

# GBC Corporate Delivery Plan

2025-2026



GUILDFORD  
BOROUGH





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## Introduction

Last year, we adopted our new corporate strategy, *A Greener, Fairer, Thriving Guildford*. It set out our vision for making Guildford borough:

### A thriving place to live, work and do business.

In seeking to achieve this vision, our corporate strategy sets out five key priorities that guide everything we do. These are:

- **A more sustainable borough:** We're committed to becoming a more socially and environmentally responsible borough. We've pledged to be net-zero by 2030 and will work collaboratively with our communities to achieve and sustain this goal together.
- **A more prosperous borough:** We'll ensure that Guildford borough is a place where business can thrive and that the benefits of that are felt by all of our residents.
- **A more inclusive borough:** We want Guildford to be a welcoming borough where people of diverse identities feel valued, respected, included, supported, and represented. A place where everyone in our communities can be authentic, can contribute to the wellbeing and success of their

community, can have a voice and can be heard.

- **Decent and Affordable homes:** Having a home is one of the most basic human needs for a happy, healthy, and successful life. We'll use the powers and means available to us as a social housing provider, and as the local planning authority, to ensure that local people have access to decent homes they can afford.
- **A resilient and well-managed council:** in striving to achieve all of these priorities we will ensure that as a council, we spend wisely, charge fairly, make good decisions, and provide the best possible services for our residents, businesses and visitors.

Delivering upon these priorities for our residents and businesses is a long-term endeavour. This delivery plan sets out the most important and significant actions and activities we'll be undertaking over the course of 2025-26 as

part of this.

From delivering a new nature reserve at Burpham Court Farm to investing £5.5m in improving the kitchens and bathrooms of our tenants, delivering vital services like meals on wheels that our most vulnerable residents rely upon and working at pace with councils across Surrey to prepare for local government reorganisation, your council is working hard to create a greener, fairer and thriving Guildford borough.

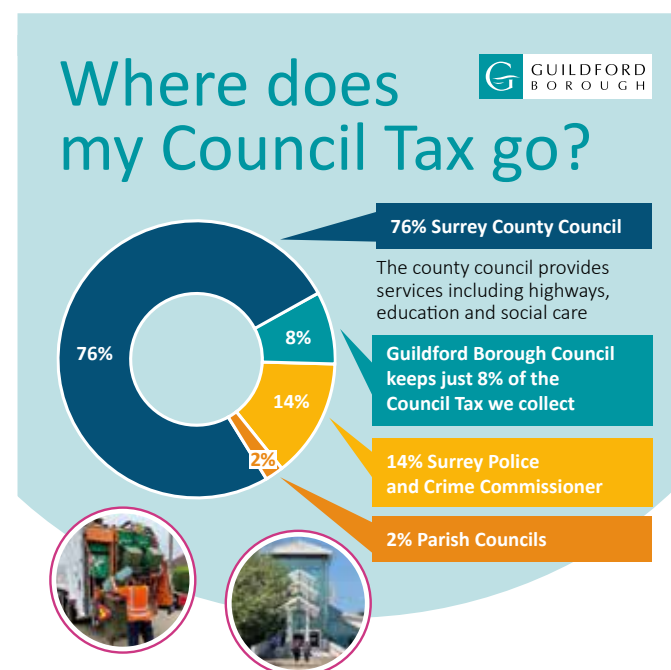
We've developed this delivery plan because we want to make sure we're accountable to you - our councillors, partners and residents. This is what we're setting out to achieve in 2025-26 and will be how our performance can be measured as the year progresses. Whilst we've made significant progress in recent years, we know we're far from perfect. We'll continue to work hard to make sure that we're a council that is resilient and well-managed, and one you, our residents, are able to influence and be proud of.



## Our Finances

Each year, our councillors formally decide how much we should spend on individual council services. This budget, which is called the General Fund, has a value of £16.5m, and is used to deliver our services for residents and businesses.

We also proudly own and manage over 5,200 council homes, which we use to ensure local people have access to Decent and Affordable homes. To look after these, we have a special Housing Revenue Account (HRA) fund, which is ringfenced to look after existing council homes for tenants, improve safety, and deliver more council homes. This budget has a value of £45m.



### Our services

For just £3.92 per week, we provide vital services to meet the needs of our residents, communities and businesses.

- Community wellbeing support**  
Supporting people, groups and organisations to strengthen the communities that make Guildford a place where everyone is valued. This includes community transport, community meals, an activities hub and a café at the Hive.
- Leisure and culture**  
Providing a wide range of sport, leisure and social opportunities for people of all ages. We're responsible for Guildford Spectrum, Guildford Lido, Ash Manor Sports Centre, and 14 multi-use games areas. We also care for heritage buildings, including Guildford Castle and Guildford Museum.
- Planning and building control**  
Setting planning policy, developing Local Plans, evaluating planning applications and monitoring all building and new development in the borough.
- Bin collections, recycling and street cleaning**  
We collect 7.2 million waste and recycling bins from households across the borough each year, as well as green waste and managing street cleaning.
- Environmental health and licensing**  
Dealing with fly-tipping, pest control, air quality, animal welfare and food safety standards. Keeping residents safe by licensing and enforcement of street traders, tattoo artists, taxi drivers, and those who sell alcohol.
- Parks, countryside and bereavement services**  
Protecting and managing over 100 sites and 1,000 hectares of parks, gardens and countryside. Running the crematorium and some cemeteries.
- Parking**  
Operating over 20 car parks across Guildford and managing off street parking enforcement.
- Elections and democracy**  
Managing all elections and referendums within the borough and maintaining the Register of Electors. We also train councillors to help them be effective in their roles and oversee council meetings.
- Property management**  
Managing the buildings we own that are used to deliver our services or bring in commercial income.
- Regeneration and economic development**  
Investing in regeneration projects and developing the local economy so Guildford is a great place to live, work and do business. Building sustainable new council homes for social and affordable rent, and shared ownership.
- Private sector housing and homelessness prevention**  
We provide protection and advice for private housing tenants and supported over 300 households to prevent homelessness last year.
- Corporate services including HR, finance, legal and customer services**  
Working across the council to support the efficient running of our services and dealing with residents' enquiries.

Throughout the year, we undertake regular monitoring and reporting on our budget, to make sure we continue to be effective stewards of public funds. Above is a current breakdown of how our General Fund budget is split.



## What we've done so far

Whilst this is our first delivery plan, we have already done a considerable amount of work since our corporate strategy was adopted last July to deliver upon our strategic priorities and create a greener, fairer, thriving Guildford borough.

### Key highlights include:

- **July 2024:** Upgraded our booking systems for sport pitches, courts and campsites, making it easier for residents and businesses to access these facilities.
- **August 2024:** Developed and approved new guidelines for open spaces in new residential developments, supporting the health and wellbeing of future residents and ensuring that the right amount and type of recreational open space is delivered as part of new developments.
- **October 2024:** produced our Climate Change Annual Report, highlighting our progress in tackling climate change and reducing carbon emissions within the borough. Since 2019 we have successfully reduced our carbon emissions by 13%.
- **October 2024:** produced and approved updated sustainability guidelines for planning applications, helping to ensure new developments are more climate-friendly and will consider their environmental impact.
- **October 2024:** worked collaboratively with Surrey County Council and the Wellington Place Residents Group to complete a programme of flood prevention works around the Blackwater River near Ash Vale.
- **November 2024:** won a platinum animal welfare policies and procedures awards in the RSPCA PawPrints Awards, recognising our sustained excellence in animal welfare.
- **November 2024:** worked with the Surrey Environment Partnership to expand food recycling collection to over 1,500 flats and communal properties that previous did not have a dedicated food waste recycling service.
- **December 2024:** distributed Christmas presents to 175 local families through our Christmas Present scheme, with the support of Guildford High School.
- **February 2025:** Opened the new Chester Bridge in Ash, providing a vital new crossing across the railway, improving road safety and cutting congestion.
- **March 2025:** completing our extensive restoration of the Grade I listed Guildford House, bringing the original features back to life and helping to make sure the building can continue to be enjoyed by visitors for years to come.
- **March 2025:** Worked closely with Surrey Police to review and update the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for Guildford town centre, helping to create a positive environment for residents, business, and visitors.



## What we're going to do in 2025-26

Building on the progress we've made so far, this section sets out the key actions and initiatives we will deliver over the coming year to bring our corporate strategy to life. Guided by our five strategic priorities – **sustainability, prosperity, inclusivity, Decent and Affordable homes**, and **a resilient and well-managed council** – this plan outlines how we will continue to improve the lives of our residents, support our communities, and protect our environment. Each action is designed to make a measurable difference, ensuring we remain transparent in everything we do, and enabling you to hold us to account. From major infrastructure projects to community-focused services, this is how we're working to create a greener, fairer, and thriving Guildford.





What we're going to do in 2025-26:

A more sustainable borough

Below are some of the ways we are going to continue to work towards creating a more sustainable borough:



Outcome	This year we will	When will we do this by?	How will we measure our impact?
Improve biodiversity and preserve the natural environment New communities and development are delivered sustainably	Transform Burpham Court Farm into a 50-hectare nature reserve. Enhancing biodiversity and providing accessible outdoor areas for the community.	January 2026	Completion of the new facility, and its opening to the public. Number of visitors to council own green spaces. Amount of land improved, restored and managed for nature.
We are a carbon neutral council by 2030 and the wider borough is net zero by 2050	Review and refresh our Climate Change Action Plan.	October 2025	An updated Action Plan that sets out the measures the council will take to reduce carbon emissions.
	Develop and adopt a decarbonisation plan for our fleet vehicles.	April 2026	Adoption of a plan and the reduction in the carbon emissions of our fleet.
	Reduce our carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency across our facilities through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Develop a costed decarbonisation programme for Guildford Spectrum.</li><li>Install a new pool cover for the Lido to reduce heat loss.</li><li>Install new pool covers at Spectrum.</li></ul>	December 2025 January 2026	Clear plan for reduction of carbon footprint across leisure stock. Reduction in energy consumption of Lido.
Improve biodiversity and preserve the natural environment New communities and development are delivered sustainably	Complete construction on a new depot for our Environmental Services that meets high environmental standards and frees up the existing depot site for housing delivery.	Completion by Summer 2026	Fully operational new depot with minimal impact on service delivery.



Our borough is resilient to the effects of climate change	Support the Environment Agency as they develop a Flood Alleviation Scheme for Guildford town centre. This year we will support ongoing technical work and undertake discussions with key landowners.	April 2026	Input by the council into the Outline Business Case, which the EA intend to submit in late-2026.
	Continue to support multi-agency flood risk management alongside Surrey County Council's flood and climate resilience team and local flood action groups.	Ongoing	Flood risk management actions completed; improvements to the level of flood risk in communities.
Improve biodiversity and preserve the natural environment	Confirm the priority habitat baseline to establish a biodiversity reporting system. This will enable us to track delivery in biodiversity on council land.	Confirm baseline: July 2025. Reporting: December 2025	Baseline established and feeding into corporate performance reporting. Tracked long term biodiversity delivery on council owned land.
	Create three Woodland Management Plans at Chilworth Gunpowder Mills, Riverside Local Nature Reserve and Thorny Croft Wood Local Nature Reserve approved by the Forestry Commission, that enable future funding and felling licences to support the development of detailed Site Management Plans.	March 2026	Approval of plans by Forestry Commission that improve reporting and recording and future preservation and improvement.
	Continue supporting Surrey County Council (the responsible authority), as a supporting authority, in preparing and agreeing the (draft) Surrey Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).	March 2026	LNRS becomes a material consideration in planning decisions and sets a strategic framework for land management actions to improve biodiversity.
	Continue to work with landowners to secure BNG projects on their land to support developers who are unable to deliver BNG on site.	April 2026	Number of BNG sites secured through Section 106.
	Continue working with the Surrey Hills Board and other constituent authorities to update and adopt the Surrey Hills Management Plan 2025.	September 2025	An updated Surrey Hills Management Plan that will help guide planning decisions and contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Surrey Hills National Landscape.



<p>Improve biodiversity and preserve the natural environment</p> <p>New communities and development are delivered sustainably</p>	<p>Establish a habitat bank at Tyting Farm, improving biodiversity in that area and providing credits that can be used by developers as part of Biodiversity Net Gain.</p>	<p>December 2025</p>	<p>Improvement in biodiversity at Tyting Farm</p> <p>Habitat bank adopted.</p>
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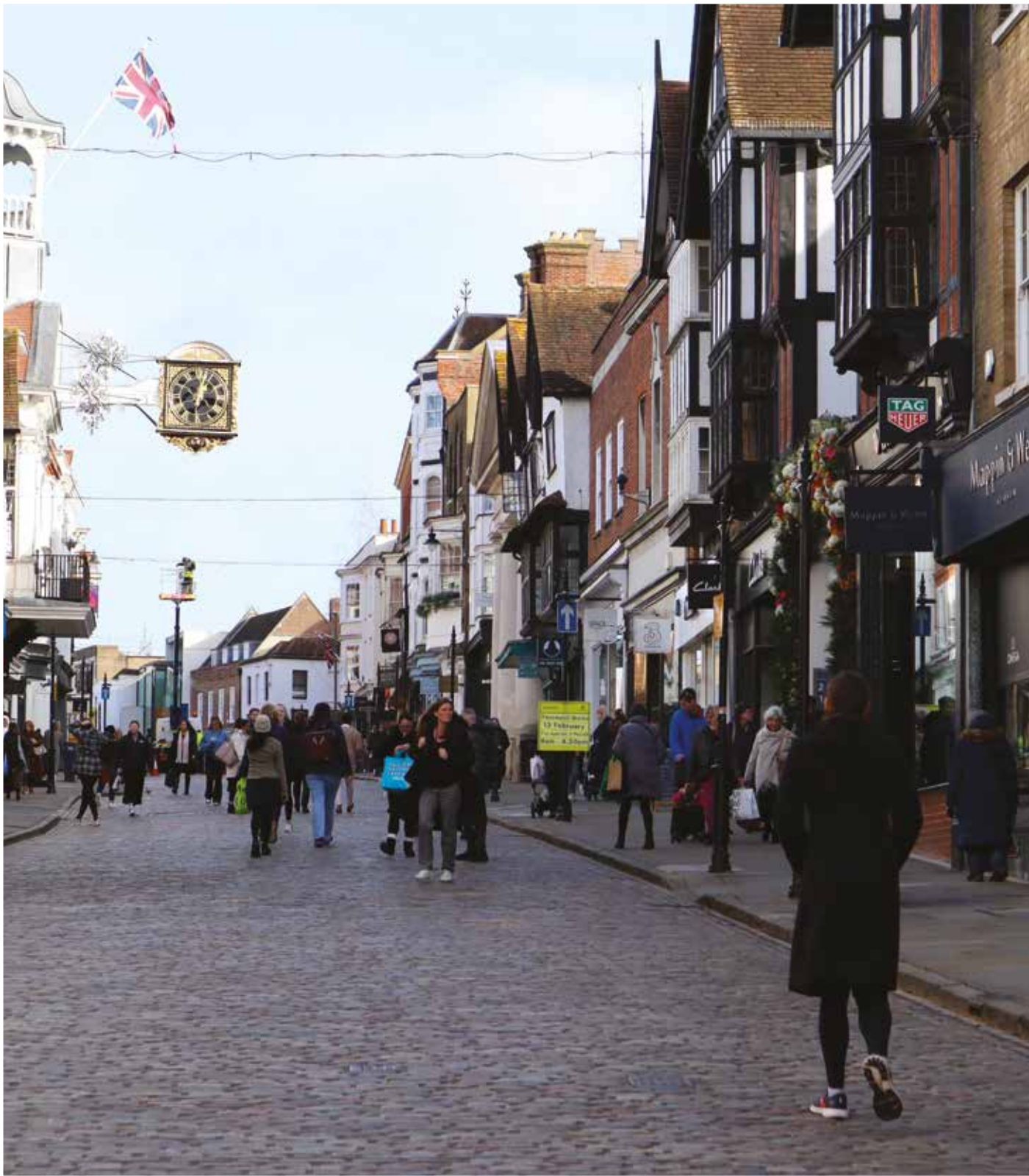
What we're going to do in 2025-26:

A more prosperous borough

Below are some of the ways we are going to continue to work towards creating a more prosperous borough:



Outcome	This year we will	When will we do this by?	How will we measure our impact?
Residents have access to the jobs they need, along with training opportunities for lifelong learning	Work with the University of Surrey to develop a placement scheme at the council for their students.	April 2026	Number of placements hosted by the council.
Guildford borough has a thriving and green local economy	We will work with partners to develop a shared brand for Guildford and Waverley to help deliver the priorities in our Economic Development Strategy, support inward investment, attract new business to locate in the borough and support the retention and growth of our existing business.	April 2026	Production of marketing materials and assessment of the borough's economic health.
	Building upon the objectives of our Economic Development Strategy, we will support 50 local business through the provision of access to free specialist advice and information.	April 2026	Number of businesses using support offer. Questionnaire of those receiving support.
A vibrant and thriving town centre	Introduction of new technology within council car parks making our car parks easier for residents to use and encouraging people to stay for longer.	July 2025	Dwell time in car parks
	To help make parking more affordable for workers in the night time economy, we will work with Experience Guildford to trial a heavily reduced car parking permit scheme (4pm – 10pm) for people working in the hospitality sector.	September 2025	If there is interest in the offer and how quickly the permits are taken up. Feedback from employers, employees and Experience Guildford.
	Work with key partners such as Experience Guildford to support the town centre. Encourage footfall through delivering events on the high street such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• VE Day Commemorations (May 2025).</li><li>• Guildford Green Day (June 2025).</li><li>• Heritage Open Days (September 2025).</li><li>• Cleaner Air Day (September 2025).</li><li>• Festive Family Fun Day (November 2025).</li></ul>	April 2026	Increased footfall. Increased spend on high street and surrounding areas.



New communities and development are delivered sustainably  
A vibrant and thriving town centre

Prepare a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to guide the design and height of tall buildings in the Guildford Town Centre

December 2025

An adopted SPD that will help guide planning decisions.



What we're going to do in 2025-26:

A more inclusive borough

Below are some of the ways we are going to continue to work towards creating a more inclusive borough:



Outcome	This year we will	When will we do this by?	How will we measure our impact?
Everyone in the borough is inspired and encouraged to lead a healthy and active life	Reprocure our leisure services contract, with a focus on social value to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Drive increased outreach work from our leisure centres focused on health &amp; wellbeing.</li><li>• Run focused sessions within of leisure centres to reduce health inequality in our borough.</li><li>• Use of cultural partnerships to reach out to communities and offer opportunities to improve health &amp; wellbeing of residents.</li></ul>	Reprocurement complete by November 2025. New contract in place for January 2026	Increased delivery and participation in courses and sessions offered in the borough. Social value will be calculated at the end of each year and reported back to emphasise the impact achieved. Increased opening hours of leisure facilities.
	Our borough is safe and clean A vibrant and thriving town centre	Implement the new Public Spaces Protection Order for Guildford town centre. Working with partners to monitor and act where breaches occur. Develop a new Antisocial Behaviour Policy for the council, reducing the impact of antisocial behaviour across the borough.	Anticipated adoption of the new policy by the Executive in June 2026.  Reduction in ASB across the borough.
Identify residents' needs and shape services	Expand our meals on wheels service that supports vulnerable residents to remain independent, we will increase our hot meal provision from one to two meals per day- providing a breakfast and evening packed dinner option for customers.	April 2026	Measure the number of customers who request the new meal options to be delivered.
Everyone in Guildford has the opportunity to thrive Everyone in Guildford borough has a safe place to live	To support elderly, disabled and vulnerable residents to remain independent in their homes for longer, we will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Undertake at least 1,400 jobs through our Handyperson service.</li><li>• Undertake at least 190 adaptations for council tenants</li><li>• Fund at least further 120 adaptations for other residents through Disabled Facilities Grants.</li></ul> Support at least 30 residents by providing Home Improvement Grants to enable essential repairs, or signpost them to other funding streams where appropriate.	April 2026	Number of adaptations undertaken, funded, or signposted to.
Everyone in Guildford has the opportunity to thrive	To do all we can to support those arriving into the UK under Home Office refugee programmes, we will increase our number of Afghan refugee families from 3 to 10.	May 2025	Measure our number of arrivals.



Everyone in Guildford has the opportunity to thrive (continued...)	To support elderly, disabled and vulnerable residents, we will carry out at least 400 Occupation Therapy assessments to support and advise residents on the most appropriate adaptations and equipment for their homes to help them remain independent.	April 2026	Number of assessments undertaken.
	To support elderly, disabled and vulnerable residents, we will carry out at least 120 bathing assessments to support and advise residents on the most appropriate adaptations and equipment for their homes to help them bathe safely and independently.	April 2026	Number of assessments undertaken.
	In partnership with the Friends of Guildford Museum and Guildford Town Guides, open a Discovery Room at Guildford Museum. This will encourage engagement with the Heritage Service and help improve visitor numbers, allowing those attending to find out more about our borough's history.	June 2025	Numbers of people visiting the Room.
	Following a successful trial last year, programme a relaxed opening of each temporary exhibition at Guildford Museum for families with children who have an Autism Spectrum Condition or other sensory needs.	April 2026	Numbers of people visiting during these sessions.
	Develop, pilot, and implement a new education programme for schools which uses our Heritage assets and collections to support learning for local schoolchildren.	April 2026	Numbers of sessions run for local schools.
	Raise awareness of the services available for residents at the Hive.	Ongoing	Improved service take-up





Everyone in the borough is inspired and encouraged to lead a healthy and active life	To support the health and wellbeing of our residents, we will continue to offer services visits to the Older Peoples Service at The Hive, the Community Fridge & Pantry, Thrive @ The Hive as well as outreach services such as Playrangers	April 2026	Number of face-to-face contacts undertaken, and referrals made to other services for further support.
Our borough is safe and clean	Re-establish the Safe Guildford Partnership Executive meetings, bring partners together to work together to respond to the most serious crimes and support schemes that work to reduce this.	April 2026	Attendance at the partnership and number of referrals made.
The council makes the right decisions in the right way We take pride in our diverse places and communities, and consider different needs and points of view when making council decisions	Review our community grants process and develop a Grants Policy to ensure our grant allocations best supports the delivery of the outcomes in our Corporate Strategy.	October 2025	Clear objectives and intended outcomes from grant funding.





What we're going to do in 2025-26:

Decent and Affordable homes

Below are some of the ways we are going to continue to work towards ensuring Guildford borough residents have access to Decent and Affordable homes.



Outcome	This year we will	When will we do this by?	How will we measure our impact?
Guildford borough's tenants live in high quality homes and neighbourhood	Invest £5.5m in Council homes replacing kitchens, bathrooms and roofs to ensure meet the Decent Homes Standard.	April 2026	Tenant satisfaction with new kitchens and bathrooms. Increase in % of homes that meet the government's Decent Homes Standard.
	Deliver 2025/26 milestones of the Housing Improvement plan.	April 2026	July and December progress report to Council – improved outcomes and experience for tenants.
	Introduce case management system to monitor and address damp and mould cases to ensure compliance with Awaabs Law.	February 2026	Reduction in damp and mould experienced by council tenants. Monitoring Awaabs Law timescales.
	Implement Tenancy visit programme to know and understand residents of council homes and their needs.	October 2025	Progress report to Housing Operations Board Sept 2025 on data and outcomes of visits. Monitoring target to visit all tenants every two years.
	Work with developers to identify opportunities to acquire new Affordable council homes from developers.	April 2026	Number of council homes acquired.
	Develop a set of Employer's Requirements and design standards for new housing to make clear our expectations around the quality and sustainability of the new homes we're building.	April 2026	Delivery of agreed standards, construction of homes to these standards.
	Work with tenants to develop a co-design methodology to review services together to ensure they meet needs and expectations.	October 2025	Programme of service areas to co-design. Published Estate standard report with recommendations implemented. Increase in tenants' satisfaction.



Everyone in Guildford borough has a safe place to live	Revise our homelessness strategy to provide clearer direction on how we are supporting our residents.	April 2025	Number of homelessness preventions. Delivery of an improved facility.
	To support residents experiencing homelessness, we will reconfigure and refurbish the Number 5 Project at York Road, providing an increased number of rooms and better quality of facility for those seeking short-term temporary accommodation. This year we will appoint a design team and develop a planning application, aiming to start work by the end of the year.	Commence construction by March 2026	Reduction in Number of rough sleepers. Service User satisfaction with HUB.
Development across the borough is sustainable and affordable	Continue to deliver new Affordable homes, that meet the needs of residents, through our pipeline of small sites.	April 2026	Number of affordable homes delivered against delivery target.
Guildford borough's tenants live in high quality homes and neighbourhood	Work with our partner Wates to deliver up to 248 new, high quality and sustainable homes at Guildford Park Road, of which 40% will be owned and managed by the council. This year we will submit a planning application for the scheme.	September 2025	Determination of the planning application in accordance with the timescales in the planning performance agreement.
	Complete the programme of small site housing developments, maximising the use of these sites for additional housing delivery.	April 2026	Business cases presented to the Executive and Council



What we're going to do in 2025-26:

A resilient and well-managed council

Below are some of the ways we are going to continue to work towards being a resilient and well managed council.



Outcome	This year we will	When will we do this by?	How will we measure our impact?
The council makes the right decisions in the right way Residents feel informed, heard and able to influence what the council does	Support the development of proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Surrey and ensure that these proposals best reflect the views of our residents and needs of our communities.	May 2025 - proposal submission April 2026 – proposal implementation	Creation of new shadow authorities and initiation of a smooth transition to these new councils.
The council has delivered its Corporate Improvement Plan and is consistently and effectively meeting its statutory duty to deliver Best Value	Work with the Independent Assurance Panel to deliver the Year 2 Actions on Guildford's Improvement Plan.	April 2026	Feedback from the Panel and actions completed.
The council recruits, rewards, develops, and retains a diverse, skilled and motivated workforce	Improve our recruitment and retention practices by developing and adopting a new People Strategy.	July 2025	Staff Survey results Increase in appraisals Increased uptake in our training. Reduced reliance on agency/consultancy staff. Absence rates. Fewer ER cases going to formal stage. Increased representation in our protected characteristics. Internal promotion rate.



Guildford borough benefits from its collaboration with Waverley Borough Council	In readiness for Local Government Reorganisation, we will harmonise services and policies where we it will mean that we can deliver better outcomes for our residents. This year we will harmonise around 60 with Waverley Borough Council to build consistency in advice, guidance and support across both councils.	September 2025	Alignment and harmonisation across council functions and services. Aligned and harmonised HR policies.
The council makes the right decisions in the right way	Strengthen our controls and approach to Procurement and working with suppliers through a new procurement strategy.	September 2025	Tracking our procurement spend to ensure the council spends its resources appropriately, aligned to the procurement strategy.
Residents feel informed, heard and able to influence what the council does	Continue to adapt our approach to communications, in line with evolving resident preferences, to make sure that residents and partners feel informed about our work. We will undertake resident engagement as part of our service and financial planning process to make sure that residents are able to help develop and shape our priorities and resource allocation.	April 2026	Resident engagement levels.
The council has achieved financial sustainability and is delivering for those who live, work and do business in Guildford borough	Continue improving and sustaining our net income contribution from our investment portfolio.  Continue reviewing our portfolio identifying suitable assets in accordance with the objectives of the Assets Disposal Strategy for recommendation to Executive for disposal. By April 2027, we will have generated £30m that will help provide capital receipts and lessen pressure on our budget.	April 2026  April 2027	Achieve strong financial returns on investment properties and low vacancy rates.  Completed sales transactions of assets approved for disposal by the council's Executive.



## Get involved

Here are some of the ways you can get involved and make sure your voice is heard:

- **Find out more about our corporate strategy**, A Greener, Fairer, Thriving Guildford.
- **View and respond to council consultations**.
- **Get involved with our Tenant Engagement Group**, a group that brings together council tenants and leaseholders to help shape our housing service and work with us to enable all our housing to be the best.
- **Sign up to receive About Guildford**, our digital newsletter with news, events and what's happening in our borough.
- Find out more about the **advice and opportunities** we offer for businesses.
- **View Contact Point** – our digital magazine for Guildford Borough Council tenants and leaseholders.
- Find out **who your elected representatives** are and **when they meet to make decisions**.





## **Guildford Borough Council**

[guildford.gov.uk](http://guildford.gov.uk)



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