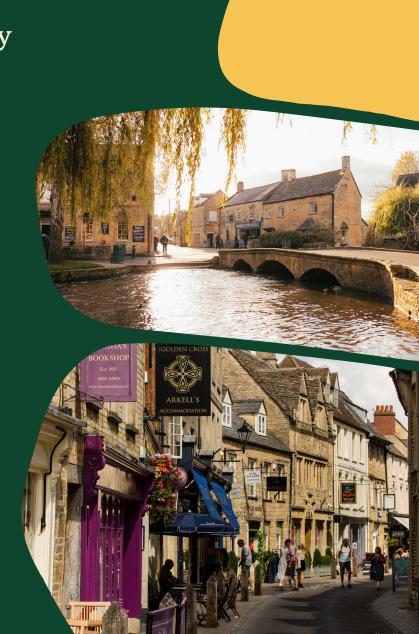
Corporate Plan

2025-2028

Building a lasting legacy for the Cotswolds





Foreword

Welcome to the 2025 refresh of Cotswold District Council's Corporate Plan.

In the last year, we've made great progress across several key projects and ambitions – and I'm proud of everything we've achieved. Against the backdrop of ongoing financial pressures – which are impacting every council in the country – we have delivered hundreds of genuinely affordable homes and brought more services back in-house to drive greater responsiveness and accountability.

We have significantly improved the scores which measure our response to tackling climate change. We have also generated funding to the tune of £1.2million for dozens of community projects, renewed a Green Economic Growth Strategy and supported economic development through management of two prosperity funds.

That's on top of keeping our promise to deliver good services in waste and recycling, planning, licensing and more.

But anyone reading this will know all too well that life doesn't stand still, and so it's sensible that we review the council's priorities to ensure that they're keeping pace with a changing world.

As you'll note reading through this document - by and large, our priorities remain the same. But we have considered to how we build on recent success. And while this plan represents evolution not revolution, significant new challenges have emerged in the last year – prompting us to turn up the dial in certain areas, as well as introduce a new priority.

Central government has more than doubled the number of new houses that the district is expected to deliver with immediate effect. For a district like ours, where 80 per cent of the land is designated as National Landscape and therefore given the strongest protection against development, finding suitable locations for 1,000 new homes per year is incredibly difficult. We need more affordable homes, but we also need sustainable communities.

The government has also asked Cotswold District Council and neighbouring authorities in Gloucestershire to develop proposals for big changes to local government, which would abolish county and district councils, replacing them with one or two unitary authorities. Both of these critical changes present substantial challenge for the council.

As such, to balance the need we have in the district for more affordable homes and to support further economic growth, while ensuring housing development is proportionate and sustainable, we are forging ahead with a full update to our Local Plan, and reasserting control of the district's destiny when it comes to development. This initiative cuts across almost all of our core priorities and will be a central focus in the coming year.

We have also added a new priority: Preparing for the future. This will ensure that as we continue to deliver against our priorities for residents now, we leave a lasting legacy, as the council prepares to hand over the reins to a successor authority in 2028.

This evolution of our priorities is supported by a robust action plan which we believe is ambitious but achievable. I'm excited for what lies ahead, as we work to leave a fitting legacy for this beautiful district as it faces a new future.



Councillor Mike Evemy
Leader, Cotswold District Council

Building a lasting legacy for the Cotswolds

Our purpose, vision, priorities and values

Cotswold District Council is proud to serve the communities that reside in one of the UK's most iconic and cherished areas, a place revered around the world for its natural beauty and heritage.

Around 90,000 people call this district home, in more than 100 close-knit communities and parishes. They are the stewards of the beautiful, national landscape, hosts to its millions of annual visitors, and the key drivers for its continued economic development.

Our purpose

As a council, we exist to provide good services that meet their needs. From planning and housing, to climate action and community wellbeing, our work is rooted in improving lives, strengthening communities, and protecting the unique character of the Cotswolds.

As we approach a period of significant change in local government, we remain focused on delivering for our communities with purpose, integrity, and ambition.

This corporate strategy recognises and embraces the challenges facing the district, and sets out our vision through to 2028, when the council is expected to be replaced - along with other Gloucestershire councils - by a new unitary council structure, under national plans for Local Government Reorganisation

The strategy is underpinned by an action plan that describes in detail how we will deliver against our ambitions, and leave a lasting legacy for the district.

Our vision

As we plan for the future, we are working to leave a legacy of:

- Genuinely affordable, sustainable housing
- Resilient, connected communities
- A thriving local economy
- A protected and enhanced natural environment
- Good, transparent public services

Our values

Everything we do is built on principles of trust, confidence and transparency, listening to the needs of our community and providing good value for money. At Cotswold District Council, we:



put our **communities first:** their priorities are our priorities



are **one team:** working for our residents and businesses



are **business focussed:** ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and good value for money



are **set up for success:** to deliver against our corporate priorities

Our strategic priorities

Between now and 2028, the priorities we've set out to achieve this legacy are:

- Preparing for the future
- Delivering good services
- Responding to the climate emergency
- Delivering housing
- Supporting communities
- Supporting the economy

Our commitment

As we seek to leave a lasting legacy for a new unitary authority, we will remain flexible and responsive in a world characterised by change, steadfast in our vision to continue delivering good services while enhancing and protecting communities – ensuring they're sustainable and prosperous.

Cotswold District Council's corporate priorities



Preparing for the Future



Why is this important?

The UK government has decided that Gloucestershire should be served by a unitary local government structure; that is one or two principal councils rather than the current county and district/borough/city Councils which currently serve the county. Under Government proposals, Cotswold District Council services will transfer to a successor council in April 2028. Until then, we need to work with partners to ensure our residents' needs will be met now, and into the future.

What will we achieve?

Services will transfer seamlessly into a successor council, and continue to deliver effectively on behalf of Cotswold residents.

How will we do this?

- Driving organisational and cultural change to be fit for the future
- Preparing for Local Government Reorganisation
- Developing our workforce
- Deliver a new Local Plan

What have we done?

- We held a Town and Parish Council Summit, to ensure local councillors understand changes that are coming.
- Worked with partner councils on a programme of public engagement, the results of which will form part of a singular evidence-base that will support the development of unitary authority proposals
- Councillors and officers are collaborating counterparts at Gloucestershire councils to share information and design services, drawing on best practice within existing councils to ensure future unitary council delivery meets local needs.

'The challenges that lie ahead are significant, but change brings opportunity, and I'm excited about how we plan to tackle these challenges. It's important that we work to leave a fitting legacy for this beautiful district, as it faces a new future.'

Cllr Mike Evemy



Delivering Good Services



Why is this important?

As a council, we exist to provide vital services to our residents, businesses and visitors. We will deliver our services both effectively and efficiently, ensuring they are designed to reflect our commitment to tackling climate change, and best value for local taxpayers.

What will we achieve?

Our services will provide value for money and high standards. We will work with our contractors and partners, such as town and parish councils, to sustain valuable services, and help maintain the Cotswolds environment we are all proud of.

How will we do this?

- Ensure value for money and good standards
- Enhance financial resilience and make best use of our assets
- Play our part in maintaining and enhancing the public realm
- Deliver a new Local Plan

consideration.

Cllr Patrick Coleman

government doubling the district's housing target. • The council received strong and encouraging feedback from the Local Government Association's Corporate Peer Challenge Progress Review. The review team recognised the council's commitment to improvement, highlighting significant

What have we done?

- In November 2024 we brought around 70 staff back in-house to the council, maximising responsiveness and democratic accountability.
- Contract management of our waste service, leisure centres and Corinium Museum, along with our property and assets team, were brought back in-house in July 2025.
- We are progressing with a full update to the council's Local Plan, at pace, which will address challenges brought about by the government doubling the district's housing target.

progress since the original 2022 review.

'Waste and recycling services

impact every household in our district. While they're working well, we're aiming 'As every council in the country to improve collections and comes under continuous financial communication. Upcoming changes, pressure, we know we have a including new legislation on flexible clear responsibility to deliver good plastics and climate adaptation, will value for money, ensure financial bring fresh challenges.' resilience, and to manage the Cllr Andrea Pellegram district's public purse with utmost care and

Responding to the Climate Emergency



Why is this important?

Minimising and adapting to the effects of climate change are priorities for everyone. The science is settled; global warming is a consequence of human activity, and greenhouse gas emissions must be cut to net zero. All major international agencies now agree that climate change, and the associated biodiversity crisis, is the biggest threat to life on Earth. Achieving the necessary reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and delivering nature recovery not only impacts us, it requires everything we do to change – from transport and energy generation to food production and the way we use energy in our homes and workplaces.

What will we achieve?

Though our success will play out over a long period, everyone will benefit from a decarbonised, healthier society, and a more resilient natural environment. In the short term there will be cost savings for residents and businesses, as well as employment and investment benefits.

Our commitment to electric vehicle charging points and renewable energy installations will ensure residents, businesses and visitors can transition to and use hybrid and electric vehicles in the Cotswold district.

How will we do this?

- Support and enable residents and businesses to reduce their own carbon emissions
- Decarbonise council operations
- Increase resilience to the effect of climate change
- Deliver a new Local Plan with policies that are 'green to the core'



'Our new climate board ensures councillors and officers are accountable for taking action in their service areas to deliver against our climate objectives. This is already having

an impact: the council has almost doubled its Climate Emergency UK score. We're focussed on decarbonising council operations, building resilience to the impacts of climate change and empowering residents to take action with us.'

Cllr Mike McKeown

What have we done?

- The council's carbon emissions have reduced 41% against the 1990 baseline year, from 4.7million kg CO2e in 1990 to 2.76million kg CO2e in the year 2022 to 2023.
- The council has agreed to install 26 electric vehicle charging points in its car parks in Tetbury, Cirencester, Stow-on-the-Wold and Moreton in Marsh. Of the 150 publicly accessible EV chargers across the district, the council has installed 49.
- The council had almost doubled its climate score according to Climate Emergency UK, placing it in the top 15% of district councils nationwide and second in Gloucestershire for climate improvement.
- The council is helping residents to install solar panels through the Cotswold Home Solar scheme. This has already led to solar panels being installed at 27 homes, and installation is underway at a further 18 homes, on track to collectively save £450,000.



Delivering Housing



Why is this important?

Cotswold is at the centre of a housing affordability crisis. The gap between earnings and house prices is one of the highest in the country, and there is a shortage of good quality, genuinely affordable housing to rent. As of May 2025, the average property price in the Cotswold district was £419,000, which is substantially higher than the UK average of £269,000, and more than 14 times the average salary. Local people struggle to find and afford suitable accommodation, and many of the district's younger generation are forced to leave the area because they can't afford to live here. We are committed to providing good quality affordable housing, with an emphasis on social rent and provision for young people, military veterans and families.

We will urge the development of homes that are carbon neutral in their build and fuel efficient in their use. Energy efficient homes that are powered by renewable energy are also cheaper to run – contributing to long-term affordability.

We want to ensure that provision for the homeless strikes a balance between meeting their needs, in a way that is financially sustainable for the council. Housing is key to the things we love about living in the Cotswolds:

resilient, supportive communities, health and wellbeing, and a safe place to live and thrive. Without a home, none of this can happen, and so it's vital we tackle the housing emergency, and strive to provide a home for everyone.

What will we achieve?

We will deliver good quality housing that is genuinely affordable. Homes that can be adapted to meet changing needs over the lifespan of the building, while enabling local people on low incomes to stay local. We will ensure that suitable, good quality accommodation is provided for homeless people, and will help them to move into more settled accommodation in the long-term. We will continue to maximise the opportunities presented by our own assets as well as explore innovative routes to progress affordable housing provision within the district.

How will we do this?

- Work with our partners to deliver more affordable homes
- Understand everyone's housing needs
- **Continue to reduce homelessness**
- **Deliver the new Local Plan**





'Delivering more social rented affordable homes so local people can stay local is a key priority.

Through our new Local Plan, we'll deliver on our climate promises and we'll retain control over housing to help communities thrive despite government-imposed targets.'

Cllr Juliet Layton



Supporting Communities



Why is this important?

The health and wellbeing of our residents is generally good - above England and regional averages. The Cotswold district is one of the safest, with low levels of crime, and we're lucky enough to be surrounded by beautiful countryside. But we do face some challenges – including barriers to service access, as well as loneliness and isolation due to the rural nature of our location.

We know sustainable behaviour change can only be achieved when residents are involved in the design and implementation of services, and so we're committed to working with community, voluntary and public sector partners to tackle these challenges and improve our residents' health and wellbeing for good.

What will we achieve?

We want our district to be the best in the UK for health and wellbeing. We want to ensure all our neighbourhoods are safe and enjoyable places to live, where we know – and can rely on – our neighbours, with access to leisure opportunities and a vibrant cultural scene to enrich our lives.

How will we do this?

- Strengthen our links with town and parish councils and key stakeholders
- Encourage community health and wellbeing
- Support our residents in crises
- Deliver the new Local Plan

What have we done?

- In July 2024, the Council agreed to recommission Crowdfund Cotswold. To date, this programme has supported over 50 projects with £1.2m, pledged from almost 4,300 backers.
- Local charities, activists and others have come together to form the Cotswold Food network, creatively to tackle hunger, food waste and improve access to healthy food. This partnership has also worked with the council to support financial inclusion, helping households tackle rising food and utility bills.
- The council secured £50,000 through the Strengthening Local Communities Fund to deliver 14 multigenerational community events across the north and south of the district.
- In September 2024, the council launched an 'unsung heroes' award scheme, to celebrate contributions so many people make to their communities. Following the success of this scheme, we launched a 'Young Unsung Hero' category in 2025, to recognise the efforts of young people in trying to give back to the communities they have grown up in.



Supporting the Economy



Why is this important?

The Cotswold economy is home to businesses of all sizes and across all sectors forming the cornerstone of our local economy. The visitor economy – built on the back of our beautiful landscape, towns and villages – accounts for a significant proportion of employment and has been severely impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic. However the Cotswold economy is about much more than tourism, and there is potential for even greater diversity. We will manage government investment funds to support those interventions that provide the conditions for businesses and their employees to thrive and grow. Through our economic recovery plan, we want to enable businesses to become more resilient, by enhancing their digital presence and looking at different business models. Our green economic growth strategy puts the climate agenda at the heart of future growth.

'Local businesses are the backbone of the economy all across the Cotswolds and we will continue to champion them with initiatives and policies that encourage investment and job creation. We will put innovation and collaboration at the heart of our business community and support exciting projects right across our region.'

Cllr Tristan Wilkinson



What will we achieve?

We want to nurture a dynamic, vibrant and balanced economy, and to grow high value, highly skilled, low environmental impact businesses in the Cotswolds. Our region is already home to some highly creative and innovative businesses. Exciting projects in the agri-tech, cyber and digital, medical equipment and environmental technology sectors promise to provide great opportunities for local people and businesses. As a business-friendly council, we won't just communicate regularly with our local business community – we will work with them and our partners to grow the district's economy to provide better opportunities for local people.

How will we do this?

- Develop the skills of our residents
- Grow a strong and sustainable economy
- Manage the opportunity and impact of the visitor economy
- **Deliver the new Local Plan**

What have we done?

- Working with the Royal Agricultural University to bring to the table proposals for an Innovation village to support home grown businesses
- Over the past three years, the district has successfully managed a £1.76m Shared Prosperity/Rural England Prosperity Fund, supporting local businesses, the growth hub and critical community infrastructure. In 2025, we've allocated a further £560k
- In 2024, the Council adopted a renewed Green Economic Growth Strategy. The area now hosted cutting edge green aviation businesses such as ZeroAvia and Vertical Aerospace and a growing agritech specialism, as well as continued to attract year-round visitors to our high-quality tourist offer.

Corporate Plan 2025-2028

Priorities	sub-priority	Action	Portfolio holder	Accountable officer(s)	Startdate	Enddate
Preparing for the future	Driving organisational and cultural change to be fit for the future	Transformation-Develop Strategy Action Plan.	Cllr Tristan Wilkinson/ Mike Evemy	Helen Martin	Aug-25	Mar-28
		Transformation through changing existing or creating new service delivery models, and/or making changes to the organisation structure, roles, processes or technology to improve outcomes, as a result of introducing new ways of working, and/or to reduce the costs ofservices.	Cllr Tristan Wilkinson	Helen Martin	Oct-25	Mar-28
		Digital Transformation: accelerating the use of digital technology to improve council services, enhance accessibility, and promote digital inclusion across communities.	Cllr Tristan Wilkinson	Helen Martin	Helen Martin Oct-25	Mar-28
	Preparing for Local Government	Prepare the LGR submission to government. Prepare the next phase of the LGR Programme. Implement the governments decision.	Cllr Mike Evemy	Jane Portman	already commenced	Mar-28
	Reorganisation	Consult with other local authorities to inform possible options for establishing a Strategic Authority.	Cllr Mike Evemy	Jane Portman	already commenced	Mar-28
		Deliver the People and Culture Strategy.	Cllr Mike Evemy	Angela Claridge	Sep-25	Mar-28
	Developing our workforce	Deliver the Internal Communications Plan, to keep staff informed and engaged in organisational development and LGR.	Cllr Mike Evemy	Matt Abbott	Sep-25	Mar-28
		Consideration of a small number of functions currently in Publica in light of their focus core function delivery.	Cllr Mike Evemy	Jane Portman	Aug-25 Oct-25 Oct-25 already commenced Sep-25 Sep-25 Jul-25	Dec-25
	Deliver the new Local Plan	Adopt the new Local Plan, providing a robust development framework for the Cotswold area post 2028 that provides affordable housing, employment and infrastrucuture for present and future generations whilst conserving and enhancing the national landscape.	Cllr Juliet Layton	Geraldine LeCointe		Dec-27

		Develop a Fleet Replacement programme.	Cllr Andrea Pellegram	Peta Johnson	already commenced	Apr-26
	Ensure value for money and good standards	Improve and digitise engagement with the customers of the Waste and Environment Services.	Cllr Andrea Pellegram	Peta Johnson	already commenced	Mar-28
		Adapt to changes in Waste legislation.	Cllr Andrea Pellegram	Peta Johnson	already commenced	Mar-28
		Implement the Planning Advisory Service action plan.	Cllr Juliet Layton	Geraldine LeCointe	already commenced	Aug-26
Delivering good services	Enhance financial resilience and make best use of our assets	Maintain financial sustainability over the MTFS-period (2026/27 to 2029/30) following the outcome of the Fair Funding 2.0 review.	Cllr Patrick Coleman	David Stanley	Apr-26	Mar-28
	Play our part in maintaining and enhancing the public	Introduce charging to sustain Council owned public toilets.	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Sue Hughes/ Claire Locke	already commenced	Dec-25
		Deliver the new Parking Strategy.	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Sue Hughes	already commenced	Mar-28
	realm	Invest in and maintain our car parks.	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Alan Hope	already commenced	Mar-28
	Deliver the new Local Plan	Ensure our planning policies deliver our corporate priorities and promote carbon neutral development and sustainable infrastructure for our communities.	Cllr Juliet Layton	Geraldine LeCointe Jo Symons	already commenced	Dec-26

	Support and Enable Residents & Businesses	Expand the network of Electric Vehicle Charge Points.	Cllr Mike McKeown	Olivia McGregor	already commenced	Mar-28
	Decarbonise Council Operations	Embed climate action into council services to reduce the council's operational carbon emissions.	Cllr Mike McKeown	Olivia McGregor	already commenced	Mar-28
Responding to the climate	Increase resilience to the effects of climate change	Work in partnership to respond to the Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment.	Cllr Mike McKeown	Olivia McGregor	Oct-25	Mar-28
emergency	Deliver the new Local Plan	Provide appropriate planning policies through our Plan review that support sustainable development and deliver high quality retrofit advice and support installation of renewables across the district through policy, partnership working and initiatives.	Cllr Mike McKeown	Olivia McGregor	already commenced	Mar-28

Delivering Housing	Deliver the new Local Plan	Allocate sites in line with Government requirements that will boost housing delivery whilst taking account of the significant constraints across the district.	Cllr Juliet Layton	Geraldine LeCointe	already commenced	Dec-26
	Working with our partners to deliver more affordable homes	Move forward a Pipeline of Rural Affordable Housing Sites and develop ways to increase Affordable Housing delivery.	Cllr Juliet Layton	Alan Hope	already commenced	Mar-28
	Continue to reduce homelessness	Adopt and implement the Preventing Homelessness Strategy.	Cllr Juliet Layton	Jon Dearing Caroline Clissold	Sep-25	Mar-28
	111	Adopt and implement the Preventing Homelessness Strategy.	Cllr Juliet Layton	Jon Dearing Caroline Clissold	Sep-25	Mar-28
	everyones	Continue to monitor housing needs to inform the councils revised Housing Strategy.	Cllr Juliet Layton	Jon Dearing Caroline Clissold	already commenced	Mar-28
		Refocus the Housing Strategy on Strategic Actions.	Cllr Juliet Layton	Alan Hope	Aug-25	Oct-25

	Strengthen our links with town and parish councils and key stakeholders	Engage with and support town and parish councils to prepare for Local Government Reorganisation.	Cllr Mike Evemy	Matt Abbott	Jun-25	Mar-28
	Encourage community health and wellbeing	Enable networking and public engagement events to help local residents to access support services.	Cllr Claire Bloomer	Joseph Walker	already commenced	Mar-28
		Celebrate the contribution of individuals and local groups.	Cllr Claire Bloomer	Joseph Walker	already commenced	Mar-28
		Promote community activity through Crowdfund Cotswold.	Cllr Claire Bloomer	Joseph Walker	already commenced	Mar-28
Supporting communities		Ensure the leisure and culture contracts deliver core provision and positive community outcomes.	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Joseph Walker	already commenced	Mar-28
		Work with Cotswold Youth Network to champion to contribution and needs of young people.	Cllr Claire Bloomer	Joseph Walker	Oct-25	Mar-28
	Support our residents in crises	Coordinate a partnership response to address financial hardship and the cost of living.	Cllr Claire Bloomer	Joseph Walker	already commenced	Mar-28
		Work with the NHS Integrated Locality Partnership to improve the quality of life of children and vulnerable households.	Cllr Claire Bloomer	Joseph Walker	already commenced	Mar-28
		Work with the Cotswold Community Safety Partnership to improve road safety and reduce antisocial behaviour.	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Joseph Walker	already commenced	Mar-28
	Deliver the new Local Plan	Through our Local Plan review aim to ensure that development provides the necessary infrastructure for communities and that this provision is aligned with the phasing and delivery of development.	Cllr Juliet Layton	Geraldine LeCointe	already commenced	Mar-28

Supporting the economy	Develop the skills of our residents	Support key sectors to create new highly skilled jobs, including through promotion of apprenticeship opportunities.	Cllr Tristan Wilkinson	Joseph Walker Paul James	already commenced	Mar-28
	Grow a strong and sustainable economy	Deliver a programme of activities through the Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Funds.	Cllr Tristan Wilkinson	Joseph Walker Paul James	Mar-25	Mar-26
		Deliver the actions set out in the refreshed Green Economic Growth Strategy.	Cllr Tristan Wilkinson	Joseph Walker Paul James	Jan-25	Mar-28
		Work with the Royal Agricultural University on their aspiration for the Innovation Village.	Cllr Tristan Wilkinson	Joseph Walker Paul James	already commenced	Mar-28
		Promote the Growth Hub to support existing businesses and encourage the growth of start-ups.	Cllr Tristan Wilkinson	Joseph Walker Paul James	already commenced	Mar-28
		Work with partners to realise benefits of the Creative Cotswolds Action Plan.	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Joseph Walker	Sep-25	Mar-28
	Manage the opportunity and impact of the visitor economy	Refresh the Tourism Destination Management Plan.	Cllr Paul Hodgkinson	Joseph Walker Chris Jackson	Sep-25	Sep-26
	Deliver the new Local Plan	Promote policies that maintains and protects our existing employment sites whilst supporting sustainable economic growth in the district.	Cllr Juliet Layton	Geraldine LeCointe	already commenced	Dec-26

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