

Corporate Plan 2023/2027

Welcome to our four-year plan.

Our four-year plan provides a high-level strategic framework for the decisions we take. It describes our most important aims and the priority activities that we will focus on delivering. It will be implemented through service plans and key strategy and policy documents, such as the Hart Local Plan.

The Plan will give you a strong sense of our priorities and focus.

Our district is a diverse, attractive and a good place to live and work. We have deep-seated Hampshire traditions, but we also share boundaries with both Surrey and Berkshire which means that we have local economic and housing links with the Blackwater Valley as well as a strong association with the north Hampshire M3/A303 corridor. We also share borders with East Hampshire and have much traffic passing north-south from Alton and Farnham to the M3.

We are identified by the Government as being one of the least deprived districts within the country, but we are a district of extremes of wealth and 'hidden' inequality. We also have an aging community which in the last 10 years has seen a 30% increase in people aged sixty-five and over.

We are suffering the impacts of climate change. In response we have declared a climate emergency and pledged to make Hart district carbon neutral by 2040, whilst bringing forward an ambitious target to make all areas directly under the control of the Council carbon neutral by 2035.

Communities, residents, businesses, and partners must achieve this too. If not, the impact of climate break down will be felt most by the vulnerable in our district.

Our top priority is working with you, and our partners, to deliver services right first time. By using our council resources wisely, we will support employment opportunities. We will also ensure the delivery of sustainable homes that people can afford to live in, and which provide a foundation both for good health as well as addressing the climate emergency.

Building our resilience as a community over the next 4 years is important to us if we want to weather the storm of potentially deepening inequality, climate breakdown and the cost-of-living crisis.

Doing what we can locally with what we have is essential. As your council leaders, we set out here what you can expect of us and how you can help us deliver the best quality services.

Our focus for the next four years in partnership with you is:

Planet – make all areas directly under the control of the Council carbon neutral by 2035 and make Hart a carbon neutral district by 2040.

People – fair treatment for all, help for those in need, and a sustainable economy that makes Hart a great place to live, work and enjoy.

Place - delivering warmer, better homes in sustainable locations that people can afford to live in.

This will be underpinned by providing a **resilient and financially sound Council**.

Planet - Sustainability and Climate Emergency: A carbon neutral and climate resilient council by 2035

Following the successful adoption of Hart's Climate Change Action Plan, we have declared a climate emergency, which commits us to putting the reduction of CO₂ in the atmosphere at the front and centre of all policies and formal decision making, particularly Planning.

We will lead our community to carbon neutrality. Tackling climate change is central to all our activities. We will continue to support a targeted and costed Sustainability and Climate Action Plan with the ambition of becoming a carbon neutral and climate-resilient council by 2035 and District by 2040.

We will:

- Use our influence to lead our district to being carbon neutral by 2040.
- Ensure the Council plays its part by reducing our greenhouse gas emissions to carbon neutral by 2035.
- Increase the energy efficiency of Council managed assets.
- Support climate mitigation schemes such as flood alleviation, and the delivery of low or carbon neutral electricity generation.
- Put sustainability at the heart of our local planning processes to include requiring the delivery of energy efficient, climate resilient and adaptable housing.
- Provide measures for adapting to the impacts of climate change by reducing the risk of flooding by directing new development away from areas at risk of flooding, and using opportunities offered by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding from all sources.
- Protect and enhance the District's natural environment, landscape character, water environment and biodiversity, including ensuring appropriate mitigation is in place for new development to avoid adverse impacts on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA).
- Improve the energy efficiency of homes including supporting low-carbon heating and insulation technologies for those residents who are on low incomes which in turn will help to reduce heating costs.
- Encourage more cycling and walking in the district by extending the Green Grid network and working with Hampshire County Council and others to improve infrastructure and reduce barriers to walking and cycling.
- Increase the electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

- Increase biodiversity, wildflower and pollinator opportunities through cutting pesticide use on council managed land and ambitious programme of carbon capture, through planting and rewilding.
- Improve our public open spaces.

Four year goals:

- Establish a clear path to being carbon neutral through the adoption of a costed Carbon Neutral Pathway Plan.
- Provide electric charging points within our car parks.
- Extend the Green Grid through adopting and implemented, in partnership with Hampshire County Council, a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.
- Working in consultation with our lead partners to prepare, update and refresh management plans for the nature reserves, heathlands and commons that we manage.
- Prepare and implement a long-term vision for the Council's countryside sites and Sites of Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGs).

People – fair treatment for all, help for those in need, and a sustainable economy that makes Hart a great place to live and work

We need to continue our people-centred approach which directs wealth back into local economy and places control and benefits in the hands of people. We will work with our key local partners such as Hampshire County Council, the voluntary sector, local businesses, partnerships such as the Community Safety Partnership, police, NHS, and education providers to provide more local sustainability.

We will:

- Make our tax fairer by supporting those on the lowest incomes.
- Pursue the four key priorities identified in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (Prevention – having measures in place to prevent homelessness from happening. Intervention – having targeted support in place for those in crisis. Recovery – having support in place to help to rebuild lives. Partnerships – working together to find effective solutions).
- Consciously consider the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant when delivering key healthcare, housing and education services.
- Increase local employment opportunities by directly promoting and committing ourselves and partners to pay the real living wage.
- Use our power as a public sector body to buy and procure locally, where possible, ensuring best value.
- Supporting those in most need to get through the current cost of living crisis.
- Gain a better understanding and tackle social and health inequalities.
- Nurture safe, supportive, and inclusive communities, taking a joined-up approach to keep communities safe.
- Support local skills and employment.
- Continue our work to prevent homelessness.

Four year goals:

- Keeping council tax support for those on lowest incomes.
- Ensure the full and on-going implementation of the Council's Homelessness Strategy Action Plan.

- Support a vibrant local voluntary sector, which includes continued support funding for Hart Voluntary Action and Citizens Advice, as well as empowering local community support groups through the Hart Lottery platform.
- Ensure the delivery of the Supporting Communities Plan and the Here for Hart Initiative.
- Deliver our pledge to support the Armed Forces community, by attainment of the Ministry of Defence 'Employer Recognition Scheme' [Silver Award](#).
- Support the Hart Food Bank and the Hart Community Pantry initiatives.
- Maintaining the Hart Employment and Skills hub.
- Support Farnborough College of Technology to provide a further and higher education facility within Hart.
- Pursuing the Civic Quarter Regeneration initiative and support the delivery of a refurbished or replacement Harlington.
- Bring forward our ambitious plans to invest in our community with funding through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). To deliver the following:
 - Community and Place
 - The provision of Community Hubs.
 - Feasibility Study - Data mining to better understand the hidden issues within the district.
 - Employment & skills interventions and young person's engagement.
 - Development of the Green Grid Strategy.
 - Supporting Local Businesses
 - Marketing campaigns to attract business/people to invest in Hart.
 - Feasibility Study - Refresh of the Economic Development Strategy.

Place - delivering warmer, better homes in sustainable locations that people can afford to live in.

The home in which we live has a huge influence on the quality of all our lives and health. Access to safe, secure, and affordable housing really is fundamental to supporting wellbeing and creating sustainable communities where people can live and work.

We will:

- Use our Local Plan to support the provision of a diverse range of energy and resource efficient, climate resilient homes. including affordable housing, along with new homes and care accommodation to meet the needs of an ageing population, and homes for other specialist groups.
- Deliver more affordable homes within the district, including in our main villages, and provide homes which support independent living as well as homes for other specialist groups.
- Ensure new development is well designed creating safe, inclusive environments and taking account of character, local distinctiveness and sustainable design principles.
- Deliver the number of new homes required in the district through innovation, modular housing, and developing sustainable infill and other sites within the settlement boundaries as defined in the Local Plan.
- Reduce any reliance on temporary and emergency accommodation.
- Support communities in creating and maintaining up to date Neighbourhood Plans.
- Support Neighbourhood Plan led regeneration initiatives for our town and village centres.
- Support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections.

Four year goals:

- Provide more social rented homes, and more affordable market rented homes for local people and our key workers.
- Support the delivery of community led rural exception sites.
- Keep our Local Plan under review to ensure that it is up to date.

- Undertake a Settlement Capacity and Intensification Study to enable the prioritisation of future opportunities for development, ensuring that we properly research opportunities within our defined towns and villages before building on green fields.
- Support the adaptation or provision of accessible homes for those with physical and additional support needs.
- Ensure that we prioritise the improvement of housing conditions for private and social tenants.

Building a Resilient Council - Your services: getting it right first time and delivering what matters to you

We know how important our services are to you and getting them right matters.

We will:

- Provide the best customer service by focusing on resolving questions and problems first time.
- Solve your issues and questions by being knowledgeable and available through an enhanced and accessible website, by phone, in person, and online.
- Continue to reduce waste, working with our partners and contractors to maintain efficient recycling and refuse services.
- Get our communication and engagement right through regular information sharing and consultation.
- Improve links and partnerships with town and parish councils, neighbouring local authorities, and Hampshire County Council.
- Ensure an effective and transparent planning service, holding developers and our delivery partners accountable for providing infrastructure and affordable housing.
- Work with partners, including the Community Safety Partnership, Hampshire Constabulary, the voluntary sector, and local businesses, to keep Hart a safe place to live, work and enjoy.
- Review current shared and outsourced services to ensure that they are effective.

Four year goals:

- Improved quality of customer contact, outcomes, and satisfaction.
- A supported community where we listen and respond to residents.
- Reduction in waste, increased reuse, and recycling.
- Working with neighbouring councils to share services and reduce costs.
- Ensuring effective use of our assets and to make the council more financially self-sustainable.
- Maintaining an effective CCTV infrastructure.