James Ellis
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

MEETING	**:**	HARLOW AND GILSTON GARDEN TOWN JOINT COMMITTEE
VENUE	**:**	COUNCIL CHAMBER IN THE HARLOW CIVIC CENTRE, THE WATER GARDENS, COLLEGE SQUARE, HARLOW CM20 1WG
DATE	**:**	MONDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2025
TIME	**:**	6.30 PM

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PLEASE NOTE TIME AND VENUE

</div>

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Councillors D Swords (Chairman), S Boulton (Vice Chairman), B Crystall (East Herts District Council), N Bedford (Epping Forest District Council), L Wagland (Essex County Council)

(Note: Substitution arrangements must be notified by the absent Member to Democratic Services 24 hours before the meeting)

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CONTACT OFFICER:
T Larsen, Democratic Services,
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democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

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A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:

- must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
- must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
- must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
- if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
- must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.

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Everyone is welcome to record meetings of the Council and its Committees using whatever, non-disruptive, methods you think are suitable, which may

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1. <u>Webcasting Introduction</u>

   This meeting is to be webcast and theChairman will read the following announcement:

   "I would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be broadcast live to the internet (or filmed) and will be capable of repeated viewing (or other such use by third parties).

   Therefore, by participating in this meeting, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.

   Please also be aware that if technical difficulties interrupt the meeting that cannot be overcome, I may need to adjourn the meeting.

   Members are reminded to activate their microphones before speaking".

2. <u>Apologies for Absence</u>

   To be announced at the meeting.

   To report non-attendance before the meeting, please contact [the EFDC Democratic Services](#) to ensure your absence is properly logged.

3. <u>Substitute Members</u>

   To report on the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

4. <u>Declarations of Interest</u>

   Members of the Joint Committee to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary

Interests or Personal Interest in any item on this agenda.

5. Minutes - 22 July 2024 (Pages 8 - 48)

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of the HGGT Joint Committee held on Monday 22nd July 2024.

6. Matters Arising and Outstanding Actions

Matters arising and outstanding actions from previous meetings.

7. Requests to Address the Joint Committee

1.   Any member of the public or a representative of an outside organisation may address the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) Joint Committee on any agenda item (except those dealt with in private session as exempt or confidential business) due to be considered at a meeting.

2.   The following rules shall apply to such requests:

(i)   requests must relate to any existing agenda item;

(ii)   requests must not raise new business for the meeting concerned;

(iii) A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to the Democratic Services team at Epping Forest District Council on democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk at least 4 working days before the meeting. Each   question must give the name and business address of the questioner.

The full provisions are contained within Parts 21 and 22 of the Inter-Authority Agreement.

8. <u>Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy and Updated Action Plan</u> (Pages 49 - 128)

    To review and propose any recommendations to the Quality-of-Life Monitoring strategy and Updated Action Plan.

9. <u>HGGT Water Lane Strategic Site - "Proposals for the Way Forward"</u> (Pages 129 - 149)

    To review and propose any recommendations to the HGGT Water Lane Strategic Site - "Proposals for The Way Forward".

10. <u>HGGT 3-Year Business Plan</u> (Pages 150 - 172)

    To review and propose any recommendations to the HGGT 3 – Year Business Plan.

11. <u>HGGT Programme Management Report</u> (Pages 173 - 180)

    To note the progress updates of the HGGT 2024/25 Work Programme.

12. <u>Any Other Business</u>

    Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that the permission of the Chairman be obtained, after prior notice to the Proper Officer, before urgent business not specified in the agenda may be transacted.

13. <u>Date of the Next Meeting</u>

    The next meeting of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Joint Committee will be held on 1st April 2025.

14. <u>Exclusion of the Public and Press</u>

Exclusion: To consider whether, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press should be excluded from the meeting for the items of business set out below on grounds that they will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) or are confidential under Section 100(A)(2):

Agenda Item No	Subject	Exempt Information Paragraph Number
15	Exempt HGGT Programme Management Report	3

The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, which came into effect on 1 March 2006, requires the Council to consider whether maintaining the exemption listed above outweighs the potential public interest in disclosing the information. Any member who considers that this test should be applied to any currently exempted matter on this agenda should contact the proper officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

15. HGGT Programme Management Report

To review and propose any recommendations on the progress updates of the HGGT 2024/25 Work Programme.

Agenda Item 5

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
HGGT JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Monday 22 July 2024, 6.30 pm – 8.28pm
Council Chamber in the Civic Centre, The Water Gardens, College Square, Harlow CM20 1WG

Members Present:	Councillors D Swords (Chairman) S Boulton (Vice-Chairman), B Crystall, N Bedford,and L Wagland
Officers In Attendance:	Richard Cassidy (EHDC Chief Executive), Nigel Richardson (Service Director (Planning Development)), Colin Haigh (HCC Director of Growth), Yvonne Rees (HDC Chief Executive), Jonathan Schifferes (ECC Head of Housing), Gary Woodhall (Team Manager - Democratic & Electoral Services), Therese Larsen (Democratic Services Officer), Amanda Apcar (Principal Planning Lawyer) and Naisha Polaine (Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Director)

A RECORDING OF THIS MEETING IS AVAILABLE FOR REPEATED VIEWING

13   WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Chairman made a short address to remind all present that the meeting would be broadcast on the Internet.

14   APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

15   DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

16   MINUTES

Resolved:

(1) That the minutes of the HGGT Joint Committee held on 11 June 2024 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

17   MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

There were no matters arising or outstanding actions from the last meeting of the HGGT Joint Committee held on the 11 June 2024.

18   REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE JOINT COMMITTEE

One request to address the Joint Committee had been received:

-    Cllr Edwards was given 3 minutes to address the Joint Committee.

Cllr Edwards started by talking about Agenda Item 11 'Re-imagining How We Can Travel Differently'; in particular the sustainable transport network and the yet to be agreed town centre south link.

Cllr Edwards expressed concern regarding the changes being made to the transport network plans first being envisioned by HGGT, to a now very different transport solution that in his opinion will cause huge issues for Harlow Town.

Cllr Edwards also talked about the long-term revenue funding for the transport infrastructure.
Cllr Edwards pointed to the report where it mentions ongoing revenue of between 21 to 48 million pounds being spent on transport, and he queried where this revenue will be raised.

- Cllr Swords thanked Cllr Edwards for being the first ever public speaker to address the Joint Committee.

19   HGGT ANNUAL REVIEW

Naisha Polaine, HGGT Director, introduced a report on the HGGT Annual Review presenting the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Annual Review for 2023-24. This was the sixth Annual Review, and it recorded a number of significant steps taken in the delivery of the adopted HGGT Vision during the last year. It also sets out the ambitions for the year to come.

The HGGT initiative published an Annual Review each year which sets out the achievements and progress of the 5-Council partnership towards its vision to promote healthy, sustainable communities and co-ordinate and facilitate the delivery of 16,000 new homes by 2033, and 7,000 new homes in the years after that along with associated transport, community and environmental infrastructure.

It was important that the progress of the 5-Council partnership led HGGT initiative was reported through the Annual Review in an accessible public facing record. The Annual Review would also be used to support future funding bids, inform project communications, and increase the visibility and prominence of the initiative across the wider community.

The HGGT Annual Review 2023-24 highlighted the progress that the 5-Council Partners were making in the planning and delivery of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town initiative. Delivery highlights include the start of the Garden Town's North to Centre Sustainable Transport Corridor; the Latton Priory Design Code and the Masterplan Guidance for East of Harlow. At the heart of any sustainable and lasting town-led regeneration was a thriving town centre and Harlow had now begun significant town centre regeneration. Lastly, the Discover Harlow Engagement Hub had opened this year providing a place that local people and visitors could find out more about the work detailed above and talk to the HGGT and Harlow Regeneration Teams.

The Joint Committee commented on and agreed the recommendations in the report.

Resolved:

(1) That as set out in Appendix A of the report, the HGGT draft Annual Review for 2023/24 be agreed.

(2) That authority be delegated to the Director of HGGT, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Joint Committee, to make minor changes and publish the final version of the HGGT 2023/24 HGGT Annual Review on the HGGT website.

20   HGGT QUALITY REVIEW PANEL ANNUAL REPORT

Kevin Steptoe, Garden Town Lead for East Herts Council and Lead for Place-shaping and Engagement Workstream in the HGGT Team, introduced Lucy Block and Peter Maxwell from Frame Projects.

Block and Maxwell shared a presentation on the role of the Quality Review Panel (QRP) in helping deliver growth and regeneration across the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town. Example schemes and emerging issues were noted, as well as next steps and recommendations made to Local Authorities and Developers. The presentation provided an update to the Joint Committee regarding the work of the QRP over the last year and to highlight issues that were considered to require further attention in either policy development or through the delivery of development proposals.

The Joint Committee asked questions and commented on the presentations:
- The Joint Committee commented that it was positive that the area of expertise had been expanded and was pleased about the encouragement to design code but would like the panel to expand on this some more.
- The Joint Committee commented that in some instances it seemed requests from Authorities and from local people had been ignored, and that Authorities should have been consulted.
- Maxwell explained that the parameter scope needed to be clear about what could be built where and be specific to each location.
- The Review Panel would challenge and use best practice for long term planning with the help of the Authorities Planning Departments.
- The Joint Committee requested that the Terms of Reference be shared.
- Block explained that the Terms of Reference covered the remit of the Panel, as well as issues that the Panel needed to be aware of, and feedback and consultation. The Panel did not want to undermine the Joint Committee or any of the authorities.
- The Joint Committee asked if the Panel was finding that applicants were paying enough attention to the ICB and Health Authorities desires. The Joint Committee asked if the Panel had found any challenges with regards to the Authorities capabilities.
- Maxwell replied that sometimes applications had come in for a certain number of homes, rather than the purpose of these homes and what was trying to be achieved. Better applications included areas for green space, sustainable transport etc. There was room for improvement.
- Block added, regarding capacity in Authorities, an up-dating and up-skilling session had been set up for Wednesday 24th July 2024 with all the authorities. This would hopefully lead to confidence in bringing schemes forward.

The Joint Committee agreed the recommendations of the report.

Resolved:

(1) That the HGGT QRP Annual Report 2023/24, as set out in Appendix A of the report-, and particularly the emerging issues and next steps to address these in Section 6, be agreed.

(2) That authority be delegated to the Director of HGGT, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Joint Committee, to make any minor changes and publish the final version of the HGGT QRP Annual Report 2023/24 HGGT.

21   HGGT STEWARDSHIP CHARTER

Kevin Steptoe, Garden Town Lead for the East Hertfordshire District Council and Lead for Place-shaping and Engagement Workstreams, presented a report to the Joint Committee on how the 5-Council partners should consider the approach to be taken to ensure effective stewardship of the new communities created for the Garden Town. In this respect stewardship comprised the inclusive, proactive, and responsive planning, placemaking and care of new places. It was decided that Stewardship Guidance should be produced, providing direction to landowners, developers, community representatives and other stakeholders. This Guidance took the form of the Stewardship Charter, of six high level principles that set the expectations to achieve stewardship outcomes.

The draft Charter was subject to public consultation in the latter half of 2023. Feedback received during that consultation had been fully considered along with other inputs impacting on the Charter as set out in this report. Following the consultation a range of amendments had been made to the draft Charter bringing it into a final draft. The Charter could now be agreed by the Joint Committee.

The Joint Committee commented on the presentation:
- Praise and endorsement were given for the work put into this report and the Chartership in general.
- It was recognised what an important piece of work the Chartership was for future developments and the standard of houses delivered to residents.
- It was mentioned that the Planning Authorities now needed to be robust when accepting development proposals, and whether those proposals were fulfilled.

The Joint Committee agreed the recommendations of the report.

Resolved:

(1) That the result of the consultation exercise and consequential amendments to the draft Stewardship Charter as set out in paras 3.1 to 3.11 of this report be agreed.

(2) That the final Stewardship Charter, as set out at Appendix G be agreed.

(3) That authority be delegated to the HGGT Director to make further minor amendments to the final Stewardship Charter as may be required and to update the Charter Foreword in the final version of the Charter in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Joint Committee.

22   "RE-IMAGINING HOW WE CAN TRAVEL DIFFERENTLY" - A HGGT FRAMEWORK (HGGT MODAL TRANSITION DELIVERY FRAMEWORK)

Naisha Polaine, HGGT Director, introduced Rob Goodall from ARUP Group Limited. Goodall presented to the Joint Committee on how to develop and approve the HGGT Transport Strategy and oversee the implementation of the Transport Strategy. This includes the delegated function to develop and maintain an overarching programme plan of key activities required to deliver the HGGT modal shift targets.

The Framework would enable the 5-Council partners to programme and plan those initiatives working with the modal shift assumptions in planning permissions for the HGGT sites. It would also assist in seeking funding, where required, from other public and private sources. The HGGT's 5-Council partners were also required, as part of the Housing Investment Grant (HIG) funding provided by Homes England, to evidence that progression towards achieving the modal transition target was being made.

The Joint Committee asked questions and commented on the presentation:
- The Committee noted that modal shift in transport was difficult, but modal shift including existing residents would be even more difficult to achieve.
- A request for an undertaking of a review of the new government and its new legislation and agenda was made, and it was proposed that Polaine and the HGGT lead officers would be delegated authority to undertake minor amendments following the review.
- Polaine suggested that a first version of the Framework be published and updated once further details regarding the new Governments legislation and agenda are available.
- It was suggested that adoption of the report may be on a rolling basis following the review of Government changes.
- A comment was made that due to the scale of the proposed Garden Town in 10 years' time, active travel was an enormous challenge and required pioneering solutions.

The Joint Committee agreed the recommendations of the report.

Resolved:

(1) That the Framework 'Re-Imagining How we Can Travel Differently' (The Framework), as set out in Appendix A of the report, be agreed.

(2) That consideration of the Framework in the evidence base for the execution of highways and transport planning decisions and developer contributions by the HGGT Council partners be agreed.

(3) That the working together of the HGGT Council partners to continue to develop an overarching programme plan of key activities required to deliver modal shift, informed by the Framework, be agreed.

(4) That a progress update be reported to the Joint Committee in Spring 2025.

23   HGGT PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Chairman proposed to move this Agenda item into private session and debate the entire HGGT Programme Management Report as one item together with Agenda item 16. This was seconded by Cllr Boulton and agreed by the Joint Committee.

24   ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that there was no other business for consideration by the Joint Committee.

25   DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Joint Committee noted that their next meeting would be on Tuesday 22 October 2024 at 6.30pm.

26   EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Resolved:

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the item of business set out below as it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act indicated and the exemption is considered to outweigh the potential public interest in disclosing the information:

Agenda Item No	Subject	Exempt Information Paragraph Number
12	HGGT Programme Management Report (Exempt)	3

27   HGGT PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT REPORT (EXEMPT)

Agenda Item 12 and 16 amalgamated.

Naisha Polaine, HGGT Director, presented the HGGT programme Management Report: The purpose of the Joint Committee was to provide unified leadership to deliver the ambitious spatial growth proposals set out in the Local Plans of HDC, EHDC and EFDC supported by ECC and HCC to align and maximise opportunities for new and existing residents and communities.

The HGGT Joint Committee held the responsibility to deliver the agreed HGGT Vision to promote healthy, sustainable communities and co-ordinate and facilitate the delivery of 16,000 new homes in the HGGT by 2033, and 7,000 new homes in the years after that, along with associated transport, community, and environmental infrastructure.

This report provided the Joint Committee with oversight of progress against its agreed programme of work for 2024/25 which aimed to progress delivery of its HGGT Vision.

The Joint Committee asked questions and debated the report:
- The debate centred around engagement with the Government for support and revenue.
- A discussion followed as to what exactly should be asked of the Government, and the way in which the ask should be made.

The Joint Committee agreed to the recommendation in the report.

<u>Resolved:</u>

(1) That the Programme Management Report, as set out in Appendix A of the report, providing progress updates against the agreed HGGT 2024/25 annual work programme be agreed.

(2) That the HGGT Master Programme for Delivery featured in the HGGT Level 0 Integrated Programme Dashboard, as set out in - Appendix A of the exempt Programme Management Report be agreed.

(3) That the 9 programme risks and proposed mitigation actions in the Level 0 Strategic Risk Register featured in the HGGT Level 0 Integrated Programme Dashboard, as set out in Appendix A of the exempt Programme Management Report, be noted and agreed.

HARLOW & GILSTON GARDEN TOWN QUALITY REVIEW PANEL

Peter Maxwell - Chair of the panel
Lucy Block - Frame Projects

22 10 2024

HGGT

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GARDEN TOWN

FRAME PROJECTS TEAM

Deborah Denner
Director

Lucy Block
Associate

Yingli Tang
Panel Coordinator

HGGT
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NPPF

SECTION 12 - ACHIEVING WELL DESIGNED PLACES

"Planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development… there is a range of tools including workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements…These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes…In assessing applications, **local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.**'

(National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 138)

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DESIGN REVIEW PRINCIPLES

'Design Review is focused on delivering better places for people. It can help show a building or place meet the needs better meet the people who will use it and those of everyone who will be affected by it. It does this by constructively scrutinising proposals to improve the quality of architecture, urban design, public realm, landscape and engineering design.'

(Design Review Principles and Practice, chapter 1, page 7)

Design Review is:

Independent
It is conducted by people who are unconnected with the scheme's promoters and decision makers, and it ensures that conflicts of interest do not arise.

Expert
It is carried out by suitably trained people who are experienced in design and know how to criticise constructively. Review is usually most respected where it is carried out by professional peers of the project designers, because their standing and expertise will be acknowledged.

Multidisciplinary
It combines the different perspectives of architects, urban designers, urban and rural planners, landscape architects, engineers and other specialist experts to provide a complete, rounded assessment.

Accountable
The Review Panel and its advice must be clearly seen to work for the benefit of the public. This should be ingrained within the panel's terms of reference.

Transparent
The panel's remit, membership, governance processes and funding should always be in the public domain.

Proportionate
It is used on projects whose significance, either at local or national level, warrants the investment needed to provide the service.

Timely
It takes place as early as possible in the design process, because this can avoid a great deal of wasted time. It also costs less to make changes at an early stage.

Advisory
A design review panel does not make decisions, but it offers impartial advice for the people who do.

Objective
It appraises schemes according to reasoned, objective criteria rather than the stylistic tastes of individual panel members.
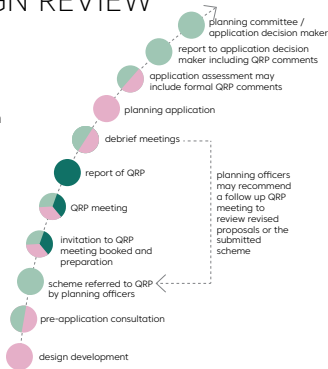
Accessible
Its findings and advice are clearly expressed in terms that design teams, decision makers and clients can all understand and make use of.

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VALUE OF DESIGN REVIEW

- identification of design before the scheme is fixed
- constructive feedback to inform early pre-app discussions
- multiple reviews (in either panel or chairs review format)
- can be included as part of PPAs to establish expectation upfront

Applicant / design team
Council / Local Authority
Quality review panel (QRP)

planning committee / application decision maker

report to application decision maker including QRP comments

application assessment may include formal QRP comments

planning application

debrief meetings

report of QRP

planning officers may recommend a follow up QRP meeting to review revised proposals or the submitted scheme

QRP meeting

invitation to QRP meeting booked and preparation

scheme referred to QRP by planning officers

pre-application consultation

design development

MEMBERSHIP

Chaired by Peter Maxwell, Director at the London Legacy Development Corporation, the Panel includes 25 professional members including:

- architects / masterplanners
- urban designers / town planners
- landscape architects
- heritage / townscape experts
- development experts
- sustainability experts
- green infrastructure experts
- inclusive design experts
- transport / infrastructure experts
- stewardship experts

TYPES OF REVIEW

Formal review:

• Chair + 4 panel members
• Most commonly used format
• Recommended for schemes with greater impact

Workshop review:

• Chair + 2 panel members
• More discursive in nature than a formal review
• Can be used for larger masterplans / complex sites to focus on key thematic issues

Chair's review:

• Chair + 1 panel member
• Recommended for smaller development proposals, or schemes previously presented at a formal review

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SCHEMES REVIEWED

20 reviews, from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024
- 8 in HGGT and 12 in EFDC, and 11 returning schemes

Type of review
- Panel review
- Chair review

Applicant type
- Private developer
- Public/private partnership
- Local authority

Type of proposal
- Masterplan
- Design document
- Design form
- Outline
- Education
- Residential (up to 50)
- Residential (50+)

Design stage
- Pre-application
- Draft document
- Submitted
- PPA masterplan

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PROPOSALS REVIEWED
GARDEN TOWN AREAS

- Centre - 1
- Villages - 4
- of Harlow - 0
- Priory - 2
- Lane - 0

+ policy document
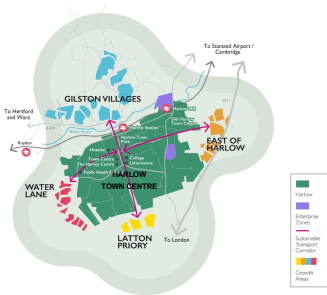
LESSONS LEARNED

Progress meeting - February 2024
- Meeting with HGGT officers, Frame Projects and Panel Chair, to discuss adjustments to the review process and address issues around performance, as well as gaps in panel expertise.

Annual report - April 2023 to March 2024
- To evaluate effectiveness of the review process, including quantitative information on schemes reviewed, and feedback from panel members, applicants and local planning authority representatives

Annual meeting - TBC
- Opportunity for updates on planning policy and development coming forward in the HGGT area, as well as sharing lessons learnt and celebrating successful projects

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STRATEGIC MASTERPLANS

- Rise in the number of strategic sites coming to the panel over the last year.

- Size and complexity of strategic sites

- Bespoke formats / extended sessions

- Splitting the complex masterplans into thematic sections.
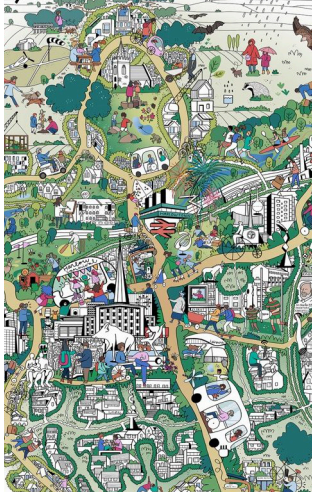
CHARACTER AND IDENTITY

- A range of placemaking within a semi-rural setting and for urban extensions

- Development of stronger design guidance, for example district wide design codes

- Additional best practice references for design teams and their officers, as well as the panel members.

SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORT

- working to support the
  ons for modal shift and
  ation of active travel

- awareness of issues
  climate resilience,
  ersity and sustainable
  ge

- nt responses to low
  and passive design more
  variable

Having taken a number of schemes to the Quality Review Panel, I can only speak highly of the process and value we experienced from it. The panels are made up of members from different professional backgrounds and with a range of skills that complement each other.

The invaluable, constructive feedback has helped us to develop well-rounded and improved proposals. Engaging with the QRP more than once during the pre-application process really maximises the benefits. We will continue to utilise the service as it's extremely effective and would really encourage others to do the same.

Ben Spencer
GS8

RE-IMAGINING HOW WE CAN TRAVEL DIFFERENTLY

JUNE 2024

GARDEN TOWN GUIDANCE

ARUP

HGGT Joint Committee Board Meeting

Summary Presentation

Re-Imagining How We Can Travel Differently

22nd July 2024

Rob Goodall, Associate Director, Arup

Presentation Purpose

Summary

- Overview of Arup's report – 'Re-imagining how we can travel differently' developed on behalf of, and in conjunction with, HGGT and all partners

- Highlighting of challenges/risks and opportunities of approach to travel behaviour in Harlow and Gilston

- Share the recommendations and the delivery pathway

- Seek approval on final documentation

1. Introduction

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Introduction

- Arup has been commissioned by Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) to produce a study into how travel behavior could be influenced or re-imagined.

- The purpose of this work is to set out how the objectives established in the HGGT Transport Strategy (2022) could be achieved under different scenarios.

- Across the HGGT area, 2023 surveys have indicated that there is currently a 23% sustainable travel mode share.

- Arup have devised a methodology of prioritised interventions and how travel behaviour could change to meet the stated objectives.
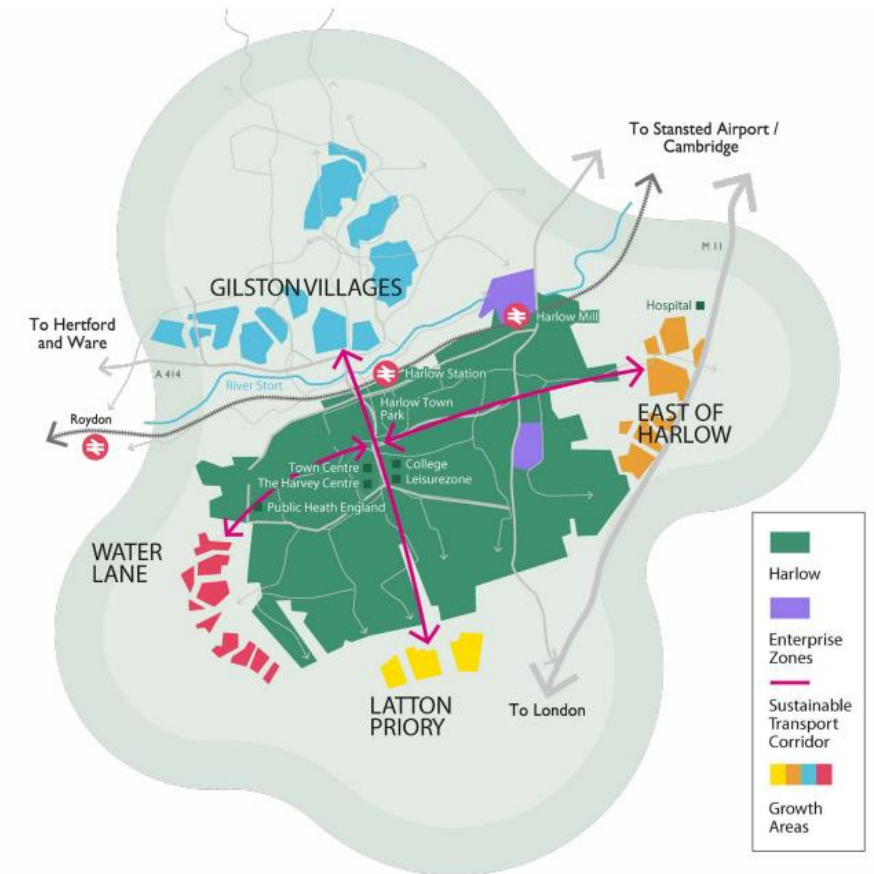
Introduction

Purpose and Approach to Delivery

The key purposes of this work are to use it as:

1   **A tool to leverage s106 funding contributions from Developers to support achievement of the modal objectives.**

2   **A mechanism to obtain funding from governmental departments.**

3   **A pathway to discharge the conditions of the Housing Infrastructure Grant.**

4   **A technical base and supporting information for Local Transport Plans (whether they are existing and/or emerging).**

It is important to note that interventions contained within this work are currently unfunded, and therefore a clear objective will be to use it as a "hook" to leverage financial support.

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ARUP

2. Context

HGGT Context

HGGT objectives and funding conditions

Transport Strategy objectives

50% of all trips starting and/or ending in the **existing** settlement area of Harlow Town should be by **active and sustainable travel modes**

60% by 2033 of all trips starting and/or ending in the **new** Garden Communities of Harlow & Gilston Garden Town should be by **active and sustainable travel modes**

Key takeaways:

- Harlow residents will need to the change the way they travel to achieve the agreed objectives.

- New strategic sites will need to *establish* how the objectives will be achieved.

Grant Determination Agreement (GDA) Part 1 - Transport Monitoring

- 3.1 The Grant Recipient shall provide:

  – 3.1.1 further transport **monitoring and evaluation** if requested by the Department for Transport, including, but not limited to, the monitoring and evaluation of travel plans including sustainable and active modes;

  – 3.1.2 details of **potential approaches** to meeting this requirement
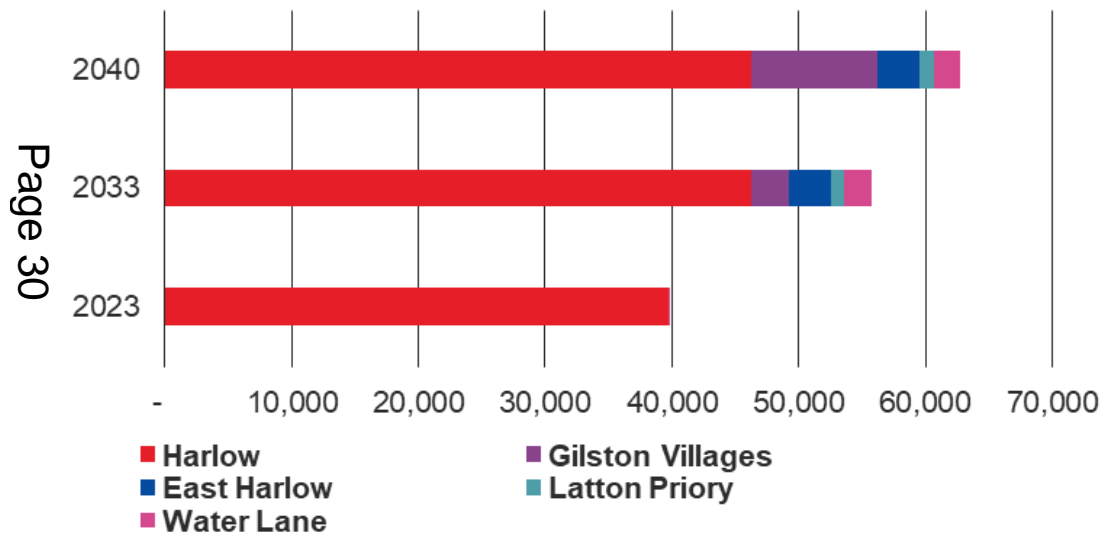
Key takeaways:

- Clear and effective Monitoring and Evaluation Plan is required showing the baseline information and the pathway to achieving the requirements.

- This work will need to set out the range of potential approaches to meet the requirements, for both existing Harlow residents and those in the future.

3. The Challenge

Delivering Growth

HGGT Planned Development

HGGT growth in number of homes

Legend:
- Harlow (red)
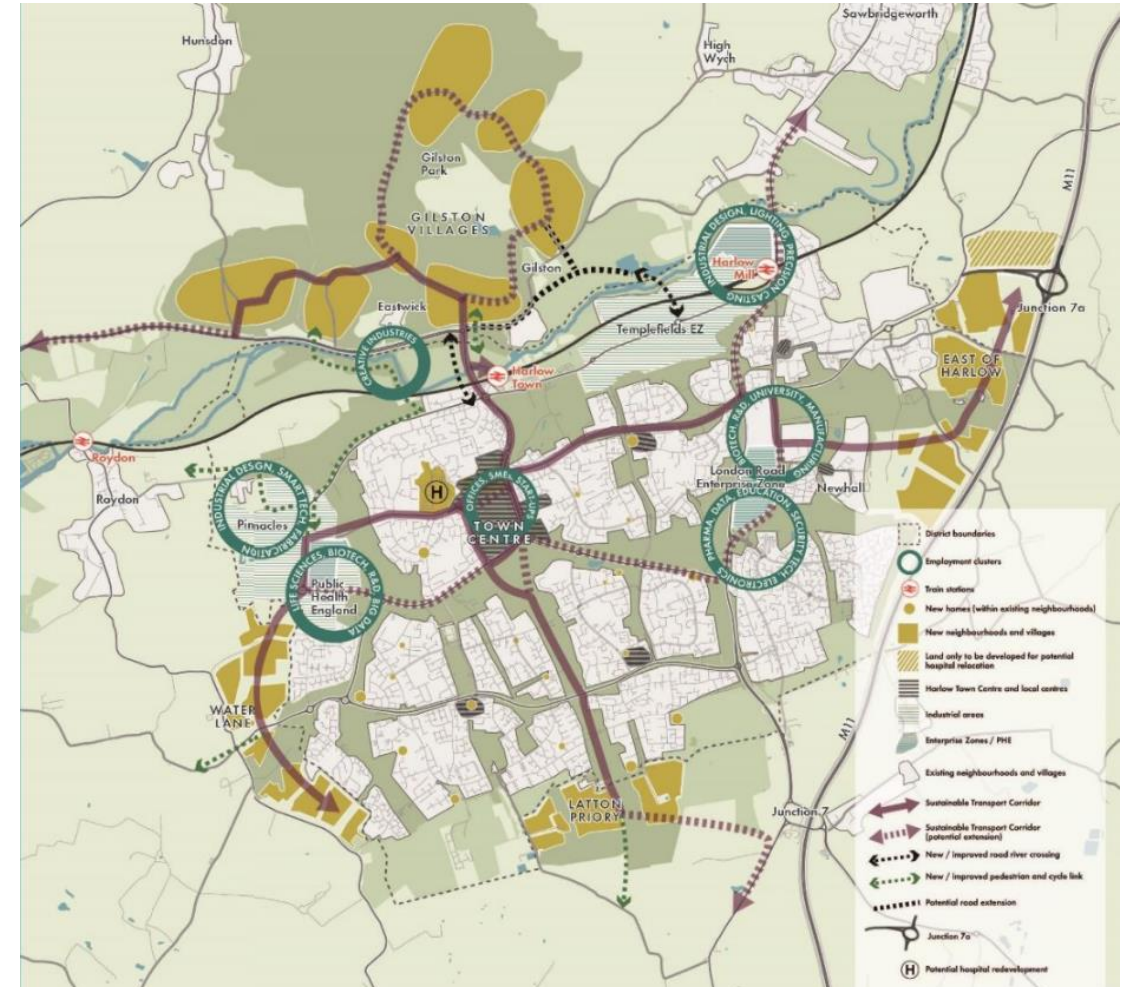- East Harlow (blue)
- Water Lane (pink)
- Gilston Villages (purple)
- Latton Priory (teal)
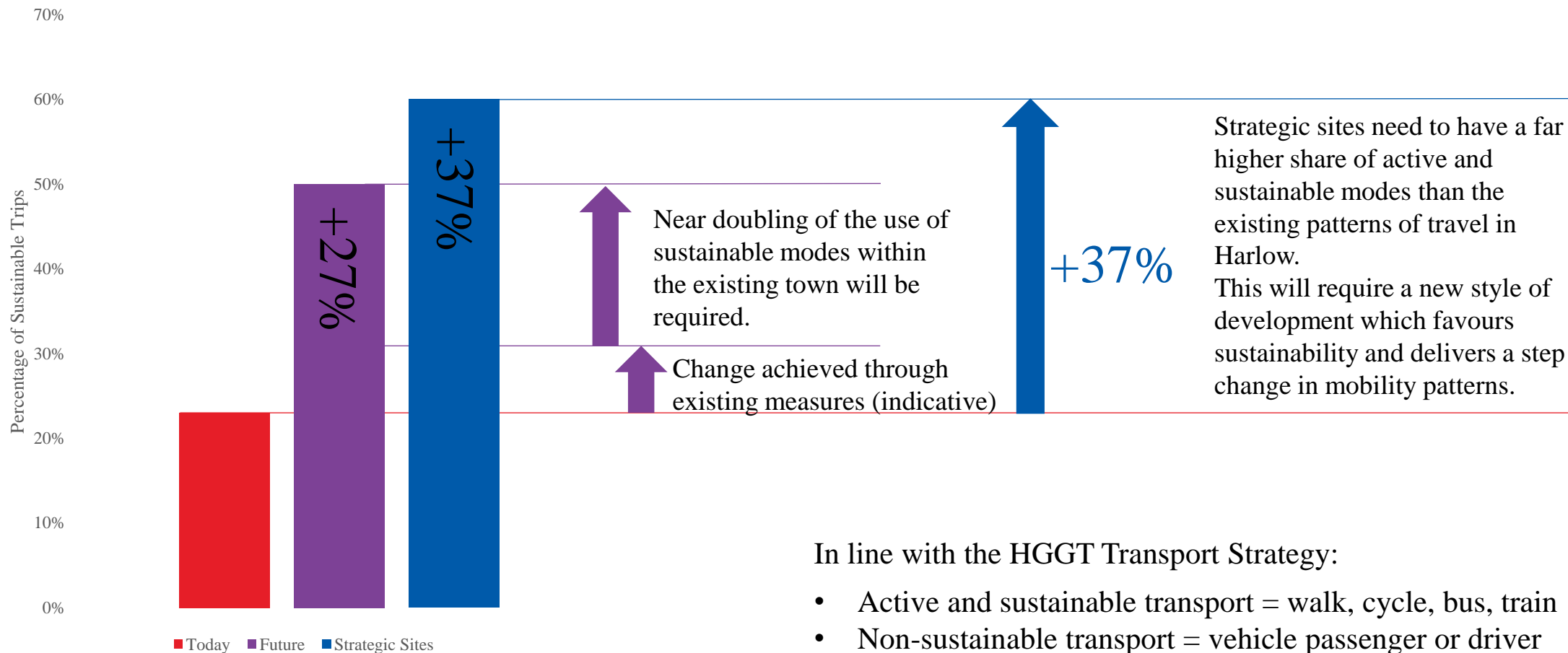
N.B. 2033 Harlow homes is an approximation from 16,000 total

A key pillar of the planning and development approach for HGGT is the significance of sustainable transport modes and how a change towards their use can be delivered and achieved.

Baseline Transport Profile

The challenge – mode shares

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Near doubling of the use of sustainable modes within the existing town will be required.

Change achieved through existing measures (indicative)

+37%

Strategic sites need to have a far higher share of active and sustainable modes than the existing patterns of travel in Harlow.

This will require a new style of development which favours sustainability and delivers a step change in mobility patterns.

In line with the HGGT Transport Strategy:

- Active and sustainable transport = walk, cycle, bus, train
- Non-sustainable transport = vehicle passenger or driver

Today   Future   Strategic Sites

10

Baseline Transport Profile

The challenge – demand

- A significant increase in the number of trips to be made by sustainable modes:
  - +90,267 (+216%) trips per day if there is no reduction in the trip rate (trips per person per day)
  - +48,157 (+115%) trips per day if there is a reduction in the trip rate (trips per person per day)

- The capacity of the active and public transport network will need to match this anticipated demand

- The reduction in the non-sustainable mode share results in non-sustainable trips reducing moderately from 2021 with the growth projections

Page 32

•Page 39
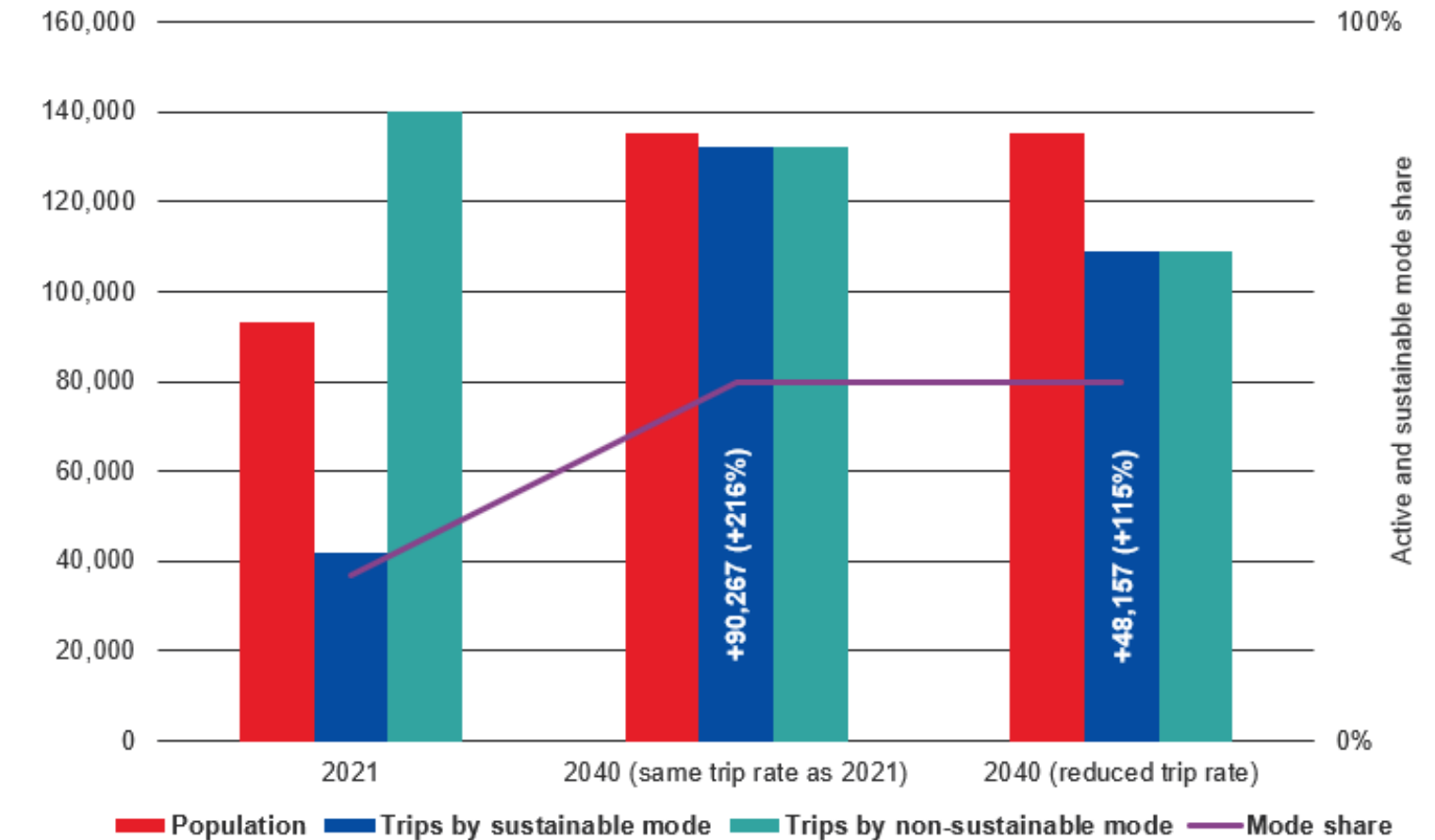
2021 trip rate: 1.95 trips per person
Reduced trip rate: 1.61 trips per person (1% reduction per year)

4. Reimagining Travel

Roads, Streets and Neighbourhoods

Increasing Bus Use

Increasing Shared Mobility and Active Travel

Page 34

Targeted Engagement Programmes

Rebalancing the Cost of Travel

Page 41

Sustainable Freight and Delivery

Themes

ARUP

5. Scenarios

Scenarios

Strategy, Programmes and Interventions

Three scenarios have been developed to provide an indication of potential pathways to achieving the HGGT objectives.

	Falling behind achieving the objectives for HGGT (BAU)	Trailing the target timeframes but progressing towards the objectives for HGGT (Ambition)	On track to achieve the objectives for HGGT (Exemplar)
Scenario			
Summary	No significant changes beyond committed infrastructure and developer funding for new infrastructure and only a small behavioural change programme in place.	Delivery of some targeted interventions has been achieved, however more controversial and higher cost schemes not delivered.	Difficult decisions regarding the delivery of more controversial and higher cost schemes have been made which reinforces growth in active and public transport through improved services and land use change.

Scenarios

ARUP

Exemplar Scenario: Harlow

In this scenario, the objective for the HGGT area is achieved by 2035 and overall vehicle trips across HGGT are below today's level, ensuring traffic and congestion levels do not increase.

Using available resources, HGGT successfully delivers interventions that contribute to the objectives in the short term and in response to this approach, the HGGT area continues to receive significant funding from Local and Central Government to deliver further improvements.

The timely delivery of interventions, such as STCs and improved public transport, increases public support for further interventions and support for the ongoing cost of subsidised public transport. The HGGT area's roads become less congested which in turn enables the re-prioritisation of road space in the high streets and town centre to development and supporting active transport. Lower traffic and greater bus priority supports the bus networks performance and makes the HGGT area a more attractive place to walk and cycle.

Working from home has a sustained impact on how often people choose to commute and local travel increases substantially, typically by walking or cycling. E-bikes are particularly popular for travel to mobility hubs over middle distances, combined with an improved bus network supported by DRT in lower density areas.

Trip type	Walk	Cycle	Rail / Bus	Car	Car passenger
Commuting and business	▲	▲	▲	▼	▼
Education or education escort	▲	▲	▲	▼	▼
Shopping and leisure	▲	▲	▲	▼	▼

Minor change ☐ ☐ ☐   Major change
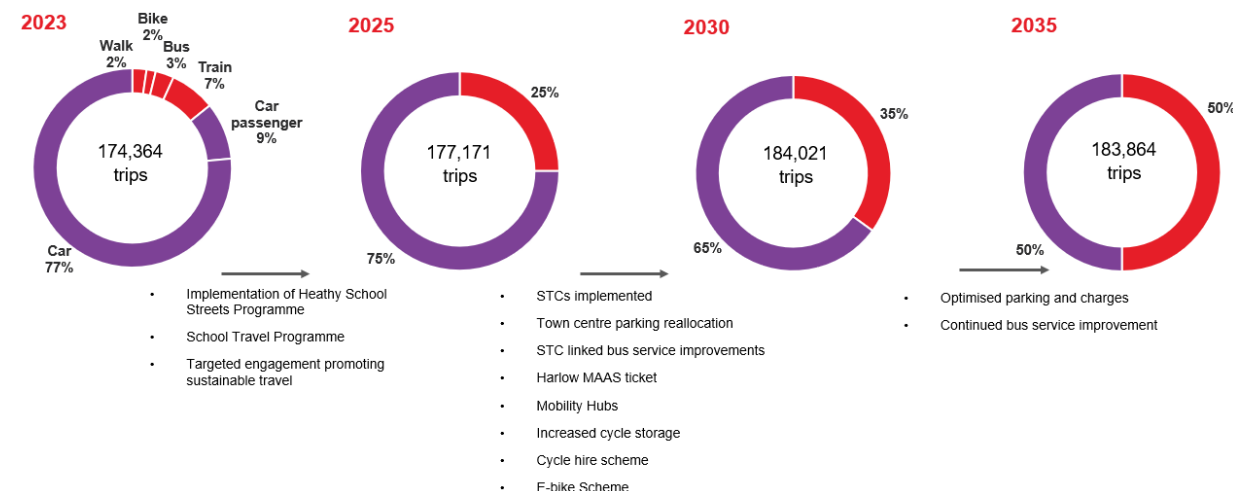
By 2040:

10,389 additional total daily trips

52,472 additional daily trips by active and sustainable modes

42,083 fewer daily trips by car modes

27% increase in active and sustainable mode share

Active and sustainable modes

■ Walk ■ Cycle ■ Bus ■ Train ■ Car ■ Car passenger

2023
Walk 2%
Bike 2%
Bus 3%
Train 7%
Car passenger 9%
Car 77%
174,364 trips

2025
25%
75%
177,171 trips

- Implementation of Heathy School Streets Programme
- School Travel Programme
- Targeted engagement promoting sustainable travel

2030
35%
65%
184,021 trips

- STCs implemented
- Town centre parking reallocation
- STC linked bus service improvements
- Harlow MAAS ticket
- Mobility Hubs
- Increased cycle storage
- Cycle hire scheme
- E-bike Scheme

2035
50%
50%
183,864 trips

- Optimised parking and charges
- Continued bus service improvement

Scenarios

Exemplar: Strategic Sites

In this scenario, the objective for the strategic sites is achieved by 2035.

The strategic sites are designed in such a way that supports high active and public transport travel for all trip types, growing the active and sustainable mode share quickly from 15% to 47% to 2030. The objective is further advanced up to 2035 due mostly to implementation of parking policies which discourage short vehicle trips and high-quality walking and cycling routes.

Initially lower rates of public transport take up are seen as service levels builds as demand increases. Developments are attractive to new and existing residents partially because of the sustainable lifestyle they deliver for residents.

Short trips are concentrated on walking and cycling, this includes access to schools, retail and local leisure facilities. Cycling occurs along dedicated cycle routes and local streets and safe storage is provided at key locations.

For journeys into Harlow and onwards, many residents use the high-quality turn up and go local bus provision utilising the STCs or an expanded DRT to get to the town centre and for regional connections via the train or bus station.

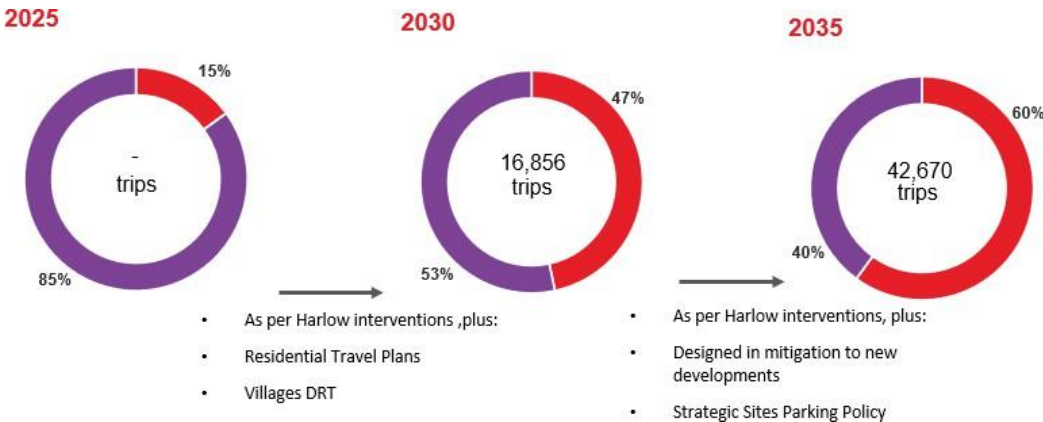| Trip type	Walk	Cycle	Rail / Bus	Car	Car passenger
Commuting and business	▲	▲	▲	▼	▼
Education or education escort	▲	▲	▲	▼	▼
Shopping and leisure	▲	▲	▲	▼	▼

Minor change ▢ ▢ ▇   Major change

By 2040:

- **68,320** additional total daily trips
- **40,992** additional daily trips by active and sustainable modes
- **27,328** additional daily trips by car modes
- **60% active and sustainable mode share**

Active and sustainable modes
■ Walk ■ Cycle ■ Bus ■ Train ■ Car ■ Car passenger

2025
15%
- trips
85%

2030
47%
16,856 trips
53%

- As per Harlow interventions, plus:
- Residential Travel Plans
- Villages DRT

2035
60%
42,670 trips
40%

- As per Harlow interventions, plus:
- Designed in mitigation to new developments
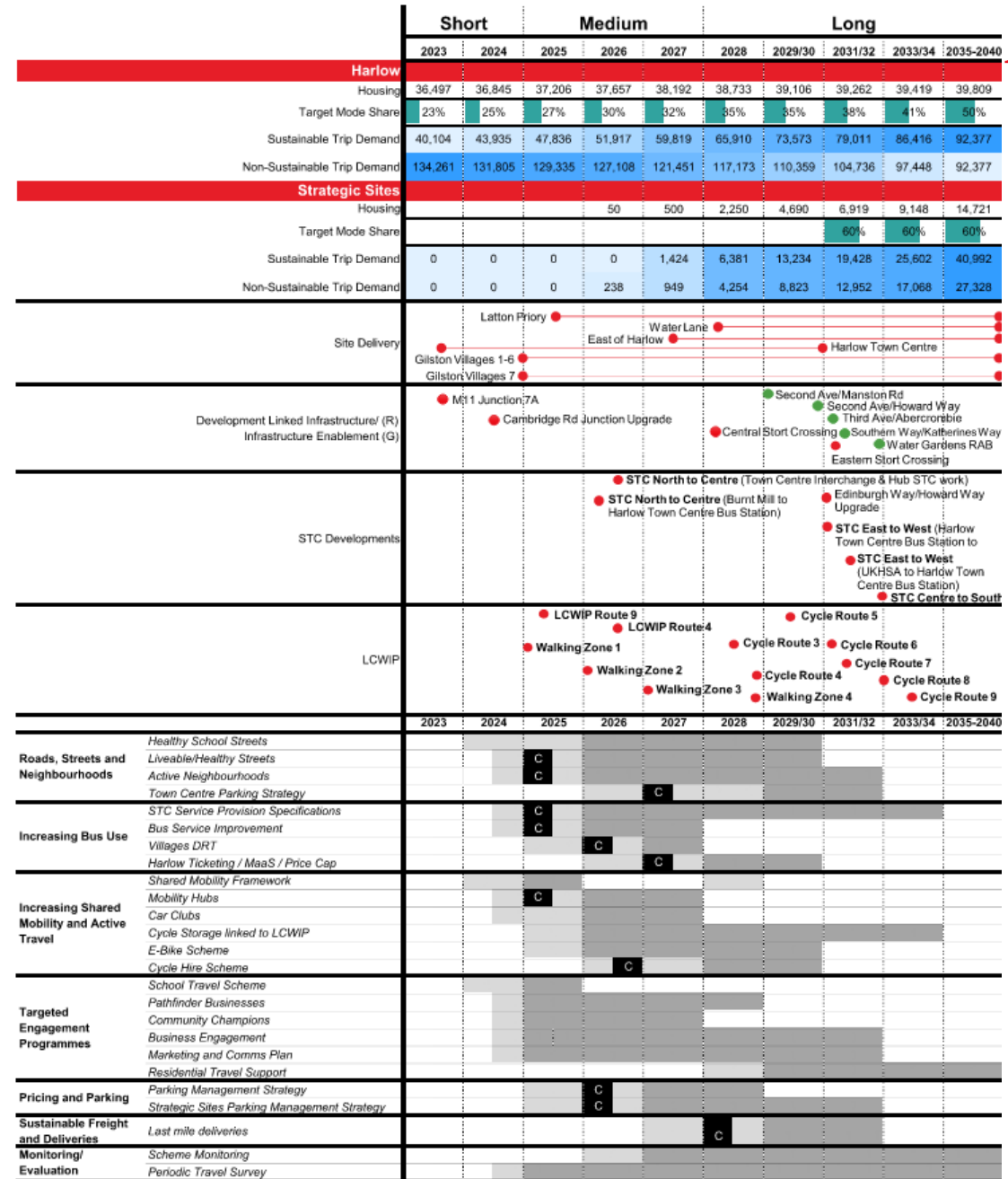- Strategic Sites Parking Policy

6. Summary

Summary

Combined Delivery Pathway

The delivery themes pathway has been overlaid with the existing HGGT work plan (key site delivery and infrastructure delivery and enablement timeframes). This ties together the schemes that are already planned with the recommended supporting interventions required to meet the modal transition objectives.

The scenario shown in the delivery pathway is most aligned to the Exemplar scenario. with continuous delivery and implementation of a range of interventions and programmes to support the gradual and sustained change to active and public transport.

HGGT will need to assess the deliverability of the supporting interventions under the delivery themes pathway with respect to their resource constraints.

	Short		Medium				Long			
	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029/30	2031/32	2033/34	2035-2040
Harlow										
Housing	36,497	36,845	37,206	37,657	38,192	38,733	39,106	39,262	39,419	39,809
Target Mode Share	23%	25%	27%	30%	32%	35%	35%	38%	41%	50%
Sustainable Trip Demand	40,104	43,935	47,836	51,917	59,819	65,910	73,573	79,011	86,416	92,377
Non-Sustainable Trip Demand	134,261	131,805	129,335	127,108	121,451	117,173	110,359	104,736	97,448	92,377
Strategic Sites										
Housing				50	500	2,250	4,690	6,919	9,148	14,721
Target Mode Share							60%	60%	60%	
Sustainable Trip Demand	0	0	0	0	1,424	6,381	13,234	19,428	25,602	40,992
Non-Sustainable Trip Demand	0	0	0	238	949	4,254	8,823	12,952	17,068	27,328

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HGGT
HARLOW & GILSTON GARDEN TOWN

Agenda Item 8

Report to: **HARLOW AND GILSTON GARDEN TOWN JOINT COMMITTEE**

Title: **HGGT Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy and Updated Action Plan**

Report Reference: **JC-008-2024/25**

Date: **10 February 2025**

Report Author: **Adeola Pilgrim - HGGT Quality of Life Lead**

Enclosures: **Appendix A – HGGT Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy**
Appendix B – HGGT Quality of Life Action Plan

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

The HGGT Joint Committee is asked to:

A.   Agree the HGGT Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy as set out in Appendix A.

B.   Agree the updated HGGT Quality of Life Action Plan as set out in Appendix B.

C.   Delegate authority to the Acting HGGT Director to make further minor amendments to the final HGGT Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy and Action Plan as may be required for final publication, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Joint Committee.

D.   Recommend to the HGGT Council partners that the HGGT Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy and Action Plan are used as a benchmark for aligning the approach to community engagement across the Garden Town area.

Executive Summary:

In 2022, the HGGT Quality of Life (QoL) project was agreed by all HGGT 5 Council partners as a way of mapping quality of life and wellbeing, and to establish a baseline for measuring the social impacts of growth and change across the HGGT geography. It was the culmination of the

5 Council partners work to identify the shared HGGT priorities for community engagement and community-led stewardship.

This was done through the Your Quality of Life (YQoL) consultation, which was a public, digital-led consultation where HGGT asked local residents about their quality of life, and what they value, like, dislike or need.

Following the success of the YQoL Consultation in 2022, the HGGT partners recognised the additional value that QoL monitoring and engagement has across all HGGT workstreams and this resulted in the HGGT Board endorsing the Quality of Life Action Plan in February 2023. The Action Plan set out recommendations and next steps for its implementation, including a commitment to develop a HGGT Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy and to make consultation data more digitally accessible.

Appendix A contains the HGGT QoL Monitoring Strategy which provides a guide for measuring and tracking Quality of Life across the Garden Town, both within existing and new communities, in years to come. The HGGT QoL Action Plan has also been updated to reflect progress and further recommendations following development of the Monitoring Strategy, and is set out in Appendix B.

The HGGT QoL Monitoring Strategy and Action Plan have been developed collaboratively by the Quality of Life Foundation and the HGGT 5 Council partners.

Reasons for proposed Decision:

The Quality-of-Life Indicators are performance indicators that are used to measure and evaluate health and wellbeing. The HGGT Joint Committee is tasked with monitoring reports on Quality of Life indicators in Harlow and the new neighbourhoods. By undertaking Quality of Life Monitoring, changes in quality of life can be monitored and the outputs from this can inform future policy and planning decisions.

Other Options for Action:

It could be determined not to agree the HGGT Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy and updated Action Plan and to take no further action in relation to it. This option as a course of action is *not recommended*. It would not support enabling the 5 Council partners to achieve the HGGT Vision informed by monitoring the health and wellbeing of current and future residents and to support better quality of life for the community. It would also leave landowners, developers, community representatives and other stakeholders without further guidance from the 5 Council partners of HGGT with respect to Quality of Life. With HGGT stewardship approach still under development, and limited engagement and monitoring policy, Quality of Life Monitoring helps secure enhancements to quality and social equity at scale through verifiable, data-driven

approaches, which can be scaled further. All of these have been helpful in raising the profile of the HGGT and support seeking further funding opportunities.

1. Introduction

1.1 Harlow and Gilston was designated as a Garden Town in January 2017. It will create new communities in and around Harlow with 23,000 new homes, 20,000 new jobs and transformational supporting infrastructure by 2033 and beyond. The Garden Town will support regeneration of Harlow town centre and provide significant new job opportunities.

1.2 The HGGT 5 Council partners wanted to measure the impact of this long-term growth by establishing a Quality of Life baseline for the Garden Town area. By establishing the baseline, it enables monitoring of any changes to quality of life and social value in relation to the baseline and allows adjustment to policy and planning. The HGGT Quality of Life project therefore focuses on people's quality of life in the town and surrounding areas and is part of ongoing efforts to enhance the health and wellbeing of current and future residents and to involve more local people in decisions affecting their area.

2. Background

2.1 In 2022, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) PropTech Round 2 Digital Engagement funding was awarded to HGGT for mapping quality of life and wellbeing, to establish a baseline for measuring the social impacts of growth and change. This was done through the YQoL consultation which presented a set of QoL indicator questions to residents to understand how different areas of the Garden Town are performing. The questions were themed under the headings of Community, Nature, Movement, Health, Wonder and Control.

2.2 The engagement included over 1000 contributions and 49 in-person events, which was a threefold increase in engagement compared to previous consultations. There was also an increase in engagement with under-represented groups, including both younger and older people, people from minority backgrounds and people with disabilities. Feedback from the YQoL consultation has been summarised in reports and shared back with the community, including a Community Feedback Report and the Reflections and Recommendations Report which have fed into the QoL Action Plan. These have and will continue to enable community feedback to influence both authority and developer-led proposals and policies, as well as long-term stewardship and governance arrangements. It has also provided a baseline to return to and inform approaches in the future.

2.3 The HGGT Quality of Life Action Plan was endorsed by the HGGT Board in February 2023. It considers how to progress, resource and plan projects; develop potential wider collaborations; and to ensure the most value and learning from the Quality of Life project is drawn down and applied. It includes both short-term and longer-term actions and tasks, the delivery of which is dependent on appropriate resource and funding. The HGGT 5 Council partners have already begun delivering several actions, including opening the Discover Harlow Hub; updating the HGGT Communications and Engagement Strategy; progressing the Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy and developing a public facing digital dashboard.

3. HGGT Quality of Life Monitoring

3.1 Quality of Life Monitoring is the process of measuring responses to the same set of Quality of Life questions over a period of time consistently and observing any changes in the feedback. As new data is collected over time, it will identify positive or negative trends in people's responses - thus showing whether there is a positive or negative trend in residents' perceived quality of life. The outputs from this can inform future policy and planning decisions, such as for social value, stewardship, engagement, and design quality; indicate priorities for investment; as well as monitor performance of development overall, in relation to quality of life.

3.2 The primary purpose of the QoL Monitoring Strategy therefore is to enable future quality of life assessments against the 2022 baseline data – and then again against future years, including with future communities - so that quality of life data, aggregated over geographical areas and time, can inform policy and planning decisions to support better quality of life for the community.

3.3 The Monitoring Strategy has been developed through workshops and discussions with officers from across the partnership representing a range of service areas. The Strategy consists of nine main steps requiring different levels of input, expertise and resources. These are summarised in Figure 1 below.
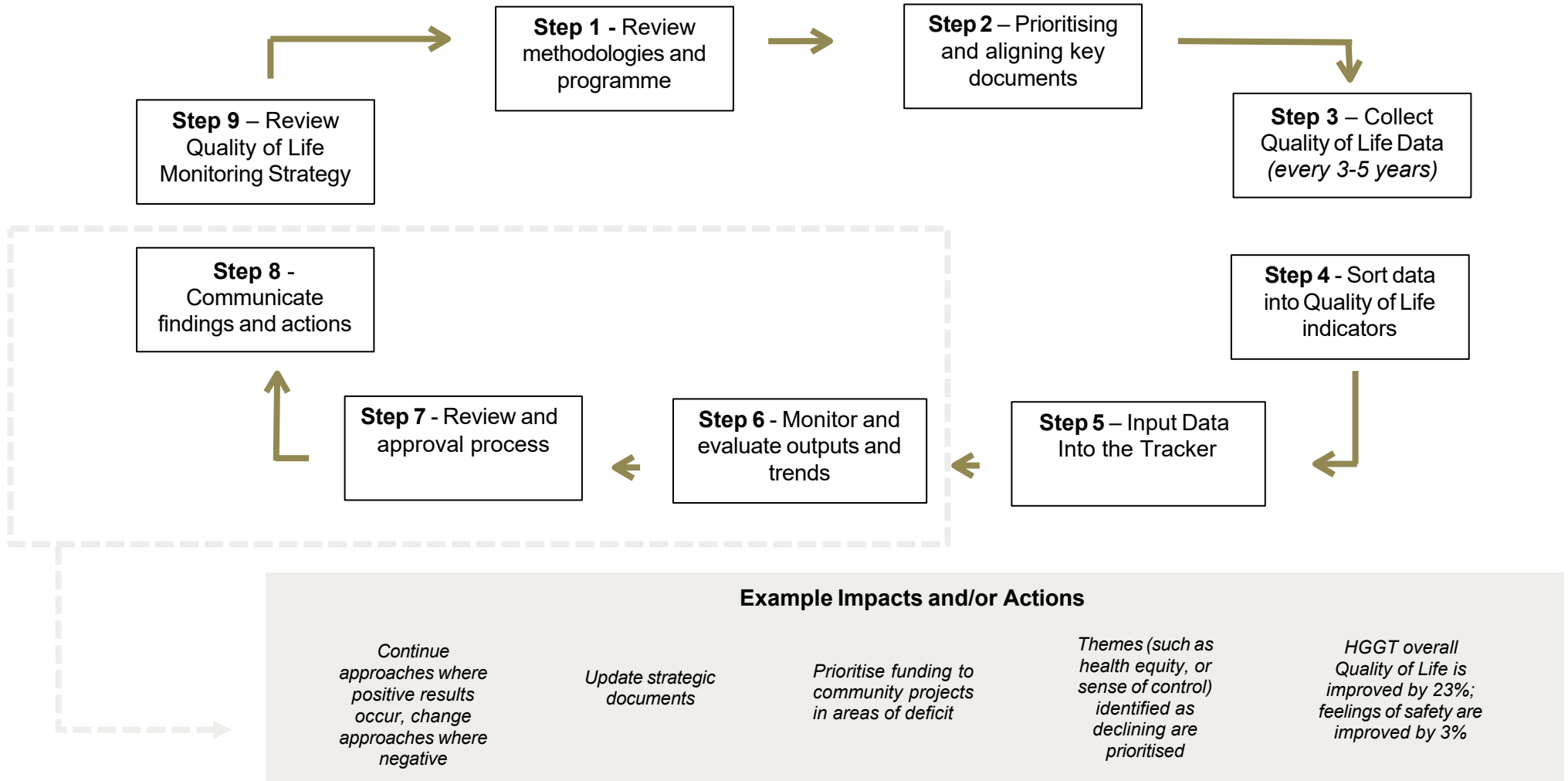
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Step 1 - Review methodologies and programme

Step 2 – Prioritising and aligning key documents

Step 3 – Collect Quality of Life Data *(every 3-5 years)*

Step 9 – Review Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy

Step 8 - Communicate findings and actions

Step 4 - Sort data into Quality of Life indicators

Step 7 - Review and approval process

Step 6 - Monitor and evaluate outputs and trends

Step 5 – Input Data Into the Tracker

Example Impacts and/or Actions

Continue approaches where positive results occur, change approaches where negative

Update strategic documents

Prioritise funding to community projects in areas of deficit

Themes (such as health equity, or sense of control) identified as declining are prioritised

HGGT overall Quality of Life is improved by 23%; feelings of safety are improved by 3%

Figure 1: How Quality of Life Monitoring works, with example Impacts and/or Actions

East Herts Council | Epping Forest District Council www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk | Essex County Council | Harlow Council Working together for Harlow | Hertfordshire

3.4 The HGGT Quality of Life Action Plan outlines specific tasks and goals, with recommendations for implementation, and is to be read alongside the Monitoring Strategy. The Action Plan was formulated based on the Quality of Life Foundation's recommendations to HGGT for how to improve and measure quality of life and the desire to turn these into actions for HGGT and potentially partners going forward. With sections A, B, C, S and D, previously agreed by the HGGT Board in February 2023, these have since been updated to reflect progress and next actions. Additional actions have also been recommended to support QoL monitoring as well as the recommendations previously agreed by the HGGT Board.

3.5 The Quality of Life Action Plan is to be reviewed and updated at least annually, to report on progress and reflect any recommendations which arise as a result of QoL monitoring. With Your Quality of Life consultations recommended to take place every 3-5 years, the Monitoring Strategy itself is reviewed with each consultation to ensure it remains relevant.

3.6 It will be important for each of the 5 Council partners to consider how their approach to community engagement aligns with the QoL Framework as there is the potential for the Quality of Life Consultation to replace or reduce the length of other surveys.

4. Programme and Next Steps

4.1 The Quality of Life project is split into 4 phases. Phase 1 covered the YQoL Consultation and Monitoring Baseline which have now been completed. The approval of the Monitoring Strategy and updated Action Plan will round off Phase 2 of the project.

4.2 Phase 3 is currently progressing and involves integrating Quality of Life monitoring indicators and consultation data into a digital consultation hub - the HGGT Data Dashboard. The dashboard is the platform where Quality of Life Monitoring will be consulted on, reported and shared back with the community. This will enable better sharing of consultation data across HGGT and partner boundaries, and supports better engagement, transparency and accountability with key stakeholders. Several outputs from Phase 3 have already been delivered or being progressed. The integration of QoL monitoring data into the HGGT Data Dashboard is now complete and expected to be accessible to the public by early 2025.

4.3 Phase 4 of the project will be defined through the updated Action Plan and is expected to include a programme of both internal and external engagement covering elements such as user training on the data dashboard and future YQoL Consultation. Although the next YQoL consultation is not anticipated until 2026, some elements such as aligning further strategies to QoL indicators can be progressed now, enabling further benefits to be experienced sooner.

4.4 The allocated budget for Phase 3 has been used up, with a few key tasks outstanding. Phase 4 is also currently unfunded, although, several elements can be progressed in the interim, as HGGT in-house resource allows. The project will therefore benefit from further budget allocations and funding opportunities. A key outcome the project is seeking to achieve is scalability, for increased and accelerated impact, which could support future funding opportunities.

6

Implications:

Once approved, the Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy and Action Plan will form part of the HGGT Quality Monitoring Framework. This will enable the 5 Council partners of HGGT to monitor quality of life at different levels and for different groups which would in turn help to shape policy and guidance, masterplans, development proposals, stewardship arrangements, etc.

The Quality of Life project is already having impact across several HGGT workstreams, with references to the project embedded throughout the recently adopted HGGT Stewardship Charter which in itself will support long term Quality of Life Monitoring across the garden town.

Whilst not a legislative requirement, it will also be a reasonable expectation of the local community and other stakeholders that the 5 Council partners of HGGT seek to secure the outcomes set out in the Monitoring Strategy and Action Plan.

Resource Implications

Whilst the delivery of actions identified within Monitoring Strategy and Action Plan would require some funding, there are no direct financial implications to approving the recommendations within this report.

Equalities and Diversity

Equality Impact Assessment

Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?	Yes
Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy or decision	To engage meaningfully and support better quality of life for the community.
What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (ie decommissioning or commissioning a service)?	Monitor and track quality of life data to inform policy and planning decisions.
Does or will the policy or decision affect: • service users • employees • the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities?	Service users and the wider community will be able to understand how their neighbourhood affects their health and wellbeing and empower them in the decisions affecting their local area.

7

Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?	Yes, by promoting inclusive engagement and prioritising and enabling underrepresented groups.
Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?	No
Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes?	The HGGT Quality of Life is aligned with strategic objectives and corporate policies in place across the 5 Council partners of HGGT.
What does the information tell you about those groups identified?	N/A
Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?	Feedback gathered from community and resident responses have been summarised in a Community Feedback Report and built into the QoL Action Plan.
If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary:	N/A
Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.	
Age, Disability, Gender, Gender reassignment, Pregnancy/maternity, Marriage/civil partnership, Race, Religion/belief, Sexual orientation	There is no impact on any protected groups.
Does the EqIA indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high	No

HGGT Vision Assurance

1. What principles of the HGGT Vision does this seek to achieve?

The project aims to address cross-cutting stewardship themes through meaningful, inclusive engagement and by measuring quality targets based on the principles of healthy growth.

2. What steps have been taken to ensure the HGGT Vision is embedded into the project?

The HGGT Vision core principles for healthy growth align with the Quality of Life Foundation's Monitoring Framework themes which form the basis for the HGGT quality of life indicators.

Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy

02 October 2024

This Strategy has been developed collaboratively by the Quality of Life Foundation and the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) team. The HGGT Quality of Life Action Plan has similarly been collaboratively developed and sets out recommendations and next steps for its implementation, and is to be read alongside this guide.

Contents

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Revision History and Updates

Any changes to the strategy or its supporting Appendices will be supplied in both track change and a clean version, with key changes noted in this document control sheet, following the example in grey below.

Date	Version	Key updates
23 September 2026	2.0	QoL Tracker updated to include: • new national data benchmarks • 2026 HGGT QoL data collected • Lessons Learned on digital accessibility
02 Oct 2024	1.0	First issue

1. Introduction

1.1.   Following the success of the HGGT Your Quality of Life (YQoL) Consultation in 2022 - where the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town asked people across the area what they value and need about the places they live and work - the HGGT Board endorsed the HGGT Quality of Life (QoL) Action Plan in February 2023.

1.2.   Several actions have already been delivered, such as opening the Discover Harlow Hub and updating the HGGT Communications and Engagement Strategy. The QoL Action Plan also included a commitment to developing the HGGT Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy (the Monitoring Strategy); and developing digital tools to enhance community participation in planning.

1.3.   The Monitoring Strategy is a guide to measure and track quality of life across the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town area. Using the Quality of Life Foundation's Monitoring Framework, national benchmarks regarding health and wellbeing, and some of the Garden Town's own questions, a bespoke set of quality of life indicator questions was created and consulted on, providing a baseline to measure against in the future.

1.4.   The primary purpose of the Monitoring Strategy is to enable future quality of life assessments against the 2022 baseline data – and then again against future years, including with future communities - so that quality of life data, aggregated over geographical areas and time, can inform policy and planning decisions to support better quality of life for the community.

1.5.   The data provides an evidence base for community-led decision making and indicates issues arising in the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town area, enabling more localised decisions, alongside strategic performance oversight. As such, it is part of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Partnership's ongoing efforts to ensure that the health and wellbeing of current and future residents is protected and promoted during and after a period of extensive development.

1.6.   Alongside this, Quality of Life Monitoring Indicators and consultation data have also been integrated into the HGGT Data Dashboard – the platform where Quality of Life Monitoring will be consulted on, reported on and shared back with the community. This will enable better sharing of consultation data across HGGT and partner boundaries; and supports better engagement, transparency and accountability with key stakeholders.

1.7.   With Your Quality of Life consultations aligned with wider authority monitoring and strategic objectives, and recommended to take place every 3-5 years, this Monitoring Strategy and the HGGT Data Dashboard will form part of the HGGT Quality Monitoring Framework.
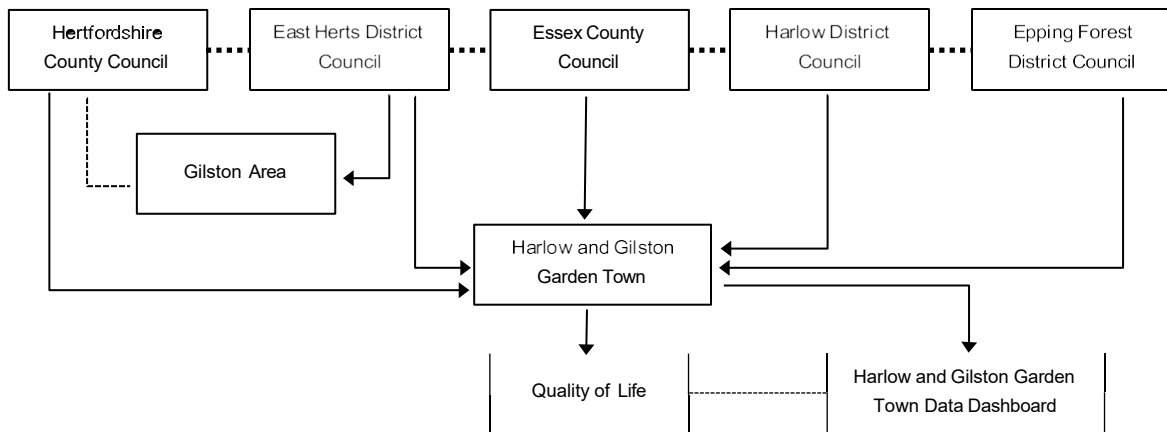
Figure 1 – Partnering Authority Quality Monitoring Frameworks alongside HGGT Data Dashboard

- - - - = aligned relationship, where approaches are compatible

_____ = direct relationship, where one or more organisations define the approach

2. Quality of Life Framework

2.1.   The Quality of Life Framework is an evidence-based framework from the Quality of Life Foundation that outlines six main themes, each with three sub-themes, that we believe make up the necessary components of a happy and healthy life; and which align well with key strategic documents, including the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Vision. *For detailed definitions, please refer to Appendix A - Quality of Life themes and sub-themes*
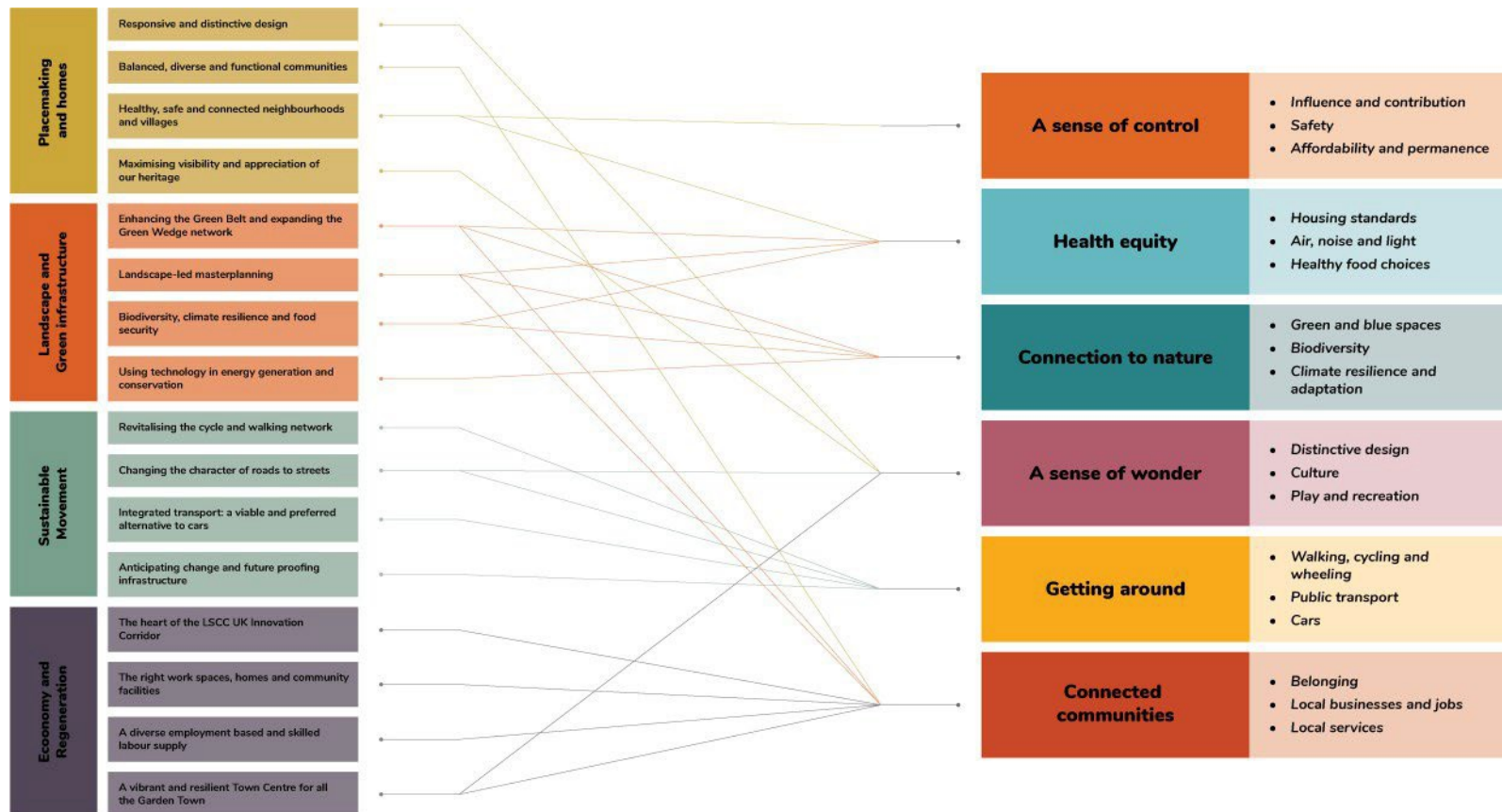

Figure 2 - Aligning the HGGT Vision to the Quality of Life themes.

3. How it Works

3.1.   Quality of life indicators are linked to all aspects of planning and development, and so Quality of Life Monitoring data is relevant to all departments and geographies across the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town area, and its partnering authorities.

3.2.   As such, both developer and authority frameworks and strategies from various disciplines can also be measured and benefit from consultations. This is achieved by linking their desired outcomes with the Quality of Life Indicators in the Quality of Life Tracker, which is an editable spreadsheet that tracks Quality of Life Indicators over time (see Appendix C - Quality of Life Monitoring Tracker). This process is referred to in this Strategy as "aligning" documents.

3.3.   Measurement and evaluation in this strategy involves collecting quality of life data via community consultation every 3-5 years; sorting and inputting that data into a Tracker; and analysing and reporting on changes and any decisions which result (see Figure 5 - How Quality of Life Monitoring works, with example impacts and/or actions, see Figure 7 for timings).

3.4.   Quality of Life Monitoring is therefore the process of measuring responses to the same set of Quality of Life questions over a period of time consistently, and observing any changes in the feedback. Changes in feedback will result in a net increase or decrease in scores, indicating changes in what people value and need in different areas, or across the whole of the Garden Town.

3.5.   If desired, the same survey can also be delivered locally to focus on specific areas; or select questions can be delivered through a shorter survey, or through other surveys – such as Health Impact Assessments, or Post Occupancy Evaluations - where indicator questions have been aligned.

3.6.   As new data is added to the tracker over time, it will identify positive or negative trends in people's responses - thus showing whether there is a positive or negative trend in local residents' perceived quality of life. The outputs from this can inform future policy and planning decisions, such as for social value, stewardship, engagement, and design quality; indicate priorities for investment; as well as monitor performance of the development overall, in relation to quality of life.

3.7.   By making the data accessible through illustrative and engaging graphics via the HGGT Data Dashboard, it provides greater accountability and transparency to how these factors have been considered. Detailed delivery instructions and guidance are provided in Appendices A-H.

4. Uses and Benefits

4.1.   The Quality of Life Indicators can be applied across a broad range of initiatives, policies and frameworks, meaning quality of life can be consistently measured, benefitting all stakeholders with a shared interest in quality of life. Some examples of these benefits and uses are shown below.

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4.2.   In between Quality of Life Consultations, the Tracker can also be used as a checking tool for authority and developer strategic documents and monitoring approaches, to support them be more measurable for quality of life outcomes. This is particularly valuable in documents as they develop, prior to being submitted for approvals, but can also be used retrospectively, as documents are due to be updated.

4.3.   By implementing this strategy, all Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Partners will have a common language and Framework which supports achieving shared quality of life outcomes.

4.4.   Further to this, Quality of Life Monitoring is scalable, so the approaches set out in this strategy can be applied at any scale and within both existing and future communities

Uses and Benefits	HGGT Partner Authorities	Developers	Members	Community (Individuals)	Community (Groups)	Others (Central Gov, LPAs, NGOs, etc)
Enable community to participate more equitably in the planning process, by sharing how their quality of life informs decisions, and by making that information accessible and transparent	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure planning decisions and developer applications respond to community quality of life, health and wellbeing issues	✓	✓				
Tailor projects to reflect community feedback, values and needs	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Communicate in a more informed way about the issues that people care about, and why decisions are being taken	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increase underrepresented groups participation in the planning process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increase transparency in why decisions are being made, and certain areas prioritised to benefit communities and quality of life	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Identify further projects and opportunities to engage (i.e. a community project is funded to make an area feel safer at night; or to comment on where more seating is needed)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Demonstrate accountability, through accessible, data-backed decision-making processes, highlighting what works and what doesn't, about the things people value	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Build relationships and social capital with local communities, through long term dialogue, and better communication practices about the things people value	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Increased community influence in planning decisions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Uses and Benefits	HGGT Partner Authorities	Developers	Members	Community (Individuals)	Community (Groups)	Others (Central Gov, LPAs, NGOs, etc
Increased awareness of influence, and of resulting Actions and Impact				✓	✓	
Supports others' reporting and monitoring, where Quality of Life indicators align (i.e. POE evaluations, stewardship outcomes, etc)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Share benefits/positive impacts in communications and marketing material		✓	✓			✓
Scale positive impacts to quality of life. The approaches we've innovated are scalable, which means, others can benefit too - locally, regionally and nationally.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Demonstrates innovation and leadership in developing and delivering social value, in the context of growth and change	✓	✓	✓			
Establishes a way to measure key stewardship outcomes, where no other framework currently exists	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Supports further funding and investment, via funding grants and monitoring contributions, and where new homes, health and wellbeing remain high on political agendas, and where interest in stewardship is increasing	✓				✓	✓

Figure 3 - key benefits and potential uses to various stakeholder groups

5. QoL Monitoring Delivery Team

5.1.   This Strategy sits across different levels and teams within Harlow and Gilston Garden Town and requires varying levels of input and oversight across several departments. For example, engagement officers will be actively involved in the collection of data via consultations and engagement with residents; whereas senior management and officers will be more involved in interpreting the trends that emerge from the data, going on to make strategic recommendations and decisions in response.

5.2.   Key users who will be adding, tracking, evaluating and reporting the data are identified in the table below, including skill requirements to undertake different aspects. This table should be used as a guide for identifying the most appropriate team and whether further skills or resource are required or may be resourced differently. Adjustment will be based on the structure and needs of delivery teams and/or organisations.

6

QoL Monitoring Team				
Tier/role	Skills/experience	*Adding and Tracking Data*	*Evaluation and Reporting*	Quality of Life Monitoring Actions
Project Manager *(who may hold one or more of the roles below),*	Liaising across five partner authorities, with external stakeholders and consultants		✓	Championing and driving the project to ensure delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan, in collaboration with partnering authorities and external stakeholders to maximising impact.
Planning or Senior Planning Officer	with experience in spatial planning for health and wellbeing undertaking high-level research and analysis of engagement data and feedback	✓	✓	Translating the trends that emerge over time into directives, ideas and areas of further research / investigation Undertaking the regular evaluation of the Quality of Life Monitoring methodology and Tracker Developing strategies and plans based on feedback
Senior Engagement Officer	leading and delivering engagement and consultation programmes at a variety of scales and contexts and to progress QoL Action Plan	✓	✓	Adding and tracking indicators input into the Tracker over time
Data analyst (socio-economic skillset)	developing outcomes based socio-economic monitoring and evaluation programmes	✓	✓	Inputting into future outcomes-based monitoring and evaluation programmes
Data Visualisation officer (or similar skill set e.g. Graphic Designer)	analysing and communicating data visually to various stakeholder groups with the HGGT Data Dashboard Team		✓	Translating hard data into informative, easily accessible data-graphics to reach every audience

Figure 4 - QoL Monitoring Team and Skills Requirements

6. Process and Workflow

6.1.   The Strategy consists of nine main steps requiring different levels of input, expertise and resources. For detailed guidance for each step, refer *to Appendix A -* Detailed Step by Step Guidance and Delivery Timescales**.**

→ **Step 1 - Review methodologies and programme** - This requires the review and evaluation of past, present and future engagement methodology to minimise work, as well as other planned engagement to coordinate approaches.

→ **Step 2 – Prioritising and aligning key documents.** This step involves aligning strategic documents or other consultations with the Framework by linking desired outcomes to the Quality of Life indicators measured in the Tracker.

→ **Step 3 – Collect Quality of Life Data** - Through repeat Quality of Life Consultations and smaller scale surveys, where useful.

→ **Step 4 - Sort data into Quality of Life indicators** - Aggregating feedback into groups to give an overall number that broadly summarises sentiment in response to a question.*

→ **Step 5 – Input Data Into the Tracker -** This shows changes over time, enabling users to understand what areas need further focus and which areas are performing well.*

→ **Step 6 - Monitor and evaluate outputs and trends** - Report on changes or trends that emerge from data and make recommendations via an updated Action Plan. This increases understanding of what actions need to be taken to adjust or maintain quality of life.

→ **Step 7 - Review and approval process –** HGGT Senior Management Group (or other Senior Officer Group) review recommendations and determine next steps via the updated Action Plan.

→ **Step 8 - Communicate findings and actions** – To share actions resulting from Your Quality of Life consultation through visually engaging data graphics via reports and the HGGT Data Dashboard.

→ **Step 9 – Review Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy** - A review of the strategy to capture lessons learned and carry them forward to future iterations.

Note that steps 4 and 5 are likely to become redundant over time as data management processes are improved and/or automated within the dashboard. In the interim, data is managed through the Quality of Life Tracker an then uploaded.
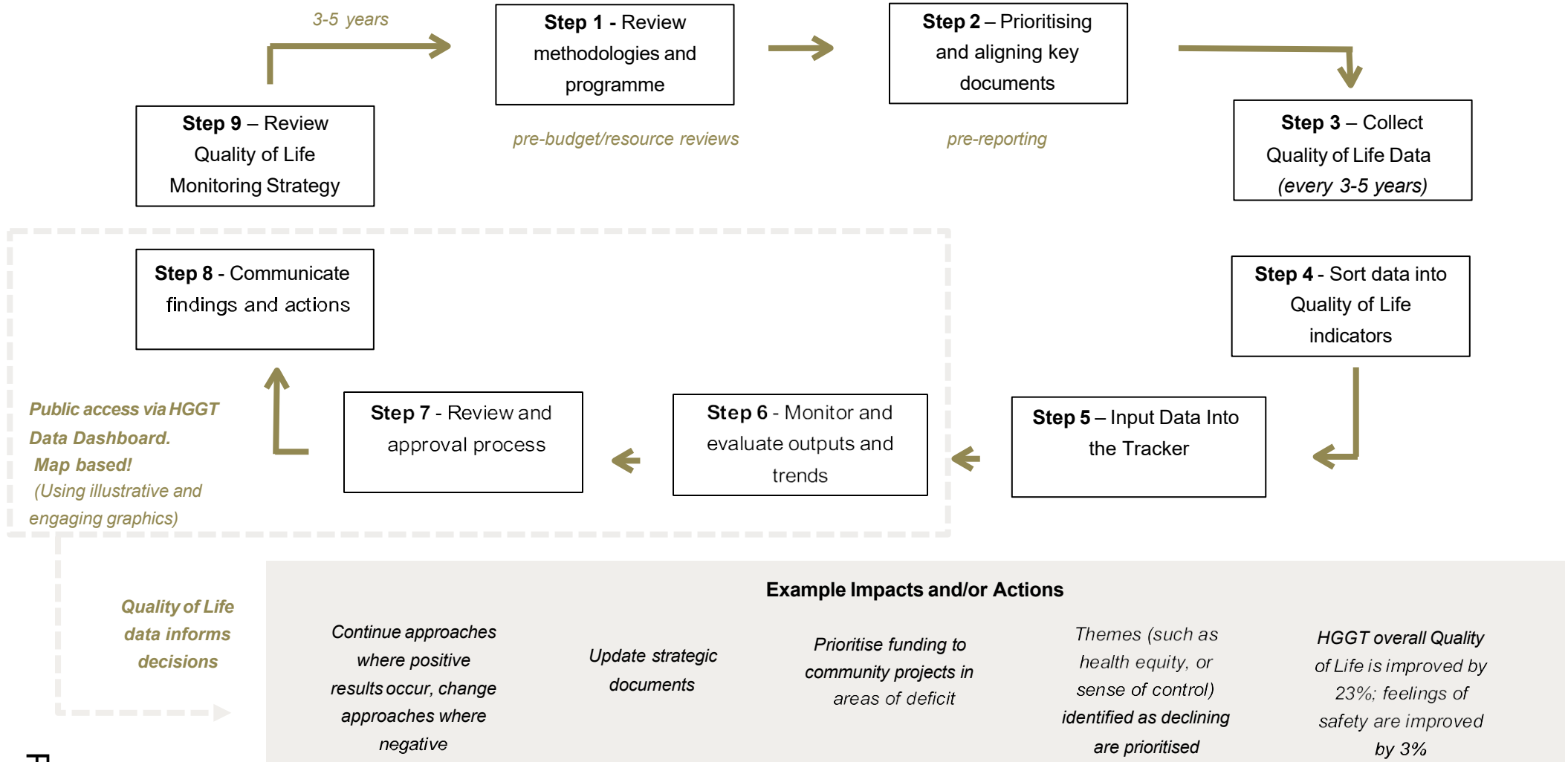
Figure 5 - How Quality of Life Monitoring works, with example impacts and/or actions, see Figure 7 for timings)

7. Frequency and scale of consultations

7.1.   Garden Town wide 'Your Quality of Life' (YQoL) consultations is to be completed on a three-to-five-year cycle. This is to support alignment to typical cycles of large-scale housing development and Local Plan consultations, maximising the impact of the findings; and to ensure that data can be reliably benchmarked (anything beyond 5 years becomes less reliable).

7.2.   Interim, smaller scale quality of life data collections through aligned surveys will add to this data, developing a richer understanding of change in quality of life in those areas, (for example, via the annual Harlow Residents Survey, or developer Post-Occupancy Evaluations, where aligned).

7.3.   Frequency of data collection for smaller scale consultations will be determined by their respective timelines and reviewed periodically. See *Step 1 - Review data collection and engagement methodology.*

7.4.   Where questions asked in smaller scale surveys are covered by the Quality of Life survey questions (*refer to Appendix C - Quality of Life Indicator Questions)* there is potential for the Quality of Life Consultation to replace the need for those surveys, or reduce the length of those surveys, during those years.

7.5.   Consistent consultations (i.e. every 3, 4 or 5 years) will reduce the effects of external factors over time by reducing variability, therefore long term funding will be kept under review to support this.

8. Further resources

- Your Quality of Life Community Feedback Report: Sets out insights and findings from the consultation (digital and non-digital), to provide recommendations to HGGT around improving quality of life, and the processes to do so, for and with local people.
- Your Quality of Life Reflections and Recommendation Report: Summarises Quality of Life Foundation's recommendations to the Garden Town. The Garden Town are already implementing some of the recommendations and planning how to address the others in the HGGT Quality of Life Action Plan.
- Stantec's Better Places for a Better Quality of Life report discusses how this evidence-based approach supports better decision-making and planning for social value and wellbeing, including the opportunity for scalability and use elsewhere.
- Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Case Study: The project was selected as one of four case studies, highlighting the Your Quality of Life consultation's inclusive consultation approach and use of digital and physical outreach and engagement approaches.
- PropTech Engagement Fund 2 Report The detailed report to DLUHC, summarising the quality of life mapping and monitoring project via digital and in-person engagement across the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town.

Glossary

Baseline data is data that has already been collected from previous consultations and populates the Tracker, beginning with the 2022 Your Quality of Life consultation.

HGGT Stewardship Charter: the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Principles and base requirements for stewardship.

Masterplanning: The process of developing and structuring elements of places and how they are used (homes and neighbourhoods, green spaces, transport links, historic areas) to identify priority areas for action, recommendations for future growth with a long-term, often dynamic, approach.

Natural Language Processing (NLP): An analysis method that sifts through qualitative responses and categorises them, allowing for quantitative analysis of non-numerical datasets as well as allowing for broad sentiment analysis of large, qualitative data.

Passive data: Data that is collected and collated from existing data sources, typically from existing national surveys. This data can include ONS Census data on age, gender or employment, for example.

Primary data: Data that was collected over the course of the original Your Quality of Life Consultation. This includes both qualitative and quantitative data.

Qualitative data: Data that is more descriptive in nature, that can also take a more narrative form. Qualitative data is typically made up of non-numerical feedback that is usually collected in engagement programmes via interviews, open-ended questions and focus groups. Examples of this include descriptive questions asking about how respondents feel or perceive things in their local area.

Quality of life: Quality of life refers to the impact that the environment, both natural and built, has on someone's perceptions of how happy, healthy and satisfied they are with their life.

Quality of Life Framework: A framework developed by the Quality of Life Foundation made up of six themes that influence and shape people and communities' quality of life. For more information visit: https://www.qolf.org/framework/

Quality of Life Indicators: Performance indicators that are used to measure and evaluate performance and are derived by asking Quality of Life Questions. Baseline data for these indicators in this document have been derived from community consultation programmes that match data from the Your Quality of Life consultation, which was carried out by the Quality of Life Foundation in the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town area in the summer of 2022.

Quality of Life Indicator Questions: These are the questions that are used to collect data to establish the Quality of Life indicators. The questions were originally asked as part of the Your Quality of Life Consultation that the Quality of Life Foundation carried out in the summer of 2022. The Quality of Life Questions have been reviewed and updated as part of the development of this strategy, ensuring that benchmarks and questions are up to date.

Quality of Life Monitoring Digital User Guide: A digital user guide for key stakeholders to be able to access and use quality of life monitoring information online.

Quality of Life Monitoring Methodology: This is the monitoring methodology recommended by Quality of Life Foundation, for use in the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, and forms part of the Monitoring Strategy.

Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy (and User Guide): This sets out how quality of life will be monitored across the Garden Town, including how

to update the strategy and use Quality of Life indicators (also referred to as the User Guide).

Quality of Life Monitoring Tracker: This is a table that tracks Quality of Life scores across the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Area, beginning in 2022.

Quantitative data: Data that is made up of discrete and continuous points and categories, where sets have unique values that can be expressed and analysed directly as numbers. For example, quantitative data could include the number of people living in a home or how many times someone catches the bus per week.

Representative data: Datasets that can portray similar make up and characteristics of a larger population, without having to collect the data of the larger group. In this project, the notion of representative data was more specifically aimed at ensuring that feedback from minority groups is proportionally captured and analysed.

Social value: When we talk about social value and the built environment we are referring to the UK Green Building Council's definition: "... social value is created when buildings, places and infrastructure support environmental, economic and social wellbeing, and in doing so improve the quality of life of people."

S106 Schedules: a legally-binding agreement or planning obligation between the local planning authority and a landowner as part of the granting of planning permission.

Appendices (A-H: Detailed Delivery Guidance; I-K: Background)

A. Detailed Step by Step Guidance and Delivery Timescales

The below process is based on the 2022 Consultation, including lessons learned, and to provide a guide for delivery.

As the HGGT Data Dashboard is developed, further efficiencies will be gained. For example, where indicator questions have been pre-aligned to strategies, steps 3-5 will become semi-automated. Similarly, AI will be used to support evaluation and reporting, for example, to summarise recurring or common themes.

Your Quality of Life Consultation Programme, undertaken every 3-5 years			
Steps	**Team member**	**Estimated time needed**	**Outcome**
Step 1 - Review methodologies and programme	QoL Team	2-4 days *(6 months prior to budget reviews to enable resourcing)*	Maintains validity and rigour of the Tracker and engagement approaches; ensures monitoring programmes are coordinated, aligned
Step 2 – Prioritising and aligning key documents	Planning officers	1-2 days (per strategy) This activity can be undertaken any time	Further strategies, policies and other frameworks are aligned to QoL indicators, increasing impact
Step 3 – Collect Quality of Life Data	Engagement and outreach officers	12-16 weeks (consultation period)	Community feedback gathered relating to Quality of Life Monitoring questions
Step 4 - Sort data into Quality of Life indicators	Data analysts	2-4 days	Feedback is grouped and aligned with the indicators
Step 5 – Input Data Into the Tracker	Planning officers/ Data analysts	0.5 day	A direct measure of how Quality of Life has changed since the last measurement
Step 6 - Monitor and evaluate outputs and trends	Planning officers/ Data analysts / Socio-economic experts	10 working days, depending on specific strategies, capacity and resources alongside any additional changes required.	Recommendations guided by measurable outcomes that centre health and wellbeing of communities

Step 7 - Review and approval process	Planning officers / Data analysts / Socio-economic experts / Senior management teams	1 day - 2 months (depends on the recommendation)	Decisions based on data and evaluation and planning context, recorded in the Quality of Life Action Plan
Step 8 - Communicate findings and actions	Data visualisation and graphics Engagement and outreach officers	2-3 days 7 days (digital and in person)	Reporting on and implementing actions resulting from Your Quality of Life Consultation
Step 9 – Review Quality of Life Monitoring	QoL Team	one week (could be shorter if following a template)	Review and update Strategy to take on board lessons learned
Interim activities, undertaken more frequently			
Check emerging authority and developer strategic documents and monitoring approaches against the Tracker	Planning officers	1-2 days (per strategy) As documents develop, prior to being submitted for approvals; and as documents are due to be updated.	Supports key documents to be more measurable for quality of life outcomes.

Figure 6 - Nine Steps of Quality of Life Monitoring and Delivery Teams

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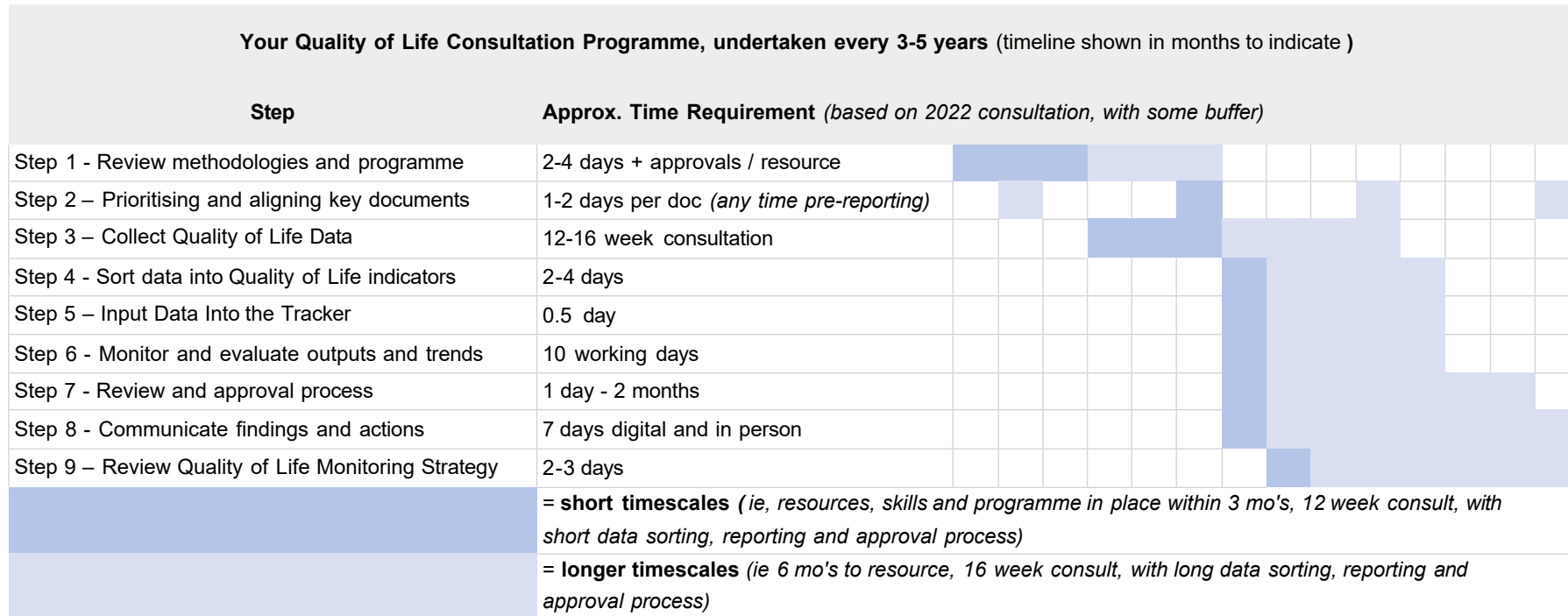| **Your Quality of Life Consultation Programme, undertaken every 3-5 years** (timeline shown in months to indicate)	
Step	**Approx. Time Requirement** (based on 2022 consultation, with some buffer)
Step 1 - Review methodologies and programme	2-4 days + approvals / resource
Step 2 – Prioritising and aligning key documents	1-2 days per doc (any time pre-reporting)
Step 3 – Collect Quality of Life Data	12-16 week consultation
Step 4 - Sort data into Quality of Life indicators	2-4 days
Step 5 – Input Data Into the Tracker	0.5 day
Step 6 - Monitor and evaluate outputs and trends	10 working days
Step 7 - Review and approval process	1 day - 2 months
Step 8 - Communicate findings and actions	7 days digital and in person
Step 9 – Review Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy	2-3 days
	= **short timescales** (ie, resources, skills and programme in place within 3 mo's, 12 week consult, with short data sorting, reporting and approval process)
	= **longer timescales** (ie 6 mo's to resource, 16 week consult, with long data sorting, reporting and approval process)

Figure 7 - Gantt view of Steps 1-9, with flexibility for delivery. Note Step 2 can be undertaken any time prior to reporting, and is shown here as quarterly

Step 1 - Review methodologies and programme

A1. **Timing**: Reviewing data collection and engagement methodology is not onerous, but requires coordination across several teams, and will clarify to senior officers resources required to deliver the programme. Methodology reviews are therefore undertaken at least six months in advance of any budget and resourcing reviews for the years that Quality of Life Consultations will be held.

A2. To maintain the validity of the Tracker, and to keep the same level of rigour in data collection and monitoring, the Tracker itself is evaluated at the end of each Quality of Life consultation, and at least every 5 years.

A3. This will ensure that indicator questions and comparative datasets are up to date. The 5-year timescale is designed to reflect best practice around the use of up-to-date data, and to compliment national benchmark reviews, where data that is older than 5 years is often difficult to reliably benchmark against.

A4. There is also significant research emerging in the health and wellbeing sector around the impact of environments, with increasing numbers of publicly available data sets that may replace benchmarks currently in use. Emerging research is to be kept under review and considered in the evaluation of the tracker.

A5. **Approach:** To ensure a coordinated approach, avoiding duplication, consultation fatigue, and ensure timing doesn't compete, review the following:

- ☐ **Outreach and engagement approach**, how data will be collected
- ☐ **Draft YQoL Consultation programme**, integrated with wider HGGT and partner programmes, including other consultations, to manage timing
- ☐ **Quality of Life Data collected** since the last Your Quality of Life Consultation (ie, via other consultations, where aligned)
- ☐ **Quality of Life Tracker**
    - o check existing questions against emerging research and update any national datasets
    - o check for any new and relevant national survey questions which may be added
    - o for indicators that are infrequently updated over an extended period, evaluate whether this is engagement related, or if no longer relevant
    - o ensure data inputted into the Tracker can be referenced back to the source
- ☐ **Further documents to align**
    - o which documents will have the most impact, either by enhancing the document itself to reflect quality of life outcome indicators, or through monitoring once aligned
    - o which surveys can be reduced or replaced (where surveys or consultations asking similar questions, align them to the QoL Questions) (see Step 2 and Aligned Documents and Future Alignments Template*)*
- ☐ **Quality of Life Action Plan** taking on board any recommendations agreed

Step 2 – Prioritising and aligning key documents

A6. **Timing**: Documents are aligned ahead of Consultations; and where their review against Quality of Life indicators supports document development to make them more measurable for quality of life.

A7.   **Approach**: As with Step 1, this is not an onerous task, but does require coordination across several teams to identify emerging internal and external documents - and those due to be updated - which would benefit being aligned.

A8. Aligning monitoring metrics linked to authority and developer commitments – such as S106 agreements, Design Coding, Equality Diversity and Inclusion strategies - will improve reliability of data and enable enforcement

A9. If there is overlap between upcoming surveys' questions and the Your Quality of Life Consultation then the questions for Your Quality of Life consultation are prioritised. This is to maintain robustness and benchmarking capabilities; will save additional time and resources on a local level; and increases ability to monitor quality of life on the local scale.

A10. Prioritising further documents to align is based primarily on anticipated impact, time sensitivity and resource capacity. Currently aligned and further documents to align and which have been identified so far are listed in *Appendix F -Aligned Documents and Future Alignments Template,*

A11. Aligning is the process of linking the aims, objectives and outcomes identified within a framework, policy or other strategic document to the Quality of Life indicator questions within the Tracker, so that it's possible to evidence whether or not the outcomes are being achieved, and to gauge the quality of life impact these plans and guidance have on the community.

A12. Aligning documents to the relevant Quality of Life indicators only requires a working understanding of the documents in question, however the process can vary widely depending on the specificity of the document being considered. Documents with defined and measurable quality of life outcomes will align more readily.

A13. For a document with clearly defined outcomes that point to easily measurable outputs, this process of aligning is envisioned to be undertaken by a Planning or Senior Planning Officer can take anything between a few hours for simple documents, to a few days for more complex, extensive, detailed, or highly specific outcomes.

A14. Aligning documents that do not have clear, measurable outputs requires some subjective interpretation of strategic aims into outcomes, and so should be carried out by officers that have a deep level of knowledge of Quality of Life monitoring, the materials they are aligning and any relevant

context. Refer to Appendix E - Aligning documents and document reviews for more detailed information.

A15. Figure 2 demonstrates how the HGGT Vision is aligned with the Quality of Life Framework themes. A similar diagram could be drawn up for any of the documents aligned e.g. the HGGT Stewardship Charter. Other strategies may align more strongly to just one or two themes, or evenly across all, depending on the scope of the document or strategy in question.

Step 3 – Collect Quality of Life Data

A16. **Timing:** For best practice, and therefore best results, Your Quality of Life Consultations should be undertaken every 3-5 years. Smaller scale surveys which use the same questions can also contribute to data in the interim.

A17. **Approach:** Community responses to Quality of Life Indicator Questions indicate how people feel about their local environment, neighbourhood and their own homes (both positive and negative).

A18. The Tracker is a means of consolidating and quantifying those responses through directly derived data, creating a clearer picture of the lived experiences of community within the HGGT area. Therefore, Quality of Life data inputted into the Tracker should come exclusively from engagement with communities and stakeholders. *See Engagement methodology*

A19. To enable ease of use for developers, officers and other stakeholders, data collection can be carried out at a variety of scales, from neighbourhoods to a wider town-scale. However, it is essential that there is consistency in the phrasing of the questions and multiple choice answers. This will enable for more consistent measurement and, ultimately, comparison between data sets even at differing scales.

A20. Your Quality of Life Consultations asks the full set of Quality of Life questions and aims for the same level of uptake, if not to engage with a larger group. This is to allow for a full and comparable set of Quality of Life Indicators to be collected consistently, and to align with Local Plan consultations to maximise input and uptake.

A21. Feedback from smaller scale consultations can be fed into the Tracker in between full consultations. To allow maximum flexibility, there is no minimum requirement on the number of questions that need to be included in smaller consultations, and so can be targeted to a particular community, demographic or geographical area.

A22. See Engagement methodology and the full list of questions for Your Quality of Life consultations in the Quality of Life Monitoring Tracker.

Step 4 - Sort data into Quality of Life indicators

A23. **Timing:** immediately following consultation; and, once automated in the Data Dashboard, to included mid-consultation updates to indicate level of engagement and any arising themes.

A24.   **Approach:** Quality of Life data is tied to the Garden Town's own key themes of healthy growth, and can be benchmarked against previous years, other locations within the Garden Town, as well as national datasets.

A25. QoL Indicators are devised by grouping responses to a survey question. For example, we ask people how they feel about belonging to their immediate neighbourhood, providing four options to choose from in response, using a sliding scale from strongly negative to strongly positive.

QoL Indicator Question	2022 Consultation Data _(data is for illustrative purposes only)_			
"How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood?"	Very Strongly	Fairly Strongly	Not very Strongly	Not strongly at all
Response %	33%	40%	15%	12%

**Figure 8 – Example: 73% of respondents in 2022 felt that they, very or fairly strongly, belong to their immediate neighbourhood.**

A26. By asking this same question in future consultations in the same geographical area, it's possible to see how people's perceptions of belonging to their immediate neighbourhood change over time, thus providing an indicator of how people's sense of belonging is changing.

A27.   Data can also be compared against national benchmarks and indicate sentiment about existing quality of life. In this example, sense of belonging has decreased in the Garden Town in 2026 by 4%, but increased in the years following, and remains 8-10% above the national average.

QoL Indicator Question	Data _(data is for illustrative purposes only)_			
"How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood?"	2022 (Baseline)	2026	2030	2034
Response %	73%	69%	74%	77%
Change	-	- 4%	+5%	+4%
Change from 2022 Baseline	-	- 4%	+1%	+5%
Compared to National Benchmark	+10% (63% NB)	+9% (60 % NB)	+9% (65 % NB)	+8% (69 % NB)

**Figure** 9 **- example of how changes in quality of life can be compared**

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A28. Gathering indicators involves grouping responses to indicator questions and evaluating the change in the outputs. A positive change (i.e. percentage increase) typically translates into an improvement in quality of life, whereas a negative change (i.e. percentage decrease) translates into an area that is worsening.

Figure 10 - Gathering indicators can be summarised via the above steps - continuous measurement can be achieved via repetition of the steps.

Step 5 – Input Data Into the Tracker

Navigating the Tracker

A29. The Tracker has nine main elements as shown in Figure 7 – Navigating the QoL Indicators Tracker. It has been designed for ease of use and legibility, however, to ensure data is controlled, editing the Tracker is limited to one Officer in the QoL Monitoring Delivery Team who has the appropriate skills and training in how to use it; with viewing and commenting rights for other officers to access the data.

A30. The Tracker includes reference to the documents that are aligned to it, and the methodology behind some of these. These, along with any other relevant information - for example demographic data or the Quality of Life themes - can be viewed through the tabs in the Tracker spreadsheet.

A31. The Tracker contains the Quality of Life Questions and the associated indicators, how they are calculated, any national benchmarks and their source, as well as the capacity for the addition of new data via consultations.

A32. Future iterations of the Tracker will be more interactive, via the introduction of the HGGT Consultation dashboard.

Adding new data

A33. **Timing**. The Tracker will be updated whenever new Quality of Life data is collected.

A34. **Approach**. Once Quality of Life data is collected, an officer will review the Baseline Metric column on an editable version of the Tracker to ensure feedback has been processed correctly before

adding it to the new column attributed to the year that data was collected, aggregating results. For example, the percentage of responses that were "Fairly satisfied" and "Very satisfied".

A35. Review data quality and representation, adding the relevant notation to the data before inputting it into the Quality of Life Monitoring Tracker. Examples of key questions to consider and note at this stage include:

 a. *Does your data have any answer categories or options missing due to a methodology limitation?*
 b. *Did your questions directly quote the ones in the Quality of Life Monitoring Tracker that you are drawing comparisons from? If using translations when collecting responses in your survey, does the phrasing remain consistent and capture the same sentiments?*
 c. *What geographical area is the question being applied to?*
 d. *Are responses demographically representative of the geographical area you are surveying?*

A36. Add date of data collection, project name for future reference and notes, as relevant from above, and to allow for the identification and applicability of data sources more easily.

Managing the Tracker over time

A37. Save the Quality of Life Monitoring Tracker to [HGGT shared location]. When saving the Quality of Life Monitoring Tracker, be sure to use the same naming convention used in the original file, and ensure this is Read Only; editable by the Tracker 'owner' only.

A38. Where there are multiple versions of the Quality of Life Monitoring Tracker, a suffix denoting a version number should be used to help differentiate between the files. For example:

- 260512_ Quality of Life Tracker_V01
- 260512_ Quality of Life Tracker_V02

A39. Following each Consultation a final version of the Tracker with new Consultation data should be saved as a new file, with an updated date. For example:

- 260512_Quality of Life Tracker_FINAL
- 300527_Quality of Life Tracker_FINAL

1. Quality of Life theme

The Quality of Life theme used to categorise and evaluate feedback.

2. Survey question

All questions are closed, multiple choice, to allow for an easily quantifiable and measurable result.

3. Aligned guidance, policy or commitment

Numbers in the table relate to the section/paragraph number of the aligned strategy/policy which can be measured by the respective QoL question.

4. 2022 baseline data

Percentage of positive responses from the 2022 survey

5. National benchmarks data

Where applicable, data from national surveys is listed in this column. When the row is highlighted in blue, the question and its associated indicators have been drawn from a national survey.

6. National benchmarks source

The source for the benchmark data and date of data publication, to allow for the periodic evaluation of benchmark sources as new data releases are made.

7. Baseline metric

How the data has been processed, including guidance for processing further data before adding it. Where there is national benchmark data, the national benchmark processing methodology is followed.

8. 2025 Indicator

Example year showing how an indicator could be added, following the process noted in the Baseline metric column.

9. 2025 Indicator source

Another example column to list the source of the data that forms the indicator for that year/period, illustrating various consultations/surveys that could be used to gather quality of life data

Figure 11 – Navigating the QoL Indicators Tracker

A-10

Step 6 - Monitor and evaluate outputs and trends

A40. Monitoring takes place through the columns on the right hand side of the main sheet. The Tracker has been set up to change colour based on whether the inputted data is higher (green), lower (red) or equal (amber) to data inputted from the last consultation.

A41. The Red, Amber and Green system will help users understand how performance on a specific indicator has gone either up or down. These are high-level indicators that will, over time, show if there are any trends for specific questions that are being asked to collect the feedback.

	2025 Indicator		2029 Indicator		2034 Indicator	
	Indicator	Source	Indicator	Source	Indicator	Source
d?*	75%	Quality of Life Consultation 2025	78%	Quality of life Consultation 2029	79%	Quality of Life Consultation 2034
in your local area?	50%	Quality of Life Consultation 2025	54%	Quality of Life Consultation 2029	58%	Quality of Life Consultation 2034
	38%	Quality of Life Consultation 2025	42%	Quality of life Consultation 2029	42%	Quality of Life Consultation 2034

Figure 12 - Example Quality Monitoring Tracker showing an increase across indicators over three hypothetical evaluations

A42. In the above illustrative example, this set of indicators, corresponding to the Community theme and stewardship placemaking commitments have mixed performance in the 2025 Quality of Life survey, but then been on an upward trend in 2029.

A43. Reviewing the nationally benchmarked indicators in combination with qualitative community feedback enables identification of local priorities and provides an evidence base for community-led decision making. It indicates issues arising in the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town area, enabling more localised decisions, alongside strategic performance oversight.

A44.   This can help inform a wide range of guidance, policy and strategies, as well as on the ground delivery of projects. These include (but are not limited to): stewardship, social value, design proposals, interlinked quality monitoring approaches, future development briefs, resource allocation, planning application determinations, and maintenance decisions. For example, where performing well, to maintain approaches, or conversely, if trending downwards, what the causes may be and how to rectify that.

A45. These findings, though indicative in nature, can be shared externally, through broad summaries or general notes that point to trends and identify actions, such as:

- Headline indicators of performance across themes e.g. "We've improved our performance on measures for Health and Nature in the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town area by 25% since 2022"

- Headline directives around areas of focus, where performance has been trending downwards e.g. "Feedback around Wonder and Community monitored from 2022-25 suggests that there is a downward trend in community-led approaches to placemaking in some areas of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, with young people indicating the lowest involvement. Further research and consultation is needed around these themes and why they are underperforming; and engagement with young people prioritised."

A46. As stated earlier, the Tracker is an indicative tool. Its indicators are made up of subjective opinions and feedback, influenced by a wide array of factors, not all of which will be within the authority's control. It therefore does not provide accuracy across specific topics or sentiments around individual projects or developments; however, as the Tracker accumulates more data and as more specific, outcomes-based indicators linked to enforceable commitments form part of the monitoring, this will increase its accuracy and ability to be used as evidence.

A47. When developing plans and policy directives, the Quality of Life Monitoring Tracker is therefore to be used as a strategic tool with indicators that can guide towards action, but needs to be considered within the context of wider policy and planning contexts.

A48. Once primary areas of focus are identified, the QoL Monitoring Team will dive deeper into existing data and feedback via reports, including with HGGT Data Dashboard Team, and identify any follow up recommendations or actions in the Quality of Life Action Plan.

Step 7 - Review and approval process

A49. Once trends and recommended actions are identified and reported on, the Action Plan will be updated and approved by Senior Officers, to enable public reporting. For examples of the types of actions or recommendations which will be reported on, refer to Figure 3 – How Quality of Life Monitoring Works, with example actions and/or impacts and Figure 4 - key benefits and potential uses to various stakeholder groups.

Step 8 - Communicate findings and actions

A50.   Communicating findings, recommendations and any commitments made by the HGGT team is an essential part of this strategy. Sharing findings will not only close the engagement loop, giving respondents and residents an opportunity to reflect on their feedback, it will also provide HGGT residents and stakeholders the opportunity to see how their feedback is contributing to decision- making, supporting increased participation in future consultations.

A51. To make the data more accessible, data and analysis will be translated into clear data graphics which will be shared via the HGGT Data Dashboard. See Figure 3 – How Quality of Life Monitoring Works, with example actions and/or impacts.

A52. This will enable officers to analyse and communicate complex issues more easily both internally and externally, widening audience reach, and increasing transparency for more effective communication and decision-making.

Step 9 – Review Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy

A53. Following consultation, the Monitoring Strategy itself is reviewed to take on board any lessons learned, while they are still fresh. This step involves the full team to feedback any significant challenges, as well as elements that worked well.

A54. This, combined with the methodology reviews ahead of consultations, will ensure relevance and best fit of content and overall approach for future consultations.

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B. Quality of Life themes and sub-themes

The latest version of the *Quality of Life themes and subthemes, which set out how these relate to various quality of life indicators, can be found online at www.qolf.org/framework*

A sense of control	When we feel a sense of control in our lives, we are better equipped to overcome any challenges we might encounter. Having the ability to improve our area and address local problems can give us a sense of stability and security. Our neighbourhoods should provide us all with the opportunity to get involved in how decisions are made and set down roots in the long term.
Influence and contribution	*At its most simple, a sense of influence and the ability to contribute to decisions affecting our environment can give us the freedom to hang a picture on a wall in our home. But in a broader sense, it can also mean having the opportunity to contribute our own knowledge or to have a say in how our neighbourhoods are run or planned. In our homes, this can be through the provision of living spaces we can make our own and at a neighbourhood scale this can be regular and active engagement in local decision-making or hands-on, long- term, community stewardship.*
Safety	*Feeling safe inside our homes and within our neighbourhoods by day and night is fundamental to individual and collective wellbeing. We should be able to live in our homes and neighbourhoods free from fear and free from gender, ability, sexuality, class and identity-based harassment and violence. Our neighbourhoods should provide safe environments for everyone, inside and outside our homes.*
Affordability and Permanence	*Affordability and permanence refers to the cost of living in a neighbourhood and the sense of rootedness we have to where we live, whether we are a homeowner or tenant. This means considering how much rent, bills and mortgages cost, and also the sense of stability that results from knowing we can pay these costs and have a future where we live. Permanency can also be defined by our ability to adapt our homes to changing needs. Adaption can actively support us to live either independently or interdependently, where principles of inclusive design enable us to gain greater control and feel less pressured to move out of established communities.*

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Health equity	Our health is crucial to our quality of life. Overcrowding, damp and mould within homes are all detrimental to our health and wellbeing and can affect some communities more than others. The difference in life expectancy between the most and least affluent areas can be almost 20 years, even for adjacent neighbourhoods. Our housing and local environments should equitably support communities to pursue healthy lifestyles, no matter where we live.
Housing standards	*Given that we spend the majority of our lives inside our homes, it is essential that they have a positive impact on our health and wellbeing. This can be achieved through the amount of space, light and ventilation inside a home and the level of comfort it can provide to residents of all ages all year round. Also important is the material quality of the interior spaces and our ability to adapt these to our changing needs as we age.*
Air, noise and light	*The environmental quality of our neighbourhoods is important as proximity to areas of poorer air, noise and light quality are associated with greater deprivation. Our neighbourhoods should provide environments that are clean and without all kinds of pollution. This includes clean air, quiet neighbourhoods and how much artificial light is present at night.*
Healthy food choices	*Access to affordable, healthy food options locally is a big part of happy and healthy neighbourhoods. This means not only the availability of fresh and healthy produce, whether that is through local shops or grocery stores, but also the ability for communities to grow their own food if they want to. Conversely, the proliferation of fast food outlets serving only unhealthy food can exacerbate unhealthy lifestyles, particularly among young people.*
Connection to nature	Many studies have shown that contact with nature is good for our mood and aids our recovery when we are ill, whether through interaction with our window boxes, local parks or countryside. Everyone from all parts of society should have better access to nature within their area, taking an active part in exploring and looking after it. We need homes in which to live, but their creation and care inevitably impact the natural environment, so

	in return we must respect the environment during construction of our homes and neighbourhoods, particularly given the dual threats of climate change and biodiversity loss. The good news is that, by and large, a neighbourhood that is healthier for people will be healthier for the planet, too.
Green and blue spaces	*Green and blue spaces are natural and semi-natural areas, which includes local pocket parks, wild groves and meadows as well as ponds, canals, lakes and coastlines. Our neighbourhoods should provide everyone with access to a variety of different green and blues spaces, allowing us to feel more connected to nature in our everyday lives and leaving space for wildlife, too. Green and blue spaces also provide opportunities for social contacts and help to improve community cohesion.*
Biodiversity	*Biodiversity refers to the quality of the green and blue spaces around our homes and neighbourhoods, and the variety of wildlife they encourage. Climate change is a primary driver of biodiversity loss, so we must recognise the importance of providing environments where wildlife can thrive alongside residents and communities.*
Climate resilience and adaptation	*Because of climate change, our homes and neighbourhoods are increasingly vulnerable to extreme weather events such as flooding or heatwaves. The places where we live, therefore, must be designed and delivered to be climate resilient and to minimise their impact on the natural environment in the long term. To mitigate climate change, our homes and neighbourhoods should provide us with the opportunity to live more sustainable and environmentally friendly lifestyles with ease.*
A sense of wonder	**Happiness, fun and wonder play an important role in our quality of life. The physical expression of this is seen in the design of our homes and neighbourhoods – not simply the way they function, but also the way they look and how they feel. In addition, having the ability to be creative and taking part in cultural expression gives us all an opportunity to feel a sense of identity and pride in our community and to open ourselves to a diverse range of cultures in turn. Importantly, play is also crucial to our health and wellbeing at**

	any age, and having opportunities to play and pursue leisure and sporting activities is key to our physical and mental health.
Distinctive design	*Our homes and neighbourhoods should be designed with care and attention to not only be useful and long lasting but also to inspire and delight. This means buildings that are beautiful and streets and parks that are human-scaled, visually varied and loved by residents for their character and design. Neighbourhoods can often have historical or heritage sites that are culturally significant, which may include landmarks, museums and buildings that contribute to the story about the community's past and present.*
Culture	*In a neighbourhood context, culture can refer to cultural Institutions, such as concert halls and libraries, but it can show itself in music and street art, and in the shared values, beliefs, practices, traditions and social behaviours that characterise the community. Cultural events and celebrations, and local culinary traditions, all provide opportunities for residents to come together, share their cultural heritage, and show pride in their community.*
Play and recreation	*We all need places to unwind and play and to connect with our friends and neighbours. Play and recreation refers to the opportunities for residents of all ages to be able to connect with themselves and with one another, whether that is using a swing or slide, playing a sport, going to a cinema, chatting over a drink or taking a walk in the countryside. Conserving these opportunities is essential to both physical and mental health and wellbeing.*
Getting around	**Having access to a car can contribute to people's quality of life, but when everyone owns a car roads become noisy and unsafe and parked cars often clog our streets and pavements. There are significant health and wellbeing benefits to walking, wheeling and cycling, and public transport is crucial in maintaining equitable and resilient neighbourhoods. It is essential that we can choose how to get around, based on needs, accessibility and affordability. This means having the infrastructure to get around using**

	different options – by walking, cycling, using public transport or car shares, for example – and having equitable access to a range of transport options.
Walking, cycling and wheeling	*A healthy neighbourhood is one that we can safely navigate by walking, cycling or wheeling (which includes activities such as rollerblading, skateboarding and using a wheelchair or mobility scooter). This relates to the infrastructure provided, the design of streets and the extent to which the space encourages and facilitates residents' movement, allowing for connectivity between key spaces such as schools, local amenities and public transport. Our neighbourhoods should provide attractive, usable and safe walking, wheeling and cycling routes for all.*
Public transport	*Access to affordable, reliable and inclusive public transport is crucial in ensuring freedom of movement for all, particularly to those who don't have access to their own vehicle. Good public transport can provide easy access to education, services and employment, and be better for the planet. We should have access to affordable and reliable public transport in our neighbourhoods, allowing us to get around with ease, whether that is to travel to work, travel with children or to meet friends or family.*
Cars	*For many people, cars have become an integral part of everyday life. However, reducing our reliance on them is critical to lower carbon emissions and air pollution. Over-reliance on cars also affects streets and neighbourhoods, taking up space that could be used for play or nature. Our neighbourhoods should enable us to use our cars less often, providing attractive, affordable and safe alternatives for getting around.*
Connected communities	**Belonging to a community is crucial to our personal, social and psychological wellbeing. Our local communities can provide a shared sense of identity, connection and purpose, and they can encourage the celebration of diversity, collective action and the sharing of resources across differing cultures and languages. Together, we can get to know our neighbours, chat to shopkeepers or just share a nod with fellow dog walkers. To facilitate this, local spaces need to enable a variety of social connections to emerge, while providing local job opportunities and a range of social services.**

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Belonging	*Belonging refers to how connected we feel to our local communities and is a key way of combating loneliness, with its consequent health and wellbeing risks. A sense of belonging could come in the form of joining community events or a local social media group, or it could simply be about knowing our neighbours and saying hello. Neighbourhoods should provide opportunities for people to connect with each other to allow a sense of belonging to emerge.*
Local businesses and jobs	*Local businesses and jobs are the life-blood of neighbourhoods, providing activity and vitality. As well as a means for living and working, they create a range of economic opportunities, whether through spending, investment or generating income. Our neighbourhoods should provide a mixture of uses that are well- integrated, thoughtfully designed and contribute to the local economy.*
Services	*Local services refers to spaces, facilities and social infrastructure such as community centres, schools and educational facilities, town halls, care services and digital services. Access to these services and community spaces are key in helping to combat social isolation, in providing essential moments of connection, and in helping us to grow. Our neighbourhoods should therefore provide us with a variety of services that allow us to connect with others and be cared for throughout our lives.*

C. Quality of Life Monitoring Tracker

The Quality of Life Tracker, which contains the Quality of Life Indicator Questions and consolidated non-personalised data, can be viewed by officers from all partnering authorities of the Garden Town, however the Tracker is only editable by relevant members of the QoL Monitoring Team. [insert link to live location].

For any questions about the Tracker, please contact a member of the HGGT QoL Monitoring Team.

Quality of Life Theme	Survey Question	Mapped Guidance, Policy or Commitment					2022 Baseline Data	National Benchmarks		Baseline Metric
		Stewardship HGGT Charter (TEST)	Thriving Together (DRAFT)	HGGT Vision (Nov 2018)	Harlow District Council Corporate Plan (2024	Harlow Residents Survey (Sept 2023	Quality of Life Mapping	Data Average	Source	
Connected Communities	How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood?"	-	1.4			Q4	73%	63%	Community Life Survey (2021-22)	Total percentage of "Very strongly" and "Fairly strongly" responses
Connected Communities	Generally, how satisfied are you with the local services and amenities in your local area?	3.1-3.6, 5.6	3.1, 2.4 , 2.5,	P9.2, P9.6,	RN2, HP3, HP5		51%	-	-	Total percentage of "Satisfied" and "Very Satisfied" responses
Connected Communities	"People in my local area pull together to improve the local area"	3.1-3.6, 5.8	2.3, 2.7, 3.2, 3.8			Q7	38%	-	-	Total percentage of "agree" and "strongly agree" responses
Connected Communities	"I have access to everything I need in my day to day life within a 10 minute walk or wheel from my home"		1.3, 2.4, 2.8, 3.4,	P9.2, P9.6, P16.9	RN2		50%	-	-	Total percentage of "agree" and "strongly agree" responses
Connected Communities	"I have access to plenty of opportunities to learn new skills easily and locally"	5.8	1.2	P22.6, P22.7,	IF4		38%	-	-	Total percentage of "agree" and "strongly agree" responses
Connected Communities	"There are plenty of good quality local jobs in my area"	5.5, 5.8	1.2	P9.2, P9.6, P21.2, P21.3, P21.7, P22.1	IF1		20%	-	-	Total percentage of "agree" and "strongly agree" responses
A sense of control	To what extent do you agree or disagree that you personally can influence decisions affecting your local area?	1.1-1.6,2.3, 4.1, 4.3-4.8	2.7, 3.8	P11.2	HP1, HP5		26%	27%	Community Life Survey (2021-22)	Total percentage of "Tend to agree" and "Definitely agree" responses
A sense of control	At this present moment, do you see yourself living in your area long term?	-	1.5, 1.6, 3.3	P9.4, P9.8			57%			Total percentage of "Yes" responses
A sense of control	"If I wanted to, I know who I can speak to about the places I care about in my local area"	1.1-1.6,2.3,3.1-3.6, 4.1, 4.3-4.8, 5.8	2.7, 3.8		HP5		33%	-	-	Total percentage of "agree" and "strongly agree" responses
A sense of control	"I have a say in how local community projects are run"	1.1-1.6, 2.3, 3.1-3.6, 4.1, 4.3-4.8, 5.8	2.7, 3.8		HP1		15%	-	-	Total percentage of "agree" and "strongly agree" responses
A sense of control	"Thinking of your personal safety, how safe or unsafe would you feel walking on your own during the day in a quiet street close to your home?"	-	2.4	P16.2, P17.4	PC1, PC2, PC3		78%	91%	Perceptions of personal safety and experiences of harassment, Great Britain (2022)	Total percentage of "fairly safe" and "very safe" responses
A sense of control	"I feel safe walking around my area after dark"	-	2.4	P17.4	PC1, PC2, PC3	Q5.1	40%	-	-	Total percentage of "agree" and "strongly agree" responses
A sense of control	How affordable is the amount you pay in rent or mortgage?	-	3.3	P9.5			35%	-	-	Total percentage of responses scoring 6 or higher on the scale
A sense of control	How affordable are your bills?	5.7	1.8, 3.3	P9.5, P15.3	TH10		33%	-	-	Total percentage of responses scoring 6 or higher on the scale
Health equity	How is your health in general?	6.7	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.6, 3.8	P10.7	PC7		61%	82%	2021 Census	Total percentage of "Very good" and "Good" responses
Health equity	Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or a disability that has lasted, or expected to last, at least 12 months?	-			PC7		-	18%	2021 Census	Total percentage of "Yes, a little" and "Yes, a lot" responses
Health equity	Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?	6.7	1.1, 1.2, 1.4				6.9	7.54	Annual Population Survey (2022)	Average response out of 10
Health equity	Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?	6.7	1.1, 1.2, 1.4				7.1	7.77	Annual Population Survey (2022)	Average response out of 10

Tabs: Quality of Life Tracker | Quality of Life Themes | Demographics (2022) | Thriving Together | HGGT Stewardship Char …

Figure 13 - screenshot of part of the Tracker as of July 2024

D. Quality of Life Indicator Questions

Below is a table containing all the questions that are used to identify indicators for the 2022 Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy and benchmarking sources.

Quality of Life Theme	Question	Benchmark source
Connected Communities	*How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood?*	*Community Life Survey*
	Generally, how satisfied are you with the local services and amenities in your local area?	
	"People in my local area pull together to improve the local area"	*n/a*
	"I have access to everything I need in my day to day life within a 10 minute walk or wheel from my home"	
	"I have access to plenty of opportunities to learn new skills easily and locally"	
	"There are plenty of good quality local jobs in my area"	
A sense of control	*To what extent do you agree or disagree that you personally can influence decisions affecting your local area?*	*Community Life Survey*
	At this present moment, do you see yourself living in your area long term?	*n/a*
	"If I wanted to, I know who I can speak to about the places I care about in my local area"	
	"I have a say in how local community projects are run"	
	"Thinking of your personal safety, how safe or unsafe would you feel walking on your own during the day in a quiet street close to your home?"	*Opinions and Lifestyle survey*

Quality of Life Theme	Question	Benchmark source
	"I feel safe walking around my area after dark"	*Social Capital in the UK*
	How affordable is the amount you pay in rent or mortgage?	*n/a*
	How affordable are your bills?	
Health equity	*How is your health in general?*	*2021 Census*
	Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or a disability that has lasted, or expected to last, at least 12 months?	
	Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?	*Annual Population Survey (2022)*
	Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?	
	Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?	
	Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?	
Getting around	*Are you satisfied with the public transport connections to your area?*	*n/a*
	Do you think you generally do more, less or about the same amount of cycling now as you did this time last year?	
	"Cars dominate the streets in my area"	
	How satisfied are you with the provision of walking options in your area?	

Quality of Life Theme	Question	Benchmark source
	How satisfied are you with the provision of local buses in your area?	*National Travel Survey (2021)*
	How satisfied are you with the provision of cycling options in your area?	
Connection to nature	*"My local green spaces are accessible and inclusive in their design" (For example, prams, wheeled and seated mobility devices can get in and around these green spaces)*	*n/a*
	Have you taken part in any nature or wildlife projects near where you live? (Planting wildflowers in a park or street, making wildlife habitats)	
	Thinking of the green and natural spaces close to where you live, have they improved or reduced in the last 5 years, or have they not changed? The quality has…	*The People and Nature Survey (2022)*
	"My local green and natural spaces are within easy walking distance"	
	"My local green and natural spaces are good places for mental health and wellbeing"	
	"My local green and natural spaces are a high enough standard to want to spend time in"	
A sense of wonder	*Do you engage with the local arts and culture? (For example, local sculptures, music and any markets)*	*n/a*
	"My local area offers people of all ages opportunities to enjoy themselves"	
	"I can easily visit a range of arts, culture and leisure amenities (places to enjoy a day or a night out) from my home"	
	How satisfied are you with your local arts and culture?	
	"There are lots of different things to do without spending too much money in my neighbourhood"	

Quality of Life Theme	Question	Benchmark source
	"I feel a sense of pride and care for the places in my neighbourhood"	
	"There are interesting new projects happening near where I live for a variety of ages and interests" (i.e. pop-up cafes or shops, rain gardens, community allotments)	

E. Using QoL Indicators as a Document Alignment and Checking Tool

Identifying outcomes, outputs and indicators

Outcomes often describe a broad change which are a result of a collective set of circumstances, rather than one specific change. For example, the improvement in biodiversity in a region, or the reduction of wider social discord.

Outputs are quantifiable changes that relate to those outcomes, but can be measured directly via quantitative or qualitative data. For example, the number of new sign ups to a local community website per month (output) indicates increased community involvement in their local area (outcome); or the number of trips taken via bicycle in a week (output) indicates both health and community activation outcomes.

Outcomes and outputs are used to define, understand and measure impact, and in this instance, to measure the social impact of projects, strategies and frameworks.

Outcome	Output
Increased participation in decision making processes	Number of new attendees at community engagement events
Improvement of biodiversity	Number of new species in a community park
Reduction of personal impact on the environment	Number of trips taken via a personal vehicle

Figure 14 *- Examples of how outcomes can translate into outputs that can be easily measured.*

By reviewing a framework or a strategy, understanding its intended outcome, you can identify measurable outputs, which can be linked to Quality of Life Indicator questions. For example:

Principle	Intended outcome(s)	Quantifiable output	Quality of Life indicator question
4.4 A robust governance structure will ensure it achieves the following objectives: • Assets are properly safeguarded in the public interest, in perpetuity • Community development and asset development are progressed together to optimise	Improved community involvement in decision making and governance processes	Number of residents who report feeling they have a say or influence their local community decision process	"I have a say in how local community projects are run"

value • Services delivery is effective and of a high quality • Resilience is integrated to be able to deal with changing circumstances • The community is empowered and accountability is maintained			

Figure 15 - Example of how indicators are aligned to outcomes sought in the HGGT Stewardship Charter.

Proxies

When outcomes aren't easily or directly measurable, proxy measures can indicate a change in the right direction. The use of proxies to measure outputs, and thus progress against outcomes, should only be done when direct measurement is particularly challenging or unreliable. Often, multiple proxies are used to denote progress against an outcome.

Outcome	Potential proxies
Improved environmental quality	• Air quality • Light pollution • Noise pollution
Improvement of biodiversity	• Number of new species • Density of species per square kilometre
Improved community health	• Number of visits to GP • Number of activities per week

Figure 16 *- Examples of how proxies can be used to understand progress against certain outcomes.*

F. Case Study – HGGT Stewardship Charter Recommendations

The thematic connections between the HGGT Stewardship Charter (2024) and the Monitoring Strategy don't all translate directly, so a more complicated aligning process has been applied. A summary of this process is provided in the Tracker.

Should the Stewardship Charter be updated in future, suggestions to make it more measurable to track stewardship performance are:

Added granularity in the formatting

Adding paragraph numbers to clauses would allow aims of the Charter to be aligned more easily. For example, where principles link to several indicators or touch on several themes and areas, being more specific about which paragraph these relate to will make aligning strategies, and identifying impacts, easier.

Include more specific, actionable and quantifiable outputs for desired outcomes

For example, adding more detail to the Principles' Checklist regarding the intended outcomes of a principle, would help remove subjectivity and make the monitoring aims clear. This can be achieved by using language that suggests an increase or a decrease in a particular outcome, for example, to "Improve community engagement and participation in decision making". This same principle can also be applied more widely throughout the document.

CHECKLIST		
What	**By When**	**Outcome**
Engagement Strategy	Early engagement, pre-application or Strategic Master Planning stage	Improve community engagement and participation in decision making
Delivery Programme	Early engagement, pre-application or Strategic Master Planning stage	Improve community engagement and participation in decision making
...		
Draft Ecological and Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy	Outline planning application stage	Improve community engagement and participation in decision making Improve biodiversity in the Garden Town Area

Figure 17 - Example of how the checklist could be updated to provide aims that allow parts of the principle, and relevant documents, to be mapped more easily.

Define community participation outcomes for each principle

The Stewardship Charter focuses on the ways in which community agency and participation should inform the process of managing and delivering community assets. As above, defining measurable outcomes relating to community participation for each Principle will provide a clearer understanding of whether this principle aim is contributing to the overarching improvements to quality of life via the Stewardship Charter.

Use the Gilston Area Principles and Objectives (2022) as a medium to update the Charter

The HGGT Stewardship Charter was informed by the Gilston Area Stewardship Principles and Objectives (P&Os). These P&Os are more holistic and have clear directive outcomes linked to each of the quality of life themes, therefore providing a much closer fit across the Quality of Life Indicators. Provided that the outcomes identified in the P&Os are still sought by the HGGT, using the outcomes identified in them will make the Charter more directly measurable for quality of life.

G. Aligned Documents and Future Alignments Template

Aligned Documents

The following initiatives have been aligned to the Quality of Life Monitoring Tracker so far, and further initiatives will be aligned over time, as set out in *Appendix A - Detailed Step by Step Guidance and Delivery Timescales*

Aligned strategies are based primarily on anticipated impact, time sensitivity and resource capacity. The following documents which have been aligned have been chosen for anticipated impact, and to illustrate versatility of the Strategy.

In addition to impact considerations, both the HGGT Stewardship Charter and EHDC Thriving Together Strategy were in development and so there was additional opportunity for these to be updated to be more measurable, before they are finalised.

A similar approach is recommended for future alignments, both by building in time for this in advance, and by using the Tracker as a checking tool for strategies and documents as they are drafted.

There is no limit for aligning further documents later – this can be done as capacity allows.

Guidance, Policy or Commitment Document	Author(s)	Rationale
The HGGT Stewardship Charter, supporting quality monitoring of stewardship;	Harlow and Gilston Garden Town	The Stewardship Charter's key themes of healthy growth sit across each of the Quality of Life themes, and the HGGT Vision, so monitoring stewardship will provide an indication of performance of the Garden Town. Establishing HGGT Stewardship Charter Quality of Life indicators is therefore a way to monitor both stewardship outcomes; and indicate performance of the Garden Town.

Guidance, Policy or Commitment Document	Author(s)	Rationale
East Herts District Council's Thriving Together Strategy, supporting quality monitoring of health and wellbeing	East Herts District Council	By linking quality of life indicators to health and wellbeing initiatives, this demonstrates the versatility of Quality of Life Monitoring to be useful beyond the Garden Town, with opportunities to scale across all partnering authorities. A similar principle could be applied to Developer Strategies.
HGGT Garden Town Spatial Vision (2018): setting out the vision for the Garden Town and the Principles that will inform its growth and management	Harlow and Gilston Garden Town	As with the Charter, due to its thematic similarities with the Quality of Life themes; being of an appropriate scale/level of precision in its aims and objectives; and, like the Stewardship Charter, will provide indications of overall performance of development.
Harlow District Council Corporate Plan: Setting out the mission for Harlow over the next four years	Harlow District Council	This plan was aligned due to its similarity in methodology (the collation of different metrics from a variety of sources both primary and secondary to understand progress against goals over a few years); scale as a means to measure progress across different aims, objectives and themes; and because it represents the largest proportion of residents within the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town. The same is recommended for all partnering authorities' Corporate Plans.
Harlow Residents Survey: A Harlow-wide survey to understand residents' perceptions of the local area, the local council and their communication preferences.	Harlow District Council	Although this did not provide a large number of connections, this particular document was aligned as it demonstrates that other surveys could also be used to align and inform the Quality of Life Tracker, and vice versa; and because Harlow represents the largest population in the Garden Town.

QoL - Documents to Align

The following documents have been identified by the HGGT to align over time, and will be reviewed and prioritised periodically as part of the Evaluation process. As documents are aligned, they will be moved to the above list, so appearing in strategy updates over time.

Documents to align to Framework		Prioritisation Check	
Guidance, Policy or Commitment Document *(Links to be added over time)*	**Author(s)**	**Rationale** *To be completed during reviews. See examples above, taking impact, timing, and resource capacity into account.*	**Document Review Date**
East Herts Corporate Plan 2024-2027	East Herts District Council		
Epping Forest Corporate Plan 2023-2027	Epping Forest District Council		
Hertfordshire Corporate Plan 2022-2025	Hertfordshire District Council		
Essex Corporate Plan 2021-2025	Essex District Council		
Harlow Corporate Plan 2024-2028	Harlow District Council		
HGGT Sustainability Checklist	Harlow and Gilston Garden Town	To increase build quality and demonstrate quality of build impacts for quality of life.	
Hertfordshire Connected Lives Model	Hertfordshire County Council		

Documents to align to Framework		Prioritisation Check	
Guidance, Policy or Commitment Document *(Links to be added over time)*	**Author(s)**	**Rationale** *To be completed during reviews. See examples above, taking impact, timing, and resource capacity into account.*	**Document Review Date**
HGGT Strategic Economic Framework	Harlow and Gilston Garden Town		
Harlow Economic Development Strategy	Harlow District Council		
East of Harlow Masterplanning Guidance SPD	Harlow District Council Epping Forest District Council		
Latton Priory Strategic Masterplan Framework	Epping Forest District Council		
Latton Priory Design Code	Epping Forest District Council		
Water Lane Strategic Masterplan Framework (in development)	Epping Forest District Council		
EFDC Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Epping Forest District Council		
DEVELOPER CONSULTANT DOCUMENTS			
Gilston Area Stewardship and Governance Strategy	Places for People and Taylor Wimpey	• to make the dashboard / QoL Monitoring more relatable/valuable to Developers, helping secure funding,	

Documents to align to Framework		Prioritisation Check	
Guidance, Policy or Commitment Document *(Links to be added over time)*	**Author(s)**	**Rationale** *To be completed during reviews. See examples above, taking impact, timing, and resource capacity into account.*	**Document Review Date**
		increase benefit and use • example for Officers, Community, Members, Developers to see how QoL monitoring also helps with developer accountability (including for Developer benefit) • enables monitoring of developer approaches to stewardship • value outweighs costs	
Places for People Tenant Satisfaction Measures Survey	Places for People	Aligning PfP and QoL Monitoring, benefitting both PfP and the HGGT by streamlining.	
Village 7 Masterplan & design code (in development)	Taylor Wimpey, Stantec, Alan Baxter		
Gilston Strategic Landscape Masterplan SLMP & design code (in development)	JTP Architects		
Village 1 Masterplan & design code (in development)	JTP Architects		
EXTERNAL FRAMEWORKS GUIDING QUALITY OF LIFE OUTCOMES			
United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	United Nations		

Documents to align to Framework		Prioritisation Check	
Guidance, Policy or Commitment Document *(Links to be added over time)*	**Author(s)**	**Rationale** *To be completed during reviews. See examples above, taking impact, timing, and resource capacity into account.*	**Document Review Date**
Wellbeing in Place Perceptions Scale (WIPPS) 2021	University of Liverpool		
Health Inequalities Assessment Toolkit (HIAT)	National Institute for Health and Care Research		
National Planning Policy Framework	Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government	Expected updates include health to have greater weight in planning considerations throughout.	
Other Health and Wellbeing, Behaviour Change, Social Value and Spatial Planning best practice	TBC		

H. Engagement methodology

The Your Quality of Life consultation programme is a hybrid approach to engagement, using face-to-face and digital methods in tandem to improve uptake and reach a broader and more representative audience.

This approach tripled engagement in 2022 compared to previous HGGT Consultations[1]. To ensure consistency and quality of feedback collected, a similar approach is to be used at each consultation, building on lessons learned along the way. This list below is not exhaustive, nor prescriptive and advancements in technology will allow the introduction of new methods:

<u>In-person</u>
  o Pre-engagement workshops with identified underrepresented groups to inform comms and engagement approaches
  o Weekly pop-ups at different locations
  o Targeted workshops speaking to underrepresented communities

<u>Printed Communications</u>
  o Printed surveys to allow for those who don't have digital access
  o Flyers, banners and posters directing audiences to the digital survey
  o Advertorials in local magazines, newspapers and newsletters

<u>Digital</u>
  o Digital survey platform
  o Email newsletters
  o Targeted social media advertising and promotional content
  o Circulation within closed, existing groups and pages (e.g. Whatsapp and Facebook)

To ensure consistency and validity of collected data, whether that is through Your Quality of Life consultations or other engagement programmes, the following steps need to be considered when carrying out engagement and/or consultation for future data collection.

● **Reduce number of questions for smaller surveys and increase impact:** By asking fewer questions that are more directly related to the outputs and desired outcomes for each consultation, uptake will be more consistent across the entirety of the survey data.

● **Emphasise spatial responses:** Limitations by the consultation platform during the 2022 baseline collection exercise meant that the mapping element of the project and spatialising of responses (ie themes by area) was not possible. This was partly because there weren't always

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[1] https://media.localdigital.gov.uk/uploads/2023/08/07205013/PropTech-Innovation-Fund-Round-2-HGGT-Final-Report.docx.pdf

enough responses to identify a clear spatial pattern and partly because there was not a clear enough relationship between point selection on the map and the questions that respondents were subsequently prompted to answer. Future consultations will overcome this as numbers of respondents increase, and as the HGGT Data Dashboard develops its map-based communications.

- **Improve demographic uptake**: As is common with consultation programmes, the 2022 dataset was skewed in its demographic make-up, containing a majority of older, wealthier and more educated respondents. Further and more targeted consultations, especially smaller scale and longer-term programmes, can begin to rebalance this demographic uptake to be more representative of the area.

- **Manage community expectations**: It is also essential to ensure that community and resident expectations are carefully managed, explaining how the feedback and communication process will work. Refer to the Process and Workflow

- **To gauge how statistically robust responses are,** record the highest number of responses across all questions on the tracker and note any questions that are equal to or less than 10% of the most responded question

For more detailed information on best practice engagement approaches, refer to the **Inclusive Engagement Toolkit,** produced by the Quality of Life Foundation in collaboration with Urban Symbiotics in 2022; and with the **HGGT Communications and Engagement Strategy**, which is updated periodically to reflect adopted HGGT Engagement practice.

HGGT
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I. Officer Feedback and how it has informed the Strategy

We received feedback from 13 respondents over the running of the survey. The following is a short summary of the feedback received, and which helped to verify the approach taken in the strategy.

Officer Survey

Do you have experience in any of the following types of data processing? (e.g. this could be through consultations and/or communicating statistics etc.)
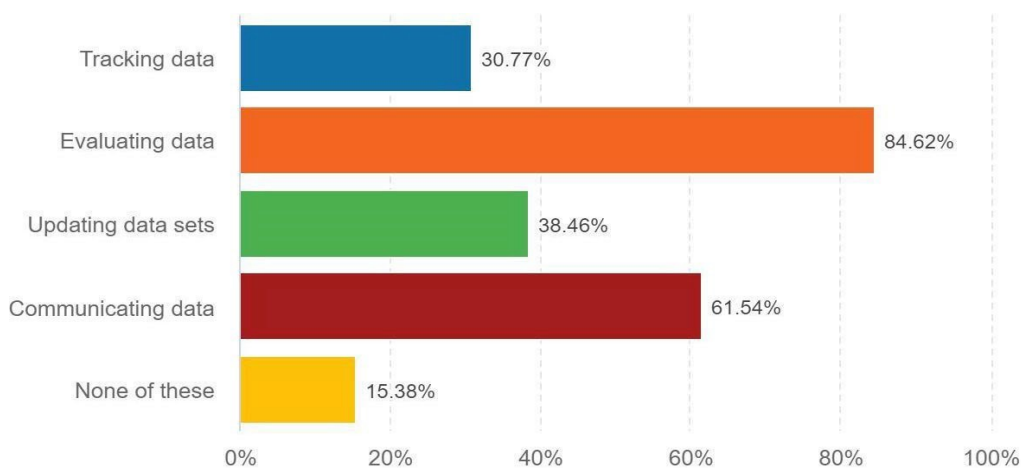
Are you currently measuring quality of life or health and wellbeing outcomes within their work and department?

38.5% said "yes"

30.8% said "no"

30.8% said "not sure

63.6% of officers collect data to measure outcomes from secondary sources (ONS or GOV.UK for example), but only **18.2%** of officers felt that these measurements are *robust or reliable*

What is your current work area?

"Gilston new town"
"Development planning"
"Health and wellbeing"
"Planning and biodiversity"
"Public health and wellbeing"
"GIS (Mapping) and digital"
"Infrastructure planning"

"Urban design and masterplanning"
"Sustainable transport"
"Planning/Garden Town"
"Transport and planning"
"Service improvement, data collection and analysis"

"

Officers pointed out that there is a range of measures currently in place. However, the responses highlighted that there is **general lack of clarity regarding the robustness of the data that they are using to benchmark performance.**

Are there any gaps between the Quality of Life Framework themes and your work?

23.1% said "yes"

15.4% said "no"

61.5% said "not sure"

What's missing from this framework?

"Sport, food production and historic connections"

"Active public engagement with the natural world or local food growing"

"Please refer to key headings in the NPPF and NPPG"

Themes concerning **nature, movement and community resonated the most** with Officer's own areas of work/focus. Whilst other themes are consistently rated by officers across the board. A few comments by officers pointed out areas that were missing in the Quality of Life Framework themes, which have since been included in the updated Framework.

Regarding the Indicators

92.3% of officers broadly agreed that *the indicators are easy to understand*

84.6% of officers broadly **agreed that it is clear that these indicators can demonstrate a change in quality of life**

61.5% of officers broadly **agreed that they would use quality of life insights** to inform future approaches, and to improve performance of development

When asked about the process of deriving indicators, officers generally felt that this process was easy to understand. The benefit of these indicators and their association to quality of life metrics was also well understood by officers.

Regarding the Tracker

53.9% of officers felt that **the tracker looks easy to use and navigate**

61.5% of officers **would use the tracker** to measure current and future performance of development and other initiatives that are linked to health and wellbeing and quality of life

Thinking about the potential benefits of implementing the Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy, which of the following would be the most useful to your organisation? (Please choose at least 3 options)

| Benefit	Percent
Better access to community insights (via digital tool, when live, via reports in the interim)	69.23%
Enables informed approaches according to the needs of specific communities	76.92%
Better informed and more transparent decision-making	30.77%
Better understanding of our own performance against national and local benchmark	23.08%
Ability to communicate issues and successes more easily to stakeholders	69.23%
Enhanced credibility and reputation through increased transparency and accountability	7.69%
Opportunity to streamline monitoring by aligning shared interests	38.46%
Better measurement standards	23.08%
Cross departmental analysis	15.38%
Opportunity for more frequent measurement	23.08%
Opportunity for long term measurement	38.46%

What do you see as a potential barrier(s) to the wider use of this tracker to track performance of quality of life across the HGGT area? (Select as many responses as you think are necessary)
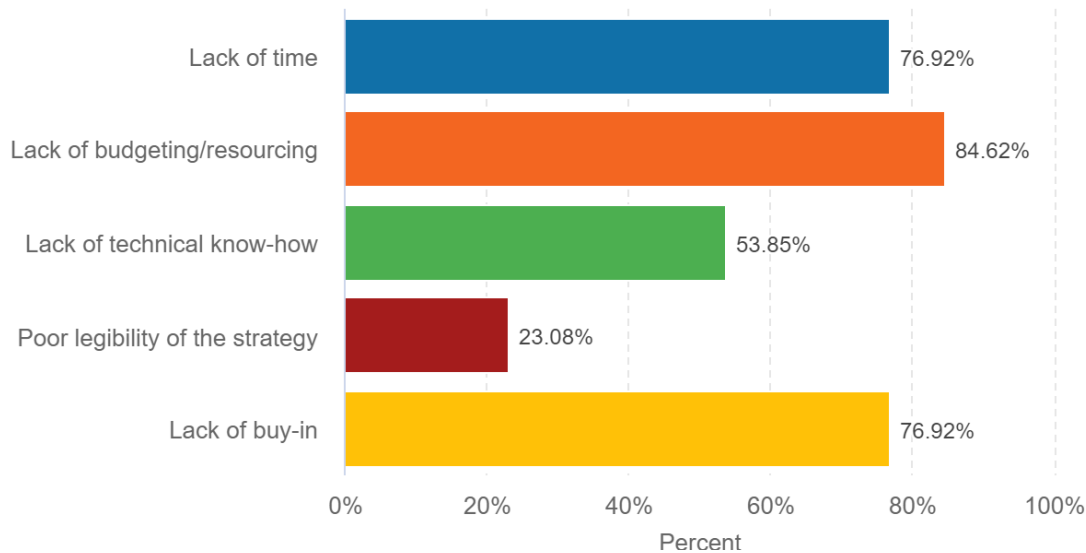
Officers' comments reflected the need for the strategy to move beyond the Excel spreadsheet as a means to input, manage and communicate the Quality of Life data. This is in line with other comments that suggested that the Strategy remains simple and easy to use consistently.

Reflecting feedback across other parts of the survey, officers felt that the Quality of Life Tracker could be helpful in understanding the communities that their organisations serve better.

Lastly, officers were broadly in agreement that resourcing and time constraints would be the major hurdle to using the Strategy. Particularly, they ranked the option "Poor legibility of the strategy" as the least likely barrier to the use of the Strategy to measure quality of life across HGGT.

> ***Resulting changes to the Strategy and or Action Plan:***
>
> - *The Tracker and its management are being integrated into the HGGT Data Dashboard.*
> - *The Strategy itself has been simplified further, reducing length and furthering ease of use*
> - *Noting that the strategy is the least likely barrier to the strategy, actions to address the other barriers include: officer training, budget and resource planning, ensuring project champion at senior officer level;*
> - *Sport, food production, historic connections, and active participation with the natural world all fall under current Quality of Life themes and indicator questions; and NPPF is included as related framework to periodically check against, as it is updated. As the NPPG is a guide to support interpreting the NPPF, only the NPPF has been included. The list of related frameworks is non-exhaustive and will be updated periodically.*

Officer Workshop

The Quality of Life Foundation ran a workshop with 21 partnering authority officers on Monday 18th March 2024 to gather feedback about the Monitoring Strategy.

Summary Feedback

- Adding more visual elements would help explain the process more concisely
- Officer time and resource are scarce, an awareness of this as we develop the approach to ensure that there is no double-work or inefficiencies is essential for officer buy-in, for example, to consider existing policies and monitoring frameworks to get a sense of what is already being measured to avoid further duplication of work
- There are already a range of different assessments that are providing data for local teams periodically
- There is an interest in capturing sentiments around aspirations, hopes and fears in the context of local development and community perceptions
- The use of a spreadsheet to input and track data is not ideal in terms of user experience and usability - with a few comments noting the benefit that spatialising the data (i.e. putting it on a map) could help address this issue.

Resulting changes to the Strategy and or Action Plan:

- *Visual elements, summary charts and workflows added*
- *Clarifications on how work and engagement will be coordinated to avoid duplication, and maximise benefit, for example, timing of consultations and reviews to stay in step with national benchmarks, and coordinated reviews of monitoring arrangements ahead of consultations*
- *Scalability has been maintained, so that officers outside the HGGT may also benefit from data*
- *As above, the Tracker and its management are being integrated into the HGGT Data Dashboard.*

J. 2022 Your Quality of Life Consultation – Establishing Baseline Data

Data gathered from community and resident responses were used in tandem with datasets provided by consultants, Stantec, and national benchmark data taken from past surveys carried out at national and/or regional scales. The resulting combination provided a good measure of performance of quality of life based on the thoughts and feedback of the local community, as well as a range of comparative scores to gauge how well the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town area is performing nationally.

Data sources include:

- o Sustrans
- o Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
- o Office for National Statistics
- o Natural England
- o Department for Transport
- o UK Government Disability Unit

The core questions yielded the highest volume of responses. These drew mainly on the Taking Part and Community Life (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) surveys. Benchmarks from other surveys listed above were included but did not amass enough responses to be analysed and interpreted meaningfully in the reporting for this project. However, these data points have been included in the Quality of Life Monitoring Tracker with the view that future data points will build on the statistical gaps in this first round of indicators.

International benchmarks have been omitted as there are limitations in drawing comparisons in contexts that are culturally and socially different. Therefore, benchmarks have been drawn exclusively from UK national surveys. Reviewing international benchmarks and keeping abreast of best practice forms part of the strategy review process, and a task undertaken by the QoL Monitoring Team.

Questions relating to transport and movement that were asked in the 2022 consultation were limited due to upcoming engagement on travel patterns through the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Travel Diary survey, delivered by Stantec.

To avoid duplication, questions in this theme were minimal and focussed on qualitative elements resulting in the comparatively smaller number of questions to provide a baseline. To address this gap, questions from national surveys have been added to the most recent version of the Tracker to provide a more balanced picture.

These new additions are not currently part of the baseline data for this version of the Monitoring Strategy, but data will be captured in the next Your Quality of Life consultation or in any intermediate consultations that are able to take place and collect data against these new questions.

K. 2022 Consultation Demographics

Table showing the breakdown of different demographic markers for respondents to the 2022 Your Quality of Life consultation. These questions were optional, so not all respondents' demographic information was captured but the majority of respondents did feed back on these markers. These demographics are also included in the Tracker, where they are benchmarked against 2021 Census data to allow ease of comparison.

Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Employment and income	Disability	Gender and Sexual orientation
13-15: 3 (1.09%) 16-24: 21 (7.61%) 25-34: 29 (10.51%) 35-44: 59 (21.38%) 45-54: 50 (18.12%) 55-64: 65 (23.55%) 65-74: 39 (14.12%) 75-84: 9 (3.26%) * 85 or over: 1 (0.36%) * (likely to be more due to digital exclusion / lack of demographic data from some physical surveys may mean data does not fully reflect older group participation)	Female: 101 (66.5%) Male: 45 (29.6%) Other: 2 (1.3%) Prefer not to say: 4 (2.6%)	Overall percentage of people from ethnic minorities and/or under represented communities: 16.22% • Gypsy or Irish Traveller - 1 • Any other White background - 5 • White and Black Caribbean - 1 • White and Black African - 2 • White and Asian - 2 • Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background - 3 • Indian - 3 • Pakistani - 2 • Bangladeshi - 1	- Most respondents earn over £25k but 25% earn less	- 41.1% have a disability or illness that impacts their daily life. - Vision (e.g. blindness or partial sight): 3 - Hearing (e.g. deafness or partial hearing): 10 - Mobility (e.g. walking or climbing stairs): 11 - Dexterity (carrying things, using keyboards): 5 - Learning, understanding or concentrating: 4 - Memory: 1 - Mental Health: 16 - Stamina or breathing fatigue: 7	- 4.64% of respondents said their gender was not the same as their sex registered at birth or they prefer not to say - The sexual orientation of participants was 80.67% straight or heterosexual / 4% bisexual / 4.67% Gay or Lesbian / 2% other / 8.67% prefer not to say.

		• Caribbean - 2 • Any other Black/African/Caribbean background - 1 • Any other ethnic group - 1 • Welsh/ English/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British - 124		– Social or behavioural (Autism or ADHD): 5 – Other: 5 – Prefer not to say: 14 – No disability or illness: 82	

HGGT QUALITY OF LIFE ACTION PLAN

Revision History and Updates

Date	Version	Key updates	Purpose
Oct 2024	2.0	Updated to reflect Progress and further recommendations following development of the Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy	For Joint Committee Approval alongside Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy.
Feb 2023	1.0	First issue – Endorsed by the HGGT Board	n/a

Introduction: The following Action Plan is based on, and to be read alongside, the **HGGT Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy**, which has been collaboratively developed by the Quality of Life Foundation and the HGGT Team to enable quality of life monitoring for the HGGT and partners.

With sections A, B, C, S and D, previously agreed by the HGGT Board in February 2023, these have since been updated to reflect progress and next actions. Actions A1, Establish a Physical Presence; and D, Develop a Quality of Life Monitoring Strategy, are now complete.

Summary: Note that the recommendations and actions identified in Q) Quality of Life Monitoring will support all recommendations previously agreed by the HGGT Board, including those which have not yet progressed. Where previous actions have not progressed, this is primarily due to lack of engagement resource, which would be addressed should the QoL Monitoring Strategy be implemented. We therefore recommend actions in section Q which support QoL Monitoring Delivery are prioritised.

Q) QUALITY OF LIFE MONITORING DELIVERY

QoLF and HGGT Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action / Programme *(subject to funding/ resource evaluation)*
Q1. PROJECT MANAGEMENT			
Q1.1.ESTABLISH QOLMONITORING TEAM, allocating HGGT resource to meet delivery requirements of the Strategy and this Action Plan, including to coordinate QoLwork across wider HGGT programmes and engage	To ensure resource is in place to deliver QoL Monitoring, on time, with the right skills and processes in place; ensures monitoring and	In progress, (QoL Lead/ Data Dashboard)	Scope for FY 24/25 - Identify **project champions and existing resource** - include **QoL as a regular agenda item** with key

QoLF and HGGT Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action / Programme *(subject to funding/ resource evaluation)*
with key stakeholders.	programme approaches align to maximise value and impact; and that key stakeholders are kept informed. Also responds to officer survey feedback that time, resource and buy-in are the primary barriers to delivery.	identify further resources in 2025	stakeholder groups and HGGT teams - Review in **QoL Strategy, QoL draft Budget** and **HGGT budget**
Q1.2.ESTABLISH A HGGT QUALITYMONITORING TEAM OR STEERING GROUP, and update frameworks with standard phrasing to support alignment	Quality of Life Monitoring falls under a wider Quality Monitoring Framework, and so needs to be coordinated across partnering authorities and with developers. Potential for this to be part of strategic stewardship activities	In progress, via SMG and EOG	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in **HGGT Strategic Stewardship, HGGT Quality Monitoring Framework, Gilston Area Strategic Monitoring Framework**
Q.1.3. INVESTIGATE FURTHER FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, consideringboth the beneficiaries and the befits inapplying/seeking funding.	Due to the wide arrayof benefits which QoL Monitoringbrings to all stakeholders and aspects of developmentin the Garden Town (and beyond), there will be many opportunities for grants and partnerships in emergingor priority areas. For example, relating to climate change, modalshift, qualityhomes, health and wellbeing, stewardship, spatial approaches to planning.	In progress, all phases	Ongoing / immediate - Review in **HGGT QoL Monitoring Team** - monitoring and/or S106 contributions - MHCHLG, Optimal Cities, etc.
Q1.4.UPDATE THISACTION PLAN AT LEAST ANNUALLY, with more comprehensive updates followingYQoLConsultation Monitoring and Evaluation reporting,	To report on progress, and to reflect any recommendations which arise asa resultof QoL Monitoring	Next Review 2025	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in **Action Plan, QoL Monitoring Strategy, QoL Reporting**
Q2.INFORMING POLICY, STRATEGIESAND PROJECTS			
Q2.1 CHECK EMERGING AND EXISTING STRATEGIES AND PLANSAND OTHER KEYDOCUMENTS, such as master plansagainst QoLIndicators, making recommendations to make them more measurable for achieving quality of life outcomes, as they are developed and/or updated.	To support strategies to be more effective for achieving quality of life outcomes. By making these documents more measurable for quality of life, this can lead to improvements in quality of life over time. Several are mapped already. Mapping more will mean that data will support insights to be used more readily for other teams.	In progress, via QoL Monitoring Phase 2, 3	Ongoing / Immediate - Review timing and potential authority and developer strategies via **QoL Documents to Align** - No time limit, but timing this ahead of document reviews will make this most effective.

QoLF and HGGT Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action / Programme *(subject to funding/ resource evaluation)*
			- Make the 'QoL Indicator Check' a requirement for all strategic documents
Q2.2. IDENTIFY AND ALIGN OTHER SURVEYS AND CONSULTATIONS with QoL Indicator Questions	To maximise benefit and reduce duplication. This will enable smaller scale and other consultations to contribute to quality of life data in between HGGT QoL consultations, and prevents multiple consultations or surveys running at the same time. These small scale consultations will also support reaching wider demographics, giving a clearer picture of quality of life over time, more equitably.	In progress, via QoL Monitoring Phase 2, 3	Ongoing / Immediate - Review timing and potential authority and developer strategies via **QoL Documents to Align**
Q2.3. SUPPORT STEWARDSHIP BODIES TO USE QOL MONITORING, aligning strategies, engagement, and community development plans to QoL Monitoring	The HGGT Stewardship Charter is aligned, so individual and strategic sites will also align, providing more granular information about what works in different areas. Demonstrates how stewardship decisions impact people's quality of life; and vice versa, how engaging people in stewardship and quality of life monitoring will also lead to changes in how stewardship decisions are made.	In progress, via HGGT Stewardship Charter, QoL Monitoring Phase 2, 3	Ongoing / Immediate - Review in: **HGGT Strategic Stewardship, HGGT Stewardship Charter, PfP/TW Stewardship and Governance Strategy** (+ others as they emerge) - **Gilston Area Stewardship (Shadow) Body** (+ others as they emerge)
Q2.4. INCLUDE STANDARD REFERENCING TO QOL MONITORING FOR LINKED FRAMEWORKS, where aligned, such as Developer post occupancy surveys; and other partner frameworks, for example, Gilston Area Quality Monitoring Strategic Framework	To support continuity in approaches and ease of use and therefore impact.	In progress, via QoL Monitoring Phase 2, 3; Gilston Area Monitoring Framework	Ongoing / Immediate - Review in: **HGGT Quality Monitoring Framework; Gilston Area Quality Monitoring Framework.** - Referenced in **HGGT Stewardship Charter**
Q3. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT			

QoLF and HGGT Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action / Programme *(subject to funding/ resource evaluation)*
Q3.1. SHARE QOL MONITORING STRATEGY PUBLICLY, with Members, Joint Committee, and other key stakeholders, including YQoL Community Participants	Closes the feedback loop with community following YQoL Consultation Feedback Report which sets out aspiration to monitor quality of life; strengthens accountability, benefitting all stakeholder groups; and supports implementation by socialising content	In progress, via QoL Monitoring Phase 2, 3	Scope for FY 24/25 - Once agreed, share with **Joint Committee**
Q3.2. PUBLISH UPDATES FOLLOWING USER TESTING to let people know how the site is evolving	Demonstrates accountability, furthers opportunities for others to engage	In progress, via QoL Monitoring Phase 2, 3	Scope for FY 24/25 - Following **Data Dashboard** development (current ETA spring 2025) - **QoL Monitoring Phase 2**
Q3.3. ENGAGE KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN ONGOING FEEDBACK BEYOND THE INITIAL USER TESTING to continue to develop communications which are relevant and engaging to key groups	Key to understanding user preferences and tailoring outputs to communicate benefits, inform decision making and strategies, embed use and secure funding	Begin 2025	Scope for FY 25/26 - Following **Data Dashboard** development (current ETA spring 2025) - **QoL Monitoring Phase 3**
Q3.4. REPEAT YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE CONSULTATIONS EVERY 3-5 YEARS, ideally at regular intervals, as per strategy.	As per Strategy	Begin 2026	- **QoL Monitoring Phase 3**
Q4. TRAINING AND SCALING UP IMPACT			
Q4.1. ENGAGE EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS such as MHCLG, other local authorities and interested NGOs via working groups, such as the Health and Wellbeing in Planning Network	To share and continue learning on how the built environment and community involvement impacts quality of life, and increase potential reach	In progress, all phases	Ongoing / Immediate - QoL Lead to review and attend key relevant working groups
Q4.2. ENGAGE PARTNERS AND OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS TO EXPLORE POTENTIAL TO SCALE, including Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils; and Epping Forest, Harlow and East Herts District Councils; Developer Partners; and others, such as MHCLG, the	This is a key outcome sought from the project, and the potential to bring positive impact at scale is very high. It could also bring potential future funding opportunities.	In progress, all phases	Ongoing / immediate

QoLF and HGGT Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action / Programme *(subject to funding/ resource evaluation)*
TCPA, NHS and Homes England.			
Q4.3. TRAINING OFFICERS IN HOW TO USE QOL MONITORING DATA ALONGSIDE OTHER DATA, such as the HGGT Sustainability Checklist, Health Impact Assessments, Local Plans and Developer Proposals	To support officer ability to report and make recommendations, informed by quality of life data Responds to officer feedback that technical know-how is required.	Begin 2025	Scope for FY 25/26 - Review in QoL platform of **Data Dashboard** - **QoL Monitoring Phase 3**
Q4.4. TRAINING EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS in how to use the data dashboard, in including young people	to understand QoL changes and how engagement impacts strategies and projects	Begin 2025	Scope for FY 25/26 - Review in QoL platform of **Data Dashboard** - **QoL Monitoring Phase 3**
Q5. DIGITAL DASHBOARD DEVELOPMENT			
Q5.1. ENFORCE USE OF SUSTAINABILITY CHECKLIST and include as layer on QoL Map	To increase build quality and demonstrate quality of build impacts for quality of life.	Begin 2025	Scope for 25/26 - prioritise in **QoL Documents to Align**
Q5.2. OVERLAY QOL MAP WITH FURTHER DATA WHICH CONTRIBUTES TO QUALITY OF LIFE, such as: Watershed's pollution map; .Gov housing quality; and other emerging research, such as Spatial Plans as a Critical Intervention in Improving Population Health.	To further evidence the links between quality of built environment and ecology and quality of life and people's health. This will be an evolving data set as more research emerges, so keeping abreast of evidence will help keep this relevant. Note that the Strategy includes this as one of it's 9 steps.	Begin 2025	Scope for FY 25/26 - Review in QoL platform of **Data Dashboard**, and as part of periodic **QoL Methodology Reviews**

Recommendations for A, B, C, S and D endorsed by the HGGT Board in February 2023, based on the Quality of Life Recommendations Report, updated to reflect progress and further actions to support delivery. Note that these will all be supported by actioning the recommendations in section Q above.

A. ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION PRACTICES WITH COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONS

QoLF Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action/ Programme *(subject to funding/ resource evaluation)*
A1. ESTABLISH A PHYSICAL PRESENCE: A physical place is allocated and run through HGGT for community engagement. This could be a series of semi-permanent 'pop-ups' or permanent space that could be staffed occasionally.	This space would give the public the chance to provide ongoing feedback, receive information about proposed developments to their local area and feel connected to the process of change in a way that is visible and tangible.	Complete. Harlow Discovery Hub opened November 2023	Scope for FY 23/24 - Review in **Comms & Engagement**
A2. INCREASE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS AROUND PLANNING AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT: Involving the community more directly in matters relating to planning, management and policy development, through: i) Regular follow-ups to keep residents informed about the project, results of consultations and outcomes	People felt concerned about their ability to shape planning and development, often asking if their comments and ideas would actually make a difference. Providing more information on outcomes and actions helps to demonstrate that their inputs are having an impact.	Progressing via QoL Monitoring and Digital Dashboard; HGGT Stewardship Charter; Comms and Engagement Strategy	Scope for FY 24/25: - Review how to better inform, empower and involve communities to be reviewed in **Comms & Engagement, partner SCIs, Stewardship, Data & Digital** - **Quality of Life Monitoring**
A3. PROVIDE COMMUNITY LINKS OFFICERS: The LAs/ HGGT partnership to provide resourcing for a Community Engagement Team. This could be in the form of community links officers who: work to engage early with stakeholders about local issues; work with partner organisations, local people, and amenity groups; liaise with in-house teams	To provide dedicated resources and capacity that can support consultation processes and enable engagement.	Not started	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in **Comms & Engagement, Stewardship** - Review engagement resource in **Placeshaping & Engagement workstream** - Via **Harlow Discovery Hub and Community Forums**
A4. INCREASE DIGITAL INCLUSION AND SUPPORT: LAs/ HGGT partnership to support resources for in-person engagement and support alongside digital engagement. This could be in the form of working with partner organisations that provide digital support or access.	To support people who do not have digital access to devices, to get online and to be involved in conversations.	Progressing via QoL Monitoring; Digital Dashboard; Discover Harlow Hub	Scope for FY 24/25: - Review in **Comms & Engagement, partner SCIs Placeshaping & Sustainability, Stewardship, Economic Growth, Data & Digital**

QoLF Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action/ Programme (subject to funding/ resource evaluation)
A5. EMBED LOCAL EVENTS INTO ENGAGEMENT: Embedding pop-ups deeper into future engagement efforts. These should be well distributed and take into account the spaces that under-represented groups use most.	Local events provide an excellent opportunity to "meet people where they are", demonstrate that engagement is part of the fabric of local life and reach a wider audience.	Not started	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in **Comms & Engagement, Active Travel** - **Explore via Discover Harlow Hub and pop-up sites**
A6. PROJECT ENGAGEMENT PLANS ON ALL PROJECTS: Undertake a project engagement plan and mid-point review on all projects. Methods to agree and understand the impact of any future outreach and engagement to be agreed.	It's important to understand the context by mapping out the stakeholders, tapping into local people and resources, and finding out where people go for information as part of an ongoing programme.	Not started	Scope for FY 24/25 - Identify officer to create stakeholder map - Review in **Comms & Engagement**; **consultation planning**
A7. SENSE CHECKING OF MATERIAL BY THE COMMUNITY: That community stakeholders are involved in sense checkingand scrutinising the outreach and engagement materials. We recommend that this also includes underrepresented groups so that materials are relevant and relatable.	This approach ensures that materials are relevant and relatable, avoiding jargon and increasing the likelihood of meaningful interactions.	Progressing via QoL Monitoring; Digital Dashboard; and HGGT Comms	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in **Comms & Engagement**, Data & Digital, **QoL Monitoring Workshops**
A8. SPECIFIC ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE: LAs to take a more active approach in involving young people, through: i) Pop-ups and dedicated events specifically for young people ii) Using newsletters, digital platforms and social media to provide informal feedback on the current project progress.	In Harlow, Gilston and surrounding areas, 90% of 16-24yr olds felt they were not able to have any influence on their local area, and this is compared to the national average of 73% for that age range.	Progressing via HGGT Stewardship Charter and Design Code workshops	Scope for FY 24/25 - **Report back to young people** about how their input has informed the HGGT Stewardship Charter and Design Codes - **Establish group for engaging young people** beyond EFDC and HDC Youth Councils - Review of **Comms & Engagement, Stewardship, partner SCIs** - **Quality of Life Monitoring**

QoLF Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action/ Programme *(subject to funding/ resource evaluation)*
			- **Collaborate with Harlow College and Herts University**
A9. REDUCE RELIANCE ON PROFESSIONAL LANGUAGE: i) That terms that are commonly used by the Local Authorities are defined and accessible ii) The adoption of the Crystal Mark for external communications	The Crystal Mark is a standard for clear communication established by the Plain English Campaign. This mark has been adopted by a number of UK Government departments as well as corporations and is seen as a good standard for communication across sectors.	Progressing via QoL Monitoring and Digital Dashboard	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in **Comms & Engagement, partner SCIs, Digital Dashboard, Digital QoL Monitoring Guide** - **Formal adoption of Crystal Mark** to be led by EFDC as the Garden Town's lead authority

B) **EMPOWERING EXISTING COMMUNITY GROUPS AND CREATING COMMUNITY-LED PROCESSES**

QoLF Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action/ Programme *(subject to funding/ resource evaluation)*
B1. BUILD TRAINING INTO FUTURE ENGAGEMENT: The specifics of this depend on engagement being undertaken. Rainbow Services (Harlow) could be involved, as well as students from Harlow College and volunteers at the Princess Alexandra hospital.	Involving residents in this project has helped to upskill both local partners and the wider community. Taking such an approach to future engagement and including training to support community involvement in such processes will further build local capacity.	Progressing via QoL Monitoring, Digital Dashboard and HGGT Stewardship Charter	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review of **Comms & Engagement, Stewardship, Economic Growth** - **Quality of Life Monitoring** (Phase 3 - training community and other key stakeholders) - Via **Community Forums, Developer engagement initiatives**
B2. TRANSFER OF MANAGEMENT TO COMMUNITIES: i) Management transfer strategy should be developed along with local stakeholders to identify areas, assets and opportunities. ii) Local Authorities help to set up local community bodies, resident councils, or	Increased sense of control and belonging through building local capacity and in some cases transferring decisions/ ownership over to the community. Local community groups can mobilise interested residents and businesses to generate community funding. This is a step towards giving communities a great sense of agency in the face of ongoing	Progressing via QoL Monitoring, Digital Dashboard and HGGT Stewardship Charter	Scope for FY 24/25 - **Comms & Engagement** - **Quality of Life Monitoring** - **HGGT Stewardship Charter** - **Developer stewardship approaches**

QoLF Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action/ Programme (subject to funding/ resource evaluation)
strengthen existing groups. These can in turn assist with helping to raise awareness around local issues and explain the constraints under which LAs work	challenges around changes to Harlow, Gilston and the wider area.		
B3. MAPPING ROUTES TO INFLUENCE: Set up a simple route map into the local authority making clear how things like maintenance of space, streets, transport and perceived decline can be addressed	Most communities understand that money and funds are tight for this sort of work/help, they often just want to understand what can be done and where they can help with local issues. Better understanding of local authority structures and contact points will give new communities some contact and possibly input into decisions.	Progressing via QoL Monitoring, Digital Dashboard and HGGT Stewardship Charter	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in **Comms & Engagement**, **Data & Digital** - **QoL Monitoring** - **HGGT Stewardship Charter** - **Developer Communications**
B4. FACILITATING AND EMPOWERING EXISTING COMMUNITY GROUPS: i) Active mapping and planning - inclusivity or street audits alongside community groups (see also Rec C1) ii) Adopt tactical urban planning practices alongside existing community groups	Engaging with community groups to respond to queries relating to speeding, active travel, walking and cycling will increase local understanding of the issues and provide important insights to decision makers. Tactical or DIY Urbanism are short-term and flexible options to prototype and evaluate ideas around street safety, public space and community building. Taking such an approach can help local people directly engage with the issues and provide a visible demonstration that action is being taken.	Not started	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in **Comms & Engagement, Sustainable Mobility/ Modal Shift, Design Guidance, Stewardship** - **Quality of Life Monitoring** - **Community Forums**
B5. ADOPTING COMMUNITY CHARTERS: i) The adoption of a community charter for the Harlow, Gilston and surrounding areas.	These typically highlight the fundamental rights and responsibilities that concern and direct the future of that community, helping to provide a sense of empowerment for the community and accountability for decision makers.	Not started	Ongoing/ immediate - Review in **Comms & Engagement**, **Stewardship** - **Quality of Life Monitoring** - Explore via **Community Forums**

CONSIDERING LOCAL PRIORITIES IN PLANNING, REGENERATION AND GROWTH

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QoLF Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action/ Programme (subject to funding/ resource evaluation)
C1. PRIORITISE TRANSPORT NETWORK INVESTMENT: i) The deployment of small-scale infrastructure investments ii) Use of street and space audits, with community groups, (see RecB4, alongside Local Authority highways and transport teams exercises iii) Community transport - the establishment of a local chapter that provides these services to access travel for those who can drive but don't own a car	Existing road and transport infrastructure in the area can be enhanced through strategic and small-scale public infrastructure projects such as junctions, surfacing and signage projects. *See also S2 Active Travel Routes.* These can also be beautification and greening projects, which can improve perceptions around the state and maintenance of town areas as well as improve access to green spaces. A community-led shared public transport option that could take many forms, from minibuses to car club services. Charities or Local Authorities could help establish these services, or subsidise them. *See also S3 - Public Transport.*	In progress via HGGT Modal Transition Delivery Framework	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in **Sustainable Mobility/ Modal Shift, Comms & Engagement** - Consider **Champions**
C2. CREATE MORE PLACES TO SIT: i) Trialling of public seating arrangements deployed in and around green and hard public areas	Bench provision is always positive and is generally a cost-effective way of improving walking networks and increasing the use and natural surveillance of public spaces and footpaths. Improved lighting in some areas can also assist in improving use and connectivity and reducing the likelihood of these spaces becoming sites for anti-social behaviour.	Progressing via Strategic Masterplans and Design Codes	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in **Design Guide, Placeshaping, Masterplanning**
C3. CREATE SPACES FOR ENJOYMENT i) Investing in meanwhile spaces ii) Continuation of investment into the maintenance and upkeep of the highly valued green spaces. iii) Encouraging, supporting and facilitating local food cooperatives	Create flexible, adaptive, spaces that cater to the community's needs for commercial food and entertainment needs. This can be a cost-effective way to test out different kinds of offers and could also be paired with local enterprises to help support local businesses and entrepreneurs through mentorships, start-up guidance and reduced rent agreements. Promoting investment into existing or potential green spaces in the area could result in projects such as community growing and vegetable box schemes. This can help foster a	Progressing via HGGT Stewardship Charter	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in **Stewardship, Green Infrastructure, Design Guide** - Seek in **S106 Commitments** - Consider **Champions**

QoLF Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action/ Programme *(subject to funding/ resource evaluation)*
	sense of community cohesion while improving health and wellbeing through a greater awareness of food.		

S) **SPATIAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

QoLF Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action/ Programme *(subject to funding/ resource evaluation)*
S1. DENSITY AND ACTIVE FRONTAGE ANALYSIS: Review the existing density of the urban area. Review and analyse existing green space. Create good density, enclosure, active frontages and spaces with passive surveillance.	To address observations and community perspectives around safety, antisocial behaviour, maintenance, and critical mass for services.	Progressing via Strategic Masterplans and Design Codes	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in **Design Guide, Masterplanning, Green Infrastructure**
S2. PROGRESS THE LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN: Improve accessibility through paving treatments, green the route and improve lighting. Focus on intersections between modes and between key uses.	To address observations and community perspectives around strong cycle connections, legibility and permeability issues, limited passive surveillance, needed improvement for key walking and cycle routes, and improving satisfaction for those with mobility issues.	Progressing via the HGGT LCWIP	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in **Sustainable Mobility/ Modal Shift** - Seek in **S106 Commitments**
S3. PUBLIC TRANSPORT ANALYSIS AND ACTION PLAN: Analysis to ensure PT provision targeted and benefits are maximized. Needs awareness of financial realities of sustainable transport provision, focusing on and prioritising most impactful interventions. Consideration to be given to the difficulties that lower density developments have in maintaining public or sustainable transport options. Support higher	To address observations and community perspectives around frequency and reliability of bus provision, connections from public transport into other modes, accessibility of wider destinations and bus stops in terms of location and cost.	Progressing via HGGT Modal Transition Delivery Framework	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in **Sustainable Mobility/ Modal Shift, Design Guide, Masterplanning**

QoLF Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action/ Programme *(subject to funding/ resource evaluation)*
densities and closer arrangements of blocks to support public transport.			

D) FUTURE QUALITY OF LIFE MONITORING RECOMMENDATION

QoLF Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action / Programme *(subject to funding/ resource evaluation)*
D1) DEVELOP QUALITY OF LIFE MONITORING STRATEGY: Progress work on quality of life indicators and methodology for future quality of life monitoring, alongside Quality of Life Foundation and Stantec	To continue to monitor quality of life in the Garden Town by updating the metrics assessed by the survey and baseline data at appropriate intervals. In order to be able to measure and monitor quality of life across the Garden Town, and understand the impact of growth and change.	Complete. Strategy submitted for Approval 2024.	**Scope for FY 23/24** - **Quality of Life Monitoring**

Agenda Item 9

Report to:	**HARLOW AND GILSTON GARDEN TOWN JOINT COMMITTEE**
Title:	**Harlow & Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) Water Lane Strategic Site – "Proposals For The Way Forward"**
Report Reference:	**JC-009-2024/25**
Date:	**10 February 2025**
Report Authors:	**Peter van der Zwan - Principal Planning Officer (Epping Forest District Council)**
	Adeola Pilgrim – HGGT Lead Liaison Officer (Epping Forest District Council)
Enclosures:	**Appendix A – Water Lane Stakeholder Engagement Proposal**

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

The HGGT Joint Committee is asked to:

A. Endorse the Water Lane Stakeholder Engagement Proposal as set out in Appendix A.

B. Agree to link any proposed consultation with the HGGT Quality of Life Indicators.

C. Delegate authority to the Acting HGGT Director to finalise the consultation arrangements and programme as may be required, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Joint Committee.

Executive Summary:

Allocated within the adopted Epping Forest District Local Plan, the HGGT Water Lane strategic site will provide around 2,100 new homes within the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, alongside

community facilities including a local centre, new primary school and strategic natural greenspace. The site will be connected to Harlow Town Centre and the wider Garden Town via direct pedestrian and cycle links as well as bus services which will run along a dedicated Sustainable Transport Corridor.

The site is split into two main areas - West Katherines and West Sumners – and is being promoted by Manor Oak Homes, Martin Grant Homes, Persimmon Homes and Taylor Wimpey (the Developers). The Developers are collaborating to prepare a Strategic Masterplan for the area, and a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) is in place to provide a project management framework for progressing this. The PPA is between Epping Forest District Council (EFDC), Harlow District Council (HDC), Essex County Council (ECC) and the Developers. The Strategic Masterplan will set out the key development, design and delivery principles and guide future planning application proposals.

To enable the masterplanning process to progress, the developers have submitted a proposal to engage with residents and businesses around the Water Lane Strategic Masterplan Area. The aim of the stakeholder engagement is to establish how the development of the Water Lane Strategic Masterplan Area could be successfully integrated into the existing neighbourhoods and to ensure that the development delivers benefits for the wider community.

Appendix A contains the Water Lane Stakeholder Engagement Proposal which outlines the developers' proposed approach to interact and communicate with residents and businesses.

Reasons for proposed Decision:

The HGGT Vision is for early community engagement that brings local people into the conversation about the planned growth across the HGGT area. The Water Lane Stakeholder Engagement Proposal aims to enable the 5 Council partners and the developers of the Water Lane strategic site to communicate effectively with communities and stakeholders in a way that intends to build trust and ensures that the delivery of the Garden Town is the result of genuine collaboration. It will also assist in monitoring the performance of the development overall, in relation to Quality of Life.

Other Options for Action:

It could be determined not to agree the Water Lane Stakeholder Engagement Proposal and to take no further action in relation to it. Community consultation would be delivered to meet basic legal requirements of the planning system. This option as a course of action is *not recommended*. It would not support and enable the approach of the 5 Council partners to support the HGGT Vision with strong leadership and participative community engagement. It would also leave landowners, developers, community representatives and other stakeholders

without further guidance from the 5 Council partners of HGGT on the steps towards supporting the delivery of this development proposal within the Garden Town.

1. Introduction

1.1 East Herts District Council, Epping Forest District Council, Harlow District Council and Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils are working in partnership to bring forward transformational growth in the form of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town. The Garden Town represents a major opportunity to accommodate around 16,000 homes up to 2033, with a further 7,000 homes by 2040. The Garden Town will also provide a mix of development, including employment, schools, transport infrastructure and community facilities.

1.2 Harlow and Gilston Garden Town comprises the whole of Harlow together with four new Garden Town neighbourhoods including East of Harlow, Latton Priory, the Water Lane Area, and Gilston Area. Three of these neighbourhoods (East of Harlow, Latton Priory and Water Lane Area) lie within or partially within Epping Forest District and are central to the Spatial Development Strategy of the adopted Epping Forest District Local Plan.

1.3 The Water Lane Area allocation provides capacity for a minimum of 2,100 homes, alongside community facilities, early years provision, a new primary school and appropriate contributions towards a secondary school to serve the needs arising from new development. In addition, five traveller pitches will be provided.

2. Background

2.1 Development proposals for HGGT strategic sites must reflect and demonstrate that the principles set out in the relevant policy framework have been adhered to. One of the requirements of the Epping Forest District Local Plan is that a Strategic Masterplan is developed for each of the new Garden Town neighbourhoods prior to the submission of a planning application, to guide the planning, design and implementation of any proposed development. Strategic Masterplans will be produced by the site developers, in partnership with EFDC and relevant stakeholders and will be taken into account as an important material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

2.2 The delivery of the Water Lane Strategic Site is evolving via a developer-led Strategic Masterplan Framework (SMF) which is being progressed under a Performance Planning Agreement (PPA) agreed between EFDC, HDC, ECC and the developers of Water Lane. It includes key milestones and actions that are required to ensure that all key planning issues are properly considered and resolved at the earliest possible stage.

3. Water Lane Stakeholder Engagement Proposal

3.1 The Developers understand that any development proposal for the Water Lane strategic site needs to be designed to deliver benefits for current residents and businesses of both Epping Forest and Harlow District Councils as well as integrate with existing services and communities. They are therefore proposing to embark on a programme of stakeholder engagement collaboratively with HGGT. The engagement will assist in understanding the needs of the broader community, how those needs can be met in line with policy requirements, as well as seeking to address concerns that residents may have about the new development.

3.2 The proposed approach to engagement is supported by the HGGT Quality of Life Framework as it would provide a baseline for measuring the social impacts of growth and change in the area. It would also help establish community-led stewardship by building relationships and social capital with local communities and increasing community influence in planning decisions. It would therefore be beneficial to link any proposed consultation with the HGGT Quality of Life Indicators.

3.3 This round of stakeholder engagement will be in 'listening mode' and is not intended to present masterplans or other proposals. Rather, feedback from these discussions will help inform and shape the masterplanning process. The expectation is that the programme will engage existing Parish Councils, Ward Members, community groups and representatives including resident groups and associations, and local businesses as a minimum. The opportunity to develop a Community Panel which puts local people at the heart of decision-making would also be explored.

3.4 This phase of the project is crucial for advancing proposals to develop the HGGT Water Lane strategic site. The Developers envisage that early engagement with stakeholders would help align development proposals with the needs of local residents and businesses which would in turn demonstrate the wider benefits to the community.

4. Next Steps

4.1 Following the decision of the Joint Committee, a project plan will be prepared collaboratively between the Developers and the HGGT partners, setting out a programme of events and agreed milestones. This would enable the stakeholder engagement to commence in January 2025 as proposed.

4.2 The Developers have also agreed to appoint and work in partnership with a third-party engagement consultant to help facilitate the stakeholder engagement process. This would

ensure that the project receives the attention and expertise necessary for a successful implementation.

Implications:

If approved, the Water Lane Stakeholder Engagement Proposal will lead to more informed decision making and better outcomes and will also enable the delivery of the HGGT Water Lane strategic site to advance to the next phase.

Resource Implications

There are no financial implications to HGGT for delivering the recommendations within this report.

Equalities and Diversity

Equality Impact Assessment

Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?	Yes
Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy or decision	To understand and consider the impacts on those affected by the Water Lane development proposals in line with the HGGT Communications and Engagement Strategy.
What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (ie decommissioning or commissioning a service)?	Allow the local community to provide feedback to inform planning decisions.
Does or will the policy or decision affect: • service users • employees • the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities?	Service users and the wider community will be given a platform to express their opinions and empowered to influence decisions that affect their lives.
Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?	No
Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?	No

Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes?	The project is aligned with the HGGT Communications and Engagement Strategy as well as the strategic objectives and corporate policies in place across the 5 Council partners of HGGT.
What does the information tell you about those groups identified?	N/A
Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?	This report proposes to consult with residents in Epping Forest and Harlow District Councils regarding the Water Lane development.
If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary:	Extensive consultation took place on the HGGT Communications and Engagement Strategy that sets the policy context for this project. Further feedback will be acquired as an outcome the project.
Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.	
Age, Disability, Gender, Gender reassignment, Pregnancy/maternity, Marriage/civil partnership, Race, Religion/belief, Sexual orientation	There is no impact on any protected groups.
Does the EqIA indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high	No

HGGT Vision Assurance

1. What principles of the HGGT Vision does this seek to achieve?

The project seeks to address several key principles under Placemaking and Homes and is aimed at creating vibrant, inclusive and sustainable communities.

2. What steps have been taken to ensure the HGGT Vision is embedded into the project?

The project aligns with the HGGT Communications and Engagement Strategy which is designed to support the HGGT Vision by setting out how commitments to inform, involve and empower stakeholders through effective and meaningful engagement.

East Herts Council   Epping Forest District Council www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk   Essex County Council   Harlow Council Working together for Harlow   Hertfordshire

APPENDIX A

Water Lane, Harlow

Stakeholder Engagement Proposal

October 2024

Introduction

1. This proposal is submitted by Manor Oak Homes, Martin Grant Homes, Persimmon Homes and Taylor Wimpey (the Developers) who are collaborating in the preparation of a Strategic Masterplan for Water Lane, West Harlow.

2. The proposal is submitted with the aim of agreeing a programme of stakeholder engagement with the Harlow & Gilston Garden Town Joint Committee (JC).

3. The programme will be focused on the residents and businesses of Katherines and Sumners – the neighbourhoods located in West Harlow closest to the Water Lane Strategic Masterplan area.

4. The purpose of the engagement is:

   1. To introduce the Developers and establish a constructive dialogue with local residents and businesses.
   2. To understand initial views and opinions on the Water Lane Local Plan allocations adopted with the Epping Forest District Council Local Plan.
   3. To inform the future preparation of the Strategic Masterplan for Water Lane.

Background

1. In the promotion of land at Water Lane for development, Martin Grant Homes, Persimmon Homes and Taylor Wimpey (the Consortium) are in formal consortium with one another.

2. They have been in collaborative discussion with Manor Oak since at least 2019 when the group presented to the Quality Review Panel (QRP).

3. Manor Oak control land south of Water Lane. The Consortium control land to the north of Water Lane.

4. The group have:-

   1. Together completed a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with Epping Forest District Council (EFDC), Harlow District Council (HDC) and Essex County Council (ECC) in support of a Strategic Masterplan for the Water Lane area.

   2. Been actively engaged with the Councils and the Garden Town team throughout the Local Plan process.

Epping Forest Local Plan

1. EFDC adopted its Local Plan on 14th March 2023.

2. This completed the Local Plan adoptions in the Harlow & Gilston Garden Town; following:-

   - Harlow Local Plan – adopted December 2020
   - East Herts Local Plan- adopted October 2018

3. The key policy for Water Lane is SP4 (overleaf) with the following also of relevance

   - Water Lane Strategic Masterplan area (SP3)
   - Sustainable Transport Corridor

4. Crucially, the EFDC Local Plan releases land west of Harlow from the Green Belt and allocates the land for future development.

Policy SP4 - requires

1. A minimum of 2,100 homes

2. Five traveller pitches

3. A local centre

4. A new primary school with early years and childcare provision on an education site of at least 2.5 hectares

5. Contributions towards new secondary school provision within the Garden Town

6. The provision of appropriate community and health facilities

7. Highway and transport improvements including contributions towards Sustainable Transport Corridors; works to Water Lane/A1169 roundabout; A1025/Abercrombie Way signals and traffic calming along the Southern Way corridor;

8. Satisfactory utility infrastructure including water, wastewater, solid waste, gas, electricity and telecommunications for occupants

9. Bus services and direct pedestrian and cycle links between homes, the facilities that serve them and other key destinations

Policy SP3 – requires

1. That Strategic Masterplans will be developed for each of the Garden Communities setting out the key development, design and delivery principles and to guide proposals.

2. Planning applications and any other consenting mechanisms for the Garden Communities should be accompanied by Strategic Masterplans which demonstrate that the development requirements set out in the Policy have been accommodated and which have been endorsed by the Council and where appropriate Harlow District Council.

3. Endorsed Strategic Masterplans will be taken into account as an important material consideration in the determination of any planning applications.
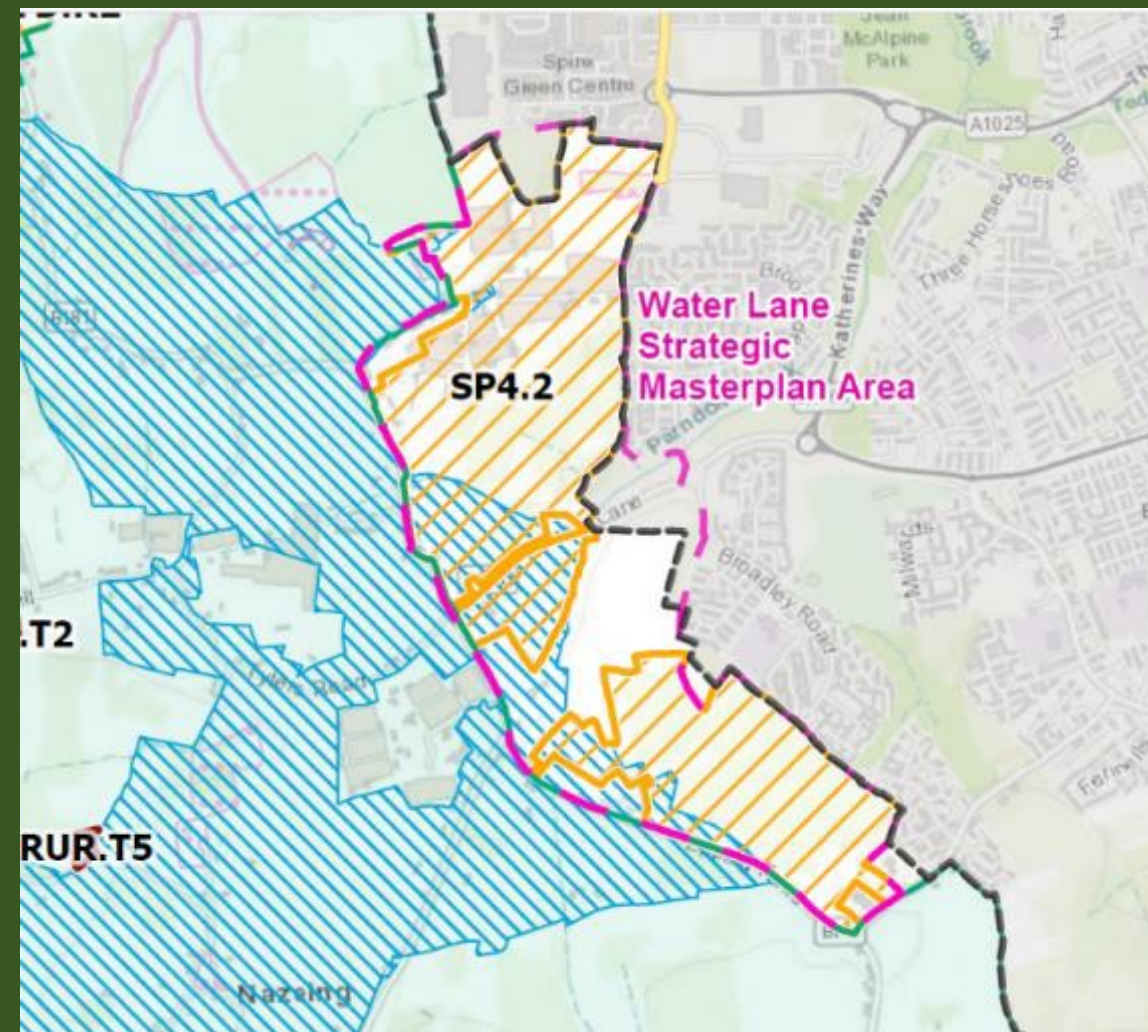
Sustainable Transport Corridors

1. The Garden Town has been built on the premise of high frequency, priority bus routes providing an attractive alternative to private car use - linking to employment areas, the Town Centre and public transport hubs.

2. These routes are called Sustainable Transport Corridors (STCs) and as well as public transport, they are to provide attractive pedestrian and cycle routes.

3. The routes of the STCs are within both the Epping Forest and Harlow adopted Local Plans.

Map 2.2 Sustainable Transport Corridors in the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town
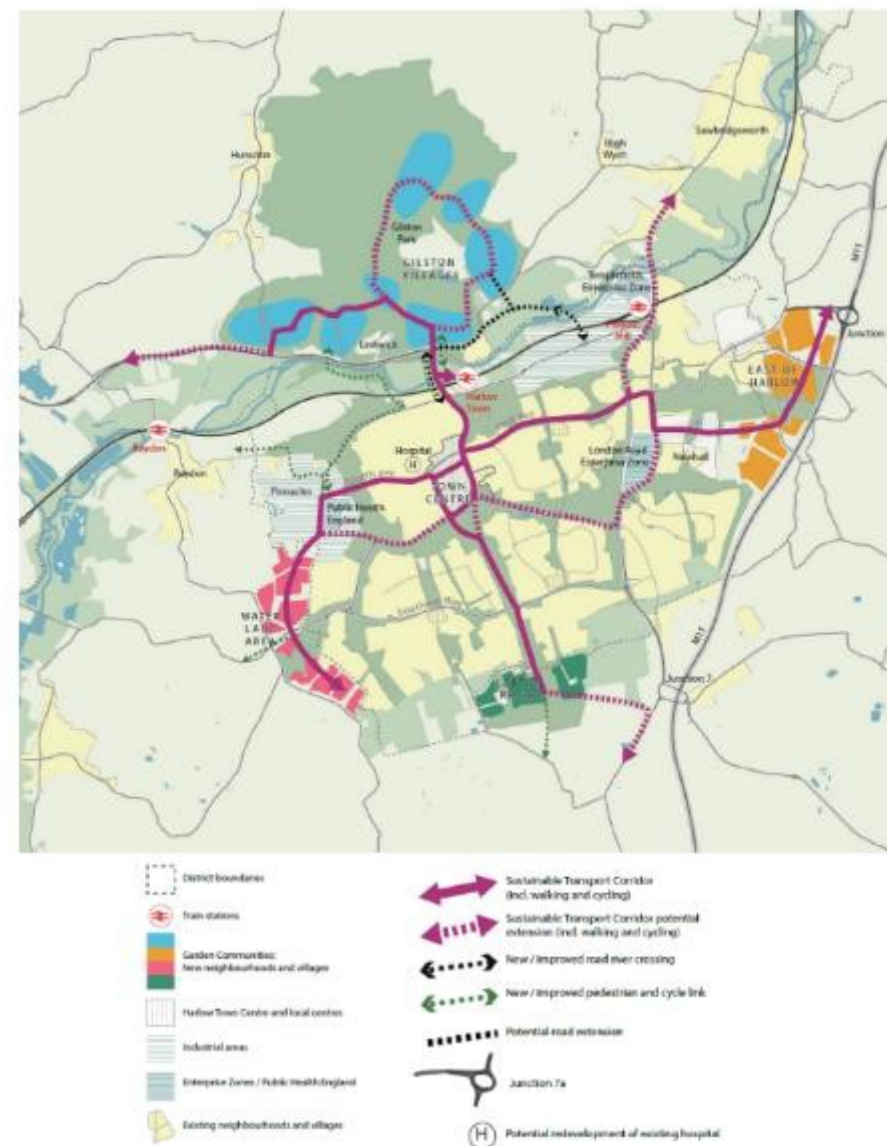
Stakeholder Engagement

1. It is understood that the development of the Water Lane Strategic Masterplan area requires the active engagement of the existing residents and businesses that will be affected.

2. The Developers fully appreciate this and are committed to a programme of stakeholder engagement.

3. It is proposed to embark on this programme collaboratively with the Garden Town JC and its Officers.

4. Initially, the programme will engage:

    1. Existing Ward Members – Great Parndon and Sumners & Kingsmoor
    2. Community representatives – residents groups and associations, community groups
    3. Local businesses

5. The opportunity will be taken if possible to develop a "Community Panel" in each area (Katherines and Sumners) of interested resident and business representatives.

Listening Mode

1. This will be very much in a "listening mode" – to understand as much as possible the existing neighbourhoods, what matters to local residents and businesses, what concerns them about new development.

2. Reference will be made to the EFDC Local Plan and its Water Lane allocation policies.

3. It is not proposed to present masterplans or other proposals – this would be rightly seen as premature.

4. Manor Oak will lead on engagement with Sumners residents and the Consortium will lead on engagement with Katherines residents – regularly exchanging notes with one another as well as the Garden Town team.

5. The aim would be to establish how the development of the Water Lane Masterplan area could be successfully integrated and add value to the existing neighbourhoods, concerns with development allayed and community support generated.

Concerns with Development

1. From experience, the Developers would anticipate the following areas of community concern: -
    1. Traffic impact. This is a function of:
        1. Existing congestion.
        2. The increase in local population that comes with new housing development.
        3. Active travel and public transport services – accessibility, appeal, reliability.
        4. Accessibility of schools, shops, leisure facilities etc
    2. Pressure on existing community infrastructure
        1. School places
        2. Access to health services, community, sports and leisure facilities
    3. Loss of employment land.
    4. Landscape impact.
    5. Construction disturbance.

Addressing Concerns

1. As noted above, central to the Water Lane proposal is the STC. This will provide travel options – public transport particularly – as an alternative to the private car.

2. The Water Lane allocation requires new school, community and health infrastructure – either directly or through contributions.

3. General development plan policies will mitigate landscape impact and construction disturbance.

4. Existing employers will be supported in their relocation to suitable, alternative premises in the District.

Benefits

1. Of course, the Water Lane development offers many benefits to a local community:

   1. Access to new housing - particularly affordable housing to those in housing need.
   2. New employment and training opportunities.
   3. Investment in the local economy.
   4. New schools.
   5. New community, health and sports facilities.

2. A key focus of the engagement will be how these benefits – and other benefits to be identified – can be nurtured and realised in a form that are clear and tangible for the residents, stakeholders and businesses of Katherines and Sumners.

Next Steps

1. If supported by the Garden Town JC, the stakeholder engagement is proposed to commence in January 2025 and be completed within an agreed timescale (TBC)

2. Phase One will focus initially on elected and community representatives in:

    1. Sumners – led by Manor Oak.

    2. Katherines – led by the Consortium.

    The outcomes of these discussions will inform the scope of work and timescales for the future work

3. The engagement will be very much in a "listening mode" and to establish relationships in the two neighbourhoods.

4. The opportunity will be taken if possible to develop a "Community Panel" in each area of interested residents and business representatives.

5. Following this first phase, a report will be submitted to the Garden Town JC with proposals for the next stage of engagement work.

HGGT

HARLOW & GILSTON GARDEN TOWN

Agenda Item 10

Report to:	**HARLOW AND GILSTON GARDEN TOWN JOINT COMMITTEE**
Title:	**HGGT 3 Year Business Plan (2025-2028)**
Report Reference:	**JC-010-2024/25**
Date:	**10 February 2025**
Report Author:	**Osian Evans – Acting Director Harlow & Gilston Garden Town**

Enclosures:
Annex A – HGGT 3 Year Business Plan (2025-2028)

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Recommendations/Decisions Required:

The HGGT Joint Committee is asked to:

A. Approve the HGGT 3 Year Business Plan (2025-2028), noting that this is an unfunded proposal.

B. Approve the proposed 2025/26 HGGT Programme of Work set out at Appendix A in principle.

C. Ask the HGGT 5 Council partners to agree a contribution of £120,000 per partner for 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A The HGGT Business Plan - Section 5.

D. Note and comment on the Strategic Objectives and 2025/26 Annual Programme of Co-Ordination & Enabling Work, specifically to agree alignment with the HGGT Vision.

Executive Summary:

This 3 Year Business Plan sets out how HGGT can work towards its Vision through prioritised co-ordination and enabling activity. A three-tiered approach is set out with the Vision at the top, which informs the strategic objectives and consequently the programme of co-ordination and enabling work. This is prioritised to present a financial plan that can be adapted to a wide range of potential funding scenarios.

This report sets the context for the HGGT 3 Year Business Plan (2025-2028) which is included in Annex A.

Reasons for proposed Decision:

To give members confidence that the strategic objectives could be met for the next 3 years and that they align with the HGGT Vision, subject to availability of funding. Additionally, to comply with terms set out in the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA).

Other Options for Action:

Not to approve the HGGT 3 Year Business Plan (2025-2028). This option as a course of action is not recommended. Clarity within the HGGT partnership on the co-ordination and enabling activities that could deliver the HGGT Vision will allow efficient allocation of resources if they become available.

1. Introduction

1.1 The HGGT 3 Year Business Plan (2025-2028) is a plan of the Executive Officers' Group led by the HGGT Director. It sets a course for HGGT to work towards its Vision in the short term through prioritised co-ordination and enabling activity with financial projections.

1.2 This approach to Business Planning allows the Joint Committee to meet its formalised governance responsibilities set out in the IAA and to have an agreed approach to delivery, subject to resource availability.

2. Background

2.1 The overarching objective of the HGGT project is to co-ordinate and enable the delivery of 16,000 homes by 2033, along with associated infrastructure, delivering the Garden Town Vision, principles and guidance that has been agreed by the 5 Council partners.

2.2 The key delivery themes for 2025/26 are:

- Delivering the Garden Town Vision of quality, beautiful and sustainable places
- Enabling the Infrastructure Foundations for Growth
- Maximising and Accelerating Delivery with a focus on outcomes by 2025
- Ensuring our Governance is Fit for the Future

3. Proposals

3.1 The HGGT 3 Year Business Plan (2025-2028) is set out in Appendix A. The three areas of the plan that require approval are the strategic objectives, the financial plan, and the annual programme of enabling work for 2025/26.

3.2 The strategic objectives section includes delivery themes and 3-year objectives for each of the key workstreams in the enabling programme of work. This section connects the Vision with the Programme's initiatives and is also a requirement stipulated in the IAA.

3.3 The financial plan assumes, for the purposes of modelling, that contributions are maintained at £120,000 per Council partner for 2025/26 and maintained at £150,000 per Council partner for subsequent years. It is important to note however - that the contributions from each Council partner are diminishing year on year.

The HGGT Annual Programme of Work 2025-26

3.4 The HGGT Programme of Co-ordination and Enabling Work 2025/26 has been created and refined by the Executive Officers' Group with support from HGGT Lead Officers. It can be found at Appendix A with commentary found at Section 5.

3.5 The HGGT officers assessed the co-ordination and enabling work required to meet the HGGT agreed delivery themes as set out in the Business Plan.

3.6 This shows that, assuming £120,000 contribution from the 5 Council partners, income covers staff and running costs, as well as committed contracts, leaves no reserve to fund enabling new initiatives.

Implications:

Resource Implications:

Central Government Funding has been made available to date to support the work of the HGGT partnership. This is the result of annual bidding rounds and while the funding is both welcome and essential, this approach creates uncertainty in planning for enabling and delivery work. In addition, significant resources are required to deliver the infrastructure both in advance of development and during the development period, not all of which is identified.

Equalities and Diversity:

Equality Impact Assessment

Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?	No
Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy or decision	To agree a 3-year Business Plan for HGGT
What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (i.e. decommissioning or commissioning a service)?	Agree 5 Partners Contributions. Set objectives for 3 years and agree the enabling programme for next year.
Does or will the policy or decision affect: • service users • employees • the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities?	Yes - contributes to the delivery of the HGGT project to deliver over 20,000 new homes and associated infrastructure in and around Harlow which will affect existing and future residents.

East Herts Council

Epping Forest District Council
www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Essex County Council

Harlow Council
Working together for Harlow

Hertfordshire

Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?	No
Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?	No
Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes?	No
What does the information tell you about those groups identified?	N/A
Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?	N/A
If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary:	The work of HGGT has been subject to public consultation and will continue to be so in the future.

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

Age, Disability, Gender, Gender reassignment, Pregnancy/maternity, Marriage/civil partnership, Race, Religion/belief, Sexual orientation	N/A	
Does the EqIA indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high	No	See comment above

HGGT Vision Assurance

1. What principles of the HGGT Vision does this seek to achieve?

The objective of the HGGT Programme is to deliver the HGGT Vision.

2. What steps have been taken to ensure the HGGT Vision is embedded into the project?

The HGGT Programme ensures that the individual projects remain aligned to the HGGT Vision.

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HARLOW & GILSTON GARDEN TOWN

3 Year Business Plan

2025-2028

Contents

1. Foreword

The Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) represents a transformative vision for sustainable growth, innovation, and adaptable, healthy places. Through this Business Plan, we reaffirm our commitment to delivering on that vision to bring benefits to existing and new communities.

This document outlines the strategic objectives, delivery themes and programme priorities for the years ahead, detailing how we will build on our progress and address challenges in the Garden Town. As one of the most ambitious development projects in the country, HGGT is constituted as a Joint Committee structure to help meet the housing, economic, and environmental needs of today while planning with resilience and adaptability for future needs.

The foundation of our approach is collaboration. By bringing together the expertise and aspirations of local authorities, developers, businesses, and community stakeholders, we are ensuring that Harlow and Gilston Garden Town becomes a model for an integrated and planned approach to strategic growth. Our priorities for this year are guided by core values:

- **Delivering the Garden Town Vision of quality, beautiful and sustainable places**

- **Enabling the Infrastructure Foundations for Growth**

- **Maximising and Accelerating Delivery of homes and jobs**

- **Ensuring our Governance is Fit for the Future**

The Business Plan serves as both a blueprint and a call to action. It reflects the collective determination of our partners to deliver on ambitious targets while ensuring that public engagement shapes the role of communities as long-term stewards of new neighbourhoods with new assets.

This plan will guide investments, monitor progress, and ensure that we maintain transparency and accountability in all that we do. We encourage all stakeholders to explore the workstreams proposed. We recognise that we will strengthen outcomes for Harlow and Gilston Garden Town through inclusive approaches, achieving broad contributions towards our collective work.

The HGGT Executive Officer Group

2. Overview

2.1. Introduction

Harlow and Gilston Garden Town provides one of the most exciting growth opportunities of any place in the UK. It will create exciting new communities in Harlow with over 20,000 new homes and transformational supporting infrastructure. The Garden Town will support regeneration of Harlow town centre and provide significant new job opportunities.

When Harlow was created as a New Town some 70 years ago, it grew from a vision shaped by Sir Frederick Gibberd, acknowledged as one of the leading architect planners of his time. Gibberd saw the town as 'an organism which would go on changing and being rebuilt as the needs of the people changed.'

Since then, Harlow has grown and so has its ambition, its demands, and its needs. The Garden Town proposals respond to these changes and grasp the opportunity that its location at the heart of the UK's Innovation Corridor presents – with exceptional links to London, Stansted Airport and Cambridge.

The extract below is a diagrammatic representation of the location and scale of new development in relation to existing Harlow.
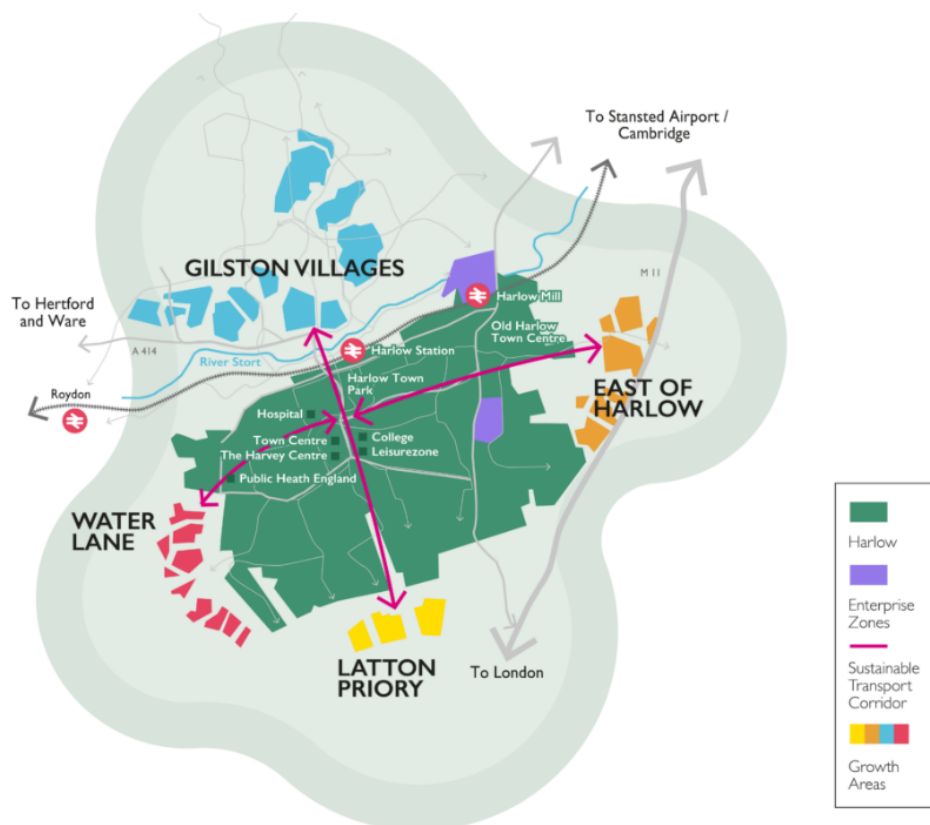
2.2. Purpose

As part of the governance set out in the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA), HGGT must prepare and maintain a 3 year Business Plan to the Joint Committee (a Proposed Budget) setting out:

1. The proposed level of Partner Authority Contributions;

2. How those contirbutions and any other income for the Garden Town is allocated in respect to those 3 financial years. (defined as the Recoverable Cost Funding and Project Funding in the IAA); and

3. The Annual Programme of enabling work to be carried out by the HGGT Delivery Team with objectives for years 2 & 3.

This Business Plan details a structured 3-level approach, starting with the HGGT vision, which guides the strategic plan and then breaks down into annual focus areas and action plans.

3. Organisational Strategy

3.1. Vision

The Vision[1] of the Garden Town was agreed by the 5 Council partners of HGGT in November 2018. It aims to ensure plans for the Garden Town support sustainable living and a healthy economy; provide a good quality of life for existing and future residents; and respond to local landscape and character. It is informed by the Town and Country Planning Association's (TCPA) Garden City Principles and from input from our stakeholders and the local community.

Four themes have been identified and each of these have a set of principles to help guide development and growth across every aspect of the Garden Town. A series of indicators sit beneath these principles to shape and inform strategic decisions and support the transformation of the Garden Town.


A diagram setting out the inter-relationship between the four themes, their set of relating principles and the page numbers to find them in this document. Long term stewardship ties these themes together. New facilities will not be sustainable without well organised management structures supported by consistent revenue streams.

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[1] Vision Document – Harlow and Gilston Garden Town

3.2. Governance Structure

HGGT has a 3-level approach to governance:

1. **Joint Committee** provides accountable and cross boundary leadership to deliver the ambitious spatial growth proposals set out in the Local Plans of EFDC, EHDC and HDC and supported by ECC and HCC, and to coordinate and maximise opportunities for new and existing residents and communities. It maintains the HGGT vision and oversees its delivery working to manage strategic risks in line with its delegated functions.

2. **Executive Officers Group** consists of a senior officer representative from each of the 5 Council partners and is chaired by the HGGT Director. The Executive Officers Group is a delivery focused group that provides strategic officer leadership to the Joint Committee as well as preparing any papers requiring approval by the Joint Committee.

3. **Garden Town Delivery Team and Lead Officers** are responsible for delivering initiatives within the enabling programme as well as liaising with the appropriate stakeholders within their respective Local Authorities to ensure recommendations to Joint Committee have been through the appropriate channels to enhance quality decision making.
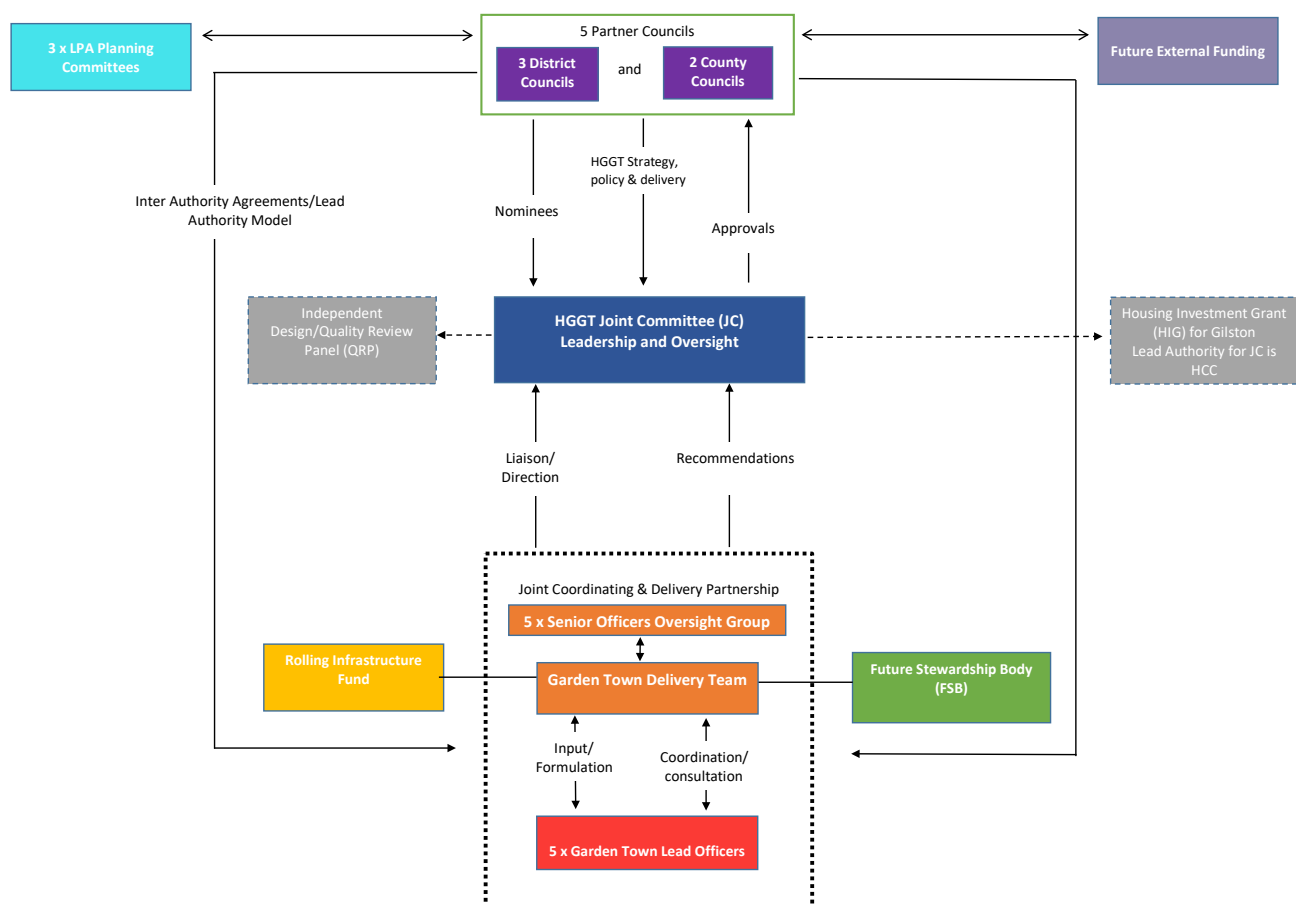
4. Strategic Objectives

4.1. Delivery Themes for the next 3 Years

2025-2028 Delivery Themes for the HGGT Partnership

- Delivering the Garden Town Vision of quality, beautiful and sustainable places
- Enabling the Infrastructure Foundations for Growth
- Maximising and Accelerating Delivery of homes and jobs
- Ensuring our Governance is Fit for the Future

4.2. 2025-2028 Programme Priorities for the HGGT Partnership

Our Programme Priorities for 2025 – 2028 are delivered through our **5 key workstreams.** The 2025/26 Year 1 Programme is set out at Appendix A with objectives for Years 2 & 3 below:

4.2.1. **Workstream 1: Sustainable Mobility**
Focusing on achieving transport Modal Transition through resident engagement and the introduction/improvement of sustainable forms of transport.

- **Year 1**: Continue to develop the Action Plan from the Modal Transition Delivery Framework (MTDF). Develop frameworks for the HGGT bike hire scheme and bus service improvements to ensure they are ready for delivery in subsequent years.

- **Year 2**: Begin the implementation of the bike hire scheme and enhancements to local bus services developed in Year 1 collaborating with stakeholders to ensure they are effectively integrated into the existing transport network and funded appropriately.

- **Year 3**: Monitor the performance of the launched initiatives against the Modal Transition targets, establishing clear metrics for evaluation, gathering user feedback, and conducting assessments to identify areas for development & improvement, making necessary adjustments to optimise the services for the community's needs.

4.2.2. **Workstream 2: Policy & Strategy**
Ensuring that plans are fit for purpose to underpin sustainable growth of the Garden Town

- **Year 1**: Deliver key strategic policy initiatives including publishing the first HGGT Infrastructure Funding Statement and refreshing the HGGT Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) 2021; scoping the HGGT Infrastructure Delivery Plan refresh and assessing the need for further studies supporting employment and commercial land availability.

- **Year 2:** Complete the HGGT Infrastructure Delivery Plan refresh and assess the need for refresh of the HGGT Vision and Sustainability Guidance. As HGGT continues to move towards delivery, funding will be redirected from this workstream towards supporting spades in the ground.

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o **Year** 3: Complete any policy development initiated in Year 2. The HGGT Infrastructure Funding Statement will be produced annually from hereon. HGGT will review which policy and strategy documents need to be refreshed as required.

4.2.3. Workstream 3: Infrastructure & Delivery

Maintaining momentum of delivery, unblocking legal issues and ensuring continued funding is available through the delivery of the Rolling Infrastructure Fund.

o **Year 1**: The focus will be on maintaining legal support and land assembly advice for CPO processes to assist resolution of planning consents and resolving land availability issues.

o **Year 2**: The emphasis will shift to setting up the Rolling Infrastructure Fund (RIF), ensuring it is structured to maximise drawdown of funding from the HIG. Additionally, the team will continue managing land assembly and CPO processes.

o **Year 3**: A focus on the effective administration of the RIF, ensuring that it runs efficiently to ensure funding is made available to meet the evolving infrastructure needs of HGGT. Oversee ongoing land assembly and CPO activities, adapting strategies as required to support new initiatives.

4.2.4. Workstream 4: Place-shaping, Community Engagement

Communicating the benefits of the Garden Town, growing the local economy and safeguarding community assets for the future.

o **Year 1:** Finalise development of a robust stewardship policy, targeting the framework in place by the end of the year. Maintain high-quality outputs in communications and public engagement. Contribute to economic development by supporting efforts to grow 1,000 new jobs within the local economy**.**

o **Year 2:** The stewardship initiative will enter the feasibility phase, with a comprehensive study to be completed by Q3. Public engagement will be strengthened through targeted campaigns aimed at increasing awareness amongst residents of HGGT benefits. The economic development goal remains a priority, with a target of generating another 1,000 jobs, focusing on high-growth industries.

o **Year 3:** The stewardship program will move into the delivery phase. Sustaining high standards in communication, the team will begin to measure changes in public opinion because of outreach efforts through the Quality of Life and Data Dashboard initiatives. The economic target will continue, with the creation of 1,000 jobs focused on sustainable and long-term employment opportunities.

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4.2.5. Workstream 5: Governance

Guaranteeing that management structures and processes run smoothly to allow timely and robust decision making at all levels.

- o **Year 1:** Ensure effective PMO and programme management and administration of the Joint Committee. Progress potential next steps to enhance governance and explore process improvements that foster effective collaboration.

- o **Year 2:** The emphasis will remain on sustaining efficient programme management and Joint Committee administration while remaining flexible to adapt governance practices as needed. The team will work on refining processes and conducting targeted workshops for continued development.

- o **Year 3:** The workstream will continue to provide effective programme management and support the administration of the Joint Committee, remaining flexible and adjusting to meet the evolving needs of HGGT. Regular assessments will ensure governance practices remain relevant and responsive to changing circumstances.

5. Financial Plan

5.1. Introduction

The Garden Town funding model is essentially one of a 'commissioned service' meaning funding is agreed on an annual basis by the 5 council partners supplemented, peripatetically, by central government funding. This annualised cycle creates instability in resourcing meaning the HGGT programme and staffing must be reviewed and scaled appropriately every six months.

The HGGT Inter Authority Agreement requires the 5 council partners to agree their contributions to the partnership. A 3-year business plan is also required which is anticipated to be presented to the HGGT Joint Committee by the Executive Officer Group (EOG) on 10 February 2025.

This HGGT Business Plan runs from April 2025 to March 2028 in line with HGGT's Inter Authority Agreement.

5.2. Assumptions

- Partner contributions will be £120,000 per Council partner for 2025/26 and will revert back to £150,000 per Council partner for subsequent years.
- £0 income is assumed from other sources in, but the partnership will continue to pursue other sources of funding
- There is an uplift of 5% on staff and running costs

5.3. Funding Requirements

5.3.1. Year 1: 2025/26

The HGGT officers have assessed the co-ordination and enabling work required to meet the delivery themes identified above. This has been done within in each individual workstream and brought together through a series of workshops.

The guiding principles have been the delivery theme objectives combined with analysis of the current master programme resulting in forecasting activities to allow milestones to be met. There is then an assessment of what requires progression by the 5 Council partners in partnership rather than what can and/or should be done by 1 Council partner alone. It is the former activities that then form the basis of the business plan recommendations for the 2025/26 Programme. This will continue to accelerate delivery of the HGGT initiative of creating over 20,000 new homes and set out at Appendix A with costs set out at Table 1.

This shows that, assuming £120,000 contribution from the 5 Council partners, income covers staff and running costs, as well as committed contracts, leaving no unallocated funds, to fund new enabling initiatives.

Given HGGT is operating on a 'commissioned service' model it outsources key programme management activities, rather than operate through permanent staffing resource contracts. These includes programme management functions, maintaining the Master Programme and the FTE Head of Delivery. These costs are contracted until end Quarter 1 2025 at which point a decision must be made on how those functions are delivered.

Table 1: 2025/26 Annual Programme of Co-Ordination & Enabling Work

Income					
Income Title	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**	**Total**
Carry Forward from 2024/25	£252,509.80	£-	£-	£-	£252,509.80
LA Contributions (5 x £120k)	£600,000.00	£-	£-	£-	£600,000.00
Total	**£852,509.80**	**£-**	**£-**	**£-**	**£852,509.80**
Expenditure					
Work Title	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**	**Total**
Staff Costs (Director starting Q2)	£37,996.74	£76,600.26	£76,600.26	£76,600.26	£267,797.51
Committed costs	£31,997.25	£31,997.25	£31,997.25	£31,997.25	£127,989.00
Operational Costs	£160,471.35	£98,750.65	£98,750.65	£98,750.65	£456,723.29
Total	**£230,465.34**	**£207,348.15**	**£207,348.15**	**£207,348.15**	**£852,509.80**

Budget for allocation 2025/26	£ 0

5.3.2. Years 2 & 3 Programme Cost Projections

The HGGT officers have projected the likely enabling work required to progress the delivery themes identified above, relating this to the HGGT Master Programme which is maintained.

For the purposes of modelling, the 5 Council partner contributions are maintained at £150,000 each. Table 2 below shows how much funding will be available to deliver initiatives each year:

Table 2: Years 2 & 3 Programme Cost Projections

	2026/27	**2027/28**
Income		
Annual Contributions	£ 750,000.00	£ 750,000.00
Allocated Budget		
Staff & Running Costs	£ 395,394.12	£ 415,163.83
Unallocated Budget		
Unallocated Headroom	£ 354,605.88	£ 334,836.17

Additional funding from various government and other sources is sought throughout the year but £0 income from other sources is included as an assumption in this financial forecasting. For this reason, HGGT adopts an agile approach to its programme of enabling activities. A pipeline of initiatives is generated, costed and assigned a priority and placed in a tier from 1-4, this is set out at Appendix B for information. As funding becomes available throughout the year, initiatives can be brought forward.

The Funding Gap Analysis at Table 3 expands on the unallocated budget figures from Table 2 and shows the funding gap that would need to be satisfied in order to deliver all of the enabling initiatives in a given tier.

Table 3: Funding Gap Analysis

Funding Gap Analysis		
	2026/27	2027/28
Unallocated Headroom	£ 354,605.88	£ 334,836.17
Scenario 1		
Tier 1 Initiatives	£ 773,434.43	£ 787,656.15
Deficit	-£ 418,828.55	-£ 452,819.98
Scenario 2		
Tier 1 - 2 Initiatives	£ 1,024,884.43	£ 957,128.65
Deficit	-£ 670,278.55	-£ 622,292.48
Scenario 3		
Tier 1 - 3 Initiatives	£ 1,798,318.86	£ 1,744,784.80
Deficit	-£ 1,443,712.98	-£ 1,409,948.63
Scenario 4		
Tier 1 - 4 Initiatives	£ 2,049,768.86	£ 1,914,257.30
Deficit	-£ 1,695,162.98	-£ 1,579,421.13

It is evident from above that programme ambitions will need to be scaled back and/or additional sources of income found. If this is not possible, it is likely that delivery of new homes will be slower, including increased risks of infrastructure shortfalls which are likely to serve as a constraint on sustainable growth.

5.4. Opportunities for Income Generation

Early optioneering has been undertaken to identify potential income from services and/or assets that may operate within the HGGT area. However, this work is still at an early stage.

Government grants, available periodically over recent years have been an essential source of underpinning income and programme delivery for HGGT. However, the amounts of funding, timing of payments, and stipulations regarding payment have changed from year to year. The HGGT team proactively research and apply for government and other sources of funding on a continual basis.

It was proposed in the 2021 Business Plan that a portion of developer contributions could be used 'to fund the Garden Town's operational costs where pooled contributions have a direct relationship to the delivery of infrastructure necessary for a development to be taken forward.' This method of income generation was not taken forward by partners and was not built into the Infrastructure Development Plan in 2019 or its refresh in 2024. None of the Local Planning Authorities currently operate a Community Infrastructure Levy.

5.5. Next Steps

The commissioned service model of HGGT contains inherent instability which in effect means that funding is agreed on an annual basis by the 5 council partners supplemented, peripatetically, by central government funding. This annualised cycle creates instability in resourcing meaning the HGGT programme and staffing must be reviewed and scaled appropriately every six months.

This creates a stop-start cycle which inhibits capacity-building work and creates a barrier to employing staff into the team on a permanent/fixed term basis – making roles less attractive to talent. A longer-term settlement of funding would create efficiencies in cost and implementation of the work identified as priorities to deliver long-term large-scale growth.

The HGGT Business Plan requires cyclical in-year review to adjust to changes in income during the financial year and to plan for future financial years.

Appendix A

2025/26 Annual Programme of Co-Ordination & Enabling Work

As mentioned in the financial plan, the funds available for enabling initiatives, after staff and running costs, only cover the contractually committed initiatives. This Programme shows only the contractually committed and Tier 1 initiatives. It should be viewed in conjunction with the Programme Pipeline in Appendix B. As funding becomes available throughout the year, initiatives from the Programme Pipeline will be added to the Enabling Programme of work.

	Programme Item	2025									2026		
		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Sustainable Mobility	Transport Planner	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
	Bus Service Improvement	Scope				Design Development			Delivery				
	TRG	Finalise		Approve	Publish								
	Bike Hire Schemes	Feasibility Stage 2		Analysis	Approve	Design Development					Delivery		
Policy and Strategy	Design Guide Refresh	Finalise		Approve	Publish								
	LCWIP	Scope		Research					Approve	Publish			
	Economic Case Evidence for safeguarding Employment Land	Scope		Research					Approve	Publish			
	IDP Delivery Plan Refresh		Scoping procurement brief		Procure	Refresh					Approve	Publish	
	IFS				Scope		Research					Approve	Publish
Infrastructure and Delivery	External Legal Advice and Support	As required											
	Land Assembly & CPO (Cushman's)	As required											
	Head of Delivery	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
Placeshaping & Community Engagement	Quality Review Panel	As required											
	HGGT Stewardship	Scope		Procure		Consult			Refine			Approve	Publish
	Comms Engagement	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
	Garden Town Placemaking & Marketing	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly

Governance	PMO & Master Programme	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
	Joint Committee SLA	Quarterly			Quarterly			Quarterly			Quarterly		

Grey Initiatives are not yet committed and therefore subject to funding

Appendix B
Programme Pipeline

Items currently not guaranteed to be undertaken - kept in Pipeline until additional funding/resources available

2025/26 Pipeline Items			
Workstream	**Tier 1**	**Tier 2**	**Tiers 3 & 4**
Sustainable Mobility	Bus Service Improvement		
	Bike Hire Scheme - implementation		
	Transport Planner		
	Active Travel - Staff Costs & Initiatives Costs		
Policy & Strategy	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan	HGGT Vision Refresh	
	Employment Land Study	Strategic Sites' Viability Assessment	
	Infrastructure Delivery Plan Refresh		
	Infrastructure Funding Statement		
Infrastructure & Delivery	Head of Delivery	Digital Infrastructure & Community Energy	
	External Legal Advice and Support		
	Land Assembly & Compulsory Purchase Order		
Placeshaping, Community Engagement	Quality Review Pannel	Inward Investment	Construction engagement app
	HGGT Stewardship		Video Production
	Garden Town Placemaking & Marketing		
	Go Vocal		
	Data & Digital Dashboard		

Governance	PMO & Master Programme	Development workshops	

2026/27 Pipeline Items			
Workstream	**Tier 1**	**Tier 2**	**Tiers 3 & 4**
Sustainable Mobility	Transport Planner	Healthy School Streets	STC Service Provision Spec
	Active Travel - Staff Costs & Initiatives Costs		
Policy & Strategy	Infrastructure Delivery Plan Refresh	Strategic Viability Assessment	Sustainability Guidance
		Infrastructure Funding Statement	
Infrastructure & Delivery	Setup and deliver the Rolling Infrastructure Fund	Administer Transport Review Group	
	Head of Delivery	Site Selection Feasibility Studies	
	External Legal Advice and Support		
	Land Assembly & Compulsory Purchase Order		
Placeshaping, Community Engagement	QRP	Quality of Life	Website Refresh
	Community Engagement Officer	Conference Attendance	Construction engagement app
	HGGT Stewardship	Investment Prospectus	Video Production
	Garden Town Placemaking & Marketing	Harlow Place Proposition	
	Employment Land Evidence	Skills Audit	
	Data & Digital Dashboard		
Governance	PMO & Master Programme	Development workshops	

Workstream	2027/28 Pipeline Items		
	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tiers 3 & 4
Sustainable Mobility	Transport Planner	Healthy School Streets	Mode share monitoring plan
	Active Travel Officer		
Policy & Strategy	Infrastructure Funding Statement		Sustainability Guidance
Infrastructure & Delivery	Head of Delivery	Administer Transport Review Group	
	Setup and deliver the Rolling Infrastructure Fund		
	External Legal Advice and Support		
	Land Assembly & CPO		
Placeshaping, Community Engagement	QRP	QoL	Community Engagement Officer
	HGGT Stewardship	Conference Attendance	Entrepreneurship Officer
	Garden Town Placemaking & Marketing		Construction engagement app
	Data & Digital Dashboard		Video Production
Governance	PMO & Master Programme	Development workshops	

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HARLOW & GILSTON
GARDEN TOWN

Agenda Item 11

Report to: **HARLOW AND GILSTON GARDEN TOWN JOINT COMMITTEE**

Title: **HGGT Programme Management Report**

Report Reference: JC-011-2024/25

Date: **10 February 2025**

Report Author: **Osian Evans - Acting Director Harlow & Gilston Garden Town**

Enclosures: **Appendix A – 2024/25 HGGT Programme of Work**

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Recommendations/Decisions Required:

The HGGT Joint Committee is asked to:

A. Consider and comment on the Programme Management Report, as set out in Appendix A, providing progress updates against the agreed HGGT 2024/25 annual work programme.

Executive Summary:

The purpose of the Joint Committee is to provide unified leadership to deliver the ambitious spatial growth proposals set out in the Local Plans of Epping Forest, East Herts and Harlow District Council, supported by Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils and to align and maximise opportunities for new and existing residents and communities.

The HGGT Joint Committee holds the responsibility to deliver the agreed HGGT Vision to promote healthy, sustainable communities and co-ordinate and facilitate the delivery of 16,000 new homes in the HGGT by 2033, and 7,000 new homes in the years after that, along with associated transport, community, and environmental infrastructure.

This report provides the Joint Committee with oversight of progress against its agreed programme of work for 2024/25 which aims to progress delivery of its HGGT Vision.

Reasons for proposed Decision:
To adhere to governance procedures set out in the Terms of Reference of the Joint Committee for the HGGT Joint Committee to have oversight of the HGGT programme.

Other Options for Action:

Not to receive programme reporting information. This option as a course of action is not recommended. Oversight is required to mitigate risks and maintain quality of decision-making and delivery amongst the five Council partners and the HGGT Team.

1. **Introduction**

1.1 This report provides the HGGT Joint Committee with key reporting benchmarks setting out at Appendix A the progress of the 2024/25 work programme noting the baseline programme agreed at the Joint Committee meeting held on 22 July 2024.

1.2 This approach to programme management will enable the Joint Committee to meet its formalised governance and audit responsibilities and to respond to key issues and emerging risks.

2. **Background**

2.1 The overarching strategic objective of the HGGT Work Programme is to co-ordinate and enable the delivery of 16,000 homes by 2033, along with associated infrastructure, delivering the Garden Town Vision, principles and guidance that has been agreed by the five Council partners.

2.2 The HGGT Work Programme is developed from across the five Council HGGT partnership in line with the **strategic objective, delivery aims, and programme priorities** agreed by the Joint Committee as set out below:

    2.2.1 **2024/25 Key delivery themes**:

- Delivering the Garden Town Vision of quality, beautiful and sustainable places
- Enabling the Infrastructure Foundations for Growth
- Maximising and Accelerating Delivery with a focus on outcomes by 2025
- Ensuring our Governance is Fit for the Future

    2.2.2 **2024/25 programme priorities** for the HGGT partnership:

- Enabling the HGGT Strategic Sites to come forward
- Enabling Achievement of HGGT Modal Transition Target
- Demonstrating and engaging with the community on the benefits of growth
- Delivery of the long-term stewardship arrangements

3. **Delivery Highlight Updates**

3.1 The following updates are provided for the HGGT strategic sites; the Housing Investment Grant (HIG) and the 2024/25 HGGT Programme of Work:

4. **Strategic Site Updates**

4.1 **Latton Priory –** There is an allocation in the EFDC Local Plan for a minimum of 1,050 homes, as well as a primary and secondary school, local centre and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG). The Strategic Masterplan Framework and Latton Priory Design Code have been endorsed by EFDC Cabinet. Work by HGGT on the STC Connector Route Study is complete for the STC connector from Latton Priory Masterplan Area to Commonside Road. An Outline Planning Application was submitted to EFDC in September 2024 for up to 1,340 dwellings, 5 traveller pitches, and associated infrastructure.

4.2 **Water Lane –** There is an allocation in the EFDC Local Plan for a minimum of 2,100 homes, a new primary school, local centre and strategic natural greenspace. A Planning Performance Agreement for masterplan work is complete and has been signed by developers, EFDC, HDC and ECC. Work is complete on the STC Connector Route Study for the STC connector from Water Lane Masterplan Area into the Pinnacles. The site developers are working on a programme of stakeholder engagement to enable the master planning process to progress.

4.3 **East of Harlow –** There is an allocation in the HDC Local Plan for 2,600 homes and an allocation in the EFDC Local Plan for 750 Homes. HGGT partners have drafted an East of Harlow Masterplanning Guidance Supplementary Planning Document which was adopted by EFDC on 28 May 2024 and HDC on 12 September 2024. The site continues to await appointment of a lead master developer.

4.4 **Gilston Villages –** Subsequent to the resolutions of the East Herts Development Management Committee to resolve to grant outline planning permissions (in early 2023), the details of the associated Section 106 Agreement has now been published. The Section 106 agreement is being finalised, signed and the decision notices giving outline planning permission for the Gilston area, released. Masterplanning activity previously paused whilst the priority was to complete the Section 106 Agreement, has now started to recommence to enable these to be moved ahead with speed once the decision notices are issued.

4.5 **Harlow Town Centre – Arts & Cultural Quarter –** The Ex-Occasio House site demolition has been completed, and site cleared. Secured delivery partner of site via Harlow Regeneration Partnership. Full planning permission granted in April 2024. Further detailed designs have resulted in design changes. Procurement for the rest of the site is currently underway with expressions of interest complete and tender exercise via National Framework Partnership progressing with appointment expected early in 2025.

4.6 **Harlow Town Centre – Broadwalk** – Contractor appointed, and works have begun. Construction to take place from August 2024 and scheduled completion June 2025. DLUHC had approved project adjustment request, confirming £1.6m funding for Market Square. Market Square proposals public consultation completed and informing detailed design, RIBA Stage 3 designs completed Autumn 2024 and start on site Spring 2025, complete December 2025.

4.7 **Harlow TC Interchange & Hub STC Work –** Demolition of toilets, kiosk and Terminus House footbridge completed. Negotiating terms for full Design and Build JCT Contract, due to complete Winter 2024. Value engineering complete, s.73 application submitted Summer

2024 and due to be determined Winter 2024. Planning application for temporary bus station approved in September 2024, construction is underway and operational from December 2024, which will include temporary stands and an information kiosk. Construction to start early in 2025 and complete Spring 2026.

4.8 **Walking and Cycling –** Construction on a new pedestrian and cycle route from the Town Centre to Pinnacles is due to be completed by November 2025 (ahead of schedule). Another route from the Town Centre to Churchgate Street/East of Harlow is currently in the design phase.

5. **Housing Investment Grant (HIG)**

5.1 **Gilston HIG programme -** As part of the Garden Town delivery programme, Hertfordshire County Council is overseeing the delivery of £171 million of Homes England Housing Investment Grant funding to deliver transport infrastructure that mitigates the impact of the Gilston Garden town villages development on Harlow and the surrounding areas and enables wider Garden Town development to come forward. This provides early enabling and delivery of key transport and other supporting infrastructure to start mitigating the impact of the development.

5.2 **Stort Valley Crossings –** As part of the HIG delivery programme, there are two key projects to mitigate any increase in traffic across the Stort Valley between Gilston and Harlow due to housing growth across the Garden Town. The first one, called the Central Stort Crossing will enhance the existing A414 River Stort crossing with a significant increase in capacity for sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and buses. The second one, called the Eastern Stort Crossing, will increase general traffic capacity and provide an additional link into the Templefields area.

5.3 **North to Centre STC –** Work has commenced on the North to Centre (Sustainable Transport Corridor) STC. The programme is estimated to last approximately 18 months with completion expected in late 2025. It is the first stage of a wider network of enhanced routes to provide more sustainable modes of transport across the Town. It will link up with the new Central Stort Crossing and provide the opportunity for quick journeys on sustainable travel modes between Gilston and the Town Centre, as the most direct route into Gilston will be a sustainable only mode access.

5.4 **Cambridge Road Link –** The Cambridge Road junction is the first project to be delivered as part of the HIG programme and is both an early enabler for the Eastern Stort Crossing, but also provides the benefit of providing an alternative route for HGV and other traffic using the Templefields industrial area, diverting traffic away from Edinburgh Way. Work on Cambridge Road junction is now complete; it is expected to open permanently in the near future following resolution of land transfers.

6. **2024/25 HGGT Work Programme Updates**

6.1 The 2024/25 HGGT work programme is set out at Appendix A annotated with key updates. Highlights include:

6.1.1 **Modal Transition Plan** – The 5 Council Partners agreed to work together to continue to develop an overarching programme plan of key activities required to deliver modal transition, informed by the Framework. A progress update will be reported to the Joint Committee in Q1 2025/26**.**

6.1.2 **Parking Guidance** – The Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) Parking Guidance documentation has been approved by EPOA Chief Officers and sent to all Essex LPAs who will make their own decisions on adopting the guidance. The Parking Guidance has now been published in the Essex Design Guide.

6.1.3 **Data Dashboard** – The prototype data dashboard was recently presented to EOG (Executive Officers Group) and received positive feedback. Development has also commenced on a Quality of Life (QoL) Data Dashboard and User Guide, which has been reviewed by the QoL team. The project is now looking into incorporating some data sets such as pedal power GPS data and some Modal Shift monitoring data sets.

6.1.4 **Bike Hire Scheme** – An external advisor has been appointed to carry out the Phase 2 feasibility study to inform the ambition to introduce a bike hire scheme across the Garden Town area, piloting initially in Harlow, subject to approval.

6.1.5 **Harlow Train Station Study** – Weston Williamson have been commissioned to develop an opportunities and constraints study that examines the potential to make the Grade II Listed Station and its environs suitable for an expanding community with the sizeable housing and employment growth anticipated by the development of HGGT. The study has commenced and is forecast for completion by Q1 of 2025/26.

Implications:

Resource Implications:

Central Government Funding has been made available to date to support the work of the HGGT partnership. This is the result of annual bidding rounds and while the funding is both welcome and essential, this approach creates uncertainty in planning for enabling and delivery work. Officers of HGGT will continue dialogue with HGGT partners and Government for future arrangements in an attempt to establish multi-year revenue funding agreements. Each council partner considers contribution to the HGGT partnership as part of the annual budget setting.

Equalities and Diversity:

Equality Impact Assessment:

Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?	No
Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy or decision	To provide budget and programme information to deliver the aims of the HGGT Joint Committee

What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (i.e. decommissioning or commissioning a service)?	Provide oversight of HGGT programme and progress.
Does or will the policy or decision affect: • service users • employees • the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities?	Yes - contributes to the delivery of the HGGT project to deliver over 20,000 new homes and associated infrastructure in and around Harlow which will affect existing and future residents.
Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?	No
Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?	No
Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes?	No
What does the information tell you about those groups identified?	N/A
Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?	N/A
If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary:	The work of HGGT has been subject to public consultation and will continue to be so in the future.

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

Age, Disability, Gender, Gender reassignment, Pregnancy/maternity, Marriage/civil partnership, Race, Religion/belief, Sexual orientation	N/A	

Does the EqIA indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high	No	See comment above

HGGT Vision Assurance

1. What principles of the HGGT Vision does this seek to achieve?

The objective of the HGGT Programme is to deliver the HGGT Vision.

2. What steps have been taken to ensure the HGGT Vision is embedded into the project?

The HGGT Programme ensures that the individual projects remain aligned to the HGGT Vision.

HGGT
HARLOW & GILSTON GARDEN TOWN

APPENDIX A

2024/25 HGGT Programme of Work – progress

Category	Group	Programme Item	2024 April	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	2025 Jan	Feb	Mar
Sustainable Mobility	Modal Transition Delivery	LCWIP Refresh												Scoping
		Bus & Operational Services - Enhanced Bus Partnership						Bus Summit		Develop Operational Plan				
		Shared Mobility - Bike Hire	Feasibility report finalised							Feasibility Stage 2				
		Future Transport Review Group					Procure			TRG Recommendations				
		Active Travel Behavioural Change (Sustrans)		Onboard	Embed									
		Modal Transition Delivery Framework	Take forward prioritised initiatives as per delivery framework											
		Parking Guidance for Garden Communities and Large Scale Development						Present to EPOA						
		Harlow Town Rail and Access Improvements					Procure			Develop				
Policy and Strategy		IDP Update 2024	Endorsed											
		IDP Refresh 2026 Scoping											Scoping procurement brief	
		Design Guide Refresh										Procure	Prepare Report	
Infrastructure and Delivery		Land Assembly and CPO	Continued Delivery of the Land Assembly Programme											
Placeshaping & Community Engagement		HGGT Stewardship Charter	Consult			Joint Committee	Embed							
		HGGT Strategic Stewardship Options	Umbrella Body Update & Options Report			Review and Refine								
		Communications	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Endorse Plan	Publish	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly
		HGGT Data Dashboard and Insights (Local Digital Fund)	Testing Digital Dashboard Solution			Implementation						Supplier Procurement	Consultation & Guide	
		Citizenlab Engagement Platform	Continued Monitoring and Evaluation of the Citizenlab Platform and Adjusting Where Needed											
		QRP	Ongoing drumbeat of QRPs											
		East of Harlow		SPD EFDC & HDC Adopt										
		Latton Priory	Publish Design Code											
Governance		HGGT Joint Commitee	Establish Joint Committee			Operationalise Joint Committee								
		PMO & Master Programme	Scope Milestones	Maintain										

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