

CORPORATE PLAN 2020 - 2024



**BOROUGH OF
BROXBOURNE**

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD	3
PROFILE OF THE BOROUGH OF BROXBOURNE	4
ACHIEVEMENTS FROM THE CORPORATE PLAN 2017 - 2020	7
CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES 2020 – 2024	10
A THRIVING ECONOMY OFFERING BUSINESS GROWTH AND JOBS	11
SUSTAINABLE LIVING IN AN ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT	16
AN EFFECTIVE COUNCIL, EFFICIENT AND RESPONSIVE TO RESIDENTS	21

FOREWORD



As the Borough continues to face the challenges arising from the COVID-19 virus and any lasting changes to the way people live and work become clearer, the next four years will be an important time for the Borough of Broxbourne. The new Local Plan will be an essential building block in the recovery from the effects of the virus and will provide the framework for a transformative impact on the area. For example, development will begin on Brookfield Riverside, providing extra retail and leisure facilities, offices and a civic hub which together will form a new town centre for the Borough. In addition, the redevelopment of Delamare Road, known as Cheshunt Lakeside, will bring more than 500 new homes during the period of this Corporate Plan, and this is just the beginning.

New developments, a growing population and the impact of climate change will put extra pressure on local infrastructure and the green, leafy environment everyone enjoys. The Council will lead the way in finding a sustainable balance that protects the Borough for future generations, assisted by the opportunities brought by digital technology to transform business, the workplace and our homes. These changes will be made in full collaboration with residents, engaging with their priorities and concerns as the Borough moves through a period of significant change.

In the short term our focus will be on helping residents and businesses recover from the impacts of COVID-19. However, this Corporate Plan deals with the medium term and will guide the work of the Council for the period 2020 to 2024. There are three priorities, reflecting not only the challenges but also the opportunities that lie ahead:

A thriving economy offering business growth and jobs: Securing the infrastructure and competitive business offer that will attract skilled employment to the Borough; creating wealth through new and growing local businesses; supporting residents, particularly young people, to raise their aspirations and develop skills that will equip them for an exciting future.

Sustainable living in an attractive environment: Protecting the green, clean, safe and pleasant environment that Broxbourne residents appreciate, whilst providing the housing and leisure facilities they need; collectively meeting the responsibility to live sustainably for the benefit of future generations, whilst caring for the health and wellbeing of current residents.

An efficient Council, effective and responsive to residents: Maintaining financial self-sufficiency, using modern technology and business practices to maximise the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of services and reduce the Council's carbon consumption, listening to residents and improving services for customers.

The Council looks forward to achieving the ambitions set out in this Plan and seeing the benefits they will bring for Broxbourne residents.

Councillor Lewis Cocking

Leader of the Council
Borough of Broxbourne

PROFILE OF THE BOROUGH OF BROXBOURNE

The Borough of Broxbourne is in southeast Hertfordshire, adjoining London to the south and Essex to the east. It has an area of 52 square kilometres and a population of about 99,000 (Office for National Statistics or ONS). The largest towns are Cheshunt, Hoddesdon and Waltham Cross.



The people of Broxbourne

The population is relatively diverse, with the 2011 Census recording 82% of white British or Irish origin, and 8.2% of other white backgrounds, including well-established Italian, Polish, Ukrainian and Turkish communities and more recent arrivals from Eastern Europe. In 2011, a further 4.2% of the population were of black origin, 2.3% Asian, 2.3% mixed origin, and 1% other. Evidence suggests that since the 2011 Census the population has become more diverse.

The average age of the population is increasing, as in the rest of the UK. During the five years from 2020 to 2025, the number of residents aged 75 and over is expected to increase by 17% compared to a 3% increase for the population of the Borough overall (ONS).

In general, the health of Broxbourne residents is good. Life expectancy for a baby born between 2015 and 2017 is 85 for a girl and 81 for a boy (ONS). This is above the average for England. However, health issues associated generally with lifestyle restrict the number of healthy years that residents enjoy. It is estimated that 70% of the adult population is overweight, which is significantly above the average for England at 62% overall (2017/18, Public Health England). Repeated surveys by Sport England have shown that a significant proportion of Broxbourne residents are physically inactive, achieving less than 30 minutes of physical activity or sport each week.



The local economy

The outbreak of COVID-19 may have changed the way many businesses will work in the future with a consequent impact on employment space and the need for high speed reliable digital connectivity. The economy of the country will undoubtedly be adversely affected by the measures taken to prevent the spread of the virus and the need for Broxbourne to play its part in the economic recovery is fully recognised. Broxbourne is well placed to do so, enjoying a strategic location just north of the M25 with swift rail links to London and Cambridge and easy road access to London Stansted and London Luton Airports. Local employment is mixed, with professional and scientific services, retail and wholesale and construction predominating. There are particular specialisations in manufacture of electrical equipment, civil engineering and scientific research and development.

However, the Borough has a relatively high proportion of very small businesses employing only one or two people, and few major employers. Until the outbreak of COVID-19 Broxbourne was the only borough or district in Hertfordshire to have seen an overall loss of jobs in recent years (2012-2017, the most recent data available), largely due to Tesco moving its corporate headquarters away from the area. Job density, the ratio of jobs to people of working age living in Broxbourne, is 0.68, much lower than the overall figure for Hertfordshire, which is 1.02 (2018, ONS). Many residents commute out of the Borough to work, particularly to London.

Although unemployment has been low in the recent past, poor skills are a barrier to progress in employment for many residents and a brake on the local economy. 31% of working age residents have no qualifications or only basic qualifications (NVQ Level 1), compared to 22% in Hertfordshire as a whole.

The new draft Local Plan has identified significant sites suitable for business development and the Council will review what is appropriate for these sites in the aftermath of COVID-19. There are opportunities also arising from planned improvements to Junction 25 of the M25 and the proposal for Crossrail 2, with two stations in the Borough lying on the route.

Some parts of the Borough – Goffs Oak and Broxbourne – are among the least deprived areas in England. However, there are areas with comparatively high levels of deprivation, particularly parts of Waltham Cross, and Wormley and Turnford. From 2014 to 2018 the average price of a house or flat in the Borough increased by 30%. Rents are high (£995 median rent for a 2-bed flat in Broxbourne in the year to September 2018, compared to £600 in England overall). More residents, particularly families, are struggling to find an affordable home locally.

The environment

The green spaces of Broxbourne are the most popular feature of life in the Borough, according to the most recent residents' survey run by the Council. The 'lockdown' brought about by COVID-19 has reinforced their importance. The Borough has 3,300 hectares of Green Belt land. In addition, the Council maintains 290 hectares of open space, including parks, informal spaces, play areas and sports pitches. These are complemented by the Lee Valley Regional Park, run by the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, which stretches along the eastern border of the Borough. There is also the New River, a waterway constructed in the 17th century to take fresh water into London, which runs through the Borough from north to south. Owned by Thames Water, the New River is now a haven for wildlife and a much-valued tranquil route for walkers. These open spaces are important for the physical and mental wellbeing of residents.



Cheshunt Park

In recent years the volume of traffic on the M25 and the A10 passing through the Borough has caused air pollution to exceed statutory limits in some locations. The Council is developing an action plan to improve air quality in these and other areas. The pollution is a symptom of a wider issue of environmental sustainability and the need to respond to global warming. The Council will respond through a transportation strategy that seeks modal shift for journeys from petrol and diesel cars to electric vehicles, bicycles or walking, initiating a major tree planting programme and significantly reducing energy use.

Broxbourne Borough Council

The Council of the Borough of Broxbourne was created in 1974. The Borough Council provides:

- Domestic refuse collection and recycling
- Street cleansing
- Parks and open spaces, allotments, cemeteries
- Car parks and on-street parking bays
- Environmental health
- Licensing
- Leisure – the Council runs a number of sports and leisure facilities
- Prevention of homelessness, facilitating construction of affordable housing
- Administration of housing benefits
- Collection of council tax and business rates
- Electoral registration and running of elections
- Economic development
- Planning policy, development management and building control
- Community development, including arts, culture, sports and community events
- Community safety



ACHIEVEMENTS

FROM THE CORPORATE PLAN 2017-2020

There were three priorities in the Corporate Plan 2017 - 2020: Ambition Broxbourne, a thriving economy; Beautiful Broxbourne, enhancing the quality of life; and Innovative Broxbourne, an effective, enabling Council. Achievements to these priorities are listed below.

AMBITION BROXBOURNE A THRIVING ECONOMY

- **Ambition Broxbourne Business Centre** - The Business Centre in Hoddesdon was completed within budget, and opened in December 2016. It provides 68 offices and workshops and has allowed training to be delivered to over 900 local employees. The Local Enterprise Partnership provided 39% of the capital cost of the build and is reinvesting part of the profits from the centre to fund expansion of the training throughout the Borough and to provide vouchers for innovation to local businesses.



Ambition Broxbourne Business Centre

- **Queen Eleanor Square in Waltham Cross** - The new square, the first stage in the Waltham Cross Renaissance Programme, was officially opened in August 2019. It incorporates features that celebrate the history of Queen Eleanor's Cross and provides an attractive open space for town events.
- **Herts and Essex Digital Improvement Zone** - The Council is an active member of a multi-agency partnership to make the east of Hertfordshire and west Essex into the best digitally connected place of its type in the UK, with an economy, public services, communities and built environment that make the most of digital technology. A strategy for the Zone was finalised in March 2019 and provides a work programme and route map for realising this ambition.
- **Hoddesdon Business Improvement District (BID)** - The Love Hoddesdon BID levy raises around £100,000 a year from the 200 businesses in the town for work to help local businesses to prosper and attract more shoppers and visitors to the town. Run by local businesses, the BID came into effect in 2018 and will be renewed after five years at the end of 2022. The Council promoted the creation of the BID and works in partnership with the BID team.
- **Hoddesdon Business Park** - The Council secured the delivery of a realigned Essex Road, in partnership with the County Council and Local Enterprise Partnership, to improve access to the Business Park
- **Maxwells West** - Planning permission has been granted for a hyperscale data centre and business park on this site on the A10 south of Cheshunt. This will help create 500 jobs, opportunities for businesses that are displaced through regeneration schemes to relocate, training in skilled jobs and possibly a second Council-owned business centre.
- **Local Plan** - The Draft Local Plan for 2018-2033 was submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration in 2018. In April 2020 it was accepted as sound, subject to minor modifications. Once adopted by the Council, it will guide the Borough in the creation of up to 6,000 new jobs and 7,700 new homes whilst creating new parks and open spaces, a network of new footpaths and cycle paths and improved bus and rail services.

BEAUTIFUL BROXBOURNE ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF LIFE

- **The Council facilitated construction of homes** for affordable rent, working in partnership with housing associations.
- **Prevention of homelessness** - The Homelessness Reduction Act was enacted on 3 April 2018. Since the introduction of the legislation, and with a change in practices, the Council has successfully prevented homelessness for many more households, achieving a 63% reduction in households designated homeless.
- **Separate weekly food waste collections** began in the last week of March 2017, allowing about 3,000 tonnes of waste a year to be diverted from general household rubbish, providing liquid fertiliser and the energy to power 284 homes.
- **Green Flag for parks** - The Borough successfully retained accreditation under the prestigious Green Flag standard for five parks and open spaces. In 2018, the Community Award for Old Highway Recreation Ground was added, making a total of six Green Flag sites within the Borough.



Food Waste Collection

- **Adopt-a-Street volunteers** - More than 100 volunteers are participating in the scheme to keep their streets clean.
- **New crematorium at Woollensbrook** - This new facility was built and is run by a private company, facilitated by a long-term lease of Council land.
- **Refurbished John Warner Sports Centre Gym** - The gym benefited from new equipment and the introduction of a popular eGym. The project included re-decoration, new flooring, re-configuration and replacement of all cardio and resistance equipment.
- **Spotlight improvements** - The programme of refurbishment has begun, including a brand new bar and lounge and refurbished dressing rooms.
- **Youth Intervention Project** - This three-year project is working closely with three local secondary schools to reduce youth violence and raise awareness of gang culture.
- **Youth Mayor** - The first Youth Mayor was elected in 2017 by local young people, providing a voice for their concerns and interests.
- **Active Herts** - This programme offers a choice of free sports and physical activities in a friendly environment to physically inactive adults who have diabetes or heart disease. It is extremely effective; 65% of residents referred to the programme complete it and are still physically active after six months, 850 so far.

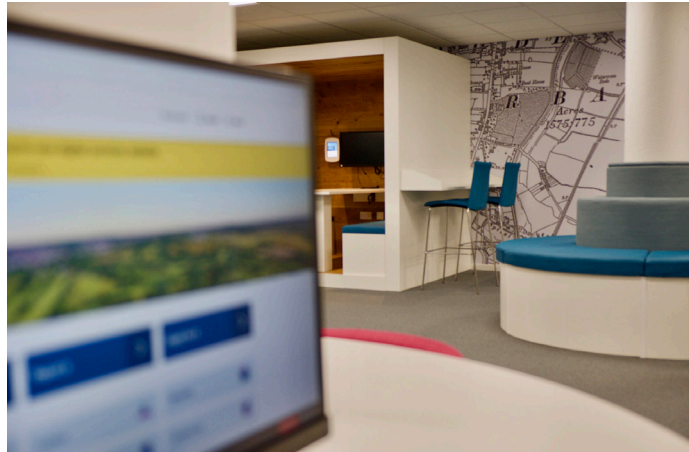


Active Herts

INNOVATIVE BROXBOURNE AN EFFECTIVE, ENABLING COUNCIL

- **Financial self-sufficiency without Government grant** - Financial prudence and effective use of resources in property investments, with returns better than those through traditional financial routes, allowed the Council to achieve financial self-sufficiency by the end of 2017/18. At the time, Broxbourne Council was one of only two local authorities in the country to achieve this. The Council won a prestigious national MJ Award as Entrepreneurial Council of the year.

- **New reception area at Council offices** - The spacious new reception area at Bishops' College provides a welcoming environment for visitors, who can sign in for an appointment or make a service request on the iPads provided. The customer service advisers are trained and equipped to provide help for those who need it, and there are now ample rooms for meetings.



Reception at Bishops' College

- **New Council website** - The Council has launched a new website that enables customers to carry out many more transactions online with streamlined, user-friendly processes 24 hours a day, seven days a week. These include reporting a fly-tip, pinpointing the location without having to type in the address; obtaining housing advice related to their individual circumstances; paying for many services; applying for housing benefit or reporting a missed bin collection. Customers can now set up a personal account to save time and enable them to receive tailored information. Over 30,000 transactions were carried out on the website in the first two months of 2020.
- **Broxbourne Environmental Services Trading Ltd** - Known as Best, the wholly owned Council company began trading in April 2019. The new company is well placed to develop new income streams.
- **Apprenticeships** - The Council has created 50 apprenticeship positions.
- **Badger BC Investments Ltd** - The company's property portfolio expanded. Badger now owns and operates 35 properties, 18 of them developed on land acquired from the Council. A further 24 units are under construction at Wolsey Court, Cheshunt.
- **Shared Services** - Council services have become more resilient through the additional shared service arrangements established for building control, internal audit, legal and financial services.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES 2020-2024

Broxbourne Borough Council has three corporate priorities. Each priority will be delivered through a set of corporate objectives.

A THRIVING ECONOMY

OFFERING BUSINESS GROWTH AND JOBS

1. Commence construction of Brookfield Riverside and Brookfield Garden Village.
2. Enable sustainable growth in local employment for residents by encouraging the creation of high-skilled, high-value jobs on identified sites.
3. Pursue the implementation of the housing and infrastructure needed to support a thriving economy.
4. Foster development of town centres as vibrant locations for business and leisure.
5. Work with local business and education partners to provide a skilled workforce.
6. Increase the availability of high-speed broadband in the Borough.

SUSTAINABLE LIVING

IN AN ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT

7. Take action to improve air quality.
8. Increase tree cover and greenery and enhance biodiversity in the Borough.
9. Increase the proportion of local journeys made by sustainable modes of travel.
10. Deliver affordable homes for local residents and reduce homelessness.
11. Help residents to lead a healthy lifestyle.
12. Promote community safety and reduce fear of crime.

AN EFFECTIVE COUNCIL

EFFICIENT AND RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS

13. Improve the quality of services significantly through redesign and better use of IT.
14. Engage effectively with residents to understand their priorities.
15. Maintain a stable financial position.
16. Build strong partnerships to deliver more for the Borough.
17. Be transparent and ensure effective scrutiny.

These are described in more depth on the subsequent pages of this Plan.

A THRIVING ECONOMY

OFFERING BUSINESS GROWTH AND JOBS

The Council understands it is local businesses that will be key in the delivery of both the recovery from the effects of COVID-19 and also future economic growth and jobs. As such, the Council aims to ensure the right environment is in place for them to do so. The vision for Broxbourne is to increase local employment opportunities, with more skilled and higher paid jobs, thereby increasing residents' incomes and reducing the need to travel elsewhere for jobs. The Borough should be a place where young people in particular can see a bright future, like the local lifestyle and want to settle after higher education or training. There should be a balance between the pay available from skilled jobs and the price of local housing, so that they can afford to bring up their families.

The Council is finalising the new Ambition Broxbourne Economic Development Strategy, a vision for economic growth from 2020 to 2025. Working with partners, the Council will focus on providing suitable sites for business through the new Local Plan, improving skills levels and developing transport and digital infrastructure. There will also be a focus on supporting town centres to thrive during a period of significant change in the retail sector and after any long term impacts of COVID-19 are known. Linking these initiatives is the recognition of the importance of place-making; bringing the infrastructure, housing, green spaces, and leisure opportunities together in Broxbourne to create a local lifestyle attractive to prospective employers and employees alike.

The new Local Plan is in the final stages of adoption by the Council. It will provide a blueprint for the development of the Borough until 2033. This will include homes, jobs, shops, leisure, transport and infrastructure alongside protection and improvement of a redefined Green Belt and parks and open spaces.



The main components of the new Local Plan are:

Homes and neighbourhoods

About 7,700 homes are to be built by 2033, a mixture of market and affordable housing. The main sites are:

- Brookfield Garden Village, with about 1,250 new homes and a primary school, to be built adjacent to Brookfield Riverside.
- Cheshunt Lakeside, a new mixed-use urban village with 1,725 homes, businesses and a primary school, on land currently occupied by the Delamare Road employment area.
- Rosedale Park, already in construction, with 864 homes and a primary school on the former Tudor Nurseries site and at Rags Brook, opening up the valley to public access for the first time and creating a parkland setting for developments.
- High Leigh Garden Village, up to 485 dwellings in Hoddesdon, and a primary school.



Cheshunt Lakeside

Brookfield Riverside

This is the name of the project to expand the existing retail park at the Brookfield Centre to create a new centre for the Borough. It will comprise all the elements of a traditional town centre including modern shopping and leisure facilities, offices (including the relocation of the Council offices), a transport hub and about 250 homes with elderly persons' accommodation.



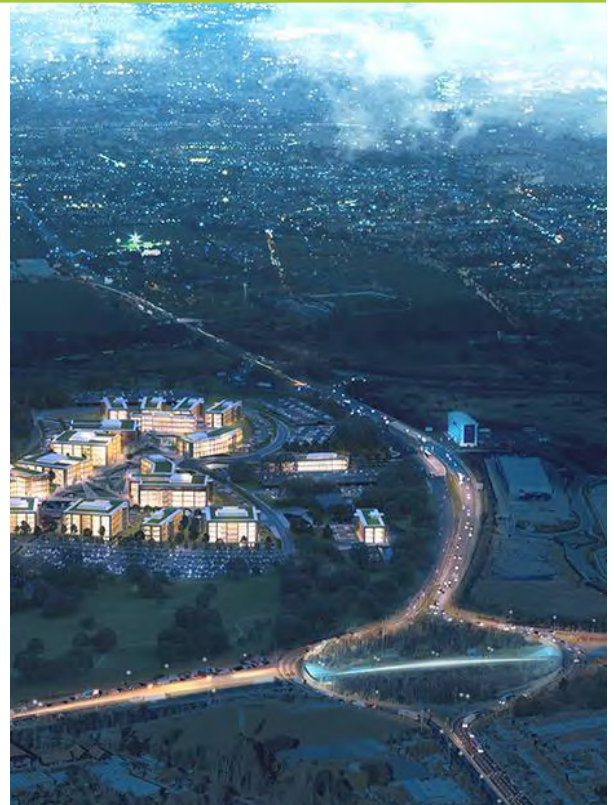
Brookfield Riverside visualisation

Jobs

The draft Local Plan proposes 5,000 to 6,000 additional jobs to be based in the Borough by 2033, with the possibility of significantly more in the longer term. New employment sites have been earmarked to facilitate investment by larger employers.

The key sites are:

- Park Plaza West which will provide about 4,500 new jobs, located in a well landscaped setting on the A10 just north of the M25.
- Park Plaza North and Maxwells West on the A10 south of Cheshunt which will accommodate a hyperscale data centre, new business space and the relocation of businesses from regeneration sites, including Delamare Road, Waltham Cross and Brookfield.
- Brookfield will provide 2,000 new jobs in a mix of sectors including retail and leisure at Brookfield Riverside, and office-based employment.



Park Plaza West visualisation

Town centres

In Waltham Cross, the Plan proposes to redevelop the northern High Street, including the relocation of Wickes to Park Plaza North, to provide land for 300 new homes with shops and commercial premises at street level. After 2027, the focus will shift to the regeneration of the eastern part of Waltham Cross.

In Hoddesdon, the Plan proposes a review of the Town Centre Strategy to prioritise the completion of public realm enhancements, develop key sites including a gateway development to the north of the town centre, a review of parking and access, and protection of the historic character of the town. The Council will work closely with Love Hoddesdon, the local businesses in the Business Improvement District.



Hoddesdon Town Centre

A new strategy for Cheshunt Old Pond has been agreed. It aims to enhance the area as a lively neighbourhood centre, with an attractive mixture of shops, eating and drinking establishments, local facilities, housing and businesses. Landscaped public space and improvements to Grundy Park will provide an attractive setting for outdoor life.

Transport

The Broxbourne Transport Strategy sets out an integrated, multi-modal strategy to achieve the transport objectives and vision in the draft Local Plan. The Local Plan allocates residential development on land where the need for car-based travel is minimised, for example at Brookfield Garden Village and at Cheshunt Lakeside. For Broxbourne's roads, congestion on the A10 and local roads will be minimised by improvements to the key junctions. For rail, the strategy is to improve service frequency and capacity on the West Anglia mainline by supporting four-tracking and the proposed Crossrail 2. The plan promotes new stations at Turnford and Park Plaza.



Local bus

New strategic developments will be connected into bus services, whilst a new 'town bus service' is proposed to connect the railway station at Waltham Cross with Cheshunt and a new station at Turnford via Brookfield. The Council has also prepared a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan which demonstrates how investment and promotion of opportunities for walking and cycling can benefit the Borough and encourage a shift away from the motor car for short distance journeys, thereby enhancing the environment, air quality and health.

A THRIVING ECONOMY

CORPORATE OBJECTIVES FOR 2020-2024

1. Begin construction of Brookfield Riverside and Brookfield Garden Village.

- Complete an agreement with the developer of Brookfield Riverside to ensure the timely delivery of the scheme.
- Determine the development strategy for Brookfield Garden Village and appoint a partner.
- Arrange for the relocation of existing uses to facilitate the developments of both areas.
- Work with Hertford Regional College to ensure local residents are best placed to take advantage of the employment opportunities in the Brookfield development.
- Ensure Brookfield is well connected to sustainable transport networks.

2. Enable sustainable growth in local employment of residents by encouraging the creation of high-skilled, high-value jobs on identified sites.

- Deliver space for businesses at Cheshunt Lakeside.
- Develop and implement masterplans for Park Plaza North and Park Plaza West.
- Encourage businesses currently in regeneration sites to relocate to Park Plaza North and Maxwells West.
- Maximise occupancy of the Ambition Broxbourne Business Centre and deliver improved opportunities for small businesses in the south of the Borough.
- Scope potential for a Business Improvement District for Hoddesdon Business Park.
- Work with the London Stansted Cambridge Consortium and the Local Enterprise Partnership to promote the benefits of investment in the Borough.
- Work with Pharmaron to scope the potential for a Biotech incubator in Hoddesdon.

3. Pursue the implementation of the housing and infrastructure needed to support a thriving economy.

- Adopt the new Local Plan.
- Enable delivery of 1,725 homes and a primary school at Cheshunt Lakeside.
- Facilitate development of 864 homes and a primary school at Rosedale Park.
- Coordinate allocation of Section 106 (s106) funding and deliver projects that will support thriving communities.
- Minimise traffic congestion by delivering A10 junction improvement schemes.
- Continue to support Crossrail 2 and projects to improve service frequency and capacity on the West Anglia mainline.
- Promote proposals for new railway stations at Turnford and Park Plaza.

4. Foster development of town centres as vibrant locations for business and leisure.

- Maintain clean and lively town centres, attracting visitors with well-managed traffic and parking, improved public transport and access for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Provide a variety of daytime and evening activities and events in town centres.
- Complete improvement plans for shopping parades in local neighbourhoods.
- Redevelop the northern part of Waltham Cross High Street to provide 300 new homes, shops and commercial uses, opening the street to vehicles and providing an attractive, green and sustainable public realm.
- Pursue plans to regenerate Waltham Cross town centre and areas to the east of the town to take advantage of plans to improve the rail service.
- Implement the Cheshunt Old Pond Strategy.
- Review the Hoddesdon Town Centre Strategy, ensuring the character of this historic market town is protected and enhanced through sensitive development.
- Continue to work with local businesses and community organisations such as Business Improvement Districts.
- Establish business forums in Waltham Cross and Cheshunt and pursue the opportunity for the creation of further Business Improvement Districts.

5. Work with local business and education partners to provide a skilled workforce.

- In partnership with the multi-agency Broxbourne Skills Group develop jobs and training, particularly in the life sciences, retail, finance, business and creative sectors.
- Work with the Skills Group to help people who face barriers to employment to get into work.
- Work with the Skills Group to increase local young people's exposure to business and employment opportunities in the Borough.
- Support schools and Hertford Regional College to increase attainment and raise aspirations.
- Create apprenticeships, traineeships and work experience opportunities at the Council and locally through s106 planning agreements on major developments in the Borough.

6. Increase the availability of high-speed broadband in the Borough.

- Work with partners in the Digital Innovation Zone, as part of the London Stansted Cambridge Consortium, to make the case for "fibre to the premises" (FTTP) infrastructure throughout the Borough.
- Continue implementing digital projects to benefit the local economy and improve public sector efficiency as part of the Digital Innovation Zone.
- Improve the availability of free WiFi in town centres, Council buildings and industrial estates.
- Enable local small businesses to develop the digital skills of their workforce.

SUSTAINABLE LIVING

IN AN ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Successive surveys have shown that feeling safe from crime, clean streets, and attractive parks and open spaces are the most important factors making the Borough a pleasant place to live for Broxbourne residents, so these are clearly priorities for the Corporate Plan. These priorities are also interlinked. For example, the delivery of services such as waste management, street cleansing and grounds maintenance affects the quality of the local environment and influences how safe residents feel when out and about.

A clean environment

Residents and the Council regard street cleanliness as a high priority. The Council employs inspectors to investigate fly-tips, littering, graffiti and overgrown hedges. Many residents join the innovative “Adopt-a-street” programme to provide extra litter picking in their neighbourhood, or participate in one of the Borough’s regular clean-up events.

Over the last three years the Council has gradually increased the recycling rate and began a popular separate weekly food collection for most households in 2017.



Investigating a fly-tip

A green and sustainable environment

Over the next few years the Council will be taking extra steps to protect the environment through a new Sustainability Strategy. This will focus on tackling the issue of air pollution caused by heavy vehicular traffic in some parts of the Borough, installing electric vehicle charging points, enhancing the environment through a tree planting programme, reducing the carbon footprint of the Council’s buildings and services, and encouraging residents to take action too. The involvement of residents will also continue to be welcomed in gardening, landscape conservation and planting in parks and open spaces as members of Friends’ groups.



Wildflowers at Cheshunt Park

To support the strategy, the Council has introduced an Environmental Sustainability Panel, and has allocated a £50,000 annual budget for the development of environmental projects.

The new Local Plan makes provision for a network of cycling and walking paths to encourage residents to leave the car at home. The Local Plan will also improve access to the countryside, protect biodiversity and safeguard historic buildings.

A safe environment

Broxbourne is a very safe place to live and work. Sustained partnership working with residents, the Police, Parkguard, housing associations and the County Council over the years has considerably reduced anti-social behaviour in particular. However, it is important to continue to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and to increase the number of residents who feel safe. For example, among young people there has emerged the possibility of increased gang activity and intimidation which needs to be tackled. The Council has secured funding to run a project delivered by specialists which is underway in local secondary schools. The current community safety priorities for Broxbourne shared with the Police and other partners are tackling drug trafficking and reducing theft and robbery.



A permanent home

An increasing proportion of the population is struggling to afford housing in the Borough. Many private sector tenancies are unaffordable for people who are on low income or unemployed, particularly families. The Council helps residents who are at risk of homelessness to secure their home or to find a new tenancy. Often this means helping them to find work, tackle debts or secure help for a disability or long-term health condition.

Once adopted, the new Local Plan will make provision for 40% of new housing to be built in the Borough to be affordable. 65% of the new affordable housing will for rent and 35% for sale.



New affordable housing at Beltona Gardens, Cheshunt.



Health and wellbeing

Good health is fundamental to quality of life. Too many residents of Broxbourne either do not enjoy good health, or through their busy lifestyles are likely to develop health problems in the future. Obesity and lack of exercise are direct causes of cardiac disease, strokes, diabetes, some types of cancer, and dementia. The Council continues to create more opportunities for low-cost, entry level participation in sports and physical activity in the Borough, targeted particularly at those who are less likely to be engaged in sport at present. Recent initiatives include Nordic walking, women's rugby and walking football. The eGym technology at the Council's leisure centres provides easy-to-use equipment in a quiet, non-competitive environment and is extremely popular, especially with older residents.

The new Healthy Hub in Cheshunt, to be run in partnership with the County Council and local GPs, will provide one-to-one help for residents needing to change their lifestyle for health reasons, for example, losing weight or cutting back on drinking. It is hoped that sustainable funding will enable the Council to continue Active Herts, the successful and popular programme to help people who have health problems get physically active.

SUSTAINABLE LIVING

CORPORATE OBJECTIVES FOR 2020 - 2024

7. Take action to improve air quality.

- In partnership with Hertfordshire County Council, implement an Air Quality Management Plan for a section of the A10.
- When planting trees and greenery give priority to areas affected by poor air quality.
- Promote development that is adaptable to a changing climate and also reduces greenhouse gas emissions.
- Ensure that up-to-date air quality alerts are available to residents online.

8. Increase tree cover and greenery and enhance biodiversity in the Borough.

- Carry out a tree and greenery-planting programme, achieving a net increase of 10,000 trees on Council land and an improvement in quality and diversity of young trees.
- Seek opportunities to create, restore and enhance wildlife habitats, and seek net biodiversity gains in new developments including, where appropriate to do so, suitable planting of trees and hedgerows.
- Submit a bid for funding from the Government's Urban Tree Challenge Fund.
- Deliver the new open spaces set out within the Local Plan, for example at Rosedale Park.

9. Increase the proportion of local journeys made by sustainable modes of travel.

- Ensure that new strategic developments are connected to bus services.
- Implement the Broxbourne Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, developing a network of safe cycle paths and walking routes with clear signage, and increasing secure parking facilities for bicycles.
- Work with Hertfordshire County Council to promote walking and cycling, especially to school.
- Campaign for improved bus services that are financially and environmentally sustainable.
- Minimise car journeys made by Council staff by using technology to enable remote working.
- Help create a network of 100 rapid charging points for electric vehicles across the Borough sufficient to meet the needs of residents who cannot charge a vehicle at home and work with developers to incorporate charging points in new developments.



10. Deliver affordable homes for local residents and reduce homelessness.

- Achieve a significant increase in affordable housing in the Borough through acquisition and the Council's capital programme.
- Work in partnership with housing associations and other developers to maximise the supply of new affordable homes.
- Work to increase the availability of suitable homes for rent in the private rented sector.
- Prevent homelessness where possible and provide appropriate support to those who are in temporary accommodation to move on to settled housing.
- Maintain a range of Council funded housing for vulnerable local residents who need extra support.
- Work with partners to provide advice to residents about welfare benefits, personal budgeting and managing debt, and help them to get into training or work.

11. Help residents to lead a healthy lifestyle.

- Plan ahead to meet future needs for a growing population by updating the Council's Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy.
- Maximise the use of Borough sports facilities, including leisure centres and Cheshunt Park Golf Centre.
- Work with health and community partners to help residents adopt a healthier lifestyle, for example through the Healthy Hub and Active Herts.
- Run or facilitate community projects to benefit young people, such as Fit and Fed.
- Improve access to the countryside through the new Rosedale Park.
- Protect the public's health through environmental health and licensing services.

12. Promote community safety and reduce fear of crime.

- Reduce the opportunity for crime in new developments through effective planning policies.
- Support groups of neighbours who want to improve the security of their homes by co-funding fencing, gating and other works.
- Work with Hertfordshire County Council and schools to reduce parking problems in and around schools.
- Provide diversionary activities for young people, especially those at risk of offending.
- Develop the Broxbourne Youth Intervention Programme further and secure long-term funding.
- Work with the Community Safety Partnership to improve the safety of the Borough's town centres and shopping parades.
- Take action to tackle hate crime.
- Work with partners to increase awareness about child protection, modern slavery and domestic abuse, and how to refer concerns to the appropriate agency.

AN EFFECTIVE COUNCIL

EFFICIENT AND RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS

Value for money and efficiency

Broxbourne Council has a proven track record of achieving efficiency savings year on year and has maintained one of the lowest council tax levels in England. The Council managed to achieve financial self-sufficiency, i.e. not having to rely on the Government's revenue support grant, in 2017. The Government withdrew grant from local authorities from April 2020.

The Council's plans to maintain financial security and improve value for money include modernisation of the Council's services and administration, continuing successful investment strategies such as the use of Badger BC Investments Ltd, and sharing services with other councils and service providers.

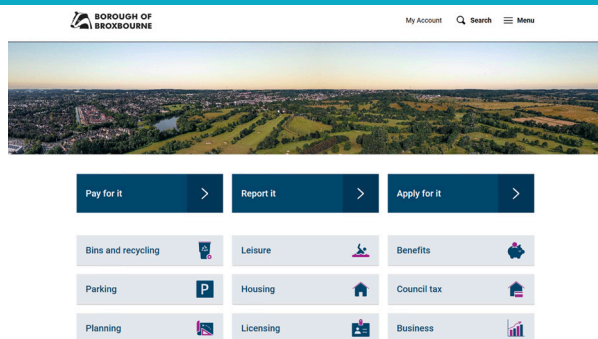


Award for improving efficiency and effectiveness of services

Transformation of Council services

The Council recognised that working practices in many services were cumbersome, not centred around the customer's needs and did not take advantage of the benefits of IT. Since 2019 the Council has been reviewing administrative processes, introduced new IT systems and created a new website. Customers can now report problems in their area online, and sign up and pay online 24 hours, seven days a week from the comfort of their homes. This is particularly important whilst social distancing remains necessary. As the volume of routine queries is reduced, the Council's customer service advisers can spend more time with people who need more help or who cannot use a computer. Complementing these developments is a spacious new reception area at the Council offices with breakout areas and meeting rooms being available when the COVID-19 measures have been lifted. This replaces three separate, cramped reception areas for services on different floors.

The streamlining of working processes is still underway but is already reaping dividends, for example contributing to the Housing service's success in tackling homelessness. The new in-cab technology fitted to the waste management vehicles will shortly provide residents with live information regarding their refuse and recycling collections. This work and building the website will continue during 2020/21.



Broxbourne Borough Council website

Shared services

The Council has various shared service arrangements with neighbouring authorities and will continue to look for opportunities to share expertise and create efficiencies through such arrangements. As at April 2020, the Council has a shared service for revenues, benefits and computer services with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council; with Epping Forest District Council for legal services; and with Harlow Council and Epping Forest District Council for internal audit. A trial is in place with Harlow Council for the provision of financial services. Along with eight other Hertfordshire authorities, Broxbourne has set up a jointly owned company to provide building control services, which also competes with the private sector. The Council is also a member of the Hertfordshire Shared Anti-Fraud Service (SAFS).



Best Ltd

Best Ltd is a wholly owned Council company established in April 2019. It runs the Council's waste management, street cleansing, cemetery and grounds maintenance services, and Council staff from those services transferred into the new company. Best has the flexibility of a company to expand its services and seek new income streams.



Broxbourne Housing

The Council is exploring if it should establish a company for the direct delivery of new affordable homes. A decision will be made by 2021.



Housing for affordable rent, The Cardinals, Cheshunt

AN EFFECTIVE COUNCIL

CORPORATE OBJECTIVES FOR 2020 - 2024

13. Improve the quality of services significantly through service redesign and better use of IT.

- Continue to develop the Council's website to maximise the number of residents using it to transact with the Council.
- Enable customer service advisers to resolve more queries from the public at first point of contact.
- Extend the MyAccount functionality so that customers can track online the progress of their service requests and responses from staff.
- Improve the quality of customer service by learning from customer reviews and mystery shopping.
- Improve the resilience of Council services in an emergency by enabling residents and staff to conduct business online, prioritising services most important to residents.

14. Engage effectively with residents to understand their priorities.

- Increase engagement with the Council's social media channels.
- Carry out a residents' survey about the Council, its priorities and service delivery.

15. Maintain a stable financial position.

- Review the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's financial position during 2020.
- Reduce the Council's budget requirement by increasing income from other sources aside from council tax and business rates and maintain financial self-sufficiency.
- Manage the Council's assets efficiently to maximise returns and contribute to Council priorities.
- Improve the energy efficiency of Council-owned buildings.
- Maximise income from the property portfolio of Badger Investments Ltd, a company wholly owned by the Council.
- Develop new income streams through the Council's environmental services company, Broxbourne Environmental Services Trading (Best) Ltd.

16. Build strong partnerships to deliver more for the Borough.

- Develop a new form of local strategic partnership with a mandate to improve partnership working on cross-cutting issues such as child poverty.
- Work with local businesses, the Ambition Broxbourne Board and the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership to bring investment and external funding into Broxbourne.
- Work with the Police, Fire and Rescue, Probation, Youth Services and other partners through the Community Safety Partnership to improve community safety and reduce fear of crime in the Borough.
- Work with local GPs, other NHS partners and charities such as MIND, Age UK and Broxbourne Foodbank to improve the health and welfare of residents.
- Maximise the efficiency and resilience of Council services through partnerships with local authorities and private sector providers.
- Show appreciation for those who work to benefit their community through the Borough of Broxbourne Awards.

17. Be transparent and ensure effective scrutiny.

- Support effective Member scrutiny of the Council's decision-making.
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date risk registers, assess the risks of major proposals and projects before they begin, and take continual action to minimise risk.
- Manage capital projects effectively and deliver them to an agreed timeframe and within budget, taking remedial action if there are problems.
- Achieve the best possible value in spending public money, ensure fairness in the allocation of contracts and maintain the highest standards of integrity in doing so.
- Publish an annual Infrastructure Funding Statement to account for the spending of s106 planning obligations and other funding.
- Undergo a peer review by a team appointed by the Local Government Association and act on the findings.

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