

A town-wide vision for

Luton 2040

A place to thrive

www.luton.gov.uk/luton2040



Foreword

Luton 2040

A place to thrive

We are delighted to present our updated vision for Luton 2040. This is a bold vision for Luton to be a healthy, fair and sustainable town where everyone can thrive and no-one has to live in poverty.

Together, as key system leaders and anchor institutions, we have developed this vision with residents and partners across Luton, based on their aspirations for the future of the town and the 225,300 people that live here.

Over the last two years we have worked together to deliver the first phase of our journey to Luton 2040, overcoming the unprecedented challenges brought by Covid-19 to health and the economy and shaping our long-term plans for growth, wellbeing, sustainability, the future of our young people and fairness in our community.

Through our roles as members of the Inclusive Economy and Health and Wellbeing Boards, we have led the way in delivering the first steps to transforming our town, but all our progress so far has only been possible because of the commitment of residents, businesses and organisations across our community.

We are proud of all that has been achieved so far, including our town's resilience and recovery from the pandemic, the creation of new facilities for education and wellbeing in our town and some of the major investment we have already generated for our economy and our community. The impact of this transformation is already being felt by many in our town and we are building real momentum to achieve our long-term mission for Luton.

Despite this progress, several clear challenges remain, including poverty and inequality that cut across outcomes and life chances of our residents in education, health and employment. We are also entering increasingly challenging times, with a cost of living crisis nationally, war in Europe and the ongoing existential threat to our planet. Our shared vision for Luton 2040 is now more important than ever and we must go even further to deliver on this vision.

This document sets out our refreshed vision and priorities, marking a clear shift from the pandemic to the next phase of our journey to Luton 2040.

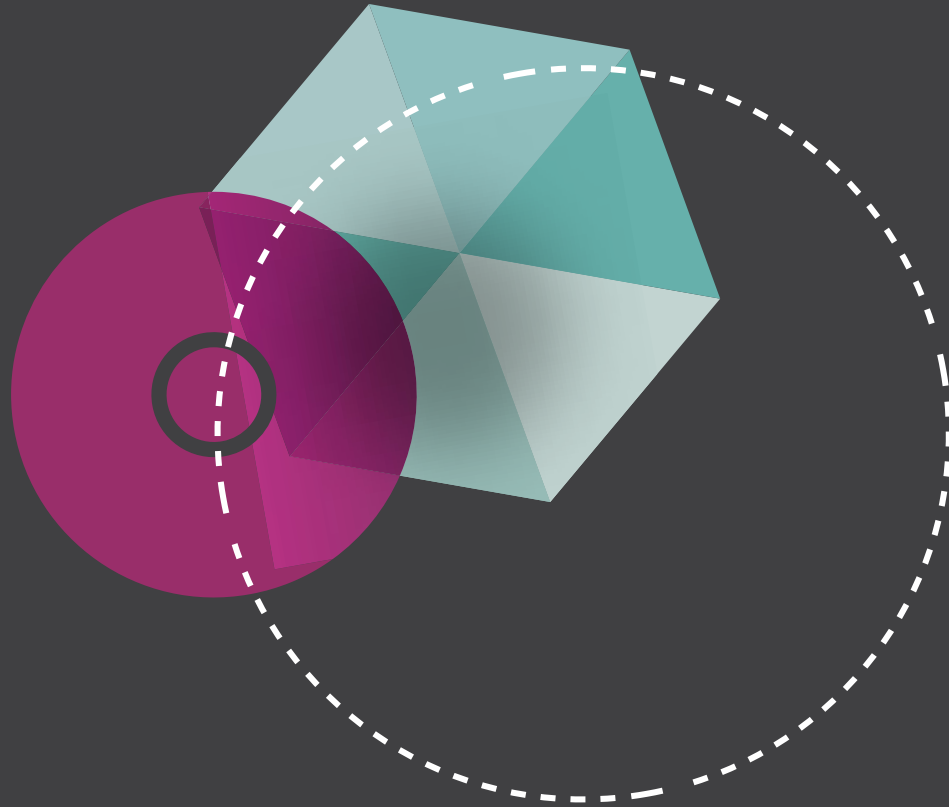


As system leaders we are committed to working together to deliver this vision and we will continue to work with everyone in the town to make Luton a healthy, fair and sustainable town where everyone can thrive and no-one has to live in poverty.



Contents

Introduction	5
Luton 2040 vision and priorities	8
Luton in 2022 – The strengths and assets of our town	10
Luton 2040: The journey so far	12
How we built our shared vision	13
Laying the foundations for Luton 2040	14
Achievements so far	18
The next steps on our journey to Luton 2040	21
Vision, priorities and strategies 2023-2028	22
Inclusive economy	24
Population wellbeing	28
Net zero town	32
Child friendly town	36
Fairness, resilience and social justice	40
Delivering our vision for Luton 2040	44
System-wide delivery	45
Playing your part – the role of organisations	47
Partnership in Practice	48
Playing your part – the role of residents	51
Measuring our success	52
Measuring poverty and quality of life – Minimum Income Standard and other measures	53
Luton’s Thriving People Index	55



Introduction



Introduction

Our town-wide vision for Luton 2040 is to be a healthy, fair and sustainable town where everyone can thrive and no-one has to live in poverty.

This vision has been created by residents and partners across our town and was first launched in October 2020.

The first phase of the vision was focussed on responding to the immediate challenges we faced during the Covid-19 pandemic. Over the past two years businesses, public sector and voluntary and community sector organisations, as well as residents have worked together to overcome these challenges and lay the foundations for us to achieve this shared vision.

This refreshed document sets out the next steps on our journey to Luton 2040 and everyone in our town will continue to have an important role to play in this journey.

The Luton 2040 vision is focussed on a central mission, to tackle poverty and inequality so that everyone can enjoy a good quality of life. This responds directly to the evidence gathered by the Inclusive Growth Commission in 2019, which recognised the scale of poverty in our town and the clear link between this and many other challenges, including education and health inequalities.

The Luton 2040 vision is built around five priorities, each of which contributes to achieving our central mission and our overall vision for the town:

Building a more inclusive economy

Improving population wellbeing

Becoming a child friendly town

Tackling the climate emergency and becoming a net zero town

Supporting a strong and empowered community

Our first published vision document set out the initial steps on our journey towards Luton 2040, including our plans for recovery from the pandemic and how we would lay the foundations to achieve our long-term vision.

During the last two years, we have worked together to deliver a strong recovery in terms of wellbeing and our economy. Partners across Luton have also been transforming the town with a series of major projects and initiatives. These have included the development of more than 600 new homes, the completion of new schools and a new building for Barnfield College and improvements to sports facilities at Lewsey Sports Centre. Our town centre is transforming with more than £20 million secured for regeneration.

In addition to these achievements, we have also seen the launch of Luton Rising, a new brand for our airport company, and the establishment of our Fairness Taskforce, a truly innovative approach to empowering residents being delivered by partners across the voluntary and community sector.

Luton 2040

A place to thrive

These achievements are already having a positive impact on the lives of our residents and our latest resident's survey is showing record levels of satisfaction with Luton as a place to live and increased levels of optimism about the future of our town. Over the last two years, we have also set out our strategies, plans and partnership approaches to deliver on each of our priorities over the long-term. This has included the development of our new Town Centre Masterplan, our Health Inequalities Action Plan and our Climate Change Roadmap – as well as many other key plans and strategies.

As well as developing our local systems to deliver in partnership on our 2040 priorities, we have been building strong links with central government, aligning our priorities and plans closely with the national agendas for levelling up and net zero. These links are already helping to generate increased support and funding, which will be critical to attracting further inward investment and major transformation of our town.

The rapid progress of the last two years has enabled us to bring forward the next phase of our journey to Luton 2040. This document sets out our updated priorities and plans for the next five years (2023-2028), as we move forward from recovery to delivering on our long term vision.

As we progress on our journey towards Luton 2040, we can expect to see many more exciting developments over the next five years that will have a positive impact on our town and the lives of residents. This will include the completion of major developments such as Power Court Football Stadium and The Stage, the delivery of more than 2,000 new homes for residents, the opening of new family hubs, community hubs and a new children with disabilities resource centre, as well as the introduction of more infrastructure to help us get to net zero.

While this is a long-term strategic vision to create the conditions to prevent anyone from having to live in poverty by 2040, it is important to recognise that there are also immediate challenges that will need to be addressed over the coming years. The cost of living crisis and energy instability caused by the war in Ukraine will continue to impact our residents and businesses, while the public sector and our community will inevitably experience further cuts to funding following years of austerity.

Our collective ambition for the future of Luton rightly remains high and it is important that we work more collaboratively than ever before to fight for fair funding and to deliver in partnership for the people of our town. Only by working together will we deliver on our vision and make Luton a place where everyone can thrive.



Our town-wide Vision for Luton 2040:

Luton will be a healthy, fair and sustainable town, where everyone can thrive and no-one has to live in poverty.

Our priorities for Luton 2040:

Building an inclusive economy that delivers investment to support the growth of businesses, jobs and incomes.



Improving population wellbeing and tackling health inequalities to enable everyone to have a good quality of life and reach their full potential.



Becoming a child friendly town, where our children grow up happy, healthy and secure, with a voice that matters and the opportunities they need to thrive.



Tackling the climate emergency and becoming a net zero town with sustainable growth and a healthier environment.



Supporting a strong and empowered community, built on fairness, local pride and a powerful voice for all our residents.



Luton in 2040...

A series of pocket parks opening up in the town centre.

A CHILD FRIENDLY TOWN. CHILDREN GROW UP HAPPY HEALTHY & SECURE



Improved population wellbeing.



A Marmot Town.

Sustainable public transport and more walking and cycling in town.

THE LUTON DART - SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT TO LONDON FROM LUTON AIRPORT.



POWER COURT



A NEW FOOTBALL STADIUM IN LUTON

HAT WORKS



REDEVELOPMENT

A net zero town.

The most sustainable airport in the UK - supporting economic growth + more jobs.



BARTLETT SQUARE REDEVELOPMENT



OPENING UP OF THE RIVER LEA



DEVELOPMENT OF GREEN HORIZONS PARK



CULTURAL EVENTS & PUBLIC ART



CONTINUED RESTORATION OF THE HAT DISTRICT



A town built on fairness.

A more resilient community - protecting our most vulnerable neighbours.

Community hubs providing support to vulnerable people.

Better and more equal health outcomes.

Money spent locally by businesses + residents

A disability friendly town

Citizens panels giving residents a strong voice to shape the future of the town.

Fairness and social justice at the heart of our community - Fairness Taskforce delivering equality.



Luton in 2023

The strengths and assets of our town

Luton 2040 A place to thrive

Luton is a vibrant, modern and diverse town, which is home to 225,300 residents. Luton has many key strengths and assets which provide a strong foundation on which to build our vision for Luton 2040.

These strengths cut across all parts of our town, including our community, our environment, our economy and key institutions across health, education, leisure and culture. Each of these features of our town are important assets that will help us to deliver on our shared mission and priorities.

A super diverse town with a vibrant mix of culture, skills and languages



The third youngest population in the country with 22% of residents below the age of 15



A cohesive town where people get on well with their neighbours



An excellent strategic location, situated between London, Oxford and Cambridge



Outstanding connectivity by road, rail and air- less than 30 minutes from London by rail, close to the M1 and 10 miles from the M25



A strong local economy, with productivity above the national average prior to the pandemic



Luton in 2023

The strengths and assets of our town

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Home to the fifth largest airport in the UK- supporting 27,000 jobs, and adding around £1.1 billion to the regional economy



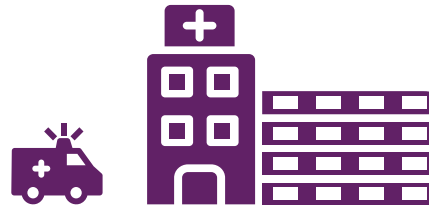
A growing arts, culture and heritage offer with events that celebrate our diverse range of cultures and support greater wellbeing



Effective and efficient health partnerships locally and regionally, led by the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care System.



Home to Luton and Dunstable University Hospital – providing good and outstanding core services to around 400,000 people in the region



90% of schools in Luton rated as Good or Outstanding by Ofsted



A dedicated voluntary and community sector that delivers a wide range of crucial services



Outstanding access to greenspace – including six green flag parks and close proximity to the Chilterns



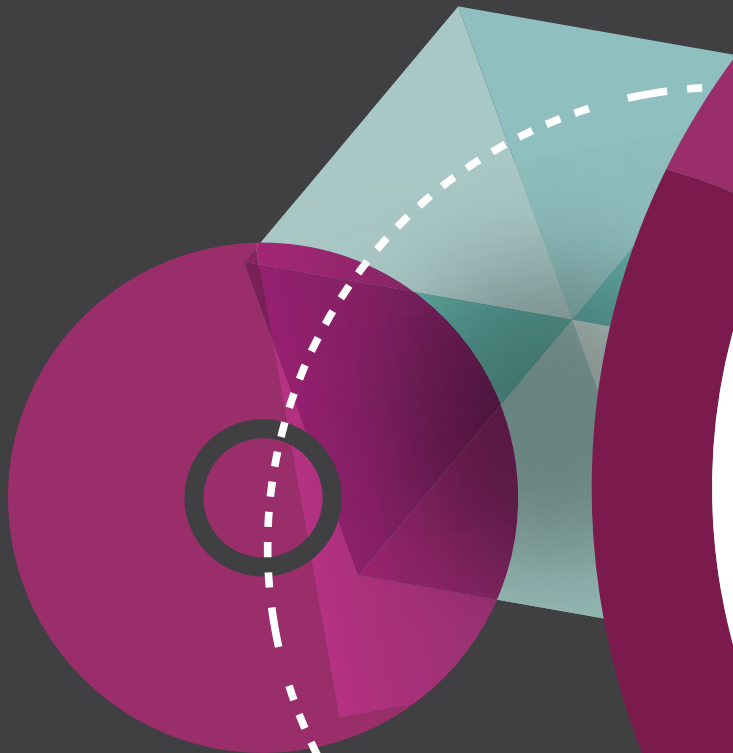
Home to Luton Town Football Club



A strong higher and further education offer through the University of Bedfordshire, Barnfield College and Luton Sixth Form College



Luton 2040: The journey so far



How we built our shared vision

The Luton 2040 vision was developed with residents and partners across Luton in 2020, drawing together our shared ambitions for the future of our town, while building on our many collective strengths and overcoming the challenges that we face together.

The vision was developed in response to Luton’s independent Inclusive Growth Commission, which released its [final report in 2019](#). This report outlined the 12 ambitions for the town based on the unique opportunities and most pressing challenges. In particular, this report identified overcoming poverty and inequality as a central mission that could enable everyone in Luton to thrive, as well as identifying many key assets such as our anchor institutions, our voluntary and community sector and key sectors within our economy such as manufacturing, digital and green industries.

Throughout 2020, Luton Council carried out an extensive consultation with residents and organisations across the public, private and voluntary and community sectors in the town to build on these recommendations and

develop a shared vision for everyone to work towards. Throughout the course of this and the consultation with the Inclusive Growth Commission in 2019, over 700 residents and 191 organisations took part in shaping the Luton 2040 vision.

Throughout these consultations, residents and organisations considered the opportunities and challenges facing our town and told us what mattered to them. This included building a more inclusive economy, improving wellbeing, tackling the climate emergency, giving our young people the best start in life and tackling injustice and inequality. Each of these priorities link back to the central challenge set by the Inclusive Growth Commission around tackling poverty and inequality so that everyone in our town can reach their full potential.

The Luton 2040 vision was first published in October 2020, setting a long-term vision for the town with strategic priorities focused on achieving this. It was agreed that these priorities, as well as our plans to deliver on them, would be updated regularly through continuous engagement with partners and residents throughout our 20-year journey.

Residents have the ability to shape these priorities and plans over time, through direct engagement with elected representatives and through participation in our Fairness Taskforce and citizen’s forums. Partners across the town are also able to shape the direction of the vision through representation on our partnership boards and involvement in a range of partnership networks that drive key work streams within each of our priorities.

More than **500 residents** spoke to the Inclusive Growth Commission in 2019



More than **200 residents** took part in the Luton 2040 Vision consultation in 2020



119 organisations from public, private and voluntary and community sector helped to shape the 2040 vision



Between **72%-87%** of residents supported each of the 2040 priorities when agreed in 2020.



Laying the foundations for Luton 2040

Luton 2040 A place to thrive

The first edition of the Luton 2040 vision set out our initial short-term priorities to build towards our longer-term ambition for the town. This was developed during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic and was therefore focussed on overcoming the immediate threat to health and our economy, before delivering a strong recovery and laying the foundations for 2040 by developing our plans.

Covid-19 recovery

Alongside our initial priorities for Luton 2040, we set out our plans for recovery from Covid-19. This included our Economic Recovery Plan and our Population Wellbeing Recovery Plan.

Luton was among the worst-impacted places in the UK as a result of the pandemic. In terms of health, our town experienced some of the highest rates of infection during early waves and saw a disproportionately high level of deaths compared to other parts of the country.

The local economy was also significantly impacted, with around one in three Luton jobs identified as being at risk at the beginning of the pandemic, one of the highest rates in the country. This included at risk jobs within the airport, aviation and transport sectors, as well as retail, hospitality and our creative sectors, which were all unable to operate due to restrictions.

In addition, many other businesses faced a fall in demand and increased costs throughout this period. As a result many businesses were forced to close and unemployment rose to 9.3% by March 2021. Young people were especially impacted, with the number of 16-24 year olds in Luton out of work almost trebling within the first 12 months of the pandemic.

Through our Population Wellbeing Recovery Plan, we worked together to protect our most vulnerable residents throughout the pandemic, maintaining key services such as health and education and supporting those who were shielding from the virus. Health partners across our town worked tirelessly to deliver over 375,000 vaccinations to residents and helped us to avoid further restrictions by successfully managing local outbreaks.

After overcoming the initial crisis phase of the pandemic partners across the system have been working to tackle the inequalities that were exacerbated by

the pandemic including physical and mental health disparities and educational inequalities. This has included initiatives such as the Talk, Listen, Change project, in which health partners have worked with communities to develop solutions to health disparities.

Our Economic Recovery Plan has also enabled us to protect businesses, jobs and incomes throughout the pandemic, as we worked with central government to deliver more than £56.6 million of support grants to businesses in Luton and furlough payments to 39,500 employees. Our plan also enabled us to reopen our economy safely and to support people back into work through schemes like KickStart and Passport to Employment, with unemployment falling to 5.8% by August 2022.



Luton 2040

A place to thrive

Key sectors of our economy are bouncing back, with our airport already back to 80% of pre-pandemic passenger numbers by summer 2022 and many of our retail and hospitality industries also returning to full capacity. Our creative sector has also been re-energised, with a full programme of our most popular cultural events, as well as new events and festivals returning to the town. This strong economic recovery has created a platform for us to build back better so that all of our residents can benefit from future growth.

No-one in poverty

All of the work that has been delivered throughout the first phase of the Luton 2040 vision has been geared towards tackling inequality, protecting our most disadvantaged residents and increasing opportunity, to help lay the foundations for a town where no-one has to live in poverty.

Before we developed the vision, there were around 46% of children in Luton growing up in relative poverty (End Child Poverty Coalition, 2019). In 2020 this figure initially fell to 39%, demonstrating the positive impact of previous work by partners across Luton.

Since then however, the impact of the pandemic has seen relative child poverty increase again to 45% of children in Luton.

Although it is still too early to see the clear impact of our collective work, the first two years of our journey towards Luton 2040 has been against the backdrop of the pandemic, which we know has exacerbated many inequalities and hardships in our town. This further demonstrates the continued need to ensure that our vision and priorities are focussed on achieving our central mission of no-one in poverty.

The progress we have made so far against each of our priorities is already having a positive impact on our residents. Our latest perception survey released in 2022 showed that 73% of our residents are now satisfied with Luton as a place to live, an increase from 66% two years earlier and the highest satisfaction level on record. 84% of our residents said they feel happy with their local neighbourhood as a place to live. Even more encouragingly, 75% of residents said that they feel optimistic about the future of our town, compared to only 51% of residents in 2020. This is a strong endorsement for the positive transformation that we are already beginning to see across Luton.

Going forward, there remains a clear challenge around poverty as a result of the cost of living crisis. The impact of inflation is likely to be felt more severely by our most deprived communities who spend a greater proportion of their income on basic needs such as food and fuel, while also posing a threat to the living standards of the entire population.

Our mission of no-one in poverty is therefore more important today than at the beginning of our journey and achieving this mission will continue to drive each of our strategic priorities.



Delivering on our priorities for Luton 2040

In 2020, we set out our two main strategies for Luton 2040, the Inclusive Economy Strategy and Population Wellbeing Strategy. Delivered together, these strategies will create the opportunities and conditions that all of our residents need to reach their full potential and enjoy a good quality of life.

These strategies are delivered by our two overarching partnership boards, the Inclusive Economy Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board. In the first two years of our journey to Luton 2040, we have already made enormous progress in developing our detailed plans and partnership approaches and we are now beginning to deliver on many of the key actions within these plans.

The Inclusive Economy Strategy is focussed on growing our economy in a way that benefits everyone in our town, by driving investment in our key sectors to deliver good-quality and well-paid jobs and giving our residents the skills needed to access these opportunities.

Since 2020, we have developed a number of detailed implementation plans to deliver on each of the key areas of this strategy, including a new Town Centre Masterplan, a new Employment and Skills Strategy, a new Heritage Strategy and a refreshed Arts and Culture Strategy.

We have also developed partnerships such as our anchor institutions network that is central to delivering local wealth building and many of our major employers are already signing up to the Good Business Charter that commits them to delivering on many of our aims for an Inclusive Economy. We have also delivered many tangible achievements in this area already, including attracting more than £20 million of Levelling Up investment and the commencement of several key developments across the town.

The Population Wellbeing Strategy aims to support all of our residents to reach their full potential by using a life-course approach to tackle health and wellbeing issues at all ages, including strengthening education, physical and mental wellbeing and housing. Since 2020, we have further shaped this strategy around our commitment to becoming a Marmot Town.

This means developing a Marmot approach, which follows the principles and recommendations set out by the Institute of Health Equity, in their report, “Reducing Health Inequalities in Luton: A Marmot Town”.

Building on the evidence of this report, our strategy now takes a preventative approach to ill health, by addressing inequalities and the wider determinants of health. We have also developed new strategies for adult social care, housing and education, while partners across the town have helped to deliver investment in new and improved educational facilities and more than 600 new homes.

In addition, we have seen other tangible achievements including the delivery of the Energise Luton holiday activity and food programme, successful delivery of the Covid Community Champions programme to promote vaccination in the population, our physical activity plans to re-engage the community post-pandemic, and the delivery of our Talk, Listen, Change research project and outcomes.

Luton 2040

A place to thrive

Over the first two years of our journey to 2040, we have also been laying the foundations to become a more sustainable town, delivering on our commitment to reach net zero in response to the climate emergency.

We have engaged closely with residents and partners through climate change assemblies to identify the scale of the challenge and the role that businesses, households and our transport networks have to play to become a net zero town.

We have also drawn on expert advice and analysis to develop a clear roadmap to net zero with a detailed action plan that everyone in our town can follow to achieve this aim. As well as setting out our long-term plan for net zero we have already delivered



some important developments within this priority, including the launch of the Luton DART, providing a more sustainable route for passengers to and from the airport, an increase in the number of organisations in Luton with a sustainable travel plan and the launch of our airport company Luton Rising's Sustainability and Net Zero Strategies.

Since 2020, we have also taken the first steps to becoming a child friendly town. The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on our children and young people, with disruption to education for all age groups and stark challenges around digital access and isolation affecting development and mental wellbeing.

In addition, young adults were disproportionately impacted by the economic downturn, with a 196% increase in unemployment among 16-24-year-olds in Luton and many young people facing difficulty entering the job market for the first time.

Since then we have worked hard to strengthen some of the most basic services for our young people, including delivering on our Ofsted Children's Improvement Plan, providing education catch-up through our schools and

education providers and providing skills and employment support such as Kickstart and Passport to Employment to help young people into work. We will continue on our journey to improve these essential services, while giving our young people a meaningful voice to shape our longer-term plans to make Luton a child friendly town.

We have also made significant progress around our priority to build a fairer community. We have developed a fairness and social justice strategy and have established our innovative Fairness Taskforce model, which brings together residents and partners across the voluntary and community sector to empower residents and deliver social justice. This model is continuing to evolve with the development of a Citizen's Forum to enable residents to shape the future of our town.

As part of this priority, we have also developed plans for building resilience within our communities, through a new network of community hubs and our innovative Food First programme, as well as plans for equality, diversity and inclusion across our town.

Achievements so far

Over the last two years we have already seen a number of outstanding achievements from partners across the town that are contributing to delivering on our vision for Luton 2040 and enabling everyone in our town to thrive.



Delivered our Covid-19 recovery plans for the economy and population wellbeing



Launched our new Town Centre Masterplan



The opening of a new pocket park and opening up of the River Lea in the town centre



Launch of Luton Rising – a new brand for our airport focussed on sustainable growth that supports our community and our planet



The Culture Trust, Luton opened Hat Works in the Hat District



Launched a new Employment and Skills Strategy



Kickstart employment scheme delivered to support young people into work



Completion of Barnfield College's £25 million redevelopment



Premium Progression Partnership scheme launched by University of Bedfordshire



Schools kept open throughout the pandemic and education catchup to support pupils



Delivering our continuous improvement journey for children's services



Launch of a new Heritage Strategy – Curating Luton



Delivery of Luton's first heritage month – with a full programme of events



Refresh of our Arts and Culture Strategy – Harnessing Momentum



Successful Creative Leaders Programme piloted

Achievements so far



Access for
All upgrades delivered
at Luton Airport
Parkway Station



Operation Foresight
increasing policing and
enforcement to improve
town centre safety in
2021 and 2022



University of Bedfordshire
launches its Civic
Agreement with Luton
Council



Delivery of 600 new homes
by developers, with a
further 1,500 due
to be completed by
March 2023



Opening of the
new Windmill Hill
SEND school



Completion of Putteridge
High School's new
£23 million
building



Launch of new Adult
Social Care Strategy
and Luton's first social
work academy



Lewsey Pool and
sports facilities
refurbished and
reopened



Established Thriving
Communities
social prescribing
programme



Creation of our
Integrated Family
Partnership
service



Edge of Care
service launched



Procurement of
Barnardo's to deliver
new Junior
Safeguarding Board



Six Luton Parks
retained Green
Flag status



Luton's Fairness
Taskforce
launched



Established
Equality, Diversity
and Inclusion
Board



73% of residents said
they were satisfied
with Luton as a place
to live in 2022 – the
highest level ever
recorded



Resettlement
programmes for refugees
from Afghanistan
and Ukraine

Achievements so far



ABCD community clean ups organised as part of #KeepLutonTidy campaign



Mary Seacole Housing Association and Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation launch Will Power project



More than £119 million in grant funding secured by 543 organisations in Luton since 2020



Over 375,000 vaccines delivered to residents



£56.6 million in business grants delivered to local businesses and 39,500 jobs supported through furlough



Launch of BLMK Integrated Care System and University of Bedfordshire's research hub



£20 million secured from the Levelling Up Fund for town centre regeneration



New Town Centre Strategic Board established



Planning approved for Power Court, a new stadium for Luton Town FC



Good Business Charter officially launched



Luton officially becomes a Marmot Town, following release of report by Institute for Health Equity on Reducing Health Inequalities in Luton



London Luton Airport back to 80% of pre-pandemic passenger numbers by summer 2022



More than 280 people successfully helped out of temporary accommodation



Obtained £19.1 million of Bus Back Better funding to deliver our Bus Service Improvement Plan



Luton school pupils achieve better Key Stage 2 results than the national average in 2022



No school exclusions among looked after children cohort for another year



Secured £7.7 million Salix grant to decarbonise public sector buildings

The next steps on our journey to Luton 2040

Luton 2040
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The scale and speed of the many achievements so far has enabled us to bring forward the next phase of our journey to Luton 2040. Having successfully laid the foundations for delivering on our vision, the next phase will be about delivering against each of our priorities to bring about a total transformation of our town and the lives of our residents.

We have engaged with residents and partners again to shape these next steps, evolving our priorities and target outcomes from the recovery phase to set a focus for the next five years.

Our five updated priorities build on those of the first phase of the vision, with refreshed target outcomes that we will use to measure our progress on each priority. We have also included our updated plans for each priority, which include the key strands of work and actions that we will deliver together across the Luton system.

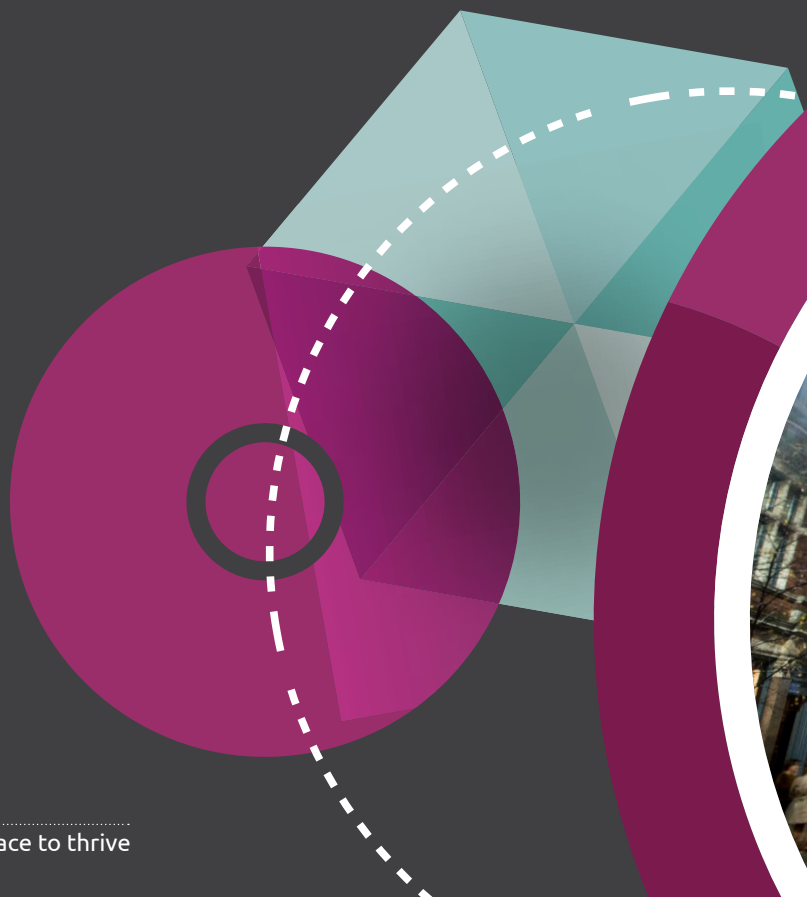
Across each priority we have also outlined some of the big transformational projects that partners across the town plan to deliver over the next five years. These include major infrastructure projects, as well as the introduction of new services and investment that will help to deliver each of the five priorities.



Vision, priorities

and strategies

2023-2028



Our town-wide Vision for Luton 2040:

Luton will be a healthy, fair and sustainable town, where everyone can thrive and no-one has to live in poverty.

Our priorities for Luton 2040:

Building an inclusive economy that delivers investment to support the growth of businesses, jobs and incomes.



Improving population wellbeing and tackling health inequalities to enable everyone to have a good quality of life and reach their full potential.



Becoming a child friendly town, where our children grow up happy, healthy and secure, with a voice that matters and the opportunities they need to thrive.



Tackling the climate emergency and becoming a net zero town with sustainable growth and a healthier environment.



Supporting a strong and empowered community, built on fairness, local pride and a powerful voice for all our residents.



Building an inclusive economy that delivers inward investment to support the growth of businesses, jobs and incomes.

Building an inclusive economy that provides investment, jobs and opportunities for all residents and businesses is essential to raising living standards so that everyone in Luton can thrive.

We know that Luton has a strong economy that has demonstrated excellent resilience in recent years. Luton is home to more than 8,800 businesses, supporting around 93,000 jobs, 69% of which are full-time positions. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the town's economy was worth around £6.3 billion per year and had a higher productivity rate than the UK as a whole (just over £36 Gross Value Added per hour).

Luton's economy has a range of traditionally strong sectors that employ lots of people, including manufacturing, construction, transport and aviation. The town is also experiencing the growth of new and emerging sectors, including creative and digital industries, new types of advanced manufacturing and the green economy.

Luton is home to many major businesses and employers, including EasyJet, TUI, WizzAir, Stellantis (Vauxhall), General Motors, Leonardo and AstraZeneca, as well as key anchor institutions such as Luton Council, Luton and Dunstable University Hospital, the University of Bedfordshire, London Luton Airport and Luton Town Football Club.

Following the recovery from Covid-19 we have updated our target outcomes for this priority. With the ongoing cost of living crisis likely to impact businesses across all sectors we recognise that there will continue to be challenges to growth and investment over the next five years. For this reason it is more important than ever that we focus on attracting greater inward investment, supporting increased local spend and making long-term plans to reform our economy so that everyone can benefit from future growth.

First, we will continue to grow our economy, especially key sectors like aviation, transport, construction and manufacturing, as well as emerging sectors like the green economy, digital and creative industries.




Target Outcomes



- Increased inward investment supporting the growth of our key and emerging sectors including aviation, manufacturing, digital and creative industries.
- More of our residents in well-paid, high value and fair employment within Luton.
- A more highly skilled workforce that meets the needs of local employers.
- Increased local spending and social value through supply chains of large employers and anchor institutions.
- A thriving town centre with the right mix of office, retail, leisure, residential and community space.





The growth of our airport will continue to be at the heart of our economy and we must continue to balance the benefits of this against the need to protect our environment.

Luton Rising has now set out plans for sustainable growth that will create 12,000 new jobs and an additional £1.6 billion of economic activity per year, while simultaneously making Luton a hub for green technology, research and finance. In addition, Luton Rising's plans for the London Luton Airport Enterprise Zone, including Bartlett Square and Green Horizons Park will provide a further 5,200 jobs to the local economy. We will also continue to deliver on plans for transforming lives through arts, culture and heritage, delivering on our strategies through strategic partnerships led by local creatives and The Culture Trust, Luton. As part of this aim we will develop a strong place brand narrative for Luton to attract investment into our town from the public and private sector, while also maximising the opportunities of green growth to align with our climate change commitment.

Second, we must ensure that the jobs being created as a result of economic growth are well-paid and high-value jobs so that everyone working in our economy can share in the benefits of this growth.

Currently more than a quarter of employees in Luton earn below the Real Living Wage, including many on insecure contracts with irregular hours. Moving forward Luton will become a Good Business Charter Town, with many of our major employers committed to paying the Real Living Wage and delivering fair employment conditions to their staff.

Third, we must deliver on our ambitious plans for skills and employability to give our residents the opportunity to access the well-paid jobs being created in our town.

Workplace earnings in Luton have been consistently higher than those of residents for several years, demonstrating that many of the best-paid roles are filled by non-residents. This is in part driven by a lower skills base, with one in ten working age adults in Luton having no formal qualifications and just 67% trained to level 2 qualifications of higher compared to 78% nationally.

Partners across the town are now working to implement our Employment and Skills Strategy, with strong collaboration between employers and training providers to ensure that local people have the skills to meet the future needs of our local job market. These skills will also need



to meet the growing needs of our population across health, social care and education that are all seeing growing demand. This work includes key initiatives such as Passport to Employment, which now has over 850 enrolments, as well as the new bespoke Passport to Health and Social Care Programme and a similar programme being developed with the airport.

Fourth, we will continue to develop our local wealth building approach to delivering inclusive economic growth. Working together with our anchor institutions and large employers we aim to increase the proportion of our collective spend that goes back into the local economy, maximising the Luton pound to support local jobs and businesses. Since the launch of the Inclusive Economy Strategy in 2020, the proportion of influencable spending that remains within the local system has steadily improved, with 41p in every pound now spent locally. We will also work together to develop supply chains in the local economy to build-in social value, supporting skills, sustainability and ethical employment practices to help build an economy that meets our vision for a healthy, fair and sustainable town.



Finally, the transformation of our town centre will continue to be at the heart of our plans for an Inclusive Economy. The town centre is a vital shared space for our families, community, businesses, workers and visitors to our town. Delivering this transformation is therefore central to meeting the needs of everyone in our town, as well as being a catalyst for inward investment, economic growth and strengthening pride among all parts of our community.

We will continue to deliver our Town Centre Masterplan, with several major developments including The Stage, Power Court and Hat Gardens all likely to be completed over the next five years. We are also continuing to work with central government to improve our town centre offer, including work with the High Streets Taskforce and Partnerships for People and Place to tackle underlying challenges.



Major developments we will see by 2028:

Key town centre developments including Power Court Stadium, The Stage and Hat Gardens will all be completed

Luton will be a Real Living Wage Town

Luton will have a new place brand - making our town an attractive place to live, work, study and invest

A new skills and employment hub and a new apprenticeship brokerage scheme will be in place

Anchor institutions and large employers will have developed a shared procurement and social value framework



Inclusive Economy Strategy

Governance: Inclusive Economy Board



Attracting Inward Investment

- Developing our place branding and Think Luton investment proposition
- Leveraging public sector investment to level-up our economy
- Attracting private sector investment

Growing our Key Sectors

Increasing investment, productivity and employment in each of our key sectors:

- Digital, creative and heritage sectors
 - Aviation and transport
 - Advanced manufacturing
 - Green economy

Local Wealth Building

- A shared procurement framework for large employers and anchor institutions
- Increased collective spend locally
 - Social value and sustainability generated through local supply chains

A Real Living Wage Town

- More workers earning the Real Living Wage and Luton living wage
- Employers delivering fair hours and working conditions
- Supporting flexible working and access to good employment

Skills for the Future

- A highly skilled workforce that meets the future needs of our economy
- Increased job readiness and soft skills
 - Bridging the digital skills divide
 - Pathways to employment and reskilling

A Thriving Town Centre

- The right mix of retail, office, leisure and residential space
- A safer, cleaner and greener town centre
- Improved perceptions of our town centre

Improving population wellbeing and tackling health inequalities to enable everyone to have a good quality of life and reach their full potential.



Supporting the wellbeing of our population is vital to ensuring that all residents are able to work, study and maximise the opportunities available to enjoy a good standard of living. This priority aligns to our commitment to be a Marmot Town, building on the recommendations of Professor Sir Michael Marmot and the Institute of Health Equity in their report, [Reducing Health Inequalities in Luton: A Marmot Town.](#)

At the heart of this challenge is significant inequality in overall health outcomes that are preventing many in our town from reaching their full potential and having a good quality of life. Life expectancy in Luton for both males and females is lower than the national and regional averages, with stark inequalities in different parts of the town. Women in our most deprived wards can expect to live almost seven years shorter lives than women from our least deprived areas; for men this gap is just over five years.


The Covid-19 pandemic further highlighted and exacerbated many of these health challenges as well as widening inequalities around wider determinants of health such as education, housing and employment. Despite this our Population Wellbeing recovery plan has helped to protect many of our most vulnerable people from Covid-19, while also tackling some of the most severe inequalities faced as a result.

The cost of living crisis threatens to further exacerbate many of these inequalities. As a result we will adopt a more strategic approach to system-wide prevention, that addresses the wider determinants of health, including employment, housing and the environment to reduce long-term inequalities that will prevent people from reaching their full potential.

Target Outcomes

- A preventative approach to improving physical and mental wellbeing that addresses the wider determinants of health to achieve better and more equal health outcomes.
- A healthier start for our children and young people with better and more equal physical and mental health outcomes.
- A stronger care sector with increased capacity to help people and families to manage long-term conditions.
- More of our households living in good quality and affordable housing.
- A safer community with fewer cases of crime, domestic abuse, serious violence and addiction





The primary aim of this priority will be to create a healthier town that supports better health outcomes overall, culminating in longer and more equal health life expectancy for our residents.

In doing so this priority closely interacts with all of the other priorities within the Luton 2040 vision. Health partners across Luton and the wider region, including the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care System will be important to delivering on this priority and enabling people to live healthier lives from early years into adulthood and old age.



This priority will establish a preventative approach to physical and mental ill health, including prevention of serious conditions. Luton currently has a higher rate of premature death from all causes, including cancer and cardiovascular diseases than the England and East of England averages. By working with the Institute of Health Equity to become a Marmot Town, we have been developing our preventative approach to ill health. This approach includes addressing known risk factors linked to conditions such as diet, physical activity, smoking and alcohol consumption, as well as early detection for conditions to intervene early.

We will also take a preventative approach to mental ill health, including preventing issues of loneliness and social isolation in people of all ages.

This preventative approach will also include providing a healthy start for our children and young people, aligning with our priority to make Luton a child friendly town.

We know that early years development and childhood is a critical period for preventing poor health outcomes in later life and as part of this priority we will aim to prevent key issues such as obesity, malnutrition, dental decay and inactivity that can lead to long-term health problems in adulthood.

Strengthening social care to support people in old age and those with long term health conditions is also central to wellbeing and improving the quality of life for our residents. We know that long-term health conditions and disabilities have an impact on individuals and their families, with these families often more likely to be in poverty. We also know that Luton has a strong care sector, with many people employed as carers and many in our community carrying out caring duties for family, friends and neighbours. Our carer providers and hospitals also have an excellent track record for hospital discharge over a number of years.



Nonetheless the care sector faces significant challenges, including unprecedented levels of demand and shortages of provision, workers and skills. As part of this priority we will continue to deliver on our new Adult Social Care Strategy, including delivering new approaches to home care and reablement services. In addition, we will continue to build skills in the sector through initiatives like Passport to Care, while working with our community and government to find long-term solutions to increase capacity and funding for the sector.

Delivering good quality, secure and affordable housing is an important aim within this priority. Quality of housing is a significant determinant of health outcomes, with poor quality housing linked too many illnesses such as respiratory conditions and poor mental health.

The affordability and security of housing also has a major impact on the financial sustainability of people in the town. The median house price in Luton is more than nine times median annual earnings.



The number of households in the private rented sector in Luton is also above the national average, resulting in high housing costs for many of our families. Delivering more affordable and secure housing that supports people to live healthy lives is therefore an important aim within this priority. Developers, private landlords, housing associations and the council will all have a vital role to play in working together to deliver the right homes that residents need for the future, while improving the standards of existing homes in the town. We will also continue to ensure that the voices of residents and tenants are heard by all partners to ensure that their housing needs are met.

Community safety is also important to the wellbeing of everyone in our town. Although we have seen a decrease in many cases of crime over and increased enforcement efforts from the police and other community safety partners in the last two years, we know that many of our residents continue to feel unsafe in Luton.

In our latest resident's survey in 2022, only 22% of residents said they felt safe in Luton, with 40% feeling unsafe. In particular many residents feel unsafe in parts of the town centre, with poor perceptions of safety often linked to specific issues such as alcohol and drug use as well as violence and anti-social behaviour.



In addition we know that safety is a big concern for many of our young people in the town. Our community safety partnership brings together the police with other enforcement and public health partners and community leaders to tackle these issues. These partners are also working more closely with government departments to tackle persistent issues of crime and to engage with residents to ensure that they can feel safe in Luton.

Major developments we will see by 2028:

Luton will be recognised as the first Marmot Town, delivering on our action plan to tackle the causes of inequality

Family Hubs will be in operation providing vital early years support and interventions

Over 425 new homes built each year - 20% of which will be affordable homes

Ending rough sleeping and halving the number of people in temporary accommodation

We will tackle persistent issues of crime and anti-social behaviour leading to a significant improvement in residents' perceptions of safety in the town



Population Wellbeing Strategy

Governance: Health and Wellbeing Board



Starting and Developing Well

- Reduced inequalities from birth across Luton
- Food educational attainment from early years
- More children at a healthy weight
- Greater support for mental wellbeing for young people

Living and Working Well

- Increased physical activity and lower obesity rates for adults
- Better mental wellbeing
- Increasing screening and detection of serious conditions
- Reduced drug and alcohol related harm

Ageing Well

- Reducing social isolation
- Ensuring elderly residents are living in decent housing
- Tackling fuel poverty and pensioner poverty
- Enabling more people to remain in their own home in old age

Quality Education for All

- More good and outstanding schools in Luton
- Higher educational attainment
- SEND provision and measures to tackle educational inequalities
- Increased access to adult education and lifelong learning

Safe and Cohesive Community

- Lower crime and reoffending rates including fewer cases of domestic abuse, exploitation and serious violence
- Protecting the most vulnerable
- Increased capacity and resilience in our community

Quality and Affordable Housing

- More affordable homes for families
- Reducing homelessness and temporary accommodation
- - Ensuring more housing is decent, safe and secure

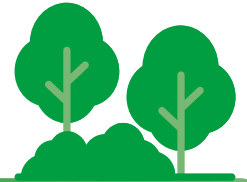
Tackling the climate emergency and becoming a net zero town with sustainable growth and a healthier environment.

Sustainability is at the heart of our long-term vision for Luton. Together, we recognise the importance of the climate emergency and the threat this poses to our local environment and our planet as a whole. Protecting the long-term future of the planet and the resources it provides is essential to maintaining growth and protecting the long-term security of our residents and preventing poverty. Enhancing our natural environment is also central to improving the physical and mental wellbeing of our residents as well as fostering a strong sense of local pride and cohesion throughout our community.

Luton was among the first local authorities to respond to the climate emergency by committing to becoming a net zero town by 2040. This ambition meets the global challenge set by the Paris agreement to aim to limit global average temperature increases to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, and goes further than the current UK government's commitment to reach net zero by 2050.

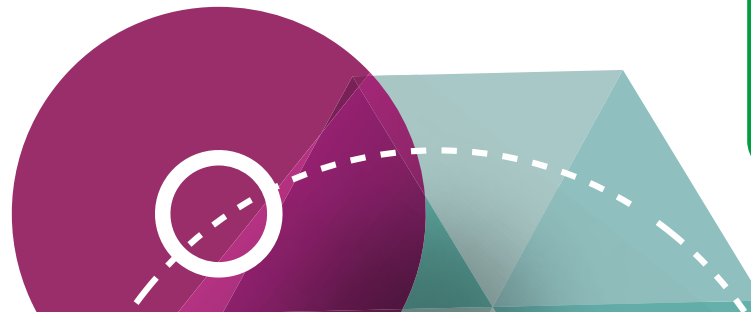
Luton's current emissions profile is estimated to be around 790 ktCO₂e (the equivalent of 790 kilotons of carbon emissions) per year. Approximately 39% of Luton's emissions comes from households, followed by 29% from industry and 23% emitted on the road.

The primary aim of this priority is to reduce the overall emissions of our town as a whole to meet our net zero aim by 2040. This will include reducing the emissions of carbon and other greenhouse gases from businesses, organisations and households across our town by shifting to renewable energy sources over time and by reducing waste and consumption of non-renewables. Reaching net-zero can ultimately be achieved in three ways, through carbon reduction, carbon capture and offsetting of emissions.



Target Outcomes

- Reduced net carbon emissions from businesses, organisations and households.
- A greener transport network, with a reduction in car usage and an increase in walking, cycling and sustainable public transport usage.
- The most sustainable airport in the UK.
- Enhanced greenspace and richer biodiversity that offset emissions and enriches our local environment.
- Improved air quality across our town to support better health outcomes.



Our net zero strategy will focus on carbon reduction, wherever possible followed by carbon capture. Offsetting of carbon emissions will only be a last resort, where the other two options are not achievable.

Much of our roadmap to becoming a net zero town requires us to invest in improving the energy efficiency of buildings to reduce energy use. This includes retrofitting our existing homes, business premises and community and leisure spaces.

Developers will also have an important role to design more energy efficient homes and we will work together to improve energy efficiency across privately owned, privately rented and social housing. Luton's Housing Strategy commits to driving up these standards to ensure that all council housing achieves Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C or above by 2025, with all new Council homes built achieving a rating of B or above.

Developing a greener transport network is a key outcome that will help us to tackle the climate crisis while also improving the way we travel to places of work, education and leisure. A greener transport network can be achieved in three ways.

First, we will work together to capitalise on the growth of electric vehicles and other renewable technologies by investing in infrastructure such as vehicle charging points and supporting businesses and individuals to move and upgrade their vehicles. Based on current projections, Luton is expected to have more than 6,000 electric vehicles by 2025, which will require an estimated 212 public charging points to be available across the town. As of 2022, there are 54 public charging points in the town, which is above the level of provision required for the number of electric vehicles.

Second, we will need to work together to improve connectivity and sustainability in our public transport network, including trains and buses, to encourage more use of these services.

Luton has already secured £19.1 million from the Department of Transport to deliver its Bus Service Improvement Plan, which will improve bus services and infrastructure to encourage more people to use sustainable bus travel instead of cars. This plan also includes the introduction of a new park and ride service for the town and the first steps to transition to a greener bus network.



Third, all parts of the aviation sector in Luton must work together to minimise and offset its impacts on the environment to enable our airport to become the most sustainable in the UK. Luton Rising is providing leadership for the aviation sector in Luton, having set out its ambition to grow the airport in a sustainable way, making use of its unique position as a community airport owner to future proof assets and invest in the transition to net zero to become a world-leader in sustainability. Luton Rising has set out a Sustainability Strategy which includes working with partners to protect and enhance the natural environment, build climate resilience, lead the transition to net zero across the sector and become a national hub for green technology, finance and aviation.

Alongside a greener transport network, we will also aim to increase walking and cycling as alternative forms of travel to benefit the environment and the wellbeing of those who live and work in our town. We will work collaboratively to re-design our town to make active travel easier, safer and more enjoyable for everyone.

Providing more homes for people and driving economic and employment growth for future generations will mean more buildings. While this is unavoidable, we are making it a key priority to increase sustainability by offsetting our emissions through greater biodiversity. This will mean further greening of our town with the addition of one hectare of tree planting over the next five years, alongside significant rewilding. We will also continue to protect and enhance our fantastic parks and greenspaces,

including our Six Green Flag parks. This will include the implementation of a new Masterplan for Stockwood Park over the next five years. As well as helping to tackle climate change, this approach will also contribute to the wellbeing of our population and increase local pride throughout our community.

Another key outcome of this priority will be to improve the air quality of our town. By shifting towards cleaner sources of energy and away from high levels of pollution, as well as increasing bio-diversity and greenspace, we will realise many of these improvements. However, we will also work to tackle specific challenges around poor air quality in residential areas, and hotspots such as the town centre, schools and the airport. This outcome will help to meet our climate commitments as well as contributing to a healthier town.



Major developments we will see by 2028:

A clear reduction in the carbon emissions of the town as a whole

A circular icon with a green background showing a white cloud with 'CO₂' written on it and three downward-pointing arrows below it.

All new council homes to be built to Energy Performance rating B or above

A circular icon with a green background showing a white silhouette of a house with solar panels on the roof and a lightning bolt symbol on the side.

Introduction of a new park and ride service

A circular icon with a green background showing a white silhouette of a car and a parking sign with the letter 'P'.

The launch of a new Community Carbon Offset Fund

A circular icon with a green background showing a white silhouette of a hand holding a coin with a small plant growing from the top.

Additional 1 hectare of trees planted and increased rewilding of the town

A circular icon with a green background showing a white silhouette of a hand holding a small plant seedling.



Net Zero Strategy

Governance: Health and Wellbeing Board



Business and Public Sector

- Upgrading public and private sector buildings to improve energy efficiency
- Building sustainability within business and public sector supply chains
- Transition to renewable energy across all business and public sector operations

Residential Buildings

- Delivering more energy efficient new homes
- Retrofitting homes across the social and private rented sector and owned homes
 - Ensure compliance with planning regulations to meet efficiency standards

Waste and Consumer Choices

- Increased recycling and reduced waste from households
- Develop a more circular economy that facilitates greater recycling
- Education around consumer choices and develop a sustainable food plan

Transport

- Invest in green transport infrastructure, including public transport and electric charging points
- Accelerate shift from petrol to electric vehicles for residents and organisations
- Increasing active travel, including walking and cycling

Biodiversity and Resilience

- Tree planting and rewilding to increase biodiversity and offset emissions
 - Climate resilience action plans, including overheating and flood management
- Maintain and increase access to parks and greenspace for residents

Funding and Resources

- Establishing long-term funding and investment plans to achieve net zero
- Developing skills and supply chains to deliver our net zero plans and support the green economy

Airport

- Shifting airport operations and supply chains towards renewable energy
- Increasing sustainable and active travel to and from the airport
- Implement measures to remove and offset carbon emissions

Becoming a child friendly town, where our children grow up happy, healthy and secure, with a voice that matters and the opportunities they need to thrive.

Giving children and young people in Luton the best start in life is an important priority to achieve our vision for Luton 2040. Children born and growing up in Luton today will be reaching adulthood by 2040 and will become the next generation of local leaders, workers, educators, carers and parents that make up our community. Providing our young people with the skills, opportunities and good quality of life they need to reach their full potential is essential if they are to play their part in building a better town where everyone can thrive beyond 2040.

Luton benefits from having one of the youngest populations in the country, with 36% of residents below the age of 25 and 22% below the age of 15. Having a young population is an important asset for our town that can drive growth and investment and enables us to shape a brighter future around the skills and creativity of our young people.

Despite this, there are also challenges associated with having a young population, including additional costs of education and children's services and barriers to employment linked to high childcare costs and a lack of affordable housing that meets the needs of growing families.

Our children and young people also face significant inequalities in comparison to other places. Around 45% of children in Luton are growing up in relative poverty compared to 27% nationally. Luton's children also have lower rates of educational attainment and some poorer health outcomes, including higher rates of childhood obesity in year 6 children and higher rates of infant mortality. Addressing these challenges is essential if we are to give our children and young people the best start in life and enable them to reach their full potential.

A key aim within this priority is to provide good quality services that keep our children and young people safe and secure.



Target Outcomes

- Our children and young people will have access to good quality services that keep them safe and secure.
- Every child has an excellent education that raises aspiration and achievement and reduces educational inequalities.
- More opportunities for our children and young people to develop, play and socialise.
- Greater and more equal opportunities for children and young people with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities).
- All of our children and young people will have a meaningful voice that is heard and that matters.

We have been working closely with partners, the Department for Education and Ofsted since 2020 throughout our improvement journey for children's services and this system-wide support has been critical to the continued development of our services. We all have a crucial role to play to protect our most vulnerable children and young people and we will continue to strive to provide good and outstanding services for all.

Through this priority, we will also focus on providing better outcomes and reducing education inequalities for our children and young people, enabling them to reach their full potential and achieve great things in later life.

Luton has a strong education offer, with 90% of schools in the town rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted, which is above average compared to national and regional rates. The percentage of pupils in Luton achieving the expected standard for reading, writing and maths by the end of Key Stage 2 is also above the national average (60% in Luton compared to 57% across England).

Our schools and education leaders play a vital role in raising aspiration and achievement, as well as enabling children to be healthy and to develop well. In addition, schools will work collaboratively with further and higher education, as well as employers to help young people to transition into adulthood and access the opportunities they need to thrive in later life.



We also want to ensure that all of our children and young people have the best opportunities possible to develop through play and socialising with one another. This is an important aim that will cut across all of our other priorities, and will require us to develop spaces and opportunities within our town centre, our parks, our local environment, our neighbourhoods and our leisure and community spaces that are child and family friendly, enabling all of our young people to have a fun and enjoyable upbringing.



Becoming a Child Friendly Town includes making sure that our children and young people with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) and their families can have the same opportunities as the rest of the population. In Luton there are around 2,100 young people with SEND who have an Education, Health and Care Plan. For many of these children and young people, there are significant inequalities with their peers around education and health outcomes and barriers to opportunity and enjoying a good quality of life. Our SEND Strategy has been created based on what children and young people with SEND and their families have told us they want to see, including

opportunities to reach their full potential, grow up feeling happy, healthy and secure and having a voice that is listened to. This strategy will be delivered across the system to overcome barriers and ensure that people with SEND have the opportunities they need to thrive across all parts of their lives.

All of these aims will help to give our young people the tools that they need to enjoy a good quality of life and access opportunities to work, learn and grow, contributing to the future success of our town. Going further, our children and young people are also the future leaders of our community and have an equal stake in its future to the rest of our population.

As with our community as a whole, we will support our children and young people to have a strong and powerful voice that is heard and that makes a real difference in shaping the future of our town to meet their needs and aspirations.



Major developments we will see by 2028:

Luton will be recognised as a child friendly town

Luton will have a good or outstanding Ofsted rating for children's services

Opening of a new centre of excellence for children with disabilities

More special school places and special educational provision to enable children with SEND to reach their full potential

An active young people's council and young people's citizen's panels



Child Friendly Town Strategy

Governance: Children's Trust Board



Keeping Children Safe and Secure

- Providing access to good and outstanding children's services
- Promoting fostering and adoption and meeting the needs of children in care
- Preventing youth offending, serious youth violence, substance abuse and self-harm

A Healthy Start

- Better and more equal health outcomes for children and young people
- Increasing physical activity and nutrition to achieve a healthy weight
 - Promoting good oral health and preventing tooth decay
 - Supporting mental wellbeing
 - Safe and secure housing that enables good development

Ageing Well

- Reducing social isolation
- Ensuring elderly residents are living in decent housing
- Tackling fuel poverty and pensioner poverty
- Enabling more people to remain in their own home in old age

Education, Aspiration and Achievement

- More good and outstanding schools
- Education leaders working together to support children's health, development and transition into adulthood
- Higher educational attainment and reduced educational inequalities
 - Working with employers to raise aspirations, increase opportunities and support transition into work

Giving Children and Young People a Meaningful Voice

- Increasing young people's participation in democracy and civil society
- Giving young people a meaningful voice in shaping the future of our town
- Enabling young people to shape services to meet their needs

Supporting a strong and empowered community, built on fairness, local pride and a powerful voice for all our residents.

Our community is at the heart of our vision for Luton 2040. Our vision is for a town that is built on fairness and social justice, with a strong voluntary and community sector that supports the resilience of our most vulnerable residents. Within this priority, we also want to ensure that our residents continue to have a strong sense of civic pride, social responsibility and a powerful voice to shape the future of our town.

Luton benefits from having an incredibly strong and cohesive community, including a super-diverse range of people and cultures, a highly dedicated collection of voluntary sector organisations and community groups delivering vital services, and a passionate society with thousands of residents that play their part in making Luton a better place every day. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, all parts of our community came together to support one another, delivering food and emergency supplies to the most vulnerable, supporting the rollout of vaccines and playing their part in Luton's recovery.

The strength of our informal communities is demonstrated by our latest residents' perception survey, in which 84% of residents said that their neighbourhoods were good places to live.

This priority will continue to build on our innovative Fairness Taskforce model, which brings together representatives from across our community to tackle inequality and structural barriers to achieve more equitable outcomes for everyone in our town. This approach is also working to address financial insecurity faced by our most vulnerable and deprived residents and those most impacted by the cost of living crisis.



Target Outcomes

- A town built on fairness with equitable outcomes for all our residents.
- Increased resilience across our community protecting and enabling the most excluded and vulnerable.
- A thriving voluntary and community sector delivering on shared priorities with our residents.
- A stronger and meaningful voice for all our residents to shape the vision and direction of our town.
- A welcoming and compassionate town, with respect, social responsibility and increased civic pride at its heart.



The Fairness Taskforce brings together all parts of our community to build resilience and real solutions to prevent hardship and crisis. While the Luton 2040 vision takes a long-term strategic approach to preventing poverty, this priority also recognises the immediate impact of the cost of living crisis. Working together we will help to address these challenges with short-term interventions such as the Food First programme, the creation of community Warm Hubs and Family hubs which will support households to meet their most basic needs.

Luton benefits from having a large voluntary and community sector, with around 335 highly dedicated charities and community organisations based in the town and a further 150 organisations that deliver services that directly impact our residents. Our latest resident's survey also shows that one in three residents carried out voluntary activity in 2021, an increase from one in five residents a year earlier.

The voluntary and community sector delivers a diverse range of services that deliver on all parts of our Luton 2040 vision, including youth services, skills and employment, health and wellbeing services, environmental groups and local neighbourhood networks that support our most vulnerable residents.

As part of this priority, we will aim to work together to strengthen the role of the voluntary and community sector, increase coordination of collective activities and ensure equitable funding to deliver on all of our priorities and for all parts of our town fairly.

Providing a powerful voice for our residents is important to give everyone the ability to shape the future direction of our town. Many residents have already played their part in creating the vision, and we will empower residents further through the Fairness Taskforce Citizens' Forum, as well as through a renewed programme of engagement with elected councillors. Despite this, we know that 52% of residents feel they cannot influence the decisions that affect their local neighbourhoods. We will therefore work together through our Citizens' Forum, as well as other forms of consultation, communications and social media to ensure that more residents are involved in decisions that affect their everyday lives.

Finally, this priority and the whole of our vision for Luton 2040 is designed to meet many shared ambitions for our town, all of which rely upon the contributions of everyone in our town and all of which will help to generate a greater sense of pride in our place.



As part of this priority, we will aim to increase participation and social responsibility encouraging everyone in our town to play their part in delivering Luton 2040. The roles of organisations and residents are outlined in detail throughout our strategies within this document, including specific roles for businesses, the public sector, voluntary organisations and individuals to support our economy, wellbeing, environment and our young people. We will ensure that everyone in our town is able to play their part on our journey to Luton 2040, building a greater sense of pride and ownership of this vision throughout our community so that everyone feels that Luton is a place where they can thrive.



Major developments we will see by 2028:

Creating and delivering a new Fairness and Social Justice Strategy in partnership with our community

New approaches to civic involvement such as citizens' assemblies that increase resident satisfaction and influence over their neighbourhoods and towns

Place-based community networks and hubs, increasing access to services and support where they are most needed

Town-wide programmes for our community such as Food First, City of Sanctuary, and Warm Spaces

The Fairness Taskforce delivering citizen led solutions to increase equity and social inclusion in Luton



Fairness and Social Justice Strategy

Governance: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board and Fairness Taskforce



A Town Built on Fairness and Social Justice

- Community and system-wide leadership, identifying, understanding and tackling structural inequalities in our society
- Delivering equitable outcomes for all parts of our community
- Tackling discrimination, hatred and injustice in all its forms
- Becoming a disability friendly town

A Thriving Voluntary and Community Sector

- Supporting the growth and resilience of our Voluntary and Community Sector
- Strengthening leadership, coordination, collaboration and skills
- Ensuring funding to the sector is fair and equitable to deliver on all our shared priorities

A Resilient and Supportive Town

- Working together to prevent deprivation and persistent poverty
- Supporting access to services that help residents to deal with crisis and financial hardship
- Building resilience within households, neighbourhoods and communities
- Increasing access to digital resources

A Powerful Voice for all Residents

- Increasing participation in democracy and civil society
- Giving residents a powerful voice to shape the future direction of our town
- Enabling residents to shape services and opportunities to meet their needs

Pride in our Town

- Increasing civic pride among all parts of our community
- Building social responsibility among residents and organisations
- Increasing opportunities for volunteering and participation
- Everyone playing their part in delivering our shared vision for Luton 2040

Delivering our vision for Luton 2040



System-wide delivery

Luton 2040

A place to thrive

Luton 2040 is a town-wide vision built around our shared mission to build a healthy, fair and sustainable town where everyone can thrive and no-one has to live in poverty. Everyone has a part to play in delivering on this vision, including public, private and voluntary and community sector organisations, as well as every one of our 225,300 residents.

The Council and other major anchor institutions in our town, as well as Central Government, have an important role to play in leading the transformation of our town; however, this vision can only be made a reality with the energy and action of all parts of Luton.

Luton 2040 partnership boards

Delivery of the Luton 2040 vision is led by our two formal partnership boards - The Inclusive Economy Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board. These boards bring together key system leaders across the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, including education, health and key sectors of our economy.

These two boards come together twice annually as part of our 2040 partnership events to provide the strategic and system-wide governance to drive the direction of the Luton 2040 programme.

The Inclusive Economy Board delivers directly on our Inclusive Economy Strategy and the key strands of work involved within this. The Climate Change Steering Group provides the governance to drive the delivery of our Net Zero Strategy. This strategy formally reports into the Inclusive Economy Board, although its work streams cut across both formal partnership boards.

The Health and Wellbeing Board directly delivers on the Population Wellbeing Strategy and its key strands of work. The Children's Trust Board provides governance for the Child Friendly Town Strategy, while the Fairness and Social Justice Board provides governance to drive the delivery of the Fairness Strategy. These two boards formally report to the Health and Wellbeing Board, however both cut across the work of our two formal partnership boards.



System-wide delivery

Feeding into each board are a number of other partnership boards which are responsible for driving some of the key strands of work within each of the strategies.



Playing your part – The role of organisations

All organisations in Luton have an important role to play in delivering on the Luton 2040 vision. Employers in the town are critical to delivering skills, well-paid jobs and local wealth building to build an inclusive economy, while all organisations can also play an important role in tackling the wider determinants of health, including housing, education and employment to enable everyone to enjoy a healthy life and reach their full potential. All organisations also have an important role to play in increasing sustainability and reducing emissions through their operations, as well as providing opportunities for children and young people and building fairness, resilience and pride throughout our community.

Our partnership initiatives

Many of our major anchor institutions and large employers in the town are already heavily involved in delivering our shared vision for Luton 2040, and we are developing some of the key partnerships that are essential to delivering on key strands of the vision.

These key partnerships include our anchor institutions workshop, the Fairness Taskforce, a civic agreement with the University of Bedfordshire and our town centre stakeholder group. These partnership approaches are only the beginning and we will continue to develop more opportunities for all organisations to work together to deliver in partnership towards Luton 2040.

The Luton 2040 Pledge

Many organisations have also been setting out their own Luton 2040 pledges to affirm their commitment to delivering on the vision. These pledges include a set of clear commitments agreed by each organisation that align with our 2040 priorities, demonstrating the many ways in which they are contributing to delivering on our collective aims. These include commitments such as signing up to the Good Business Charter, committing to fair pay and employment, organisational plans for wellbeing, sustainability and active travel and commitments to provide training, employment and apprenticeship opportunities for young people.

Making a Luton 2040 Pledge is easy for organisations to do and is a great way to demonstrate the social value that each

organisation brings to residents, customers, partners and investors. Developing a pledge can also help organisations to develop their own plans and strategies in a way that clearly aligns with our shared vision for Luton 2040, so that we can all work together to achieve our collective aims.

Organisations can find out more and sign up to a pledge today at:
www.luton.gov.uk/2040pledge



Partnership in Practice

Luton 2040 A place to thrive

There are many examples of partnership working already taking place to deliver Luton 2040 – as well as many more being developed across the town.

Integrated Care System



The BLMK Health and Care Partnership, is an Integrated Care System (ICS) that operates across the areas of Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes.

The partnership brings together NHS organisations for the region alongside local councils and other partners across health and social services and the voluntary sector. This includes all of the hospitals for the region, as well as all primary care networks, NHS community services and ambulance services.

Integrated Care Systems are designed to bring together these partners to improve health and care outcomes, tackle health inequalities, enhance value for money of services and support socio-economic opportunities for their region.

This vision and the priorities of BLMK align with the Luton 2040 Vision and priorities. BLMK's strategic priorities are closely aligned to the aims of Luton's Population Wellbeing Strategy, with a focus on reducing health inequalities and supporting wellbeing across the three stages of the life course, also aligning to our priorities for children and fairness in our communities. BLMK also prioritise sustainable economic growth, which aligns with our Inclusive Economy Strategy and Net zero roadmap.

BLMK Priorities:

Start well – Live Well – Age well – Growth – Reducing Inequalities

University of Bedfordshire Civic Agreement



The University of Bedfordshire is currently developing a Civic Agreement with Luton Council. This agreement will set out the universities commitment, as a key anchor institution to deliver on the Luton 2040 vision, building on its existing strengths in local collaborative work, especially around skills, health, business enterprise and arts, culture and heritage.

The civic agreement will help to develop shared capacity for innovation, plan for how businesses and the local economy need to adapt for the future, and develop coordinated approaches around talent pipelines and reskilling the local population.

The core objective of this agreement will be ***Collaboration and innovation for a fair and thriving future for Luton.***

Partnership in Practice

Anchor Institutions

Luton's anchor institutions are a network of key stakeholders who are rooted in the town. These partners include Luton Council, the University of Bedfordshire and further education colleges, the Luton and Dunstable Hospital, Luton Rising, and key businesses and voluntary and community sector organisations.

The anchor institutions group works closely to drive our approach to inclusive economic growth, through shared procurement principles that look to increase local spend and generate social value.

In addition, anchor institutions are leading the way in establishing Luton as a Good Business Charter town, by adopting the ten principles of the charter.

Transforming Lives Through Arts, Culture and Heritage

Transforming lives through arts, culture and heritage is a key focus that helps us to build a more inclusive economy where creative businesses and independents can thrive, while improving population wellbeing through increased participation among residents.

The creative forum is a network of practitioners working across arts, culture and creativity. The group meets quarterly to discuss opportunities and network about up and coming developments that impact the cultural ecology of Luton.

The Luton Heritage Forum brings together key stakeholders with an interest in preserving and enhancing Luton's heritage. The forum helps to drive Curating Luton: our 10-year Heritage Strategy and the Heritage Implementation Plan to widen participation in heritage for the benefit of all of our diverse communities.

Luton 2040
A place to thrive



Community Safety

There are a number of partnership approaches helping to keep people safe in Luton, tackling issues of crime and anti-social behaviour and supporting vulnerable people.

Bedfordshire Police and enforcement partners have worked closely to deliver initiatives such as Operation Foresight and Dallow Cares to provide place-based approaches to tackling specific issues such as violent crime. These approaches have also drawn on health partners, including drug and alcohol services, homelessness charities, as well as business representatives and the community.

Through the Partnerships for People and Place programme, Luton Council and University of Bedfordshire are leading work to develop lasting solutions with local partners and central government to help reduce issues of street begging and crime within the town centre.



Partnership in Practice

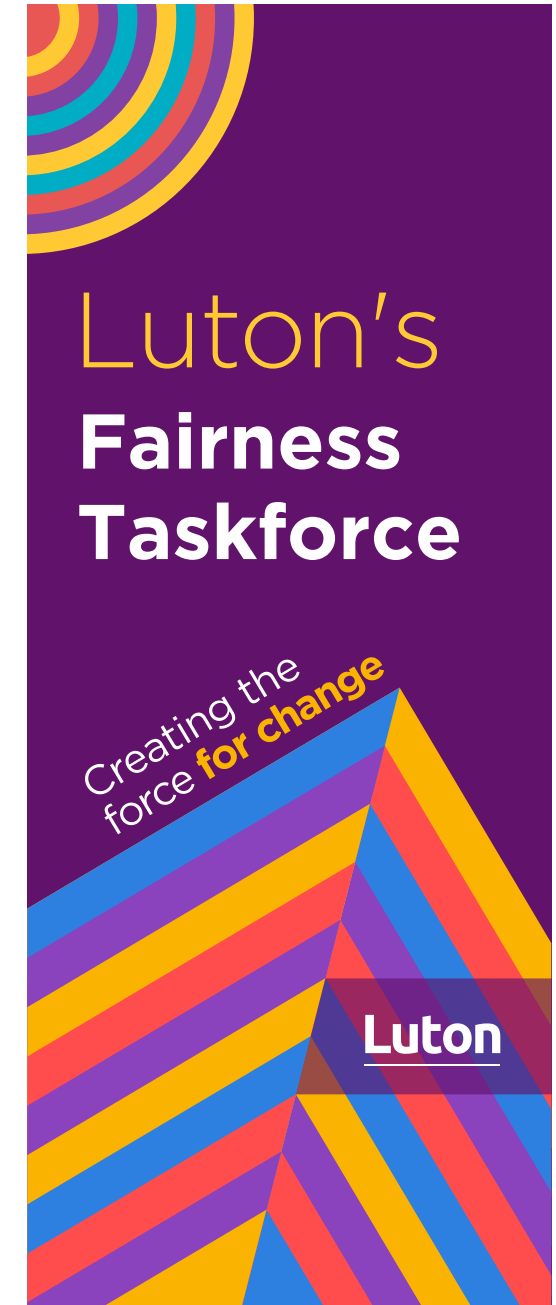
Luton's Fairness Taskforce

Launched in November 2021, Luton's Fairness Taskforce is an innovative approach which enables our community, citizens and the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sectors to actively shape the future of the Luton to create a more equitable future for all. The taskforce has a key role in challenging system leaders to respond to new citizen-led solutions for reducing inequality and social exclusion and has already begun to find new ways to increase collaboration across networks to achieve shared goals that increase fairness at all levels.

The Fairness Taskforce's approach to delivering change starts with understanding the lived experience and voice of residents, before identifying what needs to change through co-design between organisations and citizens and finally delivering this change across whole systems and community partnerships.

So far the taskforce has achieved a number of things, including identifying new approaches to funding and collaboration across the VCSFE sector, developing best practice for mental health support among employers in Luton, bringing together all support on offer to address common challenges faced by young people, and linking the VCSFE sector to recruitment and skills opportunities through the Employment and Skills Partnership Board.

Luton 2040
A place to thrive



Playing your part – The role of residents

Our residents are at the heart of our shared vision for Luton 2040. The vision has been shaped by residents from the start and reflects the collective values and aspirations that every member of our community has within their own lives and for our town as a whole. It is built on a simple premise that our town should be a better place to live for everyone and a place where everyone can reach their full potential, with no-one left behind. It is a vision that also requires all of our residents to play their part in order for it to become a reality.

Three quarters of our residents now feel positive about the future of our town, compared to just half before the Luton 2040 vision was launched. We also know that all parts of our community are deeply passionate about making our town a better place to live and many residents already play an enormous role in making this happen. There are a number of ways that residents can play their part in delivering on our town-wide vision, something many residents are already contributing to.

Participation and social responsibility

Most residents throughout our town already contribute to delivering on our priorities for Luton 2040 by playing an active role in society, as well as supporting others in their community and being socially responsible. We know that a third of our residents regularly take part in voluntary activities, including working for local charities and delivering supplies to their neighbours.

84% of our residents regularly take part in arts, culture and heritage activities that make our town a vibrant place to live, while the vast majority of our residents also take regular steps to protect our environment, including recycling and taking steps to reduce energy consumption in their homes.

There are many other ways in which residents can continue to support each of our priorities. Residents can support our local economy by buying local, as well as enhancing our environment by retrofitting their homes and switching to greener forms of transport and travel. Residents can also help to improve their own wellbeing and that of others by eating well, maintaining an active lifestyle and by supporting vulnerable friends and neighbours.

Local democracy and a strong voice for all our residents

The voice of residents across all parts of our community is central to further shaping our priorities and ambitions for the town as we continue on our journey to Luton 2040.

There are many ways in which residents can and do get involved to make sure that their voices are heard and impact on the decisions taken by organisations and leaders across the town. This includes formal participation in the democratic process, by voting and playing their part in elections, as well as taking part in consultations, citizen's forums and tenant participation boards to give their views on plans and services that they use.

Making a commitment through a Luton 2040 Pledge

Building on the success of our Luton 2040 pledges for organisations, we will launch a Citizen's Pledge, giving residents the opportunity to make their own commitments to delivering on the vision. This pledge will be shaped with our residents to bring together the work that many are already doing with further actions that we can all take to help make our vision for Luton a reality.

Measuring our success



Measuring our success

Throughout our journey to Luton 2040, we must measure our progress to ensure that we remain on the right course and are able to adapt our plans as and when required. Our vision is built around a central mission to enable everyone to live a better quality of life and prevent anyone in our town from having to live in poverty. Each of our five priorities and their target outcomes have been developed based on a strong evidence base of the key drivers of poverty in our town, and achieving each of these priorities and outcomes is linked to achieving our mission.

Our framework for measuring success is designed to track our progress against each of our target outcomes across the five priorities, in a way that captures the collective efforts of all parts of the Luton system. Our framework includes a set of high level measures that will help to identify the overall quality of life of our residents and the levels of deprivation and inequality that exist in our town.

Feeding into this, we then have a broader index of performance indicators that are measured against each of our agreed target outcomes for all of our five priorities. We know that Luton 2040 is a long-term vision. It will take time to see a marked and lasting shift in the quality of life of our residents and the numbers living in poverty. However progress against our wider index of measures will tell us whether we are making progress on the factors that matter most to tackling poverty and enabling all of our residents to thrive. Organisations will be able to align their own corporate performance measures to this index.

Measuring poverty and quality of life – Minimum Income Standard and other measures

The Minimum Income Standard (MIS) is our primary measure of poverty and the quality of life of our residents. This model was first developed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and identifies the true cost of living faced by people across different household makeups throughout the UK, helping to analyse how much income people need to have a good quality of life and how many individuals and families are currently living below this level.

Luton Council's Business Intelligence Unit adjusts this model each year, to include localised housing costs and council tax rates, to give us a clearer analysis of the cost of living in Luton and the income levels needed to enjoy a good quality of life. Through our Lutonised MIS model, we have broken this into five bands to describe the different levels of income that households face.

All households in bands A and B are above the financial quality of life line, meaning they have a good standard of living (those in band B are above the line but a small change in circumstances, such as temporary loss of income could see them fall into poverty, whereas band A is households that are comfortably above the line). Households in band C are below the financial quality of life line. Although these households have a decent standard of living and can afford to meet their basic needs, they are unable to afford the things required to enjoy a good standard of living each and every month.

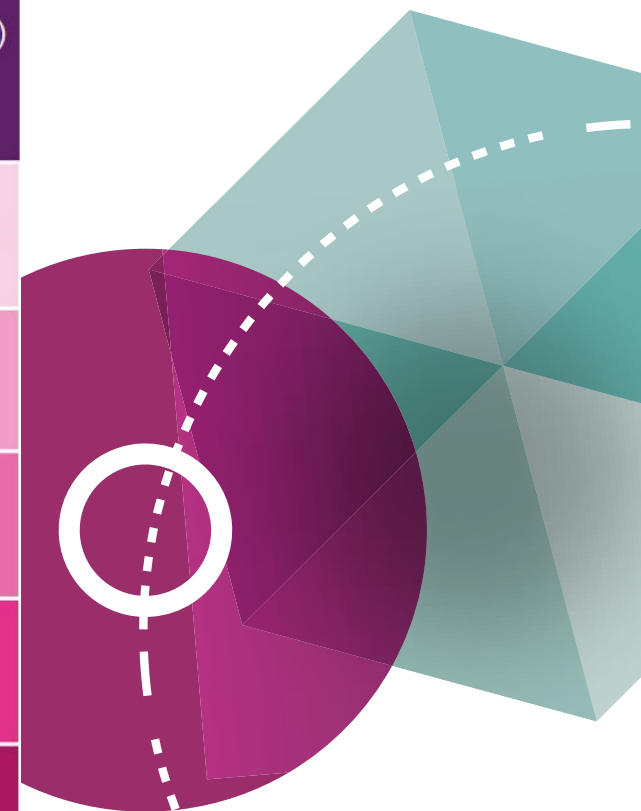
Households that fall into bands D and E on the model are classed as living in poverty and unable to afford the most basic needs of food, water, clothing, accommodation, energy and transport each month (with those in band E having no income or funds whatsoever). This model and each of the financial bands are updated annually in line with the updates to the national model and up-to-date household data.

Measuring our success

Luton 2040 A place to thrive

Our aim by 2040 is to ensure that nobody in our town has to live in poverty, meaning nobody will fall into the bottom two bands and significantly more of our households will be above the financial quality of life line enjoying a good standard of living.

Financial Quality of Life Definition	Band	Definition (using Minimum Income Standard)	Couple 2 children (private rent)	Couple 2 children (social rent)
Secure standard of living	A	Households that can afford all necessities and are financially comfortable	> £67,719	> £60,279
Good Standard of Living	B	Households that can afford basic needs, personal services and paid social and cultural activities, being able to participate fully socially and culturally	up to £67,718	up to £60,278
Decent standard of living	C	Households that can afford basic needs, but may need to juggle finances to afford insurances, personal services like hairdressing or paid social and cultural activities such as day trips and holidays	up to £57,718	up to £50,278
Unable to afford basic needs	D	People who may struggle to pay some basic needs (rent, food, clothing, gas, electric, water, internet and transport costs) and require greater financial support	up to £34,099	up to £26,659
absolute poverty	E	People who have no home, no income or whose outgoings significantly outweigh their income (e.g. significant debt, income does not cover housing costs)	£0	£0



In addition to this model, we will also continue to measure poverty and the quality of life in two other ways to recognise how our resident's quality of life compares to other places and the level of deprivation and inequality faced by different parts of our community.

Measuring our success

Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is produced by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities every four years. This measure identifies the level of deprivation across the country and within small local output areas within each local authority area. This helps us to compare the inequalities that exist in different parts of Luton as well as with other places across the UK. In 2019, Luton had four areas within the 10% most deprived areas in the country but also five local areas that were within the 20% least deprived places in the country. This measure of poverty is important for our ambitions to level up outcomes across our town so that our poorest communities can reach the standard of living enjoyed by our most affluent areas.

Local authority child poverty figures

Each year, the Centre for Social Policy Research and Loughborough University publish a report which analyses the level of child poverty across all local authorities in the UK. This is a relative poverty measure which identifies the number of children living below the 60% of the median income level after housing costs.

As with the IMD measure, this additional measure of poverty allows us to compare how many of our children are growing up in poverty in comparison to other places. According to these figures, 44.6% of children in Luton were in relative poverty in 2021, the fifth highest rate in the country. This figure was 46% in 2019 before falling to 39% in 2020, however the impact of the pandemic and cost of living crisis has seen a recent increase. These figures demonstrate the inequality experienced between many children in Luton and others parts of the country.

Luton's Thriving People Index

Each of our strategic priorities and target outcomes are designed to contribute to achieving our central mission, enabling everyone to reach their full potential and enjoy a good quality of life, with nobody having to live in poverty. To measure our success against these target outcomes, we are developing an innovative new index of indicators for the whole of our Luton 2040 programme. The key performance indicators within this index will focus on social and environmental outcomes across three broad dimensions of social progress including Basic Human Needs, Foundations of Wellbeing and Opportunity.

Overall progress will be analysed regularly and with the ability to see progress at ward level. Crucially the pioneering Thriving People Index can be used by decision makers to intervene in the right areas to improve outcomes for residents and positively move towards realising our Luton 2040 ambitions.

Transparency and accountability will be core pillars to our approach, with dynamic scorecards made available online for residents to see progress in their local areas and across Luton.

Luton 2040

A place to thrive





For further details please go to
www.luton.gov.uk/luton2040

Or contact us by:

Email: Luton2040@luton.gov.uk