



Staffordshire

# BUILDING A PLACE TO PROSPER

OUR UNITED VISION FOR THE  
STAFFORDSHIRE ECONOMY

2023 - 2033



# TOGETHER, WE'RE MAKING STAFFORDSHIRE A PLACE TO PROSPER

Staffordshire is already an amazing place. And it has the potential to be even more amazing. It's our role, as Local Authorities working together through the Staffordshire Leaders' Board, to unlock that potential. That's why we've all committed to a joint programme of ambitious, strategically important economic projects and investments that come together to deliver more than the sum of its parts, make more of an impact on the national economy and help our businesses and residents to thrive.

We want town centres to be proud of. So, looking through a fresh future-proof lens, we'll regenerate and revitalise these important hubs of commerce and community.

We want to bring huge growth in jobs and homes across the county. So it's at the forefront of our local plans, supported by investment in roads, rail, green transport and gigabit-capable broadband to make us one of the UK's best-connected places to live and work.

We want people with the skills to take on the highly-paid opportunities that will be created. So we're working with, and investing in, schools, colleges and universities to make sure we have a skills pipeline that, together with our internationally renowned businesses, will drive vital technological innovation.

Together, we share the same ambition: to make sure both residents and businesses flourish right here in Staffordshire. We believe our co-ordinated vision and priorities will create the opportunities to make this a reality.



**Councillor Alan White**

Leaders' Board Chair and  
Leader of Staffordshire  
County Council



**Councillor George Allen**

Leaders' Board Vice-Chair and  
Leader of East Staffordshire  
Borough Council

On behalf of council leaders across Staffordshire.

GREEN SUSTAINABILITY  
& INNOVATION LOCAL CULTURE  
WELLBEING  
COMMUNITY PRIDE  
TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENT INNOVATION &  
COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY  
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

# OUR SHARED VISION

PEOPLE ACROSS STAFFORDSHIRE WILL BENEFIT FROM MORE AND BETTER-PAID JOBS IN ONE OF THE UK'S PRIMARY LOCATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE GREEN GROWTH AND INVESTMENT, CREATING PLACES WE CAN ALL BE PROUD OF, DRIVEN BY INNOVATION AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES.



# OUR PRIORITIES

While recognising both the similarities and the diversity that exists in our county, our plan is to work together across eight economic priorities.

OUR AMBITION:  
RESIDENTS AND  
BUSINESSES FLOURISH  
WITH STAFFORDSHIRE  
PLAYING A MAJOR  
ROLE IN GREAT  
BRITAIN PLC



## TOWN CENTRES

Reshaping, reimagining and revitalising



## INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Supporting housing and business-led growth



## RURAL AREAS

Developing the rural and visitor economies, and addressing rural connectivity challenges



## STRATEGIC CORRIDORS

Exploiting strategic growth corridors such as the A50/A500



## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Optimising small business and start-up growth



## CLIMATE CHANGE

Supporting sustainable businesses and their potential for growth



## SKILLED WORKFORCE

Enabling high-value job opportunities for all



## PLACEMAKING

Marketing Staffordshire as a place of cultural, leisure and heritage importance to visitors





## REGENERATING AND RESHAPING

Our towns and local centres are where most people live and work. While people's shopping habits may change with the shift to online retail, high streets remain essential as a place to live, meet, relax, access services and more; they are still community centres, and as such need reshaping and reimagining to create places people value and have pride in.

Retail space may shrink on many of our high streets, but other areas such as hospitality, housing, education and front-line services have the potential to grow. In other words, they will still play a key role in everything that gives us our quality of life; so from market towns to city living, our high street community hubs are critical.



## SUPPORTING OUR RURAL ECONOMY

We're all rightly proud of our county's rural assets – so we want to maximise the way they contribute to developing its thriving economy. The role of agriculture remains vital of course, and many of our most well-known visitor attractions are in rural areas.

We're planning to improve infrastructure and access for rural areas, including gigabit-capable broadband, while also making the most of the opportunities they offer to tackle big challenges such as moving towards cleaner energy generation through renewable energy schemes.

### DID YOU KNOW?

**80%** of Staffordshire is rural – that's why it plays such an important role in the county's economy.





## SUPPORTING START-UPS AND BEYOND

Encouraging business start-ups and helping them to flourish is vital to increasing the county's productivity levels and employment opportunities – the more start-ups we support, the more will become growing businesses that take on employees.

That support means providing the right infrastructure, including high-quality premises, broadband and transport connectivity; it also means making sure good quality advice and access to finance are readily available. We're committed to working together so that people see starting up their own business as a viable career option, with access to all the skills development programmes they need to start up and grow.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Staffordshire already boasts a higher start-up survival rate than most of the UK.



## BETTER PAID, LOCAL JOBS

The people of Staffordshire have long been known for their resourcefulness, creativity and determination. Now we're working together to tackle skills isolation and make sure everyone has the opportunity to upskill through lifelong learning and broader access to education. The aim is to not only support jobs growth and add value to the local economy, but also improve general health and wellbeing.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Our local universities are recognised as trailblazers in broadening access to higher education.





# PROVIDING FOR MORE JOBS AND HOMES

Staffordshire is a great place for businesses and people to put down their roots and thrive – and this potential is being realised through local plans incorporating high quality affordable homes and supporting substantial job growth.

Our role is to support these through projects that ensure sustainable development supported by valued services, to make sure the benefit of these plans is maximised. Together we're planning for longer-term growth, investing in our infrastructure while also finding continued private and public sector investment in the county.



# BETTER CONNECTIVITY, BETTER GROWTH

Our prime location at the heart of the UK has given us the opportunity to create strategic growth corridors, opening up our region to the world, helping businesses innovate and grow and helping with our wider ambitions to provide good homes and a greener infrastructure.

These corridors, such as the A50/A500 and A38, connect numerous towns and locations in conjunction with planned investment in road and rail, including HS2, to improve connectivity across the sub-region, and thus create the potential for significant sustainable growth in the future.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The A50/A500 Strategic Corridor plays a key role in the development of green energies.





# MAKING THE MOVE TO NET ZERO

Minimising our impact on the environment is more important than ever – so we need to support businesses to take advantage of the move towards a Net-Zero economy. For some, this will mean supporting start-ups and growing businesses in new emerging sectors. For others, it means helping existing businesses diversify and adapt so they can still play a key role in our economy.



# IMPROVING OUR VISITOR ECONOMY

From natural assets such as Cannock Chase and the Peak District, to Alton Towers and Drayton Manor theme parks alongside countless other cultural and heritage attractions, Staffordshire has so much to attract people here.

Together, we're playing a key role in making the county a place that everyone – organisations and individuals – can be immensely proud to shout about, and we're investing in projects that will make people want to live, work, visit and invest here even more.







# HOW WE'RE MAKING IT HAPPEN

Achieving our vision for Staffordshire will need a strong partnership to deliver the many projects and programmes. Fortunately, we have a strong history of collaborating with our other council partners and many other stakeholders.

Rather than working as separate locations with separate identities, all nine Local Authorities are committed to a co-ordinated action plan to drive the county's economic growth in a sustainable way.

Importantly, we recognise that we'll need others' help – which is why we'll sometimes play a different role.



We'll lead on  
**DIRECT DELIVERY**



We'll collaborate with  
**PARTNERS & STAKEHOLDERS**



We'll advocate the  
**DELIVERY OF PROJECTS**  
and programmes by other organisations that meet our own ambitions.

We'll also always listen to our businesses and communities to understand how we can better create a more productive, dynamic local economy.



# INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

Individually, we continue to invest significant sums of money in Staffordshire, as well as unlocking funding from a range of sources and advocating for investment within the county.

Many of the county's existing assets will also play an important role in achieving our collective vision, and we'll continue to make sure that any investment we make will achieve the maximum possible benefit.

Over the longer-term we'll be able to explore different approaches to funding growth, as well as influencing how the Government progresses its various policy agendas, and will continue to work with our partners to deliver our vision and priorities for Staffordshire.



**£200M INVESTED**

The government also believe in the economy of Staffordshire with an investment of over £200 million in the last few years to help grow our economy.



# A PARTNERSHIP GREATER THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS

In a unique collaboration by public sector partners across Staffordshire, all nine councils across the county have joined together in the 'Staffordshire Means Back to Business' partnership to reach more businesses more quickly, and with more bespoke help than any single organisation could possibly have managed. By throwing out the rulebook on the usual processes and innovating across administrative boundaries, the partnership has already:

- played a substantial role in improving business start-up and survival rates which are now significantly higher than the national average.
- played a substantial role in improving business start-up rates, which for the first time, are now similar to the national average - whilst more businesses continue to survive in Staffordshire than the country as a whole.



# OUR PLACES

Proudly individual, and proud to be part of Staffordshire.

## CANNOCK CHASE

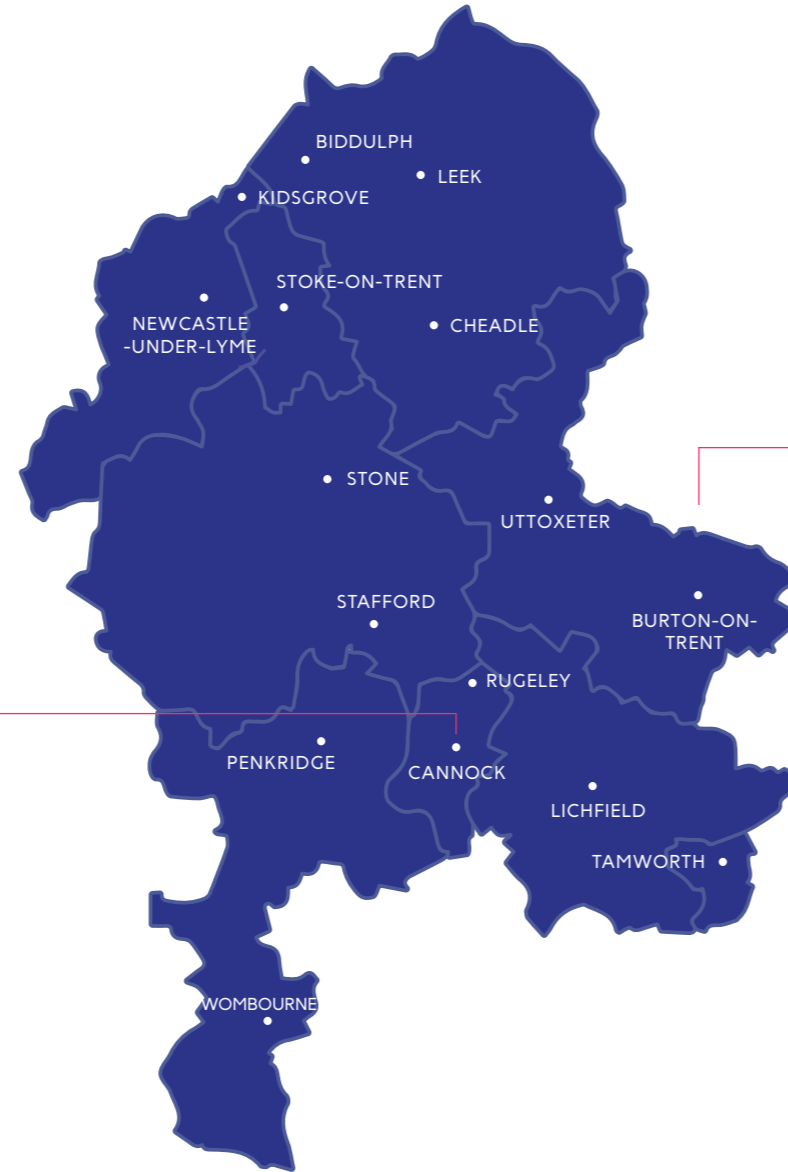
Outstanding environmental assets, vibrant communities and a unique entrepreneurial spirit make Cannock Chase an attractive place to live. Set in the rural heart of Staffordshire, its long-term strategy is built around clean growth and the green agenda, aiming to champion clean growth principles to support a highly productive, clean and resilient economy.

The Council has secured £20m from the Government's Levelling Up Fund to develop part of Cannock town centre, which will bring a new economic purpose, a highly visible transformational change and act as the catalyst for its longer-term revival.



**£20M**

External funding already secured to transform Cannock town centre.



## EAST STAFFORDSHIRE

Location is the key here; perfectly positioned for the West and East Midlands (with significant economic and social links with both), East Staffordshire's easy accessibility and local raw materials have created a Borough characterised by a mix of urban and rural areas.

The principal towns are Burton upon Trent, known worldwide for its brewing, logistics and other industries, and Uttoxeter – an attractive and friendly market town, with a famous leading National Hunt racecourse, close to Alton Towers and home to both St Georges Park (England's National Football Centre) and the worldwide headquarters of JCB.

Burton upon Trent is one of the towns to receive investment through the Towns Fund and has been allocated a grant of £23.8m to create a resilient, better, brighter Burton for the future, whilst Uttoxeter is being regenerated through the Council's Uttoxeter Masterplan, identifying investment in the town centre and the creation of a new Sports Hub.



**£23.8M**

External funding secured for a brighter Burton.





## NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME

This historic Borough is made up of the market town of Newcastle and its second town, the canal town of Kidsgrove, as well as a string of urban and rural villages.

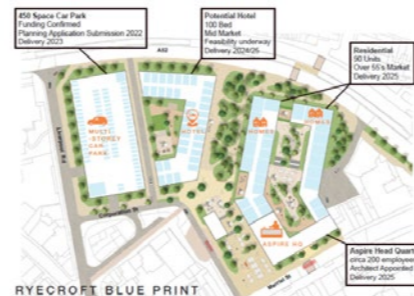
As the home of Keele University and the Newcastle campus of the Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group, the town has a strong academic reputation and high levels of student satisfaction. The Keele University Science and Innovation Park is a regional centre of excellence, attracting a wide variety of businesses.

The award-winning New Vic Theatre is one of the country's most successful independent producing theatres, with town centre events and festivals celebrating the local cultural heritage. Newcastle-under-Lyme is a great place to live, featuring a wide choice of housing from town centre apartments to rural family homes, and offers businesses cost-effective wage rates.

The Borough is now taking a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to invest in its town centres and reshape its urban landscape, with Newcastle-under-Lyme and Kidsgrove receiving over £50m in two Town Deals and Future High Street Funds investment for economic regeneration.



Over **£56 MILLION** secured through Future High Streets Fund, Town Deals and Shared Prosperity Fund.



## LICHFIELD

Perhaps best-known for its distinctive cathedral and many other historic buildings, Lichfield District is also home to major attractions such as Drayton Manor Park and the National Memorial Arboretum. It's also a place of culture, with the Garrick Theatre, community theatre events and the annual Lichfield Festival, set among its many open spaces and gardens. With its excellent transport links via rail and motorway to the rest of the region, together with a highly skilled, entrepreneurial workforce and Staffordshire's first Michelin-starred restaurant, Lichfield is also a perfect location for both global and local businesses.

With the Lichfield City Centre Masterplan and Local Plan 2040 both in place to shape the future growth for the city centre, there are promising major regeneration plans to enhance the quality of the city centre environment.



## STAFFORDSHIRE'S FIRST MICHELIN STAR RESTAURANT

Home to Upstairs by Tom Shepherd, Staffordshire's first restaurant to be awarded a Michelin star.





## SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE

Just a short hop from Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Telford, South Staffordshire is a superb destination due to its location and major route access. It's a great place to live, work and visit, surrounded by glorious open countryside and steeped in history. The area's diverse high streets with independent retailers and restaurants are a perfect contrast to its thriving and ever-growing advanced manufacturing base.

Three major projects are shaping the South Staffordshire region; the West Midlands Interchange, the largest rail-served logistics development in the UK; the redevelopment of the 60-acre Royal Ordnance Survey site at Featherstone (Logic54) for a range of uses including industrial, storage and distribution; and i54 South Staffordshire, one of the most sought-after shovel-ready sites in Europe. There's strong interest in the remaining plots on the new i54 Western Extension which is set to create up to 100,000 sq m of development platforms for high-value manufacturing and up to 1,700 jobs.



West Midlands Interchange is expected to generate around **£430M** of local economic activity each year once complete.



## STAFFORD

Stafford Borough is primarily made up of three towns, each with its own distinct character – Eccleshall, with its personal touch; Stone, with its creativity; and Stafford, the county town with its big brands. Surrounding them is a wealth of lush countryside and wonderful attractions, including Trentham Estate, Shugborough Estate, Cannock Chase and more.

Stafford already has an outstanding transport infrastructure, and HS2 will put London just 50 minutes away, with Birmingham and Manchester 20 and 30 minutes respectively, to bring new investment to the Borough.

Work on the £23 million Skills and Engineering facility at Stafford College is underway while the £63 million Stafford Western Access Route (SWAR) has just been completed, while the county town's dramatic growth continues with the planned £21m transformation of the high street and new History Centre, the recent restoration of the award-winning Victoria Park and development of Wren house.

Plus there's the proposed Stafford Station Gateway Masterplan with projected investment of £500 million, the regeneration of the Eastgate Quarter, a major house-building programme and the new Pets at Home distribution centre creating 750 jobs.



**£500M** Stafford Masterplan already underway.





## STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS

On the edge of the Peak District National Park, Staffordshire Moorlands offers a great location with a healthy work-life balance. The area features spectacular scenery from rocky outcrops to lush valleys such as the Churnet and Manifold Valleys, ideal for walkers, cyclists, water sports and more. Its idyllic towns and villages include Leek with its bustling markets, antique shops and popular Arts Festival, Biddulph with its glorious gardens at Biddulph Grange, and Cheadle, a busy market town with many historic buildings.

For businesses and developers, Staffordshire Moorlands has been recognised as one of the top five best value locations to invest in the UK.



**£21M**

of Government investment secured including for town centre improvements in Leek.



## TAMWORTH

The charming market town of Tamworth, on the border with Warwickshire, is steeped in history and surrounded by beautiful Staffordshire countryside. Once the capital of Mercia, largest of all the English kingdoms, it still has its ancient castle as well as many other historic buildings and a host of attractions from nearby Drayton Manor Park to the SnowDome.

Today work is well underway on a £40m investment package to completely transform the vibrant Town Centre, with the relocation of a brand-new flagship Further Education College. The recently completed Enterprise Quarter project saw significant investment in the refurbished Tamworth Assembly Rooms theatre, a new Enterprise Centre and public realm improvements.



**£40M**

Town centre investment package.





“

WE'RE DELIGHTED THAT THE COUNTY'S NINE LOCAL AUTHORITIES HAVE COME TOGETHER IN A VISION FOR REALISING THE TRUE POTENTIAL OF STAFFORDSHIRE'S ECONOMY.

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**Alan White**  
Leaders' Board Chair and Leader of  
Staffordshire County Council

**George Allen**  
Leaders' Board Vice-Chair and Leader of  
East Staffordshire Borough Council



## DELIVERING A STRONGER STAFFORDSHIRE

We're united in our ambition to deliver a stronger Staffordshire – one we can all be proud of.

By working together, we will grow a local economy that's fully coordinated, integrated, robust and thriving. The potential is boundless. We remain as one to put the whole of Staffordshire on the UK and world map to contribute even more to our national wellbeing.

### CONTACT US

To talk to us about our plans for Staffordshire, please contact:



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