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Meeting	CABINET
Time/Day/Date	5.00 pm on Tuesday, 24 March 2026
Location	Abbey Room, Stenson House, London Road, Coalville, LE67 3FN
Officer to contact	Democratic Services (01530 454512)

AGENDA

Item	Pages
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
Under the Code of Conduct members are reminded that in declaring interests you should make clear the nature of that interest and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest, registerable interest or other interest.	
3. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION	
4. MINUTES	
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 17 and 24 February 2026	5 - 10
5. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, VIREMENTS AND CAPITAL APPROVALS	
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6. FORMER TENANT RENT ARREARS, CURRENT TENANT RENT ARREARS, COUNCIL TAX, NON DOMESTIC RATES AND SUNDRY DEBTS WRITE OFFS	
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7. LEGACY FUND GRANT	
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8.	STENSON SQUARE GARDENS - PRESENTATION OF DESIGNS POST PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND APPROVAL TO FUND AND SUBMIT PLANNING APPLICATIONS	65 - 72
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9.	FREPORT – CHANGE OF ACCOUNTABLE BODY	73 - 88
	Report of the Chief Executive Presented by the Planning Portfolio Holder	
10.	GOOD DESIGN GUIDE FOR NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE	89 - 112
	Report of the Strategic Director of Place Presented by the Infrastructure Portfolio Holder	
11.	LEICESTER & LEICESTERSHIRE AUTHORITIES STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND – STRATEGIC DISTRIBUTION	113 - 132
	Report of the Strategic Director of Place Presented by the Infrastructure Portfolio Holder	
12.	LEICESTER & LEICESTERSHIRE AUTHORITIES STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND – HOUSING DISTRIBUTION UNDER THE NEW STANDARD METHOD	133 - 216
	Report of the Strategic Director of Place Presented by the Infrastructure Portfolio Holder	
13.	BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT	217 - 236
	Report of the Strategic Director of Communities Presented by the Community and Climate Change Portfolio Holder	
14.	EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC	
	The officers consider that the press and public should be excluded during consideration of the following items in accordance with Section 100(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 as publicity would be likely to result in disclosure of exempt or confidential information. Members are reminded that they must have regard to the public interest test and must consider, for each item, whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption from disclosure outweighs the public interest in making the item available.	
15.	FUTURE OF ROUGH SLEEPING PROVISION	237 - 240
	Report of the Strategic Director of Communities Presented by the Housing, Property and Customer Services Portfolio Holder	
16.	RENEWAL OF CONTRACTS FOR PLANNED MAINTENANCE AND ESTATE UPGRADES	241 - 244
	Report of the Strategic Director of Communities Presented by the Housing, Property and Customer Services Portfolio Holder	

Circulation:

Councillor R Blunt (Chair)
Councillor M B Wyatt (Deputy Chair)
Councillor T Gillard
Councillor K Merrie MBE
Councillor N J Rushton
Councillor A C Saffell
Councillor A C Woodman

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MINUTES of a meeting of the CABINET held in the Abbey Room, Stenson House, London Road, Coalville, LE67 3FN on TUESDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2026

Present: Councillor R Blunt (Chair)

Councillors M B Wyatt, T Gillard, K Merrie MBE, A C Saffell and A C Woodman

In Attendance: Councillors D Cooper, J Legrys, P Moulton, J G Simmons and R Sutton

Officers: Mrs A Thomas, Mrs A Crouch, Ms B Leonard, Ms K Hiller and Mrs C Hammond

114. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor N Rushton.

115. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no interests declared.

116. 2026/27 GENERAL FUND BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX

The report was presented by the Finance and Corporate Portfolio Holder.

Following the presentation, Councillor K Merrie summarised the decisions made at the meeting of the 3 of February.

A question was asked by Councillor J Legrys.

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR JOHN LEGRYS

'Can I ask the Leader why the following publicly announced changes to proposals are not shown:

-10% Increase car parking charges (to be removed?)

-extension of 'free two hour'

parking charge exemption for Money Hill car park (not shown)'

RESPONSE FROM THE FINANCE AND CORPORATE PORTFOLIO HOLDER

'The Government announced details of the final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2026/27 on 9 February 2026. Given the unprecedented and significant changes to the funding formula, and the consequent material impact on the Council's funding position over the medium term, it was agreed that an extraordinary Cabinet meeting should be convened on 17 February 2026 to consider the implications.

While the agenda for the Full Council meeting on 19 February 2026 was issued on 11 February 2026, it was considered more appropriate to await the outcomes of the extraordinary Cabinet meeting on 17 February 2026. Accordingly, it was agreed that an addendum report would be presented to Full Council, incorporating all updates since the budget proposals were considered by Cabinet on 3 February 2026, including both the announcements made at that meeting and the details of the final finance settlement. This approach ensures that Members are presented with a single, consolidated view of all changes affecting the budget proposals.'

A supplementary question was asked. The Head of Finance informed those present that an addendum report, covering all updates, would be taken to full Council on Thursday 19 February. Officers hoped to be able to publish the addendum on Thursday morning; earlier if possible.

The carparking review was welcomed by members, as was the confirmed plans to

introduce up to 2 hours free parking in all Council-run car parks in Coalville and the Money Hill car park in Ashby. Details of its implementation was explained by a member and its implementation aimed to be from 6 July 2026. This was expected to boost access to town centres and support local businesses. Alongside this change, the Council would conduct a data-gathering exercise to better understand car park usage and identify what visitors wanted, helping to inform future operational decisions.

Thanks were extended to Councillor A Woodman for his contribution to discussions regarding Ashby's parking facilities.

In response, it was noted that a full parking review was timely and important, particularly in areas where car parks were currently at capacity and better turnover was needed to support local access and trade.

It was moved by Councillor K Merrie, seconded by Councillor M Wyatt and

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1) The proposed general fund budget as detailed in this report and attached appendices was endorsed and recommended to Council for approval at its meeting on 19 February 2026.
- 2) The contribution to a contingency budget as detailed in appendix 1 was approved and responsibility delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources (Section 151 officer) and the relevant portfolio holder to incur expenditure under that budget.
- 3) The fees and charges as set out in Appendix 3 was approved.
- 4) Authority was delegated to the Section 151 officer, in consultation with the Finance and Corporate portfolio holder to make amendments to the budget prior to its consideration at council on 19 February 2026 in response to any requests from portfolio holders in respect of their portfolio.
- 5) The creation of a £2m Legacy fund to support communities with capital and revenue projects was approved.
- 6) Two hours free parking at Moneyhill Car Park in Ashby was approved.
- 7) Car parking charging increases were frozen across the district pending the outcome of a car parking review.
- 8) The grant to Age UK was allocated for befriending services to ensure value for money.
- 9) The reinstated grant to Ashby Museum was approved on the condition that the funding was to support the cost of IT equipment and services.
- 10) The removal of the agency model for the leisure contract saving as outlined in Appendix Two was approved.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm

The Chair closed the meeting at 5.10 pm

MINUTES of a meeting of the CABINET held in the Abbey Room, Stenson House, London Road, Coalville, LE67 3FN on TUESDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2026

Present: Councillor R Blunt (Chair)

Councillors M B Wyatt, T Gillard, K Merrie MBE, A C Saffell and A C Woodman

In Attendance: Councillors

Officers: Mrs A Thomas, Mr J Arnold, Mr A Barton, Ms K Hiller, Mr P Stone, Ms H Panter, Mrs R Wallace and Mr P Wheatley

117. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor N Rushton.

118. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

119. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no questions received.

120. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2026.

It was moved by Councillor T Gillard, seconded by Councillor A Saffell and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 February be approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record of proceedings.

Reason for Decision: The Cabinet (Executive) Procedure Rules require that the minutes of the previous meeting are considered and confirmed as a correct record.

121. ADMISSION OF ADDITIONAL ITEM

RESOLVED THAT:

By reason of special circumstance in that an additional item of business needs to be considered before the next meeting of Cabinet to allow Corporate Scrutiny Committee to receive the report, the item entitled 'Council Delivery Plan - Performance Report - 2025/26 Quarter 3' be considered as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 100B(4)(B) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Reason for decision: To enable the consideration of urgent business.

122. 2023/24 PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

The Housing, Property and Customer Services Portfolio Holder presented the report.

The report was noted.

123. 2023/24 PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN - GENERAL FUND

The Corporate and Finance Portfolio Holder presented the report.

The report was noted.

124. 2024/25 PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

The Housing, Property and Customer Services Portfolio Holder presented the report.

The report was noted.

125. 2024/25 PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN - GENERAL FUND

The Corporate and Finance Portfolio Holder presented the report.

The report was noted.

126. REVIEW OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE POLICIES - INFORMATION GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The Corporate and Finance Portfolio Holder presented the report.

It was moved by Councillor K Merrie, seconded by Councillor A Saffell and

RESOLVED THAT:

The Corporate Governance Policies listed in paragraph 1.2 of the report be approved.

Reason for decision: To ensure that the Council has an up-to-date suite of governance policies in place reflecting the law and best practice.

127. COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN - PERFORMANCE REPORT - 2025/26 QUARTER 3

Before considering the report, the comments from Corporate Scrutiny Committee on the Quarter two performance were considered in turn.

The Business and Regeneration Portfolio Holder presented the report.

Members of the Cabinet provided updates for the service areas of their portfolios. This included Leisure Centre achievements, recycling collections, compliance in taxis and food businesses, publishing of the Statement of Accounts, housing complaints, Coalville regeneration projects and planning application performance.

The report was noted.

128. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED THAT:

In pursuance of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the business to be transacted involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Reason for decision: To enable the consideration of exempt information.

129. AWARD OF PAYROLL AND HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) SYSTEM CONTRACT

The Corporate and Finance Portfolio Holder presented the report

It was moved by Councillor K Merrie, seconded by Councillor T Gillard and

RESOLVED THAT:

The recommendations in the report be approved.

Reason for decision: to comply with the constitution of the Council.

130. WOLSEY ROAD REGENERATION AREA (COALVILLE) – PROVISION OF GRANT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF EXTENSION TO LINDEN WAY AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS

The Leader of the Council presented the report.

Members welcomed the report and thanked the officers for the work undertaken on the project to date.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor M Wyatt and

RESOLVED THAT:

The recommendations in the report be approved.

Reason for decision: to comply with the constitution of the Council.

131. AWARD OF CONTRACTS

The Housing, property and Customer Services Portfolio Holder presented the report.

It was moved by Councillor A Woodman, seconded by Councillor T Gillard and

RESOLVED THAT:

The recommendations in the report be approved.

Reason for decision: to comply with the constitution of the Council.

132. EE SMARTPHONE AND VOICE CONTRACT RENEWAL

The Housing, property and Customer Services Portfolio Holder presented the report.

It was moved by Councillor A Woodman, seconded by Councillor T Gillard and

RESOLVED THAT:

The recommendations in the report be approved.

Reason for decision: to comply with the constitution of the Council.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm

The Chair closed the meeting at 5.34 pm

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – TUESDAY, 24 MARCH 2026



Title of Report	SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, VIREMENTS AND CAPITAL APPROVALS	
Presented by	Councillor Keith Merrie MBE Finance and Corporate Portfolio Holder PH Briefed <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Background Papers	Council – 20 February 2025 General Fund Budget and Council Tax 2025/26	Public Report: Yes
		Key Decision: Yes
Financial Implications	Appendix 2 provides information on the supplementary estimates requiring approval Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	No legal implications arising from this report.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	Any staffing implications of this report are detailed in the body of the report and the attached appendices.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To seek approval of the supplementary estimates, virements and capital scheme movements.	
Reason for Decision	The Council's Financial Procedure Rules, Section 2, paragraphs A24 to A28 stipulate the procedures for virements and supplementary estimates, whilst the Council's Capital Strategy sets out the Governance of the Capital Programme.	
Recommendations	THAT CABINET APPROVES THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES DETAILED IN APPENDIX 2 THAT ARE ABOVE £10K AND BELOW £250K AND COUNCIL FUNDED.	

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for supplementary estimates, as required under the Council's Constitution. This is a regular report to Cabinet to enable the approval of virements and supplementary estimates in a timely manner for the efficient operation of the Council.
- 1.2 This report covers items in respect of the General Fund. There are no virements or capital movements requiring approval.
- 1.3 All supplementary estimates outlined in this report were submitted before 1 March 2026 and are therefore governed by the constitutional provisions effective from 1 March 2025. A relevant extract concerning virements and supplementary estimates is provided in Appendix 1.

1.4 Appendix 2 provides an extract from the updated Constitution effective 1 March 2026; all supplementary estimates and virements will follow the new rules from this date.

2.0 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

2.1 A supplementary estimate is an addition to the Council's agreed budget and should only be considered after all other options such as virements or savings have been considered. Supplementary estimates include budgets fully funded by external grants or contributions.

2.2 Supplementary estimate levels were approved as part of the Constitution by Council in February 2025. These approval levels are detailed in Appendix 1. All supplementary estimates which will be Council funded require Cabinet approval whereas those fully externally funded are reported to Cabinet below £100k but require approval over £100k. Those above £250k require Council approval.

2.3 Appendix 3 details all supplementary estimates grouped by value and funding with details of the reasons for the requests which are summarised in the table below.

	General Fund	
	Revenue	Capital
Between £0 and £99,999 (For Information Only)	129,572	66,368
Between £100,000 and £249,999 (For Cabinet Approval)	-	-
Over £250,000 (Requires Council Approval)	-	-
Total Externally Funded	129,572	66,368
Between £0 and £9,999 (For Information Only)	22,000	-
Between £10,000 and £249,999 (For Cabinet Approval)	237,920	-
Over £250,000 (Requires Council Approval)	-	-
Total Council Funded	259,920	-
Total Supplementary Estimates	389,492	66,368

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	A well-run council
Policy Considerations:	The Council's Financial Procedure Rules, sections A24 – A28, set out the details of the virement and supplementary estimates, as shown in Appendix 1 of this report.
Safeguarding:	None
Equalities/Diversity:	None
Customer Impact:	None
Economic and Social Impact:	None
Environment, Climate Change and Zero Carbon:	None
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	None
Risks:	Non-compliance with any grant conditions. A full assessment is in place as part of the grant process.
Officer Contact	Anna Crouch Head of Finance anna.crouch@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

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Extract from 'The Council's Constitution' March 2025 Version

Virement

A.24 **Full Council** is responsible for agreeing procedures for **Virement** of expenditure between **Budget** headings. The definition of a Virement is set out in Section 5 of the **Policy & Budget Framework** as follows:

*Steps taken by the **Cabinet**, a **Cabinet Member**, a group of the Cabinet, or Officers, or **Joint Arrangements** to implement Council policy shall not exceed the budgets allocated to each relevant **Budget** head. However, such bodies or individuals shall be entitled to vire across Budget heads within such limits as shall be laid down in the **Financial Procedure Rules**. Beyond those limits, approval to any **Virement** across Budget heads shall require the approval of the **Full Council**.*

*A **Virement** is defined as where one or more **Budget(s)** are reduced to fund an increase in another **Budget(s)**. There is no net change in the total Budget agreed by Council arising from a Virement.*

A.25 The table below sets out the approval level required based on the value of the **Virement**.

Value	Approval Level Required		
	Within a Budget Head	Between Budget Heads in same Directorate	Between Directorates
Between £0 - £4,999	Heads of Service	Heads of Service	Heads of Service
Between £5,000 and £24,999	Heads of Service and Strategic Directors	Strategic Directors and Portfolio Holder(s)	Strategic Directors and Portfolio Holder(s)
Between £25,000 and £99,999	Strategic Directors and Portfolio Holder(s)	Strategic Directors and Portfolio Holder(s)	Strategic Directors and Portfolio Holder(s)
Between £100,000 and £249,999	Cabinet	Cabinet	Cabinet
£250,000 and over	Full Council	Full Council	Full Council

Notes:

1. In all circumstances Virements require approval by the S151 Officer.
2. All relevant parties listed above must be in agreement.
3. Virements should not be artificially disaggregated.
4. Virement rules apply to capital and revenue.

Supplementary Estimates

A.26 A supplementary estimate is an addition to the Council's agreed **Budget**. Supplementary estimates can be one-offs, or recurring. In either case, supplementary estimates should only be considered after all other options, such as **Virements**, or savings, have been considered. Supplementary estimates include budgets fully funded by external grant or contribution.

A.27 The table below sets out the approval level required based on the value of the supplementary estimates.

Value	Approval Level Required	
	Fully Externally Funded	Requires Council Funding
Between £0 and £9,999	S151 Officer	S151 Officer
Between £10,000 and £99,999	Head of Service [then reported to Cabinet at next meeting]	Cabinet
Between £100,000 and £249,999	Cabinet	Cabinet
£250,000 and over	Full Council	Full Council

Notes:

1. In all circumstances Supplementary Estimates require approval by the S151 Officer.
2. Council funding includes (but is not limited to) revenue budget, reserves, Section 106, capital receipts and borrowing. S151 Officer decision will undertaken an assessment.
3. Supplementary Estimates should not be artificially disaggregated.
4. Supplementary Estimates rules apply to capital and revenue.

A.28 Where in exceptional or unexpected circumstances a Directorate is faced with a material increase in its net expenditure, which cannot reasonably be contained within its resource allocation figure for the year, the **Chief Executive** or **Strategic Directors** must (wherever possible, prior to incurring the expenditure) submit a request to **Cabinet** or **Council** for a supplementary estimate to cover the additional expenditure. The Cabinet or Council will also decide how the expenditure will be funded, e.g. from grant, revenue, reserve, loan or otherwise.

Extract from 'The Council's Constitution' March 2026 Version

Virement

The scheme of virement is intended to enable Strategic Directors, Heads of Service and budget holders to manage budgets with a degree of flexibility within the overall policy framework determined by the Council, and therefore to optimise the use of resources. It is administered by the S151 Officer within guidelines set out within these financial procedure rules. The overall budget is set by the Council. Budget holders are therefore authorised to incur expenditure in accordance with the estimates that make up the budget. The procedures for virements is the mechanism for moving resources between approved estimates or heads of expenditure. For the purposes of this scheme, a budget head is considered to be a line in the approved estimates, or, as a minimum, at an equivalent level to the standard service subdivision as defined by CIPFA's Service Expenditure Analysis, i.e. employees, premises etc.

A virement does not create additional overall budget liability and therefore should not lead to an overspend. A virement should not be used where one off savings are used to fund recurring expenditure thereby creating future commitments, including full-year effects of decisions made part way through a year, for which future resources have not been identified.

Where an approved budget is a lump-sum budget or contingency intended for allocation during the year, its allocation will not be treated as a virement, provided that:

- (a) the amount is used in accordance with the purposes for which it has been established;
- (b) The Cabinet/Council has approved the basis and the terms, including financial limits, on which it will be allocated. Individual allocations in excess of the financial limits should be reported to the Cabinet/Council.

The movement of budgets between services as a result of changes in management responsibility or changes in accounting policy or other changes that do not affect the amount available for service provision are not classed as virements and can be approved by the S151 Officer.

A Virement that is likely to impact on the level of service activity of another service area should be implemented only after agreement with the relevant service.

In all cases the overall budget position of the Council will be considered and virements should not be requested by Strategic Directors, Heads of Service or the S151 Officer if underspends in some services are required to meet overspends in other areas. In all

cases the competing demands and priorities as identified in the Council Delivery Plan will be paramount.

Strategic Directors and Heads of Service may request to vire sums within service budgets without limit provided such virement does not give rise to a change of Council policy or amend the permanent establishment. All such approval should be approved by the S151 Officer in the format requested.

All virements in excess of £50,000 will be reported within financial monitoring reports.

The S151 Officer is responsible for keeping a record of all virements and ensuring the finance system is updated in respect of approvals given.

Capital budget virements are governed by the same principles as revenue virements outlined above.

Supplementary Estimates

A.25 The Budget is set on an annual basis and events occur that require additional spending within the year. This is particularly the case where there is a statutory requirement which cannot be avoided. A supplementary estimate is an addition to the Council's agreed **Budget**. Supplementary estimates can be one-offs, or recurring. In either case, supplementary estimates should only be considered after all other options, such as **Virements**, or savings, have been considered. Supplementary estimates include budgets fully funded by external grant or contribution.

A.26 Any un-ringfenced grants will be allocated as agreed with the Senior Leadership Team.

A.27 Where the Council receives ring fenced grant income either through a bidding process or new burdens funding other than that identified in the approved budget, an additional budget will be created and Directors and Heads of Service will be allowed to incur expenditure in line with the conditions of the grant. Cabinet or Council approval is not required as the Council has no discretion over how the funds are used.

A.28 The table below sets out the approval level required based on the value of the supplementary estimates. Council funding includes, but is not limited to revenue budget reserves, Section 106, capital receipts and borrowing. In all circumstances, the S151 Officer will be consulted on the proposals. Supplementary estimates apply to capital and revenue.

Amount	Approval Required
Up to £99,999	Head of Service + S151 Officer
£100,000–£250,000	Cabinet

Over £250,000	Full Council
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A.29 Where in exceptional or unexpected circumstances a Directorate is faced with a material increase in its net expenditure, which cannot reasonably be contained within its resource allocation figure for the year, the **Chief Executive** or **Strategic Directors** must (wherever possible, prior to incurring the expenditure) submit a request to **Cabinet** or **Council** for a supplementary estimate to cover the additional expenditure. The Cabinet or Council will also decide how the expenditure will be funded, e.g. from grant, revenue, reserve, loan or otherwise.

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Supplementary Estimates - General Fund, HRA & Special Expenses (Capital & Revenue)

Capital/ Revenue	General Fund/HRA/ Special Expenses	Directorate	Service	Recurring/ One-Off	Amount £	Funded By	Reason For Request
Externally Funded							
Between £0 and £99,999 (For Information Only)							
Revenue	General	Housing & Community	Leisure Services	One off	8,275	Grant	Sport England Grant
Revenue	General	Housing & Community	Environmental Health	One off	10,550	Grant	Food Standard Agency (FSA)
Revenue	General	Housing & Community	Environmental Protection	One off	23,072	Grant	MHCLG - New Burdens funding for the Renters' Rights Act
Revenue	General	Housing & Community	Environmental Health	One off	1,883	Grant	Enforcement of the Calorie Labelling
Revenue	General	Housing & Community	Strategic Housing	One off	15,800	Grant	Asylum Dispersal Scheme - Scheme Ref 395 - Q3 growth in Occupied beds compared to baseline
Revenue	General	Housing & Community	Strategic Housing	One off	11,800	Grant	Asylum Dispersal Scheme - Q2 growth in Occupied beds compared to baseline
Revenue	General	Housing & Community	Strategic Housing	One off	58,192	Grant	Additional top-up grant announced in year as part of the Homelessness Prevention Grant
Capital	General			One off	66,368	Grant	Additional Disabled Facilities Grant
Between £100,000 and £249,999 (For Cabinet Approval)							
Over £250,000 (Requires Council Approval)							
TOTAL EXTERNALLY FUNDED					195,940		
Council Funded							
Between £0 and £9,999 (For Information Only)							
Revenue	General	Chief Executive	Legal & Support	One off	5,000	MTFP Reserve	External support for Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups
Revenue	General	Resources	Finance	One off	5,000	MTFP Reserve	Consultancy Support to implement the Housing Rent Debit Integration between the housing and finance systems.
Revenue	General	Place	Economic Regeneration	One off	7,000	Business Rates Reserve	Grant to Castle Donington Parish Council
Revenue	General	Communities	Environmental Protection	One off	5,000	MTFP Reserve	Love Your Neighbourhood – Graffiti Removal Kits
Between £10,000 and £249,999 (For Cabinet Approval)							
Revenue	General	Resources	Customer Services	One off	35,640	MTFP Reserve	Additional capacity to support the increasing operational demands placed on the Customer Service Team, including Household Support Fund, the newly named Crisis Resilience Fund and rollout of new Waste services.
Revenue	General	Housing & Community	Waste Services	One off	52,280	MTFP Reserve	Fleet & Driver Compliance Project Manager - 12 month role will manage the development and rollout of a centralised driver compliance framework, implementing fleet management systems and ensuring all council drivers meet legal and operational standards.
Revenue	General	Resources	ICT	One off	150,000	Savings/Grant	IT Security Officer for 2 years to cover the growing Cyber/IT Security work £107,502.48. Using the £10k savings from the EE contract and part of the £150k Government Cyber Security Grant. The remaining grant will be spent on other Cyber security work. The grant will be an EMR request to carry forward at the end of 25/26 as won't be spent this year.
Over £250,000 (Requires Council Approval)							
TOTAL COUNCIL FUNDED					259,920		
TOTAL SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES					455,860		

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – TUESDAY, 24 MARCH 2026



Title of Report	FORMER TENANT RENT ARREARS, CURRENT TENANT RENT ARREARS, COUNCIL TAX, NON DOMESTIC RATES AND SUNDRY DEBTS WRITE OFFS	
Presented by	Councillor Keith Merrie MBE Finance and Corporate Portfolio Holder PH Briefed <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Background Papers	All information used in compiling the report contain exempt information under paragraph 3 of Part 1 to Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972.	Public Report: Yes
		Key Decision: Yes
Financial Implications	There are no additional financial impacts as all the debts are met from the Council's bad debt provision for previous years' arrears or from in-year income if the debts relate to the current financial year.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	There are no direct legal implications from this report.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	None identified.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To approve write offs over £10,000 in compliance with the Council's Constitution.	
Reason for Decision	To comply with proper accounting practices.	
Recommendations	THAT CABINET APPROVES TO WRITE OFF: 1. PROPERTY DEBT OF £19,377.40; AND 2. TRADE WASTE DEBT OF £97,503.34 AS DETAILED IN SECTION 2.	

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to write off debts over £10,000. This report details write-offs in relation to sundry debtors.

1.2 Writing off debts is only considered where appropriate recovery and enforcement options have been taken, or, where the Council is legally prohibited from pursuing the debt. These include where:

- A bankruptcy or a Debt Relief Order is in place.
- The individual is deceased and there are no assets within the estate.
- The debtor absconded or there is no trace.
- The company is in liquidation/dissolved or ceased trading with no assets.
- There is severe hardship and/or serious health issues
- Any claim would be statute barred i.e. the Council cannot legally pursue the debt as there has been six years since the debt fell due and no action has been taken to collect the debt
- The debit is uneconomical to collect i.e. it is not financially viable to take further action, for example, due to the low level of the debt or they have gone abroad.

2.0 SUNDRY DEBTORS

2.1 There are two Sundry Debtors Accounts over £10,000 for which Cabinet approval is sought to write off the debt:

1. A Property Account, with debt totalling £19,377.40 due to unpaid rent from 2022. The customer was evicted and has entered liquidation. The Council has already deducted the deposit paid by the customer at the time they leased the property from the write-off amount.
2. A Trade Waste account with debt totalling £97,503.34 for the period from June 2025 to October 2025, which remained outstanding when the company entered voluntary liquidation in November 2025.

3.0 SUMMARY

3.1 There are no write offs over £10,000 in relation to former tenant rent arrears, current tenant rent arrears, council tax or business rates debts to be considered in this report.

3.2 Writing off debt is only ever considered as a last resort.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	A well-run council
Policy Considerations:	Council Constitution
Safeguarding:	Not applicable
Equalities/Diversity:	Not applicable
Customer Impact:	Not applicable
Economic and Social Impact:	Not applicable
Environment, Climate Change and Zero Carbon:	Not applicable
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	Not applicable
Risks:	Regular reviews of debts for write off mitigates the risk that the Council's accounts do not reflect the true level of recoverable income. It is also part of an effective arrears management strategy.
Officer Contact	Anna Crouch Head of Finance anna.crouch@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – TUESDAY, 24 MARCH 2026



Title of Report	LEGACY FUND GRANT	
Presented by	Paul Stone Director of Resources	PH Briefed <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Background Papers	General Fund and Council Tax 2026/27 - Council 19 February 2026	Public Report: Yes
		Key Decision: Yes
Financial Implications	At its meeting on 19 February 2026, Council approved funding of £2m to establish a Legacy Grant scheme. This decision was made following consideration of the General Fund and Council Tax 2026/27 report, which outlined the rationale for creating the Legacy Grant scheme as a means to support local initiatives and provide long-term benefits to the community. The report detailed the allocation of resources and emphasised the Council's commitment to investing in projects that would have a lasting positive impact. The approval of this funding marks a significant step in delivering on the priorities identified in the Council's financial planning for the forthcoming year, ensuring that the Legacy Grant scheme is both fully resourced and aligned with the strategic aims set out in the February report.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	The Council must ensure compliance with relevant legislation, including public sector procurement rules, the Subsidy Control Act 2022, and equality legislation.	
	Grant criteria and decision-making processes must be transparent, fair, and non-discriminatory, with robust governance arrangements in place to prevent conflicts of interest and ensure accountability.	
	Data protection and confidentiality requirements must also be observed when dealing with applicants' information.	
	Additionally, the terms and conditions of the grant should clearly outline the responsibilities of recipients and the Council, including provisions for monitoring, reporting, and clawback of funds if necessary. Failure to address these legal aspects could expose the Council to legal challenges or reputational risks.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	

Staffing and Corporate Implications	Funding of £100,000 will be made available to provide administration of the system. This allocation is intended to cover all necessary staffing costs associated with managing the Legacy Grant scheme, including the recruitment or redeployment of administrative personnel, training requirements, and ongoing operational support.
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes
Purpose of Report	To ask Members of the Cabinet to approve the Legacy Grant process and Closed Churchyards/Cemeteries Grant Scheme.
Reason for Decision	<i>To ensure that the grant scheme has the appropriate governance and transparency arrangements.</i>
Recommendations	<p>THAT CABINET:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. APPROVES THE DETAILS OF THE LEGACY GRANT PROCESS FOR APPLICATIONS AS SHOWN AT APPENDIX ONE AND CONSIDERS ANY COMMENTS MADE BY THE CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AT ITS MEETING ON 19 MARCH 2026 2. APPROVES THE DETAILS OF THE CLOSED CHURCHYARDS/CEMETERIES GRANT SCHEME SHOWN AT APPENDIX FOUR AND CONSIDERS ANY COMMENTS MADE BY THE CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AT ITS MEETING ON 19 MARCH 2026

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At its meeting on 19 February 2026, the Council gave approval to provide the budget for a Legacy Grant Scheme as well as a scheme designed to support requests for additional funding for closed churchyards. This report provides a comprehensive overview of the proposed administration arrangements and outlines the assessment criteria that will be applied to both schemes, ensuring clarity and transparency for all stakeholders involved.
- 1.2 In addition to the Legacy Grant Scheme, the Council also provided budget for a dedicated grants scheme for closed churchyards and cemeteries at its meeting on 19 February 2026. This scheme is specifically designed to support capital projects, enabling improvements to infrastructure, restoration works, and essential maintenance of these sites. The intention is to help preserve and enhance the sites, ensuring they remain accessible and well-maintained for the benefit of the wider community.
- 1.3 Details of both the above schemes are set out below.

2.0 LEGACY GRANT

- 2.1 On 19 February 2026, the Council approved the budget for a Legacy Grant Scheme. This scheme is designed to provide financial support to local organisations and initiatives that contribute to the community's long-term wellbeing and development. The primary purpose of the Legacy Grant is to enable projects that have a lasting positive impact, such as enhancements to public spaces, improvements to community facilities, and activities that foster social inclusion and cohesion.
- 2.2 The Legacy Grants Scheme is established to provide targeted financial support to local organisations delivering projects that benefit residents of North West Leicestershire. The programme is intended to complement, rather than replace, existing small grant schemes operated by the Council, such as the Community Lottery Grant and Zero Carbon Grant, by introducing a structured and proportionate route for larger-scale community investment.
- 2.3 The programme will operate through two distinct funding strands:
- **Revenue grants of up to £25,000 (£2,500 minimum)**, designed to support the delivery of time-limited community activities, services or pilot projects. The minimum amount for the Legacy Grant Scheme was established after careful consideration of the existing Small Grant Scheme (£500 minimum), the Zero Carbon Grant (£1,000 minimum), and the NWL Community Grant (£750 minimum). By setting a higher minimum, the Legacy Grant Scheme is clearly positioned to support larger-scale projects, ensuring it complements rather than duplicates the Council's smaller grant programmes.
 - **Capital grants of up to £250,000 (£10,000 minimum)**, designed to fund the creation or improvement of community assets and facilities that provide long-term benefit.
- 2.4 By offering both revenue and capital support within a single framework, the Council aims to enable community groups not only to run activities, but also to invest in the buildings and infrastructure that allow communities to thrive over the longer term. Once the bidding round opens, there will be a sufficient period allotted to ensure applicants have adequate time to prepare comprehensive and detailed submissions. The Council will communicate information regarding the scheme's timing and application deadlines in due course, allowing all potential applicants to plan accordingly and maximise their chances of success. The proposed framework is set out in Appendix One.

Assessment

- 2.5 The Legacy Grant Scheme uses a structured and transparent assessment framework to ensure that funding decisions are fair, consistent and evidence-based. All applications are assessed by Council officers against published criteria using scoring matrices that reflect the size, risk and nature of the grant. Proportionality is a key principle: smaller revenue grants are assessed with lighter-touch requirements, while larger or higher-risk awards are subject to enhanced due diligence and, where appropriate, Member oversight. A minimum score threshold applies to both revenue and capital grants to ensure that only high-quality, well-aligned projects are considered. A proposed application form is shown in Appendix Two.
- 2.6 Revenue grants are assessed on factors including demonstrated local need, clarity of community benefit, deliverability, inclusion and equality of access, value for money, governance and strategic fit with Council priorities. Capital grants place greater emphasis on readiness to deliver, long-term sustainability, asset life, match funding

and ongoing maintenance arrangements, reflecting the scale and longevity of investment. Across both funding strands, applicants must clearly show how their proposals support community wellbeing, fairness, inclusion and long-term benefit for residents of North West Leicestershire, with monitoring arrangements in place to ensure accountability and learning.

Governance

- 2.7 Cabinet is being asked to approve the overall design, purpose and governance framework of the grant scheme, with responsibility for assessing applications and making decisions on individual grant awards delegated to officers.
- 2.8 Member involvement would, therefore, be limited to the approval of the scheme objectives, eligibility and assessment criteria, financial parameters and assurance arrangements. Once the scheme is approved, officers would assess applications against the agreed criteria and determine awards in accordance with delegated authority, ensuring that decisions are taken consistently, transparently and in line with relevant legal and financial requirements. A clear audit trail would be maintained setting out the basis for each decision.
- 2.9 Where an individual grant award, or a cumulative award to a single organisation, is proposed to exceed £100,000, the decision would be taken in accordance with the Council's Constitution, including any requirements relating to executive decision-making, key decision thresholds or additional Member approval.

Conflicts of Interest

- 2.10 Any potential conflicts arising from Members' associations with applicant organisations would be managed through the Council's Code of Conduct and existing constitutional arrangements, with Members exercising oversight only at a policy and framework level rather than in relation to specific awards.
- 2.11 By removing Members from the assessment and determination of individual applications, this approach supports fairness, objectivity and public confidence in the grant process, and represents the lowest governance risk option.

Guidance for Applicants

- 2.12 A comprehensive range of media will be utilised to promote the Legacy Grant Scheme to ensure broad awareness and engagement across North West Leicestershire. This includes digital channels, local press, printed materials, social media platforms and community networks, as set out in the communications framework in Appendix One. The proposed guidance for applicants is set out in Appendix Three.

3.0 CLOSED CHURCHYARD/CEMETERIES GRANT SCHEME

- 3.1 The responsibility for closed churchyards was moved from special expenses in 2024/25 primarily because the nature and cost of their maintenance, particularly regarding liabilities associated with boundary walls and other structures, are exceptionally high. These costs could not be adequately funded through special expense precepts, as any increase necessary to cover them would surpass the Council Tax referendum limits, making it financially unviable and potentially burdensome for local taxpayers.
- 3.2 The grant scheme is being established specifically to assist parish councils in covering revenue and capital costs associated with the maintenance of closed churchyards. The scheme prevents the financial burden from falling onto local precepts, which would otherwise risk exceeding council tax referendum limits and placing undue strain on local taxpayers. The scheme operates transparently and equitably, enabling the Council to allocate funds efficiently while ensuring compliance with financial regulations. Details of the proposed scheme are set out in Appendix Four.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	Insert relevant Council Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning and regeneration - Communities and housing - Clean, green and Zero Carbon - A well-run council
Policy Considerations:	None.
Safeguarding:	None.
Equalities/Diversity:	In setting up a grant scheme, careful attention has been given to equalities and diversity to ensure fair and inclusive access for all potential applicants. The scheme is designed to be accessible to groups from a wide range of backgrounds, including those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
Customer Impact:	The introduction of a grant scheme is likely to have a positive impact on customers by providing them with financial support and opportunities to access resources that may otherwise be unavailable. This can help individuals, community groups, and organisations to deliver projects or services that address local needs and priorities.

Economic and Social Impact:	<p>Economically, the scheme provides financial support to individuals, community groups, and organisations, enabling them to undertake projects or deliver services that might otherwise be unattainable. This injection of funds can stimulate local economic activity, promote job creation, and encourage innovation by supporting initiatives that address specific local needs and priorities.</p> <p>Socially, grant schemes foster inclusivity and empowerment, allowing diverse groups to access opportunities and contribute to community development. By supporting projects that enhance social cohesion and improve quality of life, grant schemes can strengthen communities and help build a fairer, more resilient society.</p>
Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	<p>When establishing a grant scheme, especially for capital projects, it is essential to assess the environmental, climate change, and zero carbon implications of funded activities. Capital projects supported by grants should be encouraged to adopt sustainable practices, minimise carbon emissions, and contribute positively to the environment.</p> <p>Considerations might include the use of energy-efficient materials and technologies, waste reduction measures, sustainable sourcing, and promoting biodiversity. Applicants should be guided to evaluate the carbon footprint of their projects and incorporate strategies such as renewable energy installations, eco-friendly construction methods, and efficient water management. The scheme should also prioritise projects that actively support the transition to net zero, including those that reduce reliance on fossil fuels and enhance climate resilience within the community.</p>
Consultation/Community Engagement:	During the process of establishing the 2026/27 budget, consultations were conducted.
Risks:	<p>Financial Risks: There is a possibility that funding may be insufficient to support all proposed legacy projects, or that projects may exceed budget due to unforeseen costs. Mismanagement or inadequate allocation of resources could also lead to financial losses.</p> <p>Project Delivery Risks: Legacy projects may face delays, fail to meet their intended objectives, or encounter challenges in maintaining quality standards. Issues such as lack of expertise, poor planning, or ineffective project management could hamper progress.</p>

	<p>Reputational Risks: If legacy projects do not deliver the expected outcomes or encounter significant problems, the Council's reputation may be negatively impacted. Stakeholder dissatisfaction or public criticism can arise if projects are perceived as wasteful or unsuccessful.</p> <p>Compliance and Governance Risks: Projects must adhere to regulatory requirements, council policies, and governance standards. Failure to comply could result in legal issues or audit findings.</p> <p>Environmental Risks: Capital projects may have adverse environmental impacts if sustainability and climate considerations are not adequately addressed. Poor environmental practices could lead to increased carbon emissions or ecological harm.</p> <p>Community Engagement Risks: Insufficient consultation or lack of community support may lead to resistance or disengagement, reducing the effectiveness and sustainability of legacy projects.</p> <p>Operational Risks: Risks such as inadequate staffing, lack of continuity, or unforeseen external factors may affect the smooth operation and long-term viability of legacy projects.</p>
Officer Contact	Paul Stone Director of Resources paul.stone@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

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Appendix 1

North West Leicestershire District Council Legacy Grants – Application and Assessment Framework

1. Purpose and scope of the programme

The Council recognises the critical role that voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations, parish and town councils, and community groups play in improving quality of life, strengthening social cohesion, and sustaining vibrant local places across the district. Many of the outcomes that matter most to residents such as reduced loneliness, better wellbeing, inclusive community facilities and stronger civic pride are most effectively delivered through community-led action.

The Legacy Grants Programme is established to provide targeted financial support to local organisations delivering projects that benefit residents of North West Leicestershire. The programme is intended to complement, rather than replace, existing small grant schemes operated by the Council, such as the Community Lottery Grant and Zero Carbon Grant, by introducing a structured and proportionate route for larger-scale community investment.

The programme will operate through two distinct funding strands:

- **Revenue grants of up to £25,000 (minimum £2,500)**, designed to support the delivery of time-limited community activities, services or pilot projects.
- **Capital grants of up to £250,000 (minimum £10,000)**, designed to fund the creation or improvement of community assets and facilities that provide long-term benefit.

By offering both revenue and capital support within a single framework, the Council aims to enable community groups not only to run activities, but also to invest in the buildings and infrastructure that allow communities to thrive over the longer term.

2. Eligible organisations

Applications may be submitted by not-for-profit organisations that are properly constituted and able to demonstrate good governance and financial management. Eligible bodies include registered charities, charitable incorporated organisations (CIOs), community interest companies, constituted voluntary and community groups, social enterprises, and parish and town councils.

All applicants must be able to demonstrate that they are based in, or primarily active within, North West Leicestershire and that the benefits of the proposed project will be delivered predominantly to residents of the district.

Applicants must hold a bank account in the name of the organisation and have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place where activities involve children, young people or vulnerable adults.

The Council recognises that smaller community groups may be at an earlier stage of organisational development. For revenue grants in particular, governance and policy requirements will be applied proportionately, with officer support offered where appropriate to help groups become grant-ready.

3. Types of funding available

Revenue grants (up to £25,000)

Revenue grants are intended to support community activity that is time-limited and outcome-focused. Funding may be used to cover costs that are directly attributable to the delivery of the proposed project, such as sessional staffing, facilitation costs, venue hire, volunteer expenses, outreach materials, transport required to enable participation, and small items of equipment or consumables that are essential to delivery.

Revenue funding is not intended to cover an organisation's general running costs on an ongoing basis. Instead, applicants should be able to demonstrate how the grant will enable a specific programme of activity to take place and what difference that activity will make for residents.

Capital grants (up to £250,000)

Capital grants are intended to support investment in physical assets that will provide benefit to the community for a minimum of five years. This includes, but is not limited to, refurbishment or extension of community buildings, accessibility improvements, energy-efficiency and decarbonisation measures, creation of community outdoor spaces, play areas, and the purchase of significant items of equipment.

Capital funding must clearly meet the definition of capital expenditure under local government accounting rules. Projects that primarily relate to routine maintenance or short-life items will not be supported through the capital programme.

For larger capital awards, the Council will expect applicants to demonstrate that they have ownership of, or a long-term lease on, the property or land in question and that future running and maintenance costs have been properly considered.

4. Strategic priorities and desired outcomes

The Legacy Grants Programme will operate within the strategic framework of the Council's corporate priorities and Council Delivery Plan. While priorities may be refreshed annually to reflect changing needs, the programme as a whole is focused on supporting projects that:

- Strengthen community cohesion and reduce social isolation, supporting the North West Leicestershire District Council's aim to build strong, connected communities as outlined in the Council Delivery Plan 2023–2028.
- Improve physical and mental health and wellbeing, in line with the Council's strategic priority to support healthy, safe and thriving communities.
- Provide positive opportunities for children and young people, reflecting the Council's commitment to investing in the next generation and ensuring access to enriching activities for all ages.
- Promote inclusion and equality of access, particularly for groups facing barriers to participation, supporting the Council's objective to ensure fairness and reduce inequalities across the district.
- Support climate action, environmental enhancement and the creation of sustainable community assets, contributing to the Council's ambitions for a cleaner, greener district and advancing its sustainability agenda.
- Increase volunteering, skills development and community participation in local decision-making, aligning with the Council's focus on empowering residents and fostering active citizenship as set out in the Delivery Plan 2023–2028.

Applicants will be expected to demonstrate clearly how their project aligns with one or more of these themes and how local need has been identified.

5. Application process

The Legacy Grants Programme will operate through a series of bidding rounds until the balance is exhausted. Guidance notes and application forms will be published on the

Council's website, supported by online briefings and optional pre-application advice sessions.

For revenue grants, organisations will complete a single-stage application that sets out the case for funding, intended outcomes, delivery plan and budget.

For capital grants, the Council may operate a two-stage process for larger awards. An initial expression of interest will focus on strategic fit and readiness to deliver. Organisations that pass this stage will be invited to submit a full application supported by detailed costings, quotes, permissions and delivery plans.

The Council is committed to making the application process proportionate, transparent and accessible. Application requirements will increase in depth in line with the size and risk of the grant requested.

In addition, separate subsidy control assessments will be conducted during the grant approval process to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and regulatory requirements. This step is necessary to confirm that the proposed funding arrangements do not constitute prohibited subsidies and are in line with current public sector obligations.

6. Assessment and determination of grants

All applications will be assessed against published criteria using a structured scoring methodology (see below). This ensures that decisions are evidence-based, consistent and fair, while still allowing for professional judgement and local knowledge.

Revenue grant applications will be assessed primarily on the strength of local need and outcomes, the realism of the delivery plan, inclusion and accessibility, and value for money. Particular weight will be given to projects that demonstrate clear community benefit within a defined timescale.

Capital grant applications will be assessed using a more detailed framework reflecting the higher level of financial commitment and long-term risk. In addition to strategic fit and community benefit, assessment will focus on deliverability, quality of design, long-term sustainability, robustness of cost estimates, and future maintenance arrangements.

To ensure proportionality, smaller revenue grants will be subject to lighter-touch assessment, while larger capital awards will undergo enhanced due diligence.

7. Officer Assessment

Applications submitted to the Legacy Grants Programme will be assessed by Council officers in accordance with the published eligibility criteria, scoring matrices and assessment guidance. Officer assessments will include due diligence checks to ensure compliance with financial, legal, equality, safeguarding and governance requirements. Funding recommendations in excess of £100,000 will be presented to Cabinet for decision-making or approval, in line with the Council's Constitution, Scheme of Delegation and Financial Procedure Rules. Awards of less than £100,000 will be awarded by delegation to designated officers with details subsequently reported to Cabinet. This approach ensures that grant awards are made consistently, transparently and in accordance with the Council's established governance processes, with appropriate executive oversight.

8. Value for money, match funding and payment arrangements

The Council has a responsibility to ensure that public funds are used effectively. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that their project represents good value for money, with costs that are reasonable and proportionate to the outcomes delivered.

For capital projects, applicants will normally be expected to contribute match funding from other sources. While there is no fixed minimum, projects that demonstrate higher levels of secured match funding will generally score more highly, particularly where this indicates broader support and long-term viability. The Council recognises that in some cases, such as projects in areas of high deprivation, lower levels of match may be appropriate. Payment arrangements will reflect the size and nature of the grant. Larger capital grants are likely to be paid in stages, with a proportion retained until satisfactory evidence of completion is provided.

9. Monitoring, reporting and learning

All funded organisations will be required to monitor and report on the use of grant funding. Reporting requirements will be proportionate to the level of funding received.

Revenue grants will normally require a brief end-of-project report summarising activity delivered, numbers reached and outcomes achieved. Capital grants will require evidence of expenditure, completion and, where appropriate, a short statement of impact once the asset is in use.

The Council intends to use monitoring information not only for assurance, but also to learn what works well and to inform future grant priorities.

Transparency and accountability

Details of all grants awarded through the programme, including the name of the organisation, project summary and funding amount, will be published on the Council's website to ensure transparency.

Applicants that are unsuccessful will be offered constructive feedback to support future applications, either to the Council or to other funders.

Closing statement

The Legacy Grants Programme is designed to be a fair, transparent and strategically aligned mechanism for investing in the people and places of North West Leicestershire. By combining proportionate assessment, cross-party oversight and a clear focus on outcomes, the Council seeks to empower communities while ensuring that public resources are used responsibly and effectively.

Assessment Criteria

To ensure equitable distribution of grant funding across the district, rather than concentrating resources in one specific geographical area. A well-designed grant scheme can address this by setting clear criteria that prioritise fairness and inclusivity, ensuring that all communities have equal opportunities to benefit. By monitoring allocation patterns and encouraging applications from underrepresented areas, the Council can help to balance investment and support a more diverse range of projects throughout North West Leicestershire.

Scoring Matrix

The specific details of the scoring matrices for both revenue and capital grants are provided in the sections below. These matrices outline the criteria, weightings, and examples used to assess applications, ensuring a transparent and consistent approach to evaluating grant proposals.

Detailed Scoring Matrices with Examples

PART 1: REVENUE GRANTS (up to £25,000)

Total available score: 100 points

Minimum score for consideration: 60 points

Revenue grants are assessed proportionately, recognising that many applicants are smaller community organisations. Assessors focus on need, impact, feasibility and value for money, rather than professional-level business planning.

1. Community Need and Benefit (0–20 points)

What we assess

- How clearly the local need is explained
- Evidence that the need exists in North West Leicestershire
- How clearly the project benefits residents

Score descriptions and examples

0–5 points (Limited evidence)

The application states a general issue (e.g. “loneliness is a problem”) but provides little or no evidence that the project responds to a specific local need. The benefit to residents is described in broad terms with limited clarity.

Example:

“People feel isolated, and our project will bring people together.”
(No local data, no target group, no explanation of scale.)

6–12 points (Clear and relevant need)

The application explains the issue clearly and provides some local evidence, such as community feedback, waiting lists or partner insight. The beneficiary group is defined and the proposed benefit is realistic.

Example:

“Feedback from our weekly drop-in shows older residents in X village are seeking more social activities. This project will provide six facilitated sessions for 12–15 residents.”

13–20 points (Strong and compelling case)

The application presents strong, localised evidence of need using multiple sources. It clearly explains why the project is needed now and how it will make a meaningful difference.

Example:

“Attendance data shows a 40% increase in referrals to our food support over 12 months. This project will provide structured, supportive sessions to 50 households, reducing isolation and improving food security.”

2. Project Delivery and Feasibility (0–15 points)

What we assess

- Whether the activities are clearly described
- Whether the project can realistically be delivered
- Organisational capability to deliver

Score descriptions and examples

0–5 points (Unclear or risky delivery)

Activities are vague or unrealistic. Delivery roles and timescales are unclear. There is limited evidence that the organisation can deliver the project.

Example:

“We will run sessions when possible, depending on availability.”

6–10 points (Deliverable and realistic)

Activities are clearly described, with a realistic timetable and clear responsibility for delivery. The organisation appears capable, even if the project is new.

Example:

“We will deliver weekly sessions from April to July, facilitated by our experienced volunteer coordinator.”

11–15 points (Highly robust and well planned)

A strong, well-structured plan with clear milestones, partners, staffing and contingency arrangements. The organisation demonstrates experience or transferable skills.

Example:

“A detailed six-month plan with session schedules, facilitator cover, safeguarding arrangements and venue agreements already in place.”

3. Inclusion, Equality and Access (0–15 points)

What we assess

- How inclusive the project is
- Whether barriers to participation are addressed
- Whether inclusion is intentional or incidental

Score descriptions and examples

0–5 points (General access only)

The project is open to all but does not actively consider access barriers.

Example:

“Anyone can attend” (no consideration of transport, cost, language or disability).

6–10 points (Inclusive practice)

Some barriers are identified and reasonable adjustments are built into the design.

Example:

“Sessions are free, accessible, and held during daytime hours. Transport support is available on request.”

11–15 points (Inclusion embedded)

Inclusion is central to design. Outreach is targeted and adjustments are planned from the outset.

Example:

“Sessions are co-designed with disabled participants, delivered in accessible venues, with support workers present.”

4. Value for Money (0–15 points)

What we assess

- Whether costs are reasonable
- Whether funding is proportionate to outcomes
- Use of other resources (volunteers, in-kind support)

Score descriptions and examples

0–5 points (Poor value)

Costs appear high or poorly justified; outputs are unclear.

Example:

£8,000 requested for a one-off event with no wider benefit.

6–10 points (Reasonable value)

Budget is clear and realistic, with outcomes broadly proportionate to cost.

Example:

£5,000 for a 12-week programme reaching 30 residents.

11–15 points (Strong value)

Funding enables significant impact relative to cost, with additional contribution from volunteers or partners.

Example:

£7,500 supporting a £15,000 programme through volunteer time and donated venue space.

5. Learning, Sustainability and Legacy (0–10 points)

What we assess

- Whether learning will be captured
- Whether benefits extend beyond funding

Examples:

- Low score: “Funding will end when sessions finish.”
 - High score: “Evaluation findings will shape future delivery and inform parish partnerships.”
-

6. Governance and Risk (0–5 points)

What we assess

- Basic governance
- Identification and management of risks

Examples:

- Clear safeguarding, insurance, and risks → higher score
 - No risk awareness → low score
-

7. Strategic Fit (20 points)

- Strategic fit with local and organisational priorities
- Community benefit and clarity of purpose

Score descriptions and examples

0–5 points: (Vague or minimal alignment; unclear who benefits)

Example:

The intended benefits are not described, and it is uncertain which sections of the community, if any, will gain from the project.

6–10 points: (Some alignment; benefits evident but not well defined)

The application notes it will help families but does not detail how or which families will be involved. There is some mention of local priorities, but the connection is weak.

11–15 points: (Good fit; clearly addresses identified needs)

Example: The project is designed to create a youth activity centre in response to a local survey highlighting the need for youth facilities. It references alignment with the council's youth engagement strategy.

16–20 points: Strong, integrated fit; wide community support and clear outcomes

The project has been co-designed with residents and local organisations, is referenced in the community action plan, and has letters of support from key stakeholders. It demonstrates measurable social, economic, and environmental benefits for a broad cross-section of the community.

PART 2: CAPITAL GRANTS (up to £250,000)

Total available score: 120 points

Minimum score for consideration: 75 points

Capital grant support long-term community assets and therefore require clearer evidence of readiness, sustainability and value for money

Assessment and Scoring Framework

Applications would be assessed by officers using a structured scoring framework designed to ensure consistency, transparency and objectivity. Each application would be scored against the criteria set out below, with scores awarded within defined low, medium and high bands. The maximum total score available would be 120 points. Scores would be supported by written commentary and retained as part of the decision-making record.

1. Strategic Fit and Community Benefit (0–30 points)

This criterion assesses the extent to which the proposal aligns with council priorities, adopted strategies and identified community needs, as well as the scale of benefit delivered. A low score, typically in the range of 0–10 points, would apply where the proposal demonstrates limited community use, serves a narrow group of users, or has an unclear purpose or weak alignment with council plans and local priorities. A medium score, typically 11–20 points, would apply where the proposal demonstrates a reasonable level of community benefit, serves a defined local audience and shows some alignment with relevant strategies, but with limited evidence of wider impact or strategic contribution.

A high score, typically 21–30 points, would apply where the proposal relates to a widely used or clearly needed community asset, strongly aligns with adopted community plans and council priorities, and demonstrates clear and significant benefits to the local area.

2. Deliverability and Readiness (0–25 points)

This criterion considers whether the project is sufficiently developed and capable of being delivered within the required timescales.

A low score, typically 0–8 points, would apply where the proposal remains at a conceptual stage, with limited cost certainty, no confirmed quotations, designs or permissions, and significant uncertainty around delivery.

A medium score, typically 9–17 points, would apply where the proposal is partially developed, with some indicative costs, emerging designs or approvals, and a broadly realistic but not fully evidenced delivery plan.

A high score, typically 18–25 points, would apply where the proposal is fully developed and ready to proceed, supported by detailed quotations, designs, necessary permissions or approvals, and a clear and achievable delivery timetable.

3. Capital Eligibility and Asset Life (0–10 points)

This criterion assesses whether the proposed expenditure is genuinely capital in nature and represents a long-term investment.

A low score, typically 0–3 points, would apply where the proposal consists primarily of minor repairs or short-term works that do not meet capital definitions or offer limited asset life.

A medium score, typically 4–7 points, would apply where the proposal includes eligible capital works but with limited clarity on asset longevity or long-term benefit.

A high score, typically 8–10 points, would apply where the proposal clearly involves eligible capital expenditure resulting in an asset with a demonstrable lifespan of 10 to 20 years or more.

4. Value for Money and Match Funding (0–20 points)

This criterion considers the extent to which the proposal represents good value for money and leverages external funding.

A low score, typically 0–7 points, would apply where the proposal is heavily or wholly reliant on council funding, with limited evidence of cost control or alternative funding sources.

A medium score, typically 8–14 points, would apply where the proposal includes some match funding or in-kind contributions and demonstrates reasonable value for money, but with limited leverage.

A high score, typically 15–20 points, would apply where the proposal demonstrates strong value for money, includes significant cash match funding (typically in the range of 30–50 per cent), and provides evidence of competitive procurement and robust cost management.

5. Sustainability and Maintenance (0–15 points)

This criterion assesses the applicant's ability to maintain and sustain the asset over time.

A low score, typically 0–5 points, would apply where there is no clear plan or funding identified for ongoing maintenance and future costs.

A medium score, typically 6–10 points, would apply where the applicant provides a basic maintenance plan with some identified resources, but with limited long-term certainty.

A high score, typically 11–15 points, would apply where the proposal is supported by a fully costed maintenance plan covering at least five years, with credible income streams or funding arrangements identified.

6. Inclusion, Accessibility and Climate Impact (0–10 points)

This criterion considers the extent to which the proposal improves accessibility, inclusion and environmental outcomes.

A low score, typically 0–3 points, would apply where the proposal delivers no meaningful improvement in accessibility or environmental performance.

A medium score, typically 4–7 points, would apply where the proposal includes some improvements to access or energy efficiency but with limited overall impact.

A high score, typically 8–10 points, would apply where the proposal delivers fully accessible design, promotes inclusion and demonstrates a clear reduction in carbon emissions or energy use.

7. Governance, Risk and Compliance (0–10 points)

This criterion assesses the robustness of the applicant's governance arrangements and the management of delivery risks.

A low score, typically 0–3 points, would apply where ownership, tenure, responsibilities or governance arrangements are unclear or inadequately evidenced.

A medium score, typically 4–7 points, would apply where governance and risk arrangements are broadly in place but with some gaps or unresolved issues.

A high score, typically 8–10 points, would apply where the applicant can demonstrate secure freehold or long-term lease arrangements, appropriate insurance, sound governance structures and a clear understanding of risks supported by a risk register.

Officer recommendations would be informed by the overall score achieved and the availability of funding. Any decision to award funding to an application that scores poorly against key criteria, or to depart from the scoring outcomes, would require a clear and recorded rationale.

Appendix 2

Application Form

Section A — Before you start (eligibility checker)

Q0. Which grant are you applying for?

Field type: Single choice (Required)

- Revenue grant (activities/services) — up to £25,000
- Capital grant (assets/buildings/equipment) — up to £250,000

Q1. Are you a not-for-profit organisation based in or primarily serving North West Leicestershire residents?

Field type: Yes/No (Required)

- **If “No”** → End screen: “You are not eligible for this programme. Please see our funding signposting page.”

Q2. Your organisation type

Field type: Single choice (Required)

- Registered Charity
- Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
- Community Interest Company (CIC with asset lock)
- Constituted Community/Voluntary Group
- Social Enterprise (not-for-profit)
- Parish or Town Council
- Other (please specify)

Q3. Do you have a governing document (e.g., constitution, Articles) and a bank account in the organisation’s name?

Field type: Yes/No (Required)

- **If “No”** → Message: “You must have both to apply. If you need help to become grant-ready, please contact us.”

Q4. Safeguarding confirmation (shown if activities involve children/young people/vulnerable adults OR if the applicant selects “Not sure”)

Field type: Single choice (Required if applicable)

- We work with these groups and have appropriate safeguarding policies and DBS processes.
- We will not work with these groups.

- Not sure – please advise.
Validation: If “Not sure”, prompt to contact Grants Team before submission.

Q5. Brief project summary (max 60 words)

Field type: Short text (Required)

Help text: “A plain-English summary for our website if funded.”

Q6. Project location

Field type: Postcode + free text (Required)

- Primary postcode (Required)
- Wards/communities served (free text, 150 words)

Q7. Project dates

Field type: Date fields (Required)

- Estimated start date
- Estimated end date
Validation: Start not earlier than 8 weeks after round closes; end within 18 months (Revenue) / 24 months (Capital).
Conditional: The 24-month limit applies only on the Capital path.

Q8. Equalities & accessibility commitment

Field type: Checkbox (Required)

- We confirm our project will be accessible and inclusive, with reasonable adjustments where required.

Section B — About your organisation

Q9. Legal name and trading name (if different)

Field type: Short text (Required)

Q10. Organisation details

Field type: Grouped fields (Required)

- Company/Charity/CIO/CIC number (if applicable)
- Year founded
- Website or social link (optional)
- Registered address

Q11. Contact for this application

Field type: Grouped fields (Required)

- Name, role, email, phone

Q12. Governance and people

Field type: Upload + text (Required)

- Upload your **governing document** (PDF/DOC, max 5MB)
- Number of trustees/directors
- Number of employees (FTE)
- Number of active volunteers

Q13. Financial summary

Field type: Grouped fields + upload (Required)

- Last full year income (£) and expenditure (£)
- Free reserves at year end (£)
- Upload **latest signed accounts** or **income/expenditure statement** (PDF, max 10MB)

Q14. Policies and insurance

Field type: Multi-upload + checkboxes (Required; conditional for safeguarding)

- Public liability insurance certificate (if project involves public activity)
- Safeguarding policy (if applicable)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy (optional but recommended)
- Data protection statement (for handling personal data)
Checkbox: I confirm all uploaded policies are current and adopted by the governing body.

Section C — Project need and beneficiaries

Q15. What local need are you addressing, and how do you know?

Field type: Long text (Required, 300–500 words)

Prompt: “Use local evidence: community feedback, surveys, demand data, waiting lists, ward profiles, JSNA insights, or lived experience.”

Q16. Who will benefit?

Field type: Multi-select + numbers + narrative (Required)

- Primary beneficiaries (tick all that apply):
Children & young people; Older people; Disabled people; People on low incomes; Carers; Rural residents; Minority ethnic communities; LGBTQ+ communities; Women & girls; Refugees/people seeking asylum; Whole community; Other (specify).
- Estimated number of **direct** beneficiaries
- Estimated number of **indirect** beneficiaries
- How will you reach and include people who face barriers to participation? (150–300 words)

Q17. Which Council/community priorities does your project support, and how?

Field type: Multi-select + narrative (Required, 200–350 words)

- Community cohesion and inclusion
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Youth opportunities
 - Climate action and environment
 - Stronger local places and participation
 - Other local priorities (name and explain)
-

Section D — Project activities and outcomes (Revenue & Capital share most, with Capital extras later)

Q18. What will you actually do?

Field type: Long text (Required, 300–500 words)

Prompt: “Describe activities, frequency, locations, partners, and timetable.”

Q19. What difference will it make?

Field type: Outcomes table (Required)

- Outcome 1: [text] | How measured? [text] | Target (number/qual)
- Outcome 2: [text] | How measured? [text] | Target
- Outcome 3: [optional]

Note: Encourage at least two outcomes, one of which should relate to inclusion or wellbeing.

Q20. How will you monitor and learn?

Field type: Long text (Required, 150–300 words)

Prompt: “Tell us how you’ll collect feedback and data, and how learning will influence future work.”

Section E — Budget and value for money (Revenue path)

Conditional: Show Section E1 when Q0 = Revenue grant.

E1. Revenue budget breakdown

Field type: Itemised table (Required)

- Cost item | Unit cost | Quantity | Total (£) | Funded by this grant? (Y/N) | Other funding source (if N)

Validation: Totals add up; costs reasonable for activity; no retrospectives.

E2. Total funding request

Field type: Currency (Required)

- Amount requested from NWLDC (£) (max £25,000)

E3. Match funding and in-kind support

Field type: Short text + table (Optional but scored)

- Cash match (secured/pending, source, amount)
- In-kind support (e.g., free venue, volunteer time—estimate value)

E4. Value for money

Field type: Short narrative (Required, 150–250 words)

Prompt: “Explain why the budget is good value relative to your outcomes.”

Section F — Delivery, risk and safeguarding (Revenue path)

Conditional: Show Section F when Q0 = Revenue grant.

F1. Delivery plan

Field type: Milestones table (Required)

- Milestone | Date | Responsible person/partner

F2. Key risks and mitigations

Field type: Risks table (Required)

- Risk | Likelihood | Impact | Mitigation
-

Section G — Capital-specific details

Conditional: Show Sections G–K when Q0 = Capital grant.

G1. Capital works or asset description

Field type: Long text (Required, 300–500 words)

Prompt: “Describe the asset/improvement, scope, and benefits (accessibility, inclusion, climate).”

G2. Site, ownership and permissions

Field type: Grouped fields + uploads (Required)

- Site address and ownership (freehold/leasehold)
- If leasehold: years remaining (must normally be 5+ years after project completion)
- Upload proof of ownership/lease (PDF)
- Planning/building control: status and reference (if required). Upload consents or indicate timeline.

G3. Design and technical readiness

Field type: Uploads + narrative (Required)

- Drawings/specs or schedule of works (PDF)

- Accessibility and inclusive design statement (150–300 words)
- Environmental/sustainability statement (e.g., energy savings, materials, biodiversity) (150–300 words)

G4. Procurement and quotes

Field type: Uploads + narrative (Required)

- Upload at least **three like-for-like quotes** for each major element **or** explain procurement route (framework/competitive tender).
- If a single supplier is proposed, justify why (specialism, compatibility, best value).
- Provide preferred contractor/supplier (if known).

G5. Capital budget

Field type: Itemised capital budget table (Required)

- Work package/equipment | Supplier | Quote ref/date | Cost (£) | VAT status | Funding source (NWLDC/Other/Secured)
- Professional fees (design, QS, PM, surveys)
- Contingency (typically 5–10%)
Validation: Total = request + match; contingency is reasonable.

G6. Funding profile and match

Field type: Table + evidence upload (Required)

- Source | Amount | Secured? (Y/N) | Evidence (award letter/email)
- If pending, expected decision date.

G7. Delivery programme

Field type: Gantt-style milestones (Required)

- Design complete | Procurement/compliance | Start on site | Practical completion | Handover | Opening date
Validation: Completion within 24 months of award unless justified.

G8. Future running and maintenance plan

Field type: Long text + projected budget (Required)

- Who will manage the asset?
- Annual running costs and income plan (yrs 1–5)
- Maintenance schedule and sinking fund provision
- Public access arrangements (where applicable)

G9. Permissions and compliance confirmations

Field type: Checkboxes (Required)

- We will comply with all planning, building regulations and CDM duties.

- We will insure the asset adequately from practical completion.
 - We acknowledge potential clawback conditions if the asset is disposed of or use changes within 5 years of project completion.
-

Section H — Organisation declarations (both paths)

H1. Declarations

Field type: Checkboxes (Required)

- The information in this application is true and complete.
- We consent to the Council carrying out checks for fraud, subsidy control, and due diligence.
- We agree to publicity requirements and to share anonymised monitoring information.
- We understand that funding cannot be used for retrospectively incurred costs.

H2. GDPR statement

Field type: Text + checkbox (Required)

- “We will process your data to assess your application, manage any award, and evaluate the programme. See our privacy notice.”
- I have read and understood the privacy notice.

H3. Final sign-off

Field type: E-signature (Typed name + date) (Required)

- Name (authorised signatory), position, and date

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Appendix 3

North West Leicestershire District Council

Legacy Grants Programme – Guidance for Applicants

Introduction

North West Leicestershire District Council is committed to supporting vibrant, inclusive and resilient communities. Across the district, voluntary and community organisations play a vital role in improving wellbeing, reducing isolation, creating opportunities for young people and strengthening local places.

The Legacy Grants Programme provides financial support to local organisations delivering projects that benefit residents of North West Leicestershire. The programme focuses on funding projects that respond to local need, demonstrate clear community benefit and offer good value for public money.

This guidance explains who can apply, what we can fund, how to apply and how funding decisions are made.

What funding is available?

The Legacy Grants Programme has **two funding strands**:

Revenue grants – up to £25,000

Revenue grants support **activities and services**, rather than buildings or major equipment. They are designed to help community organisations run projects that are time-limited and outcome-focused.

Funding can be used for costs such as:

- Running community activities or events
- Session-based staff or facilitator costs
- Venue hire
- Volunteer expenses
- Outreach, engagement and promotion costs
- Small items of equipment needed to deliver an activity

Revenue grants cannot be used to cover an organisation's ongoing general running costs or to pay for work that has already taken place.

Capital grants – up to £250,000

Capital grants support **physical improvements and long-term assets** that will benefit the community for a number of years.

Funding can be used for:

- Improving community buildings (including accessibility improvements)
- Energy efficiency and carbon-reduction works
- Community play areas, outdoor spaces or sports facilities
- Large items of equipment with a long lifespan

Capital funding cannot normally be used for day-to-day maintenance or short-term repairs.

For larger capital projects, we will normally expect organisations to contribute funding from other sources.

Who can apply?

Applications are welcome from:

- Registered charities
- Community interest companies (CICs) with an asset lock
- Charitable incorporated organisations (CIOs)
- Constituted voluntary and community groups
- Social enterprises
- Parish and town councils

Where we will not provide financial support:

- Request for funding after the activity or project has taken place
- Funding requests from schools and Parent Teacher Associations**
- Requests for funding for religious activities
- Requests for funding for political activities or by a political organisation
- Requests for funding for activities / projects which do not benefit individuals who live in North West Leicestershire
- Requests for funding from private organisations or individuals
- Where there is potential reputational risk for North West Leicestershire District Council.
- If you have already received a NWL Community Lottery grant this year

**Parent/Friend Associations of schools and academies may apply where properly constituted independently from the school and where all other criteria are met.

To apply, your organisation must:

- Be based in, or actively working within, North West Leicestershire
- Benefit residents of North West Leicestershire
- Have a constitution or formal governing document

- Have a bank account in the name of the organisation

If your project involves children, young people or vulnerable adults, you must have appropriate safeguarding policies in place.

What are we looking to fund?

We are looking to fund projects that:

- Address a clear local need
- Make a positive difference to people in North West Leicestershire
- Are inclusive and accessible
- Are realistic, well planned and deliverable
- Offer good value for money

Priority will be given to projects that support one or more of the following:

- Reducing loneliness and strengthening community connections
- Improving physical or mental health and wellbeing
- Providing positive activities and opportunities for children and young people
- Promoting equality, inclusion and access for people facing barriers
- Supporting environmental improvement or climate action
- Encouraging volunteering and community involvement

Projects should complement rather than duplicate existing services.

What won't be funded?

We cannot fund:

- Individuals
- Activities that have already taken place
- Party-political activity
- Religious activity that promotes a faith
- General running costs not linked to a specific project
- Routine maintenance or repair costs (capital grants)

How to apply

The Legacy Grants Programme runs **two application rounds each year**.

Application forms and guidance will be published on the Council's website when a round opens. We strongly encourage groups to read this guidance carefully before applying.

For **revenue grants**, organisations will complete a single application form.

For **capital grants**, larger projects may be asked to submit an initial expression of interest, followed by a full application if shortlisted.

Support will be available through guidance notes, webinars and, where possible, pre-application advice sessions.

How will applications be assessed?

All applications are assessed in a fair and transparent way against published criteria.

Revenue grant assessments focus on:

- Evidence of local need and community benefit
- Clear and achievable outcomes
- Inclusion and accessibility
- Value for money
- Ability to deliver the project

Capital grant assessments also consider:

- Long-term benefit to the community
- Readiness to deliver (permissions, quotes, timescales)
- Match funding and sustainability
- Future running and maintenance costs

Assessment is proportionate, meaning larger grant requests are subject to more detailed checks.

How are decisions made?

Grant decisions are made by in accordance with the Council's governance arrangements.

Officer assessments and scoring are considered alongside local knowledge and available funding. Support from a councillor does not guarantee funding.

For the largest capital grants, recommendations may be referred to Cabinet or another formal decision-making body.

Payment, monitoring and reporting

Successful organisations will be required to sign a grant agreement setting out the conditions of funding.

Payments may be made in stages, especially for capital projects. All funded organisations will need to provide evidence of how the money has been spent and what difference the project has made.

Reporting requirements are kept proportionate to the size of the grant.

Transparency and feedback

All grants awarded through the programme will be published on the Council's website.

If your application is unsuccessful, you will be offered feedback to help you strengthen future applications.

Need help?

If you are unsure whether your project is eligible or need help with your application, support information will be available on the Council's website when each funding round opens.

Final note to applicants

The Council values the passion, commitment and insight of our community organisations. We encourage applications from a wide range of groups, including those who may not have applied for council funding before. If your project makes a positive difference to the people of North West Leicestershire, we want to hear from you.

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Appendix 4

Closed Churchyards and Cemeteries Grant Scheme

1. Purpose of the Scheme

The Closed Churchyards and Cemeteries Concurrent Grant Scheme (“the Scheme”) has been established to support Parish Councils within North West Leicestershire that are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of closed churchyards and closed cemeteries.

The Scheme recognises that Parish Councils often assume statutory responsibility for closed burial grounds under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 without the transfer of equivalent long-term funding, placing ongoing financial and operational pressure on parish budgets. The Scheme is intended to assist Parish Councils in ensuring that closed burial grounds are maintained in a safe, dignified, and sustainable condition, that health and safety risks associated with memorials, trees, pathways, and built structures are appropriately managed, that local heritage and community assets are protected, and that environmental or biodiversity improvements are supported where these are appropriate to the character and use of burial grounds.

The Scheme will operate concurrently alongside other North West Leicestershire District Council grant programmes. Eligible Parish Councils will be able to apply to this Scheme without prejudice to other funding streams, subject to the requirement that overall public funding does not exceed the actual cost of works and that subsidy control requirements are met.

2. Scope of the Scheme

Funding provided under this Scheme is strictly limited to works and activities relating to closed churchyards and closed cemeteries where statutory responsibility for maintenance rests with the Parish Council.

Open or active churchyards and cemeteries, or sites that remain open for burials or interments, are explicitly excluded from the Scheme and will not be eligible for funding.

3. Eligible Applicants

Applications under the Scheme may be submitted only by Parish Councils that are wholly or partly within the administrative area of North West Leicestershire District Council.

The applicant Parish Council must have legal responsibility for the maintenance of the closed churchyard or cemetery to which the application relates and must be able

to demonstrate ownership, control, or statutory maintenance responsibility for the site. Parish Councils must also be able to demonstrate that they have appropriate governance, financial management, and decision-making arrangements in place.

Applications from individuals, churches, community or voluntary groups, dioceses, or private landowners will not be accepted under this Scheme.

4. Eligible Sites

To be eligible for funding, a site must be a churchyard or cemetery that has been formally closed, either by Order in Council or by other lawful means.

Responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of the site must have transferred to the Parish Council, either automatically under statute or through a formal legal or administrative process. The site must be located within the boundaries of North West Leicestershire District Council and must normally be accessible to the public, unless access has been restricted or limited for health and safety reasons.

5. Eligible Expenditure

Funding under the Scheme may be used to support both revenue and capital expenditure that is directly related to the maintenance, safety, accessibility, or improvement of eligible closed churchyards and cemeteries.

Eligible expenditure includes grass cutting and general grounds maintenance where this is necessary to maintain safety and accessibility, tree inspections, management and remedial works, memorial safety inspections and stabilisation works, repairs to boundaries such as walls, fences and gates, repairs to pathways and access routes, litter clearance and waste disposal, and ecological or biodiversity improvements where these are compatible with the respectful use of burial grounds.

Professional fees may also be supported where they are directly related to eligible works, including arboricultural reports, structural surveys, or specialist safety inspections.

6. Ineligible Expenditure

Funding will not be provided for works relating to open or active churchyards or cemeteries, nor for religious or faith-based activities or services.

The Scheme will not support the creation of new burial provision or the extension of existing burial grounds. Routine Parish Council administrative costs, including staffing and general overheads, are not eligible for funding. Retrospective works that have been completed prior to the formal approval of a grant award will not be funded, and the Scheme will not support works that are already fully funded from another public grant source, in order to avoid double funding.

7. Grant Value and Intervention Rate

Grants will normally be awarded up to a maximum annual amount, which will be determined by the Council through its approved budget allocation for the Scheme.

Funding may cover up to one hundred per cent of eligible costs, subject to an assessment of value for money and the availability of funding. In some cases, Parish Councils may be required to demonstrate a local financial contribution or match funding where this is considered appropriate or proportionate.

The Council reserves the right to award less than the amount requested by an applicant and to part-fund individual elements of an application rather than the full project.

8. Concurrent Funding Arrangements

The Scheme will operate concurrently with other North West Leicestershire District Council grant schemes.

Parish Councils may apply to this Scheme in addition to other Council funding, and awards made under this Scheme will be considered separately and will not automatically reduce eligibility for other grants. Applicants must declare all other funding applied for or received in relation to the same site or project, and total public funding must not exceed the actual cost of the works.

9. Application Process

Applications must be submitted using the Council's approved application form and must include sufficient information to allow the Council to assess eligibility, need, and value for money.

Applications will be required to provide a description and location of the closed churchyard or cemetery, evidence of closure and Parish Council maintenance responsibility, details of the proposed works and associated costs, quotations or estimates for the works, a proposed project timetable, and a declaration of all other funding sources.

Incomplete applications may not be assessed.

10. Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed against a range of criteria, including confirmation of statutory responsibility and eligibility, the extent to which the application addresses health and safety risks, the condition and urgency of the proposed works, value for

money and proportionality, environmental and heritage considerations, and the ability of the Parish Council to deliver the works within the proposed timeframe.

The Council is not obliged to fund all applications that meet the eligibility criteria.

11. Decision-Making and Governance

Decisions on grant awards will be made either under delegated authority or by Members, in accordance with the Council's Constitution and Financial Procedure Rules.

The Scheme will operate within the approved budget allocation, and all awards will be subject to formal grant offer letters and associated conditions.

12. Monitoring and Conditions

Successful applicants will be required to use grant funding solely for the approved purposes and to maintain appropriate financial records and evidence of expenditure.

Parish Councils will be required to confirm completion of works and demonstrate the outcomes achieved. The Council reserves the right to require repayment of grant funding where conditions are breached or where funding is misused.

13. Subsidy Control, State Aid, and Legal Compliance

The Scheme will operate in compliance with UK Subsidy Control requirements, the Council's Constitution and Financial Procedure Rules, the Equality Act 2010, and data protection legislation.

Most grants awarded under this Scheme are expected to fall outside subsidy control requirements, as the activities funded are non-economic in nature and relate to statutory and community responsibilities.

14. Review of the Scheme

The Scheme will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it continues to align with Council priorities, represents an effective use of public funds, and remains relevant to the needs of Parish Councils.

The Council reserves the right to amend, suspend, or withdraw the Scheme at any time.

Title of Report	STENSON SQUARE GARDENS – PRESENTATION OF DESIGNS POST PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND APPROVAL TO FUND AND SUBMIT PLANNING APPLICATIONS	
Presented by	Richard Blunt Leader of the Council PH Briefed x	
Background Papers	Coalville Regeneration Framework (2023) Council Delivery Plan Council February 2024 Cabinet October 2024 Community Scrutiny February 2026	Public Report: Yes Key Decision: Yes
Financial Implications	It is proposed that the next stages of work for Stenson Gardens are funded from the Council Regeneration Capital programme where an allocation has previously been agreed at Council on 22 February 2023. Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	The Stenson Square site is predominately located on land owned by North West Leicestershire District Council. At its periphery the proposals extend on to Leicestershire County Council Highways land. Public realm works will be undertaken using Permitted Development rights so do not require a specific planning consent. All procurement activity associated with consultant appointments, the preparation of RIBA Stage 4–5 documentation, and subsequent contractor procurement will be undertaken in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023. Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	The project will be delivered using existing Economic Regeneration staff resources. Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To present the latest RIBA 3 design proposals for the Stenson Gardens project To seek approval to appoint Arup to undertake RIBA Stage 4 design work To seek approval to appoint consultants to prepare an outline planning application for the former Council offices site. To seek approval to make an outline planning application for the former Council offices site	

Reason for Decision	Cabinet approval required to enable progress with the next stages of the Stenson Gardens project in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and procurement legislation.
Recommendations	<p>THAT CABINET</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) NOTES THE FEEDBACK FROM THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSION CARRIED OUT 8 OCTOBER 2025 2) CONSIDERS THE COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON 25 FEBRUARY 2026 3) RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL THAT A SUM OF £276,258 IS MOVED FROM THE DEVELOPMENT POOL TO THE ACTIVE PROGRAMME IN THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME AS OUTLINED IN SECTION 4.0 OF THE REPORT 4) AGREES TO APPOINT ARUP TO PROVIDE DESIGN SERVICES FOR RIBA STAGE 4 OF THE STENSON GARDENS PUBLIC REALM PROJECT TO A POINT WHERE TENDERS FOR CONSTRUCTION HAVE BEEN OBTAINED WITHIN THE AGREED BUDGET OF £276,258 SUBJECT TO COUNCIL AGREEING THE MOVEMENT OF FUNDS TO THE ACTIVE PROGRAMME. 5) DELEGATES AUTHORITY TO THE DIRECTOR OF PLACE (IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER) TO APPOINT CONSULTANTS TO PREPARE AN OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE FORMER COUNCIL OFFICES SITE WITHIN THE AGREED BUDGET OF £276,258 SUBJECT TO COUNCIL AGREEING THE MOVEMENT OF FUNDS TO THE ACTIVE PROGRAMME. 6) DELEGATES AUTHORITY TO THE DIRECTOR OF PLACE (IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER) TO SUBMIT AN OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR PLANNING CONSENT FOR RESIDENTIAL USE ON THE FORMER COUNCIL OFFICES SITE

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The regeneration of Coalville is a key priority within the Council Delivery Plan and the Stenson Gardens project is one of the flagship schemes highlighted in the Coalville Regeneration Framework.
- 1.2 The creation of Stenson Gardens will contribute to the Council's long held ambition to deliver the Prince's Foundation '4 squares' strategic vision for Coalville.
- 1.3 The Stenson Gardens project comprises two principal parts; firstly the creation of a new public realm to the front of Stenson House, incorporating London Road car park, and secondly the redevelopment of the now cleared former Council offices site for residential use.
- 1.4 Through work by Arup (a leading land use consultancy), the public realm element of this project has been progressed to RIBA Stage 3 designs (a level of design evolution sufficient to show general arrangements and material choices). The associated proposals for residential development on the former Council offices site have been developed in parallel up to RIBA Stage 2, also by Arup. RIBA Stage 2 residential designs are concept design only.
- 1.5 The project has benefited from cross-party input from members during the design process to date.
- 1.6 There has also been input from stakeholders such as the Registrar's service, Citizens Advice Bureau and Council staff that work from Stenson House to inform the public realm design. In addition, a public engagement session was held on 8 October 2025. The feedback report is appended at Appendix 1 and a draft response to comments raised at the engagement session is appended at Appendix 2.
- 1.7 Engagement with the Council's Planning Service has clarified that the public realm proposals that have been developed to RIBA Stage 3 do not require the making of a separate planning application but can be delivered under Permitted Development rights. Should any elements of the scheme be found to not be permissible under Permitted Development then appropriate planning applications will be made.
- 1.8 An outline planning consent is required for any redevelopment of the former Council offices site and to establish the principle of a new use an outline application is proposed to be made.
- 1.9 The Council's Community Scrutiny Committee reviewed both elements of the project, specifically noting the feedback received as part of the public engagement and commenting on the RIBA Stage 3 designs. Their comments are appended here at Appendix 8.

2.0 NEXT STEPS - PUBLIC REALM

- 2.1 The project has achieved RIBA Stage 3 (planning consent) For the public realm element of the project planning consent is not required as the works can be undertaken using Permitted Development rights.

- 2.2 The next stage of project development is RIBA Stage 4 which is the preparation of detailed construction drawings, specifications and bills of quantities for construction of the scheme. It is now intended to appoint Arup to undertake this stage of work.
- 2.3 It is intended to appoint Arup using the Crown Commercial Services Framework via a Direct Award. This recognizes the specialist knowledge of the scheme that Arup have gathered through designing the proposed works to RIBA stage 3.
- 2.4 Following the completion of RIBA Stage 4 the construction works will be procured with support from the procurement team using a mini competition or direct award against a suitable framework.
- 2.5 The project will be brought back to Cabinet once tenders for construction have been obtained.

3.0 NEXT STEPS - RESIDENTIAL

- 3.1 The next stage to progress the residential element of the project is to make an outline planning application for this part of the site. This will de-risk the residential development project and give confidence to potential purchasers when the site is placed on the market as well as increasing the land value.
- 3.2 Consultancy support will be required to progress and submit the outline residential planning application including commissioning all supporting documentation e.g. Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy.
- 3.3 Delegated authority from Cabinet to make associated appointments is requested.

4.0 FINANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Arup has provided a fee quotation of £156,258 to progress the public realm element of the project to the point at which a Construction Contractor can be appointed.
- 4.2 As described in Section 2 above, this quotation is believed to offer good value to the Council because of retained knowledge and project continuity. The fee can be met from the existing capital programme allocation, subject to moving the required sum from the development pool to the active programme.
- 4.3 Fee proposals for the preparation of the outline planning consent are being sought. An initial fee proposal of around £120,000 has been received but officers are seeking lower prices. Any fee that is accepted can also be funded from the existing capital programme allocation.
- 4.4 A full report on the cost of construction of the public realm will be presented to Cabinet on completion of contractor procurement prior to the award of contract.

- 4.5 It is expected that the net proceeds from sale of the former Council Offices site will make a significant contribution towards recovering the public realm works costs.

5.0 PROJECT OUTCOMES

5.1 The desired outcomes for the Stenson Gardens project are as follows:

- To create a high quality visually attractive arrival point in the town, at the junction between two key roads and outside Stenson House.
- To create a space from which residents can draw civic pride, but which can also be used for socialising.
- To link the London Road public car park (adjacent) to Stenson House.
- To support the use of Stenson House particularly by the Registrars Service by providing an attractive environment for wedding photographs etc.
- To guide pedestrians towards the town centre and the town's other public places such as Memorial Square, and Marlborough Square.
- To create a wider attractive environment for high quality residential accommodation on the former Council Offices site.
- To create an attractive street scene on Whitwick Road.
- To continue to provide vehicular access for residents on Park Road.
- To continue to provide vehicular access for the Coalville Bowls Club.
- To ensure through good design that the residential development and Stenson House and Stenson Square Gardens operate in a coordinated way.

6.0 STENSON GARDENS PROPOSALS - DETAILED OVERVIEW

6.1 The draft general layout arrangement and designs for the public realm are set out in the attached appendices (Appendices 3-7). These drawings also include details of materials and planting schedule and lighting design proposals.

6.2 A boundary plan of the former council offices site is included at Appendix 9

7.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK

7.1 A community engagement exercise was conducted to seek input from the public and stakeholders into the Stenson Gardens project. Key takeaways from the exercise include:

- Suggestion to include a water pump as part of public realm – given that the town pump was located in the vicinity of Stenson Gardens.
- Desire to ensure that any public realm improvements are properly maintained in the future

- Concerns that the public realm works will attract anti-social behaviour
- No strong support for either the public realm or the housing elements of the scheme, largely citing that Council funds could be better spent elsewhere.
- Opinion was divided regarding the best form of tenure new housing could take (e.g. social housing or market housing).

7.2 A copy of the post engagement feedback report and a revised 'you said, we did' document are appended at Appendices 1 and 2. These comments have been taken on board by the design team when preparing the RIBA Stage 3 draft designs.

8.0 COMMUNITY SCRUTINY FEEDBACK

8.1 A report was considered at the Community Scrutiny meeting on 25 February 2026. Feedback is tabulated below at 8.2.

8.2

	Comments/recommendations from scrutiny	Advice provided by officers at the Scrutiny meeting	Cabinet response
C1	Proposed housing on site: The financial implications of affordable housing versus market housing were raised. The consensus was that a mixed-use development was preferred which included social housing. Members stressed the need for proper proportion of social housing. It was also suggested that homes be accessible for specific demographics.	Officers explained the budget allocation and the funding plans. The potential for a mixed-use development was acknowledged, and it was confirmed that more work was needed on this once the principle was agreed for housing on the site.	
C2	Project timeline: The timing of the project was questioned due to the risk of funds being absorbed into the new authority as part of Local Government Reorganisation.	It was acknowledged that time was critical and the aim was to secure maximum revenue within the current lifetime of the authority.	
C3	Public consultation: The mixed public feedback was noted. Members felt that future marketing and public communication were essential.	Officers clarified they were committed to continued public engagement and communication during the project.	
R1	Recommendation: That Cabinet encourages the Coalville Heritage Society to investigate the options available to help fund some archaeological investigations on the site when works begin and there is access to the ground.	-	

R2	Recommendation: That Cabinet undertakes more marketing to showcase the design visuals and promote the project with the aim to gain more community involvement.	-	
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8.3 LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HIGHWAYS

8.4 Part of the RIBA 3 design proposals include proposed resurfacing work to Leicestershire County Council (LCC) footways on Whitwick Road and London Road, adjacent to the Stenson Gardens site. Approval for resurfacing of the public footway with a material consistent with that proposed to be used in Stenson Gardens will require LCC consent and approval for this is now being sought.

9.0 PROJECT RISKS

9.1 Detailed project risks are identified in the RAID Risk Register and include materials availability, contractor pricing, further pandemics, Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), inflation etc.

9.2 The project timetable has been assessed in the context of the anticipated LGR timeline, and a delivery plan will be maintained to ensure continuity should governance arrangements change.

10.0 PROJECT TIMESCALES

10.1 Arup has advised officers that as part of their fee proposal for RIBA Stage 4-5 that they are likely to require 15 weeks from appointment to prepare documentation ready for contractor procurement.

11.0 APPENDICES

The appendices can be viewed by following the links below:

[Appendix 1 – Public engagement feedback report](#)

[Appendix 2 – Draft Response to Engagement](#)

[Appendix 3 – Draft General arrangement drawing](#)

[Appendix 4 – Draft Outline specification](#)

[Appendix 5 – Draft Stage 3 Design Report](#)

[Appendix 6 – Draft Stage 3 Lighting Design Report](#)

[Appendix 7 – Illustrative drawing of Stenson gardens](#)

[Appendix 8 – Comments from Community Scrutiny Committee 25 February 2026](#)

[Appendix 9 – Boundary plan of former council offices site](#)

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	Planning and regeneration
Policy Considerations:	Coalville Regeneration Framework
Safeguarding:	Principles of safeguarding have been taken into account through the design process
Equalities/Diversity:	The public realm has been designed for all users
Customer Impact:	Creation of new public amenity space for enjoyment and relaxation (wellbeing/quality of life)
Economic and Social Impact:	Outline planning permission for circa 40 new dwellings in Coalville Creation of new public amenity space for enjoyment and relaxation (wellbeing/quality of life)
Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	Climate resilient planting in Stenson Gardens public realm Tree planting Sustainable Urban Drainage Greening of London Road car park Provision of 4 EV charging points Biodiversity improvements
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Community engagement event undertaken on 8 October 2025 – please see attached feedback report Engagement with stakeholders undertaken as part of RIBA 3 design works e.g. Leicestershire Police Designing Out Crime Officer, Registrars Service, Citizens Advice Bureau, NWLDC staff using Stenson House
Risks:	See 9.0 Project Risks section
Officer Contact	Paul Wheatley Head of Property and Regeneration paul.wheatley@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – TUESDAY, 24 MARCH 2026



Title of Report	FREEPORT – CHANGE OF ACCOUNTABLE BODY	
Presented by	Councillor Tony Saffell Cabinet Member for Planning PH Briefed <input type="checkbox"/>	
Background Papers	<p>Council 18 June 2024 – East Midlands Freeport Update</p> <p>Cabinet 17 December 2024 – Appointment of East Midlands Freeport Representative.</p> <p>9 June 2025 - Incorporation of the East Midlands Freeport</p>	<p>Public Report: Yes</p> <hr/> <p>Key Decision: Yes</p>
Financial Implications	<p>The East Midland's Freeport (EMF) received an initial government revenue grant of £2 million over two years to facilitate organisational setup; these funds have now been fully utilised. A further capital grant of £25 million was provided for seed corn investment across the sites. Of this, some funding has already been committed or spent, but approximately £17 million remains available, following initial funding requests which did not proceed due to changes in circumstances.</p> <p>In addition to government funding, Leicestershire County Council (LCC) extended a cash flow loan to EMF, with an upper limit of £4 million. The outstanding balance peaked at £2.6 million at the end of the last financial year, and repayment is anticipated before the Accountable Body Transfer is completed on 31 March 2026.</p> <p>EMF's operating costs are currently funded solely through retained business rates. At present, these business rates are all sourced from the EMAGIC site in North West Leicestershire. Financial modelling by both EMF and LCC suggests that it will be several years before the East Midlands Intermodal Park (EMIP) site in Derbyshire and Ratcliffe begin contributing business rates that can be retained.</p> <p>As previously noted, around £17 million of the £25 million seed corn capital funding from government remains uncommitted. Proposals for the allocation of this funding,</p>	

	<p>together with use of surplus retained business rates over and above what is needed to cover operations costs will be subject to the established governance process, involving review by the Section 151 and public sector director subcommittees, before progressing to broader decision-making as described in the governance arrangements.</p> <p>EMF operates its own bank account and conducts monthly cash flow assessments, drawing down funds from LCC as required to minimise interest costs on the cash flow loan. Unspent seed capital remains held by the accountable body in line with Government requirements, with interest calculated at 1% below base rate to reflect zero investment risk and to cover the accountable body's fund management costs. A decision will be required following transfer on whether to maintain the current procedure, whereby EMF receives upfront funding for each month based on anticipated cash flow needs.</p> <p>Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes</p>
Legal Implications	<p>As set out in paragraph 2.0 of the report.</p> <p>Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes</p>
Staffing and Corporate Implications	<p>At present LCC provides a financial business partner role to manage financial arrangements and report to the Board. East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) will need to make provision within its own operations to take on this role from 1 April 2026.</p> <p>EMF currently has 13 staff, with plans to grow to 15. All employees are contracted with EMF Ltd and there will be no change of status after the Accountable Body transfer, so there are no Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations Employment (TUPE) considerations required.</p> <p>EMF receives support services from LCC. These include Human Resources advice, procurement advice, insurance brokerage, finance business partner role, ICT software and equipment, legal and democratic services. EMF is also currently hosted in LCC premises. EMF is considering plans to change suppliers for services and to move office location, but LCC has confirmed that it will continue to provide all current arrangements until EMF is in a position to change. Therefore, any changes can be undertaken separately to the Accountable Body transfer, and EMCCA can monitor as appropriate in its role as Member and Accountable Body. The only exception is the Finance Business Partner role, which EMCCA will need to fulfil its role as Accountable Body.</p>

	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes
Purpose of Report	The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval for the transfer of Accountable Body Status of the East Midlands Freeport (EMF) from Leicestershire County Council to EMCCA and for EMCCA with effect from 1 April 2026.
Reason for Decision	<p><i>The Chief Executive is the designated member representative of the EMF and has delegated authority to make decisions on the day to day activities of the organisation, taking into account the interests of North West Leicestershire.</i></p> <p><i>This proposal, however, changes the principles on which EMF was founded when it agreed to join the company. It is, therefore, appropriate for Cabinet to consider any changes to those arrangements.</i></p>
Recommendations	<p>THAT CABINET AUTHORISES THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AS MEMBER REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FREEPORT TO:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF ACCOUNTABLE BODY STATUS FOR THE EAST MIDLANDS FREEPORT (EMF) FROM LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (LCC) TO THE EAST MIDLANDS COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY (EMCCA) 2) AGREE TO EMCCA BECOMING A FOUNDER MEMBER OF THE EAST MIDLANDS FREEPORT. 3) AGREE ANY CHANGES TO THE GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS THAT MAY BE NECESSARY TO ENABLE THIS TRANSFER TO TAKE PLACE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES SET OUT IN THIS REPORT.

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 East Midlands Freeport (EMF) was incorporated as EMF Ltd in July 2022 as a company limited by guarantee. The final business case was signed off by government on 30 March 2023. It is the only inland Freeport (with East Midlands Airport acting as the 'port') as part of a programme of Freeport creation by the previous government. The Freeport covers three specific sites, namely:

- East Midlands Airport and Gateway Industrial Cluster (EMAGIC) in North West Leicestershire
- Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station site in Rushcliffe, Nottinghamshire
- East Midlands Intermodal Park (EMIP) in South Derbyshire.

1.2 EMF has twelve founding members - six corporate partners and six local authorities, each appointing a director to the Board. Local authority representation on the Board is typically by Leaders or portfolio holders. An independent Chair brings the total Board membership to thirteen.

- 1.3 One of the requirements of Freeport status is that an Accountable Body authority function is provided by a local authority. Leicestershire County Council (LCC) has been the Accountable Body of EMF since inception. The role of the Lead Authority/Accountable Body includes, but is not restricted to:
- Receiving funding on behalf of the East Midlands Freeport company and responsibility for its proper administration, ensuring that funding is used appropriately in accordance with the relevant legislation and applicable funding conditions and represents value for money in the use of public funds;
 - Maintaining financial systems to account for all funding received and disbursed on behalf of the East Midlands Freeport company;
 - Embedding good governance into decision making following the Nolan principles and the National Local Growth Assurance Framework;
 - Retaining necessary information and ensuring all required information on expenditure, activities and outcomes are properly monitored, recorded and reported;
 - Operating as a single point of contact for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on all Lead Authority/Accountable Body matters in relation to the Freeport.
 - MHCLG stated in a letter dated 28 March 2025 that the Accountable Body status should transfer from LCC to EMCCA no later than two years after EMCCA's creation (i.e. by 28 February 2026).
 - An agreement with MHCLG has established that the change will take effect at midnight on 31 March 2026, streamlining implementation by aligning with accounting years and thereby minimising the impact on officer time and public resources required for group account preparation.
- 1.4 The UK Industrial Strategy (June 25) furthermore sets out a clear expectation that Freeports and Investment Zones are brought together at a local level to provide greater alignment and clarity of offer to end users and investors, under the banner of 'Industrial Strategy Zone' sites.
- 1.5 EMCCA has appointed a project manager to manage the Accountable Body transfer process and joint working has taken place with LCC and EMF to put in place the necessary transfer arrangements. A delivery plan is in place for the transfer of Accountable Body functions to EMCCA to be completed within the required timescales.
- 1.6 Government was clear that, with the establishment of EMCCA as a Mayoral Strategic Authority, it expected to see the Accountable Body role transfer to EMCCA in order to ensure stronger regional alignment. This report, therefore, seeks the necessary authority for the Chief Executive to vote in favour of the EMCCA to become the Accountable Body for EMF and sets out the issues and implications of such a transfer.

2.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

- 2.1 There are three main agreements pertaining to Accountable Body Status that will require transfer from LCC to EMCCA. These are: The Accountable Body Agreement, the Memorandum of Understanding with MHCLG and the Retained Business Rates Agreement with LCC and the three relevant billing authorities. In addition, LCC is a signatory to grant agreements as Accountable Body. All agreements can be transferred (novated) from LCC to EMCCA.

- 2.2 The Accountable Body Agreement sets out key aspects such as the role and responsibilities of the Accountable Body, the time commitment required, procedures for reimbursement by EMF, and protocols for data sharing. However, the novation to EMCCA assumes that no modifications to the agreement will be sought.
- 2.3 EMF's governance includes several checks and balances, notably the Accountable Body's veto over the business plan and major financial decisions. While the Accountable Body cannot veto investments on policy grounds, it can exercise influence if concerns about value for money arise. This can include advising EMF and the Board, raising issues with MHCLG, or withholding signature and release of funds in line with public money/value for money principles. Such actions cannot be taken purely on the basis of policy disagreements or if the investment is outside the county.
- 2.4 The Agreement includes a table of reserved matters, which require approval from different groups: Founding Members, the Accountable Body (who hold veto power over certain decisions regardless of their Membership status), the EMF Board, Public Sector Directors, and Public Sector Members.
- 2.5 Most Board decisions require a majority from both public and private sector director blocs. Significant changes, such as alterations to governance, require unanimous approval from all Member organisations. Public funding decisions are initially considered by a Section 151 sub-committee, followed by a public sector director sub-committee, before being presented to the wider Board (private sector members) for strategic input. This process ensures a clear distinction between Board-wide decisions and those concerning the management of public funds.
- 2.6 EMF Members have only recently finalised the governance structure, and it is crucial that transferring the Accountable Body does not disrupt Freeport operations or its partnerships. There is therefore a strong preference to avoid major governance changes. With local government reorganisation set for 2028, which will significantly change the landscape and number of authorities in the area. Therefore, any adjustments now are very likely to need further revision within two years, lending weight to the argument to keep alterations to a minimum.
- 2.7 A decision is needed regarding EMCCA's Membership status before progressing with the transfer of the Accountable Body Agreement. There are two types of Membership available: Associate Membership and Founding Membership. Importantly, only Founding Members have the right to appoint a Director to the EMF Board. Admission of EMCCA as either an Associate or Founding Member will ultimately be determined by the EMF Members, through either a public/private majority vote or a unanimous decision, as appropriate.
- 2.8 EMCCA's preferred approach is for EMCCA to assume Accountable Body status and simultaneously seek Founding Membership within EMF. This path is preferred as it allows for the necessary transfer of responsibilities while limiting changes to the governance documents to administrative matters, thus preserving the integrity and stability of the existing arrangements.
- 2.9 Achieving Founding Member status would grant EMCCA the right to appoint a director to the EMF Board, ensuring a voice within the organisation's strategic direction. The addition of EMCCA as a member, however, potentially creates an imbalance between public and private members. If this is perceived to be an issue, then there is also an option to add a further private sector member to maintain the current balance.

- 2.10 An imbalance is also potentially created between EMCCA authorities and those outside the combined authority. This imbalance exists currently and has not been an issue to date. However, there may need to be some adjustment to voting rights in the finalisation of the agreement to offset this imbalance. Leicestershire County Council has requested consideration be given to an additional elected representative from Leicestershire being allocated a seat on the Board to match the EMCCA place. At the time of writing this report, however, this request has not been formally agreed.
- 2.11 Leicestershire County Council and North West Leicestershire District Council met with EMCCA representatives in early February to discuss the implications on the above imbalance. Assurances have been provided by EMCCA that the transfer of Accountable Body status from the County Council to EMCCA will not adversely affect Leicestershire Authorities. A copy of the letter received from EMCCA formally giving this assurance is attached at Appendix 1 to this report along with an advice note at Appendix 2. The advice note deals with some of the legal “guardrails” that exist to govern the role of the Accountable Body. For the most part these already exist, but there are further steps and assurances that the mayor has set out. The note provided sets out:
1. A description of the role of the Accountable Body
 2. An explanation of the Accountable Body's veto and extent of control of the Freeport
 3. Proposed further guardrails once EMCCA becomes the Accountable Body
 4. A statement from EMCCA on its responsibilities as Accountable Body.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications for North West Leicestershire arising from the report. The three designated EMF sites offer substantial tax incentives for businesses choosing to locate within their boundaries. In addition to these incentives, there is provision for the retention of 100% of business rates generated at these sites, after allowing for the share retained by local authorities as part of the business rates equalisation mechanism ('no detriment').
- 3.2 This retention arrangement is set for a period of 25 years, with the retained business rates earmarked for economic development initiatives across the wider Freeport area. Such investments centre on priorities including skills enhancement, innovation, low carbon energy, and infrastructure development.
- 3.3 Proposals for the allocation of this funding, together with use of surplus retained business rates over and above what is needed to cover operations costs are subject to established governance process, involving review by the Section 151 and public sector director subcommittees, before progressing to broader decision-making as set out in the governance arrangements. Additional assurances on the allocation of funding to Leicestershire authorities has also been provided as part of the assurance letter outlined in paragraph 2.11 of the report.

4.0 WAIVE OF CALL-IN

- 4.1 The approval of the Chair of the Council has been given to the exemption of the Council's Scrutiny Procedure rules in relation to the call-in of the decision on this item, since any call-in would prejudice the ability of the Council to confirm the provisional direction on or before the 1 April 2026. The Chair has considered the timetable for confirmation and agrees that the matter before Cabinet is urgent for this reason.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	<p>Insert relevant Council Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning and regeneration
Policy Considerations:	None related to this report.
Safeguarding:	None related to this report.
Equalities/Diversity:	None related to this report.
Customer Impact:	None related to this report.
Economic and Social Impact:	<p>The three designated EMF sites offer substantial tax incentives for businesses choosing to locate within their boundaries. In addition to these incentives, there is provision for the retention of 100% of business rates generated at these sites, after allowing for the share retained by local authorities as part of the business rates equalisation mechanism ('no detriment').</p> <p>This retention arrangement is set for a period of 25 years, with the retained business rates earmarked for economic development initiatives across the wider Freeport area. Such investments centre on priorities including skills enhancement, innovation, low carbon energy, and infrastructure development.</p>
Environment, Climate Change and Zero Carbon:	None specifically related to this report.
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	None related to this report.
Risks:	<p>Reduced Direct Influence Over Freeport</p> <p>Governance As EMCCA becomes the Accountable Body, the Council's influence may become more indirect, especially as EMCCA will hold key consent rights and reserved matters. However, EMF cannot proceed without the Accountable Body's explicit consent. These are not discretionary powers but structural guardrails.</p> <p>The Council may have less ability to shape or challenge decisions that affect its area, particularly around investment priorities and risk exposure.</p> <p>Potential Imbalance in Investment Across the Freeport Geography</p>

	<p>The Council could receive a smaller share of retained business rates investment if regional priorities shift or if EMCCA’s strategic oversight favours other areas. However, there are constraints on Use of Retained Business Rates. Although EMCCA controls the release of funds, it cannot direct how business rates are allocated—but it can delay or withhold release if assurance requirements are not met. EMF cannot access retained business rates, without passing through the Accountable Body’s financial, assurance and reporting processes.”</p> <p>Strategic Misalignment with Local Priorities EMCCA will emphasise alignment with regional priorities such as skills, regeneration and low-carbon transition.</p> <p>The Council’s local economic or planning priorities may not always align with EMCCA’s regional agenda, potentially limiting flexibility.</p>
Officer Contact	<p>Allison Thomas Chief Executive allison.thomas@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p>



10th March 2026

Directors of East Midlands Freeport Ltd

[Sent via email]

EMCCA as Accountable Body for East Midlands Freeport

Dear EMF Director,

Thank you for the invitation to set out a few points about how I see EMCCA operating and working alongside you as the new Accountable Body for the Freeport. The matters contained within this letter are important to me, as I know they are to you too.

The note provided deals with some of the legal “guardrails” that exist to govern the role of the Accountable Body. For the most part these already exist, but there are further steps and assurances I am keen to set out.

The note provided sets out:

1. A description of the role of the Accountable Body
2. An explanation of the Accountable Body's veto and extent of control of the Freeport
3. Proposed further guardrails once EMCCA becomes the Accountable Body
4. A statement from EMCCA on its responsibilities as Accountable Body

Furthermore, I want to set out my own personal commitment to working with you all to make the Freeport a success, particularly given I will not be EMCCA’s nominated company Director on the Board. Please don’t interpret this as a lack of interest on my part; it is quite the opposite. I have decided not to be EMCCA’s nominated company Director precisely so that I can fully champion the work of the freeport in my role as Mayor, free from any conflicts of interests. I look forward to doing so. I would like to attend the Board as a guest from time to time, as you see fit, and I will remain in touch through my officers and via the EMF Chair and Chief Executive.

Lastly, I am extremely mindful of the fact that 1 of the 3 Freeport sites is not in the EMCCA area. This creates a complexity, but it is our collective job to work past that. I am confident that we can do that successfully (as you always have) with collaboration, common sense and pragmatism so that we can demonstrate the benefits of the Freeport to all of the communities we serve, regardless of administrative boundaries.

I hope the technical note and the further principles suggested provides greater clarity and reassurance about EMCCA's role and motivations. I look forward to continuing to work with you all to put words into action.

Yours faithfully,



Claire Ward

Mayor of the East Midlands

East Midlands Freeport: Ensuring continued strong regional collaboration

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the responsibilities, governance arrangements, and assurance processes pertaining to the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) in assuming the role of the Accountable Body for the East Midlands Freeport, following the transition from Leicestershire County Council. It sets out the role of the Accountable Body, the extent of the control it has, and how EMCCA will safeguard public funds, comply with statutory and regulatory requirements, and facilitate effective collaboration between stakeholders to support the continued successful delivery of Freeport objectives.

Role of the Accountable Body

The Accountable Body is the organisation accountable to central government for the proper stewardship of public funds and the integrity of EMF governance. The role of the Accountable Body is codified under the DLUHC (now MHCLG) Memorandum of Understanding relating to the use by EMF of the MHCLG funding grant, the Seed Capital and the use of EMF RBR Funds (signed between the Accountable Body, East Midlands Freeport Ltd, and the three billing authorities), the Business Rates Agreement (signed by Leicestershire County Council and the Billing Authorities) the EMF Members' Agreement (signed by all parties referred to as Founding Members) and the Articles of Association (adopted by special resolution on 16 July 2025).

Its key functions are to:

- Act as the **accountable body for all government funding**, including Seed Capital expenditure, Capacity Funding and retained business rates, ensuring compliance with Managing Public Money, upholding procurement law practices and subsidy control requirements.
- **Monitor, report and provide assurance** to government that public funds have been subject to appropriate levels of scrutiny and used in line with the approved Full Business Case and Business Plan.
- **Support and oversee EMF's governance**, ensuring that the Board operates with transparency, propriety and inclusivity and in line with the Nolan Principles.
- Ensure appropriate **financial, risk and project documentation**, including audit trails, implementation plans and risk registers, is maintained
- Serve as the **primary interface with central government**, coordinating engagement between EMF, MHCLG and other departments as well as coordinating the work of the Board (with the Accountable Body being supported by the Chair, the Executive Delivery Team, relevant subcommittees and Members, as appropriate).

- Hold and manage pooled **retained business rates and residual seed capital funds**, distributing them in accordance with agreed strategies and decisions taken through EMF's public-sector decision-making structures.

EMF is designed to be an enabling delivery body, and the business of EMF is to operate East Midlands Freeport in accordance with MHCLG and other Government requirements. The Accountable Body is therefore not a delivery body, but a **guardian of public accountability, financial probity and governance discipline**, sitting alongside (rather than replacing) EMF's role as the operational and strategic delivery body.

It should also be noted that it is a condition of the Members Agreement that the Accountable Body should be a public sector member of EMF and appoint a Director to the Board.

The Accountable Body's veto and extent of control of the Freeport

The Accountable Body's control of the Freeport is best described as strategic, financial and governance control commensurate with its guardian of public accountability, financial probity and governance discipline. This is not operational management.

This control is exercised through reserved matters, consent rights, approvals, escalation routes and control of funding, rather than routine intervention. To date, the current Accountable Body has not used the objection or escalation route available to it.

It is important to note that the Accountable Body does not possess any overarching authority to manage EMF's operations, nor does it hold unilateral discretion over the allocation of funds. EMF's Board acts as the governing body of EMF and remains responsible for strategy, delivery and management, subject to the governance framework and the objectives of EMF.

Instead, the Accountable Body's control is exercised through clearly defined mechanisms, principally:

a. Accountable Body Reserved Matters

The Members' Agreement sets out a list of Accountable Body Reserved Matters, meaning EMF cannot proceed without the Accountable Body's explicit consent. These focus on areas where public risk is highest, including:

- Approval of the Business Plan and material in-year changes.
- Decisions that expose the Accountable Body to financial risk or liability, including borrowing, guarantees, transactions at undervalue, granting rights, selling or disposing of material assets and material contracts.
- Approval of annual accounts, with the right to withhold approval and escalate concerns to government if necessary.
- Procurement or contracting activity that is inconsistent with the Business Plan or public sector requirements.
- Entry into related-party transactions involving public money.

These are not discretionary powers but are structural guardrails, designed to ensure EMF cannot commit public funds or expose public bodies to risk without explicit oversight.

b. Objection and escalation mechanism

The Accountable Body may formally object to a Board decision if, acting reasonably, it believes the decision does not comply with government accountability or CIPFA requirements. In such cases:

- The Board must reconsider the decision.
- If the Board reaffirms its position, the Accountable Body may escalate concerns to government, even if it cannot block the decision outright.

This provides a strong soft veto and escalation safeguard, short of day-to-day interference.

c. Control over public funding flows

In practice, EMF cannot access:

- Seed Capital,
- Capacity Funding, or
- retained business rates,

without passing through the Accountable Body's financial, assurance and reporting processes. This gives the Accountable Body effective control over whether and when funding is released.

However, it doesn't give the Accountable Body the ability to direct the Freeport to distribute funds in a particular way. It couldn't, for instance, direct the use of business rates collected in one area to be used in another, this remains within the control of the EMF Board, with formal approval of funds expenditure and projects that draw from business rates by the Public Sector Directors Group.

Proposed further guardrails once EMCCA becomes the Accountable Body

As EMCCA assumes the Accountable Body role, there is scope to strengthen clarity and confidence without reopening the core constitutional balance. Options that sit comfortably with the existing framework include:

a. Formal Mayoral-Leaders / Chief Executives and EMF Strategic Review

It is proposed to establish a six-monthly strategic review between the Mayor of the East Midlands, East Midlands Freeport and the Leaders and Chief Executives of each council within the Freeport area.

- Focus on:
 - Strategic direction and alignment with regional priorities;
 - Balance of investment across the Freeport geography;
 - Long-term economic, social and environmental outcomes.

- This is an informal proposal which does not impact formal governance arrangements set out in the Members' Agreement, Articles of Association, AB Agreement and MOU with Government.
- Meeting agenda/ papers will be coordinated by EMF and reported back to the EMF Board.

b. Published statement of strategic priorities and principles

EMCCA will publish a short set of strategic principles guiding its exercise of Accountable Body functions (see EMCCA Statement below). This will increase transparency while preserving EMF's operational autonomy.

c. Enhanced scrutiny and reporting

Introduce an annual public assurance statement from EMCCA on EMF, covering:

- Use of public funds;
- Governance effectiveness;
- Alignment with regional objectives.

This can be supported with Overview and Scrutiny committee engagement within EMCCA as well as working with existing EMF structures (e.g. Audit and Risk Subcommittee).

EMCCA Statement on Responsibilities as Accountable Body

Purpose of this Statement

This statement sets out how the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA), in its role as Accountable Body, will exercise its responsibilities in relation to East Midlands Freeport Limited (EMF), providing assurance to partners, stakeholders and communities across the East Midlands.

EMCCA's Role as Accountable Body

EMCCA's role as Accountable Body is to safeguard the proper use of public funds, uphold high standards of governance and transparency, and provide assurance to Government and local partners.

EMCCA does not replace EMF's role as the strategic and operational delivery body for the Freeport. Instead, EMCCA's function is to provide proportionate oversight, ensuring that EMF can deliver confidently, compliantly and at pace.

Principles Guiding EMCCA's Approach

In exercising its Accountable Body responsibilities, EMCCA commits to the following principles:

1. Pragmatism and proportionality

EMCCA will act as an enabling and pragmatic partner. Intervention will be targeted, proportionate and focused on matters of public accountability, financial risk and governance integrity. Day-to-day operational decision making will remain with EMF.

2. Respect for agreed governance arrangements

EMCCA will operate strictly within the governance framework set out in the Memorandum of

Understanding, Members' Agreement and associated governance documents. Reserved matters and consent rights will be exercised transparently and consistently. EMCCA will work collaboratively with partners as the need for any future governance changes arises e.g. post Local Government Reorganisation.

3. Partnership and collaboration

EMCCA will work constructively with EMF, constituent councils, private sector partners and government departments to support effective delivery and timely decision making.

4. Strategic Alignment and Leadership

EMCCA will ensure that the Freeport continues to align with wider regional priorities, including inclusive economic growth, regeneration, skills development and the transition to a low carbon economy.

To support this, EMCCA will facilitate regular strategic dialogue, including periodic strategic reviews between the Mayor of the East Midlands and the Chief Executives of each council in the Freeport area, focused on long term direction, outcomes and regional balance rather than operational detail.

5. Community Benefit and Inclusive Growth

EMCCA is committed to ensuring that East Midlands Freeport delivers clear and tangible benefits for the people of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire.

In its Accountable Body role, EMCCA will support and expect:

- Investment that contributes to skills, employment and workforce transition;
- Opportunities for local communities and businesses to benefit from Freeport activity;
- Alignment with regional regeneration objectives.

These expectations will be pursued through strategic oversight and partnership working.

6. Use of Retained Business Rates

EMCCA recognises the importance of confidence in the use of retained business rates generated through the Freeport – and the position agreed and confirmed in EMF's published 2025 Investment Strategy.

Accordingly, EMCCA will:

- Uphold the agreed mechanisms governing retained business rates
- Where any changes are required (e.g. as a result of the recent LG Futures audit and of changing Government policy on business rates) EMCCA will work collaboratively with the relevant partners to resolve;
- Ensure that decisions are evidence based, transparent and aligned with Freeport objectives;
- Support a balance of investment (including with the Skills and Communities Equity Fund) across the Freeport geography over time, in line with EMF's Investment Strategy.

7. Transparency, Assurance and Accountability

EMCCA will promote high standards of transparency and assurance, including:

- Appropriate management of any conflicts of interests;
- Clear reporting and audit arrangements for public funding;

- Robust financial and risk management;
- Appropriate escalation to Government where required by accountability standards.

Should concerns arise, EMCCA will seek to resolve issues collaboratively and constructively, with escalation used only where necessary to protect public interest and probity.

8. Commitment to Stability and Confidence

EMCCA's intention as Accountable Body is to provide stability, confidence and clarity for EMF and its partners.

By combining strong public accountability with a pragmatic, partnership based approach, EMCCA will support East Midlands Freeport to realise its long term ambition as a driver of sustainable economic growth for the whole region.

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – TUESDAY, 24 MARCH 2026



Title of Report	GOOD DESIGN GUIDE FOR NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE	
Presented by	Tony Safell Portfolio Holder for Planning PH Briefed: Yes	
Background Papers	<u>Current Good Design Guide for North West Leicestershire 2017</u>	Public Report: Yes
	<u>Good Design Guide - supplementary planning document March 2026</u>	Key Decision: Yes
Financial Implications	The cost of preparing the Good Design Guide is being met from the Planning Skills Delivery Fund received in October 2024.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	The preparation of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will need to comply with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	There are no direct staffing or corporate implications.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To update Cabinet on the preparation of the Good Design Guide SPD and the outcome of public consultation held between July and September 2025. To present a revised Good Design Guide for North West Leicestershire for consideration, with a recommendation that the Local Plan Committee adopts the SPD.	
Reason for Decision	The Council's Constitution (Part 2, Section D5, paragraph 2.2.1) requires the Local Plan Committee to receive reports from Cabinet on proposed SPDs.	

Recommendations	<p>THAT CABINET:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RECOMMENDS THAT THE LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE ADOPTS THE GOOD DESIGN GUIDE FOR NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT; AND 2. DELEGATES AUTHORITY TO THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF PLACE TO AGREE ANY MINOR MODIFICATIONS TO THE FINAL DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT PRIOR TO ADOPTION AT LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE.
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1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Since 2007, the Council has improved the design quality of new development, while not compromising the number of planning consents for new homes. In 2017, the first Good Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was produced by the Council which raised the bar further still.
- 1.2 As set out as a target in the Council Delivery Plan, the Council is working to raise the quality of new development even further. As part of this journey, the Council was one of 14 authorities who took part in the National Model Design Code Pilot programme in the summer of 2021 with grant funding from Government. The Council's funding bid, agreed with Government, was to refresh and update the Council's existing Good Design Guide SPD and align it with the National Model Design Code. The new Good Design Guide is the result of that work.
- 1.3 This new Guide looks to build upon the sound foundation, aspirations and vision set out in 2017, while seeking to respond to challenges identified with stakeholders, as well as evidence from what has been built across the district and what is seen as best practice nationally.
- 1.4 Since the Council adopted its award-winning design initiative, there has been a significant transformation in design quality across the District. It is acknowledged, however, that not all schemes have been a total success, and lessons have been learnt from those which have not reached the design quality expected. However, officers are generally satisfied that many developers have responded positively and enthusiastically to the Council's design expectations.

2.0 THE NEW GOOD DESIGN GUIDE SPD FOR NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE

- 2.1 One of the key aims in the Council's Delivery Plan 2023-28 is that the Council will secure high quality design in new developments and that a new local design guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will have been produced which developments will need to comply with. Once agreed by Cabinet and then adopted at Local Plan Committee, planning applications will be assessed against the new document.
- 2.2 An SPD is a document which provides further information about a policy or policies in a development plan. An SPD can be a helpful way to provide guidance on matters such as how a policy should be interpreted in development management decisions, what information applicants need to supply to meet the requirements of a policy and procedural arrangements. Importantly an SPD is not itself part of the development plan,

but it is capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions. In addition, an SPD cannot be used to change or add to the policies in the adopted Local Plan. Such policy changes can only be made through the Local Plan Review.

- 2.3 The guidance contained within the new SPD is based on what the Council has achieved in North West Leicestershire over the last 15 years, but also how the Council can strive to improve the design quality of developments further. The document explains how good design is measured locally and provides applicants with the clarity and certainty they have asked for.
- 2.4 The draft SPD has been developed encompassing a series of visits to housing developments both within North West Leicestershire and across the country to inform what constitutes good and best practice. It also showcases examples of the design quality of the development that, if adopted by developers, are more likely to be approved. Some initial informal consultation with stakeholders including the National Forest Company, Leicestershire County Council Highways (LCC Highways), a local housebuilder and planning consultancy took place in 2024 to help inform the development of the document.
- 2.5 Once adopted, the new SPD will give Council the tools to ensure that the developments that are brought forward, enhance the built environment and are ones that the Council can be genuinely proud of.

3.0 CONSULTATION

3.1 At Local Plan Committee on 21 May 2025, members agreed that the draft Good Design Guide for North West Leicestershire SPD be approved for public consultation. The consultation ran between 23 July and 17 September 2025.

3.2 The consultation on the draft Good Design SPD received comments from ten external organisations or individuals. The external organisations were:

National Highways, LCC Highways, National Forest Company, Historic England, Environment Agency, Natural England, the Coal Authority, Leicestershire Police, Ashby de la Zouch Town Council and one planning consultant.

The comments received have generally focussed on three chapters within the document: Context, Movement and Nature.

- 3.3 A summary of the consultation responses received is attached as Appendix 1 to this report and in table form, this outlines the main issues raised, the Council's response, the action taken to deal with the issue and the name of the respondent's organisation.
- 3.4 In total there were 110 comments or observations received from the external organisations and internally. Of these, 22 were comments of support/no comment relating to chapters or sections within the document, which were noted. These are shown marked as blue in Appendix 1.
- 3.5 A further 63 comments and observation from external organisations and internally suggested changes which have been agreed and are now proposed within the revised document. These are shown marked as green in Appendix 1.

- 3.6 There are 25 comments which have been noted, but no changes to the document are recommended. The reasons for not amending the document to take account of those comments are shown marked as brown in Appendix 1.
- 3.7 Officers are satisfied that the consultation responses have been adequately dealt with, and in particular, detailed discussions have been held with LCC Highways to ensure the relevant chapters of the document are generally in accordance with the Leicestershire Highway Design Guide. Members will see that the majority of comments received have either supported the Good Design Guide or resulted in a significant number of amendments to the document. Where comments have not resulted in changes, the reasons why are clearly set out in Appendix 1.
- 3.8 A link to the document which has been amended to take into account the consultation responses where appropriate can be found here:
[Good Design Guide - supplementary planning document March 2026](#)

4.0 NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 Formulation of an SPD is an Executive function, but adoption is a Council function which has been delegated to the Local Plan Committee.
- 4.2 Therefore, Cabinet is asked to recommend to the Local Plan Committee that it formally adopts the Good Design Guide for North West Leicestershire SPD at its meeting on 22 April 2026.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	Insert relevant Council Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning and regeneration - Communities and housing - Clean, green and Zero Carbon - A well-run council
Policy Considerations:	Paragraph 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code. The Good Design Guide will align with national planning policy and the design policy in the new Local Plan.
Safeguarding:	None identified.
Equalities/Diversity:	An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed.

Customer Impact:	The new Good Design Guide will provide clear clarity for customers on the Councils expectations for the design of new development.
Economic and Social Impact:	New development offers the opportunity to use good design to create healthy, social and economically vibrant places that work well for everyone. The aim of the document is that it will promote good and well-designed buildings and spaces and create meaningful places - places that people can be proud of, will last for generations and help to make people's lives happier and more fulfilling.
Environment, Climate Change and Zero Carbon:	The new Good Design Guide contains guidance on how to deal with green infrastructure, sustainable drainage, biodiversity, energy consumption and sustainable construction including water management.
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	Consultation of the draft document took place between 23 July and 17 September 2025.
Risks:	If applications are refused as contrary to the Good Design Guide, there is a risk that appeal inspectors may allow a poor-quality development and result in developers submitting schemes of a much lower standard of design on the basis that a precedent has been set. This risk should be mitigated by aligning the Good Design document with national policy contained in the NPPF, the National Model Design Code, design policy in the Council's Local Plan and by consultation with key stakeholders including major house builders.
Officer Contact	Chris Elston Head of Planning and Infrastructure chris.elston@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

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Appendix 1

Consultation Responses to Good Design SPD (August/September 2025)

22	Support, no comment/ no action necessary	25	Point Noted but no change proposed	63	Agreed and changes made
0	Outstanding comments in discussion		No comments on Chapter		

CHAPTER: General Comments

SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT	
1	1	Security considerations are primarily focused on residential development and public spaces. These principles should also be applied to other types of development, such as industrial estates and educational facilities. Suggested wording: "Proposals will be expected to demonstrate how the design has been influenced by the need to plan positively to reduce crime and the fear of crime, and how this will be achieved."	Agreed	This will be made more explicit. Introduction. Change to ADD : 'In all development, safety and security is of paramount importance, and proposals will be expected to demonstrate how this has been achieved.' Retail and active frontage Add: Code relating to Security: 'Roller shutters must be perforated and powder coated' and 'Roller shutter boxes must be located internally' Schools Add: Code relating to Boundaries: 'Boundary fencing alongside the public realm and around entrances must be designed in harmony with the buildings and structures' and	Leicestershire Police

					<p>'Public art should be considered to offer a distinctive and attractive boundary'. 'Extensive lengths of perimeter fencing should be screened with planting.'</p> <p>Local Facilities Add: Code relating to Design: 'Safety and security must be integrated into any proposals.'</p> <p>Additional Checklist question added at the top: 'Has safety and security been well considered and integrated into the proposals'</p>	
2	2		Can more best practice images be used from around North West Leicestershire, Leicestershire or the Midlands.	Agreed	Local examples added	Ashby de le Zouch Town Council
3	3		Use of more local images	Agreed	Local examples added	JJM Planning
4	1		General support for the document	Response welcomed	n/a	Historic England
5	4		Request for more terraced units to show how these can be delivered.	Agreed Additional wording added to expand on how Frontage Parking needs to be delivered.	Change to: Separate pages for Frontage Parking and Side Parking.	NWLDC Strategic Housing
6	2		No comments regarding the document	Response welcomed	n/a	National Highways
7	3		No comments regarding the document	Response welcomed	n/a	Coal Authority Planning Team
8	4		Illustrations throughout are extremely helpful and provide a clear, simple, quick and efficient way of communicating information.	Response welcomed	n/a	Davidsons
9	1		Document should make it clearer for those undertaken smaller projects so that they do not navigate the whole document	Each chapter contains a table at the end, which indicates what may be applicable depending on different types and scale of application.	No change proposed	JJM Planning
10	2		Recommend the avoidance of tandem parking, as it can lead to on street parking.	Noted	No change proposed.	LCC Highways

			Only two spaces will count towards minimum parking standards.	This point is valid, though the alternative is an overreliance on frontage parking, which can have a more detrimental impact on the street scene.		
11	3		Risk of layouts not being adoptable if guide is not in accord with the LHDG	Noted. For information.	No action required	
12	4		Could be more reference to people with disabilities.	Noted. This is an important issue that the document seeks to address. A number of chapters currently refer to this topic: Housing Quality refers to the need to consider adaptability from the outset. Social Interaction has been amended to take into account the design of seating for different users.	No action required	
13	5		Any DPD documents should not be in conflict with the Highway Authority standards, particularly with regard to road adoption standards and requirements.	Noted. For information.	No action required	
14	6		Document could reference Health Impact Assessments.	Noted. The Local Plan is proposing Draft Policy AP6 in relation to Health Impact Assessments. There may be unnecessary duplication with that policy (though currently not adopted)	No action required	LCC Public Health
15	7		Strong links to nature for health and wellbeing and the importance of views. Links are welcome and could be made more explicit in relation to both physical and mental health and wellbeing outcomes.	Noted.	No action required	

16	5		Checklist approach a significant strength that will enable planning officers to quickly and visually identify non compliance and impacts	Response welcomed	n/a
17	6		Consistent use of 'must' is positive, with a higher proportion of 'must' than 'should'.	Response welcomed	n/a
18	7		Use of case studies is valuable and will help ensure compliance, and will encourage developers to go beyond minimum standards	Response welcomed	n/a

CHAPTER 2 Rationale and Vision

	SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT NAME	
19	8	General	Section provides a really good variety of design and street hierarchy....giving a strong flavour of different design approaches.	Response welcomed	n/a	Davidsons
20	9	Vision elements	Supported	Response welcomed	n/a	Environment Agency
21	5	Case study	Breedon case study. Development has private roads, and this is not necessarily clear to those who do not know the scheme.	Agreed	Change to: Add reference to the nature of the road within this development.	LCC Highways

CHAPTER 3 Assessment

SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT NAME
No comments received				

CHAPTER 4 Responds to Context

	SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT NAME	
22	10	Views	Strong commentary on protecting views. This is a key concern for existing residents and contribute to wellbeing	Response welcomed	n/a	LCC Public Health
23	6	Character	Characteristics focus on physical features of land and could also mention health profile of the area and social issues.	Agree	Change to: Add new layout to Character study section that sets out the various components of character. Include uses as part of that.	
24	8		Character assessment needs to consider the surrounding area, not solely the red line boundary.	The introductory text to the character section refer to <i>both the site and its immediate and wider context.</i> The second paragraph also refers to building 'a detailed appreciation of the site and its surroundings'	No action needed	
25	7	National Forest	Removal of reference to Sustainable Design Guide in introduction as the document focuses on tourism proposals.	Agreed.	Remove reference.	National Forest Company
26	8		Suggested revised wording: 01. National Forest planting guidelines relate to development which exceeds 0.5ha and requires between 20-30% Forest-related green infrastructure. Details of planting options are contained in the National Forest Guide for Developers and Planners (link opposite). Development below 0.5ha will be expected to incorporate normal landscaping appropriate to the site's National Forest setting.	Agreed	Change to: 01. National Forest planting guidelines relate to development which exceeds 0.5ha and requires between 20-30% Forest-related green infrastructure. Details of planting options are contained in the National Forest Guide for Developers and Planners (link opposite).	

27	9		<p>Suggested revised wording:</p> <p>0.2 Where planting and landscaping cannot be accommodated within or close to a development, or where the only potential area of planting or landscaping is small or is isolated with limited connectivity to other habitats, a commuted sum may be agreed.</p> <p>To align with policy En3</p>	Agreed	<p>Change to :</p> <p>0.2 Where planting and landscaping cannot be accommodated within or close to a development, or where the only potential area of planting or landscaping is small or is isolated with limited connectivity to other habitats, a commuted sum may be agreed.</p>	
28	10		<p>Suggested revised wording:</p> <p>03. Not all tree planting and landscaping will contribute to the National Forest planting requirement, but all planting has the potential to reinforce the character and identity of the National Forest, as well as contributing to legibility and wayfinding.</p> <p>Street trees for example do not form part of the National Forest planting requirements set out above but will create character and identity.</p>	Agreed	<p>Change to:</p> <p>03. Not all tree planting and landscaping will contribute to the National Forest planting requirement, but all planting has the potential to reinforce the character and identity of the National Forest, as well as contributing to legibility and wayfinding.</p> <p>Street trees do not, for example, form part of the National Forest planting requirements set out above, although they do create character and identity.</p>	
29	11		<p>Section on 'use of timber'</p> <p>Suggest the use of better images that can match wording</p>	Agreed.	Images updated	
30	12	National Forest	<p>Suggested additional wording regarding Sustainable performance:</p> <p>Design and build significantly above the 'ordinary' and use the forest as a location to encourage and trial 'green' construction technology and building techniques.</p> <p>Design for low energy and efficiency.</p> <p>Adopt low carbon construction.</p> <p>Source materials sustainability.</p> <p>Design for water efficiency, including rainwater harvesting systems and grey water recycling.</p>	Agreed	<p>Change to:</p> <p>Propose splitting the National Forest pages so that they cover planting and construction.</p> <p>The comments have been included but split over the two spreads.</p>	
31	13		<p>Add suggested wording on the Tourism Accommodation Guide, as follows:</p> <p>The Sustainable Tourism Accommodation Design Guide sets out rationale for encouraging new and retrofitted tourist</p>	Agreed	As comment directly above	National Forest Company

			accommodation development that helps create a distinctive National Forest character and sense of place and makes a case for investing in the National Forest as a sustainable tourism destination.			
32	14		Suggested changes to photos used that better demonstrate National Forest character and planting and the use of trees.	Agreed.	Images updated	
33	15		Change order of reference links to National Forest documents	Agreed	Order changed	
34	16	Checklist	Bookend photos should be changed to reflect National Forest planting and National Forest character	Agreed	Images updated	
35	17		Checklist in appendix Should read : Have National Forest planting requirements been followed?	Agreed	Changed wording.	

CHAPTER 5

Movement

	SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT NAME	
36	18	Intro	Include a reference to the need for a transport vision and reduce the need to travel by the location of land uses	Agreed	Add to introduction Good design is about making sure that development is in the right place to reduce the need to travel, and in creating a strong framework of streets and spaces that provides choices about how people can move about, particularly pedestrians and cyclists.	LCC Highways
37	11	Street Network	Support the addition of criteria relating to the future proofing of land.	Response welcomed	n/a	Ashby de le Zouch Town Council
38	9		Pedestrian and cycle links not adjacent to the adoptable highway are unlikely to be adopted.	For information. Noted	None proposed	LCC Highways
39	10		Image showing footpath adjacent to private drive. LCC unlikely to adopt.	For information. Noted. This is a key issue for the council in achieving	None proposed	

				connectivity across areas that are not linked – e.g disconnected private drives.		
40	19		Image showing planting. This would not be acceptable on adopted development roads.	Noted	Image changed.	
41	11		SN1 Requesting the addition of ' <i>away from major road networks/busy streets</i> '... So that pedestrians are not pushed onto major roads that may not be safer.	The Code already states 'This should preferably be away from major road networks and busy streets.'	None proposed.	Ashby de le Zouch Town Council
42	12		Image showing footpath adjacent to private drive. LCC unlikely to consider adoption.	For information. Noted	None proposed.	LCC Highways
43	20	Street hierarchy	The Primary Street Section indicates 3m cycleway and 2m pavement (5m in total). Is this what will now be required on every Primary Street?	The LCC Highways Design Guide provides options within the street hierarchy.	Change to: Provide some alternative street sections to offer flexibility and greater legibility.	Davidsons
44	21		Include a reference under <i>Secondary Streets</i> to require a 6m width if a bus service is proposed.	Agreed	Change to: Secondary Streets require a 6m width if a bus service is proposed.	LCC Highways
45	22		Tertiary Streets needs to include (Shared surface Residential Access)	Agreed	Change to: Additional wording to title included (Shared surface Residential Access)	
46	23		Edge Lanes are referred to in a street section, but this is not mentioned earlier.	It may be that we can amalgamate 'Edge Lanes' with Tertiary Streets as they will perform the same function. In reality 'Edge Lanes' are single sided Tertiary Streets.	Change to: Propose to retain the Edge Lane diagram but clarify the point that these are single sided Tertiary Streets.	
47	24	Walking	Include reference to NWL Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	Agreed	Additional wording included	
48	12	Walking and cycling	This is well written and walking and cycling priority comes through well. This will be useful when responding to applications.	Support welcomed	n/a	NWLDC Health and wellbeing
49	13	Walking	Walking routes not adjacent to adoptable highway unlikely to be adopted	For information. Noted	None proposed.	LCC Highways
50	25	Cycling	Include reference to NWL Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	Agreed	Additional wording included	LCC Highways
51	26		Refer to minimum cycling standards in LHDG	Agreed	Additional wording included	

52	27		Long stay cycle parking should be covered.	Agreed	Add Code: "long stay cycle parking should be covered"	
53	28	Materials	LHDG incorrectly referred to. Higher quality materials will cost more to maintain. This will increase the cost of any commuted sum that will be attached to the areas of adopted highway and the associated public realm.	Agreed. The point about costs should be added.	Document now correctly referred to. Change to: The LHDG sets out two palette types for development: a 'standard' palette and an 'enhanced' palette of higher quality materials. The enhanced palette will cost more to maintain and will result in an increased commuted sum to areas of adopted highway and associated public realm.	LCC Highways
54	29	Junctions and crossings	'Copenhagen crossings will be unlikely to be considered for adoption	Accepted	Image changed.	
55	14	Parking	A parking space of 2.4x5.5m is recommended. Is this still correct?	Yes. This is the requirement set out within the recent LCC Highways Design Guide	No change needed.	Davidsons
56	30		Refer to increasing need to provide EV charging facilities	Agreed	Reference to EV charging added	LCC Highways
57	15		50:50 rule and its difficulty in relation to affordable housing. Concern to avoid displaced parking.	Noted.		NWLDC Strategic Housing
58	31	Parking approach	Clarify diagram re parking drawing to make it less confusing	Agreed	Amendment made	LCC Highways
59	32		Include space dimensions in diagrams	Agreed	Amendment made	
60	16		Query re image relating to street trees and vehicle movement	Noted Image is indicative only	No change proposed	
61	33		Query re image showing garages close to the road	Agreed The image is NOT focussing on the garages, but recognise that this is a misleading element.	Image changed	
62	34		Reference should be made to the requirement for 0.25 visitor spaces per dwelling.	Visitor parking is important but can depend greatly on the required destination and may not always be where it is needed. LCC has indicated that in some cases provision may be	Add text re Visitor Parking Road layouts should anticipate visitor parking, which is usually linked to the destination. Where formal visitor spaces are required these need to be carefully designed and located to respond to need and minimise loss of open space.	

				on street, but particular provision may be necessary where road layouts make this problematic and highway safety risk.	<p>Code</p> <p>PA.5 Where needed, visitor spaces should be well positioned and designed to minimise loss of open space.</p> <p>PA.6 Formal visitor spaces should be in clearly marked parking bays, which need to be designed in consultation with the Highways Authority.</p> <p>PA.7 Formal visitor spaces should be surfaced in block paving, with a contrasting colour used to delineate them and offer any agreed markings.</p>	
63	35		Minimum internal dimensions for a double garage should be added.	Agreed	Dimensions added	
64	36	Parking Courtyards	Suggest residents make little or no use of parking courtyards. LCC may resist a reduction of in-curtilage parking provision and may not treat parking courtyards as counting to parking numbers.	Agreed that wording needs stiffening to avoid non-use. Well designed parking courtyards can still provide a viable parking solution, but strict guidelines need to be met.	<p>Change to:</p> <p>Parking courtyards have the potential to provide a parking solution, but the reluctance to use good quality materials and poor design decisions can make them unpleasant and unsafe environments where residents opt to park elsewhere. Specific design criteria are set out here that must be addressed for parking courtyards to be considered appropriate. Additional costs relating to these criteria need to be factored in by applicants prior to committing legally to a land purchase, particularly where it is intended to provide parking for affordable housing.</p>	
65	37	Parking courtyards	These should apply equally to affordable and market housing to be tenure blind.	Agreed	<p>Change to:</p> <p>Design requirements for parking courtyards apply irrespective of tenure.</p>	NWLDC Strategic Housing
66	13	Surface parking	Support section on surface parking	Response welcomed	n/a	Environment Agency
67	38	Surface parking	Reference could be made to the required space and aisle dimensions within the LHDG	Link doesn't exist. Clarification being sought but can be added.	<p>Change to:</p> <p>Updated link.</p>	LCC Highways
68	17	Services & Utilities	Would prefer to see 'ginnels rather than foreshortening gardens. Current approach has a lack of overlooking over access ways.	Noted	No change proposed.	NWLDC Strategic Housing

69	39	Services & Utilities	Revised dimensions for new recycling container system. Should be 4.13 sq/m	Agreed	Change to: 4.13 sq/m	NWLDC Waste Services
70	40		Revised dimensions for height of enclosed stores. Should be 1670mm	Agreed	Change to: 1670mm	
71	41		Revised requirements for collection points. Should be 2.10sq/m per unit	Agreed	Change to: 2.10sq/m	
72	42		Para 2 should be 'containers' not 'crates'	Agreed	Change to: "..bins and recycling containers dominating.."	
73	43		For any private driveways or edge lanes constructed to an adoptable standard, which the Highways Authority won't adopt and there's no bin collection point(s), for the council's waste collection vehicles to traverse them it would require indemnification against any damage to these roads as a result of waste collection vehicles gaining access and egress to empty waste and recycling receptacles. This would need to be secured via a separate legal agreement between the council and the applicant and/or the management company responsible for the roads. The council will not traverse with the waste collection vehicles any roads which are not constructed to an adoptable standard.	Agreed	Change to: Roads must be constructed to an adoptable standard for waste collection vehicles to be able to traverse them. Indemnity against damage must be provided to allow waste collection vehicles to use unadopted roads. This must be secured via a separate legal agreement between the Council and the applicant and/or management company.	
74	14	Waste	Good reference to safety when performing tasks, particularly bin storage and short drag distances	Response welcomed	n/a	LCC public health

CHAPTER 6 Embraces Nature

	SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT NAME	
75	15	General	Support for the section	Response welcomed	n/a	Environment Agency
76	44	Network of spaces	National Forest images to be used	Agreed	Images updated	National Forest Company

77	45	Open space design	Reference to Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework: Principles and Standards should be included. Suggest incorporating the FIVE headline standards: S1 Green Infrastructure Strategy Standard; S2 Accessible Greenspace Standard; S3 Urban Nature Recovery Standard; S4 Urban Greening Factor Standard; S5 Urban Tree Canopy Cover Standard. These could be used as an output measure for developers. https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx	Agreed The Council has an emerging policy on Green and Blue Infrastructure. There is a Green and Blue Infrastructure dated June 2022 that sets out recommendations, which offers a locally distinctive response.	Change to: Designs need to respond to the findings of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Study, as well as the Fields in Trust Standards.	Natural England
78	18		Natural England Green Infrastructure Planning and Design Guide 2023 was highlighted.	Noted The Council is using the Fields in Trust standards, which provides a comparable benchmark.	No action	
79	16	Green Infrastructure	Support for the inclusion of a definition	Response welcomed	n/a	Environment Agency
80	46	Open Space design	Use of photos needs amending to reflect National Forest	Agreed	Images updated	National Forest Company
81	17	Sustainable drainage	Support for wording	Response welcomed	n/a	Environment Agency
82	18		Section supported.	Response welcomed	n/a	Natural England
83	47		Suggested wording: SuDs can contribute to National Forest planting, but only if they are: - Ecologically designed; - Either permanently or seasonably wet; - Surrounded by extensive tree planting; Ponds are more likely to contribute to National Forest planting where they are located adjacent to existing or proposed woodland due to the potential for habitat connectivity.	Agree	Change to: SuDs can contribute to National Forest planting, but only if they are: - Ecologically designed; - Either permanently or seasonably wet; - Surrounded by extensive tree planting; Ponds are more likely to contribute to National Forest planting where they are located adjacent to existing or proposed woodland due to the potential for habitat connectivity.	National Forest Company
84	48	Sustainable drainage	'Must be considered' should be changed to make it more robust.	Agree	Change to:	Ashby de le Zouch Town Council

					'Sustainable drainage (SuDS) must be included...	
85	19	Street trees	Photo 3 is in a constrained location that is unlikely to survive.	The image is illustrative and the health of a tree in this location would depend on the tree pit.	No action.	LCC Highways
86	19		Wording welcomed	Response welcomed	n/a	Environment Agency
87	20		Section welcomed. Trees and other planting in new and existing areas should be diverse to increase biodiversity and resilience, with more use of native species and non-native species with documented value for wildlife.	Response welcomed	n/a	Natural England
88	49		Street trees. Request for an addition that stipulates that trees must be replaced, with a time limit. Trees are removed and not replaced, and this needs to be avoided.	Agree.	Change to: ST9 Dead, failing or vandalised trees must be replaced within the first available growing season.	Ashby de la Zouch Town Council
89	50		Use of more local examples	Agree	Images changed	National Forest Company

CHAPTER 7 Makes Best Use of Land

	SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT NAME	
90	21	Separators and Integrators	This is particularly effective. Explanation of green space acting both as a separator and integrator when adding amenity value is clear and helpful.	Response welcomed	n/a	LCC public health
91	20	Back to Back distance	Is the <i>Back to Back distance</i> diagram illustrative or will planting be required?	The image is illustrative	No action	Davidsons

CHAPTER 8 Enjoys a Strong sense of place

	SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT NAME	
92	51	Building design	Document needs to state that it applies to all tenures	Agreed	<p>Change to:</p> <p>Add in principles section</p> <p>05 Design quality will be expected, regardless of tenure.</p> <p>Code Approach must be introduced and followed through regardless of tenure.</p>	NWLDC Strategic Housing

CHAPTER 9 Has attractive public spaces

	SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT NAME	
93	52	Meeting places	The section reads ' <i>front doors could be grouped to promote social interaction</i> '. This needs to also include clearly defined boundaries to create defensible space and reduce disputes.	Noted. The guidance suggests the potential for grouping doors, but this needs to also include definition of space.	<p>Change to:</p> <p>06. Grouping front doors, together with appropriate definition of territory, can also promote interaction between neighbours on an ad hoc basis.</p> <p>SI.7 Front doors could be grouped to promote social interaction, subject to appropriate definition of territory.</p>	Leicestershire Police

94	53		<p>Seating orientation and placement, particularly in relation to views is strong. Additional guidance could be included on seating design for different groups and ages.</p> <p>Benches are multifunctional, providing physical rest, opportunities to be still and connect with nature, and social interaction.</p>	<p>Agree Additional wording introduced to provide guidance on these issues.</p>	<p>Change to:</p> <p>04 The design of seating should be informed by the different needs of users, so as to encourage use.</p> <p>A range of seating must be designed to cater for different age groups and users and respond to the needs and scale of space.</p>	LCC public health
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CHAPTER 10 Has a mix of uses

	SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT NAME	
95	21	Retail and active frontage	<p>Additional wording is suggested in relation to retail properties discouraging recessed doorways. This is to prevent opportunities for anti-social behaviour.</p>	<p>Recessed doorways and shopfronts may form part of the essential character of a place. A wide range of compensatory issues e.g lighting that are also required within the guidance.</p>	No action proposed	Leicestershire Police
96	22	Local facilities	<p>Recreation, sports pitches and facilities isn't really covered.</p>	<p>The range of facilities provided will be covered in other documents.</p>	No action proposed	NWLDC Health and wellbeing

CHAPTER 11 Has great homes to live in

	SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT NAME	
97	54	Space standards	Ambiguity as the checklist says ' must ' whereas the main text says should .	Agree. Clarification and ambiguity removed.	Change to: 01 Buildings need to be able to accommodate change.	LCC public health
98	55	Gardens and balconies	Section refers to a 1.8m wall against the public realm. This should be amplified by a buffer, such as hedging or foliage, to prevent anti-social behaviour (e.g graffiti)	Agreed	Change to: GB4 Opportunities should be taken to soften walls with hedging, planting or foliage.	Leicestershire Police
99	56		Front doors must be provided for ground floor properties. This is needed to enliven the street scene.	Agreed	Change to: GB8 Front doors must be <i>provided</i> for ground floor apartments.	NWLDC Strategic Housing

CHAPTER 12 Looks to the future

	SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT NAME	
100	22	General	Support	Response welcomed	n/a	Environment Agency
101	57	Energy efficiency	Include reference to <i>Ground Source Heat Pumps</i> as part of the Governments Future Homes Standard requirement. Need to consider position and orientation.	Agreed	Change to: Heat pumps must be located and oriented to minimise visual impact.	NWLDC Strategic Housing

CHAPTER 13 Is well looked after

	SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT NAME	
102	23	Stewardship	Concern about the possible lack of accountability for management companies	Noted	No action proposed	NWLDC Strategic Housing
103	58		Highways need to be designed to adoptable standards	Agreed	Change to: Add Highways need to be designed to adoptable standards.	LCC Highways

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CHAPTER 14 Householders

	SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT NAME	
104	59	45 degree rule	Suggest that must not is replaced by should not	Agreed	Change to: <i>Should not</i>	NWLDC Planning Department
105	60		Request a definition of ' habitable room '	Agreed	Change to: Definition of habitable room added	
106	61		' Must not ' should be replaced with ' should not normally '	Agreed	Change to: <i>Should not</i>	
107	24		Should not apply to ground floor extensions given what can be done under Permitted Development (PD).	This covers buildings larger than those covered under PD.	No action proposed.	JJM Planning
108	25	Separation distances	Needs to be made clear that this is guidance only and other considerations need to be taken into account.	This is already covered in the introduction to the section.	No action proposed.	

109	62	Extensions	Amended wording so that 'generally is included in relation to roof height for extensions.	Agreed	Change to: Add the word <i>generally</i>	
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Appendix Checklist

	SECTION	MAIN ISSUES RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE	ACTION	RESPONDENT NAME
110	63	Checklist in appendix Should read : Have National Forest planting requirements been followed?	Agreed	Change to: Have National Forest planting requirements been followed?	National Forest Company

Staffing and Corporate Implications	No staffing implications are associated with the specific content of this report. Links with the Council's Priorities are set out at the end of the report.
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes
Purpose of Report	To consider the draft Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground for strategic warehousing (January 2026) at Appendix A to this report so that the view of Cabinet can be forwarded Council when it considers the Statement of Common Ground.
Reason for Decision	To consider the draft Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground for strategic warehousing (January 2026) at Appendix A to this report so that the view of Cabinet can be forwarded to Council when it considers the Statement of Common Ground at its meeting on 12 May 2026.
Recommendations	<p>THAT CABINET:</p> <p>1. PROVIDES ANY COMMENTS ON THE STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND RELATING TO STRATEGIC DISTRIBUTION, DATED JANUARY 2026, AT APPENDIX A TO THIS REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION BY COUNCIL AT ITS MEETING ON 12 MAY 2026</p>

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A statement of common ground is formal, written agreement between local planning authorities dealing with cross-boundary strategic matters. Having a statement of common ground in place helps to ensure effective, transparent cooperation, identifying agreed facts and any outstanding issues. Such statements can be an important way to demonstrate effective joint-working (NPPF paragraph 36c).
- 1.2 This report is concerned with the 'Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Strategic Warehousing Need January 2026' (SoCG 2026). The full draft text of the SoCG 2026 is included in Appendix A.
- 1.3 The SoCG 2026 is being considered by Local Plan Committee on 18 March 2026. The Local Plan Committee covering report, which explains the purpose, background and implications of the SocG 2026, is included at Appendix B¹. The content of the Local Plan Committee report provides Cabinet with information it needs to consider this matter.
- 1.4 The March Cabinet agenda papers will be published before the 18 March Local Plan Committee is held. The Committee's comments will be conveyed to Cabinet verbally at the Cabinet meeting itself.

¹, Appendix A to the Local Plan Committee report, which is the SoCG 2026 itself, has been omitted from Appendix B. This is to avoid unnecessary duplication.

2.0 NEXT STEPS

- 2.1 The SoCG 2026 will be considered by each of the signatory Leicester and Leicestershire authorities through their governance processes.
- 2.2 A decision on the statement will be made by Council at its meeting on 12 May 2026. The views of Cabinet and Local Plan Committee will be forwarded to Council to help inform its decision.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	- Planning and regeneration
Policy Considerations:	The Local Plan is required to be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and other government guidance and requirements.
Safeguarding:	None-discernible.
Equalities/Diversity:	An Equalities Impact Assessment of the new Local Plan will be undertaken to accompany the Regulation 19 version of the plan.
Customer Impact:	No issues identified.
Economic and Social Impact:	The SoCG 2026 deals with the provision of new strategic warehousing floorspace which in turn will impact positively on the economy of the district in the form of additional investment and jobs.
Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	The decision, of itself, will have no specific impact. The new Local Plan as a whole, will aim to deliver positive environmental and climate change impacts and these will be recorded through the Sustainability Appraisal.
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	Further consultation on the Local Plan, including its approach to strategic warehousing outline in this report, will be undertaken at Regulation 19 stage.
Risks:	A risk assessment for the new Local Plan has been prepared and is kept up to date. As far as possible control measures have been put in place to minimise risks, including regular risk review.
Officer Contact	Sarah Lee Principal Planning Policy Officer sarah.lee@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

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Appendix A

Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Strategic Warehousing Need (January 2026)

1.0 The Leicester and Leicestershire HMA and FEMA

1.1 The Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) and Functional Economic Area (FEMA) covers the administrative areas of eight local planning authorities and two highways and transport authorities. The eight local planning authorities responsible for plan making are:

- Blaby District Council
- Charnwood Borough Council
- Harborough District Council
- Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
- Leicester City Council (Unitary)
- Melton Borough Council
- North West Leicestershire District Council, and
- Oadby & Wigston Borough Council.

1.2 The two upper tier authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire (L&L), with statutory responsibilities for highways, transport, education, social care, flooding, minerals & waste planning and public health are:

- Leicester City Council (Unitary), and
- Leicestershire County Council.

1.3 This Statement has been prepared jointly by the eight plan making authorities and Leicestershire County Council as an additional signatory given their statutory responsibilities, hereafter referred to as “the Authorities”. The Map in Appendix 1 shows the location and administrative areas covered by this statement. The [Housing & Economic Needs Assessment 2022](#) (HENA) identifies this area as the Leicester & Leicestershire HMA and FEMA.

2.0 Purpose

2.1 In accordance with Paragraph 25 of the NPPF (2024) the key strategic matters addressed in this statement are: the Duty to cooperate and joint working, the L&L strategic warehousing floorspace need to 2046 and the apportionment of strategic warehousing need up to 2046.

3.0 Background and Context

3.1 In 2021 the Authorities published Warehousing and Logistics in Leicester and Leicestershire: Managing Growth and Change (2021) which informed an agreed Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Strategic Warehousing & Logistics Need (September 2021). The 2021 SoCG set out the L&L need for strategic warehousing at the time and next steps to ensure the needs of the sector are appropriately planned for, including the following:

“The Authorities remain committed to cooperating on strategic cross boundary matters, including agreeing the distribution of large warehousing need”

3.2 This SoCG (2026) replaces the previous SoCG (2021) capturing the outcomes of the further joint work and agrees the apportionment of strategic warehousing need across L&L for further testing through plan-making. This Statement will be reconfirmed and updated as necessary.

3.3 Strategic Warehousing facilities are defined as those units with floorspace equal to or greater than 9,000 square metres (sqm) in total.

4.0 **Key Strategic Matters on Which Authorities Agree**

Duty to Cooperate and Joint Working

4.1 The Authorities agree there is a long track record of effective joint working on strategic matters across L&L. The authorities have continuously engaged with each other on the strategic matters set out in this Statement and through the preparation of local plans across the area. This commitment is most clearly evidenced through:

- The continued function of the L&L Members Advisory Group and Strategic Planning Group,
- The joint preparation of evidence including Warehousing & Logistics in L&L Managing Growth and Change (2021) and L&L Strategic Distribution Floorspace Need Update and Apportionment (2025),
- The agreement of a Joint Statement of Common Ground relating to strategic warehousing and logistics need (Sept 2021), and
- The preparation of this Statement.

4.2 More information and details of engagement will be set out in individual authorities' Duty to Cooperate Statements (or equivalent) that accompany local plans. Authorities will continue to work jointly on an ongoing basis.

L&L Strategic Warehousing Need to 2046

4.3 The Authorities agree the Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Distribution Floorspace Needs and Apportionment (Oct 2025) (hereafter referred to as 'the Study') is the most up-to-date cooperatively produced evidence on the needs of the strategic warehousing sector to inform planning across L&L.

4.4 Based on the Study the Authorities agree that L&L needs to provide for 3,969,400sqm of additional floorspace between 2023 and 2046 (1,349,600sqm rail-served and 2,619,800sqm road-served), after allowing for land recycling, as per Table 1 below:

Table 1: Supply-Demand Balance (2023-46) (sqm.)

	Rail-Served	Road-Served	Total
Gross Need		5,256,000	
Land Recycling		-1,286,000	
Additional Floorspace Required	1,349,600	2,619,800	3,969,400
Completions 2023/24	0	112,500	112,500
Commitments April 2024	0	797,700	797,700
Balance	1,349,600	1,709,600	3,059,200

Source: Iceni 2025

- 4.5 The Study has a base date of 1 April 2023. After updating the monitoring to 1 April 2025 (see Appendix 2) the Authorities agree that this updated position leaves a balance of **TBC** sqm at rail-served sites and **TBC** sqm at road-served sites to be planned for to 2046. Appendix 2 will be updated annually.
- 4.6 To 2046 the Study identifies a (theoretical) maximum floorspace capacity across L&L as a whole of 5,905,500sqm compared to the additional floorspace required to 2046 of 3,969,400sqm.
- 4.7 The Authorities intend that the additional floorspace required of 3,969,400sqm of strategic warehousing floorspace (2023 – 2046) will be met in L&L. The Authorities are not aware of any unmet need from neighbouring areas for strategic warehousing floorspace that should be accommodated in L&L.

Apportionment of Additional Floorspace Required to 2046

- 4.8 The Authorities agree that the Study gives strategic guidance on the distribution of future growth and provides a basis and methodology for the apportionment of need which is robust and effective. The study sets out the apportionment by District / Borough as per Table 2 below:

Table 2: Apportionment by District / Borough (Sqm)

District / Borough *	Completions + Commitments		Residual Need Apportioned		Total	Apportionment incl. completions + commitments
	Rail	Road	Rail	Road		
North West Leicestershire	-	221,100	240,000	1,093,600	1,554,700	39%
Harborough	-	257,000	-	566,400	823,400	21%
Hinckley & Bosworth	-	327,000	-	428,800	755,800	19%
Blaby	-	105,100	650,000	0	755,100	19%
Charnwood	-	0	-	80,500	80,500	2%
Total	-	910,200	890,000	2,169,200	3,969,400	

Source: Icen analysis

* District / Borough figures are made up of figures for more than one distinct Area of Opportunity (AO), in some cases.

- 4.9 The Authorities agree the figures in the total column of Table 2 are the agreed apportionment of strategic warehousing floorspace need for each authority for the period 2023-2046. These figures will be tested through each Local Planning Authority's plan making process. The rail served need for Blaby would need to be tested through the DCO process (see para 4.14-4.18 below).
- 4.10 The authorities are preparing plans with different plan periods and agree that the figures in Table 2 will be pro-rated based on the plan period of the relevant authority. Authorities not listed in Table 2 have been apportioned zero floorspace.

NWLDC Apportionment

- 4.11 NWLDC is preparing a new Local Plan for the period 2023-2042. Strategic warehousing sites have been identified for allocation in the Regulation 19 version of

the Local Plan¹. There are sufficient, suitable sites to deliver c756,775sqm of floorspace, meeting the pro-rata apportionment figure for the A/M42 location but not meeting the pro-rata apportionment figures for the M1 J23a & J24/A50 J1 location and for the Bardon area (M1 J22) due to planning constraints and an insufficient supply of available, suitable sites at those locations.

4.12 NWLDC's intended approach is to:

- Allocate suitable sites for strategic warehousing, as described above
- Include a criteria-based policy for proposals on unallocated sites
- Re-evaluate the position when the new Plan is reviewed². This would include an assessment of a) any newly available land in the locations where there is a shortfall; and b) any updated assessment of needs.

4.13 The authorities support and agree NWLDC's approach, which equates to a supply of 12 years (2024 to 2036) based on the pro-rata apportionment figures in Table 2 above. The Authorities agree this is an appropriate way forward in the context of the challenges of planning long-term for this sector, as outlined in para 5.1 below.

Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI)

4.14 The Development Consent Order (DCO) for the HNRFI proposal, mostly located in Blaby District, was refused in March 2025. The DCO application was refused on the basis of most notably insufficient transport modelling evidence assessing the impacts at M1 J21/M69 J3: non-compliance with the road safety requirements; and the highways safety impacts on the village of Sapcote. However, the decision letter agrees that there is a need for the rail-served Proposed Development.

4.15 Whilst not undermining the scale of the issues for refusal, the Study does not dismiss this location and considers that a further application for the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) in the location could be submitted through the DCO process. The proposal could therefore still come forward within the Study period to 2046.

4.16 The Authorities agree that apart from this location and land around East Midlands Airport there are no further rail-served opportunities within the Study area. Given this and the continuing national policy support for SRFI's and the role they play in transferring freight from road to rail, the ability of this site to be rail-served needs to be retained and safeguarded for the future. Proposals for solely road-based strategic B8 floorspace through the Local Plan or speculative planning applications in this location would undermine the identified need for rail-based strategic B8 floorspace and will not be supported.

4.17 However, the Authorities agree that any fresh DCO application must overcome technical challenges, for a strategic rail-served facility meeting the definition of a SRFI, to be an appropriate approach in this location.

4.18 This Statement does not infer support from the relevant Local Authorities for a future rail-served strategic B8 proposal in this location. Each authority will respond to any proposal, through the NSIP/DCO process as appropriate.

¹ North West Leicestershire DC's Local Plan Committee 19 November 2025

² In accordance with NPPF (Dec 2024) Para 34 reviews should be completed no later than 5 years from the adoption date of the plan.

Transport

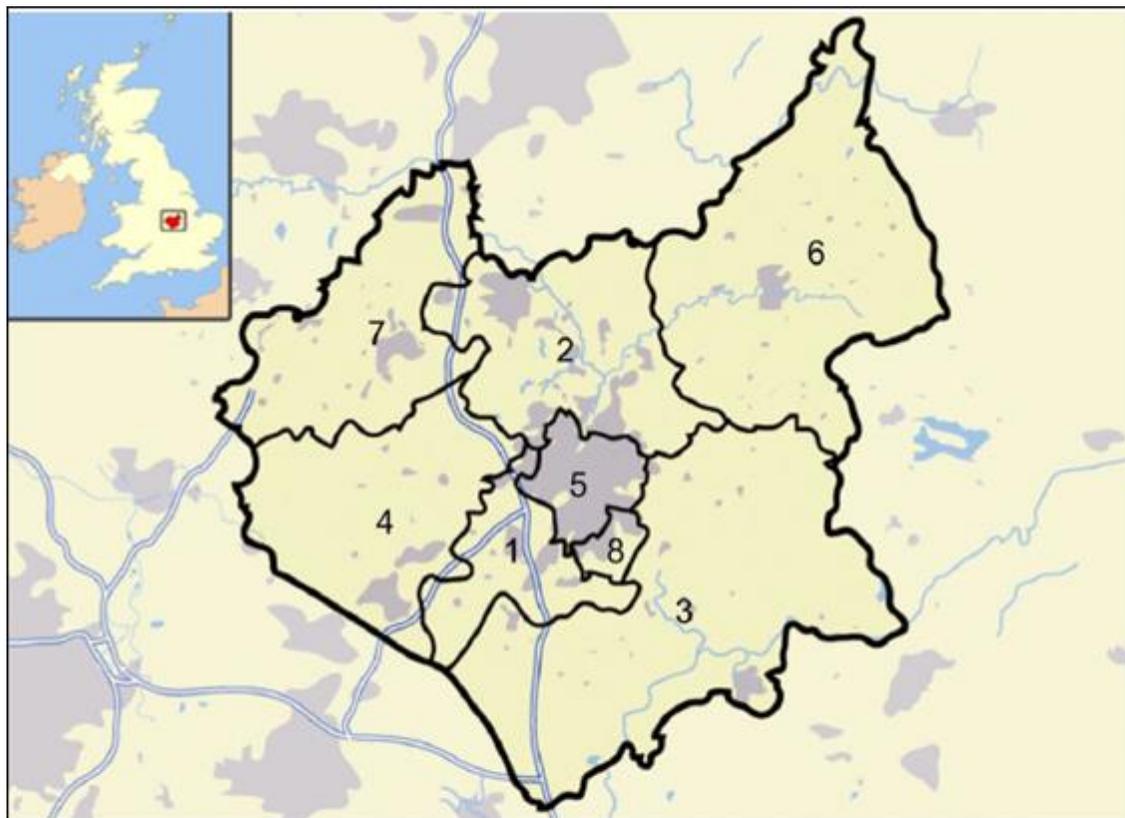
- 4.19 Leicestershire County Council, as the Local Highway Authority, has raised concerns about the ability of the County's road network, and in particular the Strategic Road Network (for which National Highways is the Highway Authority), to accommodate the quantum of strategic warehousing identified. However, it does not wish to frustrate the completion of this SoCG and instead reserves its right to pursue those concerns as appropriate if and when specific sites are brought forward through plan-making and/or as planning applications (including as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects - NSIP). The other authorities note and accept the County Council's position.
- 4.20 The authorities agree the ability of the county's road network, and particularly the Strategic Road Network, to accommodate the quantum of need will be challenging. The figures in Table 2 will therefore need to be tested through each Authority's local plan making process (and DCO process, as appropriate) with the involvement of the relevant transport authorities.

5.0 Maintaining and Updating this Statement

Planning for Future Needs to 2046

- 5.1 Planning for the future needs of this sector is particularly difficult because it is dynamic and operates on a much wider scale than L&L. Opportunities for development are linked to investment in the Strategic Road Network (SRN), with often limited long-term visibility of sites and it also involves sites that come forward through the separate NSIP/DCO process. All this means it can be challenging to make extended forecasts about long-term need.
- 5.2 The Authorities remain committed to cooperating on a plan-led approach to meet need (as set out in para 4.4). The Authorities agree:
- To test their respective apportionment figures (pro-rated) through their Local Plan preparation,
 - To continue to jointly monitor progress in site allocation, consents and delivery at the L&L level, annually,
 - That they, or successor authorities, will review and update the L&L strategic warehousing wide need and apportionment evidence as appropriate.
- 5.3 A new local planning system will be introduced early in 2026 together with the introduction of Spatial Development Strategies (SDS) through which growth related to strategic matters, such as strategic warehouses, will be distributed across a geography that is yet to be determined. The formal duty to produce a SDS is expected in Spring 2026 through secondary legislation, following royal assent of the Planning and Infrastructure Act.
- 5.4 Government is seeking full coverage of up-to-date local plans, and the local plans scheduled for submission by 31 December 2026 are at an advanced stage of preparation. The Authorities agree that the figures set out in Table 2 (pro-rated) will be tested through each Local Authority's local plan process.
- 5.5 The Authorities agree the Duty to Cooperate and joint working is an ongoing process. The process for updating and maintaining this Statement is outlined in Paragraph 5.2 and will be managed through ongoing joint work between the Authorities.

Appendix 1 – Location and Administrative Areas



Key to Map Two

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Blaby District Council | 5. Leicester City Council |
| 2. Charnwood Borough Council | 6. Melton Borough Council |
| 3. Harborough District Council | 7. North West Leicestershire District Council |
| 4. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council | 8. Oadby and Wigston Borough Council |

Appendix 2 – Updated Monitoring Data

Table A: Supply-Demand Balance (2023-2046) at 1 April 2025

	Rail-Served	Road-Served	Total
Gross Need		5,256,000	
Land Recycling		-1,286,000	
Additional Floorspace Required	1,349,600	2,619,800	3,969,400
Completions 2023/24	0	112,536	112,536
Completions 2024/25	0	TBC	TBC
Commitments April 2025	0	TBC	TBC
Balance	0	TBC	TBC

Source: Icenl, updated by LPA Monitoring 2024/25.

Table B: Supply by District / Borough (2023-2046) (sqm) at 1 April 2025

District / Borough*	A	B		C		D		E		F		G	
	Total (from Table 2)	Completions 23/24		Completions 24/25		Commitments at 1 April 2025 project for delivery to 2046		Allocations in an adopted Plan #		Emerging allocations in a Reg19 plan #		Balance	
		Rail	Road	Rail	Road	Rail	Road	Rail	Road	Rail	Road	Rail	Road
NWLDC	1,554,700	0	0	0	0	0	202,652	0	0	0	0	240,000	1,112,048
HDC	823,400	0	59,342	0	0	0	197,696	0	0	0	340,000	0	226,362
H&BBC	755,800	0	53,194	0	TBC	0	TBC	0	TBC	0	0	0	TBC
BDC	755,100	0	0	0	0	0	122,068	0	0	0	0	650,000	-16,968
CBC	80,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	80,500
Leicester	0	0	0	0	TBC	0	TBC	0	0	0	0	0	TBC
MBC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
O&WBC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3,969,400	0	112,536	0	TBC	0	TBC	0	TBC	0	340,000	890,000	TBC

* District / Borough figures are made up of figures for more than one distinct Area of Opportunity (AO), in some cases.

Without planning consent

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APPENDIX B

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY, 18 MARCH 2026



<p>Title of Report</p>	<p>LEICESTER & LEICESTERSHIRE AUTHORITIES STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND – STRATEGIC WAREHOUSING</p>	
<p>Presented by</p>	<p>Sarah Lee Principal Planning Policy Officer</p>	
<p>Background Papers</p>	<p>Item 6 Report to Local Plan Committee 18 November 2025</p> <p>Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Strategic Warehousing & Logistics Need (September 2021)</p> <p>Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Distribution Need and Apportionment Study (2025)</p> <p>National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)</p>	<p>Public Report: Yes</p>
<p>Financial Implications</p>	<p>The cost of preparing the Statement of Common Ground and its supporting evidence is met by all the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities making agreed contributions.</p> <p>Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes</p>	
<p>Legal Implications</p>	<p>The Local Plan is required to be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and other government guidance and requirements.</p> <p>Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes</p>	
<p>Staffing and Corporate Implications</p>	<p>No staffing implications are associated with the specific content of this report. Links with the Council’s Priorities are set out at the end of the report.</p> <p>Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes</p>	
<p>Purpose of Report</p>	<p>To consider the draft Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground for strategic warehousing (January 2026) at Appendix A to this report so that the view of this Committee can be forwarded to Cabinet and Council when they consider the Statement of Common Ground.</p>	

Recommendations	<p style="text-align: center;">THAT THE LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1. PROVIDES ANY COMMENTS ON THE STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND RELATING TO STRATEGIC WAREHOUSING DATED JANUARY 2026, AT APPENDIX A TO THIS REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION BY COUNCIL AT ITS MEETING ON 12 MAY 2026</p>
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A statement of common ground is formal, written agreement between local planning authorities dealing with cross-boundary strategic matters. Having a statement of common ground in place helps to ensure effective, transparent cooperation, identifying agreed facts and any outstanding issues. Such statements can be an important way to demonstrate effective joint-working (NPPF paragraph 36c).
- 1.2 The statement of common ground presented in this report is concerned with strategic warehousing. Once confirmed, the ‘Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Strategic Warehousing Need January 2026’ in Appendix A (‘the SoCG 2026’) will replace an agreed statement on the same subject dating from 2021 which dealt primarily with the following matters of evidence and process:
- it affirmed how much additional land/floorspace needed to be found in Leicester and Leicestershire to meet outstanding needs to 2041 based on evidence dating from 2021.
 - it affirmed the Areas of Opportunity identified in the 2021 study which are the broad areas where the additional floorspace is most likely to be located
 - it affirmed the next steps the authorities agreed to take to ensure needs are properly planned for across the Leicester and Leicestershire area.
- 1.3 More recently, the Leicester & Leicestershire Needs Update and Apportionment Study 2025 (‘the Study’) updates the amount of additional strategic warehousing floorspace needed and recommends how this could be distributed (‘apportioned’) between the Leicestershire authorities. The Study’s findings were reported to 19 November 2025 Local Plan Committee and helped inform the selection of sites for inclusion in the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan.
- 1.4 The SoCG 2026 reflects this latest evidence and explains how the signatory authorities intend to respond to it. Its preparation has been overseen by a steering group of officers and the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities’ Members Advisory Group has agreed it for consideration by the individual authorities.
- 1.5 This report is structured as follows:
- Section 2 summarises key findings from the Study
 - Section 3 describes the content of the SoCG 2026
 - Section 4 sets out the next steps.

2. LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE NEEDS UPDATE AND APPORTIONMENT STUDY (2025)

- 2.1 To recap, the Study finds that there is need for some 3.06million sqm of strategic warehousing floorspace in Leicester and Leicestershire for the 22-year period 2024-46¹. This figure is in addition to sites which already have planning permission.

Table A: Leicester and Leicestershire Need for Strategic Warehousing 2024-46 (additional to sites with planning permission)

Rail-served need	1,349,600 sqm
Road-served need	1,709,600 sqm
Total	3,059,200 sqm

- 2.2 Table B below shows how the Study apportions the floorspace to the authority areas in Leicester and Leicestershire. [Note this table is a 'cut down' version of Table 2 in the SoCG 2026 itself].

Table B: Apportionment by district/borough 2024-46 (additional to sites with planning permission)

North West Leicestershire	1,333,600 sqm
Harborough	566,400 sqm
Hinckley & Bosworth	428,800 sqm
Blaby	650,000 sqm
Charnwood	80,500 sqm
Total	3,059,300 sqm

- 2.3 Table C shows how the Study apportions the additional floorspace to the three highways corridors in North West Leicestershire identified as broad locations for strategic warehousing. The figures in the third and fourth columns have been adjusted to correspond with the Local Plan end date of 2042 (i.e. 18 years rather than 22 years).

Table C: North West Leicestershire apportionment (additional to sites with planning permission)

	2024-2046	2024-2042	
	Floorspace	Floorspace	Land (estimate) ²
M1 J23a/J24; A50 J1	890,600 sqm	728,673 sqm	209 ha
Bardon (J22)	113,800 sqm	93,109 sqm	27 ha
A/M42 J11,12,13	329,200 sqm	269,345 sqm	77 ha
Total	1,333,600 sqm	1,091,127 sqm	313 ha

3. LEICESTER & LEICESTERSHIRE AUTHORITIES - STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND RELATING TO STRATEGIC WAREHOUSING NEED (JANUARY 2026)

- 3.1 The text of the SoCG 2026 is included in Appendix A. The following paragraphs describe its key content section by section.

Section 1 - Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) and Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA)

¹ 2023/24-2045/46

² Assumes 1ha of land can accommodate 3,500sqm of floorspace but, in practice, this ratio will vary from site to site.

- 3.2 The SoCG 2026 affirms that the eight local planning authorities and two highways and transport authorities in the HMA and the FEMA have jointly prepared the SoCG 2026.

Section 2 - Purpose

- 3.3 This section confirms that the SoCG 2026 addresses the following key strategic matters; a) the Duty to Cooperate and joint working; and b) the need and apportionment of strategic warehousing floorspace in Leicester and Leicestershire for the period to 2046.

Section 3 – Background and context

- 3.4 This section confirms that the SoCG 2026 will replace the SoCG dating from 2021. The SoCG 2026 will be reconfirmed and updated as necessary.

Section 4 - Key strategic matters on which the authorities agree

- 3.5 This is the substantive part of the statement.
- 3.6 **Duty to Co-operate and Joint working** (paragraphs 4.1-4.2). This explains the means by which the authorities have worked together effectively on this issue.
- 3.7 **Strategic warehousing need to 2046** (paragraphs 4.3-4.7). The authorities affirm that a) the study is the best evidence of strategic warehousing needs available; b) the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities should provide for 3,969,400sqm of additional floorspace between 2023 and 2046³. Once sites with planning permission are factored in, the need figure reduces to 3,059,200sqm and the intention is that this will be met within Leicester and Leicestershire.
- 3.8 **Apportionment of additional floorspace required to 2046** (paragraphs 4.8-4.10). The SoCG 2026 states that the authorities agree the apportionment shown in Table 2 in the statement (reproduced below).

District / Borough *	Completions + Commitments		Residual Need Apportioned		Total	Apportionment incl. completions + commitments
	Rail	Road	Rail	Road		
North West Leicestershire	-	221,100	240,000	1,093,600	1,554,700	39%
Harborough	-	257,000	-	566,400	823,400	21%
Hinckley & Bosworth	-	327,000	-	428,800	755,800	19%
Blaby	-	105,100	650,000	0	755,100	19%
Charnwood	-	0		80,500	80,500	2%
Total	-	910,200	890,000	2,169,200	3,969,400	

Source: Icen analysis

- 3.9 This Council's total apportionment is the highest by some considerable margin. Note that the figures in the table are for 2023/24 to 2045/46 (22 years).

³ between 2023/24 and 2045/46

3.10 **NWLDC Apportionment** (paragraphs 4.11-4.13). The SoCG 2026 includes a specific section explaining how this Council is responding to the Study's findings in its new Local Plan. The text of the statement, which reflects the decisions this Committee has made most recently at its 19 November 2025 meeting, states the following:

- North West Leicestershire is allocating suitable sites for strategic warehousing in the new Local Plan. The council has identified sufficient, suitable sites to meet the apportionment for A/M42 location but there are insufficient suitable sites in the M1 J23a/J24; A50 J1 and the Bardon (J22) locations
- The new Local Plan will include a criteria-based policy for considering proposals on unallocated sites (new Local Plan Policy Ec4)

3.11 In addition, the 19 November 2025 Local Plan Committee report highlighted the following:

“The NPPF states that Local Plans should be reviewed within 5 years of adoption (paragraph 34). The position will need to be re-evaluated when the new Plan is reviewed. This would include an assessment of any newly available land at J24 and at Bardon, and also an updated assessment of needs” (paragraph 5.7).

3.12 This necessity for review has also been reflected in the wording of the SoCG 2026.

3.13 By signing the SoCG 2026 the other authorities will confirm their support and agreement to this Council's approach (paragraph 4.13). Having such agreement in place will be helpful for the Local Plan Examination.

3.14 The SoCG 2026 does not include equivalent sections for the other authorities. This is because the other authorities have not yet resolved how they are addressing the Study's findings and/or they have sufficient sites to meet their apportionment. This is not considered disadvantageous for this Council.

- Harborough – the sites proposed in the Regulation 19 plan are sufficient to meet HBC's apportionment for its plan period.
- Blaby – has not yet resolved how the Study's findings will be addressed.
- Hinckley & Bosworth - has not yet resolved how the Study's findings will be addressed.
- Charnwood – has very recently adopted its Local Plan and has not yet resolved how the Study's findings will be addressed.

3.15 **Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI)** (paragraphs 4.14-4.18). Whilst the Development Consent Order application for this proposal was refused on highways grounds, the decision letter affirmed that there is a need for the development. The Study identifies that it is feasible that a suitable development could come forward if the reasons for refusal were addressed. The SoCG 2026 identifies that the principle of **rail-served** development in this location should be retained and safeguarded for the future. This does not infer support for any particular future scheme.

3.16 **Transport** (paragraphs 4.19-4.20). This section outlines Leicestershire County Council's over-arching concerns as the local highway authority about the ability of the strategic and local road networks to accommodate the amount of new strategic

warehousing floorspace the Study identifies. The SoCG 2026 affirms that the apportionment figures will need to be tested in greater depth through authorities' own Local Plans.

Section 5 – Maintaining and updating this statement

- 3.17 This section includes an acknowledgement that planning for this sector can be challenging. The authorities agree to a) testing the apportionment figures through their Local Plans; b) jointly monitor planning permissions and their implementation; and c) update the evidence base as appropriate. The statement also commits the authorities to on-going joint work on this topic.

Appendices to the SoCG2026

- 3.18 These contain a map showing the district/borough boundaries and updated monitoring data which will be populated with the 1 April 2025 position.

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 The SoCG 2026 will be considered by each of the authorities through their governance processes.
- 4.2 The SoCG 2026 is being presented to this Council's Cabinet on 24 March 2025. A decision on the statement will then be made by Council at its meeting on 12 May 2026. The views of this Committee and of Cabinet will be forwarded to Council to help inform its decision.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	- Planning and regeneration
Policy Considerations:	The Local Plan is required to be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and other government guidance and requirements.
Safeguarding:	None-discernible.
Equalities/Diversity:	An Equalities Impact Assessment of the new Local Plan will be undertaken to accompany the Regulation 19 version of the plan.
Customer Impact:	No issues identified.
Economic and Social Impact:	The SoCG 2026 deals with the provision of new strategic warehousing floorspace which in turn will impact positively on the economy of the district in the form of additional investment and jobs.
Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	The decision, of itself, will have no specific impact. The new Local Plan as a whole will aim to deliver positive environmental and climate change impacts and these will be recorded through the Sustainability Appraisal.
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	Further consultation on the Local Plan, including its approach to strategic warehousing outline in this report, will be undertaken at Regulation 19 stage.

Risks:	A risk assessment for the new Local Plan has been prepared and is kept up to date. As far as possible control measures have been put in place to minimise risks, including regular risk review.
Officer Contact	Sarah Lee Principal Planning Policy Officer sarah.lee@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

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Staffing and Corporate Implications	No staffing implications are associated with the specific content of this report. Links with the Council's Priorities are set out at the end of the report.
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes
Purpose of Report	To consider the draft Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground relating to housing distribution (December 2025) at Appendix A to this report so that the view of Cabinet can be forwarded to Council when it considers the Statement of Common Ground at its meeting on 12 May 2026.
Reason for Decision	To determine Cabinet's views on the proposed Statement of Common Ground for forwarding to Council.
Recommendations	THAT CABINET: PROVIDES COMMENTS ON THE STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND RELATING TO HOUSING DISTRIBUTION FOR CONSIDERATION BY COUNCIL AT ITS MEETING ON 12 MAY 2026.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A statement of common ground is a formal, written agreement between local planning authorities dealing with cross-boundary strategic matters. Having a statement of common ground in place helps to ensure effective, transparent cooperation, identifying agreed facts and any outstanding issues. Such statements can be an important way to demonstrate effective joint-working (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 36c).
- 1.2 This report is concerned with the *Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing Distribution following NPPF and new Standard Method published December 2025* (SoCG, December 2025). The SoCG is underpinned by an *Updated Housing Distribution Paper* (UHDP, November 2025), prepared by the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities.
- 1.3 The SoCG is being considered by Local Plan Committee on 18 March 2026. The Local Plan Committee covering report, which explains the purpose, background and implications of the SoCG and the UHDP is at **Appendix 1**. The content of the Local Plan Committee report provides Cabinet with information it needs to consider on the issue of housing distribution.

1.4 Appended to the Local Plan Committee report at **Appendix 1** are:

- **Appendix A:** *Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing Distribution following NPPF and new Standard Method published December 2024* (December 2025)
- **Appendix B:** *Updated Housing Distribution Paper* (November 2025)
- **Appendix C:** *FAQs - Updated Housing Distribution Paper and associated Statement of Common Ground* (January 2026)

1.5 The March Cabinet agenda papers will be published before the 18 March Local Plan Committee is held. The comments of the Local Plan Committee will be reported verbally at the Cabinet meeting.

2.0 NEXT STEPS

2.1 The 2025 Statement of Common Ground relating to housing distribution will be considered by each individual authority through their governance processes.

2.2 A decision on the Statement of Common Ground will be made by North West Leicestershire District Council at its meeting on 12 May 2026. The views of Cabinet and Local Plan Committee will be forwarded to Council to help inform its decision

2.3 Subject to the housing figures being agreed by the respective councils, they will be tested through the examinations of the North West Leicestershire, Blaby, Hinckley and Bosworth and Oadby and Wigston Local Plans.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning and regeneration - Communities and housing
Policy Considerations:	The Local Plan is required to be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and other government guidance and requirements. This includes effecting and on-going joint working between strategic policy-making authorities to help determine whether development needs that cannot be met wholly within a particular plan area could be met elsewhere.
Safeguarding:	Non-discernible.
Equalities/Diversity:	An Equalities Impact Assessment of the new Local Plan will be undertaken to accompany the Regulation 19 version of the plan.
Customer Impact:	No issues identified.
Economic and Social Impact:	The Statement of Common Ground results in an increased housing requirement for North West Leicestershire which seeks to build more homes in alignment with the provision of jobs in the district.

Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	The Statement of Common Ground results in a minor increase to the number of homes planned for to date. It is anticipated that this additional requirement can be met on small scale windfall sites, within the Limits to Development
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	Further consultation on the Local Plan, including its approach to strategic warehousing outline in this report, will be undertaken at Regulation 19 stage.
Risks:	A risk assessment for the new Local Plan has been prepared and is kept up to date. As far as possible control measures have been put in place to minimise risks, including regular risk review.
Officer Contact	Joanne Althorpe Principal Planning Policy Officer joanne.althorpe@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH 2026



Title of Report	LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE AUTHORITIES STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND – HOUSING DISTRIBUTION UNDER THE NEW STANDARD METHOD	
Presented by	Joanne Althorpe Principal Planning Policy Officer	
Background Papers	National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) Item 30 Report to Council 6 September 2022 Item 5 Report to Local Plan Committee 25 May 2022 Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground (April 2022) Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) (2022)	Public Report: Yes
Financial Implications	The cost of preparing the Statement of Common Ground and its supporting evidence is met by all the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities making agreed contributions.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	Local planning authorities and county councils are under a duty to cooperate with each other on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries. The Statement of Common Ground has been prepared to demonstrate effective joint working.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	No staffing implications are associated with the specific content of this report. Links with the Council's Priorities are set out at the end of the report.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	

Purpose of Report	To consider the draft Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground relating to housing distribution (December 2025) at Appendix A to this report so that the view of this Committee can be forwarded to Council when it considers the Statement of Common Ground in May 2026.
Recommendations	<p>THAT THE LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE:</p> <p>PROVIDES ANY COMMENTS ON THE STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND RELATING TO HOUSING DISTRIBUTION, AT APPENDIX A TO THIS REPORT, FOR CONSIDERATION BY COUNCIL AT ITS MEETING ON 12 MAY 2026.</p>

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As directed by paragraph 62 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), this Council’s new Local Plan needs to plan for its identified housing need:

“To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning practice guidance. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.”

- 1.2 To date, the new Local Plan has been drafted in accordance with an annual housing requirement of 686 dwellings per annum. This figure was informed by the *Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA, 2022)*.
- 1.3 Following the publication of the 2022 HENA, the *Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground* (April 2022) was presented to this committee on 25 May 2022 and then approved by Council on 6 September 2022.
- 1.4 The *National Planning Policy Framework* was updated in December 2024. As part of this update, the government revised the methodology by which local planning authorities should calculate their local housing need (‘the standard method’). These changes mean it has been necessary to revisit the matter of housing distribution across the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA), particularly for those authorities who intend to submit their Local Plans by the December 2026 deadline and whose Local Plans will be examined against the 2024 NPPF (i.e. North West Leicestershire, Blaby, Hinckley and Bosworth and Oadby and Wigston).
- 1.5 The Leicestershire and Leicestershire authorities have prepared a new Statement of Common Ground (December 2025) which is underpinned by an *Updated Housing Distribution Paper* (November 2025). The Statement of Common Ground has been overseen by the Member Advisory Group (MAG), comprising members from each of the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities. MAG was established to oversee joint work on strategic planning matters but it does not have decision making powers. This

means that the Statement of Common Ground needs to be considered by each of the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities through their own governance procedures.

1.6 This report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 – Sets out the methodology in the Housing Distribution Update Paper with a focus on the implications for North West Leicestershire.
- Section 3 – Sets out the key points in the Statement of Common Ground relating to housing distribution.
- Section 4 – Advises on the implications for the North West Leicestershire Local Plan.
- Section 5 – Sets out the next steps.

1.7 Appended to this report are:

- **Appendix A:** *Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing Distribution following NPPF and new Standard Method published December 2024* (December 2025)
- **Appendix B:** *Updated Housing Distribution Paper* (November 2025)
- **Appendix C:** *FAQs - Updated Housing Distribution Paper and associated Statement of Common Ground* (January 2026)

2.0 LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE UPDATED HOUSING DISTRIBUTION PAPER (NOVEMBER 2025)

Changes to the Standard Method

- 2.1 The 2022 *Housing and Economic Needs Assessment* (HENA) was based upon the standard method at the time of its preparation in March 2022. This showed a need for 5,713 dwellings per annum (dpa) across the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA).
- 2.2 The changes made to the standard method in December 2024 results in a requirement of 5,892 dpa for the HMA (this is the requirement as at May 2025; the figures are updated annually in spring). This represents a 3.1% increase from the 2022 standard method.
- 2.3 Whilst the total amount of housing required across the HMA has increased by a relatively small amount, the distribution of this requirement has changed more significantly. The deletion of the 35% urban uplift previously applied to Leicester City has resulted in a significant decrease in the City's annual housing need and an increase in most other authorities. For North West Leicestershire, the standard method figure has increased by 66% (from 372 to 617 dpa). A comparison of the 2022 and 2025 standard methods is shown in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Comparison of Standard Methods 2022 and 2025

Local Planning Authority	Standard Method 2022 (dpa)	% share of overall housing 2022	Standard Method 2025 (dpa)	% share of overall housing 2025
Blaby	341	6%	539	9%
Charnwood	1,111	19%	992	17%
Harborough	534	9%	735	12%
Hinckley & Bosworth	472	8%	663	11%
Leicester	2,464	43%	1,588	27%
Melton	231	4%	369	6%
NWL	372	7%	617	10%
Oadby & Wigston	188	3%	389	7%
TOTAL	5,713		5,892	

Updated Housing Distribution Paper

- 2.4 The *Updated Housing Distribution Paper* (UHDP) is at **Appendix B** of this report. It has been prepared by Icenl (the authors of the 2022 HENA) and has been informed by discussions with a Steering Group comprising officers at the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities.
- 2.5 The methodology used for apportioning the housing need is based on that set out in the 2022 HENA and adjusted to account for the revised Standard Method figures. Unmet housing need has been apportioned having regard to a range of factors, including the functional relationship of each authority area with Leicester City and the balance of jobs and homes in each authority area.

Plan Making Progress and Timescales

- 2.6 The Leicester and Leicestershire authorities are at different stages of plan preparation and are progressing plans against a different policy backdrop.
- 2.7 The authorities of Charnwood, Harborough, Leicester and Melton have progressed their plans against the 2023 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (or previous versions) and should therefore continue to rely on the 2022 Statement of Common Ground on housing distribution.
- 2.8 North West Leicestershire, together with Blaby, Hinckley and Bosworth and Oadby and Wigston are preparing their plans against the 2024 NPPF which need to be informed by the updated standard method. The UHDP has been prepared to inform these authorities' plans which are all due to be submitted for examination by 31 December 2026.
- 2.9 The starting point for the UHDP is the revised standard method figure for the whole of Leicester and Leicestershire of 5,892 dpa (see **Table 1** above). It uses a base date of 2024 and extends up to 2046. The UHDP factors in the proposed 2042 end date of the

North West Leicestershire Local Plan.

Leicester's Unmet Need

- 2.10 As Leicester's Local Plan covers the period up to 2036, the UHDP assesses the City's unmet need between 2024 to 2036 and from 2036 to 2046.
- 2.11 Between 2024 and 2036, the UHDP identifies an unmet need of 2,455 dwellings, which equates to 205 dpa. This figure is based upon known housing completions (2020 and 2024) and the anticipated supply planned for in the Leicester Local Plan (2024 to 2036).
- 2.12 The UHDP concludes that it is unlikely that Leicester will be able to fully meet its housing need beyond 2036. As the UHDP has been prepared in advance of the City's Local Plan Review, there is currently limited information available on the anticipated housing supply post 2036.
- 2.13 The UHDP has made an informed view on Leicester's unmet need between 2036 and 2046, an approach supported by paragraph 28 of the 2024 NPPF which advises on the preparation of Statements of Common Ground. This informed view combines two approaches: a bottom-up estimate of longer-term supply informed by the City Council and a top-down estimate informed by historical trends of brownfield development in the City, undertaken by Iceni.
- 2.14 The approaches for estimating the City's supply between 2036 and 2046 are described in detail between paragraphs 4.14 and 4.39 of the UHDP. The UHDP estimates an unmet need figure of 8,230 dwellings between 2036 and 2046 (823 dpa). This figure is arrived at by adopting a midpoint between the City Council's estimate of supply and Iceni's analysis of historical brownfield development trends.
- 2.15 **Table 2** shows the anticipated unmet need, based upon the City's 2025 standard method figure of 1,588 dpa.

Table 2: Leicester City Council Unmet Need 2024 to 2046

	2024 to 2036	2036 to 2046
Housing Need (2025 Standard Method)	19,056	15,880
Supply Estimate	16,601	7,650
Unmet Need (total)	2,455	8,320
Unmet Need (dpa)	205	823

Unmet Need from Other Authorities

- 2.16 As shown in **Table 1** above, Oadby and Wigston's local housing need figure has significantly increased from 188 to 389 dpa (an increase of 107%). Under the 2022 SoCG, Oadby and Wigston were planning for 240 dpa. It is material that the boundaries of Oadby and Wigston are tightly defined.

- 2.17 The UHDP is based on the assumption that Oadby and Wigston can meet the 389 dpa requirement within its boundaries **but** it cannot contribute towards Leicester's unmet need.

Apportioning Unmet Need

- 2.18 The agreed unmet need from Leicester is as shown in **Table 2** above. The UHDP apportions the unmet need between the Leicestershire authorities (excluding Oadby and Wigston for the reasons described above). The apportionment is based upon each authority's functional relationship to Leicester and then by aligning homes and jobs.

Functional Relationship to Leicester

- 2.19 Some consultees have stated in previous Local Plan consultations that North West Leicestershire should not take any of Leicester's unmet need because it does not share a physical boundary with the City.
- 2.20 Section 7 of the Housing UHDP provides detail on the approach used to apportion unmet need based on each authority's *functional* relationship with Leicester. This uses a blend of migration and commuting data, recognising that migration information is based on several years of data and more stable view of flows but can be influenced by historical planning assumptions or housing supply distribution; whereas the commuting flow data is influenced by the effects of Covid-19 on working patterns at the time when the 2021 Census was undertaken but does capture some influence of the geography of employment development and changes in commuting since the 2011 Census.
- 2.21 Whilst migration and commuting patterns are undoubtedly influenced by the Leicestershire authorities' spatial relationship to Leicester (demonstrating a stronger relationship with those authorities adjoining the City), the UHDP does demonstrate a functional relationship between North West Leicestershire and Leicester.
- 2.22 **Table 3** below expresses the functional relationship to Leicester as a percentage. The functional relationship percentages are then reapportioned to account for the fact that Oadby and Wigston cannot contribute to the unmet need (as per paragraph 2.17 above).

Table 3: Functional Relationship to Leicester

Local Planning Authority	Functional Relationship to Leicester (Blended Average of Gross Migration and Commuting)	Revised Functional Relationship (Excluding Oadby & Wigston)
Blaby	24.9%	31.5%
Charnwood	24.8%	31.7%
Harborough	10.9%	13.8%
Hinckley & Bosworth	8.9%	11.2%
Melton	3.4%	4.2%
NWL	6.0%	7.5%
Oadby & Wigston	21.1%	0%

- 2.23 The methodology then reapportions the City's unmet need in line with the percentages in **Table 3**, i.e. 7.5% of the unmet need is reapportioned to North West Leicestershire. **Table 4** shows how the reapportionment is applied to North West Leicestershire, taking into account the different unmet need figures up to and post 2036 and adding them to North West Leicestershire's standard method figure of 617 dpa.

Table 4: Initial Apportionment of Unmet Need based on Functional Relationship to Leicester for North West Leicestershire (2024 to 2042)

	Calculation	North West Leicestershire
Functional Relationship to Leicester (%)		7.5%
Contribution to Unmet Need 2024 to 2036 (total)	2,455 x 7.5%	185
Contribution to Unmet Need 2024 to 2036 (dpa)	185/12	15
Contribution to Unmet Need 2036 to 2046 (total)	8,230 x 7.5%	621
Contribution to Unmet Need 2036 to 2046 (dpa)	621/10	62
Implied Requirement 2024 to 2036 (dpa)	617 + 15	632
Implied Requirement 2036 to 2042 (dpa)	617 + 62	679
Implied Requirement 2024 to 2042 (total)	(632 x 12) + (679 x 6)	11,664
Implied Requirement 2024 to 2042 (dpa)	11,664 / 18	648

It should be noted that the figures in Table 4 do not precisely sum due to rounding in the table to one decimal place. The calculations use unrounded figures.

Aligning Homes and Jobs

- 2.24 The next stage in the methodology is aligning homes with jobs. The process is set out in detail at Section 8 of the UHDP.
- 2.25 The starting point for North West Leicestershire is noting that the district has a jobs density figure of 1.14 (jobs to residents aged 16-64). The only other authority in Leicestershire to have a jobs density higher than 1.0 is Blaby. This shows a notable

level of net in-commuting to the district where a higher level of housing could help provide more localised opportunities for living and working in a similar area.

- 2.26 The Council is currently working towards a Local Plan housing requirement of 686 dpa; a figure largely informed by an economic growth scenario in the 2022 HENA. The UDHP revisits the economic growth scenario and for North West Leicestershire, recalibrates it to 2042 (the proposed end date of the Local Plan). This results in a requirement of 544 dpa, compared to the standard method figure of 617 dpa.
- 2.27 As is the case for North West Leicestershire, the updated standard method figures for all the other Leicester and Leicestershire authorities are sufficient to accommodate the economic growth scenarios.
- 2.28 However, the HDUP goes on to factor in a strategic B8 growth scenario, in response to the recently published *Leicester & Leicestershire: Strategic Distribution Floorspace Needs Update and Apportionment* report (October 2025), testing whether the apportionment of strategic B8 need has any impact on the homes/jobs balance or apportionment of housing provision within the HMA.

Table 5: Housing Need – HENA Growth Scenario Adjusted for B8 Apportionment

	Plan period end point	Standard Method (dpa)	Housing Need (dpa) HENA Growth Scenario + B8 apportionment
Blaby	2042	539	614
Charnwood	2046	992	566
Harborough	2046	735	565
Hinckley and Bosworth	2045	663	431
North West Leicestershire	2042	617	690

- 2.29 North West Leicestershire and Blaby are the only authorities where the B8 apportionment methodology results in a figure higher than the standard method. However, the B8 apportionment figure for Blaby (614 dpa) is lower than the functional apportionment figure (669 dpa) and also implicitly assumes that the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (RFI) will be delivered, when there is a degree of uncertainty around this.
- 2.30 North West Leicestershire, on the other hand, is the only authority where the B8 apportionment figure (690 dpa) is higher than the standard method figure (617 dpa) *and* the functional relationship implied figure (648 dpa, as described in Table 4 above).
- 2.31 The HDUP, therefore, proposes that NWL contributes an additional 73 dpa towards the unmet need between 2024 and 2042. The remaining unmet need is then reapportioned between the other five authorities, as shown in **Table 6** below.

Table 6: Final Apportionment of Unmet Need

Local Planning Authority	Revised Standard Method (2025) (dpa)	Proposed Housing Requirement (dpa)	Contribution to Unmet Need	% Contribution	Plan End Date
Blaby	539	654	115	25.1	2042
Charnwood	992	1,133	141	30.8	2046
Harborough	735	797	62	13.5	2046
Hinckley & Bosworth	663	711	48	10.5	2045
Melton	369	388	19	4.2	2046
NWL	617	690	73	15.9	2042
Oadby & Wigston	389	389	0	0	2042
TOTAL	4,304	4,762	458	100	

3.0 STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND RELATING TO HOUSING DISTRIBUTION (DECEMBER 2025)

3.1 The 2025 Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is at **Appendix A** of this report. It confirms that the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities agreed to commission an update to the HENA 2022 Housing Distribution Paper to inform the apportionment of unmet need under the new Standard Method (December 2024).

3.2 The SoCG has been prepared to support the submission of the Blaby, Hinckley and Bosworth, North West Leicestershire and Oadby and Wigston Local Plans as they are directly affected by the changes to the standard method in 2024.

3.3 The key matter for agreement is:

The Leicester and Leicestershire authorities agree to the apportioned contributions to unmet need established through the UHDP and set out in Table 2 [Table 6 of this committee report] which will be used by those authorities submitting a local plan for examination under the NPPF December 2024...

3.4 Other key matters that may impact upon the level of unmet need in the future are:

- That Leicester City Council will begin a Local Plan Review immediately following the adoption of the Leicester City Local Plan 2020 to 2036. This will be informed by additional evidence in due course that will be used to identify the full housing capacity for that review.
- The SoCG assumes that “Oadby and Wigston will just be able to meet its own need from a land supply position but not be able to accept any unmet need from Leicester. Evidence gathering is still being undertaken by the Council in relation to accommodation of the uplifted LHN and when complete, consideration will need to be given to the outcome of this by the HMA authorities.”

3.5 The figures in Table 2 of the SoCG (**Table 6** of this committee report) will remain in place for the submission of Local Plans before 31 December 2026.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL PLAN

4.1 The Updated Housing UHDP proposes an annual requirement of 690 dpa for North West Leicestershire between 2024 and 2042. This is a minor increase of four dwellings per year compared to the 686 dpa planned for to date. Over the 18 year plan period, this is an additional 72 dwellings (or 79 dwellings if a 10% flexibility allowance is added).

4.2 It is the recommendation of officers that the Statement of Common Ground is agreed by Council to assist the timely submission of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan for examination. The SoCG is underpinned by a robust methodology and results in just a minor increase to the Council's housing requirement between 2024 and 2042.

4.3 Officers are confident that this additional amount can be met via small windfall sites (developments of less than 10 dwellings) without the need for allocating any additional housing sites. For example, in the first year of the plan alone (2024/25) there were 57 homes completed on small windfall sites, which will count towards the Council's overall housing need.

4.4 A housing trajectory will be prepared to accompany the Regulation 19 Plan. It will take into account completions on major and small sites between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2026. Officers propose to do further work on small sites windfalls to inform the trajectory.

4.5 Assuming the Statement of Common Ground is agreed by North West Leicestershire District Council, part (1) of Policy S1 (the wording for which was agreed at the 14 August 2024 meeting of this committee) would need amending as follows:

*The housing requirement for North West Leicestershire is ~~686~~ **690** dwellings each year, and a minimum of ~~13,720~~ **12,420** dwellings over the plan period of ~~2020-2040~~ 2024-2042 as set out in the ~~Statement of Common Ground for Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (June 2022)~~ **Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities – Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing Distribution (December 2025)**.*

4.6 In addition, part (4) of Policy S1 would also require the following amendment:

*For the avoidance of doubt, the annualised district housing requirement for five year land supply and Housing Delivery Test purposes is ~~686~~ **690** dwellings each year.*

5.0 NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 The 2025 Statement of Common Ground relating to housing distribution will be considered by each individual authority through their governance processes.
- 5.2 For North West Leicestershire, the Statement of Common Ground is being presented to Cabinet on 24 March 2025. A decision on the Statement of Common Ground will then be made by Council at its meeting on 12 May 2026. The views of this Committee and of Cabinet will be forwarded to Council to help inform its decision.
- 5.3 Subject to the housing figures being agreed by the respective councils, they will be tested through the examinations of the North West Leicestershire, Blaby, Hinckley and Bosworth and Oadby and Wigston Local Plans.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning and regeneration - Communities and housing
Policy Considerations:	The Local Plan is required to be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and other government guidance and requirements. This includes effecting and on-going joint working between strategic policy-making authorities to help determine whether developments needs that cannot be met wholly within a particular plan area could be met elsewhere.
Safeguarding:	None discernible.
Equalities/Diversity:	An Equalities Impact Assessment of the Local Plan review will be undertaken as part of the Sustainability Appraisal.
Customer Impact:	No issues identified.
Economic and Social Impact:	The Statement of Common Ground results in an increased housing requirement for North West Leicestershire which seeks to build more homes in alignment with the provision of jobs in the district.
Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	The Statement of Common Ground results in a minor increase to the number of homes planned for to date. It is anticipated that this additional requirement can be met on small scale windfall sites, within the Limits to Development.
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	Further consultation on the proposed new housing requirement will be undertaken at Regulation 19 stage.
Risks:	<p>A risk assessment for the Local Plan Review has been prepared and is kept up to date. As far as possible control measures have been put in place to minimise risks, including regular Project Board meetings where risk is reviewed.</p> <p>The report highlights the potential risks associated with the issues considered as part of the report.</p>
Officer Contact	Joanne Althorpe Principal Planning Policy Officer joanne.althorpe@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing Distribution following NPPF and new Standard Method published December 2024 (December 2025)

1.0 The Leicester and Leicestershire HMA and FEMA

1.1 The Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) and Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) covers the administrative areas of eight local planning authorities and two transport authorities. The eight local planning authorities responsible for plan making are:

- Blaby District Council
- Charnwood Borough Council
- Harborough District Council
- Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
- Leicester City Council (Unitary)
- Melton Borough Council
- North West Leicestershire District Council
- Oadby & Wigston Borough Council

1.2 The two upper tier authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire (L&L), with statutory responsibilities for transportation, education, social care, flooding, minerals & waste planning and public health are:

- Leicester City Council (Unitary)
- Leicestershire County Council

1.3 This Statement has been prepared jointly by the eight plan making authorities and Leicestershire County Council as an additional signatory given their statutory responsibilities, hereafter referred to as “the authorities”. The Map in Appendix 1 shows the location and administrative areas covered by this statement. The Leicester & Leicestershire Housing & Economic Needs Assessment (June 2022), to which the Updated Housing Distribution Paper (November 2025) relates, identifies this area as the Leicester & Leicestershire HMA and FEMA.

2.0 Background and Context

2.1 In December 2024 the new Standard Method was published alongside a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 12 December 2024). This changed the overall scale of housing to be provided for in the L&L Housing Market Area (HMA) by a relatively small amount, however, the distribution across the L&L HMA significantly changed due to the deletion of the 35% urban uplift. The effect of this was to significantly reduce Local Housing Need (LHN) in Leicester City, whilst the LHN in most other Districts and Boroughs significantly increased.

2.2 Following the publication of the new NPPF, the authorities prepared the “Duty to Co-operate Statement – Transitional arrangements in respect of unmet need” (February 2025). This confirms and clearly sets out how all partners are progressing local plans, and in particular how to deal with the matter of unmet need in the absence of specific

reference to this issue in the Transitional arrangements¹. This Duty to Cooperate Statement (DtC Statement February 2025) is available at Appendix 2.

- 2.3 The L&L Housing & Economic Needs Assessment June 2022 (HENA 2022) was based on the assessment of local housing need using the Standard Method in March 2022. This showed a need for 5,713 dpa across the HMA. The HENA 2022 Housing Distribution Paper set out an agreed methodology for apportioning Leicester City's unmet housing need (at the time of 18,700 homes) and 23ha of employment need (2020 to 2036). Following publication of the new Standard Method and the reduction in Leicester City's LHN, the scale of unmet housing need was significantly reduced. It was therefore necessary to revisit the HENA's Housing Distribution Paper to inform the Local Plans which are utilising the new Standard Method and will be submitted by the December 2026 deadline, together with future Local Plan reviews within the HMA.
- 2.4 The authorities agreed to commission an update to the HENA 2022 Housing Distribution Paper to inform the apportionment of unmet need under the new Standard Method (December 2024).

3.0 Purpose

- 3.1 In accordance with paragraph 25 of the NPPF (2024), the key strategic matters addressed in this statement are: Duty to Cooperate and joint working; L&L housing needs to 2046 under the new Standard Method (December 2024); unmet need to 2046; and apportionment of unmet need to 2046. This statement has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 28 of the NPPF (2024) and will support the submission of four local plans in Leicestershire directly affected by these matters – Blaby District Council, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, North West Leicestershire District Council and Oadby & Wigston Borough Council – by the 31 December 2026 deadline. These four local plans are referred to as Tranche 3 Local Plans in the DtC Statement (February 2025) and hereafter in this statement. This statement will be reconfirmed and updated for subsequent authorities' local plans.

4.0 Key Strategic Matters on which the Authorities agree

Duty to Cooperate and Joint Working

- 4.1 The authorities agree there is a long track record of effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters across L&L and that these include the key strategic matters identified in this statement. The authorities have continuously engaged with each other on the strategic matters set out in this statement and throughout the preparation of Local Plans across the area. This is most clearly evidenced by:
- The continued function of the L&L Members Advisory Group and Strategic Planning Group
 - The joint preparation of evidence, including the update to the 2022 Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2025), L&L Strategic Distribution Floorspace Needs Update and Apportionment (2025), South Leicestershire Joint Transport Evidence

¹ As set out in Annex 1 of the December 2024 NPPF.

(2025), Strategic Growth Options and Constraints Mapping Study (2023), and Strategic Transport Assessment Stage 1 (2023).

- The adoption of a non-statutory Strategic Growth Plan 2018
- The L&L Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs (June 2022) (Appendix 3)²
- The agreement of Joint Statements of Cooperation in 2017, 2018, 2020 and 2021 (available on the [Strategic Growth Plan website](#))

4.2 More information and details of engagement will be set out in individual authority's Duty to Cooperate/Maintaining Effective Cooperation Statements that accompany local plans. Authorities will continue to engage on an ongoing basis.

L&L Housing Needs to 2046 under the new Standard Method (Dec 2024)

4.3 The authorities agree that local housing need is derived using the standard method and that for the 2024-2046 period is as set out in Table 1 below. This table does not apply for local plans being prepared in accordance with the Transition Arrangements set out in Annex 1 of the NPPF (2024) where the previous standard method calculation applies. Individual local plans may have a shorter plan period than to 2046.

Table 1: Local Housing Need, Standard Method, May 2025

Local Planning Authority	Total Housing Need	Houses per year
	2024-2046	2024-2046
Blaby District Council	11,858	539
Charnwood Borough Council	21,824	992
Harborough District Council	16,170	735
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	14,586	663
Leicester City Council	34,936	1,588
Melton Borough Council	8,118	369
North West Leicestershire District Council	13,574	617
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	8,558	389
Leicester and Leicestershire HMA Total	129,624	5,892

4.4 The authorities agree that the NPPF 2023 and L&L Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs (June 2022) apply to local plans that reached examination or Regulation 19 on or before 12 March 2025. This is set out in the DtC Statement (February 2025). For local plans that reached Regulation 19 after 12 March 2025 but before 31 December 2026, the NPPF 2024 (or relevant future iterations)

² Appendices E to J of the June 2022 Statement of Common Ground are available on the Strategic Growth Plan website

and this Statement of Common Ground will apply. These two Statements of Common Ground will co-exist to enable full local plan coverage across L&L.

- 4.5 Leicester City Council will begin a Local Plan Review immediately following the adoption of the Leicester City Local Plan 2020 to 2036. This will be informed by additional evidence in due course that will be used to identify the full housing capacity for that review.

Housing Distribution Update and Unmet Need to 2046

- 4.6 This L&L Statement of Common Ground is supported by evidence from the HENA Updated Housing Distribution Paper (UHDP) produced by Icenl on behalf of the authorities and published on the [Strategic Growth Plan website](#). The update provides a new Housing Distribution Paper to that published to accompany the L&L HENA published in June 2022. The authorities agree that the UHDP sets out the apportionment of Leicester City's unmet housing need in the L&L HMA arising from the use of the new Standard Method up to 2046.
- 4.7 The UHDP recalculates the level of unmet need for Leicester City from 2024 to 2036 to be a total of 2,455 dwellings, based on the new standard method and housing provision figures set out in the Leicester Local Plan. The UHDP also sets out the approach that has been used to identify a housing capacity for the City after 2036. Leicester City has a continuing unmet need for housing; using a proportionate evidence base the UHDP indicates that for the period 2036 – 2046 Leicester City has an estimated unmet need of 8,230 dwellings.
- 4.8 Oadby & Wigston Borough Council has undertaken further evidence to assess the housing capacity and developable and deliverable land within the Borough to accommodate the increase in Local Housing Need from 189 to 389 homes per year. From the evidence available at this time, for the purpose of this Statement of Common Ground, it has been assumed that Oadby & Wigston will just be able to meet its own need from a land supply position but not be able to accept any unmet need from Leicester. Evidence gathering is still being undertaken by the Council in relation to accommodation of the uplifted LHN and when complete, consideration will need to be given to the outcome of this by the HMA authorities.

Housing Requirement Figures for Tranche 3 Local Plans – Apportionment of Unmet Need to 2046

- 4.9 The authorities agree that the apportioned contributions to unmet need established through the UHDP and set out in Table 2 below will be used by those authorities submitting a local plan for examination under the NPPF December 2024 using the current planning system as governed by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 4.10 As circumstances change through the availability of new evidence this will be considered by the authorities and future Statements of Common Ground may be needed. However, to enable proactive, timely local plan-making for the four Tranche 3

Local Plans, the figures in Table 2 below will be used and remain in place for the submission of the four Tranche 3 Local Plans before 31 December 2026. The housing requirement for individual Tranche 3 Local Plans will depend on their plan periods, as the contribution to unmet need is different for the period *to* 2036 and the period *after* 2036.

Table 2: Annualised Apportionment of Unmet Need from 2024 over relevant plan periods

	Revised Standard Method dpa (December 2024)	Proposed Housing Requirement dpa	Contribution to Unmet Need dpa	% Contribution	Plan End Date*
Blaby	539	654	115	25.1	2042
Charnwood	992	1,133	141	30.8	2046
Harborough	735	797	62	13.5	2046
Hinckley & Bosworth	663	711	48	10.5	2045
Melton	369	388	19	4.2	2046
NW Leicestershire	617	690	73	15.9	2042
Oadby & Wigston	389	389	0	0	2042
Leicestershire Total	4,304	4,762	458	100	

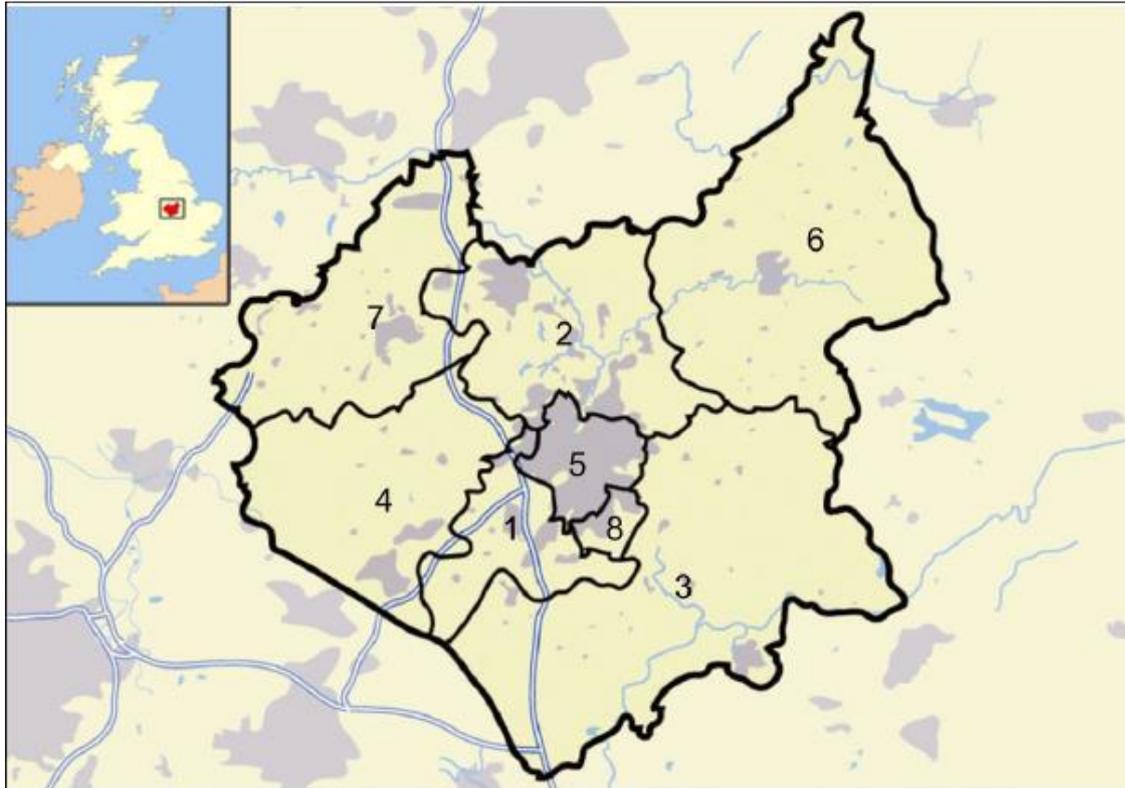
*NB 2046 is used as the default plan end date in the UHDP for non-Tranche 3 local plans.

5.0 Maintaining and Updating this Statement

- 5.1 The authorities acknowledge that this statement is necessary to progress the four Tranche 3 local plans under the current planning system as governed by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 5.2 A new local planning system will be introduced early in 2026 together with the introduction of Spatial Development Strategies, through which local housing needs will be distributed across a geography that is yet to be determined. The formal duty to produce Spatial Development Strategies is expected in Spring 2026 through secondary legislation, following the expected royal assent of the Planning and Infrastructure Bill.
- 5.3 Government is seeking full coverage of up-to-date local plans, and the Tranche 3 local plans are at an advanced stage of preparation. The authorities agree that the figures set out in Table 2 will be tested through each Tranche 3 authority's local plan process.
- 5.4 This statement will be reconfirmed and updated for subsequent authorities' local plans through the joint working of the authorities.

Appendix 1

Map showing administrative areas covered by 2025 Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing Distribution under the new Standard Method



Key to Map

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Blaby District Council | 5. Leicester City Council |
| 2. Charnwood Borough Council | 6. Melton Borough Council |
| 3. Harborough District Council | 7. North West Leicestershire District Council |
| 4. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council | 8. Oadby and Wigston Borough Council |

Appendix 2

**DUTY TO CO-OPERATE STATEMENT
TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS IN RESPECT OF UNMET NEED**

- BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL**
- CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL**
- HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL**
- HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL**
- LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL**
- LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**
- MELTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**
- NORTH-WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**
- OADBY AND WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this joint statement is to support the progression and adoption of our current and future Local Plans and Spatial Development Strategy (SDS).
- 1.2 To confirm the agreed position of all partner councils on arrangements to deal with existing unmet need and to confirm the agreed way forward through the Dec 2024 NPPF transitional period into the new Planning system.
- 1.3 This statement will be used to provide an updated position to appointed Inspectors for Plans currently being Examined, and for use in preliminary discussions with PINs for emerging Plans.

2. Background

- 2.1 L&L councils have a long standing and exemplary track record in joint planning as evidenced by the preparation and adoption of the [Strategic Growth Plan LCC](#) and the [2022 Publication of Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs - Strategic Growth Plan LCC | Strategic Growth Plan LCC](#)
- 2.2 L&L councils are keen to maintain momentum on Local Plan making, are committed to supporting plan progression through the changing legislative context and to begin to make preparations for emerging SDS requirements.
- 2.3 This statement confirms how all partners have agreed to progress plans, and in particular how to deal with the matter of unmet need in the absence of specific reference to this issue in the Transitional arrangements as set out in Annex 1 of the December 2024 [National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK](#)

3. Current position

- 3.1 The current position in respect of Plan preparation and adoption in the area is set out in Table 1 Plan Tracker below:

Table 1: L&L DtC Plan Tracker					
Tranche	Council	Plan stage/LDS Position	Relevant NPPF/Plan system	Agreed Mechanism to determine Unmet Need to support Plan	Comments
Tranche 1: Already Submitted. Projected adoption 2025	Charnwood Borough Council	Main Examination Hearings completed 2024; to be reconvened early 2025 Adoption Spring/Summer 2025	Dec 2023 NPPF	June 2022 SoCG Examination Document EX43	Reconvened hearing session to consider CIL Viability Assessment report in early 2025
	Leicester City	Main Examination Hearings completed November 2024 Modifications Consultation planned Spring 2025 Adoption Summer 2025	Dec 2023 NPPF	June 2022 SoCG Examination Document SCG/1	Commitment to Immediate Review on adoption of Plan
Tranche 2: Submission anticipated 2025. Projected Adoption 2026	Melton	Partial Review Reg 19 Consultation to be concluded by February 2025	Dec 2023 NPPF (Transition Period Under para 234 of 2024 NPPF)	June 2022 SoCG	
	Harborough	Reg 19 Consultation March 2025	Dec 2023 NPPF (Transition Period Under para 234 of 2024 NPPF)	June 2022 SoCG	

Tranche	Council	Plan stage/LDS Position	Relevant NPPF/Plan system	Agreed Mechanism to determine Unmet Need to support Plan	Comments
Tranche 3: Submission anticipated 2026, Projected Adoption 2027/28+	Blaby	Reg 19 Consultation: July 2025	December 2024 NPPF (post transition)	Future SoCG to replace 2022 SoCG based upon new Standard methodology and L&L HENA/capacity evidence	Provisions of 2022 SoCG remain valid until replaced by new SoCG
	Hinckley & Bosworth	Reg 19 Consultation: to be confirmed	December 2024 NPPF (post transition)	Future SoCG to replace 2022 SoCG based upon new Standard methodology and L&L HENA/capacity evidence	Provisions of 2022 SoCG remain valid until replaced by new SoCG
	North- West Leicestershire	Reg 19 Consultation to be confirmed	December 2024 NPPF (post transition)	Future SoCG to replace 2022 SoCG based upon new Standard methodology and L&L HENA/capacity evidence	Provisions of 2022 SoCG remain valid until replaced by new SoCG
	Oadby & Wigston	Consultation on Regulation 19 Plan concluded February 2025	January/February 2025 Reg 19 consultation carried out under Nov 2023 NPPF. Call for Sites and new capacity assessment work to be undertaken during 2025 to inform new Plan/further Reg 19 under December 2024 NPPF (post transition)	2025 Reg 19 carried out under 2023 NPPF; complies with 2022 SoCG commitments which remain valid until replaced with future SoCG based upon new Standard methodology and HENA/L&L capacity evidence	Provisions of 2022 SoCG remain valid until replaced by new SoCG/new Plan

Tranche	Council	Plan stage/LDS Position	Relevant NPPF/Plan system	Agreed Mechanism to determine Unmet Need to support Plan	Comments
Tranche 4: Future Plans	New Spatial Development Strategy (SDS)	2025 1) Geography Scoping 2) Initial evidence gathering	New Planning system TBC	Strategic Plan will supersede SoCG approach and confirm Strategic Housing distribution	Potential Funding/Pilot Bid to MHCLG?
	Plans delayed or deferred due to LGR/Devolution	Not currently anticipated	New LURA/ P&Inf Bill/Devolution Bill Planning system TBC	In line with future SDS	
	Plans failed to be found sound from Tranches 1-3	Not currently anticipated	New LURA/ P&Inf Bill/Devolution Bill Planning system TBC	In line with future SDS	

4. Agreed Position

- 4.1 The partners **agree** that for Local Plans progressing and adopted under the 2023 NPPF (Tranche 1 of Table 1 above) and those under the transitional arrangements as set out in Para 234 of Annex 1 of the 2024 NPPF (Tranche 2 of Table 1 above), the scale and distribution provisions for unmet need as set out in the 2022 Statement of Common Ground remain valid and in force.
- 4.2 The partners **agree** that progression of Local plans beyond the Transitional arrangements of the December 2024 NPPF will need to be informed by updated needs and capacity assessments relevant to those plans and the partners commit to working together to accommodate the area's needs once those results are known.

**Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground
relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs (June 2022)**

1.0 The Leicester and Leicestershire HMA and FEMA

1.1 The Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) and Functional Economic Area (FEMA) covers the administrative areas of eight local planning authorities and two transport authorities. The eight local planning authorities responsible for plan making are:

- Blaby District Council
- Charnwood Borough Council
- Harborough District Council
- Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
- Leicester City Council (Unitary)
- Melton Borough Council
- North West Leicestershire District Council
- Oadby & Wigston Borough Council

1.2 The two upper tier authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire (L&L), with statutory responsibilities for transportation, education, social care, flooding, minerals & waste planning and public health are:

- Leicester City Council (Unitary)
- Leicestershire County Council

1.3 This Statement has been prepared jointly by the eight plan making authorities and Leicestershire County Council as an additional signatory given their statutory responsibilities, hereafter referred to as “the authorities”. The Map in Appendix D shows the location and administrative areas covered by this statement. The Housing & Economic Needs Assessment 2022 (HENA) identifies this area as the Leicester & Leicestershire HMA and FEMA.

2.0 Purpose

2.1 The key strategic matters addressed in this statement are; Duty to Cooperate; L&L Housing and Employment Needs to 2036; Unmet Need to 2036; and the Apportionment of unmet need to 2036. This statement will be reconfirmed and updated as necessary for subsequent authorities’ Local Plans.

3.0 Key Strategic Matters on which Authorities Agree

Duty to Cooperate

3.1 The authorities agree there is a long track record of effective joint working on strategic matters across L&L. The authorities have continuously engaged with each other on the strategic matters set out in this statement and throughout the preparation of Local Plans across the area. This is most clearly evidenced through:

- The establishment of the Leicester & Leicestershire Members Advisory Group
- The joint preparation of evidence, including the Housing & Economic Needs Assessment (2022), Strategic Growth Options & Constraints Study (2022), and Strategic Transport Assessment (2022).

- The adoption of a non-statutory [Strategic Growth Plan 2018](#) which includes ‘notional’ housing figures.
- The preparation of a Joint Sustainability Appraisal to consider reasonable alternatives for apportionment of Leicester’s unmet need to 2036.
- The agreement of Joint Statements of Cooperation in 2017, 2018, 2020 and 2021 (Appendix E, F, G and H)

3.2 More information and details of engagement will be set out in individual authorities Duty to Cooperate Statements that accompany Local Plans. Authorities will continue to engage on an ongoing basis.

The June 2021 Statement of Common Ground (Appendix H)

3.3 The June 2021 Statement (Appendix H) was agreed by all authorities and included the following:

“The authorities agree to carry out the following programme of work to inform the apportionment of unmet need from Leicester to the L&L Districts/Boroughs:

- *Housing and Economic Needs Assessment*
- *Strategic Growth Options and Constraints Mapping*
- *Strategic Transport Assessment*
- *Sustainability Appraisal*

This work will be commissioned in Spring 2021 and used to inform a Statement of Common Ground apportioning unmet need which is anticipated to be completed in Winter 2021/2022.”

3.4 The Housing & Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) and the Sustainability Appraisal are now complete. These are the key pieces of evidence informing this Statement of Common Ground apportioning Leicester’s unmet need to 2036.

3.5 The Strategic Transport Assessment and the Strategic Growth Options & Constraints Mapping take a longer-term perspective that will inform the next steps for the [Strategic Growth Plan](#) to 2050 and will form part of the strategic evidence for Local Plans. This work will be completed later this year.

L&L Housing Need to 2036

3.6 The authorities agree the appropriate way to calculate local housing need is using the current standard method set out in government guidance which currently uses the 2014 based household projections. The authorities agree that local housing need (2020 - 2036) is as follows:

Table 1: Local Housing Need

Local Planning Authority	Total Housing Need 2020 – 2036	Houses per year 2020 - 2036
Blaby District Council	5,456	341
Charnwood Borough Council	17,776*	1,111*
Harborough District Council	8,544	534
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	7,552	472
Leicester City Council	39,424	2,464
Melton Borough Council	3,696	231
North West Leicestershire District Council	5,952	372
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	3,008	188
Leicester and Leicestershire HMA Total	91,408	5,713

* In accordance with government guidance Charnwood's Local Housing Need is set using the data from 2021 (including household growth for the 2021-31 and 2020 affordability ratio) as it submitted its Local Plan for Examination in December 2021.

- 3.7 The Government's current standard method for calculating housing need suggests L&L need to provide 91,408 homes (5,713 per year 2020 to 2036).
- 3.8 The NPPF requires authorities to have a clear understanding of the land available in their area to meet housing need through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment (SHLAA). In L&L, the SHLAAs have been prepared using an agreed methodology across the HMA as a whole.
- 3.9 Appendix A and B to this Statement have been prepared using the outputs of the standard method for calculating housing need and SHLAAs. It provides a summary of the need for new homes, and the theoretical capacity of both the HMA and each local authority.
- 3.10 To 2036 there is a theoretical capacity for some 173,721 homes across the HMA as a whole (Appendix B). When set against the need of 91,408 (2020-36), the authorities agree there is flexibility to meet L&L housing need within the HMA, including unmet need.

L&L Employment Need to 2036

- 3.11 The authorities agree the appropriate way to calculate employment need is using the jointly prepared Housing and Economic Needs Assessment 2022 (HENA) unless an up-to-date local assessment has been undertaken. Based on the HENA and local assessments of employment land need the authorities agree the need is as follows:

Table 2: Employment Land Needs

	Need		Total	Source
	B1	B2/B8 (small)		
Blaby	9.1	29.0	38.1	2021-36 need, HENA 2022
Charnwood	7.5	35.7	43.2	2021-36 need, HENA 2022
Harborough	6.8	39.3	46.1	2021-36 need, HENA 2022
H&B	4.2	53.4	57.6	2021-36 need, HENA 2022
Leicester	46,100 sqm (2.3 ha)	67.3	69.6	2019-36 need, City EDNA 2020
Melton	2	38.1	40.1	2021-36 need, HENA 2022
NWL	8.9	31.8	40.7	2021-36 need, HENA 2022
O&W	1	3.1	4.1	2021-36 need, HENA 2022
L&L Total	41.8	297.7	339.5	

3.12 Table 2 above shows L&L have to provide 340 hectares of employment land to 2036. Appendix C has been prepared using outputs from the HENA and local assessments of employment need, and employment land supply. It provides a summary of the need for new employment land, and the supply of both the FEMA and each local authority. To 2036 there is a supply for some 354 hectares across the FEMA as a whole (Appendix C). When set against the need of 340 (2021-36), the authorities agree there is flexibility to meet L&L Employment Need within the FEMA, including unmet need.

Unmet need to 2036

3.13 The authorities agree that Leicester City Council is the only authority in the HMA to have declared and quantified (with evidence) an unmet need 2020 to 2036. Assisting Leicester to meet its unmet need is therefore a key element of the Duty to Co-operate across the HMA.

3.14 Leicester City Council consulted on a Draft Local Plan (regulation 18) in September to December 2020, with a view to publishing the Submission Version (regulation 19) in 2021. Leicester City declared an unmet housing need in February 2017 (Appendix I) which remained unquantified while further evidence was gathered to support the publication of their Draft Local Plan. During this time several authorities have adopted local plans.

3.15 The L&L authorities were made aware of the potential scale of unmet need in December 2019. Consultation on the Leicester Draft Local Plan (and associated evidence) was delayed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic until September to December 2020.

3.16 Leicester's Draft Local Plan consultation indicates a potential unmet need of 7,742 homes and 23 Hectares of employment land (B2 General Industrial and B8 Small Warehousing Units less than 9,000 sq.m) 2019 to 2036.

3.17 However, immediately after the consultation closed in December 2020 the Government published a new standard method for calculating housing need. The new method increased Leicester's housing need by 35%, adding a further 9,712 homes to their need between 2020 and 2036 (607 homes per year).

- 3.18 Although the supply of homes in Leicester may evolve as their local plan progresses, providing for this amount of additional homes in the City would require more than a doubling of the allocations set out in their recent Draft Local Plan. In this context the City consider that it will not be possible to meet NPPF policy obligations of a sound and deliverable plan, and so in the revised PPG context (Paragraph: 035 Reference ID: 2a-035-20201216) it will be necessary to seek to agree a Statement of Common Ground to deal with the recent increase in housing need.
- 3.19 Leicester's standard method Local Housing Need figure is now 2,464 homes per year generating a need for 39,424 dwellings over the 2020-36 period (see Table 1 above). This includes the 'cities and urban areas uplift' and the 2021 affordability ratios published in March 2022. Appendix A and B, and the June 2021 Statement of Common Ground (Appendix H) was informed by the evidence from the Leicester's Draft Local Plan which sets out the City's capacity to accommodate growth over this period as 20,721 dwellings. An unmet need of 18,700 dwellings is therefore identified based on the evidence at the current time. An unmet need figure of 18,700 dwellings is a reasonable working assumption for the City's unmet housing need to 2036.
- 3.20 The authorities acknowledge that the quantity of Leicester's unmet need may change as the Local Plan progresses (e.g. as evidence on land supply is developed further or the need for homes changes (see section 4.0 below)). The authorities therefore agree a working assumption of Leicester's unmet need of 18,700 homes and 23 Hectares of employment land (2020 – 2036). These figures are subject to testing through the Leicester Local Plan.

Apportionment of Leicester's Unmet Need (2020 – 2036)

- 3.21 The authorities agree the L&L Statement of Common Ground Sustainability Appraisal (2022), the Housing & Economic Needs Assessment (2022) and the associated Housing and Employment Distribution Papers provide the latest cooperatively produced evidence to inform the apportionment of Leicester's unmet needs.
- 3.22 This work is based on the agreed working assumption of an unmet need from Leicester of 18,700 homes. The work considers housing provision across the HMA as a whole having regard to a range of factors including, the functional relationship of each District/Borough with Leicester City, the balance of jobs and homes in each district/borough, and deliverability of the distribution of development. When all of these factors are brought together, they address the unmet need and result in a redistributed housing provision that differs from the standard method starting point. This evidence has informed the following apportionment:

Table 3: Apportionment of Leicester City’s Unmet Local Housing Need 2020 to 2036

Local Planning Authority	Average Annual unmet housing need contribution 2020 to 2036 (dwellings)*
Blaby District Council	346
Charnwood Borough Council	78
Harborough District Council	123
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	187
Melton Borough Council	69
North West Leicestershire District Council	314
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	52
Total	1,169

*Note: the figures are presented as annual averages 2020-36. This does not imply that an authority’s unmet need apportionment must be phased evenly over this period. It will be for each Local Plan to determine appropriate phasing.

- 3.23 The authorities agree that the figures in the Table 3 above represent the agreed apportionment by District/Borough (apart from Hinckley & Bosworth – see Matters Not Agreed in Section 4 below), of the unmet housing need for Leicester, in order to meet the overall objectively assessed need for additional housing within the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area to 2036. These figures are subject to testing through each individual Local Planning Authority’s plan making.
- 3.24 Based on the agreed working assumption of an unmet need from Leicester of 23 hectares of employment land (B2 - General Industrial and B8 - Small Warehousing units less than 9,000sq.m), the joint evidence has informed the following apportionment:

Table 4: Apportionment of Leicester City’s Unmet Employment Need 2020 to 2036

Local Planning Authority	Apportionment (Hectares)
Blaby District Council	0
Charnwood Borough Council	23
Harborough District Council	0
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	0
Melton Borough Council	0
North West Leicestershire District Council	0
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	0
Total	23

3.25 The authorities agree that the figures in the Table 4 above represent the agreed apportionment by District/Borough, of the unmet employment need for Leicester, in order to meet the overall objectively assessed need for employment land within the Leicester and Leicestershire FEMA to 2036. These figures are subject to testing through each individual Local Planning Authority's plan making.

4.0 Key Strategic Matters on which Authorities Do Not Agree

4.1 Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) do not agree to the step in the HENA Housing Distribution Paper (2022) methodology from paragraph 6.21 to 6.24 and the subsequent table 6.9 which apportions 187 dwellings per year of Leicester's unmet housing need. HBBC note the capping of the redistribution of Charnwood's numbers to 1189 and believe that the accommodation of the resulting 187 dpa shortfall should be tested as part of each LPAs Local Plan process, including the current Charnwood Local Plan. HBBC consider that an apportionment of 102 dwellings per year (85 dwellings per year lower than the apportionment in Table 3) to be an initial justified apportionment of Leicester's unmet need for HBBC to test through their Local Plan work and through further strategic work. HBBC disagrees with the methodology from para 6.21 to 6.24 and the subsequent table 6.9 as it is not suitably justified and does not follow the evidence. The use of stock growth is not a measure of deliverability. It does not consider housing need, does not reflect market demand or the deliverability of developing housing in a particular area. The capping of redistribution based on 1.4% stock growth levels is considered to be arbitrary and is not supported by the evidence. Para 6.24 seeks to justify the uplift for HBBC by referencing job opportunities but this has already been considered earlier in the methodology.

4.2 HBBC is of the view that the June 2021 SoCG was clear that the apportionment of unmet need would be informed by 4 pieces of work. Only two of these pieces have been completed, the HENA and the SA. Therefore, as reflected in this Statement, the apportionment is a starting point for testing and may be amended based on the completion of the Strategic Growth Options and Constraints mapping work and the Strategic Transport Assessment and the subsequently updated Sustainability Appraisal and the outcome of any local plan 'testing'.

4.3 The other authorities do not agree with HBBC and consider the apportionment of 187 dwellings per year in Table 3 is justified by the evidence.

5.0 Maintaining and Updating this Statement

5.1 The authorities acknowledge the Government intend to reform the planning system and have previously consulted on potential future changes, including the Planning for the Future - White Paper (August 2020). The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, introduced to Parliament on 11th May 2022, proposes a number of reforms to the planning system, including potentially repealing the 'duty to cooperate' contained in existing legislation.

5.2 At present these reforms do not impact housing need or emerging Local Plans as they are proposals (rather than legislation) and could be subject to significant change before achieving Royal Assent and becoming law.

5.3 Government advice is that authorities should get up-to-date Local Plans in place (Appendix J) and some authorities in L&L are at an advanced stage of plan preparation.

- 5.4 The authorities agree the Duty to Cooperate is an ongoing process, and should the amount of unmet need change significantly, the apportionment of unmet need will be jointly reviewed to assess whether it needs updating. The process for updating and maintaining this statement will be managed through ongoing joint work between the authorities.
- 5.5 The above apportionment (Table 3 and 4 above) is intended to be implemented through individual local plans. These figures will therefore need to be tested through each authority's Local Plan process. The authorities agree that if an authority's local plan process identifies that it is not able to provide for their own objectively assessed needs as well as any unmet need apportioned in this statement (as set out in paragraph 11b of the NPPF), the apportionment of unmet need will need to be jointly reviewed and updated as necessary. The process used for this review will be proportionate to the scale of the issue and should not cause undue delay to the preparation of Local Plans.

Appendix A - Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Land Supply, 2020 to 2031

The table below compares housing land supply to local housing need based on the Governments Standard Method.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Authority	Local Housing Need 2020 - 2031	Commitments¹ projected for delivery 2020 to 2031	Allocations in an adopted Plan²	Emerging allocations in a draft plan²	Allowance for small site or windfall development to 2031	Total Projected Delivery to 2031 (B+C+D+E)	SHLAA Capacity to 2031³	Total Theoretical Capacity to 2031 (F+G)
Blaby	3,751	4,467	758		240	5,465	5,408	10,873
Charnwood	12,221	7,080	1,385	7,894	640	16,999	10,529	27,528
Harborough	5,874	3,693	4,332		864	8,889	5,873	14,762
Hinckley & Bosworth	5,192	2,692	557		584	3,833	15,902	19,735
Leicester City	27,104	9,047		6,602	1,650	17,299	0	17,299
Melton	2,541	2,704	3,145		189	6,038	1,108	7,146
NW Leics	4,092	5,862	790		320	6,972	3,821	10,793
Oadby & Wigston	2,068	1,010	1,203		189	2,402	0	2,402
HMA total	62,843	36,555	12,173	14,496	4,676	67,897	42,041	109,938

¹ Includes sites under construction; with planning permission (including sites with a resolution to grant), as at 31/03/2020

² projected delivery up to 31/03/2031; includes allocated sites from local and neighbourhood plans

³ To avoid duplication SHLAA sites that have planning permission or are allocated in an adopted or emerging plan have been removed from this figure

Appendix B - Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Land Supply, 2020 to 2036

The table below compares housing land supply to local housing need based on the Governments Standard Method.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Authority	Local Housing Need 2020 - 2036	Commitments¹ projected for delivery 2020 to 2036	Allocations in an adopted Plan²	Emerging allocations in a draft plan²	Allowance for small site or windfall development to 2036	Total Projected Delivery to 2036 (B+C+D+E)	SHLAA Capacity to 2036³	Total Theoretical Capacity to 2036 (F+G)
Blaby	5,456	4,918	984		440	6,342	18,956	25,298
Charnwood	17,776	8,820	1,990	9,024	1,040	20,874	19,938	40,812
Harborough	8,544	3,693	5,679		864	10,236	9,819	20,055
Hinckley & Bosworth	7,552	2,992	1,497		949	5,438	23,130	28,568
Leicester City	39,424	9,865		8,456	2,400	20,721	0	20,721
Melton	3,696	2,704	3,891		334	6,929	3,635	10,564
NW Leics	5,952	7,013	1,427		520	8,960	13,281	22,241
Oadby & Wigston	3,008	1,010	1,203		189	2,402	3,060	2,402
HMA total	91,408	41,015	16,671	17,480	6,736	81,902	91,819	173,721

¹ Includes sites under construction; with planning permission (including sites with a resolution to grant), as at 31/03/2020

² projected delivery up to 31/03/2036; includes allocated sites from local and neighbourhood plans

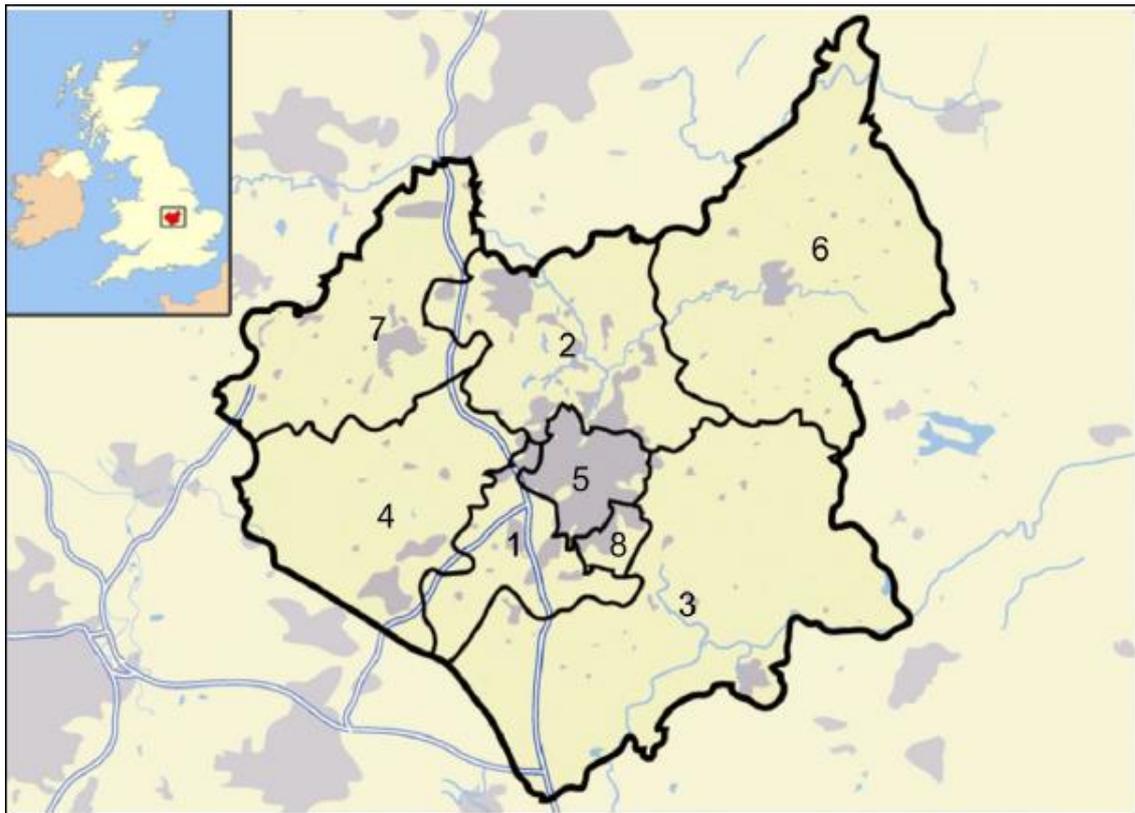
³ To avoid duplication SHLAA sites that have planning permission or are allocated in an adopted or emerging plan have been removed from this figure

Appendix C - Employment Demand and Supply Balnace 2021 to 2036 (excluding Strategic Warehousing)

	Need		Supply		Balance		Notes*
	B1	B2/B8 (small)	B1	B2/B8 (small)	B1	B2/B8 (small)	
Blaby	9.1	29.0	10.5	13.3	1.4	-15.7	2021-36 need, HENA '21 . Supply based on permissions pipeline. Mixed permissions divided by use class. Supply at April 2020
Charnwood	7.5	35.7	15.1	66.7	7.6	31.0	2021-36 need, HENA '21. Supply based on Local Plan trajectory Exc. Loughborough Science and Enterprise Park.
Harborough	6.8	39.3	18.0	41.7	11.2	2.4	2021-36 need, HENA '21 . Supply based on net permissions pipeline at April 2020
H&B	4.2	53.4	4.2	38.9	0.0	-14.5	2021-36 need, HENA '21. Supply based on Local Plan Reg19 Feb '22
Leicester	46,100 sqm (2.3 ha)	67.3	43,000 sqm (2.1 ha)	44.0	-3,100 sqm (-0.2 ha)	-23.3	2019-36 need / office supply, City EDNA '20 (sqm, converted to ha at 2.0 ratio) Industrial supply based on Local Plan Reg19 Feb '22.
Melton	2	38.1	2.6	34.4	0.6	-3.7	2021-36 need, HENA '21 . Supply based on permissions and allocations pipeline. Supply at April 2020
NWL	8.9	31.8	17.1	36.5	8.2	4.7	2021-36 need, HENA '21 . Supply based on permissions and allocations pipeline. Supply at April 2020
O&W	1	3.1	2.8	5.7	1.8	2.6	2021-36 need, HENA '21 . Supply based on permissions and allocations pipeline. Supply at April 2020
L&L Total	41.8	297.7	72.4	281.2	30.6	-16.5	Excludes 50 ha at Loughborough Science and Enterprise Park. Excludes -44,600 sqm offices for Leicester

Source: Various as identified in notes

Appendix D – Location and Administrative Areas



Key to Map Two

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Blaby District Council | 5. Leicester City Council |
| 2. Charnwood Borough Council | 6. Melton Borough Council |
| 3. Harborough District Council | 7. North West Leicestershire District Council |
| 4. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council | 8. Oadby and Wigston Borough Council |

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Updated Housing Distribution Paper

Final Report

Iceni Projects Limited on behalf of Leicester
& Leicestershire Local Authorities

November 2025

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ON BEHALF OF LEICESTER
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Icen Projects ('Icen') worked with the local authorities across the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area ('L&L HMA') in 2021/22 to prepare a Housing Distribution Paper. This was prepared as part of a wider Housing and Economic Needs Assessment ('HENA') to inform the preparation of local plans within the HMA. Its purpose was to provide an interim redistribution of unmet housing needs arising from Leicester to support the agreement of a Statement of Common Ground ('SOCG') and the preparation of local plans.
- 1.2 The 2022 HENA was based on the assessment of local housing need using the standard method in March 2022, at the time of its preparation. This showed a need for 5,713 dpa across the HMA as assessed in the 2022 HENA. The Government has since revised the standard method, through changes to national planning policy and guidance in December 2024. It is therefore necessary to revisit the Housing Distribution Paper to inform the Local Plans which are yet to be submitted within the HMA or are not progressing under transitional arrangements.

2. LOCAL HOUSING NEED

Housing Need in the 2022 HENA

- 2.1 The 2022 HENA assessed housing need using the national policy framework and guidance in place at the time of its preparation – the July 2021 NPPF and associated Planning Practice Guidance. Local housing need was calculated using the standard method which had four steps:
- Step 1: Annual Household Growth – drawn from the 2014-based Household Projections;
 - Step 2: Affordability Uplift – with a 0.25% adjustment applied for every 1% where the median house price to workplace-based earnings ratio was above 4;
 - Step 3: Cap – the affordability uplift was capped where the Step 2 need was more than 40% above that in a recently adopted plan, or 40% above the higher of the household growth or plan figure where the existing local plan was more than 5 years old;
 - Step 4: Cities & Urban Areas Uplift – a further 35% uplift was applied to the figures to Leicester, as one of the top 20 largest cities and urban areas in England.

Revised Standard Method

2.2 In December 2024 the Government revised the Standard Method alongside wider changes to the NPPF. The revised Standard Method is fundamentally different – and uses the current dwelling stock as a baseline (rather than household projections), to provide greater consistency across England; with a higher affordability ratchet then applied. Local housing need is thus now to be calculated using the revised standard method:

- Step 1: Baseline – a baseline figure is calculated as 0.8% of existing housing stock, using the latest stock estimates data published by Government;
- Step 2: Affordability Uplift – with a 0.95% adjustment applied for every 1% which the median house price to workplace-based earnings ratio was above 5. The affordability ratio is taken as the average over the 5 most recent years of data.

2.3 The figures change annually in the Spring, and if affordability ratios remain consistent are likely to increase modestly (as the stock baseline increases). However, the calculations should generally be more stable over time because of the effect of taking a 5-year average of the affordability ratio figures (as this should reduce the scale of potential year-on-year variation in the affordability uplift).

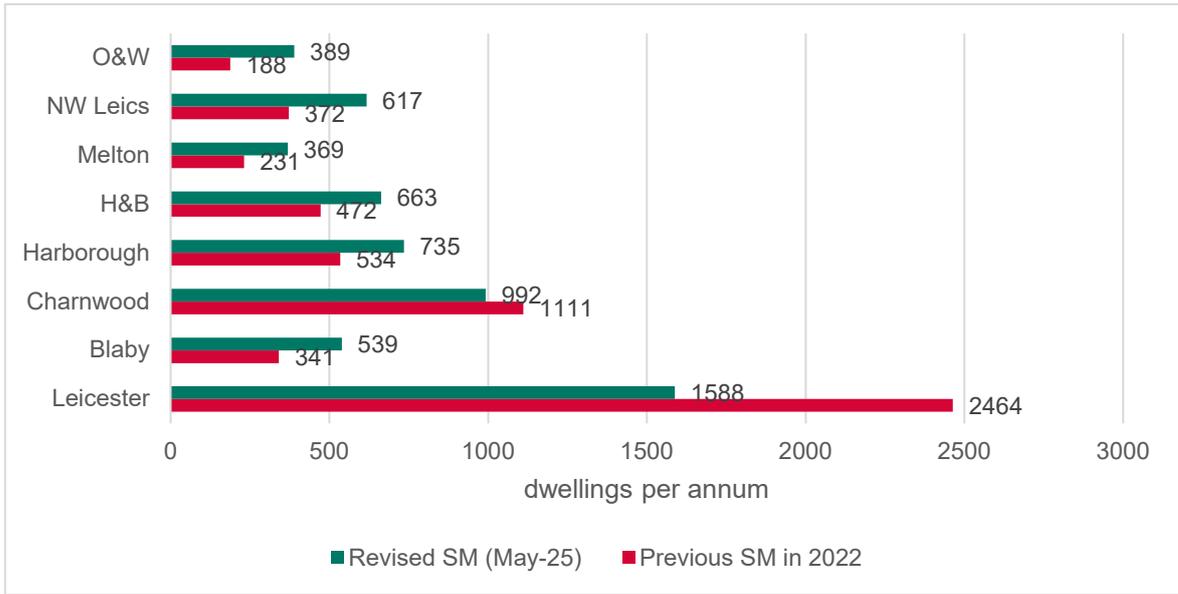
2.4 As the chart below shows, the scale of increase in housing need across the Leicester and Leicestershire HMA with the revised Standard Method is modest – with the revised method and latest data pointing to a scale of need 3% greater than that in the 2022 HENA and associated SOCG.

Table 2.1 Annual Housing Need across Leicester and Leicestershire – Comparison

	Annual housing need - Leicester & Leicestershire (dpa)
Standard Method in SOCG1 (2022 HENA)	5,713
Revised Standard Method (May-25)	5,892
% Increase	3.1%

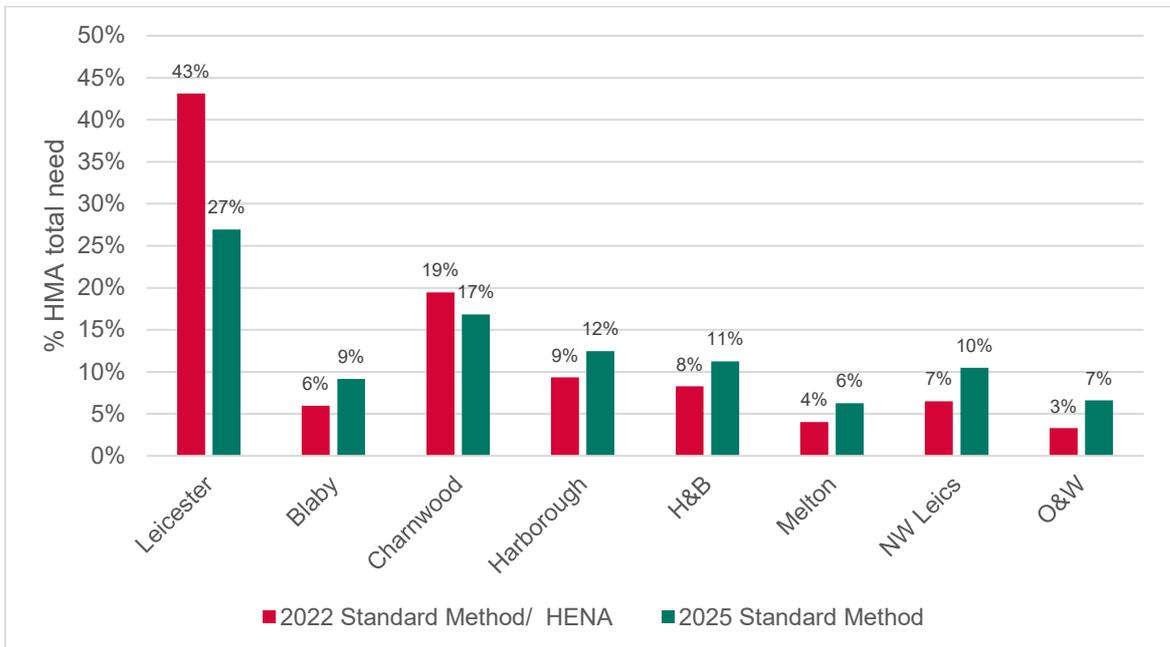
2.5 However the distribution of housing need is fundamentally different, as Figure 2.1 shows. Leicester’s local housing need figure has fallen by 36% and Charnwood’s by 11%; whilst we see increases in all other areas, with the scale of housing need more than doubling in Oadby & Wigston.

Figure 2.1: Distribution of Housing Need across Leicester & Leicestershire



2.6 The chart below shows how the share of the HMA's housing needs has shifted through revisions to the standard method. The revised methodology itself thus shifts housing need away from Leicester¹ and provides a revised starting point for considering housing distribution in this Paper.

Figure 2.2: Share of Overall Housing by LPA



¹ Leicester's LHN figure in 2022 included the 35% cities and urban areas uplift which was a component of the standard method at that time.

3. PLANMAKING PROGRESS AND TIMESCALES

- 3.1 Different L&L local authorities are at different stages in the preparation of Local Plans and indeed are progressing plans against a different national policy backdrop.
- 3.2 Melton Borough has an adopted Local Plan and concluded a Regulation 10a Review in September 2023, against the national policy position and housing need methodology at that time, which concluded that its housing requirement is up-to-date. Melton is progressing a partial update of its Local Plan and undertook a Regulation 19 consultation in early 2025. However the partial update is not amending the housing requirement policy.

Plans progressing under Transitional Arrangements

- 3.3 Charnwood and Leicester City submitted their local plans in December 2021 and September 2023 respectively. The Examination of both plans is ongoing but is progressed under the transitional arrangements provided for in Para 234 in the 2024 NPPF. They are thus being examined against the 2023 NPPF, and associated PPG, and thus for these plans their local housing need is set using the previous Standard Method approach. These plans are projected to be adopted in early 2026.
- 3.4 Harborough consulted on a Regulation 19 version of its Local Plan in Spring 2025. Its draft Plan is similarly covered by the transitional arrangements in Para 234 in the NPPF and its housing policies have been prepared on the basis of the previous standard method. Melton's partial update is also covered by the transitional arrangements in NPPF Para 234 and has been prepared on the basis of the 2023 NPPF. The Regulation 19 consultation took place in January and February 2025. The scope of the partial review does not include the housing requirement which its Regulation 10A Review² concluded remains up-to-date³. In any case the housing requirement within its adopted Plan sets out a stepped trajectory which from 2025 onwards provides for 320 dpa which is more than 80% of the Borough's local housing need calculated using the revised standard method (as per NPPF Footnote 83) as shown in Figure 2.1 herein.
- 3.5 These local plans – in Charnwood, Leicester and Harborough – have been informed by the 2022 HENA and associated 2022 SOCG on housing distribution; whilst the Melton adopted Local Plan created headroom to accommodate unmet needs from Leicester City as addressed in the 2022 SOCG.

² Melton Local Plan Five Year Review, Sept 2023

³ The Melton Local Housing Needs Assessment (July 2024) confirms this conclusion

Plans progressing under 2024 NPPF

- 3.6 Plans which are progressing under the revised (2024) NPPF and using the revised Standard Method are those for Blaby, Hinckley & Bosworth, North West Leicestershire and Oadby & Wigston. Plans in these areas are all expected to be submitted in 2026. They will therefore need to be informed by the revised standard method.

Agreed Position on Unmet Needs

- 3.7 The L&L LPAs (with the exception of Harborough) have agreed through a DtC Position Statement that Local Plans which have been progressed against the 2023 NPPF (or previous versions), and those progressing under the transitional arrangements, should continue to rely on the 2022 Statement of Common Ground on housing distribution, which remains valid and in force. This includes the local plans in Charnwood, Harborough, Leicester, and Melton. However those plans progressing under the 2024 NPPF will need to be informed by updated needs and capacity assessments relevant to those plans and the partners have committed to working together to accommodate the area's needs once those results are known.
- 3.8 This revised Housing Distribution Paper has been prepared to inform, and is of relevance to, those plans which are progressing under the 2024 NPPF; and in due course to the review (at the appropriate future point) of other plans in the HMA. The timings of such future plan reviews may however be affected by proposals for local government reorganisation in Leicester and Leicestershire.
- 3.9 These principles are important, as a 'mix and match approach' would serve to inflate the scale of housing need across the housing market area as a whole, resulting indicatively in a need figure 11% above the current standard method. This arises because the revised standard method results in a different distribution of housing provision within the HMA than the standard method figures at the time of the HENA's preparation.
- 3.10 **This Updated Housing Distribution Paper thus takes as a starting point the revised standard method figure of 5,892 dpa across the Housing Market Area.**

Timescales

- 3.11 The L&L LPAs have agreed that this updated Housing Distribution Paper should use a 2024 base date and look over a period up to 2046. The base date is consistent to the baseline data used in the standard method; whilst the end point reflects the timescales for local plan preparation and the need for plans to look 15 years beyond the point of adoption (NPPF Para 22). The housing requirement figures for individual local authority districts need to consider and take account of the relevant plan period – which for emerging local plans in Blaby and North West Leicestershire runs to 2042 and in

Hinckley & Bosworth to 2045. Conclusions are therefore drawn over different timeframes, reflecting the different plan periods for different LPAs.

4. LEICESTER'S UNMET NEED

- 4.1 A key building block for considering housing distribution is the scale of housing provision which can be accommodated in Leicester City. Icenis has sought to segment the analysis to consider unmet need to 2036, as there is good quality information on residential land supply over this period; and then unmet needs beyond 2036, for which the quality of information available is weaker and hence there is less precision regarding the potential scale of unmet need.

Unmet Need to 2036

- 4.2 Leicester's draft Local Plan covers a plan period to 2036. The Plan is currently at Examination, with a consultation on Main Modifications having been undertaken and the Inspectors' Report awaited. Policy SL01 sets a target minimum requirement of 20,730 dwellings over the plan period from 2020-36.
- 4.3 The provision anticipated between 2024-36 can be calculated by subtracting completions over the initial 2020-24 period from the plan requirement. Over this 4 year period, completions of 4,129 dwellings were achieved. This generates a residual requirement of 16,601 dwellings, as shown in the table below.
- 4.4 If the residual housing requirement of 16,600 homes (2024-36), which the draft Local Plan makes provision for, is compared to the revised standard method figure for the City (1,588 dpa), a shortfall of 2,455 dwellings arises in Leicester between 2024-2036. This represents the scale of unmet need to 2036.

Table 4.1 Residual Housing Requirement in Leicester, 2024-36

	Dwellings - Leicester
Local Plan Housing Requirement, 2020-36	20,730
Completions 2020-24	4,129
Residual Requirement, 2024-36	16,601
Standard Method Housing Need – Annual	1,588
Housing Need, 2024-36 (1588 dpa)	19,056
Shortfall to 2036	2,455

- 4.5 This figure of 2,455 dwellings is treated as a working assumption for the unmet need from Leicester to 2036 based on the plan position at this time.
- 4.6 In due course, the review of Leicester’s Local Plan will need to review the supply position and progress in terms of actual delivery, consider what appropriate supply-side buffer is necessary and may set a revised housing requirement. However the above unmet need figure is based on the best available current evidence.
- 4.7 For the avoidance of doubt, it is not appropriate - for the purpose of this Paper - to have regard to the former standard method calculations (such as those set out in the 2022 HENA) for the reasons set out in Section 3 above.

Unmet Need beyond 2036

- 4.8 It appears unlikely that Leicester will be able to fully meet its housing need beyond 2036. However there is limited information currently available on what the supply position might be as the current draft Local Plan looks to 2036 and this Paper is being prepared in advance of a Local Plan Review.
- 4.9 In contrast to the Leicestershire local authorities, the majority of housing supply in Leicester comes forward on brownfield, previously-developed sites (PDL). Leicester’s existing evidence, including its 2022 SHELAA, have considered the deliverability and developability of sites over the current plan period to 2036 only. The last data from call for sites was some time ago, in Spring 2022, and in any case, the City Council’s experience is that few sites tend to get put forwards through such processes – with many simply progressing straight to pre-app and planning applications. Icenis experience, which chimes with this, is that **there is typically limited ‘visibility’ of supply in urban areas beyond a 10 year period looking forwards.**
- 4.10 These factors mean that it is difficult at this point to be definitive on what the land supply position might be beyond 2036, and equally it is extremely difficult to quantify what it might be with any degree of accuracy. Furthermore, it is unusual for an assessment of unmet need to be undertaken (and in

particular for unmet need to be declared) before a detailed interrogation of the supply position has been undertaken. We are not aware of an instance in another local authority where this has occurred. The Leicester and Leicestershire authorities are seeking to plan proactively in this regard.

- 4.11 The NPPF, in advising on the preparation of Statements of Common Ground as part of collaboration on strategic matters such as this, sets out that:

“Plans come forwards at different times, and there may be uncertainty about the future direction of relevant development plans or the plans of infrastructure providers. In such circumstances strategic policy-making authorities will need to come to an informed view on the basis of the information available, rather than waiting for a full set of evidence from other authorities.”⁴

- 4.12 In these terms, this Paper seeks to provide an informed view on the potential scale of unmet need from Leicester over the 2036-46 period based on the information available at the time of writing. As further information becomes available on Leicester’s residential land supply, such as informed by future evidence as its Local Plan Review progresses, it may be necessary to revisit and update the assessment of unmet need and any associated SOCGs. This would be consistent with what is envisaged in NPPF Para 28 and is taken into account in the approach and methodology set out herein.

- 4.13 In the context of the information currently available, two approaches have been used to assess and draw conclusions on the potential indicative scale of unmet need: i) bottom-up estimates of longer-term supply which are informed by the City Council’s understanding of the potential longer-term contribution of different areas within the City; and ii) top-down estimates which are informed by an analysis of historical trends in brownfield development in the City. These are then drawn together by IcenI to estimate unmet need from Leicester over the 2036-46 period. These have been discussed with the City Council, County Council and other Leicestershire LPAs through the Steering Group meetings as part of preparing this Paper.

Approach A: Bottom-Up Assessment of Supply

- 4.14 The first approach represents estimates from Leicester City Council of the potential longer-term supply based on the information currently available. This is based on estimates of the following supply over the 2036-46 period:

- Estimate of the longer-term capacity of the Central Development Area (CDA): 1,300 dwellings;

⁴ NPPF (December 2024) Paragraph 28

-
- Estimate of large site windfalls outside of the CDA: 1,710 dwellings;
 - Indicative new strategic site allowance: 500 dwellings; and
 - Small site windfall allowance: 2,140 dwellings (214 dpa).
- 4.15 The 2022 Leicester Central Development Area Residential Capacity Study considered potential development sites in the short, medium and longer-term. To inform this Paper, the City Council has considered sites within the CDA which have been delivered and potential sites in the CDA area which are not already included within the supply in the emerging Local Plan to 2036. It has excluded sites which fall within Conservation Areas as it considers substantial redevelopment in these areas is unlikely. Applying a density assumption of 75 dwellings per hectare (dph), it initially estimates that the remaining potential supply in the CDA could yield 3,900 dwellings. A discount of two-thirds (66%) is then applied to this to reflect the City Council's concerns around deliverability, given issues with complex or fragmented land ownerships, contamination, flooding and other development constraints. This informs its assessment of the projected yield from the CDA area of 1,300 dwellings between 2036-46.
- 4.16 The 1,300 dwelling figure therefore represents an estimate from the City Council of the potential maximum longer-term yield from sites in the CDA.
- 4.17 The second and third components of supply reflect estimates from Leicester City Council of potential additional windfall development on large sites outside of the CDA; and an indicative allowance of 500 dwellings from a new (as yet undefined) strategic site.
- 4.18 The final component of the supply then reflects an allowance for small-site windfall development on sites of < 10 dwellings. This is based on the evidence in the 2022 SHLAA which considered completions on small sites in Leicester over the 2015-22 period, which averaged 214 dpa.
- 4.19 Drawing these two components together, the City Council has **estimated a supply position of 5,650 dwellings over the 2036-46 period.**
- 4.20 The City Council notes the potential for a diminishing supply of land for residential development in the CDA given the significant residential development which has already taken place, which includes development of the Leicester Waterside area and loss of office space through Permitted Development. It also recognises the significant impact which high-density development of Purpose-

built Student Accommodation (PBSA) has had on housing delivery historically which given the prospects for growth in student numbers in the future may not be replicated.⁵

- 4.21 The City Council does not envisage further significant greenfield land site release in the next Local Plan (such as green space, playing fields or allotments) at the current time; albeit that this will evidently need to be considered through the Local Plan Review in due course.
- 4.22 Icení would however note that the current Local Plan is largely based on evidence prepared prior to Covid-19. The current Plan seeks to generally protect existing commercial space. Our experience is that the growth of e-commerce will reduce requirements for physical retail space over time. Similarly, there is potential that changing working patterns may further reduce the overall scale of office floorspace (whilst equally emphasising a ‘flight to quality’). Updated evidence will need to consider these issues as part of the City’s future Local Plan Review, which might release additional commercial space for residential redevelopment or conversion. These issues will need to be considered as part of the City’s Local Plan Review.

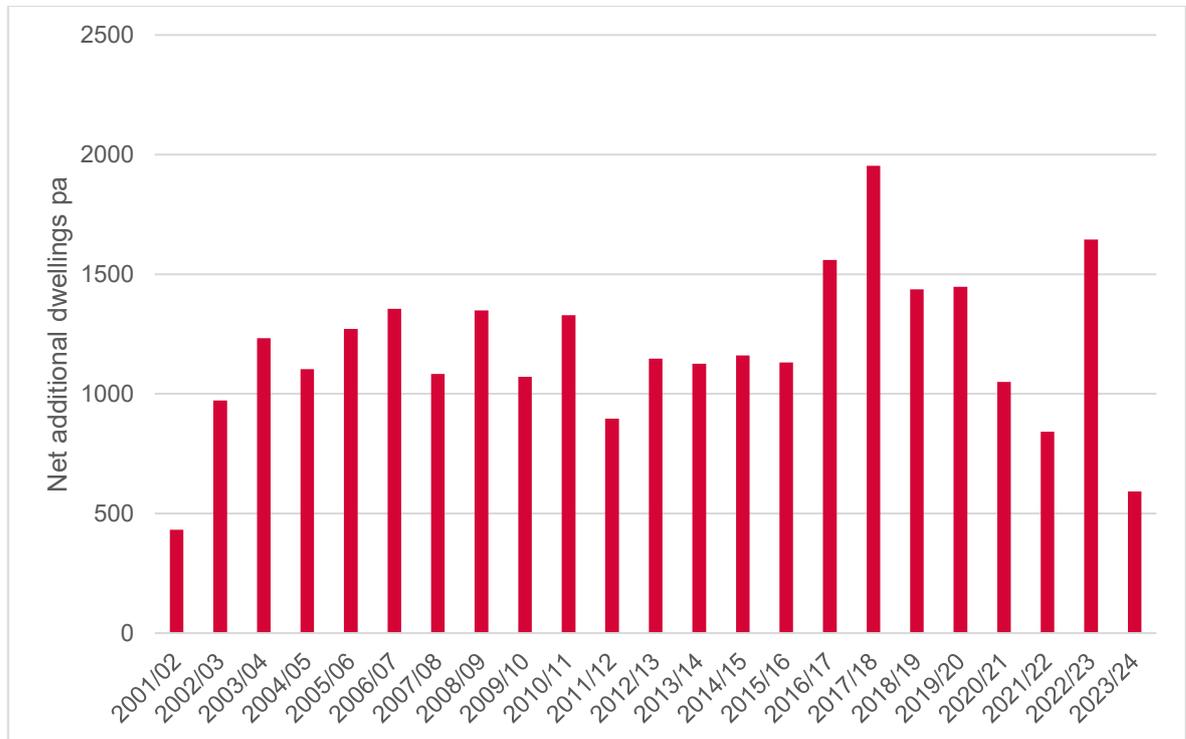
Approach B: Top-down Assessment of Potential Brownfield Supply

- 4.23 In the context of the limited visibility or clear evidence on residential land supply beyond 2036, Icení has sought to consider an alternative, top-down approach to estimating the brownfield land supply in the City based on past development trends.
- 4.24 Historical housing completions in Leicester are set out as ‘net additional dwellings’ in the City Council’s Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) (the latest of which relates to the period to March 2022). These correspond with the figures in MHCLG Live Tables on net additional dwellings and are based on the Housing Flows Reconciliation (HFR) data submitted annually by the City Council to Government. We replicate historical housing completions in Leicester in Figure 4.1 below, drawing on both datasets.
- 4.25 Housing delivery is evidently somewhat cyclical, with lower delivery between 2011-16 and since 2020 than in intervening years. Housing delivery has also dropped off significantly in recent years as rising build costs, higher finance costs and other regulatory issues (including around building safety) have affected scheme viability. These issues are equally impacting development in other cities and larger urban areas. Completions volumes have also been significantly influenced by delivery of Purpose-built Student Accommodation.

⁵ Icení would note that this is a demand-side rather than supply-side factor

4.26 However it is appropriate to focus on supply-side factors in assessing the City’s land supply and potential to meet housing need. 96% of Leicester’s Core Strategy requirement (1280 dpa) has been met over the plan period to date (2006-24).

Figure 4.1 Historical Housing Delivery in Leicester



Source: Leicester City Council Monitoring; MHCLG Live Table

4.27 Average annual housing delivery (across all types of sites) has varied over time but falls between 1,115 – 1,282 dwellings per annum (dpa) as shown in Table 4.2. The longer-term average, covering different economic cycles, is of 1,228 dpa. This covers periods of both weaker and stronger market conditions.

4.28 These levels of historical development are substantially above the City Council’s estimate of potential supply post 2036 (at an equivalent of 565 dpa). IcenI has therefore sought, for comparative purposes, to consider what future supply might look like based on historical trends.

Table 4.2 Average Net Additional Dwellings Delivered in Leicester

	Net additional dwellings
5 Year Average (2019-24)	1,115
10 Year Average (2014-24)	1,282
20 Year Average (2004-24)	1,228

- 4.29 In the context of the uncertainty regarding the future supply of greenfield sites, and to adopt a cautious approach, we have focused in particular in this scenario on the potential yield from brownfield sites if past supply trends were replicated. In this second approach, we do not therefore make any specific allowance for additional greenfield development in Leicester.
- 4.30 Data in the City Council's AMR provides a split of gross completions between brownfield and greenfield development and show 90%+ completions in recent years on brownfield land, but the City Council does not consider these figures on the brownfield/greenfield split to be reliable.
- 4.31 An alternative source is MHCLG *Land Use Statistics* data, which are accredited official statistics. We have therefore used these to consider the proportion of development taking place on previously-developed land. Data is available over the 2013-22 period and this shows that, on average, 79% of new homes in Leicester were delivered on previously-developed land with 21% on non-developed land. The data includes both homes delivered through new-build development as well as conversions. Over this period the net additional homes dataset points to demolitions of, on average, 20 dpa.
- 4.32 Using this data, we have in the table below taken long-term net additional completions data (which cover different points in the market cycle) and estimated the brownfield net supply position by first estimating gross completions, then the proportion of this on brownfield land; and then discounting losses (which will also be brownfield). This yields **an estimate supply of 965 dwellings per annum in Leicester based on historical trends**, which is a substantial 71% higher than that arising from the bottom-up approach.

Table 4.3 Estimating Brownfield Completions Trend in Leicester

	dpa Leicester
20 yr average net additional dwellings	1,228
Net/gross conversion⁶	0.985
20 yr average gross additional dwellings	1,247
% brownfield addresses in MHCLG Land Use Statistics	79%
Brownfield gross delivery	985
Of which replacement of losses	20
Estimated annual brownfield net completions	965

- 4.33 Whilst there is some (anecdotal) evidence of a diminishing brownfield land supply in the City in the longer-term, as described above, we consider that there could be some additional potential residential supply which could come forward from retail and other commercial space. Fundamentally,

⁶ Based on comparison of gross and net completions data for Leicester

there is a lack of visibility on long-term potential brownfield land supply beyond 2036 at the time of writing. This will need to be considered further through the review of Leicester's Local Plan.

Drawing the Evidence Together

- 4.34 In the context of the uncertainty regarding the longer-term land supply in Leicester, IcenI consider that the appropriate approach should be framed in the context of national policy. This makes a distinction between land supply (which influences the deliverable and developable supply) and market/demand-based factors (which influence what is actually delivered). It also emphasises the optimisation of land supply where there are prospective supply-side constraints.
- 4.35 In particular, in the context of a constrained land supply, the application of the NPPF and PPG would direct that further detailed consideration is given to other potential supply sources: the NPPF emphasises that strategic policies should make as much use as possible of brownfield land, as well as under-utilised land and buildings, especially in circumstances in which land supply is constrained (Paras 124 and 125), be informed by regular reviews of demand for land and land availability (Para 127) and take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses, including the use of retail and employment land for housing in areas of high demand (Para 128). It advises in effect that the supply/demand balance for land is an influence on appropriate densities (Para 125) and contain policies to optimise the use of land to meet as much of the identified need as possible (Para 130). There is a feedback loop in the land availability PPG⁷, where densities are expected to be reviewed where there is a land supply shortfall with a view to increasing residential development yields.
- 4.36 Leicester City has a concentration of employment opportunities and benefits from existing infrastructure, including public transport and social infrastructure, which make it one of the most sustainable locations for new development within the HMA.
- 4.37 The two supply estimates result in a potential range of between 565 – 965 dwellings per annum in Leicester City. They have been considered by the project Steering Group which includes representatives of all of the Leicester and Leicestershire Local Planning Authorities. Having regard to this national policy backdrop together with the issues about the visibility of the land supply in urban areas beyond a 10 year time horizon, **Leicester City Council have agreed with IcenI that it is reasonable to adopt the midpoint between the two supply scenarios to provide a working estimate of supply in Leicester beyond 2036. This equates to a supply of 7,650 dwellings between 2036-46, or 765 dpa.** This is taken forwards herein for the purposes of consideration of unmet needs at the current time.

⁷ *Planning Practice Guidance - Housing and economic land availability assessment*

Table 4.4 Calculating Leicester’s Unmet Need 2036-46

	Dwellings
Local housing need - Leicester, 2036-46	15,880
Estimated supply / requirement	7,650
Unmet need from Leicester, 2036-46	8,230
Unmet need per annum, 2036-46	823

4.38 As further detailed evidence emerges regarding Leicester’s longer-term land supply, as part of the Review of the Leicester Local Plan, the supply position should be revisited. We would expect there to be provision for joint working between the City Council and the local authorities in Leicestershire to discuss, review and agree land supply evidence. This can then feed through to a review, where appropriate, of the scale of unmet need and the apportionment of it to other areas. We address mechanisms for review later in this report.

Bringing the Evidence Together

4.39 Bringing the evidence together on the unmet need in Leicester to 2036, and from 2036-46, we estimate an unmet need from Leicester of 2,455 dwellings to 2036 (equivalent to 205 dpa), and of a further 8,230 dwellings from 2036-46 (equivalent to 823 dpa). The greater proportion of unmet need is therefore expected to arise after 2036. Annualised figures are set out as the timeframes for local plans differ.

Table 4.5 Scenarios for Total Land Supply Shortfall, 2024-2046

	2024-36	2036-46
Need (revised Standard Method)	19,056	15,880
Supply estimate	16,601	7,650
Unmet need	2,455	8,320
Unmet need per annum (dpa)	205	823

5. UNMET NEEDS FROM OTHER AUTHORITIES

5.1 The only other Leicestershire authority from which an unmet need could potentially arise, based on the position and information at the time of writing, is Oadby & Wigston. This is a small Borough which sits within the urban area centred around Leicester City, has tightly defined boundaries and where the revised standard method has resulted in an increase in its housing need significantly, from 188 dpa at the time of the 2022 HENA to 389 dpa at the time of writing (a 107% increase). The scale of housing need has essentially doubled.

5.2 Oadby & Wigston BC prepared and consulted on a Reg19 Local Plan in early 2025 which showed how it could support delivery of 240 dpa (this being the figure arising from the 2022 Housing SOCG). It is testing whether the standard method can be met in full within the Borough. At the time of writing this report, it does not look like the Council will be declaring an unmet housing need in relation to residential land supply, but this will need to be kept under review. The Council is still in the process of completing the full suite of Local Plan evidence base documents.

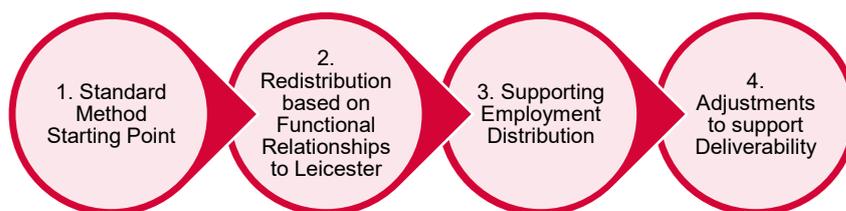
5.3 It is nonetheless clear that OWBC will not be able to contribute to meeting any unmet need from other authorities. All realistic potential development sites are likely to be required to meet its own revised standard method housing need. This is considered further in Section 6.

6. REVIEWING THE APPROACH TO APPORTIONING UNMET NEEDS

Reviewing the 2022 HENA Housing Distribution Approach

6.1 The 2022 HENA Housing Distribution Paper essentially used a three-stage approach to redistributing Leicester's unmet need: a first-stage based on functional relationships; a second stage which sought to achieve an improved local alignment between the distribution of jobs and homes; and a third stage which made adjustments for land supply and deliverability.

Figure 6.1: 2022 HENA Redistribution Approach



6.2 The functional relationships between different LPAs and Leicester, together with issues of alignment of jobs and homes are considered to remain relevant and appropriate considerations in apportioning unmet need from Leicester.

6.3 The final stage in the 2022 HENA housing distribution included the following adjustments:

- a) An upwards adjustment to the contribution from Melton Borough to reflect the residual requirement in its current adopted Plan;

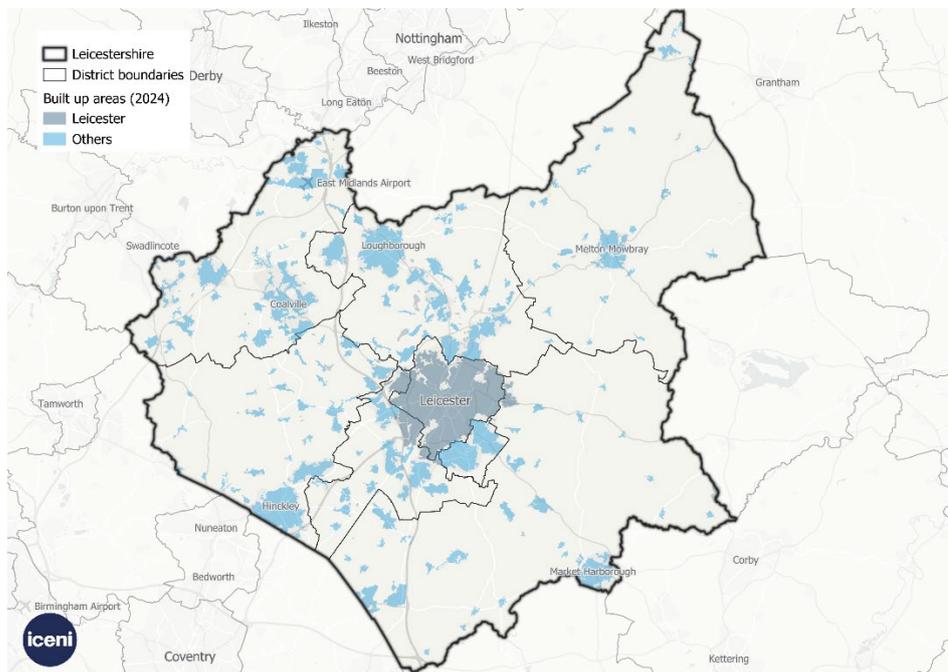
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- b) An adjustment to the contribution to Oadby & Wigston Borough, constraining the contribution it could make to unmet need to reflect the land supply position in the Borough;
 - c) An adjustment to the contribution from Charnwood on deliverability grounds, influenced by the higher demographic growth in the Borough implied in the household projections used in the standard method.
- 6.4 Reviewing the position now, the context for some of these final stage adjustments taken forwards previously has changed.
- 6.5 For **Melton** Borough, the indicative standard method housing need (369 dpa) is now above the residual plan requirement (308 dpa 2024-36) within the extant Local Plan and the stepped housing requirement therein which, for instance, envisages delivery of a minimum of 320 dpa between 2026-36, limiting potential for this to be assumed *per se* to contribute to unmet need. The extant Local Plan also does not look beyond 2036.
- 6.6 For **Oadby & Wigston**, as set out below, there is likely to be no realistic potential for the Borough to contribute to any other local authority's unmet need (in addition to meeting its own needs) given the doubling of the Borough's own housing needs and its land supply position.
- 6.7 In respect of the final 'deliverability' adjustment for **Charnwood**, which was disputed by some parties through its Local Plan Examination, the revised standard method now 'levels the playing field' by taking a stock position as a baseline (as opposed to household growth), the effect of which is to reduce the local housing need for the Borough.

7. REVIEWING THE EVIDENCE ON FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS TO LEICESTER

- 7.1 The 2022 HENA Distribution Paper considered the functional relationships between different Leicestershire authorities and Leicester City, including migration flows over the 2016-19 period and commuting patterns based on 2011 Census data. These were brought together in a blended approach recognising the vintage of the Census data alongside the influence of historical planning assumptions on migration flows.

7.2 These flows will invariably be part influenced by the spatial geography around Leicester. As the plan in Figure 7.1 shows, the Leicester Urban Area boundary (as defined by ONS⁸) extends to include Braunstone, Thorpe Astley and Glenfield in Blaby District. However the LPAs have historically also recognised a range of other settlements as falling within the wider Urban Area centred on Leicester City, including Birstall, Thurmaston, Scraptoft, Thurnby and Bushby, Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. There are then evidently further settlements which are near to, and functionally related, to Leicester.

Figure 7.1: Settlement Geography in Leicester & Leicestershire

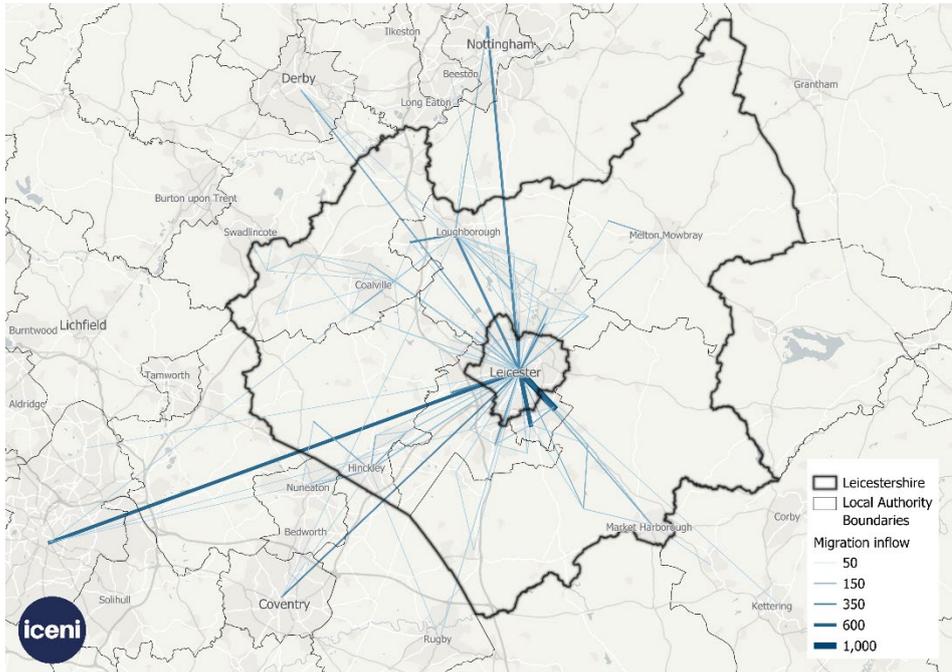


Migration Flows

7.3 The 2021 Census now provides updated information on the functional relationship of different areas with Leicester. The charts below show migration over the year to Census day 2021. They indicate a strong migration relationship of the City both with other parts of the urban area and settlements close to Leicester, as well as to the market towns elsewhere in the County, including Loughborough, as well as Lutterworth, Market Harborough, Coalville and Hinckley.

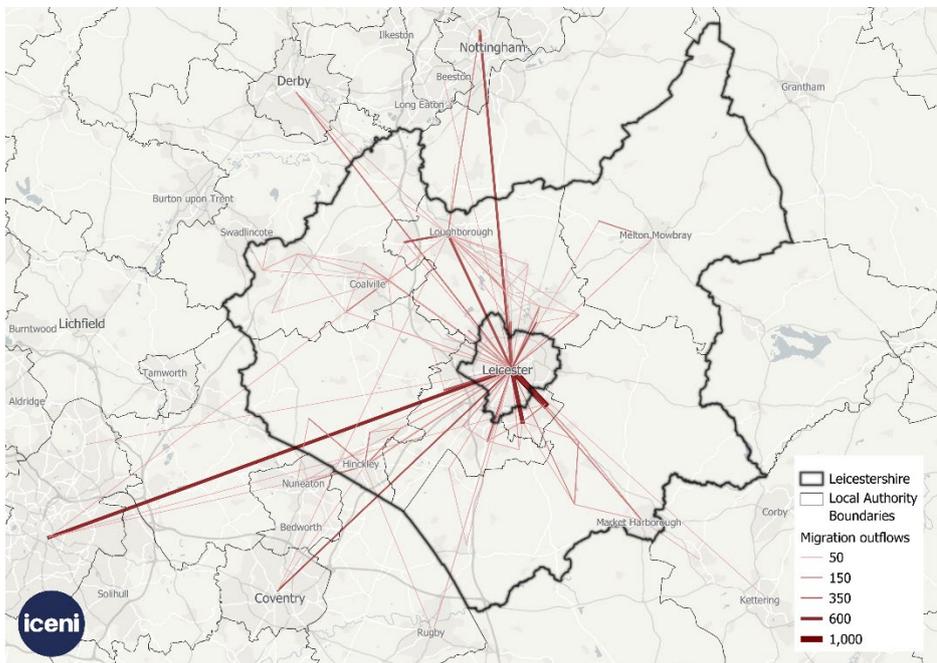
⁸ ONS Built Up Area boundaries

Figure 7.2: In-Migration to Leicester, 2020-21



Source: 2021 Census

Figure 7.3: Out-Migration from Leicester, 2020-21



Source: 2021 Census

7.4 IcenI consider that caution should be applied in the use of a single year's worth of migration data (as is used in the Census-based analysis above) given the potential influence of the distribution of new development in that year on flows. We have therefore instead analysed ONS Internal Migration Estimates, which are based on administrative data sources including higher-education and NHS

data, and considered a four year period from 2018-22. This essentially updates the analysis in the 2022 HENA Distribution Paper.

7.5 The strongest migration flows affecting Leicester are with Oadby & Wigston; Charnwood and Blaby. At the other end of the spectrum, there is a relatively weak relationship to North West Leicestershire and Melton Borough.

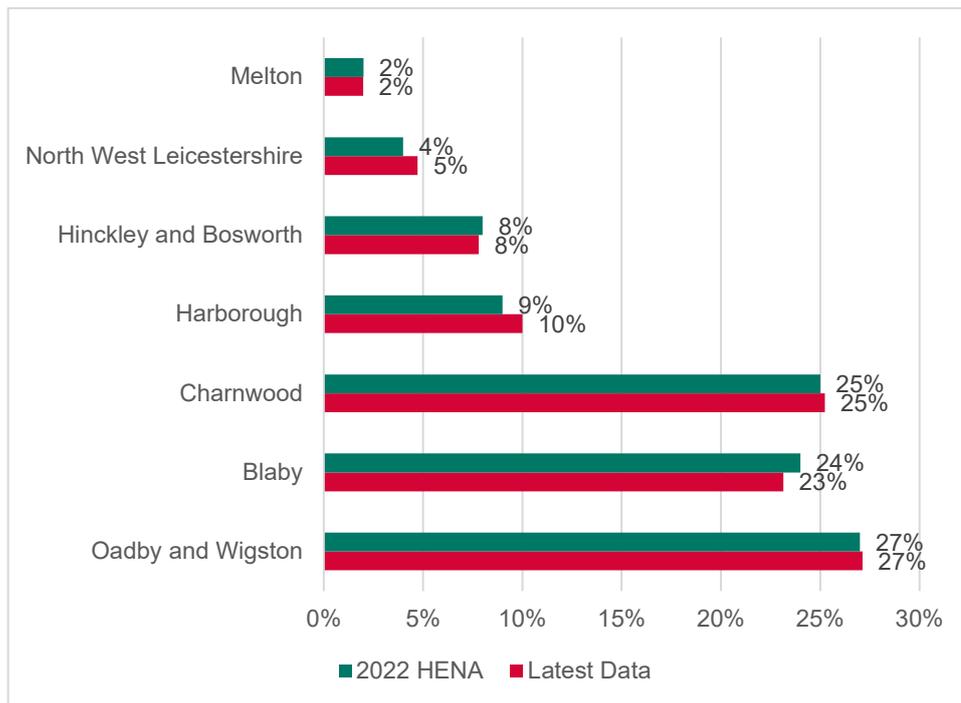
Table 7.1 Gross Migration Flows between Leicester and Leicestershire Local Authorities, 2018-22

	Average Gross Flow per annum	%
Oadby & Wigston	3,988	27.1%
Charnwood	3,708	25.2%
Blaby	3,402	23.1%
Harborough	1,470	10.0%
Hinckley & Bosworth	1,147	7.8%
North West Leicestershire	694	4.7%
Melton	291	2.0%
Total	14,700	100%

Source: ONS Internal Migration Statistics

7.6 The chart below illustrates how the share of gross migration with Leicester has changed between the data used in the 2022 HENA and the latest position. The broad migration relationship between the City and different LPAs remains consistent, with a modest increase in flows with North West Leicestershire and Harborough and modest reduction with Blaby.

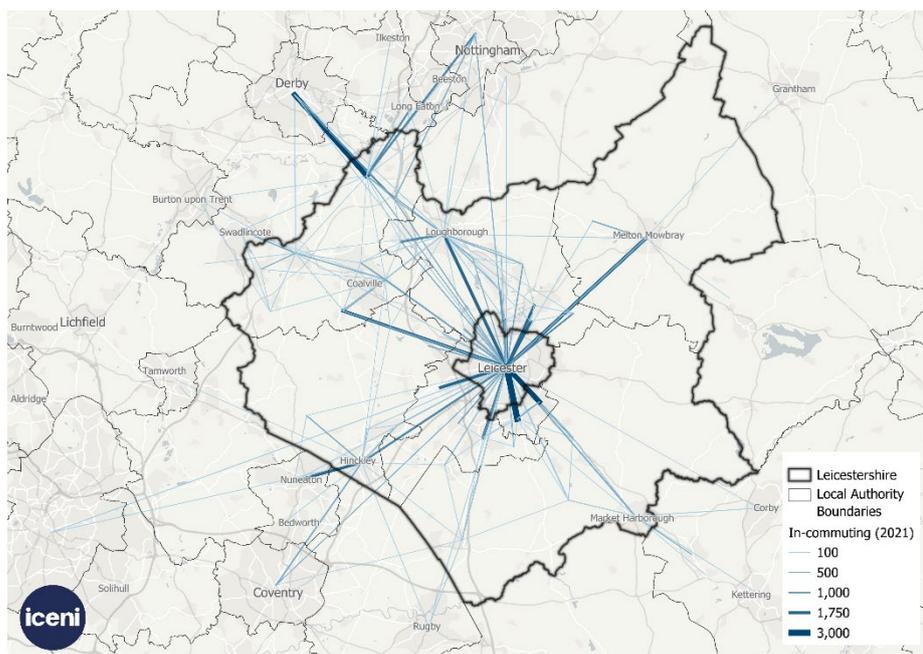
Figure 7.4: Changes in Share of Gross Migration with Leicester



Commuting Relationships

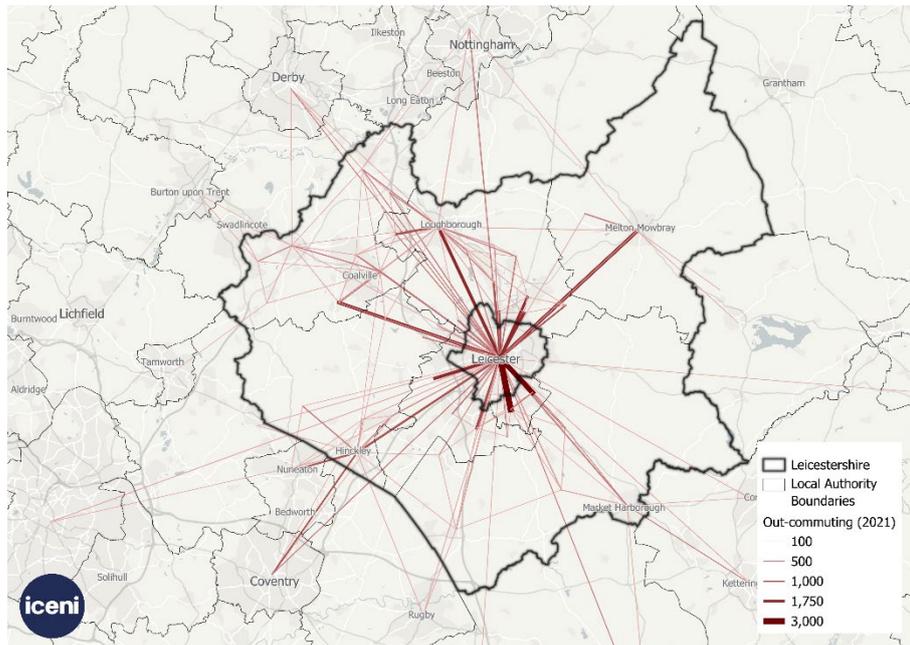
7.7 The maps below illustrate in- and out-commuting with Leicester, based on 2021 Census data. This data needs to be treated with some caution as the Census was undertaken during a Covid-19 lockdown and therefore may not be truly reflecting of commuting dynamics now. It is likely in particular to underplay commuting to office-based jobs which could be undertaken from home.

Figure 7.5: In-Commuting to Leicester



Source: 2021 Census

Figure 7.6: Out-Commuting from Leicester



Source: 2021 Census

- 7.8 The commuting analysis points again to a strong commuting relationship of Leicester City with settlements within or close to the Leicester Urban Area, but also strong relationships with some of the other market towns and other key employment locations – including Bardon in North West Leicestershire. It also shows a stronger relationship with Melton Mowbray than the migration analysis.
- 7.9 The table below shows the relative in- and out-flows between Leicester and the Leicestershire authorities based on the 2021 Census data. This updates Table 4.3 in the 2022 HENA Housing Distribution Paper. The strongest commuting flows with Leicester City remain with Blaby and Charnwood.

Table 7.2 Commuting Relationships to Leicester City, 2021

	In-commuting to Leicester	% of in-flow from Leicestershire	Out-commuting from Leicester	% of out-flow to Leicestershire
Charnwood	11,274	29%	5,615	18%
Blaby	9,199	24%	9,219	30%
Oadby & Wigston	6,566	17%	3,936	13%
Harborough	4,512	12%	3,681	12%
Hinckley & Bosworth	3,959	10%	2,929	10%
NW Leicestershire	1,908	5%	3,150	10%
Melton	1,080	3%	2,242	7%
Total	38,498	100%	30,772	100%

Source: 2021 Census

7.10 As the 2022 Paper set out, the commuting flow is indicative of a housing market relationship. It is considered that the gross commuting flow (i.e. combining flows to and from Leicester) is of greater utility in understanding the functional relationship to Leicester. The table below replicates the gross commuting relationship analysis using the 2021 Census data (updating Table 4.2 in the 2022 Paper).

Table 7.3 Gross Commuting Relationship with Leicester, 2021

	Gross commuting	%
Charnwood	16,889	24.4%
Blaby	18,418	26.6%
Oadby & Wigston	10,502	15.2%
Harborough	8,193	11.8%
Hinckley & Bosworth	6,888	9.9%
NW Leicestershire	5,058	7.3%
Melton	3,322	4.8%
Total	69,270	100%

Source: 2021 Census

7.11 It is possible to compare the gross commuting relationship of Leicestershire authorities with the City using both 2011 and 2021 Census data. This, as shown below, indicates that the changes shown are marginal. A slight reduction in commuting with Oadby & Wigston and Blaby is shown, with a slightly stronger commuting relationship with North West Leicestershire (where there has been significant employment development) and Melton (which has recognised labour supply issues).

Table 7.4 Changes in Shares of Commuting with Leicester, 2011 to 2021

	2021 Gross Commuting Share	2011 Gross Commuting Share	Difference
Charnwood	24%	24%	0%
Blaby	27%	29%	-2%
Oadby & Wigston	15%	18%	-3%
Harborough	12%	12%	0%
Hinckley & Bosworth	10%	9%	1%
NW Leicestershire	7%	5%	2%
Melton	5%	3%	2%
Total	100%	100%	0%

Source: 2011 and 2021 Census

Bringing the Evidence Together

7.12 Icen continue to consider that a blended approach to migration and commuting data should be used, which recognises that the migration data is based on several years of data and more stable view of flows but can be influenced by historical planning assumptions or housing supply distribution; whereas the commuting flow data is influenced by the effects of Covid-19 on working patterns at the time when the 2021 Census was undertaken but does capture some influence of the geography of employment development and changes in commuting since 2011.

7.13 The table below brings together the gross migration data (from Table 7.1) and commuting flow data (from Table 7.3) to generate a blended average figure, replicating the approach used in the 2022 HENA Housing Distribution Paper.

Table 7.5 Functional Relationship to Leicester – Blended Average of Gross Migration and Commuting

	% of gross commutes	% of gross migration	Average
Charnwood	24.4%	25.2%	24.8%
Blaby	26.6%	23.1%	24.9%
Oadby & Wigston	15.2%	27.1%	21.1%
Harborough	11.8%	10.0%	10.9%
Hinckley & Bosworth	9.9%	7.8%	8.9%
NW Leicestershire	7.3%	4.7%	6.0%
Melton	4.8%	2.0%	3.4%

7.14 However the current evidence indicates that Oadby & Wigston is not able to contribute to addressing unmet needs. In the 2022 Housing Distribution Paper, the Borough’s own housing need at that time was for 188 dpa. The revised standard method has increased the Borough’s housing need (or its share of the HMA’s need) to 389 dpa, with the share of the HMA’s housing need in Oadby & Wigston using the standard method increasing from 3% to 7% as Figure 2.2 shows.

7.15 IcenI has undertaken a Housing Absorption Study for OWBC to consider and assess its potential to deliver the standard method number and if there is any headroom to meet unmet needs. This indicates that including almost all sites which have been put forward for development through the emerging Local Plan that there is just sufficient land supply to meet the Borough’s standard method housing requirement over the proposed plan period to 2042. It indicates no realistic potential for the Borough to contribute to unmet needs from Leicester, albeit the Housing Absorption Study does not show that there is an unmet need arising from OWBC from a land supply perspective. On this basis, the current evidence does not suggest it is realistic for OWBC to make a contribution to unmet needs arising from Leicester. OWBC’s wider local plan evidence, including its transport evidence base, is testing further whether the Borough is able to sustainably meet its local housing need figure. It has been agreed between the HMA partners that any declared unmet need stemming from OWBC in due course will be dealt with through the Duty to Cooperate and the plan-making process and therefore consideration of potential infrastructure capacity issues is outside of the scope of this exercise.

7.16 On the basis of the current evidence that Oadby & Wigston Borough is not able to contribute to meeting unmet needs from Leicester, IcenI has therefore recalculated the functional relationships of

other areas within the HMA with Leicester, excluding Oadby & Wigston. These are shown in Table 7.6 below.⁹

Table 7.6 Revised Functional Relationship of L&L Authorities with Leicester (excluding OWBC)

	% Apportionment based on Functional Relationship¹⁰
Charnwood	31.7%
Blaby	31.5%
Harborough	13.8%
Hinckley & Bosworth	11.2%
North West Leicestershire	7.5%
Melton	4.2%

7.17 Applying these percentages (which are shown in the left hand column below) to the unmet need, the table below calculates the unmet need apportionment based on functional relationships to 2036, and over the 2036-46 period. The table provides an initial apportionment of the unmet need figures of 2,455 dwellings from Leicester over the 2024-36 period and the indicative unmet need for 8,320 dwellings over the 2036-46 period as set out in Table 4.5 herein. The right hand column shows annual figures for unmet need post 2036 which can be applied to different plan periods.

⁹ This takes the percentages for these authorities in Table 7.5 and recalculates them as a share of the total excluding Oadby & Wigston.

¹⁰ Numbers do not precisely sum due to rounding in the table to one decimal place in the table shown. Calculations use unrounded figures.

Table 7.7 Initial Apportionment of Unmet Need from Leicester based on Functional Relationships

	Functional relationship to Leicester¹¹	Contribution to unmet need from Leicester 2024-36	dpa contribution to 2036	Contribution to unmet need from Leicester 2036-46	dpa contribution 2036-46
Blaby	31.5%	775	65	2,597	260
Charnwood	31.7%	778	65	2,607	261
Harborough	13.8%	340	28	1,138	114
Hinckley & Bosworth	11.2%	275	23	923	92
Melton	4.2%	103	9	344	34
NW Leicestershire	7.5%	185	15	621	62
Total		2,455	205	8,230	823

7.18 As set out in Para 3.11 herein, local plans or plan reviews within the HMA have different plan periods, with emerging local plans in Blaby and North West Leicestershire running to 2042 and in Hinckley & Bosworth to 2045. Table 7.8 indicates the housing requirement implied by the initial apportionment based on functional relationships over these plan periods for these authorities. Figures are expressed to 2046 for the other authorities in the HMA.

7.19 The initial apportionment considered herein is then reviewed alongside issues of the alignment of jobs and homes – which is considered in the next section. Whilst these issues were considered sequentially in the 2022 HENA Paper, with a view to ensuring that the apportionment approach can be readily updated, the alignment of jobs and homes are to be considered alongside one another in the final apportionment analysis in this Paper.

¹¹ Numbers do not precisely sum due to rounding in the table to one decimal place.

Table 7.8 Initial Apportionment of Unmet Need from Leicester based on Functional Relationships over relevant plan periods

	Unmet Need from Leicester	Blaby	Charn-wood	Harb-orough	H&B	Leicester	Melton	NWL	O&W
Functional relationship to Leicester¹²		31.5%	31.7%	13.8%	11.2%	N/A	4.2%	7.5%	N/A
Contribution to unmet need 2024-36	2,455	775	778	340	275	N/A	103	185	N/A
dpa contribution to 2036		65	65	28	23	N/A	9	15	N/A
Contribution to unmet need 2036-46	8,230	2,597	2,607	1,138	923	0	344	621	0
dpa contribution 2036-46		260	261	114	92	0	34	62	0
Implied requirement 2024-36 (dpa)		604	1057	763	686	1,383	378	632	389
Implied requirement Post 2036 to end of relevant plan period (dpa)		799	1253	849	755	765	403	679	389
Plan period end point		2042	2046	2046	2045	2046	2046	2042	2042
Implied requirement over relevant plan period		12,034	25,209	17,648	15,029	24,251	8,565	11,664	7,002
Implied requirement (dpa)		669	1146	802	716	1102	389	648	389

¹² Numbers do not precisely sum due to rounding in the table to one decimal place. The calculations in the report use unrounded figures.

8. ALIGNING HOMES & JOBS

- 8.1 In this section we move on to review the alignment of homes and jobs. The first step is to consider the current balance of homes and jobs, using jobs density statistics. These describe the ratio between jobs in an area to residents aged 16-64.
- 8.2 The jobs density is above the L&L and national averages in both North West Leicestershire and Blaby, consistent with the position in the 2022 HENA¹³. This is shown in Table 8.1 below. The jobs density of over 1.0 points to notable net in-commuting to these areas. Blaby's jobs density has however increased significantly in the most recent data. A particularly low jobs density in Oadby & Wigston is also notable – pointing to significant net out-commuting.

Table 8.1 Jobs Density, 2023

	Jobs density
Blaby	1.09
Charnwood	0.70
Harborough	0.75
Hinckley & Bosworth	0.70
Leicester	0.74
Melton	0.84
NW Leicestershire	1.14
Oadby & Wigston	0.62
Leicester & Leicestershire	0.80
England	0.87

Source: NOMIS

- 8.3 Holding all other factors equal, higher housing provision in North West Leicestershire and Blaby could therefore help to provide more localised opportunities for living and working in a similar area. The opposite is the case for Oadby & Wigston.
- 8.4 The analysis in the 2022 HENA regarding employment growth prospects has not been updated at this point, but the scenarios therein were based on the long-term economic trends and took into account local economic drivers and opportunities as identified in the LLEP's¹⁴ Economic Growth Strategy to generate a 'Growth Scenario'. The modelling was presented in the HENA over the period

¹³ Table 5.2 in the 2022 Housing Distribution Paper

¹⁴ Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership

to 2036, as well as to 2050 (but not to intermediate dates) albeit Icení has been able to consider the original data herein.

- 8.5 Icení has updated the demographic model to take account of the latest data and this latest demographic information can be used to review the inter-relationship between economic growth and housing need. A base demographic model has been developed using the ONS 2022-based Sub-National Population Projections (released June 2025). The core modelling has been run over the 2024-46 period, but outputs have been developed for different end points to reflect the timeframes for different local plans recognising the need to align the housing and employment provision over the relevant plan periods.
- 8.6 Household representative rates (which are used to relate growth in population to households) have taken the HRRs from the 2021 Census as a starting point¹⁵, but then modelled a part return to the 2021 position for the 25-44 age bracket over the period to 2046. This in effect builds in the demographic effects of an improvement in housing affordability resulting in an increased ability of younger households to form over time, consistent with the national policy objectives and affordability uplift in the standard method.
- 8.7 In relating jobs and homes, the modelling builds in some improvement in economic participation over time – in line with assumptions from the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) 2018 Fiscal Sustainability Review. This is consistent to the 2022 HENA and assumes some increase in women and older persons in work. A commuting ratio is calculated from the 2021 Census.

HENA Growth Scenario

- 8.8 The table below compares housing need implied by the HENA Growth Scenario over the period to 2046 against the standard method. It shows that for all L&L local authorities, the standard method housing need generates sufficient labour supply to support the HENA Growth Scenario (with no ‘economic uplift’ therefore justified for any area using this scenario alone). In reality, there is unlikely to be ‘excess labour’ – the analysis would simply suggest that economic participation improvements would be weaker than that modelled if this housing provision and economic growth was achieved (i.e. growth in economic activity rates would be lower than modelled).

¹⁵ This is consistent to the approach adopted in the ONS 2022-based Household Projections

Table 8.2 Housing Need implied by Standard Method and HENA Growth Scenario, 2024-46

	Standard Method (dpa)	Economic-led Need: HENA Growth Scenario	Difference
Blaby	539	496	43
Charnwood	992	578	414
Harborough	735	493	242
Hinckley & Bosworth	663	323	340
Leicester	1,588	1,365	223
Melton	369	244	125
NW Leicestershire	617	513	104
Oadby & Wigston	389	193	196
TOTAL	5,892	4,204	1,688

Source: Updated Modelling

8.9 The table below provides the same analysis covering the different plan periods for the emerging local plans in Blaby, NW Leicestershire, Hinckley & Bosworth, and Oadby & Wigston. The figures differ from those in Table 8.3 above as they take account of differences in demographic changes over the varying plan periods. Again, it shows that the standard method generates sufficient labour supply to support the HENA Growth Scenario in all four authority areas.

Table 8.3 Housing Need implied by Standard Method and HENA Growth Scenario over plan periods for selected emerging Plans

	Plan period end point	Standard Method (dpa)	Economic-led Need: HENA Growth Scenario
Blaby	2042	539	515
Hinckley & Bosworth	2045	663	326
NW Leicestershire	2042	617	544
Oadby & Wigston	2042	389	197

HENA Growth Scenario with B8 Adjustments

8.10 IcenI has been working with the L&L authorities to consider the need for and apportionment of strategic B8 development. The findings from this work are set out in the *Leicester & Leicestershire: Strategic Distribution Floorspace Needs Update and Apportionment* report, dated October 2025.

8.11 We have therefore also sought to test herein whether the apportionment of strategic B8 need has any impact on the homes/jobs balance or apportionment of housing provision within the HMA. To do so, IcenI has:

- Calculated the strategic B8 floorspace implied over relevant plan periods – this has included subtracting 2023-24 completions (where appropriate) to generate a figure starting from 2024 to align with the timeframes adopted herein. Whilst the strategic B8 evidence looks to 2046, for plans with shorter plan periods we have calculated a pro-rata need over the relevant plan period.¹⁶
- Calculated the additional FTE jobs implied by the strategic B8 floorspace recommendations for different districts, using a jobs density of 95 sq.m per FTE jobs, and adopting assumptions on displacement (25%) and substitution (20%). This is then compared to the jobs already included within the sector within the 2022 HENA labour demand modelling to calculate the quantum of jobs which are additional (or lower) relative to the HENA Growth Scenario and ensure no double counting.
- The final stage is then to apply a FTE to total jobs conversion (95%) – consistent to the HENA modelling; and then to consider wider supply chain and multiplier effects (adjusted for commuting) to calculate the net additional jobs which are expected to arise.

8.12 These calculations clearly only apply to districts where there is an apportionment of strategic B8 floorspace. The results, applied to the relevant plan periods, are shown in the table below.

Table 8.4 Housing Need to Support HENA Growth Scenario and Strategic B8 Apportionment

	Plan period end point	Standard Method (dpa)	Housing Need (dpa) HENA Growth Scenario adjusted for B8 apportionment
Blaby	2042	539	614
Charnwood	2046	992	566
Harborough	2046	735	565
Hinckley & Bosworth	2045	663	431
North West Leicestershire	2042	617	690

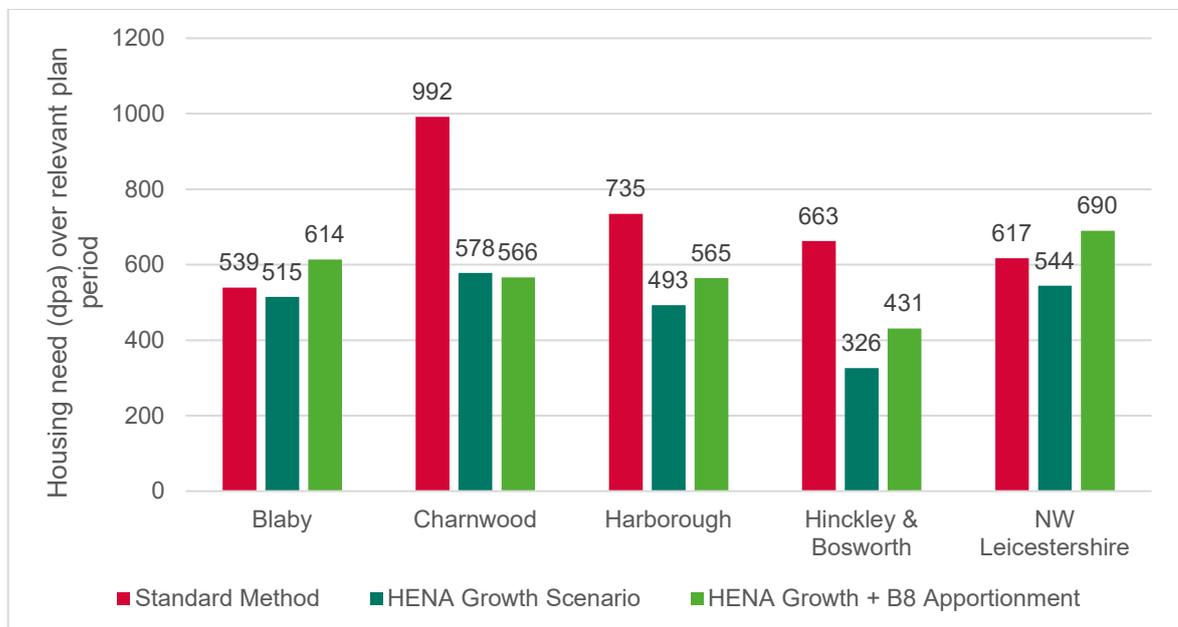
8.13 The chart below shows the effect of the strategic B8 apportionment on the economic-led housing need. It results in a housing need above the standard method arising in this scenario in Blaby (of 614 dpa) and in North West Leicestershire (690 dpa) only. It is notable that those districts in which a higher housing need arises through this analysis correlate with those in which there is already a

¹⁶ Blaby and NW Leicestershire to 2042, Hinckley & Bosworth to 2045

strong jobs density and net in-commuting – pointing to a broader rationale for higher housing provision to support the alignment of homes and jobs.

- 8.14 For North West Leicestershire, this economic-led need for 690 dpa exceeds the initial apportionment of unmet need based on the functional relationship – which was for 648 dpa, as set out in Table 7.8.
- 8.15 In how the modelling works, the economic-driven figure shown for Blaby here (614 dpa) implicitly assumes that the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (RFI) comes forwards to support jobs growth. The consenting process for this is separate to (and outside of) the local plan process and this cannot therefore be guaranteed; and this report does not imply that the proposed RFI scheme should or will come forwards. We have not therefore specifically taken forwards the economic-led need scenario here for Blaby. However it is notable that the the scale of need shown over the plan period to 2042 for Blaby arising from this scenario (614 dpa) falls below the apportionment arising based on the functional relationship analysis. This is considered further in drawing conclusions in the next section.
- 8.16 The figure for Charnwood drops in this scenario as the expected growth in warehousing and logistics is lower than assumed in the HENA Growth Scenario.

Figure 8.1: Comparison of economic-led housing need (with strategic B8 apportionment) and standard method, over relevant plan periods



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- 8.17 In the other districts – Charnwood, Harborough and Hinckley & Bosworth - the analysis continues to suggest that the standard method will provide sufficient labour supply growth to support economic growth taking account of the strategic B8 apportionment conclusions.

9. BRINGING THE EVIDENCE TOGETHER

- 9.1 The HMA authorities are keen to see an approach to apportioning unmet needs which can be readily updated to take account of changes in the base housing needs position or the unmet needs arising from Leicester. The approach must also be designed to take account of the different plan periods to which different local authorities are working. These considerations have been taken into account in bringing together the different components of analysis. This is set out in Table 9.4 herein.
- 9.2 The starting point is the standard method figures for each authority (Row 1) and the quantum of Leicester’s unmet need to 2036 (Row 2) and post 2036 (Row 3). The figures relating to the economic-led need for housing are fixed figures, based on the analysis of potential employment growth; whereas the apportionment of need based on functional relationships is based on percentage figures and can flex (for instance should the scale of unmet need change).
- 9.3 Comparing the initial apportionment based on the functional relationships analysis (Row 12) to the scale of housing need necessary to support alignment of homes and jobs (Rows 13 and 14) indicates that a higher apportionment of unmet need to North West Leicestershire would be justified to support an improved spatial alignment of homes and jobs (Row 15). It points to a proposed requirement for North West Leicestershire of 690 dpa with a contribution of +73 dpa to Leicester’s unmet need.
- 9.4 Taking account of this, the residual unmet need (as shown in Rows 17 and 20) is then apportioned to the other Leicestershire authorities, besides Oadby & Wigston (as shown in Rows 18-20 and 21-22).¹⁷ Bringing this together with the proposed provision in NW Leicestershire, the proposed annual housing requirement figures to 2036 and post 2036 in different local authorities are set out in Rows 23 and 24.

Unmet Need to 2036

- 9.5 To apportion the unmet need to 2036 of 2,455 dwellings, we thus undertake an initial apportionment based on aligning homes and jobs. This results in an increased need in NW Leicestershire (+73 dpa additional homes over the standard method) in particular as strong jobs growth is envisaged in this

¹⁷ This uses the same process as described in Footnote 9 herein

District, but it has a relatively weaker functional relationship than the position with some other Districts. The residual unmet need (132 dpa) is then apportioned to the other authorities (besides O&W) based on their functional relationship to Leicester (Rows 21 and 22). The relative shares to each authority change from those shown in Table 7.6 as North West Leicestershire is excluded at this stage (see Table 9.4). This results in the following unmet need contributions from Leicestershire authorities between 2024-36 (as shown in Row 23 in Table 9.4).

Table 9.1 Apportionment of Unmet Need to 2036 – dpa

	Apportionment of Unmet Need to 2036 (dpa)
Blaby	45
Charnwood	45
Harborough	20
Hinckley & Bosworth	16
Melton	6
NW Leicestershire	73
Oadby & Wigston	0
Total	205

Unmet Need beyond 2036

9.6 For needs beyond 2036, the analysis is repeated with a first stage apportionment to North West Leicestershire (+73 dpa), on the same basis as described above, with the residual need then distributed to other districts (besides O&W) based on their functional relationship with the City. Over this period beyond 2036, the need has been calculated as it relates to different plan periods (as shown in Row 10 in Table 9.4 herein).

Table 9.2 Apportionment of Unmet Needs post 2036 – dpa

	Apportionment post 2036
Blaby	256
Charnwood	257
Harborough	112
Hinckley & Bosworth	91
Melton	34
North West Leicestershire	73
Oadby & Wigston	0
Total	823

Housing Requirement over relevant Plan Period

- 9.7 The housing requirement over the relevant plan period is influenced by the plan period end point. The apportionment of unmet need to 2036 is applied over a 12 year period (2024-36) with the housing need post 2036 then applied to different number of years, depending on the plan period end point.¹⁸
- 9.8 The final apportionments based on the current evidence are shown overleaf in Table 9.4.

Table 9.3 Final Apportionment of Housing Need over relevant plan periods

	Plan period end point	Requirement over plan period: total dwellings	Requirement (dpa) over plan period
Blaby	2042	11,776	654
Charnwood	2046	24,935	1,133
Harborough	2046	17,528	797
H&B	2045	14,933	711
Leicester	2046	24,251	1,102
Melton	2046	8,529	388
NW Leicestershire	2042	12,420	690
Oadby & Wigston	2042	7,002	389

¹⁸ Blaby and NW Leicestershire 6 years to 2042; and Hinckley & Bosworth 9 years to 2045. Figures for other authorities are calculated to 2046

Table 9.4 Final Apportionment of Unmet Need over Relevant Plan Periods

Row			Blaby	Charnwood	Harborough	H&B	Leicester	Melton	NWL	O&W	Total
A. Review of Need and Unmet Need											
1	Standard method (dpa)		539	992	735	663	1588	369	617	389	5892
		Total									
		dpa									
2	Leicester Unmet need to 2036	2455									
3	Unmet need 2036-46	8230	823								
4	Capacity to contribute to unmet need		Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	
B. Initial Apportionment based on functional relationship											
5	Functional relationship to Leicester		31.5%	31.7%	13.8%	11.2%		4.2%	7.5%		
6	Contribution to unmet need 2024-36	2455	775	778	340	275	0	103	185	0	2455
7	dpa contribution to 2036		65	65	28	23	0	9	15	0	205
8	Contribution to unmet need 2036-46	8230	2597	2607	1138	923	0	344	621	0	8230
9	dpa contribution 2036-46		260	261	114	92	0	34	62	0	823
10	Plan period		2042	2046	2046	2045	2046	2046	2042	2042	
11	Implied requirement over relevant plan period		12,034	25,209	17,648	15,029	24,251	8,565	11,664	7,002	
12	Implied requirement based on functional relationship (dpa)		669	1146	802	716	1102	389	648	389	
C. Economic-led Need over relevant plan period											
13	HENA Growth Scenario need (dpa)		515	578	493	326	1,365	244	544	197	4,263
14	HENA Growth Scenario + B8 adjustment need (dpa)		614	566	565	431			690		
15	Economic-led Need exceeds initial apportionment on functional relationship		N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N
16	Economic uplift on Standard Method figure taken forwards								73		
D. Apportionment of residual unmet need based on functional relationship											
17	Residual unmet need to 2036 (dpa)	132									
18	Reapportionment based on functional distribution - %		34.1%	34.3%	15.0%	12.1%	0.0%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	92.5%
19	Reapportionment based on functional distribution - dpa		45	45	20	16	0	6	0	0	
20	Residual unmet need post 2036 (dpa)	750									
21	Reapportionment based on functional distribution - %		34.1%	34.3%	15.0%	12.1%	0.0%	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	
22	Reapportionment based on functional distribution - dpa		256	257	112	91	0	34	0	0	
E. Final Apportionment											
23	Requirement to 2036 (dpa)		584	1,037	755	679	1,383	375	690	389	5,892
24	Requirement post 2036 (dpa)		795	1,249	847	754	765	403	690	389	
25	Plan period end point		2042	2046	2046	2045	2046	2046	2042	2042	
26	Requirement over plan period: total dwellings		11776	24935	17528	14933	24251	8529	12420	7002	
27	Requirement (dpa) over plan period		654	1,133	797	711	1,102	388	690	389	

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Managing Future Changes

- 9.9 There is the potential for future changes in a) the standard method housing need figure for individual authorities; and b) the scale of unmet need, due to either changes in Leicester's housing need figure and/or further detailed evidence on land supply in Leicester.
- 9.10 The approach set out has been designed to be able to accommodate this. The alignment of homes and jobs results in fixed figures; allowing the iteration of the apportionment using functional relationships to flex based on changes in the scale of unmet need. The approach to managing changes is thus:
- For individual LPAs to take account of changes in the standard method figure for their area (up to the point of submission of the local plan);
 - Where changes in the unmet need from Leicester City arise, consideration is given to how this is dealt with in the following order:
 - a). Joint working to review the capacity position and agree an updated working figure for unmet needs to 2046;
 - b). Apportioning the unmet need based on functional relationships initially using the average percentage figure in Table 9.4.
 - c). Discussion of whether there are capacity constraints which would preclude an authority from making a contribution or increasing its contribution. The emphasises would be on the authorities concerned to justify this to other LPAs.
 - d). Comparison of this with evidence of housing needed to support employment growth based on the evidence herein (and any more recent testing of jobs/homes alignment within other LPAs' evidence where appropriate). The economic-led need figure is taken forwards where this exceeds the figure based on functional relationships;
 - e). Recalculate the distribution – as done in this Paper – through adjusting the functional relationship percentages to distribute the remaining need between the other authorities which are able to contribute.
- 9.11 The potential for Leicester's unmet need to change prior to the adoption of emerging local plans is a relevant consideration which individual local authorities may wish to consider, alongside land supply and infrastructure capacity evidence, in making judgments on the appropriate supply-side buffer to include within their local plans.

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FAQs - Updated Housing Distribution Paper and associated Statement of Common Ground

1. What is local housing need?

Local housing need refers to the number of homes a local authority requires to meet future demand. Housing need figures are based on a standard methodology set by Government (referred to as the Standard Method). Where a local authority does not have sufficient land available to accommodate its housing need in full, it is considered to have an 'unmet need'.

2. What is the background to this Updated Housing Distribution Paper?

When unmet housing need is declared by a local authority, the Government expects other authorities within the wider Housing Market Area to work together to plan for and deliver the homes needed.

In June 2021 each authority in Leicester and Leicestershire agreed (through a Statement of Common Ground) to a programme of evidence work for apportioning Leicester's unmet need to the surrounding authorities. The relevant evidence work, published in June 2022, included a Housing and Employment Needs Assessment (2022 HENA) which included a Housing Distribution Paper that apportioned the unmet need to 2036. The updated Housing Distribution Paper relates to the 2022 HENA.

3. Why has the Housing Distribution Paper required an update?

In December 2024 the new Standard Method was published alongside a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 12 December 2024). This changed the overall scale of housing to be provided in the Leicester & Leicestershire Housing Market Area (L&L HMA) by a relatively small amount, however, the distribution across the L&L HMA significantly changed due to the deletion of the 35% urban uplift previously applied to Leicester City. The effect of this was to significantly reduce local housing need in Leicester City, whilst the local housing need in most other Districts and Boroughs significantly increased.

4. Will the updated Housing Distribution Paper be formally agreed by Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities?

The L&L authorities have prepared a Statement of Common Ground to be the mechanism by which the apportionment set out within the updated Housing Distribution Paper would be formally agreed, subject to each individual authority's governance process, to support plan making across Leicester and Leicestershire.

5. What is a Statement of Common Ground?

Local planning authorities are required to engage constructively with other authorities when planning for strategic cross-boundary matters. In this context, Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) are produced during the local plan process to demonstrate to a local plan inspector that effective co-operation with other authorities has been undertaken. In this respect, they provide a written record of progress made on strategic cross-boundary matters and indicate where agreements have (or have not) been reached. The 2022 HENA and accompanying evidence was completed and informed the June 2022 Housing and Employment Need SoCG.

6. Are all Leicester and Leicestershire authorities immediately affected by the updated Housing Distribution Paper and associated Statement of Common Ground?

No. Only those authorities producing local plans for examination under the NPPF December 2024 using the current planning system as governed by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) will be basing their housing requirement on the updated Housing Distribution Paper; these authorities are Blaby District Council, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, North West Leicestershire District Council and Oadby & Wigston Borough Council. The other Leicestershire authorities, whose emerging plans are based on the previous Standard Method, will continue to use the Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Needs (June 2022).

7. What housing apportionment is set out in the updated Housing Distribution Paper?

The table below sets out the annualised apportionment of unmet need from 2024 over relevant plan periods. It should be noted that 2046 is used as the default plan end date in the updated Housing Distribution Paper for those authorities not submitting a local plan under the current planning system using the new Standard Method.

	Revised Standard Method dpa (December 2024)	Proposed Housing Requirement dpa	Contribution to Unmet Need dpa	% Contribution	Plan End Date
Blaby	539	654	115	25.1	2042
Charnwood	992	1,133	141	30.8	2046
Harborough	735	797	62	13.5	2046
Hinckley & Bosworth	663	711	48	10.5	2045
Melton	369	388	19	4.2	2046
NW Leicestershire	617	690	73	15.9	2042
Oadby & Wigston	389	389	0	0	2042
Leicestershire Total	4,304	4,762	458	100	

8. Which Authorities will be party to the accompanying Statement of Common Ground?

The accompanying SoCG has been prepared jointly by Leicester City Council and all Leicestershire authorities - Blaby District Council; Charnwood Borough Council; Harborough District Council; Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council; Melton Borough Council; North West Leicestershire District Council; Oadby & Wigston Borough Council; and Leicestershire County Council. The SoCG will be considered by each individual authority through their governance processes.

9. What is the status of a Statement of Common Ground? Once agreed, does it become legally binding?

A SoCG is not legally binding on any of the authorities. However, it sets out a clear and positive direction on housing (or employment) needs to inform ongoing strategies and local plan making.

10. Why does Leicester City have an unmet housing need?

Leicester City's urban area extends beyond the boundaries of the City Council's administrative area. As is common for local authorities where this is the case, there is insufficient land available within the administrative area of Leicester City to accommodate its housing need in full. As such, Leicester City has an unmet housing need and is required to work with the other authorities in Leicestershire to address the unmet need and agree an alternative distribution of housing provision.

11. How has the proposed apportionment of the housing figures across the Leicestershire authorities been reached?

The methodology used for apportioning the housing need is based on that set out in the 2022 HENA and adjusted to account for the revised Standard Method's approach. The apportionment methodology is set out in the updated Housing Distribution Paper; it has regard to a range of factors, including the functional relationship of each authority area with Leicester City, the balance of jobs and homes in each authority area and deliverability of the distribution of development.

12. Why does each authority need a Statement of Common Ground on unmet need?

In order to get a local plan in place, each individual planning authority must be able to demonstrate effective joint working and that they have complied with the policy guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In this respect, the SoCG will be a critical part of each individual authority's local plan evidence to demonstrate compliance with the aforementioned policy requirements.

13. Will there be an opportunity to comment on the level and apportionment of the housing numbers proposed?

Yes. As noted above, the housing figures set out in the updated Housing Distribution Paper and SoCG will be subject to testing through each authority's local plan process. These local plan preparation processes will include stages of public consultation that will enable all interested parties to provide comments to any planning authority that is preparing a local plan.

14. What if an authority's local plan process identifies that it is unable to provide for the housing land needs apportioned in the Statement of Common Ground?

If an authority's local plan evidence demonstrates that they are unable to accommodate their own needs and their apportionment of unmet need from Leicester in full, the SoCG will be reviewed collectively by the L&L partner authorities and updated as necessary.

15. What happens next?

The Statement of Common Ground relating to housing distribution following the NPPF and new Standard Method published December 2024 will be considered by each individual authority through their governance processes. The figures will then be tested through individual authority Local Plan processes where the new figure is applicable. If an authority's Local Plan evidence demonstrates they are not able to accommodate their own needs and their apportionment of unmet need from Leicester in full, the SoCG will be jointly reviewed and updated as necessary.

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – TUESDAY, 24 MARCH 2026



Title of Report	BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT	
Presented by	Cllr Michael Wyatt Community and Climate Change Portfolio Holder PH Briefed <input type="checkbox" value="Y"/>	
Background Papers	None	Public Report: Yes
		Key Decision: Yes
Financial Implications	There are no direct financial implications of the Biodiversity Duty Report as it sets out existing policies, objectives, partnerships and actions and a summary of proposed future actions. Future actions that would contribute to the Council complying with the biodiversity duty would need to have appropriate funding in place that has been agreed under the Council's established governance and decision-making processes.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	The Biodiversity Duty Report sets out how the Council has met the requirement set out in the Environment Act 2021 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as amended) to report on how it has complied with the biodiversity duty and plans to do so in the future.	
	All future actions undertaken to comply with the biodiversity duty must comply with the Council's established governance and decision-making processes. Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	The Biodiversity Duty Report sets out existing policies, objectives, partnerships and actions and a summary of future actions. It is not expected that future actions to comply with the biodiversity duty would result in significant staffing implications.	
	The Council has already demonstrated its commitment to conserving and enhancing biodiversity which is reflected in the Council Delivery Plan 2023-2028 Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To present the Council's Biodiversity Duty Report.	

Reason for Decision	To approve the Council's Biodiversity Duty Report as required by the Constitution.
Recommendations	<p>THAT CABINET:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CONSIDERS ANY COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AT ITS MEETING ON 19 MARCH 2026 2. APPROVES THE BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT 3. DELEGATES AUTHORITY TO THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES TO MAKE ANY MINOR AMENDMENTS TO THE REPORT PRIOR TO FINAL SUBMISSION.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council has a statutory duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity (habitats and species) under the Environment Act 2021 and the amended Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as amended) (NERC Act). This is known as 'the biodiversity duty'.
- 1.2 A key effect of the Environment Act 2021 was to amend section 40 of the NERC Act from a duty to "conserve" to a requirement to both 'conserve' and 'enhance', so as to aim to provide for the enhancement or improvement of biodiversity, not just maintenance in its current state.
- 1.3 This means that, as a public authority, North West Leicestershire District Council must:
- Consider what it can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity
 - Agree policies and specific objectives based on its consideration of the biodiversity duty
 - Act to deliver Council policies and objectives
- 1.4 The Council has a responsibility to report how it is achieving the biodiversity duty under Section 40A of the NERC Act, which was inserted by the Environment Act 2021.
- 1.5 All local authorities must publish a Biodiversity Duty Report setting out how they have complied with the biodiversity duty during a first reporting period, and how they plan to do so in the next reporting period.
- 1.6 Reports from local planning authorities must also include the following biodiversity net gain (BNG) information:
- The actions carried out to meet BNG obligations
 - Details of BNG resulting, or expected to result, from approved biodiversity gain plans
 - How BNG obligations are planned to be met in the next reporting period
- 1.7 The end date of the first reporting period should be no later than 1 January 2026, and the report must be published within 12 weeks of the period's end.

1.8 Authorities must then publish an updated report within five years of the end date of the previous reporting period.

2.0 BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT

2.1 The Council's first reporting period covers 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025. As the report has to be published within 12 weeks the end of this reporting period, the latest date by which the report must be published is 25 March 2026. The end date of the Council's next reporting period must be within five years of 31 December 2025.

2.2 The Biodiversity Duty Report sets out how the Council has approached protecting biodiversity in the first reporting period and demonstrates that the Council has policies and objectives in place, and has undertaken actions and achievements, to meet the duty. The Biodiversity Duty Report also sets out how the Council intends to meet its biodiversity duty during the next reporting period. A copy of the report is attached at Appendix 1.

2.3 It is expected that implementation of the Council's future actions over the next reporting period will help deliver an increase in and improvements to biodiversity throughout the District in a variety of different ways.

2.4 Future actions will be developed and implemented across all Council departments.

3.0 CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMENTS

3.1 Any comments and/or recommendations from Corporate Scrutiny Committee will be reported verbally at the Cabinet meeting.

4.0 CALL IN DECISION

4.1 The approval of the Chair of the Council has been given to the exemption of the Council's Scrutiny Procedure rules in relation to the call-in of the decision on this item, since any call-in would prejudice the ability of the Council to publish its Biodiversity Duty Report by the statutory deadline of 25 March 2026. The Chair has considered the timetable for confirmation and agrees that the matter before Cabinet is urgent for this reason.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	Clean, green and Zero Carbon
Policy Considerations:	It will need to be considered how future Council policies conserve and enhance biodiversity.
Safeguarding:	N/A
Equalities/Diversity:	An equality impact assessment has been carried out for policies and projects already in place and will need to be carried out as part of each future action as appropriate.

Customer Impact:	Improved biodiversity across the District can support health, wellbeing, and community cohesion, for example by improving green spaces and providing access to nature and improving air quality.
Economic and Social Impact:	It will be a key aspect of each future action to assess the economic and social impacts of conserving and enhancing biodiversity and the wider benefits.
Environment, Climate Change and Zero Carbon:	The Biodiversity Duty Report reinforces the Council's commitment to conserving and enhancing biodiversity and supports the Council's climate emergency commitments under its Zero Carbon Roadmap and Action Plan.
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	Internal engagement
Risks:	<p>The Biodiversity Duty Report is required to meet the Council's statutory duty, under the Environment Act 2021 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as amended), to report on actions taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Failure to do would be a breach of the Council's statutory obligations.</p> <p>It is considered that the Biodiversity Duty Report demonstrates how the Council is meeting its duty for conserving and enhancing biodiversity.</p>
Officer Contact	<p>Julia Marshall julia.marshall@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>Jenny Davies jenny.davies@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p>

Biodiversity Reporting Duty Report

North West Leicestershire District Council

March 2026

Introduction

Under the strengthened 'biodiversity duty' introduced by the Environment Act 2021, public authorities who operate in England are required to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England. This means that, as a public authority, North West Leicestershire District Council must:

- Consider what it can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity
- Agree policies and specific objectives based on its consideration of the biodiversity duty
- Act to deliver Council policies and objectives

This report outlines the Council's approach to protecting biodiversity, the actions carried out and how it intends to meet its biodiversity reporting duties going forward (including in respect of biodiversity net gain which is set out in a separate section of the report), building on existing policies, partnerships and activities to drive biodiversity benefits within the resource and influence of the Council. This is a corporate responsibility that needs to be considered across all Council departments, actions and decision making.

This report covers the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025. The end date of the Council's next reporting period must be within five years of 31 December 2025.

As the Council is one of many local authorities undergoing Local Government Re-organisation, the next report may represent a wider geography of Leicestershire and Rutland.

North West Leicestershire

North West Leicestershire (NWL) is a largely rural district with the key urban areas of Coalville, Ashby, Measham and Castle Donington. Its landscape is defined by its industrial heritage and extensive reforestation effort, with both the National Forest and Charnwood Forest Regional Park within its boundaries.

There are 17 Sites of Special Interest (SSSIs) within the NWL district. One of these, Charnwood Lodge, is also a National Nature Reserve.

Most of the western half of the NWL district is covered by the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is also a SSSI, and is designated due to the importance of the rare species and habitats it supports including rivers with floating vegetation often dominated by water-crowfoot, white-clawed (or Atlantic stream) crayfish, spined loach, bullhead fish and otters.

Policies and Objectives

The [Council Delivery Plan 2023-2028](#), is built around four strategic priorities, one being "Clean, green and Zero carbon" which is "about looking after the environment we live in". This commitment is underpinned by several policies and strategies across the organisation, spread over each of its three directorates: Communities, Place and Resources. Some policies and strategies have direct links to driving biodiversity benefit, whilst others drive indirect co-benefits.

Climate change is one of the biggest threats to biodiversity. On 25 June 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and appointed specialist environmental consultants to help develop the response to the need to reduce the Council's and the district's carbon emissions. This resulted in the publication of the [Zero Carbon Roadmap](#) in November 2019 which, along with the accompanying [Action Plan](#), was adopted by the Council on 31 March 2020. This sets out key objectives around climate and the environment with an ambition for the Council's operations to be carbon neutral by 2030. Activity is overseen by the Environment, Climate and Zero Carbon Steering Group drawing on an allocated reserve of £1 million to provide resource and help facilitate activity. Biodiversity related activity forms part of this workstream.

The Council signed up to the [Leicestershire Climate and Nature Pact](#) when it launched in February 2023. The core requirements of the pact include the need to act quickly on reducing the impacts of climate change, reducing carbon emissions to net zero, halting ecological decline, supporting nature recovery, and working together to deliver effective action on climate change. On 14 November 2023, the Council passed a [motion](#) to call on Leicestershire Local Government Pension Schemes to divest from fossil fuel investments.

The Council's [Environmental Policy](#), approved in January 2026, references to biodiversity and protecting and enhancing local ecosystems, wildlife habitats, and green spaces along with encouraging the planting of trees and the maintenance of local parks and reserves.

The [Tree, Woodland and Hedgerow Management Strategy](#), approved in 2025, recognises the importance of trees to the environment and outlines how they will be managed and maintained on land owned and managed by the Council, in line with principles of the [Leicestershire Tree Charter](#). The strategy includes responding to pests and diseases, planting new climate resilient trees and hedgerows to support wildlife and encourage natural regeneration and increasing tree canopy cover across the district. It is underpinned by an annual action plan which aims to increase and enhance the availability and maintenance of trees and hedgerows in the district and is integrated within management plans for parks and open spaces.

The Council's [North West Leicestershire District Regeneration Framework](#) outlines the commitment to making the district an "incredible place to live, work and play". It refers to "conserving and enhancing our Natural Environment" and outlines how the UK Shared Prosperity Fund helped support the National Forest and its [Heart of the Forest Masterplan](#), which sets out the aim to transform the centre of the National Forest over the next 10 years, strengthening its sense of place, improving the visitor experience and encouraging sustainable enterprise and inward investment.

The [Coalville Regeneration Framework](#) sets out a vision for the town and outlines a variety of projects, a desire to move towards Zero Carbon. It aims to make the most of the town's extensive green infrastructure network, encouraging sustainable modes of transport which includes plans for new and improved pedestrian and cycle paths.

The Council has led on the development of a NWL Cycling and Walking Strategy and a NWL Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) with the support of Leicestershire County Council (LCC) and in consultation with numerous local partners. The strategy sets out the approach that the Council and partners intend to take at a local level to deliver on the Government's ambitions to

make England a great walking and cycling nation. LCWIPs are designed to allow local authorities to take a long-term approach to the development of networks of walking and cycling routes that connect places that people need to get to, whether for work, education, shopping or for other reasons and include network plans for walking and cycling which identify preferred routes and core zones for further development, and a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment

The Council's [Procurement Strategy](#) supports the Council's environmental goals by prioritising sustainable procurement practices, such as reducing carbon footprints, minimising waste, and promoting the use of eco-friendly products and services, and through embedding social and environmental value into procurement activity, including specifications and tender scoring.

The Council adopted a [hybrid working policy](#) in 2021 which has enabled the move to smaller, more energy efficient offices and driven a reduction in commuting travel for many of its 500+ employees. The policy outlines a move away from traditional working methods, introducing greater flexibility whilst maintaining customer services and references to the Council's zero carbon targets.

The Council is responsible for various licencing activities; in terms of taxi licencing, its [Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy](#) actively encourages the adoption of electric vehicles through a 15% reduction in fees and, since January 2026, has required all vehicles to have at least a Euro 6 compliant engine. Any vehicle not compliant with the required standard will not be licensed at the time of renewal. From an event licencing perspective, North West Leicestershire is the home of the annual Download rock festival with over 75,000 attendees. Lift shares and coach travel are encouraged; £1 from every car parking ticket is donated to Trees for Cities to support local tree planting projects; and a focus on recycling with a deposit scheme on cups and bottles to encourage recycling and reduce litter.

The adopted [North West Leicestershire Local Plan \(2021\)](#) sets out 15 objectives identifying what the Council seeks to achieve through the Local Plan and new development, including Objective 11:

- *Protect and enhance the natural environment including the district's biodiversity, geodiversity and water environment areas identified for their importance.*

Four other objectives relate to biodiversity, covering such areas as climate change, water efficiency and flood risk, waste reduction and green sustainable development.

The adopted Local Plan includes policies to protect and enhance biodiversity and manage impacts from new development on the environment. Policy En1 (Nature Conservation) is the key policy relating to biodiversity. Several other policies in the adopted Local Plan also make reference to biodiversity covering such areas as new housing and employment sites, design, open space, the River Mease Special Area of Conservation, the National Forest, the Charnwood Regional Park, land and air quality, renewable energy and sustainable drainage systems.

All of the Neighbourhood Plans in the district, which have been produced by the relevant Parish or Town Council, include policies relating specifically to biodiversity net gain and biodiversity:

- the made Ashby de la Zouch Neighbourhood Plan (November 2025) – Policy ENV4 (Sites and Features of Natural Environment Significance) and Policy ENV5 (Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity)
- the made Breedon on the Hill Neighbourhood Plan (March 2025) – Policy BotH5 (Ecology and Biodiversity)
- the made Ellistown and Battleflat Neighbourhood Plan (July 2019) – Policy S3 (South East Coalville Development Scheme) and Policy NE2 (Biodiversity)
- the pre-submission Ellistown and Battleflat Neighbourhood Plan (March 2025) - Policy ENV4 (Sites and Features of Natural Environment Significance), Policy ENV5 (Biodiversity Across the Neighbourhood Area)
- the made Hugglescote and Donington le Heath Neighbourhood Plan (November 2021) – Policy ENV6 (Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity)
- the made Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan (April 2022) – Policy G2 (Design), Policy H1 (Residential Site Allocation) and Policy ENV6 (Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity)
- the made Swannington Neighbourhood Plan (March 2023) – Policy ENV3 (Sites and Features of Natural Environment Significance) and Policy ENV4 (Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity)
- the made Lockington cum Hemington Neighbourhood Plan (February 2024) - Policy ENV4 (Sites and Features of Natural Environment Significance) and Policy ENV5 (Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity)
- the submission Long Whatton and Diseworth Neighbourhood Plan (January 2025) – Policy LE&D5 (Ecology and Biodiversity)

Partnership Working

Effective partnership activity is key, and the Council works collaboratively with the National Forest, Forestry Commission, Woodland Trust along with Leicestershire County Council (LCC), parish and town councils and other landowners and relevant stakeholders.

The [Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-2-26 \(LLRBAP\)](#) was developed by the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust in partnership with nineteen organisations. The plan, originally published in 1998 and updated several times (most recently in 2016), is now called "Space for Wildlife16". The LLRBAP recognises five areas as having high value for wildlife because of the quality of existing habitats; within the district this includes Charnwood Forest and the adjoining National Forest. These areas form part of the [Wildlife Trusts Living Landscapes initiative](#).

The Council is a partner and collaborated on the development of the [Local Nature Recovery Strategy \(LNRS\) for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland](#), which provides a blueprint for nature recovery, focusing on habitat loss, species decline, flood mitigation, food production, building development, improving air and water quality and climate change. The LNRS outlines priorities for the district in particular relating to the Charnwood Forest, the National Forest and Leicestershire Coalfield areas as well as its urban areas and makes particular reference to the River Mease Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). The measures in the LNRS aim to deliver long-term ecological resilience and biodiversity gains for these areas and across the district and

will shape future activity across Leicestershire and Rutland, which the Council will continue to implement.

NWL is the home of The National Forest and there is a strong history of working together. This includes supporting the development of the [Heart of the National Forest Vision](#), which sets out plans to deliver biodiversity enhancements, create connected habitats, wood land management and support the Green Web - a network of footpaths and cycleways linking key attractions.

In developing the Nature Alive site in Coalville, the Council worked together with the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust. The site has a large population of great crested newts, and the ponds also support smooth newts, common toads, common frogs and numerous other aquatic invertebrates such as dragonfly larvae and water beetles. Wetland plants including common reed and water forget-me-not provide foraging, egg laying and refuge areas for newts and other wildlife. The surrounding tall grassland and scrub provide excellent hibernation and refuge areas for both amphibians and small mammals. The ponds are managed to ensure that conditions continue to be suitable for the amphibians to breed and regular surveys are carried out to identify and record species found on site.

Another example is the [River Mease Partnership](#); its membership is made up of the Council, Natural England, the Environment Agency, Severn Trent Water, the Trent Rivers Trust, the National Farmers Union, South Derbyshire District Council and Lichfield District Council. The River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC) a highly significant watercourse, designated due to the importance of the species and habitats it supports.

The water and associated habitats of the Mease are crucial for the conservation of these species. Additionally, the Mease plays an important role in local agriculture, providing water resources and contributing to the agricultural landscape. The river and its tributaries suffer from poor habitats and water quality problems mainly due to high phosphorous levels, which comes from a variety of sources, including agriculture, and from new development as a result of increased foul water discharge. The River Mease Partnership works on focusing conservation efforts to improve water quality, restore habitats, and protect its unique biodiversity, including by using mitigation measures funded by the two River Mease Developer Contribution Schemes (DCS). The DCS required developers to pay developer contributions (as part of the planning application process) to fund measures to mitigate for the harm to the SAC arising from foul drainage discharge from new developments in the Mease catchment. Efforts to restore riparian habitats along rivers and streams have resulted in the return of species such as otters and water voles to areas where they had once previously disappeared.

Work is ongoing by the Council (on behalf of South Derbyshire District Council and Lichfield District Council) and its River Mease Delivery Partner (the Trent Rivers Trust) to deliver nutrient neutrality mitigation measures for foul drainage discharge from planning applications for new housing development and other developments involving overnight stays in the catchment.

Environmental Delivery Plans (EDPs) have recently been introduced under the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025. EDPs will identify and deliver strategic conservation measures that address specific environmental impacts of development on protected sites (such as SACs) or species. In December 2025 Natural England notified DEFRA of their intention to create an EDP

for the River Mease SAC and the Council will provide information to Natural England about the SAC catchment and the work done to date by the River Mease Partnership and the Council.

In terms of indirect activity, the Council is an active member of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Air Quality Forum and Leicestershire's Air Quality and Health Partnership and reports annually on air quality. It is also a partner in the [Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy 2022-2050](#) and driving recycling rates in the district through trials of food waste and flex film collections. The strategy aims to encourage people to take greater responsibility for consumption choices that lead to waste generation and disposal, through raising awareness of initiatives such as home composting, using less, reuse and recycling. As part of the Leicestershire Waste Partnership, campaigns such as "Litter Lives On" are trying to prevent fly-tipping and littering which can have a detrimental impact on biodiversity, because it can injure or kill wildlife, pollute, destroy and damage habitats and upset ecosystems. In terms of managing Recycling Household Waste Sites (RHWS) there is an objective to protect and increase biodiversity through good practice.

Activities

The Council acknowledges that activities contributing to biodiversity outcomes can result from both direct and indirect actions. These include investments in energy efficiency measures to drive lower energy use in its social housing and use of renewable energies which helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce impact on habitats and species; encouraging active travel, reducing travel, or using electric vehicles which can help reduce air pollution and improve air quality; improving recycling services and responsible waste management to help protect habitats.

The Council adopted a [hybrid working policy](#) in 2021 which has enabled the move to smaller, more energy efficient offices and driven a reduction in commuting travel for many of its 500+ employees. It has added fifteen electric vehicles to its fleet with the rest of the fleet fuelled by hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO), which produces lower air pollutants than diesel, and has implemented route optimisation across its services to reduce mileage and drive associated environmental benefits. The Council has installed electric vehicle chargers in seven of its public car parks to help support its residents. It has installed 518 solar panels (194 kwp) on the roof of its Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre driving a reduction in energy consumption.

In managing its own land (with two Green Flag Awards) across parks, open spaces, play areas, sports fields, cemeteries and nature sites across the district, the Council remains dedicated to increasing the canopy cover in the district by planting trees in appropriate spaces. It has planted over 680 trees since 2024 and now leaves many grass areas uncut or mown less frequently to help encourage pollinators. One transformation is Coalville Forest Adventure Park which was formerly a landfill site and the area has been transformed into an important habitat for wildlife with over 8,400 trees planted in the last decade.

As part of the redevelopment of the Hermitage recreation grounds in Coalville between 2023-2025, an Eco Park was created increasing biodiversity, with enhancements to improve the ecology and biodiversity of the lake and woodland area, including indigenous tree planting, defined footpaths, boardwalks, activity nodes and lakeside reed and iris planting. The site also includes a

Tiny Forest, delivered in partnership with Earthwatch, which is a dense fast-growing native woodland that brings the benefits of a forest into cities and urban spaces. The aim is that the area reconnects people with nature, enhances wellbeing, helps mitigate the impacts of climate change and provides nature-rich habitat patches to support urban wildlife.

The site of Moira Furnace, a scheduled ancient monument and a key surviving example of a blast furnace from the early Industrial Revolution, was acquired by the Council in 1981 and developed as a museum and country park. Now run by a Trust but supported by the Council, the charity's aim is to preserve and conserve the flora and fauna of the Moira Furnace site for the benefit and education of the public. The site consists of 36 acres and amongst the attractions are woodlands, a pond and a walkway over a boggy area. In addition, the Council provides funding support for the Moira Furnace Woodland Festival which showcases woodland crafts, culture and experiences in the National Forest.

The Council is proud of its annual free tree scheme which was launched in 2008 and is a partnership with the National Forest. In 2025 over 14,000 trees and hedging plants were provided to residents and its bulb scheme has provided thousands of bulbs to local groups to plant around their communities. Grant funding has included support for the creation of a community garden; improved planting within a local park to enable visitors to view plants at close range; provided protective clothing to support the removal of invasive plants from waterways; and educating young people to get involved in growing their own food and planting to attract nature and wildlife. One element of the Council's "[Love Your Neighbourhood](#)" scheme focused on bringing residents together to create cleaner, greener neighbourhoods, funding has been provided to support litter picking and the installation of bug houses and bird and bat boxes.

Air quality affects biodiversity as plants, animals and ecosystems depend on clean air to survive and function properly. The Council produces an annual report outlining what air quality monitoring has been done in the district - and if anything is likely to impact air quality that is not currently being monitored (such as planning applications, new roads, junction alterations, etc.).

. One example under the NWL Cycling and Walking Strategy and the NWL Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is in Kegworth where, working in a partnership with LCC and Kegworth Parish Council and funded by the Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Long Lane and Ratcliffe Lane have been transformed into a quiet lane, enhancing road safety, promoting active travel, and preserving the peaceful character of this rural route, with bins to help keep the area litter free.

Planning applications are assessed against the policies in the adopted Local Plan and made Neighbourhood Plans, alongside other material considerations. This includes the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), some of which relate to biodiversity. The Good Design SPD was adopted in April 2017 and includes a chapter relating to 'A greener footprint', which relates to new development being designed and located in such a way to reduce its environmental impact and offer people opportunities to live lower carbon lifestyles. The Cycling Strategies SPDs (Part 1 - Coalville and Part 2 – Ashby de la Zouch) assist with zero carbon as cycling has zero emissions. The Council adopted an Air Quality SPD in October 2023

which sets out the circumstances in which the Council requires planning applications to be supported by an air quality assessment.

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland LNRS is a key evidence base for planning decisions, used to ensure that decisions support local biodiversity objectives and contribute to regional and national nature recovery targets.

The National Forest Company's Guide for Developers and Planners sets out the planting guidelines for development in the National Forest, where applications for sites over specific size thresholds must include Forest green infrastructure on-site or in exceptional circumstances through a contribution towards off-site planting. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the national Planning Practice Guidance both set out policies and guidance in respect of biodiversity (including biodiversity net gain).

LCC provides the Council with specialist ecological advice on planning application submissions in respect of BNG and other ecological matters including protected species.

The Council is currently producing a new [North West Leicestershire Local Plan](#) which will shape future developments across NWL. The Council consulted on the Proposed Policies, Proposed Housing and Employment Allocations, Proposed Limits to Development Review and draft Policies Maps from 5 February to 17 March 2024. Further consultation took place from 21 March to 2 May 2025 on Additional Proposed Housing and Employment Allocations. The Local Development Scheme (February 2025) sets out that the Consultation Publication Local Plan will be consulted on for six weeks in May/June 2026, with submission and examination later in 2026 and adoption in summer 2027.

The plan objectives describe, in overall terms, what the new Local Plan aims to achieve and provides a guiding framework for the Plan's policies and proposals, including Objective 9:

- *Conserve and enhance the district's natural environment, including its biodiversity, geodiversity, water environments and landscape character, notably the River Mease Special Area of Conservation, the National Forest and Charnwood Forest as well as its other valued landscapes and pursue opportunities for biodiversity net gains. [Conserving and enhancing our natural environment].*

Two other objectives relate to biodiversity, covering such areas as climate change, the efficient use of natural resources and controlling pollution.

Draft Policy En1 (Nature Conservation/Biodiversity Net Gain) is the new Local Plan policy that relates specifically to nature conservation and biodiversity net gain. Many of the other policies in the draft new Local Plan relate to biodiversity covering similar areas to the adopted Local Plan such as new housing and employment sites, design, open space, the River Mease Special Area of Conservation, the National Forest, the Charnwood Regional Park, land and air quality, renewable energy and sustainable drainage systems, and also adding in policies relating to reducing carbon emissions, water efficiency, green and blue infrastructure.

The [evidence base](#) to the new Local Plan includes the following studies and assessments relating to biodiversity and related matters:

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (March 2024) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Update (February 2026) – the update includes guidance on surface water management for new development
- Green & Blue Infrastructure Study (June 2022) identifies and maps the existing Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) assets in the district and outline the key challenges faced by the GBI network locally. It also identifies opportunities for enhancing and creating GBI within seven selected settlements.
- Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Study (February 2021) This study provides evidence on the likely technical potential for different forms of renewable and low carbon energy in the district.

Two [Sustainability Appraisals](#) (November 2025 and January 2024) of the draft policies for the new Local Plan assess them against 17 Sustainability Appraisal objectives, including SA12 which relates to ‘Protect and enhance the district’s biodiversity and protect areas identified for their nature conservation and geological importance.’ Other Sustainability Appraisals have been undertaken in the reporting period, including the Site Assessments Findings Report (November 2024 and September 2025).

The Council has produced a [Draft North West Leicestershire Good Design Guide](#) to replace the adopted Good Design SPD. Consultation on the draft Good Design Guide took place in July to September 2025 and the responses to the consultation are currently being considered. The draft Good Design Guide includes a chapter called ‘Embraces nature’ which sets out that embracing nature is critical to habitats and ecosystems and their development and survival, and that providing pathways, networks and systems that knit together offers the best way for wildlife to thrive. This chapter sets out how this can be delivered through five components:

- Network of spaces
- Open space design
- Sustainable drainage
- Balancing ponds and detention basins
- Street trees

Future Actions

North West Leicestershire District Council, under its Environmental Policy, is committed to protecting and enhancing local ecosystems, wildlife habitats, and green spaces. This includes promoting tree planting and supporting the effective management of local parks and reserves.

The Council is further committed to strengthening biodiversity by delivering strategic actions to restore and reconnect habitats and embedding nature-based solutions across planning, development and regeneration activity and wider decision-making processes.

Future initiatives will include continued working with communities and partners to ensure long-term resilience of local ecosystems and support for the Leicester and Leicestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Activities will include the redevelopment of Stenson Square in Coalville, incorporating climate resilient planting to create a more welcoming and sustainable green space;

ongoing tree and wildflower planting; encouraging gardening activity with social housing tenants; and progressing the new Local Plan and Good Design Guide through to adoption.

As the Council is one of many local authorities undergoing Local Government Re-organisation, the next report may represent a wider geography of Leicestershire and Rutland.

Biodiversity Net Gain

As part of the biodiversity duty requirements, the Environment Act 2021 requires local planning authorities to report on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as follows:

- The actions carried out to meet BNG obligations
- Details of BNG resulting, or expected to result, from biodiversity gain plans approved
- How the biodiversity net gain obligations are planned to be met in the next reporting period.

The Government's National Planning Policy Guidance at www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain sets out that:

Biodiversity net gain is a way of creating and improving biodiversity by requiring development to have a positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity. Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ("the biodiversity gain condition"). This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits. The biodiversity gain condition is a pre-commencement condition: once planning permission has been granted, a Biodiversity Gain Plan must be submitted and approved by the planning authority before commencement of the development.

BNG is a mandatory requirement for planning applications introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021). Achieving 10% BNG for applications for major development was introduced on 12 February 2024, and for applications on small sites on 2 April 2024. A government consultation on changes to BNG requirements for small sites was undertaken in May-July 2025. The government announced in December 2025 that it will introduce an area-based exemption for smaller sites along with measures to streamline off-site BNG delivery, however, this has not yet been introduced.

The Council is responsible for:

- Processing applications to ensure they meet the 10% BNG target
- Securing BNG through legal agreements and conditions
- Monitoring compliance over a minimum of 30 years.

Some applications are exempt from having to provide 10% BNG under national legislation. Some of the circumstances where applications are exempt from mandatory 10% BNG include householder applications, those applications that are below specific thresholds (known as 'de minimis', and where less than 25 sqm of on-site non-priority habitat or 5 metres of on-site linear

habitats are affected), applications for self/custom-builds subject to set criteria, some applications to vary or remove conditions on planning permissions, applications for reserved matters, retrospective applications and applications that are granted planning permission by a development order (including permitted development rights).

All planning applications that are subject to BNG must be accompanied by information about the existing habitats on the site, including a calculation of the pre-development biodiversity on-site habitat using DEFRA's biodiversity metric, a description of any irreplaceable habitat and a plan showing existing on-site habitat.

Each application is checked against an internal validation sheet which sets out the mandatory requirements for applications in relation to BNG and the list of exemptions.

A minimum of 10% BNG on each relevant application is achieved by requiring local planning authorities to only grant permission subject to the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition to ensure that the biodiversity net gain objective is met. This is a pre-commencement condition that requires submission of the Biodiversity Gain Plan to the Council for its approval before development commences on site.

Biodiversity Net Gain Mitigation

2024/2025

333 planning applications¹ were determined between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. Of these, 6.3% (21) were subject to mandatory 10% BNG, with 93.7% (312) being exempt from BNG.

During this period, one discharge of condition application was determined that relates to the mandatory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition, other details relating to BNG or a mix of both, which was approved.

Q1 & Q2 2025/2026

254 planning applications were determined in Q1 and Q2. Of these, 17.4% (44) were subject to mandatory 10% BNG, with 82.6% (210) being exempt from BNG.

One of the applications subject to BNG was refused due to not satisfactorily demonstrating that 10% BNG could be provided.

In Q1 and Q2 of 2025/2026, 11 discharge of condition applications were determined that relate to the mandatory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition, other details relating to BNG or a mix of both. All of these applications were approved.

Q3 2025/2026

118 planning applications were determined in Q3. Of these, 10.2% (12) were subject to mandatory 10% BNG, with 89.8% (106) being exempt from BNG.

¹ Only planning applications are included, as other types of applications are not subject to mandatory BNG, e.g. permission in principle, advertisements, discharge of conditions, prior notifications/prior approvals for permitted development and listed building consent.

None of the applications subject to BNG were refused due to not satisfactorily demonstrating that 10% BNG could be provided.

In Q3 of 2025/2026, eight discharge of condition applications have also been determined that relate to the mandatory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition, other details relating to BNG or a mix of both. All of these applications were approved.

Biodiversity Gain Plans

A net gain has been achieved on-site in the majority of the approved Biodiversity Gain Plans, with one site achieving it through a mix of on-site and purchased off-site biodiversity units, and two sites solely purchasing off-site units. One of the approved Biodiversity Gain Plans includes solely providing the net gain via the purchase of national statutory biodiversity credits.

For the sites where on-site BNG will be provided, there will be an increase in on-site habitat ranging from 10.21% to 58.16%. Where off-site BNG will be provided, the increase in habitat ranges from 12.58% to 328.43%.

BNG Monitoring

Where 'significant' on-site habitat will be provided, the legislation requires a detailed habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP) to be submitted, to explain how the habitat will be managed over 30 years and how it will reach the target condition stated in the metric.

At this stage, one of the approved Gain Plans has included off-site habitat on land within the applicant's ownership. In this case, the applicant has entered into a Section 106 Agreement to cover the costs of checking their monitoring reports throughout the 30-year period as well as submitting a woodland/habitat management and monitoring plan.

Actions the Council has undertaken to meet its BNG obligations

During the Council's reporting period, the Council has undertaken various actions to meet its BNG obligations on all relevant applications. The section above outlines the process and actions that officers undertake when dealing with planning applications and applications to discharge conditions.

The Ecology team at LCC provides advice to the Council in respect of planning matters relating to BNG and also on other ecological matters, including protected species. Where relating to BNG and other ecological matters, this includes advice during the production of policy and guidance, support in the production of validation lists, assistance with pre-application advice queries, the assessment of ecological reports and BNG information and metrics submitted with planning applications and at discharge of condition stage and making recommendations on planning applications. LCC will also provide support at appeals which have been refused on BNG or other ecological grounds. LCC will also monitor BNG compliance through site visits and reports where a monitoring fee has been secured in a legal agreement.

The Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Record Centre (LRERC) also provides key ecological data to the Council, including in respect of local wildlife sites and records of protected species, and provides updated information in respect of these matters twice a year.

The LNRS can be a material planning consideration and identifies strategic locations where biodiversity enhancements should be targeted, with the provision of off-site BNG at these locations being given a higher weight in terms of value in the biodiversity metric. This means that more BNG units can be delivered if the location has been identified in the LNRS for the relevant habitat to be created or enhanced, incentivising the location of off-site BNG in places where it will have the biggest impact for nature recovery.

Officers are working on a BNG validation checklist which will form part of the local planning authority's local list of requirements for planning applications.

Details of BNG for each application are recorded in the Council's existing planning application software. A specialist database has also been purchased for the details of Biodiversity Gain Plans to assist with future monitoring.

Enforcement of BNG conditions is undertaken in accordance with the Council's Local Enforcement Plan (2024). Discussions, including with the other Leicestershire and Rutland local planning authorities, are ongoing about long-term monitoring of developments subject to BNG conditions and legal agreements.

A corporate key performance indicator also tracks BNG progress, with quarterly performance reporting in place.

Planning and enforcement officers have continued to attend training sessions relating to BNG, including an in-person event hosted by LCC in January 2024 that included colleagues from other local planning authorities across Leicestershire and Rutland. Officers have also attended online webinars including those run by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS), DEFRA and Natural England. Training has also been provided to officers by a local habitat bank provider.

The Leicestershire and Rutland local planning authorities have proactively worked together to discuss BNG matters, through regular forums attended by the Head of Planning and Infrastructure and the Planning and Development Team Manager.

Officers have also run internal training sessions for the Planning and Development team, in particular, in the first year after the implementation of BNG, including validation training and working through examples of applications to understand how to deal with BNG in different scenarios.

Officers are actively involved in the BNG Forum, which has been set up by PAS to support local planning authorities with the implementation of BNG, including providing a forum to ask questions, training sessions and regular forum meetings to share experiences and provide updates.

How the Council will meet its BNG obligations in the next reporting period

The Council will continue to ensure a minimum 10% BNG is achieved on relevant applications at planning application and discharge of condition stage.

The enforcement of the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition will be essential to enable the Council to carry out its statutory duty in relation to BNG in the next reporting period.

Robust mechanisms for achieving this are being explored and it is recognised that there may be resourcing implications for this. As set out earlier in this report, discussions, including with the other Leicestershire and Rutland local planning authorities, are ongoing about the long-term monitoring of developments subject to BNG conditions and legal agreements. The use of the Council's existing planning software and its specialist database will assist with future monitoring.

Greater levels of data relating to biodiversity outcomes as a result of new developments will become available as more information is submitted to the Council under the Biodiversity Gain Plans. This will enable the Council to identify gains or losses in specific habitats and identify where off-site gains are being provided.

Through the new local plan, new and up-to-date policies will be in place to help secure increased and better local biodiversity net gains. Continued consideration of the LNRS will assist with helping to deliver the wider biodiversity objectives set out in the LNRS

Work will continue on the BNG validation checklist. Further detailed training will be provided on BNG to take account of any changes to BNG legislation and national guidance. Officers will continue to take an active role in the Planning Advisory Service Forum, to share knowledge and best practice to ensure securing a minimum of 10% BNG.

Likely to contain exempt information under paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda Item 15.

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Likely to contain exempt information under paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda Item 16.

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