



Council Plan

2026 – 2028

Contents

Foreword	1
A message from our Chief Executive	2
Future Ready	3
About our borough	4
Our vision and values	5
Our priorities	6
Our actions	10
Delivering our Council Plan	16



Council Plan 2026 – 2028

Foreword

I'm pleased to introduce our refreshed Council Plan, which sets out how we will continue to deliver for our residents, communities, and businesses during a period of significant change for local government.

Over the past year, I'm proud that we have continued to make strong progress across our priorities. Specific examples of our achievements can be found on our Council Plan webpages, and they include a range of ways in which we have supported vulnerable residents through the cost of living crisis and other challenges, delivered improvements to our environmental and community spaces, and helped local businesses to grow and succeed. Many projects are still underway, and our efforts will be focused on delivering these ahead of the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in April 2028.



Photo: Councillor Richard Stanley, Leader of the Council and Councillor Sarah Hands, Deputy Leader.

Previously, I've said that over the coming years we want to make the very best use of the time we have left as a borough council. That commitment remains unchanged. We continue to be ambitious, determined, and focused on leaving a positive legacy, defined by real outcomes and lasting benefits for our communities. Our vision, '**supporting people, strengthening communities**', continues to guide everything we do.

What has changed since last year is the structure of our plan. We have streamlined our areas of focus to reflect the move towards Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), the transition to a unitary council on 1 April 2028, and the increasingly collaborative nature of our work. We are now deeply involved in the process of reorganisation and devolution, and we are

navigating its complexities with a clear purpose: to continue making a meaningful difference and delivering positive impact across our borough.

Throughout this period of change, our three priorities remain unchanged to shape our decisions and drive our work. These are: **caring for people, caring for the environment, and caring for place.**



Caring for **people**



Caring for the **environment**



Caring for **place**

Our focused approach ensures that we concentrate our efforts where we can make the biggest difference in the time remaining. We're making long term improvements for our borough and to build a strong, stable future as we move towards a new structure.

Many of the actions in this plan link across different service areas because the challenges and opportunities in our community are closely connected. They support our three priorities and highlight where we're making progress, driving change, and working with partners to deliver real, positive outcomes for our residents, our environment, and our places.

Richard Stanley

Leader of the Council

Sarah Hands

Deputy Leader of the Council

A message from our chief executive

Shaping our borough's future through Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

With significant changes to local government happening across England, Gloucestershire has a real opportunity to shape a better future for the people and communities we serve. **I am pleased that our council is working closely with the other district councils and Gloucestershire County Council to make sure that whatever the outcome, services become simpler, clearer and better value for residents.**

This work is part of a national shift towards more streamlined, single tier councils, where responsibilities such as waste collection, housing, education, roads, social care and planning sit within one organisation rather than being split across different councils. Last year, all Gloucestershire councils were asked to put forward ideas for what this could look like locally, and earlier this year we encouraged residents, businesses and community groups to share their views on three possible options for the future structure of councils in our county. These were: one unitary council for the whole county, or two councils based on different geographic groupings.

Those conversations have been incredibly important. They are helping to shape the government's decision, which is expected in summer 2026, and ensuring that the voices of our communities are properly heard as part of this once in a generation change.

Behind the scenes, a huge amount of collaborative work is already underway across Gloucestershire, ahead of vesting day, the date when the new council arrangements formally come into effect. Councils are working together through a shared LGR programme, bringing officers and members together across a number of areas such as service design, finance, workforce, digital and governance. This joined up approach, supported by shared governance arrangements and programme boards, is helping us prepare carefully and responsibly for the future, including the transition to new arrangements when decisions are made.

At Tewkesbury Borough Council, we are fully engaged in that countywide effort, while also focusing on what this means for us locally. **Our internal Future Ready Programme has been developed to make sure we are well prepared for change, aligning our internal planning with the wider Gloucestershire approach.** Just as importantly, it ensures we remain focused on delivering high-quality services for our residents here and now.

While we wait for the government's decision, it is very much business as usual in terms of the services we provide every day. At the same time, we are planning ahead in a thoughtful and measured way. We know that the current council is expected to come to an end in April 2028, and this has rightly shaped our focus on what matters most. Our Council Plan sets out those priorities clearly, and we are tracking progress carefully to make sure we deliver real outcomes for our communities.

Most importantly, shaping the future of our borough is not something we will do alone. We will continue to listen to and work with our residents, businesses and communities, so that local priorities and voices remain at the heart of everything we do. Change on this scale brings both challenges and opportunities, and by working together we can make sure the outcome is one that benefits everyone across Tewkesbury Borough and the wider county.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Alistair Cunningham'.

Alistair Cunningham OBE
Chief Executive

Future ready

LGR represents a significant moment of change for Gloucestershire, and our purpose is to ensure that Tewkesbury Borough is well positioned throughout this transition.

Future Ready is our internal change programme, preparing the organisation to join a new Gloucestershire unitary authority in 2028. It focuses on maintaining service stability, developing our workforce and skills, and ensuring our systems, processes and governance are ready for the future.

The programme is aligned with the county-wide LGR approach, enabling us to work consistently with partners across Gloucestershire while remaining focused on delivering for our communities.

We are encouraging everyone to play their part by responding positively to change, collaborating across councils, sharing knowledge and resources, and thinking strategically about the future.

The programme ensures that we are:

- **Focusing on the delivery to become a unitary authority, ensuring business continuity and service stability is met throughout the transition**
- **Supporting and developing our workforce, through clear communication, engagement and promoting continuous learning opportunities**
- **Preparing our systems, process and governance arrangements to enable a smooth transition into any future arrangements.**

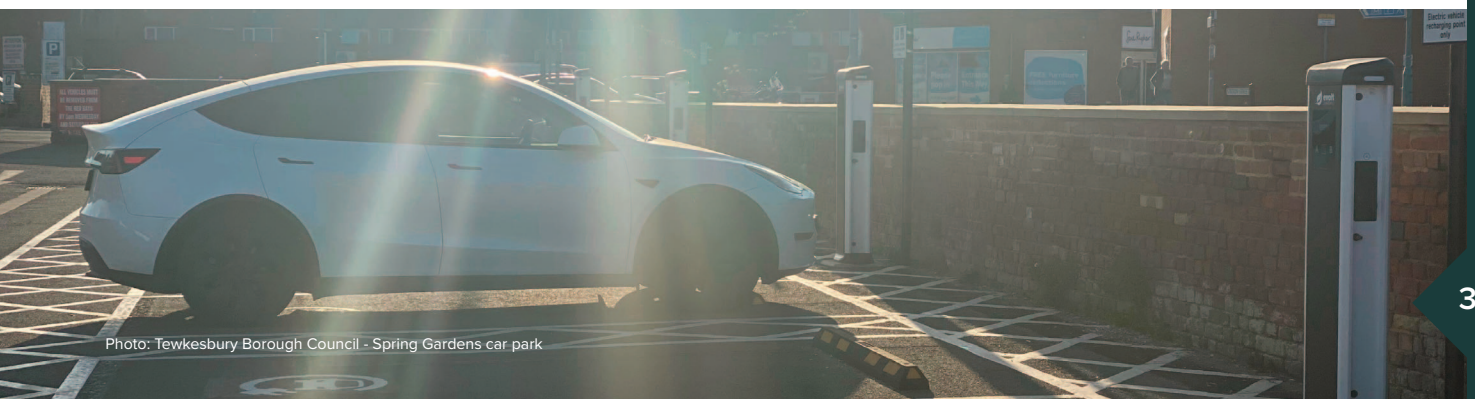
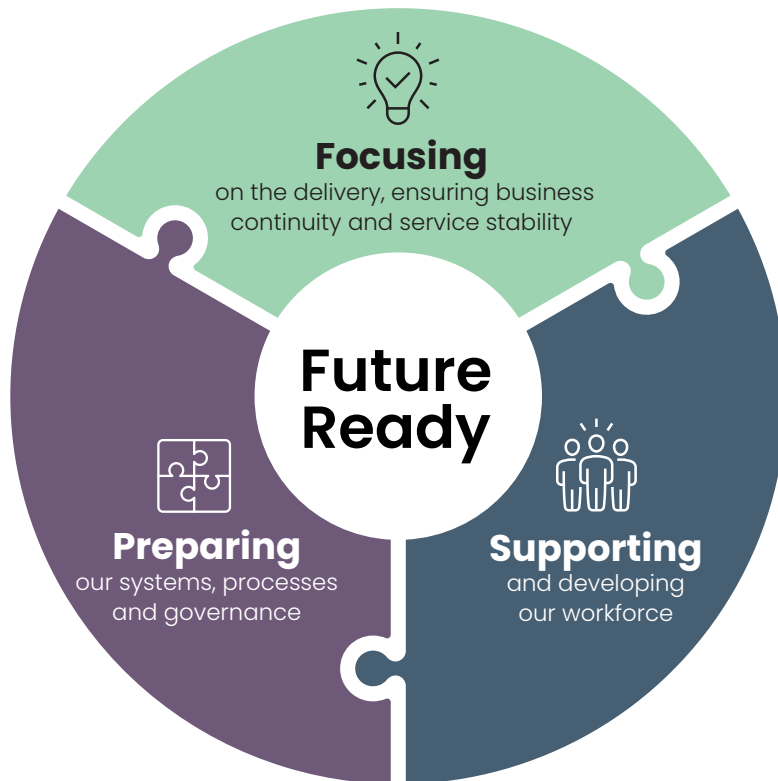


Photo: Tewkesbury Borough Council - Spring Gardens car park

About our borough

Tewkesbury Borough is in the northern part of the south west, offering both excellent transport links and beautiful scenery. Our borough's environment is one of its greatest strengths; to the east lies the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and to the northwest the River Avon joins with the River Severn.

Our borough is well connected, with plenty of options for travelling to, from, and around the area. The M5 corridor, Gloucestershire Airport, and Ashchurch for Tewkesbury Railway Station all provide strong transport links. Alongside our growing network of cycling and walking routes, this means our borough is increasingly accessible for everyone. As well as a mix of traditional industries and modern businesses making up our diverse economy, we are fortunate to have numerous villages and hamlets, each with their own unique character and history.

Our borough has vibrant communities, with local events, festivals and cultural activities taking place throughout the year. This includes Tewkesbury History Festival and the Medieval Festival, regarded as the largest free medieval gathering of its kind in Europe. It's no wonder our borough has one of the fastest growing populations in the country!*



*source: Our borough has a population of approximately 95,000, a growth of 15.8% 2011-2021 (Office for National Statistics 2021)



Photo: Tewkesbury Borough Council - View from Cleeve Hill.

“Our borough lies within the
Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty”

Our vision and values

Our vision and values shape who we are, how we work and what we aim to achieve for our communities. They play a vital role in shaping our culture, actions and decision making. We must challenge ourselves and each other to demonstrate these in our outcomes and acknowledge and learn if we fall short.

Our vision:

'Supporting people, strengthening communities.'

Our work is grounded in our core values:



Open and honest:

We are committed to fostering trust, clarity, and accountability in everything we do. We will be transparent and honest in our work and communications, and ensure decisions are made in the best interests of our communities.



Respectful:

Being respectful to others is fundamental to building strong, trusting relationships with our communities and with our colleagues. We will treat others with courtesy, listen to different points of view and acknowledge diversity of opinions.



Inclusive:

We want everyone to feel valued and heard. We are committed to fostering an inclusive environment where individuals, regardless of their backgrounds, disabilities, identities or perspectives are welcomed and represented.



Future Ready:

We are preparing to join the new Gloucestershire unitary authority/ies in 2028. We are focusing on keeping services stable, developing our workforce, and making sure our systems and processes are fit for the future.



Photo: Funding Fair 2026 at Tewkesbury Borough Council

Our priorities

Our Council Plan continues to be shaped around three core priorities. As Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) progresses, we want to ensure that the needs and ambitions of our borough stay at the forefront of our work. While we play an active role in shaping the future of local government in Gloucestershire, our focus on delivering for our communities remains unchanged.

Our communities continue to sit at the heart of everything we do. The three priorities in our Council Plan remain closely interconnected, guiding our strategic planning and decision-making. They provide a clear framework that helps us manage resources effectively and respond to the issues that matter most to our communities.



“Placing communities at the heart of everything we do”

Photo: Tewkesbury Borough Council - Butterfly Garden members, Bamfurlong, with Tewkesbury Borough's 2025/26 Mayor Cllr Kashan Pervaiz.



Caring for **people**

We will continue to keep people at the heart of everything we do. Whether it's providing essential services such as waste and recycling, co-ordinating our emergency response to events such as flooding, or ensuring access to affordable housing, we prioritise people's needs and wellbeing.

We understand how important it is to provide the right support, resources and opportunities for the people of our borough to thrive. We are committed to supporting the vitality of the communities we serve, from improving health to economic prosperity. In doing so, we listen to the voices of those who are disadvantaged, and work towards building a fairer and more inclusive borough.



About our borough

Our population increased by 15.8 per cent between the 2011 and 2021 census (Office for National Statistics 2021).

Photo: Tewkesbury Borough Council - Northway Warm Space at the Northway Community Hub



Caring for the **environment**

Climate change continues to have a significant impact on our environment, wildlife and communities. We declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 with the aim of making our council services carbon neutral by 2030. In 2023, this was expanded to a borough-wide Climate and Ecological emergency, strengthening our commitment to take urgent action.

Since then, we have continued to strengthen our climate and ecological work. Our small team dedicated to climate change has supported significant progress across our programmes, building on previous investments such as the award-winning solar car park canopy at the Public Services Centre. More recently, the council achieved silver accreditation from the Carbon Literacy Project, recognising its growing commitment to carbon awareness and the positive steps being taken to embed climate responsibility across the council.



Photo: Tewkesbury Borough Council – Coombe Hill Nature Reserve



About our borough

Around 763,900 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions was generated by the whole borough in 2021. (Latest figure from Defra and BEIS via naei.beis.gov.uk)



Caring for **place**

Our goal remains to create positive change that improves quality of life and opportunities for our residents and businesses. We recognise that each area of the borough faces different challenges; from flooding and infrastructure pressures to health inequalities and housing needs, and that understanding these local differences is essential to effective service delivery.

As LGR progresses, we continue to work closely with our partners and communities to ensure local priorities are understood and reflected in future arrangements. This approach will help ensure that, as we transition into a new unitary authority, the needs of our communities continue to guide decision making.



Photo: Jack Boskett - Coopers Edge

About our borough

We cover 414.4KM2 with 20 wards and 51 parishes across the borough, of which 43 are served by parish councils and remaining eight have parish meeting status (Office for National Statistics 2021).

Our actions

The following Council Plan (CP) actions set out how we will deliver on our priorities over the coming year. They reflect the progress made so far and our continued commitment to supporting our communities.

Each action is focused, measurable and aligned to the outcomes we want to achieve ahead of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Ensuring we remain accountable and transparent as we move through this period of significant change.



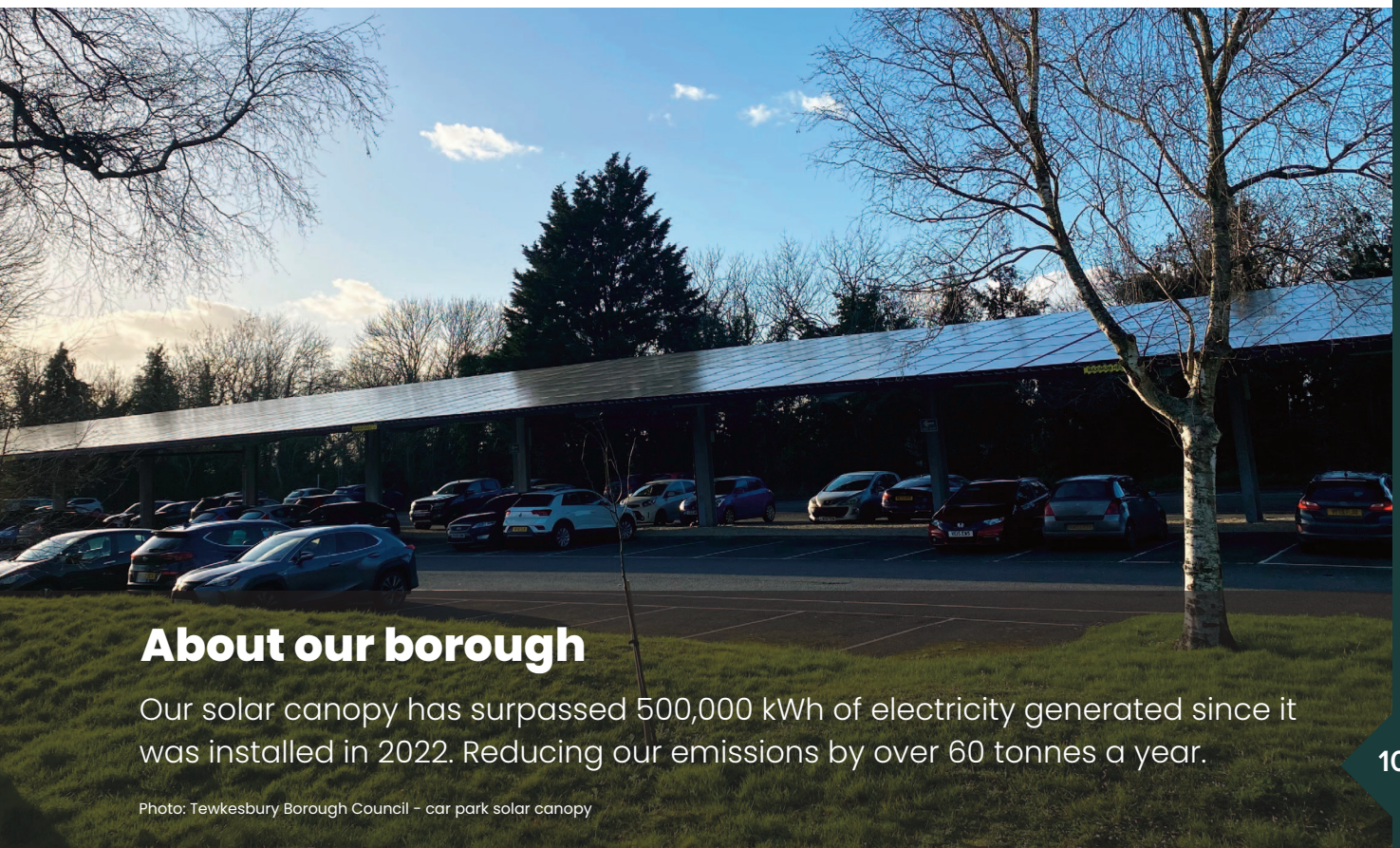
CP1. Improve our performance on the national Council Climate Action Scorecard.

We have made strong progress in tackling climate change, increasing our national Climate Action Scorecard result. The scorecard is an independent UK benchmark of how well councils are taking action towards net zero, across a number of categories. Over recent years our score has risen from 10 per cent to 44 per cent in 2025. We are working across all our services to take further action and continue improving our score. This demonstrates clear leadership on climate issues, a pathway to reduce our environmental impact, and support communities across the borough to play their part in creating a greener, more sustainable future.



CP2. Identify and enable opportunities for biodiversity net gain or nature recovery across sites within the borough.

We will identify key locations across the borough to help with nature recovery and enhancement, and work with partners to improve habitats, increase biodiversity and leave the natural environment in a better condition than before. These actions will create bigger, better and connected green spaces to support nature recovery; helping to protect the environment for people now and in the future.



About our borough

Our solar canopy has surpassed 500,000 kWh of electricity generated since it was installed in 2022. Reducing our emissions by over 60 tonnes a year.

Photo: Tewkesbury Borough Council – car park solar canopy

Our actions



CP3. Work with partners and external stakeholders to agree and deliver the recommended short-term actions following the 2026 Tirley flooding review.

We will work with Tirley Parish Council, Gloucestershire County Council and local landowners, to support delivery of the short-term actions identified from the recent Tirley flooding review. This includes supporting improvements to drainage maintenance, raising awareness of responsibilities and contributing to longer-term solutions to make the area more resilient.



CP4. Deliver improvements to relevant council-owned assets that foster community pride.

To organise and deliver a programme of asset-related improvements which bring together planned projects. These improvements include Mitton Bridge in Tewkesbury and Pennylands Bridge in Winchcombe, together with emerging projects, particularly across a number of play areas and our Tewkesbury and Bishop's Cleeve cemeteries. These improvements will protect public safety, meet required legislative standards, and ensure assets are transferred to the new unitary council in operational compliant condition.

CP5. Support communities to shape and improve their local facilities by making the best use of Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 (S106) funding. This will help deliver community priorities set by parish councils and ensure investment supports growth and addresses the impact of development.

We will improve guidance, communication and processes so that funding is used to reflect community priorities such as growth, investment in local facilities and infrastructure, and addressing the impacts of development on residents.



Photo: Tewkesbury Borough Council - Connecting Communities, Gretton Village Hall

About our borough

There are over 47,400 residential properties in our borough.

(source: June 2026 Tewkesbury Borough Council's council tax database)

Our actions



CP6. To progress the development of the Strategic and Local Plan to ensure it is submitted for examination.

Significant resource and time have been devoted with Cheltenham Borough and Gloucester City councils, to prepare a new Strategic and Local Plan (SLP). This sets out the best options for housing and employment growth across the Cheltenham Borough, Gloucester City, and Tewkesbury Borough over the next 20 years. To be completed prior to LGR vesting day, the plan needs to be reviewed, consulted on, and formally submitted to the Government for independent examination to ensure future development is properly planned and meets local needs.



CP7. Work with registered housing providers and rural communities to bring forward an increased supply of appropriate affordable housing, prioritising social rent and other tenures that meet identified local needs.

We will continue to work with housing providers, communities and partners to increase the supply of affordable homes available across the borough, particularly social rent and other lower-cost options. This will help meet local housing needs, provide more accessible homes, and support residents at risk of homelessness.



CP8. Find alternative options to reduce the use of bed and breakfasts and hotels for temporary accommodation.

We will continue to reduce the use of bed and breakfasts and hotels for people experiencing homelessness by increasing the availability of more suitable temporary accommodation within the borough. This includes investing in new options, making better use of existing buildings, and supporting people before reaching crisis point to help prevent homelessness where possible.

About our borough

A total of 395 affordable homes were delivered in the borough, of which 109 were social rent units.

(Source: Tewkesbury Borough Council – Housing) Photo: Jack Boskett – Stoke Orchard housing development

Our actions



CP9. Deliver appropriate housing on the former Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (MAFF) site in Tewkesbury.

With key organisations, such as housing providers, we will work to deliver new homes on the former Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries site in Tewkesbury, bringing the land back into use to help increase the supply of affordable housing in the borough.



CP10. Work with partners to enforce renters' rights, support tenants to understand and exercise their rights and ensure landlords meet their legal responsibilities across the private rented sector.

We are working with partners to improve standards in private rented housing following the Renters' Rights Act 2026, which strengthens tenants' protections and landlords' responsibilities. This includes helping residents understand their rights, providing clear advice on how to get support, and take action where homes do not meet required standards.




CP11. Work in partnership to implement the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT), identify households at risk of financial hardship, and use the data to deliver targeted support.

In partnership with the data organisation, Policy in Practice in Practice, we are introducing the Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT). The LIFT platform will combine various datasets to allow us insights into financially vulnerable households. It helps identify families that may be eligible for benefits but are not currently claiming them, enabling us to provide targeted outreach and support. This is part of our wider commitment to easing cost of living pressures for residents.



Photo: New housing development in Tewkesbury Borough

Our actions



CP12. Support our partners to reduce health inequalities and build community resilience for people of all ages.

Through our Integrated Locality Partnership we will work to reduce health inequalities – the unfair differences in health outcomes to build stronger, more resilient communities. Our aim is to help people to stay well, stay connected and be able to better cope with life's challenges. This includes supporting community wellbeing, through our young people mentoring scheme, improving access to services through the digital inclusion project, and strengthening local networks to create healthier, more inclusive communities.



CP13. Adopt the Tewkesbury Town Centre Masterplan and progress with longer term plans for the regeneration of Tewkesbury town centre.

We will finalise the work currently being undertaken and look to adopt the masterplan, a long-term plan that sets out how an area will grow and improve, to guide the regeneration of Tewkesbury town centre. This will include an upgrade to the Visitor and Heritage Centre to ensure it plays an active role in attracting and supporting visitors – and work to help shape improvements to public spaces, support local businesses, and overall create a more attractive, vibrant and sustainable town centre while protecting its historic character.



CP14. Deliver a Tewkesbury Borough Council-owned development company for the Garden Communities programme.

By establishing a council-owned development company funded by Government, the council will create a dedicated organisation to support the planning and delivery of the Garden Communities programme. This will support coordinated, long-term development and ensure new communities meet local needs and support sustainable growth of the borough.



About our borough

26.5 per cent of the borough's population is aged 0 to 24 years old (25,184 people) (Source: Office for National Statistics Census 2021)

Photo: Jack Boskett - Brockworth Badgers hockey team

Our actions



CP15. Support businesses in our borough to grow, embed The Growth Hub, Tewkesbury and Business Voice into our future service.

We are supporting businesses to grow through The Growth Hub Tewkesbury - a service which provides practical advice to help businesses start, grow and develop - and Business Voice events which give local businesses a platform to share views and engage with the council and other local businesses. This joined-up approach will help businesses grow, create jobs, and strengthen the local economy.



CP16. Accelerate the delivery and expansion of the advanced engineering and manufacturing sector, while supporting related sectors.

We will collaborate with key stakeholders to support the growth of Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing (AEM), alongside related sectors, by engaging with local businesses, strengthening links, and bringing forward new investment and development opportunities. This will help create high-quality jobs, attract investment, and support the long-term growth of the local economy. As part of this, we will develop leadership of the AEM sector through establishing an AEM board and providing advice and guidance to AEM businesses, with the council leading this project on behalf of the county.



CP17. Pilot a youth-engagement and youth-voice model in Tewkesbury Borough, embedding the approach within the Neighbourhood and Communities LGR work programme, to inform a future countywide model.

We will pilot a youth engagement and youth voice model to give young people a stronger voice in local decisions that affect them. Work will continue and we will look at embedding this through the Neighbourhood and Communities LGR workstream, which is shaping how local services and community engagement will operate under the new authority, helping to inform a future countywide approach as part of LGR.



About our borough

There are 4,425 registered businesses within our borough

(source: Inter Departmental Business Register (Office for National Statistics) - 2025 Photo: Tewkesbury Youth Club archery session

Delivering our Council Plan

Monitoring delivery of the Council Plan remains essential to ensuring transparency and accountability. A quarterly performance tracker is presented to the council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Actions and supporting performance indicators are measurable and outcome focused. For accountability, all actions are allocated to a responsible officer and lead member.

The Council Plan is refreshed annually so it remains a live, strategic document. It is supported by a suite of underpinning strategies and frameworks. These include:

- Climate Change and Ecological Framework
- Housing and Homelessness Strategy
- Procurement Strategy
- Waste and Recycling Strategy
- Economic Development and Tourism Strategy
- Flood Response and Resilience Action Plan
- Communications Strategy
- Community Safety Strategy.

Our Overview and Scrutiny Committee play a pivotal role in supporting policy and strategy reviews and provides ongoing monitoring to ensure they deliver their intended outcomes.

Looking ahead, both LGR and national funding reforms will continue to influence how resources are allocated. Financial pressures are expected to increase in future years, and resource allocation has already begun to shift as part of the LGR transition. As a result, we have undertaken a thorough review of all Council Plan actions as part of this year's refresh.

This has led to a more focussed set of actions. While fewer actions are now reported through the Council Plan, this does not mean other activity is not taking place. Many important areas of work will continue to be delivered and monitored through service plans and other strategic documents. The annual refresh ensures the plan remains realistic, focused and responsive to the changing environment.



Photo: Mikal Ludlow- Tewkesbury Food and Craft Market



Tewkesbury
Borough Council

phone: 01684 295010

email: council.plan@teWKesbury.gov.uk

web: teWKesbury.gov.uk

Front cover photo: Adobe Stock – View over Winchcombe and St Peters Church.

Produced and designed by Tewkesbury Borough Council. **June 2026**