

Appendix B

SUMMARY OF ISSUES FROM ENGAGEMENT

Through conversation with rural residents, rural businesses, community organisations, charities, and other rural stakeholders we identified the following priority rural issues for communities across the district.

1. Connectivity

- Support providers and other stakeholders to expand coverage of high quality 4G and 5G mobile coverage.
- Support expansion of superfast broadband into all rural areas
- Encourage, enable and support communities to strengthen social connections and support networks in rural areas.
- Help parish councils and community groups to improve and widen the availability and dissemination of information about services, facilities, activities and events in rural communities.
- Work with partners to enhance connections to information, guidance and support to access employment and training.

2. Health & Wellbeing

- Work with GP's and other health providers to improve communication and awareness of the routes to access different health information, advice & services from rural areas.
- Expand and promote Healthy Harborough Walks and Cycle Routes.
- Work with relevant providers and other stakeholders to enhance advice and support for new parents and young families.
- Encourage, enable and support volunteers and the voluntary & community sector to establish and deliver more community led health & wellbeing services within rural areas.
- Increase people's overall wellbeing and resilience by supporting activity to reduce isolation, loneliness and other mild mental / social health issues.

3. Children & Young people

- Increase accessibility and availability of facilities, services and support for families, children and young people at parish level.
- Enhance the wellbeing of children and young people through focussed activity to benefit young peoples mental health.
- Support young people to access independent modes of transport for education, work, social and leisure travel to, from and between rural communities.
- Broaden the involvement of young people in informing decision making around planning, policy & development by better seeking and exploring their needs, views and opinions.
- Prioritise use of developer contributions and other related funding for investment into new and/or improved playing fields, recreation grounds, play equipment and other outdoor recreation space (including a mix of age appropriate facilities).
- Work with local leisure centres and other providers to review and improve the range of age appropriate activities, classes, sports clubs and other youth provision accessible in rural areas.
- Engage and support village halls, community halls, and other buildings to increase the accessibility and affordability of indoor community space for use by children, young people, and associated groups.

4. Community Safety

- Create opportunities and facilitate closer communication and partnership working between the Police, Community Safety, parish councils and communities to reduce rural crime.
- Support parish councils and other parish based groups to access the support and resources they need to tackle low level crime and anti-social behaviour eg. littering, dog fouling, fly tipping.
- Work closely with local volunteers, parish councils, the police and other partners to reduce rural speeding and parking issues.
- Increase awareness of ways for people to help prevent themselves from becoming a victim of crime by supporting and/or facilitating campaigns, training, awareness sessions, talks and engagement surgeries in rural areas.

- Encourage and support communities to establish and expand neighbourhood initiatives (e.g. Neighbourhood or Rural Watch).

5. Sport & Leisure

- Review the affordability and accessibility of sports and leisure facilities to ensure equitable availability, especially for children and young people, the elderly, disabled, people facing financial hardship, and those with limited/no access to private transport.
- Promote and increase awareness of safe and accessible rural walking, cycling and horse riding routes across the District .
- Support community managed sport/leisure facilities and associated clubs/groups to access the guidance and resources they need to grow and thrive.
- Increase provision of lighting on outdoor sports pitches/courts and increase the number of grassroots sports pitches available in rural areas
- Encourage and support the introduction of new/expanded leisure activities in rural communities (e.g. community cinemas).

6. Transport

- Secure investment into new/improved transport links to, from, between, in and around rural communities.
- Explore new/innovative transport solutions to meet the travel needs and priorities of rural individuals and households without access to a private vehicle.
- Enable rural communities to influence transport reviews and other policy changes that impact their local area.
- Expand and increase accessibility of infrastructure for electric vehicle charging within rural communities.
- Increase provision of safe walking, cycling and horse riding routes within and between rural settlements.

7. Housing

- Drive an increase in housing quality to make sure that new and re-developed rural homes are fit for the 21st century.

- Ensure there is appropriate and abundant provision of affordable housing in rural settlements, evidenced by a robust Housing Need Survey, and including starter and retirement homes.
- Involve parish councils and communities in the development of planning policy and informing decisions on development that impacts their rural area.
- Encourage housing development that supports good community connections and engagement between new and existing residents, where possible incorporating community led housing schemes.
- Work with developers and communities to ensure new housing development includes appropriate investment in infrastructure.

8. Environment

- Work with communities to preserve the natural environment and protect important wildlife habitats in and around rural settlements.
- Work with communities to protect and enhance public green (grass and woodland) and blue (water) spaces by ensuring appropriate maintenance and encouraging use by a wide range of people and groups.
- Further expand rates of recycling across the District by raising awareness of what can be recycled and where.
- Support parish councils and their communities to develop and deliver local climate change and carbon reduction initiatives, including enabling access to appropriate grant funding.
- Help to reduce fuel poverty by working with partners and communities to provide home owners with information and advice on saving energy and water, and by making new and re-developed homes more energy efficient.

9. Economy, Agriculture & Tourism

- Support rural businesses to access advice, support services, grants, loans and other funding streams to support effective start up, expansion or diversification.
- Ensure the effective engagement of the farming community in the development of planning and development policies in respect of

countryside development, including green energy production, diversification and food production.

- Review the capacity, occupation rates and demand for rural workspaces, small scale rural logistics sites and business parks.
- Support the Tourism Growth Plan by enabling a managed increase in tourism across the District that minimise damage to the key features, character and heritage that attract people to the countryside.
- Work with local employers and support providers to increase apprenticeship opportunities and placements within rural industries.