



**Consultation Report**

# **Hertfordshire Growth Board Engagement Survey**

16<sup>th</sup> January 2024

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# 1. Executive Summary

## 1.1 Introduction

Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) appointed communications agency Meeting Place in Autumn 2023 to carry out a three-month engagement campaign, to help inform and develop the Board's future vision across its six core missions for Hertfordshire.

Centred on a county-wide engagement survey - [www.hertfordshiregrowthsurvey.co.uk](http://www.hertfordshiregrowthsurvey.co.uk) - this report summarises the quantitative and qualitative feedback gathered throughout the campaign. Running for a month, the survey activity resulted in 4,379 submissions from across the county, which has exceeded initial expectations.

This document reflects the comments received via a series of in-person and digital engagement initiatives, collating feedback across Hertfordshire, when it comes to resident and stakeholder opinions across each of these six missions.

## 1.2 Background on activity and objectives

In 2019, the Hertfordshire Leaders Group and chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership, working as the Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) - along with co-opted partners (NHS, Homes England and Police & Crime Commissioner) - spent time developing a shared agenda for the leadership of growth and infrastructure delivery across Hertfordshire.

During the 2022-23 financial year, and following the changes in leadership across the county after the May 2023 local elections, the joint ambitions of the Growth Board and the priority areas of focus over the next three years and beyond needed to be refreshed.

Following a range of workshops and interviews with Leaders, Chief Executives and other key strategic stakeholders, and after taking account of robust data sets, several key strategic leadership matters facing Hertfordshire were identified.

In support of inclusive and sustainable growth, the following six challenges facing the county emerged:

- Housing – affordable and of good quality
- Transport connectivity
- Economy - access to skills, good jobs and growing key sectors
- Healthy places
- Digital access
- Climate change & sustainability

From these themes, HGB drafted six core missions, which the survey and associated activity sought to gauge feedback and opinions on.

### 1.3 Methodology overview

HGB has sought to reach as many residents and different demographic groups and stakeholders across private, public and third sectors as possible across the County, to understand if the six core missions are representative of local views. The campaign activity recognises the importance of providing multiple avenues and opportunities for engagement, to ensure broad community and stakeholder involvement.

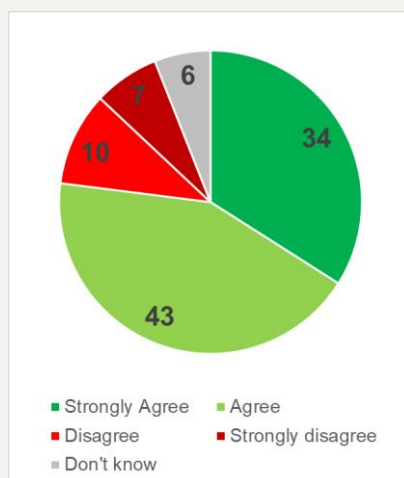
A full timeline of these activities can be found in **Appendix A**, with the methodology outlined in the below channels for engagement section in **Appendix B**, however in summary, engagement activity for the campaign encompassed:

- Social media targeting across the county, with tailored ads, engaging people across each of Hertfordshire's 10 districts
- A series of in-person engagement events - via x3 pop-up market stalls
- Media targeting through earned editorial awareness (via media coverage)
- Digital and in-person engagement - with voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) and business stakeholders across the county
- Engagement with all local authority leaders and a range of public sector stakeholders (via the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Development Board meeting and a stakeholder workshop) - feedback and notes from both events are covered in **Appendix C**.

### 1.4 Key findings

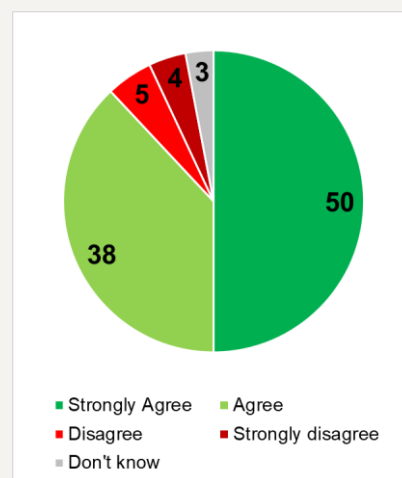
An executive summary giving a holistic overview of the respondents' views of each mission can be viewed below. *Please note: for each mission, the survey question asked, 'to what extent do you agree with this mission?'*

#### Sustainable County



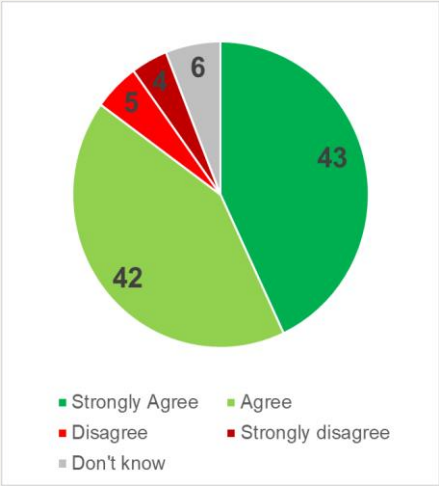
**This mission received 77% support from respondents**

#### Healthy places for all



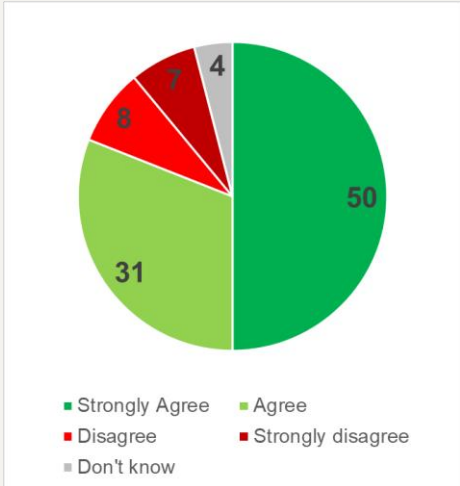
**This mission received 88% support from respondents**

A World class economy



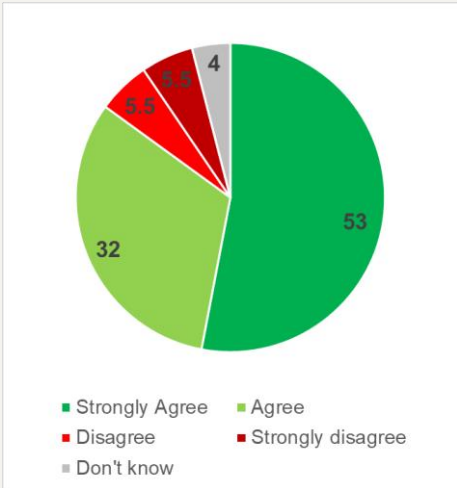
This mission received 85% support from respondents

Quality and affordable housing for all



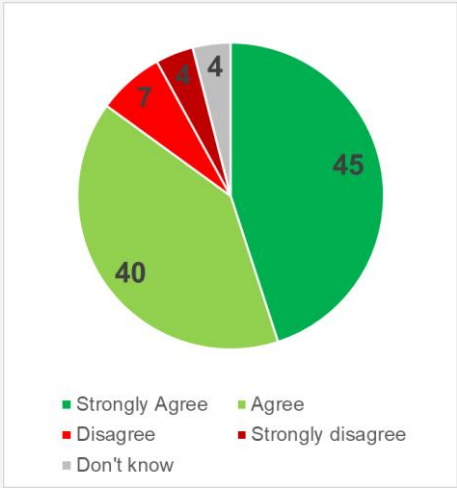
This mission received 81% support from respondents

Transport for Hertfordshire



This mission received 85% support from respondents

Digital access for all



This mission received 85% support from respondents

## 1.5 Next steps

HGB has undertaken a comprehensive programme of public engagement with the local community on its outline missions to promote Hertfordshire. The feedback from these activities so far demonstrates that there is strong acceptance and county-side support for each of the proposed missions, with a majority of support across all boroughs and age groups.

The engagement strategy was designed to advertise and engage as widely as possible with the County of Hertfordshire, to capture the views of local residents through social media, print media and in-person events.

By taking these steps, this engagement activity has reached individuals across the county, and the feedback responses reflect the sentiment of the local community.

This survey has been widely advertised and consulted upon during the engagement period, and this is reflected in the quality of support demonstrated in the feedback. The survey ran for a month between 10<sup>th</sup> November – 10<sup>th</sup> December.

This feedback summary has been shared across the mission leads for them to review and further refine the six missions identified within this survey.

Now the campaign has ended, this final report provides an updated analysis on the feedback responses. This will be incorporated into a final presentation document, with the final missions presented to Hertfordshire Growth Board in early 2024.

## 2. Feedback Analysis

This section details the results of HGB's survey as part of its wider programme of engagement, the different channels that were taken to engage with stakeholders and the survey questions asked as part of the survey.

### 2.1 Channels of engagement

With the campaign running across November and December, HGB has consulted widely across the county. Advertising and coverage of the survey, the stakeholder meetings and the individual market events have all contributed towards the views gathered.

**This was achieved through the following channels:**

- **Social media advertisement** – the proposals were advertised through Meta ads targeting individuals across Instagram and Facebook. This created **403,334 total impressions**, with **7,040** people clicking the ads to learn more about the missions and complete the survey.
- **Print and online media advertisement** – The project team ran a press release in local media advertising the survey and encouraging residents to engage with the proposals. This was also promoted via stakeholders, such as Watford Borough Council's website and social channels.
- **In person public engagement** – The project team ran pop-up market stall events in three prominent town centre locations in Hertfordshire, to engage local residents. In total, over 150 people participated in the campaign during these pop-up events. These events were held in the following locations and dates:
  - Hemel Hempstead Market – Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November
  - Stevenage Town Centre – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November
  - St Albans General Market – Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November
- **In person stakeholder engagement** – HGB held three stakeholder events to curate the views of local stakeholders in Hertfordshire. This included a public sector leaders workshop (Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> October), the regular meeting of the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Development Board (Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November) and a private/public stakeholder workshop (7<sup>th</sup> December).

The methods resulted in significant and widespread levels of activity on the Hertfordshire Growth Board Survey website - [www.hertfordshiregrowthsurvey.co.uk](http://www.hertfordshiregrowthsurvey.co.uk) - which outlined the missions and provided a feedback form, so residents could register their views.

In total, the landing page received **8,763** page views over the consultation period, with **7,387** unique users accessing the page. The survey website received **4,375 online submissions** with **7,387 individual users viewing** the survey, with **4,379 entries** in total across the engagement period.

The breakdown of where this feedback came from is below:

Feedback Type	Count
Total online feedback submissions	4,375
Handwritten feedback submission	4



## 2.2 Survey Questions

All residents and stakeholders - whether they were engaged through pop-up events, called our accessible freephone number (used by one individual with visual impairment), saw social media advertising, or visited the Hertfordshire Growth Board Survey Website - were given the opportunity to fill out the same feedback form.

The aim of these questions was to obtain a qualitative and quantitative understanding of respondents' views on HGB's missions, as well as giving them an open-ended comment section to provide specific feedback on each mission. The structure and depth of the questioning was intended to ensure a balance between the quality of insight gathered vs overcomplicating the survey, which would reduce the quantity of surveys completed.

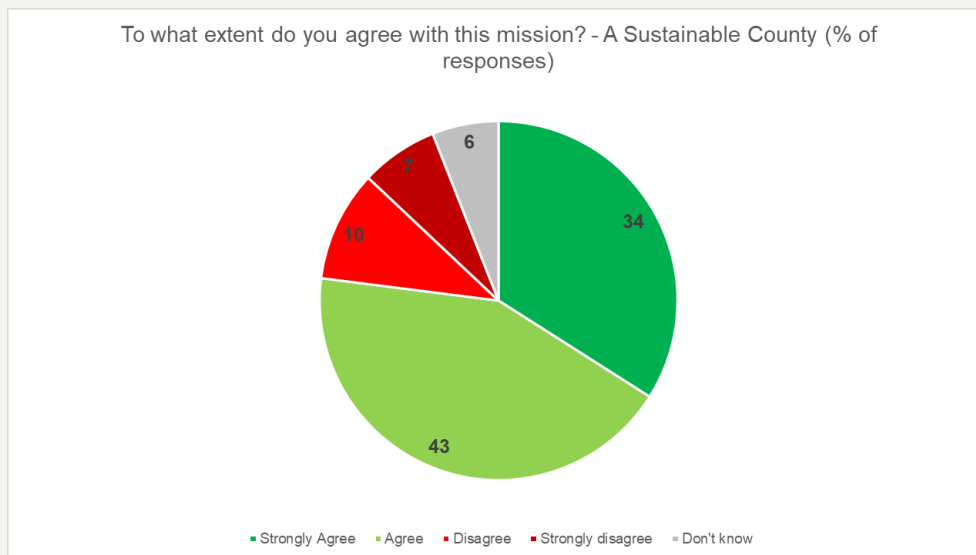
Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with each mission, with an opportunity to provide qualitative comments, to best understand their views on each mission and to share any further feedback they had. A full summary of each question asked can be found in Appendix D.

## 2.3 Response to HGB Missions

Each of the six questions have been reviewed and analysed as part of this report.

Below is a breakdown of the responses to each of HGB's key missions, including a summary of whether respondents agreed with the missions, the key themes stemming from the open-ended qualitative comments, and quotes that reflect these key themes.

## 2.4 A Sustainable County



**Respondents sample: 4,274 responses**

### Mission:

By 2050, we want Hertfordshire to be a low carbon economy in a thriving natural environment. One which has maximised the benefits of sustainable growth for our residents and businesses and achieved net zero green house gas emissions across the county.

In total, 4,134 respondents answered this question, with the majority supportive of the idea of a Sustainable County. 77% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the mission. 17% disagreed or strongly disagreed, with 6% unsure.

Although it received overwhelming support overall, it was the mission which received some split in agreement, due to scepticism about the effects of global warming, as well as scepticism of the government's (both local and national) policies (such as ULEZ).

In order to understand the many responses provided for this mission, the comments have been analysed and categorised into a selection of key themes. A detailed breakdown of the key themes and selected quotes can be found in Appendix E. This can be seen by following the link below:

[Appendix E – Mission – A Sustainable County](#)

### Support for the Mission:

Many participants expressed overall support for a transition to a low-carbon economy, recognising the importance of environmental sustainability.

The comments expressed a recognition of the importance of embracing environmentally friendly initiatives that yield long-term financial benefits. The emphasis is on being mindful of investments that may incur initial costs but result in overall savings over time.

Additionally, there was a shared sentiment about the necessity of taking meaningful actions to preserve the environment for future generations. The importance of maintaining Green Belt land was also highlighted as a crucial aspect of safeguarding the natural environment.

Overall, these comments conveyed a supportive stance toward the mission while emphasising the need for careful consideration of costs and a commitment to environmental conservation.

### Selected Quotes:

*"It's important to exploit those green initiatives which save money in the longer term to offset the initial investment but take care of those that have additional costs overall."*

*"We need to do something worthwhile to protect this environment for the future generations."*

*"As long as natural environment includes keeping as much green belt land as possible".*

### Concerns about the mission:

Some respondents also raised some concerns about the mission. This was regarding whether this mission was a priority for Hertfordshire, with other issues such as affordable housing and local services being considered more of a priority.

Some respondents believed that this was not relevant to local government, with these respondents believing that either Net Zero policies could not be achieved or were for national or even global decision makers.

The Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) policy was also referenced, with respondents suggesting that the ULEZ would not be welcomed if it were part of this mission.

### Selected Quotes:

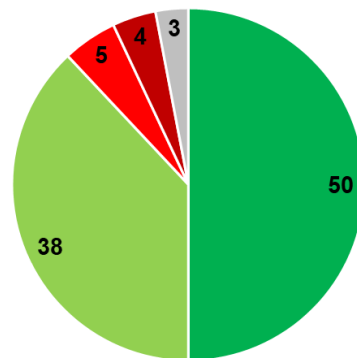
*"There are more important immediate priorities e.g. adult care services, hospitals, NHS dentist availability etc etc"*

*The UK is already a low carbon economy - the issues lie in China India US etc. Not a local priority*

*"Do not start the ULEZ here!"*

## 2.5 Healthy Places for All

To what extent do you agree with this mission? - Healthy Places for All (% of responses)



■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know



**Respondents sample:** 4,020 respondents

### Mission:

By 2040, Hertfordshire's residents and communities will benefit from neighbourhoods that are designed and regenerated with physical health, mental wellbeing and social connectedness at the heart.

The mission for Healthy Places for All received strong support, with 88% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the mission. This is 3% above the average of the support of the missions.

9% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the mission, with 3% being unsure. This was slightly below the average of disagreement with the missions.

In order to understand the many responses provided for this mission, the comments have been analysed and categorised into a selection of key themes. A detailed breakdown of the key themes and selected quotes can be found in Appendix F. This can be seen by following the link below:

### [Appendix F – Mission – Healthy Places for All](#)

#### **Support for the Mission:**

Many respondents supported the premise of this mission because it was seen as something that would benefit whole communities if achieved. This mission was viewed as one of the more strategic missions given that respondents felt it would require a lot of different elements to come together to achieve social health and well being.

Respondents supported the breadth of the mission – focusing on travel improvements, green infrastructure, investment in local services, education and improved planning for future housing and infrastructure.

Respondents also viewed this as something that would need a holistic approach, with investment from both national and local government.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"I like the breadth of this mission - it suggests that active travel, reducing and slowing traffic from / in towns is critical."*

*"Green infrastructure has a role to play here"*

*"Great idea, but how can we do this. Again it needs support locally and nationally, especially funding to achieve this"*

*"I think this would be amazing. To help keep people happier and healthier."*

#### **Concerns about the mission:**

A general concern about this mission was that the wording of the mission was considered too vague, both in its delivery timeframe and also what it seeks to achieve. These respondents were concerned that it would be difficult to measure happiness in the borough and also did not understand what this mission meant.

A number of respondents also considered that the current status of the Borough did not reflect this goal, in particular noting the need for improved local services and the increase in development.

#### Selected Quotes:

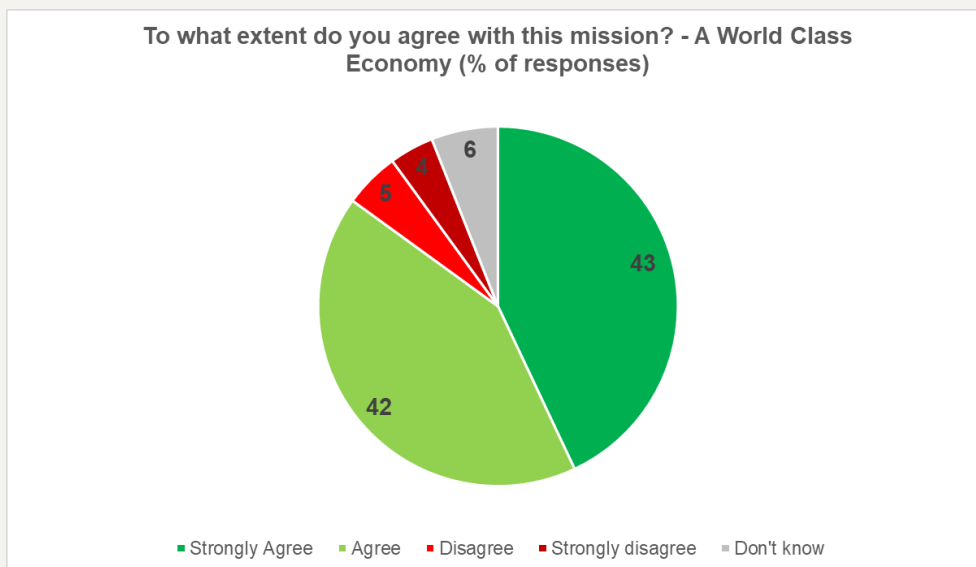
*"Believe the statement to be too liberal I would need to see a plan on how this would be achieved by 2040 before I could agree with this statement"*

*"This is so vague - who determines what is healthy?"*

*"People need more hospitals, doctors and dentist"*

*"I think building all these high rise dwellings is reversing that idea."*

## 2.6 A World Class Economy



**Respondents sample:** 3,823 responses

#### Mission:

We want to enhance Hertfordshire's reputation as a world-class economy by improving skills and job opportunities for residents, growing our key sectors and accelerating business investment into the county.

Respondents were largely supportive of the mission to produce a world class economy with 85% support for this mission. Just 9% of respondents said they disagreed or strongly disagreed with this mission and 6% were unsure.

A support rate of 85% was the average level of support (85%) for the missions, with the 9% against being the lowest level of opposition from respondents.

In order to understand the many responses provided for this mission, the comments have been analysed and categorised into a selection of key themes. A detailed breakdown of the key themes and selected quotes can be found in Appendix G. This can be seen by following the link below:

### [Appendix G – Mission – A World Class Economy](#)

#### **Support for the mission:**

One of the key themes coming out of the survey in support of the mission was just how important sustainable and well managed development within the County will harness economic growth and provide well paid jobs across the County.

There were varied opinions on how economic growth through a world class economy could be achieved. Some respondents emphasised its significance for job creation and overall prosperity whereas others commented on their concerns about the current state of the economy, challenges faced by businesses, and the need for incentives to attract investment.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Then you must cut business rates to encourage new shops in the high streets - also cut parking charges to get shopper in to the rejuvenated areas."*

*"Key is to make Herts attractive to business and people."*

*"Local economy is very important to both help fund and sustain a thriving and stable society."*

#### **Concerns about the mission:**

Those respondents that indicated they were in disagreement in the mission did not agree that Hertfordshire has a world class economy, with concerns that this would lose focus on the locality. Conversely, some respondents felt that Hertfordshire's economy is already world class and therefore did not feel that focusing on economic elements – such as growth – was a priority.

Some respondents were also confused about how this mission could be achieved and whether it would be feasible.

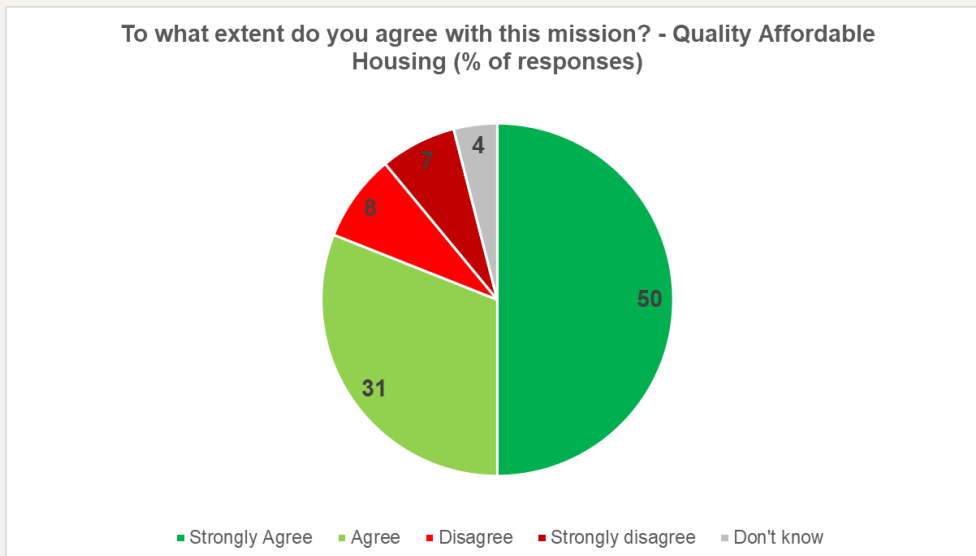
#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Not everything has to be world class - it is usually better to aim for something more tuned to the locality"*

*"Hertfordshire has a very strong economy already. Again, you seem to think relentless economic growth is the be all and end all; I disagree."*

*"Again sounds good but is it feasible?"*

## 2.7 Quality and Affordable Housing for all



**Respondents sample:** 3,676 respondents

### Mission:

We want to deliver high quality, affordable and specialist homes, to support the county's socio-economic prosperity.

The mission to deliver high quality, affordable and specialist housing Overall, it received an 81% supportive rating.

It also received the second highest level of opposition, with 15% either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the mission, although this should be taken in perspective of how much support this mission received (and indeed all the missions received).

In order to understand the many responses provided for this mission, the comments have been analysed and categorised into a selection of key themes. A detailed breakdown of the key themes and selected quotes can be found in Appendix H. This can be seen by following the link below:

[Appendix H – Mission – Quality & Affordable Housing for All](#)



### Support for the Mission:

Those respondents who supported this mission were for this aim as they hope it will provide a focus of more affordable housing for local residents. Many respondents see the current housing market as tricky to navigate, especially for young people or vulnerable, and therefore expect their needs to be catered for.

Respondents also felt that more social housing is needed and that this should come from a combination of both private development (through hitting local affordable housing targets) and through government investment and building programmes.

### Selected Quotes:

*"Absolutely this and with a focus to encourage and help users and families to transition into self supported accommodation if at all possible"*

*"Decent homes for the less advantaged and more vulnerable members of our community must come first"*

*"It is vital that the council ensures that our young people can afford to buy or rent accommodation. House prices are too high. Schemes to help young people to buy should be a priority. Housing needs to be varied, different numbers of bedrooms, available for elderly too."*

*"More affordable social options across the county is needed!"*

### Concerns about the mission:

Respondents who raised concerns about this mission did not want to see more housing (including affordable) in the County feeling that Hertfordshire is 'overcrowded'. Some of these respondents felt the priority should not be to deliver housing in Hertfordshire, but rather focus on other parts of the Country – such as the North.

Some respondents were also concerned that the need for affordable housing would promote people moving from London to Hertfordshire, which in their opinion had increased local house prices.

Other respondents disputed whether the houses built would be truly affordable, citing increasing house prices and therefore believing the affordable housing mission would not be realistic.

Further to these concerns, some respondents also wanted to preserve the Green Belt with concerns that further housing building would have a detrimental impact on the environment.

**Selected Quotes:**

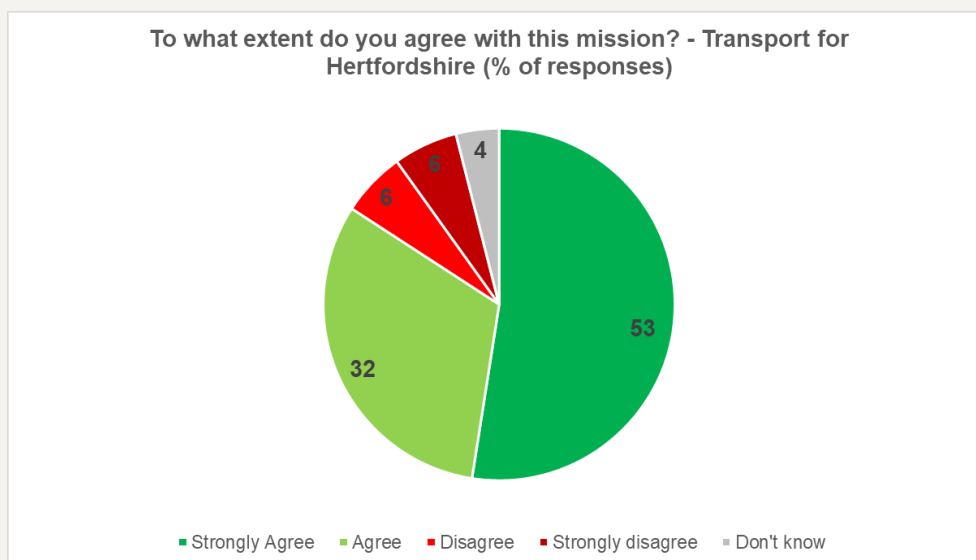
*"I think Hertfordshire is already overcrowded"*

*"London migration to the more rural locations is forcing house prices Up and I don't see any change within the next 10 years"*

*"High quality and affordability is not realistic"*

*"Too many new homes already being built taking up the green belt."*

## 2.8 Transport for Hertfordshire



**Respondents sample:** 3,583 respondents

**Mission:**

Improved options for sustainable and active travel; improved air quality, reduced congestion and carbon emissions.

The mission to improve transport in Hertfordshire received an average supportive response in the context of this survey, with 85% either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the mission.

A slightly better than average level of respondents disagreed with 12% either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the mission.

In order to understand the many responses provided for this mission, the comments have been analysed and categorised into a selection of key themes. A detailed breakdown of the key themes and selected quotes can be found in Appendix I. This can be seen by following the link below:

[Appendix I – Mission – Transport for Hertfordshire](#)

**Support for the mission:** This mission attracted a lot of support due the current perceived lack of good transport infrastructure as well as the need to improve services in general.

Respondents who supported the mission praised the push to introduce more sustainable transport options, hoped improvements to public transport, perceived national government involvement and the belief that reliable and affordable transport would benefit the county.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"Excellent mission. Are we going ULEZ? Will you achieve popular support for measures to ensure this happens?"*

*"This is a must and should be supported by making public transport as cheap as possible and invest in safe walkway/ cycleways, otherwise it will be very difficult to get people out of their cars"*

*"Good idea, however, this needs to be reorganised completely, especially where new housing is being built."*

*"All highly desirable. Bus services need expansion and greater frequency in some areas including towns. Is it desirable to campaign for subsidy/support from central government?"*

*"Reliable and affordable public transport would have great positive benefits for our county."*

**Concerns about the mission:**

Respondents who raised concerns about this mission reflected a number of the constructive points raised within the rest of the feedback. In particular, respondents did not want there to be an emphasis on sustainable transport as the only future transport option – citing the importance of the car. This was considered the only practical option for a lot of people such as those with young families or the elderly.

Some respondents also were critical of the current cost and availability of public transport, saying it is too expensive and therefore they were unlikely to use it in the future as an alternative to cars.

Some respondents also disagreed with this mission on the basis that public transport is already sustainable and they did not consider there to be an environmental issues in Hertfordshire.

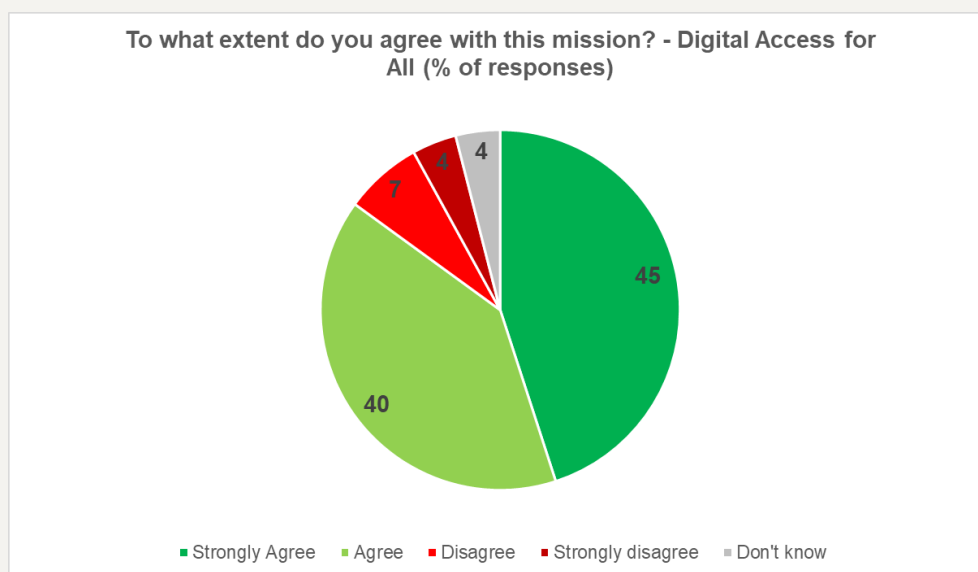
**Selected Quotes:**

*"Not everybody is able to walk or cycle and for many its not a practical option. The vast majority of journeys are made by car and this will not change no matter how many cycle lanes are opened."*

*"Public transport (trains/buses) are too expensive now and will probably remain so - even in 10 years time"*

*"Current travel is sustainable, air quality is excellent..."*

## 2.9 Digital Access for all



**Respondents sample:** 3,738 respondents

**Mission:**

We want to see every Hertfordshire resident have access to high quality connectivity, basic digital skills, and the device / support that they need to be online by 2030.

The mission to provide Digital Access for All received 85% support, which is the average level of support for each of the missions.

The mission also received a better than average response from opponents with just 11% of respondents against the mission, compared to an average of 12%.

In order to understand the many responses provided for this mission, the comments have been analysed and categorised into a selection of key themes. A detailed breakdown of the key themes and selected quotes can be found in Appendix J. This can be seen by following the link below:

### [Appendix J – Mission – Digital Access for All](#)

**Support for this mission:** Respondents generally welcomed the idea of improving access to high-speed broadband, improving connectivity, providing education to enhance digital skills and to achieve this by 2030.

Respondents viewed this as a way to help promote business in the County, very much seeing this as part of the mission to promote Hertfordshire as a World Class Economy.

Further to this, respondents supported the mission as they hoped it would push for additional funding and support from business partners to achieve this goal. In particular, they wished to see support for digital skills, infrastructure and business development.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"This is imperative to support business residents and the county as a whole."*

*"100% support hope to start work as soon as possible"*

*"Sounds great if there is funding available or support from partners. 2030 is a long time away. Can more be done to support residents to have basic digital skills sooner being as so much is now moving online?"*

*"This I really support"*

*"This would be great given parts of WGC (and I'm sure other places) still don't have fibre optic broadband."*

#### **Concerns about the mission:**

Respondents who were critical of this mission usually cited that improved internet connectivity could have the opposite effect than the mission intended. They were mainly concerned it would actually isolate communities or individuals with people reducing their social interaction.

Some respondents felt that the planned date of 2030 to achieve this mission was also unrealistic given the current level of broadband connectivity in rural parts of the County.

Also, some respondents did not feel this was the responsibility of the Council to deliver but rather the individual.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"This kind of overarching so called connectivity just drives people further apart. We know that digital is stressful for human beings. So why would we keep enforcing things we know are detrimental to human psychology"*

*"I am very concerned that we are completely reliant now on the internet for absolutely everything."*

*"There will always be a significant percentage of residents who are unable to be online and your date of 2030 is totally unrealistic"*

*"This is not a council responsibility that taxpayers should fund, but rather it's up to the individual to get online if they wish."*

## **2.10 Other comments**

As part of the feedback form, respondents were also able to provide an open-ended comment about any further feedback they would like to include in their response. In total, **2,117 respondents** provided further comments, with the key themes of these responses summarised below:

#### **Infrastructure and Services:**

Given the scope of the missions and the feedback, it was clear that respondents saw investment in infrastructure as an important goal for securing these missions.

This need for infrastructure investment was communicated through multiple avenues including:

- Highlighting the need for massive investment in infrastructure, particularly in public transport, cycling, and EV charging points.
- The need for better road maintenance, including fixing potholes and improving road connectivity.
- Calls for better public transport infrastructure, including more frequent buses, dedicated cycle paths, and reliable train services.
- Recognition that private transport remains crucial, especially for elderly and vulnerable populations.
- The need for infrastructure to keep in step with the growing population.
- Issues with the lack of services like schools and medical facilities.

- Calls for a focus on basic services, such as road maintenance, public transport, and healthcare.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"We need more infrastructure to cope with extra residents moving to Hertfordshire"*

*"This all sounds wonderful, and I can see work going on everywhere but what about the infrastructure to support all this - roads, safe cycle lanes and public transport in particular"*

*"Infrastructure has to be paramount"*

**Environmental Sustainability:** Respondents also referred to the Sustainable County mission by asking the survey to consider environmental considerations. There was general recognition that there is an environmental impact of transportation and the need for sustainable options.

There were calls for measures to address pollution, encourage sustainable living, and combat climate change, as well as the impact of new developments on the environment.

Some respondents raised concerns about air quality and pollution, with some advocating for measures to reduce carbon emissions.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"Need to see greater equality, protection of environment and biodiversity."*

*"Restoring nature, access to green spaces, tree planting in the urban environment..."*

*"Environmental issues i.e. safeguarding nature would be nice such as support for Herts & Middx WT."*

**Community Well-being:** Respondents had a desire for stronger community bonds and safer neighbourhoods. There were concerns about the decline of community-based services and the impact on quality of life.

Similar to previous comments on transport, there was emphasis on considering the needs of diverse populations, including the elderly, disabled, and those without access to cars.

Further to this, there were calls for attention to mental health, safety, and creating healthy, supportive communities.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Proper community base. These were once strong in all neighbourhoods and people were happier having their peers around them. This is what makes people feel safe and happy. Yet all of these things have been gradually whittled away and our emotional environment has suffered greatly."*

*"This has positive implications for both public health and environmental improvement"*

*"Please really work hard for us in improving the quality of the environment in Hertfordshire. More, and better linked-up, green spaces are crucial."*

**Transparency and Accountability:** Respondents wished to see further examples and evidence of the effectiveness and transparency of local government initiatives.

As part of this survey, there were requests for clear plans, measurable outcomes, and accountability in achieving stated goals.

Above all, it was emphasised the importance of clear communication about policies, costs, and the practicalities of implementing the proposed missions.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Great aims but impossible to achieve without a significant increase in council funding."*

*"The importance of communication and engagement with local communities; support for local sustainability groups; joined -up thinking on e.g. protecting air quality across the three tiers of local government. Clarity on the respective roles of HCC bodies."*

*"These are wonderful visions but investment by individuals, businesses, local authorities and government is essential..."*

**Economic Development:** Within the final comment section, there was recognition of the importance of economic growth and job opportunities, including calls for a balanced approach to housing development, considering infrastructure needs.



There was an emphasis on supporting local businesses, providing employment opportunities, and boosting the economy of Hertfordshire.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Protection and enhancement of the countryside for the economic, social and environmental benefit of all."*

*"The state of the economy in Hertfordshire has a significant impact on local residents and businesses. An economic boom can lead to jobs, income growth and an improved quality of life, while a recession can lead to rising unemployment and economic hardship."*

*"Yes to economic growth and delivering prosperity."*

**Healthcare and Social Equity:** Numerous comments covered the promotion of good health and quality of life as part of the missions. There was emphasis on the importance of local healthcare services with the belief that healthcare and education have not received enough attention in the provided missions.

There were also calls to include elderly and disabled residents in the plans and a general focus on social equity, justice, and support for the underprivileged.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Improve existing health services. Opportunities for young people. Ensure equal access to services, address disadvantaged"*

*"Hertfordshire needs good and readily available healthcare for all. Good well-equipped schools to educate the next generation. Good infrastructure so people can get on with their lives. Good social care and support for the elderly."*

*"Access to good quality healthcare and education"*

## **2.11 Response by Hertfordshire Borough**

### **Introduction**

Hertfordshire has 10 district and borough councils, each of which have their own demographics, challenges and priorities. As part of the engagement strategy, HGB sent social media ads to users in each of these authorities, alongside unique tracking links (UTM HTMLs) which ensure a wide spectrum of feedback as possible has been captured – and can be attributable – for each local authority.

As part of the review into this feedback, Meeting Place has reviewed the responses from each of the boroughs and the findings can be viewed below.

### Summary of key findings by Borough Council

Within the survey, it could be identified which Borough a respondent was located, based on the targeted Meta advert and unique tracking HTML (UTM code) they responded to, and if they provided a postcode.

Of the respondents, we were able to attribute a local authority to 1,762 individuals via the UTM code, and a further 1,212 individuals who had provided their postcodes. A table showing the breakdown of the UTM local authority can be found below (ranked highest number of responses to lowest):

Borough	Count of responses
Broxbourne	270
Stevenage	250
Watford	238
Welwyn Hatfield	214
East Herts	192
St Albans	192
Dacorum	184
North Herts	128
Hertsmere	94
Three Rivers	47

## Borough Response Matrix

In order to quantify the responses by district or borough, HGB has analysed the average responses to the individual missions and represented this in a matrix chart.

This chart addresses levels of support indicated by the respondents of each borough, compared against the average levels of support for each mission. It indicates the highest levels of support by district/borough.

	Sustainable County	Healthy Places for All	A World Class Economy	Digital Access for All	Quality Affordable Housing	Transport for Hertfordshire
Broxbourne	68.1%	74.1%	69.6%	63.7%	61.1%	61.9%
Dacorum	70.1%	73.4%	64.1%	56.5%	58.7%	60.3%
East Herts	69.3%	75.5%	75%	72.9%	64.1%	69.8%
Hertsmere	75.5%	83%	80.9%	80.9%	63.8%	74.5%
North Herts	78.1%	88.3%	79.7%	77.3%	76.6%	79.7%
St Albans	72.9%	76.6%	66.7%	70.3%	68.8%	66.1%
Stevenage	74%	76%	78.4%	70.4%	70%	69.6%
Three Rivers	72.3%	79%	70.2%	68.1%	64.3%	63.9%
Watford	77.3%	79%	70.2%	68.1%	64.3%	63.9%
Welwyn Hatfield	75.7%	84.1%	79%	76.6%	68.2%	71%

	Most support for the mission in Hertfordshire
	Overall support for the mission – 80% - 90%
	Overall support for the mission – 70% - 79%
	Overall support for the mission – 69% or below

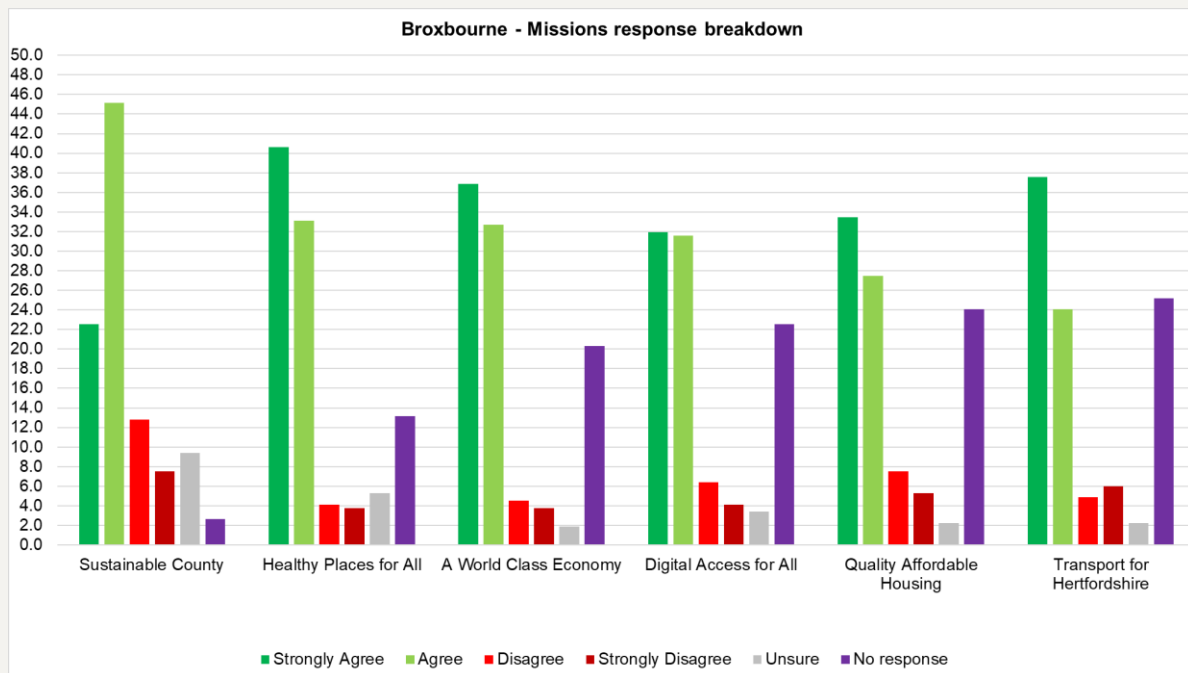
## Borough Profiles

To further breakdown the responses by borough, this report has compiled a snapshot profile of each area. This takes into consideration the quantitative responses to each mission as well as the average levels of support.

**Average respondents who agreed vs disagreed to the missions, broken down by district:**

RANK	BOROUGH	% AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE	% DISAGREE OR STRONGLY DISAGREE
1	North Herts	79.9% agree	6.5% disagree
2	Hertsmere	76.4% agree	8.3% disagree
3	Welwyn Hatfield	75.8% agree	9.1% disagree
4	Stevenage	73.1% agree	9.8% disagree
5	East Herts	71.1% agree	12.8% disagree
6	Watford	70.4% agree	8.4% disagree
7	St Albans	70.2% agree	10% disagree
8	Broxbourne	66.4% agree	11.6% disagree
9	Three Rivers	64.5% agree	7.1% disagree
10	Dacorum	63.9% agree	12.4% disagree

## Broxbourne



### District context:

Broxbourne is in the top 35% most densely populated Local Authority's in England. It has a younger population than the wider county, however this is not reflected in the health profile of the area, with many in poorer health and with low levels of physical activity.

Broxbourne had the most reported participation with the HGB vision activity, with a total of 270 respondents completing the survey. A total of 66.4% of respondents agreed with, with 11.6% disagreeing with the missions overall.

Across all 10 district and borough councils, Broxbourne was one of the lower districts in terms of support for the missions, however, it still secured over two thirds of support, on average, across each mission.

The mission which ranked highest in Broxbourne in terms of agreement was Healthy Places for All. Broxbourne residents who agreed with this mission said they wanted to see more work to help the community through initiatives to support adult education, safety, and mental health.

There was those that wanted to see more infrastructure provided within the borough, especially in areas that had seen more housing being developed.

### Selected quotes:

*"The local doctor surgeries and health care provision is always limited in the area compared to west Herts. This has a negative impact on residents' health."*

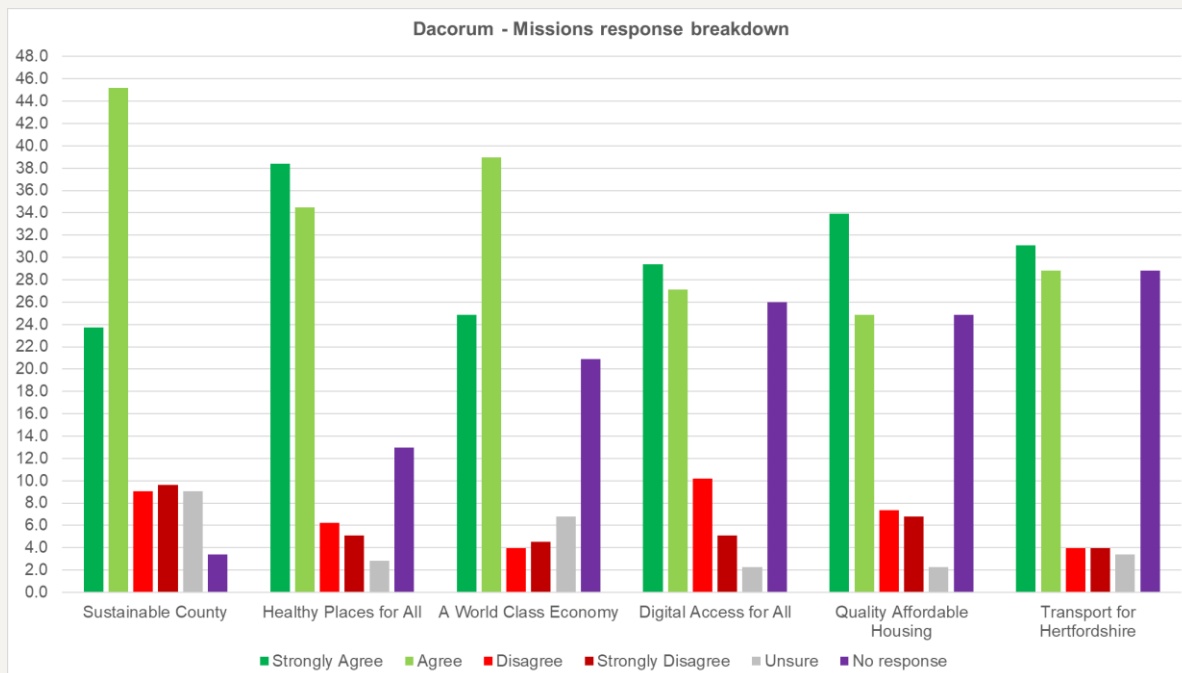
*"The key word here 'affordable' house prices in herts at the moment are by far reasonable or affordable in comparison to the national living wage"*

*"Cheshunt is a bottleneck for car pollution with the weekly roadworks and the long queues."*

As part of the analysis a review of the comments made by Borough respondents to each mission can be viewed in Appendix K. A digest of these comments for Broxbourne can be seen below:

Sustainable County	Healthy Places for All	A World Class Economy	Digital Access for All	Quality Affordable Housing	Transport for Hertfordshire
<p><b>Economic and Social Impact of Environmental Policies</b></p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Urban Planning</b></p> <p><b>Environmental Strategies and Public Perception</b></p> <p>The call for more "joined-up thinking" regarding the environment indicates a desire for comprehensive and integrated approaches to tackling environmental issues rather than piecemeal or superficial measures.</p>	<p><b>Infrastructure and Public Services.</b></p> <p><b>Community Well-being and Mental Health.</b></p> <p><b>Environmental Concerns and Accessibility.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect a call for more balanced and thoughtful urban planning that prioritises the provision of essential services, community well-being, and environmental sustainability.</p>	<p><b>Economic Growth and Employment Opportunities.</b></p> <p><b>Housing and Infrastructure Development.</b></p> <p><b>Education and Community Support.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect the community's desire for sustainable economic development that does not come at the expense of the local environment and social fabric, with a particular focus on improving employment quality, managing infrastructure growth responsibly, and updating educational methods to meet current and future needs.</p>	<p><b>Digital Divide and Technological Access.</b></p> <p><b>Community Infrastructure and Support Services.</b></p> <p><b>Diverse Needs and Inclusivity in a Digital Age.</b></p> <p>These themes underscore the challenges of integrating a growing population into a digital future, balancing technological access with other essential needs, and ensuring that community development is inclusive and considers the varied needs of all residents.</p>	<p><b>Affordability and Accessibility of Housing.</b></p> <p><b>Quality and Density of New Developments.</b></p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Community Resources.</b></p> <p>These points reflect the community's concern over the current housing strategy's alignment with the actual needs and financial realities of the residents, the quality and sustainability of new housing, and the essential supportive infrastructure that should accompany any new development.</p>	<p><b>Public Transportation Concerns.</b></p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Urban Development.</b></p> <p><b>Community Impact and Environmental Considerations.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect a community desire for a transportation system that supports both the mobility needs of the residents and the environmental goals of the area, alongside a development strategy that considers the long-term sustainability of the community.</p>

## Dacorum



### District context:

Dacorum local authority shows the widest levels of disparity and inequality between residents across the county. The majority of housing sits within the urban centres, with large rural communities that are older and more likely to be economically inactive.

184 respondents from Dacorum filled out the HGB engagement survey.

Across all districts, Dacorum had the lowest number of people to give overall support for the missions. Despite this, an average of 63.5% of respondents still agreed with the missions, with 12.6% of respondents in disagreement overall. It should be noted however that Dacorum still provided an overall healthy majority of support for the missions in the feedback.

Similar to Broxbourne, Healthy Places for All was the mission most people agreed with (73%). Dacorum residents who answered this question said they felt that Healthy Places was a priority and wanted to see improved infrastructure, more housing and improved green spaces.

### Selected quotes:

*"St Albans should not be able to dump its additional housing needs on Hemel Hempstead. Park Street residents should have some protection against the rail freight depot, etc."*

*"Too many flats built many not suitable for family or later life."*

*"There isn't enough housing for our future generations without them having to move away to either affordable houses. Private renting for low income families is too expensive (especially single parents)"*

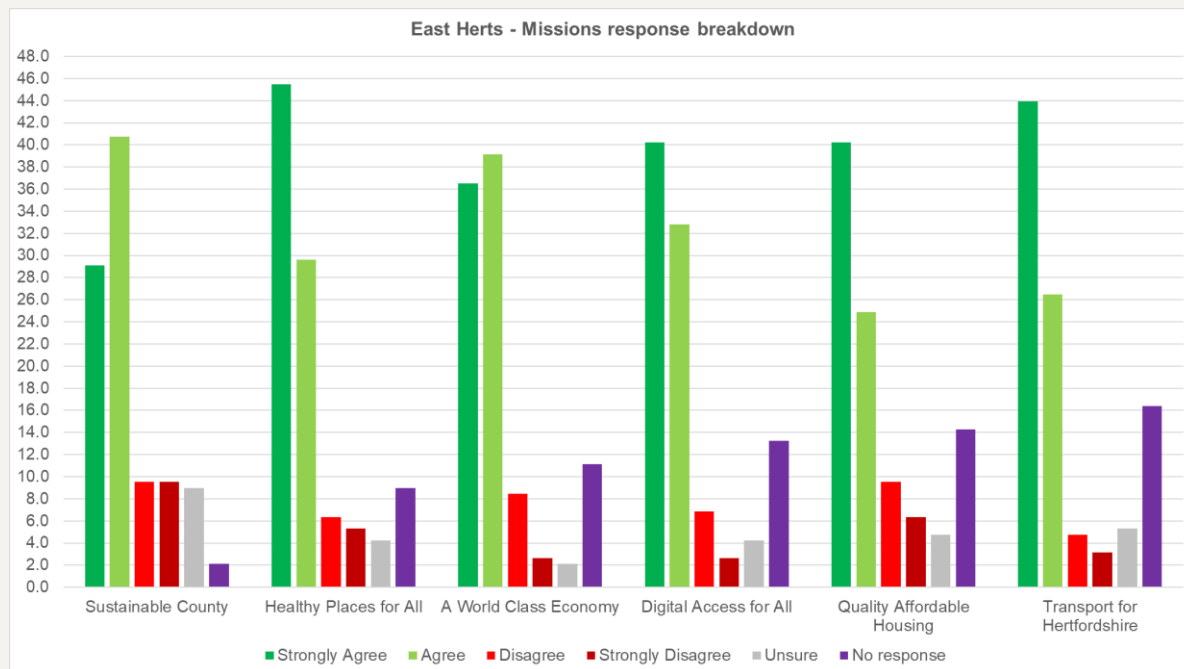
*"You have not maximised the benefits of sustainable growth for our residents and businesses, this idea failed in the town centre when you pedestrianised the Marlowes."*

As part of the analysis a review of the comments made by Borough respondents to each mission can be viewed in Appendix K. A digest of these comments for Dacorum can be seen below:

Sustainable County	Healthy Places for All	A World Class Economy	Digital Access for All	Quality Affordable Housing	Transport for Hertfordshire
<p><b>Scepticism About Climate Change and Environmental Policies.</b></p> <p><b>Urban Development and Green Spaces.</b></p> <p><b>Transportation and Sustainable Living Challenges.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect a level of scepticism towards the priority of targeting climate change and environmental policies. There was also some concern that urban development could erode this mission and there was a need to protect green spaces. Some respondents took this opportunity to raise transportation and sustainable living challenges that residents are currently facing.</p>	<p><b>Resistance to Urban Planning Concepts and Cost Concerns.</b></p> <p><b>Healthcare Infrastructure and Mental Health.</b></p> <p><b>Environmental and Social Well-being.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect resistance to urban planning in the district with concerns about the cost of delivering on these concepts. Respondents prioritised healthcare infrastructure and mental health as a way to deliver the healthy places for all. Respondents also prioritised environmental protection and social well-being.</p>	<p><b>Economic Development and Employment.</b></p> <p><b>Healthcare and Infrastructure.</b></p> <p><b>Urban Planning and Environmental Considerations.</b></p> <p>These points reflect that respondents want to see economic development and improved employment opportunities as part of this mission. Respondents also took this opportunity to say that they would like to see healthcare and infrastructure improvements along with concerns about urban planning and environmental considerations.</p>	<p><b>Digital Inclusion and Accessibility.</b></p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Community Services.</b></p> <p><b>Balance Between Technology and Human Interaction.</b></p> <p>These points reflect concerns about the pace and focus of digital adoption, emphasising the necessity to balance technological advancement with human connection and to ensure that community services and infrastructure developments meet the needs of all residents.</p>	<p><b>Affordability and Accessibility of Housing.</b></p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Community Services.</b></p> <p><b>Preservation of Community Character and Green Spaces.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect a community's concern over the rapid pace of development and its impact on local services, the environment, and the social fabric of the community. There is a call for development to be thoughtful, inclusive, and balanced with the preservation of community values and resources.</p>	<p><b>Transportation and Public Services.</b></p> <p><b>Affordable Housing and Infrastructure Development.</b></p> <p><b>Community Autonomy and Environmental Considerations.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect the community's concerns about the practicality of proposed changes, the need for inclusive and equitable development, and the desire for autonomy and freedom in personal transportation choices.</p>



## East Herts



### District context:

East Herts has an older population with very little ethnic or religious diversity. There are low levels of homelessness and unemployment and the majority of homes are owned and some are second homes that remain unoccupied for much of the year.

189 respondents from East Herts filled out the HGB engagement survey. Overall, an average of 71.1% of people agreed with the missions, whilst 12.8% were in disagreement.

The three missions which people agreed with most strongly included Healthy Places for All (75.5%), A World Class Economy (75%) and Digital Access for All (72.9%). East Herts respondents who answered the Healthy Places for All question wished to see this mission be backed with investment in infrastructure into the local area.

Suggestions included improving local walking routes, transport links to encourage connectivity and investing in existing communities.

The Borough also had higher levels of support than the average for Digital Access for All and Transport for Hertfordshire.

### Selected quotes:

*"A refurbished pool and leisure centre in Buntingford should be a priority."*

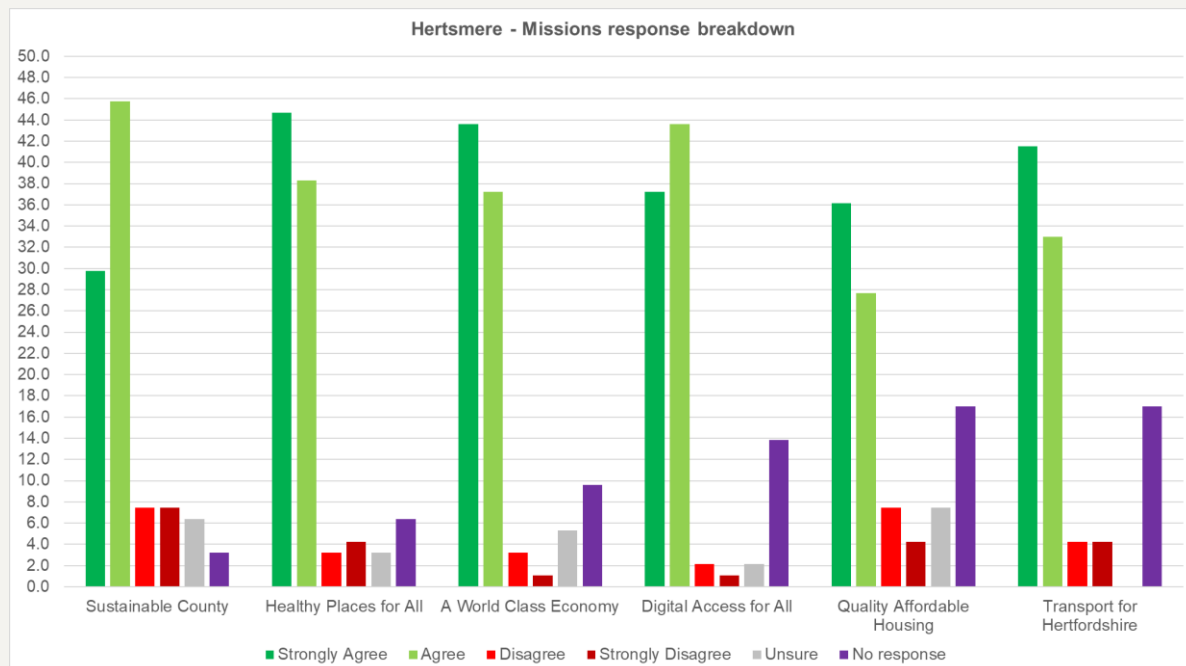
*"Why are so many fast food outlets opening and being granted licenses on our high streets?"*

*"I'm very supportive of this as we have to create social mobility in all housing tenures to lessen demand and increase supply. It must be affordable housing also for those not family targeted. Not assumed those not in family units want flats."*

As part of the analysis a review of the comments made by Borough respondents to each mission can be viewed in Appendix K. A digest of these comments for East Herts can be seen below:

Sustainable County	Healthy Places for All	A World Class Economy	Digital Access for All	Quality Affordable Housing	Transport for Hertfordshire
<p><b>Sustainable Development and Environmental Policies.</b></p> <p><b>Transport and Infrastructure Needs.</b></p> <p><b>Community Services and Housing.</b></p> <p>These themes illustrate the challenges of aligning environmental ambitions with the realities of local infrastructure, economy, and community needs. There is a call for a balanced approach that considers both the immediate needs of residents and the long-term goal of sustainability.</p>	<p><b>Community Infrastructure and Amenities.</b></p> <p><b>Environmental Impact and Urban Development.</b></p> <p><b>Mental Health and Well-being.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect the community's concerns over the balance between development and environmental sustainability, the need for comprehensive infrastructure that supports both physical and mental health, and the desire for amenities that contribute to a higher quality of life without increasing costs or compromising green spaces.</p>	<p><b>Economic Development and Infrastructure.</b></p> <p><b>Preservation of Green Spaces and Environmental Impact.</b></p> <p><b>Community Services and Mental Health.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect a desire for a holistic approach to community development that includes economic growth, environmental preservation, and enhanced community services to improve overall well-being.</p>	<p><b>Digital Connectivity and Infrastructure.</b></p> <p><b>Inclusivity in Technology Access.</b></p> <p><b>Local Government Accountability and Effectiveness.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect the community's desire for better digital services, inclusive support for all residents to access and utilise these services, and a call for accountable and responsive local governance to ensure these goals are met.</p>	<p><b>Affordable Housing and Allocation.</b></p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Environment.</b></p> <p><b>Quality of Housing and Community Impact.</b></p> <p>These themes highlight the community's concerns about the impact of housing policies on the quality of life, environment, and social equity.</p>	<p><b>Public Transport Improvement and Affordability.</b></p> <p><b>Road Infrastructure and Traffic Management.</b></p> <p><b>Sustainable and Safe Travel Initiatives.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect the community's desire for a more accessible, affordable, and environmentally friendly transportation system, as well as the challenges of implementing such changes in the face of existing infrastructure and social habits</p>

## Hertsmere



### District context:

Across Hertsmere the inequality of life expectancy at birth for men is 9.2 years. This reflects the wider conditions with poor overall health and a higher claimant count than wider Hertfordshire.

94 respondents from Hertsmere filled out the HGB engagement survey. The district was second highest in the county when it comes to those in agreement with the missions overall (76.4%) with just 8.3% in disagreement.

Similar to East Herts, the three missions which people agreed with most strongly included Healthy Places for All (83%), A World Class Economy (80.9%) and Digital Access for All (80.9%).

Hertsmere demonstrated the highest levels of support across the county for World Class Economy and Digital Access for All.

In particular, Hertsmere respondents said that strong elements of the local economy such as the film making industry as well as the County's historical success in industrial and economic innovation should be capitalised upon. Respondents also wanted this to be twinned with improved transport connections.

### Selected quotes:

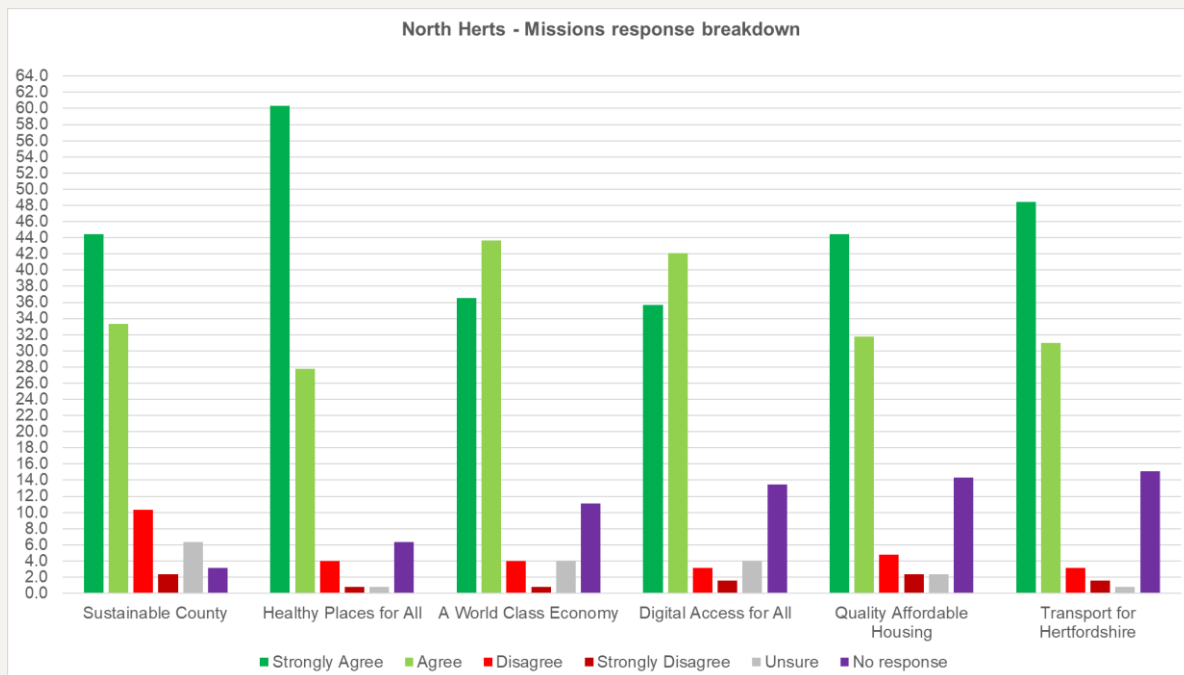
*"Have better bus route links to Hatfield, Brookmans Park, Welwyn Garden and Barnet. The train is too expensive to these locations."*

*"Any new housing needs to be in areas where road and rail infrastructure and amenities such as health care, schools and shops are already there or can be included at the same time as the housing is built. Just adding on to existing towns means that existing facilities increasingly cannot cope. We have to build new towns."*

As part of the analysis a review of the comments made by Borough respondents to each mission can be viewed in Appendix K. A digest of these comments for Hertsmeres can be seen below:

Sustainable County	Healthy Places for All	A World Class Economy	Digital Access for All	Quality Affordable Housing	Transport for Hertfordshire
<b>Sustainability Scepticism and Cost Concerns.</b>  <b>Importance of Local Environment and Green Spaces.</b>  <b>Public Transport and Infrastructure Enhancement.</b>  These themes reflect a community grappling with the tension between environmental goals and the perceived practical and economic realities of implementing sustainable practices. They also indicate a desire for a more balanced and thoughtful approach to local development that prioritizes both the environment and the needs of the community.	<b>Infrastructure and Service Concerns.</b>  <b>Community Engagement and Utilization of Spaces.</b>  <b>Preservation of Green Spaces and Accessible Design.</b>  These themes reflect the community's concerns about development impacting the quality of life and the environment, the need for better integration of infrastructure with housing and employment centres, and the desire for more inclusive planning that involves resident feedback and preserves green spaces.	<b>Scepticism and Demand for Action.</b>  <b>Economic Development and Employment.</b>  <b>Transportation and Environmental Preservation.</b>  These themes illustrate community concerns about ensuring responsible and inclusive development that balances economic growth with environmental preservation and the improvement of public infrastructure.	<b>Financial Considerations and Costing.</b>  <b>Digital Inclusion and Accessibility.</b>  <b>Support for Disadvantaged Groups.</b>  These themes illustrate community's concerns about equitable access to services, the need for diverse options that respect individual choices and capabilities, and the importance of financial planning and support to ensure no one is left behind in the digital age.	<b>Infrastructure and Sustainable Development.</b>  <b>Affordable and Social Housing.</b>  <b>Quality of Life and Access to Housing.</b>  These themes highlight a community's desire for thoughtful planning that prioritizes sustainability, affordability, and the preservation of green spaces, while also addressing the diverse needs of its residents.	<b>Transport Infrastructure and Maintenance.</b>  <b>Public Transport Accessibility and Reliability.</b>  <b>Balanced Approach to Car Use and Environmental Considerations.</b>  These themes suggest that the community values a comprehensive and well-maintained transportation network that supports both private and public transport options, with considerations for environmental impact and accessibility for all residents.

## North Herts



### District context:

The demographics across North Hertfordshire are broad, with a higher population over 75 years old. Homes are clustered around Letchworth, Royston and Hitchin with higher rates of employment as well as higher levels of social rented homes in these urban areas.

128 respondents from North Herts filled out the HGB engagement survey. The area ranked highest in the county when it came to the number of people who were in agreement (79.9%), with just 6.5% in disagreement, ranking well above the average agreement levels for all six missions county-wide.

The missions which respondents in North Herts agreed with most strongly included Healthy Places for All (88%), A World Class Economy (80%) and Transport for Hertfordshire (80%).

North Herts had the highest level of support across the county for four of the missions. These were – Healthy Places for all (88%), Transport for Hertfordshire (80%), Sustainable County (78%) and Quality Affordable Housing (77%).

Those who supported the Sustainable County mission wanted to see the environment improve to plan for future generations. They also made the point that net zero targets should be strived for Hertfordshire and should consider economic opportunities within the borough as part of this work.

### Selected quotes:

*"Climate change adaptation must be a key factor in all these six core missions. It's not simply enough to cut CO<sup>2</sup> emissions."*

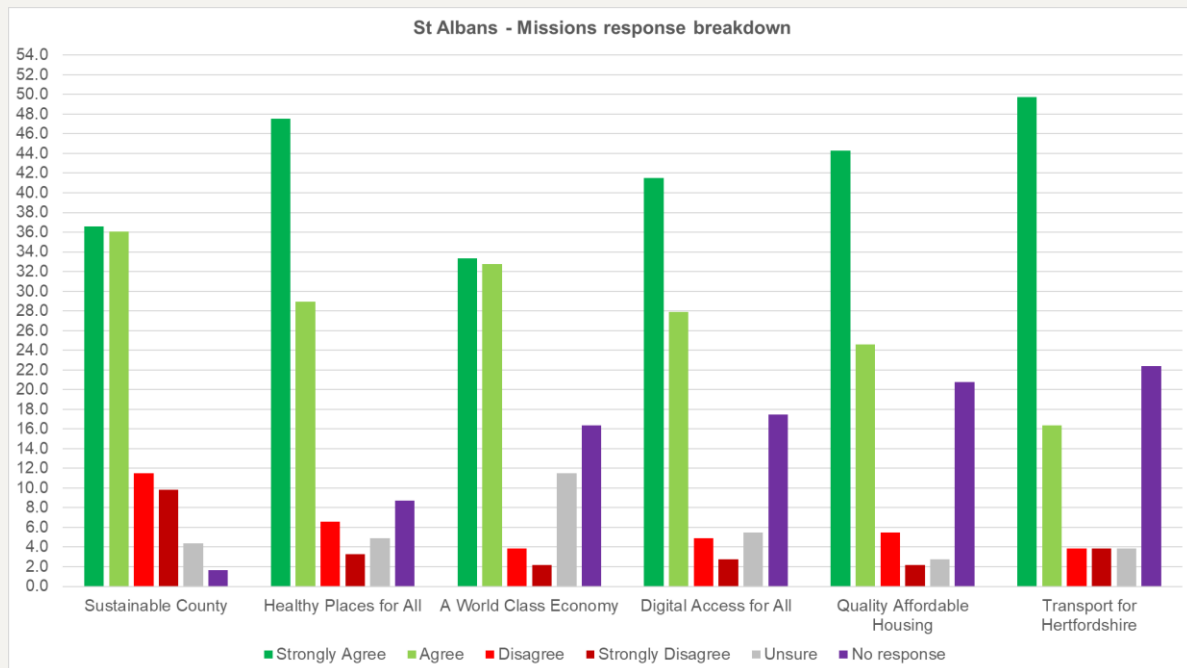
*"We need to build a sustainable future in which our children can afford to live"*

*"...more ambition is required, considering other examples e.g. removing cars from town centres has proven to increase trade and make town and cities the sort of place you want to spend time not just pass through."*

As part of the analysis a review of the comments made by Borough respondents to each mission can be viewed in Appendix K. A digest of these comments for North Herts can be seen below:

Sustainable County	Healthy Places for All	A World Class Economy	Digital Access for All	Quality Affordable Housing	Transport for Hertfordshire
<p><b>Integrated and Inclusive Environmental Action.</b></p> <p><b>Urgency and Feasibility of Achieving Net Zero.</b></p> <p><b>Scepticism and Local Impact.</b></p> <p>These themes highlight the complexity of addressing climate change at a local level, balancing urgency with practicality, inclusivity with individual impact, and global leadership with local feasibility.</p>	<p><b>Implementation and Planning for Change.</b></p> <p><b>Economic Considerations and Quality of Life.</b></p> <p><b>Transportation and Community Engagement.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect a community grappling with the challenges of urban planning and sustainable development, concerned about the economic implications and the need for a comprehensive approach that prioritizes both the environment and the well-being of its residents.</p>	<p><b>Balanced Development and Governance.</b></p> <p><b>Economic Concerns and Community Focus.</b></p> <p><b>Sustainable Employment and Education.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect the community's desire for strategic and sustainable economic growth that harmonizes with environmental protection and community well-being. There's a clear demand for action that goes beyond rhetoric, with a focus on real and practical solutions that address both local and broader societal needs.</p>	<p><b>Digital Infrastructure and Service Quality.</b></p> <p><b>Inclusivity in the Digital Transition.</b></p> <p><b>Balancing Digital and Traditional Access.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect the community's desire for a balanced approach to digital development that ensures high-quality infrastructure while protecting and including all segments of the population. There's a recognition of the need for digital skills and infrastructure, but not at the expense of personal interaction and existing services.</p>	<p><b>Affordable Housing and Development Priorities.</b></p> <p><b>Inclusivity and Accessibility in Housing.</b></p> <p><b>Community Infrastructure and Local Planning.</b></p> <p>These themes indicate a desire for a shift in housing and development policies towards more sustainable, inclusive, and community-focused planning that addresses the needs of all residents and preserves the environment.</p>	<p><b>Sustainable Transportation and Infrastructure:</b></p> <p><b>Challenges of Rural Accessibility and Public Transport.</b></p> <p><b>Balancing Development and Community Impact.</b></p> <p>These themes reflect the community's concerns about the need for comprehensive and inclusive planning to improve transportation and infrastructure while considering the environmental impact, the practicalities of rural living, and the financial implications for residents.</p>

## St Albans



### District context:

Around the urban centres of Harpenden and St Albans, the majority of households have dependent children. Due to the good transport links from these urban locations to London, there are high levels of commuters reflected in higher-than-average house prices and average weekly earnings.

183 respondents from St Albans filled out the HGB engagement survey. 69.9% of respondents from the area agreed with the missions overall, with just 10% in disagreement.

The missions which people agreed with most strongly included Healthy Places for All (76.5%) and Sustainable County (72.7%).

Even though the mission achieved significant overall agreement, interestingly, St Albans had the highest number of people who disagreed with the Sustainable County mission, with over a fifth (21.3%) in opposition, which suggests sustainability is a divisive local topic.

Despite being more sceptical of the Sustainable County mission, the area showed higher than average levels of support for Transport for Hertfordshire and Quality Affordable Housing.

### Selected quotes:

*"Culture and creativity. Feeds into them all, with creative industries being successful UK industry, and much in Herts (visual arts, film)"*

*"You cannot solve these problems by penalising drivers when there is no sensible alternative."*

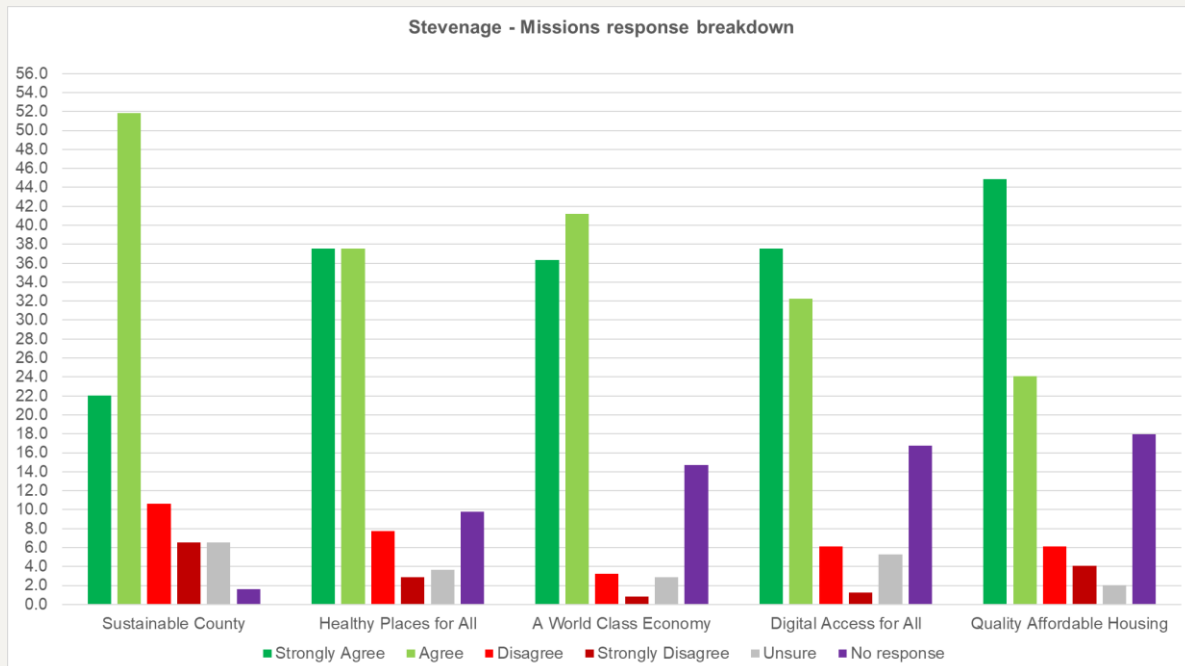
*"what make St Alban's a wonderful place to live is the balance of countryside (Greenland) and built-up areas"*

As part of the analysis a review of the comments made by Borough respondents to each mission can be viewed in Appendix K. A digest of these comments for St Albans can be seen below:

Sustainable County	Healthy Places for All	A World Class Economy	Digital Access for All	Quality Affordable Housing	Transport for Hertfordshire
<p><b>Challenges of achieving carbon free goals</b></p> <p><b>Concerns about local environmental impacts</b></p> <p><b>Varying perspectives on prioritising climate change</b></p> <p>These themes reflect concerns about the practicality and cost of environmental policies. There is a need for local authorities to regulate pollution creating activities. There were also differing opinions on the prioritising of climate change issues – from disagreeing with tackling climate change, to seeing it as urgent</p>	<p><b>Transport and Infrastructure</b></p> <p><b>Community and Green Spaces</b></p> <p><b>Trust in Governance</b></p> <p>These themes reflect advocacy for reliable and efficient public transport, building infrastructure for bikes and pedestrians. Also there was a desire for communal and town green spaces, supporting schemes enhancing the urban environment while protecting existing green spaces. Further to this, there were requests for more information on how this will be achieved with some concerns about government delivery of projects.</p>	<p><b>Affordability and Local Support</b></p> <p><b>Environmental Sustainability and Infrastructure</b></p> <p><b>Government Accountability and Clarity</b></p> <p>These themes reflect concerns about the high cost of living in Hertfordshire and the need to support residents with more affordable rents as well as local businesses. Also, there were calls to embrace sustainable economic practices, with some concern on how this could hamper the existing economy. As well as this, there was some scepticism about the Government's ability to deliver economic policies.</p>	<p><b>Existing Infrastructure and Connectivity</b></p> <p><b>Challenges Faced by Non-Digital Users</b></p> <p><b>Feasibility and Resistance to Change</b></p> <p>These themes reflect that some respondents felt that the infrastructure for a digital access was already in place. Some concerns were also raised about existing access to digital services with a call to support older individuals. What's more there were some concerns about the practicality of the proposed digital initiatives.</p>	<p><b>Affordable and Sustainable Housing</b></p> <p><b>Urban Planning and Development</b></p> <p><b>Government and Policy Issues</b></p> <p>These themes reflect the desire for sustainable, affordable, well-designed housing solutions for the County. There were concerns about current developments due to opposition to Green Belt development, proliferation of office conversions and concerns about high house prices for young people on low wages. There was also frustration about the lack of action about the government's commitment.</p>	<p><b>Transportation Alternatives and Infrastructure Improvement</b></p> <p><b>Traffic Management and Safety</b></p> <p><b>General Concerns and Diverse Opinions</b></p> <p>These themes reflect concerns about the reliance on cars, though there were mixed opinions about the need to be less reliant on them. There was also the need for improvements to public transport including better cycling infrastructure, more buses and better rail services. There were issues relating to road safety for cyclists, coordinated roadworks and air quality.</p>



## Stevenage



### District context:

Stevenage has the lowest median house price in the borough with lower levels of ownership than the average in the county. The borough also has a larger group of people working from home and residents are more likely to not own a car or van. Media weekly pay is one of the highest in Hertfordshire.

With 245 completed surveys, Stevenage ranked second when it came to the district which had the most engagement with the HGB survey.

On average, it ranked fourth in terms of overall agreement (72.4%).

The mission which received the most support was A World Class Economy (77.6%), followed by Healthy Places for All (75.1%) and Sustainable County (73.9%).

### Selected quotes:

*"No mention of the decline in shopping centres with so many empty units and losing out on having options/choices to make purchases - beginning to look like ghost towns"*

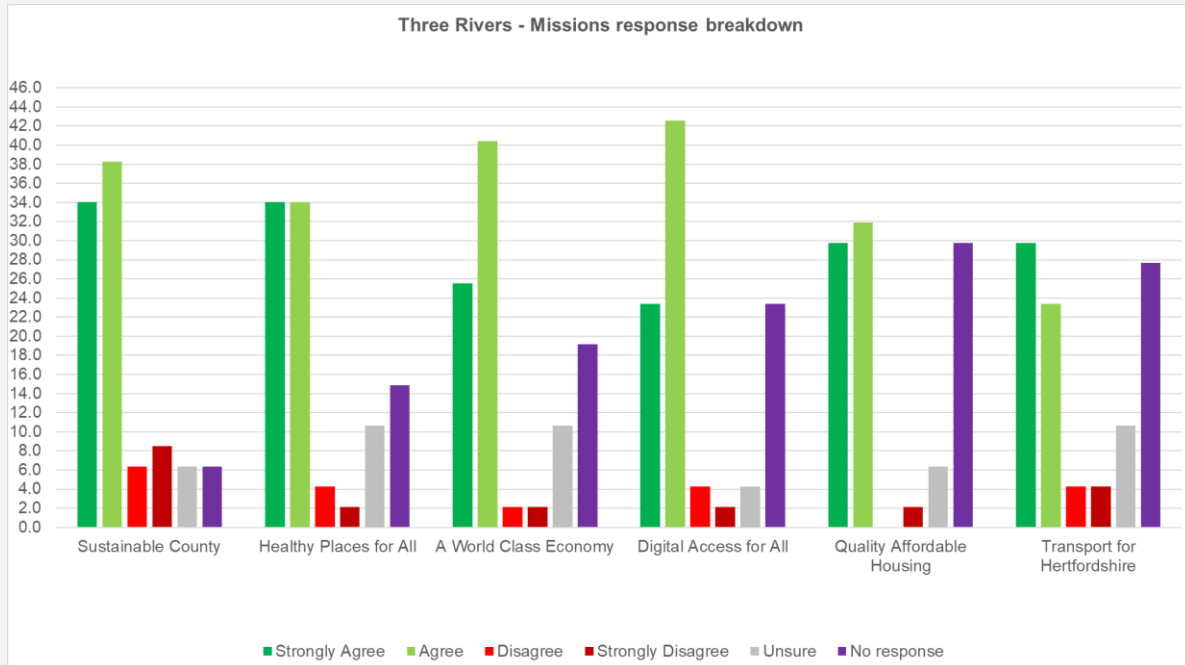
*"Good to have high ideals but in reality those missions with time targets are unlikely to be achieved given the economic situation we find ourselves in"*

*"Of course for Hertfordshire to continue to improve in an economical sense, you need to attract the big firms. Opportunities to capture larger firms moving out of London due to soaring rents could be a potential."*

As part of the analysis a review of the comments made by Borough respondents to each mission can be viewed in Appendix K. A digest of these comments for Stevenage can be seen below:

Sustainable County	Healthy Places for All	A World Class Economy	Digital Access for All	Quality Affordable Housing	Transport for Hertfordshire
<b>Financial Concerns and Accessibility</b>  <b>Infrastructure and Public Transport</b>  <b>Concerns about practicality</b>  These themes reflect concerns about the affordability and costs associated with implementing sustainability e.g. retrofitting homes. Further to this there was emphasis on importance of public transport to achieve this aim and need for transport improvements to accommodate this. Also there were concerns about the practicality of achieving net-zero aims with existing technologies	<b>Green Spaces and well-being</b>  <b>Infrastructure and services</b>  <b>Cultural and social challenges</b>  These themes reflect the importance of green spaces for mental health and well-being with some arguing against the building on green spaces. Further to this, concerns about the lack of infrastructure to accommodate this, such as healthcare. Also there was some scepticism about how this mission could be achieved without a shift in the public's attitude.	<b>Economic Growth and Job Opportunities</b>  <b>Challenges and Concerns</b>  <b>Infrastructure, Education, and Quality of Life</b>  These themes reflect the desire for new opportunities and growth in Stevenage to support home ownership, attract diverse industries and support enterprising businesses. There were concerns about the current economic climate and the ability to achieve these goals. There were calls for significant investment in education, road improvements and better healthcare.	<b>Accessibility and Inclusion</b>  <b>Financial and Practical Feasibility</b>  <b>Technological Infrastructure and Connectivity</b>  These themes reflect the emphasis on the need for affordable and inclusive solution that cater to a diverse range of individuals. There was also some concern about the practicality of implementing widespread high-speed broadband due to funding and rising costs. There was also recognition of the importance of digital access for education, knowledge and growth with the need to ensure the reliability and modernisation of technological infrastructure.	<b>Affordability and Discrimination</b>  <b>Quality and Sustainability</b>  <b>Infrastructure and Planning</b>  These themes reflect the concerns about the affordability of the current housing market and possible discrimination. There was also an emphasis on the need for quality housing with environmental considerations and sustainable features such as solar panels, insulation and construction practices. There were concerns about the lack of infrastructure to support housing development with a focus on better planning.	<b>Concerns about Public Transport Reliability and Accessibility</b>  <b>Resistance to Anti-Car Measures</b>  <b>Infrastructure Improvement and Government Investment</b>  These themes reflect concerns about the reliability of public transport and public access through the current isolation of smaller towns and villages. There were some concerns about the introduction of anti-car measures in lieu of the lack of reliable public transport. Further to this, there were calls for significant investment from the government to improve roads, increase bus services and address traffic congestion.

## Three Rivers



### District context:

Three Rivers has a greater disposable income per head than the national average, however jobs are less accessible by active or sustainable transport measures and there is a large skills gap as people get older. People are generally happier and healthier than average.

47 respondents filled out the survey in Three Rivers.

An average support for the six missions across Three Rivers was 64.5%, which is slightly lower when compared to the average level of support rate across the county (71.2% in agreement).

Despite this, all missions received an overall majority of support – with Sustainable County being the most supported mission, with 72.3% of respondents agreeing.

Although more agreed than disagreed, the mission which received the lowest support was improving Transport for Hertfordshire, which received 53.2% support. This is consistent with the profile of Three Rivers which largely is more dependent on private cars than other boroughs in the County.

### Selected quotes:

*"There needs to be investment in schools and social housing before any new 'affordable homes'"*

*"No building on green belt and more spent on brownfield clear up and home building in towns. Lower density housing, and homes with gardens and off road parking. Cut down density and give people more space."*

*"[A Low Carbon Economy] is absolutely crucial for future generations and the time to start is now."*

As part of the analysis a review of the comments made by Borough respondents to each mission can be viewed in Appendix K. A digest of these comments for Three Rivers can be seen below:

Sustainable County	Healthy Places for All	A World Class Economy	Digital Access for All	Quality Affordable Housing	Transport for Hertfordshire
<b>Challenge of achieving carbon free goals</b>  <b>Concerns about local practicalities</b>  <b>Community Engagement and alternative approaches</b>  These themes reflect concerns about the practicality and cost of environmental policies such as use of taxpayer money. Also, specific local concerns such as lack of public transport and considering the needs of low-income families. Further to this, there is a need to include the community-centric initiatives which future proof the well-being of the next generation	<b>Local Economy and jobs</b>  <b>Transportation challenges and infrastructure</b>  <b>Environmental conservation and green spaces</b>  These themes highlight the importance of job creation and the local economy in promoting wellbeing. There was also concerns about the lack of public transport and the need to consider improving local infrastructure. Further to this, there was strong advocacy for the preservation of green spaces and calls for green initiatives such as tree planting, community gardens with a focus on health services as well.	<b>Parking and Economic Viability of High Street</b>  <b>Local Economic Support and Job Creation</b>  <b>Environmental Impact and Net Zero Pursuit</b>  These themes highlight the impact of limiting parking on local business growth. There was also a desire for practical support for local businesses to create more jobs. As well as this, there were concerns about the environmental cost of proposed initiatives.	<b>Universal Access at Subsidised Rates</b>  <b>Scepticism Towards the Internet</b>  <b>Support for Communication Infrastructure</b>  These comments reflect the belief that everyone should have access to affordable internet. There was also reflection that the internet raises privacy and security concerns. As well as this, respondents expressed a positive stance on the installation of communication infrastructure especially regarding mobile masts.	<b>Housing Priorities and Types</b>  <b>Affordability and Amenities</b>  <b>Environmental Considerations and Council Involvement</b>  These themes reflect the strong emphasis on the need for more social housing. There was criticism of the affordability of current housing and the importance of infrastructure planning. There was opposition to building on Green Belt areas with advocacy for lower-density housing.	<b>Infrastructure and Transport Issues</b>  <b>Concerns about Initiatives and Policies</b>  <b>Calls for Improved Public Transport</b>  These themes reflect concerns about the condition of roads, lack of buses and traffic congestion as well as the reliability of public transport. There was also concerns about emission reducing initiatives without improvements to existing infrastructure which prevents people from transitioning away from car usage. There were calls for improved public transport including more accountability for bus companies, nationalisation of public transport and fair pricing.

Watford



District context:

Watford has a younger population with a growing number of families. This has been reflected in a change in working hours with more people reporting they are looking after their family and home and working less than full time. There has been a rise in private renting in the last decade and this may be mirrored in an increase in flats.

With 233 responses, Watford ranked third when it came to the area with the most surveys completed.

The area also had the lowest number of people who disagreed with the Sustainable County mission, (77% in agreement and only 12% against).

Overall, 71% of people were in overall support of the six missions, with 12.5% in disagreement.

The area ranked higher than the county-wide average when it came to agreement for each of the six missions.

Selected quotes:

*"Gradual changes, not ruthless imposition of laws needed [for low carbon]."*

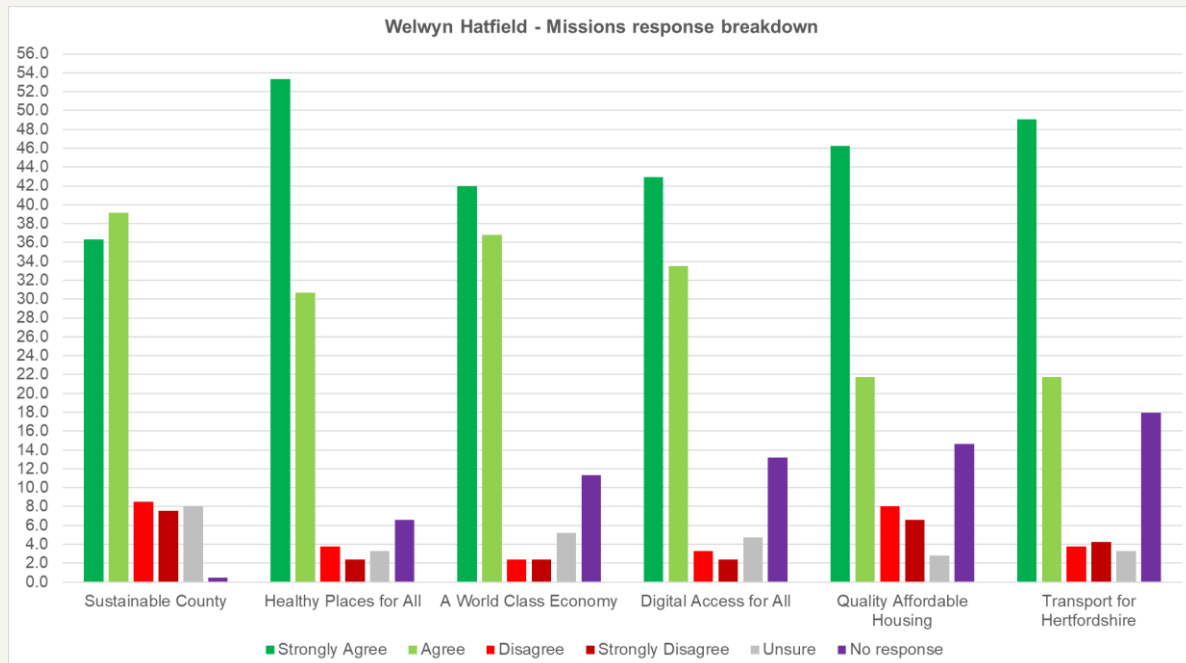
*"Where areas are being built up with high rise blocks replacing what was 'green space' on estates it is far from helping mental health"*

*"We need more opportunities for creative development within Watford so that all the jobs here aren't just customer service, and all the interesting jobs aren't being commuted into London for. Get more local kids into film!"*

As part of the analysis a review of the comments made by Borough respondents to each mission can be viewed in Appendix K. A digest of these comments for Watford can be seen below:

Sustainable County	Healthy Places for All	A World Class Economy	Digital Access for All	Quality Affordable Housing	Transport for Hertfordshire
<p><b>Concerns about implementation and impact on motorists</b></p> <p><b>Emphasis on practical solutions</b></p> <p><b>Prioritising infrastructure and housing</b></p> <p>These themes reflect concerns about the introduction of measures that affect motorists such as ULEZ. Further to this, many comments highlight the importance of practical and feasible solutions over ambitious but unrealistic goals. Also, comments highlighted the need to provide improved transport infrastructure and sustainable practices in construction</p>	<p><b>Concerns about urban development</b></p> <p><b>Health and wellbeing</b></p> <p><b>Infrastructure and connectivity</b></p> <p>These themes reflect an animosity to further high-rise development with a desire for more detailed plans on urban regeneration and preserving green spaces. Further to this, there was an emphasis on healthy living through access to food and exercise, promotion of youth groups and better health facilities. Also there were needs for better transport connectivity across the county.</p>	<p><b>Economic Development and Job Opportunities</b></p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Business Environment</b></p> <p><b>Social and Community Development</b></p> <p>These themes reflect the need for more schools, shops, libraries and healthcare facilities as well as creating more job opportunities. There were observations about the closing of local shops and businesses with calls to lower business rates and create initiatives to attract more businesses to the area. On this, there were concerns about the decline of the Watford High Street and an emphasis on the world-class economy needing to improve living standards.</p>	<p><b>Digital Divide Concerns</b></p> <p><b>Access and Support</b></p> <p><b>Mixed Views on Digital Importance</b></p> <p>These themes reflect concerns about their being a digital divide between those who have access to digital technology and skills and those who do not. There was emphasis on the need for more digital access and support to utilise improved connectivity. There were also some differing opinions on the importance of digital access.</p>	<p><b>Infrastructure and Services</b></p> <p><b>Affordability and Social Housing</b></p> <p><b>Quality, Green Spaces, and Local Impact</b></p> <p>These themes reflect the emphasis on the importance of infrastructure and services of supporting housing with concerns about the inadequacy of existing services. Affordability is a recurring theme with calls for genuinely affordable housing being championed. Also there were comments expressing concerns about the quality of housing and the impact of high-rise development on green spaces, mental health and community well-being.</p>	<p><b>Issues with Public Transport Reliability and Service Quality</b></p> <p><b>Infrastructure Challenges and Traffic Issues</b></p> <p><b>Calls for Alternative Transportation Solutions and Future Planning</b></p> <p>These themes reflect the dissatisfaction with the current state of public transport with infrastructure challenges not equipped to deal with traffic congestion or support electric transport options. There were also calls for future planning to map out future alternative transport solutions such as tram lines.</p>

## Welwyn Hatfield



### District context:

Population is aging with more over 50-year-olds as well as more people moving into full-time employment. The majority of residents are working locally however people are still using private cars to travel to work.

With 214 responses, Welwyn Hatfield ranked fourth when it came to the area with the most surveys completed.

75.6% of people were in overall agreement with the missions, with just 9.2% against.

All six missions ranked higher than the county-wide average when it came to those in support. The missions which received the most support included Sustainable County (75.5%), Healthy Places for All (84%) and A World Class Economy (78.8%).

As with other areas, the mission with the most disagreement was Sustainable County (16% against), however, interestingly, it also ranked highly when it came to opposition to the Quality Affordable Housing mission (14.6% against).

### Selected quotes:

*"We cannot sustain a carbon free existence but if we can reduce our reliance on carbon fuels then it will benefit everyone."*

*"There is still a need for social housing and more as the house prices are increasing instead of selling them. The last decent social building project was Panshanger"*

*"Frequency and speed of trains needs to improve particular for Welwyn North and Knebworth commuters who have lost their fast services and now have a slower and more reduced service but are paying more"*

As part of the analysis a review of the comments made by Borough respondents to each mission can be viewed in Appendix K. A digest of these comments for Welwyn Hatfield can be seen below:

Sustainable County	Healthy Places for All	A World Class Economy	Digital Access for All	Quality Affordable Housing	Transport for Hertfordshire
<p><b>Transportation and infrastructure</b></p> <p><b>Environmental concerns and sustainable practices</b></p> <p><b>Social and economic impacts</b></p> <p>These themes reflect concerns about existing transport infrastructure with emphasis on providing cheap and convenient public transport. They wish to see sustainable practices incorporated such as solar panels and ban coal / log burners. Also, there were concerns about the affordability and feasibility of achieving a low carbon economy by 2050, and the impact on low income individuals</p>	<p><b>Infrastructure and Accessible Amenities</b></p> <p><b>Urban Planning and Housing Issues</b></p> <p><b>Community Well-being and Engagement</b></p> <p>These themes reflect the need for a diverse range of options for low-cost facilities for all. There were also concerns about the long timeline for improvements, especially the stress on local infrastructure and the increase in housing. As well as this, there was a concern about an increasing strain on the local population due to anti-social behaviour, overdevelopment and anti-car policies with a need for a healthy, connected environment.</p>	<p><b>Concerns about Overdevelopment and Preservation of Green Spaces</b></p> <p><b>Scepticism about Economic Growth Metrics and Public Services</b></p> <p><b>Calls for Inclusive Economic Opportunities and Local Infrastructure Improvement</b></p> <p>These themes reflect concerns about overdevelopment with a desire to balance economic growth with the preservation of the local environment and green spaces. Some comments questioned using GDP as an effective economic metric and concerns that local public services need to improve. Also, comments suggested that a World Class economy needs to benefit everyone with inclusive economic opportunities and affordable housing.</p>	<p><b>Digital Inclusion and Accessibility</b></p> <p><b>Technology Education and Support</b></p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Connectivity</b></p> <p>These themes reflect the need for inclusion for people who do not have digital skills. There were also calls for more digital upskilling including lessons and courses. There was acknowledgement of the importance of connectivity while at the same time some mixed opinion on the prioritisation of digital access in comparison to some pressing issues on the decline of town centres.</p>	<p><b>Concerns about Development Quality and Impact</b></p> <p><b>Affordable and Social Housing Priority</b></p> <p><b>Environmental Considerations and Infrastructure</b></p> <p>These themes reflect concerns about the quality of housing developments and wish to maintain a 'garden city' feel by avoiding overdevelopment. Respondents wanted to see improved infrastructure and an urgent need for affordable housing. There is strong emphasis on environmental sustainability in housing design with concerns about the environmental impact of housing development including loss of Green Belt and overdevelopment.</p>	<p><b>Transportation Infrastructure Improvement</b></p> <p><b>Affordability and Accessibility of Public Transport</b></p> <p><b>Environmental Considerations and Planning</b></p> <p>These themes reflect calls for improved transport with concerns about the frequency and speed of trains and regularity of bus services. There were also requests for more affordable and reliable public transport options. Also, there were calls for investment in cycling infrastructure, electronic transport and sustainable alternatives.</p>



## 2.12 Results by age category

The aim of this engagement was to consult widely with the whole of the Hertfordshire community. In order to do so, HGB ran a targeted social media campaign which looked to attract the interest of people across all different age groups. In particular, HGB wanted to attract responses from younger people in the borough as often they are under-represented in surveys and engagement events.

### Overview of support

One question in the survey asked respondents to indicate their age group. A table with summarising these responses can be seen below:

AGE GROUP	RESPONSES (COUNT)	% RESPONSES	SUPPORT (%)	OPPOSITION (%)
17 or under	24	1%	90.3%	3.5%
18-34	339	14.4%	89.9%	6.8%
35-54	636	26.6%	84%	11.2%
55-74	1058	44.5%	83.8%	11.2%
75+	259	10.8%	84.1%	9.3%
Prefer not to say	66	2.8%	63.6%	26.5%

It should be noted that while some age groups showed more opposition to the missions than others, all respondents who indicated their age showed a strong level of overall support for each mission. No mission scored less than 74.9% support in any age group.

For those who chose not to indicate their support for the missions, there was a far lower level of support, still demonstrated a majority of support. Of the 66 responses who chose not to disclose their age, 63.6% were in support of the missions, while 26.5% were opposed.

## Age Group - Colour Matrix of responses

In order to quantify the responses by age, HGB has analysed the average responses to the individual missions and represented this in a matrix chart.

This matrix chart took the levels of support and opposition indicated by the respondents of each age group and compared against the average levels of support each mission. This matrix also indicates the highest levels of support by age group as well as the boroughs which displayed the most opposition to each mission. Please see below:

Age Group	Sustainable County	Healthy Places for All	A World Class Economy	Digital Access for All	Quality Affordable Housing	Transport for Hertfordshire
Under 18	80%	96%	88%	92%	88%	100%
18-34	87.5%	93.2%	88.5%	88%	88.3%	89.8%
35-54	81%	89.4%	85.9%	83.1%	81%	86.4%
55-74	77.3%	87.5%	85.8%	86.7%	82.3%	84.4%
75+	74.7%	86.1%	87.2%	86.4%	82.4%	88.6%

Key	
	Most support for the mission in Hertfordshire
	Overall support for the mission – 90% - 100%
	Overall support for the mission – 80% - 90%
	Overall support for the mission – 80% or below

## **Analysis**

In summary, the younger respondent groups were the most likely to support the missions, with older groups being more sceptical about the missions in the survey. This was a descending scale by age until the 75+ group which saw an uptick in support for the missions.

Support for each mission was determined by reviewing the quantitative feedback and counting any respondents from the pertinent age group who selected 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree' as a response to the question.

Opposition to each mission was determined by reviewing the quantitative feedback and counting any respondents from the pertinent age group who selected 'Strongly Disagree' or 'Disagree' as a response to the question.

A summary of the responses to each group can be seen below:

### **17 or Under**

Across all the missions, those who selected 17 or Under were more likely to indicate support than the average response across the age groups, with average levels of support of 90.7% and just an average of 3.3% opposition per mission.

Those respondents who selected 17 or under were most supportive of Transport for Hertfordshire (100% indicated Strongly Agree or Agree) Healthy Places for All (96%) and Digital Access for All (92%).

### **18 - 34 age group**

Similarly, to the 17 or Under age group, the 18 - 34 group were more likely to support each mission compared to the average of all the groups. The 18 - 35 group had an average score of 89.9% support across the missions, with 6.8% the average opposition score. This was a slightly increased level of opposition to the 17 or Under Group.

Respondents who selected 18 - 34 were most supportive of Healthy Places for All (93.2%), Transport for Hertfordshire (89.8%) and World Class Economy (88.5%).

### **35 - 54 age group**

The 35 - 54 group was the first group which demonstrated a lower level of support, although the average was still high at 84.5% support for the missions.

Respondents who selected 35 - 54 demonstrated a mix of responses and proved to be the most opinionated group on the missions. This group was most supportive on Healthy Places for all mission (89.4%). They diverged most from the highest level of support on Transport for Hertfordshire with 86.4% support in comparison to the highest level of support from the 17 or Under age group with 100% support.

### **55 - 74 age group**

Respondents who indicated they are in the 55 – 74 age group, were again slightly less supportive than the younger groups with an average support level of 84%. This should be seen as being highly supportive of the six missions.

The highest level of support from this age group came from the Healthy Places for All mission with 87.2%, Digital Access for All with 86.7% support and a World Class Economy with 85.5% support. The mission which this age group showed the most divergence from the most supportive group was on Transport for Hertfordshire. The 17 or Under group had a 100% support for Transport mission, while the 55-74 age group having a still high 84.6% in support.

### **75+ age group**

Finally, the oldest group - 75+ - demonstrated more support for the missions than the previous two groups. This group was most supportive of the Transport for Hertfordshire Mission (88.6%), a World Class Economy (87.2%) and Digital Access for All (86.4%). Similarly to the 55 – 74 age group, the 75+ age group diverged the most from the 17 or Under group in the Transport mission – with 88.6% support, compared to the 100% support from the youngest group.

## **2.13 By industry**

HGB promoted the campaign and gathered industry feedback on the survey through a series of in-person events, which included:

- The voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) conference (28<sup>th</sup> November)
- The Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Development board meeting - with 120 members in attendance – (November 22<sup>nd</sup>)
- An in-person stakeholder workshop (7th December)

**Please note** - the feedback from the circa 150 attendees at the HIDB and in-person workshop events were captured in the room and are summarised in the appendix of this document (**Appendix D**) – these are not captured in the below table.

The comments were captured through discussions with members of the HIDB team and key findings for each mission can be viewed below:

### **Sustainable County**

- The mission is a good one but there needs to be a mixture of enforcing existing rules and providing incentives for private industry
- Attendees supported the aspiration for zero carbon development
- This can be achieved through direct investment from local authorities given the cost of ensuring sustainability in the development sector
- Sustainability needs to be delivered throughout the missions across industries – from more sustainable construction methods in development to promoting sustainability in business, the Hertfordshire economy and transport methods

### **Quality Affordable Housing**

- Agreement that delivering affordable housing is important
- There is however a need to define what affordable housing is and how this should be delivered – i.e. through local authorities building their own affordable housing and S106 contributions
- There is a need to provide a range of different affordable housing options across different tenures and also specialist housing accommodation
- Attendees would like more certainty in how affordable housing is funded and delivered which can be driven by local authorities
- The planning system is currently limiting affordable housing delivery and this should be 'freed up' to help support development
- Planners in local authorities should have more support to help deliver affordable housing and communicate the importance of affordable housing delivery to Council planning departments

### **Healthy Places for All**

- Healthy Places should be a supported ambition in Hertfordshire
- Development should be used to help support this through productive use of green spaces, pepper potting development and safe neighbourhoods to promote wellness and wellbeing
- Infrastructure should be delivered to help support private development – such as education facilities, acute specialist care and health providers.

### **A World Class Economy**

- It could be argued that Hertfordshire is already a World Class economy, with a lot of different unique selling points across the county

- There are certain industries that Hertfordshire excels in and should therefore promote – such as the film industries and life sciences
- Hertfordshire needs to focus on growth through attracting external investment, providing spaces for business, creating apprenticeships and improving connections between industries
- There is an opportunity to push a 'green economy' with improved technology to achieve this, though some attendees also wondered if this could be achieved in line with maintaining a 'World Class' economy
- Some industries are overlooked in the county, such as nighttime and blue collar / manual jobs
- There needs to be less emphasis of growth in specific areas of Hertfordshire but the County as a whole

### **Digital Access for All**

- Digital infrastructure is an important mission to help support a number of other missions and needs – such as improving business and building infrastructure
- Fast internet or broadband should be viewed as a basic necessity for the county, connectivity is still poor especially in rural areas
- Developing digital skills is important to help utilise digital access for young people and business
- There were some concerns that this push for digital infrastructure would leave behind people who don't like use technology – described as a 'digital deficit'

### **Transport for Hertfordshire**

- Improved transport connections across the County are vital, with improved bus and train infrastructure required
- Current transport infrastructure is not good – issues with travelling across the County especially going east-west, as well as availability of bus and train services
- There needs to be a better strategic county-wide approach providing an overarching transport plan or organisation to oversee transport in Hertfordshire
- New transport infrastructure needs to be sustainable, promote business opportunities and should transition the county away from car usage
- Design considerations should be explored, taking ideas from what has already worked and new initiatives to create sustainable transport options which help connect areas throughout Hertfordshire

In summary, the comments from these events very much reflect the main findings found through the survey. Attendees were in support of the missions and wanted to see how these missions could be developed and delivered in the future. The main difference in these comments when compared to the survey responses was that attendees often made more specific comments about how their own professional industries could improve or benefit from the missions. These industries included film and television, property development, education and transport.

Aside from these in-person events, the online survey encouraged people to indicate whether they were responding on behalf of themselves as a resident, or whether they were responding on behalf of a business based in Hertfordshire.

**A table showing the breakdown of these responses can be seen below:**

<b>Are you responding for yourself or on behalf of a business?</b>	<b>% of responses</b>
<b>For yourself</b>	98.3%
<b>On behalf of a business / organisation</b>	1.5%
<b>Other</b>	0.5%

Most respondents indicated they were responding for themselves as a resident of Hertfordshire.

If they did say they worked in Hertfordshire, respondents were then asked what industry they worked in. The range of industries identified included the following:

- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
- Mining and Quarrying
- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Wholesale and Retail Trade
- Financial Services
- Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities
- Public Administration and Defence
- Education
- Health and Social Work

## 2.14 Next Steps

HGB has undertaken a comprehensive programme of public engagement with the local community on its outline missions to promote Hertfordshire. The feedback from these activities so far demonstrates that there is strong acceptance and county-side support for each of the proposed missions, with a majority of support across all boroughs and age groups.

This survey has been widely advertised and consulted upon during the engagement period, and this is reflected in the quality of support demonstrated in the feedback. The survey ran for a month between 10<sup>th</sup> November – 10<sup>th</sup> December.

In total, the landing page received 8,763 page views over the consultation period, with 7,387 unique users accessing the page. The survey website received 4,375 online submissions with 7,387 individual users viewing the survey, with 4,379 entries in total across the engagement period.

These responses have been analysed and both a quantitative and qualitative analysis of each responses has been undertaken reviewing their responses to each mission and whether they agree with each mission.

Analysis has also been done to review the responses by county where indicated and by industry. Further to this, HGB has conducted multiple stakeholder meetings asking members of the Hertfordshire business community to provide their commentary on the missions. These comments have been considered and fed back into this report.

In summary, the responses have demonstrated that the majority of those surveyed and consulted support each of the missions, believing them to be strong goals for HGB and Hertfordshire as a County. There is an interest to see how these goals are developed beyond the missions and how this will be delivered in practice. From our consultation and review of responses, it can be implied there is tacit acceptance of the goals and a desire to see these missions be rolled out across Hertfordshire to improve the county for residents and local businesses.

The detailed feedback summary included in this report has been shared across the mission leads for them to review and further refine the six missions to achieve this as identified within this survey.

Now the campaign has ended, this final report provides an updated analysis on the feedback responses. This will be incorporated into a final presentation document, with the final missions presented to Hertfordshire Growth Board in early 2024.



## 3. Appendix

### 3.1 Appendix A - Timetable of activities

			SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
Workstream	Activity						
	Preparatory work	Stakeholder database					
		Social value needs analysis					
		In-person workshop					
	Public/stakeholder engagement	Stakeholder and political engagement					
		Public engagement events					
		Social media advertising					
		Stakeholder symposium event					
	Survey campaign	Survey live from 10 <sup>th</sup> November – 10 <sup>th</sup> December					
	Output	Presentation and report first draft					
		Presentation and report approvals					
		Project wrap up review					

### 3.2 Appendix B - Survey Questions

The below table summarises the questions asked via our in-person and digital survey:

Question Subject	Question Set
Core mission #1 - Sustainable County	To what extent do you agree with this mission? Do you have any further comments?
Core mission #2 - Healthy Places for All	To what extent do you agree with this mission? Do you have any further comments?
Core mission #3 - A World Class Economy	To what extent do you agree with this mission? Do you have any further comments?
Core mission #4 - Digital Access for All	To what extent do you agree with this mission? Do you have any further comments?

<b>Core mission #5 - Quality Affordable Housing</b>	<p>To what extent do you agree with this mission?</p> <p>Do you have any further comments?</p>
<b>Core mission #6 - Transport for Hertfordshire</b>	<p>To what extent do you agree with this mission?</p> <p>Do you have any further comments?</p>
<b>Other Questions</b>	<p>Do you have anything else to add regarding our six core missions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Low Carbon Economy</li><li>2. Healthy Places for All</li><li>3. A World Class Economy</li><li>4. Digital Access for All</li><li>5. Quality &amp; Affordable Housing for All</li><li>6. Transport for Hertfordshire</li></ol>

### 3.3 Appendix C - Stakeholder Engagement Methodology

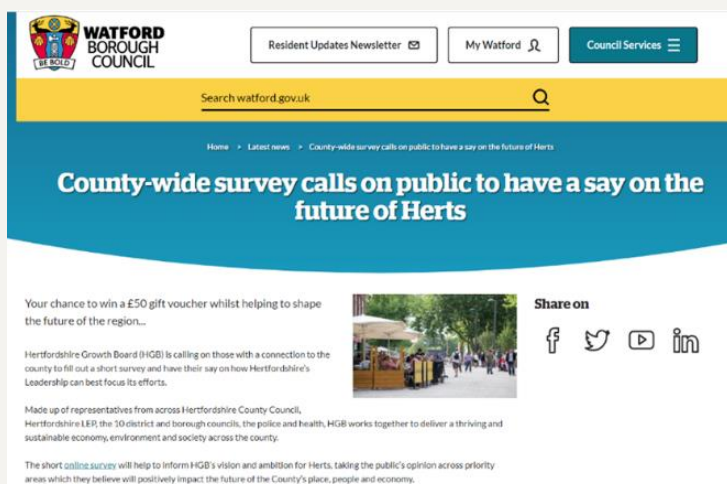
HGB held three in-person stakeholder events to collate the views of local stakeholders across Hertfordshire. This included:

- A workshop with local authority leaders - Wednesday 25th October
- The in-person quarterly meeting of the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Development Board - Wednesday 22nd November
- And a further stakeholder workshop to gain further public/private sector stakeholder feedback - Thursday 7th December

A collection of the different methods of public engagement can be viewed below:



Targeted social media ads



Stakeholder websites sharing the campaign

### County-wide survey calls on public to have a say on the future of Herts

Published: 13 November 2023



HGB website newspaper



Stakeholder and public sector amplification on social media

### 3.4 Appendix D – HIDB & HGB – event meeting notes

Aligned to the six HGB missions, this document details the notes gathered from attendees across the x6 tables at the HIDB session on the 22nd November, 2023.

#### Mission - Sustainable County

- Affordability is important and cannot be ignored – decisions will need to be made about trading off other elements of development with more robust sustainability requirements (viability)
- If expectations set out early, measures can be factored into land deals and values.
- Cost of materials are up even if technology costs are down.
- Skills need to be in place to enable delivery of innovation.
- Encourage early engagement with LPAs, and clarity about expectations. How do LPAs weigh sustainability against other key priorities.
- A sense that carbon-saving is high up on the agenda.
- Challenging to deliver along with the wider ambitions of the green agenda. The construction industry is still playing catch up.
- Policy helps to level the playing field otherwise landowners will just focus on who will pay them the most money.
- Frustration that sustainable aspirations get watered down over the course of an application.
- Sustainability is expensive and education of the occupier on how new technologies work is required.
- Mixed response overall – needs to be a mixture of carrot and stick.
- It is important to promote healthy neighbourhoods and create nice spaces to live.
- One aspect of this is to focus on quality design and how this can be achieved.
- There is an aspiration for zero carbon development.
- We need more affordable homes, however to make them sustainable makes them more unaffordable, is there a subsidy that can be put in place.
- Councils' should be retrofitting existing council houses to build the skills market for wider sector to then benefit.
- There needs to be more flexibility within the Local Plan
- What is the Government plan for Future Homes Standard, uncertainty is not helpful to support economy.
- There needs to be action from Local Authorities in terms of supporting solar and renewable schemes instead of the perception of NIMBYism.
- Removal of all condensing boilers
- Net zero – ideally should be more ambitious than 2050
- Education and engagement with wider public is key to make sure they understand why it's important and what they can do about it
- Should be linked into skills agenda – green jobs
- Historic retrofit also really important existing housing stock

- Water usage / neutrality shouldn't be forgotten
- Mixture of carrot and stick is needed
- Gilston will be a good case study, with sus transport corridors to encourage 60% modal shift
- An issue with East/West travel
- Need to have the car designed out, but bus regulation is much needed – we'll need to give up road space to accommodate
- Transport needs to be considered infrastructure-first rather than an afterthought
- We need to consider where people shop, leisure and work - Milton Keynes identified as doing well in this regard
- Walkable and cyclable communities are key
- Difference between centric areas (such as Cambridge) which draw in surrounding areas vs polycentric areas like Herts - I.e. applying centric policies (such as congestion charges) to a polycentric area is going to be a real challenge

### **Mission - Quality Affordable Housing**

- Delivery of AH is clearly important but so is tenure split.
- S106 contributions are higher than ever.
- One size doesn't fit all in each authority.
- Council can make up shortfalls through intervention and delivering themselves.
- Delivering affordable homes at the affordable level can sometimes lead to negative land values.
- There is currently a perfect storm with lots of planning changes coming in all at once.
- The length of time it takes to produce a local plan also doesn't help as the building regs change in the same period and make it more difficult to hit the original targets.
- The London Plan Review could help?
- Talk about how OPA can be misleading and held up like a piece of gold when the site is purchased by a developer. Overpaying forces a squeeze on items such as affordable.
- Design codes would help improve quality.
- Concerns that officers change across the course of applications, especially at County Councils.
- Greater flexibility in tenures would be welcome. Delivering First Homes has been challenging in Herts due to house prices in the county.
- Registered providers have pulled out of sites in recent months to refurbish their own stock. This has left homes and flats sitting empty.
- Herts Living is not quite there as a provider but it would be useful if there was a safety net for these situations.
- Affordability is difficult to define and the mechanics are complex, there needs to be an easier definition both planning and in comms.
- There needs to be more certainty in how affordable housing is funded and delivered.



- Affordable housing requirements differ between each housing authority which creates challenges. These challenges should be met by more government subsidy otherwise this will come from different affordability tenures.
- Funding should be delivered earlier to provide more certainty of investment.
- High quality design can be achieved through place shaping and place making including supported accommodation.
- Specialist accommodation is needed to deliver for residents with complex needs.
- Promote healthy communities through affordable housing and purpose-built housing
- Funding and CIL payments could follow the GLA model – where the need is defined more clearly compared to Herts.
- S106 contribution structure ties the hands of house builders in providing community funds.
- Developers are looking more towards package deals as part of affordable housing offer.
- Hertfordshire has lots of great attributes being so close to many key transport hubs, resulting in high land value which challenges viability of affordable housing.
- Until gas boilers stop being used it isn't a fair playing field for developers when some are still building with them.
- With lots of planning policy changes there is no stability in terms of requirements from developments.
- Solar panels should be enforced on new homes to reduce the power requirements on the grid.
- Insulation and eco measures are not currently seen as a premium for cost of the end house.
- High land values restrict delivery of specialist types of housing e.g. bungalows
- All tenures of affordable housing are important and are in short supply
- Social housing is likely the biggest need as much more affordable
- Developers need to do better to deliver higher affordable housing % - viability issues need to be dealt with
- Need to engage younger people much more as they are likely most affected by unaffordable prices – hidden homeless (living with family)
- Focus on key workers, e.g. hairdressers, taxi drivers etc
- First Homes is something developers should be looking at more
- Signing up to the charter will really help to level playing field
- Is 40% viability on AH even possible with construction costs sky-high?
- No disagreement on the aims of this mission
- Retrofitting needs to be considered very carefully – fitting insulation into post-war properties creates a knock on issue with mould later down the line
- We need the right quality of housing and address issues such as mould in properties and better ventilation

### **Mission - Healthy Places for All**

- Location of a site helps to improve this.

- Reliable and affordable public transport is required to make this work better – not always the case.
- Green space also helps to improve the how healthy a place is – some poor examples of this not being the case across Herts.
- There is ambition within the County of promoting health living for the future
- There is a conversation needed how development can support this.
- Education can be used to build and develop case for this alongside existing infrastructure.
- Could utilise new garden city principles focusing on design quality, orientation not currently looked at enough.
- Some areas in Herts have a lot of crime, not safe – e.g. Stevenage and Milton Keynes.
- How are the NHS and health providers contributing to the growth of HIDs and understanding the requirements of growth across the County.
- More productive use of green spaces, outdoor gym, cycle tracks linking communities.
- Infrastructure to go in first to support development so it's not always seen as the last
- Easy access to health facilities important
- Designs of parks, green spaces need to consider opportunities to improve mental health
- Wayfinding points really important for elderly population or those with needs
- Pepper potting housing developments can create a more harmonious community
- Acute care need is just for 1% of population – need to consider earlier interventions, rather than focusing on hospitals/A&E
- We need safe & healthy neighbourhoods where people feel comfortable to exercise and venture outdoors
- Broad agreement for this mission

### **Mission - A world class economy**

- Business driven objectives needed
- LEP do a lot of work to grow skills and drive investment in key sectors but HGB can help also when they are absorbed into HCC.
- Employment and skills training plans for major developments underpin jobs and development
- Circular economy and local opportunities but also considering inter authority links.
- Collaboration is key and social value is a way to capture and encourage this.
- Attracting people into Herts isn't difficult.
- Tender framework process at the County Council could be improved so that it encourages local firms to apply and win rather than just the large national companies.
- There can be difficult conversations with local politicians when the drawbridge is up to new development/investment.



- Employment land – trying to find suitable sites is difficult, especially if a business is trying to expand.
- Employees need to find a bit of everything – culture, homes and leisure.
- Businesses are happy to add money into local schemes to improve the area.
- People want to work in different places now compared to 1970's/90's building.
- Don't just pull-down old buildings – this is not sustainable.
- Herts require inward investment for a world class economy.
- Hertfordshire is a large county with different areas which have their own unique USPs. Luton has the airport, Stevenage has life sciences, other assets such as the film studios etc.
- Hertfordshire should draw out key assets and focus on this to drive future employment opportunities. Need to define what Hertfordshire is good but also consider whether the county wants to push new sectors.
- Can deliver growth also through looking at the county as a whole rather than consider individuality.
- It could be argued that Hertfordshire is already a world class economy.
- Need to consider how to attract business through taxation, connectivity and spaces for the future.
- Need to keep mind current manual jobs which need to be retained and not forgotten.
- Need to think collectively and collaboratively – productivity is falling.
- We have significant skills shortages across the County with easy links to London and other hubs, people live here but choose to travel out of county to work.
- The Growth Board needs to look at the scale of ambition and potential for the next 5-10 years to take the longer term view.
- We need to look at the potential opportunity of cross working public/private sector to provide opportunities to learn different skills and keep people in the County.
- 1/3 of working people in Hertfordshire travel out of county each day for work.
- Hertfordshire needs a unique identity to attract businesses to the County with a brand.
- The Local Plans need to be ambitious and directed towards growth.
- Apprenticeships are key to the delivery of this. We need to consider apprenticeship routes that aren't just blue collar jobs.
- Industry needs to work more closely with colleges and universities to ensure there are paths into careers.
- We need less of a focus on white-collar jobs in Hertfordshire.
- There's a lot of economic investment in the science/innovation and film/tv industries but much of this is concentrated in southern Herts – it's creating a north/south divide
- We have leading film, life science industries, but are they World Leading?
- We're globally connected...
- Warner Bros' move to Herts would be a huge coup
- Herts' attention faces London as commuters/proximity to capital, but we should be also looking within the county itself

- Tech sector/robotics and logistics was identified as a key growth sector – how can we reduce emissions in logistics?
- Night time economy is often overlooked – stronger in some areas \*East Herts\* than others
- Interventions across the county helping SMEs, such as support for market stall holders: More stalls, more shoppers
- Few empty shops in Hertford/Ware/St Albans, but a lot in other post-war new towns across the county
- Co-living is performing in Watford in terms of accommodating empty office space/repurposing assets
- Regal bringing forward flexible co-working in Watford also

### **Mission - Digital access for all**

- Rural areas need greater connectivity at low cost.
- Links into business and working from home – establishing this is key to sustainable growth.
- Proximity to data storage is crucial to business growth and connectivity.
- Digital infrastructure is the most important mission.
- It helps to reduce traffic if work can be completed locally.
- There is still poor or no signal in some areas, including on the trainlines into London.
- Fast internet should be a basic.
- Digital poverty is a concern and requires additional funding.
- Small point but having to use smartphones in car parks is an exclusion for some people.
- There needs to be flexibility – but needs to reflect the drive for a world class economy.
- Public access is required and also need to consider people's skill sets.
- Hybrid working is the way forward – with everything within walking distance.
- There are skill shortages – young people need to be given multiple pathways.
- Need to ask what a dynamic places looks like.
- Don't want to hide issues of deprivation in Hertfordshire and also consider the digital deficit.
- Hertfordshire is a leader in R&D, with the rise of AI the county could be a leading area for the sector.
- Digital connectivity across the County is still poor and needs investment to bring everyone up to the same speed of provision.
- The upgrade in broadband needs to be from the box to the home and not just upgrading part of the network.
- The towns across Hertfordshire have legacy infrastructure which needs upgrading.
- Digital connectivity isn't just about infrastructure but it's also about access. Those on the lowest incomes don't necessarily have WIFI or laptops. We need to think even harder about shared provision for people to get online beyond public libraries.

- Digital infrastructure in rural areas is a problem in the county. Openreach rollout has prioritised larger towns, but left rural communities behind
- But it's not just about getting the fastest broadband, it's also about the hardware people have access to and digital skills

### **Mission - Transport for Hertfordshire**

- Greater strategic approach needed that crosses boundaries and opens up communication with providers.
- Better relationships with infrastructure providers needed.
- Must deliver modal shift.
- Innovation and engagement through tech companies.
- It sometimes feels that applications go through different stages such as promising infrastructure early on but by the end, linkages have disappeared as promises get removed over time.
- Partly down to different officers at District and County plus councils are not agile – very much the case across Herts.
- Greater partnership is required as government is seeing Herts as a place to do business.
- District/Borough Councils are being held back by the County Council.
- S278 take a very long time – too long! To be fair to HCC, it's not unique to Herts and Unitary authorities still have issues.
- No clear vision on what the County Council vision is.
- A disconnect between planning and technical teams.
- Just adding an additional bus route is not enough – more mobility hubs are required to include trains, buses and bikes. Integrated travel!
- Issues across the county. Getting everything to work together is a challenge.
- North/South connections from London are good, East/West are poor.
- Buses have to go into developments from day one to encourage take-up.
- School bus provision is poor, especially cross-county.
- Transport in Hertfordshire is not good.
- There needs to be a shift to sustainable travel.
- Hybrid working helps with this issue, but need to make sure this does not affect the local economy.
- Local authorities should consider big, future infrastructure plans, and potentially could use stockpiled CIL to do so.
- Transport out of the County is great with so many access points, however travel across the County is poor if non-existent.
- To transition out of car use we need to upgrade the public transport availability.

- Buses are poor and not regular across the County.
- Housing isn't designed to be close to business to support residents in preventing unnecessary car journeys.
- Hybrid working is the way forward, coworking/co-living however planners do not appear keen to support.
- Issue of no overhead transport strategy in Hertfordshire as there is no overall structure in Hertfordshire.
- We need a Transport for Hertfordshire – similar to TFL.
- Better incentives and/or greater deterrents to encourage more electric vehicle use. Perhaps even a ULEZ for Hertfordshire?
- £2 bus cap ending in December – how will this impact users?
- We need to be the change we want to see as public sector
- Watford has benefit of TFL through busses, but a real discrepancy county wide when it comes to private operators
- Real time display issues on bus stops are a real pain for bus users
- Good e-bike usage in Watford, but e-scooters are illegal across the county
- Bus lanes are great – but not viable in older/medieval towns
- Seeing a higher demand for e-bikes across the county – but how could these be used across counties, such as from East Herts into Essex?
- New car clubs are being launched in Watford for people to ditch second car perhaps
- Park and Ride doesn't work that well in the county given its polycentric locations, although it is feasible in Watford
- It's not just infrastructure; Schools and businesses need to do their bit
- Car parking policies based on emissions are being considered

Aligned to the six HGB missions, the below details the notes gathered from attendees across the x4 tables at the stakeholder session on 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2023.

### **Mission - Sustainable County**

- This interlinks a lot with the other missions discussed, there are also some conflicts (such as delivering a world class economy, housing and transport)
- Question on delivery - is the Growth Board in the position to deliver Net Zero in Herts by 2050?
- There needs to be scaled improvement. Aim to reach a certain level of sustainability by 2030 and avoid waiting just before 2050
- Some big businesses in Herts are trying to bring in new initiatives to promote sustainability – there needs to be best practice, education and involvement from local authorities
- How to create a thriving natural environment – promote industrial use but also Green Belt land protection
- The 2050 date does not match up with other dates used (such as 2040 for broadband). The dates give contrasting views on delivery of these goals
- The proposals would also benefit for a vision statement with an overarching view of delivering for Hertfordshire
- This mission should connect up with each sector, industry but with tangible deliveries
- Take inspiration from existing Hertfordshire ideas – such as the Garden City movement
- A need to upskill businesses and individuals to meet future green economy/retrofitting skills was cited as a potential requirement
- The table asked how can we be more creative in engagement on future campaigns to reach younger demographics
- Consultation is key – a feeling that the ULEZ campaign wasn't properly communicated, which has created the recent issues in London and opposition to the scheme in Herts
- Need both the carrot and the stick
- Solar together scheme was cited as having real potential, but often individual households can find it cheaper to buy privately rather than through LA schemes
- We need a behavioural change to bring people along – focusing less on personal blame and more on selling the positives; biodiversity net gain, thriving communities etc...
- It was commented that grant schemes are drying up for businesses/individuals to make any meaningful change here
- Not just about individual households/commuters - We need to better communicate with businesses to show how they can benefit both in terms of reputation/commercially, rather than it just being a moral imperative to improve sustainability
- There doesn't appear to be a wholesome plan for the whole of the county to ensure sustainability is important.
- We need to be looking at sustainable construction, also looking at retrofit, we need to install heat pumps, retrofit.
- We need to protect our greenbelt and not build on any aspect of this.
- How do we monetarise social value, in terms of development.
- Sustainability shouldn't be a separate vision it should be a golden thread throughout the whole of the strategy.
- Transport connectivity by sustrans is necessary

- Affordable infrastructure needed
- Convenience is key to behavioural change
- Innovation is critical and keeping on top of technological advancement through partnerships will assist.
- Strategic concerted approach from the public sector is required, with delivery partners alongside
- HGB is a key convenor.
- Circular economies need further consideration, as a sustainable county cannot be achieved without it.

### **Mission - Quality Affordable Housing**

- The table agreed there should be more affordable housing but queried whether HGB would be able to deliver on this mission, as this would surely be under the remit of local planning authorities.
- Need to make sure that this communication of providing affordable housing filters down to planning officers, as this often does not happen.
- Needs to link the delivery of affordable housing to individual areas and their socio-economic prosperity and sustainability
- Some discussion about the possible benefits of 15 minute cities, though given the controversy around them there is need to be very careful with wording
- This mission also goes hand in hand with wellbeing mission
- Also need to consider the challenges with an ageing population – certain areas with an older demographic are unaffordable for younger people to move to and consequently they are moving out of the county
- The County needs to provide more 2-3 bed houses – this will retain young people and allow the local economy to thrive.
- Also need to deliver infrastructure, amenities and services before housing with high-build quality. Caveat that viability will affect affordability of housing.
- HGB needs to avoid looking like they are ‘delivering’ this mission themselves – the mission should be about advising local authorities on this rather than delivering
- The table discussed a need for more support for planners to ensure placemaking is well considered. Not just a need for Quality Affordable Housing, but also how we can unlock more space when it comes to spinout life science businesses to grow, for example
- A local development order (LDO) was discussed, which is making a real difference in Didcot here, however there weren’t many/any projects flagged which are being delivered in Herts with more flexible planning arrangements
- It was commented we don’t make enough out of our planning powers as a county
- Watford was cited as an area with plenty of high rise buildings, but were these of sufficient quality when it comes to homes? Also, they were seen to lack the commercial infrastructure in co-working spaces/offices etc
- It was commented that planning is focused in the short-term and more long termism view was needed to ensure developments are built with where people live and work at the front of mind
- It was cited there is a real shortage when it comes to planners/skills in the public sector
- Similarly, time constraints on planning in the Chancellor’s Autumn Budget were seen as a potential challenge
- How do we free up the planning system so it encourages and supports development.

- How can we better support the private sector and public sector in building more homes
- We need to be looking at and investing in community heating schemes. However there needs to be financial support in order to enable this to happen
- We should be building infrastructure before we build houses to encourage positivity with development
- We should be looking at more coworking/coworking living.
- There needs to be more financial support with development on brownfield sites.
- We need to look at the holland model in terms of retirement living located in areas of more population instead of retirement villages.
- Every area should have a neighbourhood plan.
- Affordable housing is not affordable in Hertfordshire, even at 80% of market rate.
- Key worker schemes should be welcomed, including co-living
- Rural properties are less affordable if we look beyond property prices and consider running costs.
- There is a health aspect to securing green measures in housing, this can be at a cost to affordability.
- Upskill trades to install green solutions.
- Consider combining affordable housing with a sustainable county.
- Population growth needs to be met through supply of both private and affordable homes.

### **Mission - Healthy Places for All**

- This has connections to the entire environment
- Investing in communities needs to be part of this
- There are challenges having an ageing population including access to services and the support needed to access those services
- Need to raise ambition and aspiration for this mission – need to avoid being siloed by being neighbours to London
- This needs to focus on existing development and communities as well as the new – focus on retrofitting, cycling infrastructure and access to culture and entertainment
- Future proofing through support for children – initiatives such as ‘Philosophy for Children’ helps children with speech therapy and support
- Watford General’s rebuild was cited as a much needed facility for the county. Currently, people are having to travel to London/Essex for treatment
- Hertsmere is working with the Wellcome Trust in supporting health inequalities.
- The ageing population should be supported within existing communities and not just out in retirement villages.
- Healthcare predominately is poor across the County and the strategy should be engaging directly with those who work in the sector.

- Although a theme throughout all six, the table asked whether we should simply have a separate mission for people
- Although people were in broad agreement with all missions overall, the table felt the general person could left out from the discussions and asked whether they were too abstract in current form
- 

### **Mission - A World Class Economy**

- HGB needs to promote existing industries which are important but don't get talked about enough – for example creative industries which are a huge part of the local and national economy
- Need to promote and run a campaign to get the message of Hertfordshire's economic success and opportunity to invest
- The term 'world class' needs to be defined – some areas of Hertfordshire are affluent, but others not so much.
- There is a skills gap in certain areas – such as Watford. HGB should galvanise efforts with institutions such as Universities and build up the skills gap during and beyond university life
- Some industries are struggling with the skills gap – such as the sports industry which has low paying jobs meaning it is difficult to retain people
- Local charities – such as Create Communities – have launched initiatives to get people back into employment – however this requires funding and have struggled to do so
- Future thinking is imperative – need to focus on filling the skills gap for the future
- This needs to be relevant to people however, rather than telling them what they need to do – with multiple channels of skills training at University but also beyond or for people who don't go into higher education
- Some concern that this will conflict with other missions – such as sustainability
- The table discussed a gradual loss of joined-up thinking and connections across the business community in recent years – a feeling that businesses are becoming potentially more individualistic and asking 'what's in it for me?'
- More representation for BAME business community would be welcomed
- There will be an acute need for joining up SMEs more when the LEP is devolved – is that something the Chamber/HGB should be supporting with to a greater extent?
- Similarly, there was some confusion around the table when it came to the differentiation between HGB, HCC and the LEP – a better external profile was cited as a need and a potential re-brand/re-naming
- The Health of Hertfordshire and Herts Limited reports were cited as a good resources to benchmark business success
- A new post-Covid economic strategy is needed
- A branding issue was cited – places like Yorkshire have a much stronger 'county brand'. Do you call someone from Herts a Hertfordian!? Should we have a county-day for Herts like Yorkshire Day?
- How can we best keep businesses updated with what's going on county-wide. Comms, initiatives and campaigns are too fragmented currently – 'there are so many groups it makes your head spin!'. There seems to be separate working groups for each challenge county-wide and the table suggested a need to amalgamate to avoid doubling up/simplify
- Visitor economy shouldn't be overlooked
- The green economy, advanced manufacturing, data centres, aerospace and film/tv were cited as having real potential for further growth in the county – benefitting from pre-existing large employers such as Warner, GSK



- We have a good proximity to London and benefit from it, but we're not good at inter-county connections
- We need a better database of SMEs and businesses county-wide and more opportunities for collaboration – HIDB was cited as a sector-specific success, but how can this be applied in other areas?
- How can we better match-make and link up businesses in Herts and national/global companies with space in the county for those who are looking to relocate?
- The County needs to accelerate business investment and support businesses further through the LEP.
- There is a lack of business space in terms of grow and move on space.
- Whilst we have many large businesses we need to be supporting small businesses in providing jobs.
- Cambridge is recognised for its work in life sciences, however Hertfordshire struggles with land availability in locations where these businesses want to establish.
- Will the numbers stack up for economic growth with manufacturing and not just specialising in film & TV.
- Broxbourne film studios is currently paused, why is this project no longer viable?
- Is the supply chain there for continuous growth in film studios.
- How do we link up all the colleges and the university to ensure that they have identified the areas for future growth.
- We need to capture future skills requirements or we will fall behind.
- Retention of people and skills in-county is critical.
- Engagement with key employers who are facilitating growth. Use LEP sub groups.
- "World" class warrants distinctiveness, what makes Herts distinct?

### **Mission - Digital Access for All**

- This should be part of an intergenerational knowledge exchange. Existing libraries have been utilised to provide knowledge digitally which has increased the spectrum of internet access
- This has created community hubs where people can share knowledge and learn skills
- There also needs to be included a sustainable angle on this – technology and hardware (such as laptops) should be recycled. Some initiatives have taken old laptops to old people's homes
- However, this should not be a one size fits all policy. Digital access should not be shoe horned in every facet of life because of generational differences and those with medical issues
- There has been some unintended consequences of more digital access – such as increase in inactivity
- Ultimately there should be a balance between freedom of choice and access
- The table said this shouldn't just focus on older generation – quite a few younger people are being left without data on phones/digitally excluded due to cost of living crisis
- An excellent idea was flagged, whereby we could match young people up with the older counterparts for an inter-generational skills sharing campaign – helping to upskill and to overcome loneliness. It's something schools network could support with on a county-wide scale
- Businesses throw a lot of tech away – could this be used more effectively to bridge digital exclusion?

- However, this requires PAT testing for equipment to be resold/given away. Is this something people leaving prison could support with and help to test? A circular economy of skills sharing...
- Digital grants are well developed centrally, with funding available, but is this being realised on the ground, especially in hard-to-reach rural communities?
- 5G is so sporadic around the County, which is limiting people working and supporting businesses.
- We need full connectivity across the county with proper bandwidth to support businesses.
- How can we influence digital skills across the County and what can HGB do to support this.
- BT is not rolling out broadband fairly across the County, as well as other utilities which cause delays.
- There is a massive disparity in terms of who is connected and who isn't, this then reflects on jobs and investment.
- Long way to go to get rural businesses up to date and connected – what is viable?, support needed to adapt, now a necessity, a right?
- Needs to be inclusive and affordable.
- Key for educating young people.
- Digital skills will change with innovation and plan needs to reflect this.

### **Mission - Transport for Hertfordshire**

- There has been some previous work to survey existing issues – such as with the A41 corridor survey – but nothing appears to have happened since
- Some ideas brought up from this survey were workable but no progress has been made
- There is a balance between lowering carbon emissions and Hertfordshire's dependence on the car
- There is a lack of connectivity in the county which will allow for more sustainable, shorter journey travel
- Young people are less likely to drive because of concerns about the environment, but that limits their work opportunities as public transport is restrictive
- There needs to be integrated solutions for sustainable public transport – such as bike, bus and trains. Need to prioritise connected travel options
- Also need to take into consideration other groups – such as people with young families, elderly people, people with disabilities – and their needs. Not all can use public transport
- There needs to be a better joined up digital approach, which allows people to view information about transport across Hertfordshire
- 'Transport is a nightmare!' – North/South connectivity is okay, but East West is incredibly challenging. Often it's easier to go into London and back out again
- The Mass Rapid Transit project was cited, but question marks over viability given circa £40bn cost
- We should be looking at neighbourhood clusters and holistic, pragmatic ways to connect up Herts
- Reliability must be addressed

- Design is key – Milton Keynes approach to new town was cited as an early example of the idea being correct, but the reality being a lot more challenging – reality vs practice
- We shouldn't be too parochial when it comes to creating communities – 15 minute communities
- Highways is a significant issue, travelling around the County is much more difficult despite having great transport links.
- Re-opening the Beecham lines would be a good use of HS2 funding.
- Cheaper public transport, across Europe it is subsidised yet in UK it is highly expensive.
- What is happening with the HERT project.
- We need to support better transport throughout the county to support younger people to want to remain in Hertfordshire instead of moving out at the earliest opportunity.
- East-west link is important and currently lacking.
- Easier to go into London than travel within Hertfordshire.
- Low carbon travel needed.
- Must demonstrate impact and benefits to areas from sustrans to high streets and others in providing new solutions.
- There is opportunity not to focus on private cars but rather to strike a balance where we know that Herts is tricky to travel without private car.
- Low cost options needed
- Nicer walks, safety.

The below appendix section outlines the key themes, quotes and feedback from each of the six missions.

### 3.5 Appendix E – Mission – A Sustainable County

#### Key themes

**Support for Carbon Reduction:** Many respondents voiced their overall support for a reduction in Carbon across Hertfordshire by commenting on the various benefits brought about through a shift toward low carbon.

The benefits discussed by respondents included health benefits, economic benefits and environmental benefits.

#### Selected quotes:

*“Low-carbon living can promote a healthier lifestyle.”*

*“Low-carbon economy can reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”*

*“Low-carbon life can save more energy.”*

**Renewable Energy and Innovation:** Positive comments highlighted the potential benefits of renewable energy sources, technological progress, and innovation in achieving a low-carbon future.

The comments underscore the potential for reducing energy costs through enhanced efficiency and the adoption of renewable energy sources. There is a recognition of the role of renewable energy in fostering technological progress and innovation capacity. The notion that sustainable development aligns with the natural progression of social productive forces and scientific advancements is emphasised.

Overall, these comments reflect a positive outlook on the transformative impact of renewable energy and innovation in promoting sustainability and advancing technological capabilities.

#### Selected Quotes:

*“Energy costs can be reduced by improving energy efficiency and using renewable energy sources.”*

*“It can promote the improvement of technological progress and innovation capacity.”*

*“Sustainable development is the inevitable outcome of the development of social productive forces and scientific and technological progress.”*

**Public Transport Improvements:** Suggestions were made to improve public transport infrastructure, making it more affordable and reliable to encourage people to use it as an alternative to private vehicles.

Respondents highlighted the importance of investing in robust public transport systems, particularly in rural areas. There's a call for a shift in the allocation of the transport budget, prioritising active travel and public transport over private vehicles.

The need for comprehensive sustainable transport infrastructure, including cycling paths, was stressed, to encourage a significant shift from cars to more sustainable modes of transportation. These comments collectively advocate for substantial improvements in public transport and active travel infrastructure to alleviate road pressure, reduce pollution, and cut carbon emissions.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"Invest in good public transport, including the rural areas. A good, reliable transport network and improved cycling and walking routes will reduce the pressure on our roads, pollution, and carbon emissions."*

*"To achieve this, the County Council must refocus its transport budget away from private vehicles and towards substantial step change capacity in active travel and public transport."*

*"A few cycle paths here and there are insufficient. Every town must see sustained investment in LTN 1/20 compatible infrastructure, creating networks of sustainable transport infrastructure to get a significant percentage of short trips out of cars and onto cycles and mobility aids."*

**Environmental Protection:** Positive sentiment was shared about the importance of protecting natural ecosystems, planting more trees, and nurturing green spaces within communities. The emphasis was on the importance of preserving and enhancing green spaces, including mature trees within the Borough.

There was also a call for businesses to contribute to the environment, suggesting a connection between economic activities and environmental responsibility.

The need for community green spaces, accessible walking areas, and the incorporation of trees and wildflower meadows around developments were advocated, reflecting a broader sentiment towards nurturing nature and fostering a greener environment.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"Low carbon is captured in mature trees within the Borough. We should nurture them and add traditional trees to the Borough. When businesses set up, they should contribute to our environment."*

*"I feel there should be community green spaces, large enough for a decent walk, near enough to people's homes to encourage this, as well as decent green spaces and trees around developments."*

*"More trees, more green spaces open to the public, more wildflower meadows"*

**Reform the planning system:** Respondents wanted to see reform to the current planning system, integrating a more sustainable county in the building of homes – modern materials – solar panels, heat pumps, improve insulation for housing. Further suggestions relate to practical measures to drive sustainable development.

The call is for more than mere aspirations; it advocates making sustainable practices a mandatory part of the planning process. There's a recommendation to incentivise eco-friendly features in homes through mechanisms like council tax or other financial incentives.

The idea of incorporating solar panels and alternative heating, such as air source, in all new developments is highlighted as a specific and tangible requirement for planning approval. Additionally, there's an emphasis on improving public transport to reduce reliance on cars.

#### **Selected quotes:**

*"Don't just be aspirational, make it happen by making it a planning requirement. Building Regulations will catch up sooner or later but why wait for it. Also consider incentivising it via council tax or whatever. Also make it count by actual energy demand rather than EPC ratings."*

*"Increase public transport to get people out of cars and equip every new home with solar panels and heat pumps from the get-go."*

*"All new developments approved for planning should have solar panels, alternative heating e.g., air source."*

**Community engagement:** Participants emphasised the need for community engagement and education to raise awareness about sustainable practices, recycling, and environmental responsibility.

The relevant comments emphasised the importance of involving citizens actively in environmental initiatives. Suggestions included promoting volunteer groups on every street, engaging citizens in planting indigenous plants, and fostering a sense of community responsibility.

There's a call for increased communication and awareness, particularly regarding recycling, with an emphasis on clear information to encourage participation. The idea of 24-hour recycling centres is also put forward as a measure to reduce fly tipping and enhance community involvement.

**Selected quotes:**

*"We need a balanced economy. Plant more indigenous plants. Get citizens involved with massive volunteer groups on each and every street. This would reduce cost for the council in cleaning and attending to issues. Open more recycling centres and open them 24 hours a day so make zero fly tipping."*

*"More publicity about recycling could help this. Clear information about what is recyclable and whether it should be clean and dry."*

*"There is a need to help everybody to change using practical far-reaching methods that involve the whole community."*

**Prioritising the Climate Crisis:** Many respondents saw priority for the Council and its communities to tackle the climate crisis. Respondents stressed the urgency and significance of addressing the climate emergency.

They expressed a desire for Hertfordshire to accelerate efforts, aiming to achieve net-zero carbon emissions well before 2050. There's a consensus that prioritising the reduction of carbon emissions is essential and that decisive action is crucial to combat climate change for the current and future generations.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"The climate crisis is the top priority for me. I would love to see Hertfordshire reach net zero faster than 2050, and committing to something more ambitious could help support local decision-making and allow action to be taken faster and with more certainty."*

*"Reducing Carbon emissions should be the priority."*

*"It is vital we take steps to save this planet, climate change is the biggest issue we face for ourselves and our children."*

**Challenges Attaining Net Zero:** Other respondents are concerned with the challenges of reaching net zero and if it is possible to achieve. The comments reflected concerns and scepticism about achieving net-zero emissions.

Some respondents questioned the feasibility of net zero, emphasising the need for transparency and understanding of how carbon offsets are calculated. There are reservations about the readiness of the nation to embrace a low carbon footprint, with a suggestion to start with industry measures rather than expecting individuals to change their habits entirely.

Concerns are also raised about potential unintended consequences, such as unachievable costs for those on lower incomes or increased pollution due to changes in the location of offices.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Net zero emissions is impossible - there should be honesty about what this really means. What offsets do you assume compensate for emissions - how are they calculated and by whom / otherwise it's just a phrase with no substance."*

*"It seems to me that companies only offset carbon created rather than reducing the amount of carbon created in the first place i.e., staff having to move from County Hall, Hertford to Farnham House, Stevenage will increase the amount of pollution, road use and carbon emitted into the atmosphere."*

*"We're not ready as a nation to subject us to a low carbon footprint. Will this affect drivers driving etc? These measures need to start with industry first and not expect the individual to change all their ways. Recycling and many other ways of ensuring a low carbon footprint is already in place."*

**Healthier Lifestyle:** Positive responses recognised the potential for a low-carbon economy to promote healthier lifestyles, both in terms of physical activity (e.g. cycling) and cleaner air. Mentioned within the comments include the importance of focusing on urban and rural areas most affected by poor environments and infrastructure.

Respondents highlight the direct impact of a low-carbon economy on people's quality of life, stressing the need for investment in good public transport, reliable networks, and improved cycling and walking routes.

The emphasis is on creating safe and segregated cycling routes and maintaining clear public footpaths to enhance the overall health and well-being of communities.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Need to focus on the urban and rural areas that are most badly affected by poor environments, air quality and infrastructure so the lives of people who experience marginalisation, are less likely to engage or be listened to are enabled and supported to benefit in terms of health and wellbeing."*

*"Low-carbon economy can directly affect people's quality of life."*



*“Invest in good public transport including the rural areas. A good, reliable transport network and improved cycling and walking routes will reduce the pressure on our roads, pollution and carbon emissions. Safe/segregated cycling routes, clear, wide public footpaths, where council and homeowners are responsible for cutting back trees, shrubs and grass verges that encroach massively on the footpaths, pushing pedestrians nearer to fast moving traffic.”*

### 3.6 Appendix F – Mission – Healthy Places for All

#### Key themes

**Preservation of Green Spaces:** Many respondents expressed a strong desire to protect existing green spaces, parks, and natural areas from further development.

Amongst these comments, individuals expressed agreement with regenerating existing built-up areas while emphasising the importance of safeguarding the remaining Green Belt in Hertfordshire as permanent open countryside.

Access to green spaces and the creation of connected cycle and walking routes are highlighted as crucial aspects of maintaining the natural environment.

There were calls for varied approaches, emphasising the preservation of natural beauty to sustain nature while encouraging community-based neighbourhood development.

#### Selected Quotes:

*“Yes, I agree with regenerating and redeveloping existing built-up areas of the county. I also want to see all remaining Green Belt in Hertfordshire protected as permanent open countryside, in line with national planning policy.”*

*“Green space is essential along with connected cycle and walking routes.”*

*“Access to green spaces is important and protection of green belt land.”*

*“These need to be varied not the same everywhere. Preserving areas of natural beauty that will sustain nature. Neighbourhoods develop on a community basic.”*

**Healthcare Facilities and Services:** Concerns were raised about the adequacy of healthcare facilities, including the need for more GP surgeries, medical centres, and improved access to medical services.

Respondents expressed the need for improved emergency access to mental health care, especially during nighttime hours. There is a call for ongoing efforts to involve various healthcare businesses, such as private practitioners, in the county's growth plans.

Concerns are raised about the current low accessibility to healthcare for both physical and mental well-being, with instances of long waiting times for mental health support leading to increased pressure on A&E resources.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"If I've not been told wrongly, I believe that some areas still have little (emergency) access to mental health care & facilities, for example in the middle of the night. I'm hopeful that Hertfordshire will be a county that cares for all."*

*"I would like to see ongoing efforts to include businesses such mine (osteopath in private healthcare) as part of this growth - I have charged the same rate for 10 years in a bid to make it as affordable as possible but continue to struggle with my business and do not feel a part of these "health conversations".*

*"Access to healthcare for both physical and mental well-being is at an all-time low. I have friends waiting for 18 months for the appropriate mental help they need - and in that time are using A&E resources instead."*

**Urban Planning and Infrastructure:** Comments emphasised the importance of thoughtful urban planning, including considerations for roads, cycling lanes, and overall infrastructure to create healthier and well-connected communities.

Respondents shared the need for a holistic approach that considers existing neighbourhoods alongside newly created ones in order to avoid uneven distribution in planning.

The importance of making urban environments more pleasant and accessible without relying on cars was highlighted. Suggestions include the creation of cycle lanes to enhance town centres and support markets in high streets.

Additionally, there was a call for building more health facilities, medical centres, gyms, leisure centres, and parks to promote overall well-being among residents.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Existing neighbourhoods should be considered for improvement alongside newly created ones. For example, the new 20 mph zones are great, and we need more schemes that focus on making the environment in our urban areas more pleasant and easy to get around without using a car."*

*"This is 17 years away, is this ambitious enough? Cycle lanes would be a quick win and could regenerate town centres if markets were supported in high streets etc."*

*“Build health facilities, including medical centres, gyms, leisure facilities and parks, to promote good health among residents.”*

**Promotion of Mental and Physical Health:** There was a consensus on the importance of promoting physical and mental health through accessible recreational spaces, sports facilities, and mental health support services.

This key theme revolves around the recognition of the interconnectedness between a thriving natural environment, physical health, and mental well-being.

Respondents highlight the positive impact of a thriving natural world on mental health and stress the importance of social connectedness for vulnerable individuals.

The promotion of physical health is seen as a crucial element in enhancing mental health, with calls for investments in youth clubs that provide accessible spaces for young people to improve their mental well-being.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*“A thriving natural world also supports good mental health and a thriving community.”*

*“I’m an advocate of physical health and the positive effect this has on my mental health, so this is music to my ears. I work with families in Hertfordshire and to know social connectedness is also at the heart, this will help many vulnerable people overcome isolation and improve their life chances.”*

*“Invest in youth clubs, more of them, where young people can just drop in rather than having to be referred, as this will help improve the mental health and well-being of young people.”*

**Community Engagement and Social Connectedness:** Many respondents highlighted the need for initiatives that foster community engagement, social connections, and activities for all age groups, including teenagers and the elderly.

Answers emphasised the importance of the needs and culture of existing residents to avoid alienation.

They called for a variety of spaces that attract different demographics, cultures, and income levels, ensuring equality of access. Safety, attractiveness, accessibility, and support for community involvement and healthy lifestyles are seen as essential elements in creating social connectedness.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"With regeneration you need to consider the needs and culture of existing residents, so you don't alienate them. Also, important to reduce silos within communities and encourage greater engagement and integration amongst different populations."*

*"We need a mixture of spaces to attract a range of ages, cultures and approaches to wellbeing. Low cost too, so that it is equality of access for low income and deprived areas."*

*"Places need to feel safe, be attractive to reside in, accessible to people of all abilities and ages and support community involvement and healthy lifestyles."*

**Traffic and Air Quality:** Concerns were raised about traffic congestion, air quality, and the impact of increased housing developments on these factors.

This theme underscored the need to address traffic-related issues and improve air quality, to which people stressed the importance of shifting the emphasis from personal vehicle ownership to public transport.

They suggested various measures such as building infrastructure for bikes and pedestrians, implementing traffic calming measures, and addressing engine idling to contribute to cleaner air.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"A good place to start right now would be tackling traffic and car-centeredness, i.e., build infrastructure for bikes and pedestrians as well as making public transport good and reliable."*

*"Transport will need to be at the heart of this mission. For many towns in Hertfordshire this will mean the emphasis on transport will need to be shifted from personal vehicle ownership to public transport with the introduction of a whole raft of traffic calming designed to slow traffic but not impede it. Measures might include widening of pavements, narrowing of roads, removal of clear delineation between pavement and road in town centres. Removal of one-way traffic systems, removal of traffic lights and other road signs."*

*"Stop engines idling and let's clean up the air."*

**Affordable Housing and Support for Vulnerable Groups:** Some comments touched on the importance of providing affordable housing and support for vulnerable groups, including older residents, those with mental health issues, and young people.

With emphasis on the need for more housing, especially social and affordable housing, to address the requirements of local communities, respondents highlighted the importance of proper housing and infrastructure, expressing concerns about increased high-density housing.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"We need far more housing, including social and affordable housing, to cater for the needs of local people. Proper housing, Proper infrastructure, not just an increase in high density housing."*

*"I work in Public Health and am very passionate about this! Everyone should have access to places where they can be healthy or fitter. Living in a flat with even more flats being built limits space. Bring communities together, with youth clubs, allotments, affordable activities for all."*

*"Principles of Proportionate Universalism should be applied to help close the inequality gap experienced by our most disadvantaged - and often vulnerable - residents. The importance of good housing and meaningful employment need to be key considerations."*

**Education on Health and Wellbeing:** There were suggestions to incorporate health education activities and initiatives promoting a healthy lifestyle, including access to nutritional food and exercise.

Comments surrounding health and wellbeing appeared to revolve around the need to ensure the availability of healthy and nutritious food within local plans and support programs aimed at improving local food options.

There were also calls for health education activities, consultations, and services, along with the creation of community hubs for education on various aspects of living well, including cooking and reducing energy consumption.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"Healthier food environments should be considered within healthier places. Ensuring the availability of healthy and nutritious food is included within local plans and that programmes supporting improving local food offers should be supported."*

*"Health education activities can be carried out, and health consultation and services can be provided."*

*"Create community hubs and education for how to live well with others, cook, reduce energy consumption etc. All vital."*

**Government Accountability and Transparency:** Several comments expressed a desire for clearer plans, transparency, and accountability from local authorities in implementing initiatives related to health and well-being.

Respondents expressed the need for meaningful promotion and advertising of consultations through various media platforms during the extension period.

Additionally, there's a call for transparency in providing details and listening to people, including clear communication about any added costs associated with the initiatives.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"It is imperative that HGB are accountable and transparent to meaningfully promote and advertise the consultation during the extension period my multiple media platforms."*

*"I fully agree with this mission, however I would be keen to see the details."*

*"I think you need to listen to people and be transparent of added costs to people."*

### 3.7 Appendix G – Mission – A World Class Economy

#### Key themes

**Economic Growth and Development:** One of the key themes coming out of the survey was just how important sustainable and well managed development within the County will harness economic growth and provide well paid jobs across the County.

There were varied opinions on the importance of economic growth, with some emphasising its significance for job creation and overall prosperity whereas others commented on their concerns about the current state of the economy, challenges faced by businesses, and the need for incentives to attract investment. With high business rates and rental figures this was considered challenging for businesses seeking to expand or establish themselves within Hertfordshire.

#### Selected Quotes:

*"Then you must cut business rates to encourage new shops in the high streets - also cut parking charges to get shopper in to the rejuvenated areas."*

*"Key is to make Herts attractive to business and people."*

*"Local economy is very important to both help fund and sustain a thriving and stable society."*

**Sustainability and Environmental Concerns:** Several comments related to increasing concern for balancing economic growth with supporting the environment and local nature.

There is a recognition of the need for sustainable development and environmentally friendly practices to ensure continued support for growth. The main opposition relates to unchecked growth and a preference for green jobs and eco-friendly initiatives.

#### Selected Quotes:

*"Prioritising Green jobs would be my priority. It's the future for us all and Hertfordshire could be at the forefront as with many towns and cities in Sweden for example. New houses should all be built to high ecologically friendly standards as this would be save families money on heating bills and lead to new jobs in the county."*

*"Yes, but also embrace other circular economies & other models to be sustainable."*

*"World class green economy - reaping the benefits from addressing climate change, mitigation and adaptation."*

**Education System:** As we transition to a digital future with the growth of artificial intelligence and technology, a concern was expressed surrounding the current education system and the perceived outdated teaching methods and structures.

The theme of comments looking forward was to identify a more creative and modern approach, including the integration of digital education methods.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"Investment in education, both school age and post 18, is vital. Hertfordshire has some excellent schools but other training especially through modern apprenticeships is essential. And we may need to bring people in from other parts of UK and other countries. This will also require housing that is genuinely affordable. In some parts of the county, reasonably well-paid teachers can't afford housing."*

*"Education should be lifelong, so people develop skills for better jobs People are most important asset for improving economic value "World class green economy - reaping the benefits from addressing climate change, mitigation and adaptation."*

*"Economic plan will develop skills of the younger age groups and well as being an incentive to the local economy."*

**Community Development:** This is particularly important to the many unique and individual communities across Hertfordshire with comments highlighting concerns on the development of communities, with concerns about the loss of larger businesses and the impact on local economies.

There were several comments made on the advocacy for supporting current small businesses, lowering business rates, and improving infrastructure.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"This must include a thriving rural economy too."*

*"The council needs to attract more business to the area to do this. Lower business rates. Bring large organisation, right down the start-ups. From multiple sectors."*

*"Support new business especially start-ups."*

**Employment Opportunities and Workforce Issues:** Hertfordshire as a county is looking for growth and with such close proximity to London and places of work, there were concerns about the future and availability of sustainable work opportunities, especially for single-parent families.

With the high cost of living due to the commutability to London, there were comments calling for fairer wages, improved public transportation, and better support for college accessibility to support younger people into education and into better jobs.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"Yes, provide opportunities such as apprenticeships in a wide range of jobs."*

*"What can you do to help school leavers and young adults get jobs?"*



*"More jobs in the county for young people."*

**Infrastructure and Housing:** This key area featured prominently in responses as expected there were calls for better infrastructure, cheaper and more efficient transportation, and lower housing costs which tie in with other key segments within economic growth and development.

There were concerns also highlighted about the impact of housing developments on green spaces and the environment.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"The infrastructure to support growth also needs to be in place."*

*"You need to build more housing, put a cap on new house building sizes. Less 6 beds with pool and games room and more 3 bed semis!"*

*"Affordable housing also required for people to afford to live and work in Hertfordshire."*

**Diversity of Jobs and Industries:** One of the future ways to safeguard Hertfordshire's growth is to ensure there is a diverse range of businesses and industries being attracted to the area, both in growing existing business but also recognising the importance of supporting start-ups and creating a business-friendly environment.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"More local jobs are always welcome. Do we have a reputation as a world class economy? Would like to see proper practical support for local businesses with less car hating policies."*

*"Any employment opportunities created must pay a rate proportionate to the cost of living in the county."*

*"More apprenticeships."*

**Local Business Support:** Following the Covid-19 pandemic, support for our local businesses is even more important to ensure we have a vibrant and diverse high street and different business sectors across the County. The comments made relating to business support were lower business rates, open roads for deliveries, and better traffic flow. This was then complimented with comments concerning high rents and calls for regulation to prevent landlords from leaving shops vacant for extended periods.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"Local councils need to lower business rates and encourage shops rather than eateries in towns. "Any employment opportunities created must pay a rate proportionate to the cost of living in the county."*

*"This should entail business incentives and the encouragement of growth. Supporting farming and better education."*

*"Support for all existing businesses."*

**Quality of Life and Social Issues:** There was recognition in the comments that economic growth should contribute to improving the quality of life for residents, therefore whilst development can often be seen in a negative light, if managed correctly this can enhance and improve the County.

There were also concerns made relating to the loss of traditional town centres and the need for more diverse job opportunities.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"I believe there is an important balance to be taken into consideration with growth within Herts. Hertfordshire is at risk of losing its Green areas if too much development goes ahead unchecked."*

*"Great, but let's have more businesses who also bring something to the local community like investing or volunteering for grassroot organisations who have limited funds and resources to keep up their work to help and inspire even more people especially young people. Help the small local businesses and not only overseas corporations."*

*"Only if it doesn't impact sustainability."*

**Government Policies and Engagement:** Whilst focussing on Hertfordshire as a County and the ability of its local partners, respondents felt this cannot be seen in isolation from national Government policies relating to growth and development. There was therefore some scepticism about the feasibility of achieving a "world-class" economy when so many of the policies to enable this are out of the control of the County.

There were also calls for transparent and effective government policies, including support for education, apprenticeships, and strategic planning for economic growth if Hertfordshire really wants to meet its potential.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"Invest more in FE, the often-overlooked education sector so as to deliver craft skills training better."*

*"It will be difficult to genuinely aspire to a world class economy given London is the immediate neighbour - perhaps a greater degree of realism leaning on both local and regional economic prosperity."*

*“It is not the business of HCC to enter into policies that require national governments to implement. Do you imagine that HCC will be sending delegations to world-wide trade symposiums?”*

### 3.8 Appendix H – Mission – Quality & Affordable Housing for All

#### Key themes

**Quality over quantity:** In Hertfordshire, there is a pressing need to prioritise the construction of high-quality, sustainable housing. It is crucial to avoid compromising the county's green spaces and landscapes for short-term gains, underscoring the significance of maintaining environmental balance.

To address these concerns, the survey respondents called for developers to incorporate eco-friendly features like solar panels and water collection systems in housing developments. This approach aligns with the specific needs of Hertfordshire, emphasising a commitment to both housing quality and environmental sustainability in the region's construction endeavours.

#### Selected Quotes:

*"More housing is definitely necessary, but not seen to be affordable or high quality so far along with additional services required."*

*"Again, need to be sustainable, well designed and have purpose. Land for people to build their own? Forward thinking, sustainable housing. Cycling, growing, community."*

*"High quality needs to include net zero - especially as this relates to social rented and those on low incomes."*

**Strategic building locations:** In addressing the housing needs of Hertfordshire, strategic building locations are crucial. It involves a thorough assessment of available land for development, with a keen consideration of the environmental impact. The focus therefore, according to respondents, was the need to repurpose existing structures to optimise land usage, emphasising sustainability.

Respondents felt it's imperative to preserve the county's green spaces, discouraging excessive concrete use, to mitigate issues such as flooding and energy loss. This strategic approach aligns with Hertfordshire's unique requirements, emphasising environmentally conscious decisions in determining where to build for long-term prosperity.

#### Selected Quotes:

*"Balanced with preserving green space, ensuring housing is sustainable and infrastructure meets the needs of growing populations. Use of brown field spaces essential but stop with huge blocks of flats and houses crammed together. Priority has to be on social housing that people can afford to live in."*

*"I am concerned about open spaces being built on. Also, that most building seems to be in the lower economic areas of the county causing more traffic congestion and less countryside. Other more affluent areas seem to be exempt."*

**Community and social housing:** Addressing the housing landscape in Hertfordshire requires a focus on community and social housing. According to respondents, this may require a significant boost in investment in social housing to meet the growing demand.

Respondents felt new developments should actively contribute to fostering community cohesion and social mobility, ensuring they integrate seamlessly with the existing social fabric. Priority should be given to developing affordable housing options, acknowledging the diverse needs within the community. By prioritising community and social housing initiatives, respondents felt that Hertfordshire can strive towards an inclusive and supportive living environment for all its residents.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"Proper affordable housing, based on local wages, prioritised for local people, not filled up by those priced out of London."*

*"Councils must invest more in housing. Not associations, HMOs and blocks of flats taking away our green spaces. The elderly need more single level living. Families need houses with a small garden."*

**Preservation of the Green Belt:** In the context of Hertfordshire, a dedicated commitment to the preservation of key aspects of the Green Belt is essential. Respondents indicated this involves a steadfast pledge against inappropriate building on Green Belt land, emphasising the need to safeguard these areas for their ecological and recreational significance.

Instead of encroaching on all of the Green Belt, people felt we should be exploring alternative strategies which could be useful, to strike a balance between development whilst preserving natural landscapes.

**Selected Quotes:**

*"Again, this must not be at the expense of air quality, removal of green belt and loss of wildlife and the natural environment."*

*"Yes, but not at the exclusion of preserving the green spaces that makes Herts so attractive to live in."*

*"Build more homes of all tenures and on the green belt too so our younger generation don't have to move away or live in rented accommodation all their lives. Think about your grandkids when answering the question from your 4-bed home with gardens."*

**Inclusive Housing Strategy:** Respondents indicated they would like to see an inclusive housing strategy for Hertfordshire. This may involve the development of housing options that cater to diverse needs, with a specific focus on creating disabled-friendly homes.

The strategy should encompass flexible plans addressing the requirements of families, individuals, and seniors, ensuring inclusivity across all demographics. Moreover, a forward-thinking approach should consider the long-term environmental impact, incorporating sustainable practices to align with the county's commitment to environmental responsibility.

By adopting such a comprehensive housing strategy, Hertfordshire can foster a more inclusive and sustainable living environment for its residents.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Should be for everyone not just those in the socio-economic prosperity bracket."*

*"Sustainable, future-proof homes NOW please."*

*"I'm very supportive of this as we have to create social mobility in all housing tenures to lessen demand and increase supply. It must be affordable housing also for those not family targeted. Not assumed those not in family units want flats. Look at under occupation in social housing and improve local housing strategy more supported housing schemes for independent living, more investment for homelessness, more investment for Traveller Sites, more investment in housing for young people."*

**Affordability and transparency:** Respondents indicated that affordability and transparency in housing is crucial. Respondents argued that clear parameters for "affordable housing" need to be defined, with a focus on aligning affordability with local income levels. This entails considering diverse housing models that cater to the financial capacities of residents.

Some respondents argued transparency plays a pivotal role, a need for the provision of clear and accessible public information. This transparency would ensure residents are well-informed, creating a more engaged and participatory approach to housing initiatives in Hertfordshire. By adhering to these principles, some respondents believed the county could enhance affordability and transparency in its housing strategy.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"How will you make developers meet affordable homes targets which are often reduced? What are specialist homes? Need to support downsizing and building of bungalows."*

*"Explain 'specialist' ... 'affordable' ?? Before anything we need the infrastructure in place. Hertfordshire is not a cash cow for developers...!"*

*"Much is already unaffordable - and infrastructure needs to match any new builds. It doesn't do this now, so this worries me. And we need green spaces for the wellbeing that was mentioned earlier. So don't build on all of them, please."*

**Infrastructure alignment:** Some respondents argued a comprehensive approach to housing development must align with infrastructure growth. Simultaneous investment in schools, medical facilities, and transport is imperative, ensuring that the expansion of housing is complemented by robust support systems.

Respondents argued it may be useful to address existing infrastructure gaps while proactively planning for future needs. By integrating housing and infrastructure development, Hertfordshire can create well-rounded communities that offer residents convenient access to essential services, fostering a sustainable and thriving living environment. This strategic alignment may enhance the overall quality of life for residents in the county.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Again, where is the infrastructure to support such a mission? Roads, transport, schools, GPs, elderly care, nurseries, parking etc?"*

*"Only if the infrastructure is included in the planning to support additional residents, e.g. GP surgeries, schools, transport systems."*

*"Pointless without increasing the infrastructure...e.g. more schools, an A&E that doesn't use Lister or Watford general but used the QE2 again."*

**Local prioritisation:** Some respondents suggested there is a need to prioritise housing opportunities for local residents. Strategies could be explored to mitigate speculative investment and overseas buyers, ensuring that housing benefits the community directly.

Emphasis should also be placed on the redevelopment of existing built-up areas, particularly for social housing projects. This approach aims to address the housing needs of the local population, fostering a sense of community and ensuring that housing initiatives contribute positively to the well-being and stability of Hertfordshire residents.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"It is vital that the council ensures that our young people can afford to buy or rent accommodation. House prices are too high. Schemes to help young people to buy should be a priority. Housing needs to be varied, with different numbers of bedrooms, available for elderly too."*

*“Do more for young people both young people that risk homelessness, but also young people wanting to move out who work hard but cannot afford private rent/mortgages.”*

**Sustainability standards:** Comments that mentioned sustainability standards argued there is a critical need to enforce high ecological and sustainability standards in all new construction projects. This could include prioritising environmentally friendly features such as solar panels and water collection systems or biodiversity net gain metrics.

Additionally, a focus on retrofitting existing housing to meet modern environmental standards is essential. This sustainability-driven approach aims to create a housing landscape that minimises its ecological footprint, promotes energy efficiency, and aligns with the county's commitment to environmental preservation.

**Selected Quotes:**

*“Not in green belt areas and good sustainable e.g. solar panels but affordable homes not for profit.”*

*“High quality needs to include net zero - especially as this relates to social rented and those on low incomes.”*

*“We need more green social housing, and more net zero housing. Stop approving cheap developments and poorly designed homes (using out of date manufacturing and build processes) that aren't fit for climate change. Also, house prices are ridiculously high in this area. My children have moved to north of England to afford to buy.”*

**Government accountability:** Further comments argued that government accountability in housing is crucial. This would involve empowering local government to actively participate in housing initiatives and enforcing policies that hold developers accountable for delivering affordable housing. Clear and transparent communication to the public was emphasised, ensuring an informed and engaged community.

Additionally, there is a recognition of the importance of extending consultation periods to gather comprehensive feedback. This approach aims to instil trust, transparency, and responsiveness in the housing development process within the county.

**Selected Quotes:**



*“There needs to be greater debate both locally and nationally about the affordability of housing. It does not make any sense that people or couples on a normal salary cannot afford to buy or even rent in the place where they would like to work or have lived. I was on a professional salary in the County for more than 35 years, yet property has never been particularly affordable here. People, including my parents, were obliged to borrow from the employer as well as having a mortgage. Building more and more three- and four-bedroom executive homes will not solve the problem either. This simply attracts more families out of unsuitable housing in London.”*

*“The Government new building guidelines, basically say the houses built today by our property market are not fit for purpose so unless we unleashed self-build, who’s going to build them.”*

### 3.9 Appendix I – Mission – Transport for Hertfordshire

#### Key themes

In order to understand the many responses provided for this mission, the comments have been analysed and categorised into a selection of key themes, which can be viewed below:

**Reliability of Public Transport:** A prevalent comment for this mission was regarding the need for a reliable public transport system. This saw a general dissatisfaction with cross-county travel, with calls for better and more frequent bus services. Solutions to do so ranged from nationalising the bus services, to improving accessibility of services, frequency and the number of available services.

Some respondents felt that the reliability of the public transport was a direct link into pursuing 'anti-car' sustainable policies for Hertfordshire. These respondents felt that any policies aimed at reducing car usage could only be delivered once Hertfordshire public transport systems had been improved.

Many comments emphasised the need for public transport to be affordable as well as reliable. Respondents want a system they can depend on for commuting and daily activities.

#### Selected Quotes:

*"I agree to some extent, however, there needs to be a reliable public transport service for people to give up their cars which give them the freedom to travel when they want."*

*"I hope something positive comes of this, especially a comprehensive and affordable, reliable public transport system."*

*"Public transport needs to be affordable for all. It also needs to be reliable so people can depend on it to get then to work/appointments etc"*

*"Need to nationalise all bus services and increase times and numbers available"*

**Concerns about Rural Areas:** Respondents also wanted recognition that, due to the rural character of many parts of Hertfordshire, there is a need for localised and specific approaches to transport in rural areas. Respondents felt that there are unique challenges and requirements of different towns and areas within Hertfordshire for transport requirements.

This also manifested in concerns about elderly and vulnerable people, advocating for affordable public transport as well as recognition that cars are the primary means of transportation for these groups.

Many respondents also viewed this as a general need, expressing concerns about potential restrictions on car ownership and emphasised the need to retain the right to travel as individuals see fit.

### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Cheap public transport must be the priority. Evenings and weekends, rural inclusion, so people can make sensible choices about how they travel."*

*"Many people are reluctant to use public transport. Much of rural Hertfordshire is poorly served with bus routes. Again, a lot of investment is needed."*

*"How do elderly people get about? How does a mother with three young children get about? How do people with mobility issues, such as back sufferers get about? We live in a semi - rural location how are we expected to get about?"*

**Infrastructure Overhaul:** The calls for improving Hertfordshire's infrastructure inevitably lead to conversations about investing in public transport services and infrastructure to make them reliable and attractive to users.

Respondents viewed this as being achieved in a number of ways – from introducing freedom passes for elderly people like in London, calls for road maintenance, pothole fixes, and improved road connectivity. Other solutions included road widening and investment in cycling infrastructure.

Some respondents also wished to see recognition of challenges related to population growth and the need for thoughtful infrastructure development.

### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Cheap public transport must be the priority. Evenings and weekends, rural inclusion, so people can make sensible choices about how they travel."*

*"Fix the potholes. Slow roads cause congestion. Improve public transport first."*

*"Active travel is important and needs a lot more investment in cycling infrastructure"*

**East-West Movement Challenges:** Given the focus on East-West travel in Hertfordshire, several comments noted the difficulty of east-west travel compared to north-south movement in the borough. There were requests for genuine East-West transport options which were not just symbolic measures.

### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Improved cross-county (east-west) public transport is important in achieving mission 1 [sustainable county] as well as improving mobility and quality of life."*

*"More imagination needed. East-west connectivity is awful and largely car-dependent. How about a guided bus network linking Hertfordshire towns to each other and to Bedford and Luton?"*

*"East-west connections are currently very poor. I think there are plans in the county councils local transport plans for improvements there, so helping to make those goals happen would be a really good outcome."*

**Contradictions in Housing and Transport Policies:** Some respondents expressed concern about conflicting goals, particularly regarding building more houses and reducing congestion. In particular, people were concerned that planning measures could make life difficult for car drivers, which is seen a vital mode of transportation across Hertfordshire. Some respondents even felt that car users could be excluded from planning considerations.

There was also recognition of congestion problems in town centres and on roads with respondents wishing to see tangible solutions for these issues. This included the impact of increased traffic and the need for effective ways to control and manage traffic in and out of the town centres.

Finally, suggestions that policies which improve air quality and reduce congestion by removing or optimising traffic lights should be utilised in future transport policies.

### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Don't introduce anti-car policies before this is all in place"*

*"Pedestrianise town centres, introduce one-way systems to make space for cycle ways and widen footpaths, bypass towns for through traffic. Create electric car charging hubs next to town centres to encourage charging and shopping, create town squares and add leisure amenities to town centres."*

*"Transport vehicles, should be reduced, regulated and policed, councils involvement should recognise, all planning activities alter transport plans, people need homes, work, entertainment, hospitals, supplies, exercise, and support."*

**Inclusion of Electric Vehicles (EVs):** Suggestions were made to include EVs as a priority in the sustainable transport strategy and address concerns related to affordability and infrastructure.

Conversely, some respondents expressed concerns about the affordability and practicality of policies around and electric vehicles. Questions about the environmental impact of electric car batteries were raised with some respondents believing that EV vehicles may not provide a solution to sustainable travel.

Equally, ULEZ was a controversial topic with many respondents expressing their concerns that Ultra-Low-Emission Zones (ULEZ) compliant cars may not be a solution and worrying that this policy could be introduced in Hertfordshire (though a select few also supported the policy.)

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Again, electric vehicles should be included as part of this strategy, rather than all other options having priority. Car ownership is still an important choice and EVs allow missions around sustainability to include cars."*

*"Electric cars are not the answer if they continue to use dangerous batteries and where mining for the lithium is a problem."*

*"Very strongly against any ULEZ restrictions or LTNs"*

*"Should bring in ULEZ the same way as London to reduce air pollution and EV public transport"*

**Requirement for Government Action:** Throughout the comments for this mission there were concerns that Government action would need to strike the right balance and there were concerns about how the Government could achieve this. This was at both the national and local level, though it should be noted that a number of these comments also queried whether it was in the power of local government to make vast changes to transport infrastructure.

Several comments highlighted the necessity of significant government investment in public transport. Criticisms were directed at existing infrastructure services, such as private bus companies for cutting services, leading to more cars on the roads.

Overall, there was general dissatisfaction with the state of public transport, road conditions, and perceived lack of meaningful action from authorities.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Huge investment from central government needed. Private bus companies have cut services so more cars on the roads, pollution/ congestion"*

*"You have no interest in a working bus or train service, bicycles are the only important transport to you or the government."*

*"I don't believe that you will get these priorities in the correct order, as invariably government try to reduce congestion by restricting movement rather than increasing it."*

**Accessibility and Affordability:** Similarly to other missions, there was an emphasis on the need for the solution to be affordable and accessible for all members of the Hertfordshire community.

For mission, this involved providing frequent and affordable public transport options, especially for those without the ability to drive a car. A number of those who selected the 'strongly agree' option for this mission prefaced it with the solution needing to have affordable public transport.

For accessibility, there was an acknowledgment of the need for diverse transportation needs, including concerns for the elderly and those with mobility issues.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Within this we need to remember that some people will be restricted in terms of their ability to take part in active and sustainable travel."*

*"Public transport needs to be far more accessible, regular and provide a viable alternative to the car."*

*"Transport must be affordable and reliable for everyone, it is cheaper to keep your own car running at the moment because ultimately it is cheaper and more reliable than public transport. "*

*"Affordable and reliable public transport is an absolute necessity!"*

*"However, these options must accommodate all groups; for example, people with young children and/or those with sensory differences or mobility issues."*

**Infrastructure for different transport modes outside of car usage:** Respondents saw the solution to fulfilling this mission by investing in existing infrastructure for various modes of transport, including bike lanes, electric vehicle charging points, and improved walking paths.

A notable theme was the importance of active travel solutions, with calls for increased investment in cycling infrastructure. Suggestions include more cycle lanes and making cycling a more viable and safer option. Several respondents saw the introduction of cycling infrastructure as essential to reducing car usage. They requested new, safe and well-designed cycling paths. In theory, this would encourage local people to use bicycles more frequently as it is currently seen as needing to be more safe.

There was also a desire for environmentally friendly and affordable public transport options such as electric buses, taxis and even e-scooters.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"We need better cycling and walking infrastructure and to discourage the use of private vehicles for short trips"*

*"I would appreciate better, dedicated cycle paths and facilities for cyclists. More people would cycle if it were safer."*

*"Public transport, and cycle paths should be main aim. Or paths that can be used my alternative modes of transport like electric scooters or mopeds. Going from village to village should be easy without using a car."*

*"Active travel, let's say Public transport, are the existing buses electric, if so all well and good perhaps Taxis should follow suit."*

*"Make cycling safer for all and encourage the use of EVs by increasing the number of charging points in the county. Buses should also be electric and there should be many of them to encourage their use."*

### 3.10 Appendix J – Mission – Digital Access for All

#### Key themes

To better understand the many responses provided for this mission, the comments have been analysed and categorised into a selection of key themes, which can be viewed below:

**Support for this mission:** Respondents generally welcomed the idea of improving access to high-speed broadband, improving connectivity, providing education to enhance digital skills and to achieve this by 2030.

#### Selected Quotes:

*"This is imperative to support business residents and the county as a whole."*

*"100% support hope to start work as soon as possible"*

*"Sounds great if there is funding available or support from partners. 2030 is a long time away. Can more be done to support residents to have basic digital skills sooner being as so much is now moving online?"*

*"This I really support"*

*"This would be great given parts of WGC (and I'm sure other places) still don't have fibre optic broadband."*

**Urgency for Basic Digital Skills:** Many respondents expressed a sense of urgency, suggesting that basic digital skills for the Hertfordshire population are essential sooner than 2030. Concerns were raised about the potential exclusion of those who lack digital literacy from this work however, given if 'digital poverty' may lead to certain sections of the population being excluded.

There was also support from respondents for digital initiatives and their potential to drive innovation, economic development, and knowledge sharing.

#### Selected Quotes:

*"This should be available now, now just in the future. At present digital poverty is an issue that needs to be addressed urgently so that sections of the population are not left behind."*

*"I would think this is fairly simple to achieve and should be done quicker than 2030."*



*"Agree with the sentiment and suggest it is connected to the previous mission for Hertfordshire to become a high performing economy. Providing residents with the opportunity to evolve their technology skills as connectivity evolves is important."*

**Digital inclusion vs. Choice:** There were a certain number of conflicting opinions when it came to digital inclusion being mandated against personal choice. Diverse opinions on technology, ranging from enthusiasm and its essential role in everyday life, to scepticism and concerns about its negative impact. Respondents raised that there should be promotion of digital inclusion, however also some respondents also wanted to see individual choice respected.

There was also an emphasis to ensure that everyone, regardless of abilities or income, benefits from digital connectivity.

Some respondents argued for personal choice regarding digital engagement, while others emphasised the importance of inclusion for all. Concerns were raised about digital poverty and the need to support those who may be tech-averse or lack access.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Giving every Hertfordshire resident access to high-quality connectivity, basic digital skills and the equipment/support they need to get online can promote digital inclusion and the development of an information society."*

*"More choice so suppliers do not have monopoly on service provision. Therefore offering more choice, attracting business growth too into local economy. Herts needs to adapt and quickly post pandemic."*

*"I agree the digital connectivity needs to improve but I don't agree that using the internet should replace in many circumstances face to face contact. There should be a choice."*

**Affordability and Accessibility:** Concerns were raised about the cost and accessibility of digital services. People emphasised the need for affordability, especially for those with limited means or low-income families.

Issues raised regarding denial of access due to lack of smartphones, digital skills, or financial constraints, emphasizing the need for affordability and inclusivity.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"This must be made affordable for everyone. At the moment it's expensive and out of reach for many."*

*"But it needs to be affordable and not relying on high costs to be connected."*

*"Digital access" is not actually "for all" unless it includes those who cannot afford a subscription service"*

**Impact on Older Population:** A consistent comment theme throughout the feedback for this mission was highlighting the challenges faced by the older population in adapting to digital technologies. There was recognition of the challenges faced by the elderly in adopting technology and the need for tailored support, including considerations for their accessibility and alternative provisions. This was also reflected in concerns for the disabled population.

There were some wider concerns about potential exclusivity and negative impacts on older populations, emphasising the need for alternatives and choices. There were suggestions that there should be training programs and support for the elderly. Concerns about digital fraud, scams, and the potential negative impact on mental health were also considered.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Many elderly and people who require assisted living are being left behind, they need all our support to get by and help integrate into this new age of digital which can be very scary!"*

*"I'm very aware that we have digital exclusion, especially for many elderly and some disadvantaged and disabled groups."*

*"This could be detrimental to the elderly or disabled unless free tuition and installation provided."*

**Quality of Connectivity:** There were points raised which centred around the quality and reliability of digital connectivity in the borough. Issues such as poor broadband services and mobile blackspots were raised.

Respondents remarked that Hertfordshire has historically lacked good digital connectivity and there was recognition of the need to upskill individuals in such areas and address the challenges faced by hard-to-reach communities.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Cost and connectivity are key."*

*"Many things require access to be online, such as job applications, applying for benefits, accessing homework and information within the community. People should not be at a disadvantage due to lack of digital skills and access to connectivity."*

*"Rural Hertfordshire has not benefited from good digital connectivity until recently in my experience."*

**Privacy and Security:** Through the feedback, respondents raised concerns about privacy, data protection, and security, expressing worries about cyber-attacks, data breaches, and potential misuse of personal information.

These comments seemed to be a more general concern about privacy and security rather than a particular issue with Hertfordshire based internet, connectivity or security.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"I would hope we will have managed to achieve levels of security to protect users against the data breaches, hacking etc"*

*"Basic skills should include protecting themselves from cybercrime."*

*"A greater awareness of security would be beneficial"*

**Infrastructure Development:** Respondents called for the improvement of digital infrastructure, including the installation of 5G and fibre broadband. Some expressed the need for a balance between digital development and preserving the urban environment.

This included raising current issues related to connectivity, poor signal, lack of Wi-Fi, and challenges in getting connected especially in rural areas.

There were also questions about the practicality and funding of the proposed digital initiatives, including concerns about the environmental impact and costs.

Conversely, there were concerns about the rapid pace of digital transformation, with some feeling it is progressing too fast for certain demographics.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"Hertfordshire should be making every effort to engage with digital suppliers to install the necessary digital infrastructure"*

*"Need to be mindful of urban realm when erecting 5G sites and other digital infrastructure"*

*"This is such a big opportunity to help those who are digitally challenged or isolated especially around their key services such as NHS and banking access. 10 % fit into this cohort who are very resistant to embracing technology so everyone needs to collaborate on this across health and social care in particular."*

**Government Responsibility:** Opinions varied on the role of the government or local councils in facilitating digital access. Some respondents saw it as a crucial responsibility, while others felt that this was not in the remit of local government, instead believing it should be driven by the individual responsibility or need.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"The government needs to invest in this so that it can be achieved!"*

*"Not sure this is a responsibility of the council, nor something to be spending taxpayer's money on. I think it is up to each individual to do this for themselves if they wish to, and by 2030 there will naturally be hardly anyone left who is not online anyway"*

*"Surely this is happening anyway. Why is it a core mission for the council?"*

**Community and Human Interaction:** Finally, a few comments stressed the importance of maintaining personal interactions and preventing an over reliance on excessive digitalisation on human well-being. Some respondents were concerned about the isolation of certain demographic groups such as older people, people from poor backgrounds and those with disabilities.

#### **Selected Quotes:**

*"The world is now digital, and all should have access, but open spaces and community should put way that. We should be getting people out from behind a screen"*

*"Consideration must be given to elder members of the community who have not grown up with technology. Also, people who are not blind but have ongoing problems with their eye sight."*

*"This mission needs to be carefully approached to ensure that residents are not forced into a fully digital existence - one which will create further challenges around isolation and lack of social interaction and ability to have human connection."*



### 3.11 Appendix K – Summary of Borough response per mission

Borough	Sustainable County	Healthy Places for All	A World Class Economy	Digital Access for All	Quality Affordable Housing	Transport for Hertfordshire
<b>Broxbourne</b>	<p><b>Economic and Social Impact of Environmental Policies:</b></p> <p>The tension between economic constraints and environmental initiatives is a recurrent theme. Individuals express concern about the financial burden that policies like the ULEZ (Ultra Low Emission Zone) place on residents, especially those who cannot afford to switch to compliant vehicles or who find public transport too expensive or inadequate.</p> <p>There's a sentiment that environmental policies are being rushed without proper consideration of their economic impact on residents and the feasibility for lower-income and retired individuals.</p>	<p><b>Infrastructure and Public Services:</b></p> <p>There is a significant concern about the lack of essential public services to match the growing population. This includes inadequate access to medical facilities like GP surgeries and hospitals, insufficient educational institutions like schools and nurseries, and poor transport connections, particularly in certain areas such as Goffs Oak, Cuffley, or Potters Bar.</p> <p>The ongoing construction and development are also linked to the overpopulation of neighbourhoods and the loss of open spaces, with a specific mention of the Delamare Road development as an</p>	<p><b>Economic Growth and Employment Opportunities:</b></p> <p>There is a clear concern about the need for economic development that benefits the local population, with an emphasis on creating stable, well-paying jobs. The current situation is seen as lacking, with an overabundance of low-wage and minimum wage jobs, and a need for more permanent, full-time positions to help the local economy grow.</p> <p>The text also indicates frustration with local development projects that seem to favour certain businesses or the perceived mismanagement of such projects, such as the Delemare Road development.</p>	<p><b>Digital Divide and Technological Access:</b></p> <p>There's a highlighted concern about the digital divide in the community, with specific mention of deprived and disaffected families who lack access to technology, such as not having enough laptops for children's education.</p> <p>The need to address this divide is recognised alongside the growing population and potential increase in poverty. Discussions about the provision of technology, like laptops, are juxtaposed against other priorities like addressing the cost of living and empowering community sustainability.</p> <p>Community Infrastructure and Support Services:</p>	<p><b>Affordability and Accessibility of Housing:</b></p> <p>There is a significant concern about the high cost of housing in the area, making it unaffordable for average families, particularly first-time buyers and those who are not eligible for social housing. The term "affordable housing" is called into question, as the prices of new homes do not align with the average salaries in the area.</p> <p><b>Quality and Density of New Developments:</b></p> <p>New housing developments are criticised for being small, low quality, and densely packed, which leads to overcrowding and does not meet the needs of all residents, including those</p>	<p><b>Public Transportation Concerns:</b></p> <p>There's a strong sentiment that public transportation systems are inadequate, with calls for more reliable and affordable services, including trains and buses. The current system is criticised for being expensive, infrequent, and not sufficiently widespread to reduce vehicle ownership or to support the needs of the residents effectively.</p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Urban Development:</b></p> <p>Many comments focus on the need for better infrastructure, such as improved roads, more accessible transport stations, and better traffic management to alleviate congestion. There's a notable frustration with the development decisions that seem to prioritise construction over the enhancement of transportation infrastructure.</p> <p><b>Community Impact and Environmental Considerations:</b></p> <p>Residents express concerns about the environmental impact of current transportation</p>

<p>Some see the push for a low carbon economy as financially draining and potentially impoverishing, highlighting a need for balance between environmental goals and economic realities.</p> <p>Infrastructure and Urban Planning:</p> <p>There's a call for better urban planning that integrates environmental considerations, such as the use of renewable energy in new developments and improved public transport to reduce car dependency.</p> <p>The criticism of ongoing construction and roadworks suggests a demand for more coherent and sustainable urban development strategies that consider long-term environmental impacts, like green corridors and wildlife conservation.</p> <p>The concern about overbuilding and loss of green spaces suggests that</p>	<p>example of cramped living conditions.</p> <p>Community Well-being and Mental Health:</p> <p>The impact of urban development on mental health is a recurring concern. The text suggests that the authorities are not sufficiently considering mental health in their planning, as evidenced by the lack of funding and support services, and the reduced access to open spaces which could potentially benefit mental well-being.</p> <p>There's a call for more community and unity-focused actions, as well as the provision of more activities for young people and the promotion of sports and exercise. Additionally, there is a desire for more "warm spaces" and support services, especially for vulnerable groups like the disabled, low-income families, and those without private transportation.</p>	<p>Housing and Infrastructure Development:</p> <p>There is significant resistance to further house building, with sentiments that the current infrastructure cannot support additional growth. Overdevelopment is linked to a variety of problems, including congestion, parking issues, and the destruction of the countryside.</p> <p>The mention of specific development failures, like the Sunset Studios going into receivership, points to a broader discontent with how development is being managed in the area.</p> <p>Education and Community Support:</p> <p>The education system is seen as outdated and not in line with the current digital era, with a call for more creative and effective educational approaches.</p>	<p>The closure of banks, post offices, and police stations, along with the need to develop libraries into community information and training centres, shows a concern for maintaining and improving essential public services.</p> <p>There is a call for better community support infrastructure, including the provision of broadband at reasonable prices and assistance for vulnerable adults to access digital services.</p> <p>Diverse Needs and Inclusivity in a Digital Age:</p> <p>Recognition that a one-size-fits-all approach to digitalisation and online services does not work for everyone. There's an acknowledgment of the importance of teaching basic life skills alongside digital education.</p> <p>Concerns are raised about preserving individual freedom and</p>	<p>with disabilities. There is a strong sentiment against further building on green belts and a call for maintaining existing parkland and countryside.</p> <p>Infrastructure and Community Resources:</p> <p>The need for sufficient infrastructure to support new housing developments is emphasised, including transport links, schools, and healthcare facilities. The text also touches on the impact of new builds on local services, with an implication that the current rate of development is outpacing the expansion of necessary community services like NHS facilities and schools.</p> <p>These points reflect the community's concern over the current housing strategy's alignment with the actual needs and financial realities of the residents, the quality and sustainability of new housing, and the essential supportive infrastructure</p>	<p>strategies, pointing out the increase in congestion and pollution. There's a call for environmentally friendly solutions and scepticism regarding the effectiveness of ULEZ (Ultra Low Emission Zones) in addressing these issues. The impact of delivery services on traffic and emissions is also highlighted as a significant concern.</p> <p>These themes reflect a community desire for a transportation system that supports both the mobility needs of the residents and the environmental goals of the area, alongside a development strategy that considers the long-term sustainability of the community.</p>
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<p>many feel urban expansion is being prioritised over environmental preservation.</p> <p>Environmental Strategies and Public Perception:</p> <p>There is scepticism about the effectiveness and sincerity of current environmental strategies, with terms like "green rubbish" and "greenwashing" indicating distrust in the policies being implemented.</p> <p>Some community members advocate for tangible solutions such as planting more trees, improving insulation in homes, and offering financial incentives for environmental compliance, rather than what they perceive as symbolic actions.</p> <p>The call for more "joined-up thinking" regarding the environment indicates a desire for comprehensive and integrated approaches to tackling environmental issues rather than</p>	<p>Environmental Concerns and Accessibility:</p> <p>Environmental impact remains a key concern with the recognition that even electric cars contribute to pollution through tyre runoff, indicating a need for a more holistic approach to environmental issues.</p> <p>Pollution, in general, is seen as a problem not being fully addressed despite a shift to electric vehicles, with issues such as runoff, noise, and air pollution mentioned specifically.</p> <p>The lack of safe and accessible green spaces for all, including those with disabilities, is highlighted, along with a demand to stop building on green land to preserve these areas for community health and interaction.</p> <p>These themes reflect a call for more balanced and thoughtful urban planning that prioritises the</p>	<p>There is a call for the local government to support businesses in staying ahead of the technological curve and to ensure education prepares residents for the jobs necessary for economic growth.</p> <p>The text also touches on social issues, with a need for better community support, advice, and incentives, especially for less wealthy people, to improve overall community well-being.</p> <p>These themes reflect the community's desire for sustainable economic development that does not come at the expense of the local environment and social fabric, with a particular focus on improving employment quality, managing infrastructure growth responsibly, and updating educational methods to meet current and future needs.</p>	<p>accommodating the needs of different demographics, including seniors and those who do not want or cannot afford to be online. This includes maintaining options for those who prefer in-person services and addressing challenges that come with digitalisation, like mental health issues and the need for connection to nature.</p> <p>These themes underscore the challenges of integrating a growing population into a digital future, balancing technological access with other essential needs, and ensuring that community development is inclusive and considers the varied needs of all residents.</p>	<p>that should accompany any new development.</p>	
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**Dacorum**

piecemeal or superficial measures.	provision of essential services, community well-being, and environmental sustainability.				
<p><b>Scepticism About Climate Change and Environmental Policies:</b></p> <p>There is a strong expression of scepticism regarding the validity of climate change, with some labelling it as false or a hoax. This scepticism extends to the effectiveness of proposed environmental policies, which are seen as burdensome or ineffective by some individuals.</p> <p><b>Urban Development and Green Spaces:</b></p> <p>Concerns are raised about the pace and scale of urban development, particularly the impact of building on green field sites and the lack of affordable and social housing. There are worries about the loss of green spaces and trees, which are seen as vital for a carbon-free environment,</p>	<p><b>Resistance to Urban Planning Concepts and Cost Concerns:</b></p> <p>There's apprehension and resistance to the idea of 15-minute cities, with some viewing it as an infringement on personal freedom and a potential cause of distress. The concept is criticised for being vague and unaffordable, with concerns about the financial burden it could place on local councils and residents.</p> <p><b>Healthcare Infrastructure and Mental Health:</b></p> <p>The need for more substantial healthcare infrastructure, specifically the requirement for a new hospital rather than satellite surgeries, is emphasised. Mental health is highlighted as an area often overlooked and in</p>	<p><b>Economic Development and Employment:</b></p> <p>There's a call for support to help people transition from benefits to employment and to foster a local economy conducive to job creation. This includes the need for investment in education and support for small businesses and startups, especially in key industries where Hertfordshire might have a competitive advantage.</p> <p><b>Healthcare and Infrastructure:</b></p> <p>The necessity for proper healthcare facilities in Hemel Hempstead is emphasised before any further residential development, such as flat-building, is undertaken. Concerns are raised about the local town's vitality and the need for a bustling</p>	<p><b>Digital Inclusion and Accessibility:</b></p> <p>There is a call for inclusive digital access, with specific concerns about the elderly and disabled feeling excluded from the digital transformation of services. Free training and support for those who are not tech-savvy, such as the elderly and low-income households, are suggested to ensure everyone can benefit from digital services.</p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Community Services:</b></p> <p>Concerns are raised about the lack of adequate infrastructure and community services, such as poor bus services and the need for general maintenance of the borough. The construction of new flats is criticised for</p>	<p><b>Affordability and Accessibility of Housing:</b></p> <p>There is a pronounced concern about the lack of genuinely affordable housing, particularly for young and local residents. The emphasis is on providing housing that is affordable for individuals with average incomes and ensuring that housing is allocated fairly, with some expressing the view that priority should be given to long-term local residents over new migrants or those from outside the community.</p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Community Services:</b></p> <p>Many comments point to the need for a simultaneous development of infrastructure alongside housing. This includes calls for more schools, hospitals,</p>	<p><b>Transportation and Public Services:</b></p> <p>There is a strong call for improvements in public transportation services, with a specific emphasis on reliability, cleanliness, and coverage, including better bus services to key locations like schools, workplaces, and hospitals. The need for public transport that accommodates early travel times and is dependable is stressed, along with concerns about the existing infrastructure's inadequacy to support a reduction in car usage.</p> <p><b>Affordable Housing and Infrastructure Development:</b></p> <p>The text highlights concerns about the lack of genuinely affordable housing, particularly in areas with high demand due to proximity to London. There's a critical view of current development strategies, suggesting that new housing is often unaffordable and built without sufficient supporting facilities like hospitals. The need for a balanced approach to development that includes adequate social facilities is emphasised.</p> <p><b>Community Autonomy and Environmental Considerations:</b></p>

<p>and the potential disruption to local wildlife.</p> <p>Transportation and Sustainable Living Challenges:</p> <p>The practicality of adopting low-carbon transportation methods, such as electric cars, is questioned due to factors like the lack of infrastructure (e.g., charging points) and the cost of electric vehicles. There's also a mention of the need for better public transportation to reduce the number of cars on the roads. Additionally, there are calls for collective action to address environmental challenges but also a recognition of the economic constraints that may hinder individuals from participating in such efforts.</p> <p>These themes indicate a divide in opinions on environmental issues, challenges in managing development while preserving natural spaces, and the difficulties faced</p>	<p>need of more focus and resources, including considerations for mental and neurological conditions within community planning.</p> <p>Environmental and Social Well-being:</p> <p>The impact of new housing developments on road infrastructure and local green spaces is a concern, with scepticism about the health benefits of such developments. There is a call to preserve green spaces and promote their maintenance by local residents. Additionally, issues like the closure of community hubs such as restaurants and pubs are mentioned in the context of dealing with local insularity and maintaining social connectedness.</p> <p>These points reflect a community's apprehension about rapid changes in urban environments, the prioritisation of mental and physical health facilities, and the preservation of green spaces and</p>	<p>economy to be visible on the streets.</p> <p>Urban Planning and Environmental Considerations:</p> <p>There's a strong sentiment against the overdevelopment of residential units at the expense of green spaces and industrial premises. This is coupled with scepticism regarding the feasibility of achieving a "world-class economy" and the potential negative impacts of such development on the local environment and community well-being.</p> <p>These themes reflect the community's desire for a pragmatic approach to economic growth that balances development with environmental preservation and the provision of essential services.</p>	<p>not being accompanied by proper facilities to support them, indicating a need for a more holistic approach to urban development.</p> <p>Balance Between Technology and Human Interaction:</p> <p>While digital access is recognised as essential, especially for remote work, there is a concern that an overemphasis on digitalisation could lead to a loss of human interaction and community engagement. The potential overreach of technology into personal freedoms and the risks associated with internet scams are also highlighted, pointing to the need for balanced and cautious implementation of digital services.</p> <p>These points reflect concerns about the pace and focus of digital adoption, emphasising the necessity to balance technological advancement with human connection and to ensure that community services and infrastructure</p>	<p>and better parking facilities. The adequacy of social facilities, like healthcare, is seen as a prerequisite to any new housing developments.</p> <p>Preservation of Community Character and Green Spaces:</p> <p>There is a desire to maintain green spaces and to ensure that any development does not lead to overdevelopment, which could cause problems such as increased traffic and loss of community character. The quality of life for the elderly and the need for social housing are also highlighted, with some suggesting that new housing should be accompanied by improvements in public transportation and other essential services.</p> <p>These themes reflect a community's concern over the rapid pace of development and its impact on local services, the environment, and the social fabric of the</p>	<p>Scepticism is expressed regarding initiatives that are perceived as controlling or restricting personal freedoms, such as ULEZ (Ultra Low Emission Zones) and the concept of 15-minute cities. There's also apprehension about the environmental impact of overbuilding and the desire to preserve green spaces. Moreover, the text reflects a desire for local autonomy in decision-making and a preference for solutions that respect individual choice and mobility.</p> <p>These themes reflect the community's concerns about the practicality of proposed changes, the need for inclusive and equitable development, and the desire for autonomy and freedom in personal transportation choices.</p>
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	by communities in transitioning to sustainable living practices.	community cohesion amidst development.		developments meet the needs of all residents.	community. There is a call for development to be thoughtful, inclusive, and balanced with the preservation of community values and resources.	
<b>East Herts</b>	<p>Sustainable Development and Environmental Policies:</p> <p>There's a tension between the desire for sustainable, low-carbon growth and the practical implications for local communities, with some questioning the feasibility and economic impact of pursuing net-zero emissions targets. The impact of such policies on areas like Hertfordshire, which is not a major emitter on a global scale, is debated.</p> <p>Transport and Infrastructure Needs:</p> <p>Improved public transportation is a recurring theme, with calls for better bus services and sustainable transport infrastructure. There's a recognition that without adequate public transport, efforts to reduce car usage</p>	<p>Community Infrastructure and Amenities:</p> <p>There is a clear call for improvements in local infrastructure, including the development of walking routes, more open-air lidos, and better planning of housing developments to include essential amenities like shops, healthcare facilities, and safe play areas within walking distance. The closure of local health facilities and lack of investment in infrastructure like swimming pools indicate a gap between community needs and current development efforts.</p> <p>Environmental Impact and Urban Development:</p> <p>Concerns are raised about the overdevelopment of greenfield sites and the lack of low-carbon</p>	<p>Economic Development and Infrastructure:</p> <p>The need for economic vitality, particularly in rural areas, is emphasised, with calls for incentives to encourage business growth, support for key sectors like farming, and the improvement of infrastructure. There's a concern about the potential increase in unemployment and the need to provide facilities and services that are in demand by local communities, such as the repair of the Ward Freeman swimming pool in Buntingford.</p> <p>Preservation of Green Spaces and Environmental Impact:</p> <p>There is a strong sentiment towards balancing development with the</p>	<p>Digital Connectivity and Infrastructure:</p> <p>There's a call for improved digital connectivity, with concerns about the current lack of reliable mobile signals and high-speed internet, particularly with the proximity to major business districts like Canary Wharf. There is scepticism about whether commercial providers will improve their services and if adequate digital infrastructure will be in place by 2030.</p> <p>Inclusivity in Technology Access:</p> <p>The need to support the elderly and other demographics in learning to use the internet is emphasised, suggesting that investment in digital literacy programs is crucial. The concern is that without</p>	<p>Affordable Housing and Allocation:</p> <p>There is a strong call for significant changes in the planning system to ensure the delivery of affordable and specialist housing. The term 'affordable' is scrutinized, especially when it doesn't seem to benefit the local residents but rather prioritizes developers' profits and outsiders. There's also concern about the distribution of these houses and whether they are reaching the right people. Additionally, the idea of making affordable housing genuinely accessible to local low-income families, including the provision of services for warmth during winter, is emphasized.</p> <p>Infrastructure and Environment:</p>	<p>Public Transport Improvement and Affordability:</p> <p>There is a widespread call for improvements in public transport services, with suggestions for more buses to alleviate road congestion, better service quality, and more affordable options. Many comments emphasize the necessity for a reliable and comprehensive public transport system, including buses with reasonable fares and schedules that accommodate the needs of smaller towns and villages.</p> <p>Road Infrastructure and Traffic Management:</p> <p>Concerns about the state of road infrastructure, including fixing poor roads and managing traffic congestion, are highlighted. Some suggest the implementation of measures like a west-east train or tram link, 20mph zones, and better pavements and lighting. There's also a mention of sorting out congestion with a bypass, specifically the Hertford A414 bypass.</p> <p>Sustainable and Safe Travel Initiatives:</p> <p>The need for sustainable travel solutions is a recurring theme. This includes creative approaches to travel across the county,</p>

<p>may be limited, and infrastructure development should not compromise green spaces.</p> <p>Community Services and Housing:</p> <p>Concerns are raised about the local housing strategy, particularly the need for affordable housing that includes renewable energy features and does not deplete green belts. The closure of local amenities, such as swimming pools, and the need for new hospitals before more flats are built are mentioned, indicating a need for holistic community development.</p> <p>These themes illustrate the challenges of aligning environmental ambitions with the realities of local infrastructure, economy, and community needs. There is a call for a balanced approach that considers both the immediate needs of residents and the long-term goal of sustainability.</p>	<p>connected communities. There is a desire for urban design that integrates environmental considerations, such as the restoration of Green Belts, solar panels, water-saving devices, and wildlife-friendly features like hedgehog highways.</p> <p>Mental Health and Well-being:</p> <p>The impact of urban overcrowding, traffic, and inadequate public services on mental health and well-being is highlighted. There is a sense that current planning and development do not adequately consider the well-being of residents, and there's a call for significant investment in mental health support within the community.</p> <p>These themes reflect the community's concerns over the balance between development and environmental sustainability, the need for comprehensive infrastructure that supports both physical and mental</p>	<p>preservation of green spaces and the promotion of environmental sustainability. Comments suggest resistance to continuous housing development without new amenities, as this could lead to increased greenhouse gas emissions and a loss of community green areas.</p> <p>Community Services and Mental Health:</p> <p>Improvements in community services, particularly for mental health and adult learning, are highlighted as areas needing more attention and investment. The text also reflects frustration over what is seen as the prioritisation of housing development over community services and amenities that would support local businesses and employment.</p> <p>These themes reflect a desire for a holistic approach to community development that includes economic growth,</p>	<p>this support, certain groups, especially the elderly and lower-income families, risk being left behind in an increasingly digital world.</p> <p>Local Government Accountability and Effectiveness:</p> <p>There is doubt about the local council's responsiveness to community needs and scepticism about the council's ability to deliver on its promises for better connectivity. This includes a lack of confidence in the council's reputation for acting effectively and concern over potential missteps in enhancing digital access for residents.</p> <p>These themes reflect the community's desire for better digital services, inclusive support for all residents to access and utilise these services, and a call for accountable and responsive local governance to ensure these goals are met.</p>	<p>Many comments focus on the need for a balance between new housing developments and the preservation of green spaces. There is a strong preference for utilizing brownfield sites rather than encroaching on green belts or farmland. Moreover, there's concern that current housing developments are not supported by adequate infrastructure, leading to increased traffic, overpopulation, and stress on local services. There's a call for proper planning to ensure sustainable growth, which includes not only the houses themselves but also the supporting infrastructure.</p> <p>Quality of Housing and Community Impact:</p> <p>The quality of housing is a recurring issue, with many expressing dissatisfaction with the new builds, which are seen as low quality and not environmentally friendly. There is also a sentiment that the character and desirability</p>	<p>investment in infrastructure, and the design of streets that promote sustainable transportation options. There are also calls for strong leadership to overcome resistance from the 'car lobby' and to prioritize sustainable transport options over car use to improve air quality and overall environmental conditions.</p> <p>These themes reflect the community's desire for a more accessible, affordable, and environmentally friendly transportation system, as well as the challenges of implementing such changes in the face of existing infrastructure and social habits</p>
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	health, and the desire for amenities that contribute to a higher quality of life without increasing costs or compromising green spaces.	environmental preservation, and enhanced community services to improve overall well-being.		<p>of towns are being negatively affected by the wrong mix of housing developments. The comments suggest a need for public sector intervention to build quality public housing, like the post-war national housing projects, and to improve the planning process to deliver such housing without stigma and with respect for the natural beauty of the area.</p> <p>These themes highlight the community's concerns about the impact of housing policies on the quality of life, environment, and social equity.</p>	
<p>Sustainability Scepticism and Cost Concerns:</p> <p>There is a sense of scepticism about the feasibility of achieving net zero emissions, with some comments suggesting that the focus should be on larger global polluters like China and America rather than imposing restrictions that may burden local ratepayers. The cost of</p>	<p>Infrastructure and Service Concerns:</p> <p>There is a strong concern regarding the adequacy of current infrastructure and public services, such as difficulty in accessing healthcare, GP appointments, and hospital services. The crumbling state of roads and the issues within communities, such as knife crime, are</p>	<p>Scepticism and Demand for Action:</p> <p>There is scepticism about the feasibility of proposed plans, questioning the tangible actions taken so far. Residents express frustration over unmet promises and lack of progress, highlighting issues such as inadequate street lighting and lack of facilities in areas like</p>	<p>Financial Considerations and Costing:</p> <p>There's concern about whether the financial aspects of the proposals have been thoroughly considered and costed. Residents are asking for transparency regarding the economic implications of the plans and if they have been properly budgeted.</p>	<p>Infrastructure and Sustainable Development:</p> <p>There is a call for any new housing development to be supported by necessary infrastructure, such as roads, rail, healthcare, and educational facilities. The respondents emphasize the need to avoid overloading existing towns and instead consider building new towns where infrastructure</p>	<p>Transport Infrastructure and Maintenance:</p> <p>There is a clear demand for the improvement and maintenance of existing transport infrastructure. Concerns include the need for road repairs, particularly fixing potholes, and the enhancement of bus and rail links. Residents express frustration over current road conditions and suggest that neglecting these issues could lead to serious safety concerns.</p> <p>Public Transport Accessibility and Reliability:</p>

<p>transitioning to a low-carbon economy is highlighted, with concerns that these expenses could fall on individuals rather than industries, and that green technologies may not be as sustainable as presented if they're not powered by fully renewable energy sources.</p> <p>Importance of Local Environment and Green Spaces:</p> <p>Many comments emphasize the need to preserve natural environments and green belt land. There is a call to maintain green spaces despite the need for housing, and criticism of local plans that lead to the destruction of natural habitats without adequate infrastructure to support population growth. The role of trees in capturing carbon is also noted, suggesting that local development should include nurturing and adding traditional trees to the borough.</p>	<p>mentioned alongside the problems that arise from increased housing and population, such as more pollution and the erosion of green spaces.</p> <p>Community Engagement and Utilization of Spaces:</p> <p>The necessity for local resident input on planning and development is emphasized, suggesting that schools and other community spaces could be better utilized for leisure and learning, especially outside of school hours. This includes the idea of enhancing well-being by making more areas available for recreational purposes at an affordable cost, possibly using facilities provided by local businesses for community use.</p> <p>Preservation of Green Spaces and Accessible Design:</p> <p>There is a clear call for the preservation of green spaces, with resistance to high-rise developments and</p>	<p>Elstree. There's a call for evidence of real change and improvements that have been promised but not delivered.</p> <p>Economic Development and Employment:</p> <p>The development of film studios in Hertfordshire is seen as a positive step for local economic growth, bringing jobs and money into the local economy. There is also a desire to create job opportunities and training facilities specifically for residents, indicating a focus on local employment and skill development.</p> <p>Transportation and Environmental Preservation:</p> <p>Improved public transportation, particularly between St Albans and Watford, is identified as necessary for accessibility to work without the need for cars. Moreover, there's a clear voice against the destruction of green belts, with residents opposing the</p>	<p>Digital Inclusion and Accessibility:</p> <p>The importance of respecting residents' preferences, especially regarding the use or non-use of digital technologies, is emphasized. The comments highlight the need to ensure that people who are not comfortable with digital tools, such as apps and smartphones, have alternative options. This includes considering the older population who may not be as tech-savvy or may choose not to engage with digital updates.</p> <p>Support for Disadvantaged Groups:</p> <p>There's a call for support for low-income households, particularly those with children, to help them access and afford necessary services like fast broadband. The comments suggest that access to technology should not be a luxury but a utility that's reasonably priced and</p>	<p>can grow with the housing. There's also a significant concern about not building on Green Belt land, preserving open spaces, and ensuring that development does not come at the expense of green spaces.</p> <p>Affordable and Social Housing:</p> <p>The need for affordable housing, including social housing and rental options for low earners, is a recurrent theme. The comments highlight the extortionate private rents and the challenges people face, particularly in retirement, due to the lack of affordable housing. There's also a demand for clarity on what is meant by "specialist" and "affordable" housing and a call for such housing to be built on brownfield sites, not green spaces.</p> <p>Quality of Life and Access to Housing:</p> <p>There's a strong belief that</p>	<p>The comments highlight the need for more reliable and frequent public transport services, including buses. There's a call for the reinstatement of previously reduced bus services and an improvement in the reliability of existing routes, such as the 602 bus route. The community also suggests a need for better connectivity between towns and villages and the importance of considering accessibility for people who are unable to drive.</p> <p>Balanced Approach to Car Use and Environmental Considerations:</p> <p>Residents argue against policies that excessively restrict car use, such as limiting access to city centres and imposing high parking fees, which they believe could negatively impact local shops and businesses. Instead, there is a suggestion to focus on improving parking and traffic flow. Moreover, there's an environmental aspect mentioned, with a desire for the incorporation of electric buses, cabs, and taxis, as well as the preservation of natural elements like trees and hedgerows to balance the environment.</p> <p>These themes suggest that the community values a comprehensive and well-maintained transportation network that supports both private and public transport options, with considerations for environmental impact and accessibility for all residents.</p>
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<p>Public Transport and Infrastructure Enhancement:</p> <p>There is a call for improvements in public transport, pedestrian walkways, and cycle paths. Better public transport is seen as a key factor in making sustainable living more accessible. However, there are also concerns about whether the current state of technology and infrastructure supports such a shift, particularly for individuals with disabilities or those who rely heavily on personal vehicles due to inadequate public transport options.</p> <p>These themes reflect a community grappling with the tension between environmental goals and the perceived practical and economic realities of implementing sustainable practices. They also indicate a desire for a more balanced and thoughtful approach to local development that prioritizes both the</p>	<p>building on the green belt, which is seen as detrimental to the happiness and well-being of existing residents. The need for safe pathways for walking and cycling, and the suggestion of turning available green spaces into reserves or play areas, indicate a desire for planning that incorporates natural environments and accessibility for all.</p> <p>These themes reflect the community's concerns about development impacting the quality of life and the environment, the need for better integration of infrastructure with housing and employment centres, and the desire for more inclusive planning that involves resident feedback and preserves green spaces.</p>	<p>building on every available space and the removal of natural vegetation. The community calls for the protection of green spaces and inclusive planning that considers the needs of all residents.</p> <p>These themes illustrate community concerns about ensuring responsible and inclusive development that balances economic growth with environmental preservation and the improvement of public infrastructure.</p>	<p>accessible to all, regardless of their income level or ability to use the internet.</p> <p>These themes illustrate a community's concerns about equitable access to services, the need for diverse options that respect individual choices and capabilities, and the importance of financial planning and support to ensure no one is left behind in the digital age.</p>	<p>housing is crucial, especially as the population ages. The importance of quality in terms of living conditions, like the absence of mould and proper insulation, is noted. There's a sentiment that improving the current state of social housing should be a priority before building more. Additionally, there is an acknowledgement of the diversity of financial capabilities among residents, with some unable to afford home ownership and considering working past retirement age to manage living expenses.</p> <p>These themes highlight a community's desire for thoughtful planning that prioritizes sustainability, affordability, and the preservation of green spaces, while also addressing the diverse needs of its residents.</p>	
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Herts**

environment and the needs of the community.					
<p><b>Integrated and Inclusive Environmental Action:</b></p> <p>There is a call for comprehensive environmental strategies that involve all sectors of the community, including residents, businesses, and visitors. This includes a push for radical changes that lead to real behavioural change beyond just the adoption of electric cars, like active transport, public transport usage, and a substantial reduction in waste. There is also a resistance to implementing solar panels on greenbelt areas, with a preference for placing them on industrial units and new houses instead.</p> <p><b>Urgency and Feasibility of Achieving Net Zero:</b></p> <p>Some respondents feel that the 2050 target for achieving net zero is too distant, allowing for</p>	<p><b>Implementation and Planning for Change:</b></p> <p>There is scepticism about current policies and the actual implementation of changes needed to achieve the envisioned goals by 2040. The lesson from the Netherlands is highlighted, emphasizing that real change takes time and begins with clear policies. Concerns are raised about traffic, inadequate community infrastructure like schools and healthcare, and the impact of these issues on mental health. The need for proactive local planning that includes green spaces and addresses community needs is also mentioned.</p> <p><b>Economic Considerations and Quality of Life:</b></p> <p>The economic impact of these changes is a significant concern, with a focus on the cost and</p>	<p><b>Balanced Development and Governance:</b></p> <p>There is an emphasis on creating a framework that prioritizes nature, people, and business in that order, to ensure community well-being. The current political structure is criticized for being disjointed, and there's a suggestion for a unitary authority for more cohesive governance. There is also a desire for detailed plans on how to achieve a balance between community investment and economic development, with a call for businesses to contribute to community and infrastructure.</p> <p><b>Economic Concerns and Community Focus:</b></p> <p>Scepticism is expressed about the focus on economic development, particularly in light of past government management and the impact of COVID-</p>	<p><b>Digital Infrastructure and Service Quality:</b></p> <p>There's concern over the current state of digital infrastructure, such as outdated copper wiring for Wi-Fi, and the high costs charged by service providers without adequate improvements. The need for enhanced broadband services and connectivity, particularly in rural areas like Baldock, Hertfordshire, is emphasized. Additionally, there is scepticism about the financial management of such upgrades, with a history of projects going over budget and not delivering satisfactory results to consumers.</p> <p><b>Inclusivity in the Digital Transition:</b></p> <p>The importance of inclusivity as society transitions to digital is a recurring point. This</p>	<p><b>Affordable Housing and Development Priorities:</b></p> <p>There's a strong call for truly affordable housing accessible to a broader segment of the population, not just the wealthy. The need for a new approach to development that prioritizes building on brownfield sites and utilizing empty units is emphasized, along with a concern for protecting natural habitats and the green belt. There's also a suggestion for rent control and means-testing for social housing to ensure fairness and prevent investment buyers from monopolizing the housing market.</p> <p><b>Inclusivity and Accessibility in Housing:</b></p> <p>Comments reflect the need for housing strategies to include special provisions for the young, elderly, and</p>	<p><b>Sustainable Transportation and Infrastructure:</b></p> <p>There's a call for a radical shift in transportation policies to prioritize sustainable and accessible travel, including the development of tram systems, better cycling infrastructure, and more frequent and comfortable public transport. The need for policy-driven change, potentially modelled after successful strategies like those in the Netherlands, is emphasized. The comments also point to the necessity of improving connections between towns within the county, not just focusing on routes into London.</p> <p><b>Challenges of Rural Accessibility and Public Transport:</b></p> <p>Concerns are raised about the reliance on cars, especially in rural areas where public transport options are lacking or non-existent. There's a demand for investment in zero-emission public transport to make it a viable alternative to car use throughout the county. The current state of public transport is criticized for being too infrequent, unreliable, and expensive, with a call for more electric charging points and affordable bus routes.</p> <p><b>Balancing Development and Community Impact:</b></p> <p>Comments suggest that there's a conflict between ongoing development, such as airport</p>



<p>unnecessary deferral of action. There is a sense of urgency for immediate changes, particularly in reducing traffic and carbon emissions. Yet, there are concerns about the practical implications, such as the impact on individuals' lives, the economic feasibility, and the priority given to agriculture, healthcare, education, and social care in the face of a climate emergency.</p> <p>Scepticism and Local Impact:</p> <p>Scepticism about the net zero initiative is expressed, with some deeming it as following a trend without substantive action. Concerns are raised about the local impact of such initiatives, suggesting they often don't take into account the needs of local people. Additionally, there is a caution against taking agricultural land for solar power development, an acknowledgment of the challenges faced by people who may not be able to</p>	<p>funding required. There's a call for economic justifications ("show me the beef") and an emphasis on the benefits that could arise if core missions are achieved. The comments also touch on the challenges of industrial traffic, air quality, and safety in towns, suggesting a need for investment in areas that directly affect residents' quality of life.</p> <p>Transportation and Community Engagement:</p> <p>Transportation is identified as central to the mission, with a shift from personal vehicle ownership to public transport suggested as a key strategy. Specific measures such as traffic calming, pavement widening, and road narrowing are proposed. Additionally, the importance of engaging young people through community initiatives and utilizing empty spaces is mentioned, indicating a desire for inclusive community development</p>	<p>19. There's a call for a cap on rents for small businesses and concerns about empty commercial units. Economic growth is seen as potentially conflicting with environmental protection, and there's a call for environmentally sustainable business practices and community development over a mere increase in the economy.</p> <p>Sustainable Employment and Education:</p> <p>The importance of investing in education and training, particularly for young people, is highlighted as crucial for economic and community development. There's a call for more sustainable job opportunities, particularly for single-parent families, and the suggestion to invest in green energy businesses. The goal is to develop employment that doesn't negatively impact the environment, aiming for a net positive effect on local communities.</p>	<p>includes ensuring that vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and disabled, who may not have digital knowledge or the capacity for digital engagement, are not ignored or excluded. Suggestions include maintaining traditional services like libraries and face-to-face interactions, providing education on technology, and integrating social activities to prevent loneliness among the elderly.</p> <p>Balancing Digital and Traditional Access:</p> <p>There's a strong sentiment that digital accessibility should not replace traditional forms of access, such as telephone, in-person, print, and audio, especially to accommodate those who are non-digital by choice or necessity. The comments also raise concerns about the risk of scams with increased digital exposure for vulnerable populations. Additionally, there's a call for maintaining human connections and ensuring</p>	<p>those with mental and social challenges. Accessibility is a recurring concern, highlighting the need for housing to be inclusive of people with disabilities and wheelchair users. There's also a mention of the negative impact of high-rise buildings on well-being, suggesting a preference for quality and affordable low-rise housing options.</p> <p>Community Infrastructure and Local Planning:</p> <p>There's scepticism about local planning authorities' ability to manage development effectively, with a demand for better skills, competence, and vision. The comments suggest that housing developments should not only focus on the buildings but also provide necessary infrastructure like roads, parking, healthcare, and community spaces. There's concern that the current approach to planning and development is failing to consider the quality of life for existing residents and</p>	<p>expansion and housing projects, and the goal of reducing car traffic. There's scepticism about the feasibility of these plans given the current financial constraints, land availability, and potential resistance from the community to any measures perceived as coercive or limiting personal freedom. The need for more inclusive planning that addresses the needs of the disabled, elderly, and non-cyclists is also highlighted.</p> <p>These themes reflect the community's concerns about the need for comprehensive and inclusive planning to improve transportation and infrastructure while considering the environmental impact, the practicalities of rural living, and the financial implications for residents.</p>
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	<p>afford or access renewable energy solutions, and questions about the overall effectiveness of the UK's efforts in the context of global carbon emissions.</p> <p>These themes highlight the complexity of addressing climate change at a local level, balancing urgency with practicality, inclusivity with individual impact, and global leadership with local feasibility.</p>	<p>that benefits all age groups.</p> <p>These themes reflect a community grappling with the challenges of urban planning and sustainable development, concerned about the economic implications and the need for a comprehensive approach that prioritizes both the environment and the well-being of its residents.</p>	<p>These themes reflect the community's desire for strategic and sustainable economic growth that harmonizes with environmental protection and community well-being. There's a clear demand for action that goes beyond rhetoric, with a focus on real and practical solutions that address both local and broader societal needs.</p>	<p>that cash payments remain a legal option to prevent the exclusion of those not engaged digitally.</p> <p>These themes reflect the community's desire for a balanced approach to digital development that ensures high-quality infrastructure while protecting and including all segments of the population. There's a recognition of the need for digital skills and infrastructure, but not at the expense of personal interaction and existing services.</p>	<p>may be driven by profit rather than community needs.</p> <p>These themes indicate a desire for a shift in housing and development policies towards more sustainable, inclusive, and community-focused planning that addresses the needs of all residents and preserves the environment.</p>	
<b>St Albans</b>	<p><b>Challenges of Achieving Carbon-Free Goals:</b></p> <p>Scepticism about the feasibility of achieving carbon-free goals due to heavy reliance on existing fuel sources and the high cost of transitioning to green alternatives.</p> <p>Concerns about the practicality and affordability of "going green," with the belief that</p>	<p><b>Transport and Infrastructure:</b></p> <p>Concerns about traffic and car-centric planning.</p> <p>Suggestions to build infrastructure for bikes and pedestrians.</p> <p>Advocacy for reliable and efficient public transport.</p> <p>Calls for a ring road to ease traffic congestion.</p>	<p><b>Affordability and Local Support:</b></p> <p>Concerns about the high cost of living in Hertfordshire, emphasizing the need for more affordable rents and house prices.</p> <p>Support for local businesses, discouraging reliance on big investors and urging focus on local economies, particularly in the artistic and creative sectors.</p>	<p><b>Existing Infrastructure and Connectivity:</b></p> <p>Some comments emphasize that there is already infrastructure in place, such as fibre availability, and express scepticism about the need for further digital involvement or identification.</p> <p><b>Challenges Faced by Non-Digital Users:</b></p>	<p><b>Affordable and Sustainable Housing:</b></p> <p>Desire for sustainable, purposeful, and well-designed housing solutions.</p> <p>Advocacy for green social housing and net-zero housing.</p> <p>Concerns about high house prices, especially for young people with low wages.</p>	<p><b>Transportation Alternatives and Infrastructure Improvement:</b></p> <p>Concerns about the reliance on cars and the need for improvements in buses and public transport.</p> <p>Suggestions for better cycling infrastructure, dedicated bus lanes, and investigation of alternative transport methods like trams.</p> <p>Calls for more buses, direct routes, and better rail services to reduce dependence on cars.</p> <p><b>Traffic Management and Safety:</b></p>

<p>the cost is too high for the average person.</p> <p><b>Environmental Impact and Local Concerns:</b></p> <p>Awareness of pollution issues, particularly from construction activities, traffic, and wood-burning stoves, emphasizing the need for local authorities to monitor and regulate such activities.</p> <p>Frustration with the lack of sustainable practices in new developments, with specific mentions of inadequate insulation, absence of eco-friendly features, and the need for more sustainable building standards.</p> <p><b>Differing Views on Climate Change and Priorities:</b></p> <p>Divergent opinions on the existence of a climate crisis, with some dismissing it as a scam and others highlighting the urgency of addressing climate change for the sake of current and future generations.</p>	<p>Emphasis on creating safer road conditions and more cycleways.</p> <p><b>Community and Green Spaces:</b></p> <p>Desire for communal meeting places and town centre green spaces.</p> <p>Opposition to more flats and a preference for community-focused development.</p> <p>Support for schemes enhancing the urban environment and making it more pleasant to navigate without a car.</p> <p>Protection of existing green spaces.</p> <p><b>Government Trust and Social Well-being:</b></p> <p>Scepticism and lack of trust in government agendas.</p> <p>Concerns about the impact of city redesign on historical and conservation aspects.</p>	<p><b>Environmental Sustainability and Infrastructure:</b></p> <p>Calls for embracing sustainable and circular economies, questioning the compatibility of attracting more businesses with environmental goals.</p> <p>Suggestions to make high streets vibrant destinations, promoting local businesses like food shops and addressing concerns about traffic flow and parking.</p> <p>Government Accountability and Clarity:</p> <p>Scepticism and calls for clarity regarding the government's goals, expressing concerns about unclear statements and scepticism about the government's ability to make effective decisions.</p> <p>Emphasis on supporting current small businesses, lowering business rates, and expressing the need for</p>	<p>Concerns are raised about the difficulties faced by individuals who do not have access to digital devices, highlighting the impact on various aspects of life such as shopping, appointments, and banking. There's a call for support, especially for older individuals who may struggle with advancing technology.</p> <p><b>Feasibility and Resistance to Change:</b></p> <p>Questions are raised about the practicality and achievability of the proposed digital initiatives. Comments suggest that some people may resist or find it challenging to adapt to technological changes, and there's a call for ensuring that support is provided to those who may not be able to fully embrace digital access.</p>	<p>Calls for affordable housing for British-born individuals and support for social housing.</p> <p><b>Urban Planning and Development:</b></p> <p>Criticisms of current developments, including the conversion of offices into small flats without adequate infrastructure.</p> <p>Opposition to building on green belt land and a call for more attention to preserving quality natural environments.</p> <p>Recognition of the need for family homes with gardens, not just flats, in certain areas.</p> <p><b>Government and Policy Issues:</b></p> <p>Frustration with the lack of action and scepticism about the government's commitment.</p>	<p>Issues related to road safety for cyclists, the unreliability and costs of trains, and the impact of roadworks on traffic.</p> <p>Requests for coordinated roadworks, better cycle access, and encouragement of public transportation, especially in the evening.</p> <p>Concerns about air quality due to exhaust fumes and the difficulty of walking on certain roads.</p> <p><b>General Concerns and Diverse Opinions:</b></p> <p>Mixed opinions on the feasibility of reducing car usage and scepticism about the impact of proposed measures.</p> <p>Comments on the negative effects of road closures on businesses and residents.</p> <p>Varied perspectives on the state of public transport, including issues with bus schedules, reliability, and missed services.</p>
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	<p>Varying perspectives on the priority of climate-related initiatives, ranging from strong support for measures to combat climate change to scepticism about the practicality and desirability of achieving net-zero goals.</p>	<p>Calls for improvements in mental health support.</p> <p>Criticism of the lack of details and plans in some proposals.</p> <p>Requests for better access for wheelchair users to social and well-being opportunities.</p>	<p>achievable and prioritized plans.</p>		<p>Suggestions to cut immigration as a solution to housing challenges.</p> <p>Calls for government support, including more laws to protect renters and increased assistance for housing associations.</p> <p>Concerns about the influence of greedy developers and the need for political courage to address housing issues.</p>	
<b>Stevenage</b>	<p><b>Financial Concerns and Accessibility:</b></p> <p>Many residents express scepticism about the financial feasibility of implementing sustainable changes, highlighting concerns about the affordability of eco-friendly technologies.</p> <p>There's a common perception that retrofitting homes and adopting sustainability measures can be expensive and may not be financially viable for working families.</p>	<p><b>Green Spaces and Well-being:</b></p> <p>Comments express concern about the importance of green spaces for mental health and well-being.</p> <p>Issues raised include the reduction in room sizes per person, the impact on children's development, and the need for access to gardens.</p> <p>Some argue against building on green spaces, emphasizing the negative effects on well-being.</p>	<p><b>Economic Growth and Job Opportunities:</b></p> <p>Desire for new opportunities and growth in Stevenage, but concerns about achieving world-class status.</p> <p>Emphasis on a stable and balanced local economy to support home ownership.</p> <p>Calls for strong economic development, attracting diverse industries such as film, tech, and life sciences.</p>	<p><b>Accessibility and Inclusion:</b></p> <p>Concerns about the exclusion of specific groups such as epileptics, disabled individuals, dyslexics, pensioners, people with dementia, and those with no funds or access to technology.</p> <p>Emphasis on the need for affordable and inclusive solutions that cater to a diverse range of individuals, including those with physical or cognitive challenges.</p>	<p><b>Affordability and Discrimination:</b></p> <p>Concerns about the unaffordability of homes, particularly for local residents.</p> <p>Discrimination against certain groups, such as males born in the town.</p> <p>Challenges in meeting the current definition of "affordable homes," with housing developments still being unaffordable for many residents.</p>	<p><b>Concerns about Public Transport Reliability and Accessibility:</b></p> <p>Many comments express dissatisfaction with the current state of public transportation, citing issues such as old buses, delays, and limited service hours.</p> <p>Calls for improved reliability, increased frequency, and expanded routes are consistent themes.</p> <p>Accessibility issues for smaller towns and villages are highlighted, with suggestions for better connectivity and service extensions beyond major towns.</p> <p><b>Resistance to Anti-Car Measures:</b></p>

<p><b>Infrastructure and Public Transport:</b></p> <p>Infrastructure and public transport play a crucial role in residents' willingness to adopt low-carbon practices. Many comments emphasize the need for improved public transport options, better roads, and charging infrastructure for electric vehicles.</p> <p>Concerns are raised about the inadequacy of existing public transport services, with some residents pointing out the impracticalities and inconveniences associated with using buses or trains.</p> <p><b>Scepticism and Practicality:</b></p> <p>There's a prevailing sense of scepticism regarding the achievability of net-zero goals within the specified timelines.</p> <p>Residents express concerns about the effectiveness of proposed measures, raising</p>	<p><b>Infrastructure and Services:</b></p> <p>Concerns about the lack of infrastructure development matching the increasing housing demand.</p> <p>Issues related to healthcare accessibility, including long waiting times for mental health services and difficulty in accessing GP appointments.</p> <p>Calls for better facilities, more hospitals, and affordable healthcare services.</p> <p><b>Cultural and Social Challenges:</b></p> <p>Some express scepticism about multicultural integration, believing it has been tried and failed.</p> <p>Concerns about changes in society, with comments highlighting perceived selfishness, rudeness, and entitlement.</p>	<p>Suggestions for more apprenticeships, local job preferences, and support for enterprising businesses.</p> <p><b>Challenges and Concerns:</b></p> <p>Concerns about the current economic climate and the ability to achieve ambitious goals.</p> <p>Issues with wages for locals, unaffordable housing, and the dominance of cafes over shops in town centres.</p> <p>Scepticism about the feasibility of sustaining growth and potential challenges in various work sectors.</p> <p><b>Infrastructure, Education, and Quality of Life:</b></p> <p>Calls for significant investment in education to improve standards and opposition to budget cuts.</p> <p>Suggestions for infrastructure development, including road</p>	<p><b>Financial and Practical Feasibility:</b></p> <p>Scepticism regarding the feasibility of implementing widespread high-speed broadband due to issues like funding, rising costs for consumers, and the expense associated with services.</p> <p>Questions about who will bear the financial burden for the proposed improvements and scepticism about the viability of the government's plans.</p> <p><b>Technological Infrastructure and Connectivity:</b></p> <p>Recognition of the importance of digital access, particularly high-speed broadband, for education, knowledge, and growth, especially for the younger generation.</p> <p>Discussions about the need for well-paid jobs, support for families, and the</p>	<p><b>Quality and Sustainability:</b></p> <p>Emphasis on the need for quality housing, expressing dissatisfaction with the construction of high-rise flats and the sacrifice of quality for profit.</p> <p>Environmental considerations, including objections to building on green spaces, concerns about the impact on the environment, and suggestions for using brownfield sites.</p> <p>Calls for sustainable features in housing, such as solar panels, high insulation standards, and environmentally friendly construction practices.</p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Planning:</b></p> <p>Concerns about the lack of infrastructure to support housing developments, including issues related to parking, access to services (doctors, schools), and urban sprawl.</p>	<p>Several comments express resistance to measures perceived as penalizing car owners, such as reducing parking spaces and making it difficult for car drivers.</p> <p>Concerns about road space being reallocated for bicycles and the impact on motorists' freedom are prevalent.</p> <p>Affordability of public transport is raised, with scepticism about the effectiveness of sustainable transport solutions without making them more financially accessible.</p> <p><b>Infrastructure Improvement and Government Investment:</b></p> <p>Calls for significant investment from the government to improve roads, increase bus services, and address traffic congestion.</p> <p>Suggestions to widen roads, enhance cycling infrastructure, and nationalize bus services are common.</p> <p>The need for more charging points for electric vehicles is highlighted, along with the importance of balancing sustainability goals with the financial burden on consumers.</p>
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	<p>questions about the practicality of forcing immediate shifts to expensive and unproven technologies.</p> <p>Some comments stress the importance of pragmatic and attainable policies, cautioning against decisions solely driven by ideology.</p>	<p>Ambiguity and scepticism about vague statements in the mission, calling for clarity and practical details.</p>	<p>improvements and better healthcare.</p> <p>Concerns about the impact of housing development on industrial areas and a desire to maintain the countryside.</p>	<p>importance of emphasizing digital skills in schools.</p> <p>Mention of outdated connections and the necessity of ensuring the reliability and modernization of the technological infrastructure, with some suggesting the privatization of providers or free broadband/Wi-Fi for all.</p>	<p>Suggestions for better planning, including infrastructure improvements as part of deals with developers and prioritizing brownfield sites.</p> <p>Calls for a focus on social housing, with an emphasis on maintaining existing social housing and proper planning for new developments to avoid negative impacts on communities.</p>	
<b>Three Rivers</b>	<p><b>Scepticism and Opposition to Net Zero Goals:</b></p> <p>Some individuals express scepticism about the importance of achieving net zero carbon emissions, considering it a distraction or a scam.</p> <p>Concerns are raised about the economic impact, potential taxpayer burden, and doubts regarding the existence of man-made climate change.</p>	<p><b>Local Economy and Jobs:</b></p> <p>Comments highlight the importance of focusing on encouraging jobs and supporting local communities for naturally happier lives.</p> <p>Concerns are raised about warehouses being built on green spaces, and the impact of large projects like HS2 on the environment.</p> <p><b>Transportation Challenges and Infrastructure:</b></p>	<p><b>Parking and Economic Viability of High Street:</b></p> <p>Concerns about the impact of limited parking (1 hour) on local businesses.</p> <p>Emphasis on the need to reinstate parking to 2 hours to support the survival of shops and prevent the decline of the high street.</p> <p><b>Local Economic Support and Job Creation:</b></p> <p>Desire for practical support for local businesses, with a</p>	<p><b>Universal Access at Subsidized Rates:</b></p> <p>The first theme revolves around the belief that everyone should have access to the internet at sensible and subsidized rates. This suggests a commitment to ensuring that internet services are affordable and accessible to a broad population.</p> <p><b>Scepticism Towards the Internet:</b></p>	<p><b>Housing Priorities and Types:</b></p> <p>There is a strong emphasis on the need for more social housing urgently.</p> <p>Concerns about the types of homes being built, with a preference for family-sized dwellings (3 bedrooms) over flats.</p> <p>Desire for more attractive housing designs and a dislike for soulless estates and towers.</p>	<p><b>Infrastructure and Transport Issues:</b></p> <p>Complaints about the poor condition of roads, lack of buses, and traffic congestion from neighbouring areas.</p> <p>Public transport is deemed unreliable, expensive, and inadequate, with specific issues highlighted such as late buses and absence of pavements.</p> <p><b>Concerns about Initiatives and Policies:</b></p> <p>Scepticism and criticism of initiatives related to emissions penalties and "active travel" without clear definitions or tangible improvements in basic infrastructure.</p>

<p><b>Local and Practical Concerns:</b></p> <p>Residents highlight specific local issues, such as the lack of public transport in Hertfordshire and the environmental impact of the M25.</p> <p>Calls for realistic solutions that consider the needs of low-income families and busy lifestyles, including subsidies and the continued use of cars.</p> <p><b>Community Engagement and Alternative Approaches:</b></p> <p>Suggestions are made to prioritize community-centric initiatives, such as promoting plant-based businesses and incorporating solar panels in all new building developments.</p> <p>Some argue that focusing on net zero goals may hinder community growth and prosperity, while others emphasize the importance</p>	<p>Criticisms are expressed regarding the lack of public transport, its expense, and issues like delays when it does exist.</p> <p>Some scepticism is directed towards the concept of "15-minute towns and cities," with questions about the feasibility and purpose of such plans.</p> <p>The need for subsidies for low-income individuals, reduction of fossil fuel-powered vehicles, and public ownership of public transport are emphasized.</p> <p><b>Environmental Conservation and Green Spaces:</b></p> <p>Strong advocacy for the protection of green belt land and the prevention of building on such areas.</p> <p>Calls for the promotion of green initiatives, such as tree planting, community gardens, and a focus on better health services.</p>	<p>focus on creating more local jobs.</p> <p>Questioning the region's reputation as a world-class economy and expressing a preference for policies that are less hostile towards cars.</p> <p><b>Environmental Impact and Net Zero Pursuit:</b></p> <p>Concerns about the environmental cost of proposed initiatives.</p> <p>Suggesting a potential conflict between pursuing net zero goals and the environmental impact, proposing that advancements in technology might naturally reduce the carbon footprint without active pursuit of net zero.</p>	<p>The second theme reflects a segment of individuals who express deep suspicion towards the internet and its offerings. This scepticism may be rooted in concerns related to privacy, security, or other apprehensions about the digital realm.</p> <p><b>Support for Communication Infrastructure:</b></p> <p>The third theme expresses a positive stance on the installation of communication infrastructure, particularly mobile masts. The commenter sees no objection to masts and asserts that they are not perceived as dangerous, indicating support for the development of the necessary infrastructure for widespread internet access.</p>	<p><b>Affordability and Amenities:</b></p> <p>Criticism of the affordability of current housing initiatives, with a call for a clearer definition of "affordable."</p> <p>The need for amenities to support the additional housing, highlighting the importance of infrastructure planning.</p> <p><b>Environmental Considerations and Council Involvement:</b></p> <p>Opposition to building on green belt areas, suggesting a preference for brownfield development.</p> <p>Advocacy for lower-density housing, homes with gardens, and off-road parking.</p> <p>Calls for a council-led house-building program to ensure availability for those in need, with an emphasis on starter homes.</p>	<p>Opposition to what is perceived as a potential "war on cars" and doubts about the efficacy of electric cars due to concerns about their batteries and mining impact.</p> <p><b>Calls for Improved Public Transport:</b></p> <p>Demands for better public transport services, including more accountability for bus companies, nationalization of train and bus services for efficiency and fair pricing, and specific suggestions such as free and frequent bus services.</p>
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	of addressing environmental concerns for the well-being of future generations.	Concerns about the impact of construction on green spaces, expressing a desire for residents to benefit rather than just developers.				
<b>Watford</b>	<p><b>Concerns about Implementation and Impact on Motorists:</b></p> <p>There are several comments expressing scepticism and opposition to measures that negatively affect motorists, such as the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ). Some participants are wary of the impact on freedom and emphasize the need for gradual changes rather than ruthless imposition of laws.</p> <p><b>Emphasis on Practical Solutions and Global Collaboration:</b></p> <p>Many comments highlight the importance of practical and feasible solutions over ambitious but unrealistic goals. Some express the view that global cooperation is necessary</p>	<p><b>Concerns about Urban Development:</b></p> <p>Criticism of the construction of high-rise buildings, flats, and estates, with a specific focus on the loss of green spaces.</p> <p>Desire for more detailed plans on urban regeneration, opposition to the encroachment of green spaces, and dissatisfaction with current development trends.</p> <p><b>Health and Wellbeing:</b></p> <p>Calls for increased attention to mental health in GP (general practice) services.</p> <p>Emphasis on the importance of healthy living, including access to healthy foods, water-only supply in schools, and</p>	<p><b>Economic Development and Job Opportunities:</b></p> <p>Concerns about Watford High Street being overrun with low-paid food outlets.</p> <p>Calls for more schools, shops, libraries, and healthcare facilities.</p> <p>Emphasis on creating more job opportunities, especially for the elderly, and utilizing their skills.</p> <p>Recognition of the need for a diverse economy beyond traditional sectors.</p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Business Environment:</b></p> <p>Observations about the closure of shops and businesses, including concerns about the impact on the local economy.</p>	<p><b>Digital Divide Concerns:</b></p> <p>Concerns about the existing and potential divide between those who have access to digital technology and skills and those who do not.</p> <p>Views on age/generation differences, with some feeling that certain age groups may have missed the opportunity for digital training.</p> <p><b>Access and Support:</b></p> <p>Emphasis on the need for more digital upskilling opportunities and improved connectivity, especially in public places like libraries, to ensure widespread access.</p> <p>Concerns about a lack of places for digital help, and the importance of</p>	<p><b>Infrastructure and Services:</b></p> <p>Several comments emphasize the importance of developing housing alongside essential services and infrastructure, such as schools, medical facilities, and transport links. Concerns are raised about the inadequacy of existing infrastructure to support the current population.</p> <p><b>Affordability and Social Housing:</b></p> <p>Affordability is a recurring theme, with calls for genuinely affordable housing and scepticism about the term "affordable housing." Suggestions include building more three-bedroom apartments or houses and providing rental properties at realistic prices. There's also</p>	<p><b>Issues with Public Transport Reliability and Service Quality:</b></p> <p>Several comments express dissatisfaction with the current state of public transport, citing problems such as poor bus routes, irregular timing, and frequent cancellations.</p> <p>Concerns are raised about the affordability of public transport, and some individuals share their experiences of inconvenience, long waiting times, and difficulties reaching destinations in a timely manner.</p> <p>The need for significant improvements in the reliability, frequency, and affordability of public transportation services is a common theme.</p> <p><b>Infrastructure Challenges and Traffic Issues:</b></p> <p>Infrastructure challenges are highlighted, with comments emphasizing that the current state of the nation's infrastructure is not equipped to support electric transport options.</p> <p>Traffic congestion is a recurring issue, with complaints about gridlock, difficulties in navigating Watford's roads, and the impact of increased development on traffic conditions.</p>



<p>for effective climate action, and there is scepticism about the effectiveness of current government green policies. Questions are raised about the feasibility and affordability of transitioning to a net-zero economy.</p> <p><b>Concerns and Priorities for Infrastructure and Housing:</b></p> <p>Participants stress the need for improved public transportation infrastructure to incentivize people to reduce car usage. There are also concerns about housing and land use, with calls to stop building on green belt land and prioritize sustainable practices. Some express concerns about the impact on existing residents and emphasize the importance of global collaboration in tackling climate change.</p>	<p>venues for sports and leisure.</p> <p>Concerns about the lack of GP surgeries and support in relation to the increasing number of new properties.</p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Connectivity:</b></p> <p>Demands for better connectivity across the county, both East to West and North to South.</p> <p>Questions about the feasibility and details of proposed initiatives, such as the concept of "15-minute neighbourhoods."</p> <p>Advocacy for the reopening of social centres, youth clubs, and adventure playgrounds to address community needs and prevent issues like youth loitering on streets.</p>	<p>Calls for lower business rates and initiatives to attract more businesses to the area.</p> <p>Suggestions for the development of technical colleges and specific training programs, such as HGV training schools.</p> <p><b>Social and Community Development:</b></p> <p>Concerns about the decline of Watford High Street and the need for more creative development opportunities within the local community.</p> <p>Emphasis on the importance of world-class economy for improving living standards.</p> <p>Recognition of the significance of the film industry in Hertfordshire and the potential impact on local development.</p>	<p>maintaining face-to-face services, particularly for vulnerable populations.</p> <p><b>Mixed Views on Digital Importance:</b></p> <p>Differing opinions on the importance of digitalization, with some viewing it as essential for the 21st century, while others consider it less important, assuming most people already have digital access.</p> <p>Concerns about the impact on older generations and the need for education to adapt to the digital age.</p>	<p>a demand for social housing and criticism of the sale of council houses.</p> <p><b>Quality, Green Spaces, and Local Impact:</b></p> <p>Comments express concerns about the quality of housing and the impact of high-rise developments on communities. Issues raised include the need for green spaces, opposition to high-rise flats without suitable infrastructure, and worries about the impact on mental health and community well-being. Local concerns about transport, schools, and the preservation of green belt land are also highlighted.</p>	<p>Suggestions are made for enhancements such as interlinking bike lanes, improving existing roads, and building a west-east tram network.</p> <p><b>Calls for Alternative Transportation Solutions and Future Planning:</b></p> <p>Some comments suggest exploring alternative means of transportation beyond electric options, emphasizing the need for diversity in transport solutions.</p> <p>Calls for a tram system in Hertfordshire, enhancements to the Abbey Flyer line, and the implementation of walking bridges are mentioned as potential solutions.</p> <p>The importance of addressing air quality concerns, especially for individuals with health issues like COPD, is raised, with a focus on long-term planning for the benefit of future generations.</p>
<p><b>Welwyn Hatfield</b></p>	<p><b>Transportation and Infrastructure:</b></p>	<p><b>Infrastructure and Accessible Amenities:</b></p>	<p><b>Concerns about Overdevelopment and Preservation of Green Spaces:</b></p>	<p><b>Digital Inclusion and Accessibility:</b></p>	<p><b>Concerns about Development Quality and Impact:</b></p> <p><b>Transportation Infrastructure Improvement:</b></p> <p>Calls for cross-country trains/monorails and regular, dependable bus services.</p>

<p>Poor public transport links and unreliable buses leading to a heavy reliance on cars.</p> <p>Lack of on-street chargers for electric cars.</p> <p>Emphasis on the importance of cheap and convenient public transport, improved cycling infrastructure, and the need for more sustainable transportation options.</p> <p><b>Environmental Concerns and Sustainable Practices:</b></p> <p>Calls for incorporating solar panels and better insulation in new builds.</p> <p>Ban on open coal and log burners for better air quality.</p> <p>Scepticism and criticism of the green agenda, with concerns about cost to taxpayers and the practicality of achieving a carbon-free existence.</p>	<p>Concerns about the need for a diverse mix of spaces to cater to various ages, cultures, and well-being approaches.</p> <p>Emphasis on low-cost facilities for equal access, especially in low-income and deprived areas.</p> <p>Prioritizing the inclusion of a swimming pool and dissatisfaction with the waiting time until 2040 for improvements.</p> <p><b>Urban Planning and Housing Issues:</b></p> <p>Criticisms about the long timeline for improvements and the impact of excessive housing on reduced facilities.</p> <p>Stress on the importance of local services, social housing, and proper infrastructure alongside new housing developments.</p> <p>Issues related to congestion, parking availability, and the need</p>	<p>Several comments express concerns about overdevelopment, with an emphasis on the proliferation of flats replacing thriving businesses and the need to preserve green field sites.</p> <p>There's a desire to balance economic growth with the preservation of the local environment and green spaces.</p> <p><b>Scepticism about Economic Growth Metrics and Public Services:</b></p> <p>Some comments question the value of traditional economic growth metrics, such as GDP, as a measure of well-being. There's a scepticism about the current focus on the economy and its impact on public services.</p> <p>Criticisms include dissatisfaction with local public services, perceived poor council performance, and concerns about the</p>	<p>Concerns about older individuals being disadvantaged due to a lack of digital skills.</p> <p>Advocacy for public spaces like libraries offering digital access and the need for widespread public Wi-Fi.</p> <p>Recognition of the challenges faced by those without smartphones or digital skills, emphasizing the importance of not leaving anyone behind.</p> <p><b>Technology Education and Support:</b></p> <p>Calls for technology lessons and courses for the elderly to enhance their digital literacy.</p> <p>Suggestions for access hubs and free technology resources for those who cannot afford devices.</p> <p>Acknowledgment of the anxiety and stress caused by the rapid transition to digital methods,</p>	<p>Some respondents express concerns about the quality of housing developments, emphasizing the need for sustainable, well-designed homes.</p> <p>There is a desire to maintain the "garden city feel" and avoid overdevelopment, with specific mention of not cramming buildings together and preserving green spaces.</p> <p>Infrastructure improvement is a major concern, with worries about the strain on existing services like hospitals, schools, and transportation due to increased housing.</p> <p><b>Affordable and Social Housing Priority:</b></p> <p>Multiple comments highlight the urgent need for affordable housing, especially for single individuals, families, and those struggling with homelessness.</p>	<p>Criticisms of the current transport system as a joke and suggestions to improve bus routes and services.</p> <p>Concerns about the frequency and speed of trains, particularly for specific commuter routes.</p> <p><b>Affordability and Accessibility of Public Transport:</b></p> <p>Requests for more affordable and reliable public transport options.</p> <p>Criticisms of high fares, and suggestions to make public transport more attractive by reducing costs.</p> <p>Emphasis on the importance of active travel, but with recognition that alternatives should be available for those with mobility limitations.</p> <p><b>Environmental Considerations and Planning:</b></p> <p>Concerns about air quality, carbon emissions, and the impact of transport choices on the environment.</p> <p>Calls for investment in cycling infrastructure, electronic transport, and sustainable alternatives.</p> <p>Criticisms of congestion and road planning, with a desire for careful and effective planning to address current issues.</p>
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<p><b>Social and Economic Impact:</b></p> <p>Worries about the economic impact of a low carbon economy, especially on poorer individuals.</p> <p>Concerns about the affordability and feasibility of achieving a low carbon economy by 2050.</p> <p>Discussions about the potential financial burden on citizens and scepticism about the true motives behind environmental initiatives, often expressed as concerns about additional taxes.</p>	<p>for a balanced approach to green initiatives.</p> <p><b>Community Well-being and Engagement:</b></p> <p>Recognition of the decline in "third places" and the potential impact on issues like hooliganism and healthcare strain.</p> <p>Calls for transparency on added costs and a focus on mental health improvement through cheaper living and more council houses.</p> <p>Concerns about overdevelopment, anti-car policies, and the need for a healthy, connected environment for all residents.</p>	<p>cost of proposed initiatives on taxpayers.</p> <p><b>Calls for Inclusive Economic Opportunities and Local Infrastructure Improvement:</b></p> <p>Many comments emphasize the importance of creating a world-class economy that benefits everyone, particularly low-income families. There's a call for inclusive economic opportunities and affordable housing.</p> <p>Suggestions include driving down costs for business units, creating reliable transport links, and investing in local services like healthcare and education. The need for local housing to reduce transportation costs and environmental damage is also highlighted.</p>	<p>emphasizing the need for support and alternatives.</p> <p><b>Infrastructure and Connectivity:</b></p> <p>Concerns about the placement of mobile phone masts, with preferences for high buildings or existing structures over housing estates.</p> <p>Acknowledgment of the importance of connectivity, with some suggesting free broadband for all.</p> <p>Mixed opinions on the prioritization of digital access, with considerations for other pressing issues and concerns about the decline of town centre shops due to online shopping.</p>	<p>Criticism is directed at the lack of recent efforts in providing social housing, with a call for a focus on building for social needs rather than profit.</p> <p>Scepticism and frustration are expressed regarding the definition of "affordable" and the need for clarity and actual affordability in housing initiatives.</p> <p><b>Environmental Considerations and Infrastructure:</b></p> <p>There is a strong emphasis on environmental sustainability in housing design, with mentions of passive house concepts, community heating systems, and the avoidance of gas boilers.</p> <p>Concerns about the environmental impact of housing developments, including the loss of greenbelt areas and over-expansion, are voiced.</p>	
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