

## Places & Environment Matter

*A vision for creating safe and liveable areas – greener, cleaner and safer living environments, with a focus on deprived areas.*

By 2026 Charnwood will be widely regarded as an excellent place to live, work and visit. The essential characteristics and diversity of the Borough's landscape, ecology, heritage and built environment have been preserved. The variety of lifestyle choices, from urban to suburban and from larger village to rural isolation makes the Borough attractive to established residents and new arrivals alike.

New sustainable communities have been substantially completed to the west of Loughborough and to the east of Thurmaston/north of Hamilton providing homes for nearly 20,000 people along with jobs, shops, services and other community facilities. Through these strategic land allocations a clear strategy for longer term growth in Charnwood up to 2026 and beyond has been established.

Green spaces have been connected together to provide 'green infrastructure networks' across the district and into neighbouring districts providing multi-functional benefits including recreational space, biodiversity enhancement, flood protection and helping to improve the overall environment and the health and well-being of the population.

The local environment is clean and safe and a clear emphasis on recycling, sustainable development and energy efficiency means that the Borough is contributing actively to reducing global environmental problems. Our targets for recycling have been met and good progress has been made in implementing our "Zero Waste" strategy.

Air quality has improved in those locations where traffic congestion was problematic, the congestion reduced through increased use of quality, integrated public transport and other alternatives to motor vehicle use. There has been a substantial reduction in the incidents of severe flooding across the Borough.

The quality and coverage of public bus services has improved alongside integration with rail services. Loughborough railway station and its forecourt have been enhanced as part of the redevelopment of the eastern gateway of the Town, and there are regular mainline rail services from Loughborough and frequent local services serving Loughborough, Barrow upon Soar, Sileby and Syston. The road network is in good condition.

Shepshed and Thurmaston have benefited from investment and concerted action to address their unique problems. The opportunity sites in Loughborough town centre have been developed and it is an attractive, vibrant and vital place where people choose to shop and spend their leisure time.

## Prosperity Matters

*A vision for maximising opportunities for a dynamic Charnwood economy - thinking and planning ahead to retain and enhance the strong Charnwood economy.*



By 2026 Loughborough is a key sub-regional centre for shopping, leisure and entertainment within the Three Cities sub area. It is also a key business and commercial centre, offering a clear alternative to the cities of Leicester, Nottingham and Derby. Pedestrianisation has been extended and Loughborough's reputation as a "green" and "walkable town" has been secured. This is complemented by the local facilities and employment opportunities available in many of our other towns and villages.

The population is decently housed and a good variety of housing types and tenures is available, making living in the Borough more achievable for people of all ages and incomes. In meeting the Borough's housing and employment needs development has been directed to the main urban centres of Loughborough, Shepshed, Birstall and Thurmaston. Whilst full use has been made of available previously developed land and buildings, it has been necessary to identify areas for growth to meet the future requirements for new homes and jobs.

In the smaller towns and villages some small scale growth has helped meet local needs for homes jobs and additional community facilities.

The economy of Charnwood is strong and is a key contributor to the East Midlands regional economy. Unemployment remains below the national average and those pockets of higher than average unemployment in 2004 are now close to the rate for the Borough as a whole. Decline in the traditional manufacturing sector has been more than offset by expansion in high added value manufacturing, hi-tech and knowledge based industry and the development of sports and cultural industry clusters.

A second Science Park has been provided at Loughborough. The presence of Loughborough University plays a pivotal role in the local economy through education, research, and dynamic business initiatives. The growth needs of the University have been accommodated and large companies such as FKI, AstraZeneca, Lafarge and 3M continue to thrive alongside a wide range of small and medium enterprises and the priority given to new business and inward investment has enabled new talent to become established. Improved conference and hotel facilities draw people to the Borough.

## **Partnership Matters**

*A vision for supporting and developing joined up thinking and action – from networking to action delivery stage improving working across all sectors in the Borough.*

By 2026 the Council has worked with its partners, other agencies and the local community to address the key concerns of the community identified through the Sustainable Community Strategy and development plan process. Effective and decisive partnerships have been established and significant investment has been identified to deliver the identified improvements in physical environment required across the Borough.