



# Rural Strategy 2023-2028

Harborough District Council











# FOREWORD

The Harborough District is made up entirely of rural hamlets, villages and market towns. Whilst a fantastic place to live, work and visit, we face a number of key challenges as a result of the rurality of our District:

- Increased cost per capita to deliver essential public services.
- Ageing population and associated health and wellbeing issues.
- Affordability of housing and a rapidly rising cost of living.
- Access to transport, broadband and mobile connectivity.
- Balancing economic development and diversification with the preservation of our unique rural environment.
- Issues of social isolation and hidden deprivation.

This Rural Strategy sets out how we can work together to overcome these challenges, rural proof future policies, and realise the unique opportunities we have to enhance wellbeing & prosperity across the District.





# OUR VISION

Working with our communities, we will build a future for the people of Harborough district that gives them the best life chances and opportunities through:

Community leadership  
to create a sense of  
pride in our place

Promoting health and  
wellbeing and encouraging  
healthy life choices

Creating a sustainable  
environment to protect  
future generations

Supporting residents  
and businesses to deliver  
a prosperous local economy



# OUR AIMS

Through delivery of our rural strategy we are aiming to create and maintain:

- 1** Inclusive, connected and resilient rural communities, where everyone has the opportunity to participate, and access to the services and facilities they need
- 2** An environmentally and economically sound rural district where the needs of farming, conservation, development and the economy are appropriately balanced
- 3** A safe and welcoming rural district where everyone is provided with opportunities to enhance their physical, mental, social and economic health and wellbeing



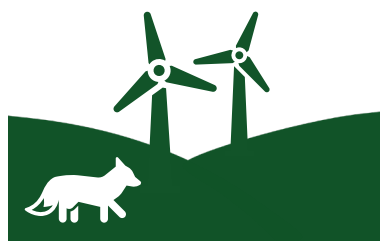
# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

We have identified seven overarching strategic priorities for rural areas of the Harborough district between 2023 and 2028:



**Rural Community**

To maintain and strengthen thriving, inclusive, safe and resilient rural communities by bringing people and organisations together to design and deliver high quality public services and community initiatives.



**Rural Environment**

To safeguard and enhance the rural environment by working together to ensure sustainable development, drive sustainable behaviour change, and to develop community-level net zero initiatives in rural areas.



**Rural Economy**

To grow a prosperous rural economy that works for all by supporting existing industries, harnessing the possibilities of diversification and digital connectivity, and facilitating the creation of local enterprises.







## Rural Wellbeing

To improve mental, physical and social health by working with all sectors to ensure people can access the care, services and facilities they need, and make healthy lifestyle choices, whatever their circumstances.



## Rural Connectivity

To create better connected rural communities and reduce reliance on traditional transport by shifting focus onto enhanced digital connectivity, remote provision, and sustainable transport infrastructure.



## Rural Housing

To meet rural housing needs and ensure rural homes are fit for the 21st century by working with developers to provide high quality housing that is genuinely affordable and designed to help combat fuel poverty.



## Rural Equity

To level up and ensure no one is disadvantaged by virtue of where they live, work or do business by better rural proofing policies and services, and striving to ensure equitable investment into rural communities.





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