



Delivering for Dacorum

Corporate Plan 2015-2020

www.dacorum.gov.uk

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Foreword

Over the last the five years we've seen real progress across Dacorum. Our £30 million regeneration programme has transformed the Old Town High Street, the Marlowes shopping area, Bank Court and bus interchange and we are making major improvements to the Jellicoe Water Gardens and Maylands Business Park. We are also putting significant investment into other areas across the borough.

For the first time in over 20 years we have started to build our own housing as well as spending around £20 million per year on making sure our existing properties are as good as they can be.

We've also continued to improve the quality and efficiency of our services. Since 2012 we've delivered over £6 million of savings while also increasing performance and satisfaction across key services.

However while much has been achieved, we know that more needs to be done.

Dacorum is already a great place to be but we are ambitious to make it even better. Our residents have told us what is important to them and this plan clearly sets out how we will deliver our key priorities:

- A clean, safe and enjoyable environment
- Building strong and vibrant communities
- Ensuring economic growth and prosperity
- Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need
- Delivering an efficient and modern council

With greater pressures on services and a decreasing pot of funding we know that some tough decisions will have to be made.

But with challenge comes opportunity. Through innovation and technology we can create services that are more effective and tailored to the needs of residents. We will also continue to reduce costs and improve standards by ensuring our approach is always underpinned by the latest research and evidence.

The next five years are going to be difficult but we are determined to succeed and our Corporate Plan sets out a clear vision and roadmap to ensure that we create a borough which enables the communities of Dacorum to thrive and prosper.

It is a huge privilege to serve the people of Dacorum and we are confident that together with the community we can ensure that this continues to be a fantastic place to live, work and enjoy.



Andrew Williams
Leader of
the Council



Sally Marshall
Chief Executive

About Dacorum

Wards and members

51

elected Councillors representing 25 wards



Total Population

Dacorum has a population of 149,700 which is 13% the total population of Hertfordshire¹

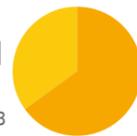
Male/Female

There are 73,600 males (49%) and 76,100 females (51%) living in the borough²



Age Structure

65% of the borough's population is aged between 15 and 65; 19% of the population are children³



Waste

On average we empty 12 million waste and recycling bins each year⁶



Parking

We manage 26 car parks, 17 of which have achieved the Park Mark for safety



Housing stock

We own around 10,000 homes in 26 different areas including Adeyfield, Berkhamsted and Kings Langley⁴



Rural and Urban

Almost 85% of Dacorum is classed as rural and some 60% is in the Green Belt⁵

Leisure Services

Last year almost 85,000 children aged between 6 and 13 attended our adventure playgrounds⁷



Customer Services

In 2014/15 we welcomed 72,871 customers to our contact centres and answered

349,662 calls



Funding

We receive 12p for every £1 you pay in council tax. 78p goes to Herts County Council and 10p goes to the Police.



What is the Corporate Plan?

The Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan is a key element within our strategic decision making process.

It outlines our vision and priorities for the next five years as well as providing a focus for service delivery and performance.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy

This is our key financial policy. It considers the financial implications of our Corporate Plan as well as providing a framework to ensure we manage our money in the most effective way. The strategy also informs the annual budget-setting process.

Since 2012 we have worked hard to protect the front line while delivering £6 million in savings. However as funding from central Government reduces we will continue to identify further efficiencies while maintaining core services.

The Core Strategy

The purpose of this 25 year plan is to anticipate and manage development and land-use change in Dacorum. It describes our strategic vision and objectives for the borough as well as setting out key policies including new settlements and housing growth, town-wide strategies and required infrastructure.

The strategy is also a key tool to help maximise new investment and promote economic regeneration.

Service Plans and Operational Strategies

Our service plans and operational strategies set out how individual teams are going to deliver their objectives.

These flow directly from the corporate priorities and they describe the key objectives and activities for each area as well as highlighting the performance indicators and risks that will be used to assess progress.

1 ONS - 2014 Survey
2 ONS - 2014 Survey
3 ONS - 2014 Survey
4 Oct 2015 - DBC figures
5 DBC Core Strategy 2006 - 2031
6 2014 - DBC figures
7 2014 - DBC figures

Our Vision, Priorities and Values

“The Council is committed to working in partnership to create a borough which enables the communities of Dacorum to thrive and prosper. This requires us to play a leadership role in bringing together a range of organisations and individuals to support and sustain good conditions for local growth”

Vision

In 2010, after consulting with Members and our communities, we adopted our strategic vision.

The vision clearly sets out the direction of travel for the Council and in doing so; it shapes our priorities and informs all our strategies and plans. It also details how we work alongside our local partners to deliver the services that people need.

Priorities

Priorities tell teams what to focus on when they are designing and delivering services.

They have been set by our Councillors taking into account our vision and what residents have told us is most important to them:

- A clean, safe and enjoyable environment
- Building strong and vibrant communities
- Ensuring economic growth and prosperity
- Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need
- Delivering an efficient and modern council

We also recognise the importance of taking an evidence-based approach and making decisions based on a sound understanding of the issues and the latest research into what does and does not work.



Values Driven

We have a clear set of values that are fundamental to who we are and how we behave.



Take responsibility



Be positive



Work with others to deliver a great service



Be reliable

These behaviours help us deliver on our priorities as well as guiding the recruitment and training of the staff who work for us.



Looking Forward: Dacorum over the next five years

- By 2018 our £30 million regeneration programme will be completed creating a lively and vibrant new town centre in Hemel Hempstead. We are also investing in other areas across the borough including a new car park at Berkhamsted and projects to renovate play areas and improve road safety.
- The long-term future of the area around the hospital site in Hemel Hempstead is a key issue. We will work with our partners including Herts County Council and the Herts Valley Clinical Commissioning Group to consider how we can make best use of the site.
- Our economic development strategy will ensure that we continue to enjoy one of the lowest unemployment rates in the UK. Investment that supports the knowledge-based economy, the transition to a low carbon economy, the rural economy and sustainable tourism will be particularly encouraged.
- We will also work with the Hertfordshire Enterprise Partnership on the recently announced Enterprise Zone that includes parts of Maylands and adjoining land up to the M1. This will bring funding and jobs for the local economy matched with the money for essential infrastructure including major road improvements to reduce congestion.
- We will undertake a strategic review of our key sports facilities in the borough with the aim of enhancing our sports and leisure offer and providing opportunities for people to relax and play. We will also implement our masterplan to renovate Gadebridge Park, providing an entertaining and enjoyable space for residents.
- Working with the Police, Herts County Council and others, we will continue to focus on the twin aims of cutting crime and keeping people safe. We will also help to reduce the fear of crime and ensure that victims always have a voice.

- We will build 300 new homes to help make the area more affordable for families while continuing to invest in our existing housing stock. Through careful planning we will also ensure that the quality and character of our towns and villages is maintained.
- The traditional view of the Council as a one-stop-provider of services is unrealistic in a world where people shop around at the touch of a button. In the future we will work with a mixture of voluntary, private and public sector partners to provide the services that residents need. The Forum, which opens in 2017, will support this by bringing a number of different organisations together into one building.
- We will use new technologies and ideas to deliver innovation and increase efficiency. This includes putting more services online, improving processes and using data to design more intelligent ways of working. We will also look at new ideas including the use of behavioural insight to help improve the resident experience.
- We have already saved £6 million over the last 3 years. In line with the Government's vision for a smaller public sector, we will continue to look at ways to reduce the Council's costs. Through our budgeting process we will identify savings and focus on our core priorities. We will also ensure services are commercially minded and that we maximise the returns from our assets.

Our Priorities 2015 – 2020

Our previous plan focused on getting the building blocks in place to develop a borough that prospers and thrives.

This plan builds on these foundations and, in doing so, it focuses on the issues that matter most for residents:



A clean, safe and enjoyable environment



Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need



Building strong and vibrant communities



Delivering an efficient and modern council



Ensuring economic growth and prosperity



A clean, safe and enjoyable environment

What's happened so far?

- We have established a high performing recycling service which includes the separate collection of food waste
- We have delivered an average recycling rate of 48% over the last four years
- We have hosted celebrations for a number of key events including the Olympic and Paralympic torch relays and the Tour of Britain cycling race
- We have trained over 200 staff to help abuse victims
- We have supported a number of initiatives to tackle anti-social behaviour, leading to a reduction in police reports from 6,314 to 2,914



Over the next five years...

- We will increase recycling and provide more convenient facilities for residents living in flats
- We will encourage greater user of green energy within our own buildings through a range of projects and activities
- We will achieve high targets for food premises inspection
- Our parks and recreational spaces will continue to be high quality spaces achieving a green flag for environmental standards
- We will work with partners to focus on the twin aims of cutting crime and keeping people safe
- We will undertake initiatives with the Police to help tackle anti-social behaviour
- We will review our existing sports and leisure offer and create a new Leisure Strategy
- We will develop and implement a plan for Gadebridge Park

What difference will this make to you?

- This will reduce the amount of waste being sent to landfill, helping protect the environment
- This will enable us to continue to provide high quality open spaces that people can enjoy
- This will ensure that food businesses meet relevant requirements to provide clean and safe food
- This will create more sports and leisure opportunities for residents across Dacorum





Building strong and vibrant communities

What's happened so far?

- We have launched a three year community sports activation programme of health and wellbeing activities called 'Get Set, Go Dacorum' with £250,000 funding from Sport England, and £45,000 of investment in-kind from the Council
- We have worked with Herts County Council on a £100,000 health and wellbeing project for the community
- We have engaged local people on key issues that affect them with over 1,100 people attending neighbourhood meetings each year
- We have delivered superfast broadband to 95% of businesses in Maylands
- We have provided over £1.8 million in grants to ten local charities whose work adds significant value to the lives of local people



Over the next five years...

- We will deliver our Get Set, Go Dacorum and Love Your Neighbourhood programmes as part of a broader package of community support
- We will increase levels of digital inclusion and online literacy
- We will commission another £1.8 million of voluntary and community services over the next three years with an option of a further two years
- We will make sure that residents are actively involved in the design and delivery of services
- We will work with Herts County Council on another £100,000 community based health and wellbeing project.

What difference will this make to you?

- This will help tackle the key issues affecting our local communities
- This will reduce digital exclusion and significantly increase the number of activities available online
- This will ensure that services are tailored around the needs of residents
- This will improve the fitness and the health and wellbeing of residents in local communities where we know there are relatively low levels of participation in sports and physical activity generally.





Ensuring economic growth and prosperity

What's happened so far?

- We have transformed the Old Town in Hemel Hempstead with new paving and street furniture and a new one-way system as part of our £30 million Hemel Evolution regeneration programme
- We have revitalised the pedestrian shopping zone in Hemel Hempstead with a new town square, events space, lighting, landscaping and food court
- We have delivered a new, accessible bus interchange in the heart of Hemel Hempstead town centre
- We have supported the creation of 1,400 new jobs in the borough
- We have registered 375 new businesses in the borough
- We have launched the Dacorum Look No Further website and funded a dedicated post to promote the area



Over the next five years...

- We will develop a new strategy for regeneration and growth based around attracting private sector investment and expertise
- We will complete the physical regeneration of Hemel Hempstead Town Centre including The Forum - a new centre for public services with a new town library, Council Offices and voluntary sector facilities; new flats and a new leisure development on the former Market Square
- We will work with the health trusts to consider redevelopment of the hospital site including health care facilities, new housing and a town centre primary school
- We will work with Hertfordshire Enterprise Partnership and St Albans City and District Council on bringing forward new development and investment in the Enterprise Zone covering large parts of Maylands and land to the M1
- We will carry out the restoration of the Jellicoe Water Gardens
- We will facilitate the development of new business space and deliver public realm improvements at Maylands Business Park

- We will open two new extensions to the Maylands Business Centre, creating space for 15 new businesses
- We will implement a plan to support the development of a digital high street
- We will promote opportunities and increase the reputation of the borough through 'Dacorum Look No Further' and the Hemel Hempstead Business Ambassadors

What difference will this make to you?

- This will ensure that new development is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure
- This will help improve the look and feel of the Town Centre, making it an attractive place to visit, shop, live and work
- This will help register over 500 new businesses boosting the local economy and creating new jobs
- This will help promote the area leading to more investment and an improved reputation
- This will help foster a vibrant and attractive retail and entertainment offer in the borough



Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need

What's happened so far?

- We have developed 640 new affordable homes, including the first new Council homes for over 20 years
- We have delivered £300k savings for the Council as part of our new repairs and maintenance contract
- We have consulted with over 500 residents on housing related services
- We have become the first supported housing provider to achieve three stars accreditation for excellence from the Centre for Housing Support
- We have installed the first of our planned biomass wood pellet boilers to flats in Hemel Hempstead Old Town, using a renewable energy source and providing cheap power for residents
- We have managed to deal with a doubling in the numbers presenting as homeless within the borough



Over the next five years...

- We will build 300 affordable new homes by 2020 and support a further 500 through developer agreements and Housing Associations
- We will support the broader development of over 2,000 new homes
- We will review our housing service to improve efficiency and reduce waste
- We will invest £96 million in our housing stock through our capital investment programme

- We will provide help and support for those who are homeless or at risk of losing their tenancies
- We will support residents to access good quality and affordable homes in the private rented sector
- We will continue to focus on preventing homelessness through proactive advice and assistance, increase the availability of temporary and permanent accommodation and keep use of bed and breakfast accommodation to emergency short-term only
- We will attract new investment for community cohesion

What difference will this make to you?

- This will help residents to have a safe and secure place they can call home
- This will support young families wanting to go into home ownership
- This will provide a variety of housing options for those in need
- This will ensure that residents views are at the heart of our housing policy





Delivering an efficient and modern council

What's happened so far?

- We have worked hard to protect front-line services in the face of government grant reductions in excess of 60% since 2010
- We have ensured that Council Tax increases remain low
- We have delivered over £6 million in savings
- We have reduced the cost of back-office functions, enabling us to prioritise spending on core services
- We have collected an annual gross income of £4.12 million from our commercial assets
- We have improved performance across key indicators
- We have introduced new online services including a streamlined payment portal

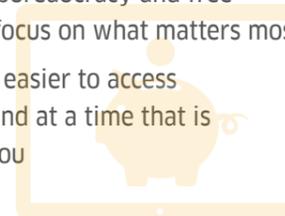


Over the next five years...

- We will continue to manage the significant reductions in government grant expected over the life of this corporate plan
- We will continue to meet our targets for reducing costs and generating additional income while ensuring that our resources are focused towards front line services
- We will move into smaller energy efficient premises at the Forum, sharing costs with Herts County Council and reducing our operating expenditure
- We will implement a new commercial strategy to ensure that we are delivering high quality services in the most cost-effective way
- We will continue to improve the quality and performance of services
- We will make the majority of our services available online
- We will move to a modern, paper-light way of working

What difference will this make to you?

- This will help us keep Council Tax increases low while still investing in front-line services
- This will ensure that we spend money in the most effective way possible
- This will ensure that we get a good return from our public assets
- This will reduce bureaucracy and free up staff time to focus on what matters most
- This will make it easier to access services online and at a time that is convenient for you



The Corporate Action Plan - Delivering our priorities and understanding the impact

The Corporate Plan is vital in setting out our long-term vision and priorities for action. However it's important that this plan also informs our thinking on a day-to-day basis.

That's why this document is underpinned by a Corporate Action Plan which will run for the lifetime of the plan and is updated annually. This will show, in detail the different projects that we are taking forward for each priority.

We will also monitor our progress against a series of performance indicators and we will set strict targets to ensure that we meet the high standards expected of each service.

Information in other languages and alternative formats

If you would like this information in another format (such as in large print or on CD) or in another language, call 01442 228000 to ask for this for yourself, or on behalf of a friend or family member who is unable to do so.

www.dacorum.gov.uk