

Wokingham Borough Council

# Health Impact Assessment

Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan Update:  
Proposed Submission Plan (Regulation 19)

September 2024



**WOKINGHAM**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Health Impact Assessment (HIA) has been prepared to support the Local Plan Update: Proposed Submission Plan (September 2024) which sets out the proposed long-term development strategy for Wokingham Borough. The HIA specifically considers the health impact of the policies contained in the plan.

## *Background to the Proposed Submission Plan*

- 1.2. Wokingham Borough Council has been preparing a new local plan – the Local Plan Update. The new local plan, once completed, will set the framework to guide the growth of the borough addressing needs and opportunities for housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure, as well as the basis for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving well designed places.
- 1.3. The preparation of the new local plan has been informed by four principal consultations, including the Draft Plan Consultation (2020) and the Revised Growth Strategy Consultation (2021).
- 1.4. The Local Plan Update: Proposed Submission Plan represents the evolution of the new local plan to the version the council intends to submit to the government for examination by a government appointed planning inspector. The examination will consider whether the plan meets legal requirements and is sound. If the plan passes examination, the council may adopt and use it to make decisions on planning applications.
- 1.5. In preparing the Proposed Submission Plan, the council has considered all representations made in response to previous consultation and reflected on technical evidence and studies to develop policies and proposals in the plan.
- 1.6. The HIA will form part of the evidence base that will be submitted along with the plan to support its examination.

## *Health Impact Assessment*

- 1.7. A HIA assesses the potential effects a plan, programme or policy can have on the health of the population and the distribution of those effects within the population<sup>1</sup>. It is often defined using the [European Centre for Health Policy](#) as ‘a combination of procedures, methods and tools by which a policy, programme or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population, and the distribution of those effects within the population’.
- 1.8. There is no statutory requirement for a local plan to complete a HIA, but due to the strategic nature of a local plan, the council chose to prepare a HIA to ensure health and wellbeing was considered during its preparation and appropriately reflected in the policies and proposals.
- 1.9. The importance of health and wellbeing and healthy communities is embedded in the council’s vision, priorities and values, in particular a key principle for the council is to ‘improve the health, well-being and quality of life for residents’.
- 1.10. The council consulted on a draft Community Vision 2035 from May to June 2024. The draft Community Vision has been developed working with partners from the community and helps to set

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Health, 2010

direction and shape the approach for the future through six ambitions: Protecting and improving our places, making it easier for people to access the things they want and need, building and maintaining great communities, providing fair opportunities for everyone, economic success that everyone is part of; and living happy, healthy and independent lives. Health and wellbeing is a key theme that is enshrined in the six ambitions set out in the Community Vision. The draft Community Vision recognises that the borough is one of the healthiest places in the country with a largely active and engaged population, however, health is experienced in the borough individually and not collectively, with differences in people's experiences that aren't equal. The Community Vision ensures that the council works with its partners and organisations within the community to help residents stay healthy, happy and safe across the borough.

- 1.11. The [Wokingham Borough Council Plan 2020 to 2024](#) supports the council's wider community vision and sets out several commitments to deliver in the borough's communities. They include: 'Providing safe and strong communities', 'Enriching lives', 'Delivering the right homes in the right places', 'Keeping the borough moving', and 'Enjoying a clean and green borough'.
- 1.12. The Draft Plan Consultation and the Revised Growth Strategy Consultation were supported by a HIA<sup>2</sup>. The HIAs assessed the impact of the policies and proposals set out in those consultation plans against a set of key health determinants and indicators. The HIAs were based on the principles and objectives set out in the [Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2030](#), [Wokingham's Health and Wellbeing Strategy into Action 2021-2024](#), and the emerging Public Health Strategy 2024-2030, which will supersede the Strategy into Action, once adopted.
- 1.13. A few comments were received to the HIA that supported the policies and proposals set out in the Revised Growth Strategy Consultation. One community group suggested that the assessment of Policy SS3 related to the Hall Farm / Loddon Valley Strategic Development Location was too generalised and focused on infrastructure. A landowner / developer suggested that there should be a clearer link between the HIA and the Sustainability Appraisal, the borough's health profile should be supplemented by local data and consider effects of the Covid-19 pandemic; and the HIA should refer to current best practice and guidance published on health and spatial planning.
- 1.14. No comments were received from statutory consultees or other key groups specifically related to the HIA.
- 1.15. In line with the previous HIAs, this HIA has assessed each policy within the Proposed Submission Plan for its potential positive or negative health impacts. The impacts consider the effect each policy might have on key health indicators and the 'building blocks of health and wellbeing', which have been informed by the strategic objectives in the local plan. The HIA is, however, updated to take account priorities contained in the latest health and wellbeing strategies, which supersede the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2021. The HIA has been used in the plan-making process to identify any potential impacts of each policy in the plan and to identify ways in which potential negative impacts can be mitigated or to maximise any potential benefits.
- 1.16. A key change in the Proposed Submission Plan is the introduction of a chapter and a suite of planning policies to combat and mitigate against the impacts of climate change. This follows key activities, actions and targets set out in the council's Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) to achieve a carbon neutral borough by 2030. The Proposed Submission Plan recognises that local and

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<sup>2</sup> Health Impact Assessment to accompany Draft Local Plan Update consultation (January 2020), available at: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-policy/emerging-local-plan-update/previous-consultations>; Health Impact Assessment to accompany the Local Plan Update: Revised Growth Strategy consultation (November 2021), available at: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-policy/emerging-local-plan-update/previous-consultations>

national targets can only be achieved if significant changes are made to the way development is delivered, primarily through energy demand reduction measures and actions to promote sustainable modes of transport. The climate change and energy policies are assessed against the health indicators, with outcomes shown in the Health Impact Assessment Matrix (Appendix 1).

## 2. National policy and guidance context

### *National Planning Policy Framework*

- 2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places an emphasis on the role health, social and cultural wellbeing can contribute towards achieving sustainable development. Paragraph 8 sets out three overarching objectives, including a social objective (8b) which seeks to ‘*support strong, vibrant and healthy communities*’ and ‘*fosters a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being*’.
- 2.2. Furthermore, the NPPF ensures that planning policies and decisions achieve ‘*healthy, inclusive and safe places*’<sup>3</sup> by supporting healthy lifestyles through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, leisure and sports facilities, local shops, and layouts and designs that encourage walking and cycling.
- 2.3. The NPPF continues to state that to ensure development promotes health, social and cultural wellbeing, local planning authorities should:
  - create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users<sup>4</sup>
  - ensure new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account the likely effects of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment<sup>5</sup>
  - enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and wellbeing needs<sup>6</sup>
  - take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all sections of the community<sup>7</sup>
  - provide access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity which are important for the health and wellbeing of communities<sup>8</sup>, and
  - promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions<sup>9</sup>.

### *Planning Practice Guidance*

- 2.4. The national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides additional guidance on promoting healthy and safe communities, in particular the role the design and use of the built and natural environment can play as major determinants of health and wellbeing, for example the use of green infrastructure.
- 2.5. The PPG sets out guidance for achieving healthy and inclusive communities through positive planning. It emphasises the need for local planning authorities to work effectively with public health organisations, health service organisations, commissioners, providers and local communities to promote healthy and inclusive communities and support appropriate health infrastructure.

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<sup>3</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 96

<sup>4</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 135 f)

<sup>5</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 191

<sup>6</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 96 c)

<sup>7</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 97 b)

<sup>8</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 102

<sup>9</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 123

- 2.6. The guidance encourages plan-making authorities to involve key groups in the local health and wellbeing system, including Health and Wellbeing Boards, who are responsible for producing a Health and Wellbeing Strategy; NHS England and Integrated Care Boards (ICB) and Integrated Care Systems (ICS).
- 2.7. The PPG suggests that planning and health should be considered in two ways. Firstly, creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles, and secondly in terms of identifying and securing facilities necessary for primary, secondary and tertiary care, and the wider health and care system.
- 2.8. The PPG defines a healthy place as *'one which supports and promotes healthy behaviours and environments and a reduction in health inequalities for people of all ages'*<sup>10</sup>. A healthy place is recognised as providing the community with opportunities to improve their physical and mental health and support community engagement and well-being. It can also meet the needs of children and younger people to grow and develop, as well as to adapt to the needs of an increasingly ageing population, such as those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments and other vulnerable groups.
- 2.9. There are a wide range of publications that discuss and recognise the relationship between planning and health. ['The Spatial Planning for Health – An evidence resource for planning and designing healthier places'](#) illustrates the links between spatial planning and health, by presenting key finds from research on the impacts of built environment on health. The review focuses on five aspects of the built and natural environment: neighbourhood design, housing, healthier food, natural and sustainable environment and transport.
- 2.10. The Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA), in partnership with the King's Fund and the Young Foundation, were commissioned by NHS England to create a series of practical guides to healthy place-making, based on learning from the Healthy New Towns Programme. The principles of ['Putting health into place'](#) demonstrate the value in healthy place making and importance of building and embedding health and wellbeing into developments and in tackling inequalities.
- 2.11. The [20-minute neighbourhood](#) is a concept that has been grasped by the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) working in partnership with key organisations, and draws on an understanding of achieving complete, compact and connected neighbourhoods in towns and cities in the country and worldwide. Interest in the concept has grown in plan-making and place-making, particularly in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, which highlighted the importance of vibrant neighbourhoods, flexible working, use of green spaces and maximising walking and cycling over reliance on private cars. The concept of a 20-minute neighbourhood is to create a complete, compact and connected neighbourhood where people can meet their everyday needs within a short walk or cycle, and also presents multiple benefits, including boosting the local economy, improving people's health and wellbeing, increasing social connections in communities and tackling climate change. Further guidance, including features of a 20-minute neighbourhood are set out in [TCPA's 20-Minute Neighbourhoods: Creating healthier, active, prosperous communities – An introduction for Council Planners in England](#).

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<sup>10</sup> Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), Paragraph: 003 Reference ID:53-003-20191101

### 3. Overview of the Local Plan Update

- 3.1. Once adopted the Local Plan Update will form part of the development plan for the borough. Development proposals must accord with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.2. The Proposed Submission Plan proposes the following strategic objectives, which have evolved through earlier consultations and taken account consultation comments:
- make the fullest contribution possible to the mitigation of, and adaptation to climate change and the transition to a low-carbon economy.
  - reduce the need to travel and widen travel choice, by providing local opportunities to access learning and employment, services and facilities, through ensuring that options for walking, cycling and public transport are attractive, accessible for all, convenient and safe, and by enabling digital connectivity.
  - improve strategic transport connectivity by walking, cycling, public transport and road, both between places within and outside of the borough.
  - maintain and strengthen the sense of place by securing quality designed development through protecting and enhancing the distinctive historic environment, landscape character, townscape character and biodiversity value, assisting vibrancy and by keeping settlements separate.
  - champion thriving town and local centres to provide the focus of their communities both in social and economic activity, ensuring they can adapt to the challenges they face.
  - enable conditions to allow the economy to creatively grow by being adaptable to structural and technological change, ensuring the economic benefits are felt by all.
  - improve health and wellbeing by enabling independence, encouraging healthy lifestyles, facilitating social interaction and creating inclusive and safe communities.
  - contribute our fair share towards meeting the need for more housing, ensuring that a range of suitable housing options are available across both towns and villages, which cater for and adapt to a variety of needs, including affordable housing, the growing and ageing population, and people with additional support or needs.
  - promote quality and innovation in the design of buildings and public spaces, ensuring they are attractive, accessible, welcoming and meet the needs of all groups in the community.
  - facilitate timely provision of new and improved infrastructure by working with providers to achieve focused investment and by securing appropriate benefits from new development.<sup>11</sup>
- 3.3. The vision and objectives for the Local Plan Update have been retained throughout the Draft Local Plan Consultation, the Revised Growth Strategy Consultation, and now the Proposed Submission Plan. Notwithstanding individual policies have evolved and proposed allocations for development have altered over time. This HIA supersedes the previous HIAs and reflects the evolved policies and pattern of development promoted by the Proposed Submission Plan.
- 3.4. The HIA forms part of the evidence base for the Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The production of the SA is an integral component of the plan-making process.

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<sup>11</sup> Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update: Draft Plan Consultation (2020), Section 3: Our Vision & Objectives



- 3.5. The SA has been undertaken at each stage of the production of the new local plan, including the assessment of housing and employment options; the assessment of site allocations; and the assessment of policies. The SA considers and assesses the main alternatives faced during the process of developing the local plan against a set of sustainability criteria.
- 3.6. This HIA provides greater scope and depth specifically related to health and wellbeing determinants. Whilst the SA has an approach to consider general sustainability factors, the purpose of the HIA is to complement the SA and ensure that specific attention is given by the council to consider all health and wellbeing determinants which are relevant to the local plan.

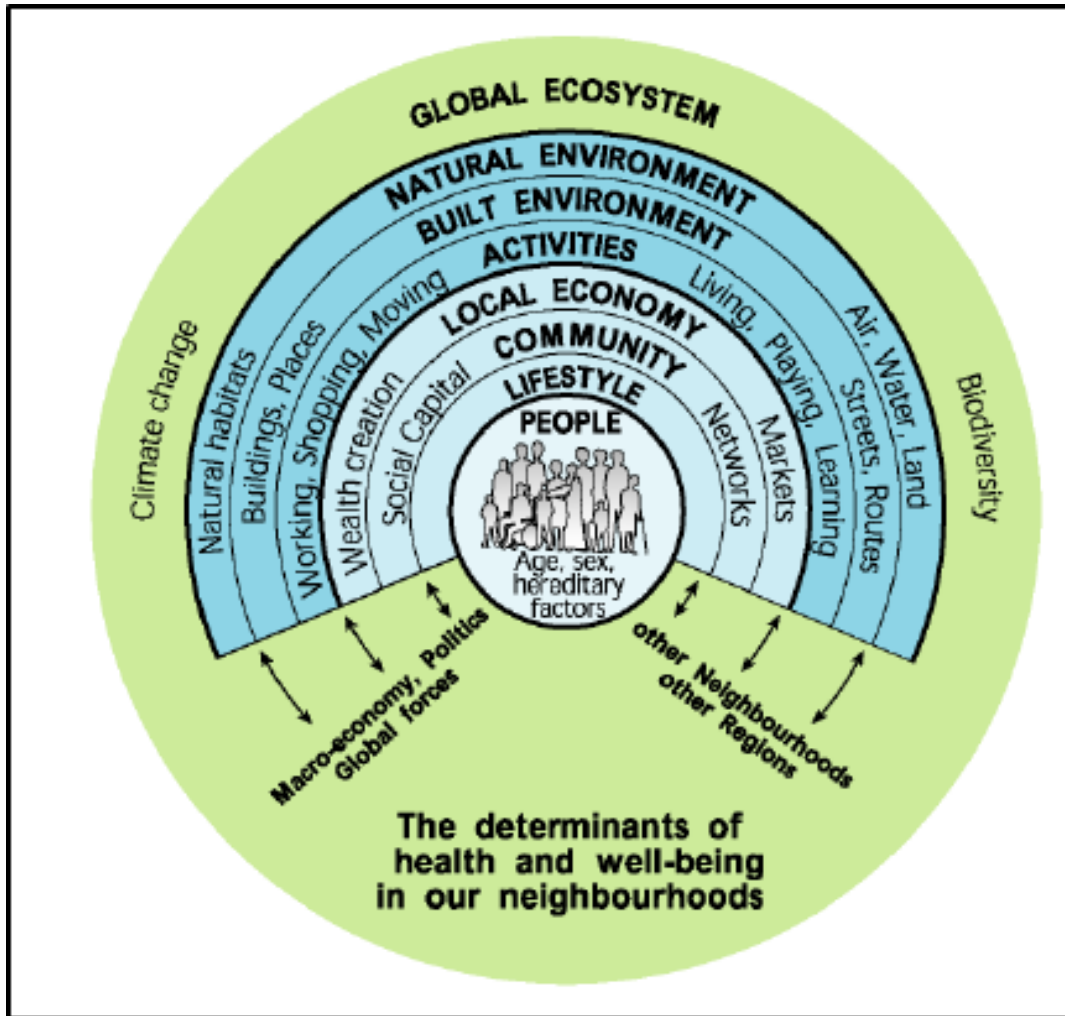
## 4. Building Blocks of Health and Wellbeing

- 4.1. Almost every aspect of a person's life impacts their health and wellbeing. The surroundings in which they grow and live, move or travel, their job and pay, their home, education, the food they eat, their family, friends and communities. These are commonly referred to as the wider determinants of health, and also the 'Building Blocks' of health and wellbeing (The Health Foundation, 2022). To create a society where everybody can thrive, people need the right building blocks in place, and right now, there are people and communities in Wokingham Borough where the blocks are missing and are unstable.



Source: How to talk about the building blocks of health. The Health Foundation; 2022 ([health.org.uk/publications/how-to-talk-about-the-building-blocks-of-health](https://health.org.uk/publications/how-to-talk-about-the-building-blocks-of-health)).

- 4.2. The council and its partners, play an important role in influencing many of these building blocks of health and have a responsibility in help to close the gaps, particularly through local strategies and plans. It is therefore important to assess the impact the proposed plans and decisions have on the health and wellbeing of residents.
- 4.3. To assess the health impact of the proposals set out in the Proposed Submission Plan, it was considered appropriate to continue to use the health determinants identified in the previous HIAs. The health determinants are social, economic, environmental and cultural factors that indirectly influence health and well-being. The diagram below illustrates the health determinants relating to people and places.

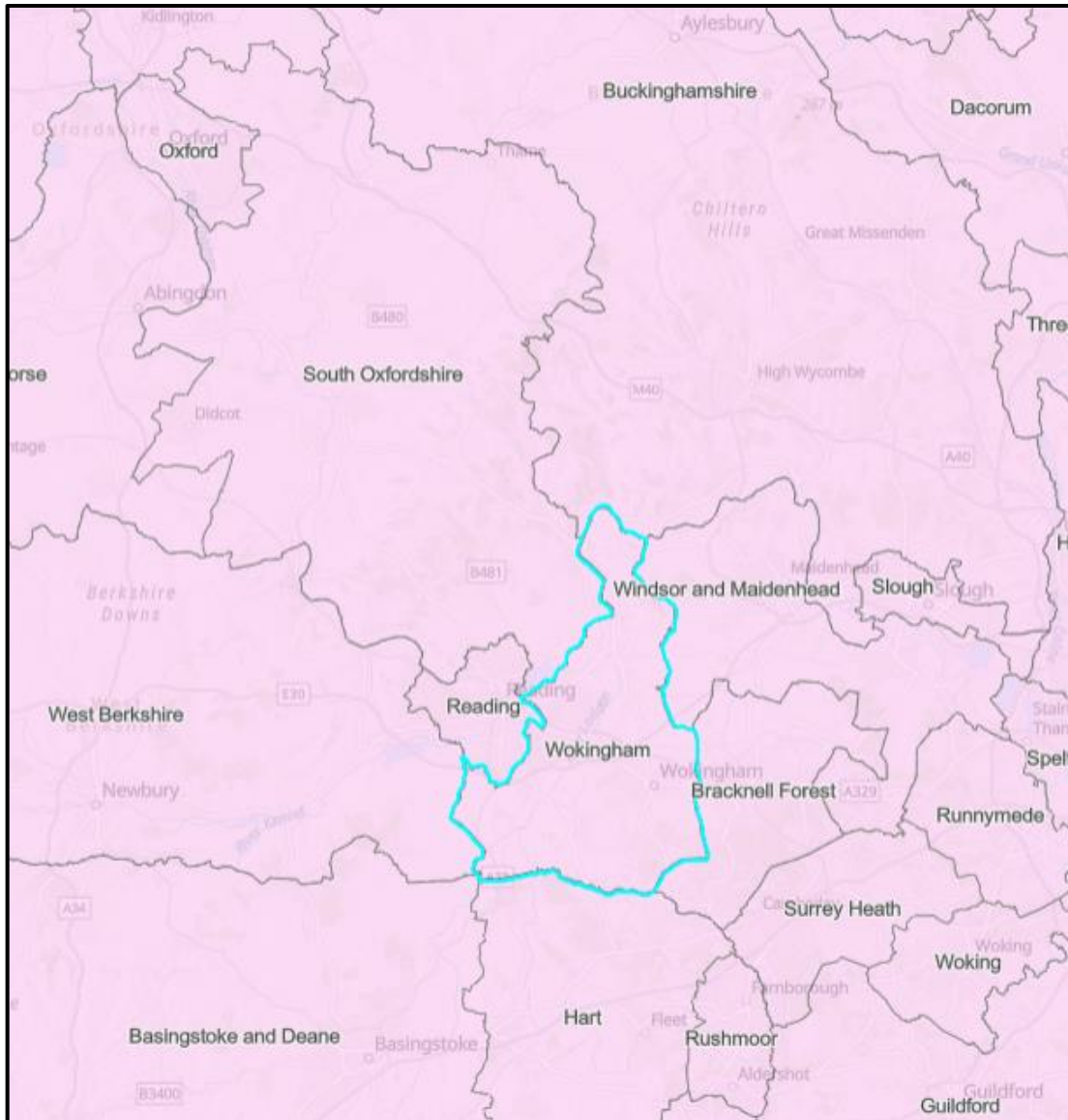


Source: *The Health Map*, Barton and Grant 2006 (published in *Health Impact Assessment of Government Policy*, 2010)

## 5. Wokingham Borough Population Profile

### *Demographic profile*

- 5.1. Wokingham Borough is a Unitary Authority covering an area of 178 square kilometres. It is in the west of Berkshire and is about 50 kilometres to the west of London. There are several local authorities that sit around Wokingham Borough. These are shown in the map below.



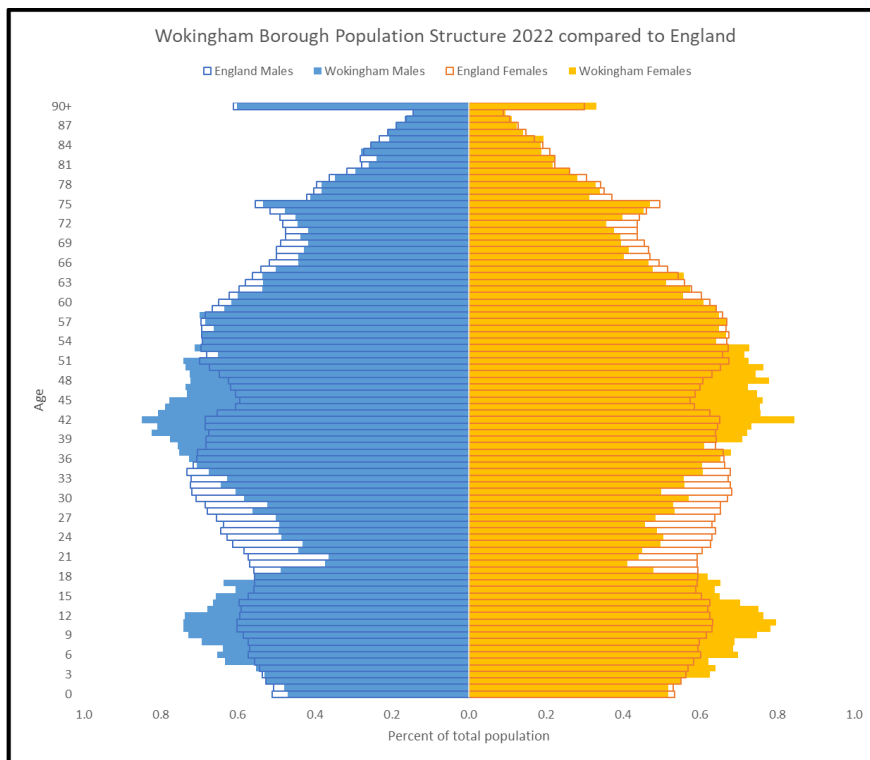
Source: ESRI using Office for National Statistics Local Authority Districts (December 2022)

- 5.2. The borough has a population of 180,967 people according to the 2022 mid-year population estimates published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). There are 992 people for every square kilometre of land in the borough<sup>12</sup>. The borough is semi-rural: two thirds of areas in the borough are urban meaning they are made up of larger towns or other concentrations of 10,000

<sup>12</sup> Office for National Statistics, 2021 census, Population Density

people or more. One third of areas are rural meaning that they are made up of smaller towns or villages with less than 10,000 people<sup>13</sup>.

5.3. The chart below shows the age and sex structure of the population of the borough. This is compared to England to show where there are larger or smaller than average numbers of people in the borough who are of certain ages. It shows that there are larger than average numbers of people in the borough who are: aged between 5 to 18, and between 35 and 50. There are smaller than average numbers of people in the borough who are: aged between 18 to 34, and between 60 to 75. The smaller number of 18 to 34 years olds is likely linked to younger adults leaving the borough for Higher Education and leaving the borough to live in less expensive housing area, such as Reading and Bracknell. With salaries generally increasing over a person’s working life, people moving into the borough are less likely to be young workers.



Source: Office for National Statistics mid-2022 population estimates for local authorities

5.4. The population of the borough increased by 15% between 2012 and 2022<sup>14</sup>. This growth has not been equal for all age groups. There was an 18% growth among those aged less than 18 years; a 12% growth among those ages 18 to 64; and a 24% growth among those aged 65 and over. This pattern has led to an increase in the dependency ratio in the borough meaning that there is now a larger number of people who are below or above working age for every person who is of working age (58 dependents for every 100 people of working age). A growing population will need to be supported by investment in infrastructure and services.

5.5. Net migration counts the number of people who move into an area minus the number of people who move out. International migration is when a person moves to the local authority from another non-UK country. Internal migration is when a person moves to a local authority from another local authority in the UK. International net migration in the borough during 2022 was 1,372. Internal net

<sup>13</sup> Rae, Alasdair (2017): A Land Cover Atlas of the United Kingdom (Document). Figshare. Journal contribution.

<sup>14</sup> Office for National Statistics mid-2022 population estimates

migration was 926. Out of 29 similarly sized local authorities, Wokingham Borough ranks 8th for international and 10th for internal net migration gain. This could be due to several factors including the scale of housing development and the large number of migrant communities such as the Hong Kong community settling in the borough. A high proportion of the net gain from migration is the gain of residents under the aged of 18.

- 5.6. 73% of the borough’s population are white British<sup>15</sup>. Detailed ethnicity breakdowns are shown in the table below.

<b>Ethnic group</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
<b>White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British</b>	129,087	73%
<b>Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Indian</b>	12,411	7%
<b>White: Other White</b>	10,750	6%
<b>Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Pakistani</b>	5,240	3%
<b>Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: African</b>	2,914	2%
<b>Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Other Asian</b>	2,436	1%
<b>Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Chinese</b>	2,390	1%
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian</b>	2,211	1%
<b>Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group</b>	1,955	1%
<b>White: Irish</b>	1,504	1%
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups</b>	1,391	1%
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean</b>	1,302	1%
<b>Other ethnic group: Arab</b>	948	1%
<b>Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Caribbean</b>	864	0.5%
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African</b>	666	0.4%
<b>Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Other Black</b>	525	0.3%
<b>Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Bangladeshi</b>	389	0.2%
<b>White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller</b>	330	0.2%
<b>White: Roma</b>	179	0.1%

Source: Office for National Statistics 2021 Census

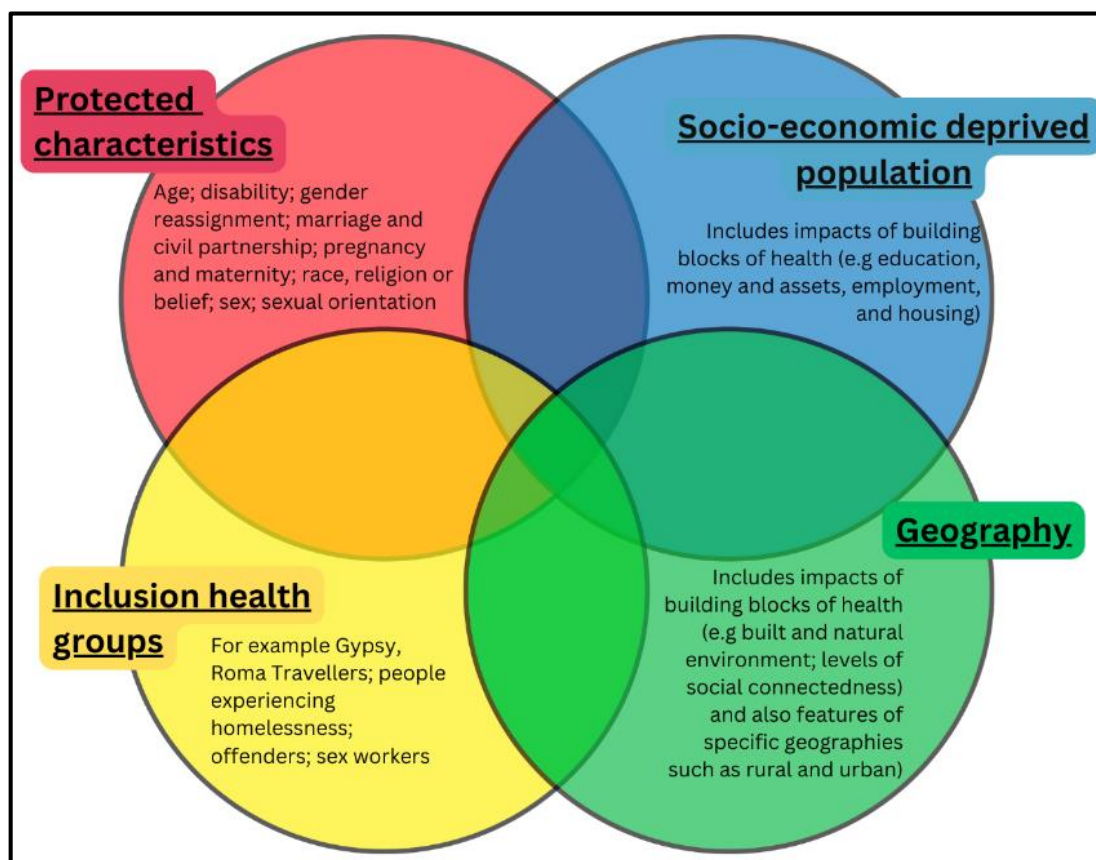
- 5.7. When compared to other local authorities in England using national measures of deprivation<sup>16</sup>, people living in Wokingham Borough appear to experience relatively low levels of deprivation. 92% of neighbourhoods in Wokingham Borough are in the least deprived 20% in England. None are in the most deprived 20% in England. However, it is known that there are people living in the borough who are experiencing high levels of deprivation despite this not being reflected in national deprivation measures. This is likely due to hidden pockets of deprivation existing within the borough that are masked at the geographic level used in such measures of deprivation. Deprivation may not be experienced equally by different groups of people living in the same neighbourhood. For example, deprivation is not experienced equally by people of different ethnic groups who are living in the same area of the borough.

- 5.8. Although deprivation is a key factor that leads to unfair and avoidable differences in health and wellbeing, it exists and interacts alongside other factors such as a person’s protected characteristics and the built and natural environment around them. These factors are shown in the picture below.

<sup>15</sup> Office for National Statistics 2021 Census

<sup>16</sup> Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019

How these factors interplay across the borough needs to be considered in the planning of infrastructure and services.



Source: Adapted from Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (2022), *Health disparities and inequalities: applying All Our Health*

- 5.9. Improving access to services for all and providing sustainable development and thriving and inclusive communities are important objectives of the Proposed Submission Plan, in seeking to address the inequalities and disparities across the borough. In addition, directing development to those settlements which have a good range and level of services and facilities will also maintain and support the vitality and viability of those services and reduce the potential for unsustainable locations of new development.

#### *Economic profile*

- 5.10. The overall economic picture of the borough is good with low levels of unemployment (1.8% in December 2023) and higher than average salaries<sup>17</sup>. However, there is a large gender pay gap. Men in the borough will earn, on average 33% more than women<sup>18</sup>. Groups who are more likely to be unemployed are those with learning disabilities, and those with serious mental illness<sup>19</sup>.
- 5.11. The table below looks at the percentage of the borough population aged 16 to 64 who reported being unemployed in the 2021 Census. This is broken down by different sub-groups of the population. Figures are calculated as a percentage of the total 16–64-year-old population within each group. Totals will not tally with the unemployment rate quoted above which is calculated as a

<sup>17</sup> Wokingham Borough Observatory, Economy and Employment report [accessed 10/07/2024]

<sup>18</sup> Office for National Statistics (2023) Gender Pay Gap

<sup>19</sup> Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Public health data (fingertips)

percentage of the economically active population. Females, those who are disabled, and people from white British or Irish backgrounds are more likely than average to not be in employment. Gaps are more apparent when looking at those who have never worked or who have not worked for 12 months or more.

	Never worked or not worked for 12 months or more	Not in employment but worked in the past 12 months	TOTAL NOT IN EMPLOYMENT
<b>TOTAL</b>	24.86%	4.08%	28.94%
<b>Female</b>	28.5%	4.3%	32.80%
<b>Male</b>	21.1%	3.8%	24.90%
<b>Disabled under the Equality Act</b>	57.2%	4.2%	61.40%
<b>Not Disabled under the Equality Act</b>	20.2%	4.1%	24.30%
<b>Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh</b>	17.00%	3.97%	20.97%
<b>Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African</b>	15.84%	5.12%	20.96%
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups</b>	11.91%	4.09%	16.00%
<b>Other ethnic group</b>	22.81%	4.58%	27.39%
<b>White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British</b>	27.91%	3.99%	31.90%
<b>White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other White</b>	15.48%	4.50%	19.98%
<b>White: Irish</b>	30.70%	5.91%	36.61%

Source: Office for National Statistics (2021) Census

- 5.12. Despite low unemployment, Wokingham Citizens Advice has seen an increase in clients seeking advice for Cost-of-Living support. Support around charitable support/foodbanks, and energy have been the areas in highest demand<sup>20</sup>. This suggests a growing number of people who are "Just About Managing". This cohort are a key priority group within the borough's [Tackling Poverty strategy](#).
- 5.13. 1.8% of the borough's 16- to 64-year-old population was claiming out of work benefits as of May 2024<sup>21</sup>. Claims were highest for males aged 16- to 24 (2.35%). They were lowest for females aged 50 to 64 (1.14%). Overall, males had a higher rate of claims than females. Younger people had a higher rate of claims than older people.
- 5.14. Home ownership within the borough is high, with approximately 80% of the housing stock being owner occupied. 12% of households in the borough are privately rented and 7% socially rented<sup>22</sup>. Despite high levels of home ownership, the borough is comparatively a less affordable areas to buy a home in the country, with average lower quartile house prices of £360,000 compared to the national average of around £190,000 in 2021<sup>23</sup>. This has affected who moves into the borough, for example key workers in the public sector who may be on lower salaries compared to the average or any private sector comparator.

<sup>20</sup> Wokingham Borough Council Insights Team, Borough profile: economic and socio-economic profile

<sup>21</sup> Wokingham Borough Observatory, Economy and Employment report [accessed 10/07/2024]

<sup>22</sup> Wokingham Local Housing Needs Assessment 2022 (November 2023), Figure 14, available at: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/wokingham/files/2024-02/Wokingham%20Local%20Housing%20Needs%20Assessment%202023.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> Wokingham Local Housing Needs Assessment 2022 (November 2023), Figure 16, available at: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/wokingham/files/2024-02/Wokingham%20Local%20Housing%20Needs%20Assessment%202023.pdf>



- 5.15. At the beginning of March 2024, 1,337 people were on the Housing Register waiting list for affordable housing in the borough. 45% had a high priority need, the remaining 55% were adequately housed. In 2022/23, 400 people had an initial assessment of homelessness circumstances and needs, 180 were owed a prevention duty and 211 were owed a relief duty<sup>24</sup>.
- 5.16. 5.6% of households in the borough are deprived according to the housing dimension of the 2021 Census. A household is classified as deprived in the housing dimension if the household's accommodation is either overcrowded, in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating. Younger people and those from minority ethnic backgrounds are more likely to be living in households classified as deprived in the housing dimension. For example, 12% of 16-to-24-year-olds and 15% of people from black ethnic backgrounds are living in households classified as housing deprived.

### *Health profile*

- 5.17. The council's emerging Public Health Strategy (2024-2030) sets out the future vision for all residents and communities in the borough to be happy, healthy and safe, and will be the council's next step on from the Strategy into Action. The local strategies are guided by the overarching priorities set out in the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which are set out in the following sections.

#### *i. Reduce the difference in health between different groups of people*

- 5.18. Overall, general health in the borough is better than the national average. This is reflected in the higher than national average life expectancy for both men (81 years) and women (84 years) from birth<sup>25</sup>. However, this is not the experience of all the population. In the borough's most deprived neighbourhoods, people are dying 5 years earlier than people who live in the least deprived neighbourhoods. For men, this gap has been increasing.
- 5.19. Our ability to thrive is shaped by the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age (the "building blocks of health and wellbeing"). To create a society where everybody can thrive, people need all the right building blocks in place including stable jobs, fair pay, quality housing and good education.
- 5.20. Health inequalities are avoidable differences in health outcomes between different groups in the population. They need to be addressed through a focus on the building blocks of health and wellbeing. Action should be taken to improve outcomes for everybody whilst focusing on those who have the greatest need and worst outcomes.
- 5.21. Local action is informed by the 8 principles outlined in The Marmot Review 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives' commissioned by the Department of Health in 2010:
- Give every child the best start in life
  - Enable all children and young people to maximise their capabilities
  - Create fair employment and good work for all
  - Ensure healthy standard of living for all
  - Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
  - Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention
- 5.22. Inequalities in deaths due to cancer and cardiovascular disease are the two leading contributors to the life expectancy gap for women living in the most deprived neighbourhoods in the borough.

<sup>24</sup> Wokingham Borough Council Borough profiles: Housing profile

<sup>25</sup> Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Public Health data (fingertips), data is for 2020-22

Inequalities in deaths due to cardiovascular disease and deaths due to external causes are the two leading contributors to the life expectancy gap for men living in the most deprived neighbourhoods, followed by deaths due to cancer<sup>26</sup>.

- 5.23. When people don't possess the things they need, like warm homes and healthy food, and are constantly worrying about making ends meet, it puts a strain on their bodies. This results in increase stress, high blood pressure and a weaker immune system. These stressors also make it harder to prioritise a healthy lifestyle.
- 5.24. This results in the prevalence of smoking, excess weight, and underlying risk factors such as hypertension being unevenly distributed across the borough's residents, with level of deprivation, sex and ethnicity all having an impact. Addressing these inequalities through a focus on the building blocks of health and wellbeing, giving everyone an equal opportunity of a healthy lifestyle will make change possible.

*ii. Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes*

- 5.25. People who experience multiple, overlapping risk factors for poor health are a focus of the Strategy into Action. This covers people with learning disabilities, unpaid carers, young people at risk of contact with the youth justice system, people with substance misuse, and people who have experienced domestic abuse. As people belonging to these groups tend to have very poor health outcomes, their health needs may require proactive support to limit harm and improve their general health and wellbeing. The Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy identifies several broad issues that may impact those groups at higher risk, notably a lack of access to health activities and food, limited availability of information about health and wellbeing services, increased loneliness and isolation and barriers to accessing GPs and primary health services.
- 5.26. The borough has a higher per capita number of adults with learning disabilities (LDs) receiving long-term supports than other boroughs in England, with 517 adults requiring supported housing or housing with support in 2020/2021<sup>27</sup>. National data shows that the average life expectancy of people with learning disabilities is 14 years lower than the general adult population for males and 17 years lower for females<sup>28</sup>. When looking at the GP records of adults with learning disabilities registered to a GP Practice in the borough, prevalence of asthma, diabetes, serious mental illness, and obesity are all higher than the general population<sup>29</sup>.
- 5.27. There are over 5,000 people in the borough providing unpaid care for 20 or more hours per week<sup>30</sup>. 72% of people live with the person for whom they are providing care. 60% of people being cared for are aged 75 and over, 44% have a physical disability, 41% have dementia and 38% a problem connected to ageing<sup>31</sup>. 51% of carers have a long-term condition or disability and 13% have parental responsibility for someone aged 18 or under. 36% of adult carers feel they have as much social contact as they would like (England = 30%). 16% of carers report neglecting their own needs<sup>32</sup>.
- 5.28. Domestic abuse will affect 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men during their lifetime. Whilst many will not report to the police, there were still over 2,400 occurrences of domestic abuse attended by the police for the Wokingham area in the past 12 months (2023/24). Domestic abuse can affect anyone

<sup>26</sup> Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Segment Tool, data is for 2021

<sup>27</sup> Wokingham Borough Council Learning Disability Strategy

<sup>28</sup> NHS England, Health and Care of People with Learning Disabilities (2022/23)

<sup>29</sup> Connected Care System Insights [accessed January 2024]

<sup>30</sup> Office for National Statistics (2021) Census

<sup>31</sup> NHS England, Survey of Adult Carers in England, 2023-24

<sup>32</sup> NHS England, Survey of Adult Carers in England, 2023-24

regardless of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, financial means, and disability. However, those who have a protected characteristic or don't fit the public perception of domestic abuse are often at increased risk of domestic abuse occurring, as well as being less likely to feel able to access help and support. These include those with a disability, those who are from the LGBTQ+ community, male victims, those from diverse communities and those who are subjected to economic abuse.

- 5.29. A high proportion of those estimated to require specialist support for drug and/or alcohol use in the borough are not in treatment. Around 37% of those in treatment for alcohol use and 45% of those who are in treatment for non-opiate drug users' complete treatment and do not represent to treatment within 6 months or more. This drops to around 7% for those who are using opiate drugs (heroin and crack cocaine)<sup>33</sup>. Many people who are in treatment for drug or alcohol use also have a mental health treatment need. 55% of adults starting treatment for alcohol use and 37% starting treatment for drug use are in regular employment. 6% of young people starting treatment are not in education, employment or training. When starting treatment, 11% of adults entering alcohol treatment and 20% of adults entering drug treatment have a housing need<sup>34</sup>.
- 5.30. There was a rate of 75 per 100,000 new entrants to the Youth Justice System during 2022/23, lower than the national average (144 per 100,000) and the South East region average (130 per 100,000). There has been a steady decline in rates of new entrants. A key risk factor for contact with the youth justice system is not being in education, employment, or training (known as NEET). 2% of 16- to 17-year-olds living in the borough were recorded as NEET in 2023, lower than the national average of 2.8% and the South East region average of 2.5%<sup>35</sup>.

*iii. Help children and families during the early years of life*

- 5.31. Giving every child the best start in life is one of the 8 Marmot Principles. Focusing on targeted support for children during their early years and their families is recognised as being key to reducing inequality and achieving long-term positive health and wellbeing outcomes in the borough's population.
- 5.32. The Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy identifies three key improvements in addressing this priority, namely supporting new parents, including single parents, in the transition to parenthood and ensuring access to effective interventions throughout the early stages of a child's life.
- 5.33. Focus areas for action in Wokingham's Strategy into Action are Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND), safeguarding, and early intervention and prevention.
- 5.34. A key early year's outcome measure is school readiness which is measured by looking at children who have a good level of development at the end of reception year of school. Although good level of development (GLD) as measured at the end of reception year at school is high for children attending Wokingham Borough schools, not all children are benefiting from the same best start in life. Notably boys, children from some ethnic minority backgrounds, children eligible for free school meals, and children with Special Educational Needs have worse outcomes<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>33</sup> Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, public health data, data is for 2022/2023

<sup>34</sup> Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, National Drug Treatment Monitoring System, Commissioning support packs 2024/25 (data year is 2022/23)

<sup>35</sup> Department for Education (2024) Local Authority Interactive Tool

<sup>36</sup> Department for Education (2022/23) Early Years profile

5.35. Ensuring that all children are ready to benefit from a good education supports many areas of adult life. Children who are school ready are more likely to do well as they progress through school. They are more likely to access good work and feel valued; and once they become adults, have greater opportunities to develop health habits, afford a good quality of life, and live and work in safe and healthy environments.

*iv. Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and younger people*

5.36. Most mental health problems begin in childhood, with 50% of those suffering from lifetime mental illness beginning to experience symptoms by the age of 14. Early identification and prevention are vital in ensuring good mental health and wellbeing through the life-course as well as ensuring services are available for those with mental health needs.

5.37. Rates of mental health problems in young people aged 17 to 25 are twice as higher for young women compared to young men. Almost half of children in care have a diagnosable mental health disorder and two-thirds have special educational needs. All children with learning or physical disabilities have a greater risk of developing a mental health problem.

5.38. 95 young people between the aged of 10 and 24 from the borough were admitted to hospital during 2022/23 for self-harm. Rates are highest for girls and for those aged between 15 and 19. The proportion of children with SEND who have social, emotional, and mental health recorded as their primary need is 2.7% and this is increasing. 46% of looked after children have emotional wellbeing that is a cause of concern (2022/23)<sup>37</sup>.

5.39. Children's mental health needs should be understood early and those who need it should receive quick access to appropriate mental health support. Families need to know where to go for support and information. It is vital to ensure local sufficiency to support children who are more likely to need extra help such as children in care and children and young people with complex needs.

*v. Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all adults*

5.40. Under this priority, the Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Strategy into Action highlights the need to reduce social isolation and loneliness to improve mental health and wellbeing. People need other people to feel supported, valued and included. People need to feel that they belong and have control over their lives. Loneliness and isolation are associated with poor mental health. They make it harder for someone to deal with stress and to prioritise their own wellbeing.

5.41. It is crucial to support all residents to be connected and able to build social relationships to improve their health. People who need extra support should be connected to high quality services to make this easier for them. There needs to be a focus on breaking down barriers that lead to social isolation and loneliness. There is a particular need to understand the experiences of people who may be more socially isolated and lonely, such as people from the LGBTQIA+ community.

5.42. Whilst social isolation and loneliness is more commonly associated with older age, anyone can experience this at any stage across their life course. There are groups or individuals who are more vulnerable than others and this can be affected by factors such as physical and mental health, education, employment, wealth, income, ethnicity, gender, age and life-stage.

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<sup>37</sup> Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, public health data

- 5.43. Social isolation and loneliness can be influenced at community, local area and wider societal levels, for example aspects of built and natural environment, transport, community and housing infrastructure can help or hinder social connections and community.
- 5.44. In Wokingham Borough, over 10,000 older residents were estimated to be living alone, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. This is projected to rise by 25% by 2025. National data also shows a rising trend in loneliness and social isolation and is likely to increase the risk of death by 26%<sup>38</sup>.
- 5.45. People with dementia are also highlighted in the Strategy into Action under this priority. Actions centre around developing a dementia friendly society and increasing the number of people in the borough who are dementia aware. Further actions focus across the dementia pathway: preventing well, diagnosing well, living and supporting well, and dying well.
- 5.46. Around 2,500 people aged 65 and over living in the borough are estimated to have dementia and 39% are estimated to be undiagnosed<sup>39</sup>. 40% of unpaid carers are caring for someone who has dementia<sup>40</sup>. The number of people living with dementia is projected to increase to 5,000 by 2050. Although people from minority ethnic backgrounds have a higher incidence of dementia, research suggests that they face delays in diagnosis and barriers in accessing services<sup>41</sup>

*vi. Creating physically active communities*

- 5.47. Creating and developing healthy and sustainable places and communities is one of the 8 Marmot Principles. It recognises that communities are important for physical health and wellbeing and, importantly that physical and social characteristics of a place, and the degree to which they enable and promote health and healthy behaviours, contributes to social gradients of health.
- 5.48. In addition to the priorities identified through the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy, the Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Board and Health and Wellbeing Strategy into Action further identified “Physically active communities” as a cross-cutting priority due to its potential to influence change across the existing five priority areas.
- 5.49. Physical inactivity is a global crisis, responsible for an estimated 5 million deaths worldwide. Physical activity contributes to a wide range of health benefits and can improve health outcomes across the life course from young to old, especially those who face barriers to being more active, including people with disabilities. Reducing inactivity in the population can deliver cost savings for health and social care services, as well as delivering further benefits such as improved productivity, reduced congestion and pollution through active travel, and healthy development of children and younger people.<sup>42</sup>
- 5.50. 30% of adults do not routinely meet the recommended 150 mins of activity per week. In Wokingham Borough, people aged between 16 to 64 are more active (72%) than people over the age of 65+ years (52%), meaning the need to consider how to create environments which meet the needs of everyone of all ages. National surveys also show 43% of girls in England disengage from sport following primary school, and children from ethnic diverse backgrounds are less likely to be physically active.

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<sup>38</sup> Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Strategy into Action (September 2021)

<sup>39</sup> Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, public health data, data is for 2023

<sup>40</sup> NHS England, Survey of Adult Carers in England, 2023-24

<sup>41</sup> Alzheimer’s UK (2022), Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and dementia research

<sup>42</sup> Wokingham Borough Council (2018) Focused Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) – Creating Healthy and Resilient Communities, <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/health/health-statistics/joint-strategic-needs-assessment/>

- 5.51. The 2022 survey of walking and cycling showed that 72.4% of people walked or cycled at least once per week in Wokingham Borough (Department of Transport). The average commuting distance in the borough is 12km (ONS, 2021) and 17.4% of commuters did not drive to work (ONS, 2021).
- 5.52. According to the latest Health and Wellbeing Strategy, approximately 75% of the borough's adults aged 19 years or older were physically active in the years 2019/20, in line with national guidelines. For children and younger people, this was significantly lower, with only 41% being physically active in the years 2018/2019. The Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Strategy into Action has prioritised increasing physical activity, through the use of green and blue spaces, creating a built environment that encourages more forms of active travel and building a social environment that facilitates and incorporates physical activity into everyday life, improving the overall health profile and reducing levels of obesity in the borough.
- 5.53. Ensuring that everyone in the community is given the opportunity to be physically active is important for many aspects of health and wellbeing. Children and adults who are physical active are more likely to gain mental and physical health benefits, feel connected and belong to a community and remain healthy and independent for longer. An active population can also increase local workplace productivity, reduce long term sickness and has been linked to reduced levels of crime and antisocial behaviour.
- 5.54. Easy access to quality outdoor space will encourage and enable people to be more physically active, making it easy and attractive for people to exercise through their daily routine. For example, by using active travel as a means of getting from place to place. The built environment is also important, particularly for older people to maintain their independence and quality of life. Older people and those with limited mobility need to be able to safely move across streets and public open spaces.

## 6. Health Impact Indicators

- 6.1. The health impact indicators used in this Health Impact Assessment are drawn from the key priorities outlined in the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy (HWBS) 2021-2030 and the Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Strategy into Action, with the exception of an additional priority that is only identified in the Strategy into Action, being 'Physically active communities'.
- 6.2. The health indicators therefore used in this assessment are:
1. Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people.
  2. Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives.
  3. Help children and families in early years.
  4. Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people.
  5. Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all adults.
  6. Create physically active communities.
- 6.3. Each policy in the Proposed Submission Plan is assessed against the health indicators, based on the categories below:
- Positive **(+)** – where the policy has a beneficial impact on health and well-being for the local plan
  - Neutral **(0)** – the policy's impact on health and well-being has neither a beneficial nor an adverse impact on the local plan
  - Negative **(-)** – where the policy has an adverse impact on health for the local plan.
- 6.4. The table in **Appendix 1** outlines whether the policies in the Proposed Submission Plan would have an impact on health in relation to the key priorities set out in the council's latest Health and Wellbeing Strategy into Action and the overall strategic objectives of the LPU. Additional commentary on the impacts of the policy have also been provided.

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1. Overall, it is clear the Proposed Submission Plan has the potential to positively influence the health and wellbeing of the borough's population, along with the potential to reduce health inequalities. The update to the HIA has not highlighted any major impacts on health and well-being.
- 7.2. Clear channels of communication have been maintained with the council's public health team to maintain the standard of planning policies relating to health and wellbeing, for example considering people with visual, physical or mobility impairments, and communities with additional support needs and older people. Proposed Submission Plan is supported by a monitoring framework to ensure the effective monitoring and implementation of the policies in the local plan. It sets out key, measurable indicators and actions to track the delivery of the plan, with outcomes recorded and reported in the council's Authority Monitoring Report (AMR).



## **8. Next steps**

- 8.1. The HIA will be published alongside the Proposed Submission Plan as part of the publication and consultation process. Moving forwards, the council will review all representations received commenting on the HIA. If appropriate and, where necessary in response to the representations, some modifications to policies may be recommended prior to submission to the Secretary of State for examination.

## Appendix 1 – Health Impact Assessment Matrix

### Delivering the Spatial Strategy

DOES THE POLICY HAVE AN IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN RELATION TO THE HEALTH IMPACT INDICATORS? POSITIVE (+), NEUTRAL (0), NEGATIVE (-)						
Policy	Health Impact indicators					Comments
	Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people.	Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives.	Help children and families in early years.	Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people / adults	Physically active communities	
Policy SS1: Sustainable development principles	+	+	+	+	+	<p>An overarching policy that sets out key principles to ensure development contributes towards economic, social and environmental objectives.</p> <p>The principles of sustainable development impact across multiple factors which influence health and wellbeing, including reductions in pollution, decreasing stress, protecting and improving the environment and other health outcomes. This is influenced by requirements outlined in the policy such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain, enhance or create a high quality and safe environment which contributes positively to the character and identity of the area</li> </ul>

DOES THE POLICY HAVE AN IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN RELATION TO THE HEALTH IMPACT INDICATORS? POSITIVE (+), NEUTRAL (0), NEGATIVE (-)						
Policy	Health Impact indicators					Comments
	Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people.	Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives.	Help children and families in early years.	Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people / adults	Physically active communities	
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid areas where pollution may impact upon the amenity of future occupiers</li> <li>• Provide or contribute to the provision of social, physical, transport, and green and blue infrastructure to support communities</li> </ul> <p>In addition, ensuring development proposals include contributions towards suitable, affordable housing has the potential to have a positive impact across all these indicators.</p>
Policy SS2: Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	Supports sustainable and proportionate growth across towns and villages within the borough, whilst ensuring adequate provision of new infrastructure and services to support development, and the safeguarding of existing facilities to maintain the vitality of towns and villages. The overall strategy of the Plan also seeks to protect and enhance the Borough's natural and built environment. Ensures development is directed to the most

DOES THE POLICY HAVE AN IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN RELATION TO THE HEALTH IMPACT INDICATORS? POSITIVE (+), NEUTRAL (0), NEGATIVE (-)						
Policy	Health Impact indicators					Comments
	Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people.	Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives.	Help children and families in early years.	Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people / adults	Physically active communities	
						sustainable locations in the borough whilst providing an appropriate level of facilities and services for communities. The policy seeks to promote cohesive and inclusive communities by locating housing, jobs and services closer together to minimise unnecessary travel.
Policy SS3: Development within or adjacent to major and modest settlements	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	The policy focuses development in locations where more services, infrastructure and jobs are available, or can be made available as part of the development, minimising the need to travel. Criteria in the policy includes consideration of realistic opportunities to use active and sustainable modes of transport for day-to-day travel, avoiding reliance on private motor vehicles.
Policy SS4: Development within and adjacent to minor settlements	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	The provision of some form of planned growth in the borough's minor settlements can help to improve the vitality and viability of existing services and facilities and sustainability of communities.

DOES THE POLICY HAVE AN IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN RELATION TO THE HEALTH IMPACT INDICATORS? POSITIVE (+), NEUTRAL (0), NEGATIVE (-)						
Policy	Health Impact indicators					Comments
	Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people.	Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives.	Help children and families in early years.	Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people / adults	Physically active communities	
Policy SS5: Development in the countryside	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<p>The provision of some form of development in the countryside can help to positively contribute towards the vitality and sustainability of the borough's rural communities.</p> <p>The policy supports specific types of development, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exception sites for affordable housing to meet local needs, rural worker's dwellings and traveller sites</li> <li>• Outdoor sport, recreation, leisure and nature conservation</li> </ul> <p>In addition, the policy ensures proposals take a landscape led approach, and consideration of factors such as improving public access to the countryside.</p>

DOES THE POLICY HAVE AN IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN RELATION TO THE HEALTH IMPACT INDICATORS? POSITIVE (+), NEUTRAL (0), NEGATIVE (-)						
Policy	Health Impact indicators					Comments
	Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people.	Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives.	Help children and families in early years.	Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people / adults	Physically active communities	
Policy SS6: Development in the Green Belt	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<p>The policy seeks to maintain the openness of the Green Belt and any potential development that may occur, and also sets out the exceptional circumstances for development in the Green Belt, which is recognise as an important resource for access the countryside for formal recreation. There is a potential benefit in maintaining the openness of the borough's distinctive landscape, some changes to the Green Belt have a positive impact as they can facilitate development in the borough. However, this will also reduce the availability of undeveloped land.</p> <p>The policy sets out exceptions to development in the Green Belt, notably supporting limited affordable housing for local community needs.</p> <p>The effects that this policy has on health objectives will be dependent on the scale and design of a development proposal. Therefore, the impacts of the policy on health will be</p>

	DOES THE POLICY HAVE AN IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN RELATION TO THE HEALTH IMPACT INDICATORS? POSITIVE (+), NEUTRAL (0), NEGATIVE (-)					
Policy	Health Impact indicators					Comments
	Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people.	Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives.	Help children and families in early years.	Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people / adults	Physically active communities	
						determined through the planning application process.
Policy SS7: Development in the vicinity of Atomic Weapons Establishments (AWE)	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	Regulation of the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) at Burghfield requires emergency planning zones to reduce the potential impact on the public of any accidents arising from site operations. The policy promotes public safety across communities taking into account wider security and defence requirements and ensures development does not have an adverse impact on the function and operation of the site, considering cumulative effects of any population increase surrounding the installation.
Policy SS8: Meeting employment needs	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	The policy continues to protect / safeguard the Core Employment Areas providing employment / learning opportunities for the borough's residents/workers. The policy also supports new employment uses within town centres, providing complimentary uses to

DOES THE POLICY HAVE AN IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN RELATION TO THE HEALTH IMPACT INDICATORS? POSITIVE (+), NEUTRAL (0), NEGATIVE (-)						
Policy	Health Impact indicators					Comments
	Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people.	Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives.	Help children and families in early years.	Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people / adults	Physically active communities	
						<p>support the wider role and to maintain the vitality and viability of centres.</p> <p>The policy responds to the changing needs of the labour market, though affordable, quality housing and flexible working spaces.</p> <p>The policy recognises that around 100,000sq m of additional employment floorspace will be delivered as part of an extension to the Thames Valley Science Park. This will support the long-term vision for Loddon Valley garden village as a sustainable community, reducing the need to travel and providing jobs that are easily accessible.</p>
Policy SS9: Whiteknights Campus	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	This policy ensures that any future development proposals located on the Whiteknights Campus consider issues such as amenity, character of the area and the safety of highway users and pedestrians, to reduce and design out crime in the area. The policy



DOES THE POLICY HAVE AN IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN RELATION TO THE HEALTH IMPACT INDICATORS? POSITIVE (+), NEUTRAL (0), NEGATIVE (-)						
Policy	Health Impact indicators					Comments
	Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people.	Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives.	Help children and families in early years.	Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people / adults	Physically active communities	
						also includes a requirement for development proposals at Whiteknights Campus to retain and enhance green and blue infrastructure networks.
Policy SS10: Meeting our housing needs	+	+	+	+	+	Policy seeks to provide an appropriate mix of housing to meet different needs in the borough.
Policy SS11: Arborfield Strategic Development Location	0	+	+	+	+	<p>This is an existing allocation in the Core Strategy to deliver around 3,500 homes. The policy recognises the continued delivery of the Arborfield Green Strategic Development Location to create a sustainable, mixed-use development with new employment, retail facilities and transport, social and physical infrastructure.</p> <p>Key requirements outlined in the policy that have a potential positive impact across the indicators, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 35% affordable homes</li> </ul>

DOES THE POLICY HAVE AN IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN RELATION TO THE HEALTH IMPACT INDICATORS? POSITIVE (+), NEUTRAL (0), NEGATIVE (-)						
Policy	Health Impact indicators					Comments
	Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people.	Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives.	Help children and families in early years.	Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people / adults	Physically active communities	
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new 2-form entry primary school including appropriate onsite early years provision and space for integrated teaching of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities</li> <li>• Specialist accommodation, including for older persons</li> <li>• New and improved off-site connections for cyclists and pedestrian providing safe, suitable and convenient access to services and facilities and local employment opportunities</li> <li>• Maximise connectivity to Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)</li> </ul> <p>The policy is supported by the council's existing Arborfield Garrison SDL Supplementary Planning Document which</p>

DOES THE POLICY HAVE AN IMPACT ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN RELATION TO THE HEALTH IMPACT INDICATORS? POSITIVE (+), NEUTRAL (0), NEGATIVE (-)						
Policy	Health Impact indicators					Comments
	Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people.	Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives.	Help children and families in early years.	Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people / adults	Physically active communities	
						provides additional detail and guidance when making decisions on proposals.
Policy SS12: South Wokingham Strategic Development Location	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<p>This is an existing allocation in the Core Strategy to deliver around 2,500 dwellings.</p> <p>The policy recognises the continued delivery of the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location to create a sustainable, mixed-use development with retail facilities, employment and social and physical infrastructure and creating balanced and inclusive communities.</p> <p>The Local Plan Update identifies further land to the south of Waterloo Road for around 1,100 dwellings within the extent of the SDL</p> <p>Key requirements outlined in the policy that are likely to have a potential positive impact across the indicators, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 35% affordable homes</li> </ul>

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two new primary schools with appropriate onsite early years provision and space for the integrated teaching of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities</li> <li>• A sports hub at Gray's Farm providing open space, sports and leisure facilities and other community uses</li> <li>• Increasing accessibility to watercourses as part of the provision of a continuous, high-quality and attractive and accessible open space network</li> <li>• New and improved connections for pedestrians and cyclists, providing safe, suitable and convenient access to countryside, communities, services and facilities and employment opportunities</li> <li>• Provision of the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR) with suitable and focused congestion management</li> </ul>

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Policy	Health Impact indicators					Comments
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						measures to control access, with priority for active travel and public transport services
Policy SS13: Loddon Valley Garden Village	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<p>The Loddon Valley Garden Village will be a holistically planned, beautifully designed and sustainable new community, aligned to the principles and qualities for garden communities. The garden village will be supported by a comprehensive package of infrastructure to incentivise sustainable behaviours and travel choices. This includes a framework to maximise opportunities for active travel within the new community and between surrounding places.</p> <p>The policy ensures proposals implement and respond to comprehensive strategies covering housing, energy and sustainability, sustainable transport, utilities, digital infrastructure and communications, ecology, drainage and flood</p>

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						<p>alleviation, strategic landscape and green and blue infrastructure.</p> <p>Some key infrastructure requirements, place shaping and delivery principles outlined in the policy that are likely to have positive impacts across the indicators, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies passive design principles to ensure form, orientation, building typologies etc. are appropriately used to reduce energy demand and deliver climate resilient neighbourhoods</li> <li>• 40% affordable homes</li> <li>• 20 Gypsy and Traveller pitches</li> <li>• Specialist accommodation</li> <li>• Provide a mix of housing types, sizes (including those suitable for extended family living) and tenures reflecting identified housing needs and demands</li> </ul>

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies designs to support spaces suitable for home working</li> <li>• 100,000sq m of research and development floorspace and other complementary uses through extension to the Thames Valley Science and Innovation Park</li> <li>• Two primary schools including onsite early years provision</li> <li>• One secondary school capable of expansion to accommodate a sixth form</li> <li>• Space for the integrated teaching of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities</li> <li>• District centre providing a range of services and facilities that are accessible to the planned housing</li> <li>• Two local centres providing day to day retail and other community uses</li> </ul>

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A multi-functional country park which is accessible to settlements beyond the garden village</li> <li>• Walkable neighbourhoods linked by attractive and accessible routes to support and encourage active travel</li> <li>• Provide a network of connected, accessible and high-quality open spaces integrated with the wider green and blue infrastructure network</li> <li>• Contribute to establishing the Loddon long distance footpath for active travel</li> </ul> <p>The policy recognises that the scale and complexity of the garden village will require development to come forward in a coordinated manner and led by a single agreed vision.</p>



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Policy SS14: Sites allocated for residential, including residential as part of mixed-use development	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<p>Encourages development in the most sustainable locations at an appropriate scale, making use of existing infrastructure and services, reducing the need to travel and encouraging sustainable modes of travel choice and allowing settlements to grow to support their own needs.</p> <p>Well-designed development on these sites can have a positive impact on people's health and well-being for existing and new communities. This will be achieved through national and local planning policies, as well as other local evidence provided when making decisions on planning applications.</p> <p>The policy is supported by development guidelines, which set out overarching matters to be considered in the design, layout and planning of each site.</p>

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Policy SS15: Securing Infrastructure	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	Ensures well balanced infrastructure is delivered on/off-site and mitigates impact of development resulting in social and health and well-being benefits, such as improvements to health care provision, education provision and other community services and facilities. Therefore, it is considered that this policy will have a positive impact on health across all indicators.
Policy SS16: Safeguarded routes	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	This policy identifies several schemes across the borough to support the delivery of strategic transport infrastructure, either to reduce the need for travel and outward commuting through widening travel choice, improving the capacity of the existing highway network or by improving the accessibility to towns/villages e.g. Wokingham Town Centre and Reading.
Policy SS17: Transport improvements	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	This policy identifies several schemes across the borough to support the delivery of strategic transport infrastructure, either to reduce the need for travel and outward

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						commuting through widening travel choice, improving the capacity of the existing highway network, mitigating air quality impacts, improving the accessibility to towns/villages e.g. Wokingham Town Centre and Reading through walking, cycling and public transport provision.

## Climate change and energy

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CE1: Design principles for efficient buildings	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<p>The policy sets out several design principles that development proposals should follow in the design and construction of efficient buildings, guided by the energy and cooling hierarchies.</p> <p>The energy hierarchy ensures development proposals introduce measures to ensure the efficiency of buildings, such as high levels of airtightness and insulation, and energy efficient appliances and reduce the need for energy through layout and orientation of buildings that capitalise on passive solar gain. More energy efficient buildings will lead to lower energy costs and reduce overheating.</p> <p>The cooling hierarchy ensures development proposals achieve buildings that are sustainable and avoid risk of overheating, such as prioritising the minimisation of</p>

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						internal heat gain and reducing unwanted solar gain, through orientation, shading, insulation and proximity to green infrastructure.
CE2: Environmental standards for non-residential development	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	The policy seeks to achieve the highest standards of sustainable design and construction including carbon neutral standards for non-residential schemes. More energy efficient buildings will lead to lower energy costs and reduce overheating.
CE3: Environmental standards for residential development	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	The policy seeks to achieve the highest standards of sustainable design and construction including carbon neutral standards for major residential schemes. More energy efficient homes will lead to lower energy costs and reduce overheating and also lead to warmer homes for residents in the winter.
CE4: Supporting a	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	The policy seeks to achieve a circular economy by focussing on the minimisation of waste through designing for durability, adaptability,

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circular economy						reuse and recycling. The policy introduces an aspiration to encourage environmentally responsible construction and sites, alongside other requirements such as recycling of rainwater, renewable energy technologies or sustainable modes of transport.
CE5: Embodied carbon	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	The policy ensures development proposals consider and reduce embodied greenhouse gas emissions through design. A Whole Life-Cycle Carbon Assessment is required to demonstrate actions have been taken to reduce life-cycle carbon emissions. The reduction of carbon emissions is likely to support people at risk of poor health outcomes, such as people with respiratory conditions, older persons and children.
CE6: Reducing energy consumption in existing buildings	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	The policy supports development proposals that involve improvements or alterations to existing buildings, such as through energy use intensity, space heating demand and water heating demand.

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CE7: Low carbon and renewable energy generation	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	The generation and use of energy from low carbon and renewable sources reduces demand for fossil fuels, reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions, as well as leading to other benefits, which can include employment opportunities, energy security, climate change resilience and potential cost savings for customers. The policy also promotes community-led initiatives allowing greater local involvement in energy production to meet local needs.
CE8: Protecting renewable energy infrastructure	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	The policy ensures the protection of existing or planned renewable and low carbon energy schemes and installations to ensure benefits to the environment and users (low carbon energy generation and reduced heating bills) can continue.

## Connections

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C1: Active and sustainable transport and accessibility	+	+	+	+	+	This policy seeks to promote opportunities to encourage more sustainable modes of travel through walking and cycling. This will help to improve local air quality by reducing the number of journeys by private car and improve the connectivity between the borough's settlements through the provision of public transport.
C2: Mitigation of transport impacts and highways safety and design	+	+	+	+	+	This policy ensures development proposals are appropriately planned to provide a range of benefits to the health and wellbeing of communities through better access to public transport and improved connectivity to towns and villages in the borough. The requirement for Transport Assessments and Transport Statements ensures development proposals can improve travel options, by ensuring all forms of travel are appropriately planned and designed into new development.



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C3: Active travel	+	+	+	+	+	Policy encourages more walking and cycling, improving air quality by reducing car journeys, connecting settlements better through sustainable forms of transport, and improving connectivity to towns/villages and the wider countryside.
C4: Green and blue infrastructure and public rights of way	+	+	+	+	+	<p>This policy seeks to protect and enhance existing green and blue infrastructure provision in the borough, which are recognised as valuable assets for recreation, landscape quality and visual amenity that are essential for providing quality of life and healthy and active communities.</p> <p>The borough's Public Rights of Way Network is a valued resource for residents, workers and visitors, providing and supporting physical and mental health and wellbeing. They also provide amenity value through facilitating access to the countryside for recreation, local employment opportunities and neighbouring towns and villages to</p>

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						access essential services and facilities. The policy ensures the protection of the existing Public Rights of Way, including green routes and Greenways and ensures new development proposals promote integration with countryside and public open space and improve connectivity, by walking and cycling, to local services and facilities.
C5: Parking and electric vehicle charging	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<p>Policy ensures development proposals are supported with sufficient levels of car parking and cycle parking. Cycle parking helps to facilitate alternative travel choices to the private car, for accessing services and facilities and supports creating physically active communities consistent with the council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.</p> <p>The provision of electric vehicle charging points would accommodate residents who have access to electric and hybrid vehicles</p>

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						and would support the transition to non-fossil fuelled vehicles.
C6: Technology and innovation in transport	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	Technological innovations in transport can help to improve mobility, reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality. The policy ensures that schemes are supported where they do not compromise the safety of pedestrians, road users and amenity.
C7: Digital infrastructure and communications technology	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	Policy seeks to improve access to high quality digital infrastructure and communications services, to support the needs of residents, visitors and workers, including businesses and organisations. Access to high-quality digital infrastructure and communications technology is also a key component of ensuring social inclusion and likely to have a positive impact across most health indicators.
C8: Utilities	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	This policy ensures that future development proposals are supported by appropriate and adequate water and wastewater infrastructure and ensures necessary infrastructure is in place to avoid

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						<p>unacceptable impacts on the environment, including pollution of land and watercourses.</p> <p>Utilities infrastructure should be appropriately designed into schemes taking into account impact on residents and visitors.</p>

## Economy, employment and retail

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ER1: Core Employment Areas	0	0	+	+	+	<p>Supports the borough's local communities by safeguarding employment and/or services on existing Core Employment Areas. This will ensure employment opportunities remain at a local level, reducing the need to travel and minimising pollution. The policy also encourages a more diverse economy by supporting a range of employment types and sizes, resulting in greater employment opportunities.</p> <p>The policy ensures proposals for expansion and intensification of employment uses consider impacts on nearby residential uses (e.g. noise and disturbance).</p> <p>The policy also provides support for non-employment uses that would support the character and economic function of the Core Employment Area. The supporting text</p>

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						recognises that technological advances and impact of the covid-19 pandemic has changed working practices, with a growth in remote working and flexible working spaces. Providing supporting facilities on-site for workers can also help to improve their work-life balance.
ER2: Employment uses outside Core Employment Areas	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	The policy supports local communities in the borough by protecting employment land/uses outside of the Core Employment Areas. This will ensure employment opportunities remain at a local level and support a diverse local economy. The retention of local employment opportunities reduces the need to travel, will help to minimise pollution and may contribute to reducing health inequalities in the longer-term. The policy ensures proposals for the expansion and intensification of employment uses consider impacts on nearby uses.

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ER3: Supporting the rural economy	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<p>Supports the rural economy and communities by allowing proportionate growth to meet their needs, retaining services and promoting the diversification of businesses. This will reduce the need for travel and outward commuting and improve the range of employment opportunities available in the borough. Sustainable tourism and leisure will help to benefit the environment and improve accessibility to rural communities and the countryside, encouraging active and healthier lifestyles.</p> <p>The policy also promotes the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages and introduction of, or improvements to, electronic communications and digital infrastructure, which are likely to have positive impacts for groups such as children and families.</p>

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						While there is a potential positive benefit, the effects that the policy may have on health objectives will depend on the scale and design of the development proposal. Therefore, the impacts of the policy on health will be determined through the planning application process.
ER4: Employment and Skills Plans	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	Policy support for employment and skills plans will strengthen the local community by ensuring new development proposals support and benefit the local area and people through providing opportunities for training, apprenticeships or vocational initiatives to develop local employability skills and assist in reducing unemployment and deprivation in the borough.
ER5: The hierarchy of centres	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	Town, district and local centres play an important role as the focal point of communities, providing day-to-day retail needs of local communities and promoting social interaction and reducing social isolation through places to meet and



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						<p>socialise. Whilst the identification of town centre boundaries and primary shopping areas maintains their function, it will also provide a compact, walkable and easily accessible area.</p> <p>The policy ensures development proposals maximise opportunities to improve accessibility for all users (including those with mobility, physical and visual impairments) reducing health inequalities and social isolation, consistent with the council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.</p> <p>The policy also ensures that for any loss of day-to-day shopping facilities (in local centres) an alternative is provided within reasonable walking distance, reducing the need to travel by car and encouraging healthier and active lifestyles.</p>

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ER6: Town, district and local centres and shopping parades	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<p>Town, district and local centres play an important role as the focal point of communities, providing day-to-day retail needs of local communities and promoting social interaction through places to meet and socialise. Whilst the identification of town centre boundaries and primary shopping areas maintains their function, it will also provide a compact, walkable and easily accessible area.</p> <p>The policy ensures development proposals maximise opportunities to improve accessibility for all users (including those with mobility, physical and visual impairments).</p> <p>The policy also ensures that for any loss of day-to-day shopping facilities (in local centres) an alternative is provided within reasonable walking distance, reducing the need to travel by car and encouraging healthier and active lifestyles.</p>

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ER7: Strengthening the role of centres	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	Protects the vitality of settlements, helps maintain the distinctiveness of the area and improves service provision meaning less journeys by car and more cycling and walking.
ER8: Wokingham town centre	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<p>This policy will continue to enhance the vitality and viability of Wokingham Town Centre as a retail and leisure destination in an environment that is safe, legible and accessible.</p> <p>The policy ensures any future development proposals consider public realm improvements and encourage people to move around by active travel, including walking and cycling.</p> <p>A Local Green Space at Elms Field is identified in the plan which is recognised as an important recreational, amenity and ecological resources, and which should continue to be maintained and enhanced.</p>

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ER9: Woodley town centre and Lower Earley district centre	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	The policy supports future improvements or enhancements to Woodley town centre and Lower Earley district centre. Improvements identified include permeability and legibility to support easy and safe movement and encourage active travel, public realm improvements, such as access to multifunctional open space and green infrastructure for recreation and social interaction.

## Housing

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Policy	Health Impact indicators					Comments
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H1: Housing mix, density and standards	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<p>Ensures an adequate mix of housing types and size are provided in new development to create inclusive and mixed communities which meet the identified needs of existing and new residents. New residential development is required to meet the nationally described space standards, reducing the risk of overcrowding, improving living conditions and reducing social isolation.</p> <p>A proportion of homes are also expected to be constructed to meet optional technical standards for accessibility and adaptability. The policy ensures the density and mix of development proposal consider place-making aspects such as character, walking, cycling and public transport accessibility, high quality design and amenity of neighbouring developments. While there is likely to be a potential positive benefit, the effects that the</p>

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						policy has on health objectives will depend on the scale and design of the development proposal. Therefore, the impacts of the policy on health will be determined through the planning application process.
H2: Presumption against residential losses	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	This policy ensures existing housing and land permitted for housing is protected from other uses.
H3: Affordable housing	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	This policy will ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing which is appropriately located in new developments to create a mixed and balanced community, and which meets particular needs of people working and living in the borough. The provision of affordable housing in the borough will meet the nationally described space standards, reducing risks of overcrowding.
H4: Exception sites	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	Supported in exceptional circumstances, rural exception sites provide a benefit to the local area in terms of meeting local need,

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						creating sustainable and mixed communities and providing opportunities for social cohesion. Providing affordable housing for those with a local connection to the town/parish will help to retain residents in their communities and reduce social isolation.
H5: Rural workers' dwellings	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	Supports access to local employment opportunities in rural locations in the borough and allows these communities to grow, providing development is of an appropriate scale and is supported by sustainable modes of transport.
H6: Self-build and custom housebuilding	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	Policy supports the provision of self-build and custom-build housing to meet the needs of individuals seeking to access housing provision.
H7: Specialist accommodation	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	The policy provides a positive impact on health as it supports improved social cohesion, through a varied housing mix within developments, including older people and those with additional support or needs.

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						<p>This policy supports the provision of residential care homes to meet housing needs for different groups in the borough to accommodate an ageing population.</p> <p>Supports the provision of specialist accommodation and housing that is more accessible to meet the needs of an ageing population, allowing them to remain within the borough and their community.</p>
H8: Conversion and sub-division of buildings	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<p>Supports meeting the different needs for housing in the borough, for example the student population, people on low incomes and single young professionals. The policy ensures development proposals for Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) consider impacts on amenity, character and the existing communities of the surrounding area, in particular loss of external amenity space and privacy which are recognised as some of the contributing factors to the health and well-being of our communities.</p>



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H9: Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople provision	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<p>Makes suitable provision for housing to meet the needs of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. Development proposals at a strategic scale are required to make a contribution by delivering pitches to created mixed and sustainable communities. By providing pitches for this specific community in the local plan, it reduces the number of unauthorised pitches and temporary permissions in the borough.</p> <p>The policy also ensures the protection of existing Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation, enabling established and settled communities to live in their area.</p>
H10: Traveller sites	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<p>Makes suitable provision for housing to meet the needs of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. The policy supports new pitches or extensions to existing sites for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople enabling</p>

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						<p>existing communities to grow. The policy also ensures new pitch provision is in suitable locations, taking into account matters such as accessibility to services and public transport, flood risk, water supply and utilities infrastructure.</p> <p>The policy also ensures development proposals do not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses or the character of the area.</p>
H11: Houseboat moorings	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	Supports the provision of new residential moorings to meet the needs of boat dwellers in the borough. The policy supports the provision of houseboats and ensures development proposals consider access to sustainable modes of transport and the provision of safe water supply, electricity and water/wastewater infrastructure.
H12: Residential development of	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	This policy seeks to protect existing residential gardens in the borough's towns and villages. Private residential gardens

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existing private gardens						provide a valuable amenity space for residents and will therefore be resisted, taking into account potential impact on local character, residential amenity and safety and security.
H13: Retention of mobile home parks	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	The policy seeks to safeguard against the loss of mobile home parks from redevelopment and alternative uses. It is recognised that mobile home parks are a type of low-cost home ownership accommodation and meet a locally identified need.

## Flooding and drainage

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FD1: Development and flood risk (from all sources)	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	Reduces flood risk for new developments and mitigates any potential impacts on existing sites. The policy also seeks to improve biodiversity and water quality in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.
FD2: Sustainable drainage	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	The policy ensures that development can manage surface water flooding and climate change impacts in a sustainable manner. The policy supports the multifunctional and appropriate use of SuDS in new development to achieve wider social, ecological and environmental benefits. Well-designed and located SuDS can improve the health and wellbeing of communities by protecting drinking water resources, supporting recreational opportunities and enhancing local amenity. The policy ensures development proposals incorporate and

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						design SuDS in accordance with the council's latest SuDS Strategy.
FD3: River corridors and watercourses	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	The policy seeks to protect or enhance the ecological function of watercourses in the borough, including the River Thames. Development proposals should consider maintaining and enhancing public access to support opportunities for formal/informal recreation.

## Natural environment

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NE1: Biodiversity and geodiversity	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	This policy restricts development in sensitive areas that are recognised as environmentally sensitive and ensures new development proposals achieve a net gain in biodiversity helping to protect and enhance the natural environment.
NE2: Biodiversity net gain	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	The policy ensures development proposals achieve a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity.
NE3: Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	The Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) is a European designated site which is home to a network of important species of ground nesting birds and is a key destination for formal and informal recreation. The policy seeks to ensure the integrity of the SPA is maintained and any potential impacts associated with development are effectively mitigated.

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NE4: Trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows	0	0	0	0	0	Whilst the presence of existing trees, woodland and hedgerows do not normally have a direct impact on health and well-being, they have an indirect impact on the health and wellbeing of the borough's communities and residents, for example by making a significant contribution to mitigating the impact of climate change, either through shading, carbon storage and reduced pollutants.
NE5: Landscape and design	0	0	0	0	+	The borough's landscapes are highly valued by those who live, work or visit the area. The borough's varied landscapes provide a valuable resource for recreation, biodiversity and heritage. This policy ensures the distinctive landscape character across the borough continues to be conserved and enhanced.
NE6: Valued Landscapes	0	0	0	+	+	The borough's landscape provides a valuable resource for recreation that can help to improve the health and wellbeing of communities. Ensuring the attractiveness of

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						the local environment and character is preserved encourages greater use of it due to improved access to the open countryside for formal/informal recreation and social interaction.
NE7: Sites of Urban Landscape Value	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	Sites of Urban Landscape Value (SULV) are recognised in the borough as forming the setting and identity of settlements and perform a recreational and ecological function for residents of the borough. This policy ensures the key features and function of SULVs are not compromised by new development, taking into account potential impacts on landscape, ecology and recreational amenity.



## Design, heritage and built environment

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DH1: Place making and quality design	+	+	+	+	+	<p>The place-making and design policy ensures the design of buildings and places are fully accessible and inclusive for all users, including people with mobility impairments or other health issues, younger children and older people. The policy will help to protect and build/enhance local character and distinctiveness, foster a sense of community and place and improve the accessibility between new and existing settlements for all, ensuring high amenity value for development.</p> <p>Key features of the policy that may generate specific health benefits include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resilience to climate change, minimising energy demand and maximising energy efficiency</li> </ul>

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<b>Policy</b>	<b>Health Impact indicators</b>					<b>Comments</b>
	<b>Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people.</b>	<b>Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives.</b>	<b>Help children and families in early years.</b>	<b>Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people / adults</b>	<b>Physically active communities</b>	
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovation in design to improve the area's quality and function</li> <li>• Safe easy and access and movement for cars and service vehicles</li> <li>• Maximising opportunities for walking, cycling and sustainable modes of transport – contributing to active and healthy lifestyles</li> <li>• Ensure streets and spaces are attractive, functional and inclusive</li> <li>• Acceptable standards of amenity, privacy and daylight and not affecting the amenity of the area or neighbouring uses</li> <li>• Integrating existing green infrastructure assets</li> <li>• Create safe environments to discourage crime and disorder (e.g. through natural surveillance and positive social interaction.</li> <li>• Accessible to all ages, disabilities and other vulnerable groups</li> </ul>

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DH2: Safeguarding amenity	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	The policy ensures development does not reduce the quality of the environment for others, and creates a quality environment for those who will occupy and use new buildings and spaces. The policy takes into account factors such as daylight and sunlight levels which are recognised as important considerations for general health and wellbeing. The amenity policy also ensures that development achieves appropriate amenity levels, for instance sensitive activities should be located away or buffered from those aspects of development likely to cause issues (e.g. car parks, bin stores and noisy equipment).
DH3: Shopfronts	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	The policy ensures development proposals create or maintain an active frontage, to create an environment to facilitate user/social interaction either inside a building or between spaces at a street level, enhance public security and surveillance and to improve the amenity of public realm by

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						encouraging pedestrian activity. This policy also ensures that new or existing shopfronts include security measures that consider the safety of pedestrians interacting with the street at all times of the day.
DH4: Advertisements and signage	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0</b>	The management of advertisements and signs can affect amenity and public safety, particularly for highway users and pedestrians. Whilst there will be a balance between commercial requirements and impacts on the environment, public safety and amenity, the policy mitigates such impacts by ensuring development is appropriately designed and located, taking into account the amenity of adjoining uses, public safety and movement and visibility of users.
DH5: The Historic environment	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	Encourages the long-term sustainability of heritage assets by seeking to protect, enhance and make best use of them. It will have a positive impact on the local character.

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DH6: Archaeology	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	Seeks to protect these sites, by assessing potential harm against any potential benefit. The policy will have a positive impact on the local character and environment.
DH7: Equestrian development	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	The policy seeks to support equestrian activities in boosting the rural economy in the borough. Recognised equestrian development includes riding establishments, livery yards and stables. The policy safeguards loss of stables, groom's accommodation and other associated buildings against substandard residential accommodation.

## Healthy and safe communities

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HC1: Promoting healthy communities	+	+	+	+	+	This policy seeks to ensure development contributes towards healthier communities and reduces health inequalities. The policy includes a requirement for major development schemes to be supported by a Health Impact Assessment to assess the proposal's impacts on the health and wellbeing of the population and the distribution of the effects on the population.
HC2: Community infrastructure	+	+	+	+	+	Protects services and facilities for the continued benefit of the community. Safeguarding existing facilities helps to encourage healthier lifestyles by reducing the need to travel and maintaining the vitality and viability of the area. The policy also supports the provision of new services and facilities to support new development and the existing population.

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HC3: Local Green Space	+	+	0	+	+	Local Green Spaces in the borough are designated for their special importance or local significance, for example their ecological, historical, recreational or landscape value. Access to Local Green Spaces can contribute towards active and healthy lifestyles, as they can provide a valuable resource for formal/informal recreation for residents, visitors and workers in the borough.
HC4: Open space, sports, recreation and play facilities	+	+	0	+	+	This policy encourages healthy and active lifestyles through the sufficient provision of open space, sports, recreation and play facilities for different groups within the borough. The policy encourages the co-location of this provision with other community services and facilities, reducing the need for travel and out commuting and encouraging active lifestyles through walking, cycling and public transport. Such provision should also be well related to the community it serves.

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						Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation are contributing factors to the health and wellbeing of communities. This policy ensures that these facilities are also sufficiently protected. Any loss of provision is required to provide an alternative facility of equal quality in a suitable and accessible location.
HC5: Environmental protection	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	Prohibits development where there is a potentially harmful impact from pollution leading to a risk of ill health or damage to the environment which cannot be successfully mitigated. Policy helps to ensure the sustainability of new development and no undue negative impacts on surrounding area.
HC6: Air pollution and air quality	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	The policy seeks to reduce risk of ill health and damage to the environment by ensuring minimum standards of air quality and any potential impacts are mitigated.



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						The supporting text to the policy recognises that development proposals should consider air quality matters, such as by prioritising the use of public transport and active travel as alternatives to private vehicles and providing services and amenities close to new development. These principles would not only help to reduce carbon emissions and air pollution but would have a positive impact on encouraging physically active communities.
HC7: Light pollution	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	Poorly designed and artificial lighting can affect the safety and security of communities and the health and well-being of residents, through sleep deprivation and health problems. The policy ensures development proposals involving artificial lighting are appropriately designed taking into account the impact on existing neighbouring properties and amenity areas and pedestrian safety.

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HC8: Noise pollution	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<p>Ensures development does not have a harmful impact from noise pollution or vibration that would lead to a risk of ill health or damage to the environment.</p> <p>The policy ensures the location of development proposals do not negatively impact on the amenity of existing and future occupiers. Where existing noise and vibration levels are unsuitable for the proposed use, impacts should be mitigated to ensure a good standard of amenity.</p> <p>The policy also sets out internal and external noise standards for residential developments.</p>
HC9: Contaminated land and water	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<p>The presence of contaminated land can present risks to human health. The policy ensures development remediates or mitigates pollution impacts arising from</p>

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						previous land uses. The policy also ensures development proposals consider the impact on residential amenity.
HC10: Odour, fumes, and dust	<b>+</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	The policy ensures development proposals do not impact upon those who live or work in surrounding areas through exposure to unpleasant odours, fumes and dust. The policy applies to both new development proposals resulting in odour, fumes and dust and new development located to an existing source.