



A meeting of **HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held in the **CIVIC SUITE, (LANCASTER / STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **WEDNESDAY, 29 MARCH 2023** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

AGENDA

APOLOGIES

1. THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Mr Phil Hayes to open the meeting with a 'Thought for the Day'.

Time Allocation: 5 Minutes.

2. MINUTES (Pages 7 - 22)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22nd February 2023.

Time Allocation: 2 Minutes.

3. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary, other registerable and non-registerable interests in relation to any Agenda item. See Notes below.

Time Allocation: 2 Minutes.

4. CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR'S ENGAGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (Pages 23 - 24)

To note the Chair and Vice-Chair's engagements and announcements since the last Council meeting.

Time Allocation: 5 Minutes.

5. NOTICES OF MOTION

Councillor R J West to move –

This Council:

- a) Notes the data collected by the National Air Traffic Service regarding the recent flight path changes at London Luton Airport;
- b) Notes the increased noise and pollution experienced by Huntingdonshire residents caused by descending aircraft
- c) Urges London Luton airport to abandon its recent flight path changes which have led to additional aircraft mileage above rural Huntingdonshire communities; and
- d) Requests that the Leadership write to the Civil Aviation Authority as part of their Post Implementation Review of flight path changes.

Time Allocation: 15 Minutes.

6. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

To answer any questions submitted by the public in accordance with the Constitution.

The deadline for the receipt of public questions is five days prior to the meeting and must be submitted to the Monitoring Officer.

7. QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

In accordance with the Council Procedure Rules, all questions -

- ❖ Must be relevant to an item which the Council has powers or duties;
- ❖ Must not relate to an item which is included elsewhere on the Agenda
- ❖ Should be limited to obtaining information or pressing for action; and
- ❖ Should not exceed two minutes in duration.

Questions should not divulge or require to be divulged, confidential or exempt information.

Time Allocation: 15 Minutes.

8. HUNTINGDONSHIRE PLACE STRATEGY (Pages 25 - 158)

Councillor S J Conboy, Executive Leader and Chair of the Cabinet to present the Place Strategy for Huntingdonshire – ‘Huntingdonshire Futures’ for approval by the Council.

(The Strategy was considered at the meeting of the Cabinet on 21st March 2023 and the Executive Leader will provide an update on the Cabinet’s deliberations).

Time Allocation: 45 Minutes.

9. CORPORATE PLAN 2023-28 (Pages 159 - 188)

Councillor S J Conboy, Executive Leader and Chair of the Cabinet to present the Corporate Plan 2023-28 for approval by the Council.

(The Plan was considered at the meeting of the Cabinet on 21st March 2023 and the Executive Leader will provide an update on the Cabinet's deliberations).

Time Allocation: 30 Minutes.

10. MEMBERS ALLOWANCES (Pages 189 - 236)

The Executive Leader to present a report by the Elections and Democratic Services Manager summarising the conclusions of the Independent Remuneration Panel following their recent review of Members Allowances.

Time Allocation: 20 Minutes.

11. GREAT GRANSDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (Pages 237 - 322)

Following the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan Referendum held on Thursday 9th March 2023, the Deputy Leader and Executive Councillor for Planning to present a report seeking approval to make the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan to enable it to become part of the Statutory Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

Time Allocation: 10 Minutes.

12. CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY - UPDATE

Councillor S J Conboy, Executive Leader to present on the activities of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

Councillors D B Dew and M A Hassall to provide an update on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor S J Corney to provide an update on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Audit and Governance Committee.

In light of the dates on which the meetings were held there are no decision summaries attached to the Agenda for March 2023 on this occasion. All reports will be verbal.

In accordance with the Protocol agreed at the February 2017 meeting, this item provides an opportunity for District Council Members to ask questions and comment on Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority issues.

If Members wish to raise questions or issues requiring a detailed response, it would be helpful if they can provide prior notice so that the necessary information can be obtained in advance of the meeting.

Time Allocation: 20 Minutes.

13. OUTCOMES FROM COMMITTEES AND PANELS (Pages 323 - 324)

An opportunity for Members to raise any issues or ask questions arising from recent meetings of the Council's Committees and Panels.

A list of meetings held since the last Council meeting is attached for information and Members are requested to address their questions to Committee and Panel Chairs.

Time Allocation: 10 Minutes.

14. VARIATIONS TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

Group Leaders to report on variations to the Membership of Committees and Panels if necessary.

Time Allocation: 5 Minutes.

21st day of March 2023

Oliver Morley

Head of Paid Service

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests.

Further information on [Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and other Registerable and Non-Registerable Interests is available in the Council's Constitution](#)

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The District Council also permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with [guidelines](#) agreed by the Council

Please contact Mrs Lisa Jablonska, Elections and Democratic Services Manager, Tel No. 01480 388004 / e-mail Lisa.Jablonska@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 Council.

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](#).

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.

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the COUNCIL held in the CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER / STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 22 February 2023

PRESENT: Councillor M J Burke – Chair.

Councillors T Alban, B S Banks, M L Beuttell, A M Blackwell, R J Brereton, S Bywater, S Cawley, J Clarke, S J Conboy, S J Corney, A E Costello, S J Criswell, L Davenport-Ray, D B Dew, S W Ferguson, I D Gardener, C M Gleadow, J A Gray, K P Gulson, J E Harvey, M A Hassall, S A Howell, N J Hunt, A R Jennings, P A Jordan, M Kadewere, D N Keane, J E Kerr, C Lowe, S R McAdam, B A Mickelburgh, D L Mickelburgh, S Mokbul, J Neish, Dr M Pickering, B M Pitt, T D Sanderson, D J Shaw, R A Slade, S L Taylor, I P Taylor, D Terry, C H Tevlin, S Wakeford, N Wells, G J Welton and R J West.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors E R Butler, P J Hodgson-Jones, P Kadewere and R Martin.

54 THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

A 'Thought for the Day' was presented by Ms Christine Green.

55 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 15th December 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

56 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

57 CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR'S ENGAGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair referred to the recent death of former District Councillor Paul Ursell who had served nine years as a District Councillor for the St Neots Eynesbury Ward. Following further tributes from Councillors Dew, Ferguson and Jennings, Members then observed a moments silence in memory of the former Councillor.

The Council noted those engagements attended by the Chair and Vice-Chair since the last meeting (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book).

Members were reminded that to mark the anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and to show the District Council's support to the nation, the Council would be raising the Ukrainian Flag at Pathfinder House on 24th February 2023. This would be followed by a national one-minute silence.

58 RETIREMENT OF MANAGING DIRECTOR

The Chair reminded Members that this would be the last meeting of the Council attended by the Managing Director Joanne Lancaster before her retirement at the end of the month. Tributes were then made by Councillors Conboy, Gray, Sanderson, Cawley, Wakeford, West and Neish before Mrs Lancaster was presented with a gift and scroll on behalf of the Council.

Having been moved by Councillor Conboy, it was unanimously

RESOLVED

that the Council place on record its sincere thanks and appreciation to Joanne Lancaster for the dedicated manner in which she has served as Managing Director for the District of Huntingdonshire for the years 2013-2023.

59 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chair reported that there had not been any public questions received by the deadline for consideration by the Council.

60 FINAL 2023/24 REVENUE BUDGET AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (2024/25 to 2027/28)

In conjunction with a report by the Director of Finance and Resources and a PowerPoint presentation (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book), Councillor B Mickelburgh, Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources presented to Members the 2023/24 Revenue Budget, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the period 2024/25 to 2027/28, the Fees and Charges schedule for 2023/24, the Treasury Management Strategy, the Capital Strategy, the Investment Strategy, the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement for 2023/24 and other associated matters for the Council's consideration and approval.

In accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Council also considered proposals for levels of Council Tax in 2023/24 for various parts of Huntingdonshire District.

By way of introduction, Councillor Mickelburgh proceeded to set out the guiding principles which had been used to put together the Budget for 2023/24, highlighting the current economic situation, referring to comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel in relation to fees and charges that would be reviewed through 2023/24 and explaining that the proposed Council Tax increase of 3.31% was the lowest since 2014. He further appraised Members with the difference between the budget and MTFS, explaining that the latter proved the Council was financially viable over the five-year period. Members noted that the budget proposed for 2023/24 was a balanced budget, without the requirement for use of reserves or cuts to front line services. This was largely attributable to the recruitment of an excellent Section 151 Officer and receipt of the Revenue Support Grant being higher than expected, further New Homes Bonus payments and retention of more money than expected through National

Non-Domestic Rates. Furthermore, the higher inflation had led to higher interest rates which on average would generate an additional £950k.

Members' attention was drawn to the impact on the MTFs, specifically the impact of inflation resulting in higher prices and ensuring sustainability in the budget with sufficient income without the reliance on Government grants. In the year ahead, Councillor Mickelburgh explained that there would be a Commercial Investment review and opportunities for service transformation projects, but also the requirement to react to Government changes such as the requirement to make weekly food waste collections that would have a direct impact on service delivery.

Councillor Mickelburgh moved the recommendations which were duly seconded by the Executive Leader Councillor S J Conboy who reserved his right to speak. In so doing, reminded Members that the budget and MTFs, through the previously agreed budget principles, proposed to continue to deliver front line services to residents, businesses and communities. With demand for services increasing, the pressures on the budget remained and welcomed the proposals for service transformation and using technology to delivery services more efficiently. She further appraised Members with the proposal to work more in partnership with key agencies to help those in crisis earlier and quicker. Attention was further drawn to the ambitious agenda with delivering the Place Strategy, Local Plan refresh and Climate Strategy but was confident that the proposed budget sought to underpin the Council's strategic objectives and priorities, whilst still protecting front line services.

In response and on behalf of the Conservative Group, the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group, Councillor J A Gray thanked Councillor Mickelburgh for his presentation and explanation of the rationale. He echoed the sentiments of Councillor Mickelburgh in supporting the comments on the excellent performance of the Section 151 Officer, Karen Sutton, as well as credit to her Team supporting her. He further referred to the considerable continuity of the budget as a complement in its approach to reserves, Commercial Investment need for review and welcomed contributed to this throughout the process. Councillor Gray outlined their support for the increase in Council Tax and acknowledged that the external funding from the Government had benefitted Huntingdonshire and also enterprise with a growing District. In referring to the goal of self-sufficiency, rather than waiting for the announcement from Government, Councillor Gray alluded to risks with the position changing in the future with a potential change in Government at the next election and the rise in net spending from £17m for many years to £24.1m. He questioned how the net budget would be driven down to a level of £21m, that was highlighted through comments raised at the Overview and Scrutiny Panel, with the budget allowed for salary increases for staff at a reduced rate compared to previous years that could mean a reduced salary increase to staff salaries or a reduction of staff, the latter of which would not seem sustainable with such an ambitious agenda.

Members noted their objection to the proposed green bin tax and suggested that there needed to be further debate through the Overview and Scrutiny process and the figure proposed for charging for a second green bin which would result in unintended consequences. Finally, in referring to the proposed new Corporate Plan, Councillor Gray highlighted that such plans would mean activity and new things resulting in expenditure and difficulty for Councillor Mickelburgh in

controlling the Place and Green agenda, whilst balancing all the other priorities. He further commended that the sound principles that had been developed through the Conservative administration had not been discarded or discredited and supported the sound budget, whilst reiterated his concerns with the MTFs, specifically the unnecessary green bin tax and had doubts about the deliverability of a reduction of net spending.

Councillor A Jennings echoed the sentiments of his Leader in the excellent work of the Section 151 Officer and her Team in putting together a comprehensive pack in line with the budget principles and thanked Officers involved and the Executive Councillor in allowing him to be briefed on the budget before consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Much of the content was supported, with almost £5m of extra funding available from Government for this year and the next, the budget principles were easier met with such additional funding. Concern was expressed again for the MTFs and fall in net expenditure and assumptions that could not be supported, including the compost tax that was announced in the media before Members had an opportunity to scrutinise the principle and increase in fees and charges in Operations by year four to £4.5m that was questioned as to where the additional income was to be secured from as it was felt that this could not all be attributable to the green bin tax. Concerns were also expressed in the future salary costs as highlighted by Councillor Gray being insufficient, in particular in Leisure and Health and reliance's on rent income in year three onwards that could be untested assumptions.

Councillor Jennings referred to the inappropriate use of Officer time in presenting an alternative budget at this point in the electoral cycle and as the recommendations included approval of the MTFs and the levying of additional taxes on residents, he reported that it could not be supported.

Councillor S Wakeford referred to questions raised with the former Executive Councillor, Councillor Gray, in the previous year questioning why he was not more worried about the deficit in the MTFs and suggested evasiveness of the answer, he too had concerns regarding additional charges for residents and if suggested that if he was in their position this year, they may well have been proposing something similar. In referring concerns raised regarding the lack of oversight of the proposals for the green bin tax through Overview and Scrutiny, Councillor Wakeford explained that the detail would be presented in the normal way through the cycle of meetings. In concluding, he outlined his support for the proposed balanced budget and thanked the Section 151 Officer and Executive Councillor.

Councillor T D Sanderson congratulated Councillor Mickelburgh and the Section 151 Officer for the excellent work in delivering the balanced budget. In so doing, attention was drawn to the effect of the cost of living increases, rising inflation and poverty as a result that would explain why the expenditure had increased. He further referred to suggested savings that were presented in the previous budget by Councillor Gray and welcomed further contributions by the Conservatives on this who had worked hard on this at Overview and Scrutiny to ensure that this budget would be delivered and praised all Members for their contributions.

Councillor R J West reminded Members of the Section 151 Officer's conclusion that the Council had taken proactive action to address the budgetary concerns

whilst ensuring that the planned continuation of work to find efficiencies that the Council has a sound financial base upon which it can further develop its aim of financial self-sufficiency and hoped that the Administration did not lose that opportunity.

It having been previously moved and seconded, upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED

- a) that the proposed overall Budget 2023/24 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024/25 to 2027/28 (Appendix 1) to include the Revenue Budgets at Section 2, the Capital Programme at Section 3 and the 2023/24 Fees and Charges at Section 7, Annex A be approved;
- b) that an increase of 3.31% Council Tax for 2023/24 be approved, i.e., the Band D Charge will increase to £155.86;
- c) ***that the Council note the Council Tax Base for the whole Council area and individual Towns and Parishes (para 6.2) as approved by Chairman of Corporate Governance Committee and Section 151 Officer on the 6 December 2022 (and subsequent publication as a key decision);***
The tax base (T) which is the amount anticipated from a District Council Tax of £1 is £65,795.
- d) that the following amounts calculated by the Council for 2023/24 in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 (the Act), the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and associated regulations: -
 - i. the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act **Gross revenue expenditure including benefits, Town/Parish Precepts - £83,509,858**
 - ii. the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) (a) to (d) of the Act **Revenue income including reimbursement of benefits, specific and general grants, use of reserves and any transfers from the collection fund - £64,785,038**
 - iii. the amount by which the aggregate at (i) above exceeds the aggregate at (ii) above in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act
This is the “Council Tax Requirement” including Parish / Town Precepts (item i minus item ii). It is the cash sum to be funded from District, Town and Parish Council Taxes - £18,724,820
 - iv. the Council Tax requirement for 2023/24 divided by the tax base (T) in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act
District plus average Town/Parish precepts (item iii divided by District tax base) - £284.59

- v. the aggregate of all “Special items” referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act.

The total value of Parish/Town precepts included in i and iii above - £8,469,932

- vi. the Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2023/24 being item iv less item v divided by the tax base (T) in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act.

The District Council’s Band D Tax for 2023/24 - £155.86

- vii. the basic amounts of Council Tax for 2023/24 for those parts of the District to which one or more special items (Parish/Town precepts) relate in accordance with Section 34 (3) of the Act are shown by adding the Huntingdonshire District Council amount to the appropriate Parish Council amount in column “band D” set out in Table 1 attached.

- viii. the amounts to be taken into account for 2023/24 in respect of categories of dwellings listed in particular valuation bands in accordance with Section 36 (1) of the Act are shown by adding the Huntingdonshire District Council amount to the Parish Council amount for each of the valuation bands in the columns “bands A to H” set out in Table 1 attached.

- e) that the amounts of the precept issued to the Council by Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority and for each Parish Council for each of the categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands in accordance with Section 40 of the Act shown in para 6.3 attached be noted;

- f) that having regard to the calculations above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Act, hereby sets the figures shown in para 6.4 as the amounts of Council Tax for 2023/24 for each of the categories of dwelling shown; **This is the total Council Tax to be collected, incorporating the requirements of all of the relevant bodies, for each town or parish area.**

- g) The Council notes that, in accordance with Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the basic amount of Council Tax for 2023/24 is not excessive. **The basic amount at b(vi) above is not excessive as defined by the Government.**

Tax Base 2023/24

Abbots Ripton	139
Abbotsley	268
Alconbury	545
Alconbury Weston	296
Alwalton	123
Barham & Woolley	30
Bluntisham	773
Brampton	2528

Brington & Molesworth	189
Broughton	101
Buckden (incorporating Diddington)	1337
Buckworth	53
Bury	782
Bythorn & Keyston	156
Catworth	166
Chesterton	66
Colne	392
Conington	75
Covington	47
Denton & Caldecote	30
Earith	604
Easton	84
Ellington	241
Elton	298
Farcet	536
Fenstanton	1343
Folksworth & Washingley	355
Glatton	133
Godmanchester	3144
Grafham	234
Great & Little Gidding	126
Great Gransden	506
Great Paxton	375
Great Staughton	344
Haddon	22
Hail Weston	244
Hamerton & Steeple Gidding	56
Hemingford Abbots	330
Hemingford Grey	1299
Hilton	451
Holme	257
Holywell-cum-Needingworth	1075
Houghton & Wyton	809
Huntingdon	7732
Kimbolton & Stonely	605
Kings Ripton	84
Leighton Bromswold	81
Little Paxton	1611
Morborne	13
Offord Cluny & Offord D'Arcy	549
Old Weston	107
Oldhurst	104
Perry	263
Pidley-cum-Fenton	197
Ramsey	3161
Sawtry	2046
Sibson-cum-Stibbington	237
Somersham	1410

Southoe & Midloe	158
Spaldwick	257
St Ives	6059
St Neots	11404
Stilton	797
Stow Longa	73
The Stukeleys	1266
Tilbrook	129
Toseland	38
Upton & Coppingford	94
Upwood & The Raveleys	450
Warboys	1608
Waresley-cum-Tetworth	145
Water Newton	39
Winwick	56
Wistow	228
Woodhurst	158
Woodwalton	82
Wyton-on-the-Hill	442
Yaxley	2997
Yelling	153
Total	65,795

h) that the 2023/24 Treasury Management, Capital and Investment Strategies, MRP Statement and Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy be approved (Appendix 2).

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the following Members voted for, against or abstained from the Motion -

For the Motion – *Banks, Blackwell, Burke, Conboy, Davenport-Ray, Dew, Ferguson, Gleadow, Harvey, Hassall, Howell, Hunt, Jordan, Kadewere M, Kerr, McAdam, B Mickelburgh, D Mickelburgh, Mokbul, Pickering, Pitt, Sanderson, Shaw, Slade, I Taylor, S Taylor, Terry, Tevlin, Wakeford, Wells*

Against the Motion – *Alban, Beuttell, Brereton, Bywater, Cawley, Clarke, Corney, Costello, Criswell, Gardener, Gray, Gulson, Jennings, Keane, Lowe, Neish, Welton, West*

Abstentions - *None*

61 CLIMATE STRATEGY

In conjunction with a report by the Assistant Director Strategic Insight and Delivery (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Executive Councillor for Climate and Environment, Councillor L Davenport-Ray presented details of the Council's Climate Strategy. In so doing, she thanked those that attended the Climate Strategy sessions over the Summer and feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel that had helped inform its development. Attention was drawn to the two main aims of the Strategy, to reduce the Council's

emissions to net zero by 2040 and use the position of leadership to encourage residents, businesses and other authorities to take climate action. In referring to the direct control over the first aim, Councillor Davenport-Ray suggested that the second aim could have a much greater impact on climate change globally.

With reference to the motion approved at Council on 12 October 2022 on the cost of living and climate crisis (Minute No. 22/34(b) refers) Members were informed that it was more than just cutting carbon and reducing global warming, it was concerning protecting the Council and residents from fluctuating fuel prices and the effects of extreme weather.

Members were appraised with details of the six objectives of the Climate Strategy that had been influenced by input from residents, businesses, Town and Parish Councils and young people and their top priority for tackling climate change was changing rules for new developments to meet sustainability standards, therefore the climate work must influence the Local Plan review, closely followed by a requirement for restoring nature and planting trees. This has resulted in the upcoming Biodiversity for All Programme to work with local communities to restore nature across the District. It was further explained that the six objectives had also been based on evidence with transport being the highest priority to focus upon in terms of carbon emissions.

Members noted that the Strategy also contained details of a trajectory of how the Council would lead operations to net zero by 2040, whilst ensuring that this was flexible as different technologies become available and evolve over the next 17 years and had resulted in a proposed annual review through a Climate Action Plan.

In referring to the budget for the Climate Strategy proposals, much of which was contained in the appropriate service areas annual budget as well as £150k allocated for a climate action accelerator reserve earmarked as necessary to unlock external funding. Members were further appraised with existing and proposed schemes throughout the District to tackle climate action.

Councillor T D Alban welcomed the proposal to build upon the green inheritance that had been left from when the Conservatives were in office and throughout the discussions on the proposals through Overview and Scrutiny it was evident that with changing technologies and solutions, the Council must be ready to adapt to that and welcomed the cross-party support tackling climate change. He highlighted his concerns with the ethical dimension of the proposals, as well as the reporting process, but was confident that these issues could be addressed through the Overview and Scrutiny process.

Councillor S Howell outlined her support for the Climate Strategy and referred to the three key Council priorities of shifting to a renewable energy system and reducing energy use, decarbonising the fleet and procuring wisely and fully supported the work with local communities to drive this change for more sustainable future.

Councillor S Cawley outlined his support for the Strategy and thanked the Executive Councillor for her time in briefing him in advance but reminded her of their discussions that it provided a good base, there needed to be more detail on the work to be done and how this was going to be achieved, whilst drawing attention

to the proposal of tackling a climate emergency was not immediately evident as one of the first actions would not commence until February 2024 and urged that consideration be given to identifying actions sooner rather than later.

Councillor J A Gray indicated his support for the Strategy with general recognition cross-party and alluded to potential missed opportunities with the budget as to whether actions needed to be taken faster to address the perceived lack of pace of tackling a climate emergency. He further welcomed the annual update and a feedback loop to a Group in Overview and Scrutiny.

Councillor S Bywater encouraged Members to continue with their moral duty to ensure that young people are engaged on this journey to continue to drive forward the change.

Councillor S Taylor thanked the Officers and Executive Councillor in the speed of compiling the Strategy and commended them for their hard work.

In concluding, Councillor Davenport-Ray thanked Members for their feedback, whereupon it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Climate Crisis and Ecological Emergency be formally recognised;
- (b) that the Council's Climate Strategy in response to the Climate Emergency be adopted;
- (c) that the initial Climate Action Plan, with annual refresh in conjunction with our communities, businesses and partners through the Climate Conversation, be adopted; and
- (d) that progress be reported annually to Overview and Scrutiny, with more frequent collaboration with the Overview and Scrutiny Climate Working Group.

62 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2023-24

In compliance with the requirements of Sections 38-43 of the Localism Act 2011, Councillor M A Hassall the Executive Councillor for Corporate and Shared Services presented a report by the Strategic HR Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) in connection with the District Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24.

The Statement, which is required to be approved by Council by 31st March 2023 and produced annually, details the Council's policies relating to Officer remuneration.

It was moved by Councillor Hassall, duly seconded by Councillor Shaw and

RESOLVED

that the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 be approved.

63 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS TO THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Councillor N Wells, Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee, presented a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) proposing the appointment of up to two co-opted non-voting Independent Members to the Corporate Governance Committee, which was expected to be the subject of national legislation once parliamentary time permitted.

Having been advised of the intended benefits of the proposals including additional knowledge and expertise for the Committee, the Council were advised that the Corporate Governance Committee at their last meeting had given the Chair and Vice-Chair delegated authority in conjunction with the Committee to finalise the detail of the proposals ahead of the commencement of the recruitment process subject to Council approval.

It was moved by Councillor Wells, duly seconded by Councillor Hassall and

RESOLVED

- a) that the appointment of up to two non-voting Independent Members to the Corporate Governance Committee be approved;
- b) that a variation to the membership of the Corporate Governance Committee as set out in Part 3 – Responsibility for Council Functions of the Council's Constitution be approved; and
- c) that the necessary amendments be made to the Council's Constitution.

64 QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

Arising from a question from Councillor M L Beuttell on the proposals for a green bin tax and concern with communication following the information being presented in the media before Overview and Scrutiny, the Executive Leader, Councillor S J Conboy, explained that the MTFs did not contain the level of detail on the proposal at this stage as there were so many variables to consider, including awaiting the detail from Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and explained that due process would be given to Overview and Scrutiny once this information was available for further consideration and welcomed their engagement.

In response to a question from Councillor D Mickelburgh on support for residents off-grid tackling the energy crisis such as those in mobile home parks and boats, Councillor S Ferguson, Executive Councillor for Customer Services, explained that the Government had announced two further energy support schemes to address these needs that included a £400 payment to residents in a mobile home or boat administered directly from the Government via a phone line to be launched on 27th February 2023 to claim. Residents without a mains gas connection, there would be a similar policy launched by the Government of a £200 payment available and an Officer had been appointed to support a project team to check the validity of the claims despite it being administered through the Government. He further reminded Members of this request to identify such residents in their ward to signpost them to this support scheme.

Following a question raised by Councillor S Cawley specifically raised by residents in his Ward in the village of Ellington and ongoing issues with Buffalod and requirement for Planning Enforcement action, Councillor T D Sanderson, Executive Councillor for Planning, welcomed sight of the issues and undertook to take up this issue with the Planning Enforcement Team.

Councillor D B Dew raised a question in relation to the timetable for the Local Plan re-launch and opportunity for Members to get involved, whereby Councillor Sanderson explained that there would be plenty of opportunities to get involved, starting with Overview and Scrutiny on 1st March 2023 that will consider the Local Development Scheme that sets out the scope of work for future development plan preparation setting out evidence based and supporting documents required as well as identifying the risks and resources involved in producing the Local Plan. Discussion will also be held at this meeting on the draft settlement and hierarchy methodology looking at call sites. He further reminded Members of the length of the process, at least for the next four years and beyond and welcomed contributions from all Members in the process.

Arising from a question by Councillor J Kerr on an update on One Leisure footfall since the price increases in January 2023, Councillor S Taylor, Executive Councillor for Leisure, Waste and Streetscene, acknowledged that Councillor D Keane had contacted her raising the same question. It was reported that overall admissions across One Leisure facilities were up year on year by 209k and highlighted the main areas of growth in casual swimming, swim courses, sports hall and aerobic classes. Full details of the impact would be circulated to all Members after the meeting.

In response to a question raised by Councillor M Pickering on progress with the backlog of planning applications and planning enforcement, Councillor T D Sanderson highlighted that cases had been reduced and was proud of the work that the Team had achieved to date and reassured Members that with investment in the service he was confident that this would continue to improve.

Arising from a question by Councillor C Tevlin on the efforts by the District Council to tackle the cost of living crisis with the assistance provided for warm hubs and future plans for reviewing the warm hubs initiative particularly in the context of the Community Chest Grant Funding, Councillor B Pitt, Executive Councillor for Community and Health, reported upon the success of the national warm hubs initiative largely driven by residents and community groups. He drew attention to the preference for a legacy for this project which not only provided focus as a warm space but also provided support for community groups going forward. He referred to the Council's commitment to support these initiatives going forward, largely supported by the £500 grants through the Community Chest Grant Funding and explained that the criteria for such grants was under review.

Councillor A Jennings raised a question in relation to an update on the market towns initiative and whether the meeting on the St Neots Regeneration Project had taken place or the likelihood, following it being reported at the Council meeting in October 2022 that a meeting would be held to update Members. In response, Councillor S Wakeford, Executive Councillor for Jobs, Economy and Housing, undertook to provide detail on the spend directly to Councillor Jennings

and further detail would be reported at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 1st March 2023. Councillor Wakeford was unable to provide the detail on the dates of the stakeholder meetings that had taken place.

Arising from a question by Councillor D Mickelburgh on an update of progress with Civil Parking Enforcement, Councillor S Taylor reported that the Council's website has been updated and a revised commencement date of October 2024 had been confirmed based upon a review by Cambridgeshire County Council of their available resources. It was further reported that on-street survey work in the District had been completed and a query list detailing where signs and lines were not up to standard or the restriction was unclear had been generated and submitted to the County Council and they had been working through the list to inform the remedial works required. Work was also underway with the draft Agency Agreement and Service Level Agreement between the District Council and County Council.

65 CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY - UPDATE

In conjunction with the decision summaries of the recent meetings of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, Councillor S J Conboy presented an update of their activities. Copies of the decision summaries are appended in the Minute Book. Councillor Conboy acquainted Members with details of their budget and financial management, the approval of a Mayoral precept to specifically fund bus franchising and work streams under the Improvement Plan and challenges for the Board to continue to work together. In response to a question by Councillor S Ferguson, Councillor Conboy assured Members that she would continue to use her influence on the Board to support bus services and not seek further cuts. Councillor J A Gray raised a question in relation to any update on the conclusion of the investigation of the Mayor and the impact that this was having on progress of the Combined Authority compared to other Combined Authorities, whereby Councillor Conboy reported that she had personally raised this with the Chief Executive and Improvement Board and urged them that the matter needed resolving that would also hopefully resolve the ongoing party politics issues.

Councillor M A Hassall provided an update on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee and drew Members attention to the three main recommendations of ensuring the commitment of spending of bus services for the next two years, risk slippage on capital projects and the Mayoral precept, as well as highlighting further detail of the Improvement Plan and review to be undertaken on committee effectiveness.

Members were provided with an update on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Audit and Governance Committee by Councillor S Corney. Particular attention was drawn to their recent training on the process of holding a standards hearing, bureaucracy in relation to the procurement process and help for small businesses as well as the smaller parishes and reported friction from Ernst and Young directly related to the delay in getting document signed off in the absence of the Mayor.

66 CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY MEMBERSHIP AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS

Following recent changes to the political membership of the District Council which had necessitated the need to make changes to the Council's nominations from the Conservative Group to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor J Neish be nominated to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a replacement for Councillor D B Dew, with Councillor S Corney nominated as the new substitute member.

67 OUTCOMES FROM COMMITTEES AND PANELS

A copy of the list of meetings held since the last meeting of the Council held on 15th December 2022 is appended in the Minute Book and Members were advised that any issues or questions could be raised in relation to these meetings.

With reference to the recent meeting of the Employment Committee and the deferral of an item on time off for trade union duties, Councillor Cawley sought and received clarification that this would be given further consideration prior to the Managing Director's imminent departure, whereby she noted the reminder and committed to providing an answer.

68 REPRESENTATION OF POLITICAL GROUPS ON DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEES, ETC

Following a recent change in the political membership of the Council, a report was submitted by the Elections and Democratic Services Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) relating to the principles and proportionality to be applied to the appointment of Committees and Panels in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Part II of the Local Government Act 2000.

Whereupon it was

RESOLVED

that the allocation of seats on District Council Committees and Panels to political groups and non-aligned Members be determined as set out in the report now submitted.

69 VARIATIONS TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

Further to Minute Number 68 and the report on the representation of political groups on District Council Committees, on the recommendation of Councillor S J Conboy, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor D B Dew be confirmed as appointed and retained to the membership of the Development Management Committee as a representative of the Liberal Democrat Group.

The meeting ended at 9.48pm.

Chair.

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CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR'S ENGAGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS 23 February – 29 March 2023

Date:	Event:	Venue:
<u>February</u>		
Friday 24-Feb-23	*Ukrainian Flag Raising (One-year anniversary of Russia/Ukraine war)	Pathfinder House
<u>March</u>		
Saturday 11-Mar-23	*Mayor of Huntingdon's Charity Day and Auction	Huntingdon
Monday 13-Mar-23	*Fly the Commonwealth Flag (City of Peterborough)	Peterborough
Saturday 25-Mar-23	Mayor of St Neots' Charity Ball	St Neots
Sunday 26-Mar-23	St Ives Civic Sunday Parade & Service	St Ives
Sunday 26-Mar-23	*Raunds Civic Service	Raunds

Notes:

- 1. The above events have occurred since the last Full Council held on 22 February 2023.*
- 2. *Events attended by the Vice-Chair on behalf of the Chair.*

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Public
Key Decision – Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Huntingdonshire Place Strategy

Meeting/Date: Scrutiny (Growth & Partnerships) – 1 March 2023
Cabinet – 21 March 2023
Council – 29 March 2023

Executive Portfolio: Cllr Sarah Conboy, Executive Leader, Chair of the Cabinet and Executive Councillor for Place

Report by: Oliver Morley, Interim Managing Director

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

The report seeks endorsement of the shared Place Strategy for Huntingdonshire, known as Huntingdonshire Futures with the recommendation for it to be approved by Council.

Huntingdonshire Futures is a statement of shared aspirations for the future that seeks to improve the lives of all our residents, communities and businesses.

This is the culmination of many months of engagement with residents, partners, elected representatives and other stakeholders to deliver a brighter future for Huntingdonshire via five outcomes; Pride in Place, Environment Innovation, Inclusive Economy, Health Embedded and Travel Transformed.

Huntingdonshire Futures will guide future strategy and policy developments and investment decisions by the Council and partners, enabling more effective delivery of integrated interventions that better serve the current and future needs of residents, communities and businesses.

The adoption of Huntingdonshire Futures is a significant milestone that underlines the Council's commitment to working differently with partners and stakeholders to better deliver our shared ambitions and outcomes, being an enabler supporting action within our communities and across our partners and influencing the actions of others.

The Council is committed to pro-actively working with partners and stakeholders throughout 2023/24 with an emphasis on embedding partnership working, agreeing short term actions, monitoring progress and how we can learn from what is working well and could be even better.

Recommendation:

Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

- Note the extensive engagement and work with partners, stakeholders and residents across Huntingdonshire to develop the shared Place Strategy known as Huntingdonshire Futures.
- Endorse and commit to the outcomes and ambitions set out in Huntingdonshire Futures.
- Recommend to Council the adoption of Huntingdonshire Futures.

Council is RECOMMENDED to:

- adopt the Place Strategy for Huntingdonshire - Huntingdonshire Futures

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report seeks endorsement of the shared Place Strategy for Huntingdonshire, known as Huntingdonshire Futures with the recommendation for it to be approved by Council.
- 1.2 The adoption of Huntingdonshire Futures is a significant milestone that underlines the Council's commitment to:
- Taking a holistic focus to the whole place, not just individual locations or issues.
 - Working differently with partners and stakeholders to better deliver our shared ambitions and outcomes, recognising our different roles, responsibilities and networks.
 - Engaging differently and using resident and stakeholder feedback to inform the development of our own strategies and policies.
 - Being an enabler supporting action within our communities and across our partners and influencing the actions of others.
 - Continuing pro-active working with partners and stakeholders over the coming months focussing on agreeing short term key actions, monitoring and how we can learn from what is working well and could be even better.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Huntingdonshire is already one of the best places to live in the country, but we want to make sure this is true for future generations too with a greener, fairer future for all. That is why we have developed Huntingdonshire Futures, that will shape not only the future of Huntingdonshire but also the future activities of the Council.
- 2.2 Huntingdonshire Futures has been developed collaboratively using a variety of bespoke engagement techniques along with existing mechanisms. It has also drawn on existing data, intelligence, insight and strategies whilst adopting a fresh approach to challenge current thinking and to take into account future societal, lifestyle and technological advancements and changes.

The **aims** and **benefits** of developing Huntingdonshire Futures are:

- To create a statement of shared aspirations for the future of our place, people, economy and the environment, which improves the lives of all our residents, communities and businesses
- To unite stakeholders through a shared sense of direction
- Reduce duplication of effort and funding across the Council and partners by addressing shared issues and priorities in an integrated and holistic way thus encouraging more effective decision making and use of limited public funds
- To guide future strategy and policy developments and investment decisions by the Council and partners enabling more effective delivery of integrated interventions that better serve the current and future needs of residents, communities and businesses.

3. SHAPING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER

3.1 Huntingdonshire Futures has been co-created with residents, businesses, partners, utilities providers and public sector bodies setting out their views about the type of place we all want Huntingdonshire to be.

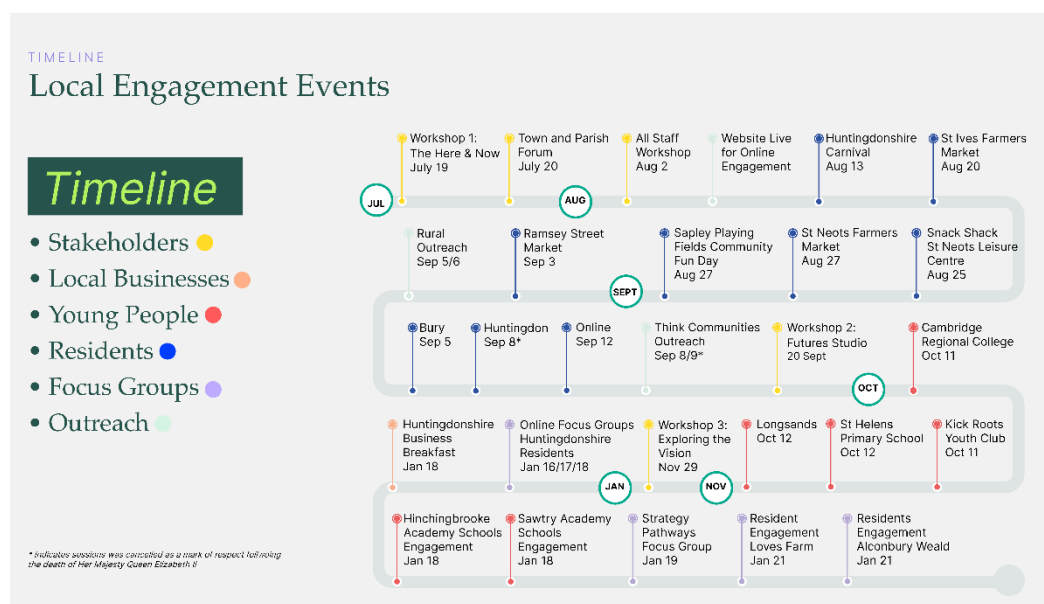
3.2 A broad approach has been used, utilising a range of tools and techniques in order to develop a clear understanding of the current perceptions, strengths and challenges we face as an area as well as identifying where there was consensus and dissonance on different aspects of Huntingdonshire. All of these processes have informed Huntingdonshire Futures which defines the high-level ambitions for Huntingdonshire, articulating our long-term goals.

3.3 Diagram 1 provides a high-level overview of the iterative nature of this engagement which has included:

- Three half day in person stakeholder workshops with representatives from nearly 70 organisations taking place in July, September and November 2022.
- A Town & Parish council in person workshop in July 2022 and online update and feedback sessions on 17th October 2022 and 25th January 2023
- 481 resident conversations were held with residents at one of four pop up exhibitions in locations such as Huntingdon carnival and Ramsey market, attending virtual or physical focus groups, engaging through existing community groups such as Sapley park fun day and conversations in rural community meeting places such as benches in parks in Godmanchester, Hilton, Kimbolton, Sawtry, and Stilton. This initial phase of engagement focused on understanding and exploring what people feel about Huntingdonshire now; their priorities for change around the four key themes of economy, environment, people and community, and place and what if we did things differently.
- During October 2022 there was a particular focus on engaging young people. This engagement was undertaken alongside the Huntingdonshire climate strategy engagement work. 147 children and young people participated in 'what if' engagement exercises through a programme with schools and groups including Kick Root Youth Club, Cambridge Regional College, Longsands Academy and St Helen's School.
- In January 2023 258 residents aged between 11 and 94 years joined listening sessions to which focussed on understanding and exploring how participants thought and felt about the draft place strategy and the role of the community through a combination of online and face to face focus groups including students in Years 7 to 9 at Sawtry Village Academy and Years 7-12 at Hinchingbrooke Academy, Ghanaian Community Association, 3cs Clon Caring Community and newer residents at Loves Farm and Alconbury Weald.

- A business breakfast workshop in January 2023 with over 30 attendees providing an opportunity to exploring feedback on the draft place strategy and the role of the business community in supporting the delivery.
- Two workshops for hdc members in September 2023 and January 2023 initially exploring opportunities and challenges and then testing the draft strategy.
- Engaging existing partnerships and forums such as the huntingdonshire place board and hunts forum of voluntary organisations.

4. DIAGRAM 1: STAKEHOLDER AND RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT IN DEVELOPING HUNTINGDONSHIRE FUTURES



4.1 Throughout the entire period, thoughts, ideas and feedback have been gathered online at [Huntingdonshire Futures](https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/futures). Social Media has been used to promote opportunities for residents to find a pop-up exhibition, sign up to a focus group or find out what is online and partners received regular sharing of updates on activities and progress via the Place email address Place@huntingdonshire.gov.uk which has acted as a single contact point throughout this process.

4.2 A summary report of stakeholder engagement activity can be found at Appendix 1 along with a report on resident conversations at Appendix 2.

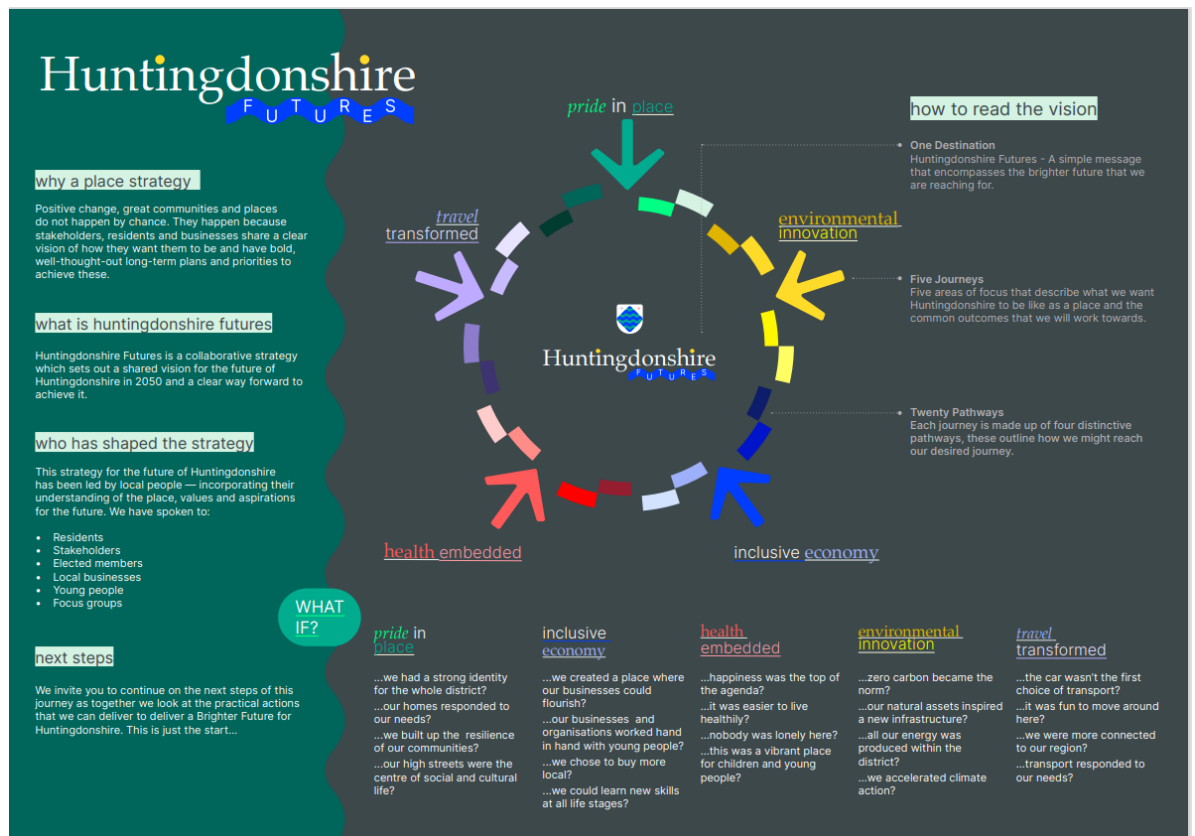
5. KEY ELEMENTS OF HUNTINGDONSHIRE FUTURES

5.1 As a result of feedback received in early 2023 on the Huntingdonshire Futures Key Directions document a number of amendments have been made to Huntingdonshire Futures.

5.2 Huntingdonshire Futures is structured around one **Destination**, five **Journeys** and twenty **Pathways**.

- 5.3 The **Destination** is a simple message that encompasses the brighter future that we are reaching for.
- 5.4 The five **Journeys** underpin the Destination, describing what we want Huntingdonshire to be like as a place and the common outcomes that we want to work towards. The Journeys are:
1. Pride in Place
 2. Environment Innovation
 3. Inclusive Economy
 4. Health Embedded
 5. Travel Transformed
- 5.5 Each Journey is made up of four distinctive **Pathways**, these outline how we might reach our desired journey. There are currently twenty Pathways. Diagram 2 shows how this all fits together.

Diagram 2: Huntingdonshire Futures Overview



- 5.6 An example of one of the Journeys and associated Pathways is shown below. The draft Huntingdonshire Futures Strategy can be found at Appendix 3.

Diagram 3: Journey and Pathway example



6. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 6.1 Progress on the development of the Place Strategy was discussed at Overview and Scrutiny at its meeting on 4th January 2023. All Members were also invited to attend a second workshop on the 31st January 2023 to hear an overview of headline feedback received from stakeholders and residents and to discuss revisions to the Place Strategy presented in this paper.
- 6.2 The Panel discussed the Place Strategy at its meeting on 1st March 2023.
- 6.3 Councillor Gardener expressed concern that engagement had mainly been focused on urban areas of the district so far but was pleased to see that it was planned to consult with rural areas which make up a large proportion of the district. The Panel were reassured that this work was ongoing in rural areas and would continue to be an ongoing dialogue to ensure engagement across the whole of the district.
- 6.4 Following a further question from Councillor Gardener regarding the change in operator for the TING service which has created confusion and loss of confidence amongst residents, the Panel heard that this would be further investigated and reported back.
- 6.5 The Panel were advised, following a question from Councillor Wells regarding the Council taking a more active role in rewilding and biodiversity it's own green spaces and across the district. This point was noted and the Panel were advised that the team would take this away and ensure that commitment is as strong in this document as in other supporting strategies.

- 6.6 Councillor Gray expressed concerns on the detail contained within the Strategy and that it appeared that a lot of detail was still work in progress. The Panel heard that the Strategy is a long term vision but encapsulates feedback received so far, and will continue to adapt as the conversation continues. The Council is facilitating this plan but will work with partners to implement this over the coming years. The Panel were assured that more refinement and detailed actions would follow alongside the implementation of the Corporate Plan. Councillor Gray expressed further concern that some of the Strategy may be aspirations of the coalition but questioned if this was what residents of the district wanted, especially if public funds would be used to implement them. The Panel were assured that engagement with residents would continue to ensure the best interests of both residents and the district.
- 6.7 Councillor Gardener enquired how the Strategy would be updated following the proposed engagement with rural areas later in the year. The Panel heard that whilst there were no further mass rounds of consultation planned, there would be continued engagement alongside the help of all Councillors and the Strategy would be subject to constant reflection alongside an annual review process.
- 6.8 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for the Cabinet to make a decision on the recommendations.

7. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

- 7.1 The biggest risks are maintaining momentum after the intensive period of strategy development, ability to sharpen the focus on action and impacts whilst balancing the need to build on the new approach of partners working together. It would be easier for the Council to push ahead and take forward Huntingdonshire Futures on its own, it is harder and will take longer to work collaboratively to maximise benefits of working together to better deliver agreed outcomes. Mitigations include Huntingdonshire Futures journeys and pathways having been mapped across the Council's new Corporate Plan so the contribution of the Council is clear. The project plan for the next phase will be agreed in quarter 1, 23/24.

8. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 8.1 Workshops, forums and conversations with partners that focus on refining actions, testing new ways of working and progress reporting will take place from quarter 2 onwards in 23/24.
- 8.2 It should be noted that the feedback received during the development of Huntingdonshire Futures has been used to inform the development of the Council's recently adopted Climate Strategy, new Corporate Plan and issues explored in the Local Plan. It will also be used to inform the refresh of the Council's Community Strategy.

9. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 9.1 The delivery of the Place Strategy is a key action within the Council's current 2022/23 Corporate Plan. Feedback received through the development of Huntingdonshire Futures has informed the Council's new three-year Corporate Plan which is also being presented to Council on the 29 March 2023. There is strong alignment between the themes within Huntingdonshire Futures and the Council's new Corporate Plan, with mapping of specific actions and next steps.
- 9.2 Huntingdonshire Futures will directly deliver against the Council's new 23/24 Corporate Plan outcome priorities:
- Priority 1 – Improving quality of life for local people
 - Priority 2 – Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations
 - Priority 3 - Deliver good quality, high Value for Money services with good control and compliance with statutory obligations

10. CONSULTATION

- 10.1 Please refer paragraphs 3.1 to 3.5 on engagement and consultation activity along with Appendices 1 and 2.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

12. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The Council's 2023/24 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) earmarked £100K to support the implementation of Huntingdonshire Futures, this funding will be used to progress further development work.
- 12.2 The intention is to use Huntingdonshire Futures to inform Council strategies, policies and approach to working differently with partners and residents.

13. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 As set out in the Community (Transition) Strategy 2021-23, the Council are committed to supporting residents through a positive and ongoing working relationship with local communities. Tackling health improvements has featured strongly in the Huntingdonshire Futures conversation, resulting in one of the five Journeys focussing on **Health Embedded**. Pathways for action include a focus on happiness, where it is easier to live healthily, where nobody is lonely and the area being a vibrant place for children and young people. Support in these areas will directly contribute to positive health outcomes.

14. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 In December 2021 the Council adopted a core set of environmental principles, the Council are now committed to the development of a new Huntingdonshire Climate Strategy. In October 2022 the Council passed a Cost of Living and Climate Change motion that recognises that the current cost of living and climate crises require joint attention to support the wellbeing of residents and businesses. In February 2023 Council formally recognised the Climate Crisis and Ecological Emergency, adopted the Council's Climate Strategy underlining the organisations commitment to:

- Setting a positive example through its actions to be a net carbon zero Council by 2040
- Acting as an enabler supporting action within our communities and across our partners
- Acting as an encourager to those that live, work and visit Huntingdonshire to take climate action and reduce carbon emissions

- 14.2 Within Huntingdonshire Futures one of the five Journeys focuses on **Environmental Innovation**, with pathways for action including zero carbon becoming the norm, our natural assets inspiring new infrastructure, all energy being produced within the district and we accelerated climate action.

15. EQUALITIES

- 15.1 The Council has a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 15.2 Good planning and effective regeneration can improve environments and opportunities for communities experiencing disadvantage. Planning which does not adequately engage with or consider the needs of local communities is unlikely to improve their life chances and may further entrench area-based disadvantage.

15.3 The development of Huntingdonshire Futures has deliberately sought to engage a broad range of groups and stakeholders as outlined in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.7.

16. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

16.1 To endorse Huntingdonshire Futures with the recommendation for it to be approved by Council.

17. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Stakeholder Engagement Summary Report

Appendix 2 – Resident Conversations about the future of Huntingdonshire

Appendix 3 – Draft Place Strategy: Huntingdonshire Futures

CONTACT OFFICER

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Appendix 1: Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

Introduction and Background

Huntingdonshire Futures is being developed in collaboration with others. Throughout the engagement, we have sought to bring together residents, businesses, partners, utilities providers and public sector bodies to set out their views about the future.

At the heart of Huntingdonshire Futures is understanding what is most important to residents, communities and stakeholders within our towns and rural areas and across Huntingdonshire. Therefore, this summary report sets out the stakeholder engagement activity to date and outlines some of the feedback we have heard. There is a separate report that outlines all resident engagement.

Engagement activity to date

A broad approach has been used, utilising a range of tools and techniques in order to develop a clear understanding of the current perceptions, strengths and challenges we face as an area as well as identifying where there was consensus and dissonance on different aspects of Huntingdonshire. This has included:

- **Stakeholder workshops**

Three half day stakeholder workshops, which took place on 19 July 2022, 20 September 2022 and 29 November 2022. These were hosted at the Burgess Hall, St Ives with representatives from over 70 organisations including NHS, Police, Fire & Rescue, the further education Sector, schools, Cambridgeshire County Council, utilities providers, businesses, along with a broad range of community and voluntary organisations.

The first workshop looked at the here and now to understand what Huntingdonshire is like today. The second workshop focussed on the future with participants being inspired to think about the changes that will impact on or transform Huntingdonshire in the years up to 2050. Finally, the third workshop rounded things off by exploring the emerging Place Strategy, with participants asked to feedback on the developing themes.

Sessions with existing partnerships and forums such as the Huntingdonshire Place Board also took place on 24 November 2022 and 26 January 2023 and the Hunts Forum on 28 November 2022.

- **Town and Parish Council Engagement**

Town and Parish Councils are vital to our district. They are key stakeholders in Huntingdonshire Futures. An in-person Town and Parish Council engagement session took place at the Burgess Hall on 20 July 2022. This workshop explored the challenges and opportunities facing Huntingdonshire and captured ideas about what actions could address these in the short and longer term. Online sessions which included feedback on what we had heard as well as the emerging Place Strategy Structure were held on the 17 October 2022 and 25 January 2023. At these sessions, details were provided on how Towns & Parishes could feed into the development of the strategy. A future session is also planned in April 2023.

On 8 August 2022 and 21 October 2022, we approached Towns and Parishes via email to ask for help and support in encouraging and enabling their communities to take part in shaping the emerging strategy. In order to explore and understand what is important to residents both now and in the future, we requested information on any local community events, groups, or organisations in their area with whom we could work with.

- **Business engagement**

Huntingdonshire District Council invited senior business leaders from all over the district to a business breakfast on 18 January 2023. This event was organised to show how committed the Council is to support and grow the local economy and also to give business leaders the chance to provide feedback on the development of the emerging Place Strategy. Thirty delegates attended the session where the structure of the Place strategy was tested; with a focus on the Place Strategy journeys and pathways, how businesses could get involved and how the Council could work smarter and more collaboratively with businesses.

- **Member engagement**

Engagement with Huntingdonshire District Councillors has also taken place throughout the development of the Place Strategy. On 27 September 2022, the Member workshop hosted in the Civic Suite at Pathfinder House gave Members the chance to learn more about the opportunities and challenges facing Huntingdonshire. These discussions resulted in ideas and observations concerning how we could address potential short- and long-term solutions through the implementation of the Place Strategy. At the next Member workshop on 31 January 2023, Members reviewed the comments residents and stakeholders provided during December and January and discussed potential revisions to the strategy.

- **Online engagement**

Throughout the entire engagement process, thoughts, ideas and feedback have been gathered online via the Huntingdonshire Futures website which went live in August 2023 and has had 2,034 site visits. Around 80 social media posts have been shared across the council's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts, with Facebook posts reaching an average of around 1,500 people per post. The council has also been tagged in social media posts from stakeholders who have attended the workshops and focus groups. Social Media promotion has also involved sharing posts with partners such as Town and Parish Councils, the voluntary and community sector has been used to promote opportunities for residents to find out more.

Thoughts, ideas, and feedback were gathered online during the entire engagement process through the Huntingdonshire Futures website, which went live in August 2023 and has received 2,034 site visits. The council's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn accounts have collectively posted about 80 social media messages, with Facebook posts on average reaching around 1,500 users. Stakeholders who attended the workshops and focus groups have also mentioned the council in social media posts. Social media promotion has also involved sharing posts with Town and Parish Councils and the voluntary and community sector who have used their socials to promote opportunities for residents to find out more information on the emerging Place Strategy.

- **Online Focus Groups**

Across December 2022 and January 2023, the attention turned to testing and refining the focus of the strategy, with the emerging areas of focus shared with key partners and stakeholders. A series of online focus groups took place in January 2023 with a session on 16 January for people who have lived in Huntingdonshire for three years or less. A session took place on 17 January for people who have lived in Huntingdonshire for 15 years or more, and a session was hosted on 18 January for people who live in Huntingdonshire but work outside the district. In-person focus groups were also held at Love's Farm and Alconbury Weald on 23 January. As themes started to emerge, stakeholders were given the opportunity to complete an online questionnaire in December 2022 and early January 2023 to reflect on what was being proposed and to provide any further thoughts on the developing strategy.

Stakeholder Phase 1 Engagement: July 2022 – September 2022

During our first phase of engagement a number of key points emerged, namely:

Key messages – People

- Make the District one of the top 10 places to live in the UK focus on quality of life
- Make decision making and funding equitable and inclusive, driven by the people it is meant to serve
- Maximise participation in volunteering and support existing organisations and initiatives
- Connect children and young people with local opportunities.
- Help people to get fit and keep fit.
- Encourage more face-to-face time with local services.

Key messages – Place & Communities

- Enhance the role of the river within towns for recreation and green tourism.
- Create communities not just new homes. New development should be balanced to avoid overwhelming local character and infrastructure.
- Transition away from reliance on the car by making the district a place where public transport and active travel is the most desirable option
- Encourage shared community responsibility for the upkeep of green and open spaces to foster a sense of ownership and social interaction
- Create a district wide strategy for buses with more and later running routes, including rural areas

Key messages – Economy

- Revitalise and diversify town centres including fostering cafe culture and the night-time economy (pubs and entertainment)
- Expand employment and training opportunities through lifelong learning and networks.
- Attract higher value jobs by celebrating accessibility combined with remote working opportunities.
- Educate businesses on sustainable practices.
- Don't leave rural areas behind - investment shouldn't just be focused on market towns
- Keep investment local.

Key messages – Environment

- Roll out a comprehensive building stock retrofit programme.
- Make the District a place where the threat of flooding is reduced as much as possible.
- Encourage rewilding and biodiversity in both public and private spaces including more trees within towns
- Establish farmers as sustainable guardians of land.
- Pioneer the transition to the Circular Economy
- Accelerate the transition to electric vehicles and provide e-bikes and e-scooters in towns.
- Create better pedestrian and cycle footpaths.

Stakeholder Phase 2 Engagement: November 2022 – January 2023

Feedback from all stakeholders led to the development of the following structure of the Place Strategy. During the second phase of engagement the structure of the strategy and areas of focus were tested and refined through a Key Directions document. This sought feedback on:

- **One Destination** – The strategy is proposed to have one destination statement. This will not be a vision of place, rather a concise statement that sets out what we will collectively reach by all stakeholders following the Place Strategy.
- **Five Journeys** – The strategy is proposed to be framed by five journeys. The Journeys represent the different focus areas that will enable all stakeholders to work towards common outcomes.
- **Twenty Pathways** – The strategy will set out 20 Pathways (four beneath each journey). Each Pathway is an articulation of the futures our stakeholders are imagining for Huntingdonshire.

Feedback on Key directions

The themes below provide an overview of the feedback on the emerging Place Strategy that was received from different stakeholders during November 2022 and January 2023. 12 responses were received via the Huntingdonshire futures website, in addition feedback was captured from **XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX**

Pride in Place

Feedback was sought from stakeholders under the emerging ‘Pride in Place’ journey and four pathways:

- What if we had a strong identity for the whole district?
- What if we had beautiful places to call home?
- What if we were incentivised to look after our own patch?
- What if our high streets were the centre of social and cultural life?

While there was support for ‘Pride in Place’, it was felt that community safety needed a stronger emphasis in the journey, especially relating to the creation of new communities and people taking care of the areas in which they live. Further feedback suggested the importance of addressing loneliness and isolation within the community, as these issues can have negative impacts on mental and physical health. By creating opportunities for social connection and support, it was suggested that this could help ensure people have a sense of belonging to the place around them and a stronger connection to others. Links between volunteering and Pride in Place were also highlighted, as was the need to make more of Huntingdonshire’s strategic location to major towns and cities such as Cambridge.

Equitable Economy

Feedback was sought from stakeholders under the emerging ‘Equitable Economy’ journey and four pathways:

- What if we become the destination for sustainable tourism?
- What if all the food we bought was grown fresh and local?
- What if our businesses and organisations worked hand in hand with young people?
- What if we created a place where start-ups could flourish?

Overall, stakeholders felt that the 'Equitable Economy' pathway presented a compelling vision for the future of Huntingdonshire and is an important area for focus if we are to create a more sustainable and equitable economy.

Stakeholders suggested that the strategy should look towards growing local food as well as buying fresh and local food. In terms of tourism, it was felt that while the Ouse Valley was mentioned, more could have been made of river usage along with the tourism opportunity that cycling can bring.

Stakeholders also noted the importance of inward investment in driving growth, creating job and developing future skills, as well as the need for greater attention to Huntingdonshire's manufacturing sector, which now contributes 25% to the region's GDP.

Further feedback indicated that the strategy needed to better reference the pivotal value of early years education and quality schools and as there was no mention of schools, further education or higher education. It was also suggested that the strategy needed to be more mindful of the value of learning new skills at all stages of life.

Environmental Innovation

Feedback was sought from stakeholders under the emerging 'Environmental Innovation' journey and four pathways:

- What if zero carbon became the norm?
- What if our natural assets inspired a new infrastructure?
- What if all our energy was produced within the district?
- What if all our children were fluent in sustainability?

Stakeholders agreed that achieving zero carbon emissions, utilising natural assets to inspire new infrastructure, and producing energy within Huntingdonshire are all crucial goals that will not only benefit the environment but will also contribute to the long-term sustainability and prosperity of the district.

However, there has to be a stronger focus on how the district's natural resources may inspire new infrastructure, as well as a better focus on increasing biodiversity. Additionally, young people need to be at the forefront of driving change by having the opportunity to take part in the decision-making process.

Health Embedded

Feedback was sought from stakeholders under the emerging 'Health Embedded' journey and four pathways:

- What if we stopped measuring GDP and started measuring happiness?
- What if it was easier to live healthily?
- What if nobody was lonely here?
- What if people of every age had the opportunity to skill up?

Stakeholders stated that additional work would need to be done to investigate community social research or use a citizen's assembly as a mechanism to collectively define happiness. It was suggested that the journey should consider promoting living independently for longer, the role leisure can play as well as reflecting how we can support healthy lifestyles for children and young people better.

Travel Transformed

Feedback was sought from stakeholders under the emerging 'Travel Transformed' journey and four pathways:

- What if the car was a relic of the past?
- What if our mobility was on demand?
- What if our distribution networks delivered for all of us?
- What if it was fun to move around here?

Overall, stakeholders agree that the "Travel Transformed" pathway offers a compelling vision for Huntingdonshire's future and should be given special attention in order to build a more sustainable and convenient transport system.

However, stakeholders were clear that the pathway 'what if the car was a relic of the past?' would be extremely difficult for people across the district as public transport can be inadequate and the car remains a necessity for many to get around, especially in rural areas. As such it was felt there is a need to reframe the pathway and that the strategy should consider alternatives to the car as the preferred method of transport.

Stakeholders suggested that the strategy has to make better reference to public transport and for it to highlight how public transport must meet user demands and be more affordable, reliable and safe for people of all ages. There were additional opinions that suggested connecting more cycle and pedestrian routes and making transit for people more enjoyable.

The strategy also needs to make better reference to public transport according to stakeholders. They want it to reflect how transport must respond to the needs of users and be more affordable, reliable and safer for people of all ages. Other observations included making travel more fun, along with making more of joined up cycle and pedestrian routes.

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF HUNTINGDONSHIRE

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) saw the development of the Huntingdonshire Futures Place strategy as an opportunity to better co-ordinate their engagement activity so it does not duplicate efforts, confuse residents and stakeholders, or miss opportunities to hear from residents and stakeholders we may not always engage with.

An engagement plan was delivered which set out to:

- Support the development of a new Huntingdonshire Place Strategy, will include our shared ambitions for the future and short, medium, and longer term priorities.
- Ensure a better understanding of what is most important to residents within their localities, as an example in the short term this will be used to support future funding bids including Levelling Up Fund and Shared Prosperity Fund. Beyond this it will inform our thinking on the development of future Local Plans.
- Support the refresh of the Huntingdonshire Community Strategy, which was currently time limited to link in with this activity.
- Provide an opportunity to gain feedback on early masterplanning thinking in Ramsey, Huntingdon, and St Ives.

This report summarises the findings of the community engagement process, which informed the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy. It provides an overview of the two distinct phase of engagement and what local people told us about their aspirations for their district.



PHASE 1: JULY – OCTOBER 2022

Phase 1

This initial phase of engagement focused on understanding and exploring:

- What people feel about Huntingdonshire now.
- Their priorities for change around the four key themes of economy, environment, people and community, and place.
- What if we did things differently? What types of change in approach would local people like to see considered in the context of the place strategy?

How We Engaged

Phase 1 of the community engagement was delivered through a range of mechanisms:

- Pop up exhibitions with interactive activities at Huntingdon Carnival, St Ives Farmers Market, St Neots Farmers Market and Ramsey Market.
- Focus groups in Bury and Huntingdon (please note additional focus groups were postponed as a mark of respect following the death of Queen Elizabeth II), and digital focus groups on Zoom.
- Visiting community groups and activities including Butterfly Ladies in Eynesbury, Yaxley Coffee Morning, Sapley Park Fun Day, Conygear Foodbank and Conygear Fun Day.
- Rural area visit, speaking to people in rural communities including Godmanchester, Hilton, Kimbolton, Sawtry, and Stilton through visits to community meeting places such as benches in parks and bus stops.
- A discussion session with young people aged 20-24 who live in Huntingdonshire.



EMERGING THEMES

Across the phase one events and activities we had 481 conversations with people from across the district aged 6 to 95, living in rural areas and market towns. Notes from engagement sessions have been reviewed and coded to identify emerging themes in relation to the four key elements of the place's strategy.

Economy

The Role of Retail: We explored with local people both how they perceived the economy now and how they wanted it to be in future. Consistently, particularly in the market towns, retail was seen to be critical to the economy, with the retail offer being seen as a key measure of success.

"There are just not enough shops in the High Street anymore. I can't spend my money locally. For shopping I have to go to Cambridge."

Focus Group Participant

"To have a thriving market town you have to have shops. Not just charity shops and cafes."

Note On A Display Board

"What if we make market towns work as market towns?"

Note On A Display Board

There is an acknowledgement that the internet and other challenges are changing how people shop, that high street is facing challenges across the country. However, there is a clear perception that thriving high streets in the districts market towns are important to local people. This aligns with a desire to see opportunities to spend money locally. People also want to see targeted support for local businesses specifically business rate relief, lower rents and support with energy bills.

The Quest for Innovation: Huntingdonshire's relation to Cambridge, and the health and technology innovations happening in that city are seen as a missed opportunity.

"We have to make being near Cambridge work for Huntingdonshire, work for our economy."

Focus Group Participant

"Could Huntingdonshire be a Silicon Valley in 30 years' time?"

Focus Group Participant

"What if the wealth, culture, knowledge, high tech solutions and infrastructure in Cambridge was spread across the County?"

Focus Group Participant – What if

Engagement suggests local people would like to see more jobs and opportunities in innovative sectors including biotech, robotics and AI based in Huntingdonshire. An innovation driven economy should be linked to education provision and opportunities for young people.

Infrastructure as a Barrier to Economic Growth: In conversations with local people, infrastructure across the district that was seen as a barrier to attracting businesses, entrepreneurship, and economic growth.

“Ramsey doesn’t have an A road. Ramsey doesn’t have a train station. Ramsey doesn’t have a decent bus service. No wonder we can’t attract businesses here.”

Conversation with Ramsey Resident

“I don’t understand why you can’t get a direct train to Cambridge. We’re not linked to where the jobs are.”

Focus Group Participant

There was a concern that the current road and rail infrastructure is a barrier to bringing new businesses into the area and are also a barrier to benefitting from economic success in the wider region. There is a feeling that the district’s infrastructure is *“holding it back from being more successful.”*

Night-time and Cultural Economy: Local people spoke of a perceived lack of a night-time and cultural economy across the district. As with retail, there is a desire to stay and spend local, alongside there being a perception that the economy does not offer enough.

“You have to search out the night-time economy in Huntingdonshire.”

Focus Group Participant

“Not much culture. Very little musical culture.”

Post It Note

“You can go and have a meal. You can go and have a drink. But there’s not much else – you can’t go for a dance.”

Conversation with Conygear Park Event Attendee

One of the challenges in terms of delivering these aspirations is that most participants want the night-time and cultural economy to be based where they live, specifically for those living in the district’s market towns. This connects with concerns about public transport and the ability to get around the district.

A Local Economy That Works for Everyone: There is a concern, particularly in deprived areas of the district, that there is an increasing divide based on socio-economic factors. For example, people living in areas of deprivation, and using support services including food banks, feel the local economy is lacking in opportunity for them. That when you are struggling to meet the needs of your household economy, for example paying increasing energy bills, you have different requirements from your local economy.



"If we do not have jobs in Huntingdonshire for people who live in Huntingdonshire, we're just going to become a dormitory town."

Post It Note

"You should be able to earn a decent living here. People should be being paid a fair wage."

Focus Group Participant

"Too many people around here are getting left behind."

Conversation with Food Bank User

The ideal of a local economy that supports local people, provides opportunity for local people and keeps local money in the Huntingdonshire economy was seen as important and vital to the future success of the district.

Environment

The Need to Act Now: Conversations with local people showed that there is an understanding of the need to act now in relation to climate change. Recent events including significant flooding in St Ives, and 40° temperatures were cited as examples.

"What if we stopped destroying the planet now?"

Conversation with St Neots Resident

"Climate change is the big threat we are facing."

Post It Note

"Stop talking about doing something (about climate change) and do something."

Conversation with Huntingdon Carnival Visitor

There is concern that change is not happening at the pace that is needed, with a perception *"that it's all talk and no action."* Whilst the majority of people we spoke to acknowledged that climate change is a real and urgent issue, there are a small group of people for whom it is a hoax and / or not a priority.

Local Nuances: Pop up events showed clear and distinct local issues, specifically in the Market Towns.

"St Ives could be underwater in 50 years? I need information to make a decision about our home and where we live."

Conversation with St Ives Residents



“Why are houses being built without solar panels? Without heat pumps? Without a wind turbine on every estate? Without electrical vehicle chargers?”

Conversation with St Neots Resident

“If you want me to use my car less then there has to be a cheap, reliable, convenient alternative. I had to by a car because the bus services weren’t reliable.”

Conversation with Ramsey Resident

“For me I have to use less energy because I can’t afford what I use. It’s not about climate change its about how much money my family has.”

Conversation with Huntingdon Resident

As illustrated in the quotes above, in St Ives, the focus was on potential impact on future flooding, specifically on homes and businesses. People in this community wanted to see direct action to reduce and mitigate the impact of flooding.

In St Neots the focus is on buildings and infrastructure, and a desire to see this delivered in an environmental conscious way.

In Ramsey, public transport was seen as important to their ability to cut their emissions, there is an acknowledgement of an over reliance on the car and frustration that *“you cannot live in Ramsey without a car.”* This frustration is also reflected in rural communities.

People we spoke to in Huntingdon tended to put the climate crisis in the context of cost of living and the desire to reduce energy usage primarily to reduce household costs.

Housing and Climate Change: Consistently in engagement there was a belief that new house building needed to be more environmentally conscious and *that “there is no excuse for the lack of environmental provision in new builds.”* Participants wanted to see a clear strategy for how new housing will be built in a way to minimise environmental impacts, including net zero building, renewable energy and generation, and reducing water and energy usage. Interestingly, these references were specific to new homes and did not include other new builds including business premises and infrastructure.

“There’s lot of new housing been built. Why on earth are they not being built with solar panels?”

Focus Group Participant

“I would love to replace my old boiler with a new heat pump, but I do not have the money to do that.”

Focus Group Participant

“We’ve just bought a new house and I’m already worried it’s not built to survive the climate we’re moving towards.”

Focus Group Participant



Owners of existing homes were concerned about the cost of making changes to their homes – including both changes to reduce the environmental impacts of their homes and changes to protect their homes from increasing temperatures and rising water levels.

Supporting Behaviour Change: There is a proportion of the population who want to do more, acknowledge that there is a need to do more, but aren't sure what to do and how. These people want to be able to change their behaviour and want to be supported to make positive changes to reduce their environmental impact.

“Where do you start? I can't afford to do anything to my house. I can't not use my car. What can I do?”

Conversation with Community Group Participant

“What if good things for the environment were cheaper?”

Post It Note

“What if solar panels were a planning requirement?”

Post It Note

While there was a desire to make individual and household level changes, there was also a desire to see obvious and apparent systemic change with key organisations including the Council and local businesses being seen to make positive changes to protect the environment.

People and Communities

Communities are more than just houses: A consistent topic raised in community engagement was a concern about house building and increasing population numbers, without the infrastructure (road, public transport and schools), and facilities, and support services (health, education and well-being) being provided to meet this increased need.

“What if we built communities, not houses?”

Post It Note

“Villages should be supported to be viable, but not overwhelmed.”

Post It Note

“Increase in population – can't keep putting people in local towns.”

Post It Note

In engagement, the local people there, were people who did not want to see any further house building, whilst others appreciated the need for more homes. Consistently, local people wanted to see an approach to house building that brings community facilities and infrastructure with new homes. Approaches such as the [15 minute city](#) and Australia's approach to planning (where community facilities come first) were cited.



Housing for the Life Journey: Housing is a need and community engagement highlighted a concern that housing development is focused on economic viability rather than need. In that, local people feel it is about *“big houses that developers can sell for high prices. Not homes for local people.”*

“You can’t find an affordable home when you’re young. Then when your children have left the nest and you want to downsize you can’t do that.”

Conversation with a St Neots Resident

“What if we built more social housing and the council retained them?”

Focus Group Participant

“Affordable housing needs to be affordable, and developers need to be held to account to deliver.”

Focus Group Participant

Discussions highlighted a desire to see a housing strategy that considers all aspects of people’s lives and the housing they need for each step of their life. For example, affordable housing to get on the ladder, opportunities to move to larger homes as families grow, and downsize as people get older. Most people we spoke to enjoy and value living in the area, but there are concerns that they will have to leave to find homes they can afford and meet their needs.

Young People: Both young people (under 20), and the wider population are concerned about a perceived lack of opportunity and lack of “things to do” for this age group.

“There is just nothing to do for teenagers here.”

Conversation with Sapley Park Event Attendee

“What if there was a way to harness young people’s talent?”

Post It Note

“We need to keep young people in the area, boosting our economy.”

Focus Group Participant

Engagement participants spoke of the importance of creating aspiration, ambition, and opportunity for young people. In addition, increasing concerns around anti-social behaviour and county lines were in part attributed to the lack of provision for young people / teenagers.

In phase 2, we will be working with young people to understand what type of district they want and need to build their lives in this area.



Huntingdonshire As the Best Place to Live: Among a proportion of engagement participants there was a belief that Huntingdonshire should focus its energy on primarily being “a great place to live, where people can live happy and healthy lives.” That it should seek to find benefits from the post pandemic, understanding that you can work from home, and there are opportunities when you don’t live and work in the same place.

“Huntingdonshire is a great place to live. So why don’t we just focus on that? Making Huntingdonshire a really great place to live. You don’t have to live where you work anymore. People can still work in other places and spend in our economy.”

Focus Group Participant

“If people live here but don’t work here, we just become a dormitory town.”

Conversation with Ramsey Event Attendee

“Being able to work from home during the pandemic has changed what people think about when choosing where to live.”

Focus Group Participant

However, there was another school of thought that more people should be both living and working in the district. A concern that places across Huntingdonshire are becoming dormitory towns’, where there is no major employer or industry, and people go to other places to work and spend.

Place

A Green and Pleasant Land: When asked what the best things are about living in Huntingdonshire, people consistently raised the countryside, access to green places, the local rivers, and wildlife.

“Please stop building on our green places.”

Hilton Resident

“It is a very pretty place; we are lucky to live here.”

Focus Group Participant

“Activate green spaces for the community.”

Post It Note

Huntingdonshire has high levels of accessible greenspace, but there are concerns across the community that these valued spaces and places are at risk, primarily from house building. Other issues raised included sewage in rivers, fly tipping, and a desire to see more trees across the district.



Getting Around the District: There is a belief among the community that the public transport system is not fit for the needs of the district. Public transport is seen as vital to enabling people to move around the district, reducing rural isolation and contributing to net zero aspirations. The Ting bus was mentioned and overall praised, but not seen as a realistic solution to meet the transport needs of the area.

“If you live here you have to go in the car and that’s crazy in this world.”

Hilton Resident

“If you don’t fix the incredibly broken public transport system in this district, and to this district, nothing else you are trying to do can be achieved.”

Focus Group Participant

“If we’re cut off due to the buses going, there’s no point planning for 2050.”

Post It Note in Ramsey

“It is easier to get to London than St Ives. Why?”

Conversation in Godmanchester

Public transport is seen as a priority that sits across all themes of the place strategy. In addition, people want to see a joined-up approach across the District and County to rights of way, footpaths, and cycle routes. People spoke of “*cycle paths that just run out in the middle of nowhere*”. They would also like to see routes that are distinct from roads for example, “*we have loads of lovely, flat countryside. Why do I have to cycle next to a busy road and breathe in car fumes. Can’t we create more routes through our lovely countryside and green spaces?*”

Rural Communities: Those living in rural communities think “*all the attention goes to the market towns*” and that there is not a clear strategy for supporting rural communities to continue and thrive.

“We’ve only just got decent broadband. If you want to live in the village you have to have a car. It’s like we’re being left behind.”

Focus Group Participant

“All the investment is in the market towns; no support or finance comes to rural areas.”

Focus Group Participant

“We’re getting new bus stops because of some new houses, but no bus. So, what’s the point? Who is making these decisions?”

Focus Group Participant

“There are 18 new houses being built in the village. Unlike some, I’m not against it. We need houses. But I am against the number of affordable houses being built being reduced and the Council doing nothing to prevent it.”

Hilton Resident



Rural communities acknowledge that they are now towns, that they are a different proposition. But they do want to “*feel love, to feel like someone knows we’re here*” and have the fundamentals that make life in rural community’s work including support services in their communities, access to transport and broadband.

Ambition: Local people want Huntingdonshire to balance ambition whilst retaining what makes the area charming and special.

“Why isn’t the District Council bolder, and more ambitious? Stop doing the option that is the bare minimum. What if we didn’t settle for the norm and instead aimed for the ideal.”

Focus Group Participant

In particular, they want to see their District Council be ambitious in tackling the challenges being faced by local people and communities including the cost of living, climate change, housing need, health and wellbeing, and poverty.

Is there too much Democracy? A number of people expressed frustration and confusions at the levels of politics and democracy and the impact.

“What if we didn’t let politics get in the way of change?”

Post It Note

“Huntingdonshire does not exist.”

St Neots Resident

“You try to get something done. There is an overgrown tree growing over our path. You ring the Council, and they say it’s not us it’s the other council. Then you try them. Nothing ever gets done. The cemetery isn’t kept tidy. The paths are full of potholes because everyone can just put the blame on another Council.”

Yaxley Residents

Those who took part in engagement want to have clarity about what Council is responsible for what, and to be able to access support and information from Council’s when they need it.

Does Huntingdonshire have an Identity? Throughout engagement no one referred to themselves as being a resident of Huntingdonshire. Often when asked if they came from Huntingdonshire at pop up events, they wouldn’t be sure. Instead, people would talk about the town or village where they live.

“What is Huntingdonshire anyway? It’s some towns and some villages, but you can’t say Huntingdonshire is this.”

Focus Group Participants

As a result, their aspirations for the future are primarily focused on change in the places where they live, rather than at a District wide level.



YOUNG PEOPLE FOCUS GROUP

To capture more perspectives from young people during phase 1 we did an additional discussion session with 3 young people aged 20 -24 who live in Huntingdonshire.

Economy

- More needs to be done to give young people the opportunity to learn and develop new skills, that can give them wider potential / choice of careers.
- Schools and colleges in the area are to focus on the “*university route and make it the only option*” and “*when you’re at school its just uni, uni, uni, uni, uni.*”

“I did a degree apprenticeship. I was hoping for a chemistry role but they offered me a position in HR. It was the best thing I could have done. I been able to learn, develop and buy my own home. But degree apprenticeships are seen as a lesser thing.”

- More needs to be done to present alternative pathways to young people, there is a belief that at the moment there is a blockage between connecting young people to enterprise and employers in the area.
- It is important that young people see the options and routes available to them and here from a range of perspectives about what a successful life is and could be.
- Have to cultivate opportunities for young people to grow and develop.

“Education and supporting young people should be seen as a community issue.”

- They would like to see more of a night-time economy in Huntingdonshire but don’t want it to “*just be about eating and drinking.*” They are looking for a different offer based on experiences. They want shared activities that bring people together for example gaming, football and dancing.
- Transport is a major barrier, which disconnects local people from employment, training and participating in the wider community and economy.

“You have to be able to drive to work here, the X5 used to be okay but now driving is the only option.”



Environment

- Is a priority for this group and they are concerned about the lack of action they see at all levels of Government.

Place

- New housing that is being built in the area is not affordable for young people.
- Rent is too high and is a barrier to people being able to save for their own home. There are young people living in rented accommodation *“who are having to decided between heating and eating.”*
- As with the wider community they are concerned about the numbers of new houses and the perceived lack of community services and infrastructure.
- They are frustrated by what they see as misuse of power examples cited included a 199 house development, which meant it didn't meet the 200 household threshold for community infrastructure. One participant spoke of his dad losing his business premises for a housing development and receiving no support to relocate.

People and Communities

- There is a significant concern about the lack of mental health support for young people in the area.

“Counselling should be available in all schools for everyone. There is a mental health crisis among young people here.”

- Without mental health support, young people will be unable to be part of the local community and contribute to the local economy.
- Social media and gaming communities are important ways for young people to connect, but there is concern about the impact on mental health.
- They feel that the communities in which they live do not reflect them, and do not meet their needs. The decision to leave in the area tends to be driven by family, friends and the ability to travel to different places for example London.

“I don't see me in my local community.”

- They believe that decisions about where they live and what happens in their community are made without them. That there is no clear involvement of young people in the current system. None of the participants knew who their Councillor is, there was some awareness of the local MP.

“Nothing about us without us.”



- They would like to see approaches like citizen's assemblies that give local people, of all types, to be active in decision making and work with decision makers. They believe there are numerous under-represented groups including young people and the LGBTQ+ community.
- Need to be creative about how we engage use different techniques and approaches like gamification to involve and encourage people to participate. They want to see spaces created where local people can be part of the shaping what happens.
- There is a need to better connect people to information and support to *“empower people through information.”*
- They also want to see different measures of success being used beyond financial, e.g., wellbeing and happiness.
- Their priorities for change are mental health, citizens' assembly and support networks. They see Huntingdonshire Future's as an opportunity to be bold and make significant changes.



WHAT IF?

Pioneered by the founder of Transition Town Totnes - Rob Hopkins, 'What if?' is a simple question, but perhaps the most important question that society has somehow forgotten. In his book 'What if to what next', Hopkins explores what we must do to revive and replenish our collective imagination. If we can rekindle that precious creative spark, whole societies and cultures can change rapidly, dramatically and unexpectedly for the better. Through all engagement activities we collated 'What if's?' These are shown in the table below.

What if.....

Economy	Environment	People and Communities	Place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we supported our local markets? • we invested more and better? • we kept investment local? • we sold only local produce in our markets? • we could bring energy prices down? • we had a scope to encourage more visitors? • what if public transport was affordable? • we made it obvious we want businesses in our town centre? • we had a tourism destination management plan? • we maximised tourism and presented our towns better? • we had a night-time economy? • we had a town wide festival that works with local businesses? • we run the weekend farmers market until 3pm? • we switched to thinking local? • we make the market towns work as market towns? • we did have affordable housing? • our economy was a green economy? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • waste was managed sustainably? • we didn't build on green spaces? • we make it interesting to be sustainable? • we invest in water infrastructure? • we stopped destroying the planet now? • we had an honest conversation with constructors about sustainable building? • we started doing something now, rather than just having bland conversations about the environment that go nowhere? • the river valley was an AOWB? • for every new house built, we planted 10 trees? • we had a way of saving water? • St. Ives was car free? • we had a strategy for flooding to prevent St. Ives being underwater in 2050? • planning required solar panels, water butts, insulated and estate turbines? • we recognised climate change as an immediate issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ambulances came quicker? • we gave local young people a social café? • children with special educational needs had the same opportunity and support as others? • all children walked to school? • there was a way to harness young people's talent? • if we went back to face healthcare? • we put people before money? • HDC lead a joined-up thinking programme? • we built community pride? • we did more to encourage people to come together? • celebrated local art? • we drove forward kerbside and car park charging and gave everyone the opportunity to run an electric vehicle? • we had initiatives to bring certain age groups together to plan together? • we made bold decisions? • we helped, rather than hindered people disposing of rubbish in public spaces? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we did planning like Australia? • public transport was the first choice? • we built new houses with character? • we didn't let politics get in the way of change? • we design towns so the people who find it most challenging (disabled, additional needs) can get around? • we connected car parks to parks and new housing? • we had a 15-minute model town/district? • the guided busway was reliable? • new housing development followed the 15-minute model? • we had more than one bus a day? • infrastructure kept up with development? • we thought about the impact of more housing? • hospital was connected to a university? • if the plans for buses had happened? • St. Ives was a dark town? • we had reasons to visit? • we had parking strategies targeted to local areas?

Economy	Environment	People and Communities	Place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we supported businesses to reduce energy costs? trees were a planning condition? no one did a journey less than a mile in a car? we planted fruit trees in public areas and grow vegetables in public? we supported businesses to become more circular? we remove the word waste? Everything is reusable. we shared what is already happening to protect the environment? streets were pedestrianised? we communicated better? we re-isolated our rural areas? we had an educational ad campaign on how/what to recycle? we had cheap energy now? solar panels were a planning requirement? we supported businesses to reduce energy costs? childcare supported working rather than a barrier? the council lead by example with flexible working? we built affordable housing? businesses were incentivised to look after their patch? we had universal basic income? we all shopped locally? we had a local, fresh produce economy? community projects had long term funding? national government reduced business rates? business advice and support – how can we progress? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we had nature friendly forming with zero soil erosion? when we plant trees, we looked after them? you could walk, cycle, or catch a bus everywhere? plans and activities for nature recovery for all our green spaces and land in the district were produced by local people? we had a great natural and town environment? we focussed on the environment? If we supported businesses to be green? people reused their waste? no-one drove a journey that was less than a mile? new builds had to have solar panels? put the environment first? good things for the environment where cheaper? we never built on green space? everyone planted a tree in their garden? we made it easy to not use a car? we promote alternatives to weedkiller, grain dumping, and paving? every house had a water butt? we had more trees, and more planting incentives to keep lawns and hedges? we had more ways to reuse water? all old houses were retrofitted? we viewed climate change as the number one? we had more green organizing campaigns to show others and also encourage everyone to has a little garden? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we had a shared sense of direction? we built communities, not housing? we promoted things to do better? we had an honest conversation with residents about infrastructure and planning? we used sport and culture to bring people in? people in rural villages didn't need a car? we had a better wellbeing? we did prevention and early intervention? we were kind to each other? we brought support services to people rather than expecting them to come to you? all children had an equal chance? no child lived in poverty in Huntingdonshire? no-one was lonely? we put the pedestrian first? we designed people centred places? we had youth clubs that were open everyday we involved young people in planning? we had community-based adult education? we had a district wide cycle path network? we had public transport for the villages? we helped people to help themselves? we incentivised behavioural change? children with ALN had equal opportunities? we educated children to be citizens? we enable behavioural change? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we had school choice? we stopped putting housing first? public transport was affordable? we had a proper high street? there was a shopping centre? had less parking? we had the town centre of the future? we had reasons to visit town? It was illegal to build a flat without a balcony? St. Neots was the go-to place? everyone felt safe where they live? we had good links to villages and London? transport was regular? the positive energy about the town was used to promote what is good? we had a district identity? we took pride in how our town looks and feels? Ramsey had another industrial/incubator hub? Same site as Lidl? we made change rather than talking about it? we had a safe cycle/footpath to countryside centre at Ramsey Heights? It was safer to cycle? we didn't have the same high street as everywhere else? we had 5G in Ramsey? Ramsey had a bypass? we had a Tom's Cakes in Ramsey? we had everything we need here? we had more reliable buses? we had free public transport? we considered the long-standing assets?

Economy	Environment	People and Communities	Place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more support was given to small businesses? • we supported local businesses? • we helped local businesses to grow? • we addressed the barriers to work e.g., transport? • we have a career pathway for everyone? • we enabled businesses to expand? • we had enough jobs locally for all our school leavers? • the wealth, culture, knowledge, high tech solutions and infrastructure in Cambridge was spread across the County? • I could work locally? • we could compare work pay to work done, I feel like the people who work the most don't get an equal amount of compensation compared with their counter who have little work input and get a larger amount of compensation? • more technology was used to make life easier and more fun for everyone, and also discovery of medicines for diseases that have none currently? • the government provided reliable technology and internet to have a good working environment? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what if we reduced air pollution that diversify to other sources of energy? • what if we reduced the number of private gasoline vehicles around town to reduce air pollution, diversify sources of energy, like solar, wind turbines, increase recreational parks, bring in more developmental & economic projects? • what if we reduced air pollution? • what if we had alternative sources of local renewable energy? • what if we restricted where people can drive? • what if the government made everywhere green? • built houses now that do what we need them to in 2050? • helped people change their behaviour? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huntingdonshire was truly inclusive? • The council answered emails? • we created spaces for teenagers to come together? • we had a bandstand? • we focused on solutions, not problems? • we thought about the life cycle of people in planning? • empty shops became community hubs? • all the public bodies spoke to each other and worked together? • renters were supported to buy? • we had communal spaces? • we kept young people in our area and spending in our economy? • joined up transport: bus, rail, and cycling? • we thought about downsizing? Bungalows as well as houses? • we had a more sustained community? • we helped those just about managing? • there were no waiting lists? • the council stepped in early to help people with their mental health? • we could make access to sport free for under 16s? • we had a community pub? • we had role models for children? • we had youth workers in our community? • we had detached youth workers? • we did join up local planning? • we promoted understanding of biodiversity in the Fens • we guaranteed a job for everyone? • we looked after the right people? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • smaller buses were available and reliable? • Huntingdonshire was more accessible to all by public transport? • traffic went? What if we could divide the ring road bus / cycle with a small park and ride. • we could minimise the hustle of travelling to workplaces and leisure opportunities by promoting more eco-friendly means like cycling and walking to protect our environment? • we used our history and parks to generate income from tourists to support our economy? • we had modern places to live in our historic buildings and towns? • what if public transport worked with people's lives? • the ting bus was available across Huntingdonshire and in the evening. • Huntingdonshire was the Silicon Valley of the region. • It was affordable to live in Huntingdonshire? • we were more ambitious and bold? We didn't settle for the norm and aimed for the ideal? • stopped working in silos? • we sorted out transportation? • built more social housing? • had rent control?

Economy	Environment	People and Communities	Place
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we helped young people on to the house ladder? • we put addressing poverty on the agenda? • help was person centred? • we listened? • the police were more present in Ramsey? • we lived in caring communities? • we stopped overlooking one off incidents? 	

POINTS OF DIFFERENCE

When reviewing the note and comments from the engagement activities, there were two key factors that primarily defined people's aspirations for the future.

Where People Live: As previously discussed in engagement activities, people prioritised need and change in the town or village they lived. Therefore, change tended to focus on local issues rather than District wide challenges.

Socio-Economic Status: There is a divide in people's priorities for the next 30 years based on socio economic status. Those living in areas of deprivation and struggling in the face of costing of living feel the priority should be on immediate support to address those challenges now rather than future thinking. Those in a stronger socio-economic position wanted to balance short, medium, and long term change.



PHASE 2: JANUARY 2023

Phase 2

This summary report sets out the findings of the second phase of engagement to support the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy. This phase of engagement focused on understanding and exploring how participants think and feel about:

- The proposed journeys that make up the draft Place Strategy.
- The pathways and actions that can make a change.
- The role of the community.

How We Engaged

Phase 2 of the community engagement was delivered through the following mechanisms:

- A programme of focus groups and listening sessions:
 - Digital:
 - People who have lived in Huntingdonshire for 3 years or less.
 - People who have live in Huntingdonshire for 15 years or more.
 - The pathways and you – general focus group.
 - Ghanian Community Association.
 - Face to Face:
 - Conygear Centre Users.
 - 3C's Colne Caring Community.
 - Young people aged 18 to 24.
 - People who live in Love's Farm.
 - People who live in Alconbury Weald.
- Working with young people at Sawtry Village Academy (Year 7 to Year 9) and Hinchingsbrooke School (Year 7 to Year 12).



THE FIVE JOURNEYS

Across the phase 2 listening sessions we heard the perspectives of 258 people, aged 11 to 94, living in rural areas and market towns. Notes from the sessions have been reviewed and coded to identify emerging themes in relation to the five pathways which form the basis of the draft place strategy.

Pride of Place

It is important to be proud of where you live: Most participants felt it was important to be proud of where you live, that it is important to feel connected to your community. Pride is connected to how people feel about and perceive where they live.

“I would like to be proud of where I live. I think if I did, I would be more inclined to get involved and make it better.”

Conygear Centre Focus Group Participant

“If you’re proud of where you live, it means you like where you live.”

Year 7 Student

How can you feel proud of a place where you don’t feel safe: Almost all of the young people we worked with in schools included the importance of feeling and being safe as a criteria for a successful community and part of creating a great place to live. The majority of the those students said they didn’t feel safe or were able to cite incidents when they did not feel safe.

“You can’t work through town without being harassed by gross men. Being shouted at. It makes me feel awful.”

Year 10 Student

“There is a great skate park in St Neots. But every time my son goes there, he tells me about drug deals happening. People taking drugs. Where are the police?”

Love’s Farm Focus Group Participant

“When there’s litter everywhere, when they use your area to fly tip. When nothing is taken care of you don’t feel safe never mind proud of where you live.”

Conygear Centre Focus Group Participant

Participants raised a range of issues related to community safety including county lines, street lighting and anti-social behaviour. There is a belief that the area is getting less safe over time, which impacts on people’s ability to feel proud about where they live.



A decline in standards: Participants spoke of a perceived decline in standards, not just across public services but also in the behaviour of people in area. There is a concern that Huntingdonshire is on a downward trajectory.

“Nothing is working at the moment. The roads are full of potholes, you can’t get in at the doctors. Why should we feel proud?”

Digital Focus Group Participant

“We could have more bins, but the problem is the people. They don’t care, they don’t care about where they live. Why should we have to pick up after them.”

Year 9 Student

The idea of having pride in Huntingdonshire, is connected to the other journeys and all aspects of life. The small things do matter, several discussions around pride were connected to litter and graffiti. Others raised concerns that the things that used to make them proud of their town are no longer happening, as one focus group participant explained *“there used to be wonderful flowers outside the Church in Huntingdonshire every spring. That does not happen anymore. Huntingdon is now very run down. You do not see flowers anymore.”*

What if We Were Incentivised to Look After Own Patch: In activities with students at Sawtry Village Academy and Hinchbrook School there were several discussions about the role of the individual / people and the role of the public sector.

“Why should I do a litter pick. That is not my job. Someone is paid to do that.”

Year 11 Student

“I think we should do things that can help keep where we live, how we want it to be.”

Year 9 Student

Across the focus groups, some felt that local people should take more of an active role in looking after their own patch. Others felt that *“too much is being left to volunteers, what does the Council actually do now”* (digital focus group participant). The Alconbury Weald focus groups participants suggested there is a good balance between the role of local people and public services / the developer in their area. This was put down to the type of people who lived in the area, a willingness to put in *“hard work to keep it the way it is now”* and the presence of a Community Development Officer.



We Had Beautiful Places To Call Home: In focus groups the reference to ‘beautiful homes’ and ‘beautiful places to call home’ in the description and pathway often brought the conversation to planning. Listening to local people, as in phase 1, there is a concern that the planning system in the area is not meeting the needs of local people and communities.

“The HDC planning process feeds into everything. Why are they building houses without capacity for GPs, without the transport links? It feels like reality isn’t considered and decisions are being made on data from the 70’s. You need to get in front of the problems.”

Love’s Farm Focus Group Participant

“Why is it beautiful homes and not affordable homes?”

Young People Aged 18 to 24 Focus Group

“The cost of houses around loves farm and Wintringham are in my opinion, as a 22 year old working, horrendous and I definitely think that most young people my age will feel that these prices aren’t affordable for anyone.”

Love’s Farm Focus Group Participant

“There seems to be an inability to do things in a cohesive way in this area. New houses are being built and transport is getting worse.

Love’s Farm Focus Group Participant

“Nobody collaboratively thinks.”

Young People Aged 18 to 24 Focus Group

“Everyone passes the buck. They hide behind the bureaucracy.”

Young People Aged 18 to 24 Focus Group

There is a perception that the planning system is not working in the area, and that more transparency and clarity in how the planning process works in Huntingdonshire and why decisions are made is needed.

Part of this perception relates to affordable housing and the lack thereof. Young people in particular are concerned about their inability to get on the house ladder, and parents feel their children may need to move out of the area to afford home.

We Had a Strong Identity for the Whole District: Very few participants described themselves as coming from Huntingdonshire. In discussions participants struggled to find a single identify for the District and tended to focus on the specific town or village they live in.



Our High Streets Were the Centre of Social and Cultural Life: As with phase 1, there is concern that town centres / High Streets are run down, unattractive and not great places to visit. There is an acknowledgement that High Streets across England are struggling, but this is tempered by a feeling that there is not enough action and support for the areas Market Towns.

"Its all nail shops, and coffee shops and barbers. There's so many barbers and yet I've never seen so many bald people."

Young People Aged 18 to 24 Focus Group

"We keep losing our banks. I read about banking hubs recently, can we have one of those. Not everyone is on the internet."

Digital Focus Group Participant

"There is noting special about our town centre."

Digital Focus Group Participant

On whole there is support for this pathway, but a need to see more tangible and realistic actions for change.

How do you know if you're successful: A consistent concern is the numerous levels of democracy in the area and the inability to hold specific Council's / public sector organisations to account. The community wants to clear about what the District Council is seeking to achieve. To have mechanisms by which they can held the public sector to account.

"This all feels very woolly too me. How we will know if anything has changed. What will you measure?"

Love's Farm Focus Group Participants

"It's so broad as to be almost meaningless."

Digital Focus Group Participant



Environmental Innovation

Zero Carbon Became the Norm and All Our Children Were Fluent in Sustainability: There is a consistent concern that not enough is being done to achieve net zero and protect the environment. It was felt the Place Strategy needs to focus on ways to help people and communities make a difference in their own areas.

“We learn about sustainability at school. What we don’t learn is what we can do to reduce our own environmental impact.”

Year 12 Student

“There needs to be more done to make people change, like when they started charging for carrier bags.”

Year 9 student

As well as support and education, people wanted to see more environmental innovation on a community level in their locality. For example, the Conygear Centre focus groups participants spoke about a desire to see a recycle and reuse facility in their area *“if we had somewhere people could take their old office chair, then someone else could use it. We wouldn’t have that chair dumped in the alleyway behind our homes.”*

New Homes: As in phase 1 focus groups participants feel it is a missed opportunity not to ensure all new homes are built to minimise their environmental impact.

“Why are you letting developers getting away with building homes without solar panels? There is no excuse.”

Alconbury Weald Focus Group

“All houses should have no carbon footprint.”

Year 11 student

Participants spoke about wanting to see policy being used to ensure that new homes are carbon neutral, across both phases of engagement this was a clear and consistent message.

All Our Energy was Produced with the District: There is support for community energy generation projects, particularly those which can both reduce environmental impact and people’s utility bills.

“It’s very windy here, very flat we should have a community wind turbine.”

Alconbury Weald Focus Group

“If it reduces my energy bill then I would support community energy. But you won’t do that round here you’ll do it in a better neighbourhood.”

Conygear Centre Focus Group



There is concern that local people won't know where to start and there needs to be a clear mechanism to turn this pathway into projects. There also needs to be an assurance that this pathway and opportunity reaches all communities and provides equality of opportunity. Interestingly there was no nimbyism (not in my backyard) in the focus group sessions and people weren't concerned about the possibility of community energy generation infrastructure in their community.

Our Natural Assets Inspired A New Infrastructure: As with phase 1 the natural environment was considered to be one of the areas key assets, greenspaces and access to nature are often cited as the best thing about Huntingdonshire.

"How is this protecting local wildlife? We should be protecting what we already have."

Year 9 Student

"Our greenspaces are a very important factor. Without them it wouldn't be the same."

Digital Focus Group Participants

There is a desire to see a more explicit protection of existing natural assets as well as 'taking inspiration for new infrastructure' and 'making the most of our wonderful natural assets.'

Show What You're Doing: At all of the schools' sessions, during a warm up exercise we asked a series of yes / no questions. One of which was 'are we doing enough to tackle climate change?' in response one student asked "what is the Council doing in Huntingdonshire?" From discussions in focus group sessions, it became clear that local people are not seeing key organisations like the Council being proactive in the battle against climate change.

"When we talk about the environment, we're talking about where we live. I know what I'm doing, but I don't know what HDC, or St Neots Town Council are doing. Are you doing anything?"

Digital Focus Group Participants

"Is HDC switching the lights of when no-one is the office? Are they going to invest in electric bin lorries? What are they doing?"

Digital Focus Group Participants



Equitable Economy

We Created A Place Where Start-ups Could Flourish: Across the focus groups there is a desire to see this journey being used specifically to support local entrepreneurs and local businesses to thrive and grow.

“When I think of start-ups, I think of Hi – tech/ Biotech start-ups in Silicon Fen in Cambridge.’ ‘The word start-up tends to be used in that context, whereas if we think about local businesses, entrepreneurship is more appropriate.”

Ghanian Community Association

“There are communities of like minded people, like here in St Neots. How will this support those of us who are already here?”

Young people aged 18 to 24

“This should be about small innovative companies, not attracting big companies in.”

Young people aged 18 to 24.

They would like to see HDC and other partners explore if they could for example *“cut business rates”* or *“motivate landlords to not let buildings stand empty”*. They want the Council to explore these issues and explain what it can and can not do. As one participant put it *“the Council should be supporting those who want to but can’t rather than those who could but don’t.”*

We Become the Destination for Sustainable Tourism: There was limited support for sustainable tourism, across the focus group sessions. It was felt that the focus should be on addressing *“the needs of local people, rather than the wants of visitors.”*

“Why are you trying to attract tourists, when the people who live here don’t have everything they need.”

Year 10 student

“Will people want to visit here? Can we really compete with other places? I’d rather you invest in our local businesses.”

Digital Focus Group Participant

“There’s nothing in our town centre, I would be embarrassed if people came here to visit.”

Digital Focus Group Participant

There was some support for tourism as a mechanism for creating jobs, however there was concern that these tend to be low paid / zero hour contracts. Participants picked up on the potential for reduced public sector budgets in the future, and there is a belief that resources and capacity should be focused on the needs of the people who live in the area.



Our Business and Organisations Worked with Young People: Everyone who participated thinks it is important to create opportunity for young people, but there was a feeling that support for young people needs to go beyond this one pathway.

Almost every young person we spoke to at Sawtry Village Academy and Hinchbrook School felt there is nothing for them to do in Huntingdonshire. There is a perception that young people are also facing increasing challenges in the area, with parents of older children making references to drug taking, anti-social behaviour and county lines.

“Youth Council – don’t put me on a kids table. If you want to work with us, take us seriously.”

18 to 24 Focus Group

“I run the youth club and we’re looking at the moment at how we can get work experience for young people. It is so hard.”

Alconbury Weald Focus Group

“Schools need to be more consistent in what they do and how they support our young people.”

Love’s Farm Focus Group Participants

There is a desire to see opportunities created for young people and this is widely supported. Young people feel this process needs to involve and engage them more. They feel that are the moment too many decisions that affect them are being made without their involvement.

Growing Food Fresh and Local: Discussions on this topic with focus group participants, highlighted the need to think about the specificity of how to deliver this locally. This was an example of a topic where people were concerned about its fundamentally deliverability.

“Importing food from other places increases air miles, and shipping miles. Growing food locally is better for the environment.”

Ghanian Community Association

“We could have a local good supply but the lose of local farmland seems to run counter to that. You need to be realistic and make sure it is achievable.”

Digital Focus Group Participant

“Community orchards would be a good way to educate people about growing food.”

Year 10 Student



Health Embedded

GDP v Happiness: In discussion it was felt that people being happy is a worthwhile aspiration, but concern there is concern about how this can be measured and delivered. It was also felt to be confusing to put it in the context of GDP, which most focus group participants did not understand.

“How are you going to measure happiness? It feels like a nice thing to say, but how are you actually going to do that.”

Love’s Farm Focus Group Participant

“People should be happy to live here, but I think that happiness will come from the place improving. I don’t think it should be a thing on its own.”

Digital Focus Group Participant

In conversations with focus group participants, it was suggested that the language should maybe change to focus on wellbeing, in the context of wellbeing being a key priority for the council and its partners.

Easier to Live Healthy: There was support for this pathway, in the context of preventive health that reduces need for health services.

“Let’s be honest it’s money that makes it easier to live healthy.”

Conygear Focus Group Participant

“Gyms should be cheaper, so everyone can afford them.”

Year 7 Student

“It would be better to do more to prevent people from getting to the point where they’re really ill. Whether that’s physical health or mental health.”

Year 12 Student

“It would be easier to live healthy if there was a doctor here. Why do we have to go to St Ives?”

3C’s Participant

Participants want to see this pathway tackle the barriers that prevent people in their community living healthier lives including the cost of healthy living and the lack of health infrastructure in some communities.

Loneliness: In conversation, when loneliness was discussed in the context of the wider impact on people’s lives it became more of a priority for participants.

“No-one should be lonely; we should have events and parties where people can get together.”

Year 8 Student



“The Council needs to visit people in their homes and see how they’re doing... There is a personal touch missing in Colne. The Council should have a list of vulnerable people on their system to visit.”

3C’s Participant

There is a perception that increased loneliness is in part due to the legacy of covid, that as a result of the pandemic there are less places, events and activities that bring people together.

Skills and Training: Probably because it is the health embedded theme, participants tended to focus on skills and training opportunities for people who work in health and care related fields.

“It will contribute to Huntingdonshire’s health sector, and people will not feel discriminated.”

Digital Focus Group Participants

“There are lots of people who work in care in this area, and we don’t do enough to support them. They certainly don’t get paid enough.”

Digital Focus Group Participant

Some people felt that lifelong learning would be a better fit for equitable economy, *“if equitable means for everyone. If we’re talking about skills and training for people of all ages, maybe that should move.”*

Mental Health: A significant number of participants felt that mental health needs a specific pathway / focus with the place strategy beyond happiness and loneliness.

“Mental health is being pushed aside in this conversation.”

18 to 24 Focus Group Participant

“You really need to help with mental health in this area. There’s lots of people struggling who can’t get help.”

Year 9 Student

“When I was a police-officer I spent more time dealing with mental health than anything else, and the only training I had was a half day slide show on mental health.”

18 to 24 Focus Group Participant

There is a swell of support for mental health being a specific pathway within the place strategy. If this is not possible a clear reason why needs to be given in feedback.



Travel Transformed

Car As A Relic of the Past: A significant majority of participants of all ages felt this pathway is fundamentally unachievable, and therefore to an extent setting up the Place Strategy for failure.

"It's not going to happen; people are not going to get rid of their cars. Even if electric cars become more successful people will still be using cars."

Alconbury Weald Focus Group Participant

"Public transport needs to be frequent, cheap and reliable otherwise it won't work. That's why I'm sticking to my car."

Alconbury Weald Focus Group Participant

"I've only just passed my test and there is no way I'm going to give up my car."

Year 12 Student

"We live in a car centric county; it's going to take one heck of a network to beat point to point."

Digital Focus Group Participant

"There doesn't seem to be much thinking about disabled people in this."

3Cs Participant

It was felt that this pathway does not reflect the reality of the district and the challenges of getting around. That it doesn't take into account that services such as GPS's and schools are not available within all local communities, or those people who need to use cars for health reasons. They felt the language of this statement is *"to final, too black and white"* (digital focus group participant).

Mobility on Demand: There was a feeling among participants that this is good in theory more challenging in practice. A number of people spoke of using the Ting bus service, but concerns were raised. For example, one focus group participant explained that son uses the service to get to work, but on several occasions there have not been enough drivers. As a result, he has needed to get a taxi, which the Ting service has then paid for.

"My son has used the Ting service to get to work, it was going great but lately they haven't had the drivers. Which means he gets a taxi that they pay for. How is that sustainable? The Ting needs to be working properly first before they do more of it."

Alconbury Weald Focus Group Participant

"Huntingdon needs Uber, when can we get uber."

Year 12 Student

"The reality needs to be considered – I've heard about the Ting bus, but I don't think I would rely on it to get me to work."

Digital Focus Group Participant

Among young people in particular the need for 'uber' was raised consistently in conversation.

Distribution Networks: There was an acknowledgement that there are high levels of traffic in the area, and that distribution of goods contributes to this. However, discussions of this topic were limited and it was not a key priority for local people.

"We do need to think about how stuff as well as people moves around."

Year 11 Student

"I think on a very local level we can do more about how we move goods around. But on a bigger scale is this feasible."

Digital Focus Group Participant

Fun to Move Around: Again, as with mobility on demand it was felt there was a need to get the basics right and improve on existing infrastructure first. As was the case in phase 1, participants feel that the current approach to cycling and walking is disconnected.

"It is impossible to cycle to Cambridge, or Sandy or Huntingdon from here. More needs to be done to create a network, rather than just a hodge potch of paths."

Love's Farm Focus Group

"I would maybe walk more if all the street lights in my local neighbourhood worked."

Digital Focus Group Participant

"The river is lovely; it would be great to see paddleboards and rowers on it more often. But are members of the public just allowed to do that?"

Digital Focus Group Participant

As shown above there is also an aspiration to see more made of the river, which is seen as a key feature of the District. Project like the St Neots Future High Street Fund are looking at the river, but local people are unsure of what they and others can do on the river.



THE MISSING JOURNEYS

Crime and Community Safety

As part of our work in schools, we asked the students to create a vision for the future of their community. Almost, all these visions referenced that their community needed to be safe. Several students spoke of times when they had felt unsafe or had witnessed anti-social behaviour or had concerns about levels of drug taking locally.

In focus group sessions, in particular the discussion at Love's Farm, it was felt that tackling crime and community safety were significant gaps in the proposed journeys / place strategy. Parents raised significant concerns about behaviour in their communities and the potential influence on their children.

From the phase 2 engagement an argument could be made that crime and community safety should be considered as an independent journey or as a specific pathway within potentially pride of place.

Young People

Whilst people of all ages would arguably benefit from change across the place strategy, there was a feeling that more consideration needs to be given to young people beyond the 'what if our businesses and organisations worked hand in hand with young people.' A range of issues were raised including consistency of schooling and education, mental health, lack of things to do for young people and anti-social behaviour.

Culture, Recreation, and the Night-time Economy

Young people in particular thought that the equitable economy theme should have a specific pathway around culture, recreation, and the night-time economy. That there is a need for a clear pathway for how Huntingdonshire District Council plans to support, enhance and develop culture, recreation and the night-time economy in the area. In so doing illustrating how this will benefit the area, creating jobs and opportunity.

Mental Health

There are references to mental health in the current draft of the place strategy. However, its importance and the levels of need across the District is felt by local people to require a specific pathway of its own.

Forward Thinking Planning

Throughout phases 1 and 2, the local planning system has been criticised and the community would like to see it used for the benefit of local people. The place strategy needs to illustrate how the planning system can change and will change to deliver its aspirations. It needs to show how it will link to local plan/s and other strategies. If this is not possible, then the feedback process needs to explain why.

People

The place strategy needs to ensure that it puts local people and communities at its heart. People want to be sure that the place strategy is a journey towards the changes they want and need in their local area to improve quality of life for them and their families.



Transparency and Communication

As with phase 1 there is a concern that number of levels of democracy in the District “means that we have blame game, with people hiding from their responsibilities.” The place strategy narrative needs to explain how its journeys have been chosen, why it is focusing on these specific pathways and which organisations will be responsible and accountable for change.

POINTS OF DIFFERENCE

When reviewing the notes from the focus groups it was apparent that the factors summarised in this section were most likely to lead to differences in perspective and need.

Socio-Economic Status: As with phase 1 there is a divide in people’s priorities for the next 30 years based on socio economic status. Those living in areas of deprivation and struggling feel “left behind” and that they do not benefit from the same levels of support and care as other areas.

“We had all our bins taken away. There are barely any bins in our park. Behind our homes there is always fly tipping. You don’t get that in the posh areas, the areas where you spend money.”

Conygear Centre Focus Group Participant

“Let’s be honest nobody cares about what happens in the Oxmoor. It’s got a bad reputation, and nobody wants to make it any better.”

Year 11 Student

Where People Live: There was evidence of variation based on where people live. For example, the Love’s Farm focus group included a discussion about a perceived missing journey / focus on community safety, support for young people and a perceived lack of community infrastructure including a “promised pub.” In contrast in Alconbury Weald there was a perception of a stronger sense of community, that there is “low level crime” but it was not seen as a fundamental issue that the Place Strategy needed to address.

“Crime and drugs are a massive problem here. Bikes keep getting stolen, there’s no police presence. I’m concerned about what is going on and how it’s influencing my kids.”

Love’s Farm Focus Group Participant

“There’s not respect here. If you tell teenagers not to litter, they tell you to F-off.”

Love’s Farm Focus Group Participant

“It is friendly place, as you’re walking around everyone says hello. So much so that when someone didn’t say hello to me the other day, I almost called them on it. Told them that we say hello round here.”

Alconbury Weald Focus Group Participant



"We are in a bit of a bubble here. I hope that as we grow, and more houses are built the friendliness grows on."

Alconbury Weald Focus Group Participant

As shown in phase 1 there is also a rural urban divide. For example, those we spoke to at the 3C's Colne Caring Community Session explained how for them transport and health are linked. Young people from areas such as Offord, talked about community groups that had gone during the covid pandemic and not comeback. The impact of not have accessible things to do and activities in your community, without the need to have access to a car.

"We've lost all our doctors they've gone to St. Ives."

3C's participant

"None of my school mates live where I live. There used to be a youth club in Offord but now there is nothing to do where I live."

Year 9 student

Commuters: While travel was seen as an issue for almost everyone we spoke to, it was a particular area of focus for commuters. Focus group participants spoke of moving to the area for its perceived "good transport links" only to be disappointed by the reality.

"Too often I'm stuck in traffic. I'm a single mum and I can't guarantee I'll get home in time for childcare. The bus is expensive and slow. There is not direct train. Cycling is taking your life in your own hands. It has to be the car for me."

Love's Farm Focus Group Participant

"I'm support a Ukrainian family they are working in Cambridge, and it is a nightmare to get them there."

Love's Farm Focus Group Participant

"I had to travel for my work experience and most of the time the bus didn't show up. I can drive now; I won't give up my car."

Year 12 Student



Age of Participants: Young people (below mid-20s) had very specific perceived gaps in the place strategy journeys particularly around mental health, the night-time economy and how the Council and Councillors work with and listen to local young people.

“You really need to help young people with mental health problems. They won’t be able to go to school or get jobs if you don’t.”

Year 9 student

“Any conversation about mental health is just pushed aside.”

18 to 24 focus group participant

“How do you keep young people here? A night-time economy, entertainment, culture it could be busy all the time.”

18 to 24 focus group participant

“We’ve got ideas, but how do we put them in front of decision makers. Why don’t Councillors come and listen to us. Work with us.”

Year 12 student

FEEDBACK AND COMMUNICATION

Feedback

Consideration needs to be given to communicating to participants how the engagement process has shaped the place strategy. In addition where the communities has asked for elements / themes / areas that are not suitable for the Place Strategy an explanation needs to be provided.

Communicating the Place Strategy

The engagement process has shown that there is concern that *“this process is about nothing more than a fancy brochure”* (Digital Focus Group Participant) and *“it is meaningless if we can’t hold it to account”* (Love’s Farm Focus Group participant). Communication around the Place Strategy needs to clearly and concisely illustrate:

- **The role and remit of the Place Strategy.**
- **Who will be responsible for delivering the strategy and who is committed to supporting its implementation.**
- **How the Place Strategy will link to other Huntingdonshire District Council policies and strategies.**
- **How the community can hold the strategy to account.**
- **How the success of the strategy will be measured.**





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Place^{*} Strategy

Huntingdonshire 2050

MARCH 2023



Huntingdonshire

FUTURES

A Brighter Future for Huntingdonshire.

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foreword

Come on a journey towards Huntingdonshire's future.
A destination where we know the communities we want to build and the opportunities we want to create.
A destination where thinking radically and imaginatively will leave a legacy now and for generations to come.
A destination where shared ambitions and collective endeavour will realise a place renowned for doing things the right way.
At the heart of the Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy is understanding what is most important to residents, communities and stakeholders within our towns and rural areas.
By investing time and developing this shared strategy with our stakeholders and partners, who will continue to champion or lead on parts of it, we can influence better outcomes for our residents and communities to ensure Huntingdonshire continues to be one of the best places to live in the country.
Together we can reach a brighter future for Huntingdonshire.

Cllr Sarah Conboy,

Executive Leader of Huntingdonshire District Council



Why a place strategy

We are living in a world of change, with the pace of change appearing to speed up. The climate emergency, the cost of living crisis, energy and food insecurity and the aftermath of the Covid pandemic means that many of us look forward with concern and a sense of unease.

However, uncertain times can ignite new ideas and revive optimism.

People are re-evaluating what is important in life, focusing on what makes our communities stronger. Our nation's small towns are reigniting their sense of local pride and distinction, shifting the limelight from the big cities. We are beginning to rethink what makes a successful society — focusing less on economic growth and prioritising well-being, happiness, and healthy ecosystems.

Positive change, great communities and places do not happen by chance.

They happen because stakeholders, residents and businesses share a clear vision of how they want them to be and have bold, well-thought-out long-term plans and priorities to achieve these.



OLIVER
CROMWELL

WELLS
& CO

OLIVER
CROMWELL
FREE HOUSE

CALL
ALL
GOOD
FOOD
PUB
GARDEN



What is Huntingdonshire futures

Huntingdonshire Futures is a collaborative strategy which sets out a shared vision for the future of Huntingdonshire in 2050 and a clear way forward to achieve it.

Together we seek to meet the following objectives:

- Gain a greater understanding of what is most important to residents, communities and stakeholders across Huntingdonshire.
- Unite stakeholders through a shared sense of direction and ambition.
- Create a shared Place Strategy that maps out our plans for our place, people, economy, and the environment which improves the lives of all of our residents, communities, and businesses.
- Guide future strategy, policy developments and investment decisions made by the council and partners, to enable more effective delivery of integrated interventions that better serve the current and future needs of residents, communities, and businesses.

Evolution of the strategy



Huntingdonshire Futures is a collaborative exploration of what makes Huntingdonshire unique, what challenges we face, and what our future may hold up to 2050. This Place Strategy captures what we have learnt and heard from reviewing evidence and an extensive programme of workshops and conversations. It also is the result of challenging our own thinking and looking beyond the district to innovative case studies across the world.



Sept
2022

Workshop 2
and Community
Engagement
continues

June
2022

Work begins
to develop a
shared vision for
Huntingdonshire



ENGAGEMENT PERIOD 2

Futures Literacy - Exploring 'What If?'

Workshop 1
and Community
Engagement
begins

July
2022

ENGAGEMENT PERIOD 1

The Here and Now

ENGAGEMENT PERIOD 3
Exploring the Vision



Nov
2022

Workshop 3 and beginning of the second phase of Community Engagement testing key directions



Draft strategy produced

Feb
2023

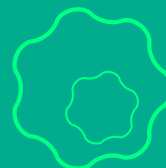


Huntingdonshire District Council look to adopt the Strategy

March
2023

ONGOING
DIALOGUE

Taking
the Vision
Forward



Huntingdonshire
FUTURES

A Brighter Future for Huntingdonshire.

Stakeholder engagement

This strategy for the future of Huntingdonshire has been led by local people — incorporating their understanding of the place, values and aspirations for the future.

A group of over sixty stakeholders were gathered to participate in a series of three workshops. Participants included representatives from business groups, the Police, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue, the NHS and local community groups.

WORKSHOP 1

Workshop 1 explored the 'Here and Now', and sought to understand Huntingdonshire as it is. We encouraged participants to identify locations and characteristics that make the district special. They then explored strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats according to Huntingdonshire's economy, environment, people and place. Finally, they were encouraged to begin to look to the future and identify inspirational projects that could be achieved in the long and short term.

WORKSHOP 2

Workshop 2 focussed on the future, and participants were encouraged to think beyond the day to day by questioning 'What if?'. Building on knowledge gained from workshop one and community consultation, participants were

presented with a series of 'What if' statements, and encouraged to be bold and imaginative. They then explored the context, assets, opportunities and challenges, unique to Huntingdonshire to deliver these scenarios. They were invited to explore the direct and indirect consequences of each possibility and finally offer a pledge to the district to begin to establish some commitments.

WORKSHOP 3

The aim of Workshop 3 was to begin to test the direction for the place strategy. Each table of participants were presented with a draft 'What if' story gathered from Workshop Two and asked how well the statement was working or if anything was missed. They were then tasked with preparing an action plan of short and long term steps to implement the 'What if' story they were exploring. Finally, they were encouraged to define ideas to take the Place Strategy forward.

WEBSITE

An interactive website was developed to host activities and gather feedback. Over the course of the stakeholder engagement period, different material was shared and users encouraged to comment and input. This process was coordinated with community consultation to best capture feedback.



community co-creation

The approach to community engagement has been developed to enable and encourage local people to join a conversation about the future of their district. Using a range of techniques, the focus has been on deliberative dialogue and quality of discussion. We delivered two phases of engagement, the first focusing on understanding local people's aspirations for the future of Huntingdonshire, on the context of people, place, economy, and the environment. We went to local people with pop up events in local markets and at other events, as well as delivering a programme of structured focus group sessions and activities with young people in partnership with schools and colleges. We asked the question 'What if', encouraging the community to think about what is possible in the communities in which they live.

The second phase of the engagement programme was a check and challenge process. We delivered a programme of focus groups and activities, working with local

organisations including schools, community groups and foodbanks. This qualitative engagement was designed to give residents the opportunity to feedback on the proposed destination, journeys, and pathways. This involved working with local people to understand their priorities for change and what they consider to be most important as well as exploring what actions for change they would like to see within the strategy. We also discussed any perceived gaps in the proposed approach and the role of the community in delivering change.

Across both phases of engagement we reviewed the qualitative data collated and looked for words or phrases that participants used repeatedly to identify themes or patterns. These were used to conduct further analysis to ensure we had a rounded understanding and supported the drafting of the strategy, so it aligns with the perspective of our communities.





Thinking Ahead

The Importance of Thinking Ahead

What if?



The Importance of Thinking Ahead

Futures Literacy

In times of uncertainty, it can be a challenge to look up from our every day lives and work practices to think about the future. 'Futures Literacy', developed by UNESCO is the ability to imagine complex future scenarios beyond the realms of what we already know. We have used this thinking to help the people and businesses of Huntingdonshire to collectively imagine a new future and challenge current thinking. Futures Literacy builds upon 'literacy' which typically refers to the ability to read and write but is often applied to wider competencies such as 'computer literacy' or 'media literacy'. It is our ability to identify, interpret and communicate knowledge.

The act of imagining and planning for future scenarios within government, businesses and organisations has previously been left to specialists called 'futurists', but everyone in Huntingdonshire - students, politicians, teachers and business leaders, should be equipped with the skills to think imaginatively about the future. This is because everyone's vision of the future is personal. It will always be shaped by our biases and experiences, but by pulling together lots of these individual lenses, we add breadth and depth to our collective vision.

Everyone with a stake in our future should be equipped to think beyond the realms of 'probable' and 'preferable' and open up the world of 'possible' (and perhaps even 'impossible?'), because without big ideas, and brave imagination, it's just 'business as usual'.

Source: UNESCO Futures Literacy, [link](#)

● We have to stop “colonising tomorrow with the ideas of today” (Nicklas Larson, Medium)



WHAT IF...



What if...?

A simple question
with big ambition

To develop 'Futures Literacy' to collectively imagine a new future beyond business as usual, the people and businesses of Huntingdonshire were asked to question 'What if...'

Pioneered by the founder of Transition Town Totnes – Rob Hopkins, 'What if?' is a simple question, but perhaps the most important question we have to refocus our outlook on the future. In his book 'What if to what next', Hopkins explores what we must do to revive and replenish our collective imagination. If we can rekindle

that precious creative spark, whole societies and cultures can change rapidly, dramatically and unexpectedly for the better. Questioning what if allows us to imagine alternative stories for Huntingdonshire and explore what would be needed to get there.

This strategy brings together a shared understanding of the current strengths and challenges facing Huntingdonshire today, combined with future thinking to set out a clear vision for how we want Huntingdonshire to be in 2050.

Source: Rob Hopkins, [link](#)

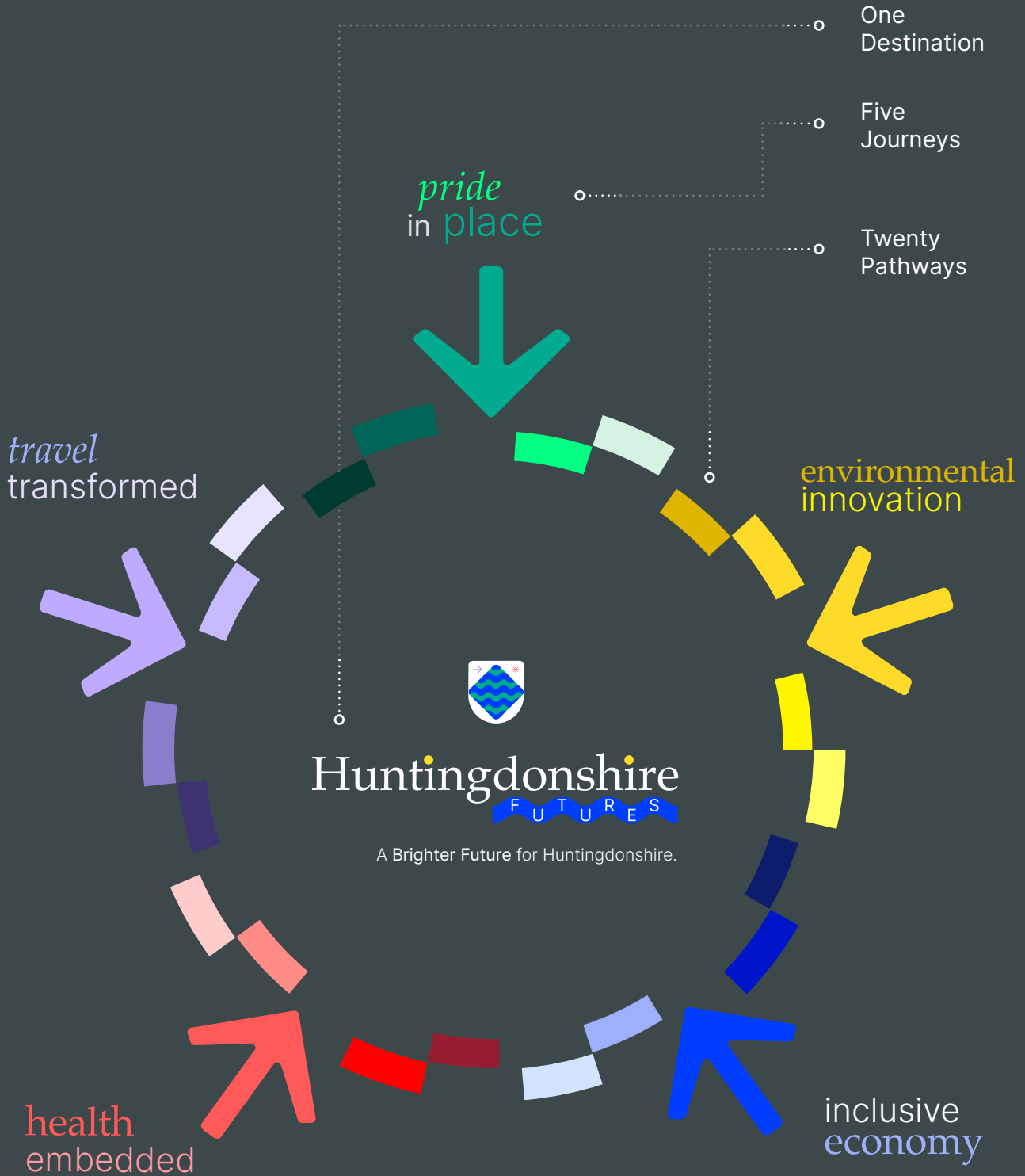




Huntingdonshire Futures

- Introducing the Place Strategy
- Pride in Place
- Inclusive Economy
- Health Embedded
- Environmental Innovation
- Travel Transformed

introducing the place strategy



One Destination

Huntingdonshire Futures - A simple message that encompasses the brighter future that we are reaching for.




Five Journeys

Five areas of focus that describe what we want Huntingdonshire to be like as a place and the common outcomes that we will work towards.

Twenty Pathways

Each journey is made up of four distinctive pathways, these outline how we might reach our desired journey.

The Pathways consist of the following:

-  **What If?**
Asking ourselves 'What If...?' helps us to imagine what's possible. Each pathway is introduced with a 'What If...?' statement which articulates what we imagine Huntingdonshire could be.
-  **Guiding Lights**
These are examples of relevant projects which show what can be done.
-  **What Could We Do?**
This presents potential steps, projects or initiatives that could be picked up by various stakeholders in order for us to achieve the vision

Each pathway will have different delivery requirements, stakeholder involvement and action plans. These are currently under development. By exploring these we hope to be able to catalyse new types of collaboration across sectors and develop truly cross-cutting initiatives that build on existing strengths and address multiple challenges at once. Not all pathways will be taken forward immediately and they will be reviewed and revised to keep them up to date.

Journey One

Distinct, unified and well-loved — by 2050, Huntingdonshire's citizens will feel proud to live and work in a place with stand-out character. We will enjoy homes that respond to our needs, great places to spend time in and a strong and safe community who take care of their surroundings.

You said...



'What is Huntingdonshire anyway?'



'I would like to be proud of where I live. I think if I did, I would be more inclined to get involved and make it better'



'You can't find an affordable home when you're young. Then when you want to downsize you can't'



What if...

we had a strong identity for the whole district?

In a world where... we are all spending more time locally, a sense of pride in our local area is fundamental. Yet we have heard that Huntingdonshire lacks a strong identity compared to neighbouring places such as Cambridge and Peterborough. Our residents, particularly our younger ones, don't feel a sense of belonging to the district.

There is a place... next to Cambridge with untapped potential including rich heritage and remarkable landscapes. We love our wide open fens and parklands, rolling claylands, and the picturesque Ouse Valley. And there's so much to enjoy about our charming market towns and villages.

Which could become... a district that people from all over the UK are drawn to, and residents are proud to call home. A place which celebrates its unique assets and competes with its neighbours — attracting employers, visitors and new residents who recognise what it means to live, work and play in true Huntingdonshire style.

But only if... we come together to recognise all the great localised initiatives taking place, and define what makes our place and people unique. The District Council, residents, businesses, cultural institutions and community groups must work together to decide what the essence of Huntingdonshire is and begin to promote our shared story.

Source: Huntingdonshire Futures Stakeholder Engagement

What could we do?

1.

Create a powerful place brand

Huntingdonshire needs a place brand that articulates the shared identity of the district. In close collaboration with the community, businesses and marketing experts a recognisable brand based on Huntingdonshire's unique identity should be developed.

Local people will feel a sense of ownership over it, and visitors can get to know the district and what it stands for through the brand. Campaign events engaging with the local community could kickstart the initiative and then maintain the momentum through regular marketing activity. The place brand could be co-created to draw on the aspects of the district that local people love.

2.

Introduce Place Champions

Nobody knows this district better than our long-standing local residents. We should seek out knowledgeable, passionate and well connected local people to become Place Champions. These champions will 'shout' about all the local activities and initiatives taking place, including the hidden treasures.

Place Champions will work together to make sure that great things do not go unnoticed, and these will reinforce the Place Brand and further inspire locals to feel proud of their district.





Guiding Lights



Raising the local profile: Visit Peak District and Derbyshire

Derbyshire County Council is working with Marketing Peak District & Derbyshire and partner authorities to develop the county's visitor economy by improving the offer, quality and identity of individual towns as part of wider destination management and place branding.

Local businesses can join the members network and enjoy benefits that help raise their profile. Support provided includes workshops, networking events, press and PR coverage and affordable advertising opportunities.

Source: Visit Peak District and Derbyshire, [link](#)

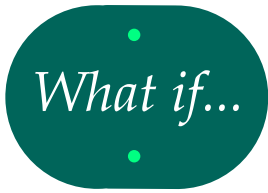


3. Establish a tourism board

The establishment of a tourism board could help coordinate and promote Huntingdonshire as a place to visit.

By involving local businesses, interest groups, cultural institutions and relevant organisations we can create a unique narrative around what makes Huntingdonshire special and why visitors should come.

This board can help identify gaps in the market, generating business opportunities and help to create a clearer sense of identity for local residents, raising awareness of local leisure and culture opportunities.



our homes responded to our needs?

In a world where... affordable housing is in scarce demand, social infrastructure is under strain and the majority of new housing in England lacks design quality and distinctiveness (Housing Design Audit for England by the Place Alliance). And where people are concerned that developers focus on building homes, rather than integrated communities.

There is a place... with a high quality of life, picturesque market towns and villages with incredible character, and landscapes that can inspire the creation of beautiful new places. A place that has been delivering 1,000 new homes per year since 2018, with similar levels projected to 2030.

Which could become... a leader in high quality, affordable, adaptable and energy efficient housing, which blends with the rich local character. A place where housing responds to the residents' needs and is served by essential social infrastructure, such as GPs and primary schools. Where new developments form integrated communities within their surrounding areas.

But only if... the council worked with stakeholders from the industry, including developers and land owners, and with other local authorities and institutions, to raise the ambition of well-designed, affordable housing which meets the community's needs.

Source: Place Alliance Housing Design Audit, [link](#), Huntingdonshire Local Plan 2036

Guiding Lights



Lovedon Fields, Hampshire

The 50 dwelling development of Lovedon Fields has recently won both the RIBA South Award and RIBA National Award for 2022 for its design quality. The rural housing scheme comprises of 40% affordable and shared ownership housing, a typology mix of apartments, terraces and detached houses, including some lifetime homes. The scheme has plentiful green public space, two-thirds of the site is conceived as a wildflower meadow and roofs feature integrated solar panels. The scheme is aligned with the local vernacular and provides a sensitive edge to South Downs National Park.

Source: RIBA Architecture, [link](#)
Top image: Jim Stephenson



What could we do?

pride in place

1.

Address housing affordability

An inclusive community is one where diverse groups of people can live together and enjoy life. This requires high quality of housing to be accessible and affordable to all who need it, especially young people who want to climb the housing ladder.

This could be achieved through trialling new forms for affordable housing delivery such as self-build schemes, community land trusts, council led house building and public private partnerships. New developments will be built with affordable housing, forming well-serviced inclusive communities.

2.

Respond to evolving needs

People's lives evolve which means that their housing needs evolve in parallel. Growing families need homes that cover their new needs, young people need flexible homes that allow them to work and play from there, and the older generation needs housing that enables them to be independent.

This requires the availability of diverse housing typologies, from flats to town houses and custom-built homes, which offer flexible spaces of the right size responding to their inhabitants' needs. Homes which are inter-generational, accessible and adaptable.

This also includes the requirement for homes to be close to the necessary infrastructure, including schools, healthcare and public transport, to foster sustainable communities.

3.

Raise the ambition for better design

The ambition and inspiration for better housing design should be reinforced across the district. The council will work with the industry and other local authorities and public institutions to promote and encourage well-designed high quality homes.

Local guidance and standards can promote a higher design aspiration and requirement utilising best practice examples from the district, the County and the rest of the country. Local towns and Parishes can enable locally led ambitious design guides, or opportunities to shape their areas through Neighbourhood Plans. Initiatives such as the Public Practice and the Eastern Design Review Panel could also be considered. Finally, a new local or joint housing expo with other authorities could be organised to showcase best practice and kickstart the discussion around better design.



What if...

we built up the resilience of our communities?

In a world where... the squeeze on income for people and businesses reduces everyone's ability to do good things for others, people can feel disconnected from where they live. Young people in Huntingdonshire particularly feel alienated here.

There is a place... with strong, conscientious communities, business forums and networks, where people are fiercely proud of their neighbourhood and actively involved in helping each other.

Which could become... a place that feels safe, inclusive and offers access to support. A place that encourages bottom-up initiatives, making sure everyone sees the value of investing in the fabric of our society.

But only if... community groups, businesses and volunteers are enabled and supported to work together. Only if programmes are established to make new engagement and collaboration easy, backed up by increased awareness of opportunities.

Source: Huntingdonshire Futures Stakeholder Engagement

What could we do?

1.

Enable citizens to shape their communities

The district could set up its very own Citizens Assembly, where anyone interested in shaping their community can get involved. This would give a voice and a sense of agency to everyone in the district, including residents, business owners, teenagers and employees and encourage participation in the political process. The Assembly could raise issues that concern its members, collectively decide which are the most important to address, seek funding and implement the improvements.

As an independent organisation it could set the priorities that mean the most to its members, hold others to account and deliver change in a more direct way.

2.

Support community and voluntary organisations

The district boasts a very strong and established volunteering sector with numerous community and volunteer groups, such as Warm Spaces, actively supporting and helping the community.

This rich sector should be supported through a digital platform with access to guidance on governance, fundraising and grants, recruiting volunteers and training. The platform could also host a network to support the different community organisations and voluntary groups to collaborate and attract volunteers, and get in touch with businesses and service providers for their needs. Venue hire, events organisation and other communications could be facilitated through the same platform.





Guiding Lights



Oxmoor Community Fridge

As the cost of living is rapidly increasing, more people are in need of support to put food on the table. The Oxmoor Community Fridge fills this need, by redistributing food given away by supermarkets and other donations, from Thongsley Fields Primary and Nursery School every Tuesday. The service is in very high demand, supporting approximately 45 residents every 1.5 hour session and having redistributed more than 10 tonnes of food in the past year, helping to reduce food waste. It even provides the option of home delivery to vulnerable residents.

Source: Zero Waste Initiatives, Huntingdonshire District Council, [link](#)

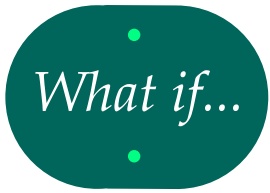


3.

Strengthen the sense of safety

The spaces we inhabit and our public spaces are an integral part of our lives, and therefore should feel safe, welcoming and well-kept. Places that look less well maintained are more likely to attract anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

Therefore, the council, the public services and other key stakeholders should work together to make improvements in the public realm's infrastructure, maintenance and supervision. It is important to keep spaces such as schools and housing estates safe, through good surveillance and clean public areas, to ensure the students' and inhabitants' wellbeing. Public realm and infrastructure interventions should have regard to attracting activity and feeling secure to use.



our high streets were the centre of social and cultural life?

In a world where... high streets are in decline, our village and town centres are no longer the heart of community life. Research by the Local Data Company and Power to Change has found vacancy rates at an all time high, due to the growth of out of town retail, online shopping and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There is a place... that benefits from its diversity arising from a cluster of market towns and villages each with its own unique offer of markets, independent shops, picturesque historic cores and plenty of citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit.

Which could become... a district that leads the revival of the high street across the UK. Rich in diverse spaces that go beyond retail, embrace the café culture and allow people to come together. Places that attract and retain locals and visitors, both in the day and later in the night with a revived offer of night time activities.

But only if... we work together — retail is all about exchange after all. We need cross-sector collaboration between landowners, the council, businesses and community groups to identify and revamp empty spaces and create vibrant public places where people want to linger.

Source: Power to Change, [link](#)

Guiding Lights



Art in the High Street

The Croydon Art Store converted a four story shopping centre unit into an arts and cultural venue, created in collaboration between Croydon Council, Kingston School of Art, the local arts organisation Turf Projects and Art Halo. The project seeks to provide affordable studio space, a gallery space to exhibit work from local artists, a free bookable creative event space, and a research space to develop a Croydon biannual art exhibition with Kingston School of Art. It will also give the council an opportunity to see how arts and cultural activities can be made more accessible and regenerate sites that would otherwise be vacant.

Source: Croydon Arts Store, [link](#)



What could we do?

pride in place

1.

Promote meanwhile use

Empty space on our high streets creates a feeling of decline, but meanwhile use, which refers to temporary use of empty property and land, can help enliven spaces as well as provide a great resource for local people.

The council can take a closer look into its high streets and identify vacant and underused spaces, then work with landlords to support temporary use of these spaces by local community groups, businesses and organisations at affordable rates to activate the spaces before a long term solution is found. This can be facilitated by providing a register of spaces, advertising the opportunities, producing guidance and enabling planning policies.

2.

Boost the night time offer

Huntingdonshire's market towns can lack diversity. While high streets are places of activity and attraction during the daytime, we need to ensure they stay bustling with leisure opportunities also at night.

This could include promoting night markets, cultural events and a cafe and restaurant culture, including pop ups, to test out new businesses and reinstate the high street as the heart of the community, even at night. The council can work together with the local business owners, entrepreneurs, community groups and cultural institutions to identify opportunities and mobilise initiatives through events, branding and advertising, permits and adapting licences.

3.

Enhance the public realm

Physical improvements on high streets and their surrounding public realm can be crucial to create inviting and attractive spaces. Widening the pavements, dedicating more space to pedestrians and spill out activities can greatly change the experience of high streets into more people-focussed and relaxing spaces.

The addition of public furniture and incidental play facilities can attract people to linger for longer. Reallocating some parking spaces on the high street into public realm can help reduce the dominance of the car and create a more child friendly place.

Journey Two

Talented, trained and confident — by 2050 Huntingdonshire will champion upskilling and provide inspiring job opportunities for residents in a variety of industries. We will nurture start-ups, enable businesses to grow, and build a strong local economy.

You said...



'There are communities of like minded people, like here in St Neots. How will this support those of us who are already here?'

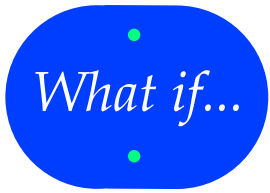


'What if we make market towns work as market towns?'



'Don't put me on a kids' table. If you want to work with us, take us seriously'





we created a place where our businesses could flourish?

In a world where... resilience and cash reserves of businesses have been hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, and where small to medium enterprises often prefer to cluster in areas outside of the district, like Cambridge.

There is a place... that has a truly entrepreneurial spirit with 150 start-ups per month, and a strong economy worth £10billion/year led by manufacturing. With strategic road and rail infrastructure and land prices which are attractive to investors and companies looking to seed, develop and scale. With Cambridge and its world-leading science and research industries and cluster of incubating Uni spin outs on its doorstep.

Which could become... a place where businesses choose to locate and grow thanks to strategies and infrastructure that attract inward investment and high value jobs. Where both start-ups and established industries are supported by the right affordable spaces, whether that be in innovative incubators or large-scale environmentally friendly developments.

But only if... the district throws its weight behind fledgling new businesses — establishing more support networks such as the St Neots Initiative, and only if it ensures its high performing sectors are supported and taps into the potential arising from Cambridge.

Source: "Ready to Recover" Economic Growth Strategy For Huntingdonshire District 2020-2025, Huntingdonshire Economic Growth Plan 2013 – 2023, Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership (LEP) (2014)

Guiding Lights



Alconbury Enterprise Campus

The Alconbury Weald Enterprise Campus is a multi-use development backed by Enterprise Zone status. It facilitates the co-location of research and development production spaces for small and medium-sized businesses in addition to flexible office incubators, as well as bespoke large buildings. The campus is home to a growing number of companies implementing technology solutions including AI, robotics and automation that supports its manufacturing, cleantech and engineering base. It hosts regular business support seminars including expertise from HDC's Invest in Huntingdonshire team.

Source: Space to make and grow your business - Alconbury Enterprise Campus, [link](#)





1.

Promote Made in Huntingdonshire

Designed to celebrate all that is positive about the Huntingdonshire Business landscape, 'Made in Huntingdonshire' will provide the platform to help celebrate our amazing businesses and their fantastic achievements, which include the diversity of the products that are designed, prototyped and produced en-mass and the service excellence offered by local companies. As well as our people and residents who make all of the above happen, including our rich base of entrepreneurs, heavyweight business leaders and all of the unsung heroes whose combined industry helps underpin our £10 billion/year economy.

2.

Foster business development programmes

The setting up of a new business can be daunting and complex. A digital platform with essential guidance to navigating the process can help many entrepreneurs. They might provide guidance on funding, regulation, finding suppliers and marketing, the right premises and much more.

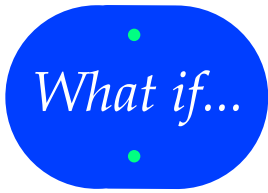
An organisation could be set up as an intermediary who brings into contact the ambitious entrepreneurs with established or larger businesses, suppliers and other experts in the field.

3.

Secure the right workspaces

The right space which responds to a business' needs, lies at the heart of a healthy operation. Affordable and flexible incubator clusters where start-ups can flourish, versatile offices which enable hybrid work, and innovative green R&D, warehousing and production facilities with easy distribution access, are all necessary for the district's economic growth. With the right policy and processes, we can deliver and promote spaces, which are accessible by public transport and situated at strategic locations, supported by targeted lower business rates and green grants.





our businesses and organisations worked hand in hand with young people?

In a world where... young people want to change the world, they also simply want meaningful work that reflects their values. At the same time businesses struggle to recruit the right staff with the knowledge and skills needed by that particular industry. In Huntingdonshire, the working age population is expected to decrease from 61.8% aged 16-64 in 2020 to 57% in 2043, in part due to people moving away.

There is a place... that has a strong and friendly business community, including a high proportion of Small to Medium Enterprises, with plenty of manufacturing, construction, science and tech businesses. With independent initiatives such as Shift Momentum and collaboration potential with Cambridge's world-class economy.

Which could become... a place where businesses, educators and young people work together and listen to each other to match skills with industry needs. Where the younger generation is aware of local opportunities available, the skills they need to get there, and feel motivated by the potential to do what they love. Businesses can become more sustainable in the long run, future proofing their workforce and being exposed to new ideas from our bright young thinkers.

But only if... there is the time, space and networks available to facilitate exchange, relying on a culture of openness. We look to develop a choice of the right training programmes with apprenticeships and short courses providing different ways to get those valuable qualifications.

Source: Cambridgeshire Insights. Top image: Huntingdonshire Youth Work Forum



What could we do?

1. Define Huntingdonshire as a District of Learning

Huntingdonshire could be inspired by European Cities of Learning to integrate learning and training into everyday life, and make participation easier and more engaging.

Local businesses could help design these small scale training programmes, so they reflect local specialisms and industry needs and raise the awareness of local opportunities.

Source: Cities of Learning, [link](#)

2. Create a culture of work experience

Work experience programmes are a great way for young people to understand opportunities available to them or learn first hand about a job they might be interested in but may not have the access to. Businesses gain access to a young pool of labour, who are eager to learn and build a career as well as share their ideas.

Businesses could be encouraged to initiate apprenticeship and work placement programmes across the district. Schools and students could also be supported through a programme that helps find students a place and assists handling their concerns or developing additional skills.



Guiding Lights



Cities of Learning

Many European cities have become Cities of Learning, where learning opportunities are more visible and accessible to young learners. Each city or region uses digital technology to map the learning opportunities, compile online learning 'playlists' and provide 'open badges'. Young people are encouraged to find events and experiences that match their ambitions, either digitally or locally, and build a digital portfolio of their learned skills and achievements. The learning opportunities are contemporary and broad, ranging from game design and entrepreneurship to architecture.

Source: Cities of Learning, [link](#)
Bottom image: Shift Ignite Programme



3.

Build a professional network

Planning for the future and ensuring that the current young workforce has the right knowledge and skills is imperative both for their own development and the district's economic growth.

In order to match demand with supply, a network could be established that links education and training providers, job seeker organisations and youth groups with local businesses.

This could be a combination of a digital platform and events to support information sharing, foster the closer collaboration of educators and employers, advertise opportunities and training, and bring young people into contact with a pool of professionals.

Source: Blueprint for All, [link](#)





we chose to buy more local?

In a world where... what we consume is increasingly expensive and reliant on vulnerable global supply chains, while our high streets are struggling. We are seeing a rise in obesity and diabetes because we aren't eating good quality, healthy food like we used to. In Huntingdonshire, 65.3% of adults are classed as overweight or obese, higher than the England average.

There is a place... with a strong local agricultural economy, a network of diverse local businesses and makers, supported by a wealth of independent retailers. With vibrant market towns which host numerous street markets with local produce and other goods.

Which could become... a district with a revitalised food and goods network where local choices are always the most convenient and cost effective. Local food producers, makers, residents, businesses, supermarkets, schools and community groups can use physical spaces and digital tools to make local products the go-to option. A place with easier routes for businesses to trade and contract with each other locally across all industry sectors.

But only if... farmers and other local producers are encouraged to supply what local people need and sell it in the region. If appropriate physical space and distribution infrastructure are put in place and consumers are informed about the health, sustainability and economic benefits of buying more locally.

Source: Cambridgeshire Insights

Guiding Lights



Totally Locally

Totally Locally is helping towns around the UK and the world support their independent retailers and producers. Volunteers and groups of businesses receive the 'Town Kit', which includes marketing material and a guide on how to launch the campaign. Local businesses are the 'Hidden Gems' who learn how to celebrate their unique products and inform local consumers. This is all centred around the concept that if each person spent £5 per week in local shops, £13.5 billion would go directly to the local economy.

Source: Totally Locally, [link](#)



What could we do?



1.

Support local food hubs and markets

Local Food Hubs could be established at various central locations in the district and rural locations close to their production. The Hubs will aggregate, store, sell on-site and also distribute and market the food products which have been locally produced.

Hubs can play an essential intermediary role between producers who may not have access to warehouses and transport, and the consumers. Farmers Markets, which already exist in the district, are another way of promoting locally sourced products.

Source: Getting to Scale with Regional Food Hubs, [link](#)

2.

Support local business networks

In order to foster the local making, growing and producing, our businesses should be effectively supported. The council should work with the business community and other stakeholders to boost existing networks, forums and associations to enhance local trading and contracting.

Support could be in the form of promoting networking platforms and events, where businesses can come into contact with other potential business partners and exchange services. Other mechanisms could include incentives and grants to contract with other local businesses and establishing a district-wide database of businesses and associated service providers.

3.

Launch marketing campaigns

Marketing is vital to help local producers, makers, growers and retailers reach their local target market and establish a client base. Digital advertising, news articles, press coverage, email marketing and social media are all effective marketing tools that could be utilised.

We can provide support to businesses through free material, training and guidance, taking advantage of opportunities such as Totally Locally. Local volunteer and community groups could join forces with businesses to become the pioneers who will celebrate the unique local products and make sure the district is informed about them.





we could learn new skills at all life stages?

In a world where... educational attainment in the district is below the national average. Where people aged 65 and above are forecast to grow to 26.7% in 2043, from 20.4% in 2020. But also where digital advancement means that the knowledge and skills attainment methods become more versatile.

There is a place... where 79% of the working age population are economically active, with a robust business network and education providers. This includes good local schools and colleges, and strong links to nearby world-class education at Cambridge University.

Which could become... a place where all residents have access to lifelong learning. Where potential is nurtured from the first thousand days at outstanding schools and early years facilities, and everyone independent of their background and age can reach their full potential at any stage — allowing them to discover fulfilling work or productive new hobbies.

But only if... the public, private, community and academic sectors come together to raise collective ambitions and provide useful training and education in a range of accessible formats, including both physical and digital classrooms.

Source: Huntingdonshire Futures Stakeholder Engagement. Top image: Trumpington Community College, Richard Ellis



What could we do?

1. Reinforce the first years of education

The first thousand days of a child's life are crucial in setting the foundations for future growth. Therefore, it is important to have high quality Early Years facilities and nurseries which nurture and stimulate our young residents.

High quality teaching and learning should continue from primary through to post-16 education. Students should be given opportunities to fulfil their educational potential, including children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and socially vulnerable students.

Sufficient supply of high quality school places, physical space enhancements to facilities, and incentives to retain students in education should be provided.

2. Establish community learning centres

Community learning centres are service providers or physical spaces that provide functional literacy, vocational skills, and work-related skills to youth and adults not in education, employment or training. This helps to get people into work, improving skills and confidence.

Huntingdonshire could work in partnership to deliver initiatives and make use of existing spaces, facilities and networks such as libraries, vacant shop units or community centres. The training programmes should respond to the needs of the community and could include English skills, vocational courses, business skills and female-focused upskilling, whilst identifying the types of employment opportunities available through engagement with business networks.



Guiding Lights



Lifelong Learning

Post-pandemic, we have expanded our definition of traditional schooling, including online, shorter, and more specialised courses in our library of learning. Attitudes are still changing. It's not just teaching methods but also subjects and student demographics that are being rewritten. Learning becomes a life-long activity, with no traditional university age, as schools and businesses encourage people of every generation to continue in education. Specialist lifelong learning centres and initiatives are being set up across the UK to widen participation for people of all life stages and demographics.

Source: Lifelong Learning, [link](#)



3.

Support the University of the Third Age

The University of the Third Age is a network of local groups across the UK that provide opportunities for people to learn together for fun. Starting in 1982, the approach encourages groups of people no longer in full-time work to come together and continue their enjoyment of learning subjects of interest to them. University of the Third Age groups already exist in Huntingdonshire, focussed in the market towns. These could be supported to raise awareness and expand their reach, particularly to rural areas and diverse new communities. Collaboration between the existing groups and businesses and education providers could also be supported to facilitate knowledge sharing and community cohesion.

Source: University of the Third Age, [link](#)

Journey Three

Healthier and more holistic — in 2050 Huntingdonshire will value happiness and health above all else, supporting good quality of life for all people at all stages of life.

You said...



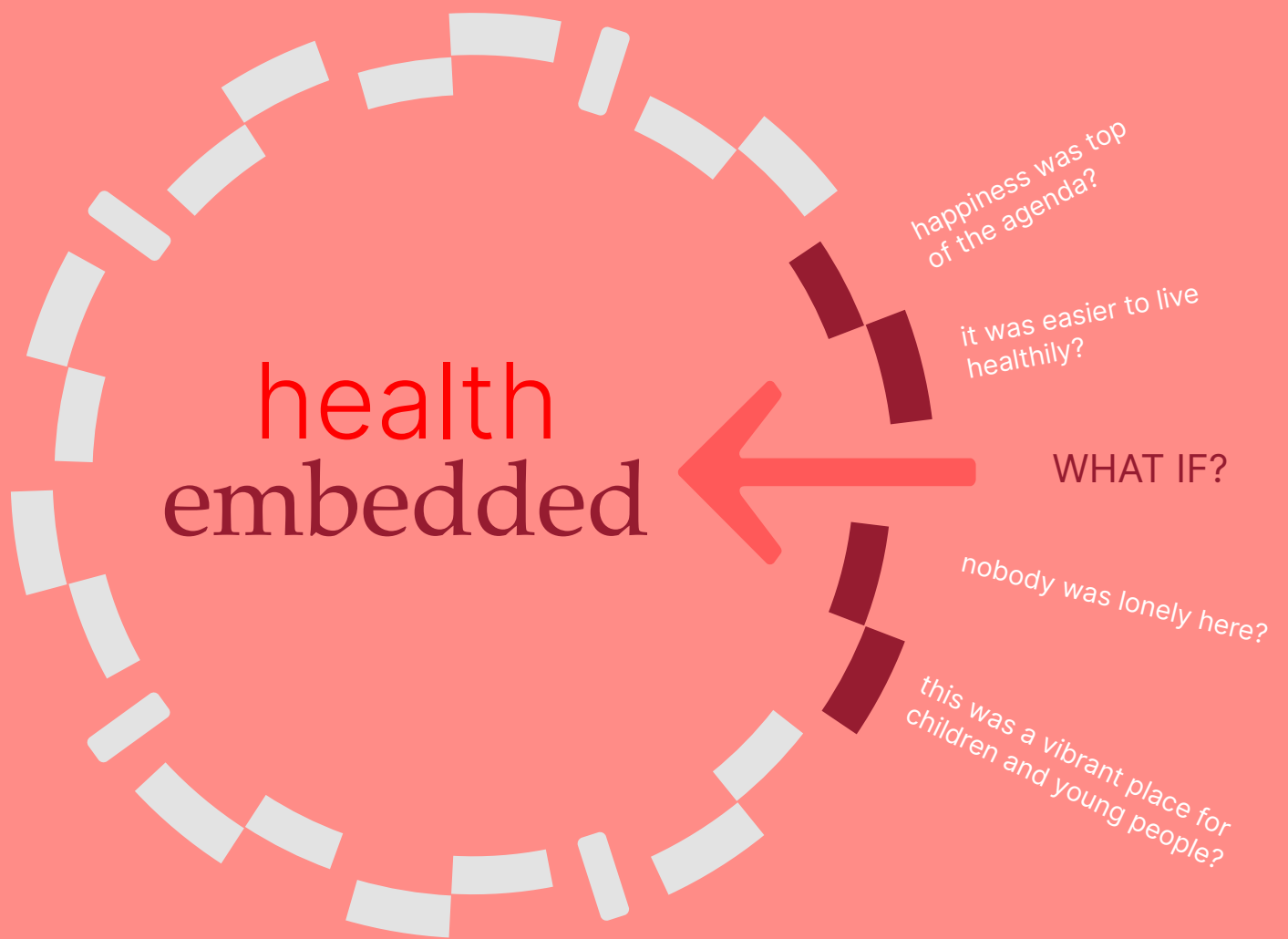
'It would be better to do more to prevent people from getting to the point where they're really ill. Whether that's physical health or mental health.'



'Mental health is being pushed aside in this conversation.'



'There are lots of people who work in care in this area, and we don't do enough to support them'



What if...

happiness was the top of the agenda?

In a world where... we know that economic growth does not necessarily result in wellbeing — health really matters and our mental and physical health is under strain. Prioritising profit has widened social inequality and in Huntingdonshire fewer than 1 in 3 residents have ‘very good’ life satisfaction.

There is a place... that has all the ingredients of a great quality of life; a kind community, beautiful green spaces, access to secure jobs and generally low levels of deprivation.

Which could become... a place that prioritises the happiness of its people and their health. A place with a cohesive support system that starts from the top and spreads through the community. A place with culture, a good work life balance, access to nature and opportunities for leisure and play — all the ingredients for a good life.

But only if... ‘happiness’ is top of the agenda for the council and our businesses, instead of just a nice-to-have. This will involve defining what happiness means for Huntingdonshire and how it can be measured in a way that reflects the diverse community — and then using this to inform our plans and decision making.

What could we do?

1.

Define what happiness means for Huntingdonshire

In order to try to achieve happiness, we need to know what happiness means for the people of Huntingdonshire.

Through collaborative sessions, for example a Citizens Assembly, we could come up with a way of defining and measuring happiness that reflects all of Huntingdonshire’s diverse communities. This approach could consider factors such as health metrics, work life balance, mental health, opportunities to socialise, access to culture and leisure and financial security.

2.

Ensure happiness drives decision making

Once a definition for happiness has been determined, and metrics developed, improving happiness should be the shared goal alongside economic growth.

Council programmes and grant-funded organisations should be required to demonstrate how they are improving happiness and the direction of these organisations should be structured towards an approach that best improves happiness.

There should be regular information gathering, to understand progress and understand which aspects of happiness are harder to achieve and require additional investment.



Gross National Happiness

The concept of Gross National Happiness was developed by the Buddhist nation of Bhutan as they felt that sustainable development should take a more holistic approach towards notions of progress and give equal importance to non-economic aspects of wellbeing.

An Index was developed which seeks to define what happiness means for the residents of Bhutan and includes metrics on health, wellbeing, nature and culture. This is used as a tool to measure national progress and inform policy, with projects, funding and decision making meant to be directed in a way that increases happiness.

Source: Gross National Happiness, [link](#)



3.

Celebrate happiness

Raise the profile of Huntingdonshire as a happy place to live and work. This includes branding campaigns that celebrate the high quality of life that Huntingdonshire provides and its new and innovative approach to running volunteering actions, community projects, the local services and initiatives.

This could be supported by a series of community events and festivals that bring places and people together.

What if...

it was easier to live healthily?

In a world where... our physical and mental health isn't something we can take for granted, living healthy lives needs to be the obvious choice, but that's often not the case. If you live in the least deprived areas, you can expect to live on average 7 years longer than those living in the most deprived areas of Huntingdonshire. Residents are frustrated by the health service — often struggling to get basic appointments. Depression rates have almost doubled since the pandemic began and depression is also more prevalent amongst young people and those in more precarious economic positions.

There is a place... with abundant parks and open spaces, topography that supports active travel and community initiatives that can help to remove barriers to healthy, happy lifestyles.

Which could become... an environment where being healthy is inclusive — where all people independent of their abilities can easily access their daily needs so that exercise is embedded in their daily routine, where choosing fresh food options is the easiest and most affordable choice, where mental health is prioritised and where service providers are coordinated and mobile, bringing care into our communities.

But only if... the council, NHS, Cambridgeshire County Council, businesses and residents view health and wellbeing holistically, investing in programmes that examine the social and economic determinants of health and treat the cause of physical and mental health complaints before they arise. This includes the promotion of healthy new places, encouraging active travel and addressing economic insecurity and social isolation.

Guiding Lights

The High Street Hospital

Post-pandemic, we reflect on how interlinked community and healthcare are.

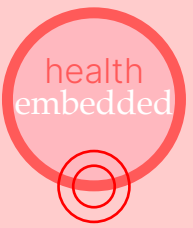
Being local to the community also plays a vital role in accessibility and ways of navigating healthcare are changing, as it strives to become human-centred, meeting people where they are.

Sheffield Hallam Teaching hospital, alongside ARUP, plans to replace dying city centre retail with walk-in clinics – high street hospitals that can use these strategically placed spaces.

Source: Arup High Street Hospital, [link](#)



What could we do?



1.

Focus on low income communities

There are significant health inequalities across Huntingdonshire, so investment in health and wellbeing should be directed towards those that need it most. In Huntingdonshire, this tends to mean low income neighbourhoods and rural communities.

The council should work together with key stakeholders to ensure that new services or investment in improvements to existing services, public realm and open space prioritise these areas. They tend to be in less accessible locations, with poor access to public transport or low car ownership. Investment in public transport including subsidies would also improve health outcomes for those that need it most.



2.

Fast track community based integrated services

Community-based integrated services enable people to receive care closer to home, preventing physical and mental health challenges before they arise.

Focusing on everyday health and wellbeing at the local level, through coordination between health care providers and community groups, gives people the support they need when they need it, including services to support self-care and wellbeing, independence and social participation. These sectors should coordinate, adapting the design of their services to better reflect the specific needs of the local population.

This aims to avoid unnecessary hospital care which can be traumatising for individuals and place strain on the NHS.

3.

Create community food systems

A “community food system” is one in which sustainable food production, processing, distribution and consumption are integrated to enhance the environmental, economic, social and nutritional health of a particular community. This could be facilitated across Huntingdonshire to initiate diverse projects that develop connections between different parts of the food system. More allotments and orchards can be created in spaces close to residents that support mental and physical wellbeing. Space in both high streets and rural areas could become equipped with community kitchens where people can gather. There could also be support for the development of small food enterprises.

Source: Community Food Systems



What if...

nobody was lonely here?

In a world where... increasing loneliness and social isolation affects the mental health of every pocket of society, the most vulnerable and the elderly are hit hardest — although isolation is also rising in young people. Research by the Campaign to End Loneliness found loneliness is likely to increase your risk of death by 26%.

There is a place... with passionate and empathetic people in an active volunteering sector and communities focussed around neighbourly towns and villages. People are proud of the strong community ties here, and a growing retired population have time to help those in need.

Which could become... a place where everyone has a friend, as all residents have the opportunity to feel engaged in their community and places help facilitate social interaction. This includes parks, high streets community centres, playgrounds and allotments which provide ample opportunities to leave the house, making it easy to engage and participate.

But only if... we ensure the built environment provides solutions including co-living, activated public realm, community spaces and good connectivity. In addition, there is promotion of a diverse range of events and volunteering opportunities to increase participation and grow local networks.

Source: Campaign to End Loneliness, [link](#)

What could we do?

1.

Trial co-living

With loneliness on the rise, collective living offers a solution and could be trialled in Huntingdonshire. Here, a community of unrelated individuals or families share housing and facilities. This might be a fully shared home, or just a group of homes organised around a communal garden or kitchen.

This helps counter loneliness and supports a sense of belonging and cohesion by creating easier opportunities to socialise. Through sharing space, these models can be more affordable and reduce consumption of resources.

2.

Promote intergenerational care

Intergenerational care refers to the practice of bringing the young and elderly together by co-locating and integrating nurseries and care homes.

The practice can decrease loneliness and improve quality of life amongst the elderly participants and has been shown to delay mental and physical decline. This also gives children the opportunity to mix regularly with elderly people, which can be missing if extended family do not live nearby. Children can also benefit from the attention of people who have time to listen and share stories which connect them with the past.

This could be achieved through locating a new nursery and care home together, expanding sites if the opportunity is available or by having reading sessions or shared outings.

Guiding Lights



Marmalade Lane

As we are beginning to understand the dire consequences of loneliness on our health, new models of co-living are being tested on our doorstep, with concepts such as Marmalade Lane, Cambridge.

Here, residents across forty two homes share facilities such as a common house for residents to socialise, host guests and eat together. A shared garden makes up the heart of the community, with mature trees, food growing and space to relax and play. The homes face onto a child friendly car free street which encourages neighbourly interaction.

Source: Marmalade Lane, [link](#)



3.

Create a community wellbeing network

Healthcare providers and the voluntary sector could collaborate to establish a network whose purpose is to improve the wellbeing of individual participants and the community as a whole.

This involves creating support plans, signposting to opportunities, helping individuals to access support groups, referring them to specialist agencies or just having a chat.

The network could serve as connectors in the community, providing spaces to socialise and find out about the range of opportunities available across Huntingdonshire, from events, clubs, volunteer opportunities and training.

What if...

this was a vibrant place for children and young people?

In a world where... poor mental health is on the rise, social media has worsened social isolation and there is the perception that crime and anti-social behaviour is on the rise.

There is a place... that has passionate and engaged communities, a strong voluntary sector, independent initiatives such as Shift Momentum and the potential to make the most of links with Cambridge, London and Peterborough.

Which could become... a place where children and young people are engaged and inspired through activities and opportunities that reflect their diverse interests. Where ambition is nurtured and young people can reach their full potential — allowing them to socialise, develop confidence, discover productive new hobbies or learn new skills.

But only if... the public, private and voluntary sectors come together to deliver places, projects and events that children and young people can enjoy. This includes listening to and responding to the actual interests and needs of those who are intended to participate and fostering a culture of trust that fosters independence and a sense of care for the community.

Source: Huntingdonshire Futures Stakeholder Engagement. Top image: #iwillmovement Twitter

Guiding Lights

Young Technicians Academy

Recently opened in Yaxley, the Young Technicians Academy helps young people build their skills, knowledge and experiences in the creative industries, including music, performing arts, media and live events. Primary and secondary school students learn about backstage operations from performers, while young people can participate in courses and clubs to learn essential skills while having fun.

Creative therapies are also delivered in partnership with communities and not-for-profit organisations.

Source: Young Technicians Academy, [link](#)



What could we do?

1.

Promote Youth Social Action and the #iwill movement

Youth social action refers to activities that children and young people can do to make a positive difference to others or the environment. The #iwill movement is made up of over 1000 organisations and 700 young ambassadors across the UK that helps to ensure meaningful action is taken to support more children and young people to be active citizens.

Huntingdonshire organizations including schools could sign up to gain access to support and funding opportunities to increase youth social action, recognizing the benefits this provides.

2.

Support Youth Services and Create a Youth Action Plan

Create through collaboration with young people and organisations across Huntingdonshire, an action plan for the district that sets out how to plan and deliver youth services. This includes preparing a comprehensive map of youth services and out of school activities across the district. Then invest in services and assets that can deliver opportunities for children and young people. This could include community transport options for rural areas, encouraging existing community organisations and spaces to deliver more youth specific activities and providing adequate resources for youth work. The action plan may identify priorities for young people in the district, for example the need for investment in mental health support or requirements to widen participation in youth services to meet Huntingdonshire's changing demographics.

3.

Youth volunteering networks

Huntingdonshire already has a strong voluntary sector. Enhancing youth participation would support skills building, create opportunities for meaningful social interaction and deliver community benefits.

A network could be established between youth organisations and existing voluntary groups to establish a programme for youth volunteering that balances the interests of children and young people with the specific opportunities Huntingdonshire has to offer. This could be linked to digital tools and incentives to widen participation.

Youth volunteer networks could also make the most of links to opportunities in nearby cities, to broaden the horizon of children and young people, particularly those who may not have access without family support.



Journey Four

Home to beautiful, local landscapes and pioneering global ambitions — in 2040 Huntingdonshire will be net zero carbon. We set out to be a leader in green innovation making the most of our wonderful natural assets.

You said...



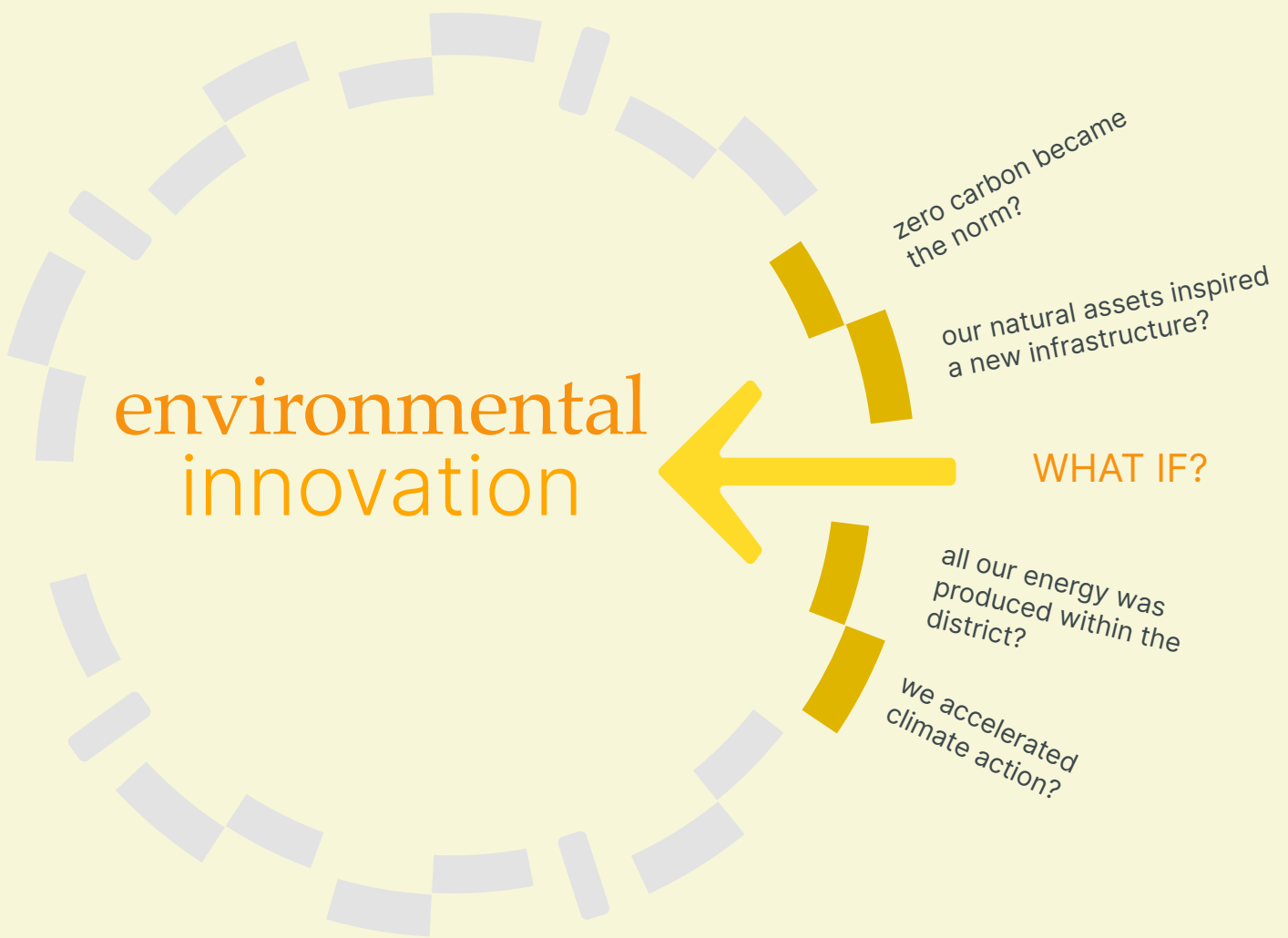
'All houses should have no carbon footprint.'



'We should be protecting what we already have.'



'There needs to be more done to make people change'



What if...

zero carbon became the norm?

In a world where... concern over the climate emergency has failed to be translated into serious action, the economy and finance mechanisms remain intertwined with the fossil fuel industry. Huntingdonshire produces 5.3 tonnes of carbon dioxide per person per year compared to the UK average of 5.2 tonnes, and our overall emissions are 88% higher than the UK average, mainly due to road traffic.

There is a place... that has the conditions for a rapid transition to net zero – plenty of versatile space for rewilding, developing carbon sinks and building renewable energy projects, as well as a community who support climate action especially if they can see tangible benefits.

Which could become... a test bed for initiatives that fast track the transition to net zero and the circular economy, a system based on re-use and regeneration. Where major infrastructure projects and new forms of financing go hand in hand with widespread behaviour change for both businesses and individuals. Where net zero initiatives don't feel like compromises but part of a bright future.

But only if... we establish a culture of openness to experimentation, taking risks and investing in ambitious net zero projects that build on current expertise and experience whilst balancing other priorities, proving to communities that they can share in the benefits of these schemes.

Source: Huntingdonshire BEIS Emission Data 2020, Huntingdonshire District Council Climate Strategy

What could we do?

1.

Improve energy efficiency

A grant scheme could be established to provide financing for homeowners and businesses to better insulate buildings. This would improve energy efficiency, reducing energy demand and its associated cost and carbon emissions.

Financing mechanisms could include grants, preferential loans or a mechanism to encourage groups of homeowners or businesses to coordinate to achieve economies of scale.

A drive to insulate would also create new business and employment opportunities across the district. This model could also explore localised insulation production business models, such as the use of reed-mace which would also help restore fenlands.

2.

Deliver re-wilding projects

Carbon sinks are natural environments that remove more carbon than they produce, which in Huntingdonshire includes woodlands, scrublands and wetlands.

Land owners should be encouraged to deliver rewilding projects that maximise the role of the landscape as a carbon sink whilst also promoting biodiversity. This could work across different environments; from the planting of street trees, to increasing land set aside for nature in agricultural fields, to improving the carbon sink function of existing open spaces or delivering ambitious rewilding projects such as the Great Fen.

In addition, processes to estimate the amount of carbon absorbed could be developed to measure progress.



Leeds Climate Innovation District

Achieving low or zero carbon does not need to feel like a compromise. The Climate Innovation District in Leeds has created a desirable, sustainable urban community on former industrial land in the heart of Leeds.

The district integrates housing with healthcare, schools, offices and manufacturing plant surrounded by diverse and accessible open spaces. The buildings are designed to near Passivhaus standard, made from cross laminated timber frames and powered by 100% renewable energy.

Source: Leeds Climate Innovation District, [link](#)



3.

Support developments to function like the circular economy

Circular economy is a system where waste and pollution are eliminated, goods and materials are re-used and nature is regenerated. We could investigate if developments can function like the circular economy to achieve net zero carbon. This includes design allowing for repair and reuse, maximising the use of shared resources, considering embedded carbon in the building materials and construction process, as well as ensuring energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources while in operation. This would need to be defined and achieved through collaboration with all stakeholders.

We could encourage residential and commercial buildings to achieve high sustainability standards. Awareness campaigns could increase the understanding of and demand for environmentally friendly homes.

What if...

our natural assets inspired a new infrastructure?

In a world where... societies have ignored and exploited nature, the climate crisis is accelerating with devastating effects including dramatic floods and droughts. In Huntingdonshire it is expected that nearly 1 in 10 homes will be affected by river flooding by 2100.

There is a place... that is defined by its lush, varied natural landscape, with river valleys, woodlands, meadows and fenlands.

Which could become... home to an extensive network of nature-based infrastructure which mimics or incorporates natural processes to create resilient urban and natural environments with enhanced biodiversity. Through wetlands, water meadows, green roofs, rain gardens and natural water filtration — we work in step with nature instead of against it.

But only if... we repaired and retrofitted ageing infrastructure, supported new nature-based solutions both in the public realm and in private buildings and protected and enhanced existing habitats.

Source: Fairness, nature and communities: addressing climate change in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, CPICC. HDC Climate Strategy

Guiding Lights

Hammarby Sjöstad

New neighbourhoods across the UK and Europe are already leading the way by integrating nature based solutions into urban neighbourhoods.

Hammarby Sjöstad represents a complete infrastructural project in which energy, water, transportation, and waste collection systems were designed to work together as an “eco-cycle”. The integration and remediation of existing water features and incorporating sustainable urban drainage systems achieves greater resilience to extreme climates. The landscapes are designed to be multi-functional, naturally managing flood waters, increasing biodiversity and creating places for informal play.

Source: Hammarby Sjöstad, [link](#)



1.

Reduce water consumption

Water is one of our most precious resources, and is particularly vulnerable as the effects of the climate crisis become apparent.

Rainwater harvesting is the process of collecting and filtering rainfall from the roof of residential and commercial buildings. Greywater recycling collects wastewater from domestic appliances such as washing machines, baths, showers and sinks and treats this so it can be re-used. A programme of retrofit and standards for new developments could be investigated to fast track the transition to more sustainable water management, reducing demand whilst delivering savings.

2.

Promote biodiverse back gardens

Re-wilding doesn't just have to mean nature reserves and large open spaces; back gardens can be home to a diverse range of habitats. A promotional campaign developed with local conservation groups could encourage individuals to take steps in their own homes and neighbourhoods to increase the role of gardens as habitats and green corridors.

This could include building ponds or nesting opportunities for birds, insects and mammals or involve planting species that are great for pollinators, with a wide variety of species that flower throughout the year. Avoiding the use of pesticides, herbicides and insecticides as well as soils containing peat would also reduce harmful environmental impacts.

These steps deliver benefits for humans too, creating beautiful and peaceful spaces that are good for our mental health and teach us about our natural world.

3.

Retrofit sustainable drainage systems

Sustainable urban drainage solutions mimic natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding. By increasing permeable surfaces and planting, rain and floodwaters are better able to infiltrate into the soils and slow the rate of surface run off.

This involves replacing hard standing with more permeable surfaces, green and blue roofs, restoring wetlands and planting rain gardens.

Guidance for individual homeowners would raise awareness of the benefits and advise on small scale solutions. Planning policy could consider requirements that new developments deliver multifunctional green infrastructure including sustainable drainage. More large scale retrofit projects such as redesigning open spaces in flood prone areas and retrofitting road side raingardens could also be explored.



What if...

all our energy was produced within the district?

In a world where... we are faced by the perfect storm of energy, climate and cost of living crisis, we are all feeling the impact. Individual household energy bills are skyrocketing, influenced by global politics. This can make it a challenge to invest in the future even though we know these issues will only get worse.

There is a place.. that has a strong, aspirational business community, many of which are clustered in networks, as well as flat landscapes and a dry and sunny climate. This includes places and organisations such as Waterside Green Energy that are beginning to implement community energy projects.

Which could become... a beacon of community energy production, with local people owning the process and reaping the benefits. From solar, wind and ground source heat pumps to processing reedmace for insulation, we can use our natural resources to power green growth across the district.

But only if... we develop new models of investment and ownership, with credible programmes and long-term support for both energy generation methods and retrofitting where possible to increase energy efficiency. Only if we create a mechanism which all people are aware of and can afford to participate in.

What could we do?

1.

Fast-track community energy

Community groups, partners and businesses could be inspired by the Waterside Green Energy Project to come together to develop their own community energy projects, taking collective action to reduce, purchase, manage and generate energy. These projects have an emphasis on local engagement and control and the local community benefits collectively from the outcomes.

This could be achieved through collaboration between partners and businesses to exploit funding and opportunity for local power generation. Toolkits could also be prepared that set out steps required to get different types of energy projects up and running, including information on grants and funding streams, advice on governance arrangements or organisational structures and lists of resources or help available.

2.

Embed renewable energy generation

We could investigate the delivery of renewable energy generation through new developments. The appropriate technique would be dependent on the local context and scale of the schemes. For example a network of ground source heat pumps could be more appropriate for larger developments, small wind turbines may be more appropriate for rural communities and solar PV's could be required on rooftops.

New and innovative approaches to renewable energy generation should be encouraged where appropriate. There could also be support programmes in place to encourage sensitive retrofit of existing homes and places.



Waterside Green Energy

Communities in Huntingdonshire are already taking initiative, developing local, resilient, zero carbon energy projects.

Waterside Green Energy project is a charitable cooperative established in 2020. It seeks to develop and implement local renewable energy projects to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. In particular, it is exploring how to implement hydropower generation on the River Great Ouse near Little Paxton. This has the potential to generate 860,000 KW hours per year equivalent to the energy required by over 300 homes whilst saving 257 tonnes of CO2 emissions per year.

Source: Waterside Green Energy, [link](#)

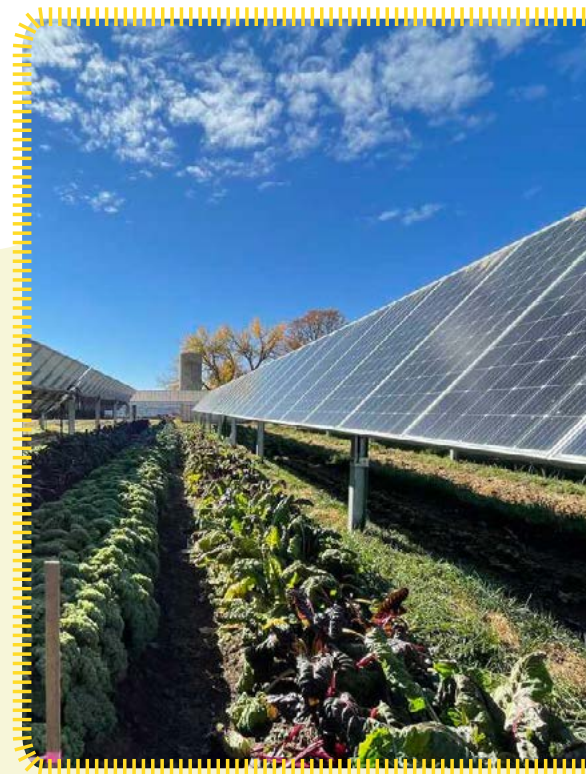


3.

Promote multi-functional agricultural land

Huntingdonshire's wide flat landscapes and dry sunny climate are ideal conditions for renewable wind or solar energy generation and there are many initiatives already in place. Huntingdonshire is well placed to become a leader in the transition to net zero by expanding this energy generation in the right places.

Given the significant role of agriculture in the district, renewable energy could be delivered in tandem with agricultural practices such as innovative stacking systems where arable and pastoral farming take place under solar panel systems. Green waste could also be converted through anaerobic digesters into gas for use in cooking and heating as well as a fertiliser.



What if...

we accelerated climate action?

In a world where... climate change is beginning to impact every aspect of society, young people are leading the shift in mindset and lifestyle. 78% agreed that looking after the environment was important to them but do not feel that enough is being done.

There is a place... that has great schools, community and business networks where many people, particularly the young, are in touch with the natural world through our abundant green spaces and where steps, such as Eco Councils, are already underway.

Which could become... a place where children and young people lead the net zero revolution. Where young people drive decision making and where the necessary steps to fast track change is clear for residents, businesses, the voluntary sector and communities and they are all held accountable.

But only if... action planning involves all stakeholders, reflects local capabilities and addresses inequalities. Decision making on how to balance sometimes competing priorities should be transparent and reflect local opinion, and young people who will be most impacted by these choices are meaningfully involved in the decision making process.

Source: The Children's People and Nature Report, [link](#)

Guiding Lights

Our City, Our World

Schools across Brighton & Hove have worked together to produce a climate change, sustainability and environmental education programme.

The council, schools and local groups work collaboratively to develop and implement a Sustainability, Climate Change and Environmental Curriculum across all phases and types of school. This enables young people to learn about the environment, develop skills to investigate their environment and learn how to make intelligent, informed decisions to care for the environment and support climate justice.

There are also steps to develop action plans to become leading sustainable institutions.

Source: Our City Our World, [link](#)



1.

Establish a Youth Climate Council

A Youth Climate Council could be established made up of interested representatives from children and young people across the district. They would come together on a regular basis to formulate policy proposals or review directions and decisions.

These would then be included in internal processes to create a direct link between policy makers, politicians and the people most likely to be affected by decision making.

The Youth Climate Council could also collaborate with other networks or Youth Councils at different scales, to extend their remit beyond local government.

2.

Provide business support and training

There is a wealth of expertise and understanding in our community about sustainable business practices and how to facilitate business models towards the circular economy. Huntingdonshire District Council could lead on or partner with existing providers to encourage and support businesses in improving the sustainability of their work practices.

This could include training opportunities and establishing networks with the business community to deliver sustainability improvements through cooperation and knowledge sharing. We could also establish metrics and targets to understand progress, and provide incentives for the transition.

3.

Develop advice, training and awareness programmes

Education providers across the district could develop dedicated courses and information material on various aspects of sustainability and better integrate sustainability into the existing curriculum. This could also include providing guidance on small steps local people, community groups, the voluntary sector and businesses can make to reduce their impact.

This could build upon the expertise that already exists across Huntingdonshire, linking with existing organisations, businesses and groups. For example, courses on ecology, rewilding and green infrastructure could link with the Great Fen project. Training on the circular economy could partner with businesses at Alconbury Weald. Training in construction could focus on low carbon methods such as modular housing, cross laminated timber or more traditional building methods such as rammed earth.



Journey Five

Greener, smarter and a lot more fun — the future of travel in Huntingdonshire will transition away from the car. We welcome effective public transport, on-demand travel options, a sustainable distribution and an attractive cycling and walking network.

You said...



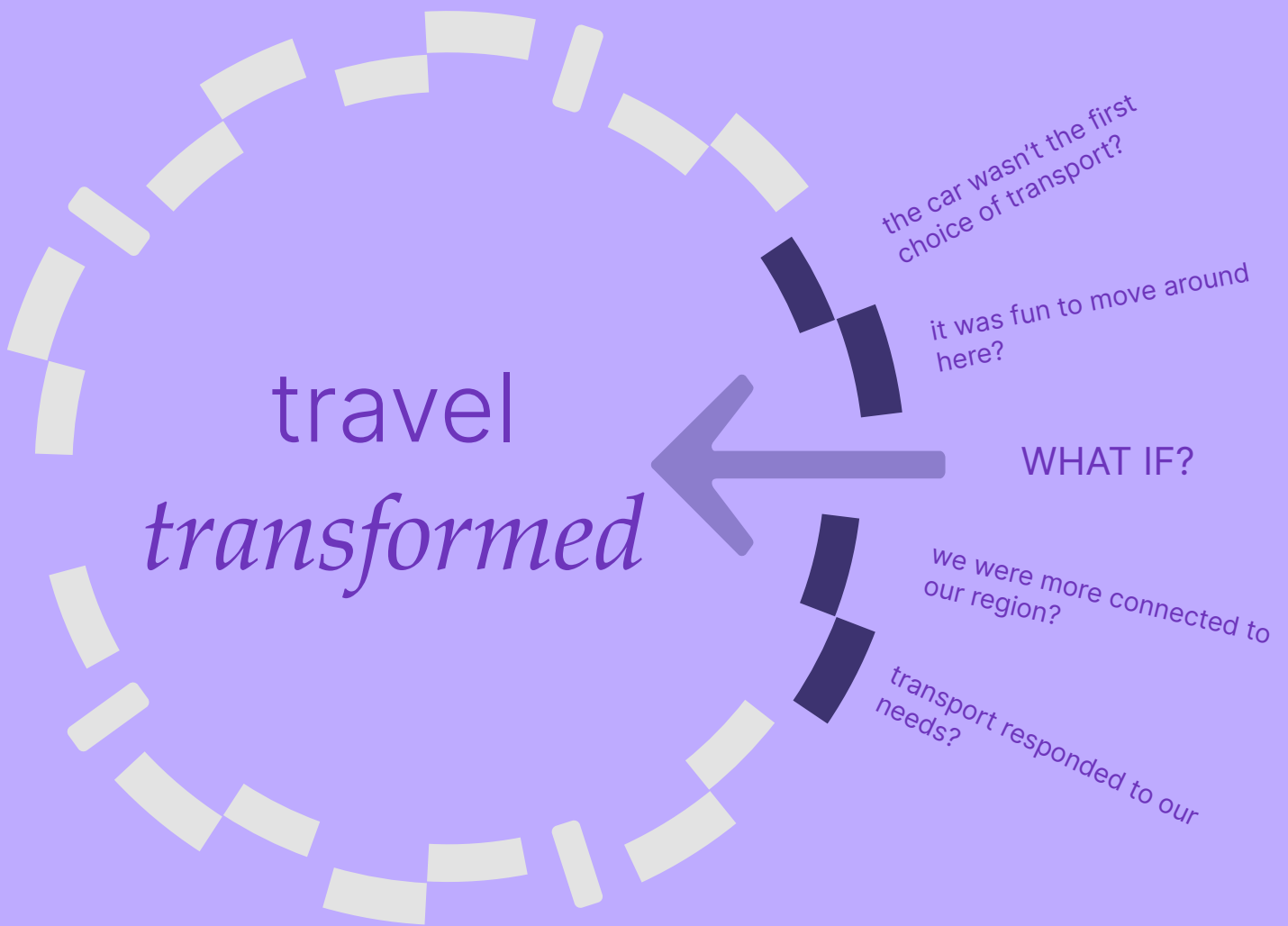
'Public transport needs to be frequent, cheap and reliable otherwise it won't work.'



'More needs to be done to create a network, rather than just a hodge potch of paths.'



'The river is lovely; it would be great to see paddleboards and rowers on it more often.'



What if...

the car wasn't the first choice of transport?

In a world where... petrol prices are high, further exacerbated by the energy crisis, we need new modes of getting around. Public transport is inadequate and the car remains a necessity to get around, especially in rural areas. The impacts of car-led carbon emissions on the environment are alarming and Huntingdonshire is currently the most polluting district in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in terms of road transport emissions.

There is a place... home to communities who genuinely care about the climate crisis. The district has green picturesque landscapes and flat towns perfect for cycling and is already trialling new approaches to public transport including the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway and the on demand Vectare Bus.

Which could become... a place where it is easy to make trips by green, zero-carbon public transport that is fast, frequent, reliable and affordable; where short trips are only made by walking or cycling through safe picturesque routes; and where bus stops provide a sheltered, comfortable hub, equipped with cycle parking and charging facilities and which provide real time bus information.

But only if... we invest in our public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure and transform it into a sustainable, efficient and convenient system which is subsidised and thus affordable to all.

Source: Huntingdonshire BEIS Emission Data, 2020

What could we do?

1.

Upgrade the bus service

Buses serve the district as the key public transport mode. The most regular bus services are to the key service centres, the market towns. Nevertheless, the more rural parts of the district are less well connected to service centres.

The provision of more frequent and reliable bus routes to villages and rural settlements, every day of the week and from early in the morning until late in the evening, will help reduce reliance on the car. The service should also be affordable to become a better alternative to the car.

The timetables of these routes should be integrated with the wider bus, Guided Busway and rail services to create a fully integrated service.

2.

Trial car free days

To support the transition away from car dominated travel, special car free days could celebrate sustainable travel choices.

The concept of giving streets back to residents can promote wider and longer term positive effects. The council can support residents in closing streets to traffic over weekends to create play streets and parklets and encourage local groups to organise neighbourhood cycle rides or walking routes. People can be reminded of the joys of active travel and discover desirable walking or cycling routes which they could utilise in their daily lives.

The days can also be used to trial options and approaches, before committing to expensive projects or to work out gaps in the network.



Guiding Lights



Every village, every hour

The rural region of North Hesse in Germany boasts a bus network that reaches every village of more than 200 residents, at least every hour, with the ambition to double public transport use in the region by 2030. This is achieved through a mix of public and commercial operators who provide a service for at least 12 hours a day, seven days a week. Overall it runs 32 million passenger trips by bus per year. The bus service is in alignment with the rail timetables, offering an integrated system.

Source: Every village, every hour - A comprehensive bus network for rural England, 2021, [link](#)



3. Establish mobility hubs

Building on the potential expansion of the bus and the Guided Busway network, the establishment of mobility hubs in key stops along their network can enhance the whole-journey experience of people travelling within, into and out of the district.

Mobility hubs concentrate complementary transport modes, which minimise or eliminate the need for car. Bus stops can be co-located with cycle and car hire facilities, sheltered cycle parking, car parking and be equipped with real time bus information, wifi or electric bike charging points. These hubs can substitute the usage of car for the entire journey or parts of it and can serve people travelling from urban and rural locations alike.

What if...

it was fun to move around here?

In a world where... people are rediscovering the pleasure of being out on a bike or going for a stroll, active travel on accessible routes is recognised as not only a fun way to connect with our surroundings, but also an essential part of a healthy lifestyle.

There is a place... that is characterised by its picturesque towns and villages with beautiful flat landscapes and expanding network of trails and quietways.

Which could become... a joyful, safe and inviting place for everyone, whether 8 or 80, to travel on an extended, safe and fun pedestrian and cycle network that crosses urban areas and beautiful natural landscapes, connecting homes with services, employment, schools and leisure opportunities.

But only if... the pedestrian and cycling routes form a comprehensive joined up network including quiet country lanes and riverside routes linking towns, villages and key destinations. This should be supported by infrastructure including bike parking spaces, showers and repair stations. To increase participation, e-mobility hire infrastructure should be widely available and promoted across the district.

Guiding Lights



Joyful Journeys

Waltham Forest is one of the leading Boroughs of the country piloting sustainable transport improvements with funding from Transport for London. Through its 'Mini Holland' scheme, it has delivered 29km of segregated cycle lanes and 62 improved pedestrian crossings. The scheme focuses on creating cycle lanes with safe dedicated space, walking and cycle routes between town centres, cycle hubs and designing new attractive outdoor spaces along the way.

Source: Enjoy Waltham Forest, [link](#)



1.

Establish a network of cycle routes

The existing cycling paths which are mainly concentrated within towns and in certain open spaces, are an invaluable asset which can be built on to create a comprehensive and joined up network.

The delivery of cycle paths will be given priority away from main roads, with appropriate signage and lighting. A comprehensive plan of existing and new paths could establish commuting routes in town and village centres.

Apart from the utility routes, leisure routes can take advantage of the district's rich natural assets and traverse its scenic parks and rivers while connecting them to the rest of the district.

2.

Have fun on the river

The River Great Ouse winds its way across Huntingdonshire connecting market towns and villages. Promoting boating and paddle-boarding on the river could be a slow leisurely way to move about the district and support great quality of life.

Celebrating the river could also be a great way of building local identity and promoting slow sustainable tourism.

3.

Improve wayfinding and safety

Safe and accessible pedestrian and cycle routes are much more likely to be used for both leisure and commuting purposes. Signage that incorporates strong graphics, simple maps and pointers to interesting landmarks which is co-designed with residents and local interest groups will help to create a clear shared identity for the district. Improved wayfinding should be delivered along with wider accessibility improvements such as better lighting, mobility and visibility impairment adaptations, crossing enhancements and outdoor seating, to aid people of all abilities.

Signage should also be placed in strategic locations including near bus stops, train stations, high streets, mobility hubs, and places of interest.



What if...

we were more connected to our region?

In a world where... road traffic is steadily increasing, causing Huntingdonshire to have much higher greenhouse gas emissions than the UK average. And where housing and employment growth put pressure on the region's transport infrastructure.

There is a place... that is located at the heart of the UK with links to London, the Midlands and the North, through key routes such as the M11, A1(M), A14, the East Coast Mainline with direct Thameslink Great Northern services to London and the Guided Busway connecting the district to wider Cambridgeshire.

Which could become... a place linked to its neighbours, to wider Cambridgeshire and beyond, which makes longer journeys easy, fast and reliable. A place where strategic housing and employment locations and other key attractions of the district are conveniently connected with its surrounding areas, thus drawing people in.

But only if... strategic collaborations are secured which raise and direct funding towards regional transport infrastructure improvements.

Source: Huntingdonshire Strategic Transport Study - Baseline Report, Mott Macdonald, 2017. Image to the right: Thameslink Railway



What could we do?

1.

Expand the Guided Busway

The Cambridgeshire Guided Busway has proven its success by connecting housing to employment locations and residents to central places. The Busway is already linked to Huntingdonshire with three frequent and high quality services into and out of Cambridge to St Ives but less frequently to Huntingdon and the bus network also misses out rural locations and key employment hubs outside of market towns.

It will be a key move to expand the bus service across the district and make trips more frequent, reliable and affordable which will encourage more passengers. This upgraded network will effectively connect the entire district and make the bus the more desirable option to the car.

2.

Improve highway capacity

Given Huntingdonshire's location, its strategic road corridors are vital in accommodating local, regional and even national journeys. Frequently these routes are impacted by heavy traffic, resulting in longer journey times and safety concerns.

Investment in key highway improvements, especially for congestion hotspots, road upgrades, junction enhancements and bypasses, will result in more reliable and safe car trips.

To mitigate their impact, highway improvements should be accompanied by sustainable drainage, green infrastructure and biodiversity corridors.

Source: CPCA Local Transport Plan, [link](#)



Local Transport and Connectivity Plan

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority’s Local Transport and Connectivity Plan outlines the long term strategy towards transport improvements across the region as it aims to bring communities closer together. Travel Demand Management will aim to reduce pressure on the transport system, namely by offering public transport alternatives. A 15% cut in car mileage will also be targeted to help cut carbon emissions. The Plan will even include internet connectivity for all, to enable access to jobs and reduce social inequalities.

Source: CPCA Local Transport Plan, [link](#)
Image below: Cambridgeshire County Council



3.

Link up strategic locations

Sustainable housing and employment growth can only be accommodated by directing growth to locations well connected with public transport, and by strategically planning for mobility infrastructure in accordance with growth needs.

In addition to housing and employment, other key attractors, such as natural spaces, should also be part of the regional transport network.

This way, the district’s residents get closer to the wider region and its opportunities, and conversely the district becomes more attractive to people from outside, for living, working and leisure.

What if...

transport responded to our needs?

In a world where... people are reliant on cars, especially in rural regions, traditional public transport options are often lacking. Yet new digital services and technologies mean that individual car ownership is being reassessed.

There is a place... that is predominantly rural, with villages and towns scattered around expansive landscapes, but shows that change is possible with pioneering public transport options including the Vectare Bus service (previously the Ting Bus) and the Guided Busway.

Which could become... a place where reliable, responsive and affordable on-demand mobility options with joint ticketing mean that it is easy to live and move around without your own car. The district could become a hub for on-demand mobility with car-sharing, ride-sharing, bike-sharing and the extended Vectare Bus serving all our urban and rural neighbourhoods.

But only if... communities, businesses, developers and transport authorities collaborate to attract and support mobility investment and commit to using different forms of mobility. In addition, on-demand options should be widely encouraged and promoted, so people know it is an easy option. We must allow for sufficient time and testing to create a system that is easy, affordable and effective.

Top image: Voi e-bikes

Guiding Lights



Fflecsi Flexible Bus Service

Fflecsi is an on-demand bus service provided in partnership with Transport for Wales. Through the app, the website or by calling, customers can book their trips at their desired times, including pick-up and drop-off locations. The bus's route is updated in real time to reflect passenger demands as they arise. The service is particularly valuable for rural communities, where public transport is limited.

The app even provides information on other public transport options to help customers decide the best means of travel for them.

Source: fflecsi, [link](#)



1.

Grow the Vectare Bus coverage

The Vectare Bus is currently one of the uncelebrated heroes of the district. It provides an on demand service currently only in West Huntingdonshire, 6 days a week until 8pm. This service connects some of the most rural parts of the district with towns such as St Neots and Huntingdon.

The pilot could become a permanent service and extended to the entire district, especially with an expanded service on Sundays and later in the night. The App makes it easy to instantly book trips on the phone and get picked up at the chosen time. Promoting the service to more residents would increase its passenger numbers and solve many transport issues faced by rural areas.

2.

Promote cycle sharing

Access to cycling does not have to depend on owning a bike. Cycle share is an effective way to attract more people to embrace cycling without the commitment and investment. A commercial or community bike share pilot can be established with bikes and stations in key locations and especially close to bus stops, the Guided Busway and mobility hubs. This could include a mix of traditional bikes, e-bikes and cargo bikes to meet diverse needs.

One-way cycling trips could increase and become the preferred mode for last-mile travel combined with other means of transport for short amenity trips. In order to be successful, the service has to be complemented with the right cycling infrastructure, creating integrated networks of safe routes with clear signage.

3.

Establish a car club

The rural parts of the district depend heavily on the car due to public transport deficiencies, while the urban areas are frequently congested and face parking problems. Some trips will always be more convenient by car, nonetheless they do not have to depend on car ownership.

Establishing a car club through a partnership between the community, businesses and local authorities, could cover this need. An appropriate provider can be attracted and supported through dedicated parking spaces in convenient locations, charging facilities and signage. A marketing campaign could be rolled out to inform the district of the benefits, money savings, convenience and environmental advantages of car clubs.





Peat =
carbon
emissions.

Amazing
heritage
and
environmental
projects
walks/trails



Taking the Vision Forward

 This is just the start

Enchanted Fairy Trail 



this is just the start

In this world of change, we need big ideas and bold thinking to inspire us to look beyond the status quo as we head out on this journey together.

Huntingdonshire Futures has brought together a community of people who truly believe that our district has a brilliant future ahead. Together we have defined what that destination is and how we might travel there.

This process has drawn on our heads and our hearts. It's taken imagination and creativity to look beyond the realms of the here and now and inspire ideas that get people excited. It's also involved picking apart those ideas to figure out how we might achieve them in a way that feels achievable, sustainable and practical.

So, we invite you to continue on the next steps of this journey as together we look at the practical actions that we can deliver to deliver a Brighter Future for Huntingdonshire.

This is just the start...

Huntingdonshire

FUTURE S

A Brighter Future for Huntingdonshire.

Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Corporate Plan 2023-2028

Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 21 March 2023
Council – 29 March 2023

Executive Portfolio: Councillor Sarah Conboy, Executive Leader

Report by: Business Intelligence and Performance Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the development of a new Corporate Plan for 2023-2028 and to present proposed priorities and outcomes to Council for approval. Key actions and operational performance indicators are also set out for 2023/24 and these will be reviewed annually.

This replaces the interim, transitional Corporate Plan adopted for 2022/23. The new Corporate Plan for 2023-2028 establishes three priorities for the Council, with related outcomes set out through detailed outcome statements. These are accompanied by a list of actions and operational performance indicators. Progress in delivering on our priorities and outcome statements will be measured against these as well as through qualitative updates and reviews of contextual measures about how the district and our residents' experiences are changing.

The actions will be reviewed annually and amended where work has been completed or new approaches have been identified as a result of engagement with partners and residents. Performance reporting will also continue to evolve with new measures to be proposed where better indicators can be identified.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet is

RECOMMENDED

To endorse the Corporate Plan for 2023-2028 to Council (attached at Appendix A).

The Council is

RECOMMENDED

To approve the Corporate Plan for 2023-2028 (attached at Appendix A).

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report is intended to update Members on the development of a new Corporate Plan for 2023-2028 and to present proposed priorities, outcomes, actions and operational performance indicators to Council for approval.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY?

- 2.1 The Council needs a Corporate Plan setting out our priorities, desired outcomes and how we plan to achieve these. The previous Corporate Plan was an interim, transitional plan intended to be replaced with a longer-term plan following 2022's programme of engagement with residents. To reflect what we have heard from residents, businesses and other stakeholders, a new Plan is needed which will set out our strategic response to this. The Plan details the immediate actions we have planned for 2023/24 and the performance indicators we will measure success against next year. It aligns with the newly co-developed Huntingdonshire Futures place strategy and connects the 'golden thread' running between individual service plans and Huntingdonshire Futures' shared vision for the district.
- 2.2 This reports also explains a new approach to performance reporting, including plans to monitor and report on a range of contextual "outcome measures" which will show how outcomes for the district and its residents are changing. We will not have direct control over their performance, but monitoring will identify trends over time and changes we may need to react to as our actions and work to enable and influence others have effect.

3. THE NEW CORPORATE PLAN

- 3.1 The new Corporate Plan is bold and ambitious in the outcome statements it sets out to achieve, while also being clear on what it is we can do, what we can enable and what we can influence as a district council. This will be critical as this Corporate Plan calls on the Council to play more of an enabling role, to make more use of partnership working and to empower people to reduce demand for traditional public services. The challenges we face can only be solved through working collaboratively and the responsibility is not the district council's alone. An example of this is our role as a statutory partner in developing the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS), working together to improve the health and wellbeing of local people throughout their lives.
- 3.2 The Corporate Plan sets out three key priorities:
- Improving quality of life for local people
 - Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations
 - Deliver good quality, high value for money services with good control and compliance with statutory obligations
- 3.3 To achieve these priorities, we must be a council that takes time to listen and to really understand where people need the help and support to make a real difference to their lives. In line with changes across the public sector system, we need to make prevention a core way of working across the

Council. This is fundamental to our “Improving the quality of life for local people” priority, which does not just focus on helping those already experiencing crisis but sets out earlier outcomes we want to achieve - keeping people out of crisis and, even more broadly, improving the happiness and wellbeing of our residents.

3.4 Whilst looking to the future, we must not lose sight of the day to day but must also continue to deliver good quality services and set an excellent example to our community of the standards we expect for our residents. Our third priority will keep our focus on delivering quality, value for money services and ensuring that what we do enables local people to thrive.

4. HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS

Organisational priority	Outcome statement	Operational performance measures (examples): “Do”	Outcome actions (examples): “Do” and “enable”	Strategic direction: “Enable” and “influence”
Priority 1 – Improving quality of life for local people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving quality of life and well-being - Preventing crisis - Helping in a crisis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of One Leisure Facilities admissions - Benefits processing - Homelessness prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver financial vulnerability programme - New Residents Outcome Strategy 	Employment, Mental Health, Older isolation
Priority 2 – Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving housing - Forward-thinking economic growth - Lowering our carbon emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing completions - Planning applications - Fleet driving efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Refresh tenancy strategy - Local Plan refresh 	Environmental, housing, planning
Priority 3 – Deliver good quality, high value for money services	Delivering good quality efficient and effective services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Website uptime - Missed bins - Council Tax collection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customer Service project - New Workforce Strategy 	Doing the basics really well
Reason	Provides an outcome target for our operational performance, and a goal for strategic activity	Ensuring we are delivering consistent service at good value for money	Annual scoped actions that will move us closer to the outcome we are aiming for	Longer term engagement around Huntingdonshire Futures place strategy themes

- 4.1 The preceding table shows how the structure of the Corporate Plan hangs together. While there will be an immediate focus on actions for the next year, and operational performance measures which we will continually monitor and report on quarterly, delivery of the longer-term ambitions set out in our outcome statements will not be forgotten.
- 4.2 Quarterly updates to Overview & Scrutiny and Cabinet will show progress on actions against milestones and key deliverables set out in project plans, while also allowing for other achievements and activities to be highlighted through qualitative updates for each priority. Quarterly reports will also show how services have delivered against their targets for operational performance indicators, with trends and comparisons to previous periods shown where possible. Commentary to accompany performance data provides an opportunity for services to explain over- or under-achievement against targets (e.g., increased demand affecting turnaround times).
- 4.3 Officers responsible for each outcome under Priority 1 and Priority 2 will also be working with colleagues and partners to identify appropriate contextual measures to show progress in delivering on the outcome statements' ambitions, and related ambitions in the Huntingdonshire Futures place strategy. It is likely that results for many of these measures will be from external data sources and only be updated annually (e.g., the Huntingdonshire district's carbon emissions) so a year-end update on these measures will allow us to monitor progress made as our activities, and work to enable and influence others, take effect. Since the outcomes themselves are not within the sole control of the Council, we will report on changes and direction of travel but not set targets for these measures.
- 4.4 Both quarterly and year-end reports will be published via our Overview & Scrutiny (Performance & Growth) Panel and Cabinet meeting agendas and on our website.
- 4.5 Aligning service plans with the new Corporate Plan enables us to closely align actions and operational performance indicators with individual services. This helps us to ensure services are working to the same priorities, aiming to deliver the same outcomes and measuring their performance in a consistent way, where possible. The new Corporate Plan 2023-2028 provides a 'golden thread' throughout the organisation, linking activity at strategic levels to activity in service plans, ultimately filtering through to objectives set for individual employees.
- 4.6 Managers will continue to monitor progress on their service plan aims and Members will receive reports on some of this activity where actions or measures are significant enough to be included in the Corporate Plan.

5. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 5.1 The Panel discussed the Corporate Plan Report at its meeting on 1st March 2023.

- 5.2 Arising from a question asked the last time the Corporate Plan was submitted, Members' attention has been drawn to the differences between the current Plan and the previous one.
- 5.3 Following a question on the measures associated with the mental health aspects of Priority 1, it has been pointed out that many areas of the Plan constitute preventative measures rather than aimed at solving existing issues. Furthermore, some areas, including this one, are the responsibility of partner organisations, so measures will be developed in conjunction with them. Given the importance of having suitable targets for operational performance measures that are both realistic and stretching, the Panel has requested sight of proposed targets for 2023/24. Having received agreement to this request, the Panel has recommended the Cabinet to approve the Corporate Plan for 2023-2028.
- 5.4 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for the Cabinet to make a decision on the recommendations.

6. KEY IMPACTS

- 6.1 The key impact of adopting the Corporate Plan is that everyone in the Council will be clear about the Council's key priorities, outcomes and the actions and indicators to be used to measure progress towards delivering on them.
- Officers will be clear about what is important and how their role contributes towards this, as identified through individual objectives.
 - Financial planning will be more clearly linked to corporate planning
 - Service plans will be more clearly linked to corporate planning
 - Members will know what information they will get and when
 - Portfolio Holders will be able to hold Officers to account
 - Overview and Scrutiny will have the information they need to hold Portfolio Holders to account
 - Links between our actions and the aims set out in the Huntingdonshire Futures place strategy can be identified and communicated with partners as we work together towards our destination of a brighter future for Huntingdonshire

7. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN

- 7.1 Following Cabinet, the new Corporate Plan 2023-2028, including actions and operational performance indicators for 2023/24, in Appendix A will be submitted for approval by Council. If approved, a final version of the Corporate Plan 2023-2028 will be made available to all employees through the Intranet, published on the Council's website and promoted externally to our residents and partners.
- 7.2 Work to deliver new actions will begin as planned while business as usual activity will continue. Progress on the actions and results for operational performance indicators will be reported to Overview and Scrutiny and

Cabinet every quarter, accompanied by a qualitative update for each outcome, as detailed in section 4. An annual report at the year-end will provide information on contextual measures relating to each priority.

- 7.3 Opportunities to improve service delivery, work with partners and bid for external funding will continue to be explored. With partners, we will work to prioritise the aims and actions required in the Huntingdonshire Futures place strategy and these are likely to inform next year's Corporate Plan.

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

- 8.1 The proposed developing Corporate Plan at Appendix A is intended to replace the previous plan and set out the Council's key priorities and outcomes for 2023-2028

9. CONSULTATION

- 9.1 This Corporate Plan has been informed by 2022's programme of engagement, which included both public and stakeholder consultations to help develop both the Huntingdonshire Futures place strategy and the Council's new Climate Strategy.

- 9.2 The new Corporate Plan includes a number of actions involving further engagement with partners to deliver joint ambitions as well as an action to listen to local residents and respond to their input on service delivery.

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Council's 2023/24 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2027/28 was approved by Council in February 2023. The proposed actions and performance measures have been informed by the approved service budgets and savings and growth proposals. It is anticipated that there will be no additional resource implications as a result of adopting the new priorities, outcomes, actions or indicators.

11. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Under our first priority, we have set out an outcome statement for the outcome "improving quality of life for local people" which specifically references 'good health' as one of the foundations of a good life. Actions planned to help improve the health of local residents include a new Residents Outcome Strategy and work we will do to influence others via the Integrated Care System. The new Corporate Plan does not take any focus or resources away from existing services that support the health of our residents and operational performance indicators relating to both One Leisure Facilities and One Leisure Active Lifestyles services are included to ensure we continue to monitor and manage their performance.

12. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The Corporate Plan supports the approach set out through our new Climate Strategy and commits us to applying a “green lens” to our decision making – embedding the climate and green agenda through all we do and considering environmental impacts and opportunities to improve the environment when making all decisions.
- 12.2 Within the “Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations” priority, we want to deliver the outcomes of “improved housing”, “forward thinking economic growth” and “lower our carbon emissions”. Actions planned under each of these outcomes should reduce carbon emissions and help to improve the district’s environment. 2023/24 actions include some actions from the new Climate Strategy action plan, while others will follow in later years. New actions will also continue to be developed, with new opportunities and funding streams considered as they arise, to help the Council tackle climate change and care for the environment.
- 12.3 Proposed operational performance indicators relating to the environment are those we are currently confident we can report quarterly however further work during the year is expected to identify additional measures, including some that may only be reportable annually at the year-end. There will also be contextual measures relating to the environment, including the district’s carbon emissions from all sources as included in the Climate Strategy.

13. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 13.1 As outlined in section 7, this report is seeking endorsement from Cabinet and approval from Council for the Corporate Plan 2023-2028. This will set out the Council’s priorities and desired outcomes as well as actions and operational performance measures for the next year. The new Plan will provide the basis of the ‘golden thread’ between our service plans and the Huntingdonshire Futures place strategy and will inform everything we do as we refocus our vision, review our priorities and work with staff, residents, partners, communities and businesses to lead Huntingdonshire into the future with confidence.

14. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix A – Corporate Plan 2023-2028, including proposed actions and operational performance measures for 2023/24

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C O R P O R A T E P L A N

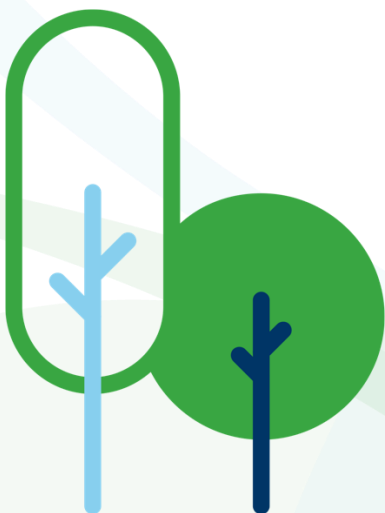
2023 - 2028

Do - Enable - Influence



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FOREWORD

**We all want to live in a place with the highest possible quality of life. A place people are drawn to, where they feel included and can aspire to something.
A place people are proud to call home.**

This Corporate Plan to 2028 will inform everything we do as we refocus our vision, review our priorities and work with staff, residents, partners, communities and businesses to lead Huntingdonshire into the future with confidence.

It will not always be easy. With a decreasing pot of government funding, rising costs and inflation and greater pressure on our services we will need to find ways to save money or generate income in order to continue providing high quality services.

We are also facing the threat of climate change. This requires decisive action and fundamental changes in how countries, cities and communities live and work. Our recently adopted Climate Strategy and action plan sets out how we can be better prepared to adapt to the impacts of climate change at a more local level. We will apply a “green lens” to all our decision making – embedding the climate and green agenda into all we do and considering environmental impacts and opportunities to improve the environment

As we grapple with the real issues facing us, we must be bold and set aspirational targets that challenge us to make a difference, whether that is by doing things directly ourselves or trying to influence change on a wider scale. With that in mind, this Corporate Plan outlines **our three key priorities**:

Priority 1 - Improving quality of life for local people



Improving the happiness and wellbeing of residents



Keeping people out of crisis



Helping people in crisis

Priority 2 - Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations



Improving housing



Forward-thinking economic growth



Lowering carbon emissions



Priority 3 - Delivering good quality, high value-for-money services with good control and compliance with statutory obligations

The first two priorities are each split into three outcomes as shown above. Outcome statements setting out our ambitions are detailed on pages 8 and 9.

To achieve these priorities, we must be a Council that takes time to listen and to really understand where people need the help and support to make a real difference to their lives.

In line with changes across the public sector system, we need to make prevention a core way of working across the Council. This is fundamental to our 'Improving the quality of life for local people' priority, which does not just focus on helping those already experiencing crisis but sets out earlier outcomes we want to achieve - keeping people out of crisis and, even more broadly, improving the happiness and wellbeing of our residents.

With that said, **'Working together'** is an overarching principle for the Council. We cannot go it alone. The challenges we face can only be solved through working collaboratively and the responsibility is not the Council's alone. An example of this is our role as a statutory partner in developing the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS), working together to improve the health and wellbeing of local people throughout their lives.

DO. Using all our services and ways of working to best serve Huntingdonshire.

ENABLE. Huntingdonshire residents and businesses to thrive by listening and working with them.

INFLUENCE. Partner organisations and stakeholders by creating a shared vision that benefits Huntingdonshire.

Do, Enable, Influence is a key phrase for us as this Corporate Plan calls on the Council to play more of an enabling role, to make more use of partnership working and to empower people to reduce demand for traditional public services. Our role is to help residents and businesses thrive, but that is not something we can do to people. Only by **working with people** can we make sure Huntingdonshire is a place where you and your family can have a good life and take advantage of the options that benefit you.

We have already started on this journey. Over the last year, we have brought together a wide range of partners to develop our Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy which creates a shared vision and a plan of goals and actions for Huntingdonshire up to 2050.

Whilst looking to the future, we must also not lose sight of the day to day. We must keep delivering good quality services and we must set an excellent example to our community of the standards we expect for our residents.

It is by doing these things that we will create a place people are proud to call home.



Councillor Sarah Conboy
Executive Leader



Councillor Tom Sanderson
Deputy Executive Leader



Councillor Sam Wakeford
Assistant Executive Leader

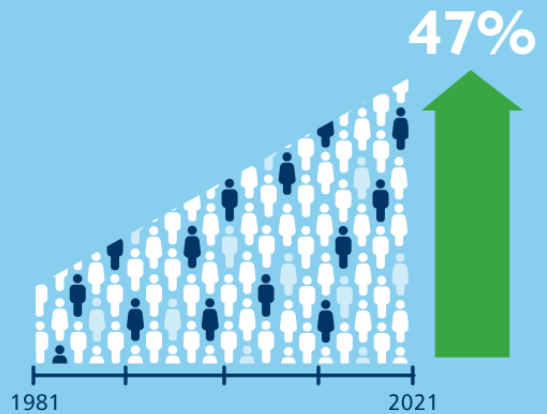
GETTING TO KNOW HUNTINGDONSHIRE

OUR PEOPLE AND PLACE



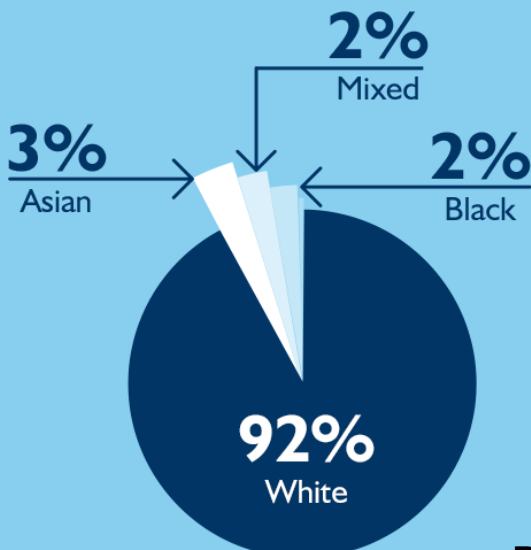
Huntingdonshire is a large (900 square kilometres) and predominantly rural area. However over 40% of the population live in our three largest market towns of **St Neots, Huntingdon** and **St Ives**.

With an estimated **180,800 residents and 76,900 households in 2021**, the population has grown significantly over recent decades (up by 47% since 1981).



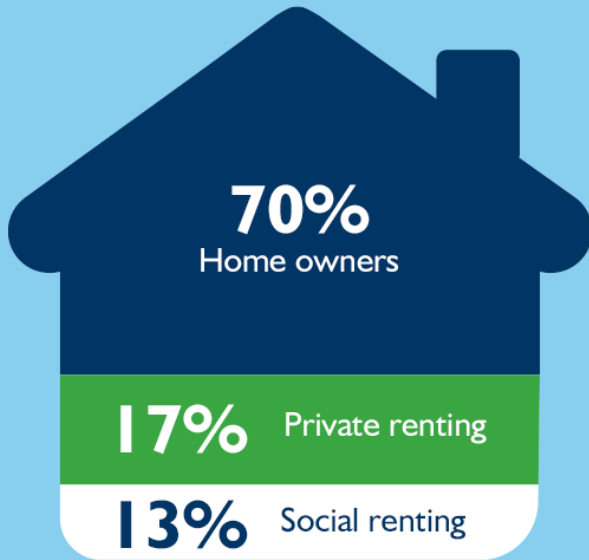
The district has an **ageing population** with 36,500 residents aged 65 plus, up by **33%** since 2011 alone.

The latest estimates indicate that the number of residents in the district **born outside the UK** was 22,400 at March 2021 (**12.4% of all residents**). **Poland** is now ranked as the most common non-UK country of birth for the district's residents, followed by the **United States** and **Romania**.



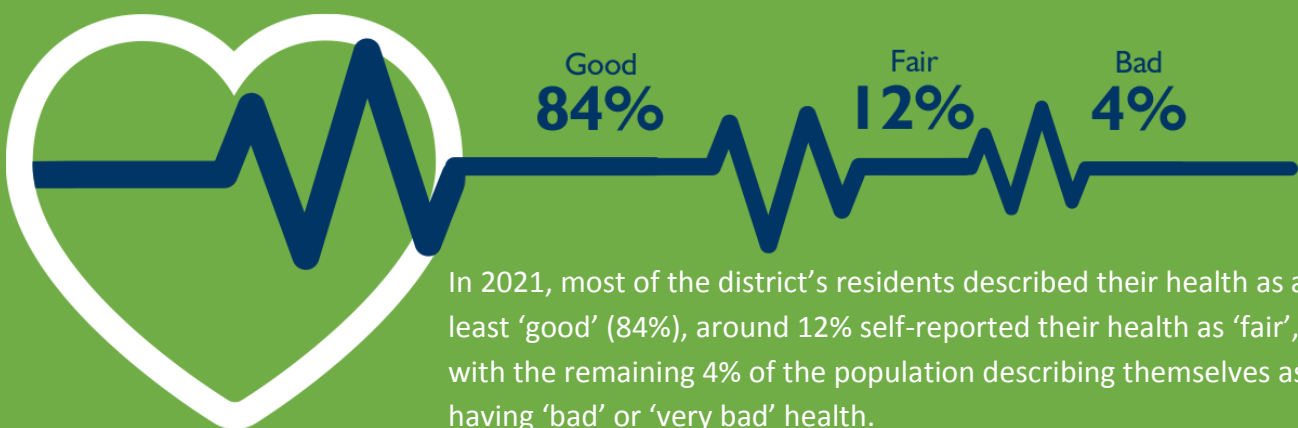
Most people in the district identified their ethnic group within the 'White' category (92%) in 2021. Around 3% identified their ethnic group within the 'Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh' category, 2% within the "Mixed or Multiple" category, 2% within the 'Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African' category and the remaining 1% identified their ethnic group within 'other ethnic groups'.

The average household size is now **2.3 persons per household**, down from 2.4 in 2011 and below the latest England average of 2.4. More people are now living alone, with the number of one person households up by 22% since 2011. **28% of all occupied households are now one person households.**



70% of households in Huntingdonshire owned their home in 2021, just over one in six (17%) rented their accommodation privately and 13% of Huntingdonshire households lived in a socially rented property. **2% of the area's occupied households had fewer bedrooms than required (overcrowded).**

OUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING



In 2021, most of the district's residents described their health as at least 'good' (84%), around 12% self-reported their health as 'fair', with the remaining 4% of the population describing themselves as having 'bad' or 'very bad' health.

An estimated **16% of the population were disabled in 2021**, with 6% stating their day-to-day activities were limited a lot.

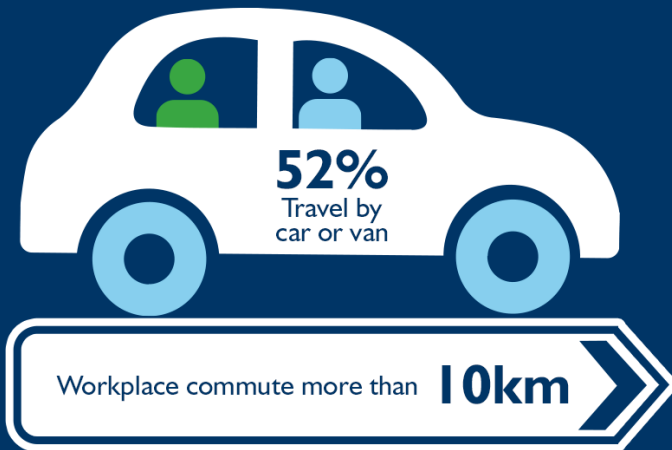




Around 4% of usual residents in 2021 said they provided at least **20 hours of unpaid care** in a typical week.

Note: all health and wellbeing figures in this section are age-standardised proportions which allow comparisons between populations over time and across geographies as they account for differences in the population size and age structure.

OUR ECONOMY, EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION



The majority of Huntingdonshire residents in 2021 travelling to a workplace or depot travelled **more than 10 kilometres** (51%) and just over half (52%) of those who travelled to work were drivers or passengers in a car or van. **Just over 6,000 residents travelled to work on foot (7%).**

Across Huntingdonshire, **33.4%** of usual residents aged 16 years and over indicated their **highest level of qualification was Level 4** or above in 2021 – slightly lower than the England average of 33.9%. However, 15.6% had no qualifications, also lower than the England average of 18.1%. Apprenticeships were the highest qualification for 5.5% of usual residents aged 16 and over.



There are pockets of higher deprivation within the district but most areas have relatively low levels, as measured by the 2019 Indices of Deprivation. **Economic activity (64% of those aged 16+)** and **employment rates (61.6% of those aged 16+)** are both higher than the national average.

OUR PRIORITIES

What sits behind our priorities is a desire to focus the efforts of the Council on the big priorities that matter to our residents, whilst not neglecting the performance of the day-to-day services that they rely on.

What we do is important, but how we deliver services and places that support our communities to take the decisions in their own long-term interests, and how we work with partners to deliver joined up services that make sense to residents, is critical. Our priorities are broad and ambitious and are supported by clear plans and strong working relationships. At their heart is a belief that creating success, or stepping in to prevent an issue developing, is always better than having to deal with a problem.

Priority 1: Improving quality of life for local people



Improving the happiness and wellbeing of residents

We want the highest possible quality of life for the people of Huntingdonshire. It will be a place which attracts employers and visitors and somewhere residents are proud to call home. We will be evidence-based, responsive and support the foundations of a good life. This includes personal independence, prosperity, social connection, community and good health.



Keeping people out of crisis*

We will identify the root causes that lead people into crises and find ways to prevent them. We will do this through our own actions. We will also work in partnership with residents, businesses, community groups, charities and our public sector partners.



Helping people in crisis*

Where a crisis has already happened, we will work holistically to understand the issues, the cause of these issues and what opportunities exist to address them. We will seek to prevent multiple personal crises becoming entrenched and unmanageable by addressing root causes.

* Crisis – A life changing event, or series of significant events within a short period of time, which can threaten or harm an individual's life experiences, often needing support to prevent further negative consequences.

Priority 2: Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations



Improving housing

We want everyone to live in a safe, high-quality home regardless of health, stage of life, family structure, income and tenure type. Homes should be energy efficient and allow people to live healthy and prosperous lives. New homes should be zero carbon ready and encourage sustainable travel.



Forward-thinking economic growth

We want our local economy to attract businesses that prioritise reducing their carbon footprint. A place where businesses choose to start-up, grow and invest in high-value jobs so they and our residents and high streets, can flourish and thrive. Local people should be able to develop their skills to take advantage of these opportunities, with businesses and education providers working more closely together to deliver an inclusive economy.



Lowering our carbon emissions

We will take positive action to reduce carbon emissions and become a net zero carbon Council by 2040. We will enable and encourage local people and businesses to reduce carbon emissions and increase biodiversity across Huntingdonshire.

Priority 3: Delivering good quality, high value-for-money services with good control and compliance with statutory obligations



Around 80% of our resources are aligned to business as usual (BAU) service delivery and our third priority focuses on delivering good quality, high value for money services with good control and compliance with statutory functions. While new activities will mostly focus on delivering outcomes under our two new outward-facing priorities, we will continue to provide a wide range of existing statutory and important services and seek to improve their efficiency and effectiveness.

MEASURING SUCCESS

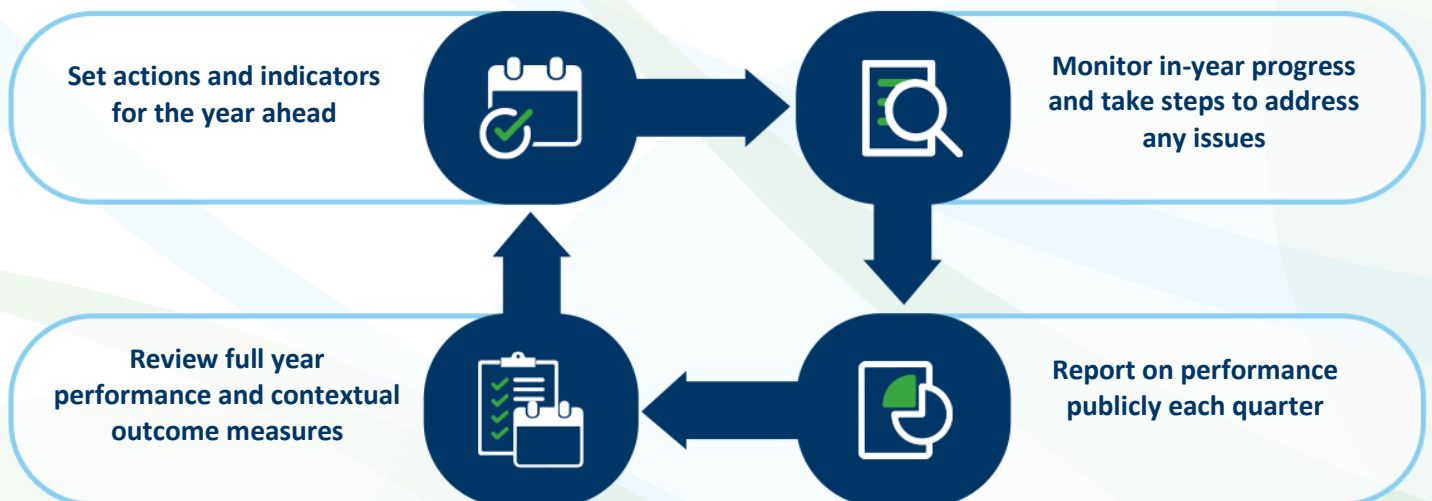
We will stand accountable for performance against these priorities through an annual action plan and performance measures. These will be refreshed yearly to reflect work completed and the development of new approaches informed by ongoing engagement with partners and residents.

In reporting on our progress and achievements, we will be transparent about what we can be held to account for but will also be setting out how we will measure success where we have great ambitions but more limited control over results.

Actions: Our action plan for the next year is set out on pages 11-17. Performance in delivering these actions will be reported quarterly to show progress against significant milestones. Qualitative updates will be provided for each priority and outcome statement to provide further detail of progress made and ensure that there is a clear link between our work and the outcomes they are delivering.

Operational Performance Indicators: We will measure the performance of our services and their contribution to our priorities, through the operational performance indicators on pages 18 and 19, with quarterly updates to show performance against targets and provide commentary on progress made and steps taken to address any issues.

Contextual Outcome Measures: We will also develop and report on a range of contextual outcome measures to monitor how outcomes for the district and its residents are changing. Most outcome measures will be based on external data sources published less frequently than our own operational performance indicators. Results will be presented against our preferred direction of travel but will not have targets since we will not have direct control over performance. However, monitoring them will identify trends over time and changes we may need to react to. The question this will help us answer is: **are our actions a sensible response to community needs and the priorities we hold?**



ACTION PLAN 2023 / 2024



P R I O R I T Y

Improving quality of life for local people

O U T C O M E

Improving the happiness and wellbeing of residents

DO

1. **Refresh** Huntingdonshire's Community Strategy via a new Residents Outcome Strategy – linking Community and Health, building on the Place Strategy findings.
2. **Deliver** the skills and employment workstream of the UK shared prosperity programme.
3. **Run** a pilot with new movers to the area which seeks to support positive outcomes from residents' first arrival in Huntingdonshire.
4. **Listen** to local residents and respond to their input on service delivery.

ENABLE

5. **Formally build** assessments of the impact on the Corporate Plan priorities into Council decision making.
6. **Refresh** our Social Value Procurement Policy and work with other local anchor institutions to encourage them to do the same.

INFLUENCE

7. **Work** via the Integrated Care System to seek to embed an approach which places a focus on activity in the long-term interests of residents in ways of working across system partners.
8. **Continue to work with** statutory partners to secure improvements to transport options for Huntingdonshire, including active travel.
9. **Formally engage** with relevant stakeholders, residents and businesses to explore how place strategy priorities are transformed into practical delivery.
10. **Explore** a campaign which seeks to extol the virtues of spending local and being physically active. Reviewing the benefits that places like Preston, Wigan and East Ayrshire have gained from this approach.



P R I O R I T Y

Improving quality of life for local people

O U T C O M E

Keeping people out of crisis

DO

11. Resource and lead a key change programme which reviews the way we support residents in need across a range of local providers. This will see us work with partners to review and define ways of working, particularly around financial distress. Seeking to develop more holistic support which address root causes and prevent issues escalating.

12. Develop proposals to pilot activity to use Council debt data to target support before people enter crisis.

ENABLE

13. Recognise that community sector partners are often the first point of call for those in a community, and as such we will **work with** community groups to explore appetite and define shared ways of working.

14. Deliver our health inequalities project in partnership with our community and continue to work with health to **seek** funding opportunities and **identify** ways to maximise the contribution of our leisure service to health improvements.

INFLUENCE

15. Work with partners to explore options as to how we use early warning signs as opportunities to seek to offer support, with a view to preventing needs escalating.

16. Continue to work with statutory partners to secure improvements to transport options for Huntingdonshire, including active travel.

17. Work proactively with partners to promote safety and address issues at the earliest opportunity.



P R I O R I T Y

Improving quality of life for local people

O U T C O M E

Helping people in crisis

DO

18. Continue to **support** those impacted via the cost-of-living crisis via a partnership approach which seeks to deal with not just the presenting issue, but wherever possible the cause of it.

19. Continue to **support** refugees and other guests, seeking to support good community relations and smooth transition into long-term residency or return home.

ENABLE

20. Formally propose to partners that we build financial, social and physical solutions into crisis management. Reducing the likelihood of crises repeating in the future.

INFLUENCE

21. Continue to champion WeAreHuntingdonshire.org and other cross cutting sources of information to deliver services that are convenient for the resident rather than structured around the organisation delivering them.

22. Formally engage with relevant stakeholders, residents and businesses to explore how place strategy priorities are transformed into practical delivery.





P R I O R I T Y

Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations

O U T C O M E

Improving Housing

DO

23. Complete Mid Term Review of the Housing Strategy. The Housing Strategy was completed in 2020, this review will enable us to take into account recent studies of need and Census data.

24. Adopt First Homes Policy. Until the update of the Local Plan is completed it is necessary to complete a position statement on First Homes.

25. Adopt new Tenancy Strategy to support people to live healthy and independent lives.

26. Maximise use of Council owned sites to deliver housing, for example working with the Longhurst Group.

ENABLE

27. Maintain the level of new housing delivery, which meets the needs of Huntingdonshire residents, including the type of home and tenure (open market and social housing).

28. Work in partnership to look at best practice and funding to improve housing conditions, including retrofit programmes in social and private housing.

INFLUENCE

29. Work with Registered Providers to improve conditions in existing accommodation through regeneration schemes.

30. Work with Health and Social Care Providers to explore future models of housing, support and care enabling people to live independently for longer.





P R I O R I T Y

Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations

O U T C O M E

Forward-thinking economic growth

DO

- 31. Promote** Huntingdonshire as a destination for high value inward investment, prioritising businesses that are proactively reducing their carbon emissions. Annual report on activity produced.
- 32. Deliver** Year 1 of a programme of UKSPF funded business support activities, including Green Business Grants and support for start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to grow.
- 33. Scope** the refresh of the Huntingdonshire Economic Growth Strategy and produce quarterly economic insights report.
- 34. Continue the delivery** of the Market Town Programme, including completion of the Accelerated Programme, ongoing delivery of Future High Street projects in St. Neots, development of new Retail Hub activity in Ramsey, and delivery of UKSPF funded Vibrant Communities project.
- 35. Commence** the update to the adopted Local Plan including refreshing the evidence base, starting community engagement and a call for sites.

ENABLE

- 36. Work with** intermediaries, professional service networks, investors and developers to understand the health of the economy, develop responses and attract investment.

INFLUENCE

- 37. Work with** the CPCA and partners to complete a review of the future demand for Further Education (FE) provision in the St. Neots area and development of the Local Skills Implementation Plan, prioritising connections between FE provision and local employers aligned to core growth sectors.
- 38. Influence** the implementation of the CPCA Economic Growth Strategy and commissioning of future business support provision.
- 39. Influence** delivery of infrastructure including East West Rail, A428, A141 Strategic Outline Business Case and future Transport Strategies.



P R I O R I T Y

Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations

O U T C O M E

Lowering our carbon emissions

DO

- 40. Review** our assets to improve energy efficiency and reduce the carbon impact of our buildings.
- 41. Deliver** Fleet Review Plan for lower carbon alternatives for service delivery.
- 42. Deliver** Energy Strategy.
- 43. Establish** Climate Conversation to openly account against the Climate Action Plan, listen to feedback from local people, evaluate priorities, develop actions towards Environmental Innovation (Place Strategy).
- 44. Review** Local Plan (ensuring plan for Biodiversity Net Gain referencing the National Planning Policy Framework).

ENABLE

- 45. Deliver** Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy.
- 46. Pilot** Community Carbon Reduction Plans.
- 47. Deliver** Biodiversity for All (2023-2025) to enable community action and support green skills development.
- 48. Commission** Active Travel Studies (UKSPF) to influence/inform future investment priorities.

INFLUENCE

- 49. Develop** the Council's procurement rules to further embed social and environmental value.
- 50. Expand** the current Green Business Awards Scheme, celebrating best practice and sharing knowledge.
- 51. Deliver** Huntingdonshire Plan for Nature and contribute to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to guide greater biodiversity and nature restoration in the district.



P R I O R I T Y

Delivering good quality, high value-for-money services with good control and compliance with statutory obligations

DO

- 52. Refresh** our Commercial Investment strategy to develop proposals for future strategic investments.
- 53. Deliver** a renewed Workforce Strategy to prepare the Council for the changing skills needed in our future workforce and to ensure that we can continue to attract, retain and nurture talent.
- 54. Refresh** of operational performance management to deliver improvement and provide consistent and transparent tracking of what we do and how we do it.
- 55. Undertake** Customer Services improvement programme to ensure that our customers are always at the heart of what we do.
- 56. Deliver** the Council Tax Support project to ensure we offer the best support to those that need it.
- 57. Ensure** that the Additional Funding for Energy Bill Rebate is **delivered** to those who are eligible.
- 58. Undertake** the Development Management Improvement programme to improve the performance of the planning service.
- 59. Implement** the review of the collection of Green waste and **develop proposals** for the collection of food waste.
- 60. Progress delivery** of Civil Parking Enforcement across the District to enforce on-street parking activity.
- 61. Deliver** the enhancement of visitor facilities at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park.
- 62. Upgrade** path and cycleways at Riverside Park St. Neots.

ENABLE

- 63. Do** these things well to enable local people to **thrive** and take new opportunities.
- 64. Enable** our outstanding volunteers in our parks, nature reserves and elsewhere to continue to improve the quality of those spaces.

INFLUENCE

- 65. Our well-run Council will act** as a model for our peers.

OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES 2023 / 2024

Priority 1: Improving quality of life for local people

MEASURES

1. Number of attendances at One Leisure Active Lifestyles programmes (cumulative year to date)
2. Number of One Leisure Facilities admissions – swimming, Impressions, fitness classes, sports hall and pitches (excluding Burgess Hall and school admissions) (cumulative year to date)
3. The number of residents enabled to live safely at home and prevented from requiring care or a prolonged stay at hospital via a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) (cumulative year to date)
4. Average time (in weeks) between date of referral and practical completion of jobs funded through Disabled Facilities Grants (cumulative year to date)
5. Average number of days to process new claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support (cumulative year to date)
6. Average number of days to process changes of circumstances for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support (cumulative year to date)
7. Number of homelessness preventions achieved (cumulative year to date)
8. Number of households housed through the housing register and Home-Link scheme (cumulative year to date)
9. Number of households in Temporary Accommodation (snapshot at end of each period)

Priority 2: Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations

MEASURES

10. Net change in number of homes with a Council Tax banding (cumulative year to date)
11. Number of new affordable homes delivered (cumulative year to date)
12. Percentage of planning applications processed on target – major (within 13 weeks or agreed extended period) (cumulative year to date)

13. Percentage of planning applications processed on target – minor or other (within 8 weeks or agreed extended period) (cumulative year to date)

14. Percentage of planning applications processed on target – household extensions (within 8 weeks or agreed extended period) (cumulative year to date)

15. Number of planning applications over 26 weeks old where there is no current extension of time in place (total at end of each quarter)

16. Efficiency of vehicle fleet driving – Energy Efficient Driving Index score for the Waste service (cumulative year to date)

Priority 3: Delivering good quality, high value-for-money services with good control and compliance with statutory obligations

MEASURES

17. Percentage of household waste reused/recycled/composted (cumulative year to date)

18. Percentage of sampled areas which are clean or predominantly clean of litter, detritus, graffiti, flyposting, or weed accumulations (cumulative year to date)

19. Number of missed bins (cumulative year to date)

20. The number of programmed food safety inspections undertaken (cumulative year to date)

22. Percentage of calls to Call Centre answered (cumulative year to date)

23. Average wait time for customers calling the Call Centre (cumulative year to date)

24. Council Tax collection rate (cumulative year to date)

25. Business Rates collection rate (cumulative year to date)

26. Staff sickness days lost per full time equivalent (FTE) (rolling 12-month total)

27. Staff turnover (rolling 12-month total)

OUR VALUES (icare)

Our values, known as icare will be embedded into the organisation. The icare values fit with the future ambitions of the Council and will be a key enabler so that we can deliver the Corporate Plan.



icare

i

INSPIRING

We have genuine pride and passion for public service, doing the best we can for our customers.

c

COLLABORATIVE

We achieve much more by working together and this allows us to provide the best service for customers.

a

ACCOUNTABLE

We take personal responsibility for our work and our decisions and we deliver on our commitments to customers.

r

RESPECTFUL

We respect people's differences and are considerate to their needs.

e

ENTERPRISING

We use drive and energy to challenge the norm and adapt to changing circumstances. We are always ready for challenges and opportunities and we embrace them.

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Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Members' Allowances
Meeting/Date: Council – 29th March 2023
Executive Portfolio: Executive Leader – Councillor S J Conboy
Report by: Elections and Democratic Services Manager
Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

The current Members' Allowances Scheme was approved by the Council on 17th October 2018 and came into effect on that date. There was a further interim review in June 2021 that gave consideration to a review of members allowances for District Council Members appointed to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. This resulted in further changes to the scheme approved in October 2018 that took effect from 2nd June 2021. This forms part of the Council's Constitution.

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require an authority to have regard to recommendations made to it by an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) before making or amending a scheme of members' allowances.

In addition, the Regulations require that where an authority has regard to an index for the purpose of annual adjustment of allowances it must not rely on that index for longer than a period of four years before seeking a further recommendation from the Independent Remuneration Panel.

The Huntingdonshire Panel was convened in November 2022 in response to the statutory requirement for a review of the index used for the past four years. Accordingly, the Remuneration Panel was presented with general terms of reference, namely to undertake a full review of the Council Members' Allowances scheme that takes into account any recent changes in governance and to make any necessary amendments.

Recommendations:

The Council is invited to consider the Panel's recommendations and to implement with effect from 1st April 2023

- (a) the level of basic allowance for all District Councillors as outlined in the attached Annex;**
- (b) the levels of Special Responsibility Allowances as outlined in the attached Annex;**
- (c) the continuation of the one Special Responsibility Allowance rule, with the exception to this rule allowing all councillor representatives on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Board, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Audit and Governance Committee, including Substitute Members and all Members of the Development and Management Committee, with the exception of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Cabinet Member nomination;**
- (d) the continuation of payment of the Independent Person and Deputy Independent Person allowance of £1,051 and £525 respectively per annum;**
- (e) the continuation of the terms and conditions and the rates payable for travel based on the mileage rates published by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs for reimbursement of mileage incurred in undertaking approved duties;**
- (f) the continuation of arrangements in that subsistence is not payable, with the exception of 'special circumstances' such as overnight stays;**
- (g) the Child and Dependent Carer's Allowance be based at cost upon the production of receipts and in the case of specialist care a requirement of medical evidence that this type of care be required, the allowance should have no monthly maximum claim when undertaking Approved duties;**
- (h) the active promotion of the Child and Dependent Carer's Allowance to prospective and new councillors both before and following an election to assist in supporting greater diversity of councillor representation;**
- (i) to support a policy of parental leave for councillors. Should a policy on Parental Leave for Councillors be approved the active promotion to prospective and current Councillors alongside the Carers Allowance. This should form part of a wider 'Be A Councillor' (Local Government Association led initiative) programme led by the Council and supported by political groups, to enhance and increase the diversity of councillor representation; and**
- (j) the indices to be used for indexation purposes to enable the Members' Allowances Scheme to be adjusted for a period of up to four years as outlined in the attached Annex.**

The Council is also invited to revoke the existing Members' Allowances Scheme with effect from 1st April 2023 and to authorise the Managing Director to prepare a new scheme of Members' Allowances to reflect the outcome of the Council's deliberations and to take any consequential action arising therefrom.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to consider the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel with regard to a review of the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel has undertaken a review of the Members' Allowances Scheme. The current Scheme has been in existence since 17th October 2018, with a further interim update in June 2021.
- 2.2 As a prelude to their review, the Panel was advised of Council's financial pressures with current budget restrictions and general economic climate, as well as a change in the political landscape of the Council since the elections in May 2022, with control by a Joint Administration comprised of four political groups and change to the different leadership model.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Panel met on 22nd and 23rd November 2022 to review the Members' Allowances Scheme. The Panel's report is attached at Annex 1. The report is based on the Panel's discussions and summarises the principal issues. A summary of the changes appears in Appendix 1 of the IRP Report. The Council is requested to consider the recommendations set out in the report and agree a Members' Allowances Scheme to take effect from 1st April 2023.
- 3.2 The Panel has also made recommendations in relation to town and parish councillors under the 2003 Regulations. Although none of the parishes in Huntingdonshire have requested a review of allowances and as far as is known, no parishes are paying the parish basic allowance to their Chairmen, the Panel has taken the opportunity to provide town and parish councils with the necessary authority should they wish to implement an allowance scheme in the future. This had not been reviewed since 2010.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 A questionnaire was sent to all Councillors prior to the Panel convening, inviting comments on the existing Scheme, and invitations were extended to all those currently in receipt of Special Responsibility Allowances to address the Panel on the day.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 In setting its Members' Allowances levels, the Council is obliged to have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel established for this purpose.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 If the proposed changes are made to the Members' Allowances Scheme, allowing for an increase in the basic allowance and recommending revisions to Special Responsibility Allowances, although an increase to expenditure, there would be no overall increase to the budget.

7. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 7.1 Part 6 of the Council's Constitution provides for the Council to adopt a Members' Allowances Scheme.

8. LIST OF ANNEXES INCLUDED

Annex 1 – The report of the Independent Remuneration Panel appointed to review the allowances paid to Huntingdonshire District Council: December 2022

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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**The report of the Independent Remuneration Panel
appointed to review the allowances paid to Councillors
of Huntingdonshire District Council**



December 2022

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ("the 2003 Regulations"), as amended, require all local authorities to appoint an independent remuneration panel (IRP) to advise on the terms and conditions of their scheme of councillors' allowances.

1.1.2 Huntingdonshire District Council formally appointed the following persons to undertake this process and make recommendations on its future scheme.

Nicky Blanning – Local resident
Gerard Dempsey- Business Consultant and member of the Judiciary
Jennifer Horn- Former Company Director
Amanda Orchard- Marketing Consultant and Local Magistrate
Mark Palmer – Development Director, East of England LGA (Chair)

1.1.3 Our terms of reference were in accordance with the requirements of the 2003 Regulations, together with "Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances" issued jointly by the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Inland Revenue (July 2003). Those requirements are to make recommendations to the Council as to:

- (a) the amount of basic allowance to be payable to all councillors;
- (b) the level of allowances and whether allowances should be payable for:
 - (i) special responsibility allowances, including those for new committees Constitution and Ethics Committee and Shareholder Cabinet Committee;
 - (ii) travelling and subsistence allowance;
 - (iii) dependants' carers' allowance;
 - (iv) parental leave and.
 - (v) co-optees' allowance.

and the amount of such allowances.

- (c) whether payment of allowances may be backdated if the scheme is amended at any time to affect an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made.
- (d) whether adjustments to the level of allowances may be determined according to an index and if so which index and how long that index should apply, subject to a maximum of four years before its application is reviewed.

2. CURRENT SCHEME

2.1.1 The last full review of councillors' allowances was undertaken by the IRP in September 2018.

2.1.2 The Scheme currently provides that all councillors are each entitled to a total basic allowance of £4,729 per annum, with effect from May 2021. In addition, some councillors receive special responsibility allowances for undertaking additional duties.

2.1.3 Councillors may also claim the cost of travel and subsistence expenses and for expenditure on the care of children or dependants whilst on approved duties.

3. PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING OUR REVIEW

3.1 The Public Service Principle

3.1.1 This is the principle that an important part of being a councillor is the desire to serve the public and, therefore, not all of what a councillor does should be remunerated. Part of a councillor's time should be given voluntarily. The consolidated guidance notes the importance of this principle when arriving at the recommended basic allowance.¹ Moreover, we found that a public service concept or ethos was articulated and supported by most of the councillors we interviewed and in the responses to the questionnaire completed by councillors as part of our review.

3.1.2 The principle of public service had been recognised in previous IRP reviews and was quantified in 2018. To provide transparency and increase an understanding of the Panel's work, we will continue to recommend the application of an explicit Public Service Discount (or PSD). Such a PSD is applied to the time input necessary to fulfil the role of a councillor. Further explanation of the PSD to be applied is given below in section 4.

3.2 The Fair Remuneration Principle

3.2.1 Alongside the belief that the role of the elected Councillor should, in part, be viewed as unpaid voluntary service, we advocate a principle of fair remuneration. The Panel in 2020 continues to subscribe to the view promoted by the independent Councillors' Commission:

Remuneration should not be an incentive for service as a councillor. Nor should lack of remuneration be a barrier. The basic allowance should encourage people from a wide range of backgrounds and with a wide range of skills to serve as local councillors. Those who participate in and contribute to the democratic process should not suffer unreasonable financial disadvantage as a result of doing so.²

3.2.2 We are keen to ensure that our recommended scheme of allowances provides reasonable financial compensation for councillors. Equally, the scheme should be fair, transparent, logical, simple, and seen as such.

3.2.3 Hence, we continue to acknowledge that:

- (i) allowances should apply to roles within the Council, not individual councillors;
- (ii) allowances should represent reasonable *compensation* to councillors for expenses they incur and time they commit in relation to their role, not *payment* for their work; and
- (iii) special responsibility allowances are used to recognise the *significant* additional responsibilities which attach to some roles, not merely the extra time required.

3.2.4 In making our recommendations, we have therefore sought to maintain a balance between:

- (i) the voluntary quality of a councillor's role;

¹ The former Office of Deputy Prime Minister – , *New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances*, London: TSO, July 2003, paragraph 68.

² Rodney Brooke and Declan Hall, *Members' Remuneration: Models, Issues, Incentives and Barriers*. London: Communities and Local Government, 2007, p.3.

- (ii) the need for appropriate financial recognition for the expenses incurred and time spent by councillors in fulfilling their roles; and
- (iii) the overall need to ensure that the scheme of allowances is neither an incentive nor a barrier to service as a councillor.

3.2.5 The Panel as in 2018 continues to ensure that the scheme of allowances is understandable in the way it is calculated. This includes ensuring the bandings and differentials of the allowances are as transparent as possible.

3.2.6 In making our recommendations, we wish to emphasise that any possible negative impact they may have is not intended and should not be interpreted as a reflection on any individual councillor’s performance in the role.

4. CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Basic Allowance

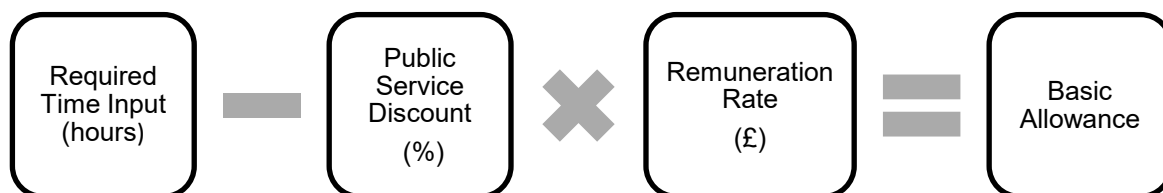
4.1.1 A Council’s scheme of allowances must include provision for a basic allowance, payable at an equal flat rate to all councillors. The guidance on arriving at the basic allowance states, “Having established what local councillors do, and the hours which are devoted to these tasks the local authorities will need to take a view on the rate at which, and the number of hours for which, councillors ought to be remunerated.”³

4.1.2 In addition to the regular cycles of Council and committee meetings, a number of working groups involving councillors may operate. Many councillors are also appointed by the Council to a number of external organisations.

4.1.3 We recognise that councillors are responsible to their electorate as:

- Representatives of a particular ward;
- Community leaders;
- Decision makers for the whole Council area;
- Policy makers for future activities of the Council;
- Scrutineers and auditors of the work of the Council; and
- Regulators of planning, licensing and other matters required by Government.

4.1.4 The guidance identifies the issues and factors an IRP should have regard to when making a scheme of allowances.⁴ For the basic allowance we considered three variables in our calculation: the time required to execute the role effectively; the public service discount; and the rate for remuneration.



³ The former Office of Deputy Prime Minister, *New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances*, London: TSO, July 2003, paragraph 67.

⁴ The former Office of Deputy Prime Minister – now the Department for Communities and Local Government, and Inland Revenue, *New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances*, London: TSO, July 2003, paragraphs 66-81.

4.1.5 Each of the variables is explained below.

Required Time Input

4.1.6 We ascertained the average number of hours necessary per week to undertake the role of a councillor (with no special responsibilities) from questionnaires and interviews with councillors and through reference to the relevant Councillor Role Profiles. In addition, we considered information about the number, range, and frequency of committee meetings.⁵

4.1.7 Discounting attendance at political meetings (which we judged to be centred upon internal political management), we find that the average time commitment required to execute the role of a councillor with no special responsibilities is 9 hours per week.

Public Service Discount (PSD)

4.1.8 From the information analysed, we found councillors espoused a high sense of public duty. Given the weight of evidence presented to us concerning, among other factors, the levels of responsibility, the varied nature of the role, the need for learning and development, and the increasing accessibility and expectations of the public, we recommend a Public Service Discount of 30 per cent to the calculation of the basic allowance. This percentage sits within the mid- range of PSDs applied to basic allowances by councils.

Remuneration Rate

4.1.9 After establishing the expected time input to be remunerated, we considered a remuneration rate. We came to a judgement about the rate at which the councillors ought to be remunerated for the work they do.

4.1.10 To help identify an hourly rate for calculating allowances, we utilised relevant statistics about the local labour market published by the Office for National Statistics. We selected the average (median), full-time gross⁶ wage per hour for the Huntingdonshire District Council area £15.32⁷

Calculating the basic allowance

4.1.11 After determining the amount of time required each week to fulfil the role (9 hours), the level of PSD to be applied (30%) and the hourly rate to be used (£15.32), we calculated the basic allowance as follows:



4.1.12 The gross Basic Allowance before the PSD is applied is **£7,170**. Following the application of the PSD this leads to a basic allowance of **£5,019** per annum.

⁵ The summary responses to the questionnaires are available on request.

⁶ The basic allowance, special responsibility allowance, dependants' carers' allowance, and co-optees' allowance are taxable as employment income.

⁷ The Nomis official labour market statistics: Hourly Pay – Gross median (£) For full-time employee jobs by place of residence: UK December 2021.

4.1.13 This amount is intended to recognise the overall contribution made by councillors, including their work on council bodies, and ward work and attendance on external bodies.

4.1.14 We did also note the levels of basic allowance currently allocated by other district/city councils in the Cambridgeshire area (see table below and Appendix 3 for a wider scope of district and borough councils).

Council	Cambridgeshire District/City Councils: Basic Allowances (£) 2022
Cambridge City Council	5,554
East Cambridge District Council	5,765
Huntingdonshire District Council	4,729
South Cambridgeshire District Council	5,010
Average	5,265

4.1.15 The Panel wished to ensure the level of basic allowance does not constitute a barrier to candidates from all sections of the community standing, or re-standing, for election as councillors. The Panel was of the view that this review had begun to make recommendations to ensure that the current basic was in accordance with the principle of fair remuneration.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the Basic Allowance payable to all members of Huntingdonshire District Council be £5,019 per annum.

4.2 Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)

4.2.1 Special Responsibility Allowances are awarded to councillors who perform significant additional responsibilities over and above the roles and expenses covered by the basic allowance. These special responsibilities must be related to the discharge of the council's functions.

4.2.2 The 2003 Regulations do not limit the number of SRAs which may be paid, nor do they prohibit the payment of more than one SRA to any one councillor. They do require that an SRA be paid to at least one councillor who is not a member of the controlling group of the Council. As the guidance suggests, if the majority of councillors receive an SRA, the local electorate may rightly question the justification for this.⁸

4.2.3 We conclude from the evidence we have considered that the following offices bear *significant* additional responsibilities:

- Executive Leader
- Deputy Executive Leader
- Assistant Executive Leader
- Cabinet Members
- Chair of Council
- Chair of Development Control Committee
- Chair of Licensing and Protection Committee/Licensing Committee
- Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Panels

⁸ The former Office of Deputy Prime Minister – now the Department for Housing Communities and Local Government, and Inland Revenue, *New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances*, London: TSO, July 2003, paragraph 72.

- Chair of Corporate Governance Committee
- Chair of Employment Committee
- Vice Chair of Council
- Vice Chair of Development Control Committee
- Vice Chair of Licensing Protection Committee/Licensing Committee
- Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Panels
- Vice Chair of Corporate Governance Committee
- Vice Chair of Employment Committee
- Leader of Principal Opposition Group
- Deputy Leader of Principal Opposition Group
- Leader of Minor Opposition
- Development Control Committee Ordinary Members
- Combined Authority Board Member
- Substitute to Combined Authority Board
- Appointees to Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees
- Appointee to Combined Authority Audit and Governance Committee
- Head Independent Person
- Deputy Independent Person

One SRA Only Rule

- 4.2.4 To improve the transparency of the scheme of allowances, we feel that no councillor should be entitled to receive at any time more than **one SRA**. If a councillor can receive more than one SRA, then the public are unable to ascertain the actual level of remuneration for an individual councillor from a reading of the Scheme of Allowances.
- 4.2.5 Moreover, the One SRA Only Rule avoids the possible anomaly of the Leader receiving a lower allowance than another councillor. If two or more allowances are applicable to a councillor, then the higher-valued allowance would be received. The One SRA Only Rule is common practice for many councils. Our calculations for the SRAs are based on this principle, which should be highlighted. The exception to this 'Rule' will continue to be for all appointments and councillor representatives on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Board. This exception will apply to the councillor representative on the Combined Authority Board, the substitute councillor representative on the Board, the councillor appointments to the Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny and Audit and Governance Committees. Finally, Ordinary Members of the Development and Management Committee with the exception of the Chair, Vice Chair and Cabinet Member nomination on the Development and Management Committee will be able to receive the additional Special Responsibility Allowance for Development and Management Committee Members.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that that no councillor shall be entitled to receive at any time more than one Special Responsibility Allowance and that this One SRA Only Rule be adopted into the Scheme of Allowances. The exception to this 'Rule' is for all councillor representatives on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Board, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Audit and Governance Committee. This exception will also apply to the Substitute Member on the Combined Authority Board. Finally, with the exception of the Chair, Vice Chair and Cabinet Member nomination all Members of the Development and Management Committee will be able to receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance.

Calculating SRAs

- 4.2.6 The Panel continued to the criteria and formula for calculating the Leader of the Council allowance. Based on a multiplier of the Basic Allowance, this role carries the most significant additional responsibilities and is the most time consuming.
- 4.2.7 We applied a multiplier of the basic allowance to establish the Leader's SRA. Other SRAs are then valued downwards as a percentage of the Leader's allowance. This approach has the advantage that, when future adjustments to the SRAs are required, changing the Leader's SRA will have a proportionate and easily calculable effect on the other SRAs within the scheme.

We grouped together in Tiers those roles that we judged to have a similar level of responsibility.

Executive Leader (Tier One)

- 4.2.8 The Council elects for a four-year term of office a Leader who is ultimately responsible for the discharge of all executive functions of the Council. The Leader is the principal policy maker and has personal authority to determine delegated powers to the rest of the Executive. The Leader is also responsible for the appointment (and dismissal) of members of the Cabinet and their respective areas of responsibility.
- 4.2.9 The multiplier we applied to calculate the Leader's SRA is 300% (3 x times) the basic allowance. If the recommended option of a basic allowance with a PSD of 30% is adopted, this results in a Leader's Allowance of £15,057.

WE RECOMMEND that the Leader of the Council to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 300% of the basic allowance, £15,057.

Deputy Executive Leader (Tier Two)

- 4.2.10 The Deputy Executive Leader usually acts on the Leader's behalf in their absence. From the information we gathered, we continue to consider this additional responsibility should be reflected in the level of allowance. Therefore, we recommend the Deputy Executive Leader's SRA be set at 75% of the Leader's SRA. If our recommendations concerning the basic allowance and the Leader's SRA are adopted, this results in an allowance of £11,293.

WE RECOMMEND that the Deputy Leader receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 75% of the Executive Leader's Allowance, £11,293.

Assistant Executive Leader (Tier Three)

- 4.2.11 Following the May 2022 elections and the formulation of the Joint Administration Agreement the role of Assistant Executive Leader was developed as part of the cabinet to support the Executive Leader and Deputy Executive Leader.
- 4.2.12 Evidence from the interviews we undertook with councillors, underlines the responsibility of this role. The role holds considerable responsibility and in addition we found the time commitment for the role to be significant.

WE RECOMMEND that the Assistant Executive Leader receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 65% of the Executive Leader, £9,787.

Cabinet Members (Tier Four)

- 4.2.13 The role of the Cabinet Members continues to be a key role within decision-making responsibility and a high level of impact across the Council and specific portfolio area.

The Panel was also of the view that the number of appointees to Cabinet should not have an impact on the level of SRA for the Cabinet Member. Regardless of the number of Cabinet Members (up to a maximum of seven excluding the Executive Leader, Deputy and Assistant Executive Leader) the SRA should be set at one level.

WE RECOMMEND that the Cabinet Members should continue receive an allowance of 55% of the recommended Executive Leaders allowance, £8,281. WE FURTHER RECOMMEND that their should be a single rate for the SRA of Cabinet Member regardless of the size and composition of the Cabinet.

Assistant Cabinet Members

- 4.2.14 Following the May 2022 election and the formation of the Joint Administration Agreement the roles of Assistant Cabinet Members have been removed. The Panel is therefore of the view that the SRA for the role of Assistant Cabinet Member should be removed from the recommended Scheme of Members Allowances.

WE RECOMMEND that the SRA for the role of Assistant Cabinet Member be withdrawn.

Chair of Development Control Committee and Chair of Licensing and Protection Committee/Licensing Committee (Tier Five)

- 4.2.15 The Panel was of the view that Chair of the Development Control Committee and Licensing and Protection Committee were both the most demanding Committee Chair roles both in terms of time commitment and community impact. The Panel therefore recommends that the Chair of the Development Control Committee and the Chair of Licensing and Protection Committee/Licensing Committee should receive a SRA of 45% of the recommended Executive Leaders' Allowance, £6,776.

WE RECOMMEND that the Chair of Development Control Committee and the Chair of Licensing and Protection/Licensing Committee receive an SRA of 45% of the recommended Executive Leaders' Allowance, £6,776.

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Panels (Tier Six).

- 4.2.16 The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel is a key role of significant impact. Overview and Scrutiny although not a decision-making committee can exert considerable influence and has an external facing role in terms of ensuring accountability. The Panel therefore recommend that the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels should receive an allowance of 40% of the Leader's Allowance, £6,023.

WE RECOMMEND that the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel should receive an allowance of 40% of the Leader's Allowance £6,023.

Leader of the Principal Opposition Group and Combined Authority Board Member (Tier Seven)

- 4.2.17 The role of Leader of the Principal Opposition Group is a significant role and one that is required to have an SRA within the 2003 Regulations. The role manages a significant sized group and also ensures democratic scrutiny and accountability of the administration. The Panel therefore recommends that the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group should receive an allowance of 35% of the Leader's Allowance, £5,270. The qualification criteria for this allowance will be the same as in the current scheme of allowances, at least eleven members been registered as a political group.

4.2.18 The Panel also considered the role of the Appointee to the Combined Authority Board. The Panel was informed that this was a role that required a significant time input and had a considerable impact due to the responsibilities of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. The Panel therefore recommends that the Appointee to the Combined Authority Board should receive an allowance of 35% of the Leader's Allowance, £5,270.

WE RECOMMEND that the Principal Opposition Group Leader and the Appointee to the Combined Authority Board should both receive an allowance of 35% of the Leader's Allowance, £5,270.

Chair of Council (Tier Eight)

4.2.19 The Chair of Council has a key role in chairing the full Council meeting and is also the first citizen of the District and has a wider ceremonial role that is remunerated outside of this Scheme of Allowances. The Panel recommend that the Chair of Council should receive an allowance of 30% of the Leader's Allowance, £4,517.

WE RECOMMEND that the Chair of Council should receive an allowance of 30% of the Leader's Allowance, £4,517.

Chair of the Employment Committee and Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee (Tier Nine)

4.2.20 The Panel recommends that the Chair of the Employment Committee and the Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee should continue to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 20% of the Leader's Allowance, £3,011.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the Chair of the Employment Committee and the Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee should receive an allowance of 20% of the Leader's Allowance, £3,011.

Vice Chair of Council, Development Control Committee, Licensing and Protection Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Panels, Employment Committee and Corporate Governance Committee.

4.2.21 The Panel was of the view that all the Vice Chair continued to undertake roles that were of a significant responsibility that justified an allowance. Within the Vice Chair roles that of the Vice Chair of Council and Vice Chair of the Development Control Committee were regarded as larger in terms of impact and time Commitment. The Panel therefore recommends that the Vice Chair of Council and the Vice Chair of Development Control Committee should receive an allowance of 40% of the Chair's allowance, £1,807 £2,710. The Panel further recommends that the Vice Chair of Licensing and Protection Committee, Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Panels, Vice Chair of the Employment Committee and Vice Chair of Corporate Governance Committee should receive an allowance of 30% of the Chair's allowance.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the Vice Chair of Council and the Vice Chair of the Development Control Committee should receive an allowance of 40% of the Chair's allowance, £1,807 and £2,710. WE FURTHER RECOMMEND that the Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Panels should receive an allowance of 30% of the Chair's allowance, £1,807. The Vice Chair Licensing and Protection Committee should receive an allowance of 30% of the Chair's allowance, £2,033. The Vice Chair of the Employment Committee and the Corporate Governance Committee should receive an allowance of 30% of the Chair's allowance, £903.

Combined Authority Allowances, Substitute Appointee to the Combined Authority

Board, Appointees to Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Appointee to Combined Authority Audit and Governance Committee.

- 4.2.22 The Panel recommends that Substitute to the Combined Authority Board should receive an allowance of 35% of the Combined Authority Board Member, £1,845. The Appointees to the Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees should receive an allowance of 20% of the Combined Authority Board Member, £1,054 and the Appointee to the Combined Authority Audit and Governance Committee should receive an allowance of 20% of the Combined Authority Board Member, £1,054.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the Substitute Appointee to the Combined Authority Board receive an allowance of 35% of the Combined Authority Board Member, £1845. The Appointees to the Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Appointee to the Combined Authority Audit and Governance Committee receive an allowance of 20% of the Combined Authority Board Member, £1,054.

Deputy Leader of Principal Opposition Group, Leader of Minority Opposition Group

- 4.2.23 The Panel is of the view that the Deputy Leader of the Principal Opposition Group and the Leader of the Minority Opposition continue to be roles of a *significant responsibility* to warrant a SRA. The Panel recommends that the Deputy Leader of Principal Opposition Group and the Leader of the Minority Opposition should receive an allowance of 15% of the Leader of the Principal Opposition, £791 per annum. Both these roles are based on the same qualification criteria as outlined in the current scheme.

Development Control Committee Ordinary Members

- 4.2.24 The Panel was of the view that the Development Control Committee Ordinary Members should continue to receive an allowance of 10% of the Chair of Development Control Committee, £678.

WE RECOMMEND that Development Control Committee Ordinary Members receive an allowance of 10% of the Chair of the Development Control Committee, £678.

4.3 Independent Persons Allowance

- 4.3.1 An IRP may recommend the payment and level of an allowance for those who serve on the committees or sub-committees of a Council but are not members of the Council. We recognise that in so doing, an element of the contribution made by the Independent Persons should be voluntary. We therefore continue to recommend that Head Independent Person of the Council and the Deputy Independent Person of the Council are entitled to an allowance plus travel, subsistence and other expenses in accordance with the scheme applicable to councillors.

WE RECOMMEND that the Head Independent Person should continue to receive an allowance of £1,051 per annum, the Deputy Independent Person an allowance of £525 per annum. The roles will also receive travel, subsistence and other expenses in accordance with the scheme applicable to councillors.

4.4 Travelling and Subsistence Allowance

- 4.4.1 A scheme of allowances may provide for any councillor to be paid for travelling and subsistence undertaken in connection with any of the duties specified in Regulation 8 of the 2003 Regulations (see paragraph 5.10). Similarly, such an allowance may also be

paid to Independent Persons of a committee or sub-committee of the Council in connection with any of those duties, provided that their expenses are not also being met by a third party.

WE RECOMMEND that travelling allowance should be payable to councillors and Independent Persons in connection with any approved duties. The amount of travel payable shall continue to be at the maximum levels payable to council staff in line with HM Revenue and Customs' rates. In respect of Subsistence WE RECOMMEND that the current approach continues in that subsistence is not payable with the exception of 'special circumstances' such as overnight stays. We propose no changes to the current travel allowances and the approach to subsistence.

4.5 Child and Dependant Carers' Allowance

- 4.5.1 The child and dependant carers' allowance should ensure that potential candidates are not deterred from standing for election and should enable current councillors to continue despite any change in their personal circumstances. The current scheme awards reimbursement of childcare at the rate of the National Living Wage when using childminders, babysitters or other sitters for dependants while carrying out Approved duties. The scheme also allows for specialist Dependent Relative Care to be reimbursed at the rate paid by Cambridgeshire County Council to home care assistants.
- 4.5.2 The Panel is of the view that to ensure no councillor is out of pocket or makes a financial loss due to any costs incurred for the provision of care both the Child and Dependant Carers' Allowance should be reimbursed for the actual cost incurred by the councillor upon production of receipts. In respect of specialist care provision medical evidence that this type of care provision is required should also be provided and approved by an appropriate officer of the Council.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the Child and Dependant Carers' Allowance should be based at cost upon production of receipts and in the case of specialist care a requirement of medical evidence that this type of care be required, the allowance should have no monthly maximum claim when undertaking Approved duties.

WE ALSO RECOMMEND that the Council should actively promote the allowance to prospective and new councillors both before and following an election. This may assist in supporting greater diversity of councillor representation.

4.6 Parental Leave

- 4.6.1 There is no uniform national policy to support councillors who require parental leave for maternity, paternity, or adoption leave. According to the Fawcett Society (Does Local Government Work for Women, 2018) a *'lack of maternity, paternity provision or support' is a real barrier for women aged 18-44 to fulfil their role as a councillor.*
- 4.6.2 We are of the view that support should be provided for parental leave although we do not wish to stipulate an exact policy/procedure. The Panel is aware that the Local Government Association has developed a model policy that has been adopted by a growing number of councils across the East of England region.
- 4.6.3 There is no legal right to parental leave of any kind for people in elected public office. However, as a way of improving the diversity of Councillors, the Panel would recommend that the Members' Allowance Scheme should be amended to include provisions that clarify that:

- All Councillors shall continue to receive their Basic Allowance in full for a period up to six months in the case of absence from their Councillor duties due to leave relate to maternity, paternity, adoption shared parental leave or sickness absence
- Councillors entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance shall continue to receive their allowance in full for a period of six months, in the case of absence from their Councillor duties due to leave related to maternity, paternity, adoption, shared parental leave or sickness absence
- Where for reasons connected with sickness, maternity leave, adoption leave, paternity leave or shared parental leave a Councillor is unable to attend a meeting of the Council for a period of six months, a dispensation by Council can be sought in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972
- If a replacement to cover the period of absence under these provisions is appointed by Council or the Leader (or in the case of a party group position the party group) the replacement shall be entitled to claim a Special Responsibility Allowance pro rata for the period over which the cover is provided.
- If a Councillor stands down, or an election is held during the period when a Councillor is absent due to any of the above and the Councillor is not re-elected or decides not to stand down for re-election, their Basic Allowance any Special Responsibility Allowance will cease from the date they leave office.

4.6.4 The Panel is conscious that these provisions do not replicate the LGA policy but that policy introduces elements that are more akin to employees which in terms of employment legislation does not include Councillors. We feel that our recommendations more simply and adequately reflect the situation relating to Councillors and clarify for them what they can expect. District Councillors however may wish to further develop the above recommendations so that they reflect the LGA policy.

WE RECOMMEND that the approach outlined is adopted as a basis of a policy to support parental leave for councillors. Should a policy on Parental Leave for Councillors be approved it should be actively promoted to prospective and current Councillors alongside the Carers Allowance. This should form part of a wider 'Be A Councillor' (LGA led initiative) programme led by the Council and supported by political groups; to enhance and increase the diversity of councillor representation.

4.7 Indexing of Allowances

4.7.1 A scheme of allowances may make provision for an annual adjustment of allowances in line with a specified index. The present scheme makes provision for the basic allowance, the special responsibility allowances and Independent Persons allowance to be adjusted annually in line with staff salaries.

WE RECOMMEND that the basic allowance, each of the SRAs and the Independent Persons Allowance be increased annually in line with the percentage increase in staff salaries from May 2023 for a period of up to four years. After this period, the Scheme shall be reviewed again by an independent remuneration panel.

4.8 Revocation of current Scheme of Allowances / Implementation of new Scheme

- 4.8.1 The 2003 Regulations provide that a scheme of allowances may only be revoked with effect from the beginning of a financial year, and that this may only take effect on the basis that the authority makes a further scheme of allowances for the period beginning with the date of revocation.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the new scheme of allowances to be agreed by the Council be implemented with effect from the beginning of the 2023-24 financial year, at which time the current scheme of allowances will be revoked.

5. OUR INVESTIGATION

5.1 Background

- 5.1.1 As part of this review, a questionnaire was issued to all councillors to support and inform the review. Responses were received from 21 of the 52 current councillors (40% response). The information obtained was helpful in informing our deliberations.
- 5.1.2 We interviewed twenty current councillors using a structured questioning process and received one written submission from an officer of the Council. We are grateful to all our interviewees for their assistance.

5.2 Councillors' views on the level of allowances

- 5.2.1 A summary of the councillors' responses to the questionnaire are attached as Appendix 2.

6. APPROVED COUNCILLOR DUTIES

- 6.1.1 The Panel reviewed the recommended duties for which allowances should be payable and recommend that no changes be made.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND: That no changes are made to the Approved Duties as outlined in the Members' Allowance Scheme.

**Mark Palmer (Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel)
Development Director, South East Employers
December 2022**

Appendix 1: Summary of Panel's Recommendations

Allowance	Current Amount for 2022-23	Number	Recommended Allowance (30% PSD)	Recommended Allowance Calculation
Basic (BA)				
Total Basic:	£4,729	52	£5,019	

Special Responsibility:				
Executive Leader	£14,813	1	£15,057	300% of BA
Deputy Executive Leader	£11,110	1	£11,293	75% of Leader's Allowance
Other Cabinet Members	£8,820	7	£8,281	55% of Leader's Allowance
Assistant Executive Leader	No SRA	1	£9,787	65% of Leader's Allowance
Assistant Cabinet Members	883		SRA to be withdrawn	
Chair of Development Control Committee	£6,632	1	£6,776	45% of Leader's Allowance
Chair of Licensing & Protection Committee	£6,632	1	£6,776	45% of Leader's Allowance
Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Panels	£5,889	2	£6,023	40% of Leader's Allowance
Chair of Council	£3,954	1	£4,517	30% of Leader's Allowance
Chair of Corporate Governance Committee	£2,920	1	£3,011	20% of Leader's Allowance
Chair of Employment Committee	£2,920	1	£3,011	20% of the Leader's Allowance
Vice Chair of Development Control Committee	£2,211	1	£2,710	40% of Chair's Allowance
Vice Chair of Licensing and Protection Committee	£2,211	1	£2,033	30% of Chair's Allowance
Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Panels	£1,472	1	£1,807	30% of Chair's Allowance
Vice Chair of Council	£1,642	1	£1,807	40% of Chair's Allowance
Vice Chair of Employment Committee	£730	1	£903	20% of Chair's Allowance
Vice Chair of Corporate Governance Committee	£730	1	£903	20% of Chair's Allowance
Leader of Principal Opposition Group	£4,729	1	£5,270	35% of Leader's Allowance
Deputy Leader of Principal Opposition Group	£760	1	£791	15% of Leader of Principal Opposition
Leader of Minor Opposition	£760	0	£791	15% of Leader of Principal Opposition

Development Control Committee Ordinary Members	£651		£678	10% of Chair of Development Control Committee
Appointee to Combined Authority Board	£5,100	1	£5,270	35% of Leader's Allowance
Substitute Appointee to Combined Authority Board	£1,655	1	£1,845	35% of Combined Authority Board Member
Appointees to Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£946	2	£1,054	20% of Combined Authority Board Member
Appointee to Combined Authority Audit and Governance Committee	£946	1	£1,054	20% of Combined Authority Board Member
Head Independent Person	£1,051	1	£1,051	
Deputy Independent Person	£525	1	£525	

Q1 In a typical week how many hours do you spend on Council business?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	5	11/7/2022 2:01 PM
2	3-5 hours	11/7/2022 12:28 PM
3	7	11/6/2022 4:20 PM
4	8	11/6/2022 12:15 PM
5	25	11/5/2022 5:03 PM
6	9 hours, but this varies widely depending on what's going on - the most I've had in a week was 16, the lowest has been 1	11/4/2022 3:17 PM
7	25	11/4/2022 2:54 PM
8	12-15	11/4/2022 12:13 AM
9	10	11/3/2022 6:32 PM
10	15 to 20 hours	11/3/2022 4:33 PM
11	20 hrs	11/3/2022 4:13 PM
12	15	11/3/2022 2:37 PM
13	10-15	11/3/2022 2:08 PM
14	8	11/3/2022 1:29 PM
15	7/10	11/3/2022 1:18 PM
16	12	11/3/2022 12:52 PM
17	At least 12 - more if I have meetings	11/3/2022 12:50 PM
18	20-30	11/3/2022 12:43 PM
19	14	11/3/2022 12:29 PM

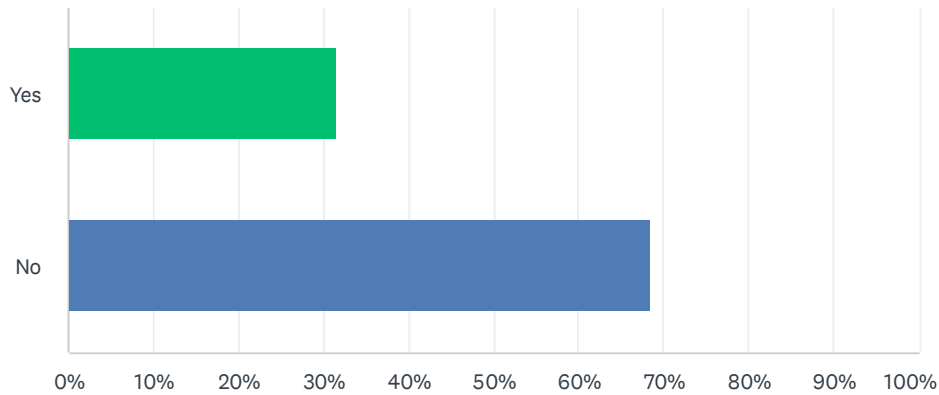
Q2 If you hold a role(s) within the Council i.e. Group Leader, Chair/Vice Chair etc., how many hours do you spend in a typical week on Council business relevant to the role(s). [Please provide details separately for each role if more than one additional role is held.] Please specify specific roles below and hours spent on each role:

Answered: 16 Skipped: 3

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	na	11/7/2022 2:01 PM
2	DMC Chair - 10-13hrs (every 4 weeks) Pre- Meeting - 2hrs Reading Agenda/Documentation - 2-3hrs Visiting Sites - 2-3hrs DMC Meeting - 3hrs Reading DMC emails - 1-2hrs	11/7/2022 12:28 PM
3	Vice Chair - 1	11/6/2022 4:20 PM
4	n/a	11/6/2022 12:15 PM
5	Cabinet Member - 21 hours per week	11/5/2022 5:03 PM
6	Vice-Chair of an O&S Panel - 2 hours on average per week (more before a panel meeting)	11/4/2022 3:17 PM
7	6+	11/4/2022 12:13 AM
8	9	11/3/2022 6:32 PM
9	Cabinet Member 5 hours Deputy Leader 3 hours	11/3/2022 4:33 PM
10	As chair I have an hour pre meeting before the committee But that is only once a month. So that would average 15 mins per week	11/3/2022 4:13 PM
11	2-5	11/3/2022 2:08 PM
12	Vice chair 4 hours	11/3/2022 1:29 PM
13	Chair of Employment 2	11/3/2022 1:18 PM
14	Combined Authority Scrutiny 10 hours per month	11/3/2022 12:52 PM
15	N/A	11/3/2022 12:50 PM
16	Executive leader 12 hours Ward Cllr 2 hrs	11/3/2022 12:29 PM

Q3 Do you incur any significant costs which you believe are not covered by your present allowance?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	31.58%	6
No	68.42%	13
TOTAL		19

#	IF YES, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS:	DATE
1	Laptop and internet, mobile phone (handset calls and data), Microsoft user membership fees	11/5/2022 5:03 PM
2	Mileage	11/4/2022 12:13 AM
3	Petrol-as prices now at 179.9p/litre	11/3/2022 2:37 PM
4	Car parking	11/3/2022 1:29 PM
5	Telephone and Wi-Fi, paper and printing	11/3/2022 12:43 PM
6	I work part-time and make up the time I give to fulfil by Council roles- which reduce my daily availability for the day job.	11/3/2022 12:29 PM

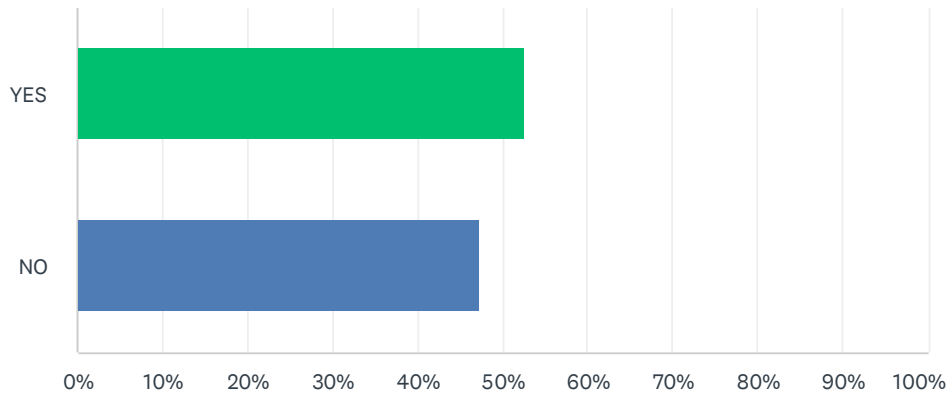
Q4 Government guidance states that “it is important that some element of the work of Councillors continues to be voluntary”. As part of their deliberations, Independent Remuneration Panels will assess what Public Service Discount should apply to the basic allowance - that is the percentage of their time Councillors expect to give without any financial remuneration. Accordingly, what do you feel is an acceptable amount of time to be given, unremunerated, if any, expressed as a percentage?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	50	11/7/2022 2:01 PM
2	Don't know depends on financial circumstance and whether you are time rich or time poor.	11/7/2022 12:28 PM
3	10	11/6/2022 4:20 PM
4	50%	11/6/2022 12:15 PM
5	5 hours per week or 50% of the time spent by a councillor with no additional responsibilities or council roles	11/5/2022 5:03 PM
6	Completely agree with the statement, but as the workload and hours "worked" vary massively between weeks it's hard to put this into a percentage. To hazard a guess, 10-15% seems reasonable	11/4/2022 3:17 PM
7	20%	11/4/2022 2:54 PM
8	Unknown	11/4/2022 12:13 AM
9	75	11/3/2022 6:32 PM
10	0%	11/3/2022 4:33 PM
11	This is very personal and difficult to generalise as everyone is different. I think town councillors should receive some sort of remuneration as they work incredibly hard with no financial rewards	11/3/2022 4:13 PM
12	20%	11/3/2022 2:37 PM
13	20%	11/3/2022 2:08 PM
14	20	11/3/2022 1:29 PM
15	2	11/3/2022 1:18 PM
16	20%	11/3/2022 12:52 PM
17	It is difficult to quantify but I try to give at least 10% above what I am remunerated for.	11/3/2022 12:50 PM
18	0	11/3/2022 12:43 PM
19	30%	11/3/2022 12:29 PM

Q5 The present level of Basic Allowance payable to all Councillors is £4,729. Do you think this is appropriate?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
YES	52.63% 10
NO	47.37% 9
TOTAL	19

#	IF NO, SHOULD IT BE LOWER OR HIGHER? PLEASE GIVE A REASON FOR YOUR ANSWER:	DATE
1	I believe it should have a moderate increase to £5,000 based on the time involved to undertake the role which includes attendance at meetings and preparation also queries from constituents. There is also a considerable amount of reading involved and a requirement to attend supporting events and meetings in connection with the role for example regular Parish Council meetings	11/6/2022 4:20 PM
2	Higher	11/4/2022 12:13 AM
3	Lower. I consider it more of a voluntary role.	11/3/2022 6:33 PM
4	Higher: the low level of allowance means that only the retired and wealthy are attracted	11/3/2022 4:34 PM
5	Higher. Amount of work undertaken helping residents, and committees involved with doing research on topics relevant to topics.	11/3/2022 2:40 PM
6	Higher - because of the number of hours involved and to reflect the rise in inflation etc	11/3/2022 2:09 PM
7	Higher cost of living has increased	11/3/2022 1:31 PM
8	Higher. If you take the 20% free time and the balance I am below minimum pay.	11/3/2022 12:56 PM
9	Cost of living and cost of travel	11/3/2022 12:43 PM
10	I think it should be reviewed with a view to ensuring it enables people to fulfil their cllr duties but this is not the time to do it.	11/3/2022 12:31 PM

Q6 If you are able to, please indicate an appropriate level £:

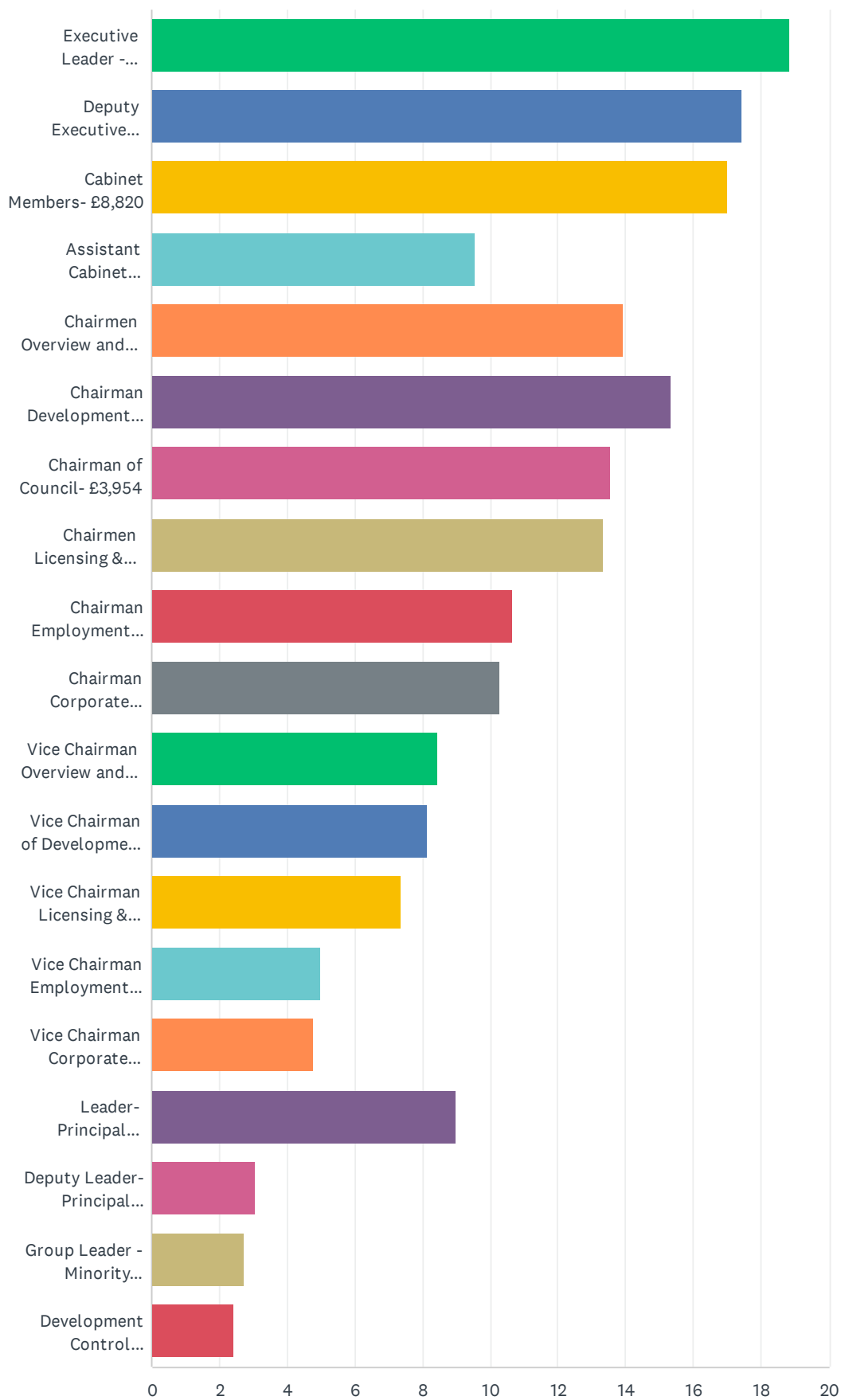
Answered: 9 Skipped: 10

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	5000	11/6/2022 4:20 PM
2	The current level of allowance is appropriate only if IT kit and memberships is in addition to this allowance.	11/5/2022 5:05 PM
3	5500+	11/4/2022 12:13 AM
4	£10,000	11/3/2022 4:34 PM
5	£7500	11/3/2022 2:40 PM
6	£5,700	11/3/2022 1:31 PM
7	£6000	11/3/2022 12:56 PM
8	I believe the current level of allowances are appropriate.	11/3/2022 12:51 PM
9	£5500	11/3/2022 12:43 PM

Q7 Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) are currently paid as follows: [To assist the Panel to produce a more consistent group of allowances, please can you score each role / position in respect of importance and impact, with 1 being the most important.

Answered: 14 Skipped: 5

Independent Remuneration Panel Members' Allowances Questionnaire 2022 - Huntingdonshire District Council



Independent Remuneration Panel Members' Allowances Questionnaire 2022 - Huntingdonshire
District Council

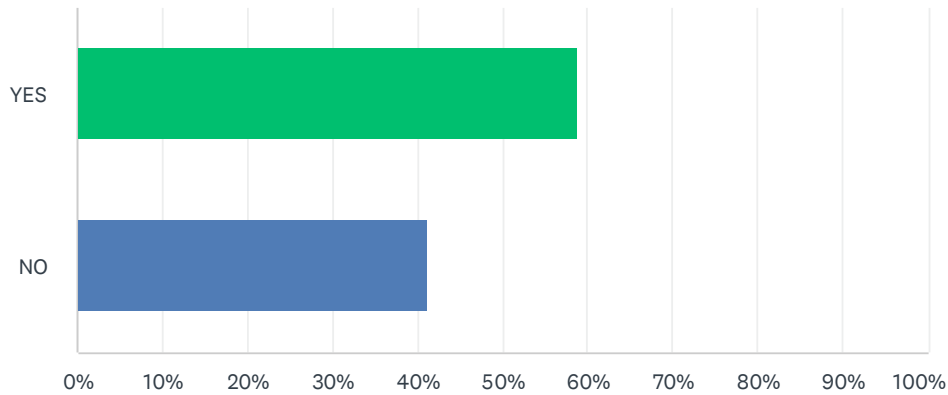
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Executive Leader - £14,813	92.86% 13	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Deputy Executive Leader - £11,110	7.14% 1	78.57% 11	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	7.14% 1
Cabinet Members- £8,820	0.00% 0	14.29% 2	71.43% 10	14.29% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Assistant Cabinet Members- £883	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	28.57% 4	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	14.29% 2	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Chairmen Overview and Scrutiny Panels- £5,889	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	28.57% 4	35.71% 5	35.71% 5	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Chairman Development Control Committee- £6,632	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	7.14% 1	28.57% 4	28.57% 4	28.57% 4	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Chairman of Council- £3,954	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	23.08% 3	0.00% 0	30.77% 4	23.08% 3	7.69% 1	7.69% 1	7.69% 1
Chairmen Licensing & Protection Committee/ Licensing Committee - £6,632	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	28.57% 4	7.14% 1	21.43% 3	28.57% 4	0.00% 0	7.14% 1
Chairman Employment Committee- £2,920	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	64.29% 9	7.14% 1
Chairman Corporate Governance Committee - £2,920	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	28.57% 4	7.14% 1	50.00% 7
Vice Chairman Overview and Scrutiny Panels - £3,312	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 2	7.14% 1
Vice Chairman of Development Control Committee - £2,211	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	0.00% 0
Vice Chairman Licensing & Protection Committee/Licensing Committee - £2,211	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	7.14% 1
Vice Chairman Employment Committee- £730	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Vice Chairman Corporate Governance Committee- £730	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Leader- Principal Opposition - £4,729	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	7.14% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	28.57% 4	0.00% 0	7.14% 1
Deputy Leader- Principal Opposition- £760	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Group Leader - Minority Opposition- £760	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Development Control	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Independent Remuneration Panel Members' Allowances Questionnaire 2022 - Huntingdonshire
District Council

Committee Members- £651	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
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Q8 Would you like to see any of these changes made to these allowances?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 2

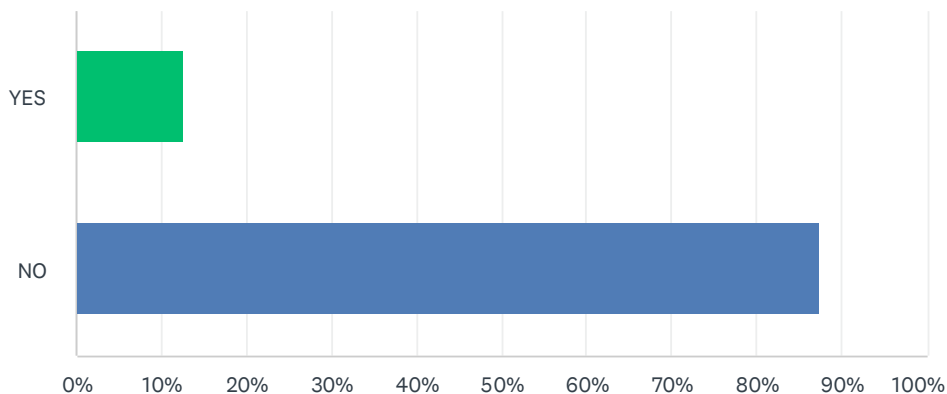


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
YES	58.82%	10
NO	41.18%	7
TOTAL		17

#	IF YES, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS:	DATE
1	The leader of the oppsotions and the minority leaders position should be lowered, but the Development control should be increased as they do a lot of work	11/7/2022 2:07 PM
2	The Vice Chairs of Corporate Governance and Employment Committees are not sufficiently remunerated in comparison to the Chairs but are expected to support and attend meetings and deputise for the Chairs. There is a huge variance in these allowances against the other Vice Chairs	11/6/2022 4:39 PM
3	We no longer need Assistant Cabinet Members. We currently have none.	11/5/2022 5:12 PM
4	Increase to DMC members, reduction to leaders on minority groups, more to leader of the opposition as they are becoming more involved	11/4/2022 2:59 PM
5	A more expenses based system might be better, especially when consider the impact of tax on allowances	11/3/2022 6:39 PM
6	Rise in line with inflation etc	11/3/2022 2:10 PM
7	Reduce all special responsibility allowances except DMC members which should be increased	11/3/2022 1:00 PM
8	A fairer distribution	11/3/2022 12:45 PM

Q9 Would you like to see any new SRAs introduced?

Answered: 16 Skipped: 3

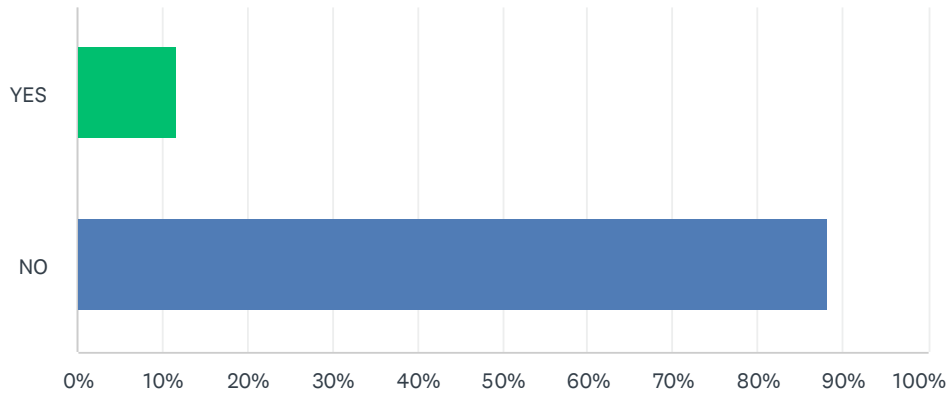


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
YES	12.50% 2
NO	87.50% 14
TOTAL	16

#	IF YES, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS:	DATE
1	SRAs for councillors that represent the council in multiple outside bodies.	11/5/2022 5:12 PM
2	Shadow Cabinet, members of outside bodies	11/4/2022 2:59 PM

Q10 Dependent Carers' Allowance - Reimbursed at National Living Wage for Childcare and for specialist care the County Councils Home Carer rate. To a maximum of 7.5 hours per week. Would you like to see any changes to this allowance?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 2

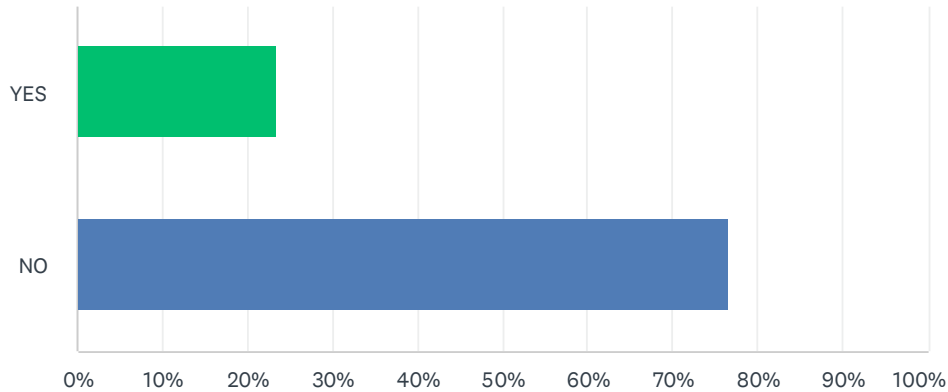


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
YES	11.76%	2
NO	88.24%	15
TOTAL		17

#	IF YES, PLEASE INDICATE RATE AND SEASON:	DATE
1	All reasonable requests for childcare should be covered - in the event that someone has to be in 10hrs of in person meetings, childcare should be provided for that period	11/4/2022 3:21 PM
2	I don't have an opinion but there is no NA option	11/3/2022 6:40 PM
3	20 hours per week	11/3/2022 12:45 PM

Q11 The current scheme of travel allowances are linked to those recommended by HMRC. Do you have any comments on the current scheme for Councillors?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 2

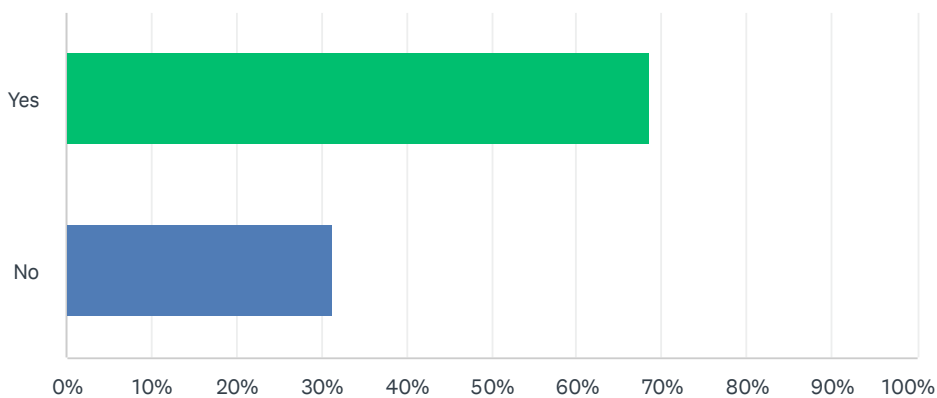


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
YES	23.53% 4
NO	76.47% 13
TOTAL	17

#	IF YES, PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS:	DATE
1	It should be inverted, the higher the cc the lower the allownace, but increased for sharing	11/7/2022 2:09 PM
2	Some of the mileage allowances are designed specifically with internal combustion engines. We should have alternative mileage rates for electric vehicles.	11/5/2022 5:16 PM
3	Needs to be increased in line with increased fuel, maintenance, insurance, car tax and insurance costscost	11/3/2022 2:51 PM
4	Not high enough given current costs	11/3/2022 12:46 PM

Q12 Parental Leave Policy for Councillors. Would you be supportive of a Parental Leave Policy for Councillors?

Answered: 16 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	68.75%	11
No	31.25%	5
TOTAL		16

Q13 If you have any other comments on Members' Allowances, please detail below:

Answered: 5 Skipped: 14

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	It should remain the same	11/7/2022 2:09 PM
2	None	11/7/2022 12:42 PM
3	We need to seriously consider providing IT equipment for members. Much time is wasted by officers and members using unliked systems and programmes. Simply increasing the allowance may not be the most efficient solution.	11/5/2022 5:16 PM
4	Any increase in allowances should not exceed the percentage increase of the average HDC staff member	11/4/2022 3:22 PM
5	There is a balance between a more expenses based system and the admin effort of this compared to an allowances system. Some members rely on the allowances in a manner that I don't so I may well be at one extreme of your responses. I also have no idea on an accurate number for the "Joe many hours a week do you spend" question	11/3/2022 6:43 PM



Previous years' data
- did not submit
2022 return

				MINIMUM	£2,808.00	£0.00			
				MAXIMUM	£7,704.00	£618,639.00			
				AVERAGE	£5,587.93	£325,343.01			
Council name	Type of council	County area	Population	Basic Allowance for 2021/2022	Overall budget for Member Allowances	Total number of councillors	Percentage of Public Service Discount*, if applicable (%)	Comments on Basic Allowance	
Adur District Council	District	West Sussex	64000	£4,762.00	£221,000.00	29	0.00%	Tied to NJC	
Arun District Council	District	West Sussex	164800	£5,730.28	£430,340.00	54	30.00%	This is linked to staff pay awards and so any increase in BA mirrors the % increase in staff pay	
Ashford Borough Council	District	Kent	132500	£5,035.04	£385,000.00	47	N/A	Increase based on annual cost of living increase for staff	
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council	District	Hampshire	185200	£7,445.00	£616,600.00	54	50.00%	N/A	
Canterbury City Council	District	Kent	166000	£5,986.00	£316,252.00	39	Not applied	N/A	
Cherwell District Council	District	Oxfordshire	150000	£4,512.00	£0.00	48	0	It has been agreed that this should be increased inline with the officer increase for 22/23 (not yet known)	
Chichester District Council	District	West Sussex	118000	£5,200.00	£296,806.00	36	0	N/A	
Crawley Borough Council	District	West Sussex	118500	£6,617.00	£330,000.00	36	N/A	Frozen for 2021/22 and 2022/23.	
Dover District Council	District	Kent	118100	£5,000.00	£255,000.00	32	40.00%	It has only increased once in the last four years	
East Hampshire District Council	District	Hampshire	125700	£5,200.00	£373,934.00	43	N/A	No comments.	
Eastbourne Borough Council	District	East Sussex	107000	£2,808.00	£133,731.00	27	N/A	No percentage agree but scheme states that basic allowance reflects an element of voluntary public service.	
Eastleigh Borough Council	District	Hampshire	131,819	£7,330.40	I can't find this figure	39	Not aware	Due to be reviewed this autumn	
Elmbridge Borough Council	District	Surrey	137452	£5,326.00	£380,000.00	48	50	N/A	
Fareham Borough Council	District	Hampshire	115627	£7,704.00	£234,000.00	31	40	None	
Folkestone & Hythe District Council	District	Kent	111500	£5,554.00	I can't find this figure	30	N/A		
Gosport Borough Council	District	Hampshire	80000	£7,068.00	£280,000.00	28	40.00%	Increased by -£250 (3.6%) on previous year	
Gravesham Borough Council	District	Kent	106900	£5,041.00	£281,040.00	44	N/A	N/A	
Guildford Borough Council	District	Surrey	150000	£7,405.00	£618,639.00	48	35%	None.	
Hart District Council	District	Hampshire	97000	£4,859.00	£250,129.00	33	N/A	N/A	
Hastings Borough Council	District	East Sussex	95000	£6,429.00	£200,000.00	32	n/a	n/a	
Havant Borough Council	District	Hampshire	124200	£5,676.00	£362,838.00	38	na	na	
Horsham District Council	District	West Sussex	145474	£5,470.50	£353,000.00	48	N/A (nb we hold to the principle but not attempted to quantify)	The Allowance was increased by 5% in April 2021 as part of the recommendations from the Independent Review Panel, but application was deferred until this April. Initial responses suggest that it is not felt appropriate in the current climate to consider an increase for next year.	
Lewes District Council	District	East Sussex	102744	£3,196.00	£223,000.00	41	Not specified		
Maldstone Borough Council	District	Kent	172438	£5,065.00	£345,530.00	55	45%	Basic Allowance has remained unchanged for 2019/20 from the figures for 2018/19.	
Mid Sussex District Council	District	West Sussex	150,000 approx.	£5,200.00	£447,833.00	54	N/A	This has increased by 2% per year for the past 4 years.	
Mole Valley District Council	District	Surrey	67505	£4,793.01	Can't find this figure I'm sorry	41	n/a	n/a	
New Forest District Council	District	Hampshire	175800	£6,871.00	£566,907.00	60	30	N/A	
Oxford City Council	District	Oxfordshire	162100	£5,245.00	£402,941.00	48	N/A	N/A	
Reigate and Banstead Borough Council	District	Surrey	150900	£5,783.00	£393,700.00	45	40%	Nil	
Rother District Council	District	East Sussex	96716	£4,703.00	£228,470.00	38	0	A formula has not been used in the past to calculate basic allowance. We will be conducting a review later this year and will hopefully use a more structured approach - thanks to the training I attended delivered by SEE.	
Runnymede Borough Council	District	Surrey	80510	£5,500.00	£338,000.00	41	50%	Basic allowance very low compared with other Councils in the South East	
Rushmoor Borough Council	District	Hampshire	94600	£5,425.00	£310,000.00	39	An additional IT Allowance is paid to all Members £392 p.a - added to the basic		
Sevenoaks District Council	District	Kent	120500	£5,715.00	£441,218.00	54	40.00%	PSD factored into base rate calculation. 40% Public Service Discount used to calculate Basic Allowance	
South Oxfordshire District Council	District	Oxfordshire	142,057	£5,186.00	£316,461.00	36	N/A	Reviewed by IRP November 2020.	
Spelthorne Borough Council	District	Surrey	99000	£6,395.34	£342,625.82	40	33%	na	
Surrey Heath Borough Council	District	Surrey	81000	£5,174.32	£255,723.66	35	50%	None	
Swale Borough Council	District	Kent	149000	£6,786.00	£0.00	47	0%	Increased allowances due to change from cabinet system to committee system	
Tandridge District Council	District	Surrey	88000	£4,317.00	£200,000.00	42	N/A	N/A	
Test Valley Borough Council	District	Hampshire	130500	£7,619.00	£430,925.00	43	45%	N/A	
Thanet District Council	District	Kent	141819	£4,570.00	£374,405.00	56	N/A	Reduced to IRP's recommendation after interim period	
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	District	Kent	132600	£5,175.00	£397,000.00	54	N/A	Current allowance frozen pending review of JIRP later in the year	
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	District	Kent	118,000	£5,500.00	£350,000.00	48	0.00%	Basic Allowances are being reviewed and it is being explored whether a separate IT Budget should be considered or if IT purchases etc should be used by std allowance	
Vale of White Horse District Council	District	Oxfordshire	137,910	£5,585.00		38	N/A	Reviewed November 2020 with IRP arranged and chaired by SEE.	
Waverley Borough Council	District	Surrey	128200	£5,164.47	£419,740.00	57	N/A	Basic allowance is increased annually in line with council employee pay increase.	
Wealden District Council	District	East Sussex	160600	£4,846.20	£294,275.00	45	N/A	N/A	
West Oxfordshire District Council	District	Oxfordshire	109800	£5,227.92	£317,000.00	34	N/A	0	
Winchester City Council	District	Hampshire	124300	£6,074.00	£393,448.00	45	not sure	Winchester is about average for Hampshire districts I believe	
Woking Borough Council	District	Surrey	103900	£7,380.00	£257,564.00	30	N/A	N/A	
Worthing Borough Council	District	West Sussex	110000	£5,153.93	£275,360.00	37	0%	Multiples of the basic allowance	

Woking Borough Council	Devon	Surry	100,000	45.0p per mile for first 10,000 miles, and all subsequent miles at the rate of 25.0p per mile	25.0p per mile	Subsistence Allowance: Payable on production of receipts of actual expenditure: More than 4 hours, before 11am - £6.14 More than 4 hours including between 12pm and 2pm - £6.35 More than 4 hours including between 3pm and 6pm - £3.35 More than 4 hours, finishing after 7pm - £10.48 Overnight allowance - £284.42 (Overnight in London, or attendance at Annual Conference of the Local Government Association) - £36.20	£4.92 per hour. If Members have the care responsibility for the child/dependent relative, payments of up to £200 per annum are available. If Members have joint responsibility, £400 per annum is available.	Members are provided with PC facilities for business use and a monthly allowance of £28 which incorporates telephone hire and broadband connection costs.	Loss Allowance - A Member is eligible to apply for a loss allowance when a vehicle has been appointed by the Council or a Committee to attend a Conference or similar or any other approved duty, necessitating absence from the Member's normal employment. An allowance of £200 (per household annually, per Member) per hour per period will be payable provided, upon the submission of necessary documentary evidence, to the Member's employer's parents. Additional services, such as the Member will need to provide evidence that the days allowed by his/her employer have been utilised before claiming Loss Allowance. Members' budgets. Members are entitled to claim expenses for surgery, as recommended by enable them to perform approved duties as a Member of Woking Borough Council.	No formal policy for Deaf Members.
Worthing Borough Council	Devon	West Sussex	100,000	NIC Rate, no local agreement	0	NIC Rate, no local agreement	Child Care Allowance: £10.25 per hour Dependent person Care Allowance: up to £11 per hour	Cllrs are supplied with device upon election	0	0

Malden Borough Council	District	Kent	172,438	Chairman of Service Committees and Planning Committee get 40% of the Leader's SMA. Audit and Learning get 20% of the Leader's SMA	18/05/2019	18/05/2020	Froam	Yes	A formula was applied in 2018 for basic allowance which was £2 per hour spent on Council work + £4.76 (DCMS) hours into the jobs of residents for Malden 2017) x 12 weeks (from Public Service Discount of 40%	Expenses only	N/A	No recent changes to the structure. No Overall Control to the Chairman, No Lib Dem Leader	N/A	An average of 30 hours per week	N/A	We only have one Overview and Scrutiny Committee (for Crime and Disorder) which are the Members of the Committee, Housing and Environment Committee and there are 8 Members.	
Mid Sussex District Council	District	West Sussex	160,000 approx	Through an Independent Remuneration Panel.	14/03/21	13/10/22	Updated	Yes	SMA are a % increase of the basic allowance. Other 2.5% of this.	750 per	31 Conservatives, 13 Liberal Democrats, 8 Independent Members & 2 Green Party Members	Yes	Unquestionable.	No significant changes made.	1 x 13 Member Scrutiny Committee which covers topics that can be attributed to the 7 Cabinet Member portfolios all of which are politically balanced.		
Mole Valley District Council	District	Surry	67,500	An 10% uplift in 2021 + one one to be hoped to be undertaken before all cut Elections in 2023.	01/04/22	01/01/23		No	They are updated according to a set amount by Annual Council	none	No changes	If not, please detail the number of hours worked on average per week	None	This differs between Cabinet Members, some may be more intensive, whereas others may only work a handful of an hour per week	15 Members on the Committee, 1 Standing Budget Panel with 6 Members, then 5 Members on any of the 102		
New Forest District Council	District	Hampshire	175,800	% of Leader's SMA	10/07/22	01/09/24	Updated	Yes	linked to national staff pay award	-£450 per day	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	4 Overview and Scrutiny Panels of 10 Members, Portfolios based.		
Oxford City Council	District	Oxfordshire	162,100	SMA are calculated as a proportion of basic allowance (the Leader is 3x basic allowance, Deputy Leader 3x, Cabinet Member 2.5x, Chair ranges from 0.25x to 3x depending on Committee)	01/04/19	31/03/23	Other (please specify)	Yes	There is indication of the basic allowance in accordance with the annual percentage uplifts provided for in the local pay deal for council employees	-£0	N/A	If not, please detail the number of hours worked on average per week	Leader also holds full time employment, we do not have specific information on hours worked in leader role per week	N/A - Allowances Scheme is due for review imminently	We have 1 Scrutiny Committee comprising of 12 Members: 6 LAB, 3 LIB and 3 GRN. Chair LIB. We then have 2 x Scrutiny Standing Panels and there is an annual Budget Review Group.		
Reigate and Banstead Borough Council	District	Surry	150,900	Use of an external benchmark (the Local Government Association data) and the discount of a 40% voluntary element.	07/04/22	01/12/22	Updated	No	N/A	Used various online job boards	-£310 on completion of each annual report with any expenses incurred for attendance at meetings	None	If not, please detail the number of hours worked on average per week	Three days a week.	Two days a week.	Remained unchanged during 2021/22.	
Reith District Council	District	East Sussex	96,716	No real basis for calculation as far as I am aware. Will be looking to introduce a formulaic approach in this year's review.	25/02/19	24/10/22	Updated	Yes	The uplift is based on the staff pay award agreed in the preceding September. The percentage increase agreed for staff is applied to Members' Allowances. Members are not happy with this approach and this is likely to change for the new Council period 2023-27.	£1000 lump sum for the entire 3 year term of office	Conservative were 24 seats, lost 2 seats at last election. Labour gained 2 seats. Reith made a new political group called Green and Independent along gained 2 seats.	If not, please detail the number of hours worked on average per week	Not known	N/A	This is difficult to answer. He is retired, but I am not aware that he "works" full time as the Leader of the Council. This would have to be answered by him!	1 OSC, 12 Members. An ad hoc number of informal task and finish groups running at any time, but no more than 4 permitted.	
Rumney Borough Council	District	Surry	80,510	Recommended by independent remuneration panel but not based on a percentage	31/03/22	01/10/24	Updated	Yes	An annual increase linked to annual staff pay awards	Council website	-£500 lump sum for the entire 3 year term of office	Conservative were 24 seats, lost 2 seats at last election. Labour gained 2 seats. Rumney made a new political group called Green and Independent along gained 2 seats.	If not, please detail the number of hours worked on average per week	Not known	N/A	The SMA of £1,296 for serving on Corporate Management Committee will now be paid to all Members of that Committee regardless of any SMA they receive for holding other office; the SMA for Chairman and Vice Chairman of Standards and Audit Committee has been increased from -£1,710 to -£3,188 and from -£648 to -£2,332 respectively. The SMA for Political Group Leaders, other than Leader of the Council, is now based on £425 per Member of the respective Group instead of a set allowance of -£1,888. No other changes be made to the scheme of Members, As Allowances.	1 Members Conservative, 1 Labour, 2 Rumneymade Independent Residents Group and 1 Green and Independent Alliance
Rushmore Borough Council	District	Hampshire	94,600	Median SMA in benchmarking group. Cabinet Chairperson are 20% of Cabinet Members. SMA Chair of OSC 25% of Leader. Vice-Chairman of OSC - 15% each of Chair of OSC's SMA	21/06/2018	13/10/2021	Updated	Yes	Uplift same as staff % increase N/A	Specialist independent Consultant Chairman - former academic, NGO/UD and local community contacts	0	N/A	N/A	15-20	10-15	N/A	11 Members politically balanced
Sevenson District Council	District	Kent	120,500	related to the agreed pay award (N/A)	10/05/22	23/01/23	Updated	Yes	Follow agreed pay increase from N/A	-£11.78 per hour, according to jobpublic advert	N/A	Yes	None - just updated for inflation.	Scrutiny Committee - 11 members - 9 Conservative, 1 Lib. Dem., 1 Independent (in accordance with political proportionality). They are able to establish working groups of members for specific tasks			
South Oxfordshire District Council	District	Oxfordshire	142,051	Leader: 4x Basic; Dep. Leader: 60% of Leader; Cabinet member: 50% of Leader; Planning Chair: 30% of Leader; Chairman of Council: 25% of Leader; Vice Chair Planning: 50% of Planning Chair; Chair Scrutiny: 15% of Leader.	11/03/2021	11/03/2025	Updated	No	N/A	Local social media, SODC website.	0	No	25 average	20	N/A	Scrutiny Committee; 8 councillors Joint Scrutiny; 10 councillors (5 SODC, 5 Vale of White Horse WC)	
Spelthorpe Borough Council	District	Surry	99,800	% of Leader's SMA	10/06/2021	05/05/2021	Updated	No	We will review again next year after the Committee system has been set up in our new year to make some changes if it becomes apparent the allowances are not enough / too much for some roles.	0	Moved to a Committee system.	Yes	we do not have them, we have committee chairs and vice chairs. It is hard to estimate as we have just moved over and some work for more than others - the Chair of Environment for example.	NA DBS is built in to each of the Committees now we operate a Committee system.			
Surry Heath Borough Council	District	Surry	81,000	Special Responsibility Allowances are calculated as a percentage of the basic allowance. The Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance is 200% of the basic allowance. Other Special Responsibilities are then calculated as a percentage of the Leader's allowance	16/01/2020	01/01/2025	Updated	Yes	Matches the staff pay award	Contacted personally - the members had not set on the 150 previously	£100	No	20	10	10	A full BP review was done in January 2020, leading to a new structured approach (Fixed approach) of SMAs based as a % of the Leader's allowance	13 members
Swale Borough Council	District	Kent	149,000	Chair of Council, Audit, Standards and Area committees 12% of leaders allowance. Leader of leader group 12%. Chair of Planning 60%. Chair of Service Committee 15%. Deputy Leader 50%	18/05/22	31/03/23	Updated	No	N/A	Volunteers	0	Recently the council have changed from Cabinet based system to Committee based	Yes	Extra SMA Given for the new service committees	0	N/A	
Tandridge District Council	District	Surry	88,000	percentage of the Leader's SMA	20/04/17	03/10/22	Froam	Yes	Linked to staff pay awards	We are in the process of re-writing a new general role. Vacancies were advertised via job for public, social media, and the Council's external communications networks	-£500	N/A	No	20-25 hours per week	N/A	N/A	
Tel Yafn Borough Council	District	Hampshire	150,150	All Chairman's SMAs are calculated as a varying figure from 0.15 to 3.5 depending on the committee, Joint Basic Allowance and Vice Chair is 20% of the Chairman's SMA.	27/10/20	27/10/24	Updated	Yes	CP for preceding September	Chairman - £2,500 + expenses / other panel members - £125 per day + expenses	N/A	N/A	If not, please detail the number of hours worked on average per week	No idea	No idea	We have increased our SMAs to over 50% of the membership temporarily until the 2023 elections, as we have set up an Audit Committee following external Audit advice. All SMAs will be adjusted accordingly in 2023 to reduce the overall to no more than 20%	18 members - 10 Conservative, 5 Liberal Democrats, 2 Independents, 1 Andover Alliance
Tipton District Council	District	Kent	141,815	We do not follow a specific methodology.	16/05/2018	08/02/2020		No	N/A	Via advert, then re-appointed.	78C - we are a member of a joint remuneration panel across East Kent.	I cannot confirm the number of hours worked per week	I cannot confirm the number of hours worked per week.	N/A	1 Panel consisting of 11 Members.		
Turbridge and Mallow Borough Council	District	Kent	112,600														
Turbridge Wells Borough Council	District	Kent	156,000	Each councillor who holds the special responsibilities will receive an SMA with the exception of the Group Leaders no member will be entitled to more than one SMA	16/09/16	01/06/22	Froam	No	N/A	a number of adverts were placed internally and externally to find a cross section of skilled people to carry out the review	n/a	new administration since May 2022	one day per week, starting from September 2022	n/a	12 members		
Vale of White Horse District Council	District	Oxfordshire	137,314	Leader: 4x Basic; Dep. Leader: 60% of Leader; Cabinet member: 50% of Leader; Planning Chair: 30% of Leader; Chairman of Council: 25% of Leader; Vice Chair Planning: 50% of Planning Chair; Chair Scrutiny: 15% of Leader.	10/01/2021	10/02/2025	Updated	No	N/A	Local social media and Council website.	N/A	N/A	No	25 average	20	N/A	Scrutiny: 8 councillors Joint Scrutiny; 10 councillors (5 Vale of White Horse, 5 South Oxon)
Waverley Borough Council	District	Surry	138,200	Current levels of SMA were set some years ago, based on the then average pay award for the Surry district/borough councils were varying	19/07/21	19/10/23	Updated	Yes	Increased with 1 April 2022 in line with the annual pay award for staff.	via SEMAP - Mark Palmer was interviewed and externally recruited two panelists.	Chairman/SEMAP - £3,750; Panel members - £500 each per report	LGBC has issued final recommendations for reduction in the base of the cases from 57 to 50 members, with effect from May 2023 elections.	If not, please detail the number of hours worked on average per week	20-1h	10-20-1h	None	2 O&S committees, each of 11 members. Chaired by member of the Principal Opposition group.
Walden District Council	District	East Sussex	160,600	Independent Remuneration Panel meet yearly to agree	16/03/22	15/11/22	Updated	Yes	N/A	Advertised on website	280	Conservative: 41 28 Liberal Democrat: 41 8 Independent Democrat: 41 5 Green Party: 41 1 Independent Group: 41 1 Vacancy: 41 1	Yes	30	None	12 members - 8 Conservatives, 2 Lib Dem, 1 Independent Democrat, 1 Green and 1 Independent	
West Oxfordshire District Council	District	Oxfordshire	108,000	as a percentage of basic	01/03/22	01/03/23	Updated	Yes	Uplift is based on staff pay increase	N/A	-£250	N/A	Yes	N/A	None	One committee, 10 members	
Winchester City Council	District	Hampshire	124,300	not sure (SEMAP facilitated BP)	15/05/20	06/09/22	Updated	Yes	same as of 105 pay awards	local newspaper, website (using same panel members as 2020)	-£200 all in for the 2 x 1hr members of BP	lib dem administration from May 2019	If not, please detail the number of hours worked on average per week	don't know!	don't know! I know that at least one cabinet member also works part time. Another cabinet member is a twin-brother at the county council	scrutiny is 8 (5 Lib, 1 Con). Chaired by con policy committee x 2 are 8 (5 Lib, 3 Con)	

Woking Borough Council	District	Surrey	101,900	SRAs are provided to the Leader Special Responsibility Allowance.	24/08/22	01/7/223	Updated		Yes	Allowances are updated in line with the agreed cost of living pay award for Council staff.	Approaches were made to the business, voluntary and academic sectors to submit candidates.	Panelists receive -£750 for a full review of Members' Allowances. In years with no full review, Panelists receive an annual stipend fee of -£150 (plus VAT), with motions being referred to the Panel without the need for a meeting.	Following May 2022 elections, change to Liberal Democrat overall control (LD 25, Con 6, Lab 1, Ind 1).	If not, please detail the number of hours worked on average per week	Hours worked are not recorded	Hours worked are not recorded	N/A	Overview and Scrutiny Committee All 10 Members (3 Conservative, 5 Liberal Democrat, 1 Labour, 1 Independent).
Worthing Borough Council	District	West Sussex	110,000	multiples of one	12/04/22	10/2/222	Updated		Yes	lead to the r/c	local media and social media	75 - 100 per meeting	Worthing has moved from a Conservative to Labour administration	no up to date info	no up to date info	no up to date info	nil	none - 8 members per authority

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Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan

Meeting/Date: Council – 29th March 2023

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Planning

Report by: Chief Planning Officer

Ward(s) affected: Great Paxton Ward

Executive Summary:

The Referendum on the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan was held on 9th March 2023 and resulted in an 91.27% 'Yes' vote in support of making the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the statutory development plan. As this exceeds the required threshold of 50% of the votes cast the Council is required to formally 'make' the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan unless the Council considers that it would be incompatible with any EU or human rights obligations. As part of the statutory development plan the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan would be used to help decide planning applications within the neighbourhood area.

It is not considered that making the plan would be incompatible with an EU or human rights obligation and the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan must therefore be 'made'.

Recommendation(s):

The Council is

RECOMMENDED

To 'make' the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan in the form attached as Appendix 1 such that it becomes part of the statutory development plan for Huntingdonshire with immediate effect.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to consider whether the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan should be officially 'made' such that it becomes part of the statutory development plan for Huntingdonshire.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Great Gransden Neighbourhood Area was formally designated on 30th July 2018. Following substantial local consultation to aid with preparation of the plan it was submitted for statutory consultation which took place between 25th August and 7th October 2022. The submission neighbourhood plan, its supporting evidence base and all responses to the statutory consultation were subject to an independent examination commencing on 14th October 2022 with the final report issued on 30th November 2022.
- 2.2 The examination confirmed that the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan should move forward to referendum subject to modifications and confirmed that it complied with the specified basic conditions, was properly prepared by the qualifying body, covered the designated plan area, did not contain any excluded development and contained policies that related to the development and use of land. The examiner's report also confirmed that there was nothing in the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan that led them to conclude there would be any breach of the European Convention on Human Rights. They also confirmed that the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with EU obligations arising from the Habitats Regulations Assessments and other directives (as retained in UK law).
- 2.3 The outcome of the examination and proposed changes were reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Performance and Growth) on 4th January and Cabinet on 24th January 2023. Arising from these it was agreed that the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan as proposed to be modified should progress to referendum.

3. ANALYSIS

- 3.1 The referendum was held on 9th March 2023 where the statutorily set question was posed asking residents of the designated neighbourhood area: 'Do you want Huntingdonshire District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Great Gransden to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'
- 3.2 A total of 816 people were eligible to vote in the referendum; 229 ballot papers were issued representing a turnout of 28.06%. The number of votes cast in favour of 'Yes' was 209, the number of votes in favour of 'No' was 19 with 1 ballot papers rejected where the intended vote could not be clearly determined. This indicated a majority of 91.27% voting in favour of using the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan to help decide planning applications within the designated neighbourhood area.

- 3.3 As the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan was endorsed by more than the required threshold of 50% of those voting the Council must now 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan such that it becomes part of the statutory development plan for Huntingdonshire unless the Council considers that it would be incompatible with any EU or human rights obligations. It is not considered that making the plan would be incompatible with an EU or human rights obligation and the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan must therefore be 'made'.

4. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

- 4.1 The key impacts of this are the reiteration of the importance of the planned system with town and parish councils and residents of the neighbourhood plan area having the opportunity to positively influence how their community grows in the future.
- 4.2 Successful 'making' of a Neighbourhood Plan entitles Great Gransden Parish Council to an increased proportion of CIL receipts from development within the neighbourhood area, up from 15% to 25%.

5. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the statutory development plan with immediate effect.

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

- 6.1 Making the neighbourhood plan links to the objective within the Corporate Plan (2022-2023) Strengthening our Communities: 'We will... Enable communities to develop and maintain Neighbourhood Plans that reflect the needs and aspirations of those living there' and the proposed key action 'Support community planning by providing advice to Towns and Parish Councils seeking to develop or update Neighbourhood Plans'.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Section 38A(4)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Council to 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan if more than half of those voting in the referendum have voted in favour. The Council is content that the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan meets the specified basic conditions, does not breach the European Convention on Human Rights and is not incompatible with EU obligations arising from the Habitats Regulations Assessments and other directives (as retained in UK law).

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 An additional 10% of CIL receipts within the neighbourhood area will be passed over to Great Gransden Parish Council. This may have implications on resource availability for infrastructure projects provided by this Council. Additional support, both financial and partnership working,

may be sought to help deliver some of the projects identified in the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan.

9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 9.1 The Council has a statutory obligation to 'make' the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan now that it has successfully passed the referendum stage.

10. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Overview and Scrutiny Committee \(Performance and Growth\) – 4th January 2023](#)

[Cabinet – 24 January 2023](#)

[The Neighbourhood Planning \(Referendums\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#)

[National Planning Practice Guidance \(Neighbourhood Planning\)](#)

[Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan Webpage](#)

[Neighbourhood Planning webpage](#)

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Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan



2021 to 2036

Referendum version

Dated 29/11/22

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2. Built-Up Area Boundary Rationale
3. Rationale for Local Green Spaces and Other Valued Green Spaces
4. Consultation Statement
5. Housing Needs Survey
6. List of Societies and Clubs
7. Basic Conditions Statement

Photos courtesy of Anne Constantine, Phillip George, Andrew Pearce.

The Parish Council would like to thank the people involved with the steering group or who provided advice: Elaine Boyd, Stephanie Beaumont, Jonathan Bonnett, James Catmur, Anne Constantine, Ann Cosgrave, Fiona Coulson, Martin Davies, Nigel Day, Rachel Greaves, Phil Hemmans, Peter King, Tim Martindale, Debi Pearce, Andrew Pett, David Prest, Dean Sibley, The late Angela Steele, Rachel Hogger on behalf of Cambridgeshire ACRE, Natalie Elworthy & Jeremy Miller at HDC.

1 Introduction

The Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.1 This document is the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan (GGNP) for the designated Great Gransden Plan Area (Figure 1, page 11) for the period 2021 to 2036. The purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan is to set a framework for future development in the Plan Area, for which the Local Planning Authority is Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC). Once approved by a referendum, the GGNP will carry the same legal weight as the Local Plan drawn up by HDC. The GGNP will sit alongside the adopted HDC Local Plan (last revised 2019) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, last revised 2021) and together they will provide the statutory development plan for the parish of Great Gransden. The Local Planning Authority must follow what is in the GGNP when making decisions about planning applications in the area, subject to other material considerations.
- 1.2 The work on the GGNP has been led by a Steering Group which was set up by the Great Gransden Parish Council (GGPC), comprising a mixture of local residents and Parish Councillors. Work on the plan started in March 2018. In September 2021 management of the plan was taken over by a working group of Great Gransden Parish Councillors, henceforth referred to as “The Working Group”. The Steering Group remains active to assist the Working Group and GGPC on request.
- 1.3 Public engagement has used a range of approaches to identify major themes of the Plan, including:
 - Display materials and presence at village events, e.g. church and school fetes, Lighthouse Cafe
 - Leafleting every house in the village
 - Engagement with village societies
 - Dedicated Web site (for the initial public engagement phase)
 - Dedicated Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/GreatGransdenNDP/>)
 - Letters to local businesses, seeking their input
 - Updates at the monthly PC meeting by a member of the Great Gransden Steering Group
 - Updates in the monthly village newsletter, “Roundabout”
 - Steering Group meetings open to the public, including an open forum session
 - Specific projects to engage young people including the school and Brownies
 - Dedicated village events, including a walking treasure hunt, a quiz, a networking event for homeworkers and a Societies Fair
 - An independent Housing Needs Survey by Cambridgeshire ACRE



Consultation

- 1.4 The GGNP Steering Group have consulted parishioners and other stakeholders and have drafted the GGNP, which covers the entirety of the parish.
- 1.5 Following a six-week period of formal consultation (“Reg. 14 Consultation”) on this plan with residents, community stakeholders and statutory consultees, the GGNP Working Group will amend this plan in light of comments received and submit it to HDC, who will then undertake a further period of consultation (“the publication stage”) before appointing an independent examiner. Subject to a successful examination, this plan will then proceed to a parish-wide referendum.
- 1.6 The original intention was to complete the GGNP and take to referendum in 2020. Restrictions due to Covid 19 caused significant delay, with the GGNP being complete in 2022.

Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans

- 1.7 There are certain requirements, referred to as basic conditions which all Neighbourhood Plans are tested against at examination. The planning policies in the plan will need to:
 - be in broad conformity with the strategic policies of the HDC 2019 Local Plan
 - contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development
 - be appropriate having regard to national policy and guidance (e.g. the National Planning Policy Framework 2021)
 - be in accordance with environmental and human rights legislation.
- 1.8 This GGNP is believed to be in compliance with these requirements.

A Small Settlement

- 1.9 The Local Plan currently in force in Huntingdonshire is the Local Plan to 2036, adopted by HDC in May 2019. In this plan, Great Gransden has been designated a Small Settlement. This means the settlement is relatively low in the district-wide settlement strategy and, compared to other settlements in the district, will receive relatively low housing growth.
- 1.10 HDC’s policy for Small Settlements requires any housing proposal to demonstrate sustainability in relation to both the level of service and infrastructure provision within the settlement, and opportunities for users of the proposed development to access everyday services and facilities by sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport.

- 1.11 As a Small Settlement, the village of Great Gransden has no formal allocation for new housing in the Local Plan. The village will however be expected to contribute sustainable housing to the Local Plan requirements for unallocated sites. HDC advised the GGNP Steering Group in October 2021 that the housing requirement figure for the designated Great Gransden Plan area – the whole parish of Great Gransden – is 64 new dwellings during the period 2011 to 2036.

2 Summary of Policies, Glossary and List of Figures

- 2.1 The Policies are in Section 7 (Planning policies), with the linked GGPC commitments replicated to Section 9 (Community Action Plans) for ease of reference.
- 2.2 To provide context when reading the Plan documents, the subjects of the Policies are:

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A Rural and Historic Parish	45
Policy G3 Local Character and Design	45
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Glossary of Abbreviations

CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
GGNP	Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan
GGPC	Great Gransden Parish Council
HDC	Huntingdonshire District Council
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework 2021
PROW	Public Right of Way
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

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Larger versions of these maps are available on the GGNP corner of the parish council's web site: <https://greatgransdenpc.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>

3 The Plan Area

Location

- 3.1 The parish of Great Gransden is located at the southern edge of Huntingdonshire, one of the districts making up Cambridgeshire, and has a total area of 1374 hectares. The only major settlement is Great Gransden village, at the south of the parish. Adjacent and to the south of Great Gransden village is the village of Little Gransden. The parish of Little Gransden is located in a different district, South Cambridgeshire District.
- 3.2 The village is located approximately 9 miles south east of St Neots, 15 miles south of Huntingdon and 15 miles west of Cambridge. Great Gransden is surrounded by a cluster of villages including Little Gransden, Waresley, Abbotsley, Eltisley, Caxton, Bourn and Longstowe. The growing town of Cambourne is about five miles to the North-east.
- 3.3 Most villagers regard themselves as inhabitants of “The Gransdens” (a name given to the two settlements of Great and Little Gransden), but Little Gransden does not fall within the NP area boundary. The Great Gransden NP area consists of the whole parish of Great Gransden as shown in Figure 1 below, and Figure 2 shows the Great Gransden community within the wider regional context.
- 3.4 The name 'Great Gransden' refers both to the village settlement and to the whole parish, with the NP area covering the latter. For clarity, in the rest of this document settlement and village are used interchangeably to refer to the main built-up area of the parish and its immediate environment within the parish. This is to align with the HDC Local Plan, which characterises Great Gransden (village) as a Small Settlement.

Great Gransden Conservation Area

Scale: 1:26,000

Date: 04/12/2021

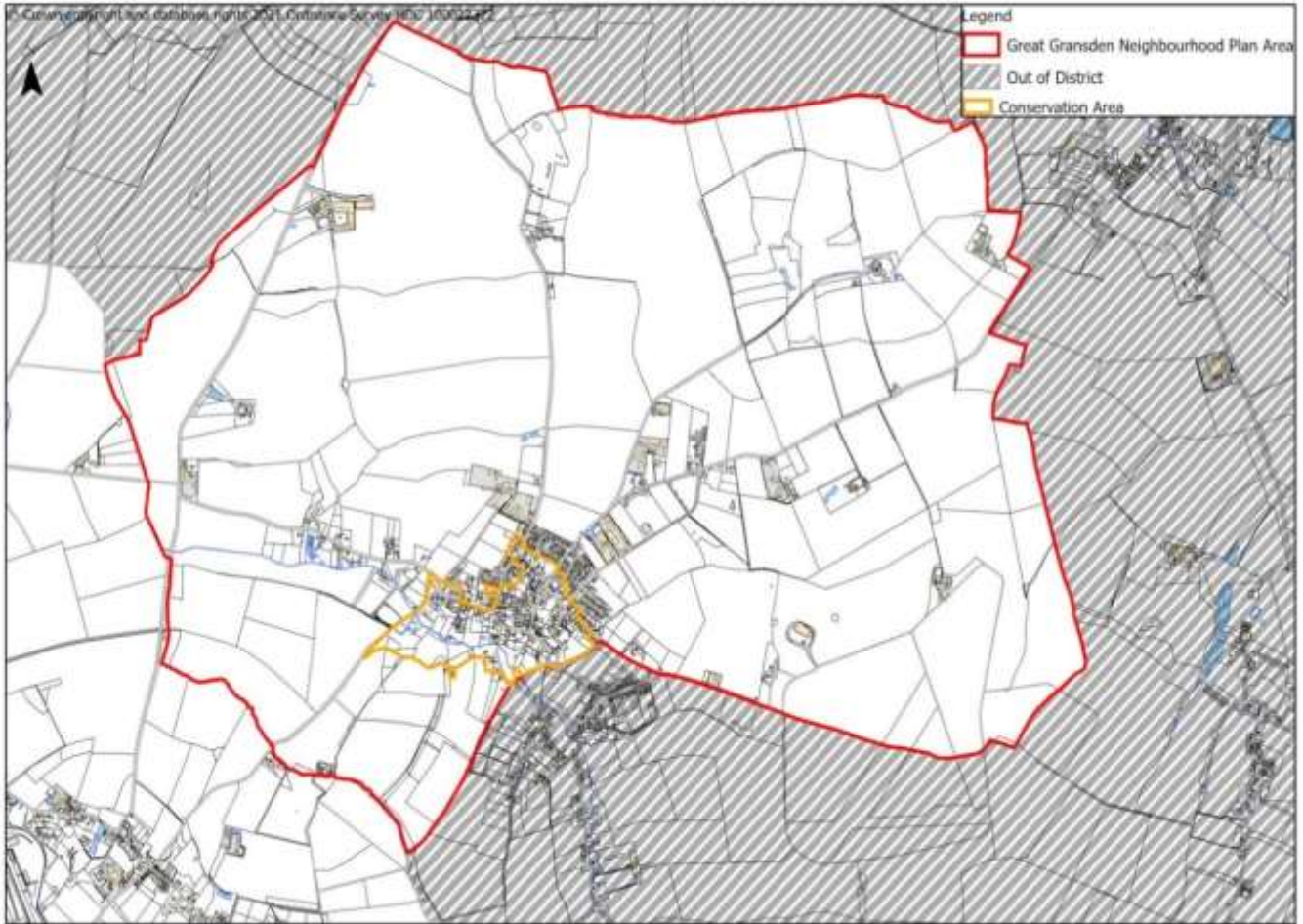


Figure 1 Great Gransden Plan Area, consisting of the parish of Great Gransden

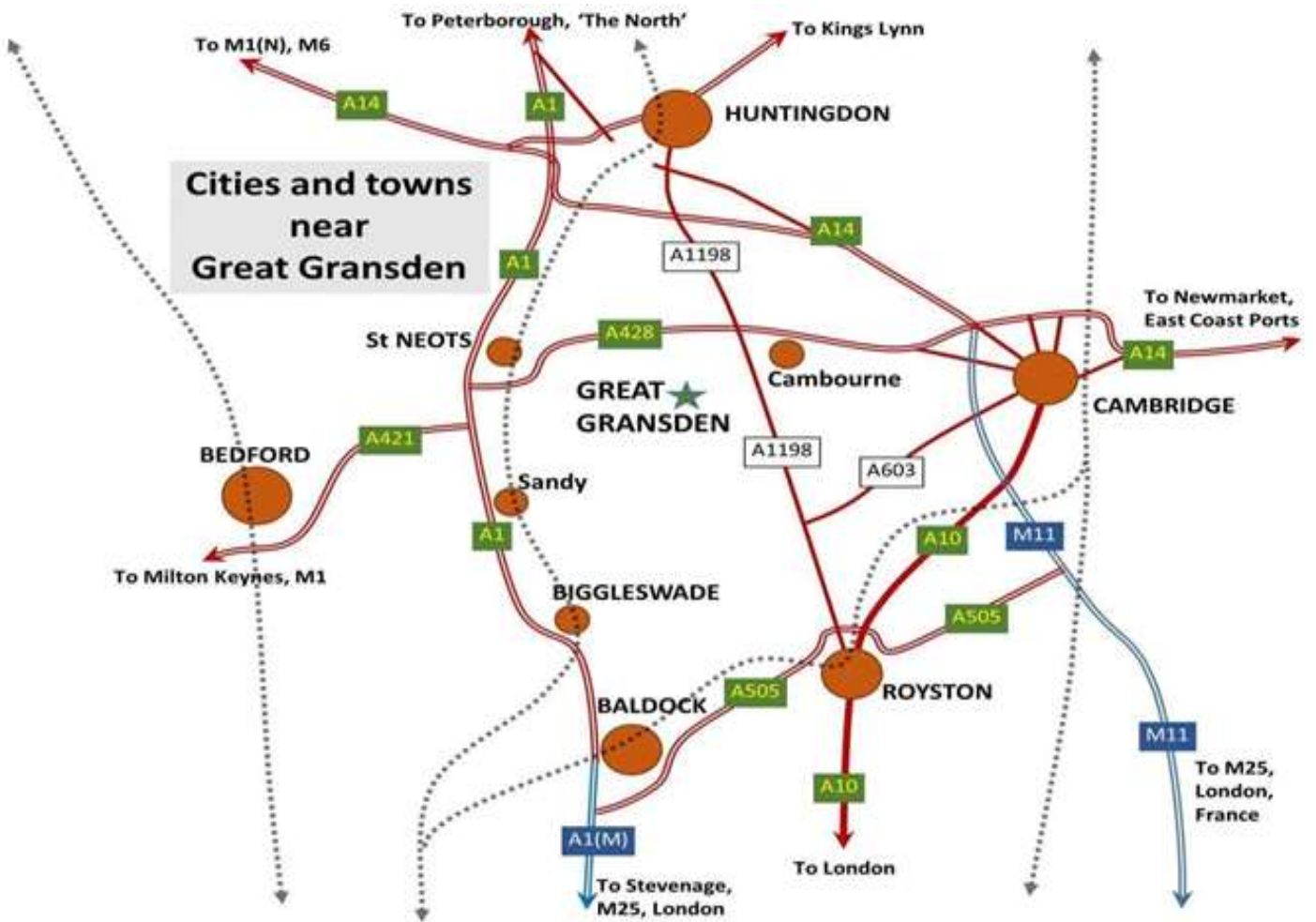
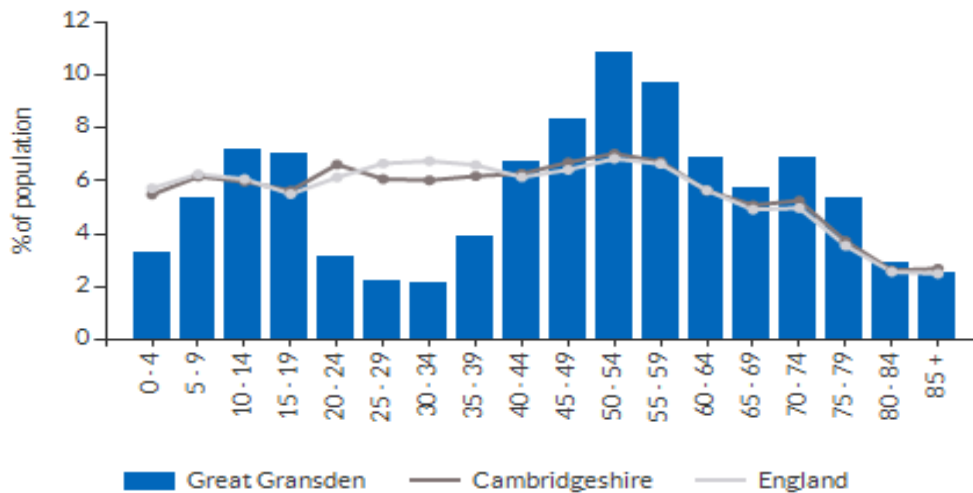


Figure 2: Great Gransden NP area within the wider regional context

Population

- 3.5 The latest Great Gransden population estimate from ONS in mid-year 2020 was 957 as at 2020 with the age profile shown in Figure 3:



Date: 2020 Source: ONS

Figure 3: Great Gransden residents age profile

Household Characteristics

- 3.6 There are currently about 400 dwellings in the parish. Owner occupation is the dominant tenure in Great Gransden accounting for 84 per cent of all households (at the time of the 2011 Census of Population). Social and private rented accommodation each account for about seven per cent of all households.
- 3.7 There are twenty rented dwellings managed by housing associations, and two shared ownership properties in the parish. On completion of the development of Dutton Gardens, off Sand Road, there will be an additional 16 affordable dwellings, of which 11 will be affordable rented properties and 5 shared ownership properties.
- 3.8 Fifty six per cent of all dwellings in Great Gransden have four or more bedrooms. Smaller properties are relatively scarce; dwellings with two or fewer bedrooms account for only 15 per cent of stock (at the time of the 2011 Census of Population).
- 3.9 The village is not provided with mains gas. Most dwellings are heated by oil, though increasing numbers have air or ground source heat pumps installed.

Built Environment Character

- 3.10 Great Gransden is an ancient rural parish, mentioned in 973 when its land was endowed to Thorney Abbey by Aethelwold, Bishop of Winchester. The main settlement in the parish ('the village') lies on the southern edge of the parish.
- 3.11 The village has a spacious feel with many dwellings set in plots with gardens both front and rear. The village layout incorporates open green spaces at road junctions, often with large trees. There are many mature trees, hedges and grassy verges around the village, reflecting its rural nature and providing the link to the countryside.

3.12 At its heart is a picturesque conservation area (see Figure 4, below) with many well-preserved historic buildings and several large distinctive houses, including Gransden Hall, Rippington Manor, Audley House, Old Vicarage, Rectory Farm, The Old Barn, Manor House, and Brinkley House. There are 60 listed buildings in the parish, almost all within the conservation area.



Great Gransden Heritage Assets

Scale: 1:7,500

Date: 04/12/2021

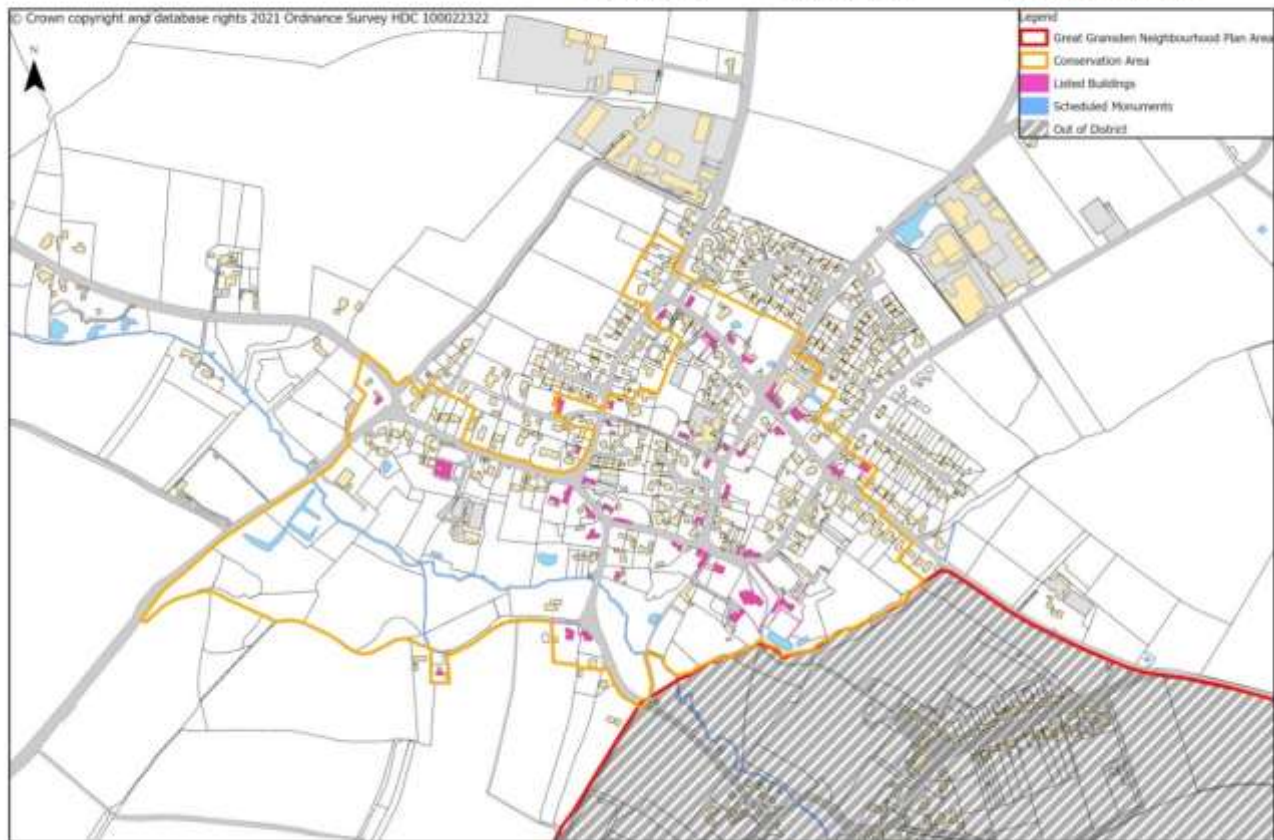


Figure 4: conservation area boundary, with listed buildings marked in purple

3.13 There is limited street lighting, so the village enjoys dark skies. Refer to CPRE's light pollution and dark skies map from 2015: <https://nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/>

3.14 The village is surrounded by agricultural land with extensive views to the open countryside, and with traditional buildings such as barns. However, there is limited access for recreation.

Landscape Character

3.15 The parish of Great Gransden lies within the South Eastern Claylands Landscape character area, one of nine landscape character areas in the district as described in the Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (L&T SPD) 2022 which was adopted on 17 March 2022. This character area is situated in the south eastern corner of Huntingdonshire. It stretches from the district boundary in the east and south (where Great Gransden is located), to the Ouse valley in the north and west. The following description of the Claylands landscape contained in the L&T SPD 2022 reflects well the landscape character in Great Gransden:

“The South East Claylands include large areas of high quality landscape with a varied and typically gently undulating landform, established hedgerows and woodland and the historic settlement patterns which are reflected through the route of the Roman Ermine Street”

“The relative lack of settlement in the area combined with the mature vegetation creates an intimate and tranquil feel to the landscape.

”



Towards Great Gransden from
Little Gransden Lane

3.16 The landscape character around the village of Great Gransden comprises gently undulating arable farmland with mostly large fields and hedgerows. Great Gransden Postmill, St Bartholomew’s Church and Gransden Woods are key landmarks within this gently rolling landscape. The village of Great Gransden itself has an undulating topography which contributes greatly to the setting of the village as a whole, the conservation area and the individual listed buildings.

Natural Environment

3.17 The natural environment in Great Gransden is much treasured by the people who live here. Key features are the attractive countryside, a strong sense of tranquillity, dark skies and the rich diversity of wildlife. Areas rich in wildlife assets that are enjoyed by



Towards the village on
Sand Rd

local people include the Waresley and Gransden Woods Nature Reserve, the community orchard and a wildflower meadow both located on the Allotments site, rural gardens and the wider agricultural landscape including hedgerows, ponds, meadows

and copses. Some of the areas of importance for wildlife are accessible or viewable from the established public footpaths and roads but others are not.

- 3.18 Much of the area of the parish is given over to arable farmland which is managed fairly intensively to grow crops mainly of winter-sown cereals (mostly wheat), oil-seed rape and beans. The wildlife of most of the parish is typical of many such areas of lowland farmland in Southern and Eastern England but within Great Gransden these areas still support populations of yellowhammers and smaller numbers of corn bunting and skylarks, species which have declined greatly elsewhere.
- 3.19 Gransden Wood is an ancient woodland and is by far the most important site for wildlife within the parish. It supports a number of ancient woodland indicator plant species, including an important population of Oxlips, and a spectacular show of Bluebells carpets the woodland floor in Spring. Together with Waresley Wood (with which it forms a single woodland block) it is notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Two-thirds of the area of Gransden Wood lies within the Waresley and Gransden Woods Nature Reserve which is owned and managed by the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust. The northern third is in private ownership. There are various other small copses of deciduous broadleaved woodland (some of which are also ancient woodland remnants) elsewhere in and around the parish.



- 3.20 The relatively small areas of permanent grassland remaining within the parish are mostly horse-grazed or cut for hay. Apart from the fields between West Street and Park Riddy and the Gransden Showground field, most of the other small parcels of land within the parish that have survived as areas of grassland are well away from the village itself, at Crimpledean, Leycourt and Hardwicke. These meadows are mainly on the poorly draining calcareous boulder clay and often with ridge and furrow topography. Cowslips are common and a few of these neutral meadows remain unimproved and still support scarcer plants such as Adder's Tongue Fern and Sulphur Clover.
- 3.21 Connectivity of wildlife habitats greatly enhances their value. On the southern flank of the village, a contiguous series of surviving grassland fields and adjacent rural gardens provide a high degree of wildlife habitat connectivity, supporting biodiversity. Wherever

possible, this should be maintained and opportunities sought to further improve the network of connected habitats across the parish. These areas currently provide connectivity between the village itself and existing important wildlife areas such as Gransden Wood SSSI. Collectively they form a valuable green corridor along the valley of the Home Dole Brook and Gransden Brook, stretching from Gransden Windmill down Mill Road, across to Little Gransden Lane and to Waresley Road and parts of Meadow Road including Gransden Park. This connected green arc also includes parts of the Mandeian Brook, Crimpledean Brook and Park Riddy, which are tributaries of the Gransden Brook. This green arc-shaped corridor (Figure 5, below) is identified as a priority area to maintain such connectivity and encourage wildlife protection and habitat enhancements through Community Actions.

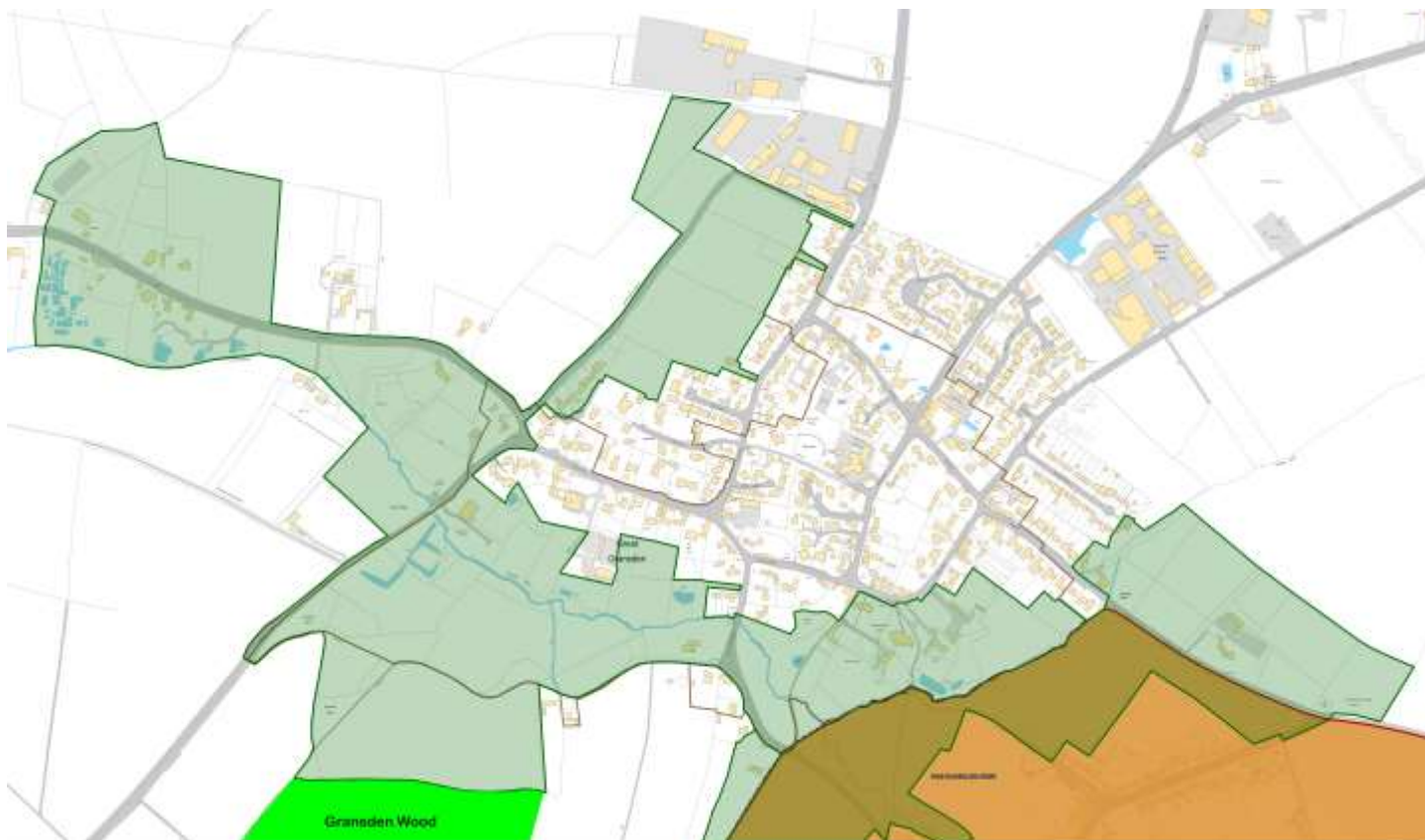


Figure 5: The Gransden Brook Corridor

The orange-shaded area in the right-hand corner of the map is part of the neighbouring parish of Little Gransden, which lies outside the Plan area of the GGNDP. However, it should be noted that the green arc identified within Great Gransden Parish is complemented by contiguous areas of grassland (shown in olive green) along the Home Dole Brook and Gransden Brook in Little Gransden, reinforcing the wildlife connectivity of these areas in the landscape.

Great Gransden Community

- 3.22 Great Gransden benefits from a strong sense of community. In GGNDP consultations, community spirit was identified as the most important aspect of village life.
- 3.23 The village has many clubs, societies and organisations covering sport, music, the arts, education and general social activities. These serve all age groups, from playgroup and nursery for pre-school children to the Evergreens for older residents. The drama group

“The Revellers” stages several performances each year. A list of clubs and societies is provided in Supporting Document 6.

3.24 There are five main social hubs within the village: the Crown and Cushion public house, the Reading Room (which acts as the village hall), the Lighthouse café, the school hall and St Bartholomew's Church. The village shop and Post Office is also a highly valued village facility. The village shop and Post Office and the Crown and Cushion village pub are designated as Assets of Community Value. The PC made a statement about this <https://greatgransdenpc.org.uk/2021/statement-regarding-the-crown-and-cushion-public-house/>. It will be important to continue support for these assets and to strive to ensure that they retain ACV status.



The residents of Great Gransden have access to a range of sports and leisure facilities, supporting health and wellbeing. Centrally situated within the village is the Playing Field, with the Bowls Club, a recently opened Multi-Use Games Area and a children's playground. There is a second playground situated in Mandene Gardens but it is currently unsafe and cannot be used. It is due to be revamped when the two developments in that area are complete. The Sportsfield, on the outskirts of the village is managed through the Gransden Sports and Recreation Association, a trust established by the GGPC. It is used by Gransden Football and Gransdens Tennis Clubs.



The pavilion is used by the local nursery. There is also a car park which has space for circa 25 cars. The car park is also used during the day by the pre-school playgroup.

- 3.25 The Great Gransden allotments are situated about one mile from the village centre. There are 29 full size plots and a children’s area of smaller plots plus a community orchard, pond and wildflower meadow.
- 3.26 There are regular charitable events, contributing to both local and national charities, including: Blues and Soul music festival; “Later with” music event; charity tennis tournaments; the Summer Ball; Gransden Muddy Run; Traidcraft Big Brew and the Gransden Agricultural Show.



Transport

Road Links

- 3.27 The village of Great Gransden is not on any A road, the nearest being the A428 (2.5 miles to the North). Nearby is the A1 (6 miles West) and the A1198 (3 miles East), and within easy reach via these roads are the M11, the A14 and the A505, all about 12 miles away (see Figure 2, page 12 above). The B1040 runs along the western boundary of the parish, and the B1046 runs roughly E-W through the village,
- 3.28 Overall, the connectivity by car is quite good, with access to the local employment and shopping centres and local rail stations (see Figure 6 below). However, this does result in a high level of traffic through the village at peak hours, especially if there are problems on the A14 and/or the A428.
- 3.29 There is a proposal to put a new, limited-access dual carriageway between the Caxton Gibbet roundabout (the A428/A1198 junction) and the Black Cat roundabout (the A421/A1 junction), with the existing A428 section between the Caxton Gibbet and the A1 being downgraded. (See <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/a428-black-cat-to-caxton-gibbet-home/>.) Work is due to start on this in 2022, with the route running close to St Neots and then north of the existing A428, as sketched on Figure 6 .

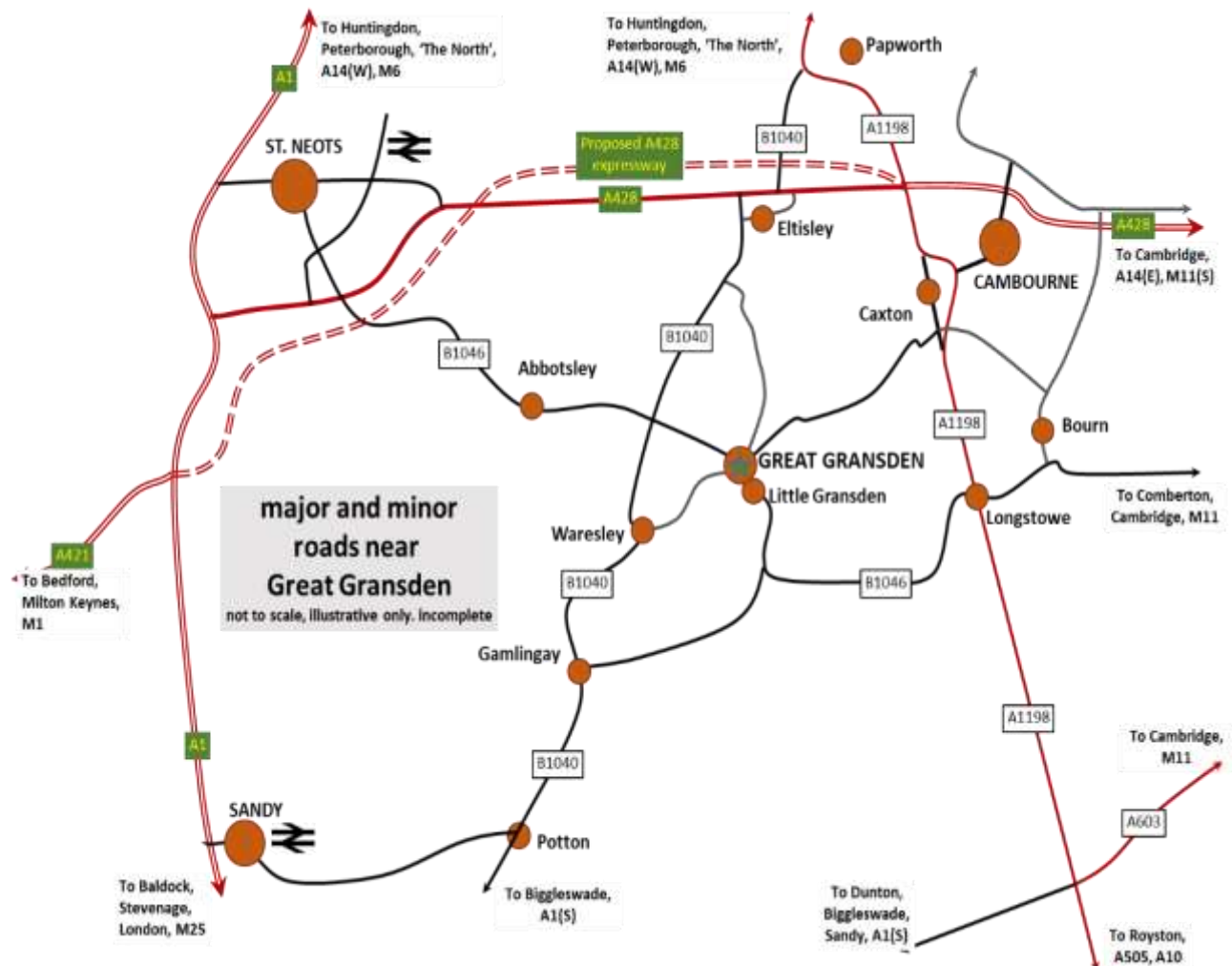


Figure 6: Roads and communities around Great Gransden

Public Transport

- 3.30 The nearest railway stations are at Sandy and St Neots, both on the East Coast Main Line; St Neots has fast services to Huntingdon and Peterborough in one direction, and London, Gatwick airport and Horsham in the other. Other nearby stations include Royston (on the Cambridge Line), Huntingdon itself (East Coast Main Line) and Cambridge.
- 3.31 Public consultation is underway to identify the preferred route of the planned east – west rail link. Some route options would run through the parish, while others would be to the north or south. (eastwestrail.co.uk). The current preferred routes are the northerly ones and would include a new station between Caxton and Cambourne, around four miles from the village of Great Gransden. The implications for the Parish of the route and the new station are unclear at this stage. The new station could provide a useful rail option, but there are concerns on the potential impact on the surrounding countryside of some route options.
- 3.32 There is a very limited bus service, with one service each weekday morning to Cambridge from Great Gransden, and two return services.
- 3.33 There is a dial-a-bus and dial-a-car service called HACT serving Huntingdonshire, for people who cannot access local bus routes. The dial-a-bus service has a different destination each day of the week.

Road Safety

- 3.34 Except for the village environment, all roads have national speed limit. The approaches to the village have 40mph limits, and the village itself 30mph. Middle Street by the primary school has a speed limit of 20mph. There is a Mobile Speed Indicator managed by GGPC but no other traffic calming measures. Village volunteers operate a Speedwatch scheme.
- 3.35 There is limited provision of pavements, no designated cycle paths, nor any dual-use foot/cycle paths in or around the village. This poses a significant hazard for pedestrians, especially with the speed of traffic, the narrowness of roads, and limited street lighting. The roads around the centre of the village are generally narrow. There is extensive on-road parking that further narrows the roads and causes congestion, especially at peak times.
- 3.36 A number of the road junctions have limited visibility for vehicles and pedestrians. Some properties have driveways that emerge on or close to blind corners or blind humps.

Employment

- 3.37 Great Gransden is well placed for access to employment opportunities across the region being located close to major roads (A1/A14/A428) and having St Neots train station within a 15 minute drive. The initial commute from the village is almost entirely by private transport.
- 3.38 Home based working has become more common, particularly with recent restrictions due to COVID-19. Many residents work from home full-time, and many more split their time between home and office, reducing the number of cars on the roads and increasing the sustainability of local village services.

In the HDC Local Plan Great Gransden has two Established Employment Areas: the Sand Road Industrial Estate and the Hardwick Road Industrial Estate. Together

these house around 25 Small Medium Enterprises (SME)s. Kingspan is a significant local employer, however they are planning to relocate and develop their site for housing. There are agricultural employers such as Collings Brothers and farms surrounding the village. Within the village the school is a significant employer; the village shop, nursery and playgroup each employ a small number of people



Sand Road Industrial Estate



Hardwick Road Industrial Estate

These employers provide an estimated 400 jobs, however only a minority of the workforce live in Great Gransden, the majority commute to work into the village, mainly by car. In addition, there are a significant number of people who work from home.

Communication infrastructure

- 3.39 Great Gransden is provided with a number of mobile and fixed line broadband services. All broadband services are provided via British Telecommunications plc (BT) and its subsidiaries, whilst mobile services are provided via the big four mobile companies, Vodafone, O2, EE and Three. Ultrafast services are available within some developments in Great Gransden area, but are currently of very limited availability. County Broadband have now hit their required order target and the build phase has commenced in the village. Mobile service providers all provide only partial – and differing – coverage of the parish.
- 3.40 As well as standard services, facilities exist within the local area, to utilise mobile internet services (data) via mobile operators, or to use satellite-based data networks.

Education

- 3.41 Easy access to a good school is essential for families with children under 16. Great Gransden is fortunate to have its own primary school; so many children can travel on foot. There is much family-sized housing in the village already and this generates a good number of school-aged children in each age group 5-18.

Primary Education and Early Years

- 3.42 Barnabas Oley Primary School, located in the very centre of Great Gransden, is one of the prized facilities of the village. It is a C. of E. Foundation School, rated as Outstanding by Ofsted and Excellent by SIAMS (the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools). It enrolled 141 pupils in 2019/20 and has a pupil admission

number (PAN) of 147. It serves the catchment area of Great and Little Gransden, Waresley and Abbotsley and admits some children from outside the catchment area when there are available places.

- 3.43 Of additional importance to families with younger children is access to pre-school and after-school provision. There is currently excellent provision in the village of a playgroup, a nursery, both rated Outstanding by OFSTED, and an after-school/school holiday club. All these are managed as businesses or not-for-profit enterprises.

Secondary Education

- 3.44 The village is in the catchment area of two secondary schools – Longsands Academy in St Neots and Comberton Village College. Most secondary-age children attend Comberton Village College but some attend church or private schools in Cambridge, Bedford and Kimbolton. Post-16 education is provided in school sixth forms, two sixth form colleges in Cambridge and Cambridge Regional College (FE) in Cambridge.

Adult Learning

- 3.45 Of value to all residents are the opportunities for adult learning in the village. This is provided through specialist clubs and societies and through Carry on Learning. The Reading Room is a valuable venue for these activities.

Health Services

- 3.46 There are GP services in Bourn and Gamlingay. Bourn Surgery had provided a weekly clinic service in the village for many years, but this was withdrawn from September 2019. There are NHS hospitals in Cambridge (Addenbrooke's General Hospital, Royal Papworth Hospital - a Specialist Heart and Lung Hospital - and the Rosie Maternity Hospital), Huntingdon (Hinchingbrooke General Hospital) and specialist NHS clinics in Cambridge and Buckden. There are also private hospitals in Cambridge.

4 The Key Issues

- 4.1 This section sets out the issues that have been identified through community engagement. The initial questions posed were:
- What do you like about Great Gransden?
 - What don't you like, or what concerns do you have about Great Gransden?
 - What changes would you like to see in Great Gransden?
- 4.2 Analysis of the responses identified recurring themes, which were then investigated further in future engagements, and these have been used to develop the Vision, Objectives and Policies in the Plan.
- 4.3 Some of these issues are planning related and can be addressed through a Neighbourhood Plan planning policy. The GGNP planning policies are set out in Section 7 (Planning policies) of this plan. Some of the issues fall wholly or partly outside of the scope of planning policy. Where possible, GGPC will seek to support community-led action to address such issues through **Community Action Plans (CAP)**. These are set out in Section 9 (Community Action Plans) of this plan.

Key Issue 1 – Sustainable development and growth of the housing stock in Great Gransden.

- 4.4 The need for further growth and development in the parish is understood, however this must not undermine the essential character of what is a small, rural community.
- 4.5 Sustainable growth must help support and maintain village infrastructure, not threaten it. The phasing and scale of new development is an important factor.
- 4.6 New development should improve the affordability and diversity of housing stock to meet parish needs, as identified in the Housing Needs Survey (supporting document 5, and subsequent revisions).
- 4.7 New development should be of minor scale (this means for residential development, up to 9 houses and a site no larger than 0.5 hectares; for non-residential less than 1,000 square metres floorspace on a site less than 1 hectare), with a focus on brownfield sites and infill.

Key Issue 2 – Protection and enhancement of the rural character

- 4.8 New developments must have a rural rather than urban character, consistent with this small rural parish.
- 4.9 New developments must enhance and not compromise the street views, adding to the interest and attractiveness of the street scene. The design and density of housing in new developments should be similar to that already existing in the village. The layout should have a spacious feel, with use of hedges and tree planting to mirror the rural environment.
- 4.10 Particular care should be taken with proposed developments that impact the conservation area. Views to and from the conservation area must be protected.

Key Issue 3 - Access to open space and enjoyment of the countryside

- 4.11 The countryside character and setting of the parish is valued highly, but public access is relatively limited. An estimated 95% of the open countryside in the parish is in private ownership, the majority of which is used for arable farming and equestrian and/or hay.
- 4.12 Existing public open green space today is very limited, confined to a few small areas that are owned by GGPC, including the Sportsfield, the Playing Field, Mill Weir and the Allotments, The Sportsfield lies outside the built-up area and lends itself mostly for organised recreational and sporting uses and the small parking area at Mill Weir gives access only for limited local coarse fishing. None of these areas is suitable for walking or attractive for other informal countryside uses.
- 4.13 Under local byelaw, none of these existing public open green spaces allow dog walking - a major daily activity for many village residents around the streets and public footpath network. Consequently, dog walking is a significant and important activity amongst visitors to the Wildlife Trust Waresley and Gransden Wood Reserve (including Browne's Piece), putting pressure on the conservation goals of this Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- 4.14 Large parts of the parish are not accessible through or even viewable from the limited public right of way (PROW) network. Virtually the only accessible area of semi-natural wildlife habitat is the Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve at Gransden Wood, with access to the wood by the permissive path network established by the Trust. One third of Gransden Wood is in private ownership and this area is not open to the public at all. None of the other woodland copses in the parish have any established public access.
- 4.15 Circular walking routes from the village are very limited; those few that do exist depend on use of public roads (without pavements) for at least part of the walking route or on use of permissive paths though Waresley and Gransden Woods, which the Wildlife Trust have sometimes closed off in recent winters.
- 4.16 A number of other walking routes depend on individual private agreement with the landowners. Misunderstandings on access rights can sometimes cause local tensions.
- 4.17 The rich wildlife assets around the parish must be sustained and enhanced, consistent with the requirement for net biodiversity increase in the Local Plan (Policy LP30) and NPPF (Para 179), and supportive of the West Cambridgeshire Hundreds strategic project. <https://www.wildlifebcn.org/westcambshundreds>

Key Issue 4 – Road safety and traffic

- 4.18 At peak times there is a high level of through traffic, both passenger cars and commercial vehicles, causing congestion and road safety problems, especially during the morning rush hour which coincides with the time younger children in the village need to get to the village primary school.
- 4.19 The absence of pavements on some of the key roads in the village, the narrowness of some of the pavements, and parking on pavements results in pedestrians having to share the road with vehicles, including HGVs and agricultural vehicles. Even where they exist, there are gaps in the pavement network, and in many locations, poor visibility.

- 4.20 A number of the road junctions have limited visibility for vehicles emerging from side roads or for pedestrians trying to cross the junction. A number of properties have driveways that emerge on or close to blind corners or blind humps.
- 4.21 Vehicles exceed the speed limits in the village, including the 20mph stretch adjacent the school
- 4.22 There are no designated cycle paths in or around the village. Many of the roads connecting the village to other villages and the local towns have blind spots requiring cyclists or horse riders to be particularly wary of other road users, and in some places the hedges and ditches block escape routes. The importance of walking and cycling routes is outlined in Working Together to Promote Active Travel by Public Health England

Key Issue 5 - Education and Health Services

- 4.23 Housing development in the village may have an impact on the resourcing and character of Barnabas Oley Primary School. The school can accommodate around 150 pupils in its current buildings and configuration of classrooms. Revenue funding for schools is pupil-related, so growth in pupil numbers is financially beneficial and a fall in numbers would have a negative financial impact. Demographic projections suggest modest growth in primary-age pupil numbers over the next eight years (less than 10%)¹ but the completed and committed housing developments in the plan period, of some 87 additional dwellings could take this growth over the 150 mark. If pupil numbers were to expand beyond 180 a full capital appraisal would be necessary in order to determine the best solution for the school.²
- 4.24 Great Gransden falls within the catchment areas of both Longsands Academy and Comberton Village College, so children of secondary age may attend either school by choice. However, free transport is only provided by the County Council to Longsands School. As most secondary-age children in Great Gransden attend Comberton Village College, parents have to organise and pay for bus transport themselves.
- 4.25 The Reading Room will need ongoing investment to ensure that it is fit for purpose for learning and other related activities.
- 4.26 The withdrawal of the weekly Bourn Surgery Clinic in the village is a significant loss of a valued service, particularly as there is no bus service to either of the local surgeries. This has increased the number of car journeys between The Gransdens and Bourn.

Key Issue 6 – Community Facilities, Leisure and Infrastructure

- 4.27 On the Playing Field there is a small playground which, though safe to use, is in a poor state and in need of refurbishment and improvements to offer a more challenging, safe play environment. The playground at Mandene Gardens is unsafe and cannot be used at present; it is due to be resited and refurbished as part of the conditions on the planning permission for 2 new dwellings nearby.

¹ According to the ONS National population projections: 2020-based interim.

² Joint meeting of Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group (NDP) and Barnabas Oley Primary School (BOPS) with Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)

4.28 The Sportsfield is home to the Gransden Youth Football Club (GYFC). For the 2021/22 season GYFC comprises:

- 120 playing members
- 7 formal year group teams and Fox Cubs (aged 4 to 6 year olds)
- 4 matches are played each weekend from mid August to mid May
- 7 training sessions during BST (Apr-Oct)

The pavilion on the Sportsfield has shared use by the Nursery and GYFC, but for GYFC it is limited to WC facilities on Saturday morning. All the club kit is stored in a container. The large car-park, which is shared by the Nursery and the Preschool Playgroup, requires resurfacing.

4.29 The Tennis Club, which is situated to one side of the Sportsfield, has three floodlit courts for use by members. It has a small clubhouse which requires updating with toilet/washing facilities to improve hygiene and safeguarding, especially as children use the club.

Key Issue 7 – Uncertainties of major infrastructure decisions

4.30 The planned east-west road link (new A428) will pass to the north of the parish. The implications for commuter and traffic levels are not yet clear.

4.31 The implications for the Parish of the route and the new station of the planned east – west rail link are unclear. The new station could provide a useful rail option, but there are concerns on the potential impact on the surrounding countryside of some route options.

4.32 GGPC will continue to monitor the proposals for these infrastructure projects and assess the implications for Great Gransden. It is important that local infrastructure projects are monitored, and that opportunities are taken to ensure the views and needs of the parish are represented

Additional Key Issue - Post Consultation another issue became apparent; this is addressed below.

Key Issue 8 - Flood risk and development

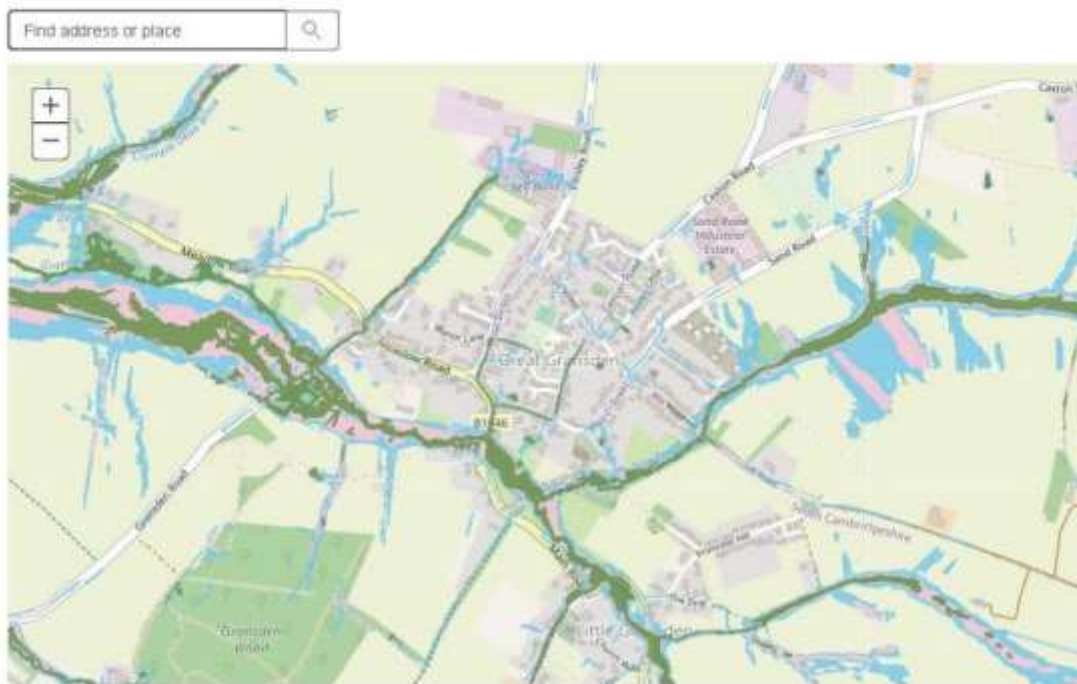
4.33 Flood risk in the parish arises from fluvial (rivers and tidal) flooding and surface water flooding. The areas of the parish at risk of fluvial flooding follow the Gransden Brook Corridor and is limited to the areas outside the Built-up Area Boundary, to the south and west of the village. The areas at risk of surface water flooding are more extensive, covering the corridors of the Mandeem Brook, the Gransden Brook, the Riddy Public Right of Way and Crumple Dean Brook. The Huntingdonshire District Council's 2017 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment includes maps of all sources of flood risk in the district. An extract focusing on surface water flood risk only and for Great Gransden village is shown below.

SFRA 2017 map

Please refer to the [SFRA report 2017 \[PDF, size unavailable\]](#) for explanations of the information shown on this map.

Map Legend

<input type="checkbox"/>	Flood Zones	 Flood Zone 2	 Flood Zone 3a	 Flood Zone 3b	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Climate Change Flood Risk	 Central	 Higher Central	 Upper End	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Updated Flood Map for Surface Water	 30 year extent	 100 year extent	 1,000 year extent	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Areas Susceptible to Ground Water Flooding	 ≥ 75%	 ≥ 50% < 75%	 ≥ 25% < 50%	 < 25%
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flood Warning Coverage	 Flood warning area			



- 4.34 For all areas of land, regardless of whether they are identified in an area of flood risk, it is essential that where development takes place it is designed so that surface water run-off is accommodated within the site. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) is the best method for managing surface water run-off, whilst also benefitting biodiversity.
- 4.35 Policy LP 5 in the Local Plan states that proposals will only be supported where all forms of flood risk have been addressed, as detailed in national planning practice guidance and with reference to the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document 2017. This policy also set out the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments.

- 4.36 Local Plan Policy LP 15 states that proposals will only be supported where surface water has been considered from the outset as an integral part of the design process and includes criteria a) to g) which must be met. Criteria a) requires that proposals incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document or successor documents and advice from Cambridgeshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority.
- 4.37 Existing policy and guidance on managing flood risk and surface water will apply to planning applications in Great Gransden parish. This includes:
- The NPPF 2021
 - National planning practice guidance
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change>
 - HDC Local Plan up to 2036 (see Policies LP 5 and LP 15)
 - Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document.
<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2609/cambridgeshire-flood-and-water-spd.pdf>

There are no additional planning policies relating to surface water or flood risk in the neighbourhood plan.

5 A Vision for Great Gransden Plan area

The vision for Great Gransden in 2036 expressed in this Neighbourhood Plan is derived from the Key Issues, which in turn were derived from the comments, consultation and engagement of the residents and other stakeholders. It is consistent with the statutory requirements of the HDC Local Plan and the NPPF.

The Vision

Great Gransden will continue to thrive as a vibrant rural village, with a diverse population and a highly engaged community. The village will develop in a sustainable, evolutionary manner, such that the parish's rural nature and character are maintained and enhanced.

This will be achieved through the following objectives and policies:

Objective	Policy reference and description
Spatial Strategy	
<p>Objective 1 - The Great Gransden NP will include policies which facilitate the delivery of the housing requirement figure provided to it by the district</p> <p>Objective 2 - New growth will be focussed on providing deliverable and sustainable developments in the parish, supported by necessary infrastructure</p>	<p>Policy G1 – A Built-Up Area Boundary Strategy for Great Gransden. This policy defines a Built-Up Area boundary within which the principle of development is accepted (subject to other constraints) and outside of which development is resisted.</p> <p>The policy requires all schemes to maintain residential amenity and for essential infrastructure to be in place.</p> <p>Policy G2 – Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites. One of the exceptions allowed for under Policy G1 is the delivery of rural exception sites (affordable housing for people with a connection to Great Gransden) on the edge of the Built-Up Area Boundary. Policy G2 sets out criteria for such proposals.</p>
A Rural and Historic Village	
<p>Objective 3 - New development must be of a high quality and sensitive to the key characteristics of Great Gransden taking cues from existing designs.</p>	<p>Policy G3 – Local Character and Design. This policy seeks to ensure that all new development contributes in a positive way to the existing built environment and is sensitive to the rural setting of the village. The policy is informed by the Great Gransden Design Guide which is set out in Section 6 of the full draft plan.</p>

<p>Objective 4 - New developments will protect and enhance the landscape character and important views</p> <p>Objective 5 - The Conservation Area and its essential character will be conserved or enhanced.</p>	<p>Policy G4 – Development, Landscape Character and Valued Views. This policy requires all proposals to protect or enhance existing landscape character. The policy also requires valued views of significant buildings and valued landscapes to be protected.</p> <p>Policy G5 – Conserving and enhancing Great Gransden’s Conservation Area. A policy which applies specifically to development proposals which would impact the historic core of the village.</p>
Natural Environment	
<p>Objective 6 - Existing areas of important semi-natural habitats within the parish and the biodiversity that they support will be effectively protected.</p> <p>Objective 7 - The biodiversity value of existing areas of semi-natural habitats should be enhanced and lost habitats restored where possible.</p> <p>Objective 8 - Protection and habitat enhancement will be targeted to areas which increase their connectivity across the landscape and thus their viability and long-term sustainability.</p>	<p>Policy G6 – Protecting and enhancing biodiversity in the parish including at Gransden Woods.</p> <p>This policy requires proposals to protect and enhance the biodiversity assets in the parish including Gransden Woods. It also signposts the reader as to how development proposals can deliver biodiversity net gain in our parish.</p> <p>See also Community Action Plan</p>
Open Space	
<p>Objective 9 - Maintain and protect key areas of green space within the village and elsewhere in the parish where these are valued by the community for their amenity and recreational value and/or rural landscape value.</p> <p>Objective 10 - Increase the quality and quantity of accessible open space within the parish, to enable local people to experience a wider enjoyment of the Gransden countryside and the associated recreational and health benefits.</p> <p>Objective 11 - Improve access to the countryside whilst fully respecting the rights of private landowners and legitimate uses of the land.</p>	<p>Policy G7 Local Green Spaces and Other Valued Green Spaces. This policy gives strong protection to four open spaces in the plan area.</p> <p>Policy G8 – Development and Open Space Requirements. This policy sets out the priorities for open space improvements and provision in the parish.</p> <p>See also Community Action Plan</p> <p>Policy G9 – Public Rights of Way Network. The policy draws attention to the existing network of public rights of way, protects the network, and requires future proposals to either link with the network or look at creating new links.</p> <p>See also Community Action Plan</p>
Transport and Road Safety Improvements	
<p>Objective 12 - A prioritised programme of improvements will be implemented, to enhance</p>	<p>Community Action Plan</p> <p>See also:</p>

<p>road safety for all road users, particularly pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians</p> <p>Objective 13 - Cycleways, footpaths, and pavements on key routes around the village, and to and from the village will be established and upgraded.</p> <p>Objective 14 - New development will allow for safe movement of vehicles and non-motorised users in and around the village.</p>	<p>Policy G10 – A walkable village and reducing village car use. This policy requires all development proposals to be provided with adequate infrastructure to enable occupants to walk and cycle along safe and direct routes into the village centre.</p> <p>Policy G11 – Roads and new development. A policy setting standards when new roads are proposed in the parish.</p>
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Community Facilities, Leisure and Infrastructure

<p>Objective 15 - New development will be supported by improvements in village infrastructure</p> <p>Objective 16 - CIL spending by GGPC will reflect local priorities as expressed through the GGNP and through ongoing liaison with the community following adoption of the plan.</p> <p>Objective 17 - Community-led projects will be identified to move towards net zero carbon.</p>	<p>Policy G12 – Great Gransden Infrastructure Priorities. This policy highlights the priorities for financial contributions to direct new and improved infrastructure, where it can be locally determined</p> <p>See also Community Action Plans</p> <p>Community led project</p> <p>Community Action Plan</p>
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Primary Schooling, Education and Health

<p>Objective 18 - The village primary school will maintain it's very high standards of education and its strong community ethos through any period of housing growth. It will be well-resourced and financially secure.</p> <p>Objective 19 - Residents in the village will have easy access to good educational opportunities for all age groups – pre-school through to adult learning.</p> <p>Objective 20 - Health provision in the village will be restored and expanded</p>	<p>Policy G13 – Barnabas Oley Primary School and parish pre-school provision. This policy supports development proposals which will help to sustain or enhance pre-school or primary school infrastructure in the parish. The policy supports in principle development needed to expand school facilities provided there are no adverse impacts on road safety, congestion or the appearance of the conservation area.</p> <p>See also the Community Action Plan</p>
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6 Design Guide for Great Gransden

6.1 This Design Guide is derived from the Character Assessment of Great Gransden (supporting document 1). Most of the housing growth in Great Gransden dates from the 1950s onwards, but much of its earlier architectural heritage has been preserved, either in its original form and use or as careful conversions from former use, such as public houses or shops, into private residences. As a consequence, an extensive part of the village was designated a Conservation Area in 1972. There have been a few decades when the village has seen a high level of house building, for example the 1970s and 1980s. However, these developments have largely been sensitive to the aesthetics of existing buildings. Ribbon development, which has marred the character of many villages and created suburban anomalies in the countryside, has been well-contained, and a visitor or passer-by is quickly captivated by the very visible green character of Great Gransden (mature trees, shrubbery, meadows and paddocks), the historic architecture, and the evidence of its agricultural economy in the barns and other former farm buildings. Most residents are now commuters or home-workers, but this has not broken the village's evident link to the times when it was a purely agricultural and largely self-contained community. This is why Great Gransden is referred to in this plan as having a 'rural character'. This should be preserved, and any development of the village must respect the existing character and be designed in harmony or complementarity with it. This Design Guide covers overarching principles for future development and detailed guidelines for new buildings.

6.2 Overarching principles:

- Proposed schemes should be in harmony with the character of those in the local proximity.
- The landscaping of any new developments on the edge of the village should be congruent with the adjacent countryside.
- Boundary treatments should be harmonious with the immediate surroundings including retention of existing trees and hedgerows where these are native or of local historic interest. New boundaries should incorporate native hedgerow species.
- New developments should not intrude above existing skylines and should protect existing views.
- Developments should be within the Built-Up Area Boundary of the village, prioritising brownfield sites or infill, and designed to integrate with the existing settlement with units arranged to maximise pedestrian permeability, promote activity and surveillance of existing and proposed streets. Ribbon or greenfield development will not be supported.
- Building materials for walls and roofs should echo those found already in the village.
- There should be variation of house design within any development of more than two houses.
- House design and construction should aim for the lowest carbon footprint and highest standard of sustainability in materials (source, lifetime and recyclability) and energy (insulation, heat source).

- The HDC Local Plan up to 2036 includes Policy LP 5 Flood Risk and Policy LP 15 Surface Water. These policies, along with the NPPF 2021 and national guidance will apply to proposals coming forward in Great Gransden Parish.

Specific guidelines:

Height

- 6.3 The vast majority of existing dwellings are single-storey or two-storey. A small number of houses have a third storey but most of these are loft-style with rooflights; a few have dormer windows set into the roof.
- 6.4 Exterior walls are, therefore, no more than two storeys high with the occasional exception of the apex of a gable end. Other height options will not be acceptable.

Layout and overall design

- 6.5 There is much consistency of design in the village, but this is very different from uniformity. On small and medium-sized developments within the village, houses have been positioned asymmetrically (Winchfield) and some have alternated gable end and main façade for the street frontage (Poplar Close). Some house styles are replicated but there is sufficient variation in house design throughout each development to avoid visual uniformity.
- 6.6 Street layout should be used to create pleasing lines within the development and also enable valued views to be preserved. House designs should complement rather than be exact copies of others in the development.

Roofs and rooflines

- 6.7 Roofs in the village are mainly variations of gable or hip. Many roofs are steep and long, reducing the impact of first-floor windows through the incorporation of dormer/chalet windows or rooflights. Traditional roof coverings in the conservation area are clay plain tiles or pantiles. A common traditional tile is the Norfolk pantile which has a distinctive form and is also available today as a Fenland pantile. This has been used on some newer buildings in clay or concrete – Lavender Barns, West Street and on barn conversions. Other pantile forms have been used on modern houses in clay or concrete – e.g. the Anglia or Lincoln tile and the Double Roman or Wessex tile. The plain clay tile has been copied to newer builds – Eltisley Road, Bowling Green House and others - albeit in plain colour rather than the attractive mix of colours on the old roofs of The Old Barn, Manor House, Audley House, Home Farm and others. There are some slate roofs in the village.
- 6.8 There are many thatched roofs in the village, but no new ones have appeared for well over 100 years. However, one house currently under construction will be partly thatched.
- 6.9 Chimneys are predominantly brick, some with styling detail to the form of the chimney as on older houses.
- 6.10 Roof coverings on future developments should be predominantly plain tiles or pantiles in clay or concrete. Tile form and colour should complement the adjacent buildings. Timber shingles, slate, thatch and zinc would be acceptable alternatives. Green roofs and solar panels are encouraged, although under current planning requirements solar panels cannot be installed in the Conservation Area on roofs that face the road.

- 6.11 Rooflines should be designed to lessen the impact of any obtrusive windows, for example through the use of recessed dormers or rooflights.

Build materials

- 6.12 Traditional building was often timber frame with plaster infill and many newer homes incorporate smaller examples of this on their facades. Traditional Potton Homes are modern versions of timber frame and plaster houses. Feather-edged boarding, a traditional barn material, has been retained in barn conversions but also incorporated as a decorative feature to the second storey in many modern houses – Bakers Court, Eltisley Road, Audley Close, Meadow Road, Baldwins Manor and others.
- 6.13 Glass began to appear as an architectural feature from the 1980s with double-height glass windows – West Street, Meadow Road - or glass box/link extensions - Fox Street and Middle Street.
- 6.14 The predominant build material is brick even for centuries-old houses like Rippington Manor, Gransden Hall, Old Barn Farm. The most common brick is soft red or orange-red reflecting the original Gransden bricks used to build the older houses in the village (the brick pits were on Meadow Road). Pale yellow or buff brick (traditionally Cambridge gault) is the second most common brick used. Many red-brick houses use a buff brick decoration around windows or as cornerstones; this is seen in the Victorian terrace on Eltisley Road, the Reading Room and Vincent Cottage, and has been carried though to modern houses in Audley Close and Bowling Green House. The colours are reversed in the Victorian terrace and adjacent semi-detached houses on the corner of Middle Street and the Georgian terrace on Church Street, and modern houses built of buff brick with red brick detailing are found on Meadow Road and Williams Close.
- 6.15 Pale yellow or buff brick without red detail has been used as the main material in some developments e.g. Winchfield and some bungalows, but this has lower visibility in the village because few of these houses front the main roads. Some bungalows and the houses in Webbs Meadow are built of mixed-colour bricks.
- 6.16 In some parts of the village, plain rendered frontages can be found – Mandene Gardens, Crow Tree Street, Middle Street and some bungalows. In the case of Crow Tree Street, the newer houses reflect the old, thatched houses at either end. The white painted brick of Old Porch House and Chapel House has been carried through to some of the houses in Poplar Close, but this is not necessarily a permanent design feature.
- 6.17 Stone or reconstituted stone is not a house building material in Great Gransden.
- 6.18 In summary, a soft-red brick is the predominant building material but with buff bricks being used as a decorative element; these colours are sometimes reversed. Subject to the first of the overarching principles set out above, these are the recommended build materials together with timber frame and plaster infill, feather-edged boarding or glass as further decorative options. Plain rendered fronts could be supported in certain sympathetic locations.

Gardens

- 6.19 Great Gransden has managed to more than double the number of its dwellings since the war *and* retain its rural character whilst impinging little on surrounding countryside. This has been achieved through densification within the village boundary – the building of dwellings on land between existing houses, mainly farmers' fields. These have been developed as Closes/No Through Roads. They have been planned and built with

gardens often extending along all four sides of the plot. Mature trees have been retained and front planting has added to the very green aspect of the whole village.

- 6.20 Anti-pollutant, carbon dioxide-reducing and with a health and aesthetic benefit, substantial green space and planting needs to be incorporated into plans for all new house building of whatever size. Native species of hedgerow plants should be used. Existing ponds should be retained, and new ponds encouraged.

Parking

- 6.21 All developments need to incorporate adequate off-street dedicated parking for the anticipated number and size of households and their visitors. Safe access for emergency vehicles and delivery vans must be ensured. External parking spaces should include permeable surfaces to reduce run-off and the risk of flooding/drain overload.

Lighting

- 6.22 Views of the night sky are highly appreciated by Great Gransden residents. This is possible because of sparse street lighting.
- 6.23 Any new development should only incorporate low impact external lighting that is essential for the reasonable safety of residents.

7 Planning policies

Spatial Strategy

Core Objectives:

- **Objective 1** The Great Gransden NP will include policies which facilitate the delivery of the housing requirement figure provided to it by the district
- **Objective 2** New growth will be focussed on providing deliverable and sustainable developments in the parish, supported by necessary infrastructure

Policies G1 and G2 – A spatial strategy for Great Gransden

Policy context and rationale:

7.1.1 HDC advised the GGNP Steering Group in October 2021 that the housing requirement figure for the designated Great Gransden Plan area – the whole parish of Great Gransden – is 64 new dwellings during the period 2011 to 2036. The GGNP must include a strategy and policies that allows for sustainable development³ to come forward and that allows for the housing requirement figure to be delivered. The GGNP is not allowed to place a cap on numbers.

7.1.2 Since April 2011 (the start date for the current Local Plan) to March 2021 there have been net twenty nine new dwellings completed in the parish. In addition, there are other sites for which planning permission has been granted for sixty four new dwellings, not yet completed at the time of this report:

Location and HDC Planning Reference	Number of dwellings remaining to be built	Type of development
Rippington Manor Barn 18/01909/FUL	1	Infill.
Adjacent to 37 Meadow Road 18/02645/FUL	1	Edge of village.
Leycourt Farm barn 18/02269/FUL	1	Rural site.
End of Mandene Gardens 17/00979/FUL	2	Infill.
Rear of 6 West Street 0900906FUL	4	Brownfield infill site
Dutton Gardens 17/01375/OUT	17 (was 40 , but 23 now completed)	Edge of village, Sand Road.
Eltisley Road – Potton Timber site 18/00958/FUL	38	Not started. Outline permission for self-build dwellings.

7.1.3 The Potton Timber site also has permission for five show houses, but the planning permission does not allow occupancy of these. The current total for new build and commitments in the Local Plan period is therefore ninety three. The housing

³ Paragraph 8 of the NPPF stipulates what sustainable development means for the planning system.

requirement figure provided at district level will therefore be exceeded in the designated Great Gransden Plan area.

Great Gransden Built-up area

- 7.1.4 A spatial strategy for growth in Great Gransden is provided by Policy LP 9 ‘Small Settlements’ of the HDC Local Plan 2019. This policy, which applies to all settlements defined as Small Settlements in the district, allows, in principle, for new development within the built-up area of Great Gransden. The policy also states that development outside the built-up area but well related to the built-up area may also be supported *“where it accords with the specific opportunities allowed for through other policies in the plan”*. Supporting paragraph 4.107 of the Local Plan clarifies that the exceptional development allowed must be linked to Local Plan policies LP10 ‘The Countryside’, LP19 ‘Rural Economy’, LP22 ‘Local Services and Community Facilities’, LP23 ‘Tourism and Recreation’, LP28 ‘Rural Exceptions Housing’, LP33 ‘Rural Buildings’ and Policy LP38 ‘Water Related Development’.
- 7.1.5 The approach in the Local Plan is therefore to focus new development in the parish within the existing built up environment of Great Gransden village, where existing facilities such as the primary school, the village shop, the church, the bus stop, the pub and community meeting spaces are located. The GGNP supports this approach but considers it important to clarify further through the designation of a Built-Up Area Boundary around the built-up area.
- 7.1.6 Paragraphs 4.80 to 4.85 of the HDC Local Plan includes a definition of built-up areas and ten principles, with implementation guidance, which can assist in understanding whether specific locations fall within a built-up area or not. The Local Plan explains that a built-up area is a distinct group of buildings that includes thirty or more dwellings. Land which relates more to the group of buildings rather than to the surrounding countryside is also considered to form part of the built-up area. In the parish of Great Gransden, the only distinct group of buildings including 30 or more dwellings is the village itself. The rest of the Parish consists of more isolated agricultural buildings, and some dwellings built adjacent to the principal roads serving the village.
- 7.1.7 The GGNP proposes to designate a Built-Up Area Boundary around the built-up area of the village of Great Gransden. The methodology used to define the boundary is consistent with the ten principles and guidance provided in paragraphs 4.80 to 4.85 of the Local Plan to identify the built-up area. The Built-Up Area Boundary is shown in Figure 7, below, and the methodology for defining it is available to view alongside this plan.

Great Gransden Built-up Area

Scale: 1:7,500

Date: 29/04/2022

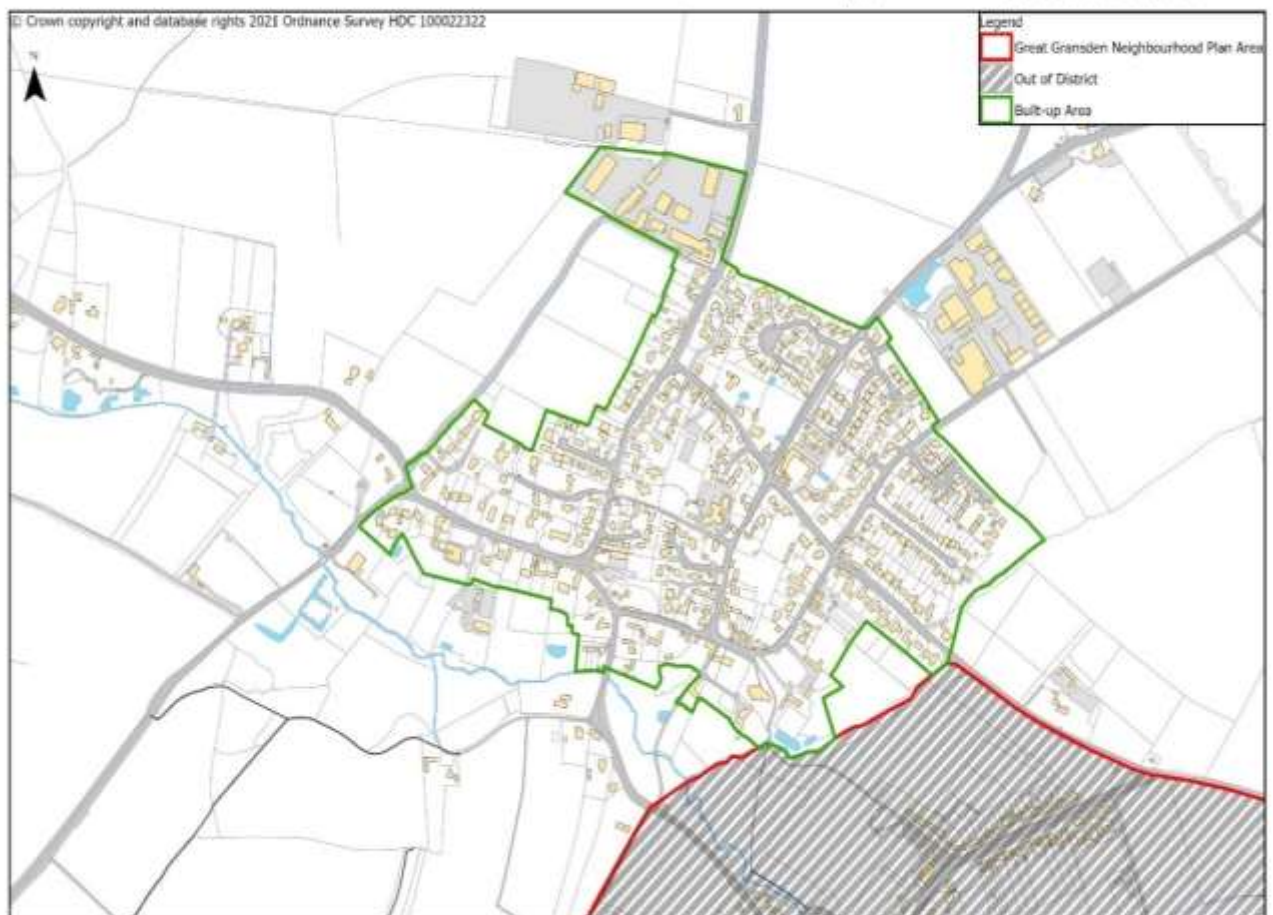


Figure 7: Great Gransden Built-Up Area

7.1.8 Together with other proposed policies in this GGNP, the Built-Up Area Boundary provides clarity on the geographic extent of permissible development in the Parish. In particular it enables the Parish to achieve its contribution to the development needs of the HDC Local Plan, while providing additional protection to greenfield sites and agricultural land surrounding the village, which are excluded from development unless in exceptional circumstances, consistent with HDC Local Plan Policies detailed below.

Preference for brownfield sites over greenfield sites

7.1.9 Consultation has identified a clear preference for development to come forward on brownfield land over development on greenfield land.

7.1.10 The HDC Local Plan allows for specific types of development in countryside locations i.e. development outside existing built up areas. This includes:

- Policy LP 19 Rural Economy allows for business proposals in specific circumstances

- Policy LP 20 Homes for Rural Workers allows for rural dwellings in the countryside in specific circumstances and in keeping with NPPF policy on rural housing
- Policy LP22 Local Services and Community Facilities
- Policy LP23 Tourism and Recreation
- Policy LP28 Rural Exceptions Housing allows for proposals outside built up areas where the scheme is well related to a built up area as an exception to the requirements of other policies on the proviso that the affordable housing will be allocated to people with a local connection.
- Policy LP38 Water Related Development

Affordability and Range of Housing Stock in Great Gransden

7.1.11 The Housing Needs Survey (undertaken in 2018) (supporting document 5) commissioned by the GGNP Steering Group asked if residents would be in favour of a small development of affordable dwellings for local people within the parish. Fifty four per cent of respondents supported the principle of such a development and 42 per cent were opposed (page 15 of the Housing Needs Survey). Support for affordable housing tended to focus particularly on the needs of young people. Some respondents were concerned about ensuring any affordable housing was secured for local people in perpetuity.

7.1.12 A common concern of people opposed to a small affordable housing development in principle was the potential impact on the character and scale of Great Gransden,

7.1.13 The Housing Register maintained by HDC was searched for households in need of affordable housing who either live in Great Gransden or stated they have a local connection to the Parish. There were two households on the Register that met these criteria. Neither currently live in the parish so presumably qualify through family, work or previous residence.

7.1.14 The Housing Needs Survey, together with the local Housing Register, identified five households identified in need of affordable housing who either live in or have a local connection to Great Gransden. Three of these five households would be eligible for a bungalow which is indicative of the age cohorts of those households identified.

1 bed		2 bed		3 bed		4 bed		5+ bed		Total
F/H	B	F/H	B	F/H	B	F/H	B	F/H	B	
	1	1	2	1						5

7.1.15 The development on Sand Road (Dutton Gardens) will provide sixteen affordable dwellings (although not tied to local people) and some smaller sized properties. These will contribute to the stock of affordable housing for the district but would not necessarily meet the needs of those with a link to Great Gransden. For this reason, a Policy is proposed that the GGPC will monitor the local housing needs and when appropriate explore the option for a Rural Exception Site.

7.1.16 There is also a small need for market housing, largely among households aged 50+ seeking to downsize.

7.1.17 As the housing survey showed, the village is well provided with large 3, 4 and 5 bedroom houses but these tend to be expensive as Great Gransden is a highly desirable place to live and lies within commuting distance of Cambridge and London.

The village is not well provided with smaller dwellings and affordable housing. The mix of housing is not ideal for all generations including young families with small children. The community would be more likely to support housing developments that provide a mix of housing size that enables provision for older people accommodation and a mix of dwelling types such as bungalows and flats to cater for changing needs and younger individuals and families, thus sustaining and growing a multi-generation community.

Impact of development on village infrastructure

7.1.18 Policy LP 9 'Small Settlements' states that a proposal in a built-up area of a Small Settlement will be supported where the amount and location of development proposed is sustainable in relation to the level of service and infrastructure provision within the settlement. The question of adequate infrastructure being in place in Great Gransden has been a key concern expressed during public consultation on the GGNP. There is a shared concern that existing infrastructure constraints are not fully recognised by developers and decision makers. This concern is addressed in more detail below in this section, under 'Community Facilities, Leisure and Infrastructure'.

G1 – A Built-Up Area Boundary Strategy for Great Gransden

Policy Intent

7.1.19 The purpose of this policy is to ensure any new residential development proposals are guided to locations within the Built-Up Area Boundary of the village and to allow development in locations outside of this boundary only where this is justified through:

- Sensitively designed affordable housing schemes for people with a Great Gransden connection in locations on the edge of Built-Up Area Boundary in locations which will not harm or undermine village character, consistent with HDC Local Plan Policies above.
- Development which is appropriate in countryside locations, consistent with HDC Local Plan Policies above.

Policy G1 – A Built-Up Area Boundary Strategy for Great Gransden

Development proposals within the Great Gransden Built-Up Area Boundary defined in Figure 7 (page 40) will be supported subject to the location, size and design of the development respecting the character in the immediate area and the settlement as a whole.

- a. Development proposals outside the defined Built-Up Area Boundary will be resisted other than the following cases:
 - the development comprises a rural exceptions housing scheme referred to in Policy G2, located on a site contiguous with the Built-Up Area Boundary and within easy and safe walking distance to village amenities.
 - residential development that complies with one or more of the circumstances set out in paragraph 80 of the NPPF 2021; or
 - the development comprises development specifically allowed for by the following policies in the Local Plan – LP10 the countryside, LP19 Rural Economy, LP20 Homes for Rural Workers, LP22 Local services and community facilities, LP23 Tourism and Recreation, LP33 Rural Buildings and LP38 water related development.
- b. To be supported, all development proposals must
 - maintain or enhance residential amenity of neighbouring properties and deliver good levels of amenity for future occupiers of the proposed scheme.
 - demonstrate that necessary infrastructure is in place or will be provided to serve the development;
 - demonstrate safe and suitable access for vehicles without undermining pedestrian safety or accessibility
 - Where the scale permits residential development proposals will be expected to provide a housing mix suitable for meeting local needs (see Paragraph 7.1.17).

7.1.20 There are no community action plans associated with policy G1.

G2 – Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites.

Policy intent

7.2 The purpose of this policy is to adopt a supportive approach to the delivery of rural exception sites within the parish where the proposed scheme is demonstrated to meet the specific needs of Great Gransden.

7.2.1 **Linked Parish Council action/commitment: CAP 1** - the Parish Council will monitor the local housing needs and when appropriate explore the option for a local Exception Site.

Policy G2– Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites.

Proposals for small scale affordable housing (10 or fewer dwellings) on rural exception sites contiguous with the Built-Up Area Boundary will be supported in principle for occupation by people with a genuine local connection with Great Gransden parish provided that the criteria in Policy LP 28 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan, and the related reasoning, are met.

In addition, the following local criteria will apply:

- the homes are located within safe and easy pedestrian and cycle access to Great Gransden village centre and amenities; and
- no significant harm shall be caused to the character of the village, its setting or the countryside.

A Rural and Historic Parish

Core Objectives:

- **Objective 3 New development must be of a high quality and sensitive to the key characteristics of Great Gransden taking cues from existing designs.**
- **Objective 4 New developments will protect and enhance the landscape character and important views**
- **Objective 5 The Conservation Area and its essential character will be conserved or enhanced.**

Policy G3 – Local Character and Design

Policy context and rationale:

- 7.3 The NPPF states (paragraph 127) that Neighbourhood Plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development. The Great Gransden Character Assessment has been developed alongside the GGNP and is available as Supporting Document 1. This document describes the key distinguishing features of the built environment in the parish.
- 7.3.1 Great Gransden is an ancient rural village. The village has a spacious feel; with many houses set in plots with gardens both front and rear. The village layout incorporates open green spaces at road junctions, often with large trees. There are many mature trees, hedges and grassy verges around the village, reflecting its rural nature and providing the link to the countryside.
- 7.3.2 At its heart is a picturesque conservation area, with many well-preserved historic buildings, including several large distinctive houses, including Gransden Hall, Rippington Manor, Audley House, Old Vicarage, Rectory Farm, The Old Barn, Manor House and Brinkley House. There are sixty listed buildings in the parish.
- 7.3.3 Many buildings are wattle and daub construction, often with thatched or clay tile roofs, and with rendered walls washed in white, terracotta or pastel shades. Other heritage buildings are built with traditional local brick, often with feature chimneys and windows, detailed with contrasting brick colours.
- 7.3.4 Buildings are almost all two storey or less, with some incorporating dormer windows in the roof.
- 7.3.5 The village has expanded and evolved over the last few decades with the addition of housing developments (typically 10-30 dwellings) and individual builds, each with the style of the time. Grey or black clapboard has been incorporated into some house designs to reflect the rural environment. Most of these developments have a spacious layout, including good sized gardens and public green spaces, with tree planting to provide a rural rather than urban feel. The developments tend to be in the form of a close, which limits through traffic.
- 7.3.6 These more recent developments often have limited visibility from the streets, an important factor in retaining the rural village ambience that is greatly valued by residents and visitors.
- 7.3.7 There is limited street lighting, so the village enjoys dark skies.
- 7.3.8 The village is surrounded by agricultural land with extensive views to the open countryside, but there is limited access for recreation.

- 7.3.9 In some locations in the village on-street parking creates problems for pedestrians, and unwanted congestion in the village.
- 7.3.10 It is therefore considered important that any new development proposals incorporate adequate parking provision to provide for the residents and their visitors. To avoid adverse impacts on the street and pedestrians, designated parking should be located off-street. Care must be taken that the designation of off-street parking does not dominate the appearance of the road frontage and detract from the quality of the built environment in Great Gransden. In addition, any on-road parking must not make it difficult for service vehicles and emergency vehicles to negotiate the streets.

Policy Intent:

- 7.3.11 The intent of this policy is to ensure all new development contributes in a positive way to the built environment in a way which is in keeping with the built environment and sensitive to the rural setting of the village.

Policy G3 – Local Character and Design

All development proposals should contribute in a positive way to the quality of the built environment in the parish.

Development proposals must be the result of a design-led process with regards to a scheme’s location, layout, design, choice of building materials and density.

To be supported, development proposals must also be sympathetic to the existing rural character of Great Gransden, detailed in the Great Gransden Character Assessment (available as supporting Document 1 alongside this Neighbourhood Plan), and demonstrate how they accord with the Design Guide principles set out below and follow guidance in the Design Guide (Section 6 (Design Guide for Great Gransden) of this Plan).

Design Guide Principles

- a. For all development proposals:
 - i. Proposed schemes must be in harmony with the character of those in the local proximity.
 - ii. The landscaping of any new developments on the edge of the village should be congruent with the adjacent countryside
 - iii. Boundary treatments should be harmonious with the immediate surroundings including retention of existing trees and hedgerows where these are native or of local historic interest. New boundaries should incorporate native hedgerow species.
 - iv. Developments should be within the Built-Up Area Boundary of the village, prioritising brownfield sites or infill, and designed to integrate with the existing settlement with units arranged to maximise pedestrian permeability, promote activity and surveillance of existing and proposed streets. Ribbon or greenfield development will not be supported unless it accords with the specific opportunities afforded by local and national policy.
 - v. Building materials for walls and roofs should echo those found already in the village.

b. For residential development proposals:

- i. Schemes of more than two dwellings should have a variety of design styles with individual features
- ii. All dwellings should have private gardens proportionate to dwelling size and in-keeping with properties in immediate vicinity
- iii. House design and construction should aim for the lowest carbon footprint and highest standard of sustainability in materials (source, lifetime and recyclability) and energy (insulation, heat source).

In addition, development proposals must include adequate provision for the parking of cars, cycles, electric scooters and mobility scooters to meet the needs of the residents and their visitors. Every house must have sufficient designated parking spaces appropriate to its size. On-street designated parking will only be acceptable where the street environment will not be compromised with respect to pedestrian safety or emergency vehicle access and does not risk causing on street congestion. Proposed schemes will conform with the HDC Design Guide SPD section 3.5 Parking and Servicing <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2573/huntingdonshire-design-guide-2017.pdf>

7.3.12 There are no community action plans associated with policy G3.

Policy G4 – Development, Landscape Character and Valued Views

Policy context and rationale

- 7.4 A key component of Great Gransden Village's character is the landscape character of the built environment itself and its setting within the wider landscape. The village feels very green with many mature trees, hedgerows and grass verges. The topography is undulating, adding interest to the built environment. Existing features of landscape value within the built up area of the village include:
- Roadside paddocks and meadows, e.g. alongside Little Gransden Lane where a paddock to the east provides a strong and characterful rural opening along the southern edge of the village
 - Roadside greens and large trees at the following junctions: Eltisley Road/Fox Street; Fox Street/West Street; West Street/Crow Tree Street; Caxton Road/Fox Street and Mandene Gardens/Sand Road.
 - Green spaces, often with feature trees, within newer developments such as Winchfield and Audley Close
 - Roadside verges, often tree lined, which often provide a transition from countryside to village environment, such as Caxton Road, Mill Road, Eltisley Road
 - The Mill Weir pond, used nowadays for fishing
 - The landscape surrounding the village provides many long distance vistas across rolling landscape and views of key landmarks along the approaches into the village both from the roadside and from the network of public rights of way.
 - There are also striking views within the village, particularly the setting of the listed and heritage buildings.
 - The valued views both within and surrounding the village are shown on Figure 8 and described as follows:
 - A. An open view across Gransden Brook Valley to the north when travelling along Waresley Road towards the village. Key features in this view to be respected are the many trees and hedgerows, and an ancient green lane along Meadow Lane. Several of the hedgerows would appear to be of ancient origin and thus of significant historic interest.



- B. The green arc-shaped corridor along the valley of Gransden Brook. This provides important visual amenity linking to the SSSI of Gransden Wood, in addition to being an important contributor to biodiversity. Key features in this view to be respected are the open ancient parkland landscape with scattered large trees, an ancient moated feature surrounded by trees, a range of hayfields, horse grazing meadows and various copses and scrub. These together provide a continuous green corridor, visually linking the village to the surrounding woods but also providing a green backdrop to the village itself. As such, this corridor makes a major contribution to the rural character of the village that is so valued by residents and visitors alike.



- C. The view from the Hayfield looking over Gransden Brook towards Gransden Hall. Key features to be respected are the Grade II listed building, an abundance of trees along the skyline, other hedgerows and trees along the field margins, and the brook itself, all of which combine to perform an important function in providing setting to the heritage asset”



- D. The view from Little Gransden Lane, looking cross to St Bartholomew's Church, Rectory Farm, Rippington Manor and the Dole Field. Key features to be protected are the listed buildings, including Grade I St Bartholomew's Church, Grade II* Rippington Manor, Grade II Rectory Farm, set in mature trees, meadow and hedgerows, looking across the confluence of the Home Dole Brook and Gransden Brook situated along the parish boundaries. These views link back to the south-west to the attractive, much used and much valued footpath and bridleway of Dick and Dolls Lane (which leads to Gransden Wood and itself follows the line of the parish boundary and the old Huntingdonshire/Cambridgeshire county boundary).



- E. The views of St Bartholomew's Church on all sides. Key feature to be protected are views of the Grade I listed building, and its grounds, including set in the original village graveyard which features two striking lime trees each around 50 metres tall. The churchyard is also of significant botanical interest, being the Type Locality for the Gransden Goldilocks Buttercup *Ranunculus obovatilobatus*, a local species virtually endemic to West Cambridgeshire



- F. The view from the roundabout has many historic buildings and features in all directions. Church Street to the northeast, Middle Street to the north and Crow Tree Street to the west. Key features to be respected are the individual heritage assets, their setting and the significance of the conservation area itself.

Great Gransden Valued Landscape Views

Scale: 1:7,000

Date: 29/11/2022

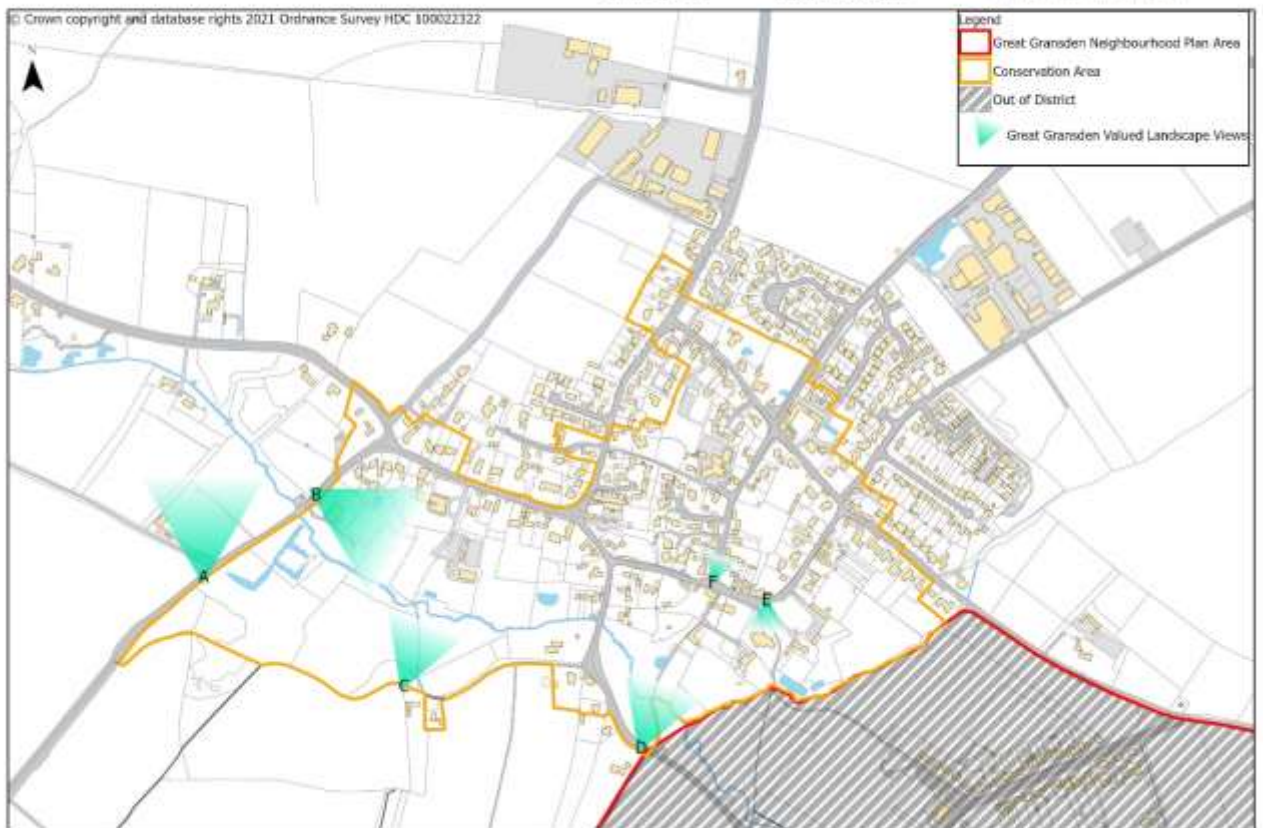


Figure 8: Map of Great Gransden Valued Landscape Views

Policy intent

7.4.1 All development coming forward should maintain or enhance the existing landscape character in the parish

Policy G4 – Development, Landscape Character and Valued Views.

All development proposals must contribute positively to existing landscape character in the plan area. To be supported proposals must:

- i. Be designed to be sensitive to the existing landscape character of the village and keep intact and where possible enhance existing features of landscape value (including the features described in the supporting text to this policy) in the immediate vicinity to the proposed development; and
- ii. Incorporate its own on-site landscaping scheme (proportionate to the scale of proposed development), where this is informed and sensitive to the existing setting of the site in relation to surroundings, and in a way which contributes to the overall rural character of the village.

Proposals will not be supported where there would be a significant adverse impact upon the valued views shown on Figure 8 and described in the supporting text to this policy.

7.4.2 There are no community action plans associated with policy G4.

Policy G5 – Conserving and enhancing Great Gransden’s Conservation Area

Policy context and rationale:

- 7.5 The parish is rich in built-heritage assets. There are sixty statutorily listed buildings (mostly focused in Great Gransden village) including three Grade II* buildings and the Grade I listed Church of St. Bartholomew. The restored Great Gransden Windmill is also a scheduled monument. A full list is provided in the Character Assessment (Supporting Document 1).
- 7.5.1 A large part of Great Gransden village is a designated conservation area, extending beyond the built up area boundary into the adjoining countryside. (See Figure 4, page 15, above.)
- 7.5.2 In keeping with paragraph 189 of the NPPF, the parish heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource which should be conserved so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.
- 7.5.3 The NPPF requires that local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected by a development proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. The NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to take account of three elements when assessing development proposals:
- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 7.5.4 In Great Gransden, the built heritage, particularly within the village centre and the conservation area, makes a very important contribution to local character and distinctiveness. The heritage assets, summarised above, make the place what it is today. Any proposal which undermines the significance of the Great Gransden Conservation Area will have an adverse impact on character and local distinctiveness of the place as a whole. No changes to the Conservation Area boundary are proposed in this Plan.
- 7.5.5 Policy LP34 in the HDC Local Plan attaches great weight and importance to the conservation of heritage assets and their setting. The policy states that the statutory presumption of the avoidance of harm can only be outweighed if there are public benefits that are powerful enough to do so.
- 7.5.6 Policy LP34 states that proposals within, affecting the setting of, or affecting views into or out of, a conservation area should preserve and where possible enhance features that contribute to the area’s character, appearance and setting as set out in character statements or other applicable documents. HDC have not, as at time of writing, prepared a conservation area character appraisal or statement for Great Gransden Conservation Area. The Great Gransden Character Assessment prepared alongside this GGNP includes a description of the conservation area.

Policy intent:

- 7.5.7 To ensure that all development proposals preserve or enhance the quality of the historic built environment in the parish.

- 7.5.8 To ensure adherence to Policy LP34 in the HDC Local Plan, which provides a development management approach to all proposals which may impact on heritage assets including conservation areas.
- 7.5.9 To complement the approach set out in Policy LP34 of the Local Plan by providing detail specific to Great Gransden.

Policy G5 – Conserving and enhancing Great Gransden’s Conservation Area

Development proposals are required to conserve and where possible enhance heritage assets (and their setting) in line with local and national policy.

To be supported, development proposals in the Conservation Area (including infill development) or within the setting of the conservation area must be sensitive to the significance and distinctive character of the Conservation Area as well as the individual heritage assets within it. To achieve this, proposals will be expected to be informed by the context and guidance (where it is relevant to the conservation area) set out in the Great Gransden Character Assessment.

Development proposals will not be supported where there would be a significant adverse impact upon views into, out of and within the Great Gransden Conservation Area (as shown on Figure 8), where these views include features of heritage value. However, where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

- 7.5.10 There are no community action plans associated with policy G5.

The Natural Environment

Core Objectives:

- **Objective 6 Existing areas of important semi-natural habitats within the parish and the biodiversity that they support will be effectively protected.**
- **Objective 7 The biodiversity value of existing areas of semi-natural habitats should be enhanced and lost habitats restored where possible.**
- **Objective 8 Protection and habitat enhancement will be targeted to areas which increase their connectivity across the landscape and thus their viability and long-term sustainability.**

Biodiversity in Great Gransden

7.5.11 The natural environment in Great Gransden is treasured by the people who live here. Key features are the attractive countryside, a strong sense of tranquillity, dark skies and the wildlife diversity. This rich wildlife asset enjoyed by local people is very broadly provided by the Waresley and Gransden Woods Nature Reserve, the community orchard and a wildflower meadow both located on the Allotments site, the agricultural landscape and habitats, meadows, copses and rural gardens.

7.5.12 In addition to Gransden Woods (see below) there are various small copses of deciduous broadleaved woodland in and around the parish.

7.5.13 A green arc-shaped corridor along the valley of Gransden Brook, as shown on the map in Figure 5 (page 18, above) has been identified as an area to target an improved network for protection and habitat enhancements. This arc could then connect to other important habitats such as the Gransden Wood, directly supportive of the West Cambridgeshire Hundreds plan (See 7.6.6 below). The implementation of such a project largely lies outside the planning scope of the NP, it would require community engagement and delivery by a Community Action Plan. The GGPC may use contributions generated via the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) towards the implementation of habitat protection and enhancement projects.

7.5.14 Development proposals will be required to deliver net gains in biodiversity in line with Policy LP30 in the Local Plan. This may for example mean protecting or designing in existing features of biodiversity value such as hedgerows, trees and ponds and/or creating new features of biodiversity value.

7.5.15 Development proposals must ensure compliance with Local Plan Policy LP30 Biodiversity and Geodiversity, which provides a framework for development management officers to use when assessing planning applications that may impact biodiversity and geodiversity.

Policy G6 – Protecting and enhancing biodiversity in the parish including at Gransden Woods.

Policy context and rationale

- 7.6 Waresley and Gransden Woods are a very popular destination for visitors. There are no public rights of way in the woodland, but the Wildlife Trust provides access via permissive routes. The Wildlife Trust need to balance the needs of wildlife conservation with public access. In recent years the Woods have been closed to public access for extended periods to prevent excessive damage to footpaths during bad weather. Dogs are required to be kept on the lead.
- 7.6.1 Gransden Wood can be accessed by footpath from the village, providing beautiful views of the countryside and the village heritage. It can also be accessed from the Waresley Wood car park located just off Waresley Road, over 1 km away from Great Gransden village centre. Public footpath 104/3 and 104/2 run from the southern edge of the village on Little Gransden Lane south and follows the western boundary of the woods towards and into the neighbouring parish Waresley-cum-Tetworth.
- 7.6.2 Gransden Wood is an ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland site, which has been continuously wooded for the last 400 years but potentially for over 1,000 years. As such an ancient survivor, Gransden Wood is clearly a site of high importance from a nature conservation perspective. In the spring there is a spectacular showing of Bluebells *Hyacinthus non-scriptus* and other characteristic ancient woodland flowers which make it a very popular site with visitors.
- 7.6.3 The Waresley and Gransden Woods Nature Reserve is owned and managed by the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust and forms part of an SSSI (listed as “Waresley Wood SSSI”) located in and to the south west of the parish. The northern part of this reserve comprises part of Gransden Wood which lies entirely within Great Gransden parish. Waresley Wood forms the southern part of this block of woodland and lies within the neighbouring parish of Waresley-cum-Tetworth. A northern section of Gransden Wood is not owned by the Reserve but is in private ownership and there is no public access to this section.
- 7.6.4 Figure 9, below, shows the extent of the SSSI (totalling 54.22 ha) and the ownership.

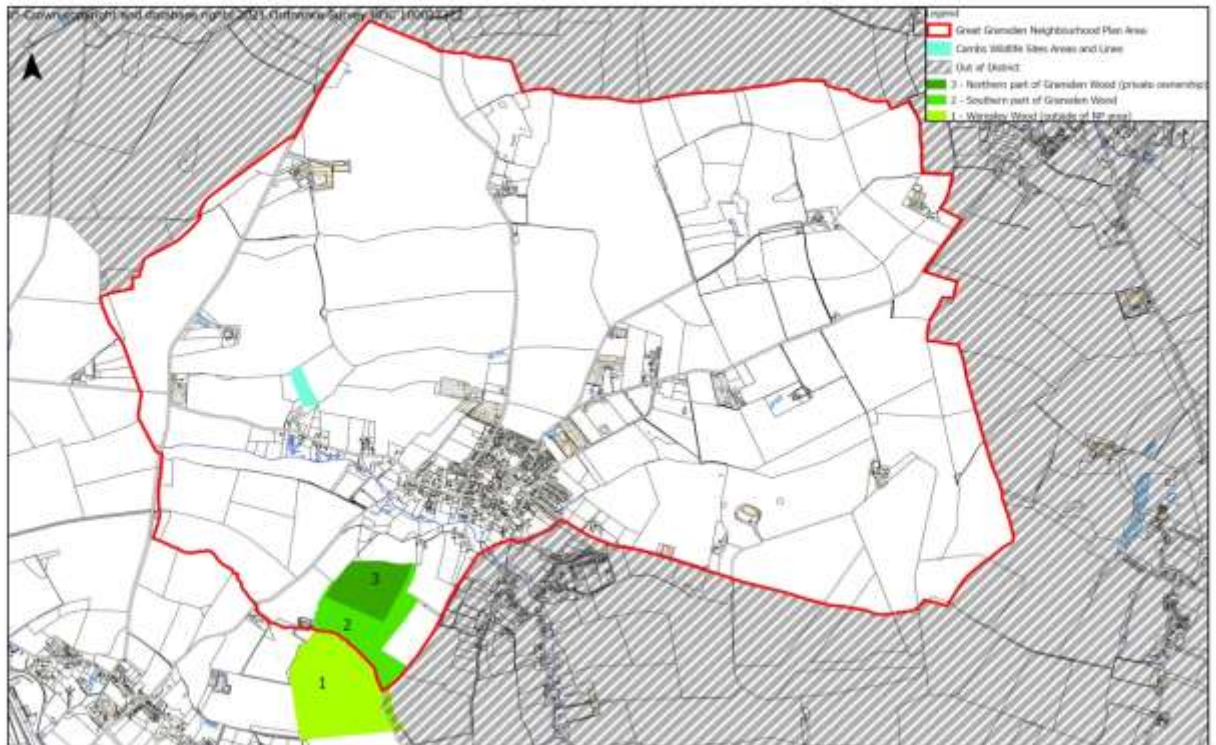


Figure 9: Waresley and Gransden Woods SSSI

- 7.6.5 Discussions between the GGNP Steering Group and The Wildlife Trust have highlighted the need to improve management of the permissive path routes through the woodland and the adjacent public footpaths and bridleways during all seasons, and for Great Gransden to be provided with alternative natural green space to give alternative options for recreational enjoyment of the countryside thus relieving pressure on the Nature Reserve site. In a public Waresley & Gransden Woods Statement (February 2019) The Wildlife Trust commented 'Increased numbers of visitors and dogs within the woods also causes increased disturbance to the detriment of wildlife'.
- 7.6.6 The West Cambridgeshire Hundreds is a strategic project focused on a collection of wildlife rich ancient woodlands to the SW of Cambridge, including the ancient woodland at Waresley and Gransden Woods. These lie within an area defined for over 1000 years by the old Anglo-Saxon regional divisions known as the Cambridgeshire Hundreds. The scheme aims to enhance the unique biodiversity found in these woodlands through better management, maintaining or reinstating traditional coppicing, widening rides and providing better conditions for butterflies and other insects. The vision for the project is for the wide area to be a landscape of connected woodlands between which wildlife can move freely. Maintaining and enhancing connectivity between the small copses, woodland areas, adjacent grassland areas and hedgerow networks will be crucial to the success of this initiative. <https://www.wildlifebcn.org/westcambshundreds>
- 7.6.7 The HDC Local Plan recognises the strategic importance of the West Cambridgeshire Hundreds Project, Paragraph 4.36.

Policy intent:

- 7.6.8 Waresley and Great Gransden Woods are already recognised as part of the national network of SSSIs. The intention is to identify that part of the SSSI that falls within Great Gransden parish as a parish site of value to biodiversity and resist any development proposals which would risk impacting directly or indirectly on the biodiversity integrity of the site.
- 7.6.9 Policy G6 also requires the delivery of biodiversity net gain (aligned with the Environment Act) on all sites and signposts what measures might be appropriate in the parish.
- 7.6.10 **Linked Parish Council commitment CAP 2** - Outside the scope of the GGNP, GGPC will aim to work with both landowners of the Waresley and Gransden Woods site to find ways to effectively protect their woodland whilst facilitating ongoing public enjoyment of these woodlands, and also continue to seek alternative outdoor recreation provision to serve the parishioners.
- 7.6.11 **Linked Parish Council commitment: CAP 3** - will support a community-led initiative to recognise an arc shaped corridor shown on the map in Figure 5, page 18 above, along the valley of Gransden Brook and its tributaries to maintain its connectivity value for wildlife and encourage landowners to target this for habitat protection and enhancement.

Policy G6 – Protecting and enhancing biodiversity in the parish including at Gransden Woods.

(It should be noted that only part of the SSSI lies within the Plan area, the remainder being in the adjacent parish of Waresley).

The area of woodland shown on Figure 9, page 57 above, is an SSSI and highly valued as a parish wide biodiversity asset. Any development proposals which would impact adversely on the biodiversity value of the site will be resisted.

Contributions may be sought, where this would be compliant with tests set out in paragraph 57 of the NPPF, LP 4 of the Local Plan (Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery) and the Developer Contributions SPD (2011) (or any successor documents), towards measures which seek to protect or enhance the biodiversity value of Gransden Woods.

Proposals which would protect wildlife assets at Gransden Woods such as provision of alternative open space for Great Gransden parishioners to enjoy will be sought.

Delivering biodiversity net gain in the parish:

All development should provide net gains in biodiversity by creating, restoring and enhancing habitats for the benefit of species. Measures to deliver net gains will be proportionate to the size of the development being proposed and could include:

- Trees, hedgerows, water and other habitats integrated into a development site;
- Bat roosts and bird boxes
- installation of green or brown roofs
- taking available opportunities to restore or enhance the existing ecological network across the Gransden Brook Corridor (see Figure 5)
- taking available opportunities to protect and enhance Gransden Woods including the delivery of an alternative open space designed to relieve pressure.

Open Space

Core Objectives:

- **Objective 9 Maintain and protect key areas of green space within the village and elsewhere in the parish where these are valued by the community for their amenity and recreational value and/or rural landscape value.**
- **Objective 10 Increase the quality and quantity of accessible open space within the parish, to enable local people to experience a wider enjoyment of the Gransden countryside and the associated recreational and health benefits.**
- **Objective 11 Improve access to the countryside whilst fully respecting the rights of private landowners and legitimate uses of the land.**

Policy G7 – Local Green Spaces and Other Valued Green Spaces

Policy context and rationale

7.7 The NPPF 2021 allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them by designating them as a Local Green Space (LGS) through a Neighbourhood Plan or a Local Plan. To qualify for LGS designation a space must meet certain criteria:

- be in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves.
- be demonstrably special to a local community and hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife.
- be local in character and not an extensive tract of land.

7.7.1 Community engagement work has identified a number of valued open spaces. The Four spaces are designated as Local Green Spaces. In recognition of the public value attached to them, a further seven spaces are designated as Other Valued Green Spaces. Supporting Document 3 provides an assessment of the LGS spaces against the criteria above, together with an assessment of the Other Valued Green Spaces.

Local Green Spaces

7.7.2 The Local Green Spaces are:

The Sportsfield: Owned by the Parish Council and located 0.5 miles from the village centre.

This space is demonstrably special to the community it serves, due being the principal sports facility for the village. In addition, it is used for community events. See Supporting Document 3 for more detail.

The Playing Field: Owned by the Parish Council and located in the heart of the village.

This space is demonstrably special to the community it serves due its function as an outdoor recreation area serving all ages. See Supporting Document 3 for more detail.

The Allotments: Owned by the Parish Council and run by Gransden Allotment and Leisure Gardens Society and located 0.5 mile from the village centre on Caxton Road.

This space is demonstrably special to the community it serves, principally due to its amenity value but also includes areas of biodiversity value. See Supporting Document 3 for more detail.

The Mill Weir: Common land maintained by the Parish Council and located 0.4 miles from the village centre.

This space is demonstrably special to the community it serves due its amenity value as a publicly accessible open space with a pond and a course fishing spot for local residents. See Supporting Document 3 for more detail.

Other Valued Green Spaces

7.7.3 Due to the public value attached to these spaces, Local Plan Policy LP 32 (Protection of Open Space) will apply to proposals impacting upon these spaces. The purpose of Policy LP 32 is to protect against the loss of open space. It does so by only supporting proposals which result in the whole or partial loss of an area of open space of public value if there would be no significant adverse impacts on the character of the surrounding areas and, as clarified in paragraph 8.28 of the Local Plan, *“where the space is to be replaced with an alternative for which there is a proven need or where compensatory measures that will deliver net gains for the community can be delivered.”*

7.7.4 Paragraph 8.27 in the Local Plan states that:

“Open space takes many forms including parks, village greens, play areas, sports pitches, allotments, semi-natural areas and substantial private gardens. Many provide important recreational and sporting facilities or are important for biodiversity. Others are part of heritage assets or form part of the setting of heritage assets. Whatever their size, function and accessibility they all contribute to the character of place and quality of life for the local community. It is important to prevent the loss of open space where this would harm the character of a settlement, the visual quality of the locality or the quality of life of residents and visitors”

7.7.5 The specific nature of the Other Valued Green Spaces and how they contribute to the character of the Great Gransden settlement is described below:

Other Valued Green Spaces and how they contribute to the character of Great Gransden

Green spaces adjacent to road junctions in the village:

These three spaces are described below. They formerly marked the ancient village boundaries, with large specimen trees

Fox Street/ Middle Street/ East Street/ Caxton Road Crossroads (Figure 11 marked A)

A roughly triangular piece of land in the heart of the village, slightly elevated above the road, displays the Great Gransden village sign and is the site of a specimen chestnut tree and a hornbeam. On the opposite corner is a substantial wildflower verge extending down West Street and Middle Street and very large and handsome sycamore tree.

The space contributes to settlement character by providing a connection with the past, a local landmark and an attractive and verdant space, with biodiversity value, in the heart of the village.

Crow Tree Street/ Meadow Road/ West Street (Figure 11 marked C)

A triangular piece of grass and wildflower land in the fork of the junction has the stump of one of the old boundary trees, a young oak tree and a public bench.

The space contributes to settlement character by providing a connection with the past, a local landmark and an attractive and verdant spaces, with biodiversity value, in the heart of the village.

Eltisley Road/ Fox Street/ West Street (Figure 11 marked B)

A large grassed space with edge planting and a small tree sweeps down from the new development on the corner of Fox Street and Eltisley Road. This piece of land is privately owned. On the opposite corner is a mature lime tree and a public bench, on a green triangle owned by Highways Department

The space is cherished as an open greenscape feature in a busy part of the village near the shop and the Reading Room. It provides a view of the Grade II listed Fox Cottage, which is set at 90°to the road.

Policy intent

- To protect existing open spaces of value to Great Gransden parishioners.

Policy G7 – Local Green Spaces and Other Valued Green Spaces

Local Green Spaces:

The following open spaces as shown on Figure 10, below, are designated as Local Green Spaces:

- The Sportsfield (2)
- The Playing Field (4)
- The Allotments (1)
- The Mill Weir (3)

Development on these sites shall be consistent with national Green Belt Policy and where it would support the identified use of the space

Other Valued Green Spaces:

The Other Valued Green Spaces, shown on Figure 11 are Other Valued Green Spaces to which Local Plan Policy LP 32 (Protection of Open Space) will apply.

- Green spaces adjacent to road junctions in the village:
 - Fox Street, Middle Street, East Street, Caxton Road Crossroads (A)
 - Eltisle Road/ Fox Street, West Street (B)
 - Crow Tree Street/Meadow Road/ West Street (C)

Great Gransden Local Green Spaces

Scale: 1:9,000

Date: 29/07/2022

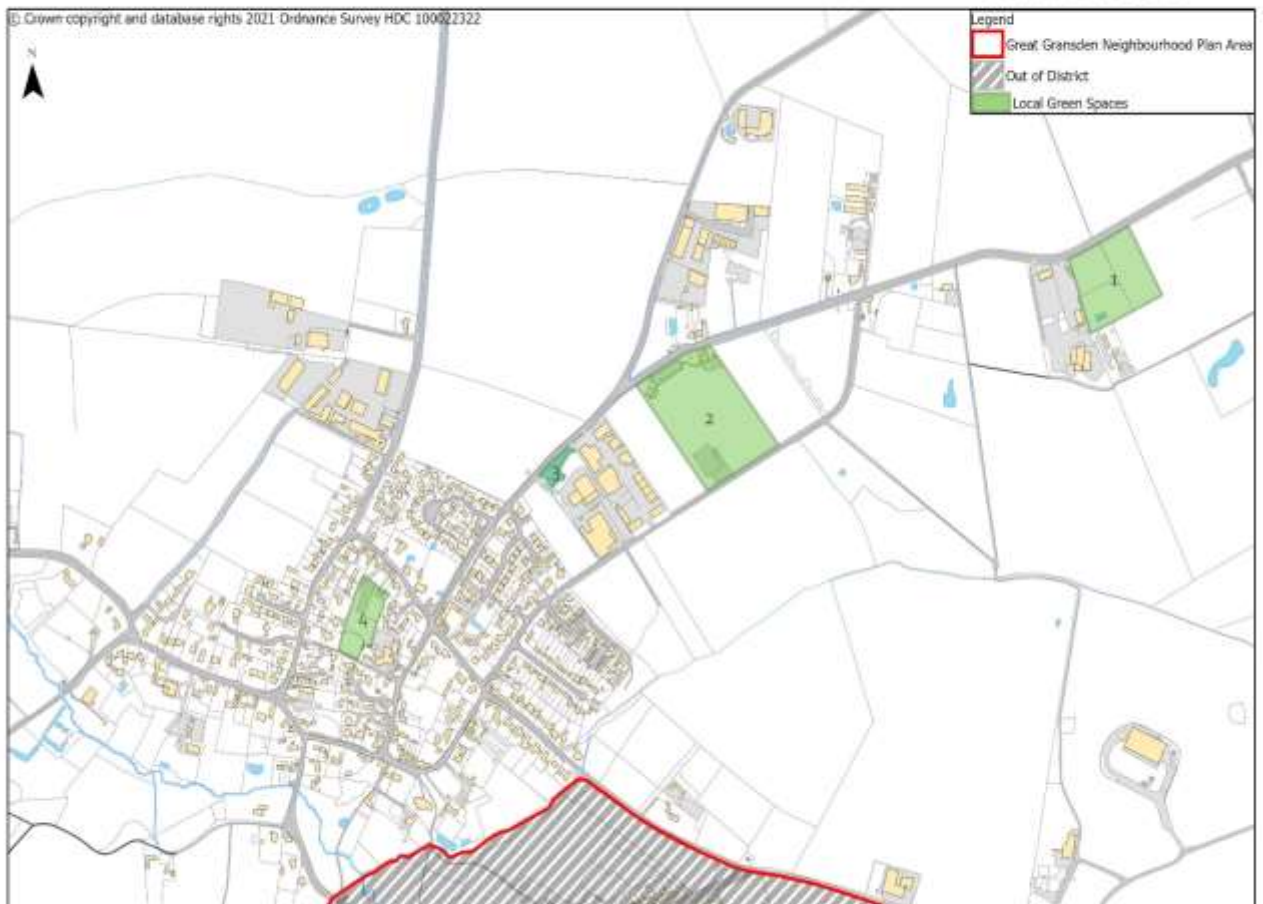


Figure 10: Local green spaces

Great Gransden Other Valued Green Spaces

Scale: 1:7,000

Date: 29/11/2022

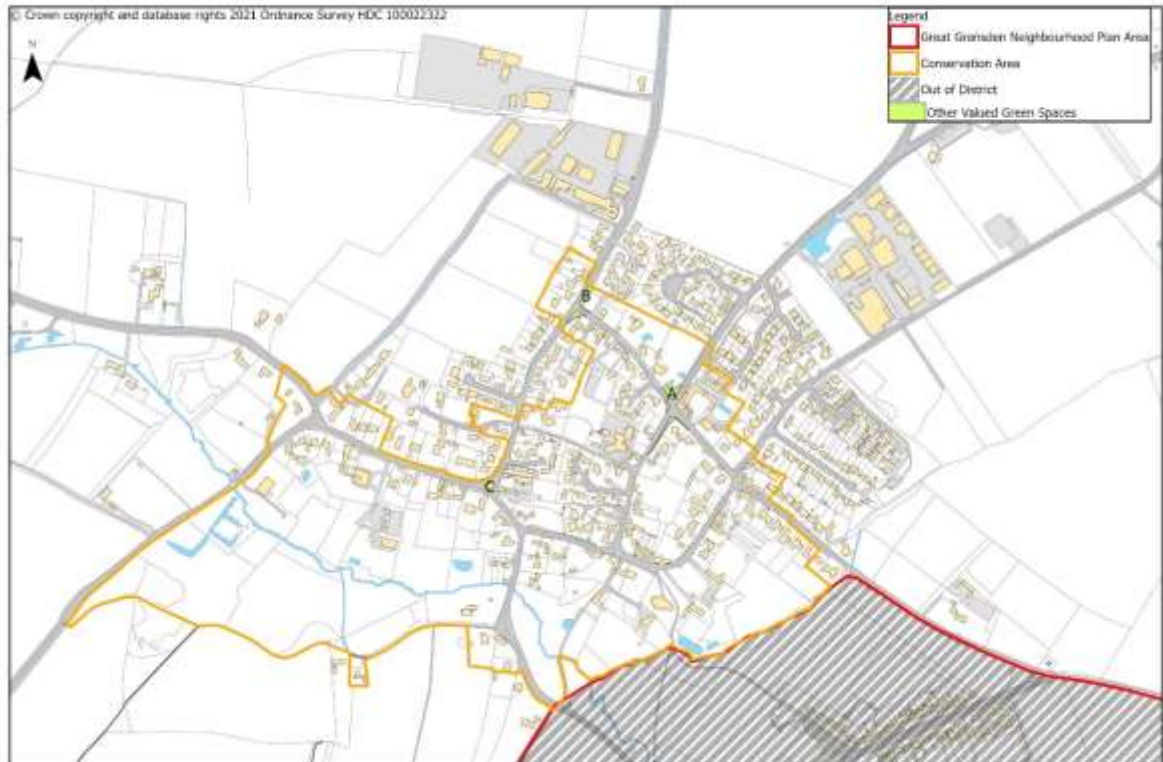


Figure 11: Other Valued Green Spaces

7.7.6 There are no community action plans associated with policy G7.

Policy G8 – Development and Open Space Requirements

Policy context and rationale

7.8 The NPPF 2021 allows local planning authorities to plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of open space, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation and to retain and enhance landscapes

7.8.1 In terms of publicly accessible open space, the following shortfalls have been identified during the initial public engagement phase detailed in 1.3

- Publicly accessible informal open space. There is an identified lack of public open space
- Dog walking opportunities. There is a lack of open space and publicly accessible rural paths providing dog walking opportunities
- Poor access to the countryside which surrounds the village.

- Circular walks from the village are particularly important, to help relieve the pressure on the woods.

7.8.2 This conclusion is supported by other earlier studies. As part of the Local Plan evidence base, a Sports and Leisure Facilities Strategy 2016-21 was produced. This finds that whilst Great Gransden residents have good access to playing fields, they have no access to amenity space or other informal provision. This remains the case today. With respect to dog walking opportunities, under local byelaw, the existing public open green spaces (the sportsfield, the playing field, Mill Weir and the Allotments) do not allow dog walking. As a result, many residents resort to walking dogs at the Waresley and Gransden Woods Reserve. However, as discussed in paragraph 7.6.5 in this plan, the Wildlife Trust have expressed concern with respect to dog walking activity undermining the conservation goals at this SSSI. See paragraph 7.6.5.

7.8.3 Local Plan Policy LP3 Green Infrastructure requires development proposals to incorporate open/green space in accordance with the Council's Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document 2011. This document requires provision of land for additional informal open space on schemes of 10 or more dwellings.

Policy intent

7.8.4 The purpose of Policy G8 is to establish the priorities with regard to open space provision as part of new schemes. It is not the intention of the policy to undermine delivery of necessary on-site play or open space infrastructure that is designed-in or triggered by particular schemes but to complement these.

7.8.5 **Linked Parish Council action/commitment: CAP 4** - To complement Policy G8, GGPC will aim to work with landowners and the community to identify a suitable location for a new open space close to the village centre.

Policy G8 – Development and Open Space Requirements

All development schemes will be expected to contribute (subject to Paragraph 57 of the NPPF, LP 4 of the Local Plan (Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery) and the Developer Contributions SPD (2011) (or any successor documents) to the provision of open space in the parish in terms of both quality and quantity having regard to the following locally identified priorities:

- New informal open space close to (within half a mile from the Village Hall) the village centre providing an alternative destination to Gransden Woods
- Improved access into the countryside for informal recreation, walking, wildlife enjoyment, countryside relaxation
- The creation of new routes and spaces where residents can walk, ride or cycle safely, including dog walking and also including horse riding

Policy G9 – Public Rights of Way

Policy context and rationale:

- 7.9 A related common concern shared by many residents is the lack of access or difficulty of access to public rights of way (PROW)⁴ and permissive paths from the built-up environment of Great Gransden into the open countryside. There are a number of public rights of way in and around the parish, as shown on Figure 12, below - there are few networks, few opportunities for circular walks and not many of the public rights of way have access points from the edge of the village. (Figure 13 shows the PROWs in a larger area centred on The Gransdens; in both figures, the public highways are not highlighted, just the public footpaths and the bridleways.) As an example, there is a public right of way from Little Gransden Lane in the south of the village which leads towards Gransden Wood but there is no official access point into the wood at the northern end. However, the wood is a popular outdoor recreation resource for villagers, so many villagers drive to the woods instead, as the public access points are quite remote from the village.
- 7.9.1 Villagers feel there are only limited opportunities for dog owners/carers to walk their dogs near the village, so many walks will begin and end with a car journey.
- 7.9.2 Other than the PROWs there are limited publicly accessible footpaths. Expanding accessibility by establishment of permissive footpaths could greatly increase access to the countryside and relieve the pressure on the established footpaths. This would require agreement with private landowners.
- 7.9.3 Due to their importance to well-being, it is important that the existing public rights of way and their amenity value are protected. Existing PROWs should be maintained to an appropriate standard, allowing easy use. Where a development proposal is near to an existing public right of way or permissive path which provides access to the open countryside, opportunities to link the development in with that network should be taken. Where there are no or limited nearby public rights of way providing access to the countryside, consideration should be given to how the development itself could deliver or contribute towards enhanced access to outdoor recreation space.

Linked Parish Council action/commitment: CAP 5 - To complement Policy G9, GGPC will support a community-led action to start initial dialogue with and then to work with landowners to identify improved access into the countryside via permissive footpaths and permissive bridleways.

Policy intent:

- 7.9.4 The purpose of this policy is to highlight to developers the existing network of public rights of way, to protect this network (and its amenity value) and require future proposals to either link in with this network and/or explore opportunities for creating new links.

⁴ For a definition of various types of public right of way, see the following article on the Land Registry's website: <https://www.landregistry-titledeeds.co.uk/frequently-asked-questions/information/public-rights-of-way.asp>

Policy G9 – Public Rights of Way Network

The existing PROW should be protected or enhanced.

Any new development on or adjacent to an existing Public Right of Way must:

1. consider the appearance of the proposal from the Right of Way or Permissive Path, and incorporate green landscaping to reduce any visual impacts, and
2. provide links to the network in and around the village.

Enhancements or extensions to the PROW network - for example through improving accessibility or connectivity - will be encouraged where this does not result in harm to ecology or landscape character, and may be required where a development is likely to lead to a significant increase in the usage of the network.

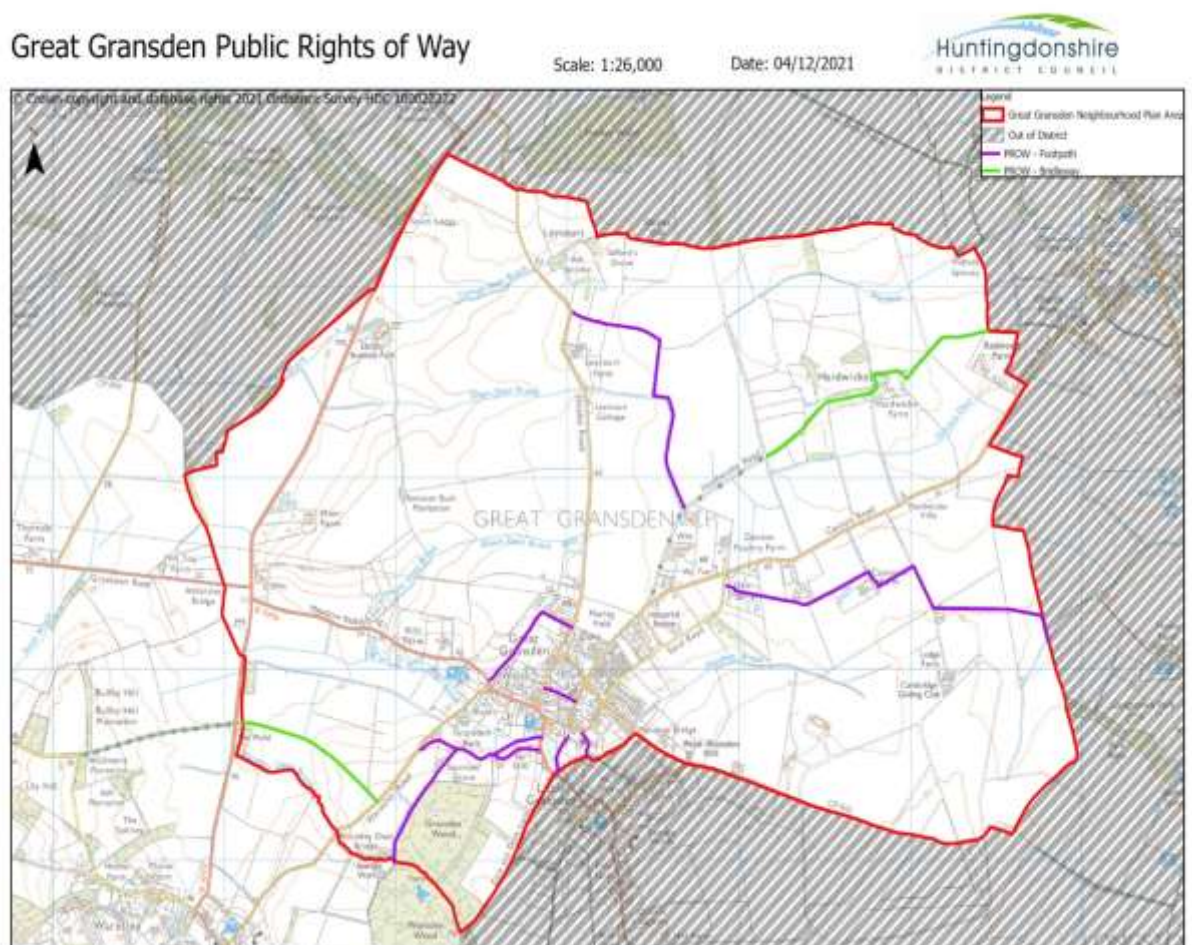


Figure 12: Public rights of way in The Gransdens

Public Rights of Way

Scale: 1:35,000

Date: 04/12/2021

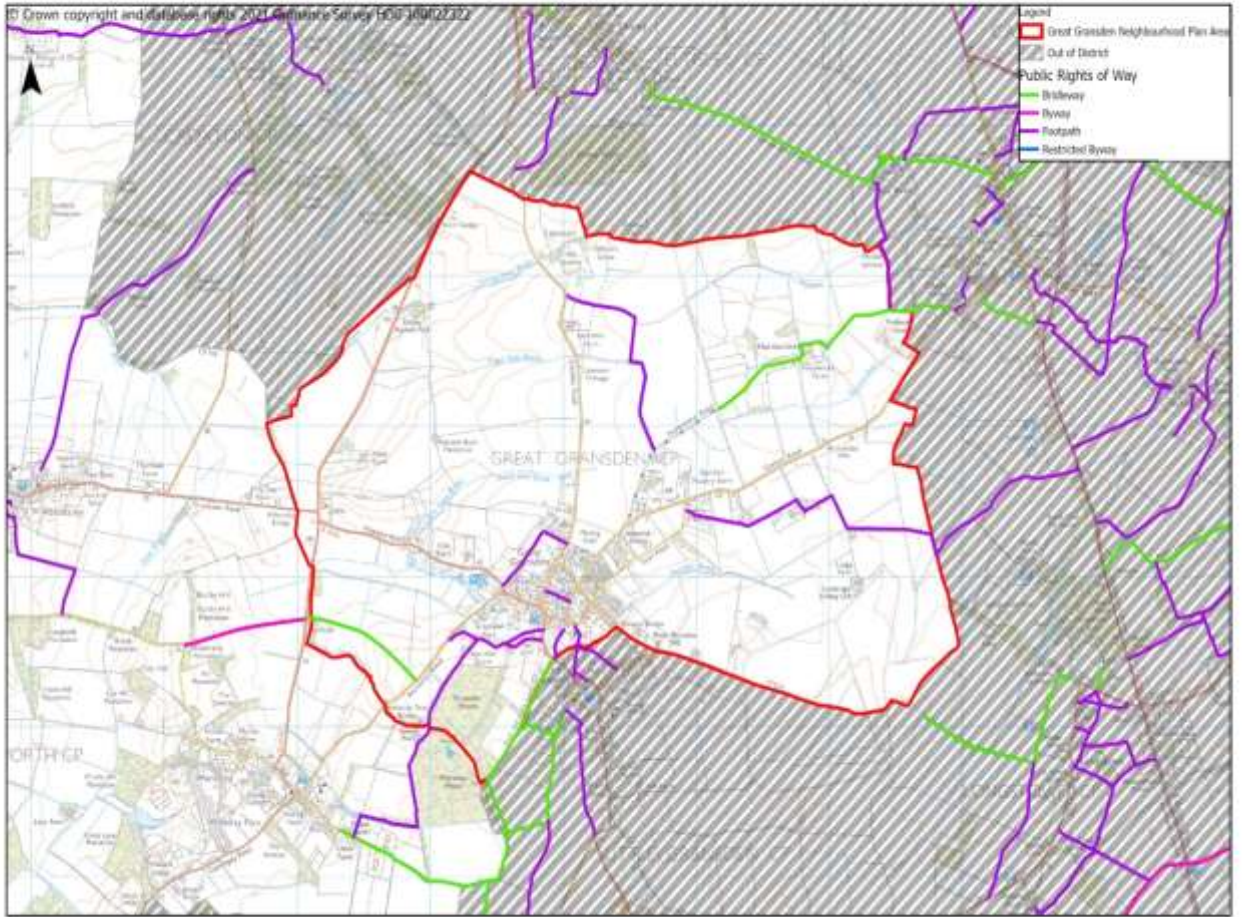


Figure 13: Public rights of way in The Gransdens and neighbouring villages

Transport and Road Safety Improvements

Core Objectives:

- **Objective 12 A prioritised programme of improvements will be implemented, to enhance road safety for all road users, particularly pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.**
- **Objective 13 Cycleways, footpaths, and pavements on key routes around the village, and to and from the village will be established and upgraded.**
- **Objective 14 New development will allow for safe movement of vehicles and non-motorised users in and around the village.**

Policies G10 and G11 – Policy context and rationale.

7.10 Car movements to and through the village are relatively light during the day, but high at peak periods. The morning peak consists of users going to work or school, people dropping off children at the school, people coming to work in the village and people using the village as a through route on their way to work in Cambridge – which is often to avoid traffic problems on the A roads. The evening peak consists of people leaving the industrial estates from 4pm onwards, users returning home from work, and others cutting through the village on their way home from work. Middle Street is the subject of a 20mph speed limit.

- Bus movements to and through the village are very light and consist mostly of school buses.
- Heavy goods vehicle movements consist mainly of deliveries to and from the industrial sites, vehicles delivering to building sites around the village, vehicles visiting the weighbridge on the airfield via Mill Road, and vehicles using the village as a through route. Many of the village roads are too narrow for two HGVs to pass each other without going onto the verges or pavements. Junctions that cause particular difficulties are the Sand Road/Mill Road/East Street crossroads and the East Street/Caxton Road crossroads. HGVs have difficulty manoeuvring around the roundabout at the Crow Tree St/Church St/ Middle St junction which lies on an HGV route to the Caxton Road Industrial area. Vehicles are seen going the wrong way around the roundabout.
- A common concern expressed by residents is the difficulties that pedestrians and cyclists face in moving around the village and into the countryside. Whilst the village is relatively compact, the pedestrian route is not safe in places. Many of the roads either lack a pavement altogether or lack an adequately wide path. Road crossing points are often on blind corners and junctions.
- Irrespective of new developments, it is important to establish a prioritised improvement plan for road safety in Great Gransden.

Policy G10 – A walkable village and reducing village car use.

Policy intent

7.10.1 The pedestrian environment is poor. Investments will be sought to improve cycle way network.

7.10.2 The quality of the pedestrian environment should be a key consideration for all planning proposals. All future residents of the village should be able to walk and cycle safely to village facilities including the shop, the school, the bus stop, employment areas and recreation facilities.

7.10.3 Linked Parish Council action/commitment: CAP 6

GGPC will:

- support the development of a prioritised improvement plan for road safety in Great Gransden for all road users, including traffic calming, pedestrian safety, pavement widening, reduced parking on pavements, new pavements, parking and support fundraising for implementation.
- support a community-led action plan to encourage reduced car usage within the village, especially for short trips; and,
- work with neighbouring parishes, the District and the County to explore the potential for a new cycle route to Cambourne, St Neots and Cambridge to link in with similar networks in neighbouring parishes.

Policy G10 – A walkable village and reducing village car use

New multiple-dwelling development proposals, and new build proposals providing places of employment must enable residents to walk and cycle along safe and direct routes into the village centre to access services. Where pavements or routes are not in place, provision shall be made as required by the District Council in consultation with the local highway authority as part of the proposed development. Attempts should be made in development proposals to improve existing pavements serving the development to make them more accessible for all users including children and those using mobility aids.

Policy G11 – Roads and new development

Policy intent

- 7.11 It is important for safety reasons that all dwellings are accessible by emergency vehicles – ambulances, fire appliances and police cars. The GGNP seeks to ensure that any roads are wide enough to ensure emergency vehicles and service vehicles (e.g. refuse collection vehicles) have safe access even if all designated on-street parking slots are occupied.

Policy G11 – Roads and new development

Where development proposals involve the creation of new roads, these must be wide enough to allow for two-way traffic (unless one-way movement of traffic has been deliberately designed-in as part of the scheme-wide movement strategy addressing all users across the scheme).

The design and layout of roads should enable ease of access for service vehicles which should have ready access to all properties and open areas when all on-street parking areas are occupied. This will not prejudice the introduction of low order shared surface private drives and mews streets if required,

All roads in new developments should be to adoptable standard to ensure the maintenance of access and safety standards.

Community Facilities, Leisure and Infrastructure

Core Objectives:

- **Objective New development will be supported by improvements in village infrastructure**
- **Objective 16 CIL spending by GGPC will reflect local priorities as expressed through the GGNP and through ongoing liaison with the community following adoption of the plan.**
- **Objective 17 Community-led projects will be identified to move towards net zero carbon.**

Infrastructure: Existing, Shortfalls and Aspirations for the Future.

7.11.1 Great Gransden has a wealth of clubs and societies. There is a strong sense of community and volunteering capacity is high. The parish has a shop/post office, a primary school, a pub, the Reading Room (village hall) and a church. It also has two playgrounds (one of which is currently unusable), and a large sportsfield providing grassed football pitches, and hosting the tennis club which has three floodlit courts. Allotments are situated approximately one mile from the village.

7.11.2 Engagement work on the GGNP has identified that the residents are concerned with existing shortfalls in community infrastructure and how any new development may impact upon this.

7.11.3 The following shortfalls in Great Gransden have been identified during the initial public engagement phase detailed in paragraph 1.3

- Very poor public bus service meaning the population is heavily dependent on the private car. Even secondary school children are predominantly dependent on being driven to school.⁵
- A need for improved indoor recreational facilities.
- A need for improvements to the children's playgrounds particularly some repair to existing equipment, the replacement of an aging roundabout with a wheelchair accessible roundabout and also some other special needs equipment.
- A lack of informal open space in and around the village. This is supported by ongoing work with the Wildlife Trust in relation to Gransden Woods. See paragraph 7.6.5.
- A need to upgrade the clubhouse facilities on the Sportsfield to provide an improved standard of hygiene and safeguarding.

⁵ Great Gransden secondary school aged children are in the catchment of Comberton or Longsands St Neots.

Policy G12 – Great Gransden Infrastructure Priorities

Policy context and rationale:

- 7.12 The NPPF 2021 seeks to allow planning authorities to plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.
- 7.12.1 Residents consider that any increase in the number of dwellings in Great Gransden should be accompanied by improvements in community facilities, leisure and infrastructure and these should be decided on the basis of local priorities.
- 7.12.2 The GGNP seeks to set out the infrastructure that the parish requires when new development comes forward. How infrastructure improvements are delivered will vary from case to case. For some proposals, there will be the need for a Section 106 agreement to be tied to a planning consent to ensure necessary improvements e.g. improving a road junction which can make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms. A number of the planning policies in this section refer to such requirements.
- 7.12.3 Low and unreliable broadband speed is a problem in parts of Great Gransden. Significant improvements could be achieved with the implementation of full fibre broadband.
- 7.12.4 The Reading Room and garden is a popular venue for small events and club meetings. It is small, with no room for a stage and can only accommodate up to 60 people. As a listed building remodelling is not straightforward but the Reading Room Management Committee is examining the potential to extend in order to accommodate a greater variety of activity and larger groups and maintain its viability. Such a project would require substantial funding.
- 7.12.5 Great Gransden has no natural gas, so households are dependent on oil, LPG or electric heating systems. Some dwellings have installed ground or air source heating systems. Great Gransden has an outdoor playground that is beginning to show its age. Most of the facilities are dated and require constant attention to ensure their safe use by children. The updating of these facilities is seen as a priority by GGPC.

Policy intent

- 7.12.6 This policy highlights the priorities for financial contributions to direct new and improved infrastructure, where it can be locally determined. Policy G7 – ‘Gransden Woods’, Policy G9 ‘Development and Open Space Requirements’ and Policy G10 – ‘A walkable village and reducing village car use’ all include references to a possibility of infrastructure improvements being sought as part of specific development proposals. The intention of this policy is to articulate a general principle that for all development proposals there may be requirements for financial contributions or direct provision of new infrastructure where this is necessary to make the development acceptable and where this is directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Many development proposals coming forward in the plan will be subject to CIL contributions (as required by HDC). The CIL contribution will be fully taken into account before determining whether additional contributions are required to make a scheme acceptable.

The current levy (revision date 2019) of 15% capped at £100/dwelling (indexed for inflation), paid to parish each year will rise to 25% uncapped when the Neighbourhood Plan is finally 'made'. These funds can be spent on community infrastructure projects.

Policy G12 – Great Gransden Infrastructure Priorities.

Financial contributions or direct provision of new infrastructure will be sought to secure infrastructure improvements made necessary by development proposals. Use of developer contributions that are locally determined will be directed to any of the following priorities:

- Improvements to the children's playground
- Improvements to the Reading Room
- Improvements to the Playing Field carpark in the centre of the village
- Improvements to indoor facilities provided at Great Gransden Sportsfield*
- Improvements to the Sportsfield carpark
- Installation of new pavements and improvements to the existing pavements and pedestrian environment within the village of Great Gransden subject to a prioritised road safety improvement plan
- Implementation of traffic calming measures
- Creation of new informal open space in and around Great Gransden*
- Extending or improving the public rights of way network and permissive footpaths so as to increase access to the countryside*
- Creation of a cycle route to access neighbouring parishes and linking up with wider cycle network and to provide access to public transport
- Habitat protection and enhancement measures along the valley of the Gransden Brook as shown on Figure 5 (page 18)*
- Improvements to the communications and broadband capabilities*
- Evaluation of ground and air source heat projects*
- Enhanced opportunities for education for all ages*

Priorities marked with an asterisk * will require community leadership, with support from GGPC

Health and Education

Core Objectives:

- **Objective 18** The village primary school will maintain its very high standards of education and its strong community ethos through any period of housing growth. It will be well-resourced and financially secure.
- **Objective 19** Residents in the village will have easy access to good educational opportunities for all age groups – pre-school through to adult learning.
- **Objective 20** Health provision in the village will be restored and expanded

Policy G13 - Barnabas Oley Primary School and parish pre-school provision

Policy context and rationale:

7.13 As Great Gransden has a lot of family housing, access to good pre-school and after-school provision is essential, both for the social and intellectual development of infants and for the convenience of working parents. There is currently excellent provision in the village of a playgroup, a nursery and an after-school/school holiday club but they all have limited space. All these are managed as businesses or not-for-profit enterprises and are fee-paying.

7.13.1 Barnabas Oley Primary School, located in the very centre of Great Gransden, is one of the prized facilities of the village, rated Outstanding by Ofsted (2019) and Excellent by SIAMS (the Schools Inspectorate for Anglican and Methodist Schools) (2019). The community wishes for the primary school to thrive through the plan period, and it is important that every primary aged child in the Gransdens and wider catchment area should have the opportunity to attend the school.

7.13.2 Housing development in the village may have an impact on the resourcing and character of Barnabas Oley Primary School. The school can accommodate around 150 pupils in its current buildings and configuration of classrooms. Revenue funding for schools is pupil-related, so growth in pupil numbers is financially beneficial and a fall in numbers would have a negative financial impact. Demographic projections suggest modest growth in primary-age pupil numbers over the next eight years (less than 10%)⁶ but the completed and committed housing developments in the plan period, of some 87 additional dwellings (see 7.1.2) could take this growth over the 150 mark. If pupil numbers were to expand beyond 180 a full capital appraisal would be necessary in order to determine the best solution for the school.

Policy Intent

7.13.3 Barnabas Oley Primary School is situated on Middle Street in the centre of the village. It is conveniently situated adjacent to the playing field with playground, the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA), and close to the village shop and St Bartholomew's church. Pupils and staff from the Gransdens are able to walk to school; those from outside the village generally arrive by car. This can add to traffic congestion at the start and end of the school day. As highlighted in paragraph 7.11.3 a very poor public bus service means that the population is heavily dependent on the private car. Middle Street is

⁶ According to the ONS National population projections: 2020-based interim.

narrow, with 20mph speed limit, and is the main thoroughfare for traffic including HGVs for the Industrial Estates. Pavements on both sides are present for only part of its length. There is a layby which is used as a bus stop and for parking. Additional traffic calming is being considered to improve road safety for pedestrians. Road safety would be a consideration if the school were to grow significantly.

Policy G13 – Barnabas Oley Primary School and parish pre-school provision

All development proposals which create additional primary school or pre-school demand on the parish will be assessed for this impact and required, as per the NPPF, Local Plan, Policy LP 4 (Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery) and the Developer Contributions SPD (2011) (or any successor documents), to contribute to pre-school and primary school provision accordingly.

Proposals which will help sustain and enhance pre-school or primary school infrastructure in the parish (for example through housing which is targeted at younger families) will be considered favourably subject to meeting other policy criteria in this plan.

Proposals that seek to extend or alter Barnabas Oley Primary School to meet changing demands or provide additional educational facilities required to accommodate growing pupil numbers will be supported in principle, provided there are no adverse impacts on road safety, congestion, the appearance of the conservation area and still maintaining a high standard of residential amenity for existing and future residents.

Secondary Schooling

7.13.4 The majority of secondary school-aged children in the parish attend Comberton Village College. The County Council designates two schools as catchment schools for the parish - Longsands Academy in St Neots and Comberton Village College - but the Local Authority only provides free public transport to Longsands Academy from Great Gransden. As a consequence, many secondary-aged children living in the parish either travel by private transport to Comberton Village College or pay for a place on a non-funded school bus. It is not within the scope of the GGNP to secure a funded public transport service from the parish to Comberton Village College as this is a matter for the County Council as the Local Authority. However, the GGNP has identified two **Parish Council commitments/actions**:

- GGPC to explore with the Local Authority the possibility of instating free travel as the cost of such journeys has a financial implication for families and could be disadvantaging people from lower incomes; and,
- GGPC to explore with stakeholders including the school, neighbouring parishes and parents the possibility of operating a locally run and part resident-funded/part subsidised secondary school bus.*
- GGPC to collaborate with the school to monitor the impact of growth and student numbers.

Adult Learning Opportunities

7.13.5 The parish is well-provided with village societies, which are a highly valued aspect of Great Gransden village life. The aspiration is that village societies are able to offer more learning opportunities to parishioners, and that village societies themselves have better access to improved meeting facilities. Current meeting venues in the parish include the Reading Room, the Primary School and the Lighthouse Café/Baptist Chapel. Meetings are also often held in the village pub. The owners or

committees responsible for these facilities will be encouraged to provide greater access to community groups as far as is practical for them to do so.

7.13.6 It is not within the scope of the GGNP to deliver these aspirations as they are not land use matters. The GGNP therefore identifies the following **Parish Council commitments**:

- GGPC to work alongside village societies to see how learning opportunities for all parishioners can be expanded*
- GGPC to work alongside owners of buildings and committees responsible for managing community spaces to see how greater access to existing meeting rooms and community buildings can be best provided.

Health Provision

7.13.7 There is currently no GP surgery in the parish. Residents must therefore travel to Bourn or Gamlingay to receive GP care. The Bourn Surgery used to run a weekly Gransden Clinic to enable less mobile residents to access GP services more easily but this was suspended in September 2019. It is recognised that more suitable premises would be required by the general practitioners in order for a consultation clinic to be restored to Great Gransden. The GGNP therefore identifies the following **Parish Council commitment**:

- GGPC to discuss with GP surgeries at Bourn and Gamlingay to try to identify and agree suitable premises for appropriate consultation clinics to be held in Great Gransden.

Health and Education Infrastructure.

Development can place additional demands upon infrastructure, the environment and the social sustainability of a community, and it is therefore essential to mitigate these impacts by providing adequate infrastructure and other services to meet economic, social and environmental needs. To this end GGPC will lean heavily on the HDC Local Plan Development Strategy Section LP4 – Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery and on HDC Developer Contributions SPD, which sets out their policy for securing developer contributions from new developments that require planning permission.

8 Monitoring the Planning Policies

The monitoring will be summarised in a report produced by the GGPC annually and published on the GGPC website.

GGPC will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to monitor delivery. Monitoring will include:

- how the policies are being applied to shape decisions on planning applications (development management)
- Whether projects and/or actions identified are being achieved
- level of monies raised through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and how such monies are being used
- whether plan aims are being achieved
- changes to national and local policy
- changes in the local area

9 Community Action Plans

- 9.1 Several of the action areas in the GGNP will be delivered by a combination of Planning Policies supported by Community Action Plans. These Community Action Plans are listed below, with the rationale having been detailed in Section 7 (Planning policies), where they are flagged as Parish Council commitments.
- 9.2 Community Action Plans (CAPs) will be community-led projects, sponsored and supported by GGPC.

Policy Theme	Policies	Related Community Action Plans
Spatial Strategy	Policy G1 – A Built-Up Area Boundary Strategy for Great Gransden	<i>There are no community action plans associated with policy G1.</i>
	Policy G2 – Affordable Housing on rural Exception Sites	CAP 1 The Parish Council will monitor the local housing needs and when appropriate explore the option for a local Exception Site.
A rural and historic parish	Policy G3 – Local Character and Design	<i>There are no community action plans associated with policy G3.</i>
	Policy G4 – Development, Landscape Character and Valued Views	<i>There are no community action plans associated with policy G4.</i>
	Policy G5 – Conserving and enhancing Great Gransden’s Conservation Area	<i>There are no community action plans associated with policy G5.</i>
The Natural Environment	Policy G6 – Protecting and enhancing biodiversity in the parish including at Gransden Woods	CAP 2 Outside the scope of the GGNP, GGPC will aim to work with both landowners of the Waresley and Gransden Woods site to find ways to effectively protect their woodland and continue to seek alternative outdoor recreation provision to serve the parishioners. CAP 3 GGPC will support a community-led initiative to recognise an arc shaped corridor shown on the map in Figure 5, page 18 above, along the valley of Gransden Brook and encourage landowners to target this for habitat protection and enhancement.
Open spaces	Policy G7 – Local Green Spaces and Other Valued Green Spaces	<i>There are no community action plans associated with policy G7.</i>

	Policy G8 – Development and Open Space Requirements	<u>CAP 4</u> To complement Policy G8, GGPC will aim to work with landowners and the community to identify a suitable location for a new open space close to the village centre.
	Policy G9 - Public Rights of Way	<u>CAP 5</u> To complement Policy G9, GGPC will support a community-led action to start initial dialogue with and then to work with landowners to identify improved access into the countryside via permissive footpaths and permissive bridleways.
Transport	Policy G10 – A walkable village and reducing village car use	<u>CAP 6</u> GGPC will: Support the development of a prioritised improvement plan for road safety in Great Gransden for all road users, including traffic calming, pedestrian safety, pavement widening, reduced parking on pavements, new pavements, parking and support fundraising for implementation. Support a community-led action plan to encourage reduced car usage within the village, especially for short trips; and, Work with neighbouring parishes, the District and the County to explore the potential for a new cycle route to Cambourne, St Neots and Cambridge to link in with similar networks in neighbouring parishes. Similarly, new route provision should be sought for horse riders and all non-motorised users.
	Policy G11 – Roads and new development	
Community Facilities, Leisure and Infrastructure	Policy G12 – Financial Contributions for Great Gransden Infrastructure Priorities.	Financial contributions or direct provision of new infrastructure will be sought to secure infrastructure improvements made necessary by development proposals. Use of developer contributions that are can be locally determined will be directed to any of the following priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to the children’s playground • Improvements to the Reading Room • Improvements to the Playing Field carpark in the centre of the village • Improvements to indoor facilities provided at Great Gransden Sportsfield*

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to the Sportsfield carpark • Installation of new pavements and improvements to the existing pavements and pedestrian environment within the village of Great Gransden subject to a prioritised road safety improvement plan • Implementation of traffic calming measures • Creation of new informal open space in and around Great Gransden* • Extending or improving the public rights of way network and permissive footpaths so as to increase access to the countryside* • Creation of a cycle route to access neighbouring parishes and linking up with wider cycle network and to provide access to public transport • Habitat protection and enhancement measures along the valley of the Gransden Brook as shown on Figure 5 (page 18, above)* • Improvements to the communications and broadband capabilities* • Evaluation of ground and air source heat projects* • Enhanced opportunities for education for all ages* <p>Priorities marked with an asterisk * will require community leadership, with support from GGPC</p>
Health and Education	Policy G13 – Barnabas Oley Primary School and parish pre-school provision	GGPC to explore with the Local Authority the possibility of instating free travel as the cost of such journeys has a financial implication for families and could be disadvantaging people from lower incomes; and, GGPC to explore with stakeholders including the school, neighbouring parishes and parents the possibility of

		<p>operating a locally run and part resident-funded/part subsidised secondary school bus*. GGPC to collaborate with the school to monitor the impact of growth and student numbers.</p> <p>GGPC to work alongside village societies to see how learning opportunities for all parishioners can be expanded;*</p> <p>GGPC to work alongside owners of buildings and committees responsible for managing community spaces to see how greater access to existing meeting rooms and community buildings can be best provided.</p> <p>GGPC to discuss with GP surgeries at Bourn and Gamlingay to try to identify and agree suitable premises for appropriate consultation clinics to be held in Great Gransden.</p> <p>Priorities marked with an asterisk * will require community involvement, with support from GGPC</p>
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MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES AND PANELS SINCE THE LAST ORDINARY MEETING

Agenda Item 13

MARCH 2023

1. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH)

- ❖ Local Development Scheme March 2023
- ❖ Draft Settlement hierarchy Methodology 2023
- ❖ Draft Land Availability Assessment Methodology
- ❖ Call for Sites
- ❖ Huntingdonshire Place Strategy
- ❖ Corporate Plan 2023-2028
- ❖ UK Shared Prosperity Fund Update
- ❖ Market Towns Programme - Spring Update 2022-23
- ❖ St Neots Market Town Programme (Old Falcon Inn and Market Square) (Exempt Item)
- ❖ Cabinet Feedback: Overview and Scrutiny Review of Representatives on Outside Bodies and Internal Drainage Boards
- ❖ Work Programme

2. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS)

- ❖ Warm Spaces
- ❖ Health Inequalities Project – Tackling Prevention through Community Engagement
- ❖ Work Programme

20. DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- ❖ 4 Applications Requiring Reference to Development Management Committee
- ❖ Appeal Decisions

21. CABINET

- ❖ Local Development Scheme March 2023
- ❖ Draft Settlement Hierarchy Methodology 2023
- ❖ Call for Sites
- ❖ Draft Land Availability Assessment Methodology
- ❖ Local Plans Advisory Group (LPAG) Terms of Reference
- ❖ Huntingdonshire Place Strategy
- ❖ Corporate Plan 2023-2028
- ❖ UK Shared Prosperity Fund Update
- ❖ Market Towns Programme – Spring Update
- ❖ St Neots Market Town Programme (Old Falcon and Market Square) (Exempt Item)

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