

BIG50

NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE VISION

DRAFT



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FOREWORD

So often in our working lives we have to focus on the tasks or problems immediately in front of us and do not get the time to think about the wider picture or longer-term future. We have certainly felt this in recent years, as have many of the partners and organisations we work with. That's why it is so important for us all to take a step back from our everyday, to consider the whole place of North Northamptonshire and the future we want to create here.

We are in a great position to now look to the future, to imagine the place that North Northamptonshire can be in 2050, to consider the place that residents deserve to live in and refocus our energies and plans to make that a reality.

If all of us are invested in making North Northamptonshire the best place possible and have a picture of what this looks like we can understand how every one of us has a part to play in designing that future, planning the actions which get us there and holding each other to account to make sure those things happen. With this knowledge, when we all set out plans, actions and strategies they will not just be for our own organisations but a building block of working together towards the Vision for North Northamptonshire's future.

We created this Vision through conversations with a range of partners and community representatives, this set out our first proposal of what the best life in North Northamptonshire in 2050 could look like. We then took this proposed Vision and socialised it at the Big 50 Conference in July 2023, where we engaged with many more partners to gather wider views on it, to check what points people agree with, and where change or additions are needed.

We were delighted with the number of different organisations that attended, from local businesses, the voluntary sector, health, and elected members and importantly some our young people. Not only did they provide valuable insights to shape the Vision for the good life, they started the conversation about what can be done to work toward achieving the best life. We have begun the partnerships which will set out and deliver the actions to make this a reality. Our proposed Vision for North Northamptonshire has been updated with the insights gathered from the conference.

This Vision is not about North Northamptonshire Council, but as its Leader and Chief Executive we felt that we had a responsibility to begin this work, to give it impetus and to bring together everyone who will work together to make the best future for North Northamptonshire. We are extremely pleased and excited to see how enthused so many partners and residents are to make this best future happen.

We look forward to working in partnerships with the many organisation who have helped to make the Vision truly reflect the wants of the whole community and working with you to create the best life in North Northamptonshire in 2050, through the actions we have committed to take together over the next months, years and decades.

Cllr Jason Smithers, Leader of North Northamptonshire Council

George Candler, Chief Executive of North Northamptonshire Council

1 INTRODUCTION

We are the heart of England. One of the fastest growing areas in the country. A place where businesses naturally flock to and where they grow.

North Northamptonshire has a unique place as the heart of the country, offering an ideal work life balance for modern employment. The pace at which it has grown shows the strength and attraction of North Northamptonshire as a place to live, work, do business and visit. This Vision is our chance to use the opportunities here to set the highest standards of the best life in 2050.

North Northamptonshire is a place of places, from its major towns (Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough) to idyllic villages, countryside and waterways. Almost everyone has easy access to high quality green space, even those living in our most urban areas.

North Northamptonshire is the heart of England, 38 million people – 63% of the population of England – can be reached within two and a half hours by road. Major employment centres are within easy commutable distance of areas of the authority, including London, Birmingham, Leicester, Cambridge and Northampton.

North Northamptonshire is one of the fastest growing places in England. From 2011 to 2021 the population increased across all age groups by 13.5% - over double the England average, with the working age population increasing by nearly three times the England average.

North Northamptonshire has long been a thriving hub for logistics and manufacturing jobs due to its central location. This has continued, with businesses expanding their operations and new businesses bringing high tech and green industry jobs to the area in recent years.

However, not everyone is able to enjoy these opportunities currently. There are places of deprivation across the larger towns, while many rural areas lack the connectivity to access employment. We are ambitious and want to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all across North Northamptonshire.

Our lack of public and sustainable transport connectivity means that 80% of our journeys are made by car, often on congested roads. As well as the environmental issues this causes, it contributes to lack of access to good employment, as well as isolation and loneliness for our more vulnerable residents. Most rural areas have over a quarter of their population aged over 65, and without being able to access activities and social interaction these people are more likely to need help from the state or charity partners earlier in life.

North Northamptonshire is in a unique moment to set out its ambitions. In 2050 we want to be able to look back to this point and be proud that we took bold and ambitious decisions to make this the best place it can be, with the best life possible for the people of North Northamptonshire.

We will be proud that we worked together to find the part which all residents, organisations, partners and businesses can play in building this future. We will have a place which not only has the excellent opportunities we have now, but where everyone benefits from them. There will not only be a thriving business community here, but one which employs local people at all levels. We will continue to attract new residents, but “grow our own” and ensure our working age population have the skills to achieve their ambitions in the developing employment market, Whether young people want to stay local or move further afield, we must ensure they have the skills to do so and that there are also the local employers and jobs which match their ambitions.

We will work for a greener future, not just ensuring our residents and businesses act in the most environmentally friendly ways, but by supporting business to thrive which drive down harmful emissions or waste across the country and the world.

2 WHAT IS A VISION?

A Vision is an inspirational statement for the whole community of an idealistic future of a place and its communities and outlines what a place would like to ultimately achieve. It also helps to communicate what needs to be done for its employees, residents, businesses, and wider communities. It is not just for a single organisation because its aims are bigger than any one organisation, it points to the best future that everyone working for North Northamptonshire can work towards.

This is the Vision for North Northamptonshire, setting out an ambition of the best life here in 2050. It draws on work done through the establishment of the unitary authority, discussions with Members, staff, partners including the business community and voluntary sector.

From these discussions came clear priorities: the opportunities set out in this Vision, but also the complex challenges which could hold North Northamptonshire back from achieving the best future possible. It is clear that these difficult issues cannot be solved by any one organisation but need everyone with a stake in North Northamptonshire to work together.

This Vision has been created through discussions with a wide range of partners – from business, the voluntary sector, education providers, statutory services, social enterprises, council officers and elected representatives from the local authority, town and parish councils. It has drawn on a wide range of existing plans, information and public feedback given to consultations from a range of partners from recent years. It did not start with a blank page but actively worked to refocus the strong work already in place to set a clear direction for everyone with a stake in North Northamptonshire's future.

This Vision does not set out to be a detailed plan which maps out the ideal future. Major, lasting change is by its nature emergent and evolves over time. Instead, this Vision sets out the overall direction for North Northamptonshire. It is the beginning of working together to deliver this future and hold each other accountable for making it happen.

2.1 The Vision is...

A Vision – it is an attempt to describe the best life in North Northamptonshire and to consider how this can be worked towards.

The beginning of a new collaboration – it has been created in collaboration with a number of different organisations, businesses, communities and residents.

Calling for action – it is a call to everyone in North Northamptonshire, the organisations and businesses who work here, to ask how we can work together over time to make this place the best it can be.

2.2 The Vision is not...

Perfect – it is the best version of where we want to get to, based on input from a wide range of partners across our area, but it will always need to evolve over time to reflect more inputs and any changes we could not foresee.

The only strategy or plan – organisations and partnerships have put considerable effort into creating their own plans, strategies, and Visions for their own work – including work done before the formation of North Northamptonshire. This Vision aims to pull together the aims of those and guide future plans to be written with an understanding of how they fit into building this best future.

Owned by one organisation – the Council have set out this Vision to spark a response and make a call to action for everyone in North Northamptonshire. The Council have a convening power to bring the community and partners together to work towards these goals, and this partnership for North Northamptonshire will constructively hold each other to account to make this future real.

3 DRIVERS

These are the reasons why North Northamptonshire needs to create a Vision for the future, based on the conversations held to date. Some of these are opportunities and strengths we must make the most of; some are challenges which we need to address. Some are very specific to North Northamptonshire; some are issues for the whole country or even the world but need a local response.

All great places have challenges. A Vision must identify problems which stop people living their best life. This will help us to tackle those complex problems head on and capture the opportunities of a changing world.

This is a long-term Vision, and over time there may be new perspectives and different drivers for change. These can be added to the growing understanding of the current and future situation of North Northamptonshire and inform the change we all want to create.

3.1.1 Not everyone has the best chance in life yet

While North Northamptonshire has generally good health and educational outcomes on average, there are areas which are less prosperous. The average life expectancy in North Northamptonshire is in line with the national average, but there can be up to nine years difference between specific areas. There are notable areas of deprivation across all the larger towns, but also in many more rural areas – where issues are often worsened by a lack of services, transport and digital connectivity which impacts on health and financial inequalities. We must ensure everyone in North Northamptonshire has a good chance of having the best life.

In improving the areas with poor outcomes now, we must not forget to also help the areas which are at risk of developing issues, and make sure that everywhere in North Northamptonshire is able to thrive.

3.1.2 Our fast-moving business environment

New businesses keep coming in and existing businesses keep expanding. This is a great place to set up business due to the great central location in the country and amount of available space.

This is a major strength of North Northamptonshire, but we should take stock of what businesses we want to see here. We are in an enviable position to be able to consider this, and if we don't think about it we will receive the good future we are handed, rather than the best future we choose for ourselves. Collectively we can use our relationships with existing and incoming businesses to continue to grow our traditional industries which have supported so many local people, while ensuring they become more environmentally sustainable, as well as attract new companies, emerging industries and different job roles to diversify the range of jobs and raise the average income.

We also know that there can be hard times for businesses as well as growth. By having a more diverse range of industries and types of job here the employment market will be more resilient, meaning that if jobs are unfortunately lost in one sector there are other opportunities for residents and new companies can come in to replace them.

3.1.3 Skills gaps

Businesses continually say that they can't find the right skilled employees locally. This happens across industries and refers to specific skills within businesses as well as general levels of being ready for the workforce. This means bringing in workers from further afield – meaning local people aren't best placed to take advantage of local jobs and increasing traffic at peak commuting times.

We need to ensure local people have the skills needed to get the new skilled jobs coming in and are prepared for the changing working environment and emerging industries of the future. This comes through ensuring our young people are getting the right training to be ready for the careers of tomorrow and adult education which will reskill those already in the workforce to take advantage of new jobs.

3.1.4 Protecting our environment

North Northamptonshire has fantastic countryside, with wonderful green spaces and waterways. This must be protected for future generations. This includes reducing our carbon emissions through generating green power and reducing carbon emissions from transport.

But we can also do more to reduce harmful emissions and waste across the country and the world by attracting and developing environmentally friendly industries here and supporting and encouraging our

existing businesses to increase their sustainable practices. We must ensure that new developments are respectful of these spaces, and that everyone has easy access to great quality open green space for all the mental and physical health benefits it gives them.

Across North Northamptonshire there are a wide range of environmental plans and strategies held by organisations, businesses and groups working to protect our local environment and the planet. Bringing these together to build the knowledge base of aims and information will give an overarching picture of the work needed to do to ensure we are working in as an environmentally friendly way as possible.

3.1.5 Rapid population growth

Over the last ten years North Northamptonshire has seen some of the biggest population growth of any local authority in England. Between 2011 and 2021 the population grew by almost 43,000 people – 13.5%, which is over double the England average. This increase has been predominately in the working age population, which has increased by 2.8 times the England average, but younger people and the over 65 population have also increased dramatically. This shows how many people want to come here, what a great place North Northamptonshire is to live in, and is something we should be proud of.

However, we need to make sure that we have the right infrastructure in place for this new population, and to support future growth. We have seen a lot of house building and have worked to include the necessary infrastructure with this. However, to keep supporting growth we need to make sure we also create the right transport links, schools and health facilities, as well as activities for residents. We need to do this in ways which enhance the character of our places rather than overwhelm them.

Age	England	North Northamptonshire	Larger Increase
0-15	5.0%	10.9%	2.18x
15-64	3.6%	10.3%	2.83x
65+	20.1%	30.4%	1.51x
Overall	6.60%	13.50%	2.05x

Table compares England average population increase to that in North Northamptonshire, and showing the proportional difference.¹

3.1.6 An aging population

We have an aging population who are more likely to need care now or in the coming years. Between 2011 and 2021 the over 65 population increased by 30%, a rate 50% higher than the national average and one of the highest rates of older population increases in the country. In most rural areas over a quarter of the residents are aged over 65, which is particularly notable to the East of North Northamptonshire. Older populations are more likely to experience loneliness, which can have a major impact on their health and wellbeing and make them more likely to need care services earlier in life.

Providing these services to people in rural areas is expensive, and care services are a major and growing cost to public services. We can use this to rethink how services are provided and develop new ways to proactively connect people to local community and statutory services, which support them to live their best life for longer.

3.1.7 Rising costs of public services

We know that the public sector and everyone supporting our residents and communities must deliver great services with diminishing resources. This means many of us need to be more effective with the

¹ Source: ONS <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E06000061/> .

resources we have. Doing this requires a proactive understanding of need to address the root causes of people’s issues, to work with them before they hit crisis, or enable them to live well for longer before they need a higher level of care. Prevention is better than cure – not just for the budgets of services but for the people who use them.

3.1.8 Lack of rural transport

One of the main barriers to people accessing the best life and opportunities is being cut off from accessing them. While North Northamptonshire has excellent and fast transport links across the country, much of its rural areas lack suitable public transport which prevents residents from accessing jobs, education and services. This also damages the environment by making people much more reliant on cars to make journeys, which clogs up the road network. This presents a chance to create innovative transport solutions, using sustainable and active travel as well as traditional public transport and responsive options.

4 A VISION FOR NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

4.1 The best life we want, not the one we are handed

Our Vision for 2050 is the best life for all in North Northamptonshire.

Our Vision is to give the best life for all because we know North Northamptonshire now gives a good life to many people. For most of the people here it is a great place to live, work, do business and spend time, but there are some who are experiencing real difficulties. By setting out these goals we can understand what the best life in North Northamptonshire is and begin to set out how to ensure that best life can be lived by everyone here.

4.2 Vision Priorities

The Vision for the best life in North Northamptonshire in 2050 has been based around three key priorities under which sit the suggested goals for our Vision.

These have been created from our discussions with partners, where the aims for North Northamptonshire were to ensure that: residents and businesses could prosper here; it was a place for everyone to feel proud of and safe in; and there was a need to get on the front foot to ensure everything works well. Now we are using these goals to call people to action and create an environment where everyone with a stake in North Northamptonshire works together to create that best life.

Our key priorities – a proud, prosperous and proactive place are set out below.

A PROUD PLACE	A PROPEROUS PLACE	A PROACTIVE PLACE
<p>A place with clear goals and a plan of how to get there, where people feel inspired and safe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bold civic leadership • Everyone has a stake in society • Communities that are empowered • Strong partnerships with a shared vision • A place of many places that all benefit from the wider growth • People feel safe, and safety is baked-in by design 	<p>A place full of thriving businesses and a skilled population who can achieve their ambitions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is the right education and skills for the future • All Children have the best start in life • Thriving jobs in both traditional and emerging sectors • Transport that allows everyone to access everything the area has to offer • Pioneering green growth across living, industry and the environment • An environment that allows entrepreneurs to thrive • A thriving tourism sector • Development complements the delivery of the future vision and cares about the area • Good quality, affordable housing 	<p>A place which understands the issues its people face and how to address them early, so everyone can live their best life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear focus on prevention and tackling root causes to problems • People are encouraged and supported to lead healthier lives • Decisions and resources focused by joined-up data and local knowledge • Services that are connected to their communities, who are actively engaged in their co-design • Equality and diversity across services and in community engagement • Integrated services that deliver better outcomes together

North Northamptonshire is already a great place for so many – we know this from the amount of people who have moved here in recent years and the number of companies who want to move or expand here. But our conversations have given us an understanding of the issues which are causing some people problems, and of the emerging opportunities and risks.

By understanding this we can work to address some of the issues which are holding back some residents and areas from making the most of the current and future opportunities – such as rural public transport and job-ready skills. These are not small challenges, but they are things we can work on more quickly to create change in the next few years.

We can also ensure that we identify and proactively address upcoming challenges. Most critical is the pressures on the health and social care sectors. We know that ensuring we work with people as early as possible in ways which identify and address the root causes of their problems and the whole person or household. This not only helps them to be in control of their life but reduces the need for more intensive services. Facing up to this challenge and making changes to how we all work with people gives an opportunity to help people who might otherwise fall into crisis to be supported into living the best life.

Through this work we will create a strong identity for North Northamptonshire to ensure it will be well known throughout the region, the country and further afield. Through setting out the aims for the area and seizing our opportunities to innovate we will become known for our successes.

4.3 What we want to be in 2050:

We are the heart of the country and the heart of change in the 21st century. We are a thriving hub of innovative businesses. We are the perfect place for work / life balance. We have opportunities for all, and our unique, diverse places offer the perfect home for everyone.

We are an interconnected place of places – with strong towns and beautiful countryside, all within easy reach of the rest of England.

All our residents live good lives, supported to enjoy all the opportunities here and overcome the obstacles which might hold them back.

We proactively prevent the issues which could stop our residents from thriving.

We are driven by data and insights into the lives of our residents and treat the root causes of issues early.

We support innovative businesses to start and grow, especially those which help to power and support the country in an environmentally friendly way.

We inspire our residents to aim for great jobs and ensure they can gain the skills to get them.

We grow in a sustainable way, welcoming development but ensuring it enhances local character and has the infrastructure it needs.

5 PRIORITY 1: PROUD PLACE

5.1 Renowned for being an inspiring, safe place for all

In 2050, North Northamptonshire will be a proud place.

Top Line: People are proud to live and work in North Northamptonshire, of their local area and the whole place. North Northamptonshire has a clear identity locally and nationally – while strengthening and valuing the specific characteristics of individual places.

This Vision gives a sense of clear direction for everyone to work towards and common goals to achieve together. It has been refined by working with partners from statutory organisations, voluntary groups and the community – leading by listening and responding to the needs of the people it affects, both at the start of the process and as it develops.

Everyone knows not just what the aim is, but how we want to get there, how they can contribute to it, and how they can discuss emerging changes. People understand the needs and aims of the whole place as well as their immediate location, and as well as the pride they have long felt of their own town or village they now feel a connection to the wider area.

The opportunities and successes of North Northamptonshire are known and felt by our residents, but also further afield. We are looked to across the country as a place which can achieve what it sets its mind to, and which has a clear offer to residents and businesses. We can't say now exactly what identity North Northamptonshire will have in 2050, because it needs to develop collaboratively as we do this work together.

People are proud not just of their own place, but of the whole place. Because of the excellent transport links, opportunities and developments in one place create benefits which are felt by the whole area and there is no rivalry between our diverse places. People can choose to live in one place for its individual charm, while enjoying all the positives of the wider area.

The community spirit and close partnership working, which has been in place for many years and was strengthened in the early 2020s, has been built on, and organisations in North Northamptonshire talk to each other to share issues and best practice. Everyone knows how to reach out to a wider group to solve problems which are too big to be taken on alone. People see the positive changes, how they benefit from them, and how their hopes and concerns have helped to shape North Northamptonshire.

Everyone feels that they have a stake in society here, and they are safe here – in our clean streets and on our clear roads. By listening to the concerns of our communities we have addressed the root causes of what makes people feel unsafe. Strong education and activities which make sure people know they have part to play in our community reduces crime and anti-social behaviour, while transport innovation and infrastructure for active travel has made people feel safe to use the wide range of ways to travel beyond the car.

5.2 Priority Goals:

Civic Leadership

North Northamptonshire is known as a place with strong civic leadership, which listens to residents and affects change based on their needs. There are clear priorities so everyone knows where we are trying to get to, how we are going to do it, and what their part to play is. Where conversations are difficult, we have them honestly and openly.

A stake in society

We have plenty of activities, which are accessible, for our young people and people who have previously felt left out. We actively reach out to groups which have been underrepresented in the past and incorporate their views into developing North Northamptonshire. Everyone feels valued and a part of society – able to contribute to it and has a sense of being part of a community.

Community Empowerment

All communities feel empowered to be able to make the changes they want to see and are supported to do this, with appropriate recognition. Groups who have been underrepresented in the past are confident in being able to talk about what they need and that it will be acted on.

Strong partnerships

All local organisations know what we are working towards, how they contribute to it, and how they can talk about and resolve issues which are bigger than any one partner to create needed change.

A Place of Many Places

Everyone can feel part of their own town or village, but also the wider North Northamptonshire. No town or village feels “forgotten” and all are able to enjoy the benefits of growth.

Safety

People feel safe in their neighbourhoods, on the roads, using our facilities. Where issues of crime or disorder are identified we use preventative approaches and education to reduce them.

6 PRIORITY 2: PROSPEROUS PLACE

6.1 Thriving businesses employing skilled local people

In 2050, North Northamptonshire will be a prosperous place.

Top line: Everyone has a well-paid, fulfilling and secure job. We are a great place to do business – for large industries, emerging sectors and start-ups. We have the infrastructure needed for modern business, and are prepared for changes to our key industries. Our residents are skilled and ready for the workforce here or wherever their ambition takes them – both for the jobs of today and the future.

Our central location and affordable land continues to bring in great businesses and jobs. We continue to attract our traditional manufacturing and logistics jobs, but companies also bring their headquarters and research facilities here to access the skilled workforce and affordable land. These also bring in new industries, with high-tech and green businesses flocking to North Northamptonshire. In the 2020s we looked ahead to the developing automation, robotics and green industries, and our reputation for working with innovative businesses and delivering the skilled workforce for them means that emerging industries of 2050 look to us as the place they can thrive.

Our people of all ages are inspired to work towards these jobs through the varied range of education and skills programmes. Our schools are excellent and we have new further education facilities which prepare people for the modern workplace so they can meet their high ambitions. We have responded to the changing world of work as automation has altered job types and ensured that people are not left behind as industries hire different skills. Our employers, education and skills providers understand the specific needs of people with disabilities and / or special educational needs and can deliver what they require for them to get into and sustain excellent employment.

Our focus on net zero business and living has brought more innovative industries to the area. We are known as a place which not only produces green energy where all businesses are net zero carbon contributors but has supported the rest of the country and beyond to decarbonise and live more sustainably through our environmentally conscious industries.

We are also a great place to start a business – with excellent digital connectivity as well as transport links. We have places which support people to create their new business and grow it alongside peers in ways which help to grow the local economy.

We are known nationally as a transport innovation hub which has hugely reduced its use of private vehicles. The towns and villages are connected by excellent greenway links to enable active travel between them, with a range of sustainable personal travel options. Rural areas are served by affordable, reliable, accessible, and green public transport which ensures that all residents can reach jobs, shopping, socialisation and support when they need it. Through this, we have reduced the use of private cars substantially, and where vehicles are used they are electric or other low-polluting technology.

We have grown our tourism industry and are known as a great countryside getaway, with a range of hotels and accommodation options. People from across the major cities nearby know that the Nene Valley is a great place for a break and regularly visit for a day or longer getaway.

We have the right homes where people want them – developments have been designed with what people want in mind: whether it's a family home within reach of their work or a downsized home to retire to. These homes are built to fit into the existing places and people can become part of the community, with all the infrastructure that this growth requires. Older housing stock has been maintained well to ensure it is excellent quality for residents, with good insulation and green heating options to minimise their environmental impact.

6.2 Priority Goals:

Education and Skills

Every child gets an excellent education, in a high-quality environment near their home which prepares them for the modern workforce. Every adult is able to refresh and improve their skills to get the great jobs in the area, with an understanding of current and future jobs.

All children get the best start

Children who have additional needs are given the appropriate support to meet them, including help to get and sustain employment in adulthood. This includes children with Special Educational Needs, children with physical disabilities, children in care and at-risk children.

Jobs

As well as continuing the growth of our traditional industries where people already work, we will attract new and innovative jobs and industries here. Our skilled workforce will be able to move into these sectors, and they will also attract more jobs here. Employers and skills providers support people with additional needs to get into and sustain good employment.

Transport

Towns and villages are accessible to everyone via public transport and sustainable routes, in a safe, affordable way so that people can access everything North Northamptonshire has to offer.

Green Growth

North Northamptonshire is known nationally as a pioneer for net zero living: for its contribution to green industries, and the environmental sustainability of all its businesses.

Entrepreneurs

There is a supportive environment for small businesses and social enterprises to star, thrive and scale up – while ensuring their work is environmentally sustainable.

Tourism

A thriving tourism industry with visitors to the North Northamptonshire countryside from across the region, UK and abroad.

Holistic Development

We work with developers who care about the needs of the area and build the right infrastructure to support growth, as well as the right homes in the right places.

Housing

We build enough homes to meet the needs of our growing population and the housing waiting lists, to ensure that people who want to remain in their local area have affordable options to do so. We ensure that older housing stock is kept in excellent condition and limit the environmental impact of our homes through excellent insulation and green energy generation.

Infrastructure

Because we anticipate growth, we ensure there is the physical, digital and social infrastructure needed to support population and business expansion. However, we also ensure that doing this respects our natural environment and green spaces.

Town Centres

Our town centres are thriving, pleasant places which have the services and facilities people want to use – without pricing out residents and long-standing businesses.

7 PRIORITY 3: PROACTIVE PLACE

7.1 Acting early in an informed way to give the best life to all

In 2050, North Northamptonshire will be a proactive place.

Top line: In the 2020s we identified causes of issues in people's lives and moved from treating the symptoms to addressing the problems at the heart of them.

We know what the issues are which cause people to need support and proactively work to address them early, no longer waiting for people to hit crisis. Instead of intensive statutory services, people receive lighter support at the start of issues such as debt. We know the signs to look for and use data and local knowledge to reach out to the people more likely to experience issues when they are a smaller worry to stop them spiralling and combining with other problems.

We recognise the importance of good mental health as well as physical health. Our pro-active drug and alcohol services and range of positive activities for young people not only help to keep people well but help to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour. There are places for residents to come together and socialise with their neighbours, to build a sense of community and end social isolation – from leisure activities and community spaces to cafes and the village pub.

Our organisations talk to each other to understand the problems residents and communities face and how they can address them together. When changes in society happen which affect people, we respond fast as a partnership to identify what problems this might create and proactively design solutions to mitigate them before they happen. We are not firefighting problems as they arise but carefully considering what problems are occurring and how we can address them across our systems, in ways which lead to better lives for the people of North Northamptonshire.

In the 2020s we looked carefully at the places and people which most needed support – both places experiencing deprivation and those at risk of it – and created plans to address their needs. We designed solutions across our whole system which responded to the needs of those places and people. These solutions are designed to meet these needs, not around traditional structures of our organisations, to make sure they work for the people who need them.

We have worked hard to understand what holds people back from achieving their best life, whether this is the area they live or any characteristics which are more likely to experience structural barriers to thriving. We have removed these barriers to ensure that wherever or however someone is born in North Northamptonshire they have every opportunity to live out their high ambitions.

Organisations are able to think long term due to clear strategic direction and suitable long term funding settlements as much as possible. This enables them to plan for the future and delivering the best for North Northamptonshire rather than worrying about current funding pressures.

7.2 Priority Goals:

Root causes/Prevention

We understand the underlying issues in people's lives and work to address them, across North Northamptonshire and at a family level.

Good Health

People are encouraged and supported to live healthy, active lifestyles which help to keep them physically and mentally well for longer. This includes an emphasis on active travel, leisure activities and enjoying culture as part of people's regular routines. We treat mental health as seriously as physical health and have services for people who need support with either or both.

Data and local knowledge

We utilise data and local knowledge to spot people who are at risk of issues developing or worsening and support them to stay on track.

Joined up services and data

Organisations connect to share their understanding of current and emerging need, in formal meetings but also through a wider network of collaboration as part of their regular work. Datasets are appropriately shared to help build the best picture of life in North Northamptonshire at an overall, local and household level. This means we all collaborate to deliver what people need based on the needs of our residents rather than organisational structures.

A solid foundation

Public services are built on a solid foundation of reliability. They resolve simpler issues quickly when they emerge and learn how to stop them happening again. There are enough well-run services for all, ensuring that people can access a GP or dentist when they need one to stop problems from getting worse.

Connected communities

Services are connected to the community, who are actively engaged to co-design where appropriate.

Equality

There is equality of access to public services, including schools and healthcare. Data and engagement with communities is used to identify where there are postcode lotteries and structural inequalities and these are addressed to ensure that everyone has access to the best life.

Integrated services

There are single front doors and a unified offer of support when people need them. People can tell their story and explain their needs once rather than to a number of services.

8 NEXT STEPS

Now we are working to convene the Big 50 Conference more regularly to set out the actions which are needed to deliver the Vision, ensure we are working towards them and check our ambitions are still the right ones. This will set out the actions and outcomes we need to make this future happen, including work over the coming months, years and decades.

No one organisation or person can create this future. We all must make it a reality by working together, not just in meetings or workshops but in how we communicate, share ideas and trust each other every day to be doing the right things for our community. The first Big 50 conference helped to show us the power of bringing people together – with partners telling us about the connections they have been making through this which will help them to collaborate on work towards these ambitions.

Wider Socialisation

This Vision is now being shared with the wider community to get further detail on the ambitions, opportunities and challenges. This will also help to make more organisations and residents aware of the Vision and be inspired to start working towards delivering these priorities.

Development

As further feedback comes in from the wider community of North Northamptonshire through our developing partnership, the document will be refreshed to include what residents, partners and businesses say they want to see now, in the next few years and far into the future.

Collaboration

Now we have our priorities, organisations need to come together to understand how we can work together to create the best future and create the strong, collaborative partnerships required to achieve these sizable long-term goals –following the Big 50 conference, the has already started.

Targets

It is clear that that our community want to see actions committed to and taken. We are now using the feedback given at the Big 50 conference to develop specific areas for action and what we can do to begin working towards them. We will all work in partnership to set clear targets and share data on how we are performing against them and identify the issues we need to address.