

Newbury Town Plan 2019 - 2036

"Newbury - The Crossroads of Southern England"

June 2018

Adopted by Newbury Town Council 25th June 2018



Members of the Steering Group

Newbury Town Council

Cllr Howard Bairstow
Cllr Jeanette Clifford
Cllr Lynne Doherty
Cllr Adrian Edwards (Council Leader)
Cllr Miles Evans (Council Deputy Leader)
Cllr John Gardner
Cllr Dave Goff
Cllr Elizabeth O’Keeffe
Cllr Margo Payne
Cllr Anthony Pick (Chairman)
Cllr Martha Vickers

Co-opted West Berkshire Councillor

Cllr Paul Bryant

Neighbouring Parishes

Cllr Alan Croney, Enborne
Cllr Pragna Hay, Greenham
Cllr Bill Graham, Shaw-cum-Donnington
Cllr Elizabeth Nonweiler, Shaw-cum-Donnington
Cllr Alan Booth, Speen

Co-opted External Specialists

Bruce Blaine, Environmental planning expert
Tony Trigwell-Jones, Artistic Director, Arlington Arts

The Town Council is grateful to them for their information, advice and support.

Officer Support

Hugh Peacocke, Town Council CEO



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Executive Summary _

Newbury Town Council has written this Town Plan to focus on how the town of Newbury should respond positively and constructively to the expected challenges over the next 20 years, and to inform and influence the WBC Local Area Plan 2019-2036. The remit of the Plan and the definition of “Newbury” are not just the civil parish but the whole Newbury urban settlement area, and for that reason the four neighbouring parishes of Enborne, Greenham, Shaw-cum-Donnington, and Speen have been fully involved. This remit remains distinct from the town of Thatcham.

Building on the town’s present strengths, the Plan is underlined by six strategic objectives:

- to sustain and promote the town’s architectural, historic, and environmental character and its social and cultural infrastructure;
- to sustain and enhance the quality of life available to its residents;
- to ensure that it attracts and retains a wide range of businesses as they grow and develop;
- to develop the town as a major leisure and cultural centre;
- to provide an attractive opportunity for its young people;
- to provide for the health and care requirements of its population.

The following are the principal directions which the Plan recommends for the town, some of which are new and some of which build on existing strengths.

1.1

The architectural integrity of its historic core, suburbs, and gateways roads can with care be maintained, with the aid of Conservation Area Appraisals and local listing, while accommodating new architectural designs and taller buildings. Its historic identity should continue to be researched, preserved and promoted.

1.2

Newbury lies within fixed planning borders. In addition to new housing, space will be required for incoming and expanding businesses; primary, secondary, and tertiary education; leisure and cultural activities; sport, health and retirement care; and transport and road facilities. A balanced spatial plan and a clear zoning policy within the planning borders are therefore needed. West Berkshire Council’s policy of 40% affordable housing in new developments is fully supported.

1.3

An assessment of the population and age profile of Newbury by 2036 will be needed to forecast the town’s housing, education, health and retirement care, day care centres, and transport services over the Plan period.

1.4

Newbury must be flexible and adaptable in providing opportunities to new business start-ups, growing businesses requiring new space, and businesses seeking to enter the area. A planning policy is required which is specifically dedicated towards realising this objective, so that the balance between Newbury as a residential and commercial/ industrial town can be preserved.

1.5

Newbury is well placed to expand its scope as a recreational centre, beyond the five events and venues for which it is presently nationally known (the Racecourse, Highclere Castle, Watermill Theatre, Newbury Spring Festival, and the Royal County of Berkshire Show), by means of further landmark events. The initiative to develop these must lie with the participating organisations, with the encouragement of local government. New facilities may be required to welcome visitors by coach.

1.6

Expansion of primary and secondary education provision (the latter in West Berkshire) will be required, on the sound basis provided by Newbury's present education service. Tertiary education should also be expanded to respond, in part, to the needs of local business at both the academic and vocational levels. The role of local schools to act as community hubs and to provide services for community use should be developed.

1.7

Measures are currently in hand or planned to improve Newbury road and rail transport, and the need for further such measures should be kept under review. The town should adapt to the substantial public and private investment currently going into advanced automotive technology, for instance by promoting the installation of electric charging points. The strategic problem remains that the north-south arterial road (A34) has no common junction with the other north-south road (A339) which takes all the local residential and commercial traffic and the traffic from Basingstoke and the M3. A solution to this problem may require road building.

1.8

The Plan supports West Berkshire Council's objective of integrated and well-signposted networks of cycling and pedestrian routes across the town, building on that Council's detailed 2016 cycling survey. Bus services should be encouraged to develop with the aim of facilitating their use by those visiting or travelling about the town, and travel to neighbouring urban centres.

1.9

The great asset of Newbury is its present parks, public open spaces, and allotments. The present help given by volunteer groups in the support, management, and funding of Newbury's public open spaces and environmentally sensitive areas, such as waterways and commons, should be encouraged and developed.

1.10

Retail expansion should occur within the town centre of Newbury, but not by new retail parks on the outskirts.

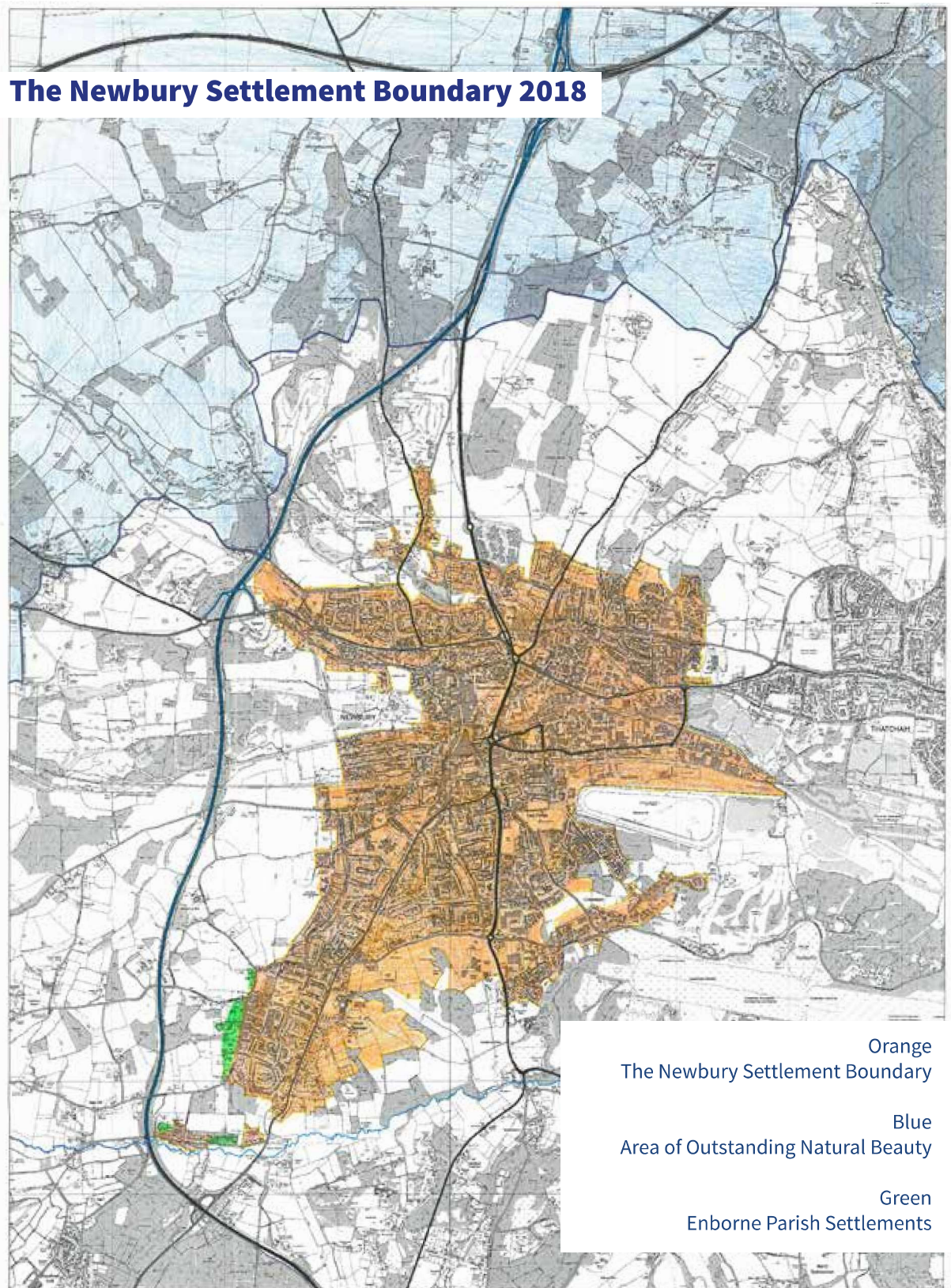
1.11

Newbury Town Council should be represented on the supervisory and consultative bodies for healthcare and emergency services in the Newbury area. Support for homeless people should be expanded to care for their health needs.

Detailed information outlined in this Executive Summary is to be found in the body of this Town Plan.



2. Map of Plan Area



3. Overview

Introduction

Newbury Town Council, as the body elected to represent the citizens of Newbury, has prepared this Town Plan with the aim of pointing a direction for the town over the next 20 years. We wish to identify and build on our existing strengths, face future opportunities with confidence, and improve the life of the town yet further.

The Plan has been prepared by a Steering Group set up by Newbury Town Council. Its members are 11 Newbury Town Councillors, plus Councillors from Enborne, Greenham, Speen, and Shaw-cum-Donnington to represent the interests of their respective parishes. Also co-opted to the Steering Group are Cllr Paul Bryant and two external specialists, Bruce Blaine, an environmental planning expert, and Tony Trigwell-Jones, Artistic Director of Arlington Arts, to advise on leisure, culture, and tourism.

The Town Plan was approved in draft by Newbury Town Council on 29th January 2018 for public consultation, which took place from 5th February to 18th March. There were 108 responses to the consultation, comprising 71 online, 28 at a public coffee morning held on 24th February, and nine individual written responses. These were considered by the Steering Group and resulted in changes to the draft. The Plan was approved in its final version by the Town Council on 25th June 2018.

Newbury is a town of about 40,000 inhabitants in the Thames Valley. It adjoins, but is distinct from, the town of Thatcham. The remit of the Plan includes the urban settlement area which is currently defined by the planning settlement boundary, extending beyond the civil parish to the urban parts of Speen, Shaw-cum-Donnington, Greenham and Enborne. In the course of the Plan, “Newbury” will refer to the Newbury urban settlement area as it may develop between now and 2036. It has been to achieve this remit that these four neighbouring Parish Councils have been involved as full partners.

This Town Plan aims to inform and influence the next West Berkshire Local Plan, intended for 2019-36, superseding the Area Delivery Plan Policy 2 in the present West Berkshire Council Core Strategy. In this way, it will contribute to wider West Berkshire planning policy.

The Town Plan endeavours to address all aspects of public life in Newbury: the character and future of Newbury; business and commerce; leisure, culture, and tourism; education; transport; the environment; health and wellbeing; the emergency services; and faith groups. The slogan “Newbury – the Crossroads of Southern England” has been devised with the intention to highlight Newbury’s role as a town at the centre of innovation and creativity, open to outside influences, while retaining its strengths and character.

The work was divided between ten working groups which reported to the Steering Group. They have consulted many interested local residents, for whose assistance we are very grateful. Officers from West Berkshire Council have also been consulted and have given valuable advice. However, the Town Plan remains the responsibility only of Newbury Town Council.

Overview

An assessment has been made of Newbury’s strengths and limitations, and the opportunities and threats which we foresee. The opportunities arise from the dynamism of modern society and economy. These can be summarised under 11 principal themes:





3.1 The Character of Newbury

Newbury is a town which retains a strong sense of its own cultural, social, and historic identity, and its historic centre has largely retained its architectural character. It has a pleasing diversity of styles and periods from the 17th century to the modern period, the 18th century and early 19th century buildings being perhaps the most distinguished. Five buildings are designated Grade I and 23 are Grade II*.

In the 1950's and 1960's Newbury retained its character since it was not designated for great expansion, as were (for instance) Basingstoke, Andover, and Swindon. We are therefore dealing with the expansion of a small town while seeking to retain the features which make it attractive

With care, new housing and other developments can be designed to respect the visual harmony, character, and materials of their neighbours without inhibiting new architectural styles and materials. Older buildings should merit particular attention. In order to prevent urban sprawl and ribbon development, further well-designed higher buildings (up to about 6 storeys, while respecting the height of buildings in the Town Centre) will be built, which should be suitably located in relation to their neighbours. The character of the inner and outer suburbs, gateway roads, and older houses and gardens, expressed through the Town Design Statement, should be equally recognised. Larger developments should respect local landmark buildings and landscape features. The Parkway development is an excellent example of this.

Preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals for the eight Conservation Areas is long overdue. Local listing and other actions to preserve and promote its historic character should be continued. Ribbon housing developments and a second retail park would put the present balance between the centre and suburbs at risk.

3.2 Spatial Planning

Newbury should retain its character by spatial planning which presents a balance of residential, commerce and business, social infrastructure, transport, and recreational purposes.

Development in Newbury is geographically constrained by the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the town of Thatcham, the Hampshire border, and the A34 arterial road. Within these constraints, spatial planning will need to provide for accommodation for the growing population, but also for appropriate social, economic, and cultural infrastructure, namely a new business park, new primary and secondary education (either new schools or extensions to existing ones), care and retirement homes for the increasing proportion of retirement age, expansion of the District Hospital, post-18 education institutions (either in Newbury or elsewhere in West Berkshire), public entertainment and events, sport, and a coach park to welcome visitors. These various claims on space must be mutually accommodated through a clear zoning policy.

The spatial and housing policy should cater for the expected population which Newbury can reach by 2036. The size of that expected population needs to be assessed.

A particular planning problem for Newbury lies with insufficient affordable, starter, and student accommodation for young adults and key workers. Present planning policies are addressing this but need to be reinforced.

The age profile by 2036 is expected to show a substantial proportionate increase in those over 65. This will entail policy developments in several areas.

The ability of West Berkshire Council to meet its objectives for spatial and zonal planning and its affordable housing targets is at risk from ever-changing central Government instructions, enforced through appeals. Once the Local Plan is approved, the Council should be left to implement it without detailed interference.



3.3 Newbury as a Business Centre

Newbury is well placed to continue to attract new and expanding innovative and high-tech businesses. It should be flexible and responsive in so doing. Its commercial rental costs are on average one-half to two-thirds those of Reading and the cost of housing is well below that of Oxford. Its well-educated population provides a local pool of talent. The projected Oxford-Cambridge Corridor will extend at least down to the M4 and will result in improvements to both the M4 and the A34. The present balance between residential and employment areas should be retained.

The town already has five business parks, containing large, medium-sized, small and growing companies. However, they are largely full and suffer from planning and rental term restrictions. A further business park will be needed with good access to the M4 and with fewer restrictions to inhibit business growth. More incubation hubs should be provided for start-up businesses and remote workers, and accelerator hubs for those seeking to expand.

Planning support will continue to be needed from West Berks Council for business growth. The present attrition of office space for housing under Permitted development Rights should be stopped.



3.4 Newbury as a Leisure Centre

Newbury has established itself as a centre for an exceptional range of leisure activities, some of national interest, some of regional interest, and some local. Some of these have a commercial basis, but many are maintained by voluntary support. They can be developed further for the benefit of both local residents and visitors to the town.

The principal present cultural landmark event is the Newbury Spring Festival. The pattern of a landmark event can be extended to further such events, providing the advantage of common national and regional publicity, booking, and accommodation. The organisation and financing of such landmark events should lie with the participating organisations, facilitated by local government.

There should be a unified web site announcing all Newbury cultural, leisure and sporting events, based on the present web sites but so far as possible comprehensive, available on public screens and supported by social media. It should be part of any future visitor information service, which may or may not (as will be assessed) have a physical presence in the town.

The current and potential role of coach visits and stopovers in Newbury should be assessed, and suitable facilities provided to welcome visitors and accommodate the needs of coach drivers and companies.

The more long-term development of Newbury as a tourist centre will require careful evaluation, in particular to assess whether a new events and/or sports facility could be built within the Plan period.

3.5 Newbury Transport

A principal reason for the growth and prosperity of Newbury arises from its role as a communications hub for southern England. This advantage continues, and is likely to be built on by the plans to upgrade the capacity of the M4 by 25%, improvements to the A34 which may eventually result in motorway status, electrification of the railway to London, and refurbishment of the railway station.

£10 million is being invested in improvements to the A339 through Newbury by 2021. This will help to keep pace with the growth of traffic caused by housebuilding and economic growth by that date, notwithstanding any changes in commuter habits. The two north-south arterial roads, the A34 and A339 have no common junction, and in consequence the A339 has to carry all the through traffic from Basingstoke as well as all the local residential and business traffic. This is a strategic problem which cannot continue indefinitely, and a number of proposals are put forward to address it.

Expected advances in automotive technology should be accommodated by, among other measures, electric charging points. Public transport should be encouraged both within Newbury and to neighbouring urban centres. Measures to improve road freight and the use of the Racecourse railway station are also proposed.



3.6 Newbury Education

Newbury's primary and secondary schools are generally rated "Good" by Ofsted and are supported by a good range of early years provision. The association of secondary schools with their feeder primaries, and of primary schools with early years settings, is being encouraged to facilitate a consistent approach to education and the tracking of pupils' progress. Particular attention should be paid to support of disadvantaged and disabled students.

Additional 400-600 primary school places in Newbury, and an additional 600-800 secondary school places in West Berkshire, will be required in the Plan period. Schools should extend their remit to become teacher training centres of excellence and local community assets.

Newbury College, also rated "Good", provides a wide range of vocational courses and supports local apprenticeships. Collaboration with local businesses should be reinforced to provide the range and quality of education needed by business and routes to employment for young people. After investigation, this may result in establishment of additional technical and academic higher-education colleges and facilities in Newbury within the Plan period.



3.7 Newbury's Physical and Natural Environment

Newbury's excellent environmental assets include three public parks, two large commons, two rivers/canals, six public allotment sites, and other large public open spaces. These are maintained by public authorities and also benefit from the support of active voluntary groups. The Town and/or District Council should encourage and formalise their support for these voluntary groups while leaving them autonomous in organisation and funding. Further public open spaces are being provided with each new major development. Biodiversity should be encouraged in consultation with the West Berkshire Council ecologist.

A policy should be developed for the long-term preservation, maintenance and funding of public open spaces which are associated with new housing developments.

Pedestrian and cycle routes across the town are fragmented, and in places are inadequately signposted and of poor quality. A programme should be put in place to gradually integrate them into single visible networks, free of obstacles and (for the pedestrian routes) suitable for people with disabilities. The cycle route will be assisted by the detailed audit carried out by West Berkshire Council in 2016.

The scope of recycling and renewable energy generation should be extended by suitable measures.



3.8 Newbury Retail

Newbury's Business Improvement District (BID), as with other BID's, is a precisely defined geographical area in Newbury Town Centre within which the businesses have voted to invest collectively in local improvements to enhance their trading environment. It is initiated, financed and led by the commercial sector, providing additional or improved services to the baseline services provided by the local authority in that area.

The opinion of Newbury's BID is that since Parkway came on-line, Newbury is nearing saturation in terms of retail, and it is now the mix of retail that needs to be worked on. The Kennet Centre refurbishment should assist in reinvigorating retail south of the Canal. It is important that Newbury tries to retain the balance of independents, chains and nationals. This is much harder to achieve on paper than in reality, since whereas many people may like the idea of independents they may rarely use them.

A second retail park would be very detrimental to the town centre and Newbury as a whole, as the town does not have the capacity to support two retail parks outside the town centre. As retail parks have evolved over the years they have gone from sterile environments where the public just bought what it needed and left, to mini town centres with coffee shops, restaurants and free parking. All this is contributing to the high-street decline across the county.

The BID is working with its partners at Parkway, the Kennet Centre, West Berkshire Council, and Newbury Town Council to once again buck the trends in footfall and vacant units, outperforming both our region and the national picture.





3.9 Health and Wellbeing

Newbury Town Council and other Parish Councils have limited influence on local health services, as they have no representation on the two local supervisory bodies, the Clinical Commissioning Group and the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board, which themselves have limited visibility and accountability to the public. The benefit that the Councils' local perspective could provide should be taken into consideration.

The additional space needed for primary and secondary healthcare, and for care for the infirm and elderly, which can be expected from the growth in Newbury's population and increased length of life, must be given the same weight in spatial planning as other needs.

Newbury is in general a healthy town. The Plan proposes measures to improve public health further and to address the health inequalities between different areas.

Current trends in healthcare, which should be supported, include a greater awareness of the importance of mental health, better integration and co-ordination with other care and emergency services, and attention to health and wellbeing inequalities and to those individuals with complex needs. The adverse effects on physical and mental health of those who find themselves homeless should encourage expansion of the present services to support them.

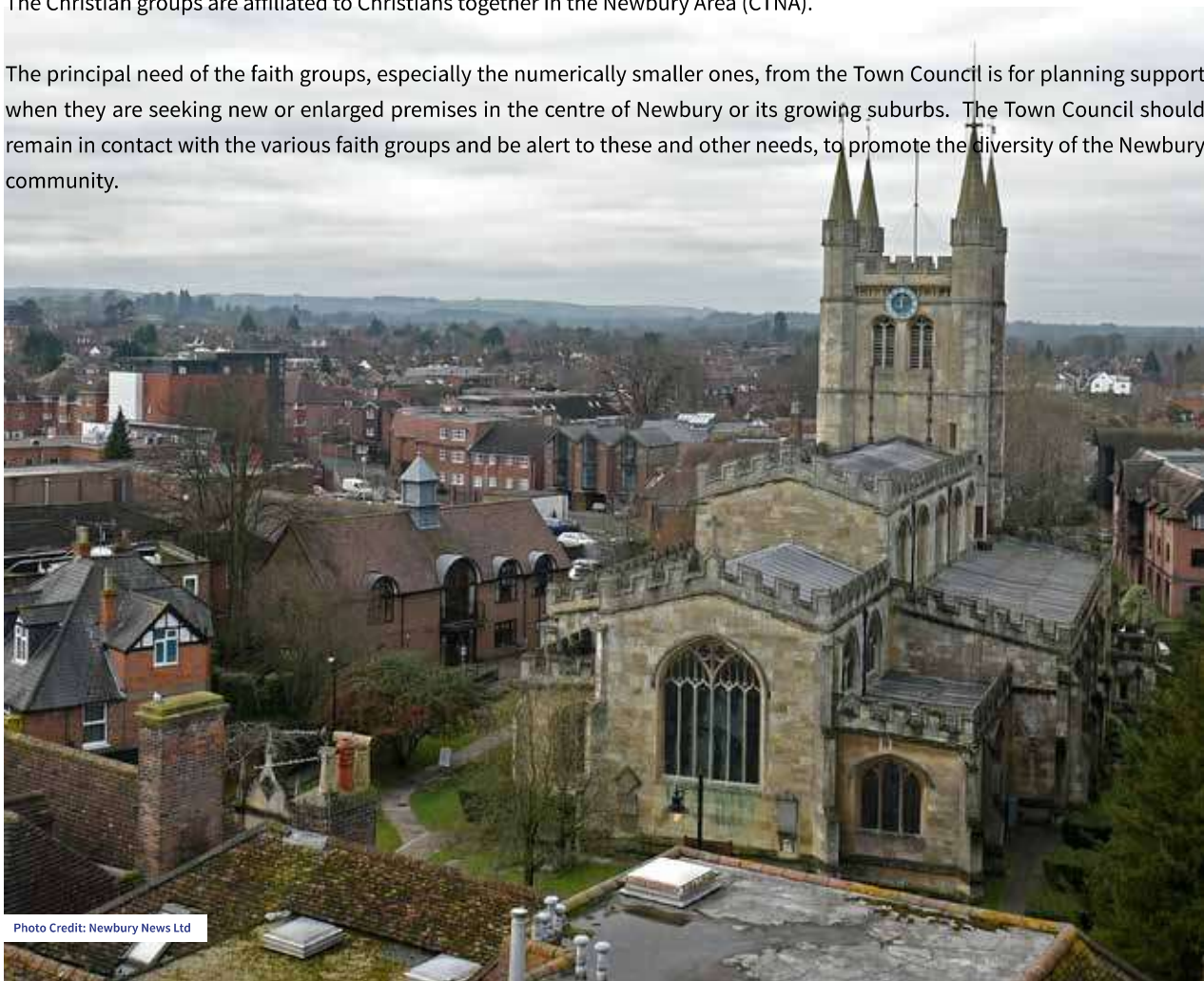
3.10 Faith Groups

As part of the review of the Newbury Community, a Working Group was set up to survey the faith groups in the town. A faith group is self-defined as a group which practices a common religious observance. Community cohesion is an important objective of The Town Council.

22 faith groups in Newbury have identified centres where they meet for religious and non-religious activities. 21 of these are Christian and one is the Mosque in Pound Street. The Christian churches mostly have associated church halls which are a valuable resource to the community at large. The Greek Orthodox, Hindu, Sikh, Jewish, and Buddhist communities are served by centres in Reading. The United Reformed Church is served by a centre in Thatcham. Some of these communities, for instance the Hindus, have expressed a wish to acquire premises in the Newbury area.

In the 2011 census, 63% of the Newbury population declared a religious identification – 59% Christian and 4% other religions. The Christian groups are affiliated to Christians together in the Newbury Area (CTNA).

The principal need of the faith groups, especially the numerically smaller ones, from the Town Council is for planning support when they are seeking new or enlarged premises in the centre of Newbury or its growing suburbs. The Town Council should remain in contact with the various faith groups and be alert to these and other needs, to promote the diversity of the Newbury community.



3.11 Implementation of the Town Plan

The Plan contains six strategic objectives and 103 specific actions to realise them. Some are under the control of Newbury Town Council, others are the responsibility of West Berkshire Council, and others involve independent commercial and voluntary groups. Many tasks include research or investigation and co-ordination between different bodies, and may be adjusted as the work proceeds. To monitor implement of the Plan, we recommend that a permanent body be created jointly by the two Councils, and incorporating representatives of the independent interests.

The monitoring body would monitor and report progress, conduct research, communicate information, and identify difficulties. It would have a co-ordinating rather than a directing function, and would act as the principal conduit of information on the progress of each objective and task. With the aim of keeping the objectives identified in the Plan in balance, it would include representatives of civic interests, business, planning, transport, the arts, sport, education, healthcare, social support, and the environment, in addition to the two Councils.

In line with the geographic scope of the Plan, the monitoring body would include representation by the four adjoining parishes.

Those parts of the Plan which have not been incorporated into the West Berkshire Local Plan may be adapted and developed in line with new information and priorities, provided that the Plan's balance of strategic objectives is preserved.

Structure of the Plan

The Plan comprises sections on:

- The Future of Newbury, which outlines the planning principles which we recommend for its development.
- The Character of Newbury, which describes the architectural design principles which should apply.
- Business and Commerce, which puts forward a programme to encourage business development and attract new business, retaining the balance with residential growth.
- Leisure, Culture, and Tourism, which describes how to build on the many present amenities of Newbury to attract visitors to the town and improve the benefits to residents.
- Transport, which reviews Newbury's transport and reports on and proposes measures to improve it.
- Education, which outlines a programme to provide the best opportunities for Newbury's children and young people.
- The Environment, which proposes how to protect and improve the quality of Newbury's physical and natural environment.
- Health and Wellbeing, which suggests ways in which trends and requirements in health services can be addressed.



4. The Future of Newbury

The principal factors which merit attention in considering the future of Newbury appear to be the expected population growth, retaining the present character of the town, maintaining the correct planning balance between residential, retail, commercial, educational, leisure, and social activities, improving the facilities for young adults, preparing for the expected proportionate growth in those over 65, and protecting the physical and natural environment. These factors are affected by each other and by Newbury's natural geographical constraints.

The present Newbury settlement boundary is shown in the Map of the Plan Area. It includes urban areas of the Parishes of Greenham, Shaw-cum-Donnington, and Speen. Enborne Parish Council have suggested that to reflect resident reality it should be extended to include those parts of the Newbury urban area which currently lie in the Parish of Enborne.

The geographical area within which Newbury can develop, and its settlement boundary can be extended, is constrained by the North Wessex Downs AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) about 2½ km to the north, the Hampshire border to the south, and the town of Thatcham to the east. To the west, a geographical constraint has not been defined, but in practical terms the A34 is likely to function as such, not including the Registered Battlefield Site of the First Battle. In addition, any future registration by Historic England of the site of the Second Battle (doubtless made after due consultation) will probably further limit the developable area to the north.

This limited area implies that two decisions will be needed. One relates to the population and age profile of the town, subject to decisions on housing density. In the 2011, this population was assessed at about 40,000. The 2012 Core Strategy for West Berkshire anticipated that a further 5,400 houses would be built in Newbury by 2026, through infilling and the sites at the Racecourse, Sandleford, London Road Industrial Development, the Market Street Development, and (following a recent Appeal decision) North Newbury. Given the passage of time, it is a reasonable guess that the population is now 45,000. An estimate therefore needs to be made of what the population by 2036 is likely to be.

The second decision relates to the spatial planning of the Newbury area. Newbury is a town with a strong sense of its own cultural and social identity, centred on a historic core which has retained much of its architectural character. Ribbon development across the countryside would result in the growth of competing urban centres of indifferent quality, diluting the present character of the town without any compensating benefit other than an increased population.

To cater for the projected growth in population, we need to plan for further housebuilding and development of housing estates. However, the town's character should also be enriched by providing for possible new infrastructure, for instance: a further business park, two or three further primary schools, a further secondary school (either in Newbury or elsewhere in West Berkshire), post-18 educational facilities, care and retirement homes, day care centres, a concert hall or events venue, further sports pitches, expansion of the District Hospital, and a coach centre. Each of these possible new facilities is discussed in the relevant sections of the Plan, and whether or not they are all adopted, the space which they will require should not be pre-empted by uncontrolled housing growth. A spatial plan for the Newbury area to provide for this infrastructure should therefore be part of the West Berkshire Local Plan.

It is widely recognised that Newbury has problems retaining young people in early adulthood. The only statistic available is that persons aged 20-35 represent 15% of the population of West Berkshire while the national ratio is 20%. Although some movement in and out of the town is natural, we should be seeking to retain and attract more. The principal problems appear to be insufficient affordable, starter, and student accommodation, as well as limited higher education services, although other cultural factors may arise.



To resolve the potential problem of ribbon development and assist with accommodation of young adults, we should plan for a higher proportion of apartment developments with affordable and low-cost housing. Some good examples of such accommodation already exist, for instance in Old Newtown Road. A height limit of 6 storeys is proposed as a general rule, on grounds of both safety and compatibility with existing two and three-storey dwellings, subject to due respect for the height of buildings in the town centre. Provision should be made for more dwellings of multiple occupation, built to a high standard.

The age profile of Newbury in 2036, when assessed, is expected to show a large proportionate increase in those over 65 compared to the present. This will have implications for the provision of retirement dwellings, sheltered accommodation, care homes, doctors' surgeries, day care centres, and leisure facilities in general, which should be built into the Local Plan.

The housing standard of Newbury is generally considered high, although there are small pockets of substandard accommodation.

Newbury's development has been piecemeal and eclectic, without the comprehensive redevelopment which has harmed so many cities. This has given a specific identity to its historic core, inner and outer suburbs, and gateway roads. It includes a legacy of many larger houses and gardens, dating from a period when pressure for housebuilding was less intense. Maintenance of this historic character is discussed further under "The Character of Newbury".

Newbury has never been dependent on a single industry. In the 18th century it flourished as a communication centre, commercially as an inland port and for individuals as a coaching exchange centre, half way between London and Bath. From the 19th century it developed an industrial base, starting with Plenty's Engineering Works and Elliott's Joinery. After 1945 the present five business parks (Greenham Business Park, Newbury Trading Estate, Newbury Business Park, London Road Industrial Estate and Turnpike Industrial Estate) were developed and the present major employers were established in the town, including Vodafone, Micro Focus, Stryker, Snell Advanced Media, Newbury Investments, and (until recently) Bayer. These characteristics are still central to Newbury's character, and are discussed further under "Newbury Business and Commerce".



The following principles to guide Newbury's future development are therefore proposed:

- 4.1 The present character of Newbury as a social and cultural entity, centred on the historic core, should be maintained.
- 4.2 The expected population and age profile in 2036 should be set and inserted into the Local Plan, to be accommodated within the town's present geographic limits. Development targets within Newbury should be tailored to accommodate this.
- 4.3 Newbury should retain its character as a commercial and industrial centre, and the present mix between residential and commercial space should be maintained. This will include planning for at least one further business park.
- 4.4 A spatial plan should be prepared for the further development of the town's educational, cultural, entertainment, social, sporting, transport, medical, and care home needs, as well as its residential development, and included in the Local Plan. This non-residential accommodation should be fully protected from residential applications.
- 4.5 Planning should include provision of more apartment developments and multiple-occupation residences, designed especially for younger adults. A general height limit of 6 storeys for flats is proposed, whilst respecting the building heights of the historic town centre.
- 4.6 The requirement of 40% affordable accommodation on residential planning applications should be strictly imposed wherever possible.
- 4.7 Developments should respect the architectural and environmental character of the historic core, inner and outer suburbs, gateway roads, and the legacy of larger houses and longer gardens.
- 4.8 Development should protect and enhance the physical and natural environment of Newbury.
- 4.9 The Newbury settlement boundary should include also those parts of the Newbury urban area which currently lie within the Parish of Enborne.
- 4.10 The BT Tower, currently Newbury's leading eyesore, and its adjoining area represents one of the town's principal development opportunities, especially given its location as a gateway to the town.
- 4.11 The Market Street urban quarter development and the Kennet Centre development should together provide an opportunity to reinvigorate that part of the town.

The detailed implication of these principles for the architectural character of Newbury, business development, education, leisure and culture, transport, and the environment are covered by relevant sections of the Plan, each including a set of specific recommendations.



5. Character of Newbury

The Town and its Centre

Newbury has benefited from a gradual piecemeal development which has preserved many older buildings and permitted new ones which, with few exceptions, have not clashed with those previous. Its central area includes many 17th, 18th, and early 19th century buildings, several of them distinguished, and a large Tudor Church. This has resulted in a pleasing diversity. Many of the most distinguished buildings are by the 18th century master builder James Clarke, of whom few personal details are known. Other buildings in the town centre are based on an earlier core from the 15th and 16th centuries. The brickwork of many historic buildings is of high quality.

Certain areas have retained an identifiable special character, in particular Northbrook Street and the Broadway, Newbury Bridge, the Market Place, the Wharf, West Mills, the Canal, and the City (Argyle Road area). More broadly, eight Conservation Areas have been designated: the Town Centre, Shaw Road and Crescent, Shaw House and Church, Donnington Square, Speen, Stroud Green, Kennet & Avon Canal East, and Kennet & Avon Canal West.

The town includes five Grade I listed buildings (St Nicolas Church, the Cloth Hall, Shaw House, Donnington Castle, and Sandleford Priory), 23 Grade II* listed buildings, and over 200 Grade II listed buildings. In addition, seven Newbury buildings have been locally listed. The Grade II* listed buildings include among others St Bartholomew's Hospital, the medieval Litten Chapel, the Granary in Wharf Street, Newbury Bridge, St Nicolas House in West Mills, the gateways to St Nicolas Church, Camp Hopson central building, Jack of Newbury's House in Northbrook Street, and the Methodist Church.



Examples of excellent modern architecture in Newbury include the new St Bartholomew's School (2010) and the Park Way retail and residential development (2011).

The few extant buildings which are generally agreed not to respect the character of Newbury include the BT telephone exchange and the Pearl Assurance development in Bartholomew Street. The second of these is due for redevelopment. The BT Exchange and its adjoining area represents the town's principal development opportunity.



The Suburbs and Gateway Roads

Newbury started to develop residential suburbs in the 19th century, with the enclosure of East and West Fields and the laying out of roads south of the railway. Suburbs were subsequently built and extended from the early 20th century, so that the older suburban roads have buildings in all 20th century styles from the Edwardian period up to the present. The architectural characters of each of the nine residential areas into which the civic parish of Newbury can be divided are described in the Town Council's Town Design Statement, originally published in 2005 and updated in 2018, together with recommendations for any future developments. The Town Design Statement does not include the urban parts of Newbury outside the civil parish.

Newbury housing developments were frequently designed with open corner plots at road junctions, to provide a spacious perspective from one road to another. Houses at these corner plots were built with windows facing towards them. There has been some infilling of these corner plots with new houses, but other open corners remain.

Consistent with its role as communications hub, Newbury is approached by seven roads which can be described as gateway roads. They attracted prosperous suburban housing with large gardens early on in Newbury's expansion, and now as garden suburbs enhance the approaches to the town, providing the visitor (other than one approaching via the A339 highway) with his or her first impression. These gateway roads are Andover Road, Greenham Road/Pyle Hill, Newtown Road, Shaw Road, Oxford Road, Old Bath Road, and London Road.



Future Design Principles

The objective of Newbury's architectural development must be to maintain the town's essential character while accommodating the changes needed to keep it relevant to modern life.

Grainger Plc carried out a detailed survey of central Newbury architecture for their 2016 planning application for the Market Street development. They called the survey "Newburyness", and it can be found on pages 18 to 37 of their Design and Access Statement for the application (February 2016). To quote their page 25: "Too little diversity and the character becomes bland; too much and the pleasing diversity of the whole becomes lost and is replaced with visual clutter." And page 35: "Where [buildings which break the rules] are successful it is because their rule breaking enhances the consistency and attractiveness of all the other buildings round them. Where they are not successful this is because building breaks too many of the rules at the same time."

The Grainger report includes an overview of the design principles of the centre of Newbury, including vertical and horizontal alignments, window proportions and spacing, materials, frontage modelling, and roofscape heights. Locally distinctive building



materials include locally sourced brick (mainly red and grey) and tiles, but other materials have been used.

New public and landmark buildings have been and will be constructed as Newbury develops. Recent and forthcoming examples are the Library, Oddfellows Heights, the Vue Cinema, the Parkway development, the approved developments at the Sterling Cables site and the Kelvin Road site, the Racecourse developments, and the approved Market Street development. These are or will be generally on a larger scale or height than the historic buildings in the core of the town, and very often employ modern materials, so representing a challenge to architects and town designers not to produce a cramped, intrusive, jarring, or incoherent effect.

None of Newbury Conservation Areas has as yet received a Conservation Area Appraisal, which would define the Area's character in greater detail. In their absence, we are dependent on summaries such as have been drawn up by Grainger Plc and Newbury Town Council as described above.



To maintain and enrich the character of Newbury, the following proposals are made:

- 5.1 The Newbury Town Design Statement, when adopted as material consideration by West Berkshire Council, should become a primary guidance in considering any planning proposal for the town. Councils for neighbouring civil parishes within the Newbury settlement boundary should be invited to contribute for their own areas.
- 5.2 Buildings and other developments adjacent to existing buildings should respect the visual harmony and character of its neighbours, without needing to follow them exactly. Materials compatible with existing materials, such as Berkshire brick where appropriate, should be used.
- 5.3 Taller buildings outside the immediate town centre should be set back from existing shorter buildings in proportion to their height. New landmark buildings in modern materials are desirable, but should enhance rather than distract from the character of their neighbourhood. The height of present buildings in the town centre should be respected.
- 5.4 Conservation Area Appraisals are long overdue, and are required to an appropriate professional standard for each of the eight Conservation Areas.
- 5.5 Special protection should be accorded to Newbury's stock of pre-Civil War 17th century and earlier buildings, which are especially vulnerable, to 18th Century buildings by James Clarke, which are some of Newbury's most distinguished, and to 19th century and early 20th century buildings by the local architect James H. Money.
- 5.6 The garden suburb character of Newbury's seven gateway roads should be a factor in any planning proposal which affects them.
- 5.7 Larger planning applications should have regard to existing local landmark buildings and landscape features.
- 5.8 The visual rhythm and characteristic design features of the post-War Newbury estates should be preserved. These should include open corner plots where these remain.
- 5.9 Canal side developments should preserve or improve on their special amenity as an attractive environment. The present general objectives for the Wharf are supported.
- 5.10 The current programme to research and record the architectural history of Newbury, preserve its heritage by local listing, and promote the town's history to the public by blue plaques or other means should be sustained.



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6. Newbury Business and Commerce

The Present Situation

Newbury should seek to remain a centre for innovative, creative, and growing companies. The Tech Nation Report 2018 identified Newbury, on the basis of its digital density, as the most tech specialised local economy in the UK, with the second highest productivity per head for tech systems. In a survey reported in the Newbury Weekly News on 25th May 2017, the commercial real estate company CBRE listed Newbury as the 16th most creative location in the UK.

Newbury has advantages which it can offer as a business location over Reading and Oxford, while benefitting from the proximity and rapid expansion of those cities. In addition to business parks, residential amenity and central location, its principal merits are a cost of rental which on average is about half that of Reading, and a highly educated work force of whom 50% have degrees, which facilitates recruitment. The attraction to business of Newbury as a crossroads, rather than just as a town adjoining the A34, and the measures to sustain and build on that situation, are discussed further under "Transport".

Around 5000 businesses are located in Newbury, divided by turnover: approximately 19 at £20 million and above, 258 at £1 million to £19 million, and the rest below £1 million. They are located principally on five business parks: Greenham Business Park, Newbury Trading Estate, Newbury Business Park, Turnpike Industrial Estate, and London Road Industrial Estate. The last of these is due for redevelopment, but its fragmented land ownership complicates planning for its future.

Businesses can be very broadly divided into three categories: small start-up enterprises, medium-sized enterprises that are seeking to grow, and larger companies, often national or international in scope, which may choose to locate a head or subsidiary premises in Newbury. Whilst Newbury is evidently not a location for heavy industry, all other forms of business are located here: offices, design and development, light industry, distribution, retail, etc. The largest companies currently based in Newbury are Vodafone, Micro Focus, Newbury Investments, Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions, H. Young, Norbain, Rebound Technology, Sovereign Housing, Stryker, Snell Advanced Media, and the English Provender Company.

The Opportunity

Newbury has had an industrial sector since the late 18th century, and that has grown as the town has. It is an objective of the Town Plan to retain the current balance of the business and commercial role of the town with its residential role, so as to provide employment to residents and the surrounding area. Newbury has often been described as a market town, but this is a legal term which means a town with a chartered market. In practical terms it refers to a town which provides a market for local farmers, but this function ceased with the closure of the Corn Exchange (in its original role) and the cattle market some decades ago.

The National Infrastructure Commission has recently proposed a Corridor of high-tech economic development stretching from Cambridge through Milton Keynes to Oxford, comprising a railway connection, an express roadway, and a programme of housebuilding. They point out that the good connections between these high-tech areas are currently with London. By creating direct fast connections between Oxford and Cambridge, they aim to create a self-sustaining, economic, labour and housing market which will stimulate growth. The proposed new rail connection will go down to Reading and consequential improvements can be expected to the A34 down to the M4. The advantage of Newbury is that median house price to earnings ratio in Newbury is about 8, while that for Oxford is about 12.

The circumstances of the great majority of businesses are not static. New businesses are continuing to be founded and existing businesses to expand at a sufficient rate to keep the number of enterprises constant or increasing. Data from the Office for National Statistics, quoted by West Berkshire Council, are that in the period 2006-10 the number of business start-ups exceeded that for business closures by 8.5%. We should therefore seek to take advantage of an essentially dynamic situation by being flexible and responsive towards the start-up, expansion, and relocation of businesses to Newbury.

For start-up businesses, incubation hubs and serviced business accommodation are becoming a major attraction, for both office use and small-scale design, development, and distribution. An incubation hub is currently provided at Greenham Business Park but not elsewhere. A second class of user of incubation hubs are remote workers. Many businesses only require to see their employees for part of the week or other period – for the rest of the time their work can be done away from the office. This may not necessarily be from home, and companies may be willing to rent capacity at an incubation hub for their remote working employees.

Accelerator hubs provide services to enable businesses to secure investment and grow beyond their initial phase.

The eight present business parks in Newbury and Thatcham are often not able to provide the spare business capacity which a new, expanding, or incoming business may be looking for on the timescale that it is seeking. If space is available, the planning conditions required and length of rental terms offered may be too onerous for the business to accept the risk. Worse, commercial space has been lost through exercise of permitted development rights to convert to housing. It would be desirable to be able to offer a new or expanding business, or one looking to relocate, new space which can be available quickly on favourable terms, either in existing buildings or in premises built or adapted to the needs of the business. However, we recognise that these are commercial decisions which may be outside local government control.



Newbury will not be able or wish to match the business variety of, say, Reading or Woking, but specialist "cluster" developments may arise and merit encouragement. Clustering is a recognised planning method for skills which depend on the proximity of similar skills. The challenge is to identify and attract the right cluster in order to identify winners. At present, potential clusters for Newbury might be communications (e.g. Vodafone), special film effects (e.g. Grass Valley, A Belden Brand) and non-military nuclear physics (e.g. Harwell). Other cluster effects, including for lower technology industries, may arise.



Retail Business

Our policy, supporting that of the BID, is that any expansion of Newbury retail business should be based in the centre of the town. Experience elsewhere suggests that any further retail development outside the town centre would compete with the town centre and adversely affect it, contrary to our general objective of retaining and building on Newbury's present character.

In recent times a clustering effect has made Newbury north of the Canal specialise in shops while south of the Canal specialises in restaurants, bars, and the night-time economy. South of the Canal is the Market Place with its weekly and monthly markets, but other retail outlets are at a footfall disadvantage compared to those north of the Canal, and are limited to specialist shops. The planned development at Market Street and refurbishment of the Kennet Centre should help to redress this imbalance.

It is recognised that a higher proportion of independent retailers, as part of a retail mix, would add to the character and attraction of the town, but it is less clear how they are to be encouraged.

Our proposals are therefore as follows:

- 6.1 Subject to evaluation, a new business park, readily accessible from the M4, should be established, designed especially for new and innovative businesses.

The planning conditions offered should be sufficiently flexible that the business should be able to set up and run within a few months, independent of the size of premises required. This will require a special planning designation of the business park, for instance by a Local Development Order.

The rental agreements offered should enable the business to expand, contract, close, or relocate easily and without onerous penalties. It should also leave the business free to select what additional services it selects, such as a receptionist or telephonist.

The business park should offer one or more incubation and accelerator hubs, similar to those established elsewhere, for example by the Magdalene Centre at Oxford.

- 6.2 Legal protection should be sought as a matter of urgency against the present Permitted Development Rights, which permit offices and other commercial premises in areas zoned for commercial use to be converted to residential accommodation without planning consent. Not only does this invalidate any zoning policy; the location is usually quite unsuitable for the resultant accommodation.
- 6.3 A close watch should be kept on potential industrial clustering in Newbury, and when they arise, prompt action be taken to promote appropriate business development and skills generation.
- 6.4 West Berkshire Council should continue to provide specific planning support to business development.
- 6.5 The vitality and growth of the historic town centre markets in all their forms will be encouraged and supported.
- 6.6 Retail expansion should be limited to the town centre, and efforts should be made to encourage a continued mix of independent, chain, and national outlets. Initiatives to encourage retail visits to the town, for example by parking measures, should be examined.
- 6.7 As discussed under "Transport", the possibility should be considered of the concentration of the Colthrop and Greenham distribution centres in a single location close to the M4, releasing the space currently occupied.



7. Leisure, Culture and Tourism

Under this heading are considered both Newbury's attractions as a tourism venue and its merits as a cultural and sporting centre for its own residents.

Newbury is not a nationally recognised tourist venue. For instance, it does not possess a World Heritage Site. However, there are three venues and two events which are nationally known and bring visitors to Newbury in considerable numbers: Highclere Castle, the Racecourse, the Watermill Theatre, the Newbury Spring Festival, and the Royal Berkshire Agricultural Show. Sandham Memorial Chapel (National Trust) in Burghclere and the Kennet & Avon Canal also attract visitors from across the country. Events which bring in visitors from across Southern England include the Roc 10K Race, the Newbury Triathlon, the Crafty Craft Race, Newbury Canoe Club races, the Newbury Real Ale Festival, some of the street theatre events arranged by the Corn Exchange, and the Open Studios art exhibitions.

The Spring Festival includes literary events. These could celebrate local authors such as Michael Bond, Richard Adams, or Sebastian Faulks. For the historically minded, the famous late 18th century and early 19th century journalist William Cobbett was close friend of the Newbury lawyer William Budd.

The Kennet & Avon Canal with its opportunities for walking, cycling, canoeing, and other activities is a major leisure asset to the town.

The National Needlework Archive is located at Greenham Business Park, providing a national service and including "The Country Wife" textile mural from the 1951 Festival of Britain.

Newbury has a substantial local arts provision. There are four theatres – the Corn Exchange, Arlington Arts, the Watermill, New Era Players – and a multiscreen cinema. Arts events also take place at Shaw House, the Corn Exchange extensions, West Berkshire Museum, City Arts, and Ace Space. The strong local musical scene includes Southern Sinfonia, the Newbury Musical Theatre Society, Newbury Symphony Orchestra, Cantemus, Kennet Opera, Newbury Choral Society, and at least ten other amateur music groups.

For sport and fitness there are the Northcroft leisure centre, four fitness centres, and clubs for cricket, Rugby, tennis, bowls, canoeing, athletics, football, etc. Park Way Shopping has made Newbury a viable shopping venue. A large and increasing number of restaurants has made Newbury a specialist centre for eating out. It possesses two large public parks. These cultural and social factors contribute towards making Newbury a very attractive residential location.

Newbury is a town with a strong sense of its own cultural, historic, and social identity. The historic Mayoral office has been occupied continuously since 1596. Heritage and wildlife sites which at present mainly have a local attendance include Shaw House, Donnington Castle, the West Berkshire Museum, Jack of Newbury's House, Snelsmore Common, and the Thatcham Nature Discovery Centre. In-depth historical studies have made possible a programme of lectures, museum exhibitions, and blue plaques. Public interest in the history of Newbury is sustained by about 10 heritage town walks each year led by local historians, plus occasional specialist walks over the two Newbury battlefield sites. Information boards and signage has been steadily improved, for instance at the two battlefield sites, but more can always be done. Its social work is supported by a network of at least 30 social, cultural, and environmental support bodies maintained by active volunteers.

The issue to be considered is how more of Newbury's local cultural and sporting clubs, events, and activities could be supported to serve the widest reach of the surrounding area and draw more visitors to the town. It is proposed that, building on the reputation of the nationally recognised Newbury events, landmark events should be organised which bring in a much wider range of Newbury's cultural and sporting offer. The Spring Festival, Open Studios, and the BID's NewburyFest provide a model for this sort of landmark event, by incorporating a large number of attractions within a set period, publicising them together,

and facilitating booking and accommodation. The Spring Festival, for example, could further broaden its appeal through an associated Fringe in temporary venues across the town or even in marquees in the larger parks. Past experience in central appointment of an event manager suggests that such landmark events should not be arranged by a local authority, but by a consortium of participating organisations willing to co-ordinate their programmes, seek funding, and then appoint an event manager themselves. Local government can support and facilitate this process.

Newbury does not have an indoor venue where a large landmark event, with more than 500 people attending, could be based. If it could provide one with 1000 or 2000 seats, a much greater range of music, theatre, and other events could be held in the town, so reinforcing its cultural reputation. However, such a venue would be in direct competition with Reading and Basingstoke, and the investment needed would be considerable. The same argument could be extended to an events venue of 2000 to 5000 seats, for which it has been suggested that a market might be developed. As a guideline, G-Live, a 1700 capacity venue in Guildford, cost £26 million to build in 2011.

At present, the location for any landmark event will therefore have to be dispersed, but this has the advantage of bringing in West Berkshire arts and sporting groups outside Newbury such as the Beenham Wind Orchestra. The present Spring Festival venues include Lambourn, Kintbury, Highclere, Englefield, Upper Woolhampton, Hungerford, East Woodhay, Ramsbury, and Sydmonton as well as Newbury, and it can almost be considered a West Berkshire festival. The once popular Comedy Festival was similarly dispersed across West Berkshire. There are also sites surrounding Newbury suitable for large open air music concerts: classical; opera; pop and folk. The Racecourse, Showground, and Market Place are popular, tried and tested locations. Greenham Common, Goldwell Park, and Donnington Castle could be adapted for outdoor musical events, subject to their limitations of access and parking.

There is an overall lack of co-ordination on the various tourist, cultural, sporting, and heritage events in Newbury, with regard to both scheduling and announcements. The wider question of the overall potential of Newbury as a short-term tourist destination, and the implications for scheduling, access, and accommodation, have not been evaluated. It seems evident that the promotion of Newbury cultural and sporting events could benefit from a more wide-ranging central publicity hub, supported by social media promotion, so extending the range of the useful service provided by the BID's Visit Newbury web site.

At present, it is believed that coaches visit Newbury for driver rest periods and exchanges of passengers between coaches, during which passengers are able to shop and see the town. The numbers, details and benefits to Newbury of these coach visits are at present understood from anecdotal information only. Research is needed to establish whether this coach trade can be developed to form a substantial element in Newbury's tourist economy.

The present coach park is to be combined with the bus station. An alternative dropping-off and collection point for coach passengers could be considered in another part of the town, while the coach drivers go elsewhere for their rest. This is mentioned further under "Transport".

It is possible that Newbury could benefit from an additional outdoor sports arena or athletic track, for adult and/or youth sports, and for local or regional competitions. The use of school playing fields for staging community multi-sports events is proposed under "Education".



The Town and District Councils do not have the resources for significant investment in cultural and sporting events or in preparing for them. However, within the context of the Town Plan, the Councils can provide encouragement and support to achieve the following:

- 7.1 Conferences of participating organisations with similar interests (creative, sporting), to encourage further areas of co-operation.
- 7.2 Collaboration with the BID to maintain a comprehensive web site to cover all leisure, tourism, and cultural events, and the merits of Newbury as a historic centre, available both on the Internet and on public screens, supported by social media.
- 7.3 Establishment of a visitor information service to suit the long-term requirements of potential and actual visitors to Newbury.
- 7.4 Facilitation of specific events as a basis for future landmark events, supported by social media. These include public open-air music and operatic events in the numerous public open spaces available, which could build on existing local skills for providing catering, temporary facilities and arenas.
- 7.5 Facilitation of the planning, organisation, and publicity of landmark events, including booking and local accommodation.
- 7.6 National publicity for events, and of Newbury and its locality as a leisure and cultural centre.
- 7.7 Development of the present heritage walks programme to include a wider range of sites and routes. Continual improvement of information boards and signage.
- 7.8 Research into potential consumer and provider involvement, including presently unengaged socio-economic groups.
- 7.9 Facilitation of pop-up centres.
- 7.10 An audit of the sports facilities available in Newbury.
- 7.11 Research into the longer-term potential and public need for a single public covered cultural/events centre. Planning so that, if a decision is taken for such a centre, the space is available for it and not pre-empted for other purposes.
- 7.12 Research into the potential and public need for an additional outdoor sports arena, for adult and/or youth use. Planning so that, if a decision is taken for such an arena, the space is available for it and is not pre-empted for other purposes.
- 7.13 Research into the value and significance of the stop-over and visitor coach trade to Newbury, in order to maximise the potential benefits to the town.
- 7.14 Support for the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust in its work to develop the Canal as a principal leisure asset for Newbury.
- 7.15 Possible development of leisure facilities in the Kennet Centre.
- 7.16 Facilitation of suitable sports and leisure developments in employment areas.



Photo Credit: Newbury Racecourse

8. Transport



Background

This chapter describes the existing town's transport network, identifies areas in the plan period where change is expected to be necessary, and sets out the opportunities on which it will actively lobby West Berkshire Council, the relevant Planning and Highways Authority, for inclusion in the new Local Transport Plan, work on which has already begun.

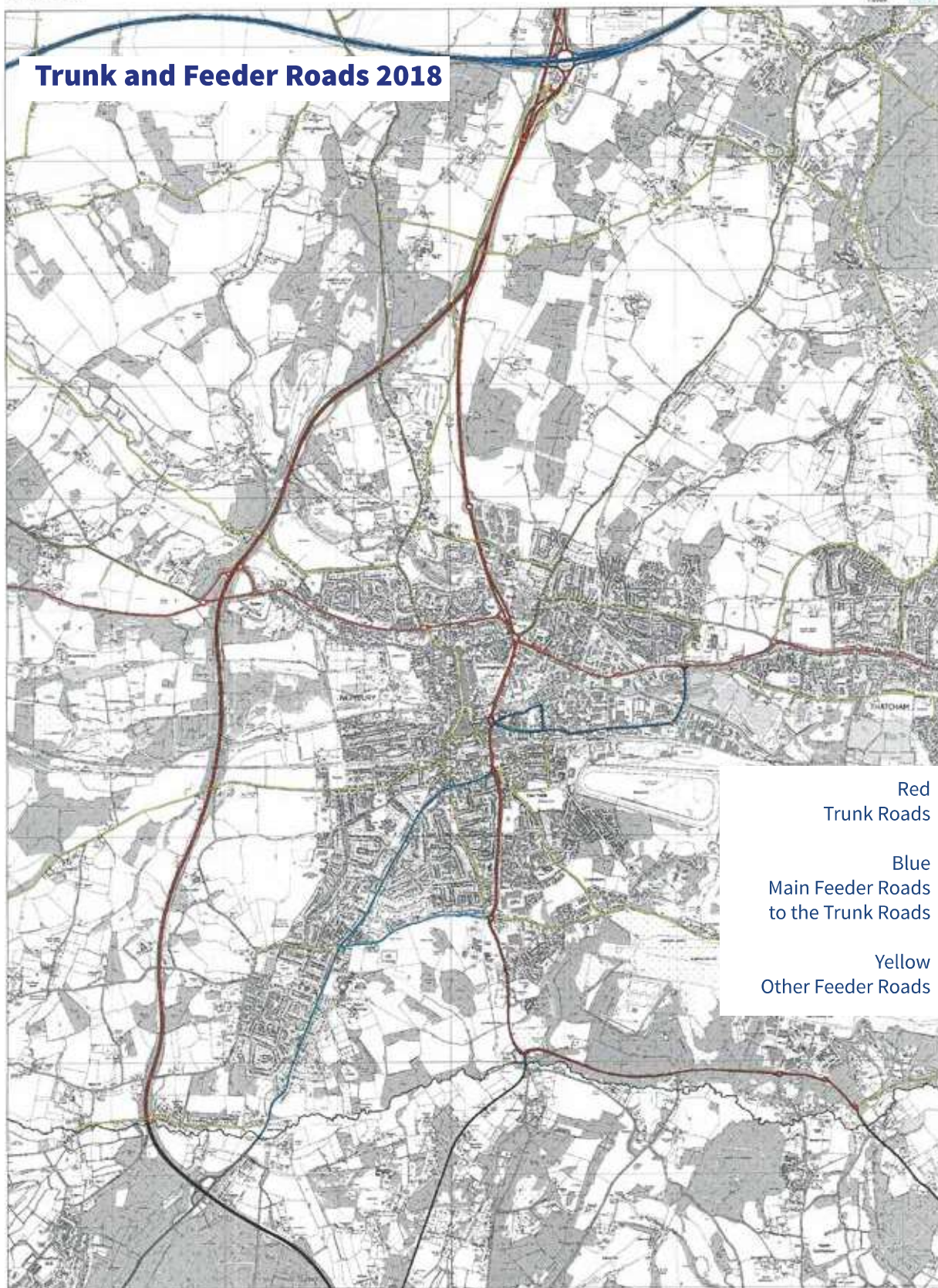
A principal advantage enjoyed by Newbury is that it is a centre of communications with towns north, south, east, and west, including Oxford, Southampton, Winchester, Reading, Bracknell, London, Swindon, Bath, and Bristol. It can describe itself as being at the crossroads of Southern England. Historically, this has been the main reason for the town's growth and development, and the advantage survives today. The airports at Heathrow, Southampton, Bournemouth, and Bristol, and the ferry terminals at Southampton and Portsmouth are all within 1½ hours' travelling distance.

Transport policy has to cater for all aspects of Newbury's activities: business traffic, commuters, leisure travellers, shoppers, school students, medical visits, the elderly and disabled. Growth in the use of private transport is expected to continue, given the planned increase in population and businesses and greater prosperity, and changes to the M4 described below. On line shopping is increasing the usage of vans, up by over a third since the turn of the century (www.licencebureau.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/road-use-statistics.pdf). At the same time, there is increasing support for non-car methods of travel for journeys under 2 miles by walking or 5 miles by cycling, to reduce congestion, cut pollution and improve health and well-being.

In line with the Government's plans to ban all new petrol and diesel cars and vans from 2040, significant public and private investments are taking place in automotive technology in two areas. The UK government, aiming to preserve its world leader status, has pledged £600 million to support ultra-low emission vehicles and £200 million to autonomous vehicles, investment that is expected to catalyse further private investment. Currently, the UK makes one in five electric cars sold in the European Union.



Trunk and Feeder Roads 2018



Red
Trunk Roads

Blue
Main Feeder Roads
to the Trunk Roads

Yellow
Other Feeder Roads

Transport policy is the responsibility of the Highways Authority of West Berkshire Council, working with public and private partners. It already has excellent data, and is investing in a new District-wide traffic model that will include Newbury.

The recent securing of £1.5 million funding for a new road to the Sterling Cables site is a pointer to what might be available with suitable planning and preparation.

The Present Situation

Trunk road transport outside Newbury is provided by two arterial roads, the M4 east-west and the A34 north-south, operated by Highways England. Within the Plan period, between £580m and £850 Million will be invested in the M4 east of Newbury to accommodate a 25% expected increase in traffic volume, by “smart” use of the hard shoulder.

The A34 northward from the M4 to the M40 is included in the Department for Transport’s Oxford to Cambridge Expressway Strategy Study (described further under “Newbury Business”), and will be subject to improvement as that project progresses. Because of the importance of this trunk road, an increasingly strong case is being made to upgrade its whole length to motorway status, connecting Newbury closely to the ports of Southampton and Portsmouth. If that is approved, it should take place within the Plan period.

Within the town, east-west transport is provided by the Railway Line south of the Canal and the A4 through the north-centre of Thatcham and Newbury, connecting with local roads. North-south transport has to cross both the railway and the Canal, and within the town is provided principally by the A339 and its bridges. A second two-lane bridge on the Hambridge Road Trading Estate is on a B road. The two other bridges over the Canal are single-lane, one in the centre of the town and the other limited to buses and taxis.

The A34 north-south trunk route to the west of Newbury has three junctions connecting it with local roads, two fully south of the town and one with the A4. It has no junction with the A339. It has therefore no direct link with south-east traffic from Basingstoke and the M3, or with the principal commercial and business areas of Newbury, which are in the eastern part of the town. The A339 has to carry all this traffic and also provide the connection with the M4 to the north. In this context, a further major road with a bridge across the Canal has been proposed many times, but it is not clear where it could be sensibly located.

The present WBC car parking requirements for new houses recognise that car ownership will remain an essential part of most people’s lives. However, many residents in the centre of the town will not have access to a parking space or will not wish to own a car. For these, the present Car Club provides electric and hybrid vehicles at five locations in Newbury town centre. It is hoped that this scheme will expand.

Problems Expected within the Plan Period

The limitations of the present road network manifest themselves in periodic traffic queuing and points where air quality thresholds are sometimes exceeded at points on the A339 and its feeder roads. At peak hours, there is traffic queuing south of the Monks Lane roundabout and in Shaw Road serving the estates in north Newbury. However, compared to that of its neighbours, Newbury’s traffic moves well. In 2015, the average peak hour journey between Vodafone roundabout and Pinchington Lane roundabout took 11 minutes northbound and 6.5 minutes southbound.

On NO₂ pollution, a 2016 survey by West Berkshire Council identified the A339 through Newbury, Andover Road at Wash Common, Shaw Road, and Chapel Street in Thatcham, as points where pollution thresholds are sometimes exceeded. An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) is declared around the Burger King roundabout. Other parts of the A339 are within acceptable Government NO₂ pollution thresholds.

An integrated series of improvements costing £10 million along the whole length of the A339 through Newbury and to the five roundabouts which serve the route will be completed by 2021. These improvements are welcome as serving the needs of local commuters and the present five business parks. However, they will only keep pace with additional traffic forecast from new housing developments and continued economic growth, and within the period of this Plan strategic action will be necessary.

Potential Solutions

The UK government, working in partnership with other organisations, is determined that UK will be a world leader in ultra-low emission and autonomous vehicle technology, which holds out the promise of more efficient, safer, environmentally-friendly and inclusive transport. With trials already well advanced and the foundations of a legal and insurance framework in place, it seems likely that within our plan period, these technologies will have a significant impact on Newbury. Working with the District council, the town should do all it can to prepare for these changes, including supporting plans to invest in supporting infrastructure. To illustrate the present speed of adaptation, only ten years ago hardly anyone had a satnav – now half of drivers use them; more than half of cars sold in the UK in 2016 had autonomous safety technology.

While advances in infrastructure design, the application of technology, traveller choice and traffic management will to some extent mitigate the impact of growth, it is likely that within the Plan period there will have to be major capital investment in new roads, some of which will probably be paid for by unlocking land for housing and economic activity. The Plan identifies a number of options, which have the common objective of improving the road connection between the A34 and A339, so enabling through traffic to transfer to the A34 and local traffic to divert to the A339, from whichever direction it is coming. Each one will require very intensive evaluation: is land available, are there unacceptable environmental costs, are they acceptable to stakeholders such as Highways England, and are they affordable? In addition, improvements in public transport and facilities for walking and cycling are proposed.

New signage aims to divert some through traffic away from the town centre along the A339 from Basingstoke down the B4640 to the A34 at the Tot Hill junction. A further proposal is for signage on the A34 north of Newbury to advise traffic for Basingstoke to turn off at Tot Hill rather than take the A339. The B4640 could be upgraded, widened, and renumbered for this purpose. As it lies in Hampshire, agreement with Hampshire County Council and Basingstoke and Deane Council will be required. Moreover, the diversion is longer and more expensive in time and fuel, and would therefore be resisted by the freight industry.

Such a measure could be accompanied by a weight restriction or other forms of limitation on through traffic through Newbury, which might again encounter user resistance. An assessment of the proportion of the A339 traffic which serves local commuters, travellers, and businesses, and the part which is through traffic from Basingstoke and the M3 to the M4, A34, and A4, can be expected from the Highways Authority's new traffic model.

Our first strategic suggestion comprises a new road from the Swan roundabout to the A34 along the River Enborne. This suggestion has very often been made in the press and in private communications as a logical and rational potential solution. A serious attempt should be made to study it, weighing the potential traffic benefits against the environmental and cost hurdles.

The foregoing would link in with a specific proposal by the Town Council on the vehicle access to Sandleford. In common with local residents, we do not support Warren Road as the principal western access, because of interference with the considerable local traffic to schools and shops, and Andover Road's role as a principal gateway into the town. We need to make provision for the large proportion of cars from Sandleford which will wish to join the A34. Our recommended solution is a new road from the western Sandleford development east and south of Garden Close Lane, joining the A343 at Wash Water. The Town Council's position is that this is the only feasible solution for a western access to Sandleford.

A second proposed strategic measure would address the future access needs of developments north of Thatcham, the present traffic queuing in the estates in north Newbury, and the inadequacy of the inner northern Thatcham ring road. It can be foreseen that at some point a railway bridge will be built close to Thatcham Railway Station. When that is done, it could be part of an eastern bypass which would run north of Thatcham and Newbury, connecting the A339 from Basingstoke with the trunk roads north of Newbury.

A third possible measure could be a road linking the A34/A4 junction with Enborne Road. This would serve local traffic to that part of Newbury, but would not resolve the A339 linkage problem.

It is hoped that diversion of through traffic from the A339 in the manner discussed above will eventually reduce traffic so as to reduce air pollution. To facilitate the widespread use of electric and hybrid cars, a programme of installing electric vehicle charging points should be put in place.



Rail Transport

Rail electrification from London should reach Newbury by December 2018. The Railway Line is crossed by five dual-lane road bridges in Newbury. The principal Edwardian Railway Station is due for a full refurbishment. Improvement of the second Railway Station by the Racecourse would attract more commuter usage; at present, lack of extensive parking there limits its use to local residents and those arriving by public transport including taxis, being dropped off, by bicycle or on foot.

Better train services to and from London at night and weekends should be available to assist those visiting the capital for shows and other recreation.

Walking and Cycling

Walking and cycling plans are a prerequisite for planning consent for larger developments. However, as with other towns the Newbury road layout was not designed to encourage cycling and walking. The section in this Plan on the Environment makes specific suggestions on an integrated network of pedestrian and cycle routes, which will include designated routes on one or more bridges over the Railway Line and the Canal. West Berkshire Council has a body of audit work on this subject, from which it is implementing schemes as funding allows.

Designated walking routes should be wide enough to accommodate double buggy and mobility scooters, be provided with dropped kerbs, and include tactile and other markers to suit people with disabilities. National standards apply in this regard.

The A339 railway bridge is a potentially dangerous bottleneck for pedestrians and cyclists. A separate bridge for them should be considered.

£450,000 has been assigned for a modern cycling hub for 300 bicycles at the Railway Station. National Cycle Route 422 will link Newbury with Windsor by 2019.

A programme of public education is required to encourage more children to walk to school, supported where necessary by additional dropping-off points.



Bus and Coach Services

We expect that bus services will continue to connect Newbury with Reading, Thatcham, Hungerford, Andover, Basingstoke, and the villages, and to serve the principal housing estates. The bus station will be located at the Wharf from 2018. We propose that there should be market research into the viability of connecting the main transport hubs in Newbury: the Railway Station, the Bus Station, Park Way, the Market Street development, the Racecourse, Sandleford, and North Newbury. The purpose of this should be to encourage more use of public transport by those visiting and travelling about the town, and those living in the further parts of the town.

The development of public transport to Oxford, Southampton, Salisbury, and Winchester should also be an important objective.

In the Plan period, the concept of Mobility as a Service (MaaS) is expected to become a reality. MaaS is predicated on a shift from personal ownership of vehicles towards mobility solutions, accessed via smartphones, that are consumed as a service. MaaS may lead to the replacement of formal bus routes by a fully demand-responsive service.

Under “Leisure and Tourism”, it is envisaged that the coach trade will continue to be a major source for the Newbury leisure and tourism industry. This will require assessment of the most suitable locations for the drop-off and collection of passengers and the parking of coaches.

Signage

Signage at the arrival points to Newbury is presently the responsibility of West Berkshire Council and/or the BID. Such arrival points include the A34 and A339, the principal gateway roads as defined under “The Character of Newbury”, and more particularly the bus, coach, and Railway stations. Such signage should provide a welcoming message to businesses that Newbury is good place to invest and grow, and to tourists that it is a good place for leisure, culture, and sport.



Recommendations

The Town Council will promote for assessment the following schemes to West Berkshire Council, the Planning and Highways Authority, for inclusion in the new Local transport Plan. All these schemes have the goal of improving transport in Newbury. Each has advantages and disadvantages and requires professional evaluation. Some require the continuance of established practice: others are new projects or innovations.

Current good practice by partners such as Department for Transport, West Berkshire Council, and Highways Executive, supported by the Town Council

- 8.1 Maintenance and development of the existing road network to good national standards.
- 8.2 Regular review of traffic junctions, speed limits and speed calming.
- 8.3 Optimal use of the road freight network, through better vehicle technology, transfer points to rail, and driver parking facilities on designated routes.
- 8.4 Extension of the Car Club according to demand.
- 8.5 Measures to facilitate use of public transport, including integrated ticketing and real-time passenger information delivered on line and via apps.
- 8.6 Development of the present pedestrian and cycle routes into an integrated, obstacle-free, and signposted network which can be regularly used by commuters and others
- 8.7 Adaptation of the pedestrian routes to accept mobility vehicles and other aids for people with disabilities.in accordance with Government policy.
- 8.8 As already planned for the Railway Station, cycle parking and other cycling infrastructure.
- 8.9 Continuation of Smarter Travel and Active Travel programmes, including measures to further encourage walking and cycling to school by school students.
- 8.10 Interim measures to divert the A339 Basingstoke traffic west to the A34 via the B4640, so relieving the A339 through Newbury. This will require consultation with Hampshire County Council and Basingstoke and Deane District Council.



New projects and innovations that the Town Council wishes to see assessed in the Local Transport Plan

8.11 Proposals to create additional road capacity in the town:

- 8.11.1 A new road from the Swan roundabout to the A34 along the River Enborne. The assessment will weigh potential traffic benefits against the environmental and cost hurdles.
- 8.11.2 An eastern by-pass, ultimately diverting traffic to and from Basingstoke east of Newbury and Thatcham, dependent on a rail bridge at or to the east of Thatcham Railway Station.
- 8.11.3 A road linking the A34/A4 junction with Enborne Road. This would serve local traffic to that part of Newbury, but would not resolve the A339 linkage problem.
- 8.11.4 A new road from the planned western Sandleford development east and south of Garden Close Lane, joining the A343 at Wash Water, to provide a direct access for Sandleford residents to the A34.
- 8.11.5 A new railway bridge at or near Thatcham Station, forming part of an eastern bypass which would run north of Thatcham and Newbury, connecting the A339 from Basingstoke with the trunk roads north of Newbury.

8.12 A programme to install electric charging points across the town.

8.13 Upgrading of the Racecourse Railway Station including good access routes for pedestrians, cyclists and buses to attract commuters, and improved parking.

8.14 In the longer term, the reopening of the Southampton to Oxford railway line. Where this has been replaced by the A34, it might run alongside the present road.

8.15 Investigation of the potential of an orbital bus route, and actions arising from that research.

8.16 As outlined under “Leisure and Tourism”, establishment of facilities for coach passengers and coach parking.

8.17 Consideration of parking incentives, electric charging points or other measures to encourage use of low-emission vehicles in Newbury.

8.18 The possible concentration of the Colthrop and Greenham distribution centres in a single location close to the M4, releasing the space currently occupied.

8.19 Review of the signage and overall impression at Newbury’s arrival points to convey the correct image of the town’s benefits as a centre for business, leisure and tourism.





9. Education

Newbury has 11 state primary schools. Ten of these are presently rated by Ofsted as “Good”. One is rated “Requires Improvement”. A further primary school has been approved for opening in 2018. There is a good range of early years provision, some of which is linked to a primary school.

The town has three state secondary schools, St Bartholomew’s, Park House, and Trinity. All three are academies and are rated by Ofsted as “Good”. Trinity School is a member of the Newbury Academy Trust, together with the primary schools Speenhamland School and Fir Tree School. There is a special school for children with additional educational needs, which is rated as “Outstanding”.

The surrounding locality includes six private schools of national standard.

Evaluation by West Berkshire Council of the growth in the number of primary and secondary school pupils in the Plan period has identified that additional places will be needed in Newbury for approximately 400 to 600 primary pupils, equivalent to between two and three one-form entry schools. It may be that solutions with existing providers that can fulfil these, or alternatively new schools will be needed. Secondary places will be needed for 600-800 more pupils in West Berkshire. The possible locations of such schools have not yet been identified.

WBC welcomes the association of secondary schools with their feeder primaries in Academy Trusts, on the pattern of the Newbury Academy Trust. This will facilitate a consistent approach to education and the tracking of pupils’ education and wellbeing throughout their school career. On the same principle, WBC encourages greater collaboration between primary schools and early years settings, on the pattern of Falkland Infant and Junior Schools.

Students with disadvantaged backgrounds require particular attention from their schools to ensure that their families receive support at the appropriate time, they receive consistent education throughout their school career, their welfare needs are met, and they receive necessary support after their school career.

To address recruitment challenges with regard to teachers in the area existing teacher training alliances should be encouraged and further developed with existing schools acting as centres of excellence.

Newbury College provides further education in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, media, IT, engineering, and accountancy. It supports local apprenticeships, and takes students up to the level of University foundation courses. It has been rated “Good” by Ofsted and is expected to adopt the new “T” level technical qualifications. It serves the wider local area, not limited to Newbury. The West Berkshire Training Consortium also provides routes to employment for young people.

There is a need for improved collaboration with local businesses to provide the quality, consistency, and breadth of academic and technical education of young people that the businesses require. In addition to Newbury College, this local technical education might also be provided by a Free School or University Technical College, sponsored by businesses, which would teach vocational qualifications and the new “T” level qualifications. In this way, Newbury should continue to provide a rich pool of talent for local employers.

Neither Newbury nor its immediate locality possesses an educational institution of University standard. Students wishing to proceed to a degree level qualification generally have to depart to a University elsewhere. Many will, of course, wish to do so,



but Newbury should aim to provide some of these students with appropriate University level education. Ideally, if a cluster effect for local businesses could be identified, such University degrees would be related to it, but as mentioned elsewhere no such well-defined cluster effect yet exists.

Newbury cannot expect to establish its own University in competition with Reading, Oxford, Southampton, etc. However, one or more local Universities might be interested in a Newbury-based campus specialising in subjects of importance to Newbury businesses. An alternative might be a Newbury business college. The growth of online delivery and Open University Course support should also be considered.

In education, Newbury and West Berkshire local government acts as a facilitator rather than a director. It should aim for:

- 9.1 Continued structured collaboration between Newbury secondary, primary, and nursery settings to achieve consistent education and wellbeing of pupils throughout their childhood.
- 9.2 Particular support and encouragement for disadvantaged and disabled pupils, continuing the present policy.
- 9.3 Teacher training alliances and centres of excellence within existing schools to support the need for local recruitment of teachers.
- 9.4 Schools acting as community assets to provide services within their local areas, including the development of schools sports pitches for multi-sports events.
- 9.5 Increased choice of vocational education, to provide a rich pool of talent for local businesses.
- 9.6 Improved co-ordination between Newbury schools and colleges and local business to refine the vocational offer to meet local requirements.
- 9.7 Additional primary and secondary school places to support the growing population by 2036, in either existing or new schools.
- 9.8 Research into the potential for a University campus or business school sponsored by a neighbouring University or equivalent institution.
- 9.9 Research into the potential for a business sponsored Free School or University Technical College.
- 9.10 Planning for space provision for the new educational capacity.

10. The Environment

The objectives of all communities should include improving the quality of the physical environment in which they live and reducing the impact of the urban fabric on the natural environment. Newbury enjoys several advantages in this regard. It has three large parks, one maintained by the Town Council and the other two by the District Council, two large commons in Greenham and Snelsmore Commons, other public open spaces such as Donnington Castle and Newtown Road Cemetery, two rivers/canals, and six public allotments sites with 500 allotments. Close to Newbury is the Chase at Woolton Hill, owned by the National Trust, and the Nature Discovery Centre in Thatcham. A new public park is planned as part of the Sandleford development. These public open spaces are easily accessible from the town, and together with an extensive network of public footpaths and bridleways provide good opportunities for wide-ranging recreational activities.

To reinforce the character of Newbury in this regard, we fully support the policy of West Berkshire Council in requiring the inclusion of a public open space within each new major housing development. However, we doubt whether the present policy of leaving the funding and maintenance of these public open spaces to the developer, or a management company appointed by the developer, will be viable. A comprehensive policy for all the public open spaces should be formulated.

Newbury's environmental objectives have wide public support which is already exercised in practical form. Volunteer Groups assist significantly in the management of Victoria Park, Newtown Road Cemetery, the Kennet & Avon Canal, the river Lambourn, the allotments, and BBOWT (Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust). Spokes is an influential pressure group for cycling. The West Berkshire Ramblers organise work parties to maintain footpaths and gates. The West Berkshire Council waste recycling service enjoys active public involvement.

The Town Council has demonstrated its competence in managing Victoria Park. Without criticising West Berkshire Council in their management of public open spaces, it can be argued that that function is not one of their core activities. It is suggested that when finances permit, the Town Council should take over Goldwell Park and other public open spaces upon which they will focus attention.

Another Town Council initiative is Newbury in Bloom, which again enjoys active public engagement, and has the aim of participating in Britain in Bloom. The proposal for a sculpture of Jack of Newbury, promoted by the sculptor, has firm Town Council support.



A fragmented set of pedestrian and cycle routes exists across the town, some along roads and some along alleys between houses. The pedestrian routes have been mapped and documented by West Berkshire Council, but some are described as “less accessible” and signposting is often missing, brief and/or uninformative. The cycle routes are disjointed and often of poor quality. A starting point for the cycle route development programme is the detailed 2016 report of the WBC Cycle Working Group, supported by Spokes and Sustrans.

The principal current cause of environmental concern to Newbury lies with vehicle traffic, a question which is considered in the section on Transport. Actions relating to planning are covered in the sections on the Future of Newbury and the Character of Newbury



Environmental improvements must of necessity be gradual and incremental, and require focussed attention in order to be achieved. The following specific environmental programme is proposed:

- 10.1 The existing Newbury public parks should be protected by suitable planning designation against development, other than development strictly ancillary to their role as a public open space.
- 10.2 A general policy should be considered to ensure that all public open spaces are protected, maintained, and funded after the completion of the development, regardless of the subsequent ownership of the development site.
- 10.3 Newbury Town Council should when finances and resources permit take over primary responsibility for all the town's public open spaces.
- 10.4 The Town Council and/or District Council should act as the umbrella body for the Friends groups upon which the success of most environmental projects depend, providing advice on constitution and governance and publicising their activities, but leaving all activities and initiatives to the groups as at present. This should encourage new groups to form where new scope for activities arises. The groups should remain self-funding, although the Councils will endeavour to help with the provision of space for public meetings.



- 10.5 As part of their umbrella role, the Town or District Council should ensure that the programme and objectives of the Friends and supporter groups are defined and communicated to the West Berkshire Council ecologist, who can then comment on or contribute to them as appropriate
- 10.6 The present policies of increasing the biodiversity of the town, including drought and pest resistant planting, use of pesticides, herbicides and peat, of replacing deceased trees and extending tree planting, should be continued.
- 10.7 During the period of the Plan, projects should be undertaken to connect the present network of pedestrian and cycle routes into integrated systems which can be regularly used by commuters and others. Each network should be clearly signposted so that users do not have to plot their routes on a map. The routes alongside roads should be separately demarcated. Any current obstacles, physical and legal, should be removed or amended to enable this integration to occur. Given that the Newbury road system was not designed around such networks, it is accepted that this will be a gradual programme.
- 10.8 It should be an objective for the Market Place to become a focus for urban amenity.
- 10.9 The complete pedestrianisation of some part of the Town Centre should remain a possible consideration in future transport planning.
- 10.10 Opportunities for renewable energy generation are to be encouraged in the town, where appropriate.
- 10.11 The waste management and recycling policies of West Berkshire Council should be improved to allow more serviceable household items to be recycled, reused or easily repurposed by the public. The Community Furniture Project provides a good example. There should be more recycling bins in the town centre, supported by public information on their use. Restrictions on access to the Civic Amenity sites must aim to encourage responsible waste disposal by all residents and businesses to reduce the incidences of flytipping.
- 10.12 The Town Council will continue to provide a service of allotment gardens to Newbury residents, according to demand.



11. Health and Wellbeing in Newbury

The Present Situation

Newbury is served by three principal GP practices, overseen by the Newbury and District Clinical Commissioning Group. The West Berkshire Community Hospital provides outpatient and rehabilitation services and an outreach service for the Royal Berkshire Hospital; it is currently being extended by a renal dialysis and advanced care unit, and expansion of its outreach service can be foreseen. Newbury has at least nine dental practices. Overall supervision is provided by the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board. The voluntary sector has an active role, in particular in supporting the Hospital's services. The patient interest is represented by Health Watch West Berkshire.

Newbury is in general a healthy place to live and work. Measures to improve further the Newbury physical and natural environment and the facilities for active travel, with corresponding improvements in public health, are described in this Plan under "Environment".

Trends in Healthcare

The expected increasing age profile of the Newbury population will, as elsewhere, impose growing burdens on local health services, lead to building of more care homes, and require the integration of health and social care to prevent hospital bed-blocking.

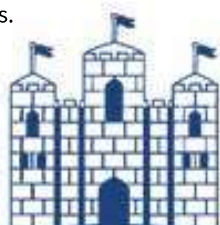
There is increasing awareness of the need to improve mental health services to the population to the same quality as physical health services. This includes, but is not limited to, support for dementia. Brighter Berkshire is a charity set up expressly to increase awareness of mental health issues. Mental and physical health problems are particularly prevalent among those who experience housing problems.

New and innovative ways in which emergency services can support each other's services are being devised. A recent example is advice given by the Fire and Rescue Service to elderly people on how to avoid falls at home. No Wrong Door is a service to young people in care, established by some Councils, which integrates all the care services to them in a single hub.

In the past, Newbury had its own local maternity service, which is now provided by Royal Berkshire Hospital, Basingstoke, Swindon, and John Radcliffe in Oxford. Past suggestions that maternity services might be restored to Newbury/Thatcham have encountered the objection that only specialist hospitals are able to deal with childbirth problems.

There is a continuing problem of shortage of key workers caused by the lack of sufficient affordable housing.

There is a health inequality gap between richer and poorer Wards in West Berkshire, amounting to 10 years' life expectancy. The causes of this may be differences in living conditions, diet, and/or access to GP surgeries.



FRESH LEEKS
2-64 Ks
ONLY
1.20

BEST RHUBARBS
4-84 Ks
2.20

FRESH HISPI CABBAGE
ONLY
1.20

Proposals

- 11.1 The spatial plan for Newbury, described in this Plan under “The Future of Newbury” must provide for space for future healthcare and residential care needs, according to the projection of Newbury’s population and age profile.
- 11.2 The present healthcare supervisory bodies, the CCG and the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board, have limited visibility and accountability to the public. Newbury Town Council, and other Parish Councils, are able to provide a local perspective and their membership of those bodies should be considered.
- 11.3 The opportunities for innovative collaboration between the emergency services for support to the public are promising and should be investigated further.
- 11.4 Similarly, the No Wrong Door experiment of several Councils suggests opportunities for integrated care for vulnerable groups which merit further study.
- 11.5 The concept of a “dementia friendly town” is an attractive one which should be studied and pursued further.
- 11.6 The advantages of and obstacles to a local maternity service should be studied to see whether on balance it would be of benefit to residents.
- 11.7 Local air quality should continue to be monitored because of its importance to public health.
- 11.8 Employers should be encouraged to be aware of any mental health problems among their employees, so that they can be addressed in good time.
- 11.9 Services to those who find themselves homeless should be expanded along the pattern provided by the charity Two Saints, to enable them to remain in the area and restart their lives.
- 11.10 Berkshire NHS Trust should be approached with a view to possibly devolving health services further to West Berkshire.
- 11.11 The causes of health inequality between areas should be analysed and addressed.
- 11.12 Accessibility by Newbury residents to health services should be improved, by extending the services provided at the Community Hospital and the access hours of local GP surgeries.
- 11.13 A health and wellbeing centre in an accessible location for those who would benefit from its services, such as homeless people and those with mental health problems, should be considered.



Consultees

The Steering Group is grateful to the following, who kindly gave their time and advice:

Fr Bruce Barnes,
St Francis de Sales Catholic Church

Rt. Hon Richard Benyon PC MP

Chris Boulton FRICS,
CEO Greenham Business Park

Grant Brisland, Corn Exchange Director

Neil Carter, Group Manager Service
Delivery, Reading and West Berkshire,
Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service

Gustav Clark, local resident

Shairoz Claridge,
Director of Operations, Newbury and
District Clinical Commissioning Group

Alistair Duff, local resident

Gillian Durrant, local resident

Enborne Parish Council

Anthony Fleming,
Baha'i Community of Newbury

Howard Grace, Newbury Quakers

Alice Kunjappy-Clifton, Development
Officer Health Watch West Berkshire

Mark Landreth-Smith,
Bridge Church, Speenhamland

Simon Marsh, Battlefields Trust

Andy Moore, local resident

Richard Page, local resident

Dr David Peacock, Newbury historian

Luke Radford, Newbury Baptist Church

Andrew Sharp, Chief Officer,
Health Watch West Berkshire

Shaw-cum-Donnington Parish Council

Tim Smith MBE,
CEO Thames Valley LEP

Julian Thick, CEO Newbury Racecourse

Superintendent Jim Weems,
Thames Valley Police

West Berkshire Indian Society

Steve Westbrook,
Group Financial Director, Newbury Investments

David Willetts FCA,
Chairman SerraLux Inc.

Andrew Williams,
Newbury Salvation Army

WBC Officers and Councillors

Mark Browne, Education Officer

Sue Butterworth,
Dementia Friendly Programme Officer

Andy Day, Head of Strategic Support

Janet Duffield, Business Development

Cllr Marcus Franks,
Portfolio Holder for Visions

Paul James, Culture Manager

Rachel Johnson,
Senior Programme Officer, Public Health

Bryan Lyttle and Laila Bassett,
Planning Policy

Anees Pari,
Head of Health and Well Being

Cllr Garth Simpson

NTC Officers and Councillors

Hugh Peacocke, CEO
Tony Hiller, Corporate Services Officer
Cllr Kuldip Singh Kang

Consultees have provided the Working Groups with valuable information and advice. However, the Town Plan remains the responsibility solely of the Town Council.

