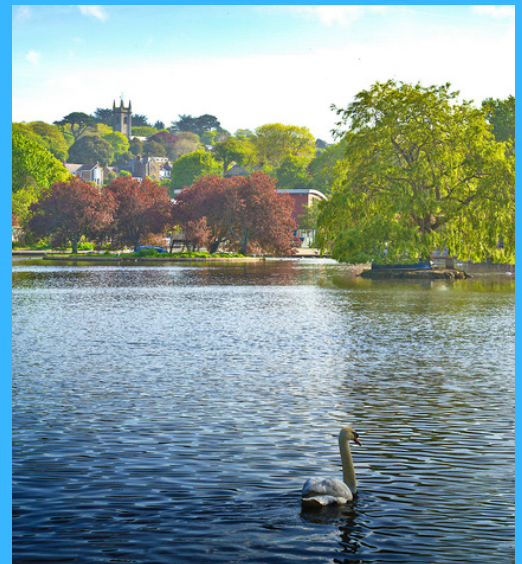


HELSTON TOWN COUNCIL Strategic Plan 2023-2027



INTRODUCTION

This is the Strategic Plan for Helston Town Council for 2023 to 2027.

This is a plan for the next four years which takes us past the next town council elections. Not everything will be delivered or achieved in this time, but the intention of this plan is that you know what to expect from Helston Town Council in terms of its services and accountability and that it provides 'building blocks' for the future.

Here we set the scene for ongoing and exciting projects to support the future of our town and how we work together to be flexible and responsive to changing times and challenges – both as a Council and with the wider community. In 2019, Helston Town Council declared a climate emergency. This means we recognise our responsibilities to make decisions that reduce emissions, enhance the environment and strengthen our community - doing our utmost to ensure we do not disadvantage our present and future communities locally and globally.



We have some fantastic assets, set in the highly valued natural environment of The Lizard and providing a service centre for a range of other communities on the peninsula. We recognise as a Council that we need to be friendly, approachable and compassionate in the way that we work with a whole range of people and partners to improve both opportunities for Helston and the experience of living, visiting or working here.

That means a town in which people are happy to live, bring up children and grow old. It means a location people choose to work in and set up businesses, and it means a community people want to visit because of what it offers.

Mission Statement

To nurture a thriving, healthy town at the heart of an inclusive and supportive community and deliver excellent services. To engage the community in developing and caring for Helston's assets and environment for the wellbeing of all, and respond and communicate effectively on progress.





Role of the Town Council

This is about how we project our identity as a place and as a Council – with the two working together as one. We recognise that local government can seem confusing or unapproachable; but as your Town Council we want to challenge those barriers by communicating and responding to your needs and concerns in a timely way, where you have the opportunity to be involved in the projects that the Town Council develops (both by itself and with partners) and that together we are building a more resilient, caring and happy town that can thrive now and in the future: with the Town Council integral to that.

Helston Town Council represents the local community at different levels, delivers services to meet local needs, manages its assets and strives to make decisions that improve the quality of life and community well-being.

A background to Helston

Helston is an ancient market town – almost equidistant to Falmouth and Penzance – and is the largest most southerly settlement in Great Britain with a growing population in excess of 14,000. It has 3 primary schools and one community college, a range of healthcare services and an active community and voluntary sector - all working hard to improve wellbeing and opportunities for the community. It is a 'catchment area' for shopping, employment and entertainment across much of The Lizard peninsula and is home to many local businesses and employers.

Helston has a range of heritage and other assets - from the kennels in Coinagehall Street to architecture in the form of Epworth Hall close by, with much of the centre of Helston classed as a Conservation Area. There is public access to several parks and gardens throughout the town.

Helston is 12 miles from the strategic transport network of the A30 and the mainline rail service. It is experiencing the same challenges as many Cornish towns with the current housing crisis and has higher than average shop vacancy.

Please Note: Some of the language included in this plan may not be familiar, so a glossary has been provided. We used plain English and avoided acronyms where ever possible.





STRONG

A strong council is financially secure, makes decisions based on strategic plans and good, impartial officer advice.

A strong council is open to ideas and challenge from the community it serves.

A strong council provides good governance and is open and transparent in its decision-making processes and spending plans.

A strong council has clear stewardship and management of its assets.



ACTIVE

An active council chooses to operate as a catalyst for positive change, working to improve lives and opportunities across the community.

An active council provides the networks and support needed for a strong and active community.

An active council builds positive relationships with neighbouring councils and the unitary authority.



PROGRESSIVE

A progressive council is ambitious, innovative, forward-thinking and outward-looking.

A progressive council regularly reviews its structures, processes and community engagement to ensure they are effective in taking the town forward towards the future.

A progressive council understands the impact of its actions on the environment and shows leadership on the issues.

A progressive council values and promotes the professional development of its staff; and proactively ensures members get the training they need to fulfil their duties as councillors.



CARING

A caring council is one in which its culture is supportive and where all contributions are valued.

A caring council is family friendly and supports those with care responsibilities.

A caring council is one which seeks the views of everyone – especially lesser heard groups.



INCLUSIVE

An inclusive council seeks to maximise the opportunities for communities to engage with it, viewing engagement as positive and beneficial.

An inclusive council builds and participates in projects and partnerships which ensure that no-one, and no part of the town is left behind.

An inclusive council actively works with, and is always accountable to the diverse community it serves.

An inclusive council is open, transparent and consultative and responsible to the diverse community it serves.



1

**CONTRIBUTE TO A PROSPEROUS
AND
HEALTHY TOWN**

Helston Town Council will engage with partner organisations to develop a more resilient, caring, happy and thriving town for the future.

2

**IMPROVE THE VALUE OF THE
TOWN'S BUILT, CULTURAL AND
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

The Town Council recognises that Helston has some fantastic assets within the town and will work (both by itself and with partners) to retain, improve and enhance the built, cultural and natural environment.

3

**STRIVE FOR THE WELLBEING OF
ALL WHO LIVE IN, VISIT AND WORK
IN THE TOWN**

The Council will work with the community and key partners to support the wellbeing of all who live, work and visit Helston.

4

**BE INCLUSIVE, REPRESENTATIVE
AND RESPONSIVE TO ALL RESIDENTS
AND STAKEHOLDERS**

We understand that local government can seem confusing or unapproachable and the Town Council wants to remove these barriers to better engage with residents and stakeholders to understand and respond to the needs and concerns of the community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We will engage with the community on each objective within the plan and adapt in response to feedback.

Aims: 4

Monitor and report on actions taken to deliver the strategic plan objectives.

Communicate with residents and businesses.

Encourage feedback, greater access and attendance at council meetings.

Monitor and report on actions taken to deliver the strategic plan objectives.

Implement the Council Communication Strategy for the enhancement of understanding and engagement for all in Helston

COMMUNITY SAFETY

We will work with partners to keep Helston a safe town that everyone can enjoy.

Aims: 1 3 4

Work with relevant partners to reduce instances of anti-social behaviour.

Engaging with the needs of people for the future of their town.

Work with relevant partners so that Helston remains a safe town.

Continue to develop, maintain and implement an Emergency Plan including a Flood Plan with volunteers and the Environment Agency.

Working with partners to design out the opportunity for crime where possible when developing projects.

Continue to support and develop the Town CCTV system.

COMMUNITY STRENGTH

We will offer grants and support to help the community take an active lead in meeting the needs of our town.

Aims: 1 3 4

Provide grant funding and support to community groups.

Explore support for a youth council/ youth voice.

Provide support and leadership to our community.

Strengthen our links with community groups and reporting back.

Support the delivery of the Youth Manifesto



ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

We will deliver and maintain our pledges as part of our Climate Emergency and Earth Protector Town declarations.

Aims: ① ② ③ ④

Produce and implement our action plan to monitor, review and report on our organisational carbon footprint with the goal of Helston Town Council being carbon neutral by 2030

Produce an Environmental Action plan to include all our services and responsibilities with the goal of maximising our positive impact on the environment and minimising harm.

In partnership with the community, develop projects that contribute to the Parish of Helston becoming carbon neutral by 2030, increase biodiversity and build resilience.



GOVERNANCE

We will ensure that the town council is well managed and accountable to residents.

Aims: ③ ④

Promote the role of Councillor to encourage more interest at local elections.

Develop a training and induction plan for Councillors and Staff.

Ensure that Accounts and Audits demonstrate good management of finances and the councils well run.

Maintain General Power of Competence and use it for the benefit of the town.

Recognise as a Council that we need to be friendly, approachable and compassionate in the way that we work.



HEALTH & WELLBEING

We will support a healthy town with opportunities for everyone.

Aims: ① ② ③ ④

Continue to deliver and support community events.

Support youth outreach and opportunities for young people to shape our town.

Development of community spaces to improve people wellbeing by increasing social interaction

Continue to support and promote community groups where possible



HOUSING & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

We will lobby for future development to provide improved infrastructure and community facilities for our town.

Aims: ① ② ③ ④

Explore the development and implementation of a Neighborhood Development Plan (NDP)

Require that development is sustainable, attractive and in a location which fits the town.

The Planning Committee will reference care for the environment and sustainability.



REGENERATION

We will seek further devolution of assets to Helston Town Council to enable a stronger natural and built environment in attracting visitors and businesses into the town.

Aims: ① ② ③ ④

Promote the town as a place to live, work and visit.

Implement improvements to Helston that support those who use and value the town.

Work with the community and voluntary sectors/groups to co-produce positive results for Helston, improving the environment of the town and ultimately reducing maintenance costs.

We will ensure that any transfer of services or assets is of benefit to the town.



TRANSPORT & CONNECTIVITY

We will seek to improve both transport and digital connectivity for the Town.

Aims: ① ③ ④

It is the aspiration of the town council to reconnect this area of West Cornwall to Network Rail in order to improve public transport. This will reduce dependency on private vehicles.

Lobby for the creation of a transport hub to help reduce the number of buses using Helston's main thoroughfare - Coinagehall Street without reducing the service provided.

Promote the building of more cycle-ways and footpaths so that residents can access all areas of the town in a healthy and safe way.

Provide as much support as we can for people struggling to access digital services.

Share information with residents regarding help they can receive from other organisations in Cornwall with accessing the internet.

Monitor the phasing out of traditional telephone landline services and offering support where possible

How will we know when we have met our objectives?

Helston Town Council will, where possible, measure success in terms of outcomes and quality of service which are both immediate and ongoing.

What is important is that we set a direction of travel that shows both what we have to do and what we want to do to achieve a more responsive and improved Town Council that is collaborating with as many partners as possible to secure a strong future for Helston.

The Town Council recognises that these have to operate within available or likely resources: so developing partnerships can allow these to be maximised to enable wellbeing. To do this we need to understand how themes and projects fit together and ensure that a positive action in one area does not lead to a negative in another. It is about understanding the whole picture; with Helston Town Council addressing issues with a local focus but within the context of wider influences – and being involved in those where appropriate.

It is important to involve the community and other organisations to ensure a joined-up approach: about balancing the needs of people and the environment. Thinking globally and acting locally.

Financial Management of this Plan

Helston Town Council will always endeavour to provide value for money in the services that it provides for our community. We must never forget that the money we use is provided by the public. We have a responsibility to ensure that it is spent carefully.

What does this mean?

Good value for money is the optimal use of resources to achieve intended outcomes. Part of this will be working with others to achieve our aims and objectives (where they are shared) and to influence others where they may not be. It is about recognising that a diligent approach can help to save money in the long run.

Good value for money has traditionally meant the adoption of the 3 Es principle:

- Is it Effective? Does it do what we want it to do?
- Is it the most Efficient way of delivering that service?
- Is it Economic in achieving that service delivery?

This does not mean the cheapest option is always the best way!

We also believe that Helston Town Council should consider an additional E when delivering services.

- What is the Environmental impact of delivering the service in this manner?

Helston Town Council has an ambition to provide the highest quality services for the community, particularly against the background of the Unitary authority stripping back services to those that it is legally required to provide.



Carbon Neutral

An individual, community or organisation would be considered “Carbon Neutral” when all of their actions that create carbon dioxide are minimised, with any unavoidable emissions being balanced by actions that remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, resulting in no net release of carbon dioxide.

Devolution

The transfer of a building, land or a service from one council to another. This could be a transfer of a play area from Cornwall Council to Helston Town Council.

General Power of Competence

The General Power of Competence (GPC) was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and took effect in February 2012. In simple terms, it gives councils the power to do anything an individual can do.

Governance

How the town council is run. A council has to meet certain guidelines by law and in how it operates.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

Neighbourhood development plans are the plans developed at a town and parish council level with legal force. They are formal a document and are additional to the Cornwall Development Plan.

Helston is currently exploring the viability of a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Infrastructure

This can include structures and facilities (e.g. buildings, roads, power supplies) needed for the operation of the town or wider community.

Mission Statement

A mission statement lets people know why an organisation exists, whom it serves, and how it se exists, whom it serves, and how it serves them.

Strategic Aims

Strategic Aims include large goals we want to reach, through our strategies. They are the overarching principles to the Vision Statement.

Strategic Objectives

Detail the steps to the strategic aims. These steps, which are measurable and visible, become the strategy for reaching the larger aims.

Sustainability Statement

A list of items which should be considered when building or changing the use of a property. This will include green issues and choice of materials.

Sustainable Transport

Any means of transport with low impact on the environment, and includes non-vehicle based transport like walking and cycling, green vehicles, car sharing, and greater use of public transport.

Values

Describe the core principles which the council will abide by, no matter what. They inspire councillors and employees best efforts and also guide their actions. Values play an important role in building a positive culture at the council.

Helston Town Council Documents

Council Finance

https://www.helston-tc.gov.uk/Council_Finance_173.aspx
Includes the Annual Return, Financial Regulations, Schedule of Payments and the Annual Budget.



Council Policies

https://www.helston-tc.gov.uk/Council_Policies_171.aspx
Includes the Code of Conduct, Environmental Policy, Standing Orders



Documents from External Organisations

Helston Climate Action Plan

www.helstonclimateaction.earth/climate-action-plan/



Earth Protector Town Website

<https://earthprotectorcommunities.net/towns/>

