

YOUR COTSWOLD YOUR PLAN

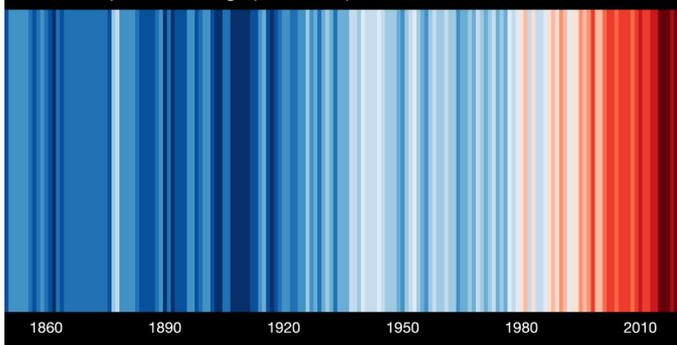
CREATING A FUTURE
THAT IS GREEN TO THE CORE



RESPONDING TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS

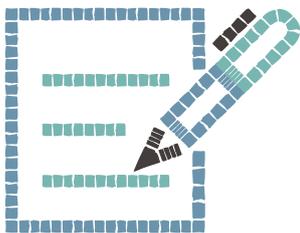
KEY FACTS

Global temperature change (1850-2020)



ISSUES

- The Local Plan currently responds to the climate emergency but it could do much more.
- Cotswold District aims to be carbon neutral by 2045.
- Mitigation - the district needs to rapidly transition to zero carbon by using less non-renewable energy and generating much more renewable energy, as well as a multitude of other mitigation measures.
- Adaptation - Developments (both existing and new) must be adaptive to droughts, worse flooding, heat stress, wildfire risk, and so on.



OPTIONS

The consultation includes numerous solutions but here is a high level summary of some of them:

- A new strategic Local Plan policy for the climate change and ecological emergencies.
- Help to deliver the emerging Renewable Energy Strategy and identify land for renewable energy generation.

- Go above and beyond Building Regulations, which only seek to make development low carbon ready as opposed to Net Zero Carbon.
- Require / encourage / facilitate a rapid transition from fossil fuel to high efficiency electric heating.
- Encourage / facilitate a deep retrofit of existing buildings to reduce energy demand.
- Update local policies to ensure new development is adaptive to the future climate.

THE KEY QUESTION

Would you support wind turbines in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and / or ground mounted solar panels ('solar farms') being much more common in the district? And should the Local Plan require all new buildings to be Net Zero Carbon?



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THAT IS GREEN TO THE CORE



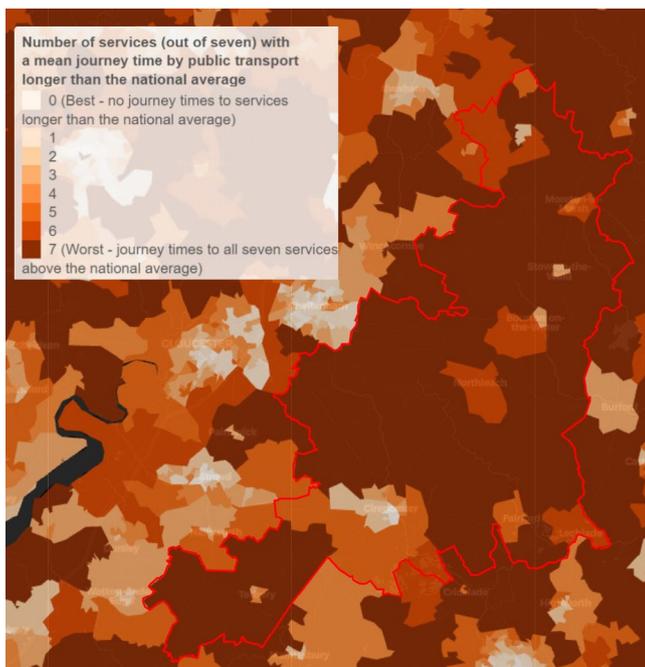
ACCESSIBILITY OF NEW HOUSING

KEY FACTS

Transport is responsible for 27% of UK carbon emissions. It is the UK's largest emitting sector and is the only one where emissions are continuing to grow¹.

In Cotswold, people tend to drive more than other people in the UK.

This map shows that accessibility (without a car) to 7 key services in rural Cotswold is amongst the poorest in the UK.



ISSUES

- In many rural parts of Cotswold, essential services and facilities are often a long way from where people live and public transport services can be limited or nonexistent.
- This means that people living in these areas are highly dependent on cars for everyday life, which leads to higher levels of carbon emissions, poorer health and increased road danger.
- It can also mean that people who cannot drive or do not have a car can struggle to meet their basic needs, or access good jobs, education and other opportunities.

OPTIONS



Seek to build new housing in areas with good access to key services by walking, cycling or public transport by introducing an accessibility scoring system for potential new development sites.

Developers will also have an opportunity to allocate land for new facilities, or seek to improve access to existing ones, where proposed developments do not meet minimum accessibility standards to one or more core services.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/final-uk-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics>

THE KEY QUESTION

Do you agree that we should seek to place most new housing development within reasonable walking + public transport distance of core services, so that people are not forced to use a car to access their daily needs?



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BIODIVERSITY

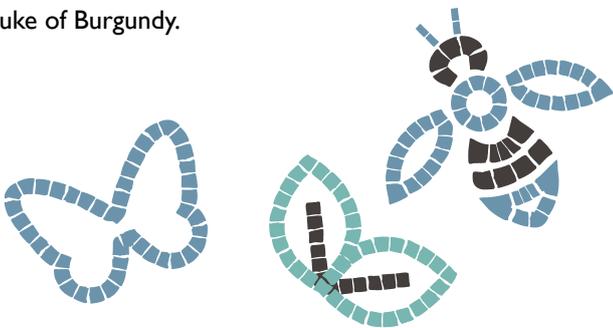
KEY FACTS

Biodiversity is “the variety of life on Earth – the variety of ecosystems or habitats, of species and of the genetic diversity they contain. We value wildlife in its own right but biodiversity also underpins much of the economic and social benefit we gain from nature.”
(Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan).

One in seven UK species is now at risk of extinction. Since the 1930s, 97% of the UK’s ancient wildflower meadows have been destroyed. There’s been a 76% decline in flying insects since 1990 and pollinators, such as bees, are particularly struggling.

Cotswold’s grasslands have numerous rare and declining plants, such as the Pasque Flower and Cotswold Pennycress, some of which are found only in the Cotswolds.

They also support nationally rare butterflies such as the Chalkhill Blue and the Duke of Burgundy.



ISSUES

- National policy will soon require at least a 10% ‘biodiversity net gain’ in developments to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than beforehand.
- Need to respond to actions contained with the District Council’s Climate Change Emergency and Ecological Emergencies.
- New Environment Act 2021 and a 25 year Environment Plan raise the importance of biodiversity, the Nature Recovery Network and introduce Local Nature Recovery Strategies.
- Covid-19 pandemic has increased recreation pressure on biodiversity.
- New Building with Nature Benchmark/Standards.

OPTIONS

The Local Plan could:

- **Require a higher percentage of biodiversity net gain** than the 10% minimum that has been mandated by the Environment Act.
- **Plug gaps in the Nature Recovery Network** through the development of sites and through off-site biodiversity net gains.
- **Further protect important wildlife sites** from increased pollution from cars, increased recreational pressure, etc., for example, by providing more high quality and accessible open spaces where provision is lacking and delivering modal shift away from private automobiles.
- **Introduce a levy requiring all new developments to contribute towards biodiversity enhancements** where viable.

THE KEY QUESTION

Local Plans can require higher than 10% but this has to be weighed in the balance of delivering other policy objectives. Should developments in Cotswold District achieve more than 10% biodiversity net gain? Should this be a fixed percentage or should it vary in relation to the size, location or type of development? And to what extent should the Council allow biodiversity net gains to be delivered off-site?



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DESIGN

KEY FACTS

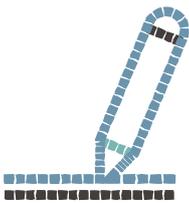
Area Name vs age of housing stock	Pre 20th Century	20th Century	21st Century
ENGLAND	16%	70%	13%
Cotswold District	24%	57%	18%

Emissions from our buildings account for 26% of the UK's total emissions. 18% of this total is from our homes.

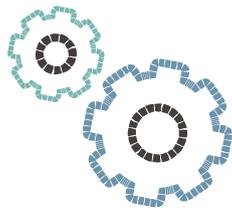
ISSUES

- Adaptation and mitigation of the climate and ecological emergencies.
- Providing safe, healthier and affordable homes and neighbourhoods.
- Creating space for people to walk and cycle more and reducing space currently devoted to vehicles.
- Need to respond to the government's policy that places greater emphasis on place shaping, design and beauty.

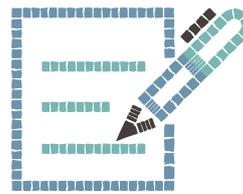
OPTIONS



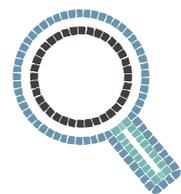
Introduce a new building standards policy that requires new buildings to be zero carbon, in terms of the construction and life time use.



Update the Cotswold Design Code to improve the visual quality of the guidance, without freighting the guidance with pages of information and avoiding repetition of national guidance; and improve consistency with the National Design Guide's ten characteristics of good places.



Create a new overarching policy that incorporates the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals¹. The policy would further 'build in' design considerations from the beginning of the planning process to help respond to known issues and deliver positive outcomes.



Greater detail for all new site allocations. This would include setting out the design influences, access arrangements and necessary infrastructure within the policy to provide more clarity and expectation to the planning application process.

¹ The United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

THE KEY QUESTION

Would you support the Council in approving development that takes a modern interpretation of the traditional Cotswold design to achieve zero or low carbon development?



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ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

KEY FACTS

The District is a net importer of labour - 2,000 employees (pre-pandemic).

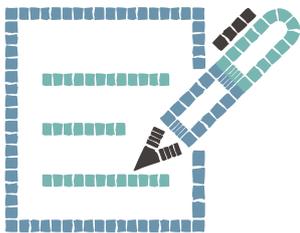
Productivity is 17% higher than the national average and the highest in the South West.

90% of businesses are microbusinesses employing 9 people or fewer - over 5,500 in total.

Double the national average of people working at home - 13.3% - 7th highest in England (pre-pandemic).

ISSUES

- The economy is in the midst of dynamic change, mainly due to increased online shopping; Brexit; changes in social and working habits due to the Covid-19 pandemic; legislative change related to Class E of the Use Classes Order; and the impact of climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Desire and strong potential for green economic growth.
- Sites for employment development are hard to find and retain due to competition from the housing market.
- Loss of young people from the District negatively affects the economy.



OPTIONS

**Amend existing, or
introduce new policy, to:**

- Ensure that the employment element of mixed-use schemes is developed alongside the housing element;
- Introduce a presumption in favour of viable employment development that demonstrably is part of the “green” economy;

- Identify areas considered to be important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses;
- Explore use of Article 4 Directions to control the ability of Class E development to change to Class C3 (houses) in specific parts of the district, including safeguarded employment sites, that may feature a significant proportion of Class E uses.
- For larger development sites, require that the proposal is accompanied by an Employment and Skills Plan that shows how the development will materially contribute to helping the local economy be more self-sufficient and sustainable.

THE KEY QUESTION

How can the Local Plan’s economic development policies be made green to the core?



YOUR COTSWOLD YOUR PLAN

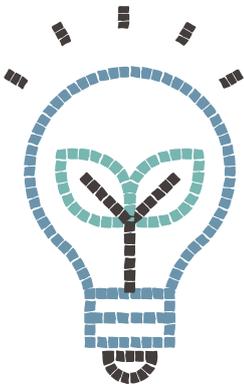
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GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

KEY FACTS

Green Infrastructure (GI) is defined as “A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity” (NPPF 2021).



GI can take many forms - e.g. green corridors, such as disused railway lines, pedestrian and cycle routes, canals and rivers; flood defences; ecological enhancements; sports pitches, parks and public open spaces; gardens, orchards and allotments; cemeteries and churchyards; green roofs; and many, many more!

Despite being a rural area, Cotswold has deficient access to publicly accessible open spaces.

Covid-19 pandemic has put pressure on existing GI with large numbers of people flocking to beauty spots causing disturbance to wildlife, litter and other damage to the environment.

ISSUES

- Need to respond to climate change and ecological emergencies.
- New Environment Act 2021 and a 25 year Environment Plan raise the importance of GI.
- Cotswold District Council is producing a new Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the need for better access to high quality GI and better management of some locations.
- Issue with long-term management of some open spaces in new developments.

OPTIONS

The Local Plan already has Green Infrastructure policies but it could be improved by an update to the Plan to reflect:

- The Council's Climate Change Emergency and Ecological Emergency declarations and its Corporate Plan;
- The Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy once it is completed;
- Updated national planning policy and guidance, such as the NPPF 2021;
- The Building with Nature Benchmark/Standard;
- The 25 year Environment Plan and the Environment Act 2021; and
- Natural England's revised National Open Space Standards.

THE KEY QUESTION

What three types of Green Infrastructure are most important to you and what would your community and the environment get the most benefit from in your area?



YOUR COTSWOLD YOUR PLAN

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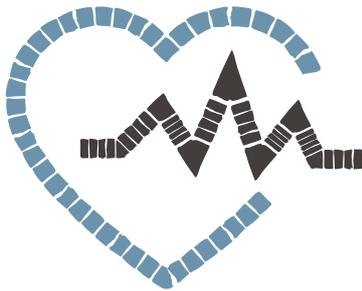
HEALTH, SOCIAL & CULTURAL WELLBEING

KEY FACTS

Cotswold has an ageing population. Social isolation and loneliness are key concerns.

There is an upward trend in obesity and mental health problems across the District.

9% of the District's households live in 'fuel poverty'.



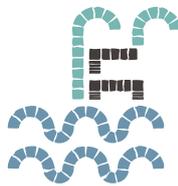
ISSUES

- The District's infrastructure can be improved to support people to choose active travel.
- The District is rural in nature. Realistically, the only choice many people have to access services, facilities and employment is using their car.
- The quality of housing is linked to health. Poorly insulated homes require heating in winter and cooling in summer - bills some people cannot afford.
- Access to healthcare (or lack of) is a particular issue in parts of the District. There is a growing need for a suitable site for new doctor's surgery in Tetbury.
- Poor nutrition and a lack of access to local produce is another issue affecting some of the District's population.

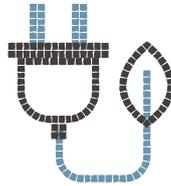
OPTIONS



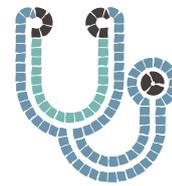
Deliver more active travel schemes, such as walking and cycling, to help improve peoples' physical and mental health.



Direct new housing towards locations with good access to services, facilities and employment to enable people to walk and cycle more and to help reduce social isolation.



Require all new housing to be energy and heat efficient to overcome fuel poverty issues.



Deliver key infrastructure items, such as doctor's surgeries, required to support the health and wellbeing of the District.



Require new developments to contribute towards improving peoples' access to good food to enable people to eat healthily and locally.

THE KEY QUESTION

Which new facilities in your local area would most help improve your health and wellbeing?



YOUR COTSWOLD YOUR PLAN

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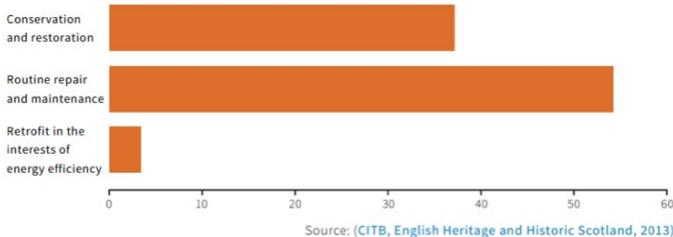
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

KEY FACTS

Cotswold District has one of the richest resources of historic environment or heritage assets of any area in England.

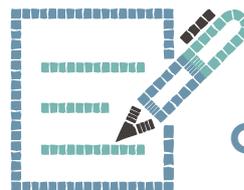
- 5,001 buildings of special architectural and historic interest (2% = Grade I; 5% = Grade II*; 93% = Grade II)
- 238 Scheduled monuments
- 144 Conservation Areas
- 33 Registered parks and gardens
- 1 Registered battlefield

Type of work undertaken on traditional (pre-1919) buildings in England



ISSUES

- The need to consider the impacts of climate change on the historic environment, for example retrofitting heritage buildings to increase energy efficiency.
- The impact of permitted development on heritage and the character of an area.
- Impact of Class E permitted changes may have a detrimental effect on valued townscapes.
- Alignment of Local Plan policy and national planning policy and guidance could be improved, including revision of the existing strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.



OPTIONS

On the basis that the adopted Local Plan's policy stance on the Historic Environment is sound and there has been no intervening legislative or national policy change, commit to preparing a **“positive strategy for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment”** for inclusion in the next full review of the Local Plan;

Update the existing Local Plan policies to improve consistency with national policy and guidance;

Prepare new policy to address the safeguarding of heritage assets while mitigating and adapting to the Climate Change Emergency.

THE KEY QUESTION

Like everything else, our historic buildings will be affected as we respond to the Climate Change Emergency. What additional measures do you think we could take to ensure our designated buildings are safeguarded as we mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change?



YOUR COTSWOLD YOUR PLAN

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HOUSING AFFORDABILITY



KEY FACTS

Cotswold District's average house price rose from £87,500 in 1997 to £350,000 in 2019.

The District's average annual wage growth has not kept pace, rising from £15,554 in 1997 to £25,988 in 2019.

House prices were on average 5.6 times annual wages in 1997 but the gap is now 13.5 times the average annual wage.

'Affordable housing' is typically a 20% discount of the market value of a house. If a house is £350,000, a 20% discount would make it £280,000. This is still unaffordable to many people.

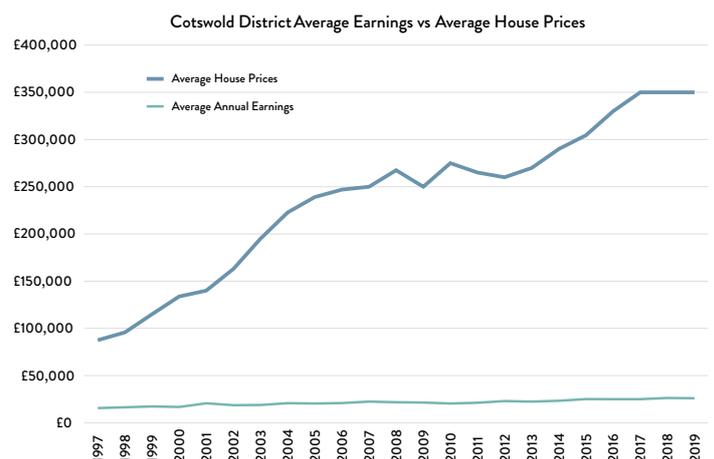
Housing has grown to become more unaffordable nationally. However, housing in Cotswold is now on average more unaffordable than in England, the South West, Gloucestershire or any of the surrounding local authority areas.

The District delivered 5,582 homes between 2011 and 2021 – 33% more than required.

The District delivered 1,145 'affordable homes' between 2015 and 2021 – 22% more than the assessed need.

ISSUES

- Despite over-delivering both market and affordable housing, housing affordability in Cotswold has worsened. Building more and more homes has not solved the problem.
- The District needs more 'truly affordable' housing, such as social rented housing.
- This is a national housing crisis – many of the reasons why housing has become unaffordable are caused by, and can only be fixed by, national policies.
- Ultimately, if housing remains unaffordable, people cannot live close to where they grew up or work. It causes long distance commuting. Many people, particularly younger people, cannot afford to live here, which causes social and economic issues.



OPTIONS

Increase requirement for truly affordable house types, such as social rented housing and smaller house types;

Adjust affordable housing requirement percentage on development sites - it is currently 30% affordable housing on brownfield sites and 40% on greenfield sites;

Update various Local Plan policies to maximise affordable housing delivery - updates to national policy have enabled some marginal gains to be made, which could yield additional affordable housing.

KEY QUESTION

Do you support our proposed Local Plan policy changes and are there any further ways that we could boost the delivery of truly affordable housing and make housing in the district more affordable?



YOUR COTSWOLD YOUR PLAN

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HOUSING NEED, REQUIREMENT, SUPPLY & DELIVERY



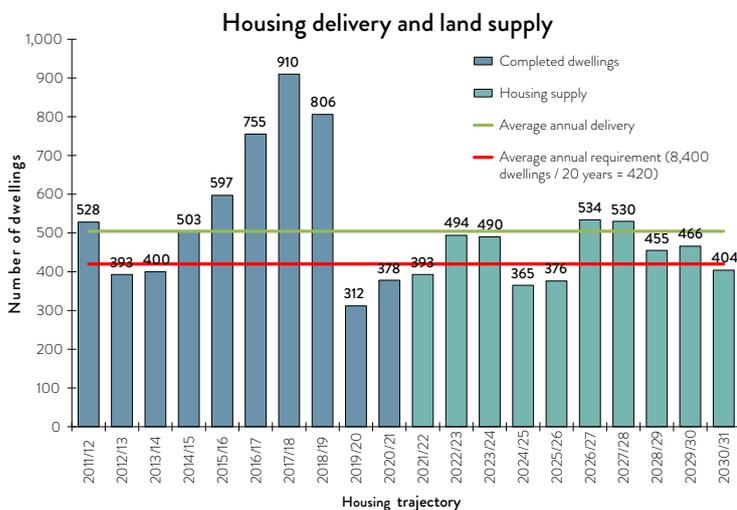
KEY FACTS

Since the current Local Plan was adopted in 2018, the District's minimum housing need has increased to 490 dwellings a year.

It is currently estimated that additional sites capable of delivering between 700 to 900 further dwellings by 2031 would be needed to deliver the increased need.

ISSUES

- Local authorities are normally required to use the government's standard method for assessing housing need unless there are exceptional circumstances for not doing so.
- They must also maintain a five year housing land supply and pass a Housing Delivery Test. Otherwise, unplanned developments can happen in locations that would normally be unsuitable.
- The Council has assessed all available land for development. Sites in Cotswold District are generally very constrained - e.g. 80% of the District is in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- Development sites can offer opportunities to benefit communities and respond to the climate change emergency and ecological emergency.
- The Local Plan must also provide for other specialist accommodation needs, such as those of older and less mobile people and gypsies, travellers and travelling show people.



OPTIONS

The preferred option is to update the Local Plan housing requirement for the remainder of the Local Plan period and, if required, allocate additional sites to maintain a five year housing land supply and pass the Housing Delivery Test.

The alternative option is to rely on the standard method of calculating housing need as the basis for determining the requirements against which the five year housing land supply and Housing Delivery Test are measured. Additional sites would be allocated in the Local Plan to maintain a five year housing land supply and pass the Housing Delivery Test.

Additionally, update the Local Plan to reflect new evidence on the accommodation needs of older and less mobile people and Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

THE KEY QUESTION

Is there a special circumstance why Cotswold District should use a different method for calculating its minimum housing need and are the findings of the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Review (2021) correct?



YOUR COTSWOLD YOUR PLAN

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INFRASTRUCTURE

KEY FACTS

Infrastructure is the basic systems and services that a place or organisation uses in order to work effectively. This includes systems such as energy, digital and water supply networks, wastewater treatment, transport, flood defences, education and health and social care. It also includes services such as play areas, open spaces, parks and green spaces, cultural and sports facilities and district heating schemes. Wind and solar energy generation and carbon capture and storage installations are also infrastructure.

New homes generate nearly £84 per square metre of Community Infrastructure Levy funds in Cotswold District (excluding the Steadings, Cirencester where infrastructure has been secured via a legal agreement). Larger developments are usually also required to either pay financial contributions towards specific infrastructure or deliver the infrastructure themselves.

ISSUES

- Infrastructure requirements may have changed as a result of changing circumstances since the Local Plan was adopted. Additional infrastructure may be required to support any additional development resulting from the Local Plan partial update. Infrastructure requirements will be reassessed in an updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- Modal shift in transport can reduce the dominance of the private car and the infrastructure that supports it - but we need better infrastructure for cycling and walking.
- There may be opportunities to deliver some items of required infrastructure on additional sites allocated in the Local Plan.
- Due to viability reasons, there is likely to be a trade-off between funding infrastructure projects and delivering the other key priorities of the Local Plan partial update.

OPTIONS



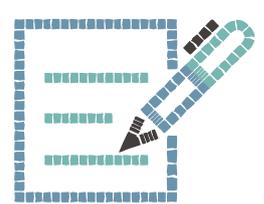
Increase or decrease the Community Infrastructure Levy rate taking account of new evidence, subject to viability.



Deliver more genuinely affordable housing, particularly social rented housing, OR seek higher contributions towards infrastructure such as education, healthcare, sustainable transport improvements, etc.



Allocate additional sites within the Local Plan in order to secure on-site delivery of required critical or essential infrastructure items. The provision of such items could be a determining factor in which sites are allocated.



Update Local Plan infrastructure policies to further secure the location, timing and delivery of infrastructure. One example is detailing the required infrastructure within site allocation design brief policies.

THE KEY QUESTION

What infrastructure is required in your area and what infrastructure could most help make the Local Plan 'Green to the Core'?



YOUR COTSWOLD YOUR PLAN

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LANDSCAPE

KEY FACTS

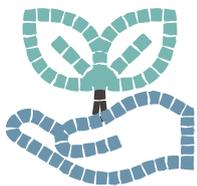
80% of the District is within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). A further 6% has a Special Landscape Area designation.

The parts of the District that have the highest wind energy generation potential are generally located within the AONB around the Cotswold escarpment.

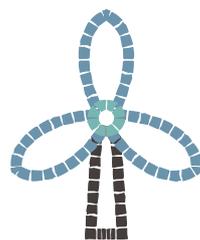
ISSUES

- Competing and often conflicting requirements between future development pressure (such as housing and economic growth) and the need to protect and enhance the landscape.
- Landscape constraints make it difficult to deliver the housing requirement and more truly affordable housing, especially where sites are major development within the AONB.
- There are very few 'easy' sites to develop in the District. Some Principal Settlements, such as Stow-on-the-Wold, have very few suitable sites or none at all.
- Need to balance conserving and enhancing designated landscapes with responding to the climate change and ecological emergencies, which have rapidly grown in importance and are now significant material considerations.

OPTIONS



Require development to provide trees and protect soils, provide flood storage areas, and walking/cycle routes, as appropriate to the scale of the development.



Be more encouraging of appropriately scaled renewable energy development in the landscape, including wind turbines. Identify suitable locations for such development - allocate specific sites and/or broad "areas of search" where they might be appropriate.



Consider the siting of renewable energy technologies in the landscape in a sequential way (least suitable to most suitable) based on agreed assessment criteria. For example, biomass energy (from crops or woodland) may have less landscape impact.

THE KEY QUESTIONS

Should the Local Plan actively promote Renewable Energy developments in the District and should it identify broad locations where Renewable Energy developments would be suitable, such as wind turbines and large scale solar farms? Should locations in the Cotswolds AONB and the Special Landscape Areas be considered for Renewable Energy developments, particularly wind turbines?



YOUR COTSWOLD YOUR PLAN

CREATING A FUTURE
THAT IS GREEN TO THE CORE



NATURAL CAPITAL & ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

KEY FACTS

Natural capital is “the world’s stocks of natural assets, which include geology, soil, air, water and all living things” (Natural Capital Forum, 2022).

Natural capital provides people with a variety of services, often called ecosystem services, which make human life possible (e.g. insects pollinating crops).

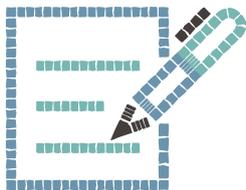
By putting a monetary value on ecosystem services, account can be taken of their monetary worth (quantitative values) in planning decisions where there may historically have only been descriptive data (qualitative values). This helps to demonstrate their importance.

Natural capital in Cotswold is conservatively estimated to annually contribute at least £60m to agriculture, £20m to recreational visits and £130m to the overall economy. Solar energy could generate £4.6bn in Cotswold over the next 100 years.

ISSUES

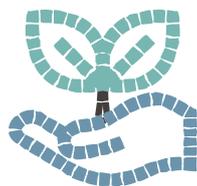
- Conflicts between different ecosystem services (e.g. tree planting for improved biodiversity, water quality and carbon sequestration conflicts with water supply and storage services as trees abstract water and much of Cotswold District is ‘water stressed’ - i.e. in deficit).
- Need to respond to Council’s Climate Change Emergency and Ecological Emergencies.
- New Environment Act 2021 and a 25 year Environment Plan.
- The adopted Local Plan does not explicitly reference natural capital or ecosystem services but provides for some of their aspects through the existing policies.

OPTIONS

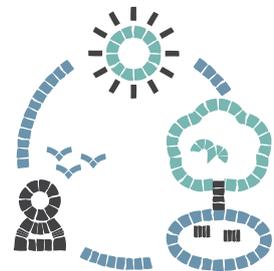


The Local Plan could:

Provide a specific Local Plan policy for natural capital and ecosystem services.



Specify how natural capital and ecosystem services should be assessed at a local level.



Enhance and strengthen natural capital and ecosystem services by including a new policy similar to that being proposed in respect of Biodiversity Net Gain.

THE KEY QUESTION

Should the Local Plan include a Biodiversity Net Gain style policy for natural capital and ecosystem services? If so, should the Local Plan allow on-site natural capital and ecosystem decreases to be compensated for by off-site improvements? And should the policy apply to all developments or only developments over a certain size?



YOUR COTSWOLD YOUR PLAN

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NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLANS

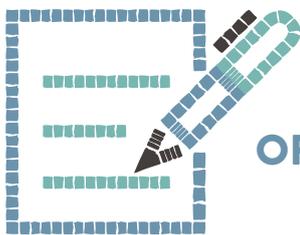
KEY FACTS

Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. It gives communities a chance to further protect and improve important assets in their community such as green spaces and historic buildings.

Where they chose to, Town and Parish Councils, supported by the District Council, usually prepare neighbourhood plans for your local area. Once 'made' a neighbourhood plan attains the same legal status as a local plan. There are seven made Neighbourhood Plans and twelve more under development in the district.

ISSUES

- Neighbourhood plans could better respond to the climate and ecological crises
- Neighbourhood plans must be in conformity with local plan strategic policies. This presents two issues:
 1. The adopted Local Plan does not specify which policies are strategic and this causes uncertainty for neighbourhood planning groups.
 2. Neighbourhood plans will need to be in general conformity with any new strategic climate change and ecological emergency policy(ies).
- There is currently ambiguity over the level of support that Cotswold District Council is expected to provide to neighbourhood planning groups.



OPTIONS

- Specify which local plan policies are strategic and non-strategic.
- Create a new Neighbourhood Plan policy that sets out the assessment criteria that neighbourhood plans will need to address to be in general conformity with the Local Plan.
- Clarify the level of support town and parish councils can expect from the Council in helping to prepare their neighbourhood plans.
- Where resources allow, prepare supplementary planning guidance to enable neighbourhood planning groups to better respond to climate and ecological emergencies.
- Where resources allow, support town and parish councils to better connect with one another and share knowledge and experience of neighbourhood planning by further supporting networks and knowledge exchange, building on the Council's recent town and parish council forums model.

THE KEY QUESTION

What kind of proposals do you think could be included in your local neighbourhood plan to help meet the challenges of the Climate Change and Ecological Emergencies, and the changing nature of the "traditional" high street?"



YOUR COTSWOLD YOUR PLAN

CREATING A FUTURE
THAT IS GREEN TO THE CORE



RETAIL AND TOWN CENTRES

KEY FACTS

Total UK internet retail sales have grown from 3% in 2007 to 28% in 2020.

A review of Cirencester town centre has found that around 50% of qualifying ground and first floor premises (Use Class E) have the potential to change use to residential use without needing planning application.

Despite the challenges, Cotswold District's town centres largely remain in good health and they have fared much better than most other town centres in the country.

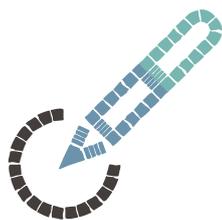
ISSUES

- Increased home working affects footfall and the need for office space in town centres.
- Effect of internet-based retailing on the traditional high street, accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic. However, much of the high street evolution process in Cotswold has now happened.
- New permitted development rights have deregulated changes of use between various uses in town centres, including to residential. This creates flexibility, which can be helpful in failing town centres, but there is less protection of the commercial core of successful town centres.

OPTIONS



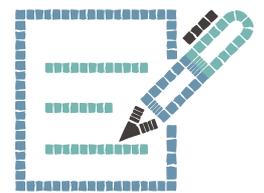
Reduce the prominence of retail as the keystone of town centre policy while maintaining the sequential test for the development of "main town centre uses".



Increase provision of and density of residential uses within and surrounding town centres to support the viability of town centres.



Retain an amended "primary shopping area" designation to ensure no conflict with NPPF requirements.



A new strategic policy requiring Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) to consider preparing town centre plans where their administrative area includes a settlement identified within the Local Plan retail hierarchy.

THE KEY QUESTION

*Do you think there should be a more diverse mix of uses in your town centre?
And what would you like to see more of?*



YOUR COTSWOLD YOUR PLAN

CREATING A FUTURE
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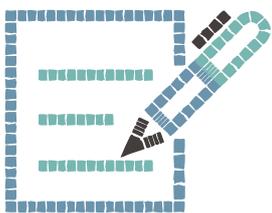
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

KEY FACTS

Sustainable tourism encompasses the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development. It ensures that the well-being and cultural heritage of communities is protected. It includes supporting conservation projects, hiring local staff, sourcing locally-produced products, conserving energy and recycling. Sustainable tourism requires participation of stakeholders and is a long term process that needs to be monitored and adapted as required.

- In 2019 17% of all jobs in the District were in tourism related sectors.
- Most tourism employment relates to food, drink and accommodation for visitors.

OPTIONS



Short-term (non-strategic) approach in Local Plan Partial Update – amend and update the Local Plan policies to deliver sustainable tourism, where it is within the scope of the Local Plan partial update.

Longer-term (strategic) approach in Local Plan Review – deliver a sustainable tourism strategy to reconcile the wider conflicts and challenges, particularly increasing the visitor ‘offer’ in respect of accommodation, retail and leisure, attractions etc. and delivering a greater distribution across the District, especially in the towns, with year-round availability.

ISSUES

- Sustainable tourism is becoming increasingly significant due to the global climate crisis.
- Current uneven distribution of visitors across the district with some ‘honeypot’ locations.
- Seasonal economy and jobs - a continual year-round tourist economy is needed.
- Also need to balance the local economy between tourism and other sectors so it is more resilient to change and has a wider employment “offer”, whilst recognising tourism’s central importance within the district’s economy.
- Limited range of public transport options, which affects the ability to both reach the destination and travel around sustainably.
- Balance between the economic and social benefits from visitor spend and the impacts that visitor numbers can have on resident communities and the need to conserve and enhance the natural assets that play a critical role in attracting visitors in the first place.

The Economic Impact of Gloucestershire’s Visitor Economy (Cotswold District) 2019

£366 million	Total Visitor Related Spend
7,348	Estimated actual employment
17%	Proportion of all employment
£82 million	Retail
£52 million	Accommodation
£123 million	Food and drink
£50 million	Attractions and entertainment
£38 million	Transport and other

Making a direct expenditure of over **£345 million in 2019**

THE KEY QUESTION

How do we balance the need to access visitor destinations in rural locations with other policy objectives such as the need to reduce private car use / carbon emissions? And should we try to ensure that tourism and its benefits are spread more equally across the District rather than concentrated in “honeypot” locations?



YOUR COTSWOLD YOUR PLAN

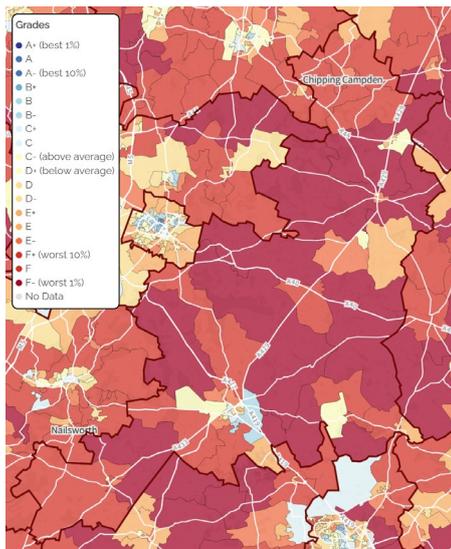
CREATING A FUTURE
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SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT



KEY FACTS

Transport is responsible for 27% of UK carbon emissions. It is the UK's largest emitting sector and is the only one where emissions are continuing to grow¹.



People living in rural areas typically have much higher annual emissions from cars than those living urban areas.

In Cotswold, people tend to produce around 60% more carbon from transport per year than the average person in the UK².

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/final-uk-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics>
² Morgan, Malcolm, Anable, Jillian, & Lucas, Karen. (2021). A place-based carbon calculator for England. Presented at the 29th Annual GIS Research UK Conference (GISRUK), Cardiff, Wales, UK (Online): Zenodo. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4665852>

ISSUES

- People in Cotswold, especially those living in more rural parts of the District, are highly dependent on their cars to get around.
- High car use is associated with high carbon emissions and other pollutants, traffic congestion, poor health and increased rates of death and injury caused by both vehicle collisions and air quality.
- Reducing car use in rural areas is challenging because alternative options, such as public transport and safe walking/cycling routes, can be limited and because the distance from home to essential services can be large.
- Despite the challenges, we need to create opportunities in Cotswold for people to reduce their prominence of cars, by 3 inter-connected approaches:
 1. Reduce the need to travel.
 2. Enable people to switch from cars to more sustainable modes.
 3. Switch remaining vehicle trips to low carbon fuels (e.g. EV) and more efficient vehicles.

OPTIONS

Introduce minimum accessibility requirements for new development sites that will ensure new housing is built within reasonable walk, cycle or public transport distance of essential services.

Introduce mode share targets for new development sites that would commit developers and management companies to a long-term plan to manage vehicle traffic generated by new development.

Develop a Sustainable Transport Strategy for Cotswold to identify the most effective and appropriate measures we can introduce to help people reduce their car use and switch to more sustainable modes of travel.

Adopt design principles and requirements that ensure new developments create safe, effective spaces for walking, cycling, public transport and shared vehicles and reduce the dominance of private vehicles in public spaces.

THE KEY QUESTION

How can the Local Plan best enable people in Cotswold to reduce their dependence on cars to fulfil their daily lives, particularly for those moving to new developments?



YOUR COTSWOLD YOUR PLAN

CREATING A FUTURE
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WATER

KEY FACTS

In future Cotswold will have higher temperatures and more extreme weather. Flooding will be more frequent, deeper, faster and extensive and there will be more droughts.

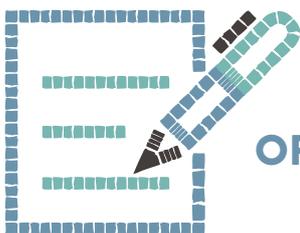
The District is mostly within the Thames River basin, which is already 'seriously water stressed' but water supply issues are expected to worsen.

The District has some very high concentrations of phosphate affecting water quality.

Two locations near Cirencester are safeguarded for future flood storage areas.

ISSUES

- Increasing conflict between climate change scenarios, such as increased storm events and dry periods, and future development demands / population increase.
- More flooding in river valleys, surface water flooding and groundwater flooding. Development could have higher flood risk and/or cause more flooding downstream.
- Further development and possible drier summers would increase demand for water resources for both humans and wildlife in an already 'seriously water stressed' area.
- Increased pollutants entering watercourses from storm event run-off, and dry periods concentrating pollutants in reduced river flows, would further deteriorate water quality.



OPTIONS

- **Require more natural methods of flood management**, such as the reestablishment of hedge lines and riverbank restoration, to reduce flood risk and improve water quality within development's river/drainage catchment areas.
- **Maximise the multiple benefits of 'water management'** in planning policies. The benefits can include reducing flood risk; reducing pollution; improving water quality capture; creating wildlife habitats; carbon

sequestration (removing CO₂); and health and economic benefits, such as improved recreation and tourism.

- **Supplement existing policies**, such as mapping for climate change and surface water, to aid understanding and implementation.
- **Require buildings to improve water quality and reduce flood risk**. E.g. properties being more resilient to flooding or rainwater capture for more efficient use of water.
- In the short term, **link flood risk policies with climate change adaptation and resilience**.
- **Safeguard land** for more flood storage areas in the longer term.

THE KEY QUESTION

Do you agree that we should enhance the requirement for developments to contribute positively to the management of the water environment and be more proactive and resilient to climate change? and Should the Local Plan require developers to use more natural methods alongside more traditional methods to improve flood prevention / water quality / and reduce water demand?

