

APPENDIX A - Lichfield District 2050

Introduction

Lichfield District 2050

When we say, Together We Will... we mean it. This document is a call to action; for everyone.

We cannot achieve and deliver the future we want for the district without you.

So, this strategy seeks a collective commitment to make Lichfield District the most confident, prosperous, active, and green part of the country by 2050; a place which other parts of the United Kingdom aspire to be.

We know this will require hard work and investment, not just from the District Council but from the County Council, from our Town, City and Parish Councils, our partners in the health and emergency services, our vital network of community, charity and third sector organisations who already contribute so much, and importantly from you, our residents.

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Foreword by the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive

This document is a departure from our usual four-yearly cycle of thinking about our priorities. It deliberately seeks to **set a different tone**. We are **proud of our district** and want to engage about its future and yours; to think about the district we want Lichfield to be by 2050; a place for you, your children, your parents, and future generations; for our businesses and visitors, to thrive in.

Lichfield District 2050 is a longer-term view of our shared priorities, **it is challenging, bold and aspirational**.

We are determined to shape our district based on your views. At the end of 2022, over 7,500 residents and businesses responded to the first 'Together We' consultation, providing your views and feedback on what Lichfield District should be in 2050. The views you provided through that feedback have been used to draft this strategy and you will see references to it throughout this document.

Lichfield District is the heart of England, at the centre of the United Kingdom, 35 minutes outside Birmingham and just over an hour away from London. **We have all the ingredients to be a place where people want to live, work and play**; where families can feel supported to raise children and equally protected in older life and retirement.

We want **Lichfield District** Council to be a beacon for the rest of the country, an example of what a modern, vibrant local authority is; a partner, **invested in our district, enabling, and supporting strong communities** with efficient public services that engage effectively and are contrite when we get things wrong.

Through this document, we are seeking to reconstruct our relationship with you, our residents, with our vibrant business sector and with our partners. **We are aiming high. We want to be the best**. We want Lichfield District to be recognised as a place where we take collective responsibility to create a better future for everyone.

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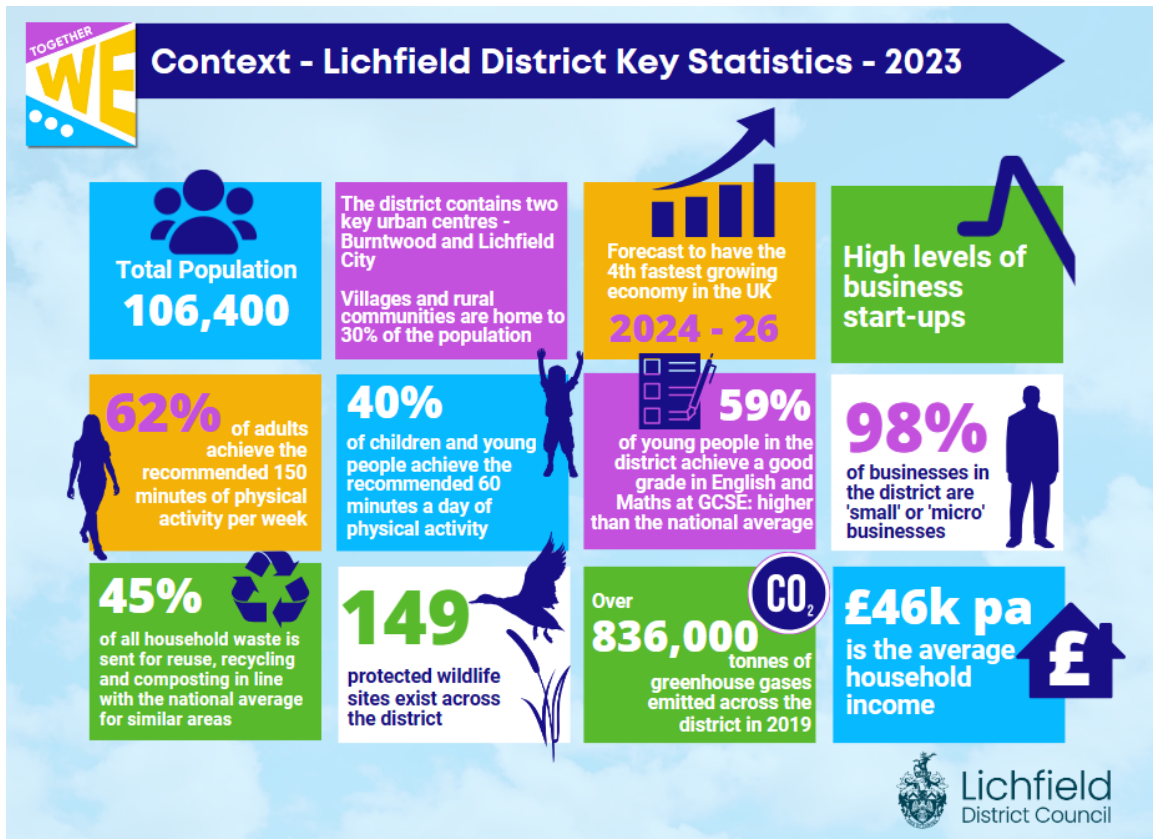
When we say, '**Together We Will...**' we mean it; this document is a **call to action, for everyone**. We cannot achieve and deliver the future we want for the district without you.

So, this strategy seeks a **collective commitment to make Lichfield District the most confident, prosperous, active, and green part of the country by 2050**; a place which other parts of the United Kingdom aspire to be. **We know this will require hard work and investment**, not just from the District Council but from the County Council, from our Town, City and Parish Councils, our partners in the health and emergency services, our vital network of community, charity and third sector organisations who already contribute so much, and importantly from you.

We have set **4 priorities, and a number of ambitious missions** through this strategy, following engagement with you. The remainder of the document outlines key actions for all four priorities, against three important milestone dates – 2028, 2038 and 2050. These milestones will help and guide us on our journey to achieving our missions. The District Council will deliver its part of this strategy through an **Annual Delivery Plan, with clear and smart quarterly objectives which we will hold ourselves to**. We will refresh this strategy every 5 years, to allow us to reflect on the progress we have made and identify the next set of key actions.

Again, without your buy-in this strategy will fail. If you **join us in committing to the priorities, we promise to listen, to hear and value your views** and to do our part to deliver the Lichfield District 2050 we believe everyone wants.

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Confident Communities

We will be the place where people across the UK aspire to live.

Confident communities are places that are **inclusive, resilient, and self-assured**, where **people take pride** in their living environment, **respecting and supporting one another regardless of background**. A confident community is a **cohesive, healthy, safe, prosperous, and happy place**. It **collectively tackles disadvantage, exclusion and powerlessness** and strives to provide a **high quality of life for everyone** that lives there, across all age ranges.

We want people to be more confident about, take more pride in and ownership of the future of Lichfield District. We want to increase the sense of belonging we know already exists and for everyone to be more able to express their views and contribute.

We understand that people want a clean, safe, and healthy environment, with appropriate employment opportunities close to home and good quality, sustainable, affordable housing, in the right places, that help them to be healthy and independent for longer. Good quality housing is a key priority for residents, ensuring there is a range of housing options and tenure to suit changing needs.

They want to live in a Burntwood or Lichfield with vibrant cultural, tourism and leisure options, and in rural communities that retain and celebrate their historic characteristics and are connected by decent public transport options. They want to be supported and empowered by a compassionate and caring public sector when they need it.

We also know building confident communities requires community action and active community and voluntary groups, that the arts and cultural sector has a key role to play and that a willingness to work together, with the public sector, will support our residents to thrive and increase wellbeing and a sense of aspiration.

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Confident Communities

By 2050 we will be a district where...

- Regeneration in Lichfield city centre and Burntwood has had a positive impact on residents across the district
- Housing growth has been controlled, easing pressure on our existing towns and villages by building new homes in the right places, with critical roads, utilities, schools, and health infrastructure delivered first, not last
- Housing inequalities have been challenged and options that meet everyone's needs, for now and the future are available
- New housing permitted is designed in a way that compliments and enhances our district, whilst also protecting and recovering our environment
- People are empowered to influence and control the decisions that matter to them, across all age ranges
- Decision-making and funding are delegated to local communities to unlock community power
- Our communities are connected to support a sense of belonging, through influencing transport authorities and providers, and through the introduction of alternative modes of transport
- Wellbeing and community cohesion is consistently prioritised in all our activities, working effectively with leisure and cultural venues to do so
- A vibrant local voluntary and community sector is supported and invested in

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Confident Communities

Key Milestones - by 2028 we will...

- Champion an 'infrastructure first' approach to growth and development across the district, working with partners to make sure the right infrastructure is in place to support our communities
- Have in place arrangements with the voluntary and community sector to provide better signposting to community support, ensuring we aren't duplicating effort
- Implement an effective Design Code, developed with residents, ensuring that housing developments in the district meet residents' expectations on design, quality, and sustainability
- Complete the city centre regeneration of Lichfield on the Birmingham Road Site
- Bring back into use more of the 500 empty properties in our district, for the benefit of families and communities
- Have worked with private rental landlords and registered social landlords to increase the supply of safer, healthier, and affordable rental properties
- Achieve 40% affordable housing on council owned sites and encourage developers to strive for the same target. The Birmingham Road Site will act as an exemplar site for good quality affordable housing
- Adopt a new Local Plan – to deliver much-needed housing within the district, including the consideration of a new urban settlement, to assist in alleviating existing pressures within our main towns and village areas.

Key Milestones - By 2038 we will...

- Be working towards the delivery of an ambitious new Local Plan
- Fully embed locality working across the district and devolved maximum powers to our locality partnerships. Influenced our partners to also devolve powers and funding
- Have delivered the regeneration of Burntwood, through a new town centre
- Regularly exceed our affordable homes target.

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Prosperous Communities

We will enable Lichfield, Burntwood and our villages to flourish

A prosperous community is one with economic wellbeing, where traditional and new business sectors succeed side by side and where innovation is commonplace and improves opportunity for all people and all areas of a place.

We want Lichfield District to be recognised as a place where business succeeds, for our entrepreneurs and businesses to thrive and for our local workforce to share in the wealth they generate.

Whilst we know our average household income in the district is high compared to other parts of the UK, we also recognise that economic inequality is not just a regional issue, it occurs between neighbourhoods. Some of our neighbourhoods are amongst the most income deprived in England, and in 2019, 8.4% of the local population was identified as income deprived.

We want to ensure the district has a diverse and resilient economy, providing a range of varied job opportunities and progression for our residents. We want to ensure that we have a vibrant economy that supports our young people to have the very best start in life. We want to make sure our residents, both young and old, can thrive in the district and achieve the aspirations they have for themselves and their families.

Key to creating prosperous communities is connectivity, both digital and physical connectivity for our urban and rural communities. We will work with partners to look at how we can better connect our places, challenging public transport providers and partners who look after our roads to do better for our district, and maximise opportunities for active travel.

We want to be the place to set up and grow a business successfully, to provide an environment where our natural entrepreneurs and micro-businesses flourish and are enabled to grow at a pace which is safe for them. We will work with private and public sector partners to invest in new units to help businesses grow sustainably and encourage more sustainable rental rates. Our ambitious new Local Plan will clearly define employment land opportunities across the district.

It is vital we continue to enhance the vibrancy of our town centres, rural communities and the city centre and further improve their local and national reputations as great places to work, live and visit. In the 'Together We' consultation you told us what you wanted to see more in the district, 26% of respondents wanted to see more retail space, 17% wanted to see more leisure options and 15% wanted to see more creative spaces.

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Prosperous Communities

By 2050 we will be a district where...

- Investment in regeneration creates sustainable, vibrant high streets in Lichfield city centre and Burntwood
- Infrastructure to support business growth programmes and provide incentives is making a difference
- Economically active people, including younger people, are attracted, and retained through targeted incentives
- Current key sectors have been nurtured to grow through investment and support that benefit local employment
- There are a range of transport options in place that help to connect our places
- Individuals' business-ready skills, knowledge and experiences are improved to enable sustainability of new enterprises
- Investment from new markets and sectors has been attracted (e.g., digital, technology, knowledge, data, and green economies) into our district, creating new employment opportunities
- Retail, Hospitality, and Leisure providers are supported to be attractive career choices for people
- Training providers and statutory bodies are challenged to provide the skills local business needs so they can recruit locally
- Public sector partners are encouraged to utilise the social value levers they have available to them
- Ultimately, we will have improved the prosperity of our residents, by increasing skills levels and access to better jobs.

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Prosperous Communities

Key Milestones - By 2028 we will...

- Be concluding delivery of the targeted Action Plan for Burntwood
- Have delivered temporary 'Meanwhile' activities on the Birmingham Road Site, including vibrant new incubator retail, office, food and beverage space alongside outdoor theatre and cinema
- Successfully have used the new cinema for Lichfield city centre, including food and beverage space, as a catalyst to regenerate the whole Birmingham Road Site
- Enjoy a vibrant, young, new residential zone on the Birmingham Road Site, with public open space as places people choose to gather
- Have supported delivery of infrastructure such as GP, schools, and roads, to be in place to meet our growing needs
- Worked with public transport providers to improve the offer across the district

Key Milestones - By 2038 we will...

- Have opened up Market Street / Bird Street Car Park to new retail outlets and views of the Minster Pool and Cathedral
- Have fully delivered Burntwood regeneration.

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Active Communities

We will make Lichfield District the most active in the UK

The evidence for the benefits of being active is overwhelming; it prevents a range of illnesses, improves our wellbeing, and helps people to manage certain health conditions better. Being active and living a healthy lifestyle was important to most respondents of the 'Together We' consultation, who identified better facilities and more group activities as things that would help them be more active. For older people, a healthy lifestyle can have a significant impact on staying independent for longer. Supporting and encouraging children and young people to be more active and have a healthy lifestyle has wide-ranging impacts, including essential key skills such as teamwork, resilience and creating good habits for life.

We know around 38% of adults and 60% of children and young people in our district are not active for recommended weekly levels and we want to change this. We want the very best sports and leisure facilities in our district. But it's not just about sports, we also need to encourage more community gardens, farms, and allotments, and to work with our schools to maximise the benefits of clubs and activities they offer.

Active communities are places where everyone can access the activities and facilities that suit them, whether they are a competitive athlete, or someone who is starting out to get moving and improve their wellbeing, and everything in-between. We will empower and encourage everyone (our partners, including the voluntary and community sector, and our communities) to set up and grow more local community sports and leisure provision, creating a vibrant network of activities and facilities across the district.

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Active Communities

By 2050 we will be a district where...

- Physical activity has increased, with people being more active, more of the time, showing a demonstrable improvement in the levels of activity undertaken
- The social and wellbeing benefits of living a healthy lifestyle are celebrated and built on
- Barriers to participation for people experiencing inequality for health, socio-economic or gender reasons are reduced
- Annual large-scale physical activity events, including walking, running, cycling, and swimming, across the district are delivered and appeal to a wide-range of people
- Physical activity as an effective preventative and treatment option for long-term conditions, mild depression and anxiety is embedded
- Advice and guidance on leading a healthy and active lifestyle is systematically available and targeted to the right people
- The full potential of our parks and green spaces is activated for health and wellbeing
- A network of high-quality leisure and recreational facilities and community groups exists to provide equitable, affordable access for all.

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Active Communities

By 2028 we will...

- Deliver a new leisure centre in north Lichfield, at Stychbrook Park
- Regularly utilise our parks and green spaces as key locations for active lives, park sports, health walks etc
- Introduce a small grants scheme to help fund new initiatives that will improve health and wellbeing
- Champion more family focused opportunities that engage the whole family
- Introduce a new Residents Advantage Card scheme, providing discounts off arts and entertainment, leisure, sports, and other activities
- Invest in and introduce new leisure facilities across the district – inc. adventure golf, climbing wall, padel tennis, obstacle course racing
- Build stronger links with the district GP surgeries and schools to work together to increase and sustain participation among all groups with targeted interventions
- Have a vibrant network of local community groups and clubs that support residents to be more active
- Utilise our locality partnerships to harness the power of local communities to support health and wellbeing more effectively

By 2038 we will...

- Increase and value the amount of green space in the district to promote healthier lifestyles
- Be nationally renowned for the quality of offer at our local authority run leisure centres
- Increase activity levels of adults and children
- Reduce the participation gap between different groups that currently face inequalities.

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Green Communities

We will create the greenest district in the country

There is no denying, we need nature, and in Lichfield District we are fortunate to have access to significant green space. Healthy green spaces can clean our air, water, soil, and future-proof farming. Restoring nature is vital for our future and economy, whilst providing invaluable spaces for wildlife to thrive and people to enjoy. 96% of respondents to the 'Together We...' consultation said the environment was important to them. For children and young people in our district, this is a real priority.

Climate change is the most critical challenge we face. We recognise a need to radically re-think how the district works and lives to become carbon neutral by 2050. We will lead by example as a District Council, transforming our own operations. We will influence and encourage our partners, businesses, and residents to do their part, and work alongside them to reduce and reverse the implications of climate change we already experience. This will include working in partnership to create greener homes across the district, supporting sustainable development and encouraging new and emerging green industries.

Green communities are committed to the whole of the environment not just climate change; they have strong wildlife recovery, vibrant biodiversity, development that protects and enhances nature, and networks of sustainable travel routes connecting communities. We will work to incorporate consideration for the climate and environment across all our operations and agree priorities for nature recovery locally where we will map and outline projects to create and improve habitat for nature and wider environmental goals.

We will work with residents and businesses to reduce the amount of waste produced by the district, whilst increasing the amount that is reused or recycled. 77% of respondents to the 'Together We...' consultation felt recycling and waste disposal was an environmental issue of most concern. We will change and adapt how we collect and dispose of our waste, seeking opportunities to make our operations carbon neutral, and innovative approaches to generate energy from our waste.

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Green Communities

By 2050 we will be a district where...

- Carbon neutrality is achieved district-wide, reducing the impact and implications of climate change on the district
- Housing across the district, both new and old, supports our ambitions to be the greenest district in the country
- Nationally, we are renowned for enhancing and protecting our natural environment
- Lowland heathland and associated habitats connecting Cannock Chase to Sutton Park are restored
- Two new nature reserves, a series of pocket parks and wildlife ponds have been introduced
- Living green spaces on roofs, walls and bus stops have been introduced and increased
- The tree canopy across the district has been extended and more street trees are introduced to our urban areas
- River Restoration has been explored and introduced, connecting rivers and waterbodies back to floodplains
- Species with local provenance have been reintroduced i.e., white-clawed crayfish, water voles, other scarce species.

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Green Communities

By 2028 we will...

- Identify and agree the location of two sites suitable to develop new nature reserves
- Introduce a green corridor between Burntwood and Lichfield contributing towards both sustainable and active travel
- Have a robust district-wide Carbon Reduction Plan in place and being delivered with our partners
- Increase the rate of recycling in the district to more than 65%, whilst reducing our overall waste
- Introduce a food waste service and have in place plans to generate more energy from our waste
- Create a live digital dashboard on our environmental performance, so that we can encourage all to do their bit to tackle climate change
- Articulate our strong commitment to sustainable housing and development, environmental protection, and enhancement through our new Local Plan
- Introduce a number of green streets, which include additional street trees, bee bricks and bird boxes
- Have electric charging points available on key off-street car parks

By 2038 we will

- Deliver the first new nature reserve in the district
- Have reduced or mitigated the council's carbon emissions to a net zero position by 2035
- Have supported the re-introduction of Lichfield Canal
- Enable more green corridors for commuting and travel.