

“There needs to be a significant project to develop a real long-term vision for Letchworth. Call it Letchworth 2053 to celebrate Letchworth’s 150th anniversary.”

2016- 2020

Your Garden City - A Five Year Plan for Letchworth

Introducing the plan

This plan is designed to shape the Heritage Foundation's activities during the next five years (2016 - 20). It outlines how we will fulfil our charitable commitments and provide even greater benefits for the town.

Our charitable commitments:

- Environment and Heritage
- Recreation and Leisure
- Education and Learning
- Health and Wellbeing
- Locally Based Charities
- Charitable Activities

Building upon our last Five Year Plan, our organisation has made significant improvements to the way it works. We have changed and simplified many of our internal processes to be more responsive, efficient and financially stable. By representing and working with the community we are meeting the changing needs of the town and adding to the quality of life in Letchworth.

This plan outlines our three main priorities:

- Recognising and celebrating our **unique** status as the world's first Garden City.
- Delivering activities that ensure Letchworth Garden City remains a **vibrant** place to live, work and visit.
- Supporting the **social** fabric of the Garden City.

It also provides the base from which we will develop Annual Action Plans. These plans will detail specific work streams together with the allocation of financial resources. The year that specific work streams will be delivered are highlighted in brackets throughout this plan.

Community Involvement

For the first time, we held a town-wide conversation with the community about the themes and headline projects in this plan. This gave local people the opportunity to tell us what they thought and what was important to them. Before this we spoke to our staff, Governors and Governor Advisory Groups who also shared their feedback.

Over a period of four weeks we held eight sessions in our Community Hub, fronted by staff and Governors, where we asked people to share their ideas and suggestions with us. Alongside this, we ran an online questionnaire which was predominantly qualitative to ensure we captured the most creative ideas.

It was reassuring to see that many of the topics raised were already captured in the plan. Some new suggestions have been reflected and specific ideas will be looked at as part of our Annual Action Plans. We have included some of the comments throughout this document.

Keeping up to date

Our dedicated web page will include updates on our progress as well as our Annual Action Plans. You can read more by visiting www.lethworth.com/five-year-plan



The Wider Context of the Plan

Although the economic climate is improving, there is still a great deal of uncertainty about what the next five years will bring, as public spending is set to reduce further. This presents many challenges, not least the need for the Heritage Foundation to adapt to change quickly and be more creative about how we deliver our priorities.

In Hertfordshire alone, the County Council has estimated it will have to make savings of around £200 million a year to balance its budget. Alongside decreasing public expenditure Letchworth is facing greater deprivation. There are areas within the town ranked as some of the most deprived in Hertfordshire and within the top 20% of most deprived in England. In contrast there are areas that are classified as some of the least deprived in the country, comparable to affluent areas of Cambridge, St Albans and West London.

Local public services, voluntary organisations, community groups, charities and social enterprises will need to look

at new ways of working in order to meet the challenge of reducing resources and increasing demands. This highlights the importance of strengthening partnerships with organisations and groups to identify issues and opportunities within our community and have a dialogue about how we can address them.

We need to consider how we can respond to the unprecedented pressure on housing as prices continue to rise, making local homes unaffordable for the next generation. At the other end of the spectrum, we are aware of the lack of suitable stock for older residents who may wish to downsize, freeing up larger much-needed family homes.

An ageing population will put additional pressure on health and social services. Getting the right support with access to leisure services to keep residents of Letchworth active and healthy for longer has never been more important. At the same time we are mindful of changes to the structure of education and learning and the pressures on family life.

New ways of working, more sophisticated customer trends and changing technology are all things that we need to be aware of as we broaden the appeal of our venues and build our audience base beyond Letchworth and North Herts.

Whilst Letchworth's employment rate stands below the National Employment Rate it is important that we help to maintain and grow a strong employment base in the town. Take up of our commercial properties is improving, businesses are expressing cautious optimism for the future and investment in the town can be expected to grow in the coming years. This should provide a good base from which to deliver

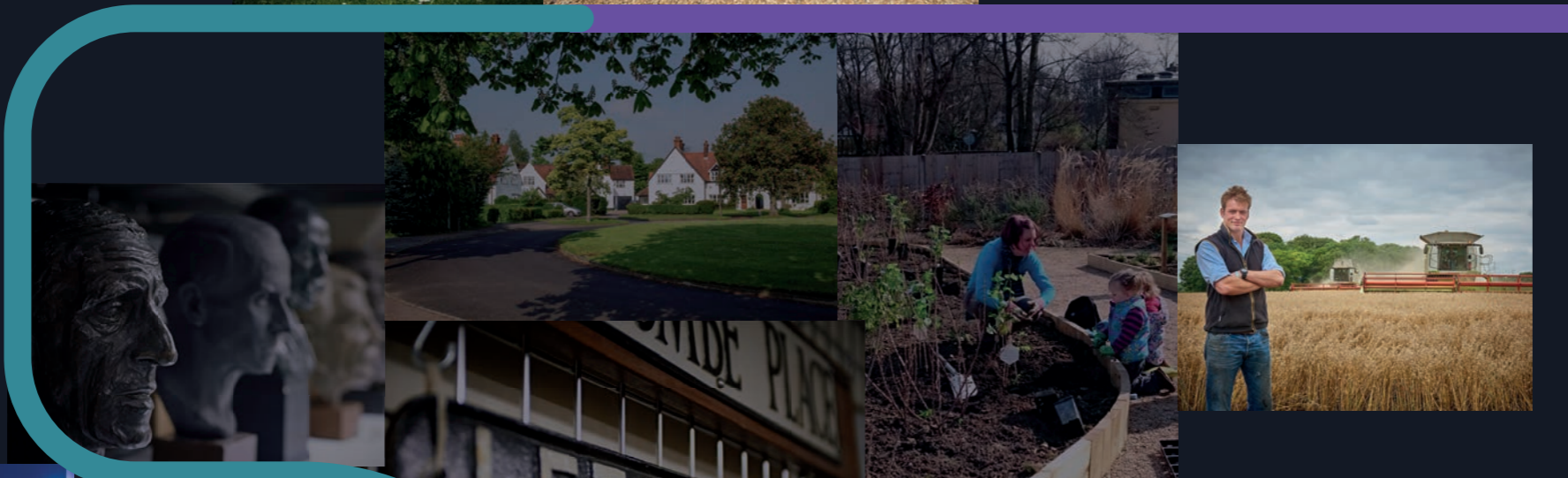
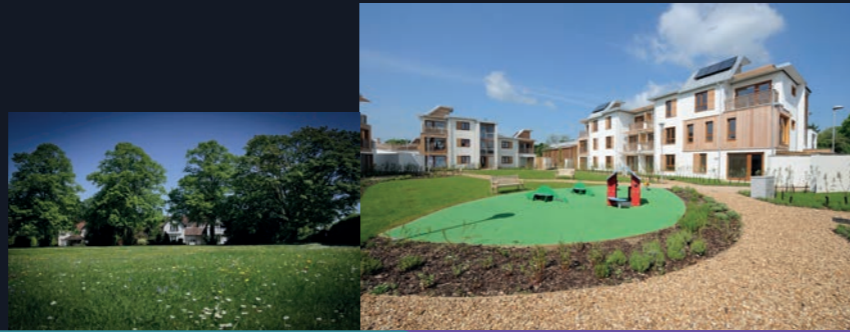
our aims to improve the local business environment within the plan period.

We will consider the ways in which we use and reuse our natural resources at a local level to play our part in supporting our long term ambition for Letchworth Garden City to be a more sustainable, low carbon town.

All these challenges and opportunities, along with the general uncertainty of what the future holds, highlight the need for this plan to be flexible and adapt to what is, and will continue to be, a very fluid environment. It is also important that as an organisation we are flexible to ensure that we successfully deliver our diverse services, projects and support for the benefit of local communities, no matter what changes happen in the external world.

Our long term vision - Letchworth 2053

As we plan for the next five years, it's important that we consider *Letchworth's long term future*. During the life of this plan, we will go out into the community to ask what kind of town it will be by the time it reaches its 150th anniversary in 2053. These conversations will help us *build a vision* for our Garden City that will support its longer term sustainability and development, ensuring that it will still be a *great place to live for people of all ages*.



“Take the concept from the Garden City and use them as a forward looking vision for Letchworth.”



What makes Letchworth a Unique Garden City?

Founded in 1903, Letchworth is the world's first Garden City. Based on the transformational ideas Ebenezer Howard set out in his book "Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Reform" (1898), the Garden City was created as a solution to the squalor and poverty of urban life in late 19th Century Britain.



Unique

From the very beginning there was a commitment that Letchworth would be a town created to reflect the needs of a broad society and continue to benefit its residents in the long term.

Today we are the only Garden City that takes the income generated by its property portfolio and reinvests it back into the town year on year.

This Garden City principle of 'value capture' brings with it both responsibility and the opportunity for us to provide significant financial support to many activities and projects for the benefit of local people.

Our unique position allows us to celebrate our town's history, address the issues it faces today and help influence its future.

Our Heritage

Letchworth's unique history – architectural, social and intellectual - requires protection and celebration. However, as modern living evolves it is important that we review how best to do this.

Within the next five years we aim to:

- Ensure our approach to heritage conservation is fit-for-purpose and balances the views and needs of all our community.
- Raise awareness and understanding of our unique history locally, nationally and internationally.

“It can be a struggle to get young people to come here but once they are here they love the green open spaces. Let's market the town better.”

Unique

Our architectural heritage is just one of the many elements that makes Letchworth special. Our Scheme of Management helps us oversee development and preserve the unique appearance of our town.

We will therefore undertake a comprehensive survey of local residents (2016) to understand their views about the Scheme of Management and identify what can be done to improve it. This will also be an opportunity to communicate with them about the importance of heritage properties in the world's first Garden City and what that means.

To further support the preservation of our architectural legacy, Heritage Grants were re-introduced in 2015. The grants are available to residents wishing to make external changes to their home and provide financial support for the undertaking of sympathetic renovations.

After two years of operating the Heritage Grants process, we will assess the benefits they have delivered and establish how they can be enhanced and adapted to maximise their impact on the appearance of the town (2016).

In this five-year plan period we will also seek to raise the profile of our Heritage Advisory Team. The team is currently based at the Community Hub in Station Road, and provides free advice and support to residents who are considering making alterations to their home. The team considers an average of 800 applications per year of which more than 95% are approved.

In recognition of this service's importance we propose to re-designate the Hub as the Heritage Advisory Centre (2016/17).

Our experienced team will continue to provide advice and guidance to Letchworth residents who are keen to understand the history of their home, its significance as part of the development of the Garden City and how any proposed changes may be implemented.

Unique

We will carry out a scoping exercise to potentially create a Heritage Advisory Centre at the Community Hub and a separate Letchworth Information Centre at the existing Tourist and Information Centre on Station Road (2016/17).

Many of the individual homes in the town remain special because of the approach owners, designers and contractors adopt when carrying out restoration, alterations or new building work.

To celebrate and promote this commitment to the highest standards of design and workmanship we will be organising two Architectural Heritage Awards programmes in the plan period (2016 and 2019).

We will be involving heritage experts, interest groups and local residents to select the winners.

The Garden City Collection's long-term aim of receiving formal accreditation will be achieved in this plan period in recognition of its vast archive about Letchworth's development and social history. The Collection will underpin our on-going commitment to familiarise local people of all ages with the history of the town

and to sharing Letchworth's story in an interesting and meaningful way. This will be done through our Community Museum, exhibitions, Collection Tours, Heritage Talks and Walks and other supporting programmes.

We will also undertake a study (2016) to identify a location for a new Letchworth museum to provide a permanent home for the celebration of the town's heritage in one central location.

The International Garden Cities Institute will continue to provide a central resource for professional bodies, town planners, academics, students and practitioners who share our interest and commitment to the Garden City Movement and its influence across the world. The Institute based in the Parker Building will also continue to be the home of the International Garden Cities Exhibition.

“Promote LGC’s uniqueness at King’s Cross and Cambridge stations and on the trains e.g green open spaces – a great place to live. In general, have better signage as you come into the town.”

Unique

Town & Country

Letchworth Garden City was designed to combine the best of town and country living. This remains central to what residents and visitors love about the town.

In the next five years we aim to:

- Invest in the green environment across the town in order to improve access to nature for the local community.
- Increase participation in outdoor activities.
- Encourage biodiversity.
- Raise awareness of the role of our rural estate.
- Maintain and improve the beauty of the town.

As a popular local attraction, Standalone Farm will continue to develop its educational role, enhancing the offer to ensure local residents are able to learn about the countryside and farming.

We will launch a full review of allotments to understand how the spaces can be further developed to support local biodiversity and the use of gardening as a strong recreational activity for local people (2019).

We place great emphasis on the Garden City looking beautiful, with residents and visitors able to enjoy and appreciate the town's many parks and gardens. Through our direct activities and partnerships we will ensure the look of the Garden City is maintained and enhanced. We will also work with our partners to encourage and support them to ensure that Letchworth looks its best.

Trees and planting play an important role in the Garden City's physical environment. A full town-wide tree survey will be carried out using iTree technology to inform future landscaping schemes (2017) and we will work with partners to ensure greenery remains a key element of Letchworth.

Our landscaping and town centre teams will continue to provide an attractive safe environment for people to enjoy. We will encourage and support our partners to make sure the town's physical environment meets the expectations of residents, businesses and visitors.

“Encourage citizens to appreciate their unique environment. Celebrate successes of current citizens in all aspects of life.”

Unique

A 21st Century Model

Letchworth was established to address the social issues of the late nineteenth century. Over the last century, the town has adapted to change while remaining true to the founding principles of the Garden City. We aspire to be a forward-looking town and model how a Garden City can progress and address new challenges such as changing demographic and lifestyle trends.

In the next five years we aim to:

- Work with partners to anticipate and understand new demands.
- Have an open dialogue with the community to capture their views about possible solutions.
- Develop approaches that enhance Letchworth's unique history and identity.

In planning for future needs North Hertfordshire District Council is preparing a new Local Plan that includes locations for the development of additional housing.

“It was the first Garden City - so something to be proud of. The ethos behind the town was pioneering for the day, and arguably still so today.”

The Local Plan will remain under public and council review during 2016 and the results of this process may lead to the allocation of a strategic housing site on land we own in the north of the town.

If the land is to be developed it is unlikely that any homes would be built before 2020. However, we will commence a master planning exercise in this plan period, working with the local community to ensure we can incorporate the best elements of the Garden City into any new homes.

The development must be of high quality, offering local people sustainable homes with gardens and green spaces. The Greenway would also be enhanced and extended. We would work closely with authorities and partners to create new facilities and transport links. Any development would be part of the town and not an isolated estate.

In the meantime we will continue to look at the development of available brownfield sites for housing to ensure a range of new homes are provided to help meet some of the current demand.

We will seek to ensure all future commercial and residential developments are of the highest standard; planned to consider access and transport, encouraging cycling and walking.

Unique

Shared spaces and facilities will meet the needs of the community at the time of building and also reflect potential future demands.

To minimise the environmental impact of new developments, developers will be encouraged to meet exacting standards with highly efficient design in terms of energy, water and waste management. This will support our long-term ambition for Letchworth to become a more environmentally sustainable town.

In creating these new homes we will seek to challenge traditional models of housing tenure and look for ways in which we can support homes for local people, developing schemes that provide truly affordable ways to get on the property ladder.

Our new Eco-Home project will help to address the challenges of improving the environmental performance of existing housing. It will see an early Garden City home retrofitted with energy saving technologies to explore how such houses can be modernised in terms of energy efficiency without harming their character or historic significance. The results of the project will demonstrate how residents can reduce their use of energy in order to save money and lessen the environmental impact of energy consumption (2016/17).

Working with partners and relevant authorities we plan to review the town's transport links to encourage more use of public transport and promote increased cycle and walking routes. We will seek to map all existing cycle and walkways and look for innovative ways to share this information to promote both travel and leisure use (2017/18).

Celebrating Letchworth

Through a series of charitable, educational and community programmes we want to inspire residents to celebrate our unique status as the world's first Garden City.

We hope these celebrations will take many forms, from arts activities to sporting events. They will however have common goals: fostering community spirit; sharing the pride we feel in our town and ensuring the unique status of Letchworth Garden City reaches a wide audience.

“Thankfully it is still a little quirky. Unique heritage. The presence of the heritage foundation. Distinctive architecture. Organisations such as the LALG.”



“Improve the arts and culture scene even more so that Letchworth Garden City becomes a destination town.”



What makes Letchworth a Vibrant Garden City?

A busy vibrant town attracts residents, visitors and businesses, helping to forge a strong local economy that creates jobs, income and expertise which in turn generates more activity and opportunities.



Vibrant

The Town Centre

The commercial vitality and economic health of a town is often judged by its centre. Like many towns, Letchworth centre faces challenges as a result of changing lifestyles and consumer habits. In the past few years we have invested significant resources into improving the town centre but recognise there is further work to be done.

We have always sought to create a centre that complements nearby towns and will continue to work to make the heart of Letchworth more welcoming for residents, visitors, businesses and investors.

In the next five years we aim to:

- Improve the town centre offer to residents, visitors, businesses and investors.
- Work creatively with partners to attract more people to our town.
- Ensure what we do complements rather than competes with neighbouring towns.

To address the ever-evolving role of town centres we will revisit our Town Centre Implementation Plan. The long-term plan for the centre explored clustering compatible activities together, such as the development of a creative campus around Broadway Gardens. It also identified key areas such as Arena Parade and the Wynd that could add to the town's appeal.

“An indoor destination for children would make more families spend more time in and around town.”

Vibrant

The Town Centre review (2017) will look at the development of these locations over the past five years and how they can be further enhanced to add to the vibrancy of the town.

Working with other town centre property owners we will look at the balance of retail, offices and housing to plan for new development so the right environment is created to encourage more activity.

We will continue to support the Business Improvement District (BID) and fund our Town Wardens, CCTV, gardens, flower displays and the annual Christmas lights installation, helping to keep the centre both attractive and safe.

Led by the Accessibility Group we are also undertaking an audit of the town centre (2016) exploring ways in which we can improve access for people with disabilities.

The development of a town centre creative campus will progress significantly with the creation of a new theatre space (2016). This major investment will see live performances on stage added to Broadway Cinema's already successful programme.

It will become a cultural centre in the town creating a programme of events that will appeal to a wide cross section of the community. Internationally-renowned theatre performances will appear alongside mainstream and specialist film programmes, live on-screen broadcasts from across the globe as well as a wide array of community and private uses.

The new Broadway Studio and Gallery will give residents the opportunity to see high quality touring exhibitions supported by workshops and community activities including fringe theatre and musical performances.

Vibrant

We will continue to work with North Hertfordshire College and the Da Vinci School to support their plan to locate more creative courses in Letchworth and introduce apprenticeships and work placements to give students hands-on experience of working in the arts.

This plan further develops our strategy for creating a rich cultural programme that will increase the town centre's appeal to both residents and visitors.

A Place for Business

A buoyant local economy adds to the energy and wealth of the town. With strong transport and communications links Letchworth Garden City is an attractive destination for business.

In the next five years we aim to:

- Improve and promote Letchworth as a place to start, grow and sustain businesses.
- Increase economic activity within the town.

We will work with existing local enterprises to survey the business environment in the town identifying opportunities to create areas of special focus and clusters of complementary activity.

“Have better signage in the town centre to direct visitors around town.”

Vibrant

With our Governor-led Business and Economic Development Group, we will continue to establish strong links with the business community and identify specific work streams (2016/17) to develop a business offer to attract inward investment to bring new employers into the town. We will work with the Chamber of Commerce to provide the support and networks new and existing businesses need to thrive.

We will promote Letchworth as a great destination for leisure events that bring economic benefits to local businesses as well as a boost to the vibrancy of the town centre.

We have the opportunity to use our unique reinvestment model to attract companies searching to fulfil their social responsibility goals. By renting a property from the Foundation all our tenants are actively supporting our charitable commitments and adding to the quality of life in the town.

Our Eco-Home will act as the first step in our aim to generate a cluster of skills, trades and services that understand how to sympathetically combine heritage housing with the modern technologies associated with sustainable living. In the first instance we will explore the creation of apprenticeships and training courses to develop skills in this area (2017/18).

We will explore the creation of new town centre office space to act as 'incubator units' for business start-ups, giving new enterprises access to commercial space and skills on a short-term 'pay as you go' basis. Support packages for new retailers will also be considered, along with options to introduce themed markets, providing cost effective display spaces for new enterprises (2016/17).

We want to encourage more charitable organisations to base themselves in Letchworth. New charitable organisations could share expertise and resources with the town's existing charities, creating local jobs and providing residents with access to important services (2017/18).

Having a skilled workforce is vital in attracting new business to Letchworth. We will help build stronger links between business and education so that young people get the chance to experience the work environment earlier in their education and are prepared for the workplace.

Vibrant

We will continue to invest the income generated by our property in the maintenance of our commercial portfolio. By providing best in class units we can be highly competitive in the marketplace allowing us to retain and attract new tenants.

A Place to Visit

To support the development of new and existing attractions, we need to draw in significant number of visitors from local towns and villages as well as from the rest of the country and overseas.

In the next five years we aim to:

- Improve the town’s leisure offer and marketing, to increase the number of people spending their leisure time within the town.
- Establish Letchworth as a recreational and tourist destination.

Our theatre, cinema and gallery will attract greater numbers of visitors and our International Garden Cities Institute and Exhibition, Garden City Collection and Community Museum all support our unique selling point as the world’s first Garden City.

Elsewhere in the town, Standalone Farm and the Garden City Greenway provide an outdoor attraction for families who want to enjoy the open spaces and connect with nature.

Two new projects will further promote local activities: the launch of a new town-wide box-office (2016) and the new Letchworth Information Centre (2016/17). Linked to the new theatre, the box-office will provide a town-wide ticketing and promotional service for all events in Letchworth.

“There is a lot going on in Letchworth, LALG is excellent, the music and bookshops are a vital hub / the swimming pools and paddling pools are excellent.”

Vibrant

The Letchworth Information Centre will be launched (2017), along with a new website providing useful community and public information for people visiting Letchworth.

With our commitment to promote Letchworth as a great destination for leisure events, we will ensure that these events are promoted in a targeted way to relevant audiences beyond Letchworth and ensure there are activities that will be of interest to those aged 13-17.

We will continue to support the development of a new hotel within the town centre to improve the accommodation available for leisure and business visitors.

The town’s heritage and historic shop front trails will attract further visitor interest in the centre as will our many tree lined streets and iconic buildings. During the plan we will explore whether the trails can be supported by a mobile app and on-street signage (2018).

We will also enhance the gateways into the town so visitors will immediately know and appreciate that they are visiting the world’s first Garden City (2017).

To promote our many green open spaces to visitors we will improve the Garden City Greenway, adding extensive information boards that will enhance the pleasure of a countryside walk or cycle ride (2018/19).

Standalone Farm will continue to develop over the five-year plan period with new initiatives that complement the existing farming, countryside and gardening activities.

Our Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Gardens in The Wynd and at Standalone Farm will act as the backdrop for a series of adult and child educational programmes, encouraging Letchworth residents to make the most of their gardens.

We will seek to maintain our relationship with Natural England so we continue to manage the rural estate in line with world-class best practices to support biodiversity and wildlife.

“Letchworth is amazing, that’s why I live here! But you need something bigger than the norm, something of great significance, all you have is a bit of history (which I appreciate), but everything is average in Letchworth to the everyday person who doesn’t have an imagination.”



“Employ a team to reach out to people and link all services such as homefirst, stroke support and council support services such as through my job in the ambulance service, I see so much loneliness.”



What makes Letchworth a Social Garden City?

Letchworth Garden City benefits from a fantastic network of community groups, social clubs and sporting facilities. This network is vital in creating and sustaining a social garden city. We already provide a wide range of support to this network but believe we can do more. We have therefore made this a significant area of focus for the Five Year Plan.

Social

Targeting Support

The Heritage Foundation is a Community Benefit Society with a wide range of charitable commitments to help support the town. It can be challenging to allocate our financial resources appropriately to maximise the public benefit created by the support we provide.

Letchworth Garden City has a diverse mix of both affluent and more deprived neighbourhoods. There are areas within the town ranked as some of the most deprived in Hertfordshire and within the top 20% of most deprived in England. In contrast there are areas that are classified as some of the least deprived in the country, comparable to affluent areas of Cambridge, St Albans and West London.

In the next five years we aim to:

- Better understand the diversity of people within the town so that our resources can support those in greatest need.

We will undertake a detailed social research project (2016/18). Working with the local community this research will increase our understanding of need and strengthen our decision making when selecting how to balance charitable reinvestment back into the town.

We will look to add to our charitable services team bringing in skills that can further support community groups and charities in Letchworth. By appointing an Active Letchworth Partnership Lead (2016) to add resources on the ground, we hope we can develop a learning culture where groups share ideas and skills in order to gain access to available services and funding.

“We all have skills we can offer – e.g. I’m a retired teacher and would love to give help to others but there is no obvious way to do this. A bank where we can give our skills or go to find someone to help us or train/teach us.”

Social

A Town for Life

In the next five years we aim to:

- Work with partners to help make Letchworth a lifetime town, where residents can enjoy every stage of life.

In meeting this ambition we will deliver services and projects through the plan period that support children, young adults, families and older people.

Letchworth Garden City has many advantages that make it an ideal town for families: a safe environment; green open spaces; an active community and much more. We plan to develop this further, placing family priorities at the centre of future projects. We hope this will strengthen our family friendly status and promote Letchworth as a great destination for families to visit and live.

Our support for education will be further developed with a focus on families and young children aged three to seven. Working with families, carers and schools we will focus on supporting children’s early learning and social development. We will work to foster strong relationships between schools and parents and support those children in greatest need to narrow gaps and inequalities.

“Commitment needed to increase offer of activities for teenagers within the town 14-19 years, a recording studio for hire maybe, very popular in Baldock. No incentive to encourage aspiring musicians.”

Social

Health and wellbeing services will be reviewed to consider how we can best tackle issues such as obesity and dementia. Our Treatment Centre currently provides a range of services across nursing, physiotherapy and occupational therapy. These services will be reviewed (2016) in order to understand how the Treatment Centre can reflect community need while recognising Letchworth's ageing population. This review will also consider options for the potential relocation and expansion of the facility to incorporate services provided by other health related organisations in order to provide a wellbeing centre.

We must also recognise the challenges of providing suitable activities for young people under 18. To support this we will dedicate a specific work stream to research and develop an understanding of the needs of this under-represented group leading to the provision of a better and more inclusive offer for young people in Letchworth (2016/17).

An Active Community

The Letchworth community is very energetic. The many volunteer groups, charitable organisations, clubs and societies all add to the town's community and help address needs that might otherwise go unmet. However, local groups can face challenges in recruiting and retaining active volunteers, and specific skill gaps prevent them achieving their aims in the long term. Through our charitable commitments, the Foundation is able to support local voluntary organisations and help them deliver activities which enhance the lives of residents.

“Letchworth needs more social housing. Particularly for 18-25 yr olds who no longer wish to live with parents. When I was younger there was a housing scheme in Stevenage called Sishes, it had 2 person flats and 4 or 8 person shared houses with its own community hall. There is nothing like this in Letchworth.”

Social

In the next five years we aim to:

- Work with partners to improve support to local voluntary organisations, making the most of the opportunities and resources available.

Working with North Hertfordshire Centre for Voluntary Service local partners we will promote and develop volunteering opportunities and work with Letchworth based charities to help them with long-term planning.

We will also explore the possibility of working with local partners who are already developing a skills bank. This will help everyone to better understand what voluntary help is available in our town and to provide community groups with access to a range of support to ensure their groups can continue their activities (2017/18).

We have ambitions to foster further health and wellbeing programmes, encouraging residents to lead an active lifestyle and take advantage of the numerous facilities and activities on offer in the town.

The Active Letchworth Steering Group will encourage greater participation in a range of activities such as walking and cycling; community gardening; yoga classes; team sports and rural pursuits.

Our annual Out and About publication lists over 150 community groups and activities that take place regularly within the town. This free guide has helped groups promote what they do and encourage the community to get involved. We will continue to produce the guide each year.

Working with many of these local groups we will also explore ways in which we can further develop the Out and About brand to help support this extensive network of activities that are vital in making Letchworth a social garden city (2017).

“A fitness park would be a great addition - an area where people could work out on a range of fitness machines in an outdoor setting.”

Delivering the Plan

This plan aims to make real improvements at a community level for the benefit of the town.

It will be delivered through programmes and projects driven by Trustees, Governors and Staff, working in partnership with the community and key organisations. Our decisions will always reflect the needs of the community, further our charitable commitments and ensure that the level of funding available to us is allocated to maximise public benefit.

The Approach

Our Five Year Plan sets out our strategic direction as an organisation and provides structure and focus for the annual activities and projects that are delivered by our teams. All staff have their own objectives set on an annual basis to ensure that their day-to-day activities help to deliver these plans. Staff are also appraised annually to review their performance to recognise their successes and also provide any support needed to help them develop in their role.



Managing our Finances

We are a self-funding charitable organisation with our income generated through our property and investment portfolio.

By generating secure and long-term income from our property and investments we are able to pay for our running costs and charitable commitments. We have streamlined the organisation to ensure that we are delivering services efficiently and cost effectively.

We will continue this focus through the Five Year Plan with our day-to-day expenditure matching our income each year so that we maximise our contribution to the Garden City and maintain our long-term reinvestment model.

We aim to grow our income over the next five years to enable us to deliver enhanced services and meet the aspirations of the plan. By the end of the plan period we intend that our venues will be self-funding overall.

Delivery of the largest project of the plan period, the creation of the new Broadway Theatre (2016), will require significant investment, which will come from our cash reserves. Future large-scale investments will be appraised individually and funded from future project receipts or if appropriate from borrowings.

Our approach means that we will manage our finances effectively, growing our income in a planned and appropriate way to spend on our charitable commitments.

No profit or surplus is removed from the Garden City; every penny earned is directed back into the fulfilment of our charitable commitments. All of our activities are delivered within Letchworth Garden City for the benefit of the community.

Technology, Systems and Processes

The effective use of technology, systems and processes is key to the successful delivery of the plan. Processes and services provided by Finance, Internal Audit, IT, Health & Safety and Human Resources provide support for all of our staff and across all aspects of our work. Our specialist teams ensure we comply with legislation and support our continual ambition to drive efficiencies.

Within this plan period we will identify areas of our operation that can be further improved by the introduction of enhanced technological support. In particular we will review our performance as a landlord to ensure we are providing a high level of service to all our tenants and explore ways by which we can improve our tenant support through the use of technology.

Our People

Our staff are our most important asset. Without them we will be unable to achieve our ambitions. As our biggest ambassadors, we want them to feel valued in their roles and engaged with the work they are doing. To help them understand the work we do and their role in delivering this plan, we will review our staff communication and engagement and set up meaningful opportunities for staff feedback.

It's important that we have enough staff with the right skills to deliver this plan. We will look at our programme of work annually and review what resources are required to deliver these work streams.



Measuring Success

We have a number of qualitative and quantitative measures that will help us track our performance during the period of this plan. These include:

Quantitative

- Our annual charitable expenditure will average no less than 35% of our annual incoming resources (subject to any exceptional costs).
- Our operating costs will average no more than 40% of our annual combined incoming resources and charitable expenditure.
- At least 90% of our work stream targets will be delivered in line with our annual action plans.

Qualitative

Qualitative assessment will be undertaken through internal surveys with Staff, Trustees and Governors and external surveys will be used to assess our performance against the aims in this plan. The surveys will be carried out after year 2 and 4 of the plan

and the results compared with previous perception surveys undertaken in 2013 and 2015.

Our annual action plans will also have individual measures for our services. We will update the community about our progress via our regular newsletter, our website and our annual Garden City Meeting.

Key Performance Indicators

We are also developing a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) under each of our three themes which will track the progress of our aims.

A benchmarking exercise will be completed in 2016 and measures will be taken throughout the five year plan period and shared online.

Some of Your Ideas and Suggestions

What makes Letchworth a **Unique** Garden City?

“Invest in innovative housing that is as pioneering now as the early houses were, including retrofitting if possible. Maintain the garden city ideals but not try to preserve the town in aspic. Encourage business and employers to prevent Letchworth becoming solely a commuter town. Ensure the town retains green spaces including allotments.”

“The heritage I’d like to see our Garden City trailblazing includes the fostering of sustainable supportive communities (of people, including the elderly and those with dementia or with no friends/family), and sustainable ‘technologies’ such as buildings (eg, like Hartington Place), transport, energy, food, water etc... I’m pleased we put ourselves on the map as the world’s first garden city, but I’d not invest a lot of time, money, resource on that going forward - because in many ways “so what?” unless we are still trailblazing NOW...”

“Weekend events only target families with small children... build a community that involves everyone, not who you want it too... Festivals and events should attract people from towns around but they don’t. Rhythms of the World in Hitchin attracts an audience from London and the south.”

“Every main road into Letchworth and along the A1 should have large advertising boards stating “The First Garden City” and encouragement to visit the town.”

“Look into vertical gardens for offices and work spaces.”

What makes Letchworth a Vibrant Garden City?

“The improvements over the last few years are great but I don’t think they go far enough. Why don’t you shut down Eastcheap and Leys Avenue to cars at the weekend, especially in summer, and allow the cafes to put out more tables and chairs.”

“There should be at least one set of hub or campus offices to encourage small tech companies in the town - give them high quality office space and meeting rooms to rent out cheaply on a monthly basis. There are examples popping up in London - see Google’s Campus or Impact Hub. This could pull in several small companies from around the area and make Letchworth an important small tech town. Perfectly positioned between London and Cambridge.”

“Some sort of ‘enterprise mentoring/coaching’ for small independent businesses, plus a particular focus on businesses (large and small) whose products, services, and way of working, are leading the way in sustainability/ecology from building community spirit (eg, the fantastic Big Lunch Extras programme)...”

“We are lucky enough to have a vast amount of different social clubs and groups in the Garden City. e.g. The Letchworth Centre, David’s Bookshop, Vasanta Hall and also a lot of family-friendly places, such as Daisy’s, Dot-to-Dot, Chris’s Tea Rooms, Ciao. We also have the outdoor paddling pools and the Howard Museum, as well as Standalone. The town has a very ‘Metropolitan’ feel about it during the summer months.”

“The leisure centre and health clubs seem expensive, there is a need for cheap and easy ‘starter activities’ which could again be linked to social activities. There seems to be much available for youngsters and the very active and the very elderly but not so much those in between. Maybe encouraging volunteering to start running social groups for exercise, gardening, arts and crafts.”

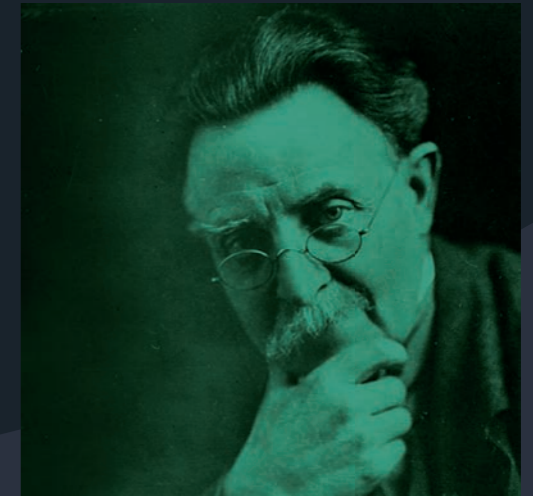
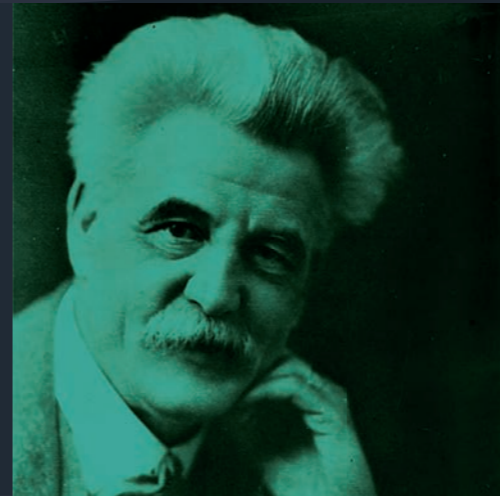
“Letchworth is already brilliant with a huge range of organisations, though perhaps aimed mainly at the U16s and Over 60s with rather less going on in the middle. David’s Bookshop is the centre of this and long may it continue.”

“How about a teenage youth club like the Leys used to be. Run by youth workers to give support and advice to our teenagers and give them a sense that their community does care about them.”

“I know quite a few socially isolated people, myself included, and we don’t know where to go to meet like-minded people. I know some of the religious groups run activities but this is off putting for those who don’t want to be involved in the religious side.”

“The community groups are amazing, I came here six years ago and have made friends through the community groups such as the The Friends Of Howard Park, Rosehill Singers, Grandparent’s Group and various Toddler Groups.”

What makes Letchworth a Social Garden City?



About the Heritage Foundation

We are a self-funding charitable organisation re-investing for the long term benefit of communities in Letchworth Garden City.

What we do

We support, fund and promote activities for Letchworth Garden City communities.

How we do it

We manage our investments and commercial activities to generate income which we re-invest into the community via our charitable activities, services and grants.

Everything we do is driven by our charitable commitments:

- Environment and Heritage
- Recreation and Leisure
- Education and Learning
- Health and Wellbeing
- Charitable Activities
- Locally based charities

Our Values

APPRECIATION / TEAM WORK / PROFESSIONALISM / LISTENING

Our values underpin the way we work together and the way we work with the community, our customers and partners. We always work as a team, appreciate individuals, goals and priorities, act professionally and above all listen and welcome feedback.

Our Principles

The principles we apply in taking forward our activities and projects are:

Commitment to sustainability

We will seek to limit our impact on the physical environment whilst ensuring that the social and economic infrastructure of Letchworth Garden City can support the successful development of the town's diverse communities.

Positive, pioneering approach

We aim to continue the spirit of the Garden City Movement in all that we support, fund and promote for the continuing development of the town to enhance the quality of life for its communities.

Dedication to open communication

We will ensure that internal and external communication is managed successfully to provide clear information and explanations regarding our projects and activities to our Colleagues, Trustees, Governors, Partners, Customers and the wider communities. We will also listen and share ideas and knowledge to ensure our work reflects the aims of the town.

Recognition of Letchworth's significance as the world's first Garden City

We will celebrate our heritage and maintain the architectural integrity of the Garden City. We will promote the success of the Garden City development model as a modern day framework to support the expansion, regeneration and development of towns and cities across the globe.

Advisory Groups and Forums

Our Trustees and Governors are very active in progressing projects and activities as part of this plan with many involved in our advisory groups and forums. Working in partnership with the community these groups have been set up to take forward key issues and ensure we are always seeking wider views. The groups currently in place are set out below. It is anticipated that the role of these groups will change over time and also new groups will be formed in the plan period.

Sustainability Forum

The primary objective for the Forum is the creation and initiation of a town-wide sustainability strategy for Letchworth Garden City, its residents, establishments, businesses and visitors.

Business and Economic Development Group

Researching the business landscape of Letchworth Garden City, the Business and Economic Group is committed to building business networks within the town and seeking to establish continued inward investment activity.

Active Letchworth

Supporting an active lifestyle, the Active Letchworth group is working with sporting groups and recreational activity providers to promote and improve Letchworth's offer.

Arts Forum

The Forum aims to bring together arts providers to share ideas and ambitions. It discusses future programming and explores ways in which activities can be developed across providers and locations in support of common themes.

Accessibility Group

By promoting the importance of accessibility, this group highlights that buildings and public areas should be usable by all members of the community and visitors. The group is exploring programmes and upgrades to improve levels of accessibility.

Appendix A – Charitable Objects

We are a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, with charitable status registered number 28211R. We were founded under the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation Act 1995 (the Act).

Our rules set out our objects to carry on for the benefit of the local community of Letchworth Garden City, the industry, business or trade of:

- (i) Promoting the preservation of buildings and other environmental features of beauty or historic interest within Letchworth Garden City. (Environment and Heritage)
- (ii) Providing or assisting in the provision of facilities for the recreation or other leisure activity of the local community in the interests of social welfare with the object of improving their conditions of life. (Recreation and Leisure)
- (iii) Promoting the advancement of education and learning within Letchworth Garden City. (Education and Learning)
- (iv) Promoting the relief of poverty and sickness within Letchworth Garden City. (Health and Wellbeing)
- (v) Supporting any charitable organisation having an office or branch in Letchworth Garden City. (Locally Based Charities)
- (vi) Promoting any other charitable purposes for the benefit of the local community. (Charitable Activities)

Our objects also appear in Schedule 1 of the Act, which states that “the only Objects of the Heritage Foundation shall be those specified in Schedule 1”.

In carrying out the objects we are required:

- a) To demonstrate that we exist for the public benefit, consistent with Section 2 and 3 of the Charities Act 2011; and
- b) To have regard to the maintenance of the undertaking as an entity in accordance with the principles on which the Garden City was founded, consistent with Sections 1 to 4 of the Charities Act 2011.

Appendix B - Our Garden City Principles

- Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets.
- Land value capture for the benefit of the community.
- Opportunities for residents to grow their own food, including allotments.
- Generous green space, including: a surrounding belt of countryside to prevent unplanned sprawl; well-connected and biodiversity-rich public parks; high-quality gardens; tree-lined streets; and open spaces.
- Strong local cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable neighbourhoods.
- Integrated and accessible transport systems.
- Strong vision, leadership and community engagement.
- Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are affordable for ordinary people.
- Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens in healthy communities.
- A strong local jobs offer in the Garden City itself and within easy commuting distance.

Appendix C - Board & Governors



Appendix D - Leadership Team

Communications Health & Safety Human Resources Internal Audit IT Services	Chief Executive – Graham Fisher graham.fisher@letchworth.com / 01462 476007				Company Secretary Jas Kaur jas.kaur@letchworth.com 01462 476002
Finance Director	Head of Property	Head of Marketing & Leisure Development	Head of Strategic Planning and Development	Head of Charitable Services Development	
Matthew Peak matthew.peak@letchworth.com 01462 476089	Mark Coles mark.coles@letchworth.com 01462 476088	Glen Dawson glen.dawson@letchworth.com 01462 476058	David Ames david.ames@letchworth.com 01462 476074	Alastair Stewart alastair.stewart@letchworth.com 01462 476037	
Financial Management	Property Portfolio Management Landscape Management Internal Resources	Tourist Information Centre Spirella Ballroom Standalone Farm Broadway (Cinema, Theatre, Studio and Gallery)	Heritage Advisory Team Strategic Planning The International Garden Cities Exhibition Garden City Collection Environmental Management	Community Grants Community Support & Learning Ernest Gardiner Treatment Centre Fleet Management	

