high level of qualifications. The sixth objective of the GNP on Page 19 is to "Help local businesses thrive". Policy GMC21 addresses "Growing new capacity for small scale businesses in the Town". The supporting text refers to paragraph 28 of the NPPF on supporting a prosperous rural economy. The GNP describes the comparatively high numbers of self-employed businesses in the Town, and the expectation that some 5 hectares (ha) of new B-class employment land will be delivered at the

Romans' Edge site. This is in general conformity with Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy relating to new employment land. In order to align better with the modified Policy GMC1, and in the interests of sustainable development, I propose that Policy GMC21 should also refer to the provision of new or converted buildings within "or adjoining" the settlement boundary of the Town. Providing that **PMS** is made, Policy GMC21 will satisfy the Basic Conditions.

- 4.15 Policy GMC2, appropriately in my opinion, supports development proposals that would enhance the tourist and visitor attractions in the area. It aligns with the emerging Local Plan Policy LP22 relating to tourism and recreation in the countryside. Supporting text for GMC2 refers to a proposed Neolithic Country Park on reclaimed land in the countryside east of the town. Policy GMC5 supports proposals that will make the most of waterside assets for quiet and low impact leisure, with low risk to wildlife. I consider that both policies have had regard for paragraph 28 of the NPPF, and should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in accordance with the Basic Conditions.
- 4.16 Page 12 of the Core Strategy states that the majority of housing growth will take place in the most sustainable locations, but more limited housing development in larger villages will help sustain their existing facilities and amenities without damaging their character. This principle applies in Godmanchester, where there is concern that the settlement could become a dormitory town serving Cambridge (paragraph 3.1 of the GNP). Chapter 7 sets out an ambition for the town's future self-sufficiency protecting existing community infrastructure and providing more facilities. It wishes to ensure that the Town has sufficient good schools, health services, a range of local shops and post office/banking services. I am satisfied that Policies GMC17-20 of the GNP seek to broadly align with Policies LP5 and LP21 of the emerging Local Plan regarding the location of proposed town centre and other uses. In addition, I consider that my proposed modification to Policy GMC1, enabling some minor or moderate scale development in the future, should ensure that there is a growing population which will support a good range of local services and prevent some potential losses.
- 4.17 Providing the above modifications are made to the GNP, I conclude that its Vision and policies for housing and economic development including for visitor and tourist facilities and for community infrastructure and business, should be sufficiently positive to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and meet all the Basic Conditions for neighbourhood planning.

Issue 2: Protecting the Semi-Rural Character of the Town and the Surrounding Countryside

- 4.18 Policy GMC3 of the GNP designates 18 areas as Local Green Spaces (LGSs) (Nos 4-21 in Appendix 1). The NPPF advises that LGS designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open spaces, and this

leads me to question whether as many as 18 sites in this Parish, with a single small Town, is excessive. Whilst the Town Council and local community wish to preserve the "semi-rural village feel" of Godmanchester, it also wishes to prevent the development of a sprawling Town, to maintain independence from Huntingdon and surrounding villages and hamlets, and to ensure that all homes are within walking distance of the historic core. If the Town includes a large number of LGSs, with protection equivalent to the Green Belt, it seems unlikely to me that sites for minor scale or infill housing development or for employment use will be available in suitable, accessible and urban locations. Too many LGSs could increase the risk of a sprawling town with developments on the edge far from the Town's core.

- 4.19 I note that several of the proposed LGS sites are not located within the settlement boundary for Godmanchester Town. Sites 6 and 7, the Recreation Ground leading to the lock and Queen's Walk, are undoubtedly special to the local community for a number of reasons as summarised in Appendix 1 of the GNP. However, both sites are located in the Post Street Conservation Area where their character and appearance will be preserved or enhanced in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The PPG advises that if land is already designated as a conservation area, then consideration should be given as to whether any additional local benefit would be gained from LGS status⁴. Sites 6 and 7 are also adjacent to Portholme Meadow Special Area of Conservation and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), designated as sites of international importance for wildlife and, in this protected environment, I consider that it is unnecessary to define the Recreation Ground and Queen's Walk as LGSs.
- 4.20 Sites 4, 5 and 19, the Nature Reserve at Cow Lane, Cow Lane gravel pits and the proposed Neolithic Country Park, are located east of the Town and outside the settlement boundary. The NPPF expects local green space to be in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves. Whilst some local residents will take walks regularly (eg. to exercise their dogs) and future residents are likely to support the proposed Country Park, these spaces are not immediately accessible like, for example, Buttermel. In addition, these sites are individually and collectively large, estimated as 61 acres (24.7 ha), 64 acres (25.9 ha) and 48 acres (19.4 ha) respectively. Gladman Developments Limited drew my attention to other NP Examiner's reports where conclusions had been reached that much smaller sites amounted to overly extensive tracts of land. In my view, examiners' judgments on proposed LGSs elsewhere, as to what constitutes an overly extensive tract of land, should not be treated as definitive. I have not adopted a solely quantitative approach in assessing the proposed LGSs, but have taken account of the specific context in which each site is located and each site's individual characteristics. A degree of judgment has necessarily been applied⁵. In the context of

⁴ PPG Reference ID:37-011-20140306.

⁵ PPG Reference ID: 37-015-20140306.

Godmanchester, I consider that sites 4, 5 and 19 are extensive tracts of land and therefore do not satisfy the criteria for LGS designation. It is also noteworthy that their countryside location and proximity to protected areas of Eastside Common SSSI and Westside Common, and inclusion in the Great Ouse Valley area identified as an area for green infrastructure enhancement in Policy CS9 of the Core Strategy, offer sufficient protection from unwanted development, in my view. LGS designation is not justified.

- 4.21 Sites 8, 9, 10 and 21 adjoin each other and are located within the settlement boundary, close to the school, church and A14 road. Collectively, they provide 11.4 acres or 4.6 ha of space. As I saw at my site visit, the church and school have their own open space so that this is not an intensively developed part of the Town. I accept that the cricket pitch and Community Nursery off Park Lane are demonstrably special and meet the other criteria for LGS in paragraph 77 of the NPPF. However, I consider that sites 9 and 10, being subsidiary and informal areas of open space, are of less importance and should not have the same high level of protection.
- 4.22 Site 12, Wigmore Meadows, as I saw at my site visit, is a pleasant area of open space with play facilities and tree planting which abuts the residential area to the east. It is a site of 10 acres or 4 ha, which is relatively extensive compared with the other proposed LGSs in Godmanchester. For example, it is nearly three times the size of the cricket pitch. More importantly, it is outside the settlement boundary in the countryside, and I consider that its designation as LGS is not justified. Site 15, Judith's Field, occupying some 6.9 acres or 2.8 ha between the A1198 and College of Animal Welfare, is described as special as a recreation and play space, with a purpose-built community use recreation building. The site is relatively close to Bearscroft Farm where significant new development is taking place, so that Judith's Field will become more centrally located in the Town's built-up area in the future, and will serve a larger catchment population. I accept that it is important to the local community, meets the criteria in the NPPF, including being local in character, and should be designated as a LGS.
- 4.23 From my site visit and from the information in Appendix 1 of the GNP, I am satisfied that sites 11- the Green between Cob Place and Fishers Way, 13 - Devana Park, 14 - Buttermel, 16 - site of former Methodist Church, 17 - War Memorial and 18 - allotments, and 20 - Rovers football ground, should be designated as LGS. Overall, with the cricket pitch, nursery and Judith's Field, I consider that 10 of the 18 sites listed in Appendix 1 of the GNP should be designated as LGS. The other 8 sites should be considered as other green space and listed accordingly in Appendix 1. Their "demotion" does not mean that they are unimportant as areas of open space. I recommend that **PM12** be made to confirm this, so that the Plan has regard for national planning policy. On Policy GMC3, it is essential that the policy relating to LGS designations, which is very protective and consistent with policy for Green Belts, is distinguished from policy for the other green spaces in Godmanchester. Having regard for national

planning policy and the contribution to the achievement of sustainable development, Policy GMC3 and its supporting text should be re-written, as set out in **PM3**.

- 4.24 I consider that Policies GMC4: Landscaping and planting, GMC5: Making the most of waterside assets, and GMC6: Improving and increasing public green spaces are commendable and consistent with high quality urban design in Godmanchester. They should promote sustainable development. Figure 2, which shows green space provision and needs, provides useful information against which development schemes can be assessed. I am also supportive of Policies GMC8: Ensuring public amenity space is retained and GMC9: Ensuring a wide range of sporting and recreational facilities are retained and expanded. They are consistent with the promotion of health and well-being as referenced in the NPPF's paragraph 171. The above policies further align with the aims of Policy LP11: Design implementation, in the emerging Local Plan.
- 4.25 Policy GMC7 supports development proposals that provide walking routes and enable access to the wider countryside, which has regard for paragraphs 69 and 75 of the NPPF. However, the designation of off-the-leash dog walking areas is not a matter for planning, in my view. Paragraph 173 of the NPPF cautions that Local Plans should be deliverable and developments should not be subject to such a scale of obligations and policy burdens that their viability is threatened. Prospective developers may regard the need to investigate the case for, and provide safely for, off-the-leash walking areas as too onerous. I appreciate from my site visit that there are many dog-owners in the GNP area who need to walk their dogs routinely and partly off-the-leash. However, the requirements for dog-walking should be addressed by community action and regulations/byelaws outside town planning. I consider that Policy GMC7 and its supporting text should be modified to prioritise improvements to the pedestrian access. The environment for dog-walkers should be mentioned in the Plan as a secondary matter only. **PM4** is needed so that regard is had for national planning policy.
- 4.26 The "semi-rural village feel" to Godmanchester is closely connected to its history, and the retention of so many old routes (from Roman times onwards) and buildings (around 125 listed buildings). Section 5 of the GNP addresses Heritage and the Built Environment, referring to the Town's "historic core" and rich architecture which will need to be protected as the Town changes over time. Map 5 on Page 68 of the GNP shows the historic core, which is referred to within Policies GMC10 and GMC11. Paragraph 5.2, correctly and commendably in my view, states that the brevity of section 5 is due to the fact that many of the Town's historic and heritage assets are covered by national policy, notably the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The GNP does not intend to duplicate higher level law and policy, but it does recognise the importance and value of its historic assets.

- 4.27 I asked the Town Council to explain how its historic core had been defined, in my letter of 24 July 2017. I was informed that consultation with local residents, the location of two Conservation Areas and over 100 listed buildings had been used to define the area. Based on this evidence and my site visit, I support the area as shown on Map 5, but consider that readers and users of the GNP would be assisted if the boundaries of Post Street and Earning Street Conservation Areas, and of the Scheduled Monument east of the parish church, were also shown on the map. This could strengthen the effectiveness of Policies GMC10, GMC11 and GMC12, giving due prominence to conserving and enhancing the historic environment in general conformity with Objectives 8, 10 and 11 of the Core Strategy, and they reflect the aims of Policies LP34 and LP35 of the emerging Local Plan. **PM11** also has regard for section 12 of the NPPF, and should be made.
- 4.28 As long as the modifications described above are in place, I conclude that the GNP's policies to protect the semi-rural character of the Town and the surrounding countryside are proportionate, take account of the Town's history and heritage appropriately, and are compliant with the Basic Conditions for neighbourhood planning.

Issue 3: Transport

- 4.29 Chapter 8 of the GNP – Getting Around – explains that transport and traffic are major concerns for residents. The vision for the GNP, in summary, is to improve safety on the roads, encourage sustainable travel by cycling, walking or on the bus, and manage parking better. Problems with congestion due to proximity to the A14 and Huntingdon, and dependence on the Medieval Bridge across the River, are described in the text preceding Policy GMC22: Reducing traffic and congestion on Godmanchester's roads. Cambridgeshire County Council's Transport Assessment Team (County Council) broadly supports the vision and objectives of the GNP.
- 4.30 However, the County Council stated that the GNP should reflect the policies and objectives of the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan (LTP3) and the Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy. The LTP3 dated July 2015, sets out policy for Cambridgeshire to 2031. It begins by defining eight challenges which, I agree, are broadly reflected in the vision within the GNP. The Strategy in LTP3 is to achieve the defined objectives, particularly tackling climate change and enhancing the economy. It aims to address existing transport problems, cater for the transport needs of new communities and improve air quality. Notably, it seeks to widen the choices available for environmentally sustainable transport, and manage the demand for transport, particularly private car use. On sustainable transport, it goes on to describe the Manual for Streets 1 & 2 "user hierarchy" which places pedestrians first, followed by cyclists, public transport, specialist service vehicles and disabled drivers, ending with other motor vehicle users.

- 4.31 The Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy provides more specific policy for the GNP area. It expects all planning applications for major developments to carry out a full transport assessment highlighting specific impacts from their schemes on the local transport network. It references the improvements which are expected from the Bearscroft Farm (Romans' Edge) development, notably higher frequency bus services with better real-time passenger information between Godmanchester and Huntingdon, and monitoring of traffic flows on the Post Street corridor to inform traffic management measures. The Strategy for the area is to effect a modal shift towards more sustainable forms of transport with a particular focus on the daily commute. Greater levels of high quality cycle parking provision are to be sought in Godmanchester, among other places. A number of short term transport measures are described and costed, beginning with traffic calming measures for Post Street and The Causeway; "along with surfacing and lighting improvements to NCN51 and Cambridge Road".
- 4.32 The Market Town Transport Strategy also describes public transport schemes for the short, medium and long term, before moving on to road network and parking issues. The proposed new bypass to the A14 is expected to "significantly reduce the amount of traffic in Huntingdon, Godmanchester and surrounding villages and remove current rat-running to avoid the existing route". The County Council and Huntingdonshire District Council see the removal of the A14 viaduct over the railway line as a vital component of the scheme. The new A14 scheme is viewed as an opportunity to reduce traffic on the narrow and historic Town Bridge between Huntingdon and Godmanchester. However, the Transport Strategy acknowledges that some parts of the local road network which lie in close proximity to growth sites, will receive a significant increase in vehicular trips. "Furthermore, the A14 scheme itself may prompt a culture of rat-running through certain wards." On parking, it is acknowledged that there is significant local concern about on-street parking, and lack of off-street parking, in Huntingdon and on key routes through Godmanchester. The primary policy for a number of years has been to remove long-stay parking sites from the town centre to encourage travel there on foot.
- 4.33 I have included the above fairly lengthy summary of the two documents, in order to indicate the extent to which the GNP does or does not reflect the County Council's transport strategy. I note that Cambridgeshire Long Term Transport Strategy and the Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy are referenced in paragraph 8.12 of the GNP, but consider that it should explain the role of the County Council and its policy documents more clearly. The introduction to Chapter 8 should also declare its support for the promotion of sustainable transport, explain that the Transport Assessment process and Travel Plans can mitigate the specific impacts of developments, and amend the reference to public transport services, as requested by the County Council Transport Assessment Team. These modifications would ensure that due regard has been had for the NPPF, paragraphs 29 - 41. The NPPF affirms that

reducing the need to travel, especially by private car, contributes to wider sustainability and health objectives, supports reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduces congestion. **PM9** would ensure appropriate regard for national policy, and should be made.

- 4.34 For similar reasons, I consider that Policy GMC22: Reducing traffic and congestion on Godmanchester's roads should refer to improving the provision of sustainable transport. It should also refer to the use of Travel Plans to set out how the use of sustainable modes will be facilitated and encouraged, having regard for paragraph 36 of the NPPF. **PM9** would secure this. The County Council requested that the significant benefits of having a town with high levels of cycling should be set out in the section which begins on Page 54 of the GNP. I recommend that paragraph 8.13 be extended to provide additional information on this subject, which again relates to sustainable travel practice. I shall also propose additional information about the approach to cycle parking. **PM10** should be made to help contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 4.35 I consider that Policies GMC23: Improving cycling, GMC24: Encouraging greater take up and provision of public transport, and GMC25: Making it easier to get about on foot are consistent with promoting sustainable travel. Paragraph 8.30 and Appendix 4 helpfully give details of public rights of way, which will need to be considered at an early stage in any development proposals. These policies align with Policy LP15 of the emerging Local Plan and have regard to national planning policy.
- 4.36 Page 39 onwards of the GNP concerns parking. As the County Council Transport Assessment Team observed, parking standards are set by the local planning authority. The County Council cautions against over-provision of car parking spaces. Notwithstanding the existing problems with parking in Godmanchester, notably within the historic core, I consider that generous allowance for residential or other parking in new developments, as implied in Policy GMC14, is only likely to increase the number of vehicles on the roads, and undermine efforts to encourage use of more sustainable travel modes. The County Council favours the use of a bespoke level of parking for each proposed development, depending on its location and nature of development and the other criteria given in paragraph 39 of the NPPF.
- 4.37 Policy LP16 of the emerging Local Plan is a comprehensive parking policy, which includes provision for cycle parking, and refers to the Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2017. This is recently adopted, and I consider that it provides guidance which should ensure that new development proposals will achieve suitable and sensitive parking provision. Even if Policy LP16 and the Design Guide SPG are not identified as strategic policies of the development plan for the area, I consider that Policy GMC14 should be amended as shown in **PM6** in order to promote sustainable development and to have regard for the NPPF.

- 4.38 I support the principle of Policy GMC15 to enhance the appearance of the streetscene in the Town's historic core and minimise visual clutter. There is a minor typographical error in line 2 ("is" instead of "its") and I consider that use of the word "setting" could be misleading, as the "setting" of a Listed Building or Conservation Area refers to the land outside it. In this instance, I therefore recommend use of the word "surroundings", and have proposed this change in **PM7**. Providing all the above modifications are made, I conclude that the policies for transport meet the Basic Conditions for neighbourhood planning, notably for sustainable transport planning.

Other Matters

- 4.39 Flooding and surface water flood risk are addressed on Page 43 and in Policy GMC16 of the GNP. The Environment Agency's flood maps are referenced in the supporting text, as is the "ever-present threat" of flooding due to Godmanchester's location close to the River Ouse. The policy should alert developers to potential risks, and aligns with Policy LP9 of the emerging Local Plan, which sets strict, detailed tests for new development, in line with the NPPF.

5. Conclusions

Summary

- 5.1 The GNP has been duly prepared in compliance with the procedural requirements. My examination has investigated whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements for neighbourhood plans. I have had regard for all the responses made following consultation on the neighbourhood plan, and the evidence documents submitted with it.
- 5.2 I have made recommendations to modify a number of policies and text to ensure the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum.

The Referendum and its Area

- 5.3 I have considered whether or not the referendum area should be extended beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates. The Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan as modified has no policy or proposals which I consider significant enough to have an impact beyond the designated neighbourhood plan boundary, requiring the referendum to extend to areas beyond the plan boundary. I recommend that the boundary for the purposes of any future referendum on the plan should be the boundary of the designated neighbourhood plan area.
- 5.4 Finally, I wish to commend the Godmanchester Town Council and its local community for the years of hard work which have been put into preparing

this Neighbourhood Plan, ensuring that local people were properly consulted and engaged, and informing themselves about the complex town planning system. Although some people will be disappointed by the modifications which are proposed in this report, which I am compelled to make to meet the relevant legal requirements, I hope they will appreciate that I am fully supportive of their aims for a compact town which maintains its distinctive and historic character set in the countryside, and will thrive in the future for the benefit of its residents and businesses. The GNP should provide a strong basis for good quality, decision-making on development proposals which take full account of the local community's wellbeing.

Jill Kingaby

Examiner

Appendix: Modifications

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification
PM1	Front cover and Page 5	<p>Front cover should add Submission Version May 2017 (or the date of the final version of the Plan)</p> <p>Paragraph 1.1</p> <p>This document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for Godmanchester parish from 20162017 to 2036</p>
PM2	Page 22	<p>Policy GMC1: The importance of the countryside setting</p> <p>Development in the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan Area shall be focused within or adjoining the settlement boundary....</p>
PM3	Page 23	<p>Preserving the Semi-Rural Village 'Feel' within the Town</p> <p>4.14 There are ... connection for wildlife but also is crucial</p> <p>4.15 Delete the first sentence and insert:</p> <p><i>The Local Green Spaces within or adjoining the settlement boundary are listed in Appendix 1, and are demonstrably special to the local community of Godmanchester. Also in Appendix 1, are sites in the Parish designated for their national and international significance for wildlife and as registered Common Land. Thirdly, Appendix 1 lists other non-designated green spaces, many of which were allocated as public amenity spaces under planning permissions for development on neighbouring land.</i></p> <p>These are all sites of community value ie. they provide a valuable space for the informalrecreational activities of the</p>

		<p>community such as walking, dog walking, informal play, sports or allotment gardening. They are</p> <p>Policy GMC3: Preserving ...Town Local Green Spaces.</p> <p>Godmanchester's designated Local Green Spaces and other Ggreen Sspaces are set out in Appendix 1. Proposals for development on the Local Green Spaces and Other Green Spaces will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated Local Green Space or Other Green Space.</p> <p>Proposals for development on other green spaces should demonstrate that alternative informal recreational space is available within walking distance for neighbouring and future residents, and the semi-rural 'village' feel within the Town will not be seriously compromised.</p>
PM4	Page 30	<p>Paragraph 4.26 – add a second sentence as follows: The provision of public amenity space that would enable off-the-leash dog walking space will be supported.</p> <p>Policy GMC7: Providing designated spaces where dogs can be walked off-the-leash and i Improving access to the countryside</p> <p>Development proposals that take account of the need to provide green open public amenity space that is designated for off-the-leash dog walking will be supported, as will those that provide walking routes and enable ongoing access to the wider countryside.</p>
PM5	Page 38	<p><u>Residential Infill and Backland Development</u></p> <p>6.3 New opening sentence:</p> <p>New housing development of a moderate or minor scale is defined in Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy as</p>

		<p>developments of 10-59 dwellings and up to 9 dwellings respectively. Back land development is defined</p> <p>6.6 The combined, cumulative effect of new development including back land and infill development is that This would not be appropriate in Godmanchester, where care and attention to the scale, design and layout of new housing and its site context must be given.</p> <p>Policy GMC13: Residential infill and back land development.</p> <p>All Residential infill and back land development within or adjoining the settlement boundary of Godmanchester should Sites within reasonable walking distance of the Town's historic centre will be favourably considered. Development should be of minor or moderate scale, or represent infilling or back land development. Infilling or back land development should reinforce the uniformity of the character of the existing streetscene by reflecting the scale, mass, semi-rural nature of the Town, with its historic core.</p>
PM6	Pages 39 to 41	<p>Improving Parking in the Town</p> <p>6.17 – delete the existing text and insert:</p> <p>New residential development in Godmanchester should include parking provision which is based on a careful assessment of the site's location and the character of the surrounding area, as well as the nature and form of the proposed development, and the size of the dwellings (number of bedrooms). Regard should be had for guidance on parking in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2017, when residential or other development proposals are put forward.</p>

		<p>Policy GMC14: For new residential development, plans should not exacerbate seek to reduce the any pressure on 'on street' parking and seek to improve parking issues through the greater provision of should provide numbers of off-street parking spaces appropriate to the site's location and the character of the proposal. The number of spaces should reflect the mix, size and type of housing.</p> <p>For new residential developments (Use Class 3)4 off street car parking spaces.</p> <p>Parking spaces can take the form Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>(Modify footnote 44 to refer to Huntingdonshire District Council Design Guide 2017)</p>
PM7	Page 42	<p>Policy GMC15: Improving and Enhancing the Town</p> <p>Second line:</p> <p>...and to enhance its historic character. Where new provision is made, it should be in keeping with the setting its surroundings</p>
PM8	Page 51	<p>Policy GMC21: Growing new capacity for small scale businesses in the Town</p> <p>Modify the second bullet of the second sentence to read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of new buildings or conversion of existing buildings within or adjoining the Settlement Boundary of the Town
PM9	Pages 52 and 53	<p>8 Getting Around</p> <p>8.1 Godmanchester is a growing community.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve manage parking better in the Town.

		<p>8.2 With the <i>anticipated improvements to the A14 road in Huntingdonshire and the</i> levels of growth planned acrossfor Godmanchester it will be important that developments each contributes..... a coherent and cohesive networktransport system incorporating more sustainable transport measures and enabling which allows people to get around more easily and safely, we are thereby protectingshould also be able to protect the historic and natural environment.</p> <p><i>8.2 a Cambridge County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2015 and the Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy seek to widen the choices available for environmentally sustainable transport, and manage the demand for transport, particularly private car use. All planning applications for development which would generate significant amounts of movement should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment, identifying the specific impacts of their proposals on the local transport network, and the measures needed to mitigate any adverse impacts. Measures should maximise opportunities for more sustainable transport eg. promoting pedestrian and cycling, and improving public transport services. Travel Plans should be provided for all developments which would generate significant new movements.</i></p> <p>.....</p> <p>8.4 Modify second sentence: The lack of public transport <i>services are not comparable to larger towns and cities in terms of frequency and coverage, so that</i> many <i>people</i> are primarily cars-users against 5% are by bus or train).on the road network. ... putting, <i>potentially,</i> a significant strain on the road network.</p>
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		<p><i>The transport assessment and travel plan accompanying the planning permission (ref: 1200685OUT) are required to address this matter.</i></p> <p>Policy GMC22: Reducing traffic and congestion on Godmanchester's roads</p> <p>Development proposals ... accompany any planning application and traffic calming, improvements to public transport, <i>cycling and walking routes, vehicle and cycle parking</i> and other measures delivered which mitigate the impact of development, particularly through the 'historic core'. <i>Where appropriate, a Travel Plan will be required, setting out how any adverse effects will be overcome, including through the promotion of use of more sustainable travel modes.</i></p>
PM10	Page 54	<p>Make the Town Safer for Cyclists</p> <p>8.13, Add two new sentences to introduce this paragraph:</p> <p><i>Godmanchester is a small town within 3 miles of the centre of Huntingdon, and within the relatively flat countryside of Cambridgeshire. It represents a highly suitable environment for cycling for people living and working locally, and for tourists and visitors.</i></p>
PM11	Page 68	<p>Map 5 – Historic Core</p> <p>Modify the map so that it shows Post Street and Earning Street Conservation Area boundaries, and the boundary of the Scheduled Monument east of the parish church.</p>
PM12	Page 69	<p>Appendix 1 – Green Spaces</p> <p>Local Green Spaces</p> <p>Delete the following:</p> <p>4. The Godmanchester Nature Reserve at Cow Lane</p>

		<p>5. The Cow Lane gravel pits</p> <p>6. The Recreation Ground including the green spaces leading up to the lock</p> <p>7. Queen's Walk</p> <p>9. The green space adjacent to the Cricket Pitch</p> <p>10. The land between the school, the Church ...</p> <p>12. The green ... Jarwood Walk and up to Silver Street ...</p> <p>19. The proposed Neolithic Country Park</p> <p>Godmanchester's Other Green Spaces</p> <p>Modify the first sentence to read:</p> <p>These are not defined within the NPPF but those listed here are mostly small scale are within the settlement boundary the Parish and are important</p> <p>Add to the list of sites: Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12 and 19.</p>
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Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan Decision Statement

1. Summary

- 1.1. Following an independent examination Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet has confirmed that the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan will proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning Referendum.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Godmanchester neighbourhood area was designated on 11 March 2015 under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012). The Plan covers the town of Godmanchester which is contiguous with the Town Council's administrative boundary.
- 2.2. Godmanchester Town Council, as the qualifying body, initially submitted the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan and its supporting evidence to Huntingdonshire District Council. The statutory six week submission consultation was held from 8 May to 19 June 2017.
- 2.3. Huntingdonshire District Council, in discussion with Godmanchester Town Council, appointed an independent examiner, Jill Kingaby MRTPI, to review whether the submitted Neighbourhood Plan met the Basic Conditions as required by legislation. Ms Kingaby issued her report on 30 August 2017 which recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the modifications proposed in her report, met the Basic Conditions and should proceed to referendum.
- 2.4. The Basic Conditions are:
 - Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan
 - The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development
 - The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority
 - The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, European Union (EU) obligations and
 - Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

Regulations 32 and 33 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) (as amended) set out two basic conditions in addition to those set out in primary legislation and referred to above. These are:

- The making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects
- Having regard to all material considerations, it is appropriate that the neighbourhood development order is made where the development described in an order proposal is Environmental Impact Assessment development (this is not applicable to this examination).

3. Decision

3.1. Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet considered the recommendations on 12 October 2017 and agreed to accept the Examiner's proposed modifications and approve the Godmanchetser Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to referendum.

3.2. The modifications to the Neighbourhood Plan, as needed to ensure it meets the Basic Conditions and in accordance with the Examiner's recommendations are listed in the following table.

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification	Discussed and Agreed with Godmanchester Town Council
PM1	Front cover and Page 5	<p>Front cover should add</p> <p>Submission Version May 2017</p> <p>(or the date of the final version of the Plan)</p> <p>Paragraph 1.1</p> <p>This document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for Godmanchester parish from 20162017 to 2036</p>	Yes
PM2	Page 22	<p>Policy GMC1: The importance of the countryside setting</p> <p>Development in the Godmanchester Neighbourhood Plan Area shall be focused within or adjoining the settlement boundary....</p>	Yes
PM3	Page 23	<p>Preserving the Semi-Rural Village ‘Feel’ within the Town</p> <p>4.14 There are ... connection for wildlife but also is crucial</p> <p>4.15 Delete the first sentence and insert:</p> <p><i>The Local Green Spaces within or adjoining the settlement boundary are listed in Appendix 1, and are demonstrably special to the local community of Godmanchester. Also in Appendix 1, are sites in the Parish designated for their national and international significance for wildlife and as registered Common Land. Thirdly, Appendix 1 lists other non-designated green spaces, many of which were allocated as public amenity spaces under planning permissions for development on neighbouring land. These are all sites of community value ie. they provide a valuable space for the informal-recreational activities of the community such as walking, dog walking, informal play, sports or allotment gardening. They are</i></p>	Yes

		<p>Policy GMC3: Preserving ...Town Local Green Spaces.</p> <p>Godmanchester's designated Local Green Spaces and other Green Spaces are set out in Appendix 1. Proposals for development on the Local Green Spaces and Other Green Spaces will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated Local Green Space or Other Green Space.</p> <p><i>Proposals for development on other green spaces should demonstrate that alternative informal recreational space is available within walking distance for neighbouring and future residents, and the semi-rural 'village' feel within the Town will not be seriously compromised.</i></p>	
PM4	Page 30	<p>Paragraph 4.26 – add a second sentence as follows: <i>The provision of public amenity space that would enable off-the-leash dog walking space will be supported.</i></p> <p>Policy GMC7: Providing designated spaces where dogs can be walked off the leash and i Improving access to the countryside</p> <p>Development proposals that take account of the need to provide green open public amenity space that is designated for off the leash dog walking will be supported, as will those that provide walking routes and enable ongoing access to the wider countryside.</p>	Yes
PM5	Page 38	<p><u>Residential Infill and Backland Development</u></p> <p>6.3 New opening sentence:</p> <p><i>New housing development of a moderate or minor scale is defined in Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy as developments of 10-59 dwellings and up to 9 dwellings respectively.</i> Back land development is defined</p> <p>6.6 The combined, cumulative effect of <i>new development including</i> back land and infill development is that This would not be appropriate in Godmanchester, <i>where care and attention to the scale, design and layout of new housing and its site context must be given.</i></p> <p>Policy GMC13: Residential infill and back land development.</p> <p>All Residential infill and back land development within <i>or adjoining</i> the settlement boundary of</p>	<u>Yes</u>

		<p>Godmanchester should Sites within reasonable walking distance of the Town's historic centre will be favourably considered. Development should be of minor or moderate scale, or represent infilling or back land development. Infilling or back land development It should reinforce the uniformity of the character of the existing streetscene by reflecting the scale, mass, semi-rural nature of the Town, with its historic core.</p>	
PM6	Pages 39 to 41	<p>Improving Parking in the Town</p> <p>6.17 – delete the existing text and insert:</p> <p><i>New residential development in Godmanchester should include parking provision which is based on a careful assessment of the site's location and the character of the surrounding area, as well as the nature and form of the proposed development, and the size of the dwellings (number of bedrooms). Regard should be had for guidance on parking in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2017, when residential or other development proposals are put forward.</i></p> <p>Policy GMC14: For new residential development, plans should <i>not exacerbate</i> seek to reduce the any pressure on 'on street' parking and seek to improve parking issues through the greater provision of <i>should provide numbers of off-street parking spaces appropriate to the site's location and the character of the proposal. The number of spaces should reflect the mix, size and type of housing.</i></p> <p>For new residential developments (Use Class 3)4 off street car parking spaces.</p> <p>Parking spaces can take the form Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>(Modify footnote 44 to refer to Huntingdonshire District Council Design Guide 2017)</p>	Yes
PM7	Page 42	<p>Policy GMC15: Improving and Enhancing the Town</p> <p>Second line:</p> <p>...and to enhance its historic character. Where new provision is made, it should be in keeping</p>	Yes

		with the setting <i>its surroundings</i>	
PM8	Page 51	<p>Policy GMC21: Growing new capacity for small scale businesses in the Town</p> <p>Modify the second bullet of the second sentence to read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of new buildings or conversion of existing buildings within <i>or adjoining</i> the Settlement Boundary of the Town 	Yes
PM9	Pages 52 and 53	<p>8 Getting Around</p> <p>8.1 Godmanchester is a growing community.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve<i>manage</i> parking <i>better</i> in the Town. <p>8.2 With the <i>anticipated improvements to the A14 road in Huntingdonshire and the</i> levels of growth planned across<i>for</i> Godmanchester it will be important that developments each contributes..... a coherent and cohesive network <i>transport system incorporating more sustainable transport measures and enabling</i> which allows people to get around more easily and safely, we are thereby protecting <i>should also be able to protect</i> the historic and natural environment.</p> <p><i>8.2 a Cambridge County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2015 and the Huntingdon and Godmanchester Market Town Transport Strategy seek to widen the choices available for environmentally sustainable transport, and manage the demand for transport, particularly private car use. All planning applications for development which would generate significant amounts of movement should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment, identifying the specific impacts of their proposals on the local transport network, and the measures needed to mitigate any adverse impacts. Measures should maximise opportunities for more sustainable transport eg. promoting pedestrian and cycling, and improving public transport services. Travel Plans should be provided for all developments which would generate significant new movements.</i></p> <p>.....</p>	Yes

		<p>8.4 Modify second sentence: The lack of public transport services are not comparable to larger towns and cities in terms of frequency and coverage, so that many people are primarily cars users against 5% are by bus or train).on the road network. ... putting, potentially, a significant strain on the road network. The transport assessment and travel plan accompanying the planning permission (ref: 1200685OUT) are required to address this matter.</p> <p>Policy GMC22: Reducing traffic and congestion on Godmanchester's roads</p> <p>Development proposals accompany any planning application and traffic calming, improvements to public transport, cycling and walking routes, vehicle and cycle parking and other measures delivered which mitigate the impact of development, particularly through the 'historic core'. Where appropriate, a Travel Plan will be required, setting out how any adverse effects will be overcome, including through the promotion of use of more sustainable travel modes.</p>	
PM10	Page 54	<p>Make the Town Safer for Cyclists</p> <p>8.13, Add two new sentences to introduce this paragraph:</p> <p>Godmanchester is a small town within 3 miles of the centre of Huntingdon, and within the relatively flat countryside of Cambridgeshire. It represents a highly suitable environment for cycling for people living and working locally, and for tourists and visitors.</p>	Yes
PM11	Page 68	<p>Map 5 – Historic Core</p> <p>Modify the map so that it shows Post Street and Earning Street Conservation Area boundaries, and the boundary of the Scheduled Monument east of the parish church.</p>	Yes
PM12	Page 69	<p>Appendix 1 – Green Spaces</p> <p>Local Green Spaces</p> <p>Delete the following:</p> <p>4. The Godmanchester Nature Reserve at Cow Lane</p>	Yes

		<p>5. The Cow Lane gravel pits</p> <p>6. The Recreation Ground including the green spaces leading up to the lock</p> <p>7. Queen's Walk</p> <p>9. The green space adjacent to the Cricket Pitch</p> <p>10. The land between the school, the Church ...</p> <p>12. The green ...Jarwood Walk and up to Silver Street ...</p> <p>19. The proposed Neolithic Country Park</p> <p>Godmanchester's Other Green Spaces</p> <p>Modify the first sentence to read:</p> <p>These are not defined within the NPPF but those listed here are <i>mostly</i> small scale are within the settlement boundary <i>the Parish</i> and are important</p> <p>Add to the list of sites: Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12 and 19.</p>	
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**Public
Key Decision - Yes ***

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title:	Approval of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the new “Disposal of Small Land Parcels Policy”, and• relevant updates to the Disposals and Acquisitions Policy.
Meeting/Date:	Cabinet – 12 th October 2017
Executive Portfolio:	Executive Member for Strategic Resources
Report by:	Head of Resources
Ward(s) affected:	All

Executive Summary:

Over the past few years the Council has received numerous demands from the public for the sale of small parcels of land. The Council had no Policy in place to deal with these proposals and was relying on a procedure that was open to interpretation. Consequently, customer demand has not been managed, in fact the approach did build a customer expectation that sales would be successful even when this was likely to be to the financial detriment to the Council.

This report recommends to the Council a specific Policy in respect of the Disposal of Small Land Parcels, as is followed at a number of other local authorities. This approach will allow the Council to effectively manage customer demand in a sustainable way and will aim to ensure that the Council achieves Best Value in the sale of such assets.

The Cabinet is

RECOMMENDED

1. To approve the “Disposals of Small Land Parcels Policy”, along with the respective updates to the Councils “Disposals and Acquisitions of Land & Buildings Policy”.
2. To recommend to the Corporate Governance Committee that it approves all required changes to the Constitution (including the Code of Procurement and Code of Financial Management) to reflect the new “Disposals of Small Land Parcels Policy along with the respective updates to the Councils “Disposals and Acquisitions of Land & Buildings Policy”.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To approve a new “Disposals of Small Land Parcels Policy” and respective updates to the Councils “Disposals and Acquisitions of Land & Buildings Policy”.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council proactively manages both its operational and non-operational estate via a programme of asset disposal and acquisition to ensure that it has the optimum mix of assets to meet its current and medium-term priorities.
- 2.2 With regard to the sale of land, this generally falls into two relatively distinct classes; land that is of substantial size which has previously supported the delivery of services and other land where the size is minimal and is residual because of other property management decisions.

Disposal of Small Land Parcels Policy

- 2.3 The Council receives numerous requests to purchase small land parcels, they are typically small open spaces and grass verges or open ground adjacent to property and in the main are a legacy of when the Council disposed of its housing stock. This has left the Council with around 500 small pieces of land.
- 2.4 Most land parcels are in residential areas and prospective purchasers are usually looking to either increase the size of their existing garden space, create space for further development (e.g. an extension or garage) or to gain access to other land. In addition, there is an increasing public awareness of the Council's holdings in respect of brownfield development sites for self-build which is also exacerbating enquiries.
- 2.5 Historically, there have been a large number of small land enquiries (in excess of 50 over the past two years) but with most being of relatively low value (three sales, averaging £3.5k per sale; with an average size of sale of 0.02 acres). The time involved in each sale is disproportionate to the return achieved.
- 2.6 All such sales are administered by the Commercial Estates Team. Prior to this report coming to Cabinet, there has not been a specific “small land sales” policy. This has resulted in inconsistent customer treatment, customer confusion and at times inconsistent advice being sought from and given to customers, members and officers. Consequently, since January there has been a moratorium on all new small land sales which has given the Team the opportunity to reorganise, manage demand and develop a sustainable Policy that will meet the Councils priorities in respect of its property holdings.

Disposal and Acquisitions Policy

- 2.7 In June 2015 (Min 14), the Cabinet approved a Disposal & Acquisitions Policy, the Policy was updated in September 2016 (Min 45) to include the sharing of sale proceeds with Town and Parish Councils. Further, the Corporate Governance Committee has undertaken an annual review of the Policy which to date has not resulted in any further changes. However, it is necessary to update the Policy as a consequence of Cabinet being asked to approve the Small Land Parcels Policy.

3. THE PROCESS FOR ADMINISTERING SMALL LAND SALES

3.1 In the past, the Council has generally looked favourably on sales of small parcels of land. As there was no Policy, what was followed was a Small Land Sales procedure. This procedure was followed for each enquiry made by a prospective purchaser but this approach had several inherent problems, including that it:

- did not effectively manage demand,
- built an expectation by the prospective purchaser that the sale would proceed,
- introduced not inconsiderable confusion in both advice sought and given to customers.

3.2 In addition.....

- The nature of land often involves people's homes and is therefore very emotive for applicants.
- Local authorities receive many Freedom of Information requests on this matter, typically to identify where disposals have taken place and for what value.
- Valuation of land is contentious. In the past various approaches to "value" have been followed including rules of thumb and on occasions external valuations; all of which can cause tensions between internal parties and between the Council and prospective purchasers.
- Potential purchasers are disappointed when there are reasons for refusal or negotiations have to be reopened when the valuation is not approved.
- Overly optimistic expectations on the level of service by the public.
- Planning no longer support informal enquiries on change of use as this is a drain on their resources.
- When members of staff or Council members are the interested party, this can cause some unnecessary complications as a consequence of mutual interest.

3.3 With regard to the Council requirement to achieve Best Value in the disposal of assets; without having readily available time recording information to hand it has not possible to determine if the Council has achieved this requirement in respect of past sales of small land parcels. However, considering the time that was involved in this activity by the current Interim Commercial Estates Manager between November 2016 and January 2016 it is fair to conclude that the Council had been committing extensive resources to this activity for marginal reward.

3.4 Also, considering the objectives of the MOSAIC programme (i.e. LEAN business processes, commercial ways of working; to name but two), a more simplified and sustainable approach is needed to effectively process the sale of small land parcels.

4. HOW OTHER COUNCILS DEAL WITH SMALL LAND SALES

4.1 A review of a number of local authorities who have published policy guidance on small land sales has revealed the following common themes (further detail is shown in **Appendix 1**):

- Where published, many Councils have a clear and published approach to small land sales with consideration being given only to disposals meeting set criteria.
- There is evidence of good practice to ensure this type of work does not become an unnecessary drain on resources.
- Policies are transparently clear to the public.

4.2 However, what these policies do not attempt to tackle is to effectively manage demand. Currently, HDC's approach and those of other Councils is to effectively give residents a perceived "right" to make unsolicited applications for small pieces of land which builds an expectation with residents that sale applications will be successful. What is needed is a robust approach that manages the expectations of residents and other interested parties and to manage the demand of sale of small parcels of land.

5. PROPOSED "DISPOSAL OF SMALL LAND PARCELS POLICY"

5.1 It is considered that the Disposal of Small Land Parcels Policy detailed at **Appendix 2** should effectively overcome the aforementioned issues and is therefore recommended for approval by Cabinet.

5.2 In summary, the Policy follows the main principles of the Councils Disposals and Acquisitions Policy but in addition:

- Clearly states that sales will not happen on an application basis.
- Nominations can be made for sales, these will be considered on a batch basis.
- Persons and organisations making nominations will be charged for each nomination.
- Batches of small land will be marketed together when it is economically efficient to do so.
- Successful purchasers will meet the Legal (and other ancillary costs) of both vendor and seller.

5.3 In addition, the Policy will introduce new "lower" thresholds for small land sales reflective of the smaller size of such land sales. In addition, the Policy introduces a new category of land sale where land could be transferred to another public body where there will not be any future financial liability falling on the Council.

5.4 The advantage of this Policy is that it will allow the Council to effectively manage such disposals (and associated demands/expectations) as well as help in mitigating the risk of challenge. However, it is proposed that small land sales are exempt from the 10% allocation to Town/Parish Councils.

6. UPDATES TO THE "DISPOSAL AND ACQUISITION OF LAND & BUILDINGS POLICY"

6.1 As a consequence of the recommendation to approve the Disposal of Small Land Parcels Policy, it is necessary to approve changes to the Councils "Disposal and Acquisition of Land & Buildings Policy" (**Appendix 3**). The changes are shown in **Table 1** below and Cabinet is recommended to approve these changes.

Summary of Changes to Disposal and Acquisition of Land & Buildings Policy.			Table 1
Colour code (colour highlight)	Section	Change	Reason for change
Minor change	Definition	Wording changes	General updating.
New wording	Definition	New sentence to confirm sales/acquisitions will be undertaken in the most commercially advantageous means.	Clarification of means of sale/acquisition.
New wording	Disposals Policy	Definition of what is "small land" and who can change this definition.	Clarification of definition.
New wording	Disposals Policy	To include the 'exclusion' from the 10% sharing of sale receipts to Town and Parish Councils of receipts from small land sales.	Clarification of policy.
Minor change	Governance	Wording change	General updating.

7. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 7.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Customers) received the Disposal of Small Land Parcels Policy at the Panel meeting on 6th September 2017.
- 7.2 As the Overview and Scrutiny Panel expressed concern that the report did not reference any need to consult with Ward Members, an amendment has been made in respect of Public Engagement Considerations ".....ward members will be consulted prior to disposal".
- 7.3 Members raised questions regarding the potential for the development of land once they have been sold however they were informed that most of the land won't be developed on although some land may have extensions built on them.

8. KEY IMPACTS

- 8.1 This new Policy will allow for a leaner approach to small land sales. As well as making the administration more straight forward it will effectively manage customer demand and expectations.

9. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN

- 9.1 As the thresholds will be a change to the Constitution, they will have to be considered by Corporate Governance Committee and thereafter approved by Council, so the earliest the new Thresholds will be in operation will be December 2017. However, this will not be detrimental to implementing the Policy immediately because if nominations etc are made it is unlikely that any single or batch sales will be actively marketed until after the aforementioned date.

10. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 10.1 The Policy will support the achievement of the Corporate Plan requirement of “Ensuring we are a customer focused and service led council” by “becoming more business-like and efficient in the way we deliver services”.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 This policy will regulate the way that the Council deals with small land sales. What is proposed follows similar policies which other local authorities already employ and it will enable the decision making process to be uniform and transparent, as set criteria will be used to decide on applications, therefore reducing the risk of possible challenges by unsuccessful applicants.

12. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The approval of the “Disposal of Small Land Parcels Policy” (and the consequential changes to the Disposal and Acquisition of Land & Buildings) will assist the Council in effectively managing customer demand for such small land holdings.
- 12.2 Upon until January 2017, the estimated net gain to the Council following each small land disposal is considered marginal and with limited resources within the Commercial Estates Team their deployment has to be to the most commercial advantageous land and building opportunities.

13. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 13.1 To ensure that Council resources are wholly and effectively committed to meeting Council priorities; thereby having appropriate policies in place to achieve this.

14. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

- **Appendix 1** - Common Themes of Small Land Scale Policies by Other Local Authorities
- **Appendix 2** - Disposal of Small Land Parcels Policy
- **Appendix 3** - Disposal and Acquisition of Land & Buildings Policy

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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APPENDIX 1

Common Themes of Small Land Scale Policies by Other Local Authorities

1	<p>Where published, many have a clear and published approach to land sales.</p> <p>Consideration being given only to disposals where:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. There is a broader community benefit to the disposal e.g. a rationalisation of small parcels of backland open space, either rarely used or often misused. b. There are management/financial issues for the Council e.g. the land is costly to maintain. c. The applicant has extenuating circumstances e.g. there are health grounds in relation to the applicant and/or their family and the sale of the land would improve their quality of life and would not adversely affect the quality of life of others in the neighbourhood – (the applicant will need to provide evidence to support and justify the application to purchase).
2	<p>There is evidence of good practice to ensure this type of work does not become an unnecessary drain on resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Prospective purchasers are given guidance to self- help routes to find out who owns local land e.g. links to HM land Registry b. Applications for sales of land include sections to justify the needs to fulfil the requirements of 1a, b and c above c. Once established that the land in question is in Council ownership then prospective purchasers are asked to pay an estates investigation fee of typically £50 – this covers the cost of enquiries about open space, highways, planning ward councillors etc. At this stage the application may be refused and reasons given d. Subject to c. above prospective purchasers are asked to confirm they will meet legal costs (typically £750) if the matter proceeds and the valuers costs of the council appointed valuer. e. The land is valued independently by an external valuer considering factors disclosed from the estates investigation The Council provides none of its own legal or valuation advice to prospective purchasers, with the cost being recovered from the purchaser. f. The Council is obliged to obtain the best price and if it is observed that there may be more than one interested party then the Council would be obliged to advertise the property for sale on the open market. Costs are recovered from the eventual purchaser.

		<p>g. Some councils cite it is their legal obligation to advertise and publish a prospective sale, with applicants bearing the cost.</p> <p>h. A minimum price threshold to apply to all disposals e.g. £50 per sq. m (this would typically mean a minimum price of circa £5,000 for 100 sq. m)</p>
3	Policies are transparently clear to the public.	<p>a. Some councils openly use auctions or independent websites for all small land sales to demonstrate open market best price is achieved</p> <p>b. There is no legal requirement for a Council to publish a refusal to sell but some publish the reasons e.g. it judges that the personal safety for users of the remainder of nearby open space will be detrimentally affected e.g. where a narrow alleyway is created; or <input type="checkbox"/> it will result in the wholesale loss of, or detract from the visual quality/amenity of the surrounding area. Alternatively, in such cases it may apply covenants on sales to retain the open nature of landscaped areas and/or to require the provision of certain standards of new boundary fencing, walling or delineation; or <input type="checkbox"/> it is considered that there will be detrimental impact of such sales on neighbouring properties not financially involved in, or not benefiting from the sale.</p> <p>c. Land is made available only where it has no strategic value to the council</p> <p>d. Some councils publish their minor disposals as those not exceeding £5,000 and define this in their finance procedure rules</p> <p>e. Councils may also be restrained from disposing of land for a purpose that was not the purpose for which it was acquired under legislative powers and this is particularly relevant for: Corporate Property Strategy Disposals, Acquisitions & Community Asset Transfer Policy e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allotments (in certain specific circumstances) • Open Space and Burial Grounds • Pleasure Grounds <p>f. Restrictive covenants are placed on land sold to restrict use to the value obtained.</p> <p>g. Guidance is clearly given that land sales and the prospect of gaining planning consent are totally separate decisions and one gives no guarantee of the other.</p> <p>h. There is no right of appeal in some councils, although applicants can request a further evaluation if new information comes to light and this may be the only basis of appeal in other council policies. A different office may</p>

		<p>review any appeal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. The Council complaints procedure is used where process is thought not to be followedj. Some councils have a published timescale when they expect to meet response to applications and make decisionsk. Clear public consultation and opportunity for alternative interested parties to bid.
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Huntingdonshire District Council

Disposal of Small Land Parcels

Policy

Date Approved: xx/xx/2017
Review Date: xx/xx/2019
Version 1

Definition

The Councils Disposals and Acquisitions Policy defines the “disposal” of land and property as:

“The means by which it can.... divest and dispose of land and property that it considers are surplus to its service or investments needs.

All sales or acquisitions will be undertaken by the most appropriate commercially advantageous means.”

The Disposal of Small Land Parcels Policy is subsidiary to the Disposals and Acquisitions Policy and defines “small land parcels” as

- “as being less than 0.25 acres (1011 square meters) and not considered suitable for development.”

Property Strategy – Surplus Property

Land and property will only be determined as surplus if it no longer meets corporate and/or investment priorities. Land held as “open space” (or amenity land) is considered as held to support the provision of a Council service.

Risk management

All activity relating to land and property will be undertaken within an environment that minimises risk to both services and the capital, or revenue, investment that has been made. This includes impacts on reputation. There will be appropriate reporting to ensure that parties are aware of the risk that is being faced by any disposal.

Transparency and fairness

This policy provides a framework which is both transparent and consistent and demonstrates fairness in the disposal of property assets.

Value for Money

Value for Money is at the heart of how the Council delivers its services; regardless of whether these are front-line or back-office. In respect of the management of land and property, the Council will ensure that the Council is only holding an optimum balance of assets to meet both its service and investment requirements.

Small Land Sales Policy

- Small Land parcels will be less than 0.25 acres (1,011 square meters) and not considered suitable for development.

- Small Land parcels will only be determined as surplus if the land no longer meets service, corporate and/or investment priorities.
- Land and property will only be disposed when it is concluded that no other use can be made of the asset, within statutory provisions.
- Prior to sale, partners of the Council may be contacted to determine if there is an alternative use for the land and property.
- The Council will also undertake investigations into the legal, planning, financial and other aspects of the land before selling.
- Subject to legislative requirements, the Council will sell any surplus land and property for the best consideration, where this is not possible or where corporate objectives are not being met, appropriate activity will be undertaken to ensure that the Councils maximises any capital receipts.
- Small Land parcels will be disposed of as expeditiously as possible; this will not be via application but via selected open tender that will be advertised on the Councils website.
- Persons wishing to purchase small land parcels can nominate land they wish to be considered for disposal. Such nominated parcels will be:
 - added to the list of sites for consideration,
 - subject to the processes outlined above,
 - if suitable, will be added to a future open tender exercise.
- No matter the means of sale, the purchaser of respective small land parcels will meet all legal (and ancillary costs) of both vendor and seller. However, other than “sale by auction”, the vendor will be charged a fixed fee for the administration of the sale, this is noted in **Table 1** below.
- The sale of small land parcels will be excluded from the provisions of 10% transfer of sale proceeds to Town and Parish Councils.

Public Engagement Considerations

- The Council’s communication team will be consulted to ensure that any disposal of land and buildings is undertaken in a proportionate way. For such small land disposals, consultation with partners may not be applicable or appropriate. However, ward members will be consulted prior to disposal.
- Consideration will be given to the statutory requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Town and County Planning Act 1990

Performance Management

Where receipts exceed £10,000, these will be Capital Receipts and will be accounted for as such, including being mapped against capital receipt targets that will be assessed annually and progress will be reported to the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet as part of the routine budget monitoring cycle.

Performance Management

There will be ongoing monitoring of disposals between the responsible officers and the parties selling or otherwise concerned with the disposal. There will be appropriate reporting to Corporate Management Team where performance is in question.

Overarching Policy

All valuations of land will be undertaken by suitably qualified professionals. VAT and other tax implications will always be considered.

Resources

The resource implications, including Legal, Finance and Procurement will be considered for every disposal or acquisition of land and buildings and both members and officers will be required to comply with the pertinent requirements of both the Code of Procurement and the Code of Financial Management. The financial thresholds for the sale of small land parcels are less than those required of the wider disposals and acquisitions because small land sales are “smaller by their nature”. The thresholds are as shown in **Table 1** below:

Thresholds of the Sale or Transfer of Small Land Parcels		Table 1
All sales and transfers will include the transfer of all associated liabilities.		Minimum Administration Charge (*)
Transfer of Small Land Parcels to Other Public Bodies		
£0 - £10,000	Head of Resources (as Section 151 Officer),	£500
£10,000 - £50,000	Managing Director (as Head of Paid Service) & Head of Resources (as Section 151 Officer),	£1,000
£50,000 - £100,000	Managing Director (as Head of Paid Service) & Head of Resources (as Section 151 Officer), in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Resources.	£1,500
£100,000 - £500,000	Treasury & Capital Management Group.	£2,000
£500,000+	Cabinet.	£3,000
Sale of Small Parcels of Land		
£0 - £10,000	Managing Director (as Head of Paid Service) & Head of Resources (as Section 151 Officer).	£1,000
£10,000 - £100,000	Managing Director (as Head of Paid Service) & Head of Resources (as Section 151 Officer), in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Resources.	£1,500
£100,000 - £500,000	Treasury & Capital Management Group.	£2,000
£500,000+	Cabinet.	£3,000
* This Administration Charge excludes all legal and other ancillary costs. Further it is the minimum charge that any prospective purchaser will pay. If any sale requires additional officer time beyond what would reasonably be expected, the vendor will be required to meet this higher charge.		

The financial thresholds will be reviewed every 2 years.

Governance

The Council will have regard to all statutory and local regulations, including reporting to Corporate Management Team and in line with the Constitution, including the Treasury and Capital Management Group.

All disposal decisions i.e. those to be included in the Small Land Disposal Programme will in reported to the Overview & Scrutiny (Customers and Performance) Panel and Cabinet. However, there will be times where “time will be of the essence” and all such disposals will be reported retrospectively to Panel and Cabinet.

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Huntingdonshire District Council

DISPOSAL AND ACQUISITION OF LAND & BUILDINGS Policy

Date Approved: xx/xx/2017
Review Date: xx/xx/2019
Version 10

Definition

The Council defines the “disposal and acquisition” of land and property as:
“The means by which it can either:

- i. **divest** and dispose of land and property that it considers are surplus to its service or investments needs or
- ii. invest in land and property that will allow the Council **to** benefit from service efficiency or investment opportunities.

All sales or acquisitions will be undertaken by the most appropriate commercially advantageous means.

Risk management

All activity relating to land and property will be undertaken within an environment that minimises risk to both services and the capital, or revenue, investment that is made. This includes impacts on reputation. There will be appropriate reporting to ensure that all parties are aware of the risk that is being faced by any disposals or acquisitions.

Value for Money

Value for Money is at the heart of how the Council delivers its services; regardless of whether these are front-line or back-office. In respect of the management of land and property, the Council will develop an Asset Management Plan that will ensure that the Council is only holding to an optimum balance of assets to meet both its service and investment requirements.

Disposals Policy

- Land and property will only be determined as surplus if it no longer meets corporate and/or investment priorities.
- Land and property will only be disposed when it is concluded that no other use can be made of the asset, within statutory provisions. There are two distinct processes relating to:
 - Medium to large areas of land, their disposal is dependent on public benefit and corporate aims and objectives.
 - Small areas of open space, their disposal is dealt with through the “Disposal of small land parcels policy”. This will be for land that is below 0.25 acres (1,011 square meters). This size definition will only be changed in exceptional circumstances and only with the agreement of the Head of Resources.
- Prior to sale, partners of the Council will be contacted to determine if there is an alternative use for the land and property.
- Subject to legislative requirements, the Council will sell any surplus land and property for the best consideration, where this is not possible or where

corporate objectives are not being met, appropriate activity will be undertaken to ensure that the Councils maximises any capital receipts.

- Surplus land will be disposed of as expeditiously as possible and follow appropriate methods of disposal.
- Where land (**other than small land parcels**) is disposed of within a Parish Council area where there is no likelihood of any consequential development funding (e.g. Community Infrastructure Levy or S.106) returning to the Parish Council following disposal, that the Parish Council receives 10% of any capital receipt received by the Council, subject to agreement by Cabinet.

Public Engagement Considerations

- The Council's communication team will be consulted to ensure that any disposal of land and buildings is undertaken in a proportionate way.
- Consideration will be given to the statutory requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Town and County Planning Act 1990

Performance Management

Capital Receipts targets will be assessed annually and progress will be reported to the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet as part of the routine budget monitoring cycle.

Acquisitions Policy

- All acquisitions of land and property are in respect of freehold, leasehold or licence.
- Land and property will only be acquired where it benefits service delivery and/or maximises investment opportunities and/or future strategic development, subject to meeting strict criteria; such as, need for asset to meet service delivery levels, option appraisal, on-going revenue costs are appropriately budgeted for, tenure is determined and VAT considerations (especially Opt to Tax).

Powers to Acquire Land and Buildings

The acquisition of land and buildings is enshrined within the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 and to invest within the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003.

Performance Management

There will be ongoing monitoring of acquisitions between the responsible officers and the parties selling or otherwise concerned with the acquisition. There will be appropriate reporting to Corporate Management Team where performance is in question.

Overarching Policy

All valuations of land will be undertaken by suitably qualified professionals. VAT implications will always be considered.

Resources

The resource implications, including Legal, Finance and Procurement will be considered for every disposal or acquisition of land and buildings and the both members and officers will be required to comply with the pertinent requirements of both the Code of Procurement and the Code of Financial Management. The financial thresholds for both disposals and acquisitions are as follows:

£0 - £500,000	Managing Director (as Head of Paid Service) & Head of Resources (as Section 151 Officer), following consultation with Executive Councillor for Resources
£500,000 to £2,000,000	Treasury and Capital Management Group
£2,000,000 +	Cabinet

The thresholds in respect of the Sale or Transfer of Small Land Parcels are defined within the “Disposal of Small Land Parcels Policy

The financial thresholds to be reviewed in 24 months following approval.

Governance

The Council will have regard to all statutory and local regulations, including reporting to Corporate Management Team and in line with the Constitution, including the Treasury and Capital Management Group.

All disposal and acquisition decisions will be retrospectively reported to the Overview & Scrutiny (Customers and Performance) Panel.

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Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Integrated Performance Report, 2017/18 Quarter 1

Meeting/Date: Overview and Scrutiny (Performance and Customers)
Panel, 6 September 2017
Cabinet, 11 October 2017

Executive Portfolio: Councillor Jonathan Gray, Executive Councillor for Strategic Resources
Councillor Stephen Cawley, Executive Councillor for Transformation and Customers

Report by: Corporate Team Manager and Head of Resources

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to brief Members on progress against the Key Actions and Corporate Indicators listed in the Council's Corporate Plan for 2016-18 for the period 1 April 2017 to 30 June 2017. The report also incorporates progress reporting for current projects being undertaken and Financial Performance Monitoring Suite information at the end of June.

An update on the Commercial Investment Strategy includes details of investments to date and the level of returns these are expected to generate, with information on potential investment opportunities reviewed in quarter 1 attached at Appendix F.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet is invited to consider and comment on progress made against Key Activities and Corporate Indicators in the Corporate Plan and current projects, as summarised in Appendix A and detailed in Appendices B and C.

The Cabinet is also invited to consider and comment on the Council's financial performance at the end of June, as detailed in Appendices D and E, and the register of reviews of Commercial Investment Strategy propositions at Appendix F.

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present performance management information on the Council's Corporate Plan for 2016-18 and updates on project delivery and financial performance.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2016-18 was refreshed for 2017/18 in March 2017 and sets out what the Council aims to achieve in addition to its core statutory services. The information in the summary at Appendix A relates to Key Actions and Corporate Indicators listed for 2017/18 and the performance report at Appendix B details those with a 'Red' status at Quarter 1.
- 2.2 As recommended by the Project Management Select Committee, updates for projects with a 'Red' status are included at Appendix C. There are currently 27 open, pending approval or pending closure projects and six closed projects logged on the SharePoint site across all programmes. This report covers all of these projects, including all Capital Projects.
- 2.3 This report also incorporates financial performance to the end of June. Performance is summarised in sections 4-6 below and details are listed in the Financial Performance Monitoring Suite at Appendix D. A review of the position of Zero Based Budgeting (ZBB) savings to date has been carried out and a RAG (Red, Amber or Green) rating for each item is listed in the table at Appendix E. Commercial investment propositions reviewed are at Appendix F.

3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- 3.1 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny (Performance and Customers) Panel have an important role in the Council's Performance Management Framework and a process of regular review of performance data has been established. The focus is on the strategic priorities and associated objectives to enable Scrutiny to maintain a strategic overview. Their comments on performance in Quarter 1 will be circulated to Cabinet following their meeting on 6 September.
- 3.2 Progress against Corporate Plan objectives is reported quarterly. The report at Appendix B includes details of all Key Actions and Corporate Indicators which had a 'Red' status at the end of Quarter 1. Appendix C provides information about projects with a 'Red' status, including the purpose of the project and comments from the Programme Office as to the current status of each project's SharePoint site as part of the new governance arrangements.
- 3.3 Performance Indicator data has been collected in accordance with standardised procedures. Targets for Corporate Indicators and target dates for Key Actions have been set by the relevant Head of Service after discussion with the appropriate Portfolio Holder.
- 3.4 The following table summarises Quarter 1 progress in delivering Key Actions for 2017/18:

Status of Key Actions	Number	Percentage
Green (on track)	37	88%
Amber (within acceptable variance)	4	10%
Red (behind schedule)	1	2%
Awaiting progress update	0	0%
Not applicable	1	n/a

Nearly 90% of the Key Actions were on track at the end of Quarter 1.

Only one of the Key Actions had a Red status indicating that it was behind schedule. This was the action to maintain clean open spaces, where nearly a third of work was not to standard. This work is subject to seasonal variation but this performance was uncharacteristically low. Details of the problems encountered and actions taken to resolve these are listed at 3.5 below.

3.5 Quarter 1 results for 2017/18 Corporate Indicators are shown in the following table:

Corporate Indicator results	Number	Percentage
Green (achieved)	27	57%
Amber (within acceptable variance)	11	23%
Red (below acceptable variance)	9	19%
Awaiting progress update	0	0%
Not applicable (annual/data unavailable)	3	n/a

Excluding the indicators with no results available, this shows that the Council achieved the majority of its targets at the end of Quarter 1. Targets were missed by more than acceptable levels of variance for nine indicators. Details of these Red indicators are listed below.

The percentage of sampled areas which were clean or predominantly clean of litter, detritus, graffiti, flyposting or weed accumulations was uncharacteristically low in the quarter at 68.5%. 349 inspections have been undertaken and details of passed inspections for each of these categories are shown below:

Category:	April	May	June
Weeds	63%	34%	30%
Litter	88%	100%	96%
Detritus	63%	66%	74%
Graffiti	96%	100%	100%

The overall performance has been adversely impacted by poor weed control performance by the contractor which is now under close management and corrective deep cleansing action has been implemented. This will be in-sourced next year to resolve these issues fully. Detritus has also been an issue, due to lack of trained operatives to deploy heavy machinery. However, alternative approaches helped to improve performance during Q1 and the issue has been corrected so future performance will show an improvement with heavy machinery deployed.

The percentage of grounds maintenance works inspected which pass the Councils agreed service specification was also below target at 71.2%. 349 inspections were completed over the quarter and the percentage of inspections passed each month is shown below:

Performance:	April	May	June
Overall Grounds Maintenance	68%	80%	89%

April's performance was down on target at 68% due to initial grass cutting being out of specification. This is not unusual due to the length of the grass before cutting and the damp mornings. The teams worked hard during this month to get things into specification and have subsequently delivered high standards.

The average time between date of referral of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) to practical completion for minor jobs up to £10,000 was well below target at 44.7 weeks, with the Home Improvement Agency shared service not performing as well as is expected. A new experienced manager is in post at the HIA and it is expected that performance will improve. The introduction of a contractors' framework is due to be implemented and is expected to increase the number of contractors available and therefore the speed with which DFGs are completed, although this may not show significant improvements until Q4. The pressure on the HDC budget has also resulted in an increased time for approval of grant applications.

The number of visitors to leisure centres is below target and down on the level recorded for Q1 last year. A significant reduction in use by schools (c.20,000 fewer visits in the year to date) accounts for nearly half of the reduction/shortfall against target as schools are cutting budgets. Impressions fitness activities at some sites are showing improvements but fitness class

numbers are falling still across the board. A review of class structures and instructor pay is underway.

Following new waste collection rounds being implemented on 29 February, the number of missed bins increased as the collection crews were getting used to their new rounds. A lot of work has taken place to assist the crews in locating properties and ensuring further missed collections don't happen. With this additional support for the collection crews, and the crews becoming more familiar with their rounds, further missed bins will decrease. The table below shows how performance varied from April to June, with more than twice as many bins missed during April compared to May and June. Although the volume of bins missed was far higher than usual, more than 99.7% of bins were collected as scheduled in each of these months.

Month:	Total missed bins	Missed bins per 1,000 household collections	Percentage missed
April	1,213	2.7	0.27%
May	467	0.9	0.09%
June	599	1.2	0.12%

The number of missed bins also had a significant impact on dealing with complaints on time. The Council dealt with more than five times the number of complaints received in Q1 2016/17 and the majority of these related to missed bin collections. The high volume of complaints meant many were not resolved within 20 working days. While complaints have fallen and future performance should return to normal, it is highly unlikely that 2017/18 performance will recover by the end of the year.

The percentage of calls answered by the Call Centre was also affected by the new waste collection rounds and the volume of calls this generated, as well as the impact of the unplanned General Election which resulted in over 1,600 additional elections calls. Both of these call types are time consuming to resolve and put service levels under pressure. In spite of this, customer satisfaction remained high.

The Council's financial performance in achieving planned net budget reductions was also rated Red due to an overall forecast overspend of £0.4m, as stated in section 4.1 below. However, the overall position does include savings made as planned where Zero Based Budget (ZBB) and Line by Line Review savings have been achieved. Detailed explanations of the Council's revenue and capital budget overspends can be found at Appendix D.

3.6 The status of corporate projects at the end of June is shown in the following table:

Corporate project status	Number	Percentage
Green (progress on track)	11	33%
Amber (progress behind schedule, project is recoverable)	10	30%
Red (significantly behind schedule, serious risks/issues)	5	15%
Pending closure	1	3%
Closed (completed)	6	18%

Six projects have recently been completed with close-down reports received by the Project Management Governance Board, with another project currently in the close-down stage. Business cases for a further three projects have not yet been approved by the Board.

Of the projects currently in the delivery stage, five were Red at the end of Quarter 1 as they were either significantly behind schedule, had serious risks or issues identified or had a lack of governance documentation. All five had previously been rated as Red at the end of March. Details of all Red projects can be found in Appendix C.

4. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

4.1 Attached at **Appendix D** is the Quarter 1 Financial Performance Monitoring Suite (FPMS), which provides details on:

- **Revenue and Reserves 2017/18** – the approved Budget is £17.2m and the forecast is £17.6m which is an overspend of £0.4m.
- **Capital Programme 2017/18** – the approved Budget is £9.3m plus the re-phasing of £3.1m giving a revised total Capital Programme of £12.4m. The forecast is £12.8m giving an overspend of £0.36m which is being funded from additional grants and contributions.

4.2 ZBB Savings Progress

As part of the budget setting process for 2017/18, £1.9m of ZBB and Line by Line Review savings were approved. A review of the position of these savings for the year has been carried out and a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating given.

Appendix E shows the RAG status for all individual projects and these are summarised in the following table:

	ZBB		Line by Line	
	Achievement of savings	Achievement of savings	Achievement of savings	Achievement of savings
	£000	%	£000	%
Red	3	0	57	8
Amber	418	50	351	50
Green	414	50	292	42
Total	835	100	700	100

Red – savings not achieved

Amber – savings have not been fully achieved yet at this time

Green – savings have been achieved or will be achieved in year

4.3 Risks - Homelessness

Homelessness continues to be an issue for the Council and its customers. A number of actions are in hand to try to deal with this, from short term tactical solutions through to longer term strategic planning. Examples of this include:

1. Accelerating occupation of properties by homeless clients by using 'direct lets' outside of the normal bidding/placement cycle – placing them quickly into accommodation.
2. Working to maintain current levels of Temporary Accommodation in the District at a time when providers are reviewing their business models. Specific discussions are being held with Metropolitan Housing Association regarding the ongoing use of Coneygear Court. HDC is also exploring opportunities with other Housing Associations to bring more Temporary Accommodation into the available stock.
3. The Council is also looking for development opportunities directly on its own land holdings, and this is a key part of any asset disposal consideration.
4. Robustly challenging developers to ensure they deliver the maximum amount of affordable housing that is viable on sites.
5. The recent approval of the Council's Housing Strategy containing ambitious plans and actions to increase the supply of an appropriate housing mix into the District.

The Council is also part of a £750k Trailblazer project across Cambridgeshire. The project has four broad areas and works across the public sector. It will:

1. Improve the intervention and management of potential homelessness cases by joining together processes across the public sector to offer high-quality intervention activities earlier.
2. Work in the private rented sector to offer a 'rent solution' service to work alongside private landlords to reduce the amount of tenancies that are terminated.
3. Provide advice and action within the private landlord sector to increase the number of low cost tenancies that are available.
4. Develop, with a range of partners, improved support toolkits such as online budget advice or tenancy related advice and information.

These actions are tackling an issue that is affecting the Country as a whole. The continued pressures of rented properties becoming less affordable, welfare reform and low levels of supply of new affordable rented homes are all long term strategic factors the Council will continue to deal with.

5. UPDATE ON THE COMMERCIAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

5.1 The Commercial Investment Strategy (CIS) was approved by Cabinet in September 2015 and the CIS Business Plan in December 2015. The implementation of the CIS is seen as a key means by which the Council can generate income to assist it in meeting the forecast gap in the revenue budget, by 2021/22 it will have in part contributed in reducing this to £1.2m.

5.2 At the end of Quarter 1, the financial projections for the CIS are:

Budget Heading	Budget (£'000)	Forecast Outturn (£'000)	Variance (£'000)
CCLA Property Fund	(165)	(165)	0
Property Rental Income	(5038)	(4465)	573
Management Charge	144	108	(36)
MRP	1896	1422	(474)
Total	(3163)	(3100)	63

5.3 Investments

Between April 2017 and June 2017, 14 properties have been investigated as potential CIS investment opportunities. The Council bid on three properties, but were unsuccessful due to a highly competitive market and shortage of quality investments on the market in the first quarter. A summary is included in Appendix F.

Returns from the CCLA property fund have remained at the 2016/17 level (circa 4.5%). There will be an increase in return this year, because our dividend will also include our acquisition of shares in Q4 of 2016/17. Other investment vehicles such as bank deposits and money market funds interest rates continue to be low.

To date all of the Council's investments have been funded from the earmarked reserves and no new borrowing has been required.

6. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANELS

6.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Customers) received the Integrated Performance Report for Quarter 1 2017/18 at its meeting on 6th September 2017.

6.2 For the second quarter in a row, concern was expressed at the amount of time it takes the Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency to complete minor Disabled Facilities Grant work.

It was noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Communities and Environment) would scrutinise this in greater detail at a future Panel meeting.

- 6.3 The Panel expressed concern that the Council had not achieved the target of delivering bins within 9 to 10 working days and the revelation that there is currently a backlog of 1,000 bins to be delivered. Members were informed that the priority was the waste round reconfiguration but that there is now an action plan in place in order to deliver the bins.
- 6.4 In regards to the Waste Round Reconfiguration, the Panel noted the issue of missed bin collections. Members were informed that currently 0.08% of bins are being missed and that the Corporate Team had been working with Operations to handle missed bin complaints.
- 6.5 In addition, Members raised questions on the following topics: the Council's ability to measure weeds, litter, detritus and graffiti; recycling; the budget for Transformation; the latest developments regarding the 3G Pitch at St Neots; the budget for Operations; the Council's policy on empty homes; the money the Council has invested in the CCLA Property Fund and why One Leisure income is increasing when visitor numbers are falling. All these questions were either answered at the meeting or submitted to the relevant Head of Service for a response.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Cabinet is invited to consider and comment on progress made against Key Activities and Corporate Indicators in the Corporate Plan and current projects, as summarised in Appendix A and detailed in Appendices B and C.
- 7.2 The Cabinet is also invited to consider and comment on financial performance at the end of June, as detailed in Appendices D and E, and the register of reviews of Commercial Investment Strategy propositions at Appendix F.

8. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix A - Performance Summary, Quarter 1, 2017/18
Appendix B – Corporate Plan Performance Report ('Red' status), Quarter 1 2017/18
Appendix C – Project Performance ('Red' status), June 2017
Appendix D – Financial Performance Monitoring Suite, June 2017
Appendix E – ZBB Savings Agreed 2017/18 Budget Setting – RAG Status, June 2017
Appendix F – Register of reviews of CIS investment propositions 2017/18

CONTACT OFFICERS

Corporate Plan Performance Monitoring (Appendices A and B)

Daniel Buckridge, Policy, Performance & Transformation Manager (Scrutiny) ☎ (01480) 388065

Project Performance (Appendix C)

Adrian Dobbyne, Corporate Team Manager ☎ (01480) 388100

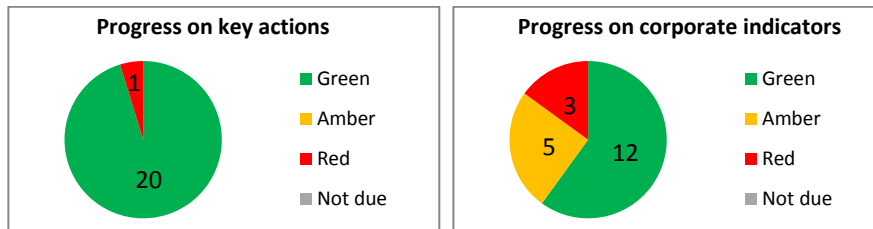
Financial Performance (Appendices D, E and F)

Adrian Forth, Finance Manager ☎ (01480) 388605

Performance Summary Quarter 1, 2017/18

Enabling communities

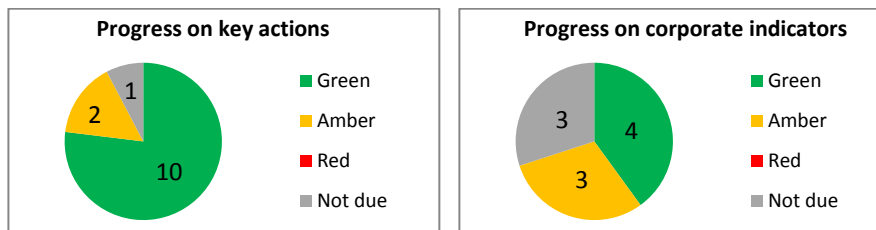
We want to make Huntingdonshire a better place to live, to improve health and well-being and for communities to get involved with local decision making



Highlights include 62% of household waste being diverted from landfill via green waste and recycling collections.

Delivering sustainable growth

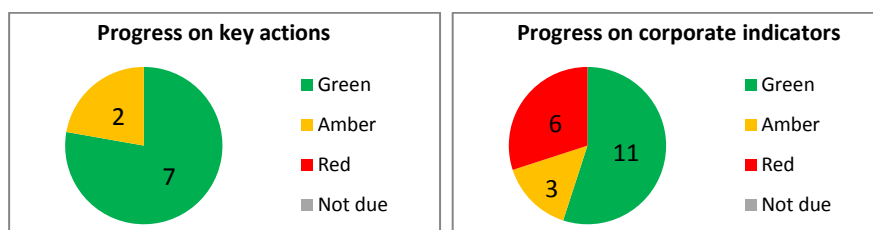
We want to make Huntingdonshire a better place to work and invest and we want to deliver new and appropriate housing



Highlights include the adoption of a new Housing Strategy by Cabinet in June 2017.

Becoming a more efficient and effective council

We want to continue to deliver value for money services



Highlights include the Council's website being rated by SOCITM as one of the top district council websites, scoring 4 out of 4 stars through assessment of a number of online services from the customer's perspective.

CORPORATE PLAN – PERFORMANCE REPORT

Appendix B

STRATEGIC THEME – ENABLING COMMUNITIES

Period April to June 2017

Summary of progress for Key Actions

G	Progress is on track	A	Progress is within acceptable variance	R	Progress is behind schedule	?	Awaiting progress update	n/a	Not applicable to state progress
	20		0		1		0		0

Target dates do not necessarily reflect the final completion date. The date given may reflect the next milestone to be reached.

Summary of progress for Corporate Indicators

G	Performance is on track	A	Performance is within acceptable variance	R	Performance is below acceptable variance	?	Awaiting performance update	n/a	Not applicable to assess performance
	12		5		3		0		0

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WE WANT TO: Create, protect and enhance our safe and clean built and green environment

Status	Key Actions for 2017/18	Target date	Portfolio Holder	Head of Service	Progress Update to be reported each Quarter
R	KA 5. Maintain clean open spaces to DEFRA Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse, compliant with the Environmental Protection Act	Ongoing	Cllr J White	Neil Sloper	349 inspections have been completed from April 2017 to June 2017, of which 68.4% of work was to standard. Although this indicator is impacted by seasonal variation, performance in this quarter is uncharacteristically low. This was due to poor weed control performance by our contractor and a lack of trained staff to deploy heavy machinery to clear detritus. These issues were temporary and corrective actions have been implemented.

Corporate Performance and Contextual Indicators

Key to status

G	Performance is on track	A	Performance is within acceptable variance	R	Performance is below acceptable variance	?	Awaiting performance update	n/a	Not applicable to assess performance
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Performance Indicator	Full Year 2016/17 Performance	Q1 2016/17 Performance	Q1 2017/18 Target	Q1 2017/18 Performance	Q1 2017/18 Status	Annual 2017/18 Target	Forecast Outturn 2017/18 Performance	Predicted Outturn 2017/18 Status
PI 1. Percentage of sampled areas which are clean or predominantly clean of litter, detritus, graffiti, flyposting or weed accumulations Aim to maximise	86.89%	82.09%	80%	68.48%	R	80%	80%	G
Comments: (Operations) Although this indicator is impacted by seasonal variation, performance in this quarter is uncharacteristically low. This was due to poor weed control performance by our contractor and a lack of trained staff to deploy heavy machinery to clear detritus. These issues were temporary and corrective actions have been implemented. Weed control services will be in-sourced next year to resolve weed control issues fully.								
PI 8. Average time between date of referral of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) to practical completion for minor jobs up to £10,000 Aim to minimise	35.8 weeks	32.1 weeks	28 weeks	44.7 weeks	R	28 weeks	35 weeks	R
Comments: (Development) The Home Improvement Agency shared service is not performing as well as is expected. However, a new experienced manager is in post at the HIA and it is expected that performance will improve. Additionally, the introduction of a contractors' framework has been delayed but is still due to be implemented and is expected to increase the number of contractors who are available and therefore the speed with which DFGs are completed, although this may not show significant improvements until Q4. The pressure on the HDC budget has also resulted in an increased time for approval of grant applications.								
PI 12. Number of visits to One Leisure – leisure centres Aim to maximise	2,333,072	597,426	604,344	555,710	R	2,324,400	2,150,000	R

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STRATEGIC THEME – DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Period April to June 2017

Summary of progress for Key Actions

G	Progress is on track	A	Progress is within acceptable variance	R	Progress is behind schedule	?	Awaiting progress update	n/a	Not applicable to state progress
	10		2		0		0		1

Target dates do not necessarily reflect the final completion date. The date given may reflect the next milestone to be reached.

Summary of progress for Corporate Indicators

G	Performance is on track	A	Performance is within acceptable variance	R	Performance is below acceptable variance	?	Awaiting performance update	n/a	Not applicable to assess performance
	4		3		0		0		3

STRATEGIC THEME – BECOMING A MORE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE COUNCIL

Period April to June 2017

Summary of progress for Key Actions

G	Progress is on track	A	Progress is within acceptable variance	R	Progress is behind schedule	?	Awaiting progress update	n/a	Not applicable to state progress
7		2		0		0		0	

Target dates do not necessarily reflect the final completion date. The date given may reflect the next milestone to be reached.

Summary of progress for Corporate Indicators

G	Performance is on track	A	Performance is within acceptable variance	R	Performance is below acceptable variance	?	Awaiting performance update	n/a	Not applicable to assess performance
11		3		6		0		0	

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Corporate Performance and Contextual Indicators

Key to status

G	Performance is on track	A	Performance is within acceptable variance	R	Performance is below acceptable variance	?	Awaiting performance update	n/a	Not applicable to assess performance
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Performance Indicator	Full Year 2016/17 Performance	Q1 2016/17 Performance	Q1 2017/18 Target	Q1 2017/18 Performance	Q1 2017/18 Status	Annual 2017/18 Target	Forecast Outturn 2017/18 Performance	Predicted Outturn 2017/18 Status
PI 23. Percentage of grounds maintenance works inspected which pass the Councils agreed service specification Aim to minimise	93.50%	86.46%	82%	71.22%	R	82%	82%	G
Comments: (Operations) Although this indicator is impacted by seasonal variation, performance in this quarter is uncharacteristically low. April's performance was down at 68% due to initial grass cutting being out of specification. This is not unusual due to the length of the grass before cutting and the damp mornings. The teams worked hard during this month to get things into specification and have subsequently delivered high standards.								

Performance Indicator	Full Year 2016/17 Performance	Q1 2016/17 Performance	Q1 2017/18 Target	Q1 2017/18 Performance	Q1 2017/18 Status	Annual 2017/18 Target	Forecast Outturn 2017/18 Performance	Predicted Outturn 2017/18 Status
PI 24. Number of missed bins per 1,000 household collections Aim to minimise	N/A	N/A	TBC	1.53	R	TBC	TBC	G
Comments: (Operations) This is a new indicator for 2017/18 and further work on setting an appropriate target is required. The new waste collection rounds were implemented on 29 February and the number of missed bins increased as the collection crews were getting used to their new rounds. A lot of work has taken place to assist the crews in locating properties and ensuring further missed collections don't happen. With this additional support for the collection crews, and crews becoming more familiar with their rounds, further missed bins will decrease. Performance for the quarter is 'Red' but did improve during the quarter and should continue to improve.								
PI 34. Planned net budget reductions achieved Aim to maximise	£1.9m	£0.283m	£0.475m	£0	R	£1.5m	£0	R
Comments: (Resources) The planned net budget reductions are not currently being achieved as Quarter 1 Financial Performance monitoring shows an overall forecast overspend of £0.4m. However, the overall position includes some savings made as planned where Zero Based Budget and Line by Line Review saving items have been achieved. Detailed explanations of the Council's forecast revenue and capital budget overspends can be found at Appendix D.								
PI 38a. Percentage of stage 1 complaints resolved within time Aim to maximise	78%	88%	98%	26%	R	98%	50%	R
Comments: (Corporate Team) Out of 280 complaints received in Q1, just 74 were responded to within 20 days. None of the three complaints relating to Development and just 67 out of 270 complaints relating to Operations services were dealt with on time. The majority of the Operations complaints related to missed bin collections. Due to the extremely large volume in Q1, it is highly unlikely that 2017/18 performance will recover by the end of the year.								
PI 38b. Percentage of stage 2 complaints resolved within time Aim to maximise	89%	0%	98%	73%	R	98%	95%	A
Comments: (Corporate Team) Eleven stage 2 complaints were received and three did not receive a response within 20 working days. Two of these related to missed bin collections and the other was a complex planning case requiring a site visit to progress the complaint.								
PI 40. Percentage of calls to Call Centre answered Aim to maximise	n/a	n/a	90%	65%	R	90%	85%	A
Comments: (Customer Services) We had an extremely busy quarter with the unplanned General Election and operations bin round changes generating a large number of additional calls and emails over a prolonged period. We had over 1,600 additional Elections calls alone. Operations and Elections call types are time consuming to resolve and put our service level under pressure. In spite of this customer satisfaction remains high (see PI 36).								

Appendix C – Project Performance

<p>Red = Project is significantly behind schedule, serious risks/issues have been identified or there is a lack of governance documentation</p>	<p>Amber = Progress is behind schedule, some risks/issues have been identified or some documentation is missing. The project may be recoverable</p>	<p>Green = Progress is on track with no impact to delivery</p>	<p>Pending Closure = In close-down stage</p>	<p>Pending Approval = Business Case to be approved</p>	<p>Closed = Project is closed. Closedown report approved by Project Board and Project Management Governance Board.</p>
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Projects relating to Huntingdonshire District Council services/facilities only:

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Title and purpose of project	Programme	PM	Target End Date	Expected End Date	Programme Office comments	RAG Status	Latest Update Date
<p>Phoenix Industrial Unit Roof Replace industrial roofs to address H & S and fulfil Council obligations.</p>	Capital 2015/16	Golby, Jackie (Resources)	30/11/17	30/06/17	<p>July 2017 - building surveyors were appointed and initial investigations and project costs received showing anticipated costs over capital budget for this project.</p> <p>Tender process has now completed and revealed a wide range of pricing (£190k to £485k) and approach to the roof problems. Tenders were issued in conjunction with other roof projects at Clifton Road and Levellers Lane to ensure any value is engineered through multiple projects/single tender approach.</p> <p>HDC appointed building surveyors are undertaking further evaluation of the tenders to make a recommendation early August. The forecast spend has been increased to £205k + £4k fees.</p> <p>Anticipated work order to be placed in time for early Autumn works.</p>	Red	Within last month
<p>Leisure Invest to Save Opportunities Explore further opportunities for invest to save schemes including the conversion of synthetic pitch at St Neots.</p>	Facing the Future	Clarke, Jon (Leisure)	30/09/15	31/03/17	<p>There are still ongoing legal issues regarding the lease at St Neots which have prevented any progress from occurring. Project site to be updated.</p>	Red	Over 6 months ago

Red = Project is significantly behind schedule, serious risks/issues have been identified or there is a lack of governance documentation	Amber = Progress is behind schedule, some risks/issues have been identified or some documentation is missing. The project may be recoverable	Green = Progress is on track with no impact to delivery	Pending Closure = In close-down stage	Pending Approval = Business Case to be approved	Closed = Project is closed. Closedown report approved by Project Board and Project Management Governance Board.
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Title and purpose of project	Programme	PM	Target End Date	Expected End Date	Programme Office comments	RAG Status	Latest Update Date
In Cab Systems The project will replace the existing manual process for logging waste collection issues and involve delivery of that information in a timely manner from the refuse collection vehicle to the call centre. This will involve the purchase of a new bespoke system including hardware devices for the refuse collection vehicles.	Capital 2016/17	Connor, Sharon (Operations)	31/01/17	31/10/17	Project has a RED status due to significant delay arriving from the decision to take a wider corporate approach and consider provision as part of the existing 3C Shared Service. User requirements for operations back office and in-cab technology are being established by 3C IT across South Cambridgeshire, Cambridge City and HDC. Workshops are completed. HDC awaiting sign off of spec by South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City.	Red	Within last month

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Joint projects with Cambridge City Council and/or South Cambridgeshire District Council:

Implementation of Financial Management System To introduce a new Financial Management System across the council.	3C Shared Services	Buckell, Andrew (3C ICT)	31/05/17	31/10/17	The project status is red due to the Accounts Receivable module requiring further development by the supplier. The supplier has withdrawn a consultant until early August and the interface build and B-ETL build are behind schedule.	Red	Within last month
Door Access Card Reader Replacement The change to Proximity Card reader from Magnetic Readers at CCC and configure or replace Card Readers at SCDC and HDC. This will improve the security at CCC and provide one card access solution for the three council sites.	3C Shared Services	Solanki, Raj (3C ICT)	31/07/16	16/12/16	This is showing as red due to the length of time (over 18 months) it has taken to procure and then implement. The delays have come from both the supplier and the availability of Council staff to progress the project. The door readers at the Guildhall offices have been commissioned, 3C ICT has requested and been granted by MBSS a sponsor for this project.	Red	Within last month (Bitrix)

Financial Performance Monitoring Suite June 2017

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Prepared By:

Sue Martin, Principal Accountant

Oliver Colbert, Principal Accountant (Technical)

1. Financial Performance Headlines

This financial year the monthly management accounts not only include the forecast position for the financial year but also over the MTFS period. Also, the revenue statements show the gross expenditure by service and where some costs are funded by reserves this is shown to then provide the net position.

Revenue The approved Budget is £17.2m and the forecast is £17.6m which is an overspend of £0.4m.

MTFS Any impacts of the forecast that potentially will carry on over the MTFS period are detailed in the table at page 10. Currently this shows an additional cost of £141k per year.

Capital The approved Budget is £9.3m plus the re-phasing of £3.1m giving a revised total Capital Programme of £12.4m. The forecast outturn is £12.80m giving an overspend of £0.36m which is being funded from additional grants and contributions.

2. Summary Revenue Forecast variances by Service

The table below shows the total variances for each Service and the main reasons. Further analysis by Service are shown in the following pages.

	Forecast (underspend) / overspend £000	Main reasons for variance
Community	(49)	Additional Licencing income and staff savings.
Customer Services	56	Housing benefit costs higher than expected but Document Centre staff savings are off-setting some of this.
ICT	256	This is the net over spend to HDC, the overall forecast of the 3Cs ICT is an overspend of £798k. The main reasons are the savings have not been identified and a new Business Case is being prepared.
Development	(44)	Combination of staff savings and additional CIL income.
Leisure and Health	(42)	Impressions income not recovering as quickly as expected however staff savings are more than off-setting this at the moment, however this is not sustainable as this will impact upon the business.
Operations	211	Complexity of waste management rounds rescheduling will mean full saving will not be achieved this year, in order to protect delivery of service.
Resources	169	Commercial investment Strategy acquisitions behind schedule so income forecasts reduced.
Directors and Corporate	(185)	Staff savings as some seconded to the Transformation Programme and other vacancies.
Total	372	

3. Revenue and Reserve Forecast

Revenue Forecast Outturn	2016/17		2017/18				
	Provisional Outturn	Budget	Forecast Outturn (Gross)	Use of Reserves to Fund Exp	Contribution to Reserves	Net Service Forecast	Net Variation
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000 %
Revenue by Service:							
Community	1,697	1,690	1,634		7	1,641	(49) ● -2.9
Customer Services	2,816	2,659	2,715			2,715	56 ● 2.1
ICT Shared Service	1,972	1,721	1,977			1,977	256 ● 14.9
Development	578	1,355	1,473	(164)	2	1,311	(44) ● -3.2
Leisure & Health	55	(160)	(227)		25	(202)	(42) ● -26.3
Operations	4,292	4,030	4,241			4,241	211 ● 5.2
Resources	3,221	4,205	4,374			4,374	169 ● 4.0
Directors and Corporate	2,693	1,711	2,526	(1,000)		1,526	(185) ● -10.8
Net Revenue Expenditure	17,324	17,211	18,713	(1,164)	34	17,583	372 ● 2.2
Contributions from Earmarked Reserves	(757)	0	(1,164)				(1,164) ● 0.0
Contributions to Earmarked Reserves	607	0	34				34 ● 0.0
Service Contribution to Reserves	3,015	2,966	2,594				(372) ● -12.5
Budget Requirement (Services)	20,189	20,177	20,177				
Financing:-							
NDR & Council Tax surplus	(7,108)	(4,622)	(5,779)				(1,157) ● 25.0
Government Grant (Non-specific)	(8,404)	(5,855)	(6,333)				(478) ● 8.2
Contribution to/(from) Collection Fund Reserve	3,214	(1,534)	(1,534)				0 ● 0.0
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	14		1,635				1,635 ● 0.0
Council Tax for Huntingdonshire DC	(7,905)	(8,166)	(8,166)				

General Fund Reserve	2016/17		2017/18		
	Outturn	Budget	Forecast	Forecast Variation	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%
Balance as at 1st April	2,537	2,568	2,598	30	1.2
Service Contribution to Reserves	3,015	3,032	2,594	(438)	-14.4
Funding Contribution to Reserves	14	0	1,635	1,635	0.0
Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves	(150)	0	0	0	0.0
Transfer to Earmarked Reserve	(2,818)	(3,018)	(4,190)	(1,172)	38.8
Outturn forecast as at 31 March (15% of Net Revenue Expenditure)	2,598	2,582	2,637	55	2.1

Earmarked Reserves	2016/17		2017/18		Commentary
	Outturn	Addition	Deduction	Forecast	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'001	
S106 agreements	1,077			1,077	
Commutated S106 payments	1,322			1,322	
CIL Admin Reserve	282			282	
Repairs and Renewals Funds	1,009	34		1,043	In year budgeted contributions
Collection Fund	1,962		(1,534)	428	
Commercial Investment	3,787			3,787	
Budget Surplus	75	4,190		4,265	To be held to meet future years budget deficit
NDR Reliefs	300			300	
Special Reserve	1,300			1,300	
Transformation Reserve	1,037		(1,000)	37	Funding 2017/18 forecast expenditure on transformation
Other Reserves	2,949		(127)	2,822	Building Control reserve passed to Cambridge City Council
Total Earmarked Reserves	15,100	4,224	(2,661)	16,663	

Definitions

2017/18 Budget
2016/17 Outturn

As approved by Council, February 2017
Final figures for 2016/17, so these may vary slightly to the Provisional Outturn figures reported to Cabinet in June 2017.

3.1 The table below provides the impact of the ZBB savings on the forecast outturn which have subsequently been overturned:

Forecast outturn	£000
2017/18 Forecast outturn	278
ZBB savings reversed	(453)
2017/18 Forecast outturn – if ZBB proposals had not been reversed	(175)

ZBB savings reversed	£000
Closure of Customer Services Centres	(23)
Document Centre (income foregone)	(67)
Car parks (income foregone and rationalisation)	(268)
Grass cutting (income foregone)	(70)
CCTV (income foregone)	(25)
Total	(453)

4. Service Commentary

The following table provides the variances by service and where variances are greater than +/- £10,000 comments have been provided by the budget managers/Head of Service. Where there are adverse variances the budget managers have provided details of the actions they are undertaking to address the overspend.

Service Forecasts as at 30 June 2017

Service	2017/18 Updated Budget	2017/18 Forecast Outturn (Gross)	Transfers to/ (from) Earmarked Reserves	2017/18 Forecast (Net)	Variance (Net)	Comments on Variance +/- £10,000
	£	£	£	£	£	
Head of Community						
Head Of Community	89,875	83,000	6,612	89,612	(263)	
C C T V	(70,393)	(59,258)		(59,258)	11,135	Income forecast lower than expected from Service Level Agreements and Contract work (£11k)
C C T V Shared Service	256,389	265,167		265,167	8,778	
Commercial Team	293,803	293,753		293,753	(50)	
Corporate Health & Safety	102,622	103,902		103,902	1,280	
Licensing	(137,464)	(170,442)		(170,442)	(32,978)	Predicting higher than expected income on licensing at this point in the year, particularly from Licensing Act 2003 licensed premises, and in increase in the number of licensed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles (£33k)
Community Team	624,634	595,304		595,304	(29,330)	Promotion of the Council's pest control service during 2017/18 seeks to increase income (£5k) along with increased Environmental Enforcement activity resulting from the Community restructure (£2k). Savings predicted from the salaries budget due to part-time working within a number of the Community team posts (£22k)
Environmental Protection Team	379,555	376,978		376,978	(2,577)	
Emergency Planning	11,575	11,460		11,460	(115)	
Environmental Health Admin	139,140	134,209		134,209	(4,931)	
	1,689,736	1,634,072	6,612	1,640,684	(49,052)	

Service	2017/18 Updated Budget	2017/18 Forecast Outturn (Gross)	Transfers to/ (from) Earmarked Reserves	2017/18 Forecast (Net)	Variance (Net)	Comments on Variance +/- £10,000
	£	£	£	£	£	
Head of Customer Services						
Head of Customer Services	97,080	97,753		97,753	673	
Local Tax Collection	7,536	10,830		10,830	3,294	
Housing Benefits	685,421	769,495		769,495	84,074	This is a very large budget with £35million in benefit payments moving in/out of it annually. Variation of this amount is not uncommon. Action - Ongoing monitoring will continue, and last financial year the outturn variance was <1%
Council Tax Support	(134,894)	(135,803)		(135,803)	(909)	
Housing Needs	917,332	905,841		905,841	(11,491)	Small salary underspend whilst recruitment into vacant post occurred.
Customer Services	823,404	834,313		834,313	10,909	Variance will need to be reviewed as the plans to close the Customer Service Centres have changed. Likely to be an overspend at year end. Work in hand to assess the scale of this.
Document Centre	263,426	232,500		232,500	(30,926)	Salary underspend within the team.
	2,659,305	2,714,929	0	2,714,929	55,624	

Service	2017/18 Updated Budget	2017/18 Forecast Outturn (Gross)	Transfers to/ (from) Earmarked Reserves	2017/18 Forecast (Net)	Variance (Net)	Comments on Variance +/- £10,000
	£	£	£	£	£	
Head of ICT Shared Service						
ICT Shared Service HDC	1,721,333	1,976,706		1,976,706	255,373	Original budget set in November was not aligned with the business case for the shared service. There is a delta of over £100k omitted from the budget as well as significant problems with salary budgetting approach vs business case. Also, staff budgets were set in advance of changes due to Northgate transition to 3C ICT. The forecast for services is based on actuals from 2016/17 spend with a 2% uplift, hence the excessive variance but this is inline with last years spend profile. Staff salaries are overspent to date due to use of contractors in first quarter which is being phased out over the forthcoming months. Based on actuals from last year forecast is realistic, budget was not set properly in line with business case. This is understood. Action - We will continue to remove dependancy on hired staff to maximise savings vs business case but the budget will remain overrun due to incorrect setup. We will continue to look for savings in the services area but this will have a relatively small effect until large software consolidation takes place for a major line of business system across the 3 partners. We will be inviting suppliers to return and reduce.
	1,721,333	1,976,706	0	1,976,706	255,373	

Service	2017/18 Updated Budget	2017/18 Forecast Outturn (Gross)	Transfers to/ (from) Earmarked Reserves	2017/18 Forecast (Net)	Variance (Net)	Comments on Variance +/- £10,000
	£	£	£	£	£	
Head of Development						
Head of Development	81,516	81,004		81,004	(512)	
Building Control	147,670	274,247	(126,577)	147,670	0	Variance relates to HDC paying over to Cambridge City Council the balance on the Building Control Reserve. Action - Variance will be covered from earmarked reserves.
Economic Development	253,389	231,307		231,307	(22,082)	Delay in recruiting to new posts.
Planning Policy	702,734	651,838		651,838	(50,896)	£11k additional cost due to additional overtime for inquiry and local plan & Maternity Leave. £94k due to forecasting increase in CIL admin income. Forecasting £20k decrease in Neighbourhood planning fees. Smaller variances amounting to some £12k.
Transportation Strategy	58,120	58,120		58,120	0	
Public Transport Total	26,100	26,100		26,100	0	
Development Management	(354,962)	(302,553)		(302,553)	52,409	Received £96k for Wintringham Park Appeal Costs (Paid for in 1617) Planning App income - Forecast per Trends sheet using averages to be £118k lower. Appeal overspend of £32k. Action - Within overall Planning budget. Application fee income being kept under review.
Housing Strategy	219,892	232,250	(35,380)	196,870	(23,022)	Reassessed staff costs forecast for 2017/18.
Apprentice Scheme	220,980	220,980		220,980	0	
	1,355,439	1,473,293	(161,957)	1,311,336	(44,103)	
Head of Leisure & Health						
Head of Leisure & Health	80,980	80,847		80,847	(133)	
One Leisure Active Lifestyles	203,274	199,972		199,972	(3,302)	
One Leisure	(444,236)	(508,079)	25,000	(483,079)	(38,843)	The majority of the variance is still due to Impressions income not meeting anticipated budget targets. A previous "recovery plan" was too ambitious and although signs of previous issues being turned around, likelihood of it happening in a short timescale is low. However, this problem is currently being offset by projected savings on staffing (£79k). Action - A full root and branch review of Impressions is underway and as areas are tackled, actions are put in place to correct any issues.
	(159,982)	(227,260)	25,000	(202,260)	(42,278)	

Service	2017/18 Updated Budget	2017/18 Forecast Outturn (Gross)	Transfers to/ (from) Earmarked Reserves	2017/18 Forecast (Net)	Variance (Net)	Comments on Variance +/- £10,000
	£	£	£	£	£	
Head of Operations						
Head of Operations	78,789	78,840		78,840	51	
Environmental & Energy Mgt	77,167	77,301		77,301	134	
Street Cleansing	793,949	768,521		768,521	(25,428)	Carrying 3 vacancies for 1st Quarter. 0.75 FTE
Green Spaces	1,163,650	1,131,488		1,131,488	(32,162)	Saving from 3x6 month posts not filled
Public Conveniences	13,400	13,830		13,830	430	Huntingdon PC not being supported by HTC, PC closed so saving cleaning costs to offset
Waste Management *	2,000,856	2,187,097		2,187,097	186,241	£180k Round rescheduling overspend due to complexity of project. Only 2 of the 3 rounds expected to save as indicated to Cabinet in Jan-2017. Action - Full Round Rescheduling not anticipated in this current year
Operations Management	0	0		0	0	
Facilities Management	1,065,592	1,128,839		1,128,839	63,247	£47k Rent to DWP not anticipated to start this year; £6k rates increase due to Solar PV Tax for EFH
Fleet Management	256,247	258,942		258,942	2,695	
Markets	(67,542)	(64,158)		(64,158)	3,384	
Car Parks	(1,352,616)	(1,339,900)		(1,339,900)	12,716	£10k shortfall in excess charges so far this year due to sickness
	4,029,492	4,240,801	0	4,240,801	211,309	
Head of Resources						
Head of Resources	87,865	87,736		87,736	(129)	
Corporate Finance	4,604,336	4,545,853		4,545,853	(58,483)	Main reason is the increased income from loans to Rsls (100k), redundancy payments +33k, less borrowing required (19k)
Legal	218,060	212,206		212,206	(5,854)	
Audit & Risk Management	560,175	638,686		638,686	78,511	Increase in insurance tender +82k, saving from BDO covering seconded staff member (3k)
Procurement	60,226	59,781		59,781	(445)	
Finance	687,208	678,410		678,410	(8,798)	
Commercial Estates	(2,633,916)	(2,477,350)		(2,477,350)	156,566	Unsuccessful bid on CIS properties has resulted in reduced forecasted income as well as reduced forecasted expenditure on MRP and management charge
HR and Payroll Services	620,581	628,732		628,732	8,151	
	4,204,535	4,374,054	0	4,374,054	169,519	

Service	2017/18 Updated Budget	2017/18 Forecast Outturn (Gross)	Transfers to/ (from) Earmarked Reserves	2017/18 Forecast (Net)	Variance (Net)	Comments on Variance +/- £10,000
	£	£	£	£	£	
Corporate Team Manager						
Democratic & Elections	776,150	723,772		723,772	(52,378)	(£53k) saving from no district elections this year
Directors	499,847	426,233		426,233	(73,614)	(£25k) Corporate Director Vacancy, (£44k) Post trf to Corporate
Corporate Team	434,710	375,708		375,708	(59,002)	(£74k) Several members of staff moved to Transformation; (£29k) Comms moved to HOSLES, £44k Post trf from Directors
Transformation	0	1,000,000	(1,000,000)	(0)	(0)	Not all seconded staff are being backfilled by the service, ergo there could be savings in other services. Action - Overspend will be funded by reserves £1m
	1,710,707	2,525,712	(1,000,000)	1,525,712	(184,995)	
HDC Totals	17,210,565	18,712,306	(1,130,345)	17,581,961	371,396	

* There is a possibility of extra costs of £190,000 due to a supplier erroneously holding onto recycling and subsequently sending it to landfill, meaning that we should not receive the credit - this error affects several councils in the area, currently under dispute

5. Medium Term Financial Strategy

2018/19 to 2021/22 MTFS (Approved February 2017)					
MTFS Service	Budgets				Comment on Variation (Incl if unavoidable, if action to rectify can be taken)
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Head of Community Approved Total	1,648	1,648	1,690	1,724	
<i>Forecast Changes</i>					
Dog Control	(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)	Woodgreen Contract cost reduced.
CCTV					Commercialisation strategy will impact on later years but this is still being evaluated
New MTFS Totals	1,643	1,643	1,685	1,719	
Head of Customer Services Approved Total	2,591	2,615	2,677	2,734	
<i>Forecast Changes</i>					
Currently no changes					
New MTFS Totals	2,591	2,615	2,677	2,734	
Head of ICT Shared Service Approved Total	1,730	1,738	1,753	1,769	
<i>Forecast Changes</i>					
ICT Shared Service					New Business Case being formulated which will provide realistic savings totals and timings. Currently being evaluated.
New MTFS Totals	1,730	1,738	1,753	1,769	
Head of Development Approved Total	1,352	1,411	1,458	1,505	
<i>Forecast Changes</i>					
Currently no changes					
New MTFS Totals	1,352	1,411	1,458	1,505	
Head of Leisure & Health Approved Total	(284)	(298)	(236)	(153)	
<i>Forecast Changes</i>					
One Leisure					Expected recovery of falling membership income currently slower than expected. Root causes to be being tackled. Impact currently being evaluated.
New MTFS Totals	(284)	(298)	(236)	(153)	
Head of Operations Approved Total	3,811	3,817	3,922	4,029	
<i>Forecast Changes</i>					
Facilities Management	6	6	6	6	Increase in rates for Solar Panels
Waste Management	90	90	90	90	Recycling round rescheduling savings cannot be achieved (see Cabinet report January)
New MTFS Totals	3,907	3,913	4,018	4,125	
Head of Resources Approved Total	4,312	4,384	4,414	4,425	
<i>Forecast Changes</i>					
Commercial Investment Strategy	50	50	50	50	Line by line review savings not achievable
New MTFS Totals	4,362	4,434	4,464	4,475	
Directors & Corporate Team Approved Total	1,650	1,662	1,687	1,704	
<i>Forecast Changes</i>					
Currently no changes					
New MTFS Totals	1,650	1,662	1,687	1,704	
MTFS Forecast Total	16,951	17,118	17,506	17,878	
Existing MTFS Total	16,810	16,977	17,365	17,737	
Expected Total Variation	141	141	141	141	

6. Capital Programme

The approved gross Capital Programme 2017/18 is £9.346m. As part of the Quarter 4 Integrated Performance Suite, Cabinet on 22 June 2017 approved the rephasing schemes from 2016/17 to 2017/18 totalling £3.1m.

The gross expenditure to date is £1.119m (9% of Budget, 25% of the year) and the Capital Programme is forecast to have an overall overspend of £0.355m. This forecast overspend is funded from additional grants (DFGs) and contributions (Sports England).

Variation Commentary Summary		£000s
Overspend		
Development – DFGs		363
The overspend is based on the current level of demand from clients. This is partly offset by private donations which are forecast to exceed the budget by £0.119m		
Development – Huntingdon West Development		61
A Community Infrastructure Levy payment has been made to Cambridgeshire County Council, this will be funded from the CIL reserve.		
Underspend		
Operations - Vehicle Fleet Replacement		(61)
A saving has resulted from actual prices of vehicles being less than that estimated at the procurement stage.		
Operations – Salix		(30)
The budget available has been reduced based on the amount of work that was completed in previous years.		
Operations – Refit Projects		(142)
The works at One Leisure St Neots have now been removed from the programme.		
Rephase		
Development – Alconbury Weald		(44)
The Alconbury Weald reserve will now be used to make loans, instead of direct expenditure.		
Other		
Leisure and Health – OL Huntingdon Changing Facilities		208
This scheme was originally netted off against external grant, it has now been grossed up to show the expenditure an income separately.		
Total		355

There is a risk that this level of forecast will not happen as there are schemes that have not started yet. This process is managed by the Finance and Performance Governance Board. The majority of schemes are still waiting to be started, even though plans are in place, contracts let etc. with a number of these.

The net spend on the Council's Capital Programme is financed via borrowing which has a revenue implication through the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP).

The next 2 tables provide the following information:

Table 1 – the Capital Programme by scheme with proposed rephasing, expenditure to date and forecast outturn.

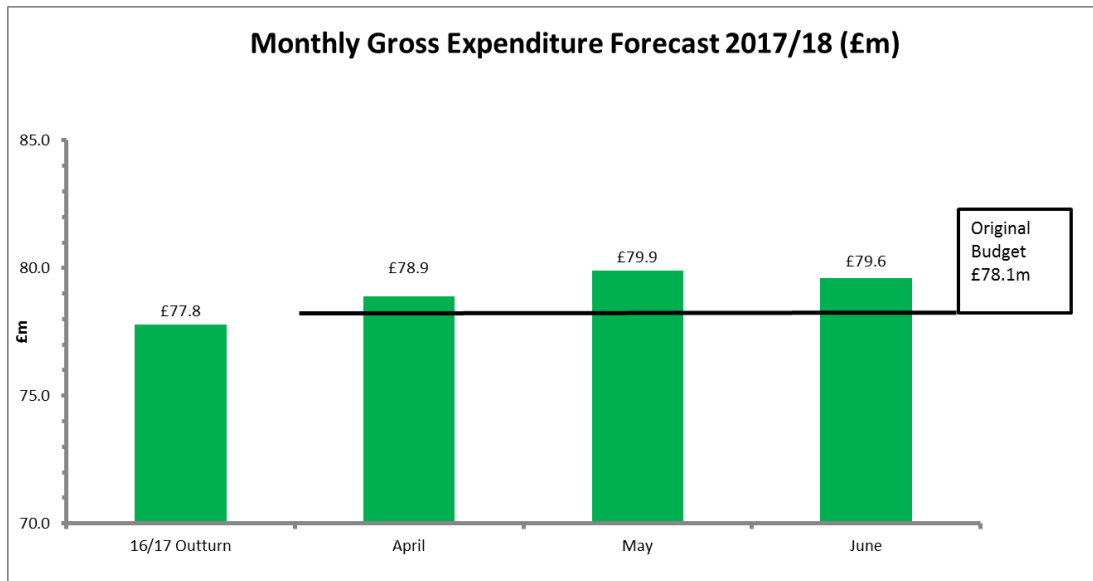
Table 2 – the financing of the Capital Programme showing the funding from grants and contributions, capital receipts, use of earmarked and capital reserves and internal borrowing.

Capital Programme Forecast 2017/18		June							
Table 1 Expenditure	Budget Manager	Approved Budget £	Slippage or Supplementary £	Updated Budget £	Expenditure to date £	Forecast £	Variance £		
Community									
CCTV Camera Replacements	Chris Stopford	190,000	30,000	220,000	0	220,000	0		
CCTV Pathfinder House Resilience	Chris Stopford	20,000		20,000	0	20,000	0		
CCTV Wi-Fi	Chris Stopford	250,000		250,000	0	250,000	0		
Lone Worker Software	Chris Stopford	20,000		20,000	0	20,000	0		
Development									
Disabled Facilities Grants	Caroline Hannon	1,300,000		1,300,000	297,408	1,663,716	363,716		
Huntingdon West Development	Claire Burton		35,000	35,000	61,332	96,332	61,332		
Alconbury Weald Remediation	Sue Bedlow	1,985,000		1,985,000	0	1,940,968	(44,032)		
Leisure and Health									
One Leisure Improvements	Pete Corley	205,000	(40,000)	165,000	26,680	165,000	0		
Burgess Hall	Brian Gray	305,000		305,000	2,028	305,000	0		
One Leisure Huntingdon Changing Facilities	Karen Martin-Peters		72,000	72,000	169,376	280,000	208,000		
One Leisure Huntingdon Development	Paul France	779,000	31,000	810,000	16,750	810,000	0		
One Leisure St Neots Synthetic Pitch	Jon Clarke		390,000	390,000	0	390,000	0		
OL St Neots Pool	Jon Clarke	290,000		290,000	2,027	290,000	0		
				0			0		
Resources									
Phoenix Court Lane Industrial Unit Roof Enhancement	Jackie Golby	157,000	40,000	197,000	0	197,000	0		
Levellers Lane Industrial Unit Roof Enhancement	Jackie Golby	56,000	22,000	78,000	0	78,000	0		
Clifton Road Industrial Unit Roof Enhancement	Jackie Golby	49,000	21,000	70,000	0	70,000	0		
Cash Receiving System	Adrian Forth		26,000	26,000	0	26,000	0		
Financial Management System Replacement	Adrian Forth		27,000	27,000	11,383	27,000	0		
FMS Archive	Adrian Forth	14,000		14,000	0	14,000	0		
VAT Exempt Capital	Adrian Forth	29,000	59,000	88,000	0	88,000	0		
Capital Grant to Huntingdon Town Council	Adrian Forth		338,000	338,000	300,000	338,000	0		
Loan Facility to Huntingdon Town Council	Adrian Forth		800,000	800,000	0	800,000	0		
Investment in Company	Adrian Forth		100,000	100,000	0	100,000	0		
Customer Services									
Printing Equipment	Andy Lusha	176,000		176,000	0	176,000	0		
E-forms	Ian Davies		3,000	3,000	12,541	3,000	0		
3C ICT									
Flexible Working - 3CSS	Emma Alterton	50,000		50,000	0	50,000	0		
Telephones - 3CSS	Emma Alterton		28,000	28,000	26,081	28,000	0		
Virtual Server - 3CSS	Emma Alterton		81,000	81,000	1,950	81,000	0		
Operations									
Building Efficiencies (Salix)	Chris Jablonski	28,000	54,000	82,000	0	52,000	(30,000)		
Wheeled Bins	Heidi Field	231,000		231,000	40,052	231,000	0		
Vehicle Fleet Replacement	David Rook	1,146,000	367,000	1,513,000	148,813	1,452,065	(60,935)		
Operations Back Office Development	Matt Chudley	135,000		135,000	0	135,000	0		
Play Equipment	Helen Lack	24,000		24,000	0	24,000	0		
Re-Fit Buildings	Chris Jablonski	311,000	481,000	792,000	2,340	649,000	(143,000)		
Bridge Place Car Park Godmanchester	Colin Luscombe	218,000	100,000	318,000	0	318,000	0		
Pathfinder House Reception (DWP)	Chris Jablonski	303,000		303,000	0	303,000	0		
In Cab Technology	Matt Chudley	75,000	(75,000)	0	0	0	0		
Civic Suite Audio Equipment	Chris Jablonski		108,000	108,000	0	108,000	0		
Transformation									
Transformation Schemes	Karen Middleton	1,000,000		1,000,000	0	1,000,000	0		
Total Expenditure		9,346,000	3,098,000	12,444,000	1,118,761	12,799,081	355,081		

Capital Programme Forecast 2017/18		June					
Table 2 Funding of Capital Programme	Budget Manager	Approved Budget £	Slippage or Supplementary £	Updated Budget £	Expenditure to date £	Forecast £	Variance £
Grants and Contributions							
DFGs	Caroline Hannon	1,000,000		1,000,000	(9,560)	1,118,716	118,716
Pathfinder House Reception	Chris Jablonski	278,000		278,000	0	278,000	0
Wheeled Bins	Heidi Field	89,000		89,000	(21,444)	89,000	0
Synthetic Pitch	Jon Clarke		274,000	274,000	0	274,000	0
One Leisure Huntingdon Changing Facilities		0	0	0	0	208,000	208,000
Total Grants and Contributions		1,367,000	274,000	1,641,000	(31,004)	1,967,716	326,716
Use of Capital Reserves							
Alconbury Remediation Works Reserve	Sue Bedlow	1,985,000		1,985,000	0	1,940,968	(44,032)
Total Capital Reserves		1,985,000	0	1,985,000	0	1,940,968	(44,032)
Capital Receipts							
Loan Repayments	Adrian Forth	320,000		320,000		320,000	0
Housing Clawback Receipts	Adrian Forth	500,000		500,000		500,000	0
Total Capital Receipts		820,000	0	820,000	0	820,000	0
Use of Earmarked Reserves							
Financial Management System Replacement	Adrian Forth		27,000	27,000		27,000	0
Capital Grant to Huntingdon Town Council	Adrian Forth		300,000	300,000		300,000	0
Investment in Trading Company	Adrian Forth		100,000	100,000		100,000	0
ICT Transformation	Clive Mason	1,000,000		1,000,000		1,000,000	0
FMS Archive	Adrian Forth	14,000		14,000		14,000	0
CIL Reserve	Andy Moffat					61,332	61,332
To Earmarked Reserves		1,014,000	427,000	1,441,000	0	1,502,332	61,332
Total Funding		5,186,000	701,000	5,887,000	(31,004)	6,231,016	344,016
Net to be funded by borrowing		4,160,000	2,397,000	6,557,000	1,149,765	6,568,065	11,065

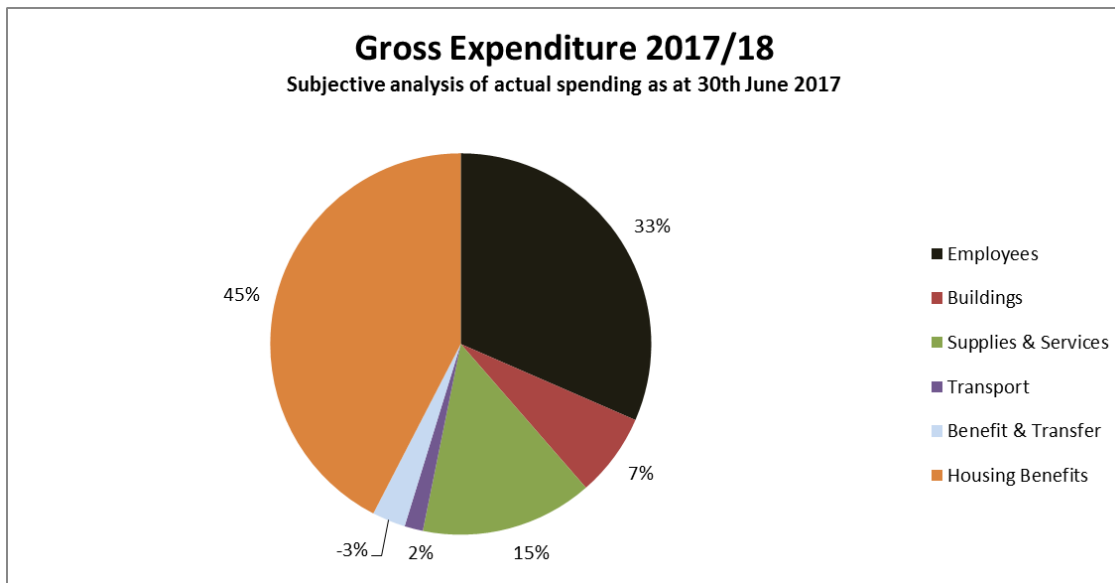
7. Financial Dashboard

Revenue Expenditure

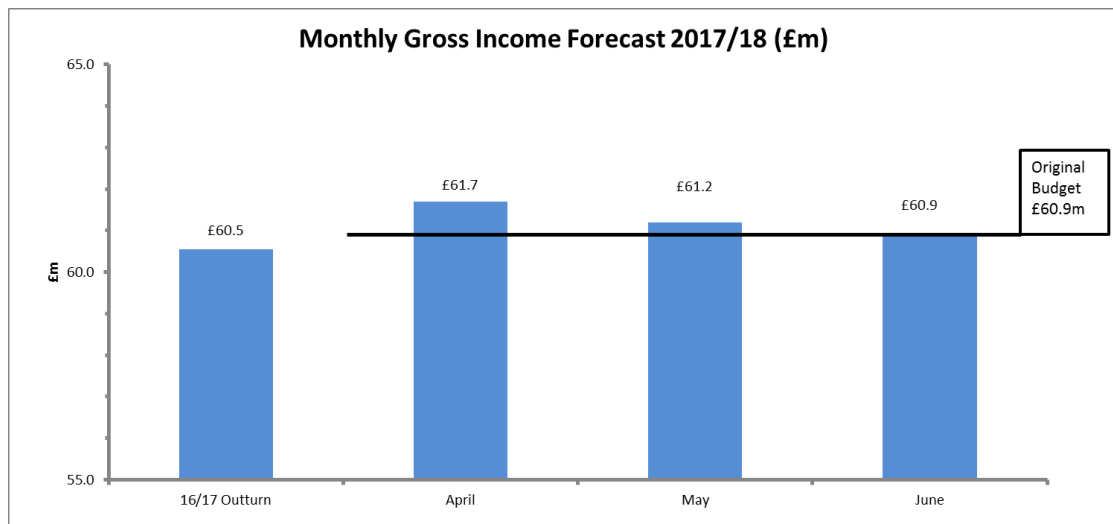


The 2017/18 gross revenue expenditure Budget is £78.1m.

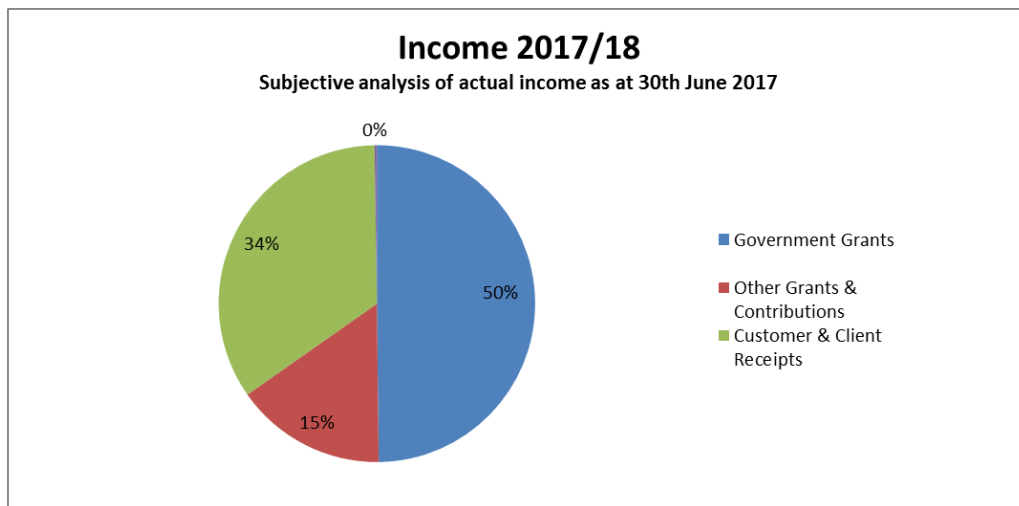
As shown below the main area of expenditure is Housing Benefits and employees.



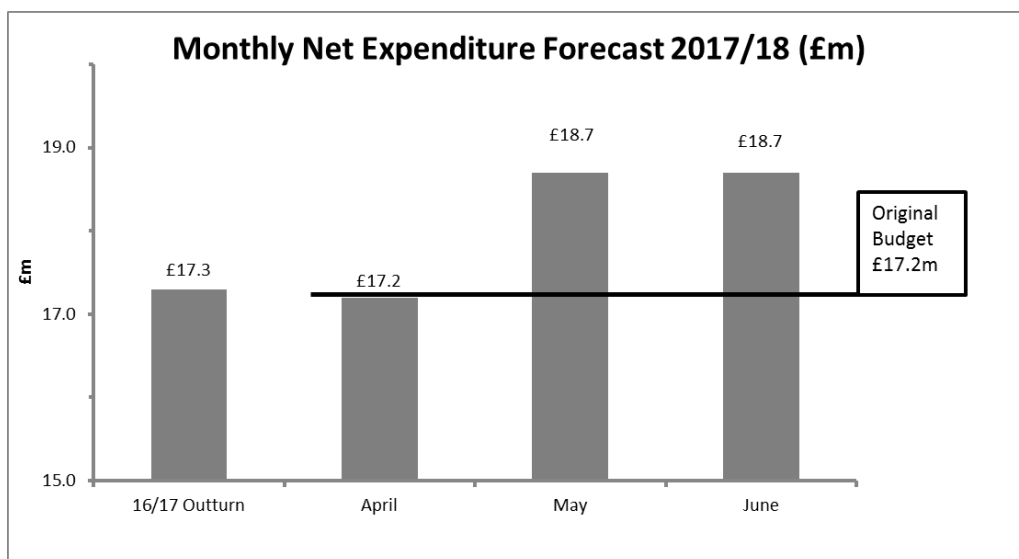
Revenue Income



The gross revenue income Budget is £60.9m,

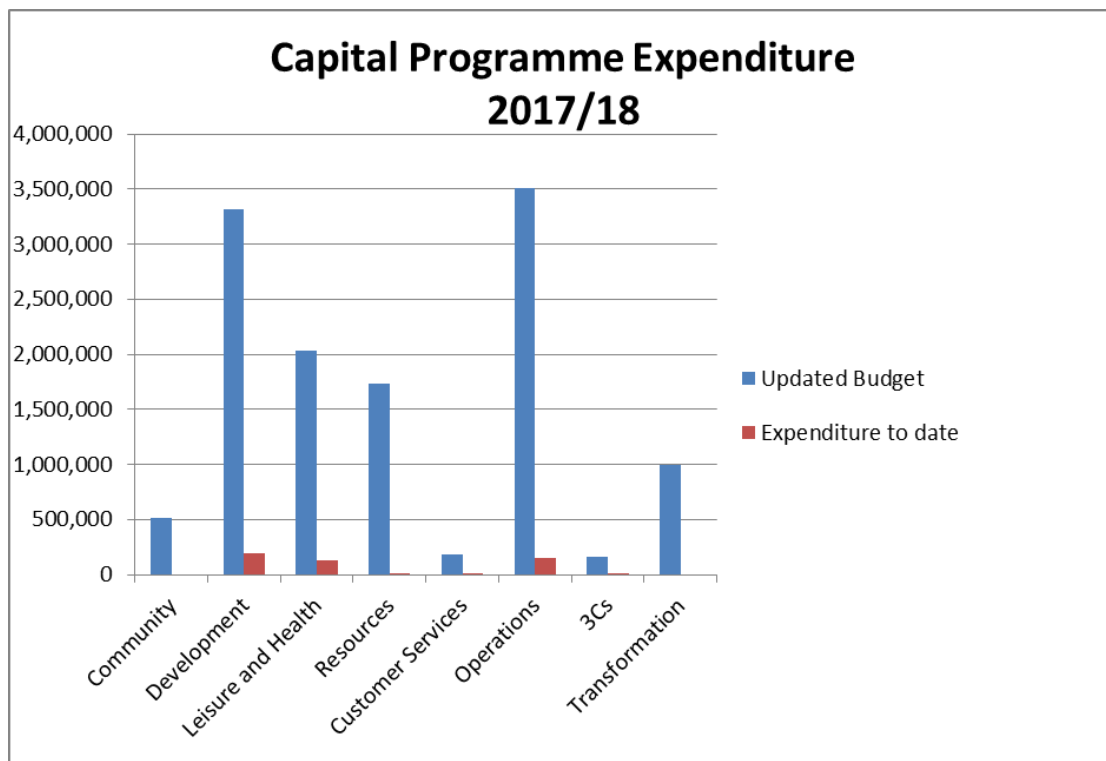


Revenue Net Position



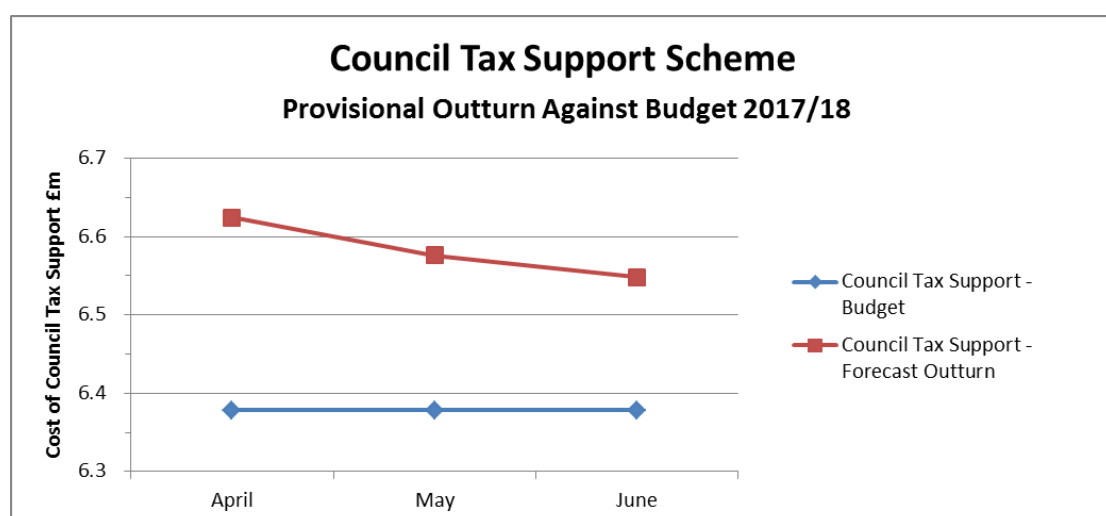
At the end of June 2017 the net revenue expenditure is forecast to be at £18.71m, however, £1.13m of this will be covered by earmarked reserves. Therefore, after allowing for movements to/from reserves the net expenditure is expected to be £0.37m above the net Budget of £17.2m. If this overspend continues then additional savings will have to be identified over and above of what is in the MTFS.

Capital Programme - Expenditure Forecast



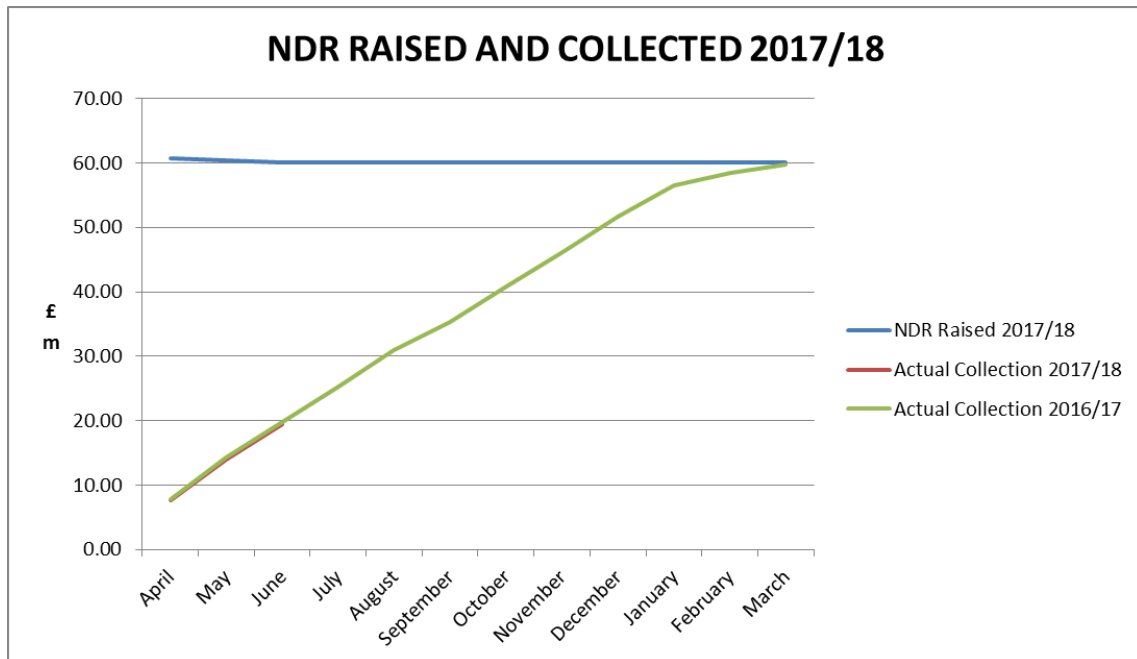
Council Tax Support Scheme

Currently, the actual take-up of Council Tax Support is running approximately £0.17m above the budgeted £6.4m. Any 2017/18 increase in Council Tax Support will impact in 2018/19.



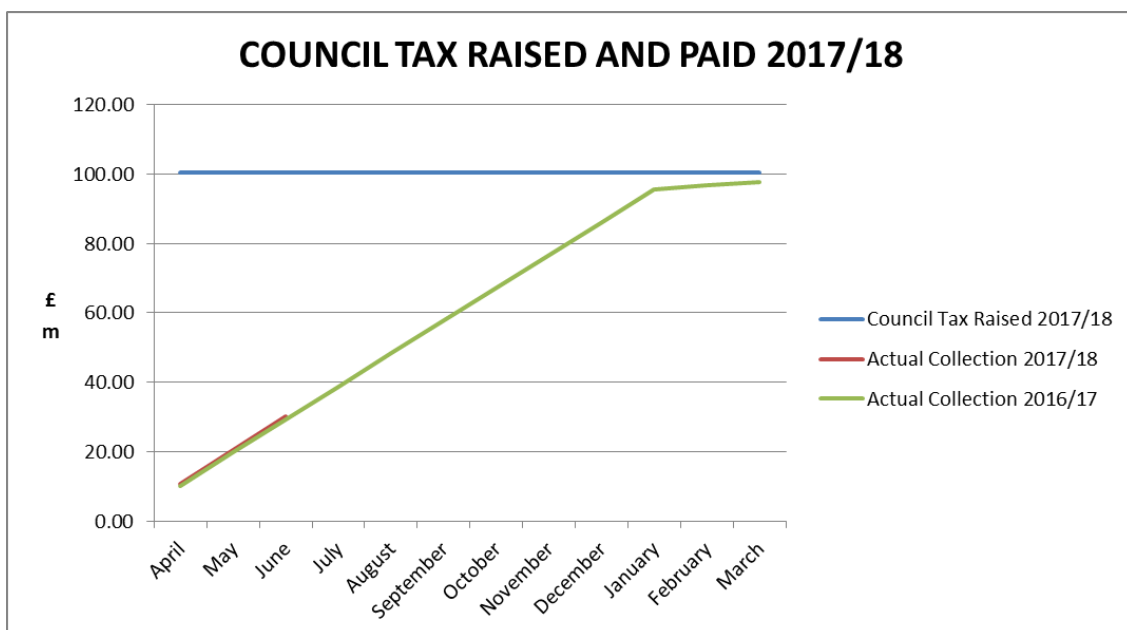
The impact of this increase on HDC will be proportionate to all Council Tax precepts (13.8% for HDC including parishes).

Collection of NDR



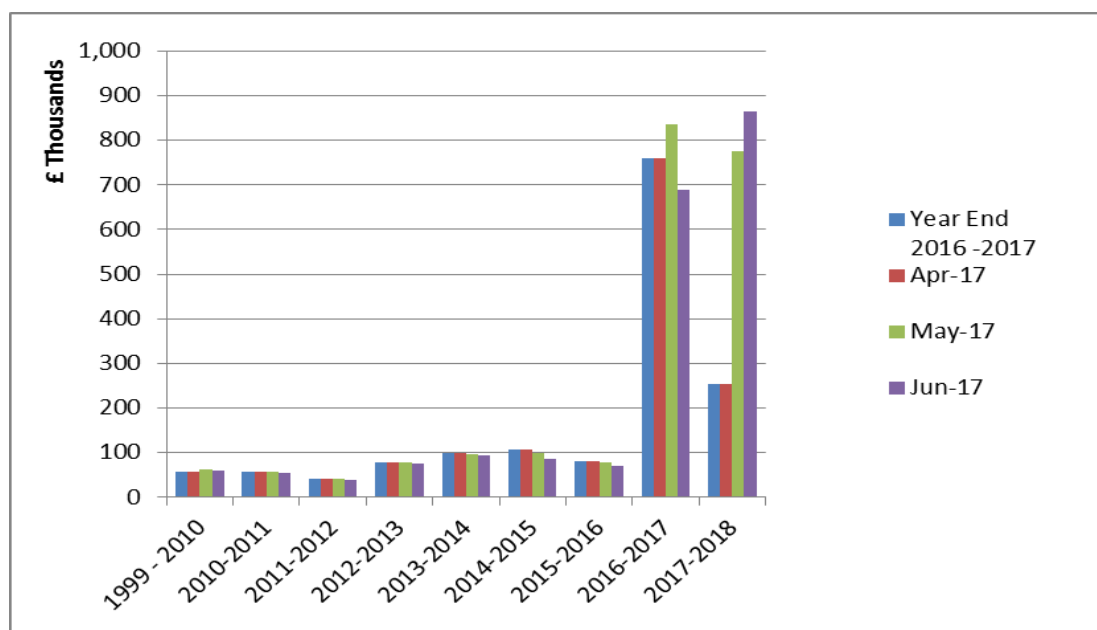
The graph above shows the total amount of NDR bills raised in 2017/18 and the actual receipts received up to end of June, with a forecast for receipts through to the end of the year, based on historical collection rates. The estimated NDR raised is £60.15m.

Collection of Council Tax



The graph above shows the total amount of Council Tax bills raised in 2017/18 and the actual receipts received up to end of June, with a forecast for receipts through to the end of the year, based on historical collection rates. The estimated Council Tax raised is £100.5m.

Miscellaneous Debt



The total outstanding debt as at June 2017 is £2.032m, £1.166m is prior year debt of which £0.688m relates to 2016/17.

The graph shows the level of overdue miscellaneous income debt (debt is overdue when it is older than 21 days). The 2016/17 and 2017/18 debt position is currently showing a large outstanding amount, £838k relates to Commercial Rents and £200k relates to schools use of One Leisure facilities. Currently, £779k is being collected via direct debit and will be paid by the end of the current financial year.

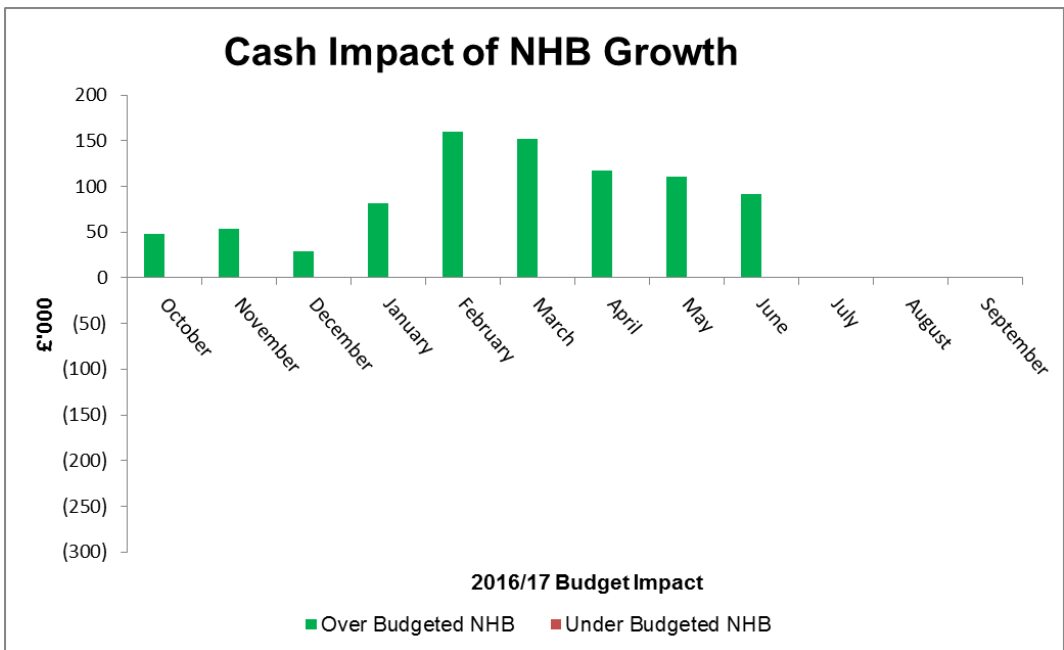
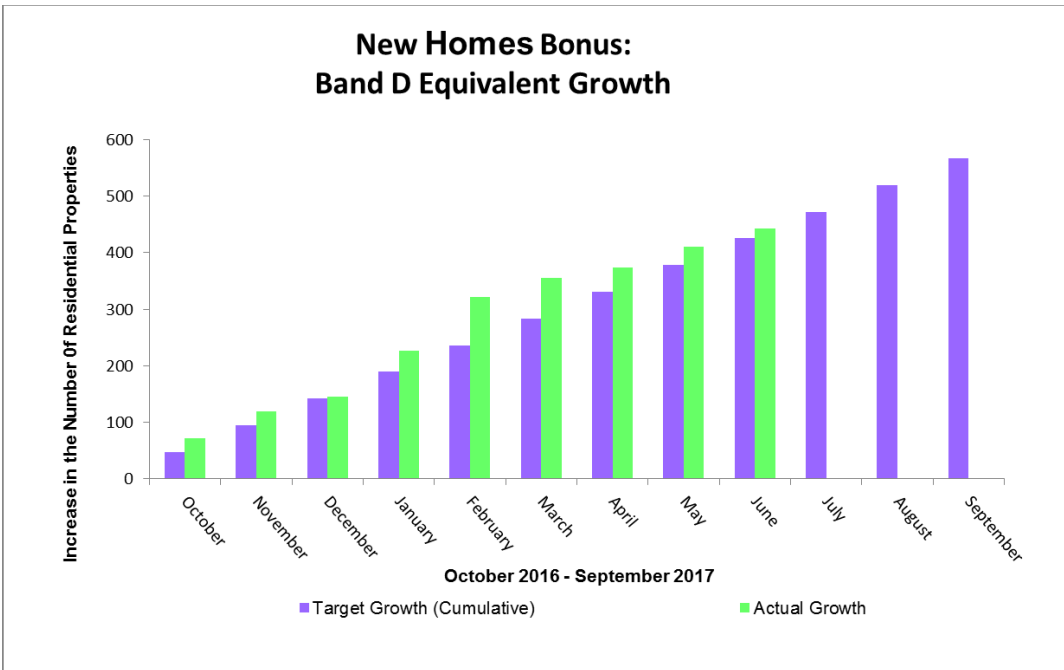
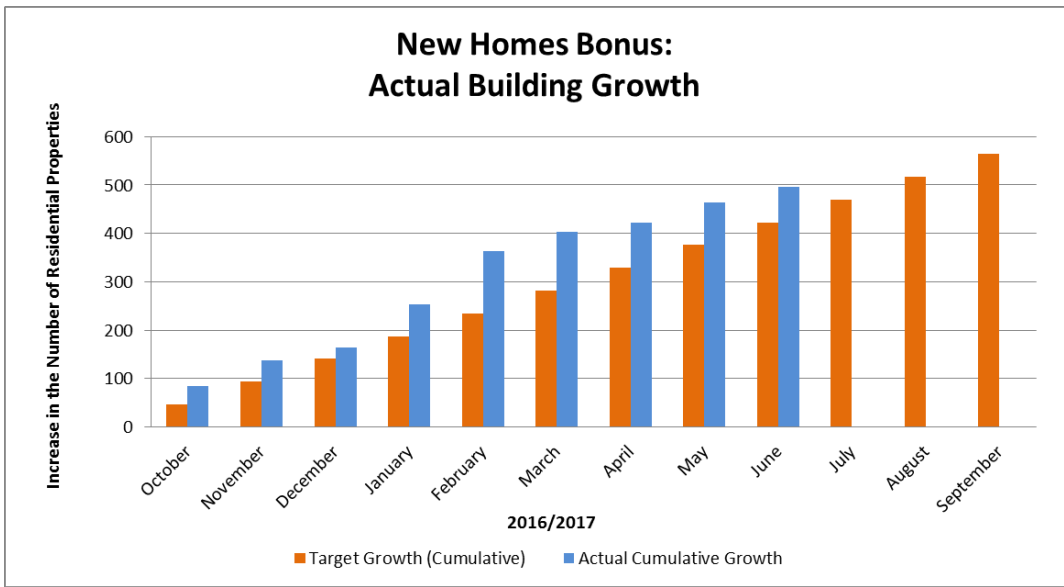
Further details on the age analysis of the debts are shown on page 22 of this report.

New Homes Bonus

The 2015/16 reporting cycle (October 2015 to September 2016) saw 637 completions which was 96 ahead of the target of 541. The impact of these additional units will come through in 2017/18.

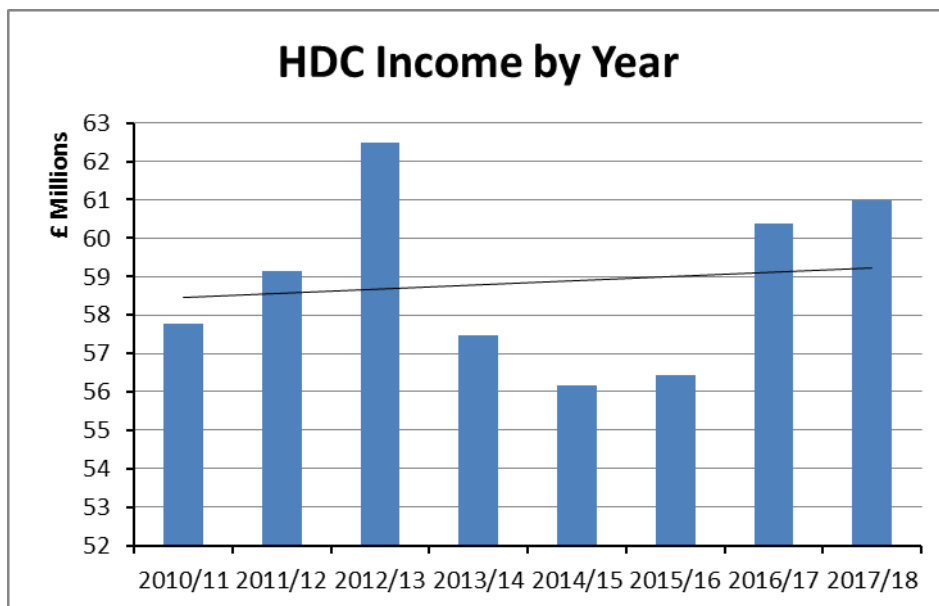
The current reporting cycle (October 2016 to September 2017) has a target number of completions of 567, as published in the draft Planning Annual Monitoring Report (December 2016). Currently, 496 properties have been completed and if completions continue at the recent rate of approximately 30 per month then we will finish slightly ahead of target.

As part of the Local Government Financial Settlement 2016/17 issued in December 2016 the Government announced changes to the New Homes Bonus Scheme. The number of years over which NHB will be paid has reduced from six to four and a new 'deadweight' factor of 0.4% is now being applied meaning the first 0.4% growth above the base does not attract NHB. The impact of these new factors, particularly the deadweight, on the NHB receipts beyond 2017/18 has been assessed and is included in the MTFS.



HDC Income and Expenditure Trends:-

Income



Comments on annual changes:-

The income figures used in the graph do not include Council Tax, NDR and Non Specific Government Grants receipts.

Housing Benefits (and previously Council Tax Benefits) account for over half of the income received by HDC. Therefore changes to these income streams have quite an impact on the Councils total income figures.

Housing Benefits (HB) and Council Tax Benefits subsidy increased by £2m between 2010/11 and 2011/12 and by £3m between 2011/12 and 2012/13. In 2013/14 Council Tax Benefits were replaced by the Council Tax Support Scheme and this removed £8m of subsidy from the income figures (Council Tax Support awarded impacts the collection fund not the General Fund revenue account). Housing Benefit Subsidy increased by £0.5m. Housing Benefit subsidy fell by £2m between 2013/14 and 2014/15 it remained at £35m in 2015/16 but fell by £1m in 2016/17.

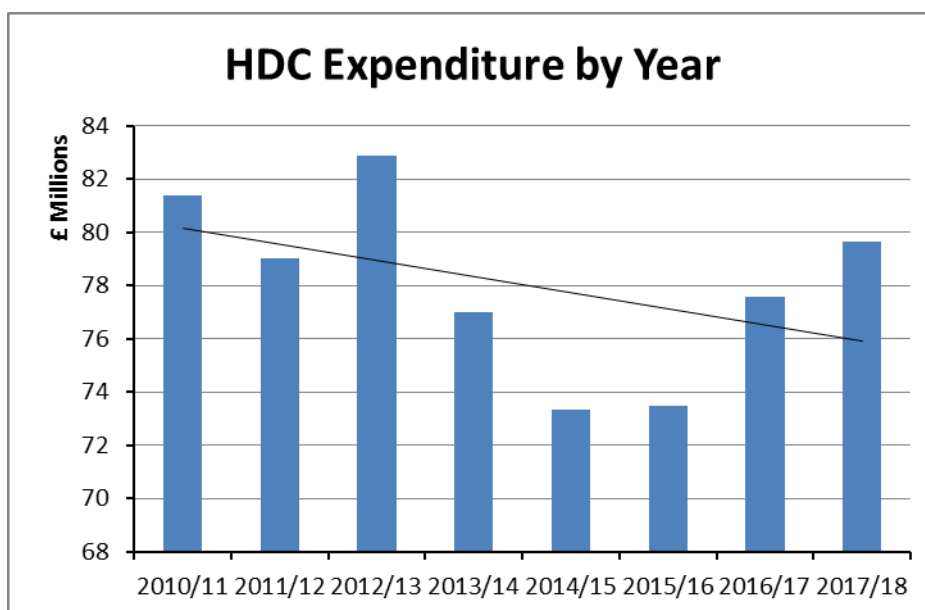
The more recent increases are due to the following:-

- From 2015/16 shared services charges to partners have increased income by £0.75m in 2015/16 and £4.7m in 2016/17.
- Commercial Estates income has risen from £1.9m in 2015/16 to £2.5m in 2016/17 and a forecast £4.6m in 2017/18. This is due to the Commercial Investment Strategy that has led to the acquisition of new commercial sites.

Other items to note are:-

- Planning application fee income has risen steadily over the years from £0.7m to £1.5m in 2016/17 and a forecast £1.6m in 2017/18.
- Car Park income has risen from £1.5m in 2010/11 to £2.4m in 2016/17 and a forecast £2.5m in 2017/18.
- One Leisure income has risen from £5.8m in 2010/11 to £6.8m in 2016/17 and a forecast £7.0m in 2017/18.

Expenditure



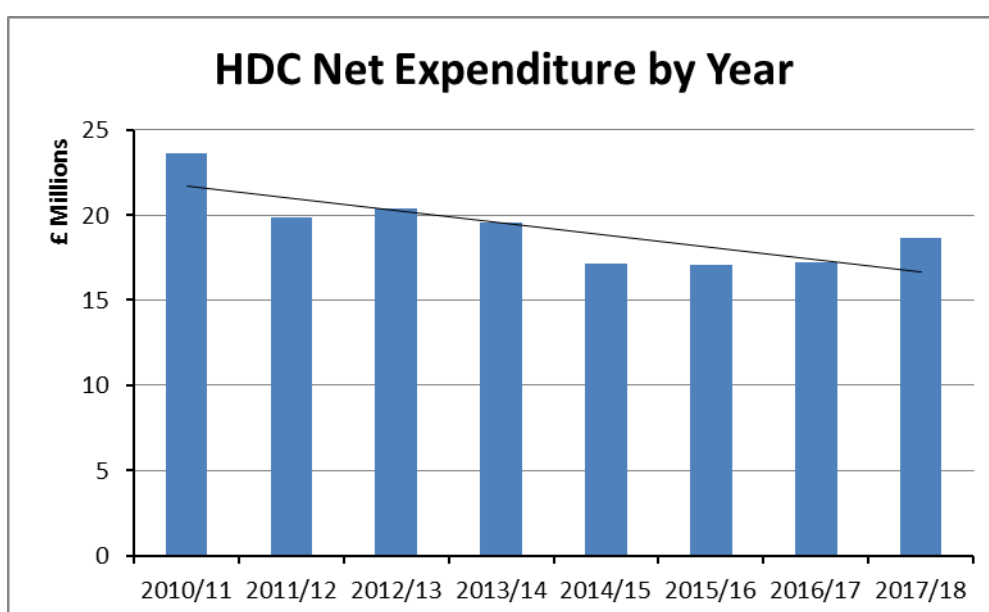
Comments on annual changes:-

The voluntary redundancy scheme offered in 2010/11 increased employee costs in that year.

As with income, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit expenditure rose sharply from 2010/11 to 2012/13 and then fell by a net £7m in 2013/14 when the Council Tax Support scheme replaced the Council Tax Benefits scheme. Since 2014/15, Housing Benefit expenditure has been falling.

The ICT shared service, where the base budget was reduced on merger, impacted on expenditure in 2015/16 but the full impact (£4.0m) was felt in 2016/17.

Net Expenditure



Miscellaneous Debt

The table below provides the analysis of the age of debt each month to date for 2017/18 with some comparative figures for 2016/17.

	Total	21 days	21 to 40 days	41 to 70 days	71 to 100 days	100 + days
First Available Sept 2016	4,885,560.73	3,531,598.80	91,947.82	25,776.57	52,279.75	1,183,957.79
2016 Oct 2016	1,551,528.69	258,334.22	92,006.76	77,810.72	20,962.50	1,102,414.49
Year End Mar 2017	2,313,295.32	608,975.80	894,763.40	83,356.69	24,047.21	702,152.22
2017/18						
Apr-17	2,114,135.25	162,571.40	480,234.88	755,884.91	61,732.78	653,711.28
May-17	2,422,915.69	298,441.12	562,164.60	327,267.33	560,163.89	674,878.75
Jun-17	2,031,792.94	451,782.56	192,838.19	42,189.44	278,680.47	1,066,302.28
Jul-17						
Aug-17						
Sep-17						
Oct-17						
Nov-17						
Dec-17						
Jan-18						
Feb-18						
Mar-18						

Appendix E

ZBB Savings Agreed 2017/18 Budget Setting - RAG Status			
Service		2017/18 £	RAG Status
Community Services			
	CCTV Shared Services Hosting	(28,000)	
Customer Services			
	Council Tax Management	(76,000)	
	Benefits Management	(65,000)	
	Community Centres	(5,500)	
	Printing	(40,000)	
	Call Centre	(1,000)	
	Customer Service Centres	(500)	
Leisure and Health			
	Healthy Walks	(1,200)	
	Exercise Referral	(1,000)	
	Sports Development	(900)	
	Active At 50	(1,000)	
	Dash Sports England	(16,900)	
	Swimming	(10,694)	
	Site & Centre Management	(22,306)	
Operations			
	Recycling Collections	(8,500)	
	Domestic Waste Collection	(60,500)	
	Trade Refuse	(10,000)	
	Street Cleansing	(20,000)	
	Hinchingbrooke Park Cafe	(10,000)	
	Parks & Open Spaces	(30,000)	
	Pathfinder House	(87,600)	
	Car Parks Operational Mgt	(168,000)	
	Projects & Env Imps Management	(6,000)	
Corporate Team			
	Corporate Team	(17,000)	
ICT Services			
	Head Of Ict Shared Service	(500)	
Resources			
	Commercial Properties	(62,000)	
	Hr & Payroll Services	(85,000)	
	TOTAL 2017/18 ZBB SAVINGS	(835,100)	

Line by line review savings Agreed 2017/18 Budget Setting - RAG Status			
Service		Line by Line review Savings Lite	RAG status
Community			
	Head Of Community	(2,000)	
	Head Of Community	(1,500)	
	Dog Control	(500)	
	Dog Control	(2,500)	
	Vehicles and Licences	(20,000)	
	Ramsey Neighbourhood	(2,000)	
	Commercial Team	(11,000)	
	Neighbourhood Intervention	(7,000)	
	Community Safety	(5,500)	
		(52,000)	
Customer			
	Benefits Management	(18,000)	
	Community Centres	(1,546)	
	Call Centre	(3,494)	
	Customer Service Centres	(3,051)	
		(26,091)	
Development			
	Dm Application Processing	(200,000)	
	Renovation/Improvement Grants	(11,000)	
	Development Management	(5,000)	
	Planning Policy	(7,000)	
		(223,000)	
Operations			
	Environmental projects	(16,000)	
	Arboricultural Team	(3,500)	
	Grounds Maintenance	(22,500)	
	Recycling Collections	(37,000)	
	Domestic Waste Collection	(22,000)	
	Bulky Refuse	(3,000)	
	Trade Refuse	(10,000)	
	Street Cleansing	(98,500)	
	Water & Sewerage	(2,000)	
	Buildings	(2,000)	
	Market Income	(5,500)	
	Car Parks Operational Mgt	(25,000)	
	Projects	(3,200)	
		(250,200)	
Corporate Services			
	Apprenticeships	(20,000)	
	Other services	(16,000)	
		(36,000)	
Resources			
	Head Of Resources	(2,850)	
	Commercial Investment Strategy	(50,000)	
	Head Of Resources (Corporate Budgets)	(4,000)	
	Insurance	(57,000)	
		(113,850)	
	TOTAL 2017/18 LINE BY LINE SAVINGS	(701,141)	

Register of Reviews of CIS Propositions 2017/18

The process of considering CIS opportunities is as follows:

Step 1

Property investment opportunities are both introduced by agents and actively sourced by the Commercial Estates Team. An initial review is undertaken against the outline criteria of the CIS such as yield, length of lease, tenant strength etc. and if they are judged to be reasonable investments, further preliminary initial due diligence is undertaken to determine the quality of the leases and an initial financial appraisal is undertaken.

Step 2

If Step 1 is passed, more detailed due diligence is undertaken (including detailed tenant strength review, ownership title, property energy efficiency, market analysis of rents and yield etc), this may lead to a site visit and more robust financial appraisal/modelling and further market scrutiny.

Step 3

If Step 2 is passed, then approval is sought from the members of the Treasury & Capital Management Group, the Managing Director, Corporate Director (Services) and the Head of Resources to submit a formal initial bid, subject to contract and relevant building and condition surveys

Step 4

If the bid submitted at Step 3 is successful, then this progresses to consideration by Overview and Scrutiny and approval for Cabinet.

Step 5

Once approval is given, formal legal and building condition due diligence commences by instruction of lawyers and building/specialist surveys are undertaken. This may take several weeks during which all concerns raised on legal and lease title and building condition are satisfied. If any significant concerns are unsatisfied, these can either be negotiated on price or withdraw from the purchase.

Reviews Undertaken April to June 2017 (Quarter 1)

Over the above period, 14 propositions reached Stage 2, of which 3 reached Stage 3 and formal bids were submitted. By property type, the 14 propositions were as follows:

Industrial	2 (1 estate, 1 stand alone)
Office	4 (2 high grade, 2 low grade), of which 2 were bid on
Business Park	1
Major Shopping Centre	1
Distribution	1, which was bid on
Leisure	1
Retail	3 (1 prime high street, 2 secondary high street)
Trade Counter	1

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