

Warwick District Council

Corporate Strategy Warwick District 2030



Foreword

Warwick District is a fantastic place, with historic buildings, green spaces, vibrant communities and growing digital and creative industries. However, we are not immune to the challenges many people are facing with high energy bills, inflation, and pollution, which affect so many parts of the country.

We are proud that Warwick District is a vibrant, distinctive, local area; so we are not looking to merge or disappear. We remain committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for our residents, communities and businesses.

This corporate strategy sets our vision for enhancing the district by playing to our strengths without shying away from tough decisions to tackle long-standing issues. It provides the basis to inform, prioritise and shape where the Council will focus its efforts, time and resources to help make the district a great place to live, work and visit by improving lives and our environment.

We believe that one way our district is 'great' is by being ambitious, innovative and embracing new ways of living and working, whilst cherishing our history and traditions. We will strive to simultaneously be 'improving lives and our environment' by seeking the balance between idealism and pragmatism. This means we must always remember that ambitious changes need to be good value for money.

Our overarching objective for Warwick District is to ensure that by having sustainability at the heart of our decision making, the district is well placed for future generations to enjoy. We aim to achieve this objective by delivering on our 3 strategic priorities.

Our first strategic priority is to ensure we deliver high-quality services. As local government continues to operate in a challenging financial environment, we will use careful financial planning and our strong asset base to ensure that we continue to operate on a sustainable footing. This will allow us to continue to invest in our services and projects throughout the district.

We are living in an increasingly digital world; our residents are looking for efficient and easy access to council services. We will redesign and reimagine our services to make it easier and quicker to do business with the Council.

To play our role in tackling the climate emergency, we will focus on things we can directly change and influence. So our second strategic priority is to reduce energy bills for Council tenants, helping private homeowners and renters to reduce theirs as well, and reducing carbon emissions associated with Council-owned buildings.

Our final strategic priority focuses on our role in fostering a sustainable and safe environment that enables our communities and businesses to thrive. Alongside this, we will ensure that support is there for our most vulnerable residents.

Warwick District has many strengths which include natural assets with its stunning environment and tourism sector, as well as excellent creative, digital and green industries. Our strategy for business growth and the creation of new jobs must make use of these strengths, to ensure our communities and industries thrive.

The Council is undertaking numerous major initiatives across the district to improve residents' lives. These include leisure and sport developments, regenerating Leamington's creative quarter, a new country park and substantial infrastructure for new housing estates. These strategic priorities are designed to benefit our communities across the district, including by regenerating areas, reducing heating bills and promoting healthier, safer, stronger communities.

Of course, this corporate strategy will only succeed with public participation, community engagement and constructive dialogue with our many partners. We look forward to working with all groups to improve our services and to play our role in helping to make Warwick District a great place to live, work and visit by improving lives and our environment.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Davison".

Cllr Ian Davison
Leader of the Council



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris King".

Cllr Chris King
Deputy Leader of the Council





About Warwick District

Warwick District is a roughly heart shaped district in the heart of England. It has a reach which is local, regional, national and international by virtue of its significant and good communication links via roads, trunk roads, motorways, rail and proximity to 3 airports – Birmingham, East Midlands and Heathrow. Its accessibility makes it a highly desirable place to live, to visit and to do business.

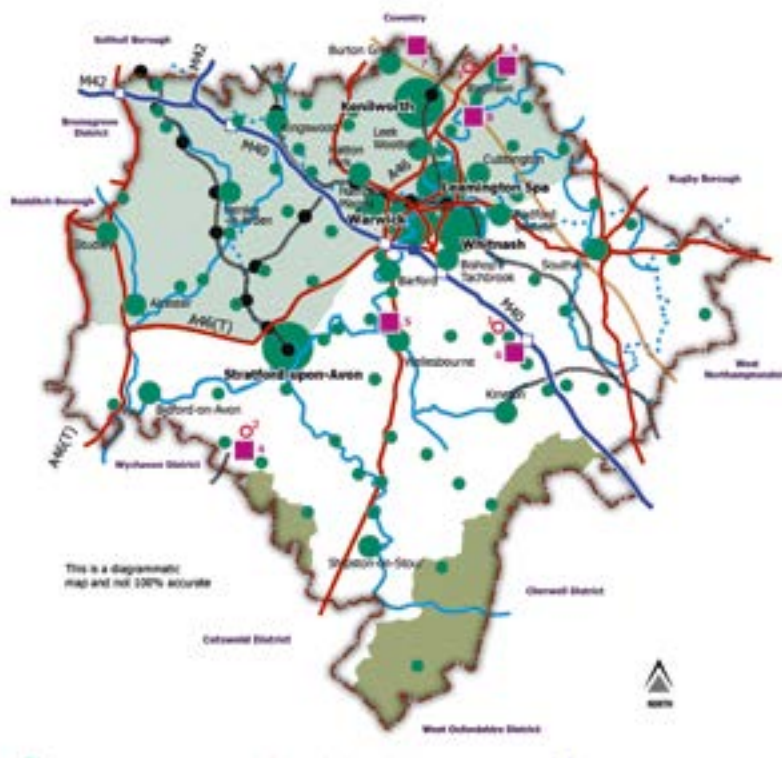
That desirability as a place to live is also reflected in the quality of the environment with 80% of the district in the Green Belt; with the historic towns of Royal Leamington Spa, Warwick, Kenilworth and Whitnash with their splendid architecture and quality open spaces, and the 20 or so villages that make up the communities of the district. The towns and villages of the district have regularly featured in indices and assessments of good quality places to live – such as the Sunday Times Best Place to Live.

That quality is also reflected in the presence of a world leading University – University of Warwick and the Warwickshire College Group – one of the country's best colleges and high performing secondary and primary schools.

Unsurprisingly this attractiveness is also reflected in the economy where there are a large number of small and medium sized enterprises as well as the district being home to national companies such as National Grid. The local economy is already witnessing the transition to more tech-based and green-tech companies and the district is now one of the leading national clusters for Games companies.

Although the district has a large number of strengths it has significant challenges in terms of environmental quality especially climate change; air pollution; water quality and biodiversity. Economically, not everyone has benefited from the prosperity largely experienced in the district and there are both neighbourhoods and sections of our communities that feel left behind. Our town centres are challenged by the impact of the pandemic and the internet. Affordability and availability of housing is also a challenge in the district.

Despite this the district of 28,000 hectares has grown in population and continues to grow. It is home to around 62,600 households (148,500 people) as at 2021 and it is forecast to grow to around 173,000 by 2029. Our communities are highly educated for the most part, certainly outspoken and are diverse geographically, socio-economically and ethnically. The district has a vibrant and wide-ranging set of community, cultural and voluntary organisations and high levels of participation.



Our Vision for Warwick District

“To make Warwick District a great place to live, work and visit by improving lives and our environment.”

Corporate Strategy Principles

The delivery of the Corporate Strategy will be underpinned by the following seven principles:



Sustainability will be at the heart of our decision making.



Plan and invest for the long-term benefit for the people and environment of the district.



Good governance and transparent decision making.



Use data, including insight from our customers, residents, businesses, and visitors to help us make the right decisions.



Social value and inclusive growth will underpin the investments we make throughout the district to help ensure all our communities prosper.



Consultation and engagement with stakeholders will be used to help inform and shape how we deliver improvements and change.



We will evaluate how we make the best use of resources to offer the best service at the best value.

Our Values

Our values are at the heart of everything we do. They provide the basis within which we engage with our employees, and ultimately influence and shape our organisational culture. They are the driving force behind all the work we do.



We will find a better way

– we will find creative, innovative and practical solutions to problems.



We will make it happen

– we are determined and take responsibility in all we do.



We will show respect

– we will value everyone, support each other and work objectively without bias or prejudice.



We will be collaborative

– we will work together with our partners and stakeholders to achieve shared goals.

Strategic Priorities

The three strategic priorities of the Council are:

1. Delivering valued, sustainable services

In order that the Council can continue to focus its efforts and activities on the needs of its residents, communities and businesses, this priority will be underpinned by ensuring continued demonstration of financial sustainability through the medium term. This is the foundation for ensuring that there are the resources to continue to enable residents to receive excellent high-quality services that are responsive and accessible to local needs.

2. Low cost, low carbon energy across the district

The Council will look to find ways to reduce energy consumption and bills in Council civic buildings, Council housing, and help others to do the same, such as privately owned homes, businesses and other public and voluntary sector organisations. Support programmes and initiatives will be developed that meet national standards of accreditation to ensure performance in use is optimised. A performance measurement approach will also be developed to assess the long-term benefits of the improvements made.

3. Creating vibrant, safe and healthy communities of the future

We will work with communities, businesses and public sector partners to enable and support improvements where people's community, economic and housing needs can be met. This will facilitate a better and more sustainable balance with the natural world that will allow our communities and businesses to thrive in a sustainable and safe way.

How we will deliver our Strategic Priorities

The framework below sets out what the Council wants to achieve within each of the Council's three strategic priorities.

This will inform and shape how:

- Service areas develop, review, and update their service area actions plans.
- External funding bids will be targeted.
- Suitable projects will be identified for consideration.
- Our communication priorities will be set.
- The strategy informs the performance framework that explains how the priorities, values and vision are aligned and woven into the fabric of the Council.

1. Delivering valued, sustainable services

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Strategic Goals What we want to achieve	Ways we will deliver this	Lead portfolio
Ensure sustainability is at the heart of our decision making.	We will develop climate and sustainability impact tool to help inform, shape and improve our decision making.	Climate
Continue to ensure the Council's finances remain on a firm and sustainable footing.	Our medium-term financial strategy will set out the steps we will take to ensure we continue to be financially sustainable and can continue to invest across the district – this will include making better use of existing resources and consider how we can increase income generating opportunities.	Resources
	Our change programme will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of how the Council delivers services to ensure they remain responsive and accessible to customer needs.	Transformation and Resources

Achieve and demonstrate delivery of high-quality services.	By reviewing how Council services are delivered and measuring performance will help ensure high quality services are being delivered across the Council.	All
	The Digital and Customer Strategy and Change Management Programme will make it easier for customers to contact the Council 24/7, 365 days a year and enable our customer service team to help more customers at the first point of contact through different communication channels.	Transformation
	We will measure our performance and develop how we use data, benchmarking and customer insight to ensure we continuously learn and improve how we deliver services.	Transformation
	We will further develop our approach to commissioning and contract management across the Council to continue to ensure residents receive the best service possible and value for the taxpayer.	Resources
	Ensure Council homes are safe and meet the Decent Homes standard for all our tenants including improving the energy efficiency of their homes and meeting all new social housing regulatory requirements.	Housing and Assets
We want to attract and retain the best talent to deliver our ambitions.	Our People Strategy will help to attract the right people with the right skills the Council needs and are recognised locally, regionally and nationally as an employer of choice.	Transformation
Ensure the best use of the Council's assets and resources to deliver the Council's wider corporate aims and support the circular economy.	A new Asset Strategy and Management Plan will set out how we will best use our assets to drive sustainability, enable regeneration, and commercial value to contribute to our long-term financial position and place shaping ambitions.	Housing and Assets
	We will continue to develop our approach for maximising social value through our place shaping initiatives and investments, to recycle the Warwick District Pound.	Place

2. Low cost, low carbon energy across the district

The Council will look to find ways to reduce energy consumption and bills in Council civic buildings, Council housing, and help others to do the same, such as privately owned homes, businesses and other public and voluntary sector organisations. Support programmes and initiatives will be developed that meet national standards of accreditation to ensure performance in use is optimised. A performance measurement approach will also be developed to assess the long-term benefits of the improvements made.

Strategic Goals What we want to achieve	Ways we will deliver this	Lead portfolio
Reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions from the council's public buildings.	Significantly improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings and introduce renewable energy generation capacity where possible.	Climate
	Assess the creation of an investment fund for energy conservation and energy generation projects.	Climate
Reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions from the existing Council Housing	<p>Develop a Decarbonisation and Energy Efficiency Strategy, for existing Council homes to reach a minimum of EPC C by 2030.</p> <p>Aim to go further to reduce carbon emissions and energy bills for Council tenants by exploring how we can maximise the impact and prioritisation of our maintenance programme and any external funding opportunities.</p> <p>This will include developing the toolkit to measure and assess impact.</p>	Climate
Provide homes which are safe and meet the Decent Homes standard for all our tenants including improving the energy efficiency of their homes.	Working with tenants and using sector best practice to ensure that our homes are safe, energy efficient, free from damp and mould and, as a minimum, meet decent home standards.	Housing and Assets
Ensure new housing developments led by the Council are exemplars of planning and construction to meet the climate emergency and other challenges.	New Council homes are net zero carbon in operation. To support this, we will set out our aspirations relating to carbon performance and for WDC-led developments recognising that there may be times when these aspirations cannot be fully achieved in light of viability.	Climate
Explore multiple, innovative approaches to make it easier for others in the districts.	By working in partnership locally, regionally and nationally, we will identify, evaluate and undertake initiatives to help local people reduce their energy needs.	Climate

3. Creating vibrant, safe and healthy communities of the future

We will work with communities, businesses and public sector partners to enable and support improvements where people’s community, economic and housing needs can be met. This will facilitate a better and more sustainable balance with the natural world that will allow our communities and businesses to thrive in a sustainable and safe way.

Strategic Goals What we want to achieve	Ways we will deliver this	Lead portfolio
<p>Support all our communities, urban and rural, to be economically ready for the future, with the right infrastructure and protect community identity with a focus on people and environment.</p>	<p>Enhance our town centres by working with businesses in place making initiatives, events and active travel to support the daytime and nighttime economy.</p> <p>This will include taking forward the future high street fund and the progression of the creative quarter.</p>	Place
	<p>Any opportunities for an investment zone will focus on the transition to a green economy, protect against unsuitable development and deliver for biodiversity, sustainable transport, and job creation.</p>	Arts & Economy
	<p>Promote the district as a location for advanced manufacturing, “green” industries, creative games and hi-tech based companies, building on our national reputation.</p> <p>Work with educational establishments to inspire people to learn new skills, help local people access jobs and opportunities.</p>	Arts & Economy
	<p>Increase the volume of high quality, low carbon, affordable and social housing including increasing the Council’s and Milverton Homes’ home building activity.</p> <p>This will help meet demand for housing and help tackle rough sleeping and homelessness.</p>	Housing & Assets

Promote vibrant communities, a welcoming atmosphere and good mental and physical health and wellbeing within all our towns and villages.

Support our creative community, including local artists, dancers, actors, musicians and history and heritage organisations through a revised Creative Framework and a programme of support through UKSPF projects.

Arts & Economy

Build on our reputation as a home for national and international sporting events.

Communities and Leisure

Encourage everyone to have a more active lifestyle via use of our leisure centres, parks and open spaces, other sports facilities, and the provision of other outreach activities.

Communities and Leisure

Review, update and continue to take forward initiatives in the Climate Emergency Action Programme and evaluate their impact.

Strategic leadership

Using our joint WDC/SDC new Local Plan to:

- prioritise housing development on brownfield sites.
- minimize use of greenfield sites where possible.
- promote new developments using 20-minute neighbourhood/settlement designs.
- ensuring convenient access to services and shop.
- protect existing community identities.
- ensure the provision of appropriate infrastructure is available to support new and existing development.

Place

In partnership with Warwickshire County Council, promote and implement active travel choices as a priority – public transport, walking and cycling.

Place

Adopt a Net Zero Carbon DPD and provide supplementary guidance, training and support to ensure that new homes and other building in the district are net zero carbon.

Place

Enhance the Biodiversity of the District	Increase the level of biodiversity on Council owned land and create a network of accessible linked biodiversity rich spaces.	Neighbourhood
	Encourage residents, communities and businesses to enhance the biodiversity of the district using the planning system, the Biodiversity Net Gain legislation and other opportunities.	Neighbourhood
To champion new and innovative ways of working together to improve health, safety, wellbeing and tackle inequalities – focussing on prevention and building resilience in communities.	Reduce health inequalities within the district and develop a series of health and community wellbeing hubs.	Communities and Leisure
	Develop and implement an asset based community development strategy where the Council and partners will work with communities to build capacity to help address their own health, safety and wellbeing needs, especially those with a more deprived socio-economic or isolated backgrounds.	Communities and Leisure
	Working with partners to deliver community safety interventions to address ASB and fear of crime.	Communities and Leisure

Some of the ways the Strategy will benefit the residents, communities and businesses of Warwick District

Residents

- ✓ It will be quicker and easier for residents to contact and receive help and services from the Council.
- ✓ More time and resources freed up to help those most in need.
- ✓ Increase in job opportunities.
- ✓ More new affordable social homes that will help reduce the housing waiting list.
- ✓ Lower energy bills for Council tenants.
- ✓ Improved leisure and sport facilities that improve sport and wellbeing opportunities.
- ✓ Safe, Clean, and Green environment.
- ✓ A better understanding of our residents needs through improved engagement.

Communities

- ✓ Reduction in carbon emissions and air pollution.
- ✓ Community hubs that provide community support facilities.
- ✓ Local improvements and support from social value achieved resulting from Council investments in the district.
- ✓ Enhanced living environments resulting from sustainable regeneration.
- ✓ More opportunities to participate in sport and leisure opportunities.
- ✓ Improved community wellbeing.
- ✓ Council will have a better understanding of its communities and their needs.

Businesses

- ✓ Increase in visitors to Warwick District that will support the tourism and hospitality sectors.
- ✓ More skilled local people.
- ✓ Further strengthening of the creative and digital sector will support business growth and the local economy.
- ✓ More business opportunities for the local supply chain and green industries.
- ✓ Increased town centre footfall.



How success will be measured

The Corporate Strategy will be assessed through measures that will develop and evolve through the life of the strategy. The table below sets out for each priority, some success measures that may be used to identify trends and hence indicate the impact of the strategy between now and 2030. The measures developed will be informed where possible through benchmarking and other evaluation techniques.

Strategic priority	Sample success measures
<p>Delivering Valued, Sustainable Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTFs and balanced budget underpinned by in-year revenue. • Number of customers transacting with the Council via digital services. • Value of non-cash efficiencies realised to free up resources to help those most in need. • % customer satisfaction with Council services. • Improved SAP rating of performance. • Recruitment and retention data. • Number of apprentices that secure a permanent role with the Council. • Improvements in Decent Homes Standards • Amount of external funding secured.
<p>Low cost, low carbon energy across the District</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in total energy consumption (gas and electricity) from WDC assets excluding housing in previous 12 months. • Renewable energy produced within WDC buildings or land – kWh in previous 12 months. • Number of carbon reduction measures implemented in non-council housing in the last year as a result of WDC actions. • % of WDC homes.
<p>Creating Vibrant, Safe and Healthy Communities of the Future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % overall resident satisfaction in Warwick District as a place to live. • Increases in biodiversity as identified through the Biodiversity Action Programme. • Increases in footfall to the high street. • % reductions in carbon emissions against 2018 baseline. • Number of digital and creative businesses moved to or opened up in the district. • Amount and type of social value achieved. • % footfall at active leisure activities. • Positive outcomes from community wardens scheme. • Number of additional net zero social houses built.

Our approach to managing risk

We have an ambitious plan for Warwick District and therefore need to ensure that as we take initiatives forward to improve the quality of life and environment, we actively consider, evaluate and manage risks.

Our approach to risk will be that of being 'risk aware rather than risk averse'.

This approach will be underpinned by our Risk Management Policy that informs how we identify, assess, review, control and manage risks across the Council.

How progress will be monitored

The Council will monitor and review the progress of this strategy in the following ways:

- A set of key performance indicators will be developed and incorporated into service area action plans that show how services are performing and how progress will be tracked over over time.
- Our project register will allow us to monitor and manage progress and plan resources.
- Completed projects will be reviewed to assess if we have achieved all the benefits expected.
- Where possible, we will regularly use external benchmarking to help inform how we are progressing.
- Publish case studies around the impact of the improvements we have made.
- Regular reporting of progress to Cabinet and Council.
- Progress of the strategy and actions will be subject to an annual review by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Review of feedback from stakeholders including, residents, communities, businesses, and public sector partners.
- The strategy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis to reflect any changes in the internal and external operating environments.
- Every three years undertake an independent resident satisfaction survey.



Just some of the organisations we work in partnership with





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