



# ***Spreading opportunity, embedding aspiration and tackling disparities***

A countywide approach  
to Levelling Up in  
Warwickshire





# Foreword



*Warwickshire is county with a proud history and a bright future.*

The county has huge strengths and generally performs very well as a place to live, work and do business; however, for some groups of people, and some places, there are significant disparities which limit people's opportunities, aspiration and social mobility. These are longstanding, complex issues, which demand a new and reinvigorated approach.

Our Levelling Up approach is designed to set out a collective commitment to understand and tackle these disparities, build stronger communities and increase opportunity in the short, medium and long-term, working towards 2030 and beyond.

Everyone who chooses to work, study, visit or live in Warwickshire should be able to live their best lives and fulfil their potential, taking pride in their county, town, community, neighbourhood and street. This means tackling the symptoms and root causes of inequalities and ensuring we build a sustainable future for the next generations.

Levelling up in Warwickshire is about long-term, generational changes, with first target dates being set at 2030. It's about transforming our towns strengthening our communities and improving individual life opportunities; tackling the inequalities that exist around health, education, skills, housing, connectivity that hold them back; and making sure the economy is strong, inclusive and works for everyone.

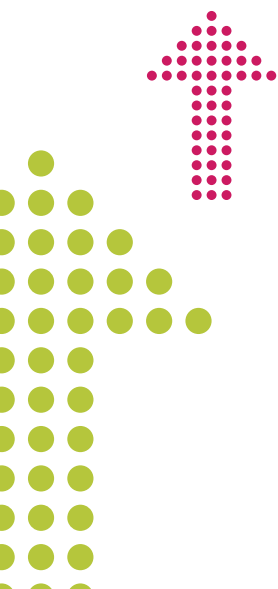
To succeed Levelling Up will need to make sense locally. Our communities have the strengths, knowledge, and capability to define their own priorities and be part of solutions to these.

Working with communities, district, borough, town and parish councils, health partners, emergency services, education, universities, voluntary and community groups and businesses can make a difference by prioritising our efforts and resources. We have developed this approach through rigorous data analysis and by working in very close collaboration with our partners, testing the approach with our residents panel and youth council.

Collectively we want to take a 'Team Warwickshire' approach to Levelling Up – bringing together the strengths of our partners and public agencies and targeting this for the benefit of people and places across the county.

Our approach to Levelling Up in Warwickshire will define, champion and drive the changes we need. We will sustain our many strengths and improve where things are uneven, making a difference to the lives and aspirations of our communities now and for the long term. This approach will combine our countywide scale and reach with a very local focus and action.

**Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE** *Leader of Warwickshire County Council*





# Background and purpose

The Government published the Levelling Up White Paper in February 2022 and provided further detail about the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill in the Queen's Speech in May 2022.

***The Government's Levelling Up White Paper sets out four core objectives:***

1. boost productivity, pay, jobs, and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging;
2. spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest;
3. restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost; and
4. empower local leaders and communities.

***Key features of the Levelling Up agenda included:***

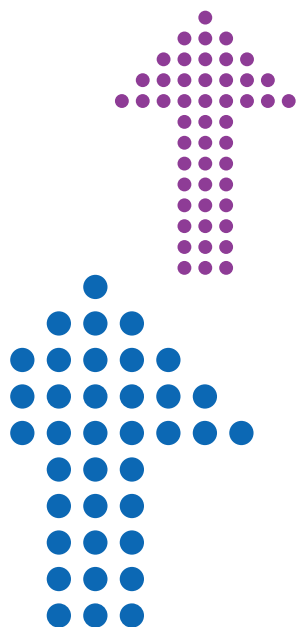
- *creation of 12 National Missions* – covering the different aspects of Levelling Up;
- *a framework for devolution* - and the opportunity for every area in the country to negotiate a devolution deal with Government to secure new powers and funding streams;
- *a reporting framework and greater accountability* - with the development of metrics to measure the success of the missions and the creation of a statutory responsibility to report on progress;
- *new funding* - guidance for the Levelling Up Fund was published alongside the White Paper along with a commitment to simplify future growth funding; and
- *future policy changes* - future legislation will be introduced to create an obligation on the Government to publish an annual report on progress and to strengthen devolution legislation in England.

***The aim of this document is to set out a countywide approach to Levelling Up in Warwickshire*** – it marks the recognition of all that has come before and signals the start of a new journey and approach to tackling longstanding, intractable inequalities.

**It aims to:**

- **translate** the national Levelling Up missions and policy for Warwickshire;
- **focus on** the specific challenges and opportunities for our county;
- **share** our commitment to Levelling Up with our communities;
- **complement and influence** existing activity and future ways of working; and
- **recognise and build** on the power of all our communities, partnerships, networks, and forums.

The following sections set this out in more detail.





# ***Why Levelling Up matters***

Warwickshire is a great place to live, work and do business, it is a destination and location of choice with an international profile and reputation. We enjoy unrivalled connections to the region and to the rest of the UK.

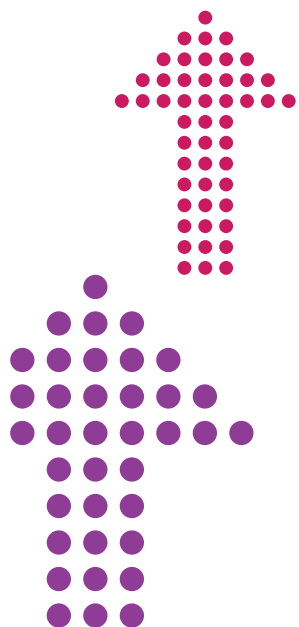
We enjoy one of the UK's most dynamic and rapidly growing economies with strong relationships at sub-regional and regional level.

We are home to a world class university, international business and sector leaders as well as SMEs, with particular strengths in automotive and battery technology, as well as gaming, logistics, digital and creative sectors.

As a county we generally perform well and are relatively affluent compared to other areas of the country. We have a strong economy, good services and mature partnerships.

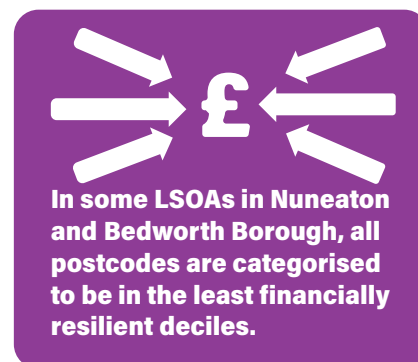
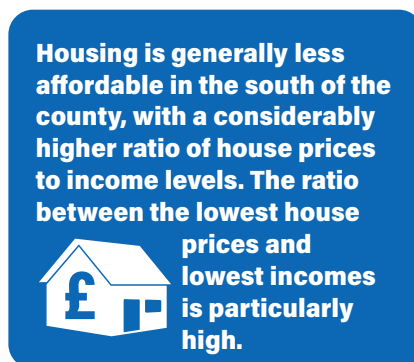
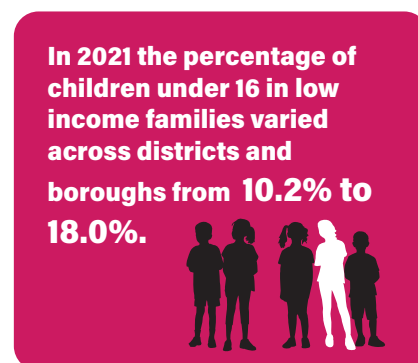
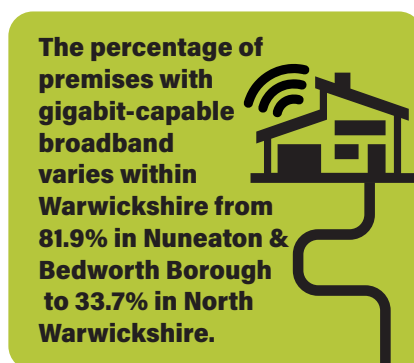
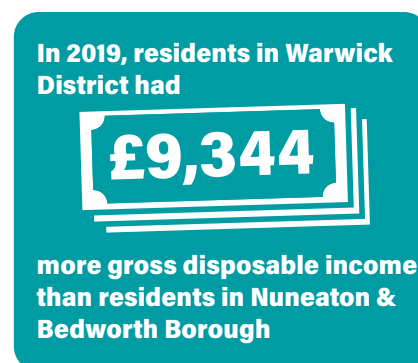
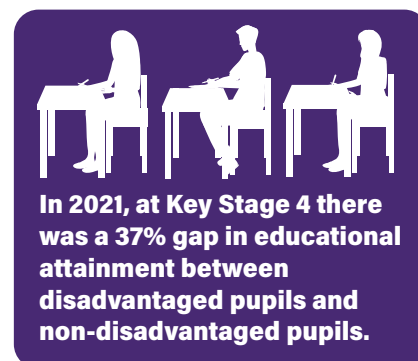
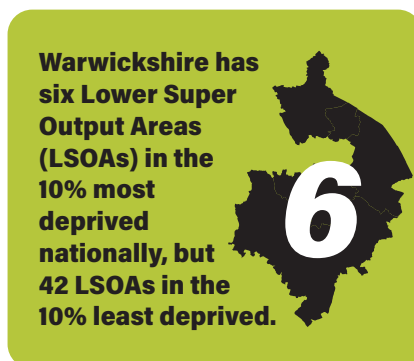
## ***Warwickshire's Key Strengths***

- Warwickshire's strengths mean it has high potential to bounce forward and level up, both within county and contributing to UK-wide levelling up missions.
- Warwickshire is ambitious and has further growth potential and strong local economic levers. This includes a top performing Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership, a wide-ranging composition of businesses; a strong track record in research and development; and innovations in local housing. Together with the £140m Warwickshire Recovery Investment Fund and County Council owned Warwickshire Property Development Group, the county is primed for a strong economic future.
- Warwickshire has a rich heritage with an international profile. Home to Shakespeare, George Eliot, castles, canals and the birthplace of Rugby, tourism is worth over £1.1billion to the local economy. Across the county there are clusters of creative producers, artists, venues and attractions.
- Warwickshire's mature health and social care partnerships and integration provides an opportunity to be an exemplar for population health management and enhancing quality of life.
- Warwickshire is stepping forward to harness the power of communities, building on their strengths and assets with a well-developed community powered approach for the county.
- Warwickshire's Sustainable Futures net zero plan for 2050 will help future proof levelling up benefits for the next generations.





*We also know that this view doesn't tell the whole story for residents and it can feel quite different depending on where in Warwickshire someone lives and even where they were born.*





By looking more closely at long term inequalities and disparities that exist locally and for specific communities of people and places the Levelling Up approach can make a real difference for our county, the region and nationally.

If we could bring the weakest-performing areas of Warwickshire's economy up to the level of the strongest, the county's economy would be boosted by £3bn a year. If we could match economic performance in the south-east, excluding London, Warwickshire would contribute £6.2bn to the UK economy as an engine of growth. By doing all of this, and investing in people's skills, the county's economy would become more inclusive. People would see their household incomes rise, addressing a gap of over £9k a year between average household incomes in Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough and those in both Stratford-on-Avon District and Warwick District.

We know that the Covid-19 pandemic has both highlighted and accentuated inequalities, but the long-term impact of this is still emerging. The rising cost of living also makes Levelling Up all the more relevant now.

The problems levelling up is aiming to tackle are not new and instead span multiple generations. There have been numerous initiatives in the past trying to solve inequalities in England such as Total Place and Big Society but Levelling Up is about building upon the lessons learnt through these programmes and being creative and innovative in our approach. Can we change to Our Levelling Up approach seeks a new outlook on these challenges by being evidence-led and bold in our prioritisation of people and places that are most in need of levelling up.





# Data driven approach

We are taking an evidence-led approach to identifying our priority places and communities. We are using robust, trusted data at a variety of geographical levels to determine where our interventions can have the biggest impact. Specifically, we will use the following frameworks:

- *The Indices of Deprivation* – this is the recognised, nationally-published dataset that enables us to analyse inequalities at a local level across a range of domains.
- *The 12 Levelling Up Missions* – these are the themes set out in the Government's Levelling Up White Paper.

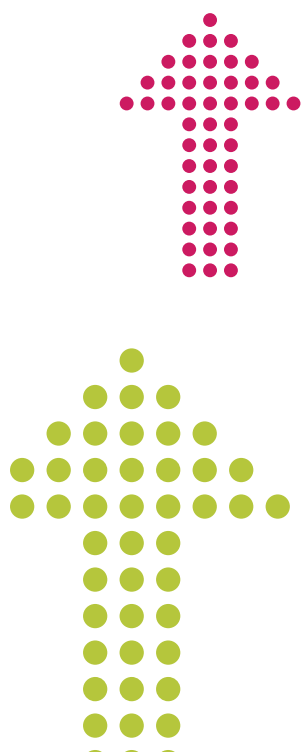
In delivering Levelling Up for Warwickshire, we will supplement these two frameworks with the use of additional nationally and locally produced intelligence. Our priorities, that will govern resource allocation, have been built upon the data shown in our State of Warwickshire 2022 report and Levelling Up evidence base. To track and report on our progress this will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Office of National Statistics Health Index;
- Experian Financial Resilience dataset;
- Warwickshire County Council Performance Framework;
- State of Warwickshire 2022 Report;
- Warwickshire place-based Joint Strategic Needs Assessment;
- Voice of Warwickshire residents' panel survey results; and
- Warwickshire Poverty Dashboard.

## **Measuring our impact**

To support the Levelling Up agenda the Government is creating a new Levelling Up Advisory Council and a statutory duty for local authorities to publish an annual progress report. As well as following this new procedure, Warwickshire County Council is committed to being transparent about the progress of levelling up in the county. To ensure the success of levelling up in Warwickshire, in line with our Performance Management Framework, our programmes of activity will be subject to regular review and reflection so that we can be quick in responding to changes in need and making improvements.

Warwickshire County Council's Integrated Delivery plan will be a key reference point for Levelling Up activity across the council. We will also develop delivery plans with key milestones and specific Levelling Up measures of impact that will report regularly on progress. Utilising our existing partnerships in the county we will influence partnership plans to further reflect delivery activity linked to levelling up.







# ***Listening to the residents of Warwickshire***

In developing our approach to Levelling Up Warwickshire County Council talked to its residents panel, the Voice of Warwickshire, about what Levelling Up means to them and asked them about their proposed approach.

## **476 panel members responded and told us:**

- There is agreement on all four elements of our definition of Levelling Up.
- The three most important things for a great place to live are parks and outdoor spaces, shops and local facilities, and education provision/schools.
- The top things that made people proud to live in their local area were parks and open spaces and how safe they felt to live there.
- There are differences at district/borough level of what makes people proud of where they live. For example, respondents living in Warwick District were more likely to say local businesses compared to respondents in Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough; respondents living in Rugby Borough were more likely to say transport links compared to respondents in Stratford-on-Avon; and respondents in Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough were more likely to say affordability of housing than respondents in Warwick District.
- Overall, residents' priorities for improving the place where they live are access to health provision, levels of safety and improved high streets and town centres with some variation at a district/borough level.

### ***Of all panel members responding***

- **90%** selected parks and outdoor spaces as an aspect of a place that makes it a great place to live.
- **73%** said parks and open spaces made them proud of the place where they live followed by **65%** saying how safe it is to live there.
- **50%** selected access to health provision as one of their top three priorities to improve the place where they live, 43%

selected improvement in how safe it is and 40% selected improvements to high street or town centre.

- **60%** were either very active or involved to some extent in their local community; with 25% saying they would definitely consider getting more involved.
- **Almost 50%** had lived where they currently live for over 20 years.
- **67%** agreed or strongly agreed with the proposed principles to guide work on Levelling Up.

### ***Of the proposed high-level themes:***

- **80%** agreed or strongly agreed with sustainable futures.
- **80%** agreed or strongly agreed with reducing disparities, addressing gaps and inequalities.
- **79%** agreed or strongly agreed with increasing opportunity and social mobility.
- **73%** agreed or strongly agreed with building community power.





## ***Warwickshire Youth Council***

Warwickshire County Council recognises the value of listening to the young people living in the county. The Leader of the Council and senior officers have engaged directly with the chairs of the Youth Council, seeking views on both content and approach.

### ***Their feedback included:***

- Positive response to our definition and principles of Levelling Up
- Pleased to see the prioritisation of skill provision for young adults and improving transport connections
- Emphasised the need for engagement with businesses on how social value and corporate social responsibility can support Levelling Up and young people
- Passionate about town centre regeneration
- Keen for young people in Warwickshire to be engaged with and have opportunities to input and share during the Levelling Up journey





# ***Our Levelling Up principles***

Our commitment to Levelling Up means partners and communities working together more closely with an even greater focus.

Finance, resources and capacity will remain tight, so our approach to Levelling Up will need to go beyond seeking Government funding. We will need to be flexible and innovate to make the best possible use of existing resources, capacity and capability, and be dynamic in seeking external investment into Warwickshire.

The key principles set out below have been tested and refined with partners. They will shape and underpin the long-term approach to Levelling Up:

1. *A joint mission and holistic approach* - we will bring together partners from across Warwickshire's public, private, voluntary and community sectors to work together on Levelling Up and our shared challenges as Team Warwickshire. We will work closely with Government and regional / sub-regional bodies so that Warwickshire benefits from opportunities to do more locally and deliver on wider national and regional agendas.
2. *A long-term approach* - addressing disparities and increasing social mobility will take decades. This approach will commit to making sustainable progress on long-term issues while delivering early results where possible.
3. *Addressing root causes* - we will use data, insight and partnerships to tackle the root causes of complex issues, rather than the symptoms, prioritising prevention and early intervention to prevent long-term problems.
4. *Strengths-based* - we will build on the strengths of individuals, communities, places and interest groups to improve quality of life for them. This approach will not hold back other places or groups with a stronger starting position. Our approach will combine our countywide scale and reach with a very local focus and action.
5. *Data-driven* - we will use data and insight to identify the things and places we need to target, and help us adapt as we learn. We will, track and report transparently on progress to our communities and inform work with our partners, using national benchmarks wherever possible.
6. *Targeted and tailored to communities of place and of interest* - based on data and insight, we will prioritise and engage the communities of place and interest that need most support, building community power and influence. We will capitalise on their strengths to help them build the capacity to improve things in the long-term, tailoring approaches to local circumstances.





# ***Our response to the Levelling Up White Paper***

*Levelling up is complex and multi-dimensional so we've tried to keep it simple and think about 4 core elements of Levelling Up for Warwickshire:*

## ***12 national missions from the Levelling Up White Paper***

The national missions set out the overall context for Levelling Up across the country. They exist in their own right and relate to each other, making them easy to group and show how progress in one will benefit others, for example the link between living standards and health and wellbeing.

The 12 missions also map well onto local strategies and organisational plans. There is a strong link between the 12 missions and the County Council's own priorities and areas of focus as set out in the Council Plan. They will also form the cornerstone of any devolution deal for Warwickshire that we develop with partners in the future.

The missions provide an opportunity for organisations to join together to positively affect overall life experiences and opportunities.

Key partners have worked together closely to develop a definition of what Levelling Up means for Warwickshire.





# Our Levelling Up definition

## Our Levelling Up definition for Warwickshire means:



**Fairness:** Increasing opportunity and social mobility: ensuring the success you enjoy in life is less dependent on where you live, your background and who your parents are by:

- spreading opportunity and embedding aspiration;
- fulfilling people's potential in life; and
- building inclusive economic growth to ensure valued, well-paid and high-quality jobs.



**Reducing disparities: addressing gaps and inequalities in:**

- standards of living;
- health, happiness and well-being;
- educational attainment;
- access to good, affordable housing; and
- connectivity (transport and digital).



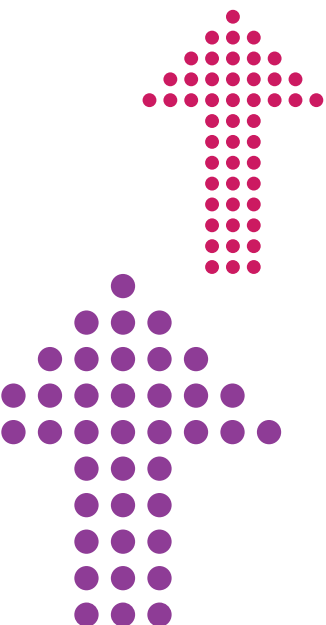
**Building community power:**

Increasing pride in the place you live in, and unleashing the potential of communities by increasing your voice and influence over your places.



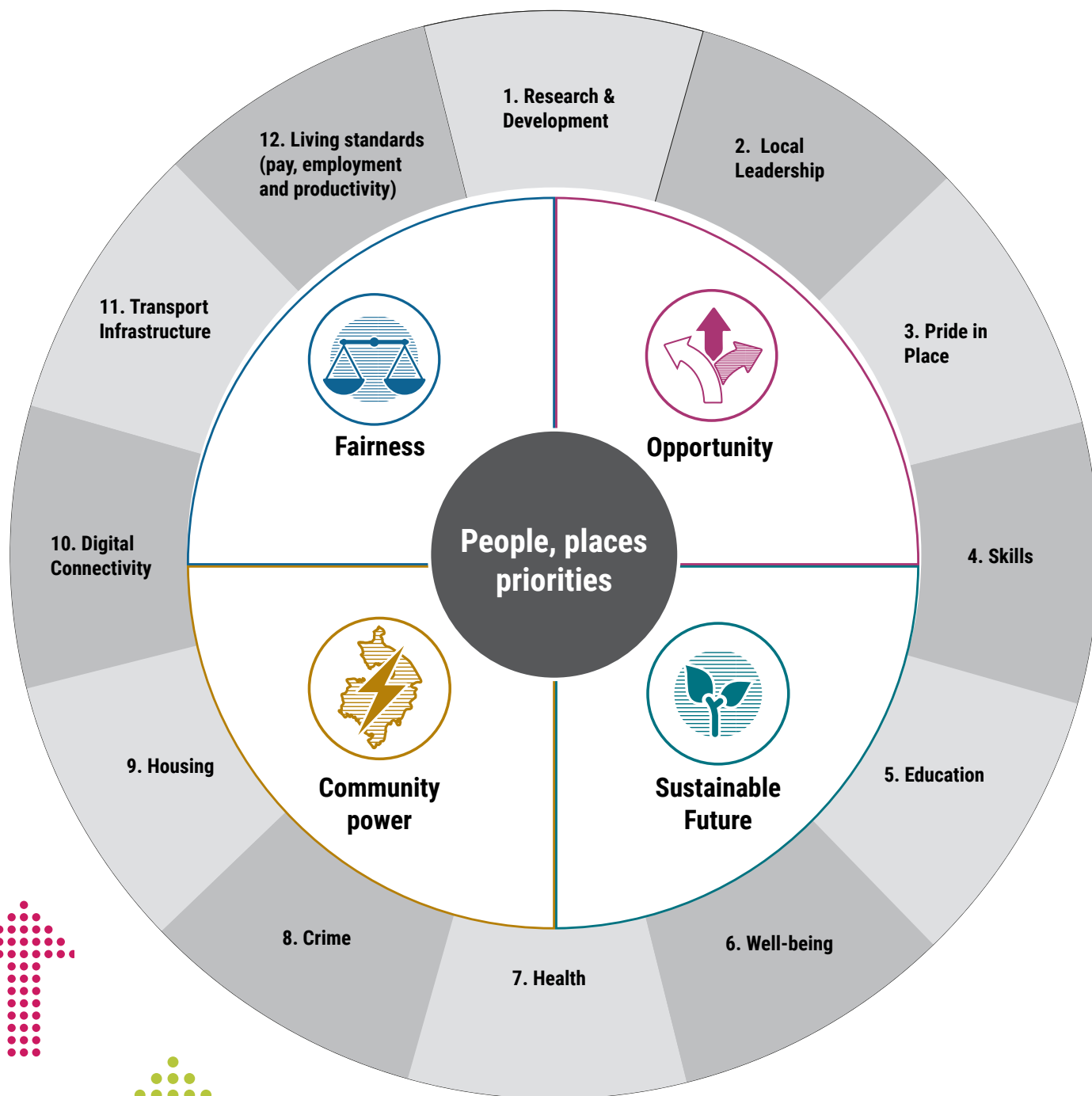
**Creating sustainable futures:**

Ensuring climate change and adaptation are a central part of Levelling Up so future generations can live in a sustainable county with good opportunities and quality of life, including standards of living.





*This diagram outlines the 12 national missions mapped against the four elements of Warwickshire's Levelling Up definition.*





# Our focus

## ***Levelling Up will run through all we do***

Building from the definition, we must prioritise our focus and resources based on local priorities and seek to maximise impact, avoiding a one size fits all approach.

Levelling Up is relevant to all places and people in Warwickshire. The priorities reflect our need to prioritise and target activity where it can deliver the greatest Levelling Up impact against the national missions and our local definition of Levelling Up.

We have worked to identify countywide priorities in three main aspects, which we will review and update from time to time.



### ***1. People***

Focusing on specific groups, cohorts and communities who face particular challenges in terms of Levelling Up, by tackling the long-term factors that affect their quality of life and living standards.



### ***2. Places***

Identifying priority places which demonstrate multiple, connected disparities, which require joined-up, concerted effort and focus to level up, taking into account the different needs and priorities of different places.



### ***3. Priorities***

Identifying the actions and activities that will continue to protect our collective strengths and normal business activity, whilst accelerating efforts and impact for those people and places where there is greatest need.





# People

## ***Using a range of data sets we have identified the following communities and groups to be a focus for Levelling Up in Warwickshire:***

Alongside this list, we will be considering the needs of global ethnic majorities and transient communities as well as looking at emerging and new areas/communities of need post-pandemic. This list is not static – it will change by location and over time.

### ***Income levels***

- Households with gross disposable income below the England average.
- Children living in low income households.
- People who are just coping financially and/or using food banks including those in work but on benefits.

### ***Connectivity***

- Communities with poor transport links to large employment centres and local facilities.
- Those at risk of social isolation.
- Communities at risk of digital exclusion.

### ***Education and Young People***

- Early years - pupils at the end of early years foundation stage not ready for the next stage of education, Key Stage One.
- Pupils in primary school not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths.
- Pupils in secondary education not achieving GCSEs in English and Maths by age 19.

- School aged children who are missing 10%+ of possible school sessions.
- Young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

### ***Health***

- Overweight and obese adults and children.
- Adults at risk of chronic health conditions such as cardiovascular and respiratory disease
- Young people and adults at risk of or with poor mental health and wellbeing.

### ***Skills and employment***

- Adults in unskilled employment.
- Adults with no qualifications above a level 3.
- School leavers that are not going into education, employment, or training.
- Long-term unemployed seeking sustainable careers.







# Place

Focusing on the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the 20% most deprived nationally, against the Index of Multiple Deprivation, the following places will be a focus for Levelling up in Warwickshire. Historically these areas have multiple, long-standing issues that will need concentrated, co-ordinated, long-term action, alongside additional investment, to address the root causes. District and borough Levelling Up plans will provide tailored approaches for supporting these areas and may highlight additional priority places.

Through our Levelling Up approach these areas will be prioritised initially when deciding where additional activity is needed but not to the disadvantage of places not listed below. This priority list will be kept under review to ensure we continue to target the right areas. We will do this in a way that ensures our focus on these priority places does not 'level down' places currently doing better.

## **Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough** (28,800)

Bar Pool North & Crescents  
Kingswood Grove Farm & Rural  
Camp Hill Village & West  
Abbey Town Centre  
Middlemarch & Swimming Pool  
Abbey Priory  
Hill Top  
Camp Hill East & Quarry  
Kingswood Stockingford Schools  
Abbey North  
Bede East  
Bede Cannons  
Poplar Coalpit Field  
Camp Hill North West & Allotments  
Riversley  
Bede North  
Poplar Nicholas Chamberlain

## **North Warwickshire Borough** (3,800)

Mancetter South & Ridge Lane  
Atherstone Central - Centre

## **Rugby Borough** (4,100)

Brownsover South Lake District North  
Rugby Town Centre

## **Warwick District** (1,300)

Lillington East

**See map showing Index of Multiple Deprivation in Warwickshire on following page**

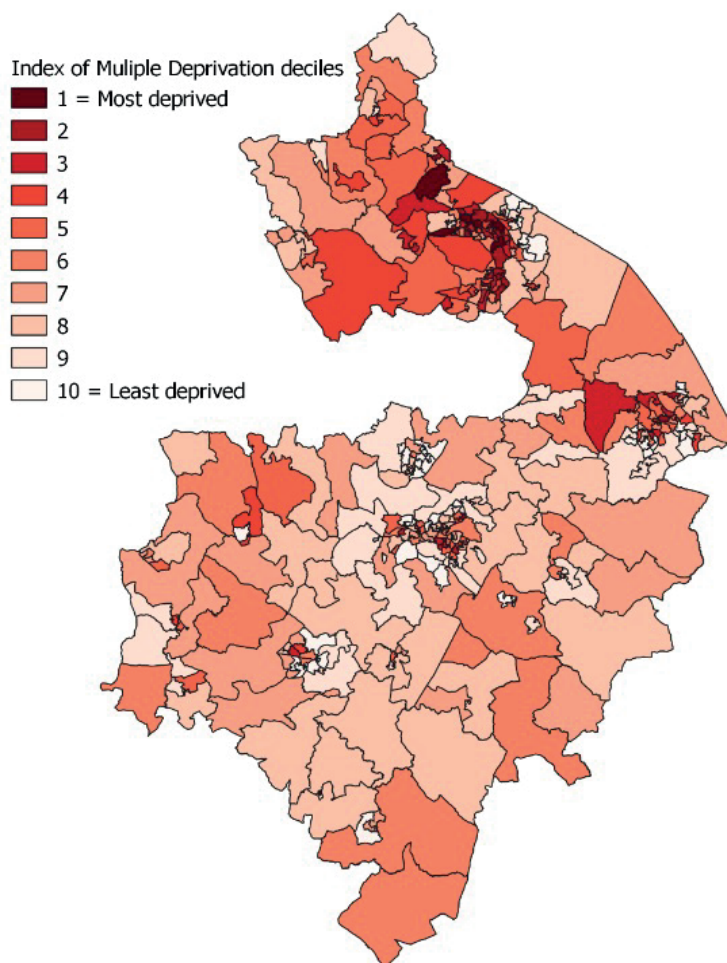
*Figure in brackets denotes population in each District/Borough living in the 20% most deprived nationally, against the Index of Multiple Deprivation*

**Beyond the 22 LSOAs listed above, there is the opportunity to develop District and Borough plans which would shape tailored local approaches, that will address the specific levelling up needs of each area.**



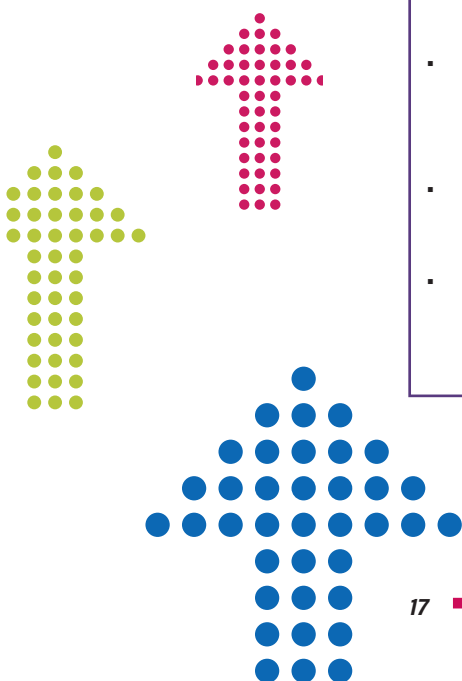


### ***Index of Multiple deprivation in Warwickshire***



***Additionally, we will look at the following factors to ensure our understanding of communities is refined and reflective of local need and knowledge:***

- Hyper-local pockets of need including community powered investments, with a particular focus on the 22 LSOAs listed on page 16.
- Town centres linked to existing and future schemes/projects; Nuneaton, Bedworth, Atherstone, Rugby, Leamington Spa and ensuring the whole county benefits from its world-class heritage and culture assets.
- Rural areas and communities with a particular focus on digital connectivity and transport.
- Emerging and new areas/communities of need and opportunities for interconnectivity between existing and newly formed communities at a local level.





# Countywide priorities:

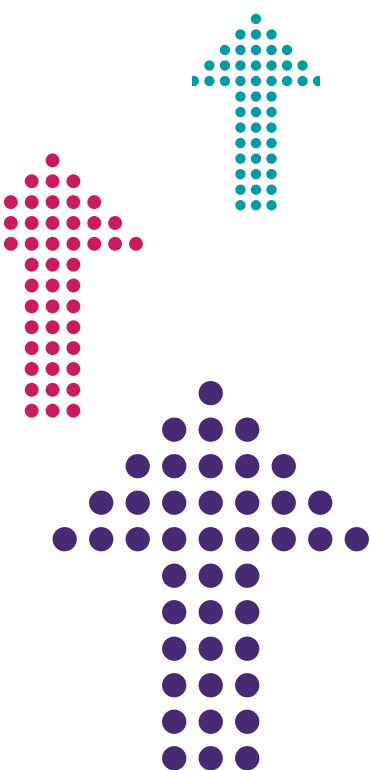
To make sure that Levelling Up is a success for Warwickshire, the following Levelling Up objectives for the county, in line with the national framework, are priorities for progress towards the 2030 targets.

## **1. Improve educational attainment and adult skills in priority places, as the key enabler of levelling up:**

- a. Improve school readiness and experiences for Early Years so all children achieve their potential, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- b. Deliver against the Government target that by 2030, 90% of children achieve expected levels of reading, writing and mathematics at the end of primary school, and the worst performing areas will have increased by one third.
- c. Significantly increase the numbers of people successfully completing high quality skills training annually, with a particular focus on improving the % of 16-64 year olds with a Level 3 qualification or better in the 16 LSOAs in the bottom quartile (generally in North Warwickshire and Nuneaton and Bedworth).

## **2. Develop an inclusive, high performing economy for all:**

- a. Bring the worst performing areas economically up to the county average, then target matching the best performing areas in the county.
- b. Levelling up Warwickshire's economic performance nationally by matching the best in the South East (excluding London).
- c. Promoting economic inclusion by enabling everyone to fulfil their potential through specific targeting of small geographies and disadvantaged/under-represented groups, ensuring no one is left behind.
- d. Starting with strengths by focusing on the key priority sectors in Warwickshire and future growth potential, but ensuring benefits are spread and accessible to all.





**3. *Improve healthy life expectancy at birth across the county by 5-years by 2035 from 64.6 to 69.6 years for males and from 64.1 to 69.1 years for females.***

To do this we will focus on reducing the proportion of children and adults who are overweight, preventing premature death from cardiovascular disease, facilitating earlier diagnosis of cancer and supporting improvements in mental health and wellbeing.

**4. *Focus on town centre regeneration in priority towns in every district and borough.***

**5. *Improve access to gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage, and 5G connectivity, across the county, with a particular focus on Stratford-on-Avon and North Warwickshire.***

**6. *Deliver against the Government target to reduce homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime levels by 10% in the worst affected areas, with a particular focus on Nuneaton and Bedworth.***

**7. *Improve access to affordable housing, especially in Stratford-on-Avon.***

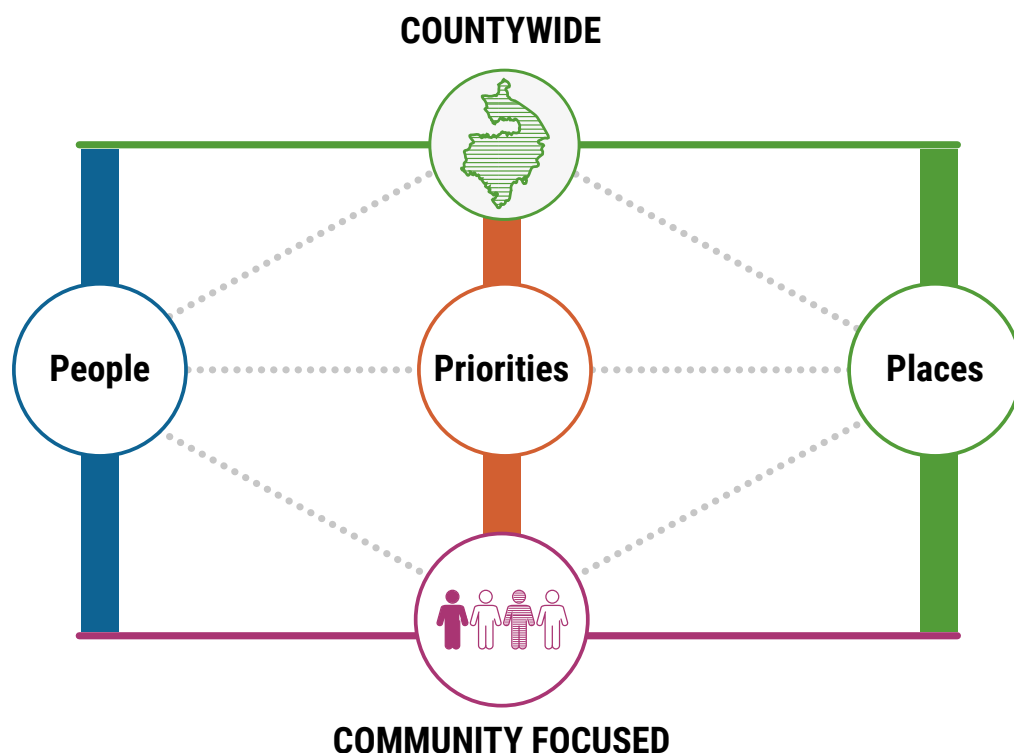
**8. *Improve transport connectivity in Stratford-on-Avon and North Warwickshire.***





# How we will work

To make Levelling up work our approach will operate at multiple spatial levels, sometimes simultaneously and always for the benefit of communities and residents.



## **Countywide**

At a county wide level we will create an universal offer, ensuring regional and national connections are made and the commissioning of services done at scale.

### **Products:**

- Health & Wellbeing Strategy
- Long-term Infrastructure Strategy (in development)
- Education Strategy
- Economic Growth Strategy
- Tackling Social Inequalities Strategy
- Sustainable Futures 2050 Strategy (in development)
- Local Transport Plan
- Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy



### **Actions:**

- Develop, with partners, targeted approaches to delivering impact for identified priority communities of place and communities of interest
- Support coordination of Levelling Up funding bids within the County
- 'Team Warwickshire' approach with partners to inform the emerging work and content of a devolution deal for Warwickshire
- Convene workshops for external investors and local developers to explore how they can support and help accelerate delivery against our Levelling Up priorities, ensuring a multiplier effect by securing private investment to support public sector investment
- Review Warwickshire Recovery Investment Fund and priorities for investment from 2023-24 against the countywide levelling up priorities
- Establish a regular dialogue with local businesses to develop ideas and support for levelling up through corporate social responsibility.
- As part of the annual refresh, we will review and update the Council's integrated delivery plan against the countywide levelling up approach and the local levelling up plans..



### **Places**

At a place-based level we will work with partners to deliver connected service offers, maximise the benefits of our existing partnerships and ensure activity is targeted and relevant.

### **Products:**

- Opportunity to develop District and Borough Levelling Up plans, using a common format to ensure alignment with the countywide approach, and aligning with Integrated Care System place plans

### **Actions:**

- Develop the role of local councillors in Levelling up
- Work with partners, stakeholders and communities to shape and bring forward town centre regeneration programmes
- Develop, with partners, a clear countywide pipeline of Levelling Up projects for funding bids and external investment





### ***Community focused***

At a community level we will focus on hyper-local areas and pockets of inequality to empower communities to develop approaches to the unique challenges they face.

#### ***Products:***

- Community Powered Warwickshire offer

#### ***Actions:***

- Set up two pilots, as part of the Community Powered Warwickshire Ground Breakers, in two of the identified 22 LSOAs, to identify approaches to apply across the rest of priority LSOAs
- Convene a Community Powered Warwickshire Big Conversation event with a focus on building community power to support our levelling up priorities

