



## Public Document Pack

# Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Dawn French

## Local Plan Leadership Group Remote Meeting

**Date:** Monday, 24th May, 2021

**Time:** 7.00 pm

**Venue:** Zoom - <https://zoom.us/>

**Chair:** Councillor G Bagnall

**Members:** Councillors M Caton, R Freeman, P Lees, M Lemon, B Light,  
S Merifield, R Pavitt (Vice-Chair), N Reeve, M Sutton and M Tayler

### **Public Participation**

At the start of the meeting there will be an opportunity for up to 10 members of the public to ask questions and make statements subject to having given notice by 2pm the working day before the meeting. Each speaker will have 4 minutes to make their statement. Please write to [committee@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:committee@uttlesford.gov.uk) to register your intention to speak with Democratic Services.

Public speakers will be offered the opportunity for an officer to read out their questions or statement at the meeting, or to attend the meeting over Zoom to readout their questions or statement themselves

Members of the public who would like to watch the meeting live can do so [here](#). The broadcast will be made available as soon as the meeting begins.

# **AGENDA**

## **PART 1**

### **Open to Public and Press**

**1 Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**

To receive any apologies and declarations of interest.

**2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

4 - 6

To consider the minutes of the previous meeting.

**3 Local Plan Strategic Objectives**

7 - 9

To consider the draft vision and objectives for the new Local Plan.

**4 Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation**

10 - 166

To receive summaries of the first consultation on the Local Plan (also known as the Issues and Options consultation).

**For information about this meeting please contact Democratic Services**

Telephone: 01799 510369, 510548, 510410 or 510467

Email: [Committee@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:Committee@uttlesford.gov.uk)

**General Enquiries**

Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

Telephone: 01799 510510

Fax: 01799 510550

Email: [uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk)

Website: [www.uttlesford.gov.uk](http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk)

# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

**LOCAL PLAN LEADERSHIP GROUP held at ZOOM - [HTTPS://ZOOM.US/](https://zoom.us/), on THURSDAY, 29 APRIL 2021 at 7.00 pm**

Present: Councillor G Bagnall (Chair)  
Councillors M Caton, R Freeman, P Lees, M Lemon, B Light,  
S Merifield, R Pavitt (Vice-Chair), N Reeve, M Sutton and  
M Tayler

Guest (non-voting): Councillor J Evans

Officers in attendance: G Glenday (Assistant Director - Planning), J Hill (Planning Policy Officer), B Kennedy (Principal Transportation and Infrastructure Planner), S Miles (Local Plans and New Communities Manager), L Mills (New Communities Senior Planning Officer) and C Shanley-Grozavu (Democratic Services Officer)

## 1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest.

## 2 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Councillor Evans and Councillor Reeve both requested that the attendance record be amended to reflect that they were present at the previous meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved, subject to the amendment of the attendance record.

## 3 **LPLG PREFERRED OPTIONS METHODOLOGY AND WORK PROGRAMME**

The Local Plans and New Communities Manager and Luke Mills presented a report which set out the proposed methodology for preparing the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan over the next nine months. The report also sought agreement to a provisional work plan of meetings until December 2021.

During discussion, officers outlined the process for developing the Strategic Objectives for the new Local Plan. It was confirmed that the objectives would be derived from a range of documentation including the National Planning Policy Framework, the Uttlesford District Council Corporate Plan and the Inspectors' findings on the withdrawn local plan and would be developed alongside members at an upcoming workshop. Following the workshop, the principles would be taken to the next meeting of the group for recommendation to Cabinet.

In response to members questions, the following was also clarified:

- Officers were engaging with various health providers, including the West Essex CCG.

- The frequency of Local Plan Leadership Group meetings would be amended to monthly, with some additional reserved dates.
- When drafting a Memoranda of Understanding, the Planning department will come to discussions with promoters of sites with an open mind but will be robust in negotiating to achieve the policy objectives of the Council.

#### 4 **FEEDBACK ON CONSULTATION ON THEME 5: LEISURE, CULTURE AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES**

The Planning Policy Officer presented a report on the comments received on the fifth consultation theme of “Leisure, Culture and Healthy Lifestyles” which was discussed by the Community Stakeholder Forum on 27 January 2021. Following the Forum, the theme was open for public consultation and in the first four weeks, 25 responses had been received.

Members discussed the findings of the ongoing consultation and the following was noted:

- The report presents the responses received for the first 4 weeks of the consultation, however officers will continue to receive responses from all themes until 21st April. It was confirmed that a full summary would be brought to the Local Plan Leadership Group.
- The UDC Open Space Assessment Report provided a comprehensive evidence base and officers are seeking to expand this for the Local Plan.
- There was some limited work by the Business Development team to explore the arts and culture facilities in the area, but there was a need for a wider review of organisations across the district.
- Members raised concerns that the responses were biased towards older age groups, who were more likely to respond to the consultation. Officers confirmed that they conducted a targeted survey for young people in order to gain a more diverse reflection of response.
- There was a need to consider whether partnerships to promote leisure, culture and healthy lifestyles would be district-wide or if a concentrated approach was needed.

#### 5 **FEEDBACK ON CONSULTATION ON THEME 6: BIODIVERSITY**

The Local Plans and New Communities Manager presented a report on the comments received on the sixth consultation theme.

The sixth theme was on the topic of “Biodiversity” and was discussed by the Community Stakeholder Forum on 10th February 2021. Following the Forum, the theme was open for public consultation and in the first four weeks, 20 responses had been received.

Members discussed the findings of the ongoing consultation and the following was noted:

- Members felt that there was a need to create a vision of how the district fits around nature, rather than managing nature like an economic entity.

- There is an existing tension between biodiversity and agriculture, and the new Local Plan needed to find a balance between necessary commercial farming, biodiversity and food production. Members highlighted the need for ongoing engagement with external authorities, such as the National Farmers Union, to achieve this.
- Members requested that Officers consider how connectivity and wildlife corridors can be ensured when allocating land.
- Officers confirmed that they had been engaging with external stakeholders, such as the NFU, for their views on the new Environmental Land Management schemes so they can reflect this within the new Local Plan.

## 6 **DECARBONISATION AND WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

The Local Plans and New Communities Manager presented the report which sets out the issues relating to and the proposed scope of work to address how the Local Plan can address climate change mitigation, resilience, adaptation and achieving net zero carbon and water resource management in preparing the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan. It was confirmed that it was the water companies' responsibility to provide a water supply, however it was the local authorities responsibility to ensure that the Local Plan is supported by appropriate evidence to demonstrate that the plan is deliverable.

Members discussed the challenges of providing a sustainable water supply for the future, given the long-term forecast of less rain in the region and an existing dependency on aquifers. In addition, they considered current thinking around supplying water in future and ideas included scaling down extraction to create a reservoir downstream, piping water from elsewhere and pumping water through sand dunes.

Members highlighted the need to raise concerns about water infrastructure early with providers, in order to ensure that the supply is provided for a deliverable local plan.

Officers noted the concerns and suggested that we await the output of the work before drawing any conclusions.

*Councillor Lees left the meeting at 20:13*

*The meeting ended at 20:20*

# Agenda Item 3

<b>Committee:</b>	Local Plan Leadership Group	<b>Date:</b>	Monday, 24 May 2021
<b>Title:</b>	Local Plan Strategic Objectives		
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor J Evans, Portfolio Holder for Planning and the Local Plan		
<b>Report Author:</b>	Stephen Miles, Local Plans and New Communities Manager smiles@uttlesford.gov.uk	<b>Key decision:</b>	N

---

## Summary

1. The Council is working on a new Local Plan, one of the first tasks for the Council is to agree the Strategic Objectives for the plan.

## Recommendations

2. To consider the draft vision and objectives for the new Local Plan and make recommendations to Cabinet.

## Financial Implications

3. The approved budget for the Local Plan in 2021-22 includes sufficient provision for the work needed through to the end of March.

## Background Papers

4. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.
  - [Planning Advisory Service - Local Plan Route Mapper](#)
  - [Planning Advisory Service - Good Plan Making Guide](#)

## Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	The draft timetable builds in three stages for people to make representations on the draft Local Plan.
Community Safety	N/a.
Equalities	Forthcoming policies will be subject to an Equalities and Healthy Impact Assessment (EqHIA).

Health and Safety	N/a.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Preparation of a local plan is a statutory duty. It needs to meet legal tests and comply with regulations.
Sustainability	Forthcoming policies will need to meet the sustainability objectives of the Council and the Local Plan will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal.
Ward-specific impacts	All.
Workforce/Workplace	N/a.

## Situation

6. The Council is working on a new Local Plan for the district. The Local Plan Leadership Group has a key role in this process – in providing clear direction during the preparation of the Draft Plan so that officers can carry out the technical work that is required to write the Draft Plan. The timetable is tight and it is vital that decisions are made in accordance with the agreed timetable so as to avoid slippage.
7. The timetable for the Local Plan was agreed at Cabinet in October 2020<sup>1</sup>. At Local Plan Leadership Group (LPLG) on 29 April the Group considered the detailed work programme to December 2021. This programme sets out three key tasks for LPLG and Cabinet over the summer, the first of which is to agree the strategic objectives for the Draft Plan.
8. In order for officers to assess sites and prepare draft planning policies it will be necessary to set some clear strategic planning objectives. This is identified as a role for the Cabinet informed by the deliberations of this Group. It is proposed that the strategic objectives will provide high level direction and that they be derived from the following:
  - a. National Planning Policy Framework (plans must be consistent with the NPPF to be sound);
  - b. The approved Uttlesford District Council Corporate Plan;
  - c. The Inspectors' findings on the withdrawn local plan;
  - d. Feedback from the Issues and Options Stage; and
  - e. Other relevant sources (for instance best practice that arises from the longer term planning response to Covid-19)
9. A workshop with members of LPLG is set up for 17 May to discuss the vision and strategic objectives. Using the above principles this workshop will

■ \_\_\_\_\_

- <sup>1</sup> The timetable for the Local Plan is contained in the Council's Local Development Scheme

consider the national requirements, the local policy drivers and look at what the Local Plan should be looking to achieve.

*The local plan must contain a vision which should be aspirational but realistic. It should set out the intended character of the plan area, based on current trends and trajectory of key data such as that related to population and economy. Objectives should flow from the vision, establishing the way in which the plan area will deal with the identified critical issues. Together, these should be clear, realistic, locally distinctive and spatial in planning terms.<sup>2</sup>*

10. The workshop will examine the vision and objectives of recently adopted Local Plans to use ‘best practice’ and will need to address (for example):

- a. The need to deliver a sufficient supply of homes;
- b. The national need and local commitment to address climate change and achieve zero carbon; and
- c. The local commitment to be an active place maker.

11. A paper setting out the conclusions of this workshop will be presented to LPLG on or before 24 May.

## Risk Analysis

12.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That the objectives are not approved in a timely manner impacting on the ability of the Council to keep to the timetable for the Local Plan in the LDS	2 – the timetable is tight	3 – any delay in the Local Plan timetable extends the period of time that the district is vulnerable to speculative development	The member workshop on 17 May allows for an opportunity to discuss the potential objectives

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

■ \_\_\_\_\_

- <sup>2</sup> PAS – Good Plan Making Guide paragraph 1.1

**Committee:** Local Plan Leadership Group

**Date:**

**Title:** Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation

Monday, 24 May  
2021

**Report Author:** Stephen Miles, Local Plans and New Communities Manager  
smiles@uttlesford.gov.uk

## Summary

1. This report summarises the first consultation on the Local Plan (also known as the Issues and Options consultation) which closed on 21 April.

## Recommendations

2. That the group notes the outcome of the consultation and endorses the use of the representations received to inform the drafting of the Local Plan.

## Financial Implications

3. The approved budget for the Local Plan in 2021-22 includes sufficient provision for the work needed as part of the approved Medium Term Financial Strategy of the Council.

## Background Papers

4. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

## Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	The draft timetable builds in three stages for people to make representations on the draft Local Plan.
Community Safety	N/a
Equalities	Forthcoming policies will be subject to an Equalities and Healthy Impact Assessment (EqHIA)
Health and Safety	N/a
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Preparation of a local plan is a statutory duty. It needs to meet legal tests and

	comply with regulations.
Sustainability	Forthcoming policies will need to meet the sustainability objectives of the Council and the Local Plan will be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal.
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	N/a

## Situation

6. The Council's first consultation on the Local Plan has just concluded. This consultation was run in a different way from 'normal' consultations on a Local Plan in that instead of the Council putting a document out with the Council's ideas on the issues facing the district and the options for dealing with those issues, the Council instead asked the public and other stakeholders to tell us what they thought the issues were and how they could be dealt with. This allowed people to have their say before any decisions are made and before a single line of the Local Plan is written.
7. The consultation was organised into 9 themes, with a 'mini-consultation' running on each theme. Each theme introduced by a discussion of that theme in public at an independent Community Stakeholder Forum (CSF), including a presentation from an independent expert in the field. This was intended to break up the issues into 'bite-sized' chunks and introduce them in a way that was easy for people who do not normally get involved in the planning system to understand and respond. This forum discussed the themes in order to stimulate ideas and debate in the community and ultimately encourage more and better representations. This was broadcast live as well as being put up on YouTube.
8. Each Community Stakeholder Forum was seen live by between 33 and 49 viewers. The presentations and discussions at the CSF were then viewed 3,419 times subsequently on YouTube.
9. A summary of further actions to promote this first consultation is set out below:
  - a. A leaflet promoting the consultation was sent to all households and businesses in the district at the start of the consultation;
  - b. A press release was sent out for each theme targeting the deadlines of local papers to seek exposure on the issues being discussed, this was also published on the UDC website;
  - c. After the first three themes adverts were also placed in the local papers to supplement the press releases;
  - d. Content from the themes was also put up on social media e.g. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram etc;
  - e. Each theme was 'pushed' a number of times on social media;
  - f. A Local Plan Newsletter was sent out regularly to those that signed up on the Council's website;

- g. Members were sent promotional material at the start of each theme to aid them in promoting each consultation in their communities;
  - h. Town and Parish Councils were sent promotional material at the start of each theme to aid them in promoting each consultation in their communities as well as preparing their responses;
  - i. Two Member Forums were held to encourage discussion on the themes and assist them in promoting the consultation in their communities;
  - j. Two Town and Parish Council Forums were held to encourage discussion on the themes and assist them in promoting the consultation in their communities as well as preparing their responses;
  - k. One Forum was held with developers and agents to assist them in preparing their submissions;
  - l. The Council's Local Plan web pages were redesigned to make them easier to navigate and more attractive.
  - m. Individuals and organisations registered on the online consultation portal received email notification at the start of the consultation for each theme.
10. Responses received during the first four weeks of each consultation were summarised and brought back to the CSF and LPLG to keep members of the groups abreast of and begin considering the responses. So far, these groups have considered responses on the first six themes. To inform this report, the remaining responses to the first six themes have been summarised, furthermore all the responses to the final three themes have been summarised. These responses have been appended to this report and will be used to inform the drafting of the Local Plan.
11. In total the Council received 670 responses to the consultation. Many of these responses are detailed, and considering a broad range of issues. Officers consider that the discussion at the CSF has helped to broaden the debate and assist those preparing representations.
12. The consultation was also supplemented by a youth survey to encourage issues to be raised by younger residents, who often do not make up the usual people responding to planning consultations. This elicited 97 responses to a survey and a further 17 more detailed responses setting out how they considered development pressures may be responded to. A report summarising these responses is appended to this report.

## Risk Analysis

13.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Insufficient regard is given to the comments received on the consultation	1 Little	3 Could lead to unsound plan	Members and officers to carefully consider results of consultation, and clearly explain reasons for decisions

			made
--	--	--	------

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

## Uttlesford Local Plan (Issues and Options) 2020-2021

### First Consultation: Theme 1 Where you Live November 2020

#### Introduction

The Community Stakeholder Forum discussed the theme on Wednesday 11 November and the theme was then open for comment.

Between 11 November 2020 and 21 April 2021, 73 people and organisations responded to the theme.

#### What we have been told about 'Where you live'

The following is a summary of what people said they *value about where they live and how they would like to see it improve in the future.*

To read all the representations in full please go to the [Consultation Portal](#).

# What you have told us about where you live...

## The built environment



Historic environment valued;  
New developments needs to respected historic character of settlements;  
Need for affordable housing;  
Changes in working habits may increase demand for housing in villages;  
Build at higher density to reduce encroachment into countryside.

## People, community



Strong community spirit valued;  
Settlements considered to be right size to foster community spirit.

## Community facilities



Community facilities valued;  
Need to be provided in new developments

## Access to services



Existing services valued;  
Range of services not expected in small settlements;  
New services need to be provided with development;

## Connections



Value strategic road and rail connections;  
Improved bus service, walking and cycling connections would reduce reliance on car.  
Introduce 20mph zones.

## Jobs



Value proximity to larger towns and cities;  
Need for local job opportunities.  
Good broadband essential  
Protect high streets and tourism for job creation



## The natural environment

Access to countryside valued;  
Rural environment valued;  
Need for more open spaces;  
Should be main consideration of new development.



## What's in walking distance?

For some, services are in walking distance;  
Issue of areas without pavements or lighting;  
Developments on edge of settlements are beyond 15 minute walk;  
Development should be planned within walking distances of services and facilities;

## Recreation & sport facilities



Value range of facilities found in settlements;  
Need for better facilities in some areas.

## Lifestyle



Value opportunities for exercise and access to nature.  
Development in countryside enables better access to environment for wellbeing, supports more facilities and reduces commuting.

What do you value about where you live and how would you like to see it improve in the future?

## Built environment: What do you like about the built character of where you live?

### General comments

Value the spread of small towns and villages across District which have preserved much of the area's historical, cultural and community worth.

Is a 15 min neighbourhood appropriate to rural district? People like rural location/isolation of village life.

Newport PC support the idea of the 15-minute community.

Delivering a 15 minute community does not require a new settlement. Existing settlements would benefit from selective small-scale development to provide affordable housing, local facilities and improved public transport.

Changes in working habits resulting from technology advances (notably fibre & Zoom) and accelerated by the Covid crisis are likely to increase demand for housing in rural villages. Equally, the climate crisis requires a significant shift away from the traditional commuting model of working.

We need to build houses fit for the 22nd century.

Chronic lack of affordable housing. Few suitable houses for young or low-income households. Need for affordable housing with mixed communities to avoid social isolation.

Character of area is being destroyed by unsustainable, poorly sited, dense, commercial and homogenous housing development.

Value volume and quality of historic assets. Value character of area and mix of old and new. Need to avoid identikit mediocrity.

Higher density should be considered in towns and larger villages to reduce encroachment into the countryside by continually adding to the periphery of settlements.

### Settlement specific comments

Clavering	Value variety and low density. New development has increased traffic and exacerbated flooding and light pollution.
Great Chesterford	The village character is rural and interesting because the village has developed organically and has a range of house styles.
Great Dunmow	Value convenience of town offerings in countryside setting. Compact nature of town, easy walking and cycling. Neighbourhood Plan protects character, heritage, landscape and biodiversity. Concern over the future vibrancy and sustainability of the town centre and that increased employment commuting will make Gt Dunmow a dormitory town. Recent urbanisation has led to increased damage to rural surroundings.
High Roding	Value and wish to preserve village character – its rurality, history, spaces between buildings, linear shape. Change should not be to detriment of character and history of village.

Little Easton	Value historic buildings and historic connections. Need affordable housing for local people.
Quendon and Rickling	Value the Green which acts as a focal point. Would like to see its use increased by other outdoor clubs.
Saffron Walden	Historic architecture of human scale and widely admired. Need more affordable housing.
Stansted Mountfitchet	Include trees in new housing developments. Value good facilities, green spaces, access to transport links. Although small has many positive attributes to enjoy. Peace and calm of technically private roads. Lack of road repairs makes it difficult for those on mobility scooters.
Thaxted	Value heritage. Negative impact of traffic; would like 20mph speed limit through village.
Various	New developments do not reflect vernacular style. Rural character of settlement.

### Natural environment: How easy is it for you to access nature?

#### General comments

Value agricultural countryside and green spaces. Value views of countryside from your home.

Value countryside, peace and the desirable village communities/street scenes – leafy, green space between houses, wildflower verges, village greens, ponds, dense high hedgerows, coppices and ancient woodland.

Environmental and sustainability factors should be main consideration of new development.

Uttlesford should be leader in Green recovery.

Lack of open spaces and parks. Need for greenspace and Country Park to relieve pressure on Hatfield Forest, need tariff on new housing to fund protection of Hatfield Forest.

To maintain natural environment only allow small pockets of development that keep trees and green spaces.

To improve natural spaces, plant more trees and wildflowers.

Countryside Protection Zone should be retained to prevent coalescence of housing and the airport.

Protect a swathe of countryside to join the greenbelt in the south, Hatfield Forest SSSI and the CPZ together.

The benefits of living in countryside area, such as access to the countryside, wildlife, a village feel etc are being eroded by over-development and industrial agriculture, with no real mitigations put in place.

### Settlement specific comments

Elsenham	Rural character has been spoilt by recent development.
Great Chesterford	Can access countryside without using the car.
Great Dunmow	Value open spaces. Need to ensure new spaces provided in new development. Quick access to longer walking routes. Lanes and tracks for cycling. Value access to and views of Chelmer Valley.
Little Easton	Value rural environment. Promote restoration of Easton Park as country park for benefit of District and relieve pressure on Hatfield Forest.
Saffron Walden	Limited open space for leisure, need more open space. Value Audley End, Bridge End Gardens and the Common.
Takeley	Value rural character, wildlife.
Various	Value access to countryside from the village

### **What's in walking distance? Can you walk to the places you need or like to go?**

Lack of maintained and usable pathways between villages.

Local small businesses must be supported to keep the town going.

New developments within walking distance to schools, health facilities and other amenities should be supported, subject to the size and scale of the existing settlement and compliance with neighbourhood plan policies.

### Settlement specific comments

Barnston	A 'neglected corner' with no amenities.
Clavering	Dispersed village but most village services within walking distance. some roads without pavement or lighting.
Great Chesterford	Primary school, village shop, doctor's surgery and mobile library all within walking distance. A post office would enhance the village.
Great Dunmow	Trade needs people to be able to park but create bike routes and rights of way, 20mph zone. Cars should become slow-moving 'guests' in a people-focused town. Small town but large enough to provide all amenities in walking distance.
Newport	Basic facilities are within walking distance, but local food shopping may be more expensive. Cars are seen as essential as people want choice.

Saffron Walden	Wide range of services accessible. Developments on the edge are beyond 15 minutes' walk.
Takeley	Community buildings, shops, job opportunities.
Various (Newport/Clavering)	Walkable community not easily achieved in linear / dispersed villages.

### Recreation and sport facilities: What are recreation facilities like in your area? How could they be improved?

#### Settlement specific comments

Clavering	Has range of facilities in village. The village has good facilities, but some are in decline as there are not enough volunteers to run them.
Great Chesterford	Value integrated open spaces.
Great Dunmow	Has good facilities for town of this size.
Priors Green (Takeley/Canfield) Saffron Walden	Lack of open space, distant from facilities in Takeley. Need for more and better leisure and sports facilities. Value sports facilities and Fairycroft House. Appreciate Saffron Hall but can be intimidating to young people.
Takeley	Has sports pitches and clubs.

### Lifestyle: Does where you live enable you to live a healthy lifestyle? If not, what would help?

#### General comments

A good work-life balance, healthy diet & physical exercise may be unaffordable to key workers.

Horse riding and associated care of horses can be part of a healthy lifestyle and there are psychological and social benefits from equestrian activities. There is a need for safe bridle ways and the connecting up of the currently disjointed rights of way (British Horse Society).

Seeing the countryside from your home enhances sense of wellbeing.

More development in the rural area would enable people to enjoy a better quality of life in terms of access to the environment and for exercise but would enable more facilities to be provided in villages, which would hopefully reverse the trend of commuting to urban areas and high car usage.

#### Settlement specific comments

Clavering	Easy to access physical activity, nature, allotments for fresh food.
Great Dunmow	Opportunities for exercise, fresh food and be mentally active.

Hadstock	Whilst there are social networks some people might be socially isolated.
Little Easton	Value peace, pollution free, risk free and healthy environment.
Takeley	Opportunities for healthy lifestyle.

### **Jobs: Are there work opportunities in your area?**

#### General comments

Value proximity to larger towns and cities.

Lack of job opportunities.

Focus on which industries would be useful to encourage here and get a solid plan together to support it fully.

Provision of good broadband essential to allow remote working.

Policies to protect high street and tourism would help job creation.

#### Settlement specific comments

Saffron Walden	Need for more local jobs.
Great Dunmow	Lack of job opportunities.
Little Easton	Most residents commute. Value other benefits of rural living than being able to walk to work.
Clavering	Minimal opportunities. Need to travel out of village.
Takeley	Job opportunities at airport and able to commute by train from Stansted or Bishop's Stortford.

### **Connections: Can you use sustainable transport – train, bus, cycle, walk?**

#### General comments

Value strategic connections (M11, rail-line, airport).

Need to have more emphasis of sustainable travel. Anecdotal evidence of greater demand for new walking and cycling routes useable throughout the year and for all levels of accessibility.

Public transport connections poor and expensive making a car cheaper and easier; lack of foot and cycle paths. Most people will use their cars most of the time.

Low-cost transport options required and delivered early in development.

Cycle paths could be provided through the Environmental Land Management Scheme.

Introduce 20mph limit in towns and villages.

Any growth will need to be supported by infrastructure.

#### Settlement specific comments

Ashdon	Would like to see cycle path between village and Saffron Walden.
Barnston	Benefits from good express bus service but less useful local service. Village would benefit from by-pass and all-weather footpaths to access services.
Clavering	Limited sustainable opportunities, a car is essential. A reliable and frequent bus service is a priority.
Great Dunmow	Poor connections to rail. Need to ensure town centre not overwhelmed by traffic but for cyclists and pedestrians to take precedence, to encourage more people out of cars and connect to the town with safe, pleasant cycleways.
Hadstock	Poor bus service, lorries and traffic making walking hazardous.
Little Easton	Value walking and cycling in local area otherwise car required.
Saffron Walden	Poor walking and cycling connections; poor public transport links. need safer streets and better connectivity. Able to cope without a car, there are two bus routes serving the southern part of town, a bus to Cambridge, train service to Cambridge, London and Stansted. Need for bus connections to train station to be better coordinated.
Takeley	Primary school walkable, good bus service, road access to M11, rail stations at Stortford and Airport.

#### **Access to services: How easy is it to access essential services?**

##### General comments

Value good health, education and other services and proximity to larger towns and cities.

Difficult (time and cost) to access services such as Job centres. One is needed in the district.

Refuge from domestic violence needed.

The site of Homebase Saffron Walden should be safeguarded as a key DIY retail site.

##### Settlement specific comments

Clavering	Reasonably self-supporting. Has shop, school and pub in village, other services 3-4 miles away. Visiting healthcare would be useful. The village hall could be refurbished to provide a healthcare room to present day standards.
Great Chesterford	Developments on periphery not integrated with village centre and have inadequate physical connections.
Great Dunmow	Value shops making themselves different and special.

	Need improved access to medical facilities. Services under pressure due to recent growth. New development should provide additional services.
Hadstock	No shop or pub and so reliant on car.
Little Easton	Value services in Gt Dunmow and Thaxted. Do not expect services in small village. Would like village shop and better bus service.
Newport	The station, shops and services has made the village attractive to development but there have been no infrastructure improvements. The surgery and school are over subscribed.
Saffron Walden	Need for easily accessible medical care.
Stansted Mountfitchet	Has a good range of services.
Stebbing	Difficult if you do not have a car
Takeley	The primary schools are oversubscribed, no secondary school, no doctors' surgery. No additional services provided with new development.
Thaxted	Village is remote from services, inadequate public transport and no local employment. School is at capacity and unacceptable waiting time for surgery appointments. Adequate provision for existing size of village but further growth would put undue pressure on local services.

### **Community facilities: Are there places near where you live to meet, exercise, hold groups and activities?**

#### General comments

Value libraries for quiet space to study, free access to computers.

Community facilities needed in new development to prevent isolation and encourage community cohesion.

#### Settlement specific comments

Ashdon	Play facilities in village are important and should be retained.
Clavering	Has halls and church.
Great Dunmow	Value facilities for public and private functions.
Hadstock	Would like community hub with drop in facilities.
Little Easton	Value community facilities which are within walking distance. Potential to increase use of facilities.
Takeley	Has halls and church.

## People and community: Who lives in your area, is there a sense of community and what makes that?

### General comments

Lack local vision for Uttlesford - need devolved democratic power leading a strong community, providing for itself and living respectfully in balance with our environment and with each other.

A vision is needed as Uttlesford is currently a poorly linked, rural commuter district with high per-capita carbon emissions. Uttlesford should be the most sustainable rural district in the UK.

### Settlement specific comments

Berden	Village has a sense of togetherness as a community.
Clavering	Village has strong sense of community and passion for locality. Many retirees, few young families due to limited and expensive housing.
Great Chesterford	The village is the right size to have a sense of community. There are thriving societies and other groups.
Great Dunmow	Value community spirit and broad mix of people.
Little Easton	People have made conscious choice to live in small village community.
Saffron Walden	The town has a strong community spirit with active participation.
Takeley	Village has sense of community but falls to a small minority of dedicated individuals to nurture and sustain the community spirit.

### Consultee Specific Comments

Anglian Water	<p>Would encourage that a holistic and integrated approach to water management forms part of the local plan strategy and incorporates the development of 'water smart communities' with the aim to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhance liveability by contributing to green street spaces and high-quality open space,</li><li>• Promote the sustainable use of water resources and infrastructure to enable growth,</li><li>• Build resilience against the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events,</li><li>• Contribute to natural capital and biodiversity through multi-functional water features, and</li><li>• Deliver water efficient homes to reduce household bills and support affordability.</li></ul>
Imperial War Museum Duxford	Need to take into consideration the constraints and impacts of building near an active airfield and to include safeguarding zone as part of the new local plan.

Essex County Council    The Essex Housing Strategy 2021-2025 has a number of strategic goals relevant to this theme.

- Enabling people to live independently,
- Growing Essex while protecting the best of the county

ECC aims to ensure that there is sufficient social and community infrastructure in place.

### Site Promoter comments

'Parsonage Green'  
Great Dunmow  
(Pigeon Capital  
Management)

The critical need for housing needs to be balanced against the need to protect Uttlesford's existing environmental assets and significantly reduce carbon emissions. The proposed spatial strategy needs to focus new homes towards its most sustainable settlements such as the Market Town of Great Dunmow and to a lesser extent Saffron Walden. Around these settlements there are opportunities to plan positively so that homes, jobs and services and facilities are within close proximity to one another and there are feasible alternatives to using the car.

**Uttlesford Local Plan (Issues and Options) 2020-2021**  
**First Consultation Theme 2 Character and Heritage 25 November 2020**

**Introduction**

The Community Stakeholder Forum discussed the theme on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and the theme was then open for comment.

Between 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021 72 people and organisations responded to the theme.

**What we have been told so far**

The following is a summary of what people said about the issues relating to the provision of new development and its impact on the character and heritage of the District.

To read all the representations in full please go to the [Consultation Portal](#).



## What do you like about the character and heritage of Uttlesford, and how you would like to see this protected and enhanced whilst providing new sustainable communities?

- Each Uttlesford town and village has a distinct/separate character.
- The character, heritage and Landscape of the District is highly valued and should be protected.
- Uttlesford benefits from multiple communities each with a strong community spirit
- The new plan should spread the housing across the district, making delivery more achievable.



### Car Dominance

- Moving away from car domination releases space for communities, nature, and healthy lifestyles.
- Suburban street layouts with cul-de-sacs should be avoided.
- Different travel patterns and scenario may develop due to changing work patterns and technologies.
- Reduction in car use will never be achieved whilst so little infrastructure is provided.



### Density vs. Greenery

- The centres of our towns and villages often have densely packed housing, and this usually forms a community.
- Density should reflect surrounding vernacular.
- Density in some areas can liberate space for greenery elsewhere, but the developments themselves must increase biodiversity.
- A mixed strategy with lower density rural sites with concentrated infill developments in towns if green spaces are provided.



### Heritage

- Heritage assets should be enjoyed.
- The impact of historic cores is seriously diminished if they are approached through large areas of suburban housing.
- Regeneration of redundant land in town centres must be high quality, intending to fit with neighbouring buildings.
- Landscape and planting must be considered alongside other aspects of built heritage as these can have a significant impact.



### Materials, Standardisation, and Style

- New materials in an appropriate context would not be out of place.
- Homes need to be attractive, use local and recycled materials, well insulated and powered by renewable greener energy towards a zero carbon.
- Materials and styles should be prioritised to reflect local characteristics.
- Build the heritage of the future reflecting how we live now.

**What do you like about the character and heritage of Uttlesford, and how you would like to see this protected and enhanced whilst providing new sustainable communities?**

What needs to be protected?

Uttlesford was considered by most respondents to have a distinctive rural character with an agricultural countryside, woodland areas, attractive historic market towns and villages. The character and heritage of the District is highly valued and should be protected.

Each Uttlesford town and village has a distinct and separate character.

Outstanding landscapes with historic rural settlements set within them must be preserved through planning policy and development directed to areas of less importance.

Uttlesford benefits from multiple communities each with a strong community spirit with a base of community assets which define its character and heritage which provide a base to build sustainable and harmonious communities for the future.

Public Right of Way no. 60 in Stansted should be improved and connected to the Flich Way to connect to wider cycling and walking networks.

Dunmow Town Council supporting evidence is available to define the Easton Lodge Estate as an historic landscape. Protection of the Chelmer Valley as a key component of the Gt Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan and should be noted as a valued landscape on that basis (Great Dunmow Town Council).

Further evidence should be prepared on the artistic and cultural history of the local landscape as well as buildings and settlements for the Pant Valley area of Uttlesford, linked to the landscapes of the Bardfield artists. Evidence could be prepared to explore how this could be linked to a rural enterprise district for environmental, educational, cultural, social, and tourist developments with linkages to past and current activities, with more appropriate farming diversity development policies for the area as well. (more detailed policy suggestions provided CH64)

Takeley Parish Council called for the Countryside Protection Zone to be upheld to ensure Stansted remains an airport in the countryside as per the 1981-83 Airport Inquiry.

Great Canfield Parish Council highlighted issues with current protections for the countryside and outlined some policy suggestions. The Flich Way was highlighted as an important access and landscape amenity feature with details about protections required (CH65).

Detailed representations have more specific locations to be protected, particularly Parish Council representations.

How to design new places?

New development should promote social inclusion and provide mixed communities.

Policies should place heritage, character and landscape protection as key factors in decision making.

A Neighbourhood Plan is the most appropriate vehicle for deciding a local development strategy.

One respondent thought that garden settlements were commuter towns by another name.

Not all landscape can be safeguarded. Potential impact on landscape and heritage can be mitigated with careful design and layout to create places.

What do we want – a market town or city?

Affordable housing should be mixed into developments to avoid a feeling of ‘us and them’.

The emerging Uttlesford Local Plan, such as it impacts upon Greater Cambridge, should have regard to the priorities set out in the seven ‘Big Themes’ (Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service – cites evidence study).

As a matter of long-term local planning, we suggest that land that is close to oversubscribed schools should be earmarked for school investment (Newport Parish Council).

### Sustainability

New housing development has to be located within walking distance of good public transport facilities and in locations that are truly sustainable in terms of access to local facilities and infrastructure.

If new communities are to be sustainable and carbon neutral then schools, surgeries, shops, day care centres, youth and community centres with good access to recreation facilities and open spaces need to be planned in line with the housing development.

Bus links across country border need to be improved and new developments must provide proper foot and cycle access to existing town, without a large bypass having to be crossed. This would help ensure people visit smaller towns rather than drive to Chelmsford or Cambridge.

### Where to build new homes?

Smaller communities would benefit from additional scale to support the use of facilities and services, and enable improved public transport funded by developer contributions to reduce car usage.

Some respondents felt that the new plan should spread the housing across the district, making delivery more achievable.

The Salings Parish Council believe the optimal settlement pattern is likely to be via higher density urban extensions, taking advantage of brownfield opportunities as an absolute priority.

Smaller scale developments should be shared between parishes rather than multiple large-scale development in single parishes as is happening in Elsenham, Henham, and Stansted.

Some concern over the number of urban estates that keep being added to existing settlements and the ability of facilities and services to cope.

The character of existing towns and villages will be destroyed by edge developments. A ring of new houses does not plan for an integrated town but dormitory subdivisions.

Development around areas that have already significantly contributed to housing needs, such as, Elsenham, Dunmow, Takeley must be protected from further development.

Redevelop land within the existing towns providing heritage and character is not compromised.

Development of both larger and smaller communities should be focussed on brown field sites first.

The new Local Plan must be incredibly careful this time, to distribute growth more evenly between strategic options and small to medium scale sites in all settlements which are sustainable (Gladman Developments).

It was generally felt that there should be no coalescence between existing settlements. If necessary, large buffers should be installed.

Maximum two storeys around rivers to avoid the dingey cavern created at Bishop's Stortford riverside, for example.

Spread development throughout the district to lessen the impact, building discretely around existing settlements in a way proportional to the size of the town or village.

There is plenty of scope for new development around Wendens Ambo that won't impact Audley End House gardens or the wider landscape.

Chesterford Research Park could be an ideal spot for apartments.

Higher density urban extensions rather than large new communities will be the best approach for Uttlesford considering sustainability, heritage, and landscape.

If it is not possible to find an alternative use for a building and demolition is the only alternative, then the suggested use to which the space is then put should be agreed by the majority of the local residential population.

Some development well outside villages is also acceptable, particularly adjacent to existing hamlets, on 'amenity land' and/or at road junctions. There should be no 'estates' in such locations but a few houses of varied appearance that logically fit in with the existing houses and/or landscape.

In parts of Uttlesford in the 'East Anglian Heights', with rural landscape value and with ancient towns and villages, there should be no windfarms. The appearance is inconsistent with the heritage and, in any case, this is one of the least windy parts of the country.

If Saffron Walden is to be developed further, then it is currently completely unbalanced. Part of that is due to the Capability Brown landscape of the Audley End estate, which must be preserved. However, development of the farmland to the outside of Bridge End Garden and behind the primary school would re-balance the town. Being very close to the centre, access could be on foot and roads into the development could all be from the Littlebury/Chesterford side.

Plans should not be developer-led, but strategy-led (Stebbing Parish Council).

### **Car dominance: How can we address the often-competing demands of travel and place?**

#### Issues caused by cars

Petrol car use is unsustainable and must decrease (Newport Parish Council).

Suburban street layouts with endless cul-de-sacs should be avoided (Thaxted Parish Council).

Car use is damaging verges, trees and hedgerows which are being torn up.

Car dominance is the main reason why residents object to developments as we see the reality of antisocial driving/parking daily.

### Benefits of reducing reliance on cars

Moving away from car domination we release space for communities, nature, and healthy lifestyles and Velocity is a model for how to do this in rural areas.

Less reliance on cars would make these areas far more aesthetically pleasing and a safe space for children to play.

The young struggle to avoid cars, city dwellers are increasingly abandoning their cars, and autonomous vehicles are the future.

### How can we address the issues?

Different travel patterns and scenario may develop due to changing work patterns and technologies, with working from home to be encouraged.

It needs to be recognised that we are still in a situation where cars are very much needed where can they be parked that has easy access but also does not detract from the area needs to be considered.

Other countries successfully place car parking underneath the housing, either at ground level or below.

Provide adequate parking so cars do not end bumped up on pavements, detracting from any character.

Cycle infrastructure proposals need to account for topography and hills (Clerk of Clavering Parish Council).

People will not want to park their high-end vehicles away from their home.

Reduction in car use will never be achieved whilst so little infrastructure is provided.

80% of journeys are under 3 miles and providing adequate cycle or mobility scooter infrastructure would reduce dependency on the car.

Car use can be reduced by investment in cycle & walking routes; higher density new development in suitable locations; enhanced 'green' public transport carpools; electric bicycles, and new train lines.

Locating new development close to stations, bus routes and settlement centres with access to a good cycleway / pedestrian network would assist in reducing reliance on car use.

A sustainable new community with public transport and associated education, shops and jobs would assist in reducing car usage.

Better footpath connectivity between villages and potentially extending the public footpath network to better accommodate bikes would help reduce car dependency.

Transport links and infrastructure should be in place before occupation of development, reducing the need to use cars within the community. Links to the rest of the region essential.

Cars need to be parked close to the owner's house so they may be unloaded safely when also caring for children for example. Tandem parking can be a source of aggravation between neighbours.

During the pandemic, the value of horses has increased substantially with people spending more time at home looking to find enjoyable ways to exercise, they are able and want to own horses. It is highly likely that the need and demand for improved equestrian access is likely to rise (British Horse Society – also included many policy and best practice references pertaining to equestrian routes, access to open spaces, green belt etc).

Electric, shared, and autonomous vehicles need to be properly accounted for with charging points for each new home and innovative parking.

### **Density v Greenery: What should be Uttlesford's future density strategy and why?**

#### Benefits of denser places

Low density is baked into current design guides; there seems no option but for this to change; we must retain green spaces. The housing crisis makes social housing necessary – there is no reason why such housing should not be attractive, higher density, and provide affordable housing for younger people and couples, with pleasant community spaces (Newport Parish Council).

High density fits with many people's lifestyles for example gardens are getting smaller and many people do not want a garden.

Density can enable affordability.

Urban sprawl (as opposed to more compact places) destroys towns and villages (Thaxted Parish Council)

Any major new development requires higher levels of low-rise density to avoid the loss of rural landscapes.

Density of housing is not necessarily bad. It is where people meet and there is social discourse. The centres of our towns and villages have often densely packed housing, and this usually forms a community.

#### Challenges of denser places

There must be flexibility built into any density policy to ensure that sites can be designed to fit with the character of the local area and take account of local constraints, without having to stick to rigid density guidelines (Gladman Developments).

Does every older building with a large garden need to be flattened to make way for several?

Density should be determined on a case-by-case basis and reflect surrounding vernacular.

Children need safe spaces in which to run, to shout, play, test climbing skills, without interfering with another person's quiet time.

Hatfield Forest is taking the brunt of a desire to enjoy open spaces by a growing population.

#### How to balance of built and natural space

A walk a day is not only healthy but enjoyable, and there should be trees, birds, insects and animals, crops, allotments, and water to enjoy. Equally, solace is so very important - a quiet space in which to sit, slow down, contemplate, read a book.

I want to see greenfield land protected and parts of it partially rewilded to provide wildflowers and habitat for insects, birds, amphibians, small mammals etc, rather than our current binary

situation of either the built or the agriculturally farmed, with anything in between soon sold off for more building.

There should be more imagination from developers - if they have a site for 150 houses why not make 3 smaller estates with different types of build that are green with an area in between each for say a children's play area (with facilities for disabled children who seem to get forgotten when building such places) a small football pitch, or a tennis court (Quendon and Rickling Parish Council).

New development should be of higher density close to village centres and stations in order to reduce the amount of greenfield land to be released.

Accommodation could be built above shops or near a place of work.

Need a mixed strategy with lower density in rural sites but allowing for more concentrated infill developments in towns if green spaces are provided.

High density requires proper maintenance - maintenance spending is critical to keep it functioning.

Green open spaces must be incorporated into new developments to preserve biodiversity and our ecosystem.

Plan needs to be very descriptive about what is acceptable in terms of density, materials, and style of new developments.

Density in some areas can liberate space for greenery elsewhere, but the developments themselves must increase biodiversity.

Everyone needs an outdoor space for themselves and roofs can help provide amenity, gardens, carbon sequestration, solar panels, and natural daylighting.

Access to the countryside is important.

With regards to density, The Council should avoid policies that require applicants to meet prescribed standards. Rather Pigeon would recommend an approach which encourages applicants through the design process to make the most efficient use of land with an amount and mix of development and open space that optimises density, whilst ensuring that the development relates well to and enhances the existing character and context (Pigeon Developments).

What should be Uttlesford's future density strategy and why? Density will differ in response to the context of a site, and prescriptive density targets should be avoided. The density of a development should be a function of design, rather than a determinant of it. Para.65 of the National Design Guide (MHCLG, 2019) states, "Built form is determined by good urban design principles that combine layout, form and scale in a way that responds positively to the context. The appropriate density will result from the context, accessibility, the proposed building types, form and character of the development." (Hill Residential Ltd.)

Any future density strategy needs to take account of all the 'open space' in the north of the District and should not be blankly ascribed over all the Parishes and Towns. I am totally against the current policy 'Call for Sites'. This encourages new-build construction in the already crowded Parishes, simply because, these places have existing facilities.

It is necessary for Uttlesford to identify areas, yet undeveloped, in such a way that would encourage Developers to want to build. These need to include larger sites constructed with

the facilities to serve the new residents. The houses should have all modern facilities, be eco-friendly and not use outdated building materials and methods e.g., Houses for the Future.

What should be Uttlesford's future density strategy and why? Density will differ in response to the context of a site, and prescriptive density targets should be avoided. The density of a development should be a function of design, rather than a determinant of it. Para.65 of the National Design Guide (MHCLG, 2019) states, "Built form is determined by good urban design principles that combine layout, form and scale in a way that responds positively to the context. The appropriate density will result from the context, accessibility, the proposed building types, form and character of the development." (Hill Residential Ltd.)

Any future density strategy needs to take account of all the 'open space' in the north of the District and should not be blankly ascribed over all the Parishes and Towns. I am totally against the current policy 'Call for Sites'. This encourages new-build construction in the already crowded Parishes, simply because, these places have existing facilities.

It is necessary for Uttlesford to identify areas, yet undeveloped, in such a way that would encourage Developers to want to build. These need to include larger sites constructed with the facilities to serve the new residents. The houses should have all modern facilities, be eco-friendly and not use outdated building materials and methods e.g., Houses for the Future.

More effort should go into supporting plant and wildlife biodiversity and we should ensure that pollinator pathways and bird and bat accommodation, hedgehog routes and wigwams, frog kerbs etc are routinely included.

Local consultation identified the need for modest homes of 1-3 bedrooms along with affordable homes for young people aspiring to leave the parental home, couples wishing to start a family and those wishing to downsize. These homes need to be accessible to all including those with walking aids, who are wheelchair based and medically infirm. Good design can be used to tempt those who are living alone in large family houses to downsize, hence reduce further pressures for housing.

Encouraging continued 'shop and buy local' will limit car use further and support local farmers and businesses.

Hedges rather than fencing panels between properties and parking to the side or rear to permit easy house access and charging points. This prevents vehicles dominating the street scene or obstructing emergency/service access.

A new policy should set out criteria for a designated strategic gap between settlements across the district, to protect green spaces which provide the setting and character for the villages and market towns. These should also be designated as valued landscapes wherever a local character or distinction can be made, to give definition to the current S7 policy, which seeks to protect the countryside for its own sake. A specific landscape policy should be formed to protect historic landscapes (Great Dunmow Town Council – full representation includes more detailed policy suggestions).

The existing protection of the Countryside Protection Zone and airport in the countryside concept should be retained, however, there could be consideration of small-scale development in villages on the periphery of the protection zone. When considering changes to the boundary of the CPZ, general urban creep should be robustly resisted (Great Dunmow Town Council).

**Heritage: How do you think we should protect and enhance the setting of heritage assets and balance the need for locating new development in the most sustainable locations – should this be through integration and complementary design, or buffers?**

Bespoke mitigation measures depending on the circumstances. Design can mitigate harm and buffers where possible to protect the setting of heritage assets.

Avoid edge of town development with inadequate screening buffers that adversely impact on views of settlements. Uttlesford should urgently draw up a schedule across the District of local landscape views worth preserving - even a quick temporary list. This should then be considered against the next 'call for sites'.

Heritage assets should be enjoyed. Appropriate integration of new development will encourage future residents to learn and appreciate heritage assets as well as managing the wider environs of the asset.

Protection of character and heritage that appears in neighbourhood plans should be mirrored in the Local Plan, and the neighbourhood plan evidence base and professional reports should be brought into the evidence base for the new Local Plan (Great Dunmow Town Council).

Regeneration of redundant land in town centres must be high quality, intending to fit with neighbouring buildings.

A Robust Spatial Strategy Process that looks at the most appropriate locations for development, irrespective of whether the land has been put forward by a developer.

One respondent was concerned that changes to the topography with bunding around development was alien to the character of the townscape /landscape.

If additions must be made that impact heritage assets, then striking but absolutely tasteful additions may be the way forward, using similar materials.

Historic England made detailed and extensive comments to help with the preparation of the Uttlesford Local Plan including methodology and assessment criteria (CH71).

Thaxted neighbourhood plan has defined a clear understanding of what is important for residents for the historic and natural environment, and this approach should be undertaken for all villages (Thaxted Parish Council).

Historic cores may remain intact, but their impact is seriously diminished if they are approached through large areas of suburban housing (Thaxted Parish Council).

Chrishall Parish Council made several policy suggestions and requests for protection to heritage and landscape assets (CH61).

Landscape and planting must be considered alongside other aspects of built heritage as these can have a significant impact (Thaxted Parish Council).

In respect of buildings and archaeological remains, it is important to consider visitor access - maybe one-way traffic routing. Parking space provision and the subsequent distance required to walk to the heritage site, disabled access, public facilities toilets, seating etc. But certainly not to have new build obscuring the site of the heritage building, whatever the design.

**Materials/Standardisation /Style: What do you think should be the Council's future priorities when guiding developers in their use of materials? How can the Council and**

**developers help deliver less standardised development? What style of development do you want to see built in the future (e.g., traditional and/or contemporary)?**

Materials

Building materials for developments near heritage assets should be complementary.

New materials in an appropriate context would not be out of place.

We suffer the most appalling architectural eyesores (bright orange brick everywhere), inappropriate lighting (on all night), inadequate roads/parking spaces (not wide enough). I want to see quality designs and the use of materials which match our landscape, green roofs, solar panels etc.

Homes need to be attractive, use local and recycled materials, well insulated and powered by renewable greener energy towards a zero carbon. It should be policy for houses to have renewable/solar power, low maintenance green roofs to support biodiversity, aid insulation and slow the flow/support the collection of rainwater for garden use.

Design independent sustainable communities. Use wood, earth or better edible roofs, and autonomous and semi-autonomous designs that generate all/most of their own light and heat, include water catchment, possibly a tank beneath building, rooftop catchment & grey water systems.

A large amount of recent development in UDC has been constructed using low quality non-natural materials that detract from the positive characteristics. Ensuring the use of high quality and appropriate materials is the best way to enhance and protect. Most historic buildings are simplistic in their architectural design and it is the material used and craftsmanship involved that creates the beauty that we enjoy today.

Most properties can be updated internally, with modern conveniences, insulation, updated heating and electricity, and heating, also, extensions upward and outward - grants should be made available to achieve this.

Climate Emergency necessitates environmentally friendly materials. Using the most up-to-date building techniques and materials is important for making new builds energy efficient and to keep carbon emissions down. Viability, durability and availability are also important factors to consider.

Materials and styles should be prioritised to reflect local characteristics.

Housebuilding materials need to be brought up to date using 'frame' houses with insurers, developers, and mortgage providers to be lobbied to facilitate this.

Solar panels should be the norm. For every 'x' houses there should be a contribution to construction of 'x solar panels' - why not a solar field of panels per site, so that residents can benefit from cheaper electricity? An alternative would be to use integrated solar panel roofing.

One respondent thought that the visible frontage of developments should reflect the use of traditional materials and timber, avoiding the eyesore of the standardised urban estate style of development.

Neighbourhood Plans should define acceptable materials and define standards for external appearance.

Materials should be in keeping with local buildings where possible however, glass and metal can look fantastic in the right place.

Concrete is responsible for more emissions than aviation or shipping therefore low embodied carbon materials must be used such as laminated timber, which is strong and versatile, and could support a new forestry industry.

Developers should be required to meet our ambitious zero carbon targets considering all aspects of sustainable design including passive design, increased insulation etc.

### Standardisation

Use convertible modular design (like the French) where dwelling includes for example 4 interlinked sections for a family, but which can be easily converted into smaller units for couples or single people.

Some respondents felt that standardisation was not always bad. Standardised development should be allowed if it meets high quality build. Minimum standards of spacing, facilities, appearance, etc, that can be exceeded are appropriate.

A few respondents considered that developers generic developments were eroding the quality of the built environment.

Quality over quantity must be a priority.

New buildings must be well designed: good sized rooms, light, materials, outdoor recreation, community spaces.

Standardisation is not always bad - there was a lot of standardisation during the Georgian period resulting in some handsome and characterful streetscapes.

Standardisation does not really matter too much if long as the houses, and planned situation are congenial, and generally have pleasant surroundings. The standardisation can be softened using greenery, play space, trees, green frontages, curvy roads, and small groups of houses.

### Style

Go for a contemporary twist on the vernacular rather than ersatz Tudor or medieval to build the heritage of the future reflecting how we live now.

Should avoid never-ending estate roads and cul-de-sacs. Squares are good but obviously cannot be used everywhere.

Inappropriate to determine a set style across the whole District. Largest settlements in Uttlesford have a variety of styles of buildings with some modern buildings between period ones. New developments should have a mix of styles and have individuality.

Adopt a selection of suitable styles and colours.

Imaginative design and materials could be specified so that new development is somewhere people want to live.

An updated Essex Design Guide could address Materials, Standardisation & Style.

High street development must maintain the look of the period high street.

We should respect the historic assets, but this shouldn't amount to pastiche and we shouldn't be afraid to have modern designs as various historic styles we modern at one time.

The 'home counties vernacular' has dominated for decades and we should explore modular developments which could avoid standardisation by providing different tenures and typologies based on intergenerational needs with rooftop gardens above and workshops or commercial space below.

Style should be authentic and with integrity, sometimes drawing on local architecture and sometimes being wholly innovative like The Avenue and Hartington Place in Letchworth.

Employ architects like Peter Barber.

In terms of the presentation's comments around appearance of new housing, the proposed changes to the NPPF to reflect the Building Better Building Beautiful Recommendations should help in this context, as would a focus on SME builders who do not have the same volume, "cookie cutter" approach as large developers. Local vernacular will vary even intra-district and there should be great focus on this (The Salings Parish Council).

A variety of styles is always a treat. New residents like to believe that this site is 'for them', and it is good to see a variety of styles and sizes in one estate. It is the beginning of a community when residents all have a belief that they own their site. It is even better when these new sites encompass energy-saving and green ecology.

The style of future development should be informed by detailed site analysis and not preconceived ideas relating to appearance, for example whether a traditional or contemporary appearance may be preferred (Pigeon Developments).

### **Which new schemes do you like and dislike?**

The Avenue looks interesting and quite pleasing.

Newhall in Harlow is also award-winning, but the contemporary styling and layout is different just for the sake of being different.

New developments should have a mix of styles and have individuality. An example of this is Poundbury in Dorset. It is well planned and highly successful.

I like what has been built around Cambridge. It is unashamedly modern but fits in, as good design always will. Woodlands Park in Dunmow is not the way to do it. City style squares full of mock townhouses have nothing to do with Uttlesford.

Cambourne is an example development which successfully links new development with adjoining motorway and rail networks and demonstrates how wildlife and water corridors can be created.

Modern development like The Avenue and 1960s-1990s buildings can age badly.

Hartington Place in Letchworth and architects like Peter Barber.

The Foresthall Park Estate has buildings on top of each other with a pitiful amount of green space resulting in parking courts being used for recreation. Affordable housing is grouped together to create a 'ghetto' effect. The consequence of this unsuitable accommodation is an exacerbation of deprivation in Stansted Mountfitchet.

The Little Maypole development and Thatcher's Grange have had an impact on the setting of the church and John Webb's windmill in Thaxted, destroying views of the historic core of the village on the approaches from Saffron Walden and from Great Sampford (Thaxted Parish Council).

A recent small development of a row of similar houses at Mole Hill Green could be thought unimaginative but fits well into its setting.

Look around country for award winning 'brave new' housing e.g., Norwich's etc-friendly Goldsmith Street Provide a 15 min town layout that includes public open spaces that also accommodate biodiversity to enhance community playgrounds, gym equipment and seating with shelters.

Smaller scale developments e.g. The Brambles in Dunmow (Redrow) that maintain green space and established trees, and promote access to the town and surrounding countryside, are the way to go.

### **Land promotions**

Stonebond properties are promoting land south of Thaxted with vision document submitted and suggest that developments should be based on strong site analysis and integrated with existing settlements that benefit from facilities and services to promote sustainable living patterns.

Knight Frank on behalf of Pelican Development Management and Landowners are promoting an allocation for a new garden community (more details in representation CH66). The Local Plan should provide an effective framework for development management, within which the planning balance is clear that where heritage assets are of high value and important for the enhancement of Uttlesford's character they should be protected, enhanced, and used to inform the proposed development to reaffirm the distinctiveness of the local area. By allocating development elsewhere and on less sensitive land the opportunity to safeguard the character and appearance of more sensitive settlements can be a priority option in site selection.

Rosconn Strategic Land understands the need to balance protecting the character & heritage with the need to provide sustainable communities supported by the necessary infrastructure. It should be recognised, however, that these two objectives are not mutually exclusive as good placemaking through new development can improve the character & function of existing settlements as well as providing much needed market & affordable housing close to existing services, facilities & employment opportunities. Clearly given the character of Uttlesford, significant urban intensification is unlikely to be feasible or desirable. Even though new settlements can be accompanied by an element of densification at their core, it is usually surrounded by lower density suburban development & so new settlements are not necessarily a "silver bullet" for urban sprawl.

Countryside Properties UK are promoting sites in Thaxted and Elsenham. It is considered that the most appropriate location for new growth in Thaxted is to the north east, away from the historic core. Whilst long distance views of the church can be seen from the land, interceding development to the north and north east of the town has resulted in this section of the church's extended setting no longer maintaining its open/rural aspect, when compared to that of the long extended views to the south, south-west, south-east, east, west, and north-west of the town.

Gladman are promoting land to the north of Wicken Road, Newport, land at Bedwell Road, Elsenham, land off the Broadway, Great Dunmow, land off Station Road, Flitch Green and land off Great Canfield Road, Takeley for residential development and consider that these sites should be included within the draft ULP as proposed allocations. The new Local Plan must be incredibly careful this time, to distribute growth more evenly between strategic options and small to medium scale sites in all settlements which are considered to be

sustainable. There must be flexibility built into any density policy to ensure that sites can be designed to fit with the character of the local area and take account of local constraints, without having to stick to rigid density guidelines.

Pigeon Investment Management Ltd. and their landowners are promoting a site in Parsonage Green. With regards to density, The Council should avoid policies that require applicants to meet prescribed standards. Rather Pigeon would recommend an approach which encourages applicants through the design process to make the most efficient use of land with an amount and mix of development and open space that optimises density, whilst ensuring that the development relates well to and enhances the existing character and context. The Council should avoid policies which refer to use of specific materials in new developments. These are matters that are best discussed with the Council at the planning application stage and will vary across sites depending on a number of factors as described above. As set out in the NDC, Councils should be encouraging applicants to identify materials that are practical, durable, affordable and attractive. This approach will greatly help new development to fit harmoniously with its surroundings. The style of future development should be informed by detailed site analysis and not preconceived ideas relating to appearance, for example whether a traditional or contemporary appearance may be preferred.

## **Uttlesford Local Plan (Issues and Options) 2020-2021**

### **First Consultation: Theme 3 Climate Change**

#### **Introduction**

The Community Stakeholder Forum discussed the theme on Wednesday 9 December and the theme was then open for comment.

Between 9 December and 23 April 2021, 82 people and organisations responded to the theme.

#### **What we have been told so far**

The following is a summary of people's views on the actions needed to forestall the impacts of climate change.

To read all the representations in full please go to the [Consultation Portal](#).

# What you have told us



## Sustainable Construction Methods

- Improve sustainability of new builds
- Zero carbon housing
- Reports demonstrating CO<sub>2</sub> use during construction phase of a development



## Parks and open spaces

- Increase available public open spaces and parks
- Increase planting in public parks



## Flood risk

- Minimise building upon floodplains
- Improve drainage systems within the district



## Biodiversity

- Destruction of habitats
- Loss of diverse range of wildlife species locally
- Loss of established pathways
- Increase requirement for planting schemes within development



## Loss of agricultural land

- Retain agricultural land to increase food security domestically
- Reduce occurrence of placing green infrastructure projects on productive agricultural land

# Climate Change

Will the actions we take today be enough to forestall the impacts of climate change?



## Harm to landscape

- The rural environment is highly valued
- Concerns regarding the implementation of green infrastructure at the cost of compromised landscape views from footpaths and pedestrian paths
- Concerns regarding the industrialisation of the location
- The views and appearance of the location are valued



## Improve sustainable transport methods

- Reduce reliance on private vehicular use
- Greater provision of green transport infrastructure
- Increase cycle and walking routes



## Improved connectivity

- Improve transport connections between villages and rural areas

## **Education**

### **Issues**

- Lack of public awareness surrounding individual responsibilities
- Lack of education of sustainable ways of living

### **Options**

- An education programme to educate the general public on individual responsibility to reduce carbon emissions
- Create a department within the local authority to oversee actions and enforcement of carbon reduction, sequestration strategies and reduction initiatives
- Build out an exemplar carbon sequestering affordable housing scheme, for use to demonstrate and for use as an education tool for developments
- Support training and employment opportunities within energy & natural systems e.g. growing hemp, woodwork, wool for insulation etc.
- Signify in meaningful ways how individual responses to climate change can provide adjust its effects
- Encourage education amongst builders regarding climate change and carbon emissions irrespective of skill level
- Inclusion of Climate Change as part of the school curriculum and research
- Teach cycle safety courses within school
- Encourage sustainable lifestyles through reducing the number of commuters and encouraging employers to employ closer to the office.
- Reduce plastic use.
- Crishall Parish Council: Implement local recycling facilities, which enable reports to be generated on how much recycled material is collected to report to the local community.

## **Sustainable Construction Methods**

### **Issues**

- Development at construction phase is not scrutinised for good practice with regards to lowering carbon emissions
- Sustainable materials are currently not conditioned for use within newly built housing schemes.
- Sustainable housing is not currently given the same weight/importance as providing affordable housing.

### **Options**

- Construct buildings with lower energy requirements, high energy efficiency/thermal insulation, noise insulation, natural forms of ventilation, cooling etc to reduce reliance on air conditioning units.
- Sustainable construction should not be at the cost of delivering affordable housing
- A higher percentage of recycled materials should be used within construction
- Energy efficiency standards for new homes should be prioritised through prohibiting materials and methods which are not carbon neutral
- Build low carbon social housing

- Building Regulations should be enhanced to include more detailed requirements for achieving higher energy efficiency standards and for the consideration of design and materials to be used
- A full audit at completion of the building to check and sign-off that the construction fully complies with the specification
- Developers should provide a document detailing energy consumption for new builds and the CO2 produced during construction
- Costs of enhancements should be shared amongst landowners, developers, buyers and possible subsidies
- Minimise waste during construction
- Imposing regulations to ensure all new buildings are of the highest standards of energy efficiency.
- Ensure planting systems are considered within new build developments, and encourage the use of vertical planting such as living walls, green roofs and the planting of suitable trees and bushes
- Encourage the use of sustainable materials for insulation such as hemp
- Encourage developers to design and build using recycled and renewable materials where possible, for example using composite boards and cladding rather than plastic
- Encourage purchase of materials from local suppliers to reduce miles and therefore the carbon footprint of each development.
- Berden Parish Council: CO2 produced by the construction of the new buildings should be compensated for by modification/reduced CIL or other financial obligations.
- Pelican Developments: New developments across the district should be delivered using carbon-efficient building techniques both for individual buildings and at neighbourhood scale.

## **Sustainable Design**

### **Issues**

- Housing built is not energy efficient
- Housing developments do not encourage sustainable energy generation or consumption

### **Options**

- Residential, commercial buildings, public buildings and car parks should include solar panels wherever possible
- Greater discussions during design stage regarding biodiversity, landscape and carbon (climate change) mitigation strategies
- 
- Mitigation of effects of development on climate change should be discussed at design phase
- Increase viability of rainwater harvesting within new build development sites
- Energy recycling should feature more prominently within the design stage of buildings, particularly office and commercial buildings
- Monitor energy use of housing development
- Designs of new builds should incorporate as much natural light as possible
- Prioritise developments which facilitate working from home

- Require carbon free energy generation installations on all new developments such as solar and geothermal generators and requiring charging points for electric vehicles onsite

## **Site Allocations**

### **Issues:**

- Development in sites of sparse development with low connectivity encourage private car use
- Concerns regarding urban sprawl
- Loss of valuable habitat space
- Newport Parish Council: The Cam's chalk aquifers is an unsuitable site as it has inadequate water to support more housing

### **Options:**

- Location of proposed sites for housing to be built should connect to or expand existing settlements
- Reluctance to permit development which will result in the loss of woods, forests and habitat land which act as carbon sinks, contribute to offset greenhouse emissions
- Prevent development outside of existing towns and villages
- Resist development which are for 2+ dwellings which rely upon vehicular travel
- Build more local, denser communities with local facilities rather than sprawling out of town development
- Encourage walkable villages
- Resist large scale housing developments within rural villages with limited travel options/sustainable transport infrastructure to reduce carbon emissions
- Development should be strategically placed along rail corridors and close to stations, bus services and local amenities
- No development in close proximity to water courses, water table level, foul and surface water drainage
- Create new towns, containing carbon neutral affordable homes.
- An energy strategy for each local community, which suggests suitable locations and sites for local solar and wind options.
- Pelican Developments: Site allocations should be based on their capacity to positively effect climate change and facilitate 15-minute neighbourhoods.
- Gladman: Using the viability assessment prior to implementing any measures through local plan policy will ensure schemes remain viable in perceived sustainable locations
- Pigeon (Turley): a comprehensive sustainability strategy should inform the viability of sites proposed for development.
- Newport Parish Council: Housing should be built where water resources exist

## **Harm to Views and Landscapes**

### **Issues:**

- Destruction of landscapes

- Concerns regarding Cutlers Green Solar Farm proposal and its impact to the rural landscape
- Concerns the historic landscape and enjoyment of the landscape of Uttlesford will be impacted upon by the inclusion of sustainable energy infrastructure such as wind farms and solar farms creating an industrialised landscape
- Increased industrialisation of Uttlesford landscape

#### **Options:**

- Encourage green infrastructure projects on sites that are unproductive and of low value with regards to landscapes and views

#### **Sustainable Transport**

##### **Issues:**

- Village and country lanes are currently experiencing traffic pollution and a volume of traffic for which they are unsuited.
- There is currently limited public transport infrastructure across the district for cycling and walking
- Great Canfield Parish Council: Great Canfield is not considered a sustainable location with limited access to essential amenities and modes of sustainable transport.
- Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service: As a number of UDC residents commute into Greater Cambridge, travel by sustainable transport methods should be encouraged.

##### **Options**

- A North exit straight onto the M11 from the A120 instead up directing traffic towards the Birchanger roundabout to reduce congestion
- Carbon footprint of housing should be calculated to include travel required to work and facilities.
- Encourage active travel connections (foot and cycle) and the provision of green public transport methods such as electric trains
- Increased connectivity of footpaths and cycleways between villages
- Provide a network of smaller scale public transport methods such as minibuses
- Buildings should be permitted where there are methods of transport that reduce the reliance upon vehicles, e.g. within walking/cycling distance to railway line
- Invest in electrical charging points across the district; especially in towns where off street parking is limited
- Provide a reliable bus service
- Implement green transport systems within new large-scale development sites
- Increasing cycle infrastructure may not reduce unsustainable transport use as the climate and cold weather prohibits cycling
- Limit available parking on streets to discourage multicar ownership
- Cross working and sharing of ideas across authorities should be heightened to promote greater integration of transport infrastructures such as roads, cycling paths, pedestrian routes and the pedestrianisation of areas
- Developers should provide greater links with larger scale developments and main towns
- Increase rail connectivity between villages to reduce reliance on vehicular use

- Provide free parking within housing sites on the outskirts of larger towns, as well as safe storage units for cycles to reduce traffic within main towns such as Saffron Walden
- Create new garden communities which contain necessary facilities and are within walking distance to larger settlements that benefit from reliable transport systems to major areas
- Provide car parking areas with permeable surfaces.
- Regular and direct bus routes between Dunmow and Bishop's Stortford may reduce private car use.
- Encouraging active travel and horse riding and expanding upon this as a mode of transport within the local plan; providing a connected network for horse riders, and prohibiting barriers which prevent all users being able to use public routes. (The British Horse Society)
- Provide electric charging points for electric vehicles around the district.
- Encourage Homeworking to reduce travel needs.
- Introduce air quality zones.
- Encourage use of electric vehicles through offering free parking for them.
- The Salings Parish Council: Resist development not well positioned to railways/train stations.
- Thaxted Parish Council: Introduce a speed limit reduction to 10 mph across the district.
- Thaxted Parish Council: Uttlesford should change its own fleet of vehicles to electric or hydrogen.
- 

## **Sustainable Energy**

### **Issues**

- Concerns regarding the sustainability of the proposed expansion of Stansted Airport and energy consumption
- Reduce number of flights
- Dumping of aviation fuel
- Current reliance on petrochemicals

### **Options**

- Increase use of natural & local products, including water recycling.
- Provide greater grants that are more widely available to allow existing housing stock to be retrofitted with more energy efficient and sustainable methods of insulation energy generation
- Encourage commercial buildings to use sustainable forms of energy generation
- Solar electricity should be a preferred method for heating and to provide heated water
- Concerns regarding the destruction of environment through the implementation of solar farms on green field.
- Solar panels should not be positioned on steep hillsides and should be screened with hedge
- Existing gas boilers should be replaced by heat pumps or hydrogen systems
- All public buildings should have solar panels. Small businesses & retail should be encouraged to install them

- The use of solar panels should be encouraged on new developments, but large-scale plants should be restricted to 'brown field' sites, sites of limited agricultural value.
- Offshore wind turbines should be favoured to reduce impact to landscape.
- Reduce night flights and dumping of aviation fuel.
- Encourage passive solar gain, encouraging the use of reflective film on windows, reducing energy use in older buildings.
- Minimise the use of Heating, cooling and Air Source and ground heat pumps,
- Recycling of grey water should be a mandatory requirement for all new build developments.

Berden Parish Council: Individual buildings should have design measures of water harvesting, solar shading etc.

- SERGO: New buildings should be compliant with the BREEAM 'very good' standards, wherein where the roof design allows, PVs for the generation of renewable energy will be installed.
- Baker and Metson Ltd: Implement a fabric first approach to reduce waste, improve insulation and achieve high levels of air tightness
- Baker and Metson Ltd: reduce the potential for a heat island effect occurring through making homes more energy efficient.

### **Flood Risk Mitigation**

#### **Issues:**

- Building upon flood plains will reduce their viability as a flood defence mechanism.
- UK climate projections suggest we'll get less rainfall in the summer yet experience more intense rainfall events which increase the risk of flooding within the public sewerage network.
- The topography of the countryside and Stansted, holds a greater risk of flooding in the lower parts of the Village.
- Great Canfield Parish Council: The river Roding runs through the parish and has experienced more flooding incidents in recent years than previously. A potential reason for this is the increase of housing developments to the north of Canfield, which has resulted in more water run-off entering the river and across the fields, which has caused farmers to lose crops as a result.

#### **Option:**

- Flood plains should not be built upon to ensure they are viable for their intended use.
- New developments should be designed with surfaces which allow water ingress to minimise the potential impacts of high levels of surface run-off areas and localised flooding.
- Restrict development into the valleys increasing the threat of surface water run-off.
- SERGO: Locate new developments in areas which are not at risk of flood
- Great Canfield Parish Council: The Flich Way should be protected from further development to reduce impact to countryside views, and to continue its use as a recreational space

### **Light Pollution**

#### **Issues:**

- External lighting, used where not necessary

**Options:**

- Use of external lighting, where not essential, should be removed
- Increased focus on external light use within development schemes

**Public & Green Space provisions****Issue:**

- Pandemic has increased use of open spaces, therefore a greater level of open and green spaces throughout the district should be strategised

**Options:**

- Increased planting within public open spaces to increase biodiversity rather than mown lawns etc.
- Link hedgerows and increase movement corridors within open spaces to provide greater mobility for wildlife.
- Innovative and workable green, blue and 'edible' infrastructure

**Listed Buildings****Issues:**

- High density of listed buildings within district which are restricted from increasing the energy efficiency of their home

**Options:**

- Listed building consent needs to be relaxed to enable better insulation & green energy installation
- Green infrastructure projects may damage/harm the settings of listed buildings

**Landscaping Schemes****Issues:**

- Destruction of landscapes will contribute to global warming

**Options:**

- Larger developments should provide fully detailed and enforceable sets of conditions to incorporate landscaping, hedgerows, trees and wild areas within their schemes

**Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems****Issues:**

- Increased levels of flooding
- Flooding events in recent history, have blocked roads in Clavering, Wicken, Bonhunt and Newport.
- Increased levels of rainfall have led to higher rates of flooding within the area
- Climate Change increases the risk of extreme weather events, posing a serious threat to the water sector (Anglican Water Services Ltd)

**Options**

- The implementation of drainage systems across the district

### **Use of Brownfield Sites**

#### **Issue**

- Use of high grade, productive land for green infrastructure projects

#### **Options**

- Larger scale developments should be sought within areas of 'brownfield' land or on land with low agricultural / landscape value
- Brownfield sites, Grade 3 land and disused airfields should be used for solar farming rather than agricultural land
- Berden Parish Council: Viable brownfield sites should be supported financially to reduce the cost of building low energy consuming housing.
- 

### **Biodiversity**

#### **Issues:**

- Concerns regarding destruction of wildlife habitats
- Loss of established pathways
- Potential introduction of new hazards to wildlife

#### **Options**

- Increase solar farms within the district as they increase biodiversity, encourage wildflowers and pollinators to improve populations of insects and wildlife
- The planting of trees, plants and hedging should be required within new developments
- Prohibit the removal of veteran trees which sequester more carbon than younger trees
- Increase conifers within settlements which offer overwintering birds and insects habitat space
- Increased planting schemes which encourage local wildlife populations

### **Agricultural Land**

#### **Issues:**

- Concerns regarding loss of arable farm land
- Green infrastructure projects may result in the loss of productive farmland
- The solar farm site on the outskirts of Berden will remove the versatile agricultural land, trees and woodlands that currently occupy the land.

#### **Options:**

- Retain agricultural land and reduce the use of these sites for renewable energy sites, such as solar farms
- Retention of agricultural land, secures the viability of UK produce following Brexit and COVID-19 and provide food security

- Seek financial compensations from agricultural landowners who are able to build or sell land for development and thus increase carbon emissions.
- Work with farmers to reduce chemical input and increase biodiversity & soil protection
- Identify sites which may suitable for solar energy generation
- Assess the potential of solar energy generation stations upon the roofs of commercial buildings and car parks.
- Subsidised covered areas for local farmer's markets should be provided to allow local produce to be sold locally

## **Uttlesford Local Plan (Issues and Options) 2020-2021**

### **First Consultation: Theme 4 Transport January 2021**

#### **Introduction**

The Community Stakeholder Forum discussed the theme on Wednesday 13 January and the theme was then open for comment.

Between 13 January and 21 April 2021, 79 individuals and organisations responded to the theme.

#### **What we have been told so far**

The following is a summary of what people said about what options for sustainable transport in Uttlesford they would support.

To read all the representations in full please go to the [Consultation Portal](#).

# Transport - what you have told us...

## Access to services



- New development should be focused in areas with good accessibility to public transport
- New homes should be located in areas with access to existing services by non-car modes
- New remote settlements should only be built where they can support their own services

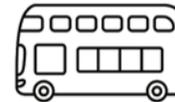
## Low traffic neighbourhoods



- Strong support for designing neighbourhoods to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists
- Need for more secure cycle parking at key destinations such as rail stations
- Lack of safe walking and cycling routes especially in Saffron Waldon
- Locating new development near public transport hubs means less reliance on cars
- The car will remain the main mode of transport in rural districts like Uttlesford

## What options for sustainable transport in Uttlesford would you support ?

### Public Transport Strategy



- Current bus network needs significant improvement to shift people out of cars
- Bus services are not integrated with rail services
- New developments should include busways and homes to be within walking distance of a bus stop
- Need to develop an integrated public transport strategy for Uttlesford
- Developers should fund bus services to new developments and subsidise services for existing communities

### Technology and transport



- Vital that new development includes ultra-fast broadband and 5G to reduce the need to travel for work in a post Covid-19 world
- Need for local workspace hubs in new communities
- Scepticism about the impact of autonomous vehicles and drones
- New technologies will need to be piloted and objectively assessed to understand impacts on building costs and viability

### Electric vehicle charging



- Developers should provide EV charging infrastructure in both private and public locations in a development
- Developers should fund any upgrade to electrical grid capacity required
- EV charging points should be integrated with solar panels on roofs

## **Transport: What options for sustainable transport would you support**

### **Individual responses and comments**

#### **Access to Services**

- General support for the principle of locating new development where there is good access to services and sustainable transport – locating growth where there are good existing services.
- Support for directing new development towards locations that enable residents to adopt sustainable modes of travel and have easy access to local shops, schools and facilities.
- Suggestion that existing towns and larger settlements with greater range of services should be the preferred location for new development.
- Entirely new settlements should only be supported where they are large enough to provide their own facilities and services.
- New developments can help support the economic vitality of existing local services.
- Developments located near to sustainable transport hubs will have less reliance on cars and in turn may need less provision for car parking on site.
- Development sites should be selected based on their accessibility to rail services and stations. The majority of commuters should be able to walk or cycle to train stations, not have to catch buses in addition to their trains.
- Avoid locating new development in isolated locations – very difficult to deliver adequate high quality public transport services to support new settlements in locations where there are currently none.
- New developments should be designed in accordance with the 15 minute neighbourhood: all facilities within 15 minutes' walk of homes, promoting health and social interaction.
- Car travel in a rural area is inevitable especially for school, medical and employment purposes however it can be minimised through the provision of more local services in each town and village.
- Uttlesford needs a job centre, local hospital, more schools and GP services within the district.
- New developments must be located to facilitate walking, cycling and public transport
- New development should consider new ways of working from home or in local area, flexible shared workspaces and hubs, residential development should include home offices and office pods or studios.
- Access to services ideally through walking or bikes, designed so people travelling in this manner are safe e.g. well-lit routes
- The CIHT paper 'Better Planning, Better Transport, Better Places' should underpin decisions about housing locations. Sustainability assessments must calculate the carbon costs of the lifestyles generated by developments: the carbon costs of commuters, school children and shoppers.
- Connected areas of growth to services and rail stations by a network of new cycle routes and requiring developers to provide households with electric bikes or funding an electric bike hire scheme.

- There is an existing linear transport corridor, including a well-connected mainline rail line, running North-South through the district. There is no existing comparable East-West corridor.
- It is very hard to drive sustainable outcomes without linking new settlements to existing centres to take advantage of concentration for public transport, and also the greater potential for walking and cycling, or without linking settlements to rail lines within a 3km or so radius.
- Transport is so key to emissions that it must be accepted that where large scale transport intervention such as Rapid Transit (to use an example from the unsuccessful previous local plan) are proposed, there has likely been a failure in spatial planning, ie that potential emissions and transport implications have not been appropriately considered in the first place.
- New housing development and employment centres should integrate bus services and links to trains at the initial planning stage to avoid 'islands', such as Chesterford Research Park, that are primarily only safely accessible by car.

### **Low traffic Neighbourhoods**

- Overall support for the concept of low traffic neighbourhood principles and designing new developments so that walking, cycling and public transport is prioritised over cars.
- Support for active travel being at the heart of the design process.
- Retrofitting the principles to existing neighbourhoods will be difficult.
- Recognition that in rural areas the car will remain essential and be the dominant mode of travel.
- Concerns about conflict between pedestrians and cyclists on shared paths were raised.
- Suggestion that new pedestrian and cycle paths should be accessible to horse riders by default.
- Concerns raised about the safety of cycling in rural areas and physical ability of older persons to cycle longer distances between settlements.
- Concerns about the lack of safe walking routes and footpaths in rural areas but also in settlements such as Saffron Waldon which results in a greater reliance on the car.
- Need to ensure new developments are permeable and that developers actually build the footpaths and cycle lanes required as part of the planning permission.
- Concern that piecemeal developments are designed in isolation resulting in no improvements for walking and cycling.
- Concerns that low traffic neighbourhoods could worsen air quality and congestion.
- Concern that if new development doesn't provide adequate space for parking within curtilage then residents will just park on the street and obstruct the footways.
- Roads in and around Uttlesford and Saffron Walden especially are not considered attractive or safe for cyclists or pedestrians however a number of opportunities for improvements.
- There should be consideration of providing pedestrian and cycle paths on the other side of hedgerows of fields next to roads to protect cyclists from vehicles and associated pollution.

- Cycling is a low carbon, cheap, and healthy form of transport and it is essential that safe paths are created to help workers access this form of transport in all new and existing developments.
- For this to be achievable more safety reviews, more consultations with the public living in the area and greater local decision-making capacity at parish and community level are needed. Responsiveness, boldness and the capacity to be swift is required.
- Concerns about speeding on roads and the excessive speed limits on certain roads especially when they are in the vicinity of schools – deter pedestrians and cyclists.
- Support for speed calming measures and wider pavements to encourage walking
- Speeding and anti-social driving behaviour is a significant problem that needs addressing.
- Support for 20 mph speed limits through villages and residential areas but they will need to be self-enforced either through the design of the road or through sensitively placed average speed cameras.
- All villages with single carriageway roads and no footpaths should by default be a 20mph speed limit zone.
- Safe links between villages, Safe School Cycle Routes and cycle lanes which run contra one-way systems.
- Explore cycle lanes on farmland and disused railway tracks such as Saffron Walden to Ashdon, Bartlow, Linton and Cambridge.
- To support walking - All facilities can be easily reached by, parents with prams, children and the elderly. Benches should be included for the elderly, as should toilet facilities. Routes should follow desire lines.
- Wildlife corridors should be built into transport plans to protect species and improve air quality, with trees and hedges to buffer transport sounds and emissions.
- Encouraging people to get out more and integrate with their local community on foot, by some form of pedal power or other environmentally friendly vehicle has clear benefits for all.

### **Public Transport Strategy**

- Current bus network is not convenient or comprehensive enough to encourage shift from cars. Bus services between settlements and rail stations need improving.
- Current bus service model is not fit for purpose, it is unaffordable with inadequate bus services that are not integrated and coordinated with rail services.
- Need to rethink the rural bus services with new operating and ownership models.
- Rural bus services are a lifeline for many rural residents. Reliable hourly bus services for rural communities would reduce the need for car journeys and benefit local economies and the environment.
- Need for the provision of reliable and real time bus service information at stops.
- New development should be well connected by rail to key employment locations such as Cambridge and London.
- The location and size of new development should be dependent on their ability to support a regular, commercially viable bus service.
- Funding for public transport service improvements for new developments should be via the developer in form of S106 or CIL.

- Developers should pay to subsidise bus services to new developments and improve bus services for existing communities particular for rural services that are not commercially viable.
- There needs to develop a district wide integrated public transport strategy that explores funding options for bus services.
- Local community knowledge should be involved in the development of bus service routes and timetables.
- Dedicated busway and bus only roads should be designed into all new large developments.
- New public transport infrastructure and services need to be delivered up front whilst the development is built out and not afterwards.
- New development should be focused on where transport infrastructure already exists rather than new infrastructure to support remote locations for new development.
- Great Chesterford has a rail station but no car park or cycle parking facilities which deters usage.
- Buses should be better designed to accommodate buggies, wheelchairs and bicycles.
- Public transport should use clean fuels
- Buses could run 'on demand' rather than timetable
- Low cost travel is essential for young people, those out of work, low paid
- Railways should be used for transportation of more freight to get HGVs off the roads.
- Mobility hubs should be considered, using electric shuttle buses for first-and-last-mile transport to and from the train stations, integrated with active travel routes
- Cost of public transport is unaffordable for low income residents and workers. It compares poorly against car travel with it costing more for a family of 4 to travel by bus than by car.
- Public transport won't be used if the bus stops and rail stations are not physically accessible or people don't feel safe walking or cycling to access them.
- Extend the existing rail line from Stansted Airport to Great Dunmow.
- Suggestion for using autonomous vehicles on certain bus routes.
- Park and Ride or local travel hubs should be considered.
- New developments should be built with existing public transport in mind, for instance near railway stations, and should be designed to encourage less car use with regular electric bus routes going to the developments as well as safe, easy to access, cycle paths linking new and old developments to railway stations and the nearest towns.
- The size and location of a development should always be built with the viability of public transport, including an electric bus service, in mind. More electric public transport is vital to reducing carbon emissions, as well as decent paths for cycling.
- Bus services based on resident's needs, particularly aimed at those with cars rather than without, which connect directly to appropriate destinations at times to suit are required.
- Affordable local station parking would encourage the use of trains.
- A connection to the tube system at Epping from the mainline going through Stansted/Bishops Stortford would also reduce car journeys.
- A bus service directly to the station from nearby villages, would encourage the use of public transport rather than use of a car/taxi.

## **Technology and transport**

- Recognition that there has been a huge growth in working from home due to the pandemic which is unlikely to revert back to before – new developments must consider working from home in their design.
- There is a need for strong policies in the Local Plan to support home working: good quality broadband, houses with adequate study and workspaces, access to up to date tech resources software and hardware; updated employment policies.
- It is vital for new developments to provide ultrafast broadband as well as 5G – this needs to be considered from the start as it will be expensive to retrofit.
- Autonomous vehicles are not likely to make a big impact in rural areas like Uttlesford.
- Uncertainty about drones and what their impact might be.
- There will be a need for local business hubs and workspaces for those that no longer required to travel into an office but home is unsuitable to work in.
- The cost of such technologies should be considered and tested to ensure the delivery and wider benefits brought by development are not prejudiced and affordability is not impacted.
- More people working from home will increase need for more walking and cycling routes for leisure activities; need for policies to support homeworking (broadband, workspace)
- Should not forget about those that don't have access to or ability to use broadband or digital technology – telephonic access should still be viable.
- Ensuring there is ultrafast fibre broadband to all areas of Uttlesford should be made a priority

## **Electric vehicle charging**

- Strong support for developers to provide electric vehicle charging in new developments and upgrade the grid if necessary.
- Electrical vehicle charging Need to consider all places where people have vehicles e.g. along streets so to ensure sufficient charging points
- EV charging should be provided at frequently visited locations: supermarkets, carparks, leisure centres, garages, etc
- Planning must promote the swiftest possible switch to electric vehicles with: EV charging available to all households Fast EV charging at car parks, leisure centres, supermarkets, petrol stations etc Wild life corridors should be incorporated into the design of all transport infrastructures to promote bio diversity and improved quality of life
- Developers should also fund public charging stations in the local community.
- Feeling that this is being led at national level and happening anyway.
- There should be consideration for the installation of 3-phase power supply to houses rather than single phase to enable faster charging.
- The cost and range of electric cars is still an issue and will need improving.
- Need also to enable EV charging in housing designs where parking areas are remote from housing. Planning authorities need to impose conditions to ensure charging points are installed.

- There are challenges including the capacity of existing energy infrastructure and costs for upgrades and network reinforcement must be factored into Local Plan viability to ensure the delivery of new allocations.
- EV charging provision should be linked up with solar panels on houses.
- A reduction in car use is always welcome but better that we accept cars are here to stay and invest in more charging points to encourage electric car use.

#### **Other comments**

- A well-structured new local plan can achieve substantial benefits within our area but will be compromised by through traffic and by those with a need to travel further.
- 75% of carbon emissions in rural areas are from transport so we urgently need to change.
- Our Local Plan should make sustainable transport choices easy, preferred option; prioritise walking, cycling and public transport; promote activity and social interaction, contributing to health and inclusion; incorporate green infrastructure and wildlife corridors to help improve biodiversity It should take a 'vision and validate' approach, not predict and provide, which results in more cars.
- The Town and Country Planning Association Guide recommends: 50% of trips to be made by non-car means, with a goal to increase to at least 60%; public transport nodes and neighbourhood facilities should be a short walk from every home. homes should be within 800 metres of schools for children under 11.
- Walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure needs are met before major roads are delivered, layout is designed around active travel, social, cultural and economic activity, not parking and cars.
- More consultation, more power to the local parishes and faster changes 20 mph to be included in areas near shops and older housing estates.
- The situation with huge lorries travelling through Thaxted to service the new supermarkets on the edge of Walden needs sorting out - it is not an appropriate route and traffic calming needs to be introduced.
- Action to tackle Climate Change would be compromised by airport expansion.

#### **Statutory Consultee comments**

##### ***Stansted Mountfichet Parish Council:***

- Stansted Mountfichet is fortunate to have access to road and rail services. However, the village is the meeting point of the major North-South route, the B1383, with the B1051 resulting in congestion and high volumes of traffic.
- Traffic calming measures, together with central refuges and adequate parking facilities, (a must for the sustainability of businesses in this important commercial centre), are essential.
- The geographical location of Stansted Mountfichet and developments elsewhere within Uttlesford mean that the village is gradually being swamped by the increase in traffic volume.

##### ***Stebbing Parish Council:***

- A transport infrastructure needs to be in place that is achievable and credible.

- Bus routing for Stebbing should reflect the actual needs of the residents for example a route to Great Dunmow that is currently only accessible by car and the main destination for GPs, supermarket, pharmacy and general shopping.
- Electric charging points should be available at service stations to encourage electric car use.
- Cycle routes should be developed not just for leisure but to enable people to get from A to B. Bridle ways should be kept in better repair.
- Employment opportunities locally reduces the need to travel long distances to work, are there plans for a growth in such jobs.

***Quendon & Rickling Parish Council:***

- Rural communities like ours need transport - for shopping and access to utilities/facilities like doctors, hospitals etc.
- It would be nice to see smaller buses on our roads, which run more frequently, at agreed times along agreed routes.
- If we were able to give the residents of our village tickets (perhaps a book of tickets, ie. a monthly pass for which you pay whereby a ticket is taken for each journey that you take) that could be used to travel on the bus - would that encourage people to use the bus more frequently? This would encourage less cars on the roads.
- To encourage people to use their bikes, or walk, it would be nice to have downloadable walks or routes that could be used by residents.
- The problem with public transport is it has to be paid for by someone and unless sufficient people use it, it will disappear.
- There should be electric charging areas on new developments and electric garages like the one in Braintree.

***Clavering Parish Council:***

- It is of paramount importance that any new developments are completely geared to the electric car and provision of power for such.
- The only way to make a community have sustainable transport is to start with a fresh garden city and build it to make sure it works.
- Cycle lanes are not the answer. The one to Audley End has created a bigger carbon footprint as cars have to travel further from outlying villages to reach the station.
- Electric vehicle points fit them to new houses now.
- Grants to local businesses to fit charge points.
- Buses on demand work well when low use and more cost effective but developments should be aimed at where a viable bus service could be established.

***Takeley Parish Council:***

- Public transport is good if there are frequent services.
- In an ideal world cycling and walking should take priority and it works well in town settings, but in rural areas the car is still important mode of transport to get to work, leisure and education.

- Stansted Airport railway station should not be considered a good commuter rail link as the fares are more expensive and the parking is very expensive compared with other stations. The bus station and networking buses are good and a useful travel hub.

***Chrishall Parish Council:***

- local byways are being abused by off-road vehicles and motorbikes and we would seek a mechanism to remove motorised vehicles from our green lanes.
- Cycle paths: to link in with carbon reductions, permissive cycle paths across and around fields need to be established to enable low carbon transportation on off-road, direct, routes.
- Those travelling to Wendens Ambo rail station have to run the gauntlet of the B1039 and try to get there safely, which needs nerves of steel.
- Children are transported to school by car because it is too dangerous for them to cycle or walk. A painted line on a road won't ensure safety of pedestrians or cyclists.
- There need to be more off-road routes which could also increase biodiversity if properly planted and maintained.

***Thaxted Parish Council:***

- It is arguable that car parking standards associated with new development are incorrectly set with spaces increasing according to building size. It would be more logical to reduce the provision of car parking spaces on all development.
- Residents with several cars could then be given the option of buying parking permits for a remote car park discreetly sited away from the housing and neighbourhood roads but incorporated as a part of the developer's scheme.
- Car charging points for each new house would also be an obvious requirement. It must be sensible though to only locate significant new developments in places where there is immediate access (walking distance) to good transport hubs.
- This will mean direct access to railway stations and bus termini with a shuttle bus service if necessary from the surrounding developments.
- Low traffic neighbourhoods have been suggested however these will be impractical in many parts of the District due to the dependence on the car whilst at the same time they inevitably come with large amounts of signage and street furniture which destroys historic character.
- What has been suggested specifically in relation to Thaxted is the creation of a Low Emissions Zone whereby a charge would be levied for the most polluting vehicles and, if ECC continue to resist a weight restriction, also on HGVs. A percentage of the revenue could be used to enhance community facilities.

***Great Dunmow Town Council:***

- Public transport is extremely poor in Uttlesford and to facilitate housing growth throughout the district, bus service funding should be viewed as an essential service rather than considering rather than trying to make the services commercially viable.
- Gt Dunmow Town Council has already recognised a need for additional local services and has liaised with ECC to work on a local bus strategy with some s106 contributions already agreed with ECC Highways.

- Priority should be given to housing development wherever there is an existing railway station, regardless of the size of the current settlement. Access to a railway station should have a defined walking and cycling distance or a short bus journey.
- The new Local Plan walking and cycling distance mapping is useful to assess sustainability of sites put forward in the Call for Sites. The plan to show 5/10/15min walking and cycling distances to shops and schools should be expanded to include access to railway stations by foot, cycle, bus and car.
- Bus services should be heavily subsidised and ideally to make it free for all UDC residents. New hopper routes should complement the existing commercial services.
- A new policy should require employers of 50 or more employees to subsidise public transport within Uttlesford.
- Make it a CIL and s106 requirement to support public transport financially on all major housing developments of 10 homes or more.
- Geographically and culturally linked village clusters already exist within Uttlesford and these established community links should be enhanced providing a new hopper bus services to link them together with a town and a railway station. This would form a rural spatial strategy whereby appropriate housing growth can be sustainable throughout the district.
- Cars cannot be designed out of a rural district such as Uttlesford. In Gt Dunmow, new Highways consideration should be given to the change in circumstances with the access arrangements of the approved all-through HRS school and sports complex.
- Walker Engineering reports are attached to evidence the impact on the Stortford Road, and could risk the 2,000+ housing delivery projections in the housing trajectory.
- Our recent new development experience leads us to request new policy wording, to require master-planning for all new housing developments over 50 homes, to include a study of the cumulative impact on the town or village from all approved, proposed and Local Plan allocated housing development.
- A review with ECC Highways, should include consideration of a new HGV strategy from the A120 to Gt Dunmow and surrounding villages. This would have an impact on Saffron Walden and could require securing long-term funding to open J9 of the M11 in the future.

***Newport Parish Council:***

- Public transport should use clean fuel e.g. electric or hydrogen cars, buses, minibuses and trains to replace fossil fuels.
- NPC asks UDC to consider bringing rural transport into public ownership (eg run by local councils), run on a not-for-profit basis, and to make it green (electric or hydrogen). Funding and investment is required.
- Locally run electric buses or minibuses could be run 'on-demand' rather than according to a formal regular timetable.
- NPC ask that UDC consider offering free or reduced cost travel to low paid workers, out of work people, and their school-age children.
- Better access to key local services would cut unnecessary car journeys. Uttlesford needs local hospital.

- Local rural rush hours and pollution hotspots are already exacerbated by parents driving their children to/from school; with Uttlesford set to expand, please plan for local schools and GPs in convenient locations where houses are being built.
- NPC suggests that rail could be better used, e.g., for delivering freight. NPC would prefer that all rail should be electrified in the UK rather than relying on fossil fuel - this requires national investment.
- In order to travel to many places in Essex, it is cheaper and quicker to drive a car, rather than going by public transport. However, as many cannot afford a car, the lack of public transport is isolating. We need better public transport.

***Salings Parish Council:***

- Sustainable transport must have train lines as a core pillar – housing development should be within 3-4km (actual road distance, not as the crow flies) maximum from a mainline railway station as this makes cycling a realistic prospect.
- UDC should focus on the North South corridor on the West side of the district, as currently there is no East-West train corridor.
- High density urban extensions are the most appropriate format for development and this has strong transport advantages – it is one of the few genuine walkability and cycling solutions, as well as making public transport more feasible for the entire urban ecosystem.
- We support the “obvious” points such as Broadband and Electric Car Charging being key to any new developments – these should be mandatory requirements within the Local Plan.

***High Roding Parish Council:***

- Options for workable, sustainable transport Cycle and pedestrian routes should be prioritised.
- Dial-a-ride/demand based public transport options should be made available, especially in more rural areas.

***Essex Police - Designing out Crime Office:***

It is important that transport systems i.e. roads cover the safety of all users and vulnerable user groups, such as cyclists, pedestrians & equestrian use. For consideration, it is essential that emergency vehicles can gain rapid access to any incident occurring & surrounding neighbourhoods. Therefore, upon devising any new road layout, we would recommend early consultation with Essex Police Roads Policing team. When designing local roads consideration is requested by developers to use the “Safe system approach” and deliberation into the various road user groups who wish to access these roads.

To encourage a more activate community & sustainable transport provisions, we would recommend that:

- public realm spaces are designed where safety and security is subliminal to the user of that space.
- Promote sustainability throughout walkways adopting ‘crime prevention through environmental design’ (CPTED) principles.
- Pedestrian walkways, safe cycle routes & public areas are designed to address issues of permeability and connectivity, promoting natural surveillance.

- With a focus on sustainable travel, consideration needs to be given to the secure external storage facilities & bicycle security, be this within the home environment or within communal bicycle stores.
- Accessibility across communities encourages healthy & active lifestyle's; however, it is important (as it increase crime and the fear of crime) to not design communities with excessive permeable routes that are not connected. Car clubs & access to safer buses should be an integral component at the outset of design.
- We support the concept of SMART cities & would encourage secure management practices around the use & safe storage of electric vehicle and scooter hire.
- It is imperative that infrastructure (i.e. cabling) is in place within the early concept & design stage(s) to facilitate this requirement (including electric vehicle charging), this will help support future technology & may assist the police i.e. with the use of CCTV.

Essex Police Designing out Crime Officer's would gladly welcome early consultation at the earliest opportunity

***Essex County Council (ECC):***

- ECC recommends that the emerging Local Plan appreciates the existing and future role that London Stansted airport will play within the spatial strategy, and sets out policies to support this function. It is important that the Local Plan appreciates the airports role as an international gateway and economic stimulus and regional transportation hub to benefit existing and future communities
- ECC recognises that the emerging Local Plan will need to have a clear understanding and robust evidence for policies that seek to - Develop clear modal shift targets and minimise transport trips through location of development and provision of sustainable transport options; Understand the policy implications that alternative fuels may require; and the impact of the digital technology.
- ECC support that when delivering future growth the new Local Plan should consider the impact on the transport network, and the scale of mitigation measures in the form of infrastructure and services needed to accommodate the development proposed.
- Emerging spatial and development management policies be consistent with ECC highways and transportation guidance and policy and identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development, for example the potential for a Rapid Transit System, and walking and cycling routes in the walking and cycling action plans and strategies.
- The TCPA Garden City Principles are important to consider when developing future communities with UDC.

***Chelmsford City Council (CCC):***

- CCC notes the objective towards provision of sustainable transport options to ensure that new and existing homes continue to have access to supporting services, whilst reducing the reliance on the car and ensuring the infrastructure and technology can support this approach.
- Supporting evidence should review the impact of new development on the local highway network and take into account adjoining authority's position.
- Reference should be made to the evidence base study for the Chelmsford Local Plan which can be found at: <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-new-local-plan/new-local-plan/evidence-base/>

**Greater Cambridge:**

We would look favourably upon development that would contribute to the delivery of cross-boundary strategic infrastructure.

**Natural England:**

- Transport policies will need to take full account of the impact of changes in the use of different modes of transport upon the natural environment (air quality; noise; lighting).
- Policies should also promote the use of public transport, cycling and walking to improve access to nature, subject to consideration of recreational pressure. Aligning improved access to nature with better connected green infrastructure could encourage greater levels of walking and cycling as alternatives to short trips by car. This modal shift would provide multiple benefits including health and wellbeing, improved air quality and climate change mitigation.

**The British Horse Society:**

- Many of the routes that are used to walk or cycle to work or school are the same routes which at other times provide for recreational use. Horse-riding is as much an 'active travel' mode as walking or cycling.
- Cambridgeshire is demonstrating good practice. Active Travel provision must be embedded in new transport projects such as the Uttlesford Local Plan in the same way for all modes, to provide continuity and improved connectivity of the network for all. No barriers should be created to prevent public routes being enjoyed by as many user groups as possible.
- Whilst we acknowledge the importance of encouraging active travel commuting, all routes must be planned with equal importance given to both leisure use by all non-motorised users (NMUs)(walkers, cyclists, equestrians, disabled people, and commuter-cycling use).
- Off-road routes are being provided for cycling which could benefit equestrians who are also vulnerable road users; and Surfaces of routes such as bridleways and byways, with rights for riders or carriage drivers, are being changed to facilitate cycling but to the detriment of equestrian access.
- This is particularly influenced by current funding initiatives making provision for cycling. With more awareness in the planning stages, ALL non-motorised vulnerable road users can benefit from all off-road tracks & none need be excluded.

**Call for Sites – Promoters:****Stonebond Properties (Chelmsford) Ltd – Thaxted Green:**

- The site at land south of Thaxted is located adjacent to the village boundary and is within walking and cycling distance of the services and facilities provided.
- Thaxted is well served by services and facilities, and contains the following: primary school, small convenience store, other convenience shops, post office, library, doctor's surgery, pharmacy, public houses, restaurants, petrol filling station, sports clubs and recreation areas, and bus services. There are bus services to Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow and Stanstead Airport from Thaxted. There are school bus services available to transport children to secondary school. In transport terms

Thaxted is a sustainable location that is accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.

- Paragraph 78 of NPPF states that “to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.
- Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.
- Thaxted is one of the key villages in the settlement hierarchy and should be a focus for additional development based on the services and facilities it provides to the surrounding rural area. It is considered that additional residential development in Thaxted could help to support the existing services and facilities within the village.

#### **Rosconn:**

- New development should be delivered through the local plan in a way that maximises the viability and vitality of existing local services, town centres and public transport facilities allowing for improved footfall to existing businesses and improved connectivity for new and existing residents.
- RSL agrees that creating neighbourhoods that incentivise people away from the private car and toward walking, cycling and public transport is an important component to sustainable development. However, it should also be recognised that when planning for new development there will always be a need to take account of vehicular movements and the necessary road widths and junction dimensions to ensure safe and effective access.
- RSL considers that vehicle movements within sites should be reconciled with and integrated into the public realm along with foot and cycle provision rather than providing segregated routes which will encourage car dependence.
- We note that the Garden Community Principles set out in the call for sites form underscores the need for, amongst other things, “integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms for local journeys.” As the consultation document states, providing public transport services is often challenging as commercial viability is usually a major barrier. In RSL’s view, the availability of existing services nearby should be a major factor in choosing sites for development whilst recognising that such sites have the capacity to improve public transport and contribute towards an integrated strategy for the settlements they are related to.
- SL agrees that providing high quality sustainable transport is a vital aspect to tackling climate change, building communities and enhancing local economies. This approach would be in line with paragraph 103 of the NPPF which states that development should be focused in locations which are or can be made sustainable by limiting the need to travel or by offering alternatives.

#### **Baker and Metson Ltd – Phase 2 Planning (Chelmer View):**

- B&M supports the objective that new development should principally be located where the need to travel by motor vehicle is reduced by providing a genuine choice of sustainable transport modes and access to local infrastructure and services, thus reducing the need for residents to travel long distances by car.

- The proposed mixed use neighbourhood at Chelmer View is one such example of an extension existing settlement of Great Dunmow which is pursuant to these objectives. Chelmer View, being a strategic scale extension to the adjacent settlement of Great Dunmow, positively supports the opportunity to integrate with the town through an expanded network of walking and cycling movement corridors and integrated public transport routes.
- Chelmer View will also reduce car travel and promote walking and cycling because all homes will fall within a 500m or 6-7 minutes walk of a local centre, school, place of employment, and open spaces/recreation areas, which will ensure a walkable neighbourhood that compliments and supports the existing infrastructure and services at Great Dunmow.
- Chelmer View is therefore a strategic scale extension in the form of a mixed use neighbourhood in a location that can limit the need to travel and provide a genuine choice of sustainable transport modes, which will reduce the need for its residents to travel by motor vehicle.

#### ***Pigeon – Parsonage Green:***

- Council's spatial strategy should seek to focus new homes within and around Uttlesford's most sustainable settlements, in particular Great Dunmow.
- Parsonage Green for instance is located on the north eastern side of Great Dunmow, in a highly sustainable location, within close proximity of 'commercially viable local services'.
- Whilst it is important through the design of new developments to maximise opportunities to encourage walking, cycling and public transport, this should be balanced against a requirement to ensure that new neighbourhoods function efficiently to get everyone around. Uttlesford is a rural district and residents will therefore be reliant on private cars to some extent.
- In terms of the design of new neighbourhoods, priority can be given to pedestrian and cycle movements, subject to location and the potential to create connections.
- It may be that improvements to a bus service are required by the local highway authority to support the level of development proposed. However, these improvements if viable and deliverable do not necessarily make a scheme unsustainable and can be secured via S106 contributions or CIL payments.
- Pigeon are committed to creating sustainable schemes that seek to mitigate against the impacts of climate change. Parsonage Green makes provision for each new home within the scheme to be equipped with the infrastructure for an electrical vehicle charging point.

#### **Grosvenor Britain & Ireland - North Uttlesford:**

- To be able to offer a genuine choice of transport modes, reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality, the Local Plan needs to allocate development in locations and of a scale which makes these goals achievable.
- Development should be in locations that take full advantage of existing and proposed transport infrastructure such as rail links, cycle paths, footways and the strategic road network.
- New development should also contribute to local infrastructure improvements to mitigate their impacts. New settlements with good connections to existing and proposed transport infrastructure are well placed to reduce the reliance on the private

vehicle, improve access to sustainable modes of transport, encourage the uptake of active travel and improve opportunities for walking and cycling.

- New settlements are also of a scale whereby they can contribute to, or deliver, new or enhanced infrastructure, to not only mitigate their impacts but provide benefits for the wider community.
- North Uttlesford will be based on the principle of the 20-minute neighbourhood where a range of facilities and services will be provided on site, encouraging short local journeys to be made by active and low carbon modes of transport such as walking and cycling. This in turn reduces the need to travel off-site and use the private car.
- New settlements offer the critical mass and ability to plan for and deliver transport infrastructure which is difficult to achieve through the same amount of development that is spread out across many sites, landowners, developers and locations.

### ***Pelican – Hatfield Garden:***

- New settlements provide an opportunity to develop a mix of land uses supporting robust sustainability principles for land uses and transport methods. The 15-minute city concept builds upon practical and evidence-led concepts about sustainable urban development and should be supported in the development of the new spatial strategy.
- As previously recognised in past local plan making exercises there will likely be a requirement for one or more new settlements to be allocated in the District.
- The opportunity should be taken to create a set of guiding principles for these allocations in line with the proposals we are making with Hatfield Gardens - an excellent opportunity to employ the 15-minute city concept.
- Hatfield Gardens is located within close proximity to the M11 and surrounding strategic infrastructure, including Stanstead Airport and several rail connections, all connecting north/south especially significant for people that may require travel intermittently into and from London.
- A new settlement will require significant connecting infrastructure and the land promoted at Hatfield Gardens is well positioned to connect into existing strategic infrastructure. The benefits of geographical location to deliver and connect into strategic infrastructure should be considered within the Councils Sustainability Appraisal. Improvements to the M11 at junction 8 would support additional development and there is a plausible justification for a new connection onto the M11 (Junction 7A) to serve a new sustainable green corridor, which could be funded by the residential development within this proposal.
- Any policy should place an expectation on new development to support emerging technologies including electric vehicles, biogas public transport, green multimodal corridors and other technologies where it is sensible and viable to do so.

### **SEGRO:**

- It is therefore considered that strategic employment developments, like that at the FedEx Cargo Warehouse at Stansted Airport, should not be required to support a regular bus service due to shift patterns and the need for some employees to travel by car during unsociable hours. However, new employment development could offer financial support towards local bus services.
- SEGRO are supportive of the principle of new developments providing ultra-fast broadband and seeking to use new technologies where feasible and viable.

Notwithstanding this, the draft Plan should take into account the fact that these technologies will be evolving over the Plan period and the opportunities listed above will not happen overnight. Sufficient flexibility should therefore be provided for new development and policies to be adaptive to account for this.

- Paragraph 105 of the NPPF notes that if setting local parking standards for development, policies should take into account the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low vehicles. For industrial and warehouse uses in other Local Authority areas, SEGRO often provide 10% of parking as EV charging spaces (with the first 5% being readily available and infrastructure in place for the remaining 5% to be delivered once there is demand).

**Bloor Homes – Land East of Station Road, Elsenham:**

- The site promoted by Bloor Homes at land east of Station Road in Elsenham is located adjacent to Elsenham Station. There are bus stops on Station Road and High Street. Elsenham is well served by services and facilities. It contains a primary school, doctors surgery, convenience store, post office, public house, takeaways, village hall, bowls club, recreation ground, businesses, railway station and bus services.
- These services and facilities will meet the day to day needs of local residents. It is considered that Elsenham is a sustainable settlement with a range of services and facilities that are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.

***Thomas G Fairhead Ltd – Land South of Ickleton Road, Great Chesterford:***

- We have submitted a site, for residential use, on land to the south of Ickleton Road, Great Chesterford under the “Call for Sites” on behalf our client.
- Great Chesterford is well placed in relation to Cambridge, London and significant employment hubs as well access to the sustainable modes of the transport.
- Allocation of housing should be prioritised in existing sustainable locations such as Great Chesterford. The village benefits from having a mainline train station, with a regular train service.
- Existing modes of sustainable transport in sustainable villages should be enhanced where appropriate.
- Allocating land for residential development in close proximity to existing modes of sustainable transport should be prioritised. New development in Great Chesterford provides an opportunity to support, and make best use of the choice of transport modes available.

**Dale Hunter – Cheffins - West of Walden Rd, Ashden:**

- We have submitted a site, for residential use, on Land to the west of Walden Road, Church End, Ashdon under the “Call for Sites” on behalf our client.
- Church End, Ashdon is well placed in relation to Saffron Walden Cambridge, London and significant employment hubs as well access to the sustainable modes of the transport.
- Allocation of housing should be prioritised in existing sustainable locations such as Church End, Ashdon. The village benefits from having a regular bus service, no.59, Haverhill, Saffron Walden, Audley End mainline train station, with a regular train service between London and Cambridge.
- NPPF Paragraph 103 sets out that development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable and where they offer a genuine choice of

transport modes. Allocating land for residential development in close proximity to existing modes of sustainable transport should be prioritised.

**Richard Agnew – Gladman Developments:**

- The traditional approach of avoiding growth in rural locations because they are seen as less sustainable will need to change. The electronic revolution will mean that much more of our daily routine will centre around the home and the need to travel for daily services and facilities will reduce.
- The new Uttlesford Local Plan will need to take these issues into account when considering the relative sustainability merits of the various settlements within the district.
- It is also important to recognise that for strategic growth to be truly sustainable, it must be accompanied by the early delivery of appropriate non-car mode solutions to travel, as well as seeking to internalise as many journeys as possible.
- In terms of the provision of electric charging facilities for vehicles, it is important to consider the capacity of infrastructure providers (particularly electricity) to cope with the demand for such charging points and their effect on development viability.
- This is a further reason why detailed design issues such as this, should be left for the Building Regulation process.

**Weston Homes – Land at Warish Hall Farm:**

- 'Land at Warish Hall Farm' is the site that Weston Homes has submitted as part of the Call for Sites 2021 consultation. It is linked to the existing urban area and facilities of Takeley and Little Canfield and will increase local population through the delivery of around 1,000 new homes, assisting the sustainability of both villages. The site benefits from good accessibility to Takeley village centre and facilities at Little Canfield local centre, is linked to the railway station at Stansted Airport and by a range of bus services to other settlements.
- Development of the site would offer the opportunity to integrate the Takeley and Little Canfield communities to help to create a more sustainable community, creating new active movement networks and promoting sustainable environments.
- New developments that are located within and close to town centres and village centres with existing infrastructure and local amenities and services would naturally promote active forms of travel and would also help support the existing services within the community. As a result, we would support a policy that guides new development towards the sustainable growth of existing settlements.
- Enhancements to existing services (e.g. local bus frequency) would be supported by an increase to local population to benefit existing and new residents with access to the service.
- Weston Homes supports using new technologies to positively transform living for instance through the provision of 5G and ultra fast broadband.
- The promotion of low carbon ways of living is also supported along with the principle of electric vehicle charging, however the existing electricity grid capacity and costs associated with upgrading, reinforcement and implementing this infrastructure would need to be considered and tested.
- Any policy wording would need to include development viability considerations in order that it is adequately flexible and does not prevent sustainable sites from coming forward for development.

## **Uttlesford Local Plan (Issues and Options) 2020-2021**

### **First Consultation: Theme 5 Leisure, Culture and Healthy Lifestyles**

**May 2021**

#### **Introduction**

The Community Stakeholder Forum discussed the theme on Wednesday 27 January and the theme was then open for comment.

Comments received up to the close of consultation on 21 April 2021 will be brought together in a document summarising comments from all nine themes, the Council's response and how the issues raised in the comments will be reflected in the Draft Local Plan.

Between 27 January and 21 April 2021, 71 people responded to the theme.

#### **What we have been told about Leisure, Culture & Healthy Lifestyles**

The following is a summary of what people said about how existing places and new development support health and wellbeing.

To read all the representations in full please go to the [Consultation Portal](#).

What you have told us about . . .

## How can existing places and new development support health and wellbeing?

### Healthy lifestyles

How can we enable you to take more exercise, eat healthily and nurture mental wellbeing?

- Better support for day centres and community centres
- Provision for active travel
- Ensure all year round use of public spaces
- Put health and wellbeing at the heart of planning decisions
- Ensure facilities promised are delivered
- Further enable healthy eating
- Provision for people in need
- Design for mental wellbeing



How could open space be made more accessible or improved?



### Leisure

- Greater protection for open spaces, including Hatfield Forest
- Expand and link up with existing open space networks
- Improve the Flich Way
- Need for greater clarity on access
- Provide access to countryside beyond footpaths on agricultural land
- Create cycle/walking/equestrian greenways
- A new country park or nature reserve
- Protect and enhance biodiversity
- Prioritise walking, pedestrians and improve paths
- Ensure developers deliver amenity space promised
- Provide more seating in public places
- Permit exercise classes to operate free/at nominal cost in public green spaces

What buildings and spaces encourage a sense of community and help prevent social isolation?

- A mix of facilities for all
- Protection of existing community green spaces and creation of new ones
- Make health, wellbeing and a sense of community a priority for new development
- Address health and income inequalities

What types for sport, recreation and play facilities should we prioritise?

- Provision of facilities to suit different needs
- Address shortfalls and inadequacy

### Culture



What arts and cultural facilities do you value? Does Uttlesford lack venues for culture, arts and adult education. If so what and where are they needed?

- Uttlesford is a beautiful, rural area with a rich historic and cultural heritage
- Main cultural spaces are in Saffron Walden, there is under-provision elsewhere in the District
- Need identified for an arts & culture review and strategy
- Opportunity . . .
  - to facilitate and publicise a wider range of cultural facilities
  - for multi-function spaces
  - support network of voluntary organisations
  - to further support hospitality, tourism and leisure
  - contribute to placemaking
  - for artists studios and development of creative skills
- Poor provision for theatre
- More performance and live music venues
- Important role of churches as a source of cultural and emotional support



# Leisure

## How could open space be made more accessible or improved?

Greater protection for open spaces:

- Areas around existing towns and villages MUST have the added protection that is afforded by green belt status
- Residents must be given certainty that agriculture land they enjoy as part of their recreation is not going to be covered in houses. Ancient woodland, natural habitats MUST be protected for future generations. We will not have the opportunity to reverse decisions once construction is underway
- More and more green open spaces are being developed. These housing developments are large with houses very close together and not a tree in sight. Many fields that used to be enjoyed for a daily walk are now developed. Walking around a housing estate is depressing and not good for our wellbeing
- Danger that housebuilding takes priority with open spaces an afterthought often neglected or underprovided for
- Focusing on zero or minimal loss of open countryside is critical to this theme

Expand and link up with existing open space networks:

- Enhance and expand publicly accessible open space for ALL users - walkers, cyclists, equestrians and the less mobile.
- Create a traffic-free off-road network, linking the PROW network, other open spaces and plug gaps
- Not much wrong with the current set up. Take care not to damage what we have.
- Better interconnectivity may encourage pub use

Poor access to open space for a rural area:

- Lack of easily accessible open space is poor and disgraceful for a rural area
- Footpaths are of variable quality and often poorly marked
- Policies should seek to improve public access to open space and to sensitively enhance the recreational versatility in existing and new areas. Large play areas are preferable to pocket-sized play spaces on new developments

Need for greater clarity on access:

- Although Uttlesford has a large quantity of open space it is not clear how much is available for public enjoyment. I find that I never sure of the status of country paths on private or agricultural land. Finding a clear map for walks is a challenge
- Easily accessible maps (physical and online) of footpaths in the district and car parking on key walking routes

Provide access to open space beyond footpaths on agricultural land:

- Rural farming areas is fine for walking/jogging, provided public rights of way exist and paths are maintained. However, these facilities are insufficient – because disabled persons, and poorer persons who are time-poor are likely excluded from access
- Footways and bridleways provide the only open space

Improvement of the Flitch Way:

- The western section is disconnected from the eastern section at Great Dunmow
- Connect and improve to be accessible to ordinary walkers and cyclists
- Reconnect the Flitch Way via a multi-user safe off-road bridleway through Dunmow

- It will enable HRS (Helena Romanes School) students to cycle and walk to school in safety when the school moves to Buttleys Lane
- Several sections are only accessible to those wearing hiking boots or mountain bikes
- Secure funding to surface the route and provide safe road crossings and a bridge over the River Chelmer
- Restore and convert buildings along the route for use as community areas, like the partially used space at Rayne Station

Prioritise walking, pedestrians and improve paths:

- Take walking and pedestrians seriously. Narrow, or missing, pavements and high traffic speeds make walking very unpleasant in some areas (e.g. Audley Road in Saffron Walden)
- Paths should be well maintained, and those closest to village centres to be safe for the elderly
- Create designated walks in every village. Start near toilet provision and include plenty of seating enroute

Identify and create cycle/walking/equestrian greenways:

- The Local Plan should include explicit pedestrian and cycling route plans
- More bridleways
- Ensure provision for safe off-road routes for horse riders too. Equestrianism is the second largest contributor to the rural economy after agriculture. It contributes over £5 million to the Essex economy and supports many rural industries. It is enjoyed in particular by women and girls. Both these groups are poorly served by many of the sports facilities in Uttlesford.
- Cycle groups too tend to be predominantly male. Cyclists have had access to bridleways since 1968. The drive to create cycle tracks is a welcome contribution to the need for improved sustainable travel but where cycle tracks are created, they should include provision for horse riders

Permit exercise classes to operate free of charge/ nominal cost in public green spaces:

- Fees are prohibitive for bootcamp or exercise classes to operate on Saffron Common. It should be full of yoga, tai chi, classes for the elderly, circuit training etc which generate the best health returns when they are professionally led
- Gardens, allotments, wildlife are important factors in Uttlesford's leisure time. Watching deer roam, buzzards wheeling in the sky, yellow hammers darting around hedgerows, bats on a summers evening all contribute to rich diversity. Planning decisions must reflect & support this diversity

Ensure developers deliver amenity space promised:

- Holding developers to their original plans and proposals for amenity space through planning approval and conditions would be hugely benefit

More seating in public places:

- Benches are needed around the village on which to rest, sit and talk.
- There is a lack of covered spaces where people can meet safely and sit and chat
- A meeting circle with fixed seats at 2m intervals as a memorial to the pandemic

#### Need to protect Hatfield Forest:

- The National Trust (NT) owns and manages Hatfield Forest providing opportunity for informal recreation
- There are no public footpaths and there is a charge to park. The Forest cannot be considered as truly public. Evidence has shown that the increased use of the forest is damaging the designated/protected features
- Natural England has put the Forest at risk of losing its 'unfavourable, recovering condition' due to excessive impacts of footfall
- Natural and semi-natural greenspace in the district is predominately provided by Hatfield Forest. The Local Plan cannot rely on the existence of Hatfield Forest in meeting requirements relating to the provision of open space and green infrastructure.
- The Council must prepare a robust and up to date evidence base including an Open Space Assessment of the quantity and quality of existing open space and future open space requirements, based on future housing provision, to inform a strategic solution to address the recreational pressure impacts to the designated site
- Future provision based upon existing provision (as recommended in the 2019 Open Space Study Standards Paper) is not an appropriate method of calculation as it does not take into consideration local circumstances
- The Council's evidence should identify shortfalls and pressure at existing sites
- Recreational pressure could be addressed through:
  1. Provision of alternative high quality natural/semi-natural greenspace on site for all new major residential developments.
  2. Provision of a destination site such as a new country park offering a multifunctional space with a range of facilities as an alternative to Hatfield Forest. This needs to be close enough to Hatfield Forest to divert pressure away from the Forest and delivered early in the plan period
  3. A contribution sought for monitoring and mitigation from new housing developments within an established Zone of Influence for the Forest
- These recommended measures are set out in the 'Hatfield Forest Visitor Survey and Impact Management Report 2018'

#### Proposal for a new country park:

- The 2019 UDC Open Space Assessment Report identified that 75% of Natural & Semi-natural Open Space is provided by Hatfield Forest which is under severe threat from overuse. Alternative facilities are urgently needed
- Of the total of 684 hectares of open space in Uttlesford, 404 hectares (approximately 60%) is accounted for by Hatfield Forest. National Trust has stated that due to ever-increasing public demand for access, the pressure on Hatfield Forest has reached an unsustainable level and a further local open space facility is urgently needed
- Restoration of the medieval Easton Park and surrounding ancient woodlands is an ideal alternative within 5 kms. The intention of the Agreement of 1939 is to keep the Park as an open space and a nature sanctuary
- UDC has the responsibility to protect the park for the next 50 and 500 years
- The benefits of a large park have been demonstrated by the success of Hylands Park under the tenure of the Chelmsford City Council
- As a rural district, Uttlesford needs to promote, preserve and develop its rights of way as free accessible means for everyone to enjoy outdoor exercise, take pleasure in our countryside and connect with each other as a community
- It sits perfectly with the council's commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030
- For non-sporty families to be encouraged to exercise (in order to start addressing the obesity issue if for no other reason), open space should be enticing. You can't push a

buggy along a muddy field footpath. Hatfield Forest is expensive for non NT members. Ditto for Audley End. We desperately need a new country park

- The Town Council is supportive of a Vision Document prepared by the Stop Easton Park Group and would support initiatives to create a new country park, to relieve pressures on Hatfield Forest. The most suitable location in the south of the district is on the historic Easton Park Estate. The area can be easily accessed from the A120 via the current gravel haul road. Planning conditions for the quarry require that each stage is restored as they work the next, returning the land to farmland and parkland by 2029. Large expanses of open landscape, public rights of way and bridleways are surrounded by picturesque ancient buildings, riding stables, ancient woodlands, local wildlife sites, natural ponds and a registered park and garden, which combined would provide a unique setting in which to restore the former deer park and provide new recreational facilities for the whole district.

A new nature reserve:

- Similar to Rye Meads in Hoddesdon, RSPB Fowlmere or Wicken Fen. Provision could be made within Easton Park and some stretches of the Chelmer

Protect the green belt:

- Green Belt land continues to be threatened by development, decreasing its ability to provide for nature and reduce the impacts of climate change and people's access to green spaces. Protect the Green Belt Uttlesford is characterised by rolling countryside and open green spaces and featuring as one of the top places to live in the UK
- Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances can be fully evidenced and justified and the policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development

Incremental change:

- Radical new thinking is not required. Improve the public footpath network, maintain it better and make it more cohesive; advertise it far more clearly; Put money into improve current leisure facilities. But largely they are fine. People move here to be in the countryside, do not spoil it.

### **What buildings and open spaces encourage a sense of community and help prevent social isolation?**

Provision of a mix of facilities:

- Green spaces, footpaths and access to the countryside should be considered as important as formal leisure facilities, gyms, swimming pools and formal play areas
- There are many types of buildings and open spaces that encourage a sense of community and help prevent social isolation: market stalls, streets of independent shops, pubs, interest groups that meet online or in-person, sports facilities, village halls, churches, playing fields and playgrounds, concert halls and music venues, museums, gardens. Community spirit relies on people having time to speak to neighbours, organise gatherings and have locations to meet and hold activities
- Grants should also be made available for developing Community hubs into multi-use facilities to encourage multi-generational interaction

Provision of facilities for all:

- More activities in the local community for young children/toddlers and parents
- Leisure centres/gymnasiums are important for all the community. Those who are older, fatter, or less fit should not be made to feel inferior

Protection of existing community green spaces and creation of new ones:

- Community green space, accessible for all, with seating & availability of refreshments, for gathering, socialising and events is lacking
- Existing community green spaces are precious; they allow diverse people to mix intergenerationally, socialise, sit down, relax and play
- Conflict exists between greedy developers/landowners who seek to develop housing on community open space, even well-used spaces
- Community land to grow food, fruits and vegetables etc helping the area become more self-sustainable. A place for people to come together, help out, volunteer and reduce our carbon footprint. Accessible to people of ages and from all walks of life. This would do wonders for people's mental health, give a sense of purpose and community spirit. Somewhere locals could plant trees, whether it be to celebrate a new joiner to this world, a bereavement, a birthday
- There are very few spaces for children to camp and learn bushcraft skills in Uttlesford. Particularly, there is a lack of deciduous, native woodland suitable for this purpose. Woodland is increasingly being seen as an important (possibly the most beneficial) outdoor environment for mental health in teens and older children.

Make health, wellbeing and a sense of community a priority for new development:

- Conflict exists between development profit versus community need for green space, community space, and amenities. If our health and wellbeing are priorities, then the latter need must take precedence
- The 15-minute neighbourhood requires facilities that promote social cohesion, community activities and support for the lonely are within 15 minutes walk of the vast majority of Uttlesford residents
- Small developments should be encouraged to be "communities" rather than just potential building sites

Address health and income inequalities:

- Stark health inequalities (TCPA & Marmot reviews 2010 & 2020) afflict the poorest harshly, including BAME and disabled groups. Poverty is on the rise in Uttlesford, as evidenced by our busy Food Bank
- Offer all benefit-claimants free-of-charge access to UDC's Lord Butler Leisure Centre and free parking at Uttlesford owned car-parking facilities

Specific places:

- Thaxted park could be enhanced to get the most out of it for all ages
- Stansted: Bloor site - static play structures were installed 12 months ago in the Children's play area, but they are still under water and unusable. Trees have still not been planted nor a footbridge into Pennington Lane
- Dunmow's green space, whilst marvellous, is over-used
- The Flitch Way, by virtue of being linear, is dull
- Saffron Walden: The Saffron Walden Quaker Meeting are looking into making the garden/graveyard at the back of the Meeting House more accessible to the public. A green space off the High St. Due to the pandemic

## What types for sport, recreation and play facilities should the Local Plan prioritise?

Provision of facilities to suit different needs:

- There need to activities appropriate to the demographics of the local population. Families with young children will probably make use of playgrounds, many adults would value gym facilities and access to team sports, while the older generation might want the social contact and lighter exercise of bowls clubs or golf
- Parks and playgrounds should not be for children only - there are great outdoor gyms that can be used by all ages
- Providing a wide range of activities aimed at teenagers could be difficult in small rural communities, they may benefit from more centralised activities based around schools
- It seems that swimming, rugby, hockey, badminton, squash, gymnastics and bowling in general are not well catered for. Further analysis may be required to establish demand, if additional facilities were to be provided

Equestrian needs

- Equestrian avoid using roads but it is often unavoidable. Main off-road access is Rights of Way network but can only use bridleways and byways. The network is fragmented and linked by roads. Equestrians are increasingly recognised as vulnerable road users
- According to Essex County Council's Rights of Way Improvement plan in Uttlesford horse riders have access to 22.1% of the Essex Rights of Way network and carriage drivers a 6.9%
- Most riders and carriage-drivers wish to take their horses out on bridleways and byways, away from motor traffic, for the physical and mental health benefits to animal and human, in exactly the same way as most walkers and cyclists. Many are unable to do so because the traffic on tarmac roads is too dangerous for such vulnerable road users, and there are generally so few traffic free routes available to equestrians

Address shortfalls and inadequacy:

- We are desperately short of sports facilities. Play spaces need upgrading. Too many developments pay lip services to play needs and sports. Plans need to be tougher on green space provision being usable
- Available sports facilities: swimming, rugby, hockey, badminton, squash, gymnastics and bowling in general are not well catered for within Uttlesford
- Stansted: Existing facilities are totally inadequate. Stansted needs more recreation space, a football pitch, a cycle track. It has well used skatepark, tennis and bowling facilities. Stansted has 3 allotment sites - these are fully taken up
- Little Easton sports pitch is down a protected lane. Dunmow United Football Club use the facility, which is not sustainable. Provision should be made in Great Dunmow. Rubbish on the verges of the protected lane is affecting wildlife and there is anti-social behaviour (selling drugs) outside hours
- Open spaces, specific play areas for children, park areas for the more mature residents to congregate have always been needed to ensure a community has focal points for its residents. The problem today is who pays for the continued maintenance of such areas - it is no longer charitable concerns under Trust Deeds setting up parks and halls...it falls to the Parish & Town Councils and local precepting as developers do not seem to wish to provide for the long term
- More areas dedicated to nature are needed. Adventure play areas such as at Great Notley and outdoor gyms are valuable ways to get people active outdoors and which are largely absent in the area of Uttlesford
- Indoor swimming facilities are also lacking in the West of Uttlesford

- Places for natural outdoor swimming are needed too
- Supporting Girlguiding and Scouting with the spaces they need for outdoor activities would be a good first step. Many girlguiding units in Uttlesford struggle to find suitable meeting spaces where they can store equipment. There is also a total lack of space for storing camping & large activity equipment. The fact that Uttlesford is already has the third highest rates of child mental health disorders in the County and that Essex has one of the highest suicide rates in the Country should spur Uttlesford to action

The Council's evidence base prepared in 2019 (the Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor & Built Facilities Strategy) should be used as a basis for identifying community sports facility needs and for informing and justifying policies in the Local Plan on the protection of sports facilities, new and enhanced sports facilities and securing provision through new development.

- It is still relatively up-to-date and However, there may be a need to update the assessment of future needs in these studies if the Council's population projections or housing requirements have changed since the studies were undertaken
- The Playing Pitch Strategy Implementation Group that was set up to implement the strategies following their completion should be used to identify and key supply and demand changes since the studies were prepared
- Encouraging physical activity can be addressed through the local plan by expecting developments to be designed to create environments that encourage physical activity. Sport England (and Public Health England's) Active Design guidance sets out 10 principles of how development can be design to promote active lifestyles and the Essex Design Guide has embedded Active Design principles into its advice

Place specific:

- Elsenham: There is an existing recreation ground with sports pitches, tennis courts, bowling green and a playground. There may be funding available to maintain and upgrade existing facilities, and local organisations can manage existing facilities and areas. However, new areas of open space and recreation facilities will be required and these are most likely to be delivered in conjunction with new development.
- Stansted:
  - has 3x Allotment sites - these are fully taken up
  - Flooding issues at the Walpole Farm site are still to be resolved satisfactorily by Bloor Homes, the developer. Additionally, Bloor still have to sort out the Children's play area, to which static play structures were installed some 12xmonths or more ago, but which are still under water (although placed at the top of the hill but which remain unusable
  - On the same site, trees have still not been planted nor a footbridge into Pennington Lane
  - Stansted needs safe cycle lanes for children and adults
  - There are no public WCs

# Culture

## Arts and cultural facilities people value

Overall:

- The district is rich in medieval heritage and local historical buildings, woodlands and gardens, which should be a source of inward tourism and be more accessible to local residents
- Uttlesford is as a place to enjoy leisure, culture and a healthy lifestyle. A beautiful, rural area with a rich historic and cultural heritage. The key question is whether planned developments preserve and improve the well-being of residents or damage it. Unfortunately, there is little evidence that recent developments have contributed to a better quality of life for us all

Uneven provision across the district:

- Saffron Screen and Saffron Hall are wonderful facilities but there is definitely under-provision elsewhere in the district
- The main cultural spaces are located in Saffron Walden, provision is poor or non-existent in the rest of the district
- For the size of population there are a surprising number of museums in the District. It is mainly Saffron Walden museum that gets any publicity. There needs to be a properly co-ordinated tourist information service for the District as a whole

Opportunity to facilitate and publicise a wider range of cultural activities:

- Uttlesford must support existing community spaces so that they can offer a bigger range of cultural activities, e.g. public music & theatre performances & film screenings. New schools should have good facilities included in the build that can be used by the local community out of school hours - e.g. sprung dance floors, equipped music studios and performance spaces. Existing schools should be supported to develop their facilities for greater community use. Libraries must be better supported so that they can offer much more education, arts & wellbeing programmes
- Encouragement should be given to publicise local culture, art and new focal points throughout the district
- Arts and cultural facilities are important not just for the wellbeing of local people but for the vitality of town centres. We are aware the emerging Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan is supportive of the potential for a new arts centre in the town. We would encourage the plan to promote and support cultural facilities in the district
- Encourage a café society in villages and towns. COVID has seen a growth in café use, so make it central with free broadband, small in-out meeting and play areas. Encourage the many local societies such as history, art, book clubs etc catering across the whole age range. It is not just about skate parks!

Need identified for an arts and culture review and strategy:

- The role that culture plays in wellbeing; placemaking; isolation; improving diversity and inclusion; education; tourism and economic growth is proven
- Uttlesford enjoys a wealth of culture which has mainly thrived at a high amateur level. However, the lack of financial investment from the Council results in a lack of engagement from the Council. Through investment in culture, the council can bring a strategy that would make the cultural life of the region more balanced geographically and ensure inclusivity. And through this investment they would reap the rewards of more visitors to the region for local businesses, improved wellbeing for Residents and a more attractive place for companies to locate their businesses.
- Request for a cultural review:

- Across all art forms
- That takes into account the provision of culture bordering the region
- Examine what is needed, sustainable, what would show a good return (social as well as economic) and what buildings already exist
- Vital that young people are at the heart of this review. The lack of rich cultural experiences for young people outside major creates a divided society and a different kind of poverty
- The District needs a strong Cultural Strategy. This needs to include a Public Art programme that sees new art commissions within new builds & housing developments. It should also support artists and cultural groups to so that they can devise & deliver Arts on Prescription Health & Wellbeing programmes for existing & new residents.
- Plans should also include the development & support of new Artist Studio spaces
- An annual cultural diversity festival could be held in Uttlesford

#### Opportunity for multi-function spaces:

- Saffron Hall is one of the country's best examples of a shared use space in the arts today (school hall and world class concert hall). It is a model that has started to be copied throughout the country. With new houses will come new schools and there are opportunities there to replicate this very progressive model
- Opportunity for art galleries in churches and cafes, theatre in village halls and music in just about any building. All of this is possible and very easily within Uttlesford's reach but it requires co-ordination and strategy

#### Acknowledgement of the importance of culture:

- Society is made up of little communities, some of which are brought together by shared interests for example in sports, music and the arts. Investing in culture is vital therefore in supporting people's mental well-being, particularly in addressing loneliness: if you are a member of a choir, it is unlikely you will ever be friendless. Cross-generation clubs like a choir are a wonderful way of including young people and making them feel valued in their communities as well as helping us to learn and develop ourselves
- A starting point for leisure and culture is to have a good, active youth service. This is where many young people begin their independent journey. It is a fantastic way to show people opportunities, allow them to learn about life

#### Support for hospitality, tourism & leisure:

- The owners / operators of Down Hall Hotel would like to ensure that the policies in the new Uttlesford Local Plan are supportive of the hospitality, tourism and leisure sector and the aspirations of the hotel to:
  - develop a varied offer
  - create on-site leisure and recreational facilities
  - offer football and tennis coaching courses
  - provide meeting space of local businesses
  - secure the long term future of the heritage assets and biodiversity on the site

#### Stansted:

- There are still some 50 voluntary organisations in the village e.g. the History Society etc.
- Mountfitchet Castle which is a commercial venue which caters for school group visits
- Stansted Hall - The Arthur Findlay College which is the headquarters of the Spiritual Movement and which offers facilities unequalled anywhere in the world in the

Spiritualist movement as a residential centre for the study of Spiritualist philosophy and religious practice

Thaxted:

- The wonderful non-conformist 'chapel' is in need of major repairs and a new use. It would make an excellent local theatre and opera venue allied to the Thaxted Festival
- The United Reform Church in Thaxted, which is an outstanding and very functional building in need of major repairs, would make a wonderful multi-use cultural centre capable of accommodating theatre space, an opera venue (associated with the Thaxted Festival), a conference/lecture venue, visual arts centre/gallery but all combined with its continuing role as a place of worship

### **Does Uttlesford lack venues for culture, arts and adult education and if so what and where are they needed?**

- Saffron Walden has a magnificent concert hall but poor provision for theatre. The Town Hall is unsatisfactory in many ways, although the Fairycroft team do brilliantly to make it work for musicals, but a flexible, theatrical space for amateur performing arts is needed
- Venues like Saffron Hall need to be replicated within any new development proposal, so any new school hall for example should be designed with dual functions in mind [with adequate separation so that the needs to the school are not compromised ie child safety]
- Uttlesford, particularly the southern area, would benefit from some additional cultural facilities similar to the South Mill Arts centre (formally Rhodes Arts Complex), Bishop Stortford, and a place to develop arts and craft skills similar to Parndon Mill in Harlow
- More live music venues etc, but practicalities especially transport, make it difficult
- We need more performance spaces, including music venues, theatres and cinemas, close to town centres. More public art would be great (sculpture trails?) and affordable galleries for local artists (even our library is too expensive for printmakers to exhibit in due to minimum commission per item). Perhaps vacant retail space can be repurposed? It is great to see arts courses going on in the area to encourage active participation. Clubs and societies need public buildings for meetings at affordable prices. We have many village halls which are ideal for this but fewer venues in towns in relation to their populations
- Insufficient attention is paid to the role of the church as a centre of community. Every village has one and they are often a source of cultural and emotional support. There is a danger of creating vast areas of housing without a communal heart
- A community hall is first and foremost a consideration for a new /expanded community as it enables different demographics of a community to have a meeting place. (The building of many village halls in the late 1930's was a way out of the financial depression and also brought communities together.) The halls should be a suitable size and design to the immediate population and from that health and wellbeing ventures will fall in place and grow.
- Most organised cultural activities rely on individuals and groups having the time and skills to make an event happen. They can be supported by the district and parish councils through funding and smoothing the path through red tape which can make events rather difficult to arrange
- Stansted: No cultural venues in Stansted. Events can use a small number of halls

- Given that each rural community cannot have a full range of social, leisure and cultural activities close at hand, transport becomes critical to allow access to those activities. Ideally this should be public transport and it needs to provide services at times that fit with demand. This is especially true for older age groups living in the more remote areas who will be discouraged from using private vehicles during winter evenings on unlit and winding rural roads
- Developers renege on their promises to create community facilities of one sort or another. What can UDC do to improve matters?
- There's a splendid concert hall, that can also be used for dance/drama and lectures, a very good, creative and involving community cinema. More space is needed for theatre, theatre workshops, poetry reading comedy spots although pubs and community halls and the Fairycroft House and library can be used for these too
- We should encourage more clubs, where a few people can meet and discuss their 'specialities' and meet on a regular basis. E.g. more clubs for children on the green in summer and maybe young football or cricket groups. If more clubs (preferably outdoors) were available we would get a lot more people exercising, walking and cycling. There could be outdoor areas for Chess, Draughts, Lectures on gardening - Art - Antiques etc.

## Healthy lifestyles

Recommendation to conduct a Health Impact Assessment:

- The new Local Plan has the potential to positively impact on the wider determinants of health and wellbeing of Uttlesford District residents and this can be achieved through appropriate requirements for a Health Impact Assessment or HIA
- HIA provides a means of assessing the negative as well as the positive impacts of development proposals, with the aims of:
  - Identifying, recognising and maximising positive benefits (e.g. job creation, contributions to local economies)
  - Avoiding, minimising or mitigating negative impacts (e.g. through redesign of proposals or through compensatory measures)
  - Identifying unintended consequences and impacts of development proposals on health and wellbeing

An UDC Wellbeing Index:

- A new UDC Index could show the level of our wellbeing resources in parishes, to help identify what is missing. Perhaps a good start would be looking at gaps shown by Health and Wellbeing Plans prepared by parishes

Primary healthcare provision:

- There are 9 GP practices, 4 branch surgeries and 1 community hospital in Saffron Walden. These are the healthcare services available that this district council local plan must take into account in formulating future strategies
- Growth in terms of housing and employment, is proposed across a wide area and would likely have an impact on future healthcare service provision. Existing GP practices in the area do not have capacity to accommodate significant growth
- There is an overall capacity deficit, based on weighted patient list sizes, within the 9 GP practices providing services in the area

- West Essex CCG continues to monitor and address capacity issues in the area:
  - A new facility was opened in 2016 Stansted Mountfitchet with space for growth
  - The Elsenham growth requires further consideration
  - A double floor extension was built at Thaxted surgery to increase capacity
  - Reconfiguration of the under-utilised wing of the Saffron Walden Community Hospital is currently underway to allow for the delivery of general medical services
  - Crocus Medical Practice will be moving into the new facility in the summer when the building work has been completed and this will provide double capacity. The existing practice site in Castle Street will close
- Other capacity issues that need to be addressed:
  - Hatfield Heath capacity requires thought with regard to any local development
  - Great Dunmow capacity requires urgent consideration with site possible solutions being investigated
  - Any larger garden town developments will require separate deliberation for further infrastructure to be provided for
- West Essex CCG and NHS England are currently working together to help plan and develop new ways of working with our primary care facilities, in line with the Five Year Forward View, to increase capacity in ways other than increasing physical space. Existing health infrastructure will require further investment and improvement in order to meet the needs of the planned growth shown in this local plan. The developments contained within would have an impact on healthcare provision in the area and its implications, if unmitigated, would be unsustainable

### How can we enable you to take more exercise, eat healthily and nurture mental wellbeing?

Better support for day centres and community centres:

- Continued support of Day Centres is crucial to the wellbeing and health of the elderly and other vulnerable groups. They are surely cost effective in terms of reducing the mental health impacts of loneliness
- The community acquisition of the Railway Arms provides an example of how a pub can become the hub of a community with mother and toddler groups, repair shops, a sensory garden, games for children and teenagers, community events and celebrations, book clubs... UDC should support such community projects where pubs are liable to closure around all the villages of Uttlesford as a way of promoting health and wellbeing
- Churches and church halls could be designed as flexible spaces for use every day of the week, as the Baptist Church is in Saffron Walden. Grants should assist them to become energy efficient or to support the removal of pews to create flexible spaces

Provision for active travel:

- Improve the footpath network by developing a proper strategy which considers where people might want to go and might be persuaded to walk instead of driving
- Providing alternatives to car use for school runs, shopping and commuting, including cycle lanes and safe pedestrian routes. Current provision is woeful
- There is a pressing need for greater connectivity within the network of public rights of way in Uttlesford through the creation of new multi-user tracks (bridleways) to encourage residents and visitors to walk, cycle, ride and drive horses both to

promote mental and physical health and to encourage sustainable travel to work and school

- A well-connected recreational network is vital so that ALL users can enjoy - including equestrians
- The district relies on the countryside and PROW network of footpaths for allowing people to get out walking, however many of these footpaths are in a very poor state and are virtually impassable during the winter months
- Longer leafy avenues and green spaces should provide a mix of direct and indirect walking and cycling route opportunities avoiding crossing roads. Where they must cross, pedestrians and cyclists should have priority... pedestrian crossing lights should change to permit walkers and cyclists to cross almost immediately making car drivers wait, driving a slower option and less convenient. This does not happen now but would be an easy district wide change to make so cycling and walking commutes become quicker, dryer and safer and so encourage more people to change their commuting habits for the better
- A 'country path' in Dunmow is used by developers as part of their 'selling strategy' as a walking cycling route but has had little investment and is now suffering as a result of this and increased footfall. It is flooded and boggy in parts and does not encourage walking for any but the surest footed

Ensure all year round use of public spaces:

- The local park in Dunmow is a quagmire during the winter due to increased footfall and does not have a continual path network thus making it virtually impossible to cross with a pushchair or young children
- New developments must be made to contribute to the existing open spaces to improve and sustain them for the increased usage, and also provide additional open space that is suitable for year round use with suitably surfaced paths/tracks

Provision of all-weather paths and seating:

- In the larger towns/villages Bench Trails should be established, with good smooth paths/paving in between, so that less mobile whether with toddlers in tow, less physically able can 'walk n rest' and communicate.

Put health and wellbeing at the heart of planning decisions:

- If development can only be achieved at the expense of poor air quality, dangerous roads, an unhealthy sedentary lifestyle and unsustainable energy usage in contravention of the UK's commitment to achieving net zero, it should not happen
- This means no developments until there are much better public transport links to where people work, meaning frequent and affordable bus and cycle links to train stations to Cambridge and London
- Developments must be required to have ground source heat pumps instead of carbon-emitting boilers, solar panels instead of cheap roofing, a frequent bus route and/or cycle lane within easy reach and preferably be built on brownfield not greenfield sites
- Large houses identical in size and style are built close to each other in strict rows are adverse to health and wellbeing. Much better care must be taken in design, layout and space in such developments of the rate of, mental illness is not to rise. Look at the design in Uttlesford already there. Use that as a model. Look at the nature of the place you want to develop. Don't allow these monstrous new developments. Mental illness and other related, problems will soar if development continues in this way. If you want to create unified communities, you need very small diverse homes to compliment not overwhelm what is already there.

#### Importance of creating and supporting communities

- Vibrant town and village centres Small developments should be encouraged to be "communities" rather than just potential building sites

#### Ensure facilities promised are delivered:

- Where developers are required to provide amenities such as tree planting, playgrounds, playing fields and so on these should be put in place before building commences
- Any developer reneging on commitments, or planting trees that subsequently die (for example) should not be allowed to develop any more housing in the district until remedied.

#### Further enable healthy eating:

- Markets with fresh fruit and veg, fish are a positive attraction. Saffron Walden market is outstanding, Dunmow and Thaxted provide opportunities to buy and eat well. Encourage a market 'offer' in other centres e.g. Stansted, Felsted, Newport
- Encourage farmer's markets or farm shops
- Events like Fete de la Musique combine arts, food and retail for residents and visitors
- Allocate allotments in new developments where demand can outstrip supply
- Healthy eating and eating less meat is linked to climate change. Uttlesford does not appear to have any vegetarian or vegan restaurants
- Child-obesity is rising – ensure fast-food restaurants are not located next to schools

#### Provision for people in need:

- Can schools have more funding to offer poorer school children: breakfast clubs, milk at breaks & affordable nutritious healthy school lunches, run non-for-profit but for the benefit of seeing children grow up healthy?
- Poverty may leave parents no time or money to feed their children well. As a society we should ensure that all children get good nutritious food while in school
- Covid19 mental health children's crisis: can schools receive funding for a mental health specialist to share across a group of schools? All children would benefit.
- UDC Wellbeing Index: an Index could show the level of our wellbeing resources in parishes, to help identify what's missing. Perhaps this can be done by looking at Health & Wellbeing Plans prepared by parishes
- The TCPA presentation identified that loneliness, poor diet, poor quality homes, and poor environments damage our communities. These issues hurt poorer people most. Unemployment and poverty are rising; working poor may earn under £10/hour. The local plan should facilitate healthy lifestyles
- Encourage employers to pay workers at least their appropriate minimum wage, and preferably a more generous living wage
- 40% of people earn under £25K P.A. in Uttlesford, there may be a need for free exercise classes, which would also assist development of community spirit and involvement. Elderly people also need free classes, for both balance and for exercise
- Disused high street spaces could encourage more community involvement by being granted rent free access for community cafes, giving disabled people and those with mental health issues the chance to work (or to be given credit by other local places such as cinema or food shops) to create a circular economy with enhanced community spirit
- Equestrian sports, or simply working with animals, could be invested in for mental health groups and children who are traumatised by domestic violence, giving free access to these groups would help them recover from trauma

#### Design for mental wellbeing:

- There are two key elements – decent living conditions and social contact
- Housing mix should be carefully considered in the Local Plan.
- At the lower end of the affordability scale provide more smaller, affordable units, but with gardens, which are a great mental stimulus
- Social contact will come about through the formation of local interest groups. They require facilities to meet so there needs to be a strategy for community buildings. Most villages have one but they are often not very inviting!
- Mental Health - needs more service

#### Place specific:

##### Stansted:

- Good range of services but little room for expansion of village centre
- Organisations offer health walks. There is the Romeera Centre and 3 allotment sites
- Not much open space, culture or leisure facilities for its size
- Residents travel to Bishop's Stortford because it is nearer
- Little provision for team sports
- A football pitch and cycle track/ Safe cycle lanes are needed
- No open space in Foresthall Park and nothing west of B1383
- Footways and bridleways provide the only open space.
- Benches are needed around the village on which to rest, sit and talk
- There are no public WCs.

##### Great Dunmow:

- Good access to health facilities supports future healthy lifestyles and provision was made in the Gt Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan, however, land allocated for a new health centre as part of Land South of Stortford Road has not been supported by the local GP surgeries or the CCG.

It is acknowledged that Uttlesford is already ahead of the rest of the county in being a place where people are more prosperous, tend to have a good lifestyle, better health and employment.

- Uttlesford is already well placed to support mental health and wellbeing. More of what we already do should be sufficient, the Buffy Bus and Mobile Library are good examples. Local coffee shops in the larger villages and volunteer led activities can all help. It is possible to keep fit and active if you want to - there are lots of good clubs and facilities already available. Education and making people aware of what's out there may help. It really is up to each one of us to look out for each other to make a community.

## Other considerations

### CIL

- CIL as an infrastructure funding tool for leisure facilities would add value

### Request to consider Neighbourhood Plans (NP):

- Felsted NP
- Thaxted NP
- [NB Great Dunmow also has a made Neighbourhood Plan]

## Call for sites - sites promoting health & wellbeing

- Chelmer View: Proposed new mixed-use development based around an extensive green infrastructure comprising open spaces, green movement corridors, water features and a soft landscaped environment. These spaces will be highly accessible (prioritising walking and cycling) linking between the site and the settlement of Great Dunmow and facilitating movement around the site to key services. Encourage exercise through day-t- day activity by linking journeys with recreation
- West of Walden Road, Church End, Ashdon : The provision of high quality public open space and a mix of sizes and tenures within development, including affordable homes, as well as its location in close proximity to local services and facilities all contribute to the promotion of wellbeing and social inclusion. Proposed provision of new formal pedestrian paths through the site and providing linkages to Fallowden Lane to the north. Provision of a new community use such as a tennis court accessible to existing and new residents
- Land at Warish Hall Farm (Weston Homes) - supports importance of open space, vibrant towns and village centres, sports and play facilities and culture and healthy lifestyles. Proposal to provide local facilities and new services through two local centres, a community hall and public open space to meet local needs and to help foster social interaction. The concept masterplan for the site draws on concepts such as the 15-minute neighbourhood by linking villages with shared resources, improved pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, providing new local services and facilities, reinvigorating local existing services and promoting sustainable environments, health and wellbeing
- North Uttlesford (Grosvenor): Alongside the provision of homes and jobs, community services and facilities need to be provided in an accessible manner to enable existing and future residents to live healthy lifestyles. New development should contribute to delivering new or enhanced infrastructure for the benefit of the wider community, in particular the provision of community facilities, health and social care and green infrastructure. Proposal includes the provision of a comprehensive range of

community infrastructure to meet the needs of its residents and will include a community centre and 3 community hubs to facilitate on-site provision of a primary school/s, on-site secondary provision, pre-school/nursery facilities, local healthcare, convenience retail, a multi-purpose community hall and other community infrastructure; active landscapes, providing functional outdoor spaces and facilities for recreation, sport, play and exercise as food growing at community allotments and orchards, and a network of over 25km of trails. Cultural landscapes are also uniquely important to the site, its sense of place and heritage

- South of Ickleton Road, Great Chesterford (Bloor Homes): The provision of high quality public open space and a mix of sizes and tenures within development, as well as its location in close proximity to local services and facilities all contribute to the promotion of wellbeing and social inclusion. Residential development would support the existing village centre, accessible on foot and by bike, whilst providing open spaces connected by a series of green corridors to encourage walking and exercise
- Thaxted: Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan that there is support for outdoor recreation areas and children's play areas. The existing recreation, play areas and outdoor sports facilities in the village are under pressure, are quite fragmented/poorly distributed, are not well connected to the village in terms of accessibility and are not able to meet local needs. The promoted development by Stonebond Properties at land south of Thaxted improves connectivity to the existing Youth Club and includes substantial areas of open space, green infrastructure and new sports pitches on the eastern and southern parts of the site

## Uttlesford Local Plan (Issues and Options) 2020-2021

### First Consultation: Theme 6 Biodiversity February 2021, additional comments 14 May 2021

#### Introduction

The Community Stakeholder Forum discussed the theme on Wednesday 10 February and the theme was then open for comment.

Comments received by Wednesday 10 March are summarised below and common themes are shown in the diagram.

These comments will be presented back to the Community Stakeholder Forum on 24<sup>th</sup> March and Local Plan Leadership Group on a date to be confirmed.

Comments received after 10 March up to the close of consultation on 21 April 2021 will be brought together in a document summarising comments from all nine themes, the Council's response and how the issues raised in the comments will be reflected in the Draft Local Plan.

Between 10 February and 10 March 2021, 20 people, WildThaxted, a major developer's representative and a Parish Council responded to the theme.

The general feel for topic can be expressed in one respondent's quote from the Dasgupta Review : *"Our economies, livelihoods and well-being all depend on our most precious asset: Nature" such that we need to "Change our measures of economic success to guide us on a more sustainable path"*.

#### What we have been told so far

The following is a summary of what people said about how we can create and enhance natural assets and biodiversity across the district.

To read all the representations in full please go to the [Consultation Portal](#).

## What you have told us so far about... Biodiversity – principal topics

- 1) Environmental legislation
- 2) Developer obligations:  
Biodiversity targets and net  
value enhancement
- 3) Local Plan policy and site  
designations
- 4) Restoring and enhancing  
biodiversity
- 5) Road verges
- 6) Stewardship and agricultural  
land practice
- 7) Access to Open Space and  
Green Infrastructure



- 8) Creation of Parkland
- 9) Flooding and Water Control
- 10) Tree Planting
- 11) Engaging Farmers and  
Landowners
- 12) Parish Councils and  
Neighbourhood Plans
- 13) Education, Advice, Support  
Services
- 14) Solar farms
- 15) Light pollution

# Biodiversity: What you have told us so far



## 1 The value of biodiversity to our quality of life

How can we protect and improve our green and natural spaces?

Local plan policy designations of valued and protected areas; negotiate with developers over enhancing areas, creating networks using existing valued places; work with parish councils on biodiversity action plans

## 3 Thinking strategically across the district and beyond, as well as local initiatives

Which sites should be protected? And how can we join up nature sites?

Strategic sites e.g. Hatfield Forest, Easton Park and local sites as in Elsenham, Thaxted. Undertake district-wide survey to plot areas of biodiversity value and quality. Identify potential corridors and networks through nature recovery networks and Plans working with expert agencies and the community, for implementation through the development process



## 2 The role of biodiversity in addressing climate change

How can careful land management of the countryside and in villages and towns encourage biodiversity?

Protection of soils and extensive tree planting to help capture carbon; creation of multi-functional areas that incorporate biodiversity like SUDs; require stewardship agreements for new developments; negotiate with farmers over land management balance with nature

## 4 How we can use the Local Plan to manage, protect, enhance our natural assets

How should the Local Plan require provision for nature in new development proposals?

Developers to provide climate change and biodiversity action plans, enforceable through plan policy with long-term endowment to a community land management or stewardship organisation; areas to be identified through survey and community input over site/ecology/habitat details and designated for protection or enhancement; for new larger areas such as creation of parks, biodiversity with tree planting and water management must be co-objectives with public access required by sec106.

# Biodiversity and Our Natural Assets



## Supporting ecosystems

Where is the use and management of land and water creating pressure and how should we address it?

Pressure is deriving from public access to insufficient open space around settlements and Hatfield Forest; and in the north because of the frailty of the ecosystem in river valley areas especially Upper Cam. Development should be away from these areas, safeguard protected zones and create alternative public park.



## Enhanced wildlife and nature networks on agricultural land

How can we encourage a net gain in biodiversity whilst protecting agriculture?

Establish land owner and farmer agreements over land management practices with controlled new public access and regular monitoring; small temporary solar farms to increase viability of farm holdings but must include rich underplanting to encourage wildlife

## Woodland creation and tree planting

How can we encourage extensive tree planting in the district? Where is it best located. Should it be encouraged in gardens, streets, parks?

Tree planting to be required of developers with correct species and location, both along streets and in SUDs or open areas; local community initiatives to green up verges and villages



1 Oxlip 2 Crested Cow-wheat 3 Sulphur Clover 4 Lesser Calamint

## Increasing biodiversity by introducing more species

How can we create and enhance natural assets and biodiversity across the district?

Undertake District-wide/cross-border survey to prepare biodiversity strategy for places and linkages of value and potential; secure developer funding or input to these proposals; work locally through neighbourhood plans and parish councils on local designations and funding opportunities.

## 1) Environmental legislation

The excellent presentation by Andrew Lovett highlighted key issues in the context of pending changes in legislation before the local plan is finalised:

- NPPF and the Environment Bill,
- Changing political scene e.g. Prime Minister's 10 Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution (notably Protecting our Natural Environment).
- Environment Bill and Local Nature Recovery Strategies/Environmental Land Management Scheme

## 2) Developer Obligations: Biodiversity targets and net value enhancement

- Supportive of the role that biodiversity has in reducing the environmental impact of developments and mitigating climate change, with integration of green spaces, nature, and wildlife into new developments,
- Slow down the approval of new developments to protect land; and insist that large scale development schemes include green areas, paths for walking and reduce concrete over green spaces
- The best way to maintain biodiversity is to restrict development to brownfield sites
- Encourage developers to regard biodiversity seriously not tokenistic e.g. allotment, benches, a few trees, with any grassed area treated as a contribution to "green space" even if it is unsuitable as natural habitat, therefore incentivise the provision of high quality green infrastructure, improve biodiversity and integrating properly green infrastructure including parks, playing fields, woodlands and gardens, sustainable drainage features and planting alongside roads and streets. Its multiple benefits include a strong sense of place, water management, reduce flood risk, and mitigate the overall impact of development and enhance biodiversity.
- Classify green space according to its biodiversity value in new planning applications with weighting attached to its quality
- Ecological reports must be prepared by truly independent experts and cover the total impact on soils, water sources, animals, and plants. Developers or their ecology consultants should be required to use the Biodiversity Net Gain Metric Calculator available via Natural England (published August 2020) or explain why it is inappropriate in their case.
- Developers should be required to match building acreage with woodland acreage, owned and managed by local communities

- Developers must give consideration of movement of wildlife and wildlife corridors, hedgehogs ('hedgehog highway' linking gardens with appropriately sized fencing holes.), shrews, birds etc which move between gardens; incorporate ponds for fishing, stocked with British species; tank rainwater run-off
- Require Developers to include more greenery in landscape proposals e.g. green walls, green roofs, hedges, double native tree cover with mandated policy on the amount of greenery so there is a net gain and extended to ALL development of whatever size
- Role of Master Planning to ensure connectivity between habitats, presence of existing natural resources with a presumption of protection made for them and clarity over definition of a “net gain” in biodiversity; biodiversity enhancement and net gain should be delivered in conjunction with development
- .
- Suggests developer contribution fund to enhance biodiversity e.g. use a carbon offset calculation and enhance to minimum 10%
- Devise accreditation scheme for developers to achieve BNG standards; Create BNG and ‘habitat credit’ areas for developers to contribute to
- Require developers to include biodiversity fully in Master Plans and integrate in new settlements; huge potential to achieve BNG working with developer where there is loss of relatively sterile arable land to potentially biodiversity-rich open space and habitat creation

### 3) Local Plan policy and site designations

- Supportive of Uttlesford’s approach to create and enhance natural assets through strategic policies within the Local Plan, and as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, to ensure environmental objectives are delivered to meet the needs of new and existing communities and future generations. Biodiversity is a key issue for the Local Plan.
- A multifunctional approach should be used by Uttlesford District Council towards biodiversity and green infrastructure to deliver enhanced biodiversity, nature improvements whilst also providing benefits to sustainable development e.g. SUDS pond for drainage, wildlife habitat and an attractive outlook and amenity space. Use planning policy to secure and mandate this multi-functional green space within and beyond development sites e.g. homes to be within 0.5 km of a quality green space.

- Strategy- There needs to be a team tasked at creating a proactive and restorative 'big plan' up front and in advance of development proposals, identifying all aspects of nature from hedgerows to overgrown alleyway, wasteland, existing corridors, hedgehog routes, frog crossings and deer crossways. This will also help to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity overall.
- Councils should adopt rewilding policies and identify suitable sites for increasing biodiversity
- The Local Plan must specify how biodiversity targets will be measured and differentiate between poor quality green space and high value habitats; encourage use of Essex Biodiversity Validation Checklist , updated in light of user feedback and changes to biodiversity legislation and policy; must establish rekaubke baselines
- Encourage small rural industries e.g. using coppiced timbers
- The Local Plan should identify new sites for nature reserves, parklands, and pathways that could form natural highways
- To preserve and protect as much of the existing environment as possible e.g. Hatfield Forest and ancient woodland, Chalky Meadow and Mosscotts Meadow in Thaxted following local community documentation surveys. Need proper management plan for Hatfield Forests
- BNG should be a firm local Plan policy and should be strengthened in supplementary guidance with wildlife site allocations; LPA to seek greater powers to enforce biodiversity targets
- Uttlesford has a paucity of designated wildlife sites, with nearest Essex Wildlife Trust Nature Discovery Centre 30 miles away from Thaxted, and no bird hide on any nature reserve site within the District. Identify sites of importance and designate them in the Local Plan with policies on sensitivity and capacity to absorb development.
- Well-connected to other green spaces and networks. By ensuring that landscape areas and green spaces connect to the existing network of green infrastructure elements (e.g. waterways and wildlife corridors) at a strategic and local level allows for a joined up and complementary approach to both nature and development.
- Stop building on farmland and Stop the expansion of Stansted
- Designate sites where biodiversity can be enhanced with tree planting, nest areas etc as part of the development; stewardship arrangements should be part of the planning requirements

- Develop Nature Recovery Networks
- Welcomes Call for Green Sites too
- Prioritise brownfield development
- Review how to calculate 'amenity', what it comprises and means
- Importance of Local Plan to reflect and implement other national legislation
- Local Nature Recovery Strategy should be prepared
- Welcomes encouragement to include ponds as an excellent habitat for wildlife
- Should have policy on habitat connectivity
- if there is no available land for BNG on the development site then developers should contribute to or provide off-site BNG

#### **4) Restoring and enhancing biodiversity**

- Restore habitats for species once common in our areas e.g. suitable for Yellow Hammers, Hedgehogs and Great Crested Newts, and develop ecological corridors to join up existing spaces, allowing wildlife, pollinator friendly planting, vertebrates, small mammals and birds to move and expand their habitats, 500m wide and to include farmland and hedgerows.
- Establish new areas of woodland managed to provide income e.g. coppicing and contribute to carbon sequestration
- Plant wildflowers along verges and boundaries, and create meadows; protect Scarlet Malachite Beetle in Clavering
- Must protect and enhance Hatfield Forest and accommodate visitors and wildlife/trees, very important natural and amenity asset
- Developers should identify how to enhance biodiversity and include a plan for each site

- Geodiversity should be considered. It is an integral part of the natural environment (variety of rocks, fossils, minerals, landforms and soil, natural processes that shape the landscape). The importance of geodiversity as an integral part of nature conservation and the planning system is reflected in The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and in legislation – Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 and Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Designate Local Geological Sites (LoGS), equivalent to Local Wildlife Sites

## 5) Road verges

- Cross-boundary working on nature with adjoining authorities e.g. major roads can be crossed by tunnels
- Wildflower planting on verges within Highways adopting appropriate management practices, as well as along private roads
- Broaden the protected verges initiative. ECC to formulate specific policies as to how they should manage their verges with a view to improving habitat quality
- Plantlife has been campaigning for the preservation of wildflowers on verges and Council could ask for volunteers
- Maintain verges with biodiversity as an objective

## 6) Stewardship and (agricultural) land practice

- Sustainable stewardship practices should be encouraged in respect of trees, hedgerows, field margins, wildlife cover, ponds.
- Farmland to adopt sustainable practices with high proportion of Natural Green Infrastructure, mandated through planning or government policy using best scientific research to advice.
- Developers should finance and set up experienced land management company with adequate funding and not expect the residents' management company to be responsible. Should be agreed pre-construction.
- Proper land maintenance essential to avoid failed systems with flooding on the site or neighbouring ones, damage to habitats.
- Keep as much undisturbed topsoil as possible, be seeded with appropriate wildflowers rather than turf and managed accordingly

- Protect the unique chalkland landscape and hills
- Key factor is land management and major concern around arable farming impact in biodiversity; encourage land management as part of development proposal
- Farmers should be helped to explore other methods such as permaculture
- Council should encourage more farmers' markets for local produce

### 7) Access to Open Space and creation of Green Infrastructure

- Shortage of open space in Uttlesford, (UDC Open Space Assessment Report, February 2019 and Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy of 2020), with heavy dependence on Hatfield Forest and hence advocate the preservation and restoration of Easton Park for the wellbeing of local communities
- Variable distribution of publicly open space with more Green Infrastructure in the south such as woodlands and grass than in the north with more agriculture, shown in the ANGST standard (Accessible Natural Greenspace).
- Public Rights of Way give poor access to GI for disabled and people with reduced ability to walk far (e.g. poorer, key or shift workers). So, in areas below the ANGST benchmark of 4, UDC should prioritise the development of a local park, with green spaces, flower meadows, and access to nature accessible for all to enjoy; importance of accessible greenspace
- Use cemeteries and courtyards for wildflower meadows, road edges, public land
- Enhance footpath access; enhance green space quality and access.

### 8) Creation of Parkland

- Support the idea to create a park on the proposed Easton Park 'new town' site and in any case its restoration for the wellbeing of local communities. It is an ancient medieval park, one of the largest in Essex with presumed 1939 planning agreement to protect it. Easton Park is encircled by ancient woodlands, High Wood, Stone Hall, The Lays, The Gardens of Easton Lodge and the Conservation Area

which together provide a wildlife habitat and open space with potential for the Essex Forest Initiative, The Queen's Green Canopy initiative to mark the Platinum Jubilee, and flagship for Uttlesford and Essex.

- Identifying land in the Local Plan for the creation of another public park in Uttlesford to relieve the pressure on Hatfield Forest.
- The Lawton Review stresses the need for 'more and bigger sites to be protected for nature conservation' as the most effective way to protect biodiversity but relatively few opportunities for larger sites.
- Create new open space for wellbeing and envelop the 15minute access principles

## 9) Flooding and Water Control

- Requirement for a proactive (not reactive) drainage and flood management plan in all new and existing developments to counter regular flooding of many roads and villages due to blocked drains. Likely to get worse because of weakening Gulf stream and stormier British winters.
- New developments to have Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) mandated in planning policy. Must be built exactly to design and maintained for the life of the development by an appropriate body clearly responsible, funded and committed (see (6) above)
- Depletion of the River Cam biodiversity because of pollution from sewage discharge by water companies (work done by CURAT, raising awareness of the continually reducing water levels in the upper River Cam chalk stream)
- Consider rainwater and greywater use with inadequate water supply and pressure of more housing; water companies should be stricter and people educated over water as a scarce resource; pressure of more housing on an inadequate water supply means rainwater and greywater use should be considered and used by developers
- Natural water management by storing water in woodland and flood plains to release a constant, significant flow e.g. alongside the railway when entering Newport from the south; should undertake a feasibility study by experts in suitable locations
- Porous hardstanding and grasscrete to permit water seepage and plant growth
- Safeguard aquifer with no further extraction

## 10) Tree Planting and Hedgerows

- All developments to include significant tree and hedge planting programmes and to ensure that their planting and ongoing management are properly enforced. Developers should be required to include a plan to enhance the biodiversity to include replacement X2 of any removed trees or hedges
- Should require a proper management plan and adequate resourcing to be made available to maintain tree planting
- Tree planting must be in the right places, with the right trees so as not to be detrimental to productive farmland. Impact of deer culling? Retain trees on development sites
- Engage Essex Forest Initiative to increase planting across sectors; woodland planting must include a management plan; help communities choose right trees
- Maintain distance from Ancient Woodland like Alsa Wood Elsenham and Hatfield Forest is under extreme pressure but still UDC allows development along its boundary; must protect ancient woodlands and encourage new tree planting
- UDC to explore using LIDAR tool as a project to map of trees and hedgerows as presented by the speaker. Necessary where developers might chop trees down prior to planning permission. Need, from a biodiversity (and Climate Emergency) viewpoint, to preserve mature trees which are proven to cleanse air of CO<sub>2</sub>
- Encourage hedge layering to promote biodiversity, encourage skills and inhibit damaging hare coursing
- Hedges should be the boundaries on new developments (including schools) along with unmown areas and no pesticides, native and mature species, permitting wildlife corridors, all as a planning requirement
- explore using LIDAR to map Uttlesford trees and hedgerows, and then apply for TPOs to protect our mature large trees and hedgerows

## 11) Engaging Farmers and Landowners

- As custodians of land they must be supported and work in partnership if we are to hope to increase biodiversity because agricultural actions have a big impact on biodiversity such as 2m boundary strips.

- Need clarity on who owns green infrastructure in Uttlesford and whether it is publicly accessible. Footpaths are not always well signposted, and woodland is often kept private.
- The Plan should be led through the farming community to advance biodiversity and commercial viability, possibly with incentives; Major opportunity to work with farmers and landowners Master Plan in new settlements or large extensions
- ELMS will help to balance land management practice
- Fundamental importance of soil to biodiversity, sequestration, habitat for insects, butterflies, calculate in BNG, added to new gardens
- Campaign to encourage organic farming
- Assist with developing biodiversity enhancement plans to improve woodland and other habitats

## 12) Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Plans

- Neighbourhood Plans should include a register of natural assets and policies on protection and enhancement of local resources.
- Engagement role for local people and nature groups in maintaining and monitoring progress.
- Every Parish to have a biodiversity action plan and ensure they are executed. They would undertake a nature audit identifying important sites using local wildlife enthusiasts looking for opportunities to enhance, protect or amalgamate sites. Works could be undertaken as a part of a policy linked to s.106 obligations
- Reintroduce incentives for '*Town in Bloom*' activities encouraging pollinators
- Ref Made Neighbourhood Plan (<https://www.felsted-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/Felsted-NP.pdf>), which was a major project spanning several years
- Must take on board Neighbourhood Plan designations
- Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan identifies a wildlife corridor along the Chelmer Valley proposes inclusion of habitat enhancement measures including the reversion of arable land to grassland beneath, tree planting and hedgerow

### 13) Education, Advice, Support Services

- Engage with an organisation like Plantlife, (<https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk>) or WildEast who is influential among farmers (<https://www.wildeast.co.uk>)
- Educate all residents and anyone working within UDC area on value of biodiversity, use campaigns, education, competitions; advice on green roofs, vertical planting, suitable trees etc ; increase awareness of value of biodiversity and importance of countryside access
- Annual wildlife garden competition
- all members of our communities must engage, work together, and agree courses of action

### 14) Solar farms

- Should only be allowed if they enhance biodiversity and treated as temporary solutions with solar panels designed to be removable in future; Consider impact on biodiversity and agriculture, and screen to reduce impact
- Solar farms and their competition with food production could be alleviated with perimeter trees and hedgerows, wildflower planting between panels to benefit insect diversification and bird life and reduce carbon emissions so long as the scheme is properly managed.
- Stop 'planting' solar panels on agricultural land but should be mandatory on all new housing and all commercial property.

### 15) Light pollution

- Reduce excessive light pollution by reducing the output of lamp standards; LEDs can be turned down with no detrimental effects on public safety
- Exclusion of all non-essential external lighting; ensure development does not add to light pollution

## COMMENTS MADE DURING COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER EVENT 10<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2021

- The approach to biodiversity through planning can appear to be anthropomorphic and relate to impact from Human perspectives e.g. access to the countryside and to green infrastructure, when humans are responsible for ecological destruction
- The Environment Bill will require biodiversity net gain (BNG) but this needs to be implemented, monitored, and managed to ensure the biodiversity quality is maintained.
- How to measure BNG – this is being researched by Government. The Environment Bill gives opportunity to creating a larger space at landscape scale. Can we nudge the require above the legally imposed 10% BNG?
- The quality and characteristics of soil are most important since it is the starting point for biodiversity. We should look at how to consider the soil in terms of improvement and protection; the BNG percentage gain required should address soil too. Developers should re-use topsoil and not sell it off.
- The role of soils in carbon sequestration should be acknowledged.
- Solar farms –a mixed response: adverse impact on landscape to the protection of soils and promotion of grassland management
- The role of insects should be acknowledged particularly flying insects.
- Roadside verges could be re-wilded.
- Planers should set a target to wild a percentage of cemeteries, say 25% of their area
- Must protect the chalk upland rivers and their water quality. Developers must not adversely impact the aquifer.
- Developers' ecological reports should be checked for local accuracy.
- People and biodiversity should be planned together and in harmony. Planning polices will offer significant opportunities, and for engaging of organisations such as wildlife trust, RSPB, National Trust
- Can we create recreation space and access to green infrastructure that also accommodates biodiversity?
- Ancient woodland should be protected as should individual trees. There is a mapping tool which can identify trees and hedgerows.
- Trees should be protected apart from tree preservation order and in Conservation Areas. The amenity value in a TPO should be assessed to include biodiversity value.
- Government is developing a metric to measure biodiversity net gain.
- Footpaths and open spaces can become overused, so it is important to plan for new ones, especially a large park. There is opportunity to connect footpaths as well as green infrastructure networks
- How can green infrastructure be scored to evaluate the quality of different elements?
- There is an opportunity for green skills to be encouraged in relation to the design, creation, and management of places with high biodiversity value.
- The impact, use and need for footpaths, green space and trees has been a common concern among forum meetings

**Uttlesford Local Plan (Issues and Options) 2020-2021  
First Consultation: Theme 7 Local Economy  
May 2021**

**Introduction**

The Community Stakeholder Forum discussed the theme on Wednesday 24 February 2021 and the theme was then open for comment.

Between 24 February and 21 April 2021, 55 people or organisations responded to the theme.

**What we have been told about the ‘Local Economy’**

The following is a summary of what people said about how we can support sustainable business growth across the district.

To read all the representations in full please go to the [Consultation Portal](#).

## What you have told us about . . .

# How can we support sustainable business growth across the district?

## Overall need for clear strategy & vision . . .

- For sectors it wants to protect and attract; based on fundamental characteristics of the rural district
  - Capitalise on opportunities that technology brings to rural communities
  - Consider the needs of all sectors contributing to the economy, including warehousing, logistics, offices etc
  - Locate employment with new homes
  - Consider healthcare employment, education/skill training needs
  - Some challenge the need for growth, as counter to well-being and climate change agenda
- Support a thriving economy within environmental and planetary needs



## Life sciences, research & innovation

- Good transport links and data connections essential
- Out of town or brownfield land



## How we can support agriculture

- Repurposing of land and buildings for hi-tech and environmental industries
- Only permit development in the countryside where it protects and enhances the local area
- Prevent abuse of prior approval/permitted development rights
- Retain disused barns for light industrial use, rather than conversion to residential
- Need for an integrated approach to resource management



## Visitor economy, retail, leisure & culture

- Need to protect and encourage our cultural heritage and ensure leisure facilities are fit for purpose
- Potential for tourism. Plan for more hotel/B&B accommodation; protect loss of retail and cafes to residential use
- Encourage farmers markets, Christmas fayres, events to draw people into towns and support small traders
- Allow under-utilised farm buildings and empty shops for artisan businesses
- Reform business rates system



## Rural economy

- Growth of rural businesses may be inhibited by lack of suitable premises
- Rural hubs could help foster growth
- Concern that villages with services risk becoming a target for development
- Unclear what a 'rural cluster' is (map 2) or implications for development
- Business hubs may be important. Potential for use of empty retail



## Home based working/businesses

- Likely to continue or grow
- Greater need for hot desking/meeting spaces
- May impact space requirements



## Supporting existing businesses

- Invest in/develop existing industrial clusters
- Business and industry should be at the cutting edge of sustainability



## Encourage growth & new business start-ups

- Ensure Uttlesford connects development within UK Innovation Corridor to business spaces, homes and a skilled workforce
- Ensure adequate employment sites



## Changes to permitted development

- High street shop conversions to residential should not be allowed
- Address loss of conversion of agricultural buildings to other employment uses



## Stansted hub

- Allow more sites to be non-aviation related
- Do not allow exponential development outside existing boundaries
- Call to curb air travel and any increase to Stansted capacity to reduce impact of climate change



## Living and working locally

- Linked to the rural economy and home working
- Request polices support residents on low incomes



## The green economy

- Assist towns and villages to create local community energy companies
- Develop a sustainable ethical investment policy
- Deliver effective green waste management



## How can we support sustainable business growth across the district?

### Strategy & vision:

- Uttlesford needs a strategy for the sectors it wants to attract: most likely are those that align with existing businesses e.g. life sciences, aviation, tourism, healthcare. Also, those that do not depend on large scale production and goods movement because of the poor transport network beyond the major roads
- Make this a place business wants to come. Encourage it financially & with top class communications & accessibility links
- We need this strategy to make decisions on transport links, housing locations and types, and what kinds of commercial areas to develop
- A new approach needs to be taken based on the fundamental characteristics of the district, its rolling topography, the resultant lack of access, its rural environment and its exceptional heritage, which are highly valued
- Uttlesford has a high proportion of small businesses and should aspire to develop as a leader of small, innovative and creative businesses notably in the high value sectors capitalising on its proximity to the scientific hub of Cambridge
- New development should seek to support the growth of existing businesses & sectors within & surrounding the District & maximise opportunities to attract new business & inward investment
- The Local Plan should seek to allocate housing in locations which respond to the strategic business context of Uttlesford. This includes the Chesterford Research Park, the life science cluster in South Cambs, the London-Stansted-Cambridge Growth Corridor & utilising existing & proposed transport infrastructure to enable residents to sustainably commute to other key employment locations such as Stansted, Saffron Walden, London, Harlow & Cambridge
- Employment Land Review (ELR) 2017 identified – ‘Given the tight market conditions and the relative lack of vacant and available land to intensify or redevelop existing employment clusters there is a need to find additional land to meet projected demand’. There is an urgent need for new employment allocations

### Relationship between housing and employment:

- Sustainability can only be achieved by locating new residential development close to main settlements where there are employment sites and opportunities, not locating new residential development in villages where unsustainable car travel is the only realistic mode of travel to get to employment sites
- A flexible approach should be taken to village planning restrictions with new housing, built within our existing communities and provision for further business facilities such as rural business hubs. Resultant requirements for improved infrastructure such as schools should be funded through the Community Infrastructure Levy. A dispersal strategy plays to our strengths both in terms of our exceptional rural environment and heritage and in terms of the strong base of small businesses from which to build
- Need to strengthen and support the varied local economy in order to provide jobs. In turn promoting a balance between the location of jobs and housing, which can help to reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable growth is encouraging. It will be important to review the local and strategic context and ensure that the strategic cross boundary movement between the authorities continues to support the wider employment opportunities within the locality
- To encourage sustainable commuting patterns & reduce transport related carbon emissions it is imperative that housing & employment are located within close proximity to each other &/or highly accessible by sustainable modes of transport

- Work with and enhance our assets, create better links with existing sources of employment, use the existing railway line and improved local bus services to make the most of all outward commuting opportunities
- In terms of larger commercial development it would be sensible to concentrate everything around the Airport and around Great Chesterford, where there is an established technological capability and technology infrastructure. For the rest of the District the infrastructure is unsuited to significant commercial development
- Areas of deprivation should be the priority for rejuvenation. Also some brownfield lands

#### Regional relationships:

- East Herts – more people commute from Uttlesford to East Hertfordshire, than to anywhere else, including Bishop’s Stortford. The District boundary is contiguous with the boundary of the town. There is a very close relationship between the two
- The inter-relationship with all surrounding areas should be considered, including those with places such as East Hertfordshire, and Bishop’s Stortford in particular, where there is already a very strong connection
- In addition to relations with Cambridge and London consider less high-profile neighbours e.g Braintree
- Greater Cambridge Shared Planning has commissioned specific evidence to support the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan and we would expect to see an appropriate evidence study supporting the Uttlesford Local Plan.  
<https://greatercambridgeplanning.org/media/1438/greater-cambridge-employment-land-and-economic-development-evidence-study-gl-hearn-nov2020.pdf>

#### Spatial considerations:

- The consultation document is clear on the significance of the North-South corridor on the West of the district. The Ox-Cam arc has many benefits in already being a highly prosperous combined region and UDC reflecting in its spatial strategy the ability to gain material associated benefit is something which clearly has merit. The fact that the mainline rail corridor and Stansted airport are also both on this corridor is significant, as in contrast is the lack of such employment-positive factors on the East-West axis. While other centres such as Dunmow would likely benefit from some economic expansion relating to any housing allocations which are appropriate urban extensions, there is likely to be far greater merit from using the North-South Ox-Cam linked corridor as the main economic catalyst and working out the correct economic links from there to the rest of the district than trying to create multiple discrete “hubs”

#### North of the district:

- Opportunity to support and benefit from the significant economic growth of Cambridge and proximity to investment and employment locations such as: Saffron Walden; Chesterford Research Park; Granta Park employs in excess of 2,000 people and has further planning permission to expand. Wellcome Genome Campus employ circa 2,600 people and have obtained further planning permission for expansion of the Hinxton campus including 150,000 sqm of flexible employment uses; Babraham Research Campus; Addenbrooke’s Teaching Hospital and Research Centre including the Cambridge Biomedical Campus

South of the district:

- Concern that Gt Dunmow will become a dormitory town. It is unclear which new employment sources could be created in the south of the district and there is a high reliance on out-commuting to work

West of the district:

- Important to recognise that Uttlesford is not as prosperous as the Ox-Cam arc, so although supportive of recognising the significance of the North-South corridor on the West of the district and its connection with the Ox-Cam arc, the potential results or job creation for UDC should not be overstated

Consideration of different employment sectors:

- All economic and employment sectors should be considered, including offices, general and light industrial, and particularly logistics (storage and distribution)
- Why focus on Life sciences etc It's importance will ebb & flow relative to other sectors. Focus on general building blocks that will benefit any type of business; broaden the target base. Business parks around the Stansted corridor/the A120, utilising brownfield sites etc
- 20% of the 5,475 businesses are in the Professional, scientific, technical & admin support category, easily the largest category. Uttlesford has built a solid base in this regard given the number of agricultural buildings that have converted into working space or small business centres
- Considering the (revised) Use Class order, there are a number of economic and employment sectors which make up substantial elements of Uttlesford's economy, that are not covered by the specific questions raised in consultation document including:
  - Class B2 – general industrial
  - Class B8 – storage or distribution
  - Class E(a) – retail
  - Class E(c) – financial and professional services
  - Class E(g)(i) – offices
  - Class E(g)(iii) – (light) industrial

Technology:

- Good communications, broadband & telecommunications systems are a must
- Broadband improvements could attract more businesses that operate online
- Superfast broadband is very important and should encourage computer and Science based business to the area
- We must look forward, capitalise on the opportunities that technology brings to rural communities and recognise the 'paradigm shift' in working practices from the five day a week commuter model that has dominated since WWII
- Don't just meet basic targets for communications capability, exceed them by a margin
- Offer reduced price broadband by negotiating deals with the big providers, and then offering these at low cost to residents on lower incomes

Healthcare & education needs:

- Healthcare employment will increase as the population ages. However, more of it may take the form of home monitoring and visits than in care homes. Education needs to provide the skills needed for future businesses. Local colleges and adult

education should include relevant courses e.g. IT in healthcare, lab working, geriatrics, robotics and AI, home energy and insulation

- Need for access to high quality local staff
- Aging population with need more caring roles. Covid has raised the profile of care and health workers. More training for these roles, but the sector needs to have better pay and conditions and realistic costing of these services in order to be able to pay appropriately
- Assist in developing a skilled local workforce and world of work awareness by linking together businesses with schools, colleges, adult training to encourage apprenticeships/work placements, all with quality information, advice and guidance plus appropriate support to people with special needs or others who might have difficulty in the labour market
- The training and development opportunities provided at Airport College at London Stansted Airport are recognised and Essex County Council recommends continued provision of education opportunities for existing and communities within Uttlesford and Essex to benefit Essex residents, workers and business

Transport links:

- Transport (as mentioned in all themes) affects ability to get to work or services, reliance on car especially when working on shifts
- Improvements in the interconnectedness of settlements without reliance on cars or heavier transportation is required
- Improved public transport links are needed, particularly from the south of the district, to connect with high quality employment sites in the north of the district and Cambridgeshire, e.g. in health and science industries

Think local:

- Local procurement - help local businesses be able to bid for contracts, especially from developers. Developers also to provide an employment and training code and local procurement code
- Market and communicate the benefits and quality from local purchasing with online presence and local delivery options. (Some of this already underway). More people in the area means more chance to build local buying patterns and their use of local facilities and personal services
- Help people to shop local. Not just pedestrianizing the shopping centres but by getting people there in more environmentally benefiting ways. Commission studies on possible routes for each village/ town. Look at the safety of these. So often there are insufficient road crossings, narrow footways, ineffective speed limits that are ignored

General comments made:

- The local economy/employment is one of the three major elements of the Local Plan along with housing and transport. The balance of these three should guide the location of new developments. The challenge is to determine the possibilities for future employment and whether these can be influenced by the plan itself
- Your very comprehensive summary portrays what could be an exciting future for the area
- If you focus too much attention on specific business types you risk missing the target completely. Be forward thinking in reuse of brownfield sites, encouraging protection & utilisation of our beautiful green spaces to make this a nice place to do business

- Consideration must be given to business growth whenever considering large development plans
- Commercial development should be sensitive to its surroundings and would not have an unacceptable impact on local roads

Challenging the need for growth:

- After recovery from Covid there are plenty of economic activities around Uttlesford for the emphasis in the District to be on preserving amenity and making adjustments such as replacing retail with accommodation, keeping Stansted Airport no larger, and generally limiting growth, which tends to be at the expense of the environment. The idea that growth is naturally desirable needs to be questioned. GDP is a coarse number and contains activities which are not beneficial either to well-being, or to the support of the national economy
- I would question the in-built assumption in this question that 'growth' is necessary
- "Create to Regenerate" and "Design to Distribute". Circular thriving must be the purpose of the new economy model, or we are toast.  
<https://www.kateraworth.com/doughnut/> (Focus on a thriving not growth, to meet the social and economic needs within the environment and means of the planet).

### **The rural economy: What kinds of rural businesses should the Local Plan encourage and support? What kind of land should be protected and allocated for these businesses?**

- Rural economy - It would be a mistake to focus on any specific types of business. Focus instead on the general building blocks needed. Good communications links, decent transport links, including walking/cycling etc
- Rural businesses should be sited near to local populations to minimise the impact of travel on carbon emissions
- Provide higher paid jobs in rural communities otherwise people have to travel to larger conurbations for career progression
- Map 2 employment locations - It is wholly unclear what a 'rural cluster' is or what the implications of what this designation would mean for new development. If it is part of a yet-to-be identified hierarchy of settlements, where the larger rural settlements are expected to be the location of some new development (e.g. formerly identified 7 'key villages' in the withdrawn local plan), then would not be some 40 'clusters' identified on Map 1. No weight should be given to this map until an explicit and fully justified hierarchy is published
- Creating small shops within villages would enable local people in their home-based or small unit businesses to buy necessities. This should be allowed WITHOUT the risk of the village then becoming a target for development because it is now 'sustainable'

Consider how to protect and enhance the rural context:

- Working from home or from rural business hubs best suits the nature of the landscape and setting in the district and provides an exceptional quality of life, which will attract future residents
- Promote a sustainable rural economy and to address any issues of rural deprivation while at the same time protecting the important countryside assets including agricultural land, historic and landscape features, and biodiversity

#### Enable diversity and growth:

- Policies should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport (NPPF (para. 84)). Important to provide for a range of different employment sites in a variety of different locations so as to be attractive to different enterprises and to maximise opportunities for the economy to continue to recover
- Planning policies should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; along with the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses
- There is potential for diversification on rural farmsteads and in village and town centres, for innovation hubs and for serviced offices as an alternative to working from home
- Rural businesses tend to start small and their growth may be inhibited by the lack of suitable premises for growth

#### Opportunity for rural hubs:

- Some empty premises would be more usefully converted to work hubs, which are essential to support very small businesses
- Rural hubs, with good services and communications, could be vital in helping foster new business. Existing, or new, village halls might be adapted or extended for this purpose. “Pop-up” hubs may be a good way to test the concept
- The “village hub” concept could revitalise local and village communities; add a village centric approach and encourage communities to “stay local”. The principle is to enable broadband and work facilities in a village hall, church hall or even disused farmyard buildings to encourage use of workspace. People could still go to work, but not commute. Eat local; spend local; work local; walk or cycle; remain nearer home; achieve a work/life balance; improve skilled participation in local community and affairs

#### **Life sciences, research & innovation: What buildings, land use and infrastructure are required to support this sector?**

- Science based businesses need a focus or easily accessible central hub upon which to interact with other businesses. Has Uttlesford realised the full potential of its investment at Chesterford Park? If not, has it learned from any mistakes made?
- Out of town or industrial estate brownfield land. Good power and data connections are essential
- Rural areas should support special types of buildings that need space e.g. labs. These would need to have good communications and transport links with associated businesses and health facilities i.e. Cambridge and Harlow hospitals and bio-industries
- Cambridge is rightly recognized as a centre of scientific research, and recent years have seen the development of numerous science parks, primarily focussed on the biotech / health sector. There is, however, a danger of overdevelopment in this area and for the attractiveness of these to business to diminish, as they are located further from academic centres in Cambridge and London. Planning should include alignment with ongoing and planned developments in Cambridgeshire to ensure these are truly competitive and attractive to business, and potentially in other sectors

- Essex County Council (ECC) acknowledge the contribution some of the emerging sectors provide within Uttlesford and Essex. Of particular importance is the life sciences at Chesterford Research Park. ECC seeks to promote growth and development within this sector, providing future economic opportunities for the Essex living, working and investing community.
- To support business growth, housing allocations on unconstrained sites in villages such as Great Chesterford should be prioritised and encouraged. Great Chesterford is in a unique position in close proximity, with many of research campuses undergoing expansion and is already on direct public transport routes. In light of this, considerable growth (e.g. 250 or more dwellings) of a village such as Great Chesterford, particularly sites within close proximity of the transport links should be strongly encouraged and prioritised

### Visitor economy: How can we support retail, leisure and culture across the district?

- Uttlesford has lots of potential both for tourism and for workforce in Cambridge and surrounds - should work for more hotel and B&B capacity, and for retaining controls to stop local shops and cafes being lost to residential use
- Artisan businesses need to be very local to their community. Under-utilised farm buildings, empty shops all provide opportunities for such businesses
- Better marketing of our visitor economy

#### Supporting retail, town centres and high streets:

- Recognise and support the importance of Homebase to Saffron Walden by designating the Homebase site for DIY retail, thus safeguarding it for this purpose. This should take the form of a policy tied to a specific designation on the Policies Map that seeks to retain the site in DIY retail use and only permit alternative uses where the site has been extensively marketed and there is no demand for the retail use
- Some retailer struggle to pay business rates, 20% vat on fuel costs
- Local shops pay business rates – a significant overhead; meanwhile, US online giant stores account for £1.3 billion in lost corporation tax p.a. This is unfair on local shops. Please lobby Government to reform the rates system
- High street shops must be accessible for potential customers. Large supermarkets provide easy free parking & some even connect with local bus routes. Our High Streets need to learn from this. Cambridge City provides a good example with a comprehensive and inexpensive park & ride services. UDC needs to encourage farmers markets, Christmas Fares and similar events which draw people into their towns. Events such as these also support small traders being able to interact directly with their clients
- Need joined up planning of town centres to prevent saturation of one shop type over another. LPA should be able to refuse applications for too many of the same type and decide applications considering the context of what else is nearby, not just assess each application in isolation
- Commercial units, particularly in High Streets, should not be turned into residential units. Business rents should be affordable to encourage smaller businesses so as to retain the High Street of small market towns
- During the pandemic there's been some business rate holidays, and restart/reopening grants, but this is insufficient to preserve local high streets. , which were losing shops prior to the pandemic. UDC should lobby Government for a long-term fair sales tax, as VAT is a regressive tax that hits poorer people disproportionately as they've less money to spend. We know that with 60% of

Uttlesford residents earn under £34,000 p.a. (and 40% earn under £25,000 p.a.) so local shops need to price goods affordably for our many low income residents

The role of culture:

- We must protect and encourage our cultural heritage and ensure our local leisure facilities are fit for purpose
- Now the Saffron Hall is established as a centre of excellence, its future and development must be supported. The Saffron Screen Cinema is undoubtedly deserving of a new, more comfortable and user friendly site in future planning, perhaps in conjunction with a business/leisure development and free parking. The siting and cost of parking is important in the attraction of footfall into our town centres, which ensures the future success of the businesses within
- Evidence could be prepared to explore how a rural enterprise district for environmental, educational, cultural, social, and tourist developments with linkages to past (including the Bardfield artists and their work) and current activities, with more appropriate farming diversity development policies for the area as well

Supporting leisure & tourism:

- Breathing life back into villages with community run pubs & well managed visitor attractions to showcase rural communities
- Review planning rules which may stop hospitality venues from expanding their outside serving spaces in view of the likely ongoing impact of the pandemic
- Look at potential new tourist attractions e.g arts & craft centres with the coffee shop attached. Bird watching tours Outdoor activities eg photographic courses & craft skills within village hub
- Development of the tourist industry and renewed focus on the local identity should also be supported
- A major tourism initiative would also help considerably. Uttlesford has so much to offer in terms of genuine 'rurality' and heritage and at a time of limited opportunity for overseas travel, a bit of marketing could produce a significant boost for local businesses
- Encourage more visitors to the area by advertising what we have to offer and also create areas where people can sit and just enjoy the towns interesting areas

### **Agriculture: How can we support agriculture and support creation of net gain in biodiversity?**

Need to protect agricultural land:

- Our green belt and productive agricultural land must be protected. We are fortunate to live in a beautiful part of the country, which through over development will put it in danger of losing its visitor attraction. Some villages are already impacted adversely
- The countryside should be protected from development, including business, unless it needs to be located there and cannot be located in a built-up area. It should also only be permitted in the countryside where it protects and enhances the local area
- Need stronger rules on the size and weight of vehicles accessing rural farms to businesses working out of old farm buildings which have been diversified as mini industrial estates. Heavy vehicle frequently accessing these sites results in continuous damage to grass verges, ditches and the roads themselves. This in turn destroys the biodiversity along these roads.

#### Supporting agriculture:

- Encourage more cooperatives between agricultural suppliers – clearly the balance is important to make sure the consumer has choices, but pooling resources could share risk. See how government's intended farm subsidy policy that is meant to improve bio diversity can be influenced to cover the conversion of more local land to production & save the UK from having to import so much food
- Supporting farmers to be 'farmers' rather than farming not being a viable business needs to be prioritised
- The correlation between land use and its resultant number of jobs ignores its true value as a national agricultural resource and the character and setting for the established local community
- Support agriculture by not focussing on other sectors that may seem to give more bang for the buck. Recent years shown that we need to be more, not less self-sufficient. We need to look at other metrics than just pure £s/acre for the good of the country, not just this local area
- Help farmers with biodiversity by working with them to achieve this and encourage more small holdings
- GVA is not a valid data presentation for the context of this consultation and should be completely ignored. Especially in relation to the Agriculture Sector. Agriculture must be supported as this area provides vital food resources

#### Support diversification:

- Support diversification in how the farms are used. e.g. in Great Canfield there are several Airbnb, self-catering cottages, and barns rented out for small local business use. This assists the local economy with employment of local people
- Repurposing of land and buildings for hi-tech and environmental industries may increase its value added

#### Repurposing agricultural buildings/structures:

- Uttlesford is predominately an agricultural area. We need to consider what business needs from an (agricultural) property
- Not a good idea to convert already industrial barns into housing (to gain profits) since barns needed for light industrial
- Permitted development rights have already been extended to allow change of use and conversion of redundant agricultural buildings to residential, subject to some limits (GDPO Part Q). There are several examples in the District where this limited exemption is being abused, whereby several former sheds on a smallholding are first deemed by the Prior Notification process to be exempt from formal approval, which are soon granted full planning permission because the PD rights have established a baseline. This then frees up the Part Q rights for other buildings on site. These sites are unsustainably located to be able to support residential development. The new Local Plan should include content and policy to prevent this abuse of process

#### Other

- Agriculture dominates land use yet seems to contribute little to the economy

## Stansted hub: What kind of space, buildings and infrastructure is required to support the diversity of businesses around Stansted?

Overall:

- Essex County Council recognises the important opportunity and asset that London Stansted airport performs as a gateway to the rest of the world

Support for non-airport related use:

- Include policies that take a more flexible approach towards accommodating development around the airport by removing airport-related user restrictions
- The airport is an important travel and business hub and is located at the heart of the UK Innovation Corridor with excellent connections to the M11. Many businesses unrelated to the airport would benefit from an on-airport location and their operations would complement airport related uses. Consider new airport policies in the Local Plan which support general employment growth within the Stansted Airport boundary. Flexible use of diverse business premises to the area further south of the runway will deliver the greatest focused economic benefits, both for the airport, the local community and for the district as a whole
- Support the diversity of businesses around the Airport and to support economic recovery and growth
- Aviation and growth around the airport will 'pick up' and is again likely to be our largest area of employment. Can more of the sites around the airport be non-aviation related?
- There is surplus vacant employment space at Stansted Airport. The demand for industrial/warehouse space from airport associated users has fallen due to the changing role and function of the airport and a change in economic circumstances. This has resulted in the permanent loss of business, a greater number of vacant units for extended periods of time and a lack of new development – all of which impacts on the economic performance of the site and the airport's ability to facilitate economic growth and the provision of jobs on and off airport. This matter is further compounded by the fact that the supply of office, industrial and warehouse space in the District is already tightly constrained
- If passenger traffic at Stansted is projected to be lower than expected then it is a good time to think local and decide how the local economy can benefit. Sprawling car parks at Stansted Airport could be rethought and used for industry and the same level of car parking achieved with multi-storey – freeing up land that is already concreted over for more efficient use.

Support for warehousing and logistics:

- Provide continued policy support for warehousing and logistics development given its significant contribution to the economy and the locational benefits of the Airport

Restrict growth of Stansted:

- Stansted airport provides opportunities for businesses, but we **MUST** not allow exponential development outside of the existing boundaries. Roads and transport links, particularly M11 junctions 8 & 8A are already at capacity and not suitable for significant increases
- The drop in flight numbers will not be a short-term matter but seen as the beginning of a more environmentally sensitive future. The over-riding importance of reducing climate change means that there is a necessity to curb air travel. Government cannot support measures to reduce climate change yet support increased airport capacity as it seems to be doing at Stansted. UDC should do all it can in its Local

Plan to severely limit the capacity of Stansted Airport, and absolutely rule out any increase

- International travel and air travel generally are likely to follow a downward trend, therefore pressure should continue to reduce airport development
- Business which supports the expansion of Stansted Airport should be discouraged because this will lead to increased air miles, carbon emissions, noise

Other concerns:

- Warehouses for distribution tend to be large steel clad buildings which require direct and good links to trunk roads which limits areas that are suitable. Overpowering buildings such as these can be very destructive to local communities, as seen in Milton Keynes. Need to be very cautious before approving buildings of this scale and impact on local communities
- Stansted Airport must stop being seen as the hub of all local employment

### **Working from home: How can we support home based working and businesses?**

- Homeworking is very likely to grow. More companies may encourage this to save on their own office costs
- Employers will not need large offices. Hot desking will be the norm & a much greater emphasis on meeting rooms e.g. oil giant BP expect staff to work 40% of their time from home. Such changes will have significant impact on the demand for office space. Many empty office spaces may be converted to flats and apartments
- Office requirements will be very different post COVID. Technology has also affected office requirements, paper free offices are the norm
- Business hubs may be important for people whose homes do not have suitable space for working at home; for facilities to enable meeting face-to-face at times. Town centres may develop these hubs in empty retail or over-the-shop spaces. These should be given priority over change of use to residential
- Implies need for additional space in new houses and/or local workspace hubs
- Home working - better communications links are needed & support for businesses & communities
- Look at the guidance issued by the Welsh Government – <https://gov.wales/remote-working> Review planning rules to relax requirements for enabling homes to become business focussed

### **Supporting existing businesses: How can the Local Plan support existing businesses?**

- Invest and develop our existing industrial clusters or where specialist opportunities exist: science; construction; businesses involved in greening and the environment; visitor attractions (museums, galleries, music, open spaces for walking etc.); arts/media/creative; sport and recreation; hospitality; food production and food growing, warehousing and distribution
- Consider the needs of logistics (storage and distribution), general or light industrial sectors, and offices – which are important sectors that all contribute to the economy

On construction:

- Construction is a large part, but interestingly appears to contribute relatively little to the economy. If this is the case, push that sector and demand more. If there are

contracts to be got, insist on the best green conditions to be met. Encourage construction companies to give back to the community and compete for the best green designs

On sustainable development:

- When planning for sustainable development there are going to be difficult decisions; the norm will no longer be the norm, and radically different ways of thinking are going to be needed. Business and industry should be at the cutting edge of sustainability, driving it with inspiring ideas

### **Encourage growth & new business start-up: What kind of businesses should we attract to Uttlesford? How can we support businesses to grow and create new jobs in Uttlesford?**

- The UK Innovation Corridor report 'Innovation Core' (17 March 2021) identifies this area as a leader for Europe, including:
  - how research is transformed into commercial products
  - forecasts for growth
  - identifying the importance of developing business spaces, more homes and a skilled workforce to benefit from an increasing numbers of jobs
  - the need to ensure Uttlesford continues to make connections to the development work within the Corridor to achieve maximum benefits to our residents, businesses and schools etc.

Uttlesford is a partner local authority and needs to be working alongside and with the other Local Plan themes and targets

- Ensure adequate business/employment sites
- Set out key areas for growth in the District, such as Stansted Airport. A key focus should be on locations for employment growth in areas which are considered as suitable locations
- Transport links must be improved if we are to encourage business growth
- There needs to be 'seed beds' to encourage small businesses to start up and flourish and the correct placing of any larger more industrial units.
- We need more computer-based companies, like a small computer hub along with science-based companies
- Allowing business to expand in their existing location is the most beneficial way to encourage employment in a district. Logical to allocate additional employment land adjacent to existing business premisses were possible. Likewise, encouraging redevelopment of low-grade employment sites to create modern clear span buildings that are more suitable for 21st century business operations. This will allow local businesses to compete internationally there by reducing imports and benefitting the local and national economy and providing high quality local employment. Enterprise zone and business rates relief can also be effective tools
- The need for flexible space and the ability for small businesses to grow.

Allow local businesses to grow and expand:

- Need to allow our local small family business to grow whilst remaining in our local area rather than moving away when they require efficient new and larger premises. Woodgates Farm in Broxton and Skyline 120 in Braintree are good examples of what can be achieved. Such developments would also attract new opportunities to Uttlesford and ultimately reduce the need for many to commute.

- There is a need to make provision for small businesses to grow and for new start-up businesses to have opportunities to locate to premises that are available in locations that are accessible to residential neighbourhoods, including villages. Uttlesford District has no vacant employment land that is available to purchase
- Land on the airport has historically been unavailable and any future release of sites is hampered by the need to provide delivery infrastructure, which has an 18-month lead in time. The nature of this land is also large scale and not suitable for the scale and nature of the majority of business operating in Uttlesford. Therefore, smaller sites need to be allocated in locations that are accessible to housing and close to the highway network, including the M11. There are no new employment land opportunities in Takeley/Canfield
- Greater flexibility should be introduced into policies to encourage expansion and adaptation of existing businesses and allow for intensification of existing employment sites to meet the demand for additional employment floorspace

#### Support of warehousing and logistics:

- There should be continued policy support for warehousing and logistics development, given its significant contribution to the economy
- To have a robust plan for economic recovery, Uttlesford must create the right conditions to support existing key resilient growth sectors, such as warehousing and logistics
- Reference to 'logistics' is under the heading of 'Stansted hub', which would pre-suppose that logistics are either only important in relation to the airport, or that the airport is the only appropriate location for logistics development. This is not the case.
- Over the past decade, the demand for new warehouse premises for logistics floorspace has grown enormously. Most of this was driven by logistics-type activities across a range of different industrial sectors including: wholesale, parcel delivery, online retail, high street retail, grocery retail and third party logistics operators. There is, and will continue to be, an increase in the demand for additional logistics (storage and distribution) floorspace, ideally located with easy access to the strategic highway network, Stansted Airport and ports
- Newport Parish Council suggests that freight should go by rail. Freight on our narrow roads pollutes our air and causes ill-health

#### Responding to change:

- The switch in activity from high street retail to online has created a significant demand for facilities close to the motorway (J8) for retailer distribution and delivery, these tend to be medium sized warehousing stock and generate relatively high levels of employment and the District is historically very short of such stock. The provision at Stansted northside proposed in the last plan will be welcome but on its own is insufficient to meet this demand and consideration ought to be given to well located sites, in close proximity to the junction in addition to the original proposals
- Consideration is required on the appropriate re use of retail buildings particularly in secondary locations which will no longer be viable for retail purposes, flexible consideration of permitted development in these locations will be required as a preponderance of empty frontages will undermine the viability of the high street as a whole. Other uses might include childcare, healthcare/gym/fitness, A3/A5, offices and residential subject to each case.

#### Address need and deficiencies:

- There is inadequate provision of smaller B (now E) class units for smaller local businesses, these typically require units of 150 to 500 sq m in trade park or roadside

locations with relatively easy access to the highway network for delivery/goods in/out and are a good source of local jobs and rates income

- There is proven demand for clusters of office/Class e employment to support the SME sector and with vacancy rates at below 5% of existing stock the lack of new employment facilities is now and has for some time acted as a constraint on the local economy
- Unless employment sites can be located adjacent to public transport hubs there will need to be adequate car parking provision as , being a rural district the majority of employees are reliant on their cars to get to and from work

Thinking about possible new settlements:

- Any new settlements proposed should have adequate provision for employment space in order to reduce the impact of traffic movements into and out of the district, but these do need to be of sufficient scale to provide a range of opportunities across the SME sector and must include B1(c) and smaller scale B8 facilities as this is where the local demand is, alongside offices aimed at the local and regional markets. a token provision will not provide the critical mass to ensure viability

### **Living and working locally: How can we create the conditions to enable people to live and work locally?**

- Policies are required to support residents on low incomes; Encourage employers to pay fair living wages to our key workers, including care workers and delivery drivers and shop workers, and decent sick pay
- Need for the creation of a local Job Centre+ where our residents claiming UC can do so without travelling far. Currently a 4-hour round trip on public transport costs around £15
- Please waive parking charges for local UC claimants and offer free public transport

### **The green economy: How can the Local Plan encourage and support the growth of new green sectors, businesses and innovation?**

- The costs to go green are an additional challenge. Have business incentives for e-cars/ e-vans, solar panels. Do this in a way that even small businesses benefit
- The idea of creating rural enterprise hubs seems good, please explore
- Solar panels – the idea of village halls and churches teaming up to create local Community Interest Companies to run an energy grid, keeping jobs and income local, seems brilliant –please assist our towns and villages to start such green enterprise
- Green Investment - develop a sustainable ethical investment policy, to invest in good things like: the Science Park, mental health services for children and adults, domestic violence shelters, affordable social housing, sports and parks, green public transport, local procurement, using local housebuilders, and green energy
- Post-Covid will hopefully see climate change being considered more important than before along with a reduction in air travel and the unrealistic desire to allow Stansted Airport to grow way beyond its current limit
- Business productivity is drastically needed in effective green waste management, green energy e.g. household solar, wind, ground source warmth, green planting materials especially vertical planting structures, green fencing, fencing with hedgehog holes, affordable green household products and green transport
- Where does all the waste go? Green disposal mechanisms are essential for greener consumerism. We should deal with the waste in Uttlesford

### **Changes to permitted development: How can the Local Plan protect and enhance our high streets?**

- The phenomenon of abandoned shopping retail premise is increasing, yet new development, tearing up existing green land going on, which seems environmentally counterproductive. Give incentives for developers to look at areas in decline before seeking new sites. Make this regeneration attractive
- High street shop conversions to residential should be banned – please lobby Government to ban this
- It's more important this holds in smaller villages where the loss of a single shop, Post Office or pub has a profound impact
- Change of high street shops to residential would result in an incongruous mix of uses
- Article 4 Directions should be sought to prevent the automatic right to change use from retail to residential

### **Impact of the pandemic on Uttlesford: How can the Local Plan support the economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic? What are the lasting changes in our behaviour and use of local facilities that are likely to stay?**

- More people working from home (not commuting) since Covid and there may be more small business start-ups. Investigate options to encourage communal business spaces, rent a desk, hubs etc. with support and facilities alongside. Possibly using community/voluntary sector buildings as a social enterprise and encourage use of existing buildings
- Need for improved broadband connectivity
- I believe that business growth will bounce back strongly once Covid restrictions are lifted and that many long established business practices will be the beneficiary of significant innovative change as a result of the pandemic. There will however be many losers and businesses which will sadly not survive, whilst others may struggle and require assistance to achieve sustainable business growth. Advantageous loan facilities and financial incentives will be required to assist and encourage new start-up businesses into the district
- Business rates must be urgently reviewed at a national level and is probably the most pressing issue affecting future business stability and growth. This is particularly the case in the leisure sector of pubs and restaurants, which has been so badly impacted. The impact of pandemic lockdowns on high street and town centres should be investigated and reviewed at the earliest opportunity to take full advantage of closed businesses and other properties for future housing or business opportunities
- We must change direction from multiple coffee chains, charity shops and estate agents to bring innovative new retail business and social centres into these areas. Home working may well initiate local business meeting hubs
- It is surely far too soon to predict what a post-pandemic District will look like (especially as it is not yet over), and to make any assumptions about what the new Local Plan should do to accommodate any changes
- It seems that Covid has created a potential shift that will see more people work from home at least part of the time, creating more stable home communities (less commuter ghost-towns) with more demand for local services and shops during the day. Local businesses are also innovating due to Covid in terms of making their services and products accessible online or with delivery options, or with pubs offering work space, pop-up mobile businesses.

- Uttlesford must create the right conditions to support existing key resilient growth sectors, such as warehousing and logistics, that can assist in ameliorating the impact of COVID-19
- Consideration, post covid, must be given to hubs or 'rent an office space' hot desk type provision

## Responses related to specific sites and the call for sites

- Land to the west of Station Road, Takeley, (Hatfield Broad Oak Parish) - 3 hectare site promoted for mixed use employment, which can be designed to make provision for a broad spectrum of business and commercial uses. The Council should be making provision for smaller mixed use employment sites in or around larger settlements where they are readily accessible to existing residential neighbourhoods. Thereby matching homes with jobs.
- Warish Hall Farm (Weston Homes) - would offer increased choice and availability of accommodation, facilities and job opportunities within the local area and in close proximity to Stansted Airport. The London-Stansted-Cambridge Corridor's Growth Commission (2016) identified that the Corridor competes globally for investment and needs the quality of place and infrastructure to attract talent, investment and entrepreneurs
- To support the diversity of businesses around the Airport and to support economic recovery and growth SEGRO requests that the FedEx Cargo Warehouse at Stansted Airport is not restricted to a cargo-related use in the emerging Local Plan. It is considered that this will provide flexibility for a range of logistics and employment uses to come forward in this area that will support economic growth
- UDC has failed to support M11 Business Link Site by refusing growth because it is in the Green Belt. This site requires direct access to the M11 but it seems UDC has deliberately ignored business development here yet why did it approve the setting up of this site in the first place?
- North Uttlesford (Grosvenor) presents an opportunity to unlock the economic potential supporting the growth of existing business & sectors and opportunities for inward investment. It is strategically well-placed. Potential to provide a range of housing & facilities for employees within the Growth Corridor & across the Life Science Cluster
- Land north of Taylors Farm (Pigeon) – opportunity for commercial and logistics park, comprising light industrial, storage and distribution uses. Uttlesford has the lowest level of industrial floorspace in its property market area (comprising Uttlesford, Hertford, Harlow and Epping Forest) representing only 15% of total stock. Furthermore, it has incredibly low vacancy rates (0.6%) against an ideal vacancy rate of 8%.
- Down Hall Hotel – request support to improve its on-site golf, leisure and recreation offer; support on-site staff living accommodation tied to the principle use of the hotel

## Other considerations

- Request to consider Felsted Neighbourhood Plan
- NB Thaxted and Great Dunmow also have made Neighbourhood Plans

## **Uttlesford Local Plan (Issues and Options) 2020-2021**

### **First Consultation: Theme 8 Homes March 2021**

#### **Introduction**

The Community Stakeholder Forum discussed the theme on Wednesday 10 March 2021 and the theme was then open for comment.

Between 10 March and 21 April 2021, 66 people and organisations responded to the theme.

#### **What we have been told about the theme of Homes**

The following is a summary of what people said in response to the question What kind of housing should be built in Uttlesford in the next 20 years and beyond?

To read all the representations in full please go to the [Consultation Portal](#).

# What kind of housing should be built in Uttlesford in the next 20 years and beyond?

## What you have told us ....



### Achieving good quality homes – good design

Design to respect environment, local vernacular, traditional materials, landscape and heritage setting

Nothing must be built now which needs costly retrofitting.

Introduce Green Design Awards

Develop local design guides.

Design guides should be flexible to homes can be designed on site specific basis.

Building Regulations not planning policy to set technical standards

### Specialist Housing



Plan for sheltered housing as part of larger developments. Set District wide target.



Require homes to meet Building regulations on Accessible and Adaptable dwellings and wheel-chair use dwellings.



Identify sites for self-build

Need to evidence the need for this number of gypsy and traveller pitches.



### Mitigation against climate change

Prioritise mitigation in design of homes. Incorporate energy saving features. Optimise use of solar energy.

Use construction materials which reduce carbon footprint of building.

Support community energy generation.

Mitigation should be left to Building Regulations

Need to understand time needed for building industry to adapt (supply chain, skills etc)

Need to understand costs of additional demand on electricity supply.



### Design and layout of new homes

Recognise that households are still reliant on cars and homes should be built with space for cars.

Apply minimum space standards.

Flexible design which allows for home-working

Dwellings with space for car charging, bike storage, shed, garden for leisure and growing plants, access to community gardens.

Urban developments can have smaller plot sizes that rural developments.



### Affordable housing

Build community led and council houses to deliver right mix of houses and right price.

Offer a variety of schemes.

Green energy efficient houses will be cheaper houses to run.

Affordability and sustainability are very effectively provided by Modular homes

Market housing should not be allowed as part of exception site schemes.

Require affordable housing on sites of less than 14 dwellings.

Consider approach to First Homes

Take into account viability; Evidenced by Market Assessment



### Types and sizes of dwellings

Plan should favour the needs of those who already live in Uttlesford.

Need for mix of dwelling sizes which will differ by area so policies should not be too rigid.

Need for more quality smaller houses, affording more choice to 'downsizers'.

Provide multi-generational housing.

Type and size to support economic strategy.

## **Homes: What kind of housing should be built in Uttlesford over the next 20 years and beyond?**

### **Achieving good quality homes – good design**

Need to deliver a range of good quality homes, in keeping with local environment, adhering to the vernacular style, traditional materials and respect for the landscape and heritage setting. Council should take a genuinely proactive approach to ensuring good design is delivered.

New homes should be constructed to significantly higher sustainability and aesthetic standards, than is currently the case. The technology exists and the costs are not exorbitant when compared to good quality existing house building approaches.

Nothing must be built now that is soon going to need costly retrofitting.

Combine the various guidance available into a comprehensive checklist for new builds, infills and extensions.

Design guidelines should allow for high-quality, imaginative designs and should not compromise climate change measures for appearances sake.

Design Guides are a useful tool, but policies should have sufficient flexibility to ensure new homes can be designed on a site-specific basis to suit the location and surrounding area responding to the context and identity of settlements.

The focus should be on the local design guide & whilst industry standards may influence the content of the design guide the local plan should not make reference to such standard being met. The only technical standard that developments should be required to meet are those set out in building regulations.

Have green design awards – best: residential home improvement, new green home, self-build, mobile home, commercial business improvements/ new-build business building, designer/ architect, landscaper, business idea with most impact, vertical garden.

The recent report of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission provides a useful steer and compliance with this, along with sustainability opportunities, should form the basis of new home design.

Balance local opinion with advice from a variety of housebuilders about what their market research is suggesting about buyer demands and needs – especially in the wake of the pandemic. These needs are likely to evolve over time and the Plan must be flexible enough to accommodate this.

Lifetime homes should be encouraged.

### **Design and Layout of new housing**

The Plan needs to recognise that households are still reliant on cars and homes should be built with space for cars, whether on-plot or off site but must avoid on street/pavement parking. Car parking standards must be realistic as cars will not disappear. Car charging points must be provided at parking space whether at house or communal parking.

Parking must be available on site.

In urban developments plot sizes can be smaller and larger gardens should be encouraged in rural developments even if this means expanding the village envelope.

Minimum space standards should apply to all buildings.

Include space to work from home or allow a flexible design that allows for home-working (e.g. the ability to partition off areas or space for garden buildings).

Dwelling should have private gardens and be large enough for leisure use, plants and artificial surfaces discouraged. Front gardens give opportunity to converse with neighbours.

The size of the area given around the house for car charging, bike storage, shed, space for veg garden and space for the gardens cannot be underestimated. It enables foods to be grown, sheds and work space, play space and vital room for plants.

Not everyone wishes to grow their own food in their garden. Support a community based approach to facilities for food growing and a review of the types of open spaces to be provided within developments.

Allotments and open spaces should be designed into schemes.

If garden space is lost to dwelling extensions, then this should be compensated for by green roofs/walls etc.

Broadband, off-street parking and power provision are priority.

UDC should lobby Government to restrict the level of permitted development rights particularly in relation to double storey extensions and loft conversions.

### **Mitigating against climate change**

Homes should incorporate energy saving features. Energy efficiency must be high up the agenda for new builds. Energy efficient homes will be cheaper to run and end fuel poverty. Sufficient natural light reduces need for electrical lighting. All measures to assist with ensuring that any new development/extension is as eco-friendly as possible should be required – solar panels, electric vehicle charging, heat recovery systems, insulation, electric boilers, water recycling etc.

Building small estates with green eco-houses (having excellent insulation, solar energy, heat pumps and water efficient fittings) and designated tree lined and open land areas will help with climate change

Local Plan should prioritise mitigating climate change in the design of homes.

Homes must be designed to enable natural cooling; high levels of insulation in roof, walls, floor and windows; allied with provision for good ventilation.

Water sources must be protected, and individual houses must incorporate water efficiency measures.

Heat exchange of water and ventilation technologies will get massively cheaper when they are fitted as standard.

Policies should require optimum use of solar energy; PV should be supplied as standard on homes and mandatory on all commercial builds.

The Plan must lead to a reduction in the carbon footprint of construction and make housing a carbon sink by use of timber and other such products. We can't dictate to developers, but by setting ambitious clear carbon targets, based on reaching carbon zero by 2030, we will be encouraging and giving permissions to developers who are willing to apply these technologies and stimulate new sustainable industries.

Support community energy generation in all new developments.

Properties should be built to passive-house standard.

Apply Fabric First approach.

Mitigation should be left to Building Regulations.

Important that Councils recognise that it will take time to ensure that the technology required to achieve net zero emission from new homes has not been delivered to date on large scale. There is still considerable work to do to ensure that supply chains are in place to supply the housebuilding industry as well as the technical skills in place to deliver & maintain systems.

Important to recognise that these new technologies will change patterns of demand for electricity supply. It will be important that infrastructure is improved where necessary to address these changing patterns of demand.

A requirement for large numbers of EVCPs will require a larger connection to the development & will introduce a power supply requirement otherwise not needed. The level of upgrade needed is dependent on the capacity available in the local network resulting in additional costs in relation to charge point instalment.

### **Specialist housing**

The plan should allocate/identify land for self-building.

The need for this number of gypsy and traveller pitches must be supported by evidence.

Sheltered housing should be planned as part of larger new developments.

Build according to requirements of evidence.

A mix of all needed housing needs to be allocated in new development, from starter homes to elderly housing and care homes.

Any policy supporting the provision of accommodation for older people should include a target as to how many homes for older people will be delivered in the District.

Recommend that the Council require that new homes are designed to meet the Building Regulations Requirement on Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings and on larger sites, a proportion of dwellings will be expected to meet the Building Regulations Requirement Wheelchair User Dwellings, depending on the local need for this type of accommodation.

### **Types and sizes of dwellings**

It is important to distinguish between internal needs generated by existing residents and the external needs of those wishing to move to the district. Typically, internal demand is for smaller and more affordable properties, whilst developers build larger homes. The Plan should favour those who already live and work in the area.

There is always a need for a mix of dwelling sizes, which will differ by area and so any regulations should not be rigid. Reflect the pattern of established rural villages and market towns.

There is a requirement for more emphasis on 3 and 4 bed market houses and 2 and 3 bed flats/houses, some of which should be affordable.

Avoid building too many flats as occupants should not be disassociated from gardens.

There should be provision for some 1, 2, or 3 bed rental homes on larger developments.

There is too much emphasis on 4, 5 bed luxury commuter homes, which are more profitable for the developer. If there were more quality smaller houses, affording more choice to

"downsizers," this would release more 4 and 5 bed quality housing onto the market for younger families to fill.

Modular designed homes would allow larger homes to be split into smaller properties.

Provide multi-generational housing as we are not all nuclear families.

The type and size of houses will depend on the demands of the market. Consider what is already in the pipeline.

Studio accommodation could be built for starter homes for single young people on starter mortgages.

The plan needs to deliver bungalows for elderly and disabled people to downsize. Housing association bungalows need to be safeguarded for over 60s and those with accessibility issues. Development rights should be removed from all new bungalows, so that any change to a chalet bungalow or house is considered on a case-by-case basis.

Do not assume all older people are looking for smaller properties.

Policy should allow the conversion of redundant retail premises into houses and apartments.

New homes developed in Uttlesford should provide for a greater number and wider range of people. This includes the building of houses and apartments to suit a wide range of future occupants and include a range of private and affordable housing.

Policy should allow scope for flexibility and for site consideration to be factored into housing mixes for development sites. Housing mix policies should be more responsive to buyer demands and balanced with population evidence and household size predictions.

The use of housing policies should be considered and tested to ensure the delivery and wider benefits brought by development are not prejudiced and affordability is not impacted.

The Local Plan should explore the full range of tenure options. Delivering a mixed tenure of dwellings and house types is best achieved through growth delivered on a strategic scale, making it easier to plan for and deliver the right type and mix of housing.

Important to consider the type of housing required to support the wider economic strategies of the region and the need to attract and retain a working age population. This is more relevant than the mix associated past delivery of housing. There should be flexibility in terms of housing mix. The economic strategy and the housing strategy should be properly aligned.

Policies allocating sites should set out required housing mix, tenure and any specialist housing requirements. Technical requirements should be set out in development management policies.

### **Affordable housing**

There is a need affordable housing to meet those in most need. Refer to affordable housing needs identified in Neighbourhood Plans.

If the provision of affordable housing is being questioned because it makes the scheme unviable then the Council must obtain independent viability advice.

Different ways of delivery affordable housing should be used in conjunction - if different allocations use different approaches, then it is likely that there will be a positive net result across sites.

A variety of schemes should be offered to enable lower-paid residents to participate in the housing market.

Community-led, rural exception sites and UDC Council House building should be encouraged to ensure that the right mix of houses are delivered at the right price. It also allows people to live close to where they grew up to support the wellbeing of communities.

Affordability should be based on local incomes.

Rent to buy options should be available.

'Green' energy efficient houses will be cheaper houses to run and the lower fuel bills will make up for the initial investment.

Affordability and sustainability are very effectively provided by Modular homes, manufactured in local factories. £80,000 for a 2 bedroom house. A quarter of the average price in Uttlesford! Fully equipped, but excluding the cost of land or groundwork. They take just 3 days to build on site. They could provide the basis of a dynamic council, privately rented and rent-to-buy market.

Market housing should not be allowed as part of exception site schemes.

Require affordable housing on sites of less than 14 dwellings.

A new plan must be based on what housing is needed and where. In Uttlesford, this analysis should lead to a strategy based on providing affordable housing in existing communities.

The Council will need to demonstrate that requiring 40% affordable housing is viable across the district.

Can UDC lend money at lower cost, to those who cannot afford mortgages from banks, and keep our local economy going by investing in local people? If this isn't possible then can UDC lobby central Government to allow this.

Support Council built and managed housing. Once tenants are able, they should be encouraged to move into their own accommodation, freeing the property for others.

Starter homes should be given priority on all sites. Specific needs should be reflected in specific allocations where the need actually exists. That would ensure that a developer was clear on the nature of affordable housing that was required on each allocated site.

Need to consider approach to First Homes. It can be used to support the vitality of smaller settlements in the District by giving local families an opportunity to buy in areas they would not usually be able to due to limited supply. The Council should develop a positive policy which also provides an environment that would allow First Homes Exception Sites to come forward.

NPPF requires 10% of all homes on major sites to be affordable home ownership, & that these homes will form part of the overall affordable housing supply on site.

The affordable housing mix and tenure mix requirements should be informed by a detailed up to date strategic housing market assessment. The minimum tenure mix requirements should attempt to strike a balance between ensuring Uttlesford's overall strategic housing needs are met, including contributing towards affordable needs, and providing parishes and neighbourhoods with adequate flexibility to address local variations in viability.

## Consultee specific comments

Felsted Parish Council refer to their neighbourhood plan <https://www.felsted-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/Felsted-NP.pdf>

Essex County Council - The Essex Housing Strategy has the following strategic goals -

1. To enable people to live independently throughout their life. ECC will work with partners to deliver: -
  - a. New homes and places are designed for residents to live independent and healthy lives
  - b. Homes are adapted and digital technologies adopted, to support residents to live independently.
  - c. Access to high quality specialist and supported accommodation for those who need it.
2. Growing Essex while protecting the best of the County
  - a. Ensuring the number of new homes meet local needs, including for affordable homes.
  - b. House building provides jobs, develops skills and helps Essex firms to thrive.
  - c. New housing developments are built - and existing homes retrofitted - to meet net zero carbon requirements.

Chelmsford City Council - expects UDC to provide the relevant evidence base to reviewing housing need and any identified need would be met by allocations which seek to meet the identified need within the administrative boundary of Uttlesford. CCC also notes that provision for Gypsies and Travellers should also met within the administrative boundary of Uttlesford which will also take account the outcomes of the on-going GTAA transit site evidence base work.

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service - Homes is one of Greater Cambridge seven big themes. This theme covers how many affordable and market sale homes are needed, and what kind of homes they should be.

## Site Promoter comments

Land at Barnston (Generator Group LLP)	A development which will meet required national and local design standards, builds in sustainable methods of construction and design from outset, deliver affordable housing.
'Thaxted Green' (Stonebond Properties)	are promoting a site which would deliver high quality, bespoke housing include affordable housing, which would meet all design standards.
Land west of Station Road, Takeley (Hatfield Broad Oak Parish) (McGowan Ltd)	– support aspiration to deliver housing development which promotes high quality design and meets all environmental standards.
Land south east of Homestead Farm off Bedwell Road in Ugley Green (McPherson)	- the promoted development would deliver high quality housing, which meets all design standards, and which would deliver affordable housing and self-build plots.

<p>'Chelmer View' (Baker and Metson Ltd) -</p>	<p>homes are proposed comprising general needs, elderly, care, adaptable, and self build housing. Planning a new neighbourhood presents the opportunity for greater than minimum standards in terms of garden sizes, providing opportunity to grow food and have home offices, workshops and shared spaces.</p>
<p>North Uttlesford (Grosvenor)</p>	<p>- an opportunity to deliver a substantial amount of housing in a sustainable location, comprising a range of sizes, types and tenures to meet the needs of the District. A range of existing and new market and affordable housing models can be explored for the site and Grosvenor is committed to working with UDC to understand how North Uttlesford can best contribute to addressing the specific needs of the district and increase the opportunity for people to own or rent a home suitable for their needs.</p>
<p>Church End Ashdon (Dale, Hunter)</p>	<p>– Promoting site that has the capacity to provide a mix of house sizes and types as well the inclusions as affordable homes, 'First Homes' and homes for those wishing to downsize.</p>
<p>Home Builders Federation, Pelican Developments</p>	<p>- Development should not be subject to such a scale of obligations that the deliverability of the Local Plan is threatened. Viability assessments need to consider the cumulative costs of proposed changes to Building Regs, 10% biodiversity net gain alongside affordable housing requirements &amp; other S106 costs. (Other comments included under relevant sub-headings above)</p>
<p>Land South of Ickleton Road, Great Chesterford (Thomas Fairhead Ltd)</p>	<p>- Provide a mix of house sizes and types as well the inclusions as affordable homes, 'First Homes' and homes for those wishing to downsize.</p>
<p>Land East of Station Road, Elsenham (Bloor Homes)</p>	<p>- deliver high-quality housing including affordable housing, which meets all design standards. The houses in recent developments comply with the energy efficiency standards in the new Future Homes Standard; the fabric of the houses are built to a high standard, resulting in lower levels of heat loss from windows, walls, floors and roofs and improved energy efficiency; the water efficiency measures are designed to reduce water use; and electrical vehicle charging infrastructure is installed so that charging points can be provided for residents.</p>

## **Uttlesford Local Plan (Issues and Options) 2020-2021**

### **First Consultation: Theme 9 Creating new places and communities (March 2021)**

#### **Introduction**

The Community Stakeholder Forum discussed the theme on Wednesday 24 March 2021 and the theme was then open for comment.

Between 24 March and 21 April 2021, 91 people and organisations responded to the theme.

#### **What we have been told about the theme of Creating new places and communities**

The following is a summary of what people said in response to the questions: What should new development look like, what should it contain and where should it be located?

To read all the representations in full, please go to the [Consultation Portal](#).

**Note:** Some representations include site-specific detail in support of a separate submission associated with the call for sites. Only higher level comments are included in this summary, with detailed justification for individual sites being considered as part of the site assessment process.

## What you have told us about...

# What should new development look like, what should it contain and where should it be located?



### What it should look like...



- Rural design guidance required
- Large sites should have bespoke masterplanning and design codes
- Housing designs should be varied
- Densities should range from low in villages and rural areas, to high in towns
- Medium densities would allow for future growth
- Parking requirements should be increased so streets are not dominated by cars
- Materials are the priority

### What it should contain...



- Any new communities should have services and infrastructure needed to be self-supporting
- Infrastructure should be provided first
- Green spaces and transport corridors
- Sustainable buildings and drainage
- Employment opportunities
- Community services and facilities
- Excellent walking and cycling routes
- Fast public transport to other places
- The district needs a new country park
- A mix of housing for all parts of the community

### Where it should be located...



- Brownfield land should be prioritised
- Holistic new settlements applying 15-minute neighbourhood principles
- Sympathetic development within and adjacent existing settlements
- Village clusters e.g. VeloCity concept
- Make use of existing infrastructure
- Connected to public transport hubs
- Connections to Cambridge, science parks, Stansted Airport, Chelmsford and London
- Balanced across the district
- A mix of locations likely to be required
- Protection for countryside and green belt

## **What should new developments look like?**

- New housing should be varied in appearance
- Development density should vary from high in the towns to low in villages and rural areas
- Minimum parking requirements should be increased to ensure streets on new developments are not dominated by cars
- Housing densities should be reduced to ensure designs are compatible with the villages and rural areas
- A rural design guide should be prepared for the district, to highlight traditional designs and layouts as well as describe how contemporary developments could be added sympathetically
- A medium density should be applied, with the possibility of growth in later years
- New settlements and settlement extensions should comprise carefully designed higher densities, to limit urban sprawl and pollution while still providing a high quality of life
- In terms of appearance, materials should be the priority
- While The Essex Design Guide provides a benchmark, each strategic housing site should have its own masterplanning principles, parameter plans and design codes

## **What should new developments contain?**

- New communities need to be self-sufficient, including all key facilities, and should provide real benefits to the district e.g. through capturing land values to fund infrastructure.
- One way to link ideas on climate change, homes and biodiversity would be to build carbon-negative buildings in 'woodland communities'.
- New communities should be compact and varied, incorporating the mix of land uses found within the district's successful villages
- Facilities for recreational exercise should be within easy walking distance
- Easy access to doctor's surgeries and shops should be provided, including parking within walking distance
- The 15-minute neighbourhood concept would work well in urban areas, while the VeloCity concept is likely to be unsustainable and unworkable
- Any new town must receive new/upgraded infrastructure early, including road improvements, GP surgery, schools, shops and parks
- There should be mix of size and cost of housing, supported by a renewed Council House building programme
- After analysing what housing is needed and where, a strategy should be adopted to provide affordable housing for existing communities
- Wherever new housing is proposed, infrastructure is important. The Council must improve on its collection and use of money secured through Section 106 agreements.
- Essential requirements for a new settlement include: mixed housing (e.g. first-time buyers, downsizers), landscaping, tree planting, wildlife corridors, flood risk (including surface runoff), water supply, green building technologies
- Key facilities (e.g. GP surgeries) should be provided by larger developers in their masterplans, rather than relying on incremental funding from Section 106 agreements
- New settlements should be self-sustaining and linked to existing transport infrastructure (which could be improved with funding), with around 3,000 homes, public space, a mix of housing and light industry
- Major developments should include employment provision and new homes should provide a home office area
- Community health and wellbeing should be put first
- New homes should mostly be modestly sized, with the potential to extend if needed

- Green corridors should provide easy walking and cycling between housing and a central retail hub
- Primary schools and housing should be co-located to encourage a sense of community
- External transport connections should be similar to the Cambridge Autonomous Metro
- Houses should be supplied with heat from area ground source heat pumps
- New places should incorporate many of the features covered in the previous themes: green homes, open spaces for recreation, varied housing, shopping and industrial areas
- Affordable housing should be particularly close to transport and schools, as they will tend to be occupied by younger couples
- Housing for older people should be close to shops and open spaces
- It is important to emulate the Garden City principles
- The district requires a new country park, as highlighted by the severe recent pressure on Hatfield Forest
- A viable public transport system is required, which is suited to a rural area e.g. on-demand buses
- Activities for young people, in addition to sport facilities, need to be provided
- Adoption of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) should be explored at an early stage, to enable a broader range of development sizes (smaller developments made feasible in social infrastructure terms) and better integrate new and existing developments
- New, safe cycling routes should be formed to connect historic villages
- Green spaces should be provided, which are high quality and large enough for events to be planned
- As more jobs become automated and more people work from home, facilities for exercise and community activities should be prioritised
- Younger people should have the chance to either own or rent a property near family
- Developments should maximise solar power opportunities by incorporating roof-mounted panels
- Development should incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to prevent surface water flooding issues
- Affordable housing should be provided on medium and large sites only
- Community sports facilities should be provided in accordance with the relatively up-to-date Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor & Built Facilities Strategy
- Local recycling facilities are required

### **Where should new developments be located?**

- The idea of 'village clusters' or even 'town-village hybrid clusters' is worth exploring but would require detailed travel analysis and a commitment by the Council to join up the fragmented land ownerships which will likely result from the call for sites.
- If commuting behaviours persist, new communities should be located close to transport hubs or the employment destinations in Cambridgeshire and East Hertfordshire. Expensive properties could be built close to commuter routes, which could then fund affordable homes close to employment sites in the district.
- Assuming we are locked into the scale of housing development suggested, new developments should be built where there is close access to the M11 and public transport links, be designed according to the 20-minute neighbourhood model and be traditional in style.
- The green belt must be protected
- Town centres are undergoing significant change and could provide opportunities for a mixture of housing development and community leisure facilities
- Selecting the location of major developments will always be controversial so clear and transparent reasoning is required.

- By the time the plan is adopted, the south-west corner of the district will be extensively developed by speculative developers. The plan should protect existing communities from further development and direct new development towards the north of the district, where it can take advantage of existing rail links, the proposed Cambridge Autonomous Metro, the proposed East-West Rail project and close proximity to the Cambridge Biomedical Campus.
- Brownfield sites should be identified and utilised, including those containing offices which may no longer be used due to significant changes to working practices prompted by the pandemic
- Recent Uttlesford and national experience shows that Garden Communities take many years to deliver and can therefore only be relied upon for the next Local Plan, post 2030s. The emerging Local Plan can only deliver housing by expanding existing settlements.
- Urban sprawl and the loss of agricultural land should be avoided
- Rail access should be prioritised over road access, although an over-reliance should not be placed on cycling – for example, it is not a realistic option for elderly people
- New housing development along the A120 would only be appropriate if a suitable public transport option is provided e.g. railway, guided shuttle bus or similar
- The most appropriate locations for development would be on the M11/railway corridor. At the southern end, development would have access to the employment opportunities at Stansted Airport, Harlow and London. At the northern end, Cambridge and perhaps an expanded Chesterford Research Park.
- Most of the east of the district would be inappropriate for development due to its poor access to transport hubs
- The land around Birchanger should be considered for development. While in the green belt, the location is highly sustainable and the landscape quality has already been compromised. To compensate, land of a higher value could be preserved elsewhere.
- It is unlikely that the VeloCity model of village clusters would yield any more than a small contribution to the overall housing needs for the plan period
- The cycleways connecting village clusters would need to be funded and provided at the right time, and would need to be safe and shorter than two miles to present a realistic option
- It would be difficult, in practice, to ensure that each village within a cluster receives a particular key service/facility
- Growth should be focused on towns and urban areas, which are better suited to walking and cycling than in spaced-out villages
- New development in existing settlements should not usually exceed around a dozen houses
- Rail accounts for only 10% of journeys to work in Uttlesford, even in villages with a station. It is therefore unlikely that new communities would be able to increase this percentage significantly.
- The Garden Community proposals in the withdrawn Local Plan did not fail 'in principle' so the issues could be overcome with better coordination between promoters and the Council
- The new Local Plan needs a better balance between new settlements and meaningful allocations in the existing main towns
- New development should be split between major new developments and proportionately-expanded towns and villages
- If one new town were to be proposed, the Great Chesterford area would be most suitable. It could take advantage of employment centres to the north and relieve pressure on Saffron Walden, whereas Stansted Airport's employment centre can already draw on Great Dunmow and Bishop's Stortford.

- Strict village envelopes should be relaxed so that well-considered schemes in hamlets – e.g. close to road junctions, no loss of agricultural land, suited to home working (including fibre broadband) – can be supported
- If Saffron Walden is expanded, it should be rebalanced by concentrating development in the north. This would have relatively close proximity to the town centre, which could be accessed by paths rather than direct road access. Recreation facilities and a school could be located close to Bridge End Gardens and a bypass of Littlebury could connect the town to the B1383.
- Productive agricultural land should be preserved to reduce the UK's reliance on food imports
- Before building new communities, there must be a clear vision or purpose. Possible purposes could be: science park, airport, direct London commuting, sustainability flagship, forest community, hospital/health, VeloCity, start-up business hub, secondary education flagship.
- The significant growth required must be supported by adequate transport infrastructure – a new railway line (Stansted Airport – Little Easton parish – Braintree via restored line on Flich Way) rather than a bus service or Rapid Transit System. This could support forest communities, a cycling network based on the Flich Way, commuting to London and Cambridge, wildlife corridors and extending the benefits associated with East-West Rail.
- The fragmented expansion of Elsenham must stop. A separate, self-supporting VeloCity-style village could be built nearby, to the east of a new east-west railway.
- There is potential for a VeloCity village cluster involving Widdington, Debden, Newport, Wicken Bonhunt, Quendon and Rickling
- The unique and historic character of places should be protected by utilising brownfield land and redundant buildings for new homes
- The VeloCity concept is both highly relevant to Uttlesford and supportive of village regeneration – restrictive planning has led to congestion, ageing populations, unhealthy living and car dependency, high house prices and social isolation.
- Access to rail travel is not essential for the VeloCity concept to succeed – clusters can be supported by mini buses, cycleways and small rural businesses
- New development within existing settlements should be prioritised, supported by some development on the edges. New settlements would satisfy government requirements at the expense of residents.
- Easton Park offers an exceptional opportunity to provide a country park for the benefit of future generations
- It is clear from the series of interrelated consultation themes that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' solution, and that various solutions will need to be tailored to each part of the district. These could include the VeloCity 'village cluster' or 15-minute neighbourhood ideas.
- Large-scale development should only take place in self-sufficient new settlements, rather than disproportionate sprawling extensions of existing settlements
- Increased housing must be linked to increased jobs, to avoid exacerbating the current out-commuting trend
- New settlements and large-scale urban extensions should be prioritised because they can be planned more holistically. Extending villages tends to harm their character, miss opportunities to use brownfield land (tends to be located elsewhere), exacerbate the reliance on car travel and put a strain on existing facilities.
- New homes could be accommodated in the south-west of Saffron Walden, either side of the B1052. Adding a full-exit junction to the M11 J9 would mean there would be no additional traffic through the town centre.
- The VeloCity concept is more suitable for Uttlesford than the 15-minute neighbourhood, which is more suited to urban environments

- The locations for new development should be prioritised as follows: 1. Brownfield sites; 2. Within existing settlements (e.g. VeloCity model); 3. Edge of settlements; 4. New settlements (if still required)
- If new settlements are required, the Council must look wider than the sites put forward be landowners so it can ensure the best and most sustainable locations are selected
- Site assessment criteria for new settlements should: focus on existing rather than proposed transport infrastructure; prevent coalescence with existing settlements; remove/adapt sites with clear heritage constraints; focus on meeting needs in the plan period and not beyond due to uncertainties; adopt a maximum size of 4-5,000 homes (ECC requirement for a secondary school)
- A new settlement could be built near Chesterford Research Park due to its employment opportunities, proximity to Cambridge and the opportunity to attract tech businesses and colleges specialising in tech/bio subjects
- Smaller new communities of up to 1,000 homes could be located on part of the previous Elsenham site, or between Widdington and Cutlers Green if a public transport service is provided
- Sites should be selected according to both walking and public transport travel times
- There are no suitable sites for new settlements in the district, with the possible exception of Carver Barracks if it becomes available
- Sympathetic growth containing well-mixed housing (including social and retirement housing) could improve existing settlements, whereas new settlements would harm the rural character of the district and become commuter dormitories
- While the limited train route means the VeloCity concept is not entirely appropriate, the idea of conducting a movement analysis would help identify where village clusters would work
- Rural areas are likely to rely on private cars unless there are major improvements in transport infrastructure. As a minimum, bus routes should better connect places and electric vehicle charging points should be provided.
- There is a need to allocate sufficient small- and medium-sized sites to address short- to medium-term housing requirements. Their lower infrastructure requirements means housing can be delivered more quickly.
- Developments should be small, built within existing communities and spread evenly so no one area has a large-scale development
- Local businesses should be supported through the provision of homes above shops and offices in town centres
- A new Garden Community of medium density and following the 20-minute neighbourhood model is preferred because it would allow the current identity of Uttlesford to be retained, compared with the alternative of sprawling developments
- The Local Plan should prioritise developments in existing, sustainable settlements to ensure quick delivery, match jobs to homes, reduce travel times by dispersing housing, ensure affordable housing is provided across the district and generally support the vitality of existing settlements
- The edges of existing settlements are valuable for the character of the settlements and their rural setting, and should therefore be protected from urban sprawl and preserved for nature and recreation
- New settlements are clearly required to meet housing needs but they should be sited close to existing major road and rail links, and provided with all appropriate infrastructure to allow them to function properly
- The VeloCity concept could be adapted and applied to the whole district – for example, by inviting parishes to suggest potential cycle routes that would establish links to key services/facilities
- The Local Plan could support existing village clusters which possess and share key services and facilities – for example, providing hourly bus services between villages, their nearest town and a railway station

- New settlements take a long time to deliver so, where suitable brownfield sites (e.g. Carver Barracks) are identified or locations close to a railway station, plans should be drawn up in good time
- Stansted Mountfitchet should be elevated in the settlement hierarchy and apportioned a greater share of development, owing to its comparatively good range of services/facilities and its mainline train station
- The Countryside Protection Zone should be protected
- New development should not be located within 1km of a Site of Special Scientific Interest or, due to pollution, Stansted Airport
- Should a new settlement be built on the northern boundary of the district, a combined pedestrian/cycle/bus link to the new public transport interchange at the A11/Babraham will be required, at the beginning, to establish sustainable transport patterns
- The use of greenfield land should be a last resort, behind the use of brownfield land and higher density urban extensions
- The Garden Community approach has revealed significant practical issues, including an over-reliance on car travel
- Any new development must have easy access to Class A roads
- The VeloCity approach could play a part in delivering new housing, combining with digital infrastructure to support the growing trend for home working and modern cottage industries
- New housing should be spread evenly across all villages, excluding those that have already been developed recently. New housing, including a reasonable proportion of low-cost homes, can energise existing communities and Parish Councils should work with residents to allocate sufficient sites to meet the needs determined by the District Council.
- It is expected that the Council will be able to meet its housing requirements within its administrative boundary
- The Garden Community idea provides a good way forward but should be applied to one of the existing new developments in progress, rather than using more greenfield land
- Insufficient reference has been made to the use of brownfield land, which should be prioritised
- The North-South rail corridor should be the focus for growth because it is the only sustainable transport route
- While a self-supporting settlement would be ideal, in practice most job opportunities for Uttlesford residents are in London, Cambridge, Saffron Walden, Chelmsford and Stansted Airport
- The preferred development strategy should seek to reduce travel and support sustainable travel options, and in doing so consider the interaction with Greater Cambridge as described in the recent net zero carbon evidence for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan
- The preferred development strategy should be compatible with addressing the climate agenda. In selecting an option, it should be noted that evidence for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan has revealed that the smallest size of new settlement that could be considered to be sustainable is 4,500 homes
- Hatfield Heath could accommodate some development if the Green Belt boundaries are relaxed
- Opportunities should be taken to make existing settlements more sustainable by providing services and facilities that are lacking
- Great Canfield should remain in the lowest settlement category, suitable only for minimal development in accordance with the Village Design Statement
- There should be strict protection of the countryside beyond allocated sites
- Examples of successful farm diversification include: self-catering accommodation and barns rented by small businesses

- Town centres should be supported by changes of use from retail to community, leisure and food and drink
- Garden Communities face a real risk of becoming car-dependent dormitory settlements
- Taking into account the increased desirability for walking and cycling and emphasis on home working (associated with the pandemic), there should be greater focus on links to existing settlements than to train stations
- Thaxted has a well-established high street, which can be supported by further housing development. It has established links to other settlements and an excellent range of services and facilities.
- Great Chesterford has excellent connectivity to wider retail and employment centres. The Council should maximise the opportunity for such settlements to play a greater role in delivering sustainable growth in the first half of the plan period.
- New settlements underpinned by concepts such as the '20-minute neighbourhood' could deliver high quality, sustainable and healthy places that support the move towards net zero carbon
- Chrishall should be in the lowest category of settlement in the hierarchy, suitable only for limited development
- Bearing in mind the option of adding new development within existing settlements is unlikely to deliver substantial numbers of new homes and that new settlements have a long lead-in time, it is likely that the majority of new housing allocated in the Local Plan will need to be in extensions to existing settlements
- Garden City principles and other similar concepts can be applied to existing settlements as well as new ones
- The District Council offices could be converted to flats, essential services relocated to the Town Hall and officers relocated to work from home

### **General/Other comments**

- Regard should be had to the Felsted Neighbourhood Plan
- The number and types of homes needed in Uttlesford depend on the source of demand – people already within the area have different needs to those coming from elsewhere. Different community types and locations may be needed to satisfy these different needs.
- The district's main towns are reaching the limits of expansion – issues such as traffic volumes, infrastructure deficiencies and extended walking distances to key facilities from edge-of-town developments.
- The government's indicative minimum housing requirement is too high, being detrimental to the district's character, agricultural productivity and stretched infrastructure.
- The Local Plan must reflect the government's COP26 commitments in full
- Infrastructure should be provided before housing
- There is a strong case for Uttlesford to adopt a lower housing requirement than that indicated by the government, which only provides a figure as a starting point. Local planning authorities must determine the final figure, reflecting local circumstances and constraints.
- Roads need to be better maintained than they are currently
- Climate change will exacerbate existing water shortages in the region, which need to be better understood before committing to the scale of housing growth suggested
- Taking into account the indicative minimum housing requirement, no or very limited development is not an option
- Development in Thaxted should comply with the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan
- Strategic planning requires a shift due to changing pressures – population growth will peak in 20-30 years and the pandemic has reduced demand for city centre retail and office space

- Equestrians must be involved in decisions affecting road safety, cycleway provision and the linkage of fragmented rights of way. References to ‘walking and cycling’ routes should be updated to ‘multi-user routes’ to avoid discrimination, and Uttlesford/Essex policy should be developed in accordance with the principles in the ‘Equestrians in Hampshire’ document.
- There must be clarity on the housing requirements for areas with a Neighbourhood Plan in place. For example, recent planning permissions have directed 150 more homes to Felsted than are allocated in its Neighbourhood Plan.
- New development should address the priorities highlighted by previous themes
- Where there is no Neighbourhood Plan, the starting point should be to consult with local councils on the appropriate housing provision and requirements for supporting infrastructure, while preventing coalescence between settlements so as to preserve their unique character
- The housing requirement should be revised upwards to take account of strong economic growth in the London-Stansted-Cambridge Corridor and increased affordable housing needs
- It is not clear how this consultation process will inform the Local Plan, and officers should have spent their time more usefully elsewhere to ensure timely submission of the plan e.g. through issuing the call for sites earlier
- The starting point should be to address the lessons learned from previous Local Plan Inspectors e.g. infrastructure requirements, landscape harm
- Travel plans should be more comprehensive, to establish sustainable commuting patterns
- Despite the anticipated transition to electric cars, a shift to alternative modes is still required to avoid pollution associated with tyres
- The greatest jobs potential will be associated with scientific workers and carers for the growing elderly population
- The Council should consider viability very closely, learning from previous experience and its own analysis rather than that of developers
- Solar farms should be limited in number and, if detrimental to agricultural productivity, should include other productive methods in-keeping with a rural community e.g. sheep grazing, biodiversity
- Ongoing liaison with Essex County Council will be necessary to address various issues, including infrastructure provision and climate action
- The Council should resist the government’s housing figure. More people means more disturbance and destruction.
- Insufficient reference has been made to viability (not just “delivery”), which was proven to be a critical issue with the withdrawn Local Plan
- Planning departments require additional funding to support delivery of the large number of houses required
- Councils should be able to acquire land at low cost and use the uplift in land values to fund affordable homes and infrastructure
- The nine consultation themes share strong shared elements with the seven Big Themes for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, to which regard should be had
- In setting a minimum housing requirement, regard must be had to meeting unmet needs in neighbouring areas
- The proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework require that, where larger-scale developments such as new settlements are proposed, the Local Plan vision should have a time horizon of 30 years rather than 15
- It is important to note that the housing requirement is a minimum, not a maximum, number
- Permitted development rights are overly relaxing development controls, and the Council should press Government to address this

- New conservation areas should be designated in Chrishall, with Article 4 directions used to remove permitted development rights
- Important open and green spaces should be identified and protected
- Highway verges offer an opportunity to enhance biodiversity
- Ground source heat pumps could be installed under agricultural land, to provide for local heat requirements
- The Local Plan should facilitate development by small developers

## Uttlesford Local Plan (Issues and Options) 2020 - 2021

### First Consultation: All themes / Other Comments

#### Introduction

Between the 10 March and 21 April people were given the opportunity to make comments which covered more than one theme or on issues, relevant to the new Local Plan but had not been covered by the consultation themes.

17 people or organisations made comments which best fall within the All themes/other comments title.

The following is a summary of the comments.

**Great Dunmow Town Council.** A protocol for parish council engagement in s106 negotiations at key stages should be set out within the new Local Plan. A policy for future adoption of CIL should be included. Where possible, valued landscapes should be identified, giving the nature of their value, to be a strategic gap between settlements, locally valued landscape and views such as the Chelmer Valley, or an historic landscape, such as land on the Easton Lodge Estate, in Little Easton.

**Little Hallingbury Parish Council.** Building in villages will result in more car use and there will be no additional services and facilities. Only affordable homes should be built in villages. Leisure and cultural facilities are found in the towns and therefore need to build within easy walking/cycling distance of these. Hatfield Forest needs protection and need more public woodland and green space. New builds should include solar panels and energy efficient. All developments should have a mix of types especially genuinely affordable with gardens large enough to grow food and also bungalows 2 and 3 bed, for older people living in larger houses needing to downsize. Wider footpaths and adequate parking is also a necessity. The threshold for affordable houses needs to be lower maybe 10.

#### **The Salings Parish Council.**

- Comment positively on the issues and options process
- Parts of the issues and options content appear to be pointing strongly in directions not supported by evidence, rather than starting from a “blank slate” and building up from an evidence base.
- the Call for Sites for, which in our view is inappropriately skewed towards Garden Community Principles despite this in no way being required to meet UDC’s Climate aspirations, nor national policy.
- we have seen nothing in the Issues & Options regarding Viability or indeed introducing the Community Infrastructure Levy

The **Environment Agency** make the following comments: -  
Water Resources

- Local Plan (LP) follows the findings of the Water Cycle Study and make site allocations within areas that have the appropriate foul water capacity

- phase allocations to ensure they are inline with planned upgrades to Water Recycling Centres.

#### Biodiversity

- LP to promote sustainable use of water resources to enable sustainable growth
- deliver more water efficient homes
- green infrastructure to build resilience to climate change
- Create new woodlands/open spaces to complement and relieve pressure on existing areas
- policies which allow space for abundant wildlife habitat
- Biodiversity net gain to address previously unaccounted for environmental damage.

#### Flood Risk

- Sites within zones 2 and 3 to be accompanied by Assessment
- LP to apply sequential test and use risk based approach to development location
- sequential approach to be applied within specific sites to direct development to the areas of lowest flood risk
- Advice on
  - finished floor levels and safe access
  - Emergency Flood Plan
  - Flood resilience/resistance measures
  - increases in built footprint
- Environment Agency guidance 'Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances' should be used to inform the spatial distribution of growth and the requirements of Flood Risk Assessments (FRA) for individual applications.

#### Ground Water & Land contamination

- SuDS: deep infiltration features are not favoured
- Support development of brownfield sites and remediation of contaminated land

#### Waste Management

- advice on use of waste materials in construction phases
- impact of any construction

#### Environmental Projects

- LP make reference to Water Framework Directive, River Basin Management Plans.
- The importance of an awareness of the Catchment Based Approach and engaging with Catchment Partnerships & Catchment Plans highlighting these as opportunities for environment improvement projects

**Thames Water.** Important to ensure policies and proposals take account of wastewater infrastructure requirements. Once the preferred locations for growth are known Thames Water will work with the Council to understand the impacts of development on their works so that any necessary studies can be undertaken to help define necessary upgrade requirements. The timescales for delivery of any necessary upgrades will need to be considered in relation to the phasing of development sites allocated in the Local Plan to ensure that there is sufficient time

for any necessary upgrades to be delivered. Without this there would be a risk of issues of sewer flooding or the pollution of land and/or watercourses arising. Thames Water were supportive of the policies proposed in the previous Local Plan in relation to water resources and waste water infrastructure and in particular Policy EN12. Thames Water support the integrated water management approaches being adopted in development which would help deliver water efficient homes and reduce wastewater discharges into the sewer network. Any review of the Green Belt should remove Stansted Mountfitchet and Bishops Stortford STWs from the Green Belt to help facilitate development which will be necessary to support growth.

**Natural England.** The Local Plan:-

- should be based on an up to date evidence base on the water environment and an Integrated Water Management Study, incorporating a Water Cycle Study should be prepared for this purpose.
- will need to ensure that habitats are protected from water-related impacts and it should positively contribute to reducing flood risk by working with natural processes, for example by the provision of SUDs and green infrastructure.
- address the impacts of air quality on the natural environment.
- give appropriate weight to the roles performed by the area's soils.
- should seek to avoid allocations on best and most versatile agricultural land as far as possible and Plan policies should ensure that master-planning steers development towards areas of poorer quality land, subject to biodiversity considerations.
- Should consider key cross-boundary issues - Hatfield Forest; Essex Coast RAMS;
- Consider the sub-regional assessment and co-ordination of the infrastructure provision for both increased supply and increased wastewater treatment capacity.
- Consider transport impacts of growth within and beyond Uttlesford
- Consider coordination of any landscape scale green infrastructure and the enhancement of ecological networks which extend across district boundaries
- Consider policies to positively enhance MGB to deliver more ecosystem services, especially landscape and access to nature.

**Flichway Action Group.** The existing Flich Way is an excellent example of a well-planned and maintained fully accessible multi-user path: a linear country park, predominantly a bridleway, running from Braintree to Start Hill which is harmoniously shared and enjoyed by local residents and visitors. However, the Flich Way is severed on either side of Dunmow and is difficult to access from Dunmow town centre. It also stops abruptly near junction 8 of the M11 with no safe onward route. The Local Plan should contain a requirement that planning permission for development of land in and around Dunmow include a S106 (or equivalent) agreement with each developer to make a contribution to ensure the Flich Way link is completed without delay.

**North Herts DC** support proposals for housing, employment, biodiversity and climate change.

**IMW Duxford** wish to ensure that development does not impact on the ability of the museum to operate and fly.

**Country Landowners Association** draws attention to its publication *The Rural Powerhouse*. The rural economy has the potential to create jobs, grow businesses, build successful communities. It has the potential to solve so many of our great challenges – we want to build more houses, we want to help mitigate climate change. Two of the themes it focuses on are -

- A fully connected countryside. Digital communications and the digital economy are vital to unlocking the vast potential of rural businesses and bringing the rural economy into the 21st century. But despite this clearly documented economic contribution, the rural–urban digital divide remains.
- A planning system designed for rural communities. Meeting the housing need in smaller rural settlements is key for equality, social cohesion and the growth of the rural economy. A sufficient housing supply is integral to addressing the needs of an ageing population, the loss of vital services and to unlock the potential of rural businesses.

### **Individuals**

The plan must try to balance opposing forces: transport constraints v employment changes; expanding access to nature v protecting biodiversity; local housing needs v commuter-led price inflation

Development in the north of Uttlesford will have cross boundary issues with South Cambridgeshire DC and should form an additional theme for consideration in the production of the local plan.

We are an outward facing district, with a high proportion of our residents leaving the area to go to work. The proposed infrastructure improvements are unlikely to match such growth in demand. Will infrastructure 'logjam' or will planning consents be withheld because of the inability of infrastructure to cope? Most importantly, will additional commercial development land be earmarked, and the local LEPs asked to make employment proposals that will attract outreach by the core businesses of the clusters surrounding Cambridge, Harlow, Chelmsford, and to an extent, Braintree?

Developing a cluster of villages may not work in the UK. It may just end up as housing estates. The idea of housing estates being more pedestrianised so that cars are parked away from the house will cause difficulty in delivery of large items, house removal and carrying heavy bags of shopping a further distance, etc, especially for the elderly and people with disabilities. Since lockdown I have not seen much of an increase in cycling. People are still in a hurry to get from A to B and the quickest way is by car.

If badly planned development continues the 'Rural' aspect of our community will no longer exist. Backland and ribbon development must be controlled. Existing bungalows are being bought up as building plots. New homes need to be affordable. Hatfield Forest is under visitor pressure. Domestic parking needs to be on plot. Open green space is required near developments. The airport 'North Side' needs to be put to full industrial use. Green belt should not be lost for employment land.

Concerned about lack of garden topsoil in new developments. Trees should be appropriately sited in developments. Make it easy for people to walk and cycle. Overall, planning should encourage people to make their own good decisions to support the environment and reduce negative impact on climate change. If the local council and planners are seen to prioritise the climate and environment, it encourages residents to do so, and attracts long term residents who care about the environment and community they live in.

The new Local Plan needs a better evidence base and co-ordination of policies with Braintree Council to protect the Pant Valley and its surrounding areas. The evidence can then inform policies for the countryside and environmental protection, habitat and bio-diversity and the character of the local landscapes, and their historical connections to the Bardfield Artists' colony.

# Local Plan Youth Survey 2021



The Communities Team and Planning Team collaborated to undertake a youth survey on the impact of Covid-19 and the Lockdown, and to gain an understanding about how Young People felt about their environment, based on the Local Plan First Consultation Themes.

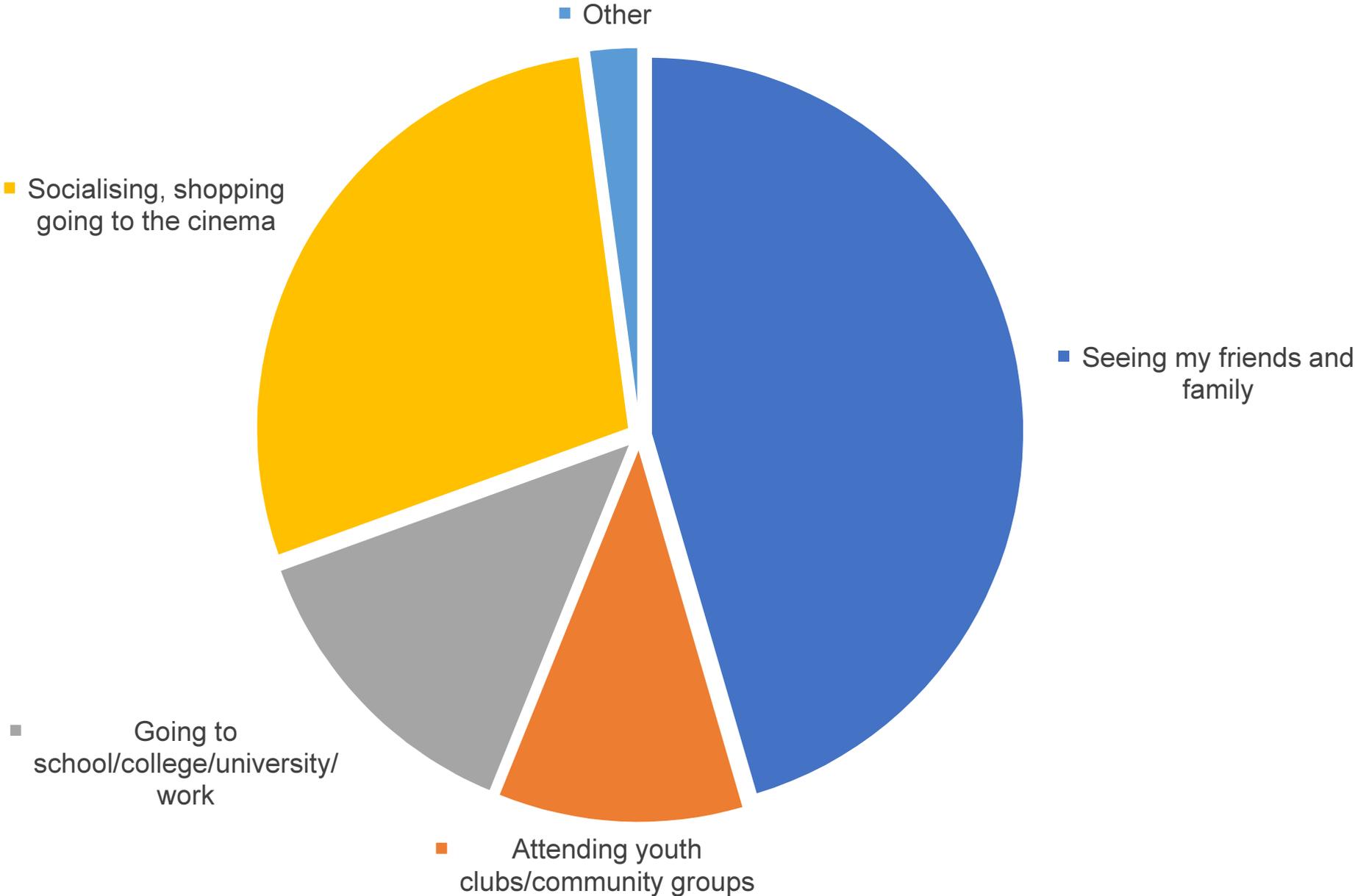
The survey was in two parts. The first part asked question about where you live and how you feel about it. The second part asked for creative ideas on how places should be designed and where they should be located,

The survey was sent to secondary schools, Essex Boys and Girls Clubs, Saffron Walden Football Club, CSVU, Boys Brigade, Scout/Explorer groups and Guide/Ranger Groups, as well as being published on social media.

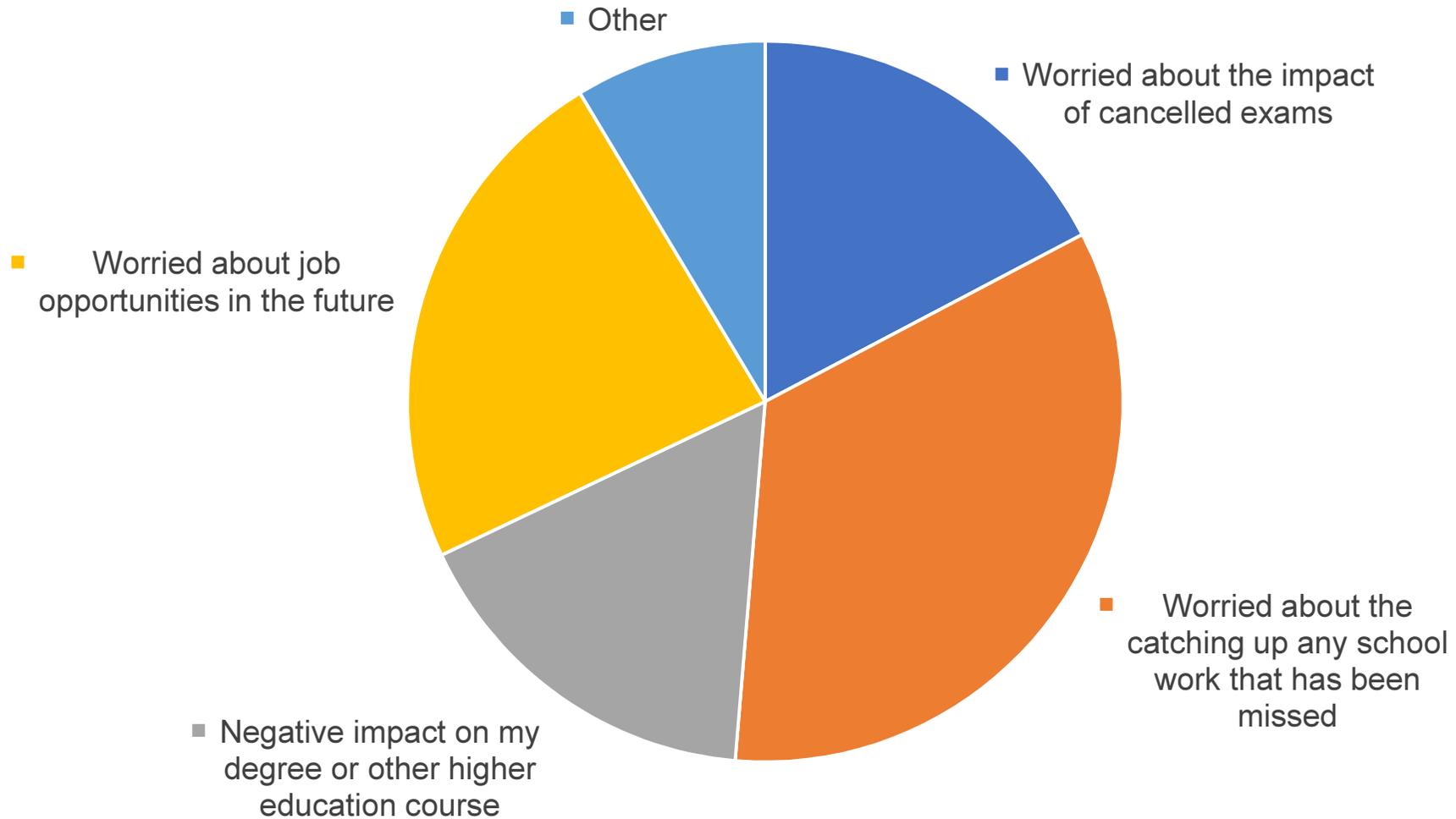
97 people took part in part 1 and 17 people took part in part 2. Responses were received from all year groups, living across the district and including someone at University.

The following shows the responses to the questions in Part 1

# What have you missed most during Covid 19 lock down period?



# What are your main concerns or worries relating to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic (please select any answers which most suit your situation)



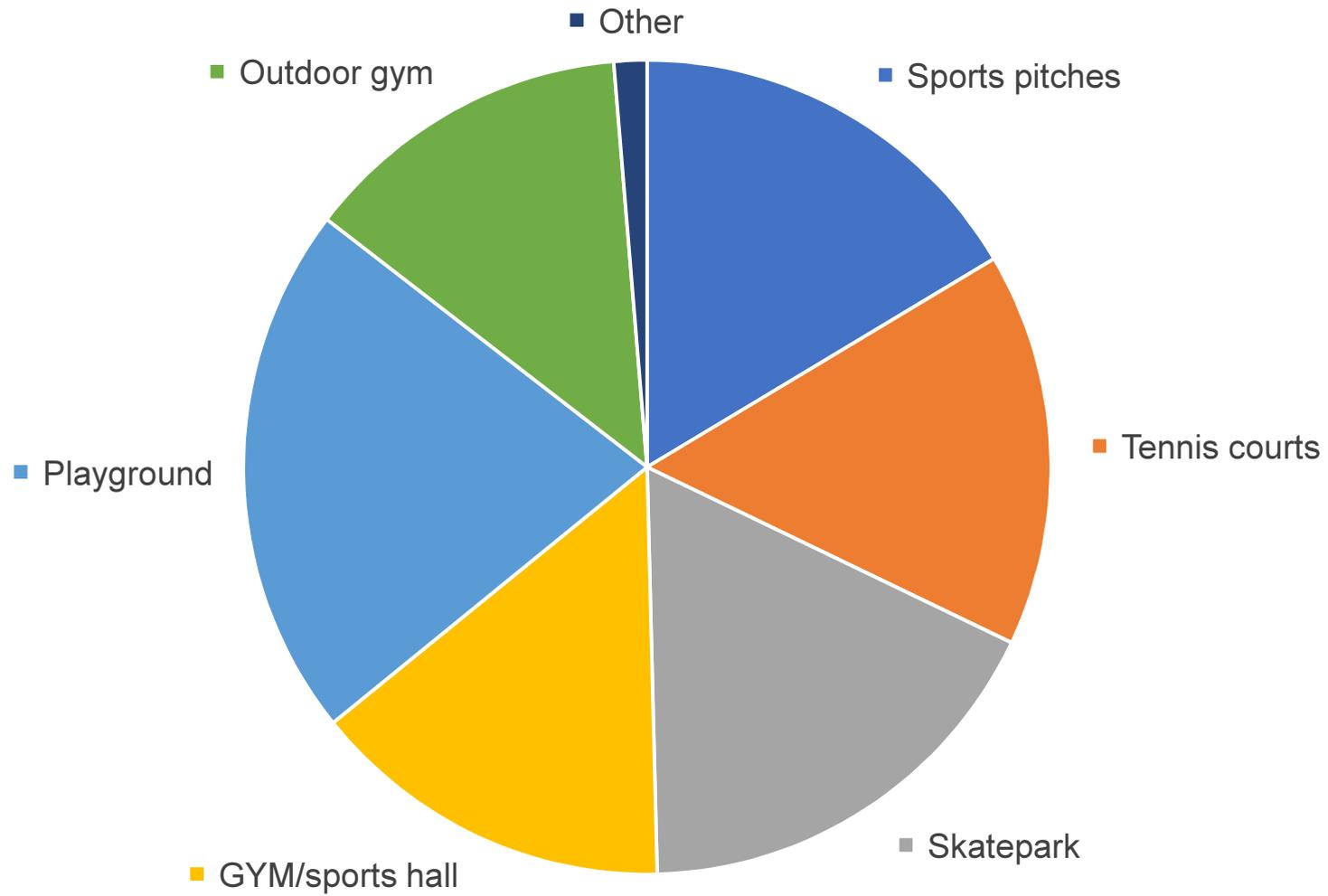
What are the things you are most looking forward to doing once lockdown is over?



Are there any support services or activities that you would like to see developed or introduced in your local area that would improve the mental or physical health of young people?

TALK-CENTRES YOUTH-MUSIC-PROJECT FITNESS-CLUB  
MENTAL-HEALTH-SUPPORT COMMUNITY-SPORTS-CENTRES  
SPORT-INCENTIVE-PROGRAMME  
STUDENT-GUIDANCE COMMUNITY-EXERCISE-CLASSES  
YOUTH-COMMUNITY-CENTRE OUTDOOR-CINEMA  
SCHOOL-SPORTS-CLUBS CYCLE-PATHS SPORTS-ACTIVITIES  
INTER-SCHOOL-SPORTS-DAY AFTER-SCHOOL-SPORTS  
BETTER-PUBLIC-TRANSPORT BOYS FREE-ACCESS  
EXTRA-TUTORING STUDENT-MENTAL-HEALTH-SUPPORT  
YOUTH-MENTALHEALTH-SUPPORT CYCLE-LANES SPORTS-CLUBS  
YOUTH-MENTAL-HEALTH-SUPPORT  
MORE-LOCAL-HOMES YOUTH-CAFES OUTDOOR-SPORTS-FACILITIES  
YOUTH-CLUBS COMMUNITY-EVENTS ALL-GIRLS-GYM  
SUPPORTLINE COMMUNITY-TEENAGER-GROUPS  
YOUTH-SUPPORT YOUTH OUTDOOR-SPORTS-PARK  
MORE-SPORTS-CLUBS LOCAL-YOUTH-SUPPORT-CLUBS  
YOUTH-SUPPORT-GROUP ACCESSIBLE-COUNSELLING  
TEENAGE-MENTAL-HEALTH-SUPPORT  
INWARD-INVESTMENT MORE-LOCAL-HOSPITALS  
BETTER-MENTAL-HEALTH-SERVICES  
PHONE YOUTH-CLUB  
PROPER-FOOTBALL-GOALS

# What are the sports and recreation facilities in your local area?

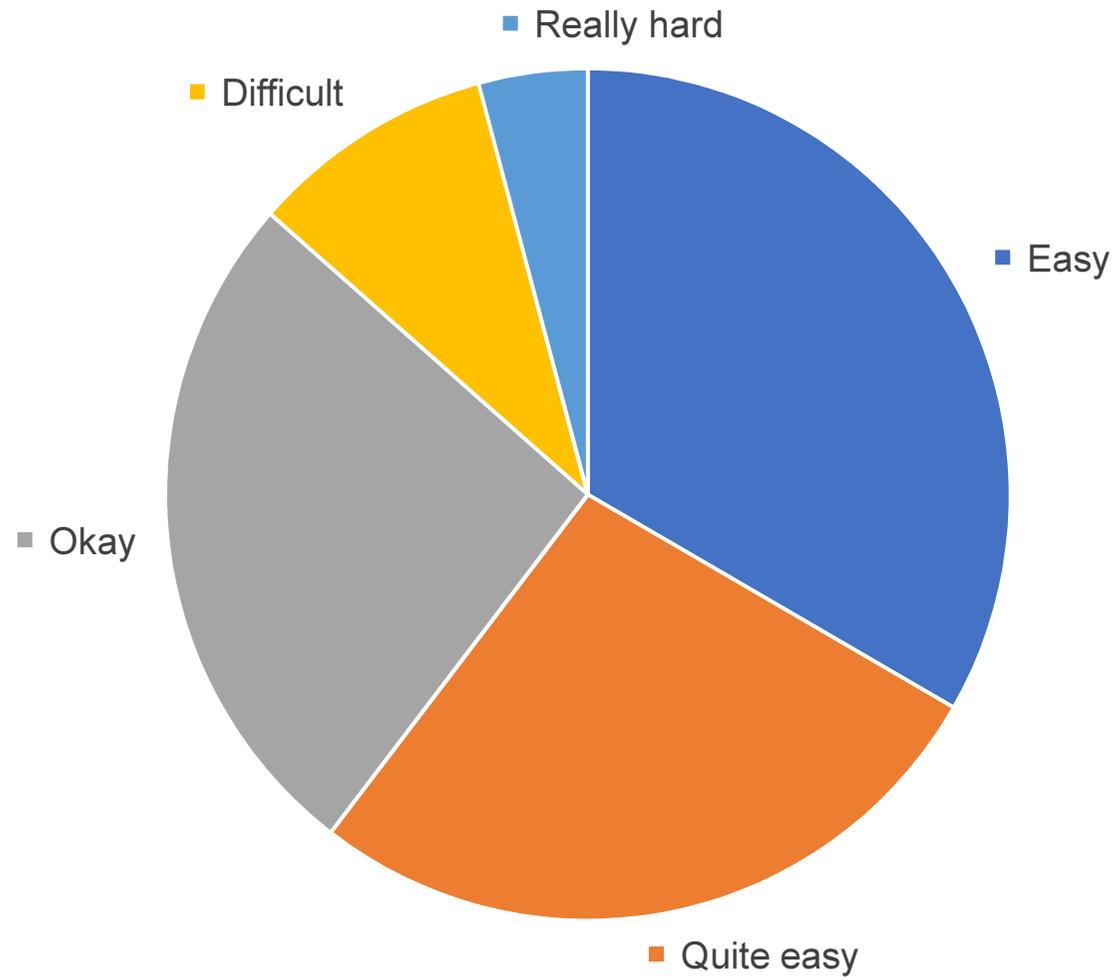


Thinking about the previous question, tell us if they could be improved in anyway.

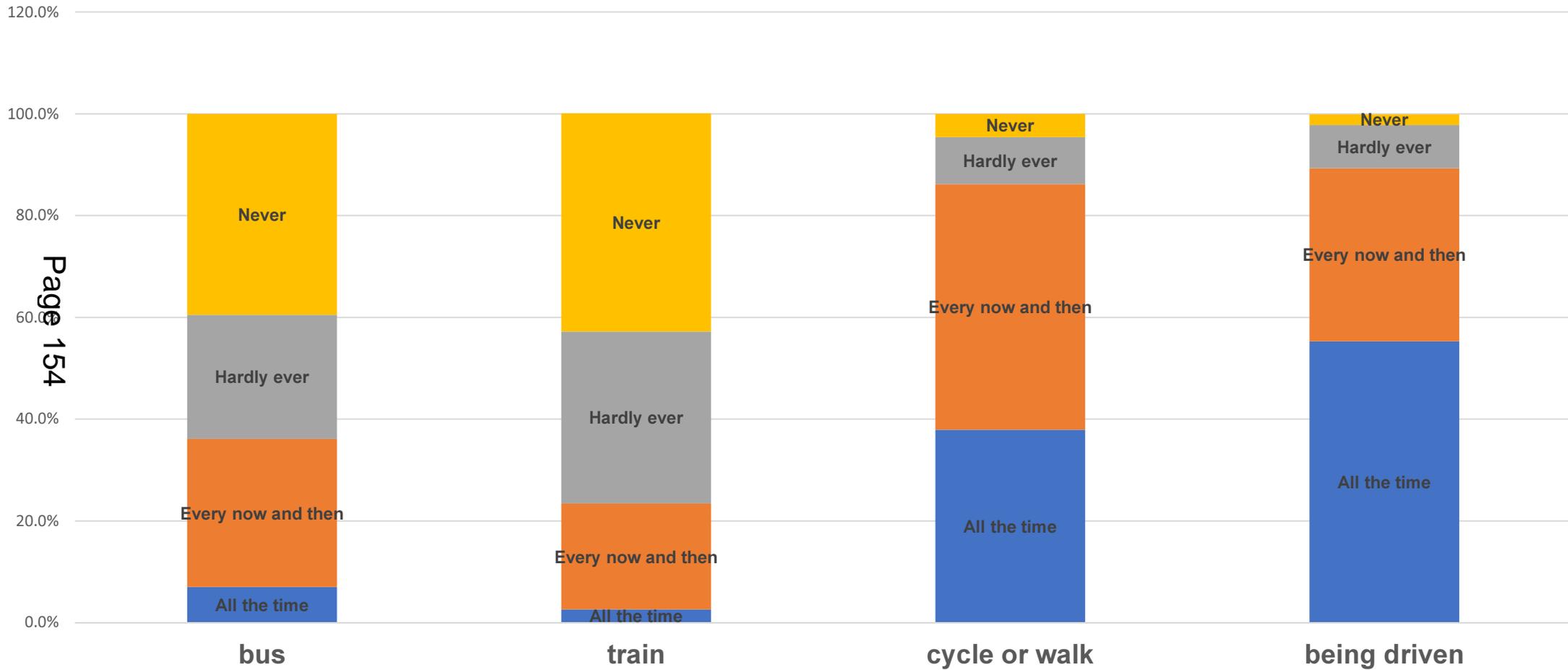
A word cloud on an orange background containing various suggestions for improving outdoor gyms. The most prominent word is 'Outdoor-Gyms' in a large, purple font. Other suggestions include 'More-Local-Sports-Facilities', 'All-Weather-3G-Pitches', 'All-Girls-Gym', 'Improved-Footpaths', 'Public-Sports-Pitches', 'More-Outdoor-Sports-Facilities', 'Bigger-Gym', 'Improved-maintenance-of-public-equipment', 'Accessible-Tennis-Courts', 'Netball-Courts', 'More-Wildlife-Areas', 'Outdoor-BasketBall-Courts', 'Map-of-Running-Routes', 'Expand-Skate-Park', 'Membership-free-Facilities', 'Local-Play-Grounds', 'More-Teenager-Activities', 'Affordable-Gym-Services', 'Outdoor-Gym', 'More-Activities', 'Less-Graffiti-on-Skatepark', 'Mountain-Bike-Park', 'Larger-Skateparks', 'Dog-Walks', 'Skate-Park', 'Artificial-Pitches', 'Promote-Cricket', 'Bus-Service', 'Boxing-Gym', 'Teen-Park', 'Interconnecting-Cycle-Paths', 'Improved-Walking-and-Cycling', 'More-Green-Space-Between-Developments', 'Basketball-Courts', 'Public-Accessible-Services', 'More-Skate-Parks', 'Improved-Skatepark', 'New-Facilities', 'Larger-Playgrounds', 'More-Spaces-for-Teenagers', 'More-Gym-Facilities', 'More-Linked-Paths-and-Cycle-ways', 'Improved-Drainage-for-Pitches', 'More-Accessible', 'Outdoor-Gym-Equipment', 'More-Variety', 'Playgrounds-for-Teenagers', 'Better-Playgrounds', 'Basketball-Hoops-and-Sports-Equipment', 'Proper-Football-Goals', 'More-Social-Distancing', and 'Improvements-to-Existing-Playgrounds'.

More-Teenager-Playgrounds More-Teenager-Facilities Public-Sports-and-Fields  
More-Local-Sports-Facilities All-Weather-3G-Pitches  
All-Girls-Gym Improved-Footpaths Public-Sports-Pitches  
More-Outdoor-Sports-Facilities Bigger-Gym  
Improved-maintenance-of-public-equipment Accessible-Tennis-Courts  
Netball-Courts More-Wildlife-Areas Outdoor-BasketBall-Courts  
Map-of-Running-Routes Expand-Skate-Park Membership-free-Facilities Local-Play-Grounds  
More-Teenager-Activities Affordable-Gym-Services Outdoor-Gym More-Activities  
Less-Graffiti-on-Skatepark Mountain-Bike-Park Larger-Skateparks  
Dog-Walks Skate-Park  
Outdoor-Gyms Artificial-Pitches  
Promote-Cricket Bus-Service Boxing-Gym  
Teen-Park Interconnecting-Cycle-Paths Improved-Walking-and-Cycling  
More-Green-Space-Between-Developments  
Basketball-Courts Public-Accessible-Services More-Skate-Parks Improved-Skatepark  
New-Facilities Larger-Playgrounds More-Spaces-for-Teenagers  
More-Gym-Facilities More-Linked-Paths-and-Cycle-ways  
Improved-Drainage-for-Pitches More-Accessible Outdoor-Gym-Equipment  
More-Variety Playgrounds-for-Teenagers  
Better-Playgrounds Basketball-Hoops-and-Sports-Equipment  
Proper-Football-Goals More-Social-Distancing Improvements-to-Existing-Playgrounds

# How easy is it for you to get to the places you need to access such as schools and shops?



# How do you get about (tick all that apply)



What do you like about where you live?

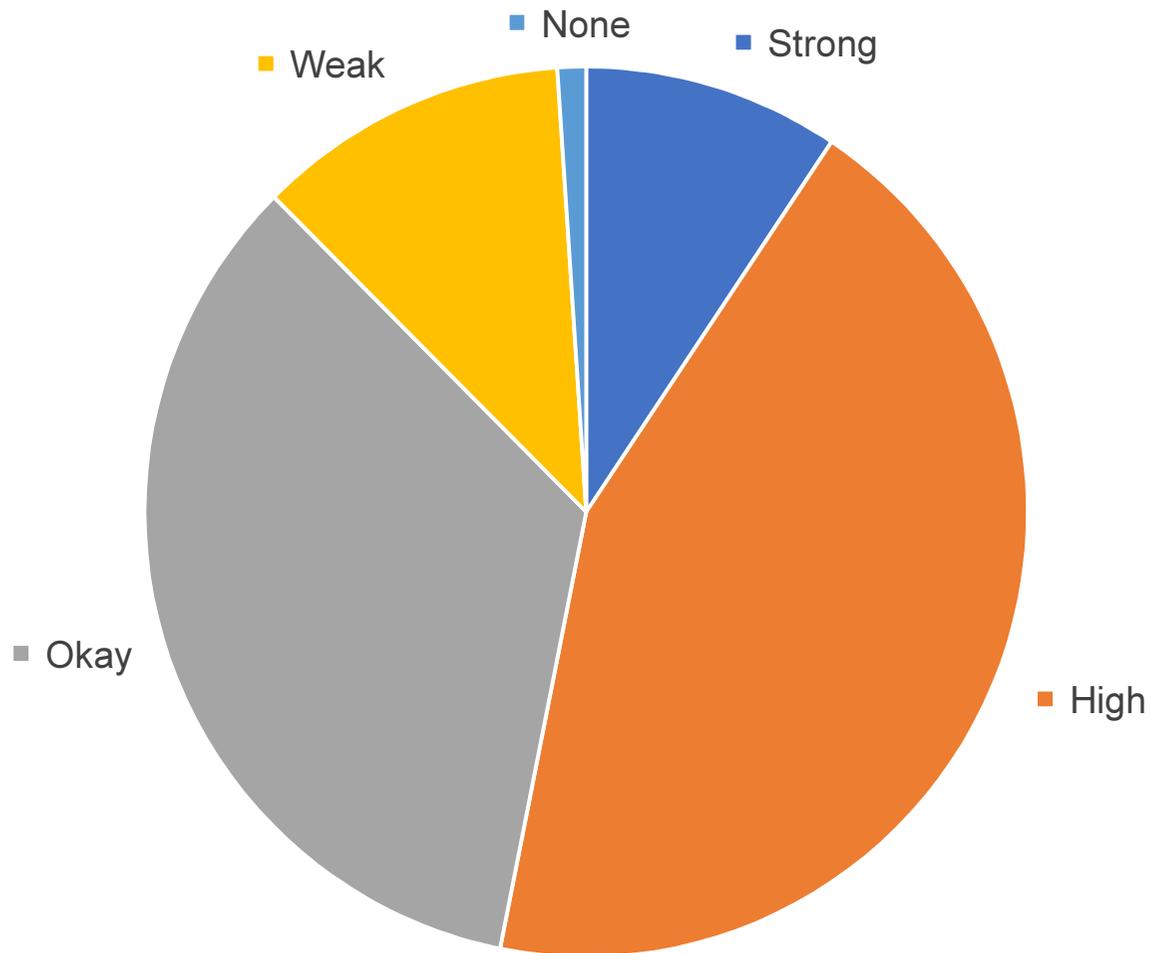
Page 155

A word cloud on a light green background. The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern, with some words being significantly larger than others. The largest words are 'Safe', 'Peaceful', 'Good-Community', and 'Easy-Access'. Other prominent words include 'Nice-Community', 'Nice-Places', 'Nice-Views', 'Nice-Scenery', 'Nice-Environment', 'Nice-Community', 'Nice-Views', 'Nice-Scenery', 'Nice-Environment', 'Nice-Community', 'Nice-Views', 'Nice-Scenery', 'Nice-Environment'. The words are in various shades of brown, orange, and red.

Nice-Countryside School-Friends Countryside-Views Environment  
Green-Spaces Friendly-Village Cycling-Between-Villages Easy-Access-to-Shops  
Close-to-Town-and-Friends Good-Community Central-to-Town  
Quiet-and-Safe Great-Opportunities Close-Supportive-Community Range-of-Clubs-and-Sports-Teams  
Fields Proximity Pretty Scenery-and-Nature Dog-Socialising  
Safe-United-Community Community Country-Walks Rural-Countryside Close-to-Shops  
Restaurants Walks-Nearby Travelling-by-Train Easily-Visit-Friends Youth-Club  
Lovely-Scenery Low-Traffic-and-Noise-Pollution Nice-People Friends  
Beautiful-Town Space-to-Exercise Town Quiet-Pretty-Countryside  
Close-to-Schools Dog-Walks Pretty-Town Safe Community-Spirit Easy-Links-to-Cities  
Market Common Not-too-Much-Crime Recreation-Park Field-Views Walkable  
Relax-in-the-Wildlife Quietness Nice-Community Country-Dog-Walks  
Close-Proximity Rural The-Park Pretty-Area Easy-Access-to-Nature Easily-Walkable  
Easy-Access Places-to-run-around Skatepark Good-Walking-Routes Near-Station  
Quiet-Environment Near-Shops-and-ammenities Clean Walks  
Easy-Travel-to-London/Cambridge Everything-Within-Walking-Distance Not-too-Busy  
Location Being-Around-Animals Peaceful Park Open-Space Hearing-Wildlife  
Near-to-Tesco-and-School Supportive-Community Easy-Accessibility Animals-and-Wildlife Small-Safe-Town

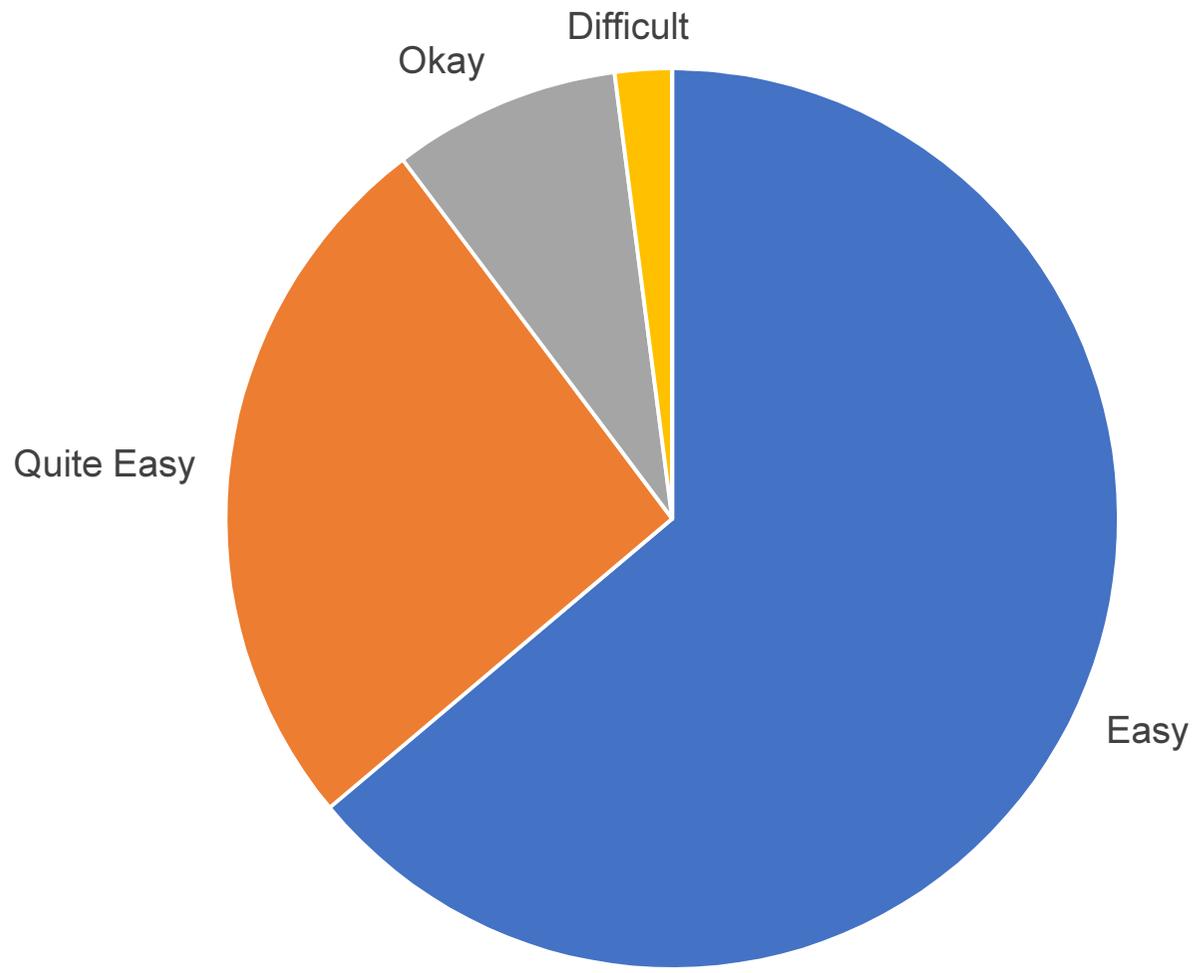
**Communities are made of up people of difference ages, household types and ethnic diversity.**

**What do you think the sense of community spirit where you live is?**

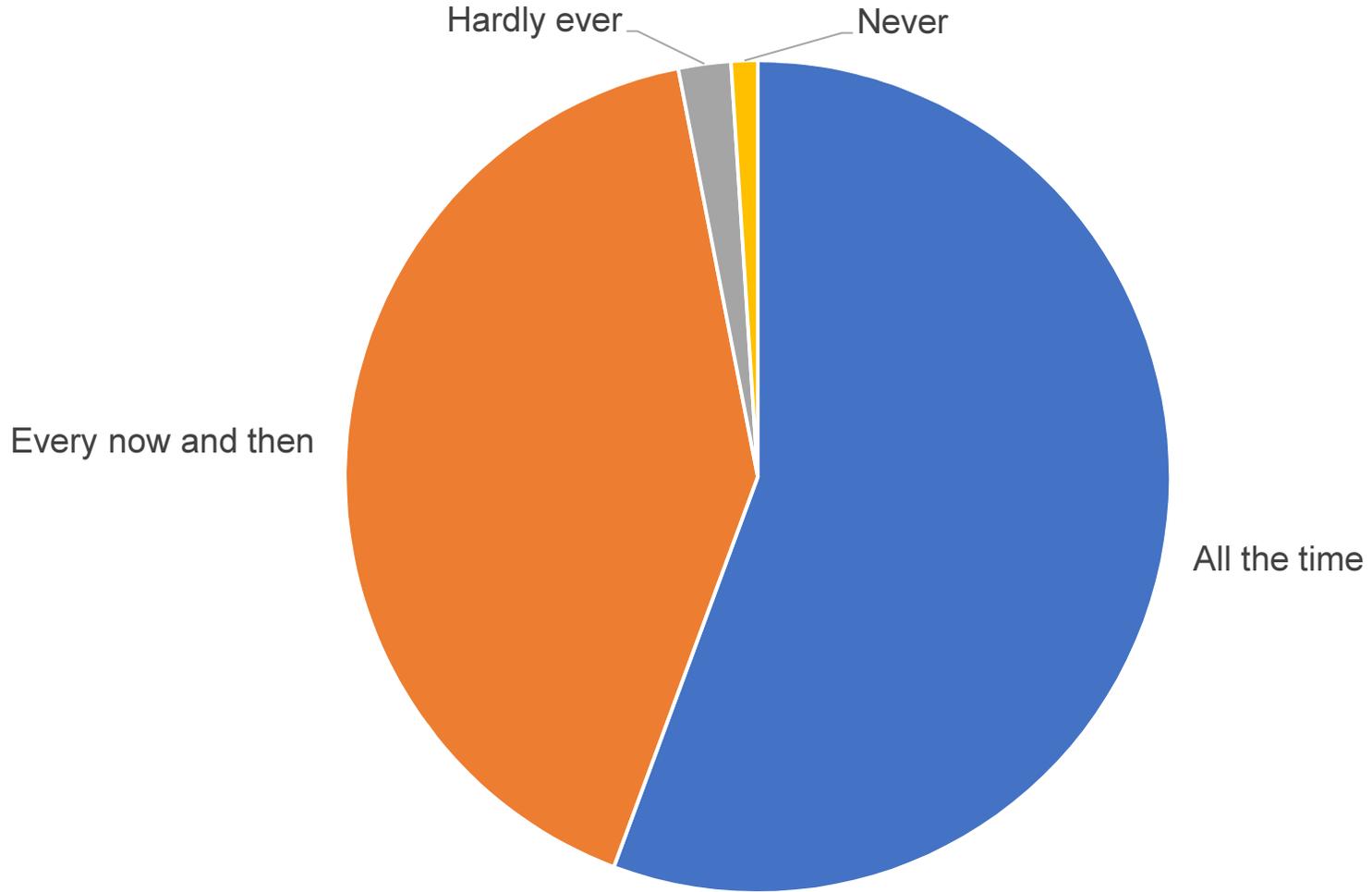




# How easy is it for you to access nature?



# How often do you access nature?



We know that being active is good for us. Please give an example of the sorts of things that you do to be active in your area

Running

Basketball Hockey Online-Workouts  
Home-Workouts PE-Class  
Skating School-Sports  
Dancing Walks PE-Lessons Playground Jogging  
Badminton Zoom-Fitness-Groups Kayaking Bounce-Class  
Tennis PE Treadmill

Walking

Dog-Walks

Netball Yoga Dog Gym  
Clubs Dance-Classes Bike  
Football Cricket Karate  
Swimming  
Climbing Sports-on-Courts Judo  
Walk Rugby Outdoor-Gym

Cycling

Woodland-Walks Bike-Rides  
Taekwondo-club Dog-Walking  
Sports

Do you think that where you live is a good place to grow up? Please give reasons for your answer



# Part 2

Participants in the survey were invited to watch two short videos which highlight some ideas for how places should be designed and where they should be located.



[What is a '15-minute city'?](#) (YouTube)

[VeloCity](#) (Vimeo)



They were asked what they thought of these ideas, could they be applied to new and existing places near where they live or could they think of another way things could be done.

Seventeen responses were received, of which nine creatively engaged with the task. Below is a summary of the themes from the responses, including some quotes.

Many of the participants supported the idea of the 15-minute city and VeloCity. They liked the idea of being able to reach places you wanted to go in a short walk or cycle ride, and they liked the idea of less cars on the roads. There was strong support for new cycle paths and places for recreation and sport outside. The affordability of housing was an issue identified in many of the responses, and there was the need to have places where the community can come together.

*“Along with this there should also be lots of trees and plants to help with the oxygen and to make it not look as boring and make it look colourful instead because nobody wants to live in a place that looks boring and dull.”*

*“Apart from the Flitch way there are no other bridleways or cycle paths. To better connect areas together cycle paths need to be built and also better public transport should be put in place.”*

There was also support for planning more trees, providing wider pavements, new cycle lanes and public transport options and increasing the price of parking so as to discourage driving while providing alternatives.

Pollution, the environment and the need for clean air came up in a number of the responses. This was linked to reducing car journeys and making it easier to access school, shops and other places. Responses also mentioned the increase in home working during the pandemic, and that this was another way of reducing car journeys.

Page 164

*“If more houses are built ... they should be (at least semi) eco-homes, so that we are protecting the environment, therefore having solar panels to generate solar electricity etc. Also existing ecosystems, for example ponds and shrubs, shouldn't be destroyed in the process but rather homes should be built around them so we don't destroy the wildlife.”*

*“Reducing the emissions and pollution in our atmosphere by finding healthier ways to get to school is a simple way leading us to a much healthier place to live for future generations and for the generation living today.”*

One response made a strong argument that new housing should be designed so as to have less energy requirements and less of an impact on nature.

*“...increased populations in villages should not be encouraged unless they are to become towns or “15 minute cities”. Sustainable living is the goal, which villages prevent.”*

There was also a preference expressed to avoid building on fields and to go for brownfield land in the first instance. It was also thought that towns should be self-contained, and that development should be concentrated in towns.

Page 165

Some were circumspect as to how far the principles of the 15 minute city and VeloCity could be implemented locally, and improvements to public transport were promoted.

*“Where I live ... there isn't much public transport infrastructure so banning cars would be impossible. The bus service near where I live could be improved - with more frequent buses and lowered fares.”*