

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

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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.

I. 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.

HGGT

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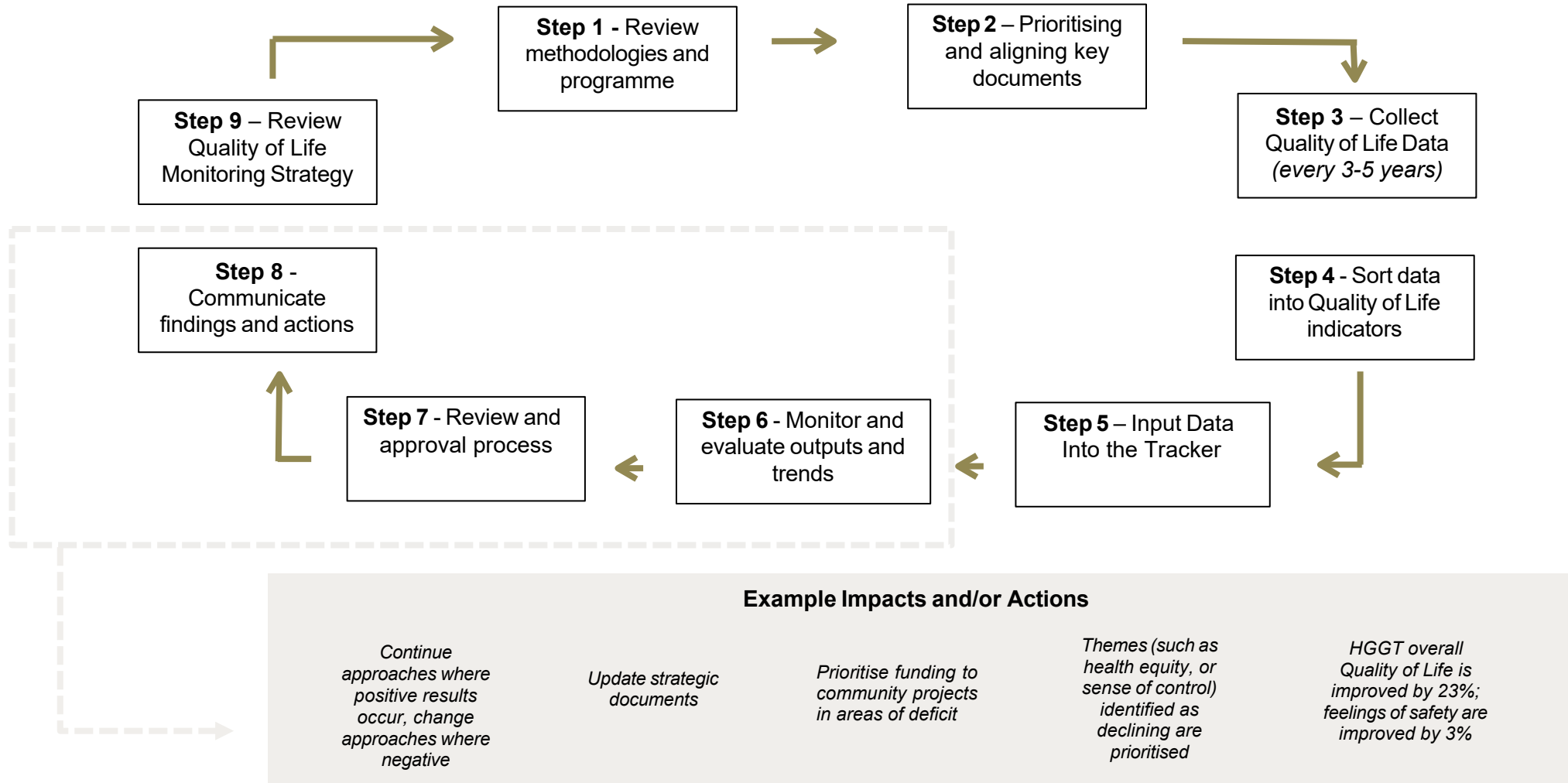


Figure 1: How Quality of Life Monitoring works, with example Impacts and/or Actions



- 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.

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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.

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

1. Introduction	1
2. Quality of Life Framework	3
3. How it Works.....	4
4. Uses and Benefits	4
5. QoL Monitoring Delivery Team.....	6
6. Process and Workflow	8
7. Frequency and scale of consultations.....	10
8. Further resources	10
Glossary	11
Appendices (A-H: Detailed Delivery Guidance; I-K: Background).....	A-1
A. Detailed Step by Step Guidance and Delivery Timescales.....	A-1
B. Quality of Life themes and sub-themes.....	B-1
C. Quality of Life Monitoring Tracker.....	C-1
D. Quality of Life Indicator Questions.....	D-1
E. Using QoL Indicators as a Document Alignment and Checking Tool	E-1
F. Case Study – HGGT Stewardship Charter Recommendations	F-1
G. Aligned Documents and Future Alignments Template.....	G-1
H. Engagement methodology	H-1
I. Officer Feedback and how it has informed the Strategy.....	I-1
J. 2022 Your Quality of Life Consultation – Establishing Baseline Data	J-1
K. 2022 Consultation Demographics	K-1

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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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

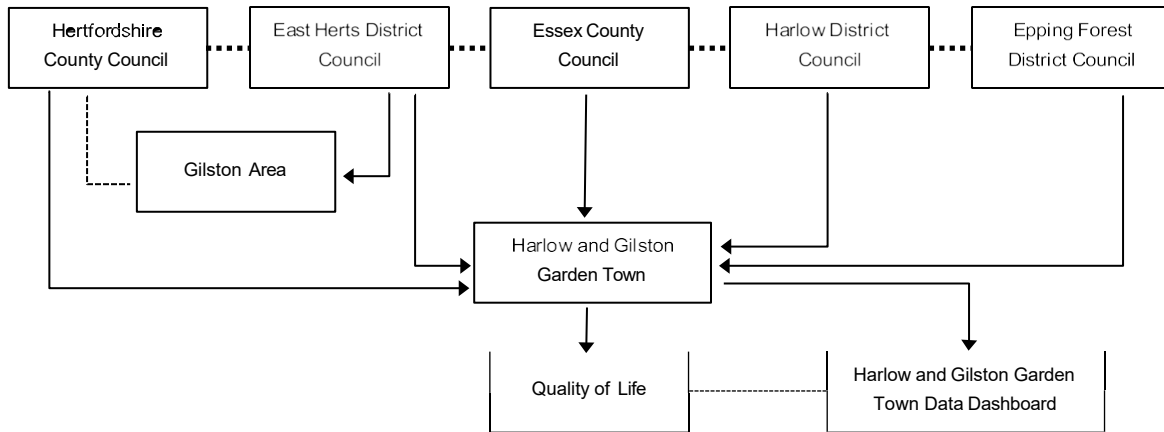


Figure 1 – Partnering Authority Quality Monitoring Frameworks alongside HGGT Data Dashboard

----- = 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*

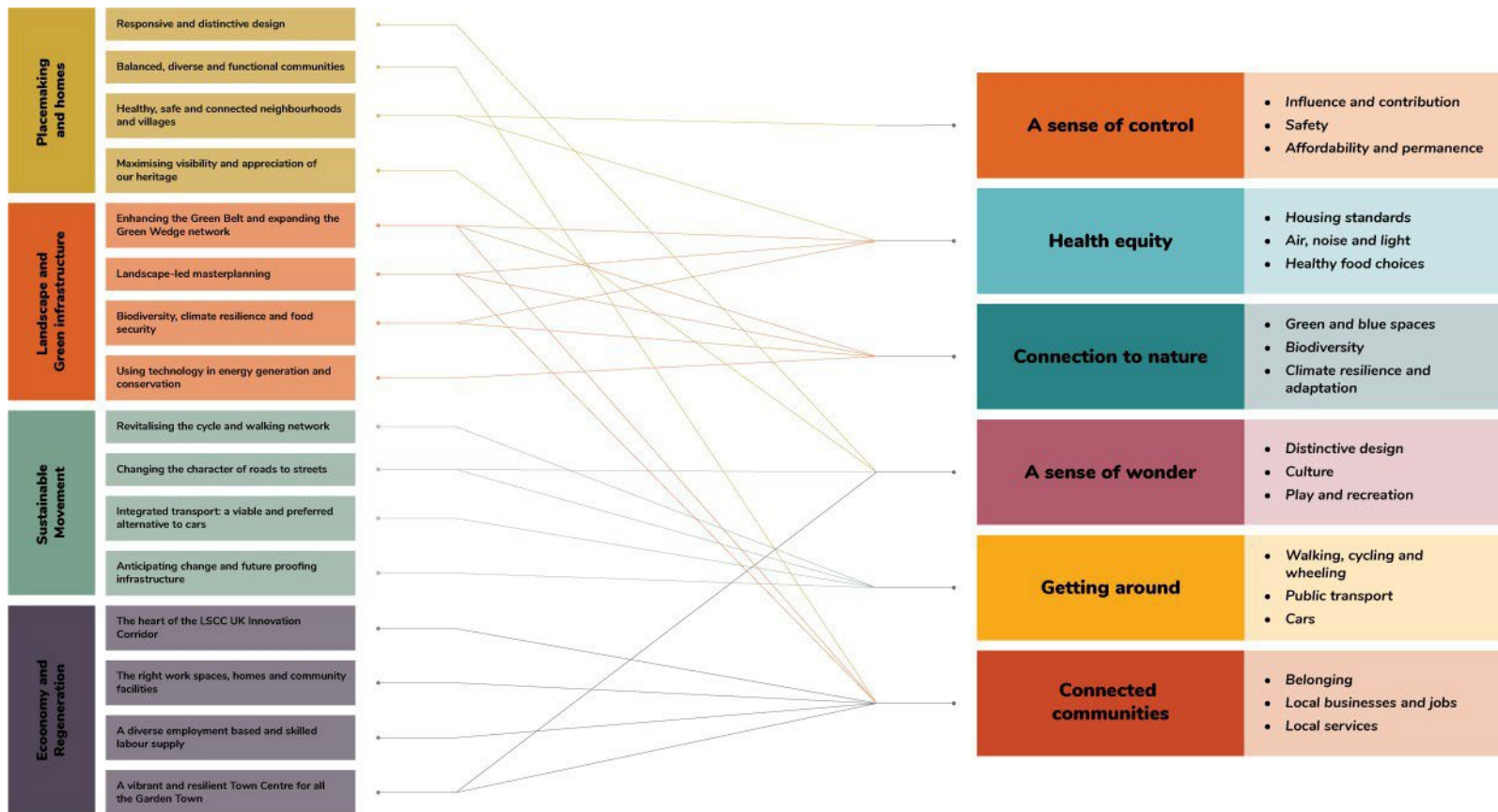


Figure 2 - Aligning the HGGT Vision to the Quality of Life themes.

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.

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.

QoL Monitoring Team				
Tier/role	Skills/experience	Adding and Tracking Data	Evaluation and Reporting	Quality of Life Monitoring Actions
Project Manager <i>(who may hold one or more of the roles below),</i>	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 and then uploaded.*

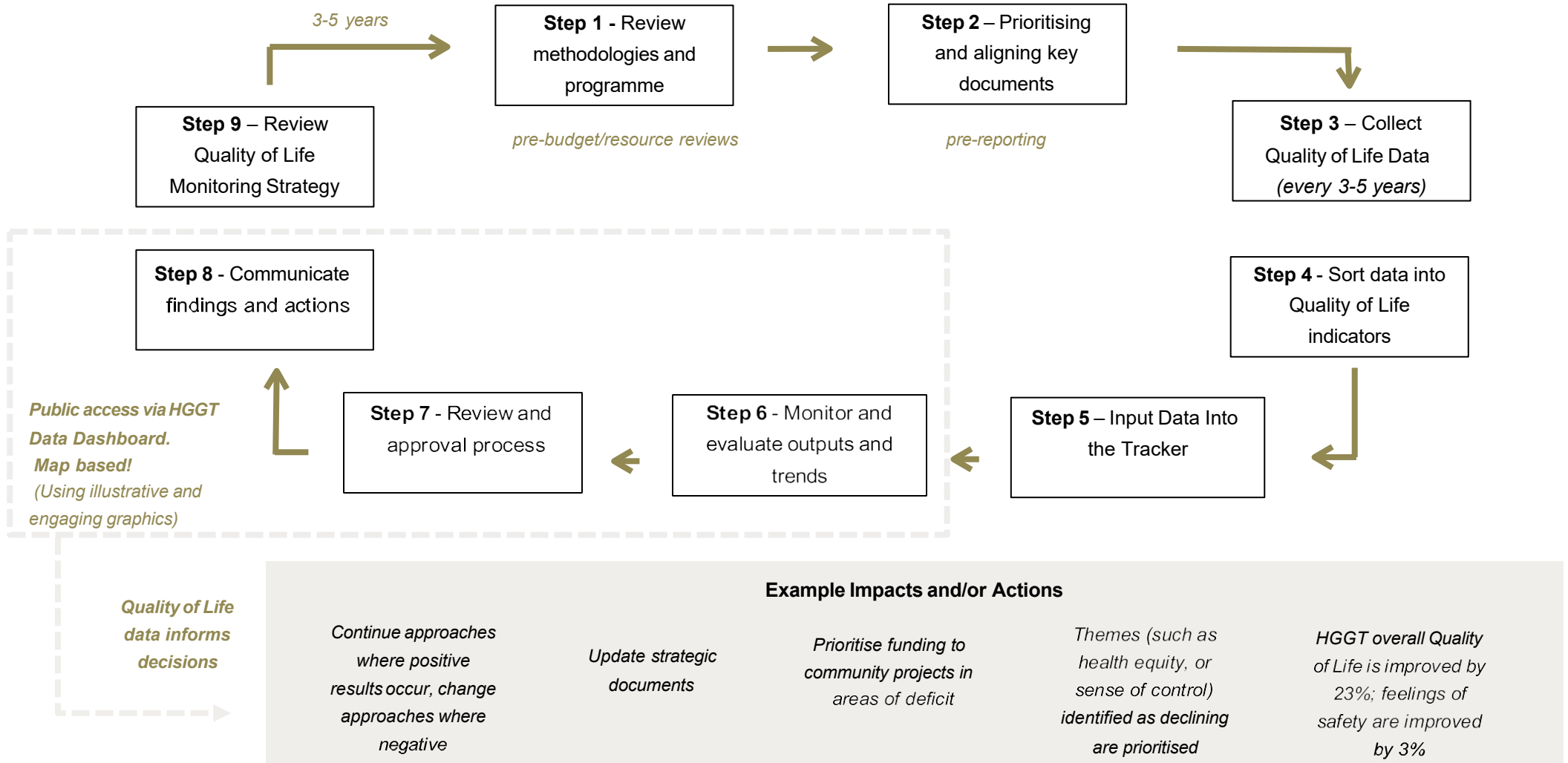


Figure 5 - How Quality of Life Monitoring works, with example impacts and/or actions, see Figure 7 for timings)

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 <i>(6 months prior to budget reviews to enable resourcing)</i>	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	2-3 days	Reporting on and implementing actions resulting from Your Quality of Life Consultation
	Engagement and outreach officers	7 days (digital and in person)	
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

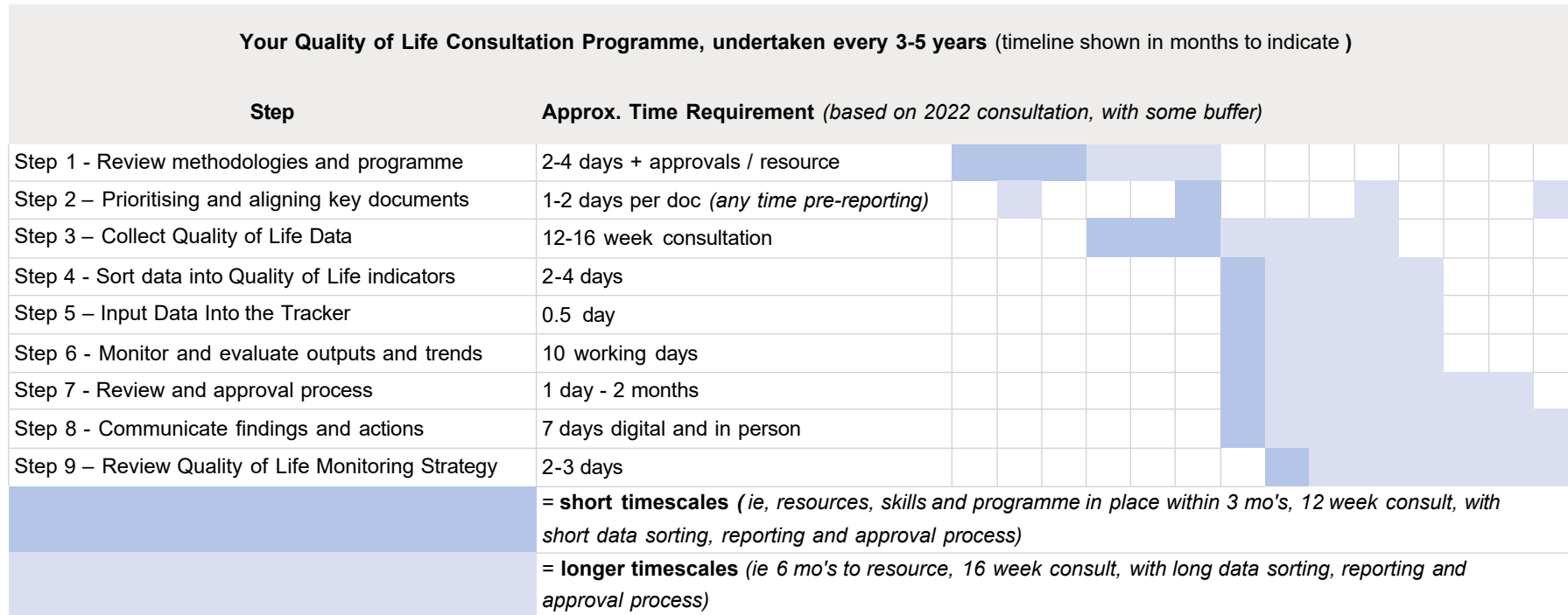


Figure 7 - Gantt view of Steps 1-9, with flexibility for delivery. Note Step 2 can be undertaken any time prior to reporting, and is shown here as quarterly

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**
 - check existing questions against emerging research and update any national datasets
 - check for any new and relevant national survey questions which may be added
 - for indicators that are infrequently updated over an extended period, evaluate whether this is engagement related, or if no longer relevant
 - ensure data inputted into the Tracker can be referenced back to the source
- Further documents to align**
 - 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
 - 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 include 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 <i>(data is for illustrative purposes only)</i>			
	Very Strongly	Fairly Strongly	Not very Strongly	Not strongly at all
“How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood?”				
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 <i>(data is for illustrative purposes only)</i>			
	2022 (Baseline)	2026	2030	2034
“How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood?”				
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

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

7	Quality of Life Theme	Survey Question	Mapped Guidance, Policy or Commitment	2022 Baseline Data	National Benchmarks		2025 Indicator		
			Stewardship HGGT Charter (TEST)	Quality of Life Mapping	Data Average	Source	Baseline Metric	Indicator	Source
8									
9	Connected Communities	How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood?*	-	73%	63%	Community Life Survey (2021-22)	Total percentage of "Very strongly" and "Fairly strongly" responses	75%	Quality of Life Consultation 2025
10	Connected Communities	Generally, how satisfied are you with the local services and amenities in your local area?*	3.1-3.6, 5.6	51%	-	-	Total percentage of "Satisfied" and "Very Satisfied" responses	50%	Quality of Life Consultation 2025
		"People in my local area will together to improve the local area?"	3.1-3.6, 5.6	78%			Total percentage of "agree" and "strongly agree" responses	78%	Quality of Life Consultation
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Figure 11 – Navigating the QoL Indicators Tracker

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
?	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.

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

<p>A sense of control</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><i>Influence and contribution</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>
<p><i>Safety</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>
<p><i>Affordability and Permanence</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>

<p>Health equity</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><i>Housing standards</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>
<p><i>Air, noise and light</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>
<p><i>Healthy food choices</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>
<p>Connection to nature</p>	<p>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</p>

	<p>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.</p>
<p><i>Green and blue spaces</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>
<p><i>Biodiversity</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>
<p><i>Climate resilience and adaptation</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>
<p>A sense of wonder</p>	<p>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</p>

	<p>any age, and having opportunities to play and pursue leisure and sporting activities is key to our physical and mental health.</p>
<p><i>Distinctive design</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>
<p><i>Culture</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>
<p><i>Play and recreation</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>
<p>Getting around</p>	<p>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</p>

		different options – by walking, cycling, using public transport or car shares, for example – and having equitable access to a range of transport options.
<i>Walking, cycling and wheeling</i>	<i>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.</i>	
<i>Public transport</i>	<i>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.</i>	
<i>Cars</i>	<i>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.</i>	
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.

<p><i>Belonging</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>
<p><i>Local businesses and jobs</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>
<p><i>Services</i></p>	<p><i>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.</i></p>

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)		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,		RM2, 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		RM2	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	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		Q5.1	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 now adays?	6.7	1.1, 1.2, 1.4				6.9	7.54	National Operations 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	National Operations Survey 2022	Average response out of 10

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	<i>How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood?</i>	Community Life Survey
	<i>Generally, how satisfied are you with the local services and amenities in your local area?</i>	
	<i>“People in my local area pull together to improve the local area”</i>	n/a
	<i>“I have access to everything I need in my day to day life within a 10 minute walk or wheel from my home”</i>	
	<i>“I have access to plenty of opportunities to learn new skills easily and locally”</i>	
	<i>“There are plenty of good quality local jobs in my area”</i>	
A sense of control	<i>To what extent do you agree or disagree that you personally can influence decisions affecting your local area?</i>	Community Life Survey
	<i>At this present moment, do you see yourself living in your area long term?</i>	n/a
	<i>“If I wanted to, I know who I can speak to about the places I care about in my local area”</i>	
	<i>“I have a say in how local community projects are run”</i>	
	<i>“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?”</i>	Opinions and Lifestyle survey

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

Quality of Life Theme	Question	Benchmark source
	<i>How satisfied are you with the provision of local buses in your area?</i>	<i>National Travel Survey (2021)</i>
	<i>How satisfied are you with the provision of cycling options in your area?</i>	
Connection to nature	<i>“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)</i>	<i>n/a</i>
	<i>Have you taken part in any nature or wildlife projects near where you live? (Planting wildflowers in a park or street, making wildlife habitats)</i>	
	<i>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...</i>	<i>The People and Nature Survey (2022)</i>
	<i>“My local green and natural spaces are within easy walking distance”</i>	
	<i>“My local green and natural spaces are good places for mental health and wellbeing”</i>	
<i>“My local green and natural spaces are a high enough standard to want to spend time in”</i>		
A sense of wonder	<i>Do you engage with the local arts and culture? (For example, local sculptures, music and any markets)</i>	<i>n/a</i>
	<i>“My local area offers people of all ages opportunities to enjoy themselves”</i>	
	<i>“I can easily visit a range of arts, culture and leisure amenities (places to enjoy a day or a night out) from my home”</i>	
	<i>How satisfied are you with your local arts and culture?</i>	
	<i>“There are lots of different things to do without spending too much money in my neighbourhood”</i>	

Quality of Life Theme	Question	Benchmark source
	<i>"I feel a sense of pride and care for the places in my neighbourhood"</i>	
	<i>"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)</i>	

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
<p>4.4 A robust governance structure will ensure it achieves the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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"

<p>value</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 			
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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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality • Light pollution • Noise pollution
Improvement of biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new species • Density of species per square kilometre
Improved community health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>East Herts District Council's Thriving Together Strategy, supporting quality monitoring of health and wellbeing</p>	<p>East Herts District Council</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>HGGT Garden Town Spatial Vision (2018): setting out the vision for the Garden Town and the Principles that will inform its growth and management</p>	<p>Harlow and Gilston Garden Town</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Harlow District Council Corporate Plan: Setting out the mission for Harlow over the next four years</p>	<p>Harlow District Council</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Harlow Residents Survey: A Harlow-wide survey to understand residents' perceptions of the local area, the local council and their communication preferences.</p>	<p>Harlow District Council</p>	<p>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.</p>

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 <i>(Links to be added over time)</i>	Author(s)	Rationale <i>To be completed during reviews. See examples above, taking impact, timing, and resource capacity into account.</i>	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 <i>(Links to be added over time)</i>	Author(s)	Rationale <i>To be completed during reviews. See examples above, taking impact, timing, and resource capacity into account.</i>	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <i>(Links to be added over time)</i>	Author(s)	Rationale <i>To be completed during reviews. See examples above, taking impact, timing, and resource capacity into account.</i>	Document Review Date
		increase benefit and use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <i>(Links to be added over time)</i>	Author(s)	Rationale <i>To be completed during reviews. See examples above, taking impact, timing, and resource capacity into account.</i>	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 Consultations¹. 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:

In-person

- Pre-engagement workshops with identified underrepresented groups to inform comms and engagement approaches
- Weekly pop-ups at different locations
- Targeted workshops speaking to underrepresented communities

Printed Communications

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

Digital

- Digital survey platform
- Email newsletters
- Targeted social media advertising and promotional content
- 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

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

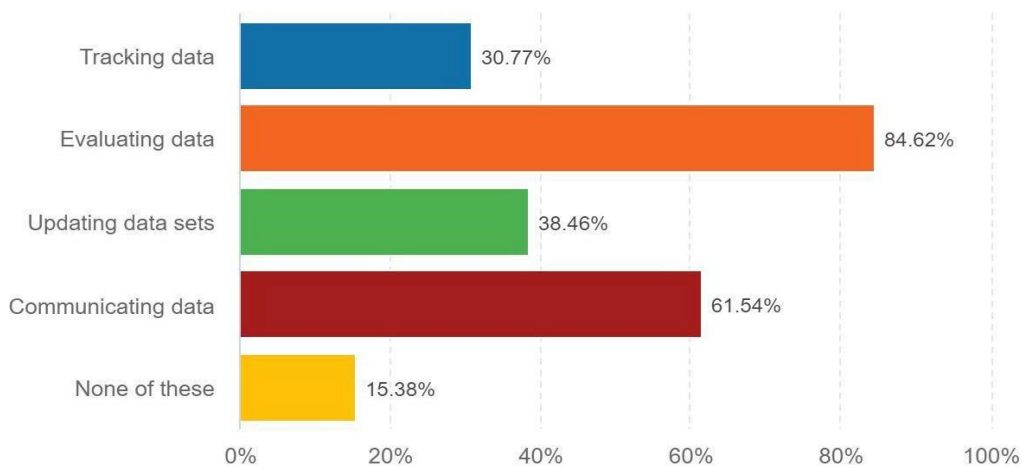
For more detailed information on best practice engagement approaches, refer to the [Inclusive Engagement Toolkit](#), produced by the Quality of Life Foundation in collaboration with Urban Symbiotics in 2022; and with the [HGGT Communications and Engagement Strategy](#), which is updated periodically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

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

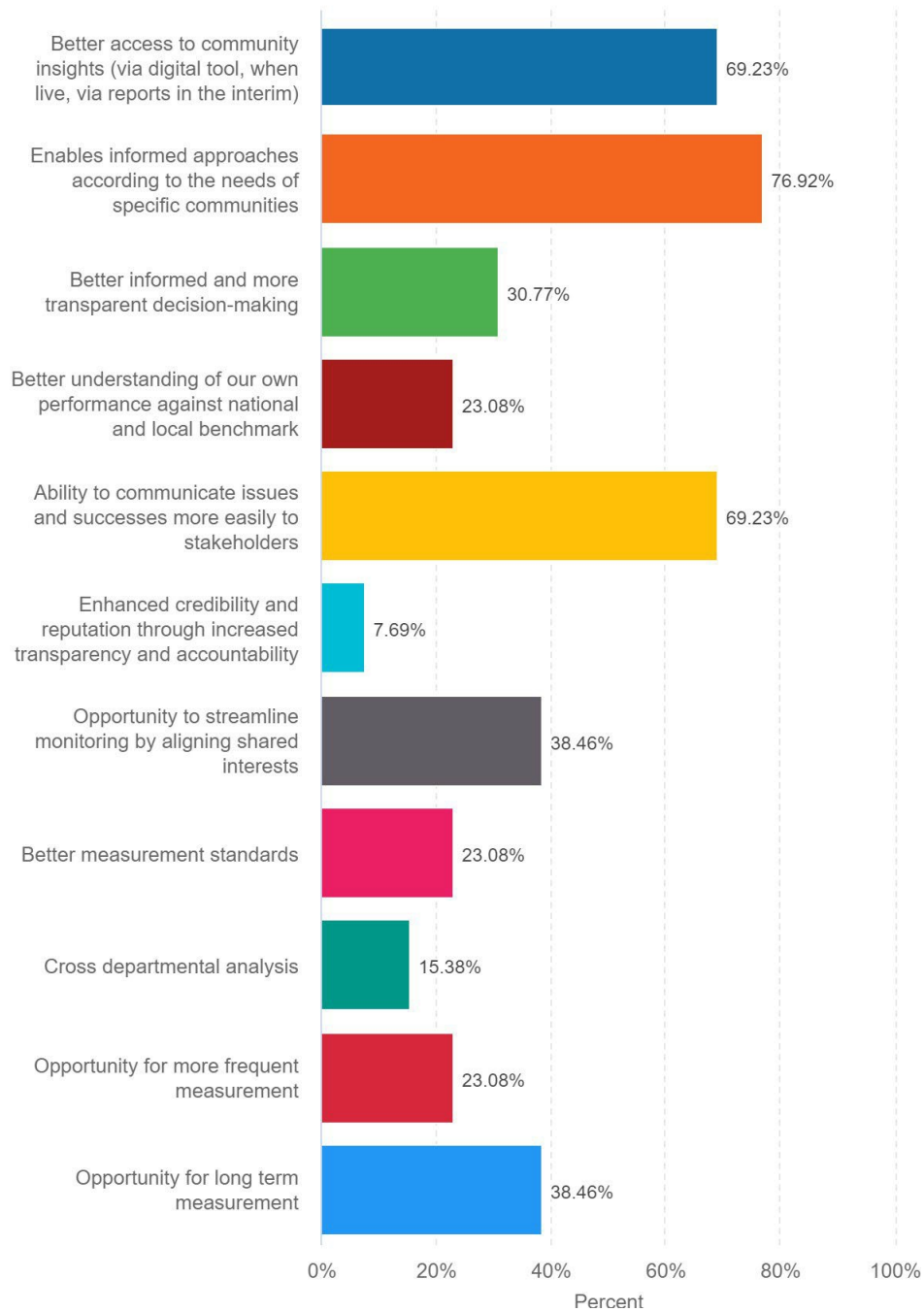
When asked about the process of deriving indicators, officers generally felt that this process was easy to understand. The benefit of these indicators and their association to quality of life metrics was also well understood by officers.

Regarding the Tracker

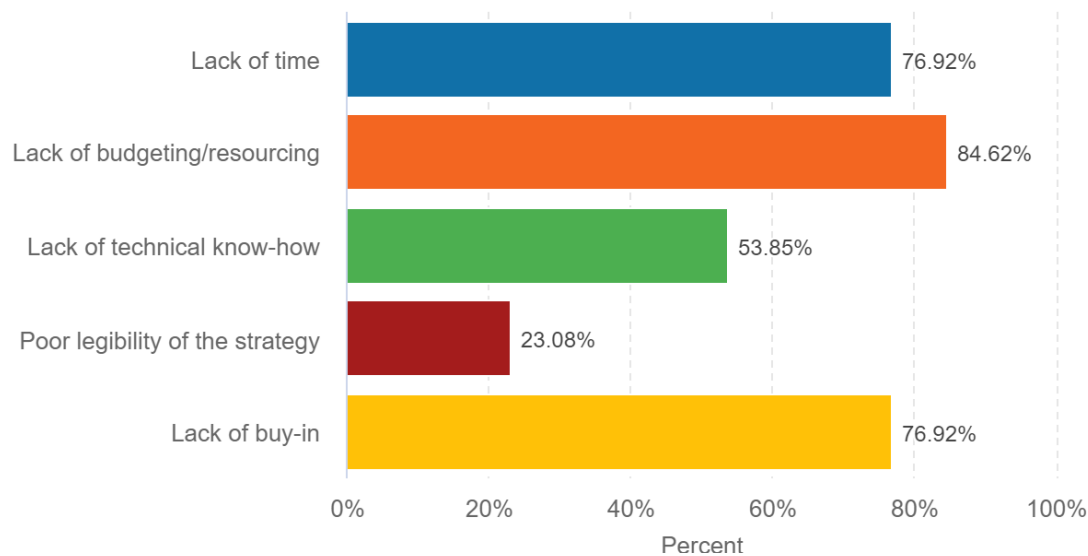
53.9% of officers felt that **the tracker looks easy to use and navigate**

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)



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:

- Sustrans
- Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
- Office for National Statistics
- Natural England
- Department for Transport
- 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% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caribbean - 2 • Any other Black/African/Caribbean background - 1 • Any other ethnic group - 1 • Welsh/ English/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British - 124 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social or behavioural (Autism or ADHD): 5 - Other: 5 - Prefer not to say: 14 - No disability or illness: 82 	
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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 (<i>subject to funding/ resource evaluation</i>)
Q1. PROJECT MANAGEMENT			
Q1.1. ESTABLISH QOL MONITORING TEAM , allocating HGGT resource to meet delivery requirements of the Strategy and this Action Plan, including to coordinate QoL work 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 <i>(subject to funding/ resource evaluation)</i>
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 QUALITY MONITORING 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
Q1.3. INVESTIGATE FURTHER FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES , considering both the beneficiaries and the benefits in applying/seeking funding.	Due to the wide array of benefits which QoL Monitoring brings to all stakeholders and aspects of development in the Garden Town (and beyond), there will be many opportunities for grants and partnerships in emerging or priority areas. For example, relating to climate change, modal shift, quality homes, 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 THIS ACTION PLAN AT LEAST ANNUALLY , with more comprehensive updates following YQoL Consultation Monitoring and Evaluation reporting,	To report on progress, and to reflect any recommendations which arise as a result of QoL Monitoring	Next Review 2025	Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in Action Plan, QoL Monitoring Strategy, QoL Reporting
Q2. INFORMING POLICY, STRATEGIES AND PROJECTS			
Q2.1 CHECK EMERGING AND EXISTING STRATEGIES AND PLANS AND OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS , such as master plans against QoL Indicators, 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 <i>(subject to funding/resource evaluation)</i>
			- Make the 'QoL Indicator Check' a requirement for all strategic documents
Q2.2. IDENTIFY AND ALIGN OTHER SURVEYS AND CONSULTATIONS with QoL Indicator Questions	<p>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.</p> <p>These small scale consultations will also support reaching wider demographics, giving a clearer picture of quality of life over time, more equitably.</p>	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	<p>The HGGT Stewardship Charter is aligned, so individual and strategic sites will also align, providing more granular information about what works in different areas.</p> <p>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.</p>	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	<p>To support continuity in approaches and ease of use and therefore impact.</p>	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 QOLMONITORING STRATEGYPUBLICLY , with Members, Joint Committee, and other key stakeholders, includingYQoLCommunity 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 UPDATESFOLLOWING USERTESTING to let people knowhowthe siteis 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 INITIALUSERTESTING 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 EXTERNALSTAKEHOLDERS such as MHCLG, other local authorities and interested NGOs via working groups, such as the Healthand Wellbeing in Planning Network	To share and continuelearning on howthebuilt environment and community involvement impacts qualityof 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 OTHERKEY STAKEHOLDERSTO EXPLORE POTENTIAL TO SCALE , includingEssex and Hertfordshire County Councils;and EppingForest, Harlowand East Herts District Councils; Developer Partners;and others, such as MHCLG, the	This is a key outcome sought from theproject, and the potential to bringpositive impact at scale is very high. It could also bringpotential future fundingopportunities.	In progress, all phases	Ongoing / immediate

QoL 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, 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 its 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)
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Complete. Harlow Discovery Hub opened November 2023</p>	<p>Scope for FY 23/24 - Review in Comms & Engagement</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Progressing via QoL Monitoring and Digital Dashboard; HGGT Stewardship Charter; Comms and Engagement Strategy</p>	<p>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</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>To provide dedicated resources and capacity that can support consultation processes and enable engagement.</p>	<p>Not started</p>	<p>Scope for FY 24/25 - Review in Comms & Engagement, Stewardship - Review engagement resource in Placeshaping & Engagement workstream - Via Harlow Discovery Hub and Community Forums</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>To support people who do not have digital access to devices, to get online and to be involved in conversations.</p>	<p>Progressing via QoL Monitoring; Digital Dashboard; Discover Harlow Hub</p>	<p>Scope for FY 24/25: - Review in Comms & Engagement, partner SCIs Placeshaping & Sustainability, Stewardship, Economic Growth, Data & Digital</p>

QoLF Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action/ Programme (subject to funding/resource evaluation)
<p>A5. EMBED LOCAL EVENTS INTO ENGAGEMENT:</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Not started</p>	<p>Scope for FY 24/25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review in Comms & Engagement, Active Travel - Explore via Discover Harlow Hub and pop-up sites
<p>A6. PROJECT ENGAGEMENT PLANS ON ALL PROJECTS:</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Not started</p>	<p>Scope for FY 24/25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify officer to create stakeholder map - Review in Comms & Engagement; consultation planning
<p>A7. SENSE CHECKING OF MATERIAL BY THE COMMUNITY:</p> <p>That community stakeholders are involved in sense checking and scrutinising the outreach and engagement materials. We recommend that this also includes underrepresented groups so that materials are relevant and relatable.</p>	<p>This approach ensures that materials are relevant and relatable, avoiding jargon and increasing the likelihood of meaningful interactions.</p>	<p>Progressing via QoL Monitoring; Digital Dashboard; and HGGT Comms</p>	<p>Scope for FY 24/25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review in Comms & Engagement, Data & Digital, QoL Monitoring Workshops
<p>A8. SPECIFIC ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE:</p> <p>LAs to take a more active approach in involving young people, through:</p> <p>i) Pop-ups and dedicated events specifically for young people</p> <p>ii) Using newsletters, digital platforms and social media to provide informal feedback on the current project progress.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Progressing via HGGT Stewardship Charter and Design Code workshops</p>	<p>Scope for FY 24/25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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.		
<p>B3. MAPPING ROUTES TO INFLUENCE:</p> <p>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</p>	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	<p>Scope for FY 24/25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review in Comms & Engagement, Data & Digital - QoL Monitoring - HGGT Stewardship Charter - Developer Communications
<p>B4. FACILITATING AND EMPOWERING EXISTING COMMUNITY GROUPS:</p> <p>i) Active mapping and planning - inclusivity or street audits alongside community groups (see also Rec C1)</p> <p>ii) Adopt tactical urban planning practices alongside existing community groups</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	Not started	<p>Scope for FY 24/25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review in Comms & Engagement, Sustainable Mobility/ Modal Shift, Design Guidance, Stewardship - Quality of Life Monitoring - Community Forums
<p>B5. ADOPTING COMMUNITY CHARTERS:</p> <p>i) The adoption of a community charter for the Harlow, Gilston and surrounding areas.</p>	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	<p>Ongoing/ immediate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review in Comms & Engagement, Stewardship - Quality of Life Monitoring - Explore via Community Forums

C) CONSIDERING LOCAL PRIORITIES IN PLANNING, REGENERATION AND GROWTH

QoLF Recommendation	Reason / description	Current Status	Action/ Programme (subject to funding/resource evaluation)
<p>C1. PRIORITISE TRANSPORT NETWORK INVESTMENT:</p> <p>i) The deployment of small-scale infrastructure investments</p> <p>ii) Use of street and space audits, with community groups, (see RecB4, alongside Local Authority highways and transport teams exercises</p> <p>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</p>	<p>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. <i>See also S2 Active Travel Routes.</i> 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. <i>See also S3 - Public Transport.</i></p>	<p>In progress via HGGT Modal Transition Delivery Framework</p>	<p>Scope for FY 24/25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review in Sustainable Mobility/ Modal Shift, Comms & Engagement - Consider Champions
<p>C2. CREATE MORE PLACES TO SIT:</p> <p>i) Trialling of public seating arrangements deployed in and around green and hard public areas</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Progressing via Strategic Masterplans and Design Codes</p>	<p>Scope for FY 24/25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review in Design Guide, Placeshaping, Masterplanning
<p>C3. CREATE SPACES FOR ENJOYMENT</p> <p>i) Investing in meanwhile spaces</p> <p>ii) Continuation of investment into the maintenance and upkeep of the highly valued green spaces.</p> <p>iii) Encouraging, supporting and facilitating local food cooperatives</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>Progressing via HGGT Stewardship Charter</p>	<p>Scope for FY 24/25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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