

Nottinghamshire County Council Annual Report 2023 to 2024



Healthy

Prosperous

Green



**Nottinghamshire
County Council**

Welcome to our Annual Report 2023-24

In November 2021 we launched [The Nottinghamshire Plan](#), which sets out the County Council’s 10-year vision for a healthy, prosperous and greener future for everyone. The Plan made clear the mechanisms we would use to monitor our progress, including an Annual Report that details what we have achieved in the last year, to meet the needs of Nottinghamshire’s residents.

It is important that we take time to reflect on the progress we are making towards achieving our ambitions and to celebrate what has gone well during the last 12 months. For example, we have, alongside our key partners, delivered a historic East Midlands devolution deal bringing in billions of pounds of new investment for the years ahead, launched a first of its kind fostering recruitment support hub, approved a new Data Strategy to help utilise data to improve services for people and communities, improved our information and signposting for people experiencing poor mental health and wellbeing, further work is being progressed with the Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) Fusion programme project, we’re on track to deliver our new office development at Oak House and save millions in running costs for the taxpayer, amongst other key achievements.


Building on these successes we remain committed to doing more, listening and working with our residents and partners, ensuring that we deliver the best for Nottinghamshire’s communities, provide value for money, and take advantage of new opportunities for the County. We continue to be recognised across the country as a good Council, with a clear vision and strong finances despite the pressures that we all face across the sector. Our plans for the future build on our achievements so far, as well as areas we are striving to improve. You can read more about our plans for 2024-25 in our new [Annual Delivery Plan](#).

This report looks back and celebrates our key achievements in 2023-24, and demonstrates just some of the steps we have taken to make the ambitions set out in the Nottinghamshire Plan a reality. We’re making real progress, and there is still so much more to come.



Cllr Ben Bradley –
Leader of the Council

Main highlights



The Council collaborated with local partners and central Government to deliver a **historic £1.14bn East Midlands devolution deal**. The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) was formally established in February 2024, with the inaugural mayoral election held on 2 May 2024.



A **Listening Project** has been commissioned to engage with stakeholders and people with lived experience of suicidality, self-harm and suicide bereavement. Findings from this and pilot projects already delivered, will be used to inform the development of our new **Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Self-Harm and Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan**.



Ten Local Area Coordinators are now walking alongside individuals in **ten different localities across the County**. The support they offer covers a range of issues and helps those living in these areas to build resilience and achieve their own personal goals to live their best life.



Foster for East Midlands (FfEM), the D2N2 fostering recruitment support hub, has launched – the first of its kind in the country. Since its launch, FfEM has already seen an increase in the number of regional **fostering applications** compared to the last financial year.



Following the approval of the Council’s new Data Strategy, we are working to improve how we **collect, use and share data effectively**. The strategy will help enable us to utilise data to continue to improve services for people and communities, target resources and drive efficiency and best value for Nottinghamshire residents.



A student travel scheme has successfully been launched in partnership with local bus operators and local colleges in Mansfield and Ashfield, with **2,100 students now using local bus services** to access education, work and leisure. The scheme has just been awarded the prestigious **Bus Centre of Excellence, Bus Initiative of the Year 2024**.



A new **Technology Enabled Care (TEC) Strategy for Adult Social Care** was approved in March 2024, with a particular focus on the cultural shift required to increase the use of TEC by staff to support the people they work with. **As of January 2024, the Council provided TEC services to 43% of people who receive our support to maintain their independence at home, the aim is to increase this to 70% by April 2027.**



Working in partnership with Derby, Derbyshire, and Nottingham City councils we have developed a **D2N2 areawide Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan** to help identify priorities for the future development of cycling and walking networks.

Further information on each of the above can be found on the following pages of this Report.

Nottinghamshire today

Population & Demographics



The population aged 65 and over is expected to grow by **28%** by 2034 – an extra **49,000** people.

The population of the County is 834,800, which is expected to grow by **9%** by 2034, to **908,000**.

Men in the County can expect to live in good health for **62 years** on average, whereas for women in the County this is **60 years**.

Deprivation & Life Expectancy



31 neighbourhoods in Nottinghamshire fall within the top **10%** most deprived neighbourhoods in England.

People in the most disadvantaged areas of the County have lives that are on average **significantly shorter** than those living in the least disadvantaged areas. For men the gap is **9.3 years** and for women the gap is **7.7 years**.

The median gross weekly pay of full-time workers by residence in Nottinghamshire is **£646**, which is below the figure for England of **£683.40**.

Earnings & Education



In 2021, **33%** of the working age population in Nottinghamshire were qualified to at least **Level 4 or higher**, compared to **43%** for England.

Transport & Digital Connections



99% of Nottinghamshire homes and businesses can access a superfast broadband service.

There is over **4,000 kilometres** of road across the County.

There are **over 1,400** local wildlife sites across Nottinghamshire.

In 2023, **69%** of residents who responded to our budget consultation were positive about their local area as a place to live.

Local Satisfaction Levels



43% of respondents indicated being satisfied with the way Nottinghamshire County Council runs things, whilst **25%** were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

Nature & Environment



Between 2011 and 2021, CO2 emissions in Nottinghamshire reduced by **15%** – this is less than the reduction achieved in England over the same period (**26%**).



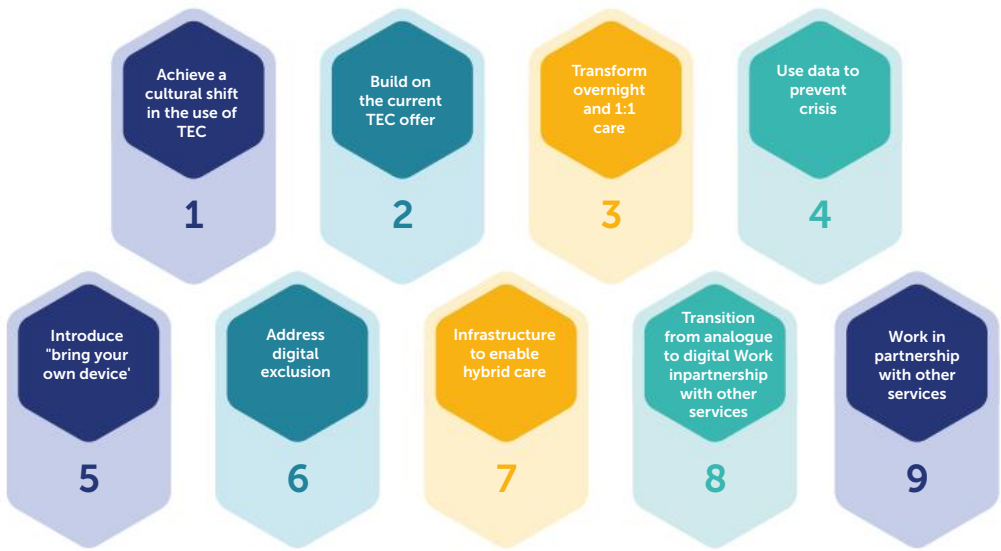
Ambition 1

Helping our people live healthier, more independent lives

Our ambition is that people in every community enjoy healthier, happier lives, whilst remaining independent for longer. We want people to live more years in good health, to see increased life expectancy in areas with the biggest inequalities, and for people to have reduced levels of anxiety. We will continue working with partners to effectively embed the positive work we are doing together in local communities.

Specific highlights during 2023-24 include:

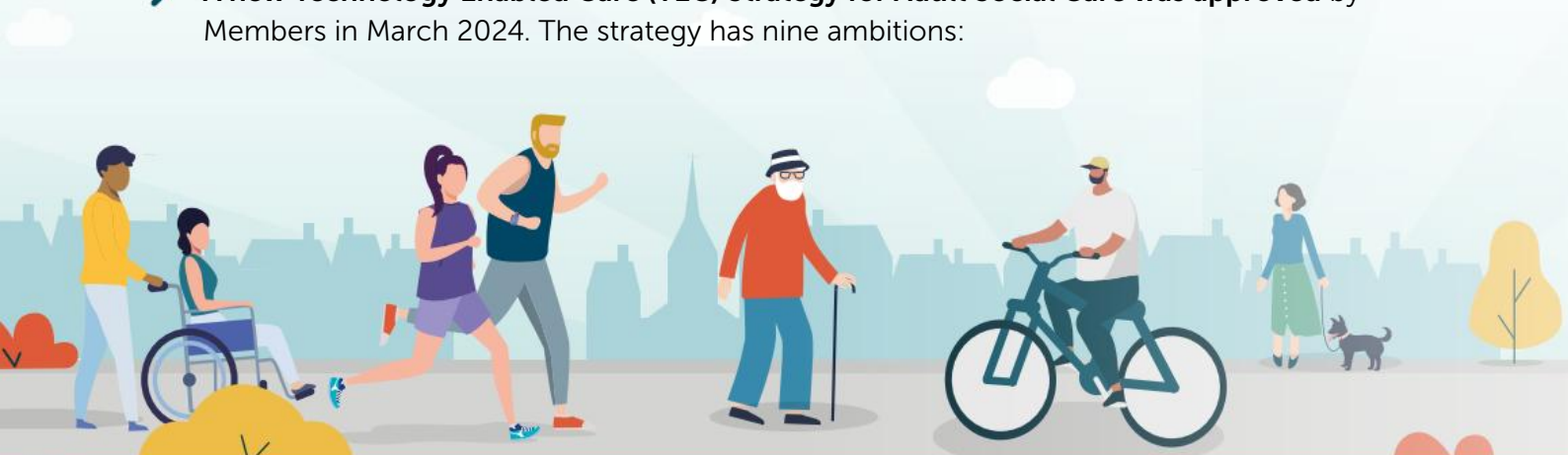
- **Mental health promotion and awareness training** videos were finalised and launched as part of Mental Health Awareness Week. The videos are accessible from: <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/adult-social-care/mental-health-wellbeing>. The development of the **new all-age NottAlone website** is also progressing, ready for launch in Autumn 2024 and will act as a key source of information and signposting for people across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire experiencing poor mental health and wellbeing.
- **A Listening Project has been established to engage with people that have lived experience of suicidality, self-harm, and suicide bereavement** to gather insights and recommendations that will inform suicide prevention activities. A range of pilot projects have been delivered to understand the barriers, experiences and perceptions surrounding mental health and suicide, whilst raising awareness, reducing stigma, and promoting help-seeking. The findings from the Listening Project and pilot projects will be used to inform the development of our new **Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Self-Harm and Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan** (due to launch in 24/25), as well as informing our commissioned training offer and the development of targeted communications resources.
- **A new Technology Enabled Care (TEC) Strategy for Adult Social Care was approved** by Members in March 2024. The strategy has nine ambitions:



There is a particular focus on the cultural shift required to increase the use of TEC by staff to support the people they work with. **As of January 2024, the Council provided TEC services to 43% of people who receive our support to maintain their independence at home, the aim is to increase this to 70% by April 2027.**

An example of positive impact		
Case Summary	How TEC helped	Outcome
Mr G's family was worried about his ability to manage at home. They suspected that he was going to the loft to turn the boiler off, despite his mobility issues, which would leave him feeling cold.	Demonstrated that Mr G was turning the heating off through radiators, rather than the boiler, as the house was too cold on average. The information from the TEC also supported the assessment of the mobility concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Family replaced radiators, so they can't be turned off.TEC remains to continue to support the assessment of Mr G's mobility and monitor temperature changes.Evidence to support intervention, reduced crisis and hospital admission

- **The commissioned Young Carers Support Service is actively working with 50% of our known young carer population** across Nottinghamshire. Active in-reach into schools is supporting the additional early identification of young carers leading to an additional 30-40 young carers being referred to the service each month. This means that young carers are receiving support at an earlier stage, leading to better health and wellbeing outcomes. The school in-reach also works with schools so that they are able to support young carers effectively within the educational environment.
- **A newly awarded single city and county-wide contract has been awarded for an Integrated Sexual Health Service** that replaces the current arrangements for sexual health services delivered through several contracts. The improved service will ensure that everyone has access to the same high quality 'one stop shop' for sexual health services, regardless of where they live, and it is working towards mobilisation ready for launch on 1st October 2024. The service will be delivered across City and County, led by Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust in partnership with Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust and supported by a remote sexual health service provider, Preventx.



Ambition 2

Supporting communities and families

Our ambition is to ensure that our services are meeting demand and provide the best possible services for all our communities and families, in the most sustainable way. We want to promote volunteering and involvement in local organisations and to ensure that funding reaches community projects and initiatives that will best support our communities. We also want to improve the number of children ready for school and achieving a good level of development by the end of the reception year and to ensure children, young people and families can access services that are easy to navigate and are adaptive to their needs.

- **The County Council is working with partners to make positive changes that improve the outcomes and experiences for children and young people with SEND.** Additional resources have been allocated to statutory Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services and more families are receiving Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessments and plans within timescales. Additional Educational Psychology capacity has been secured and there is partnership work with schools and education settings to support early identification, support and access to resources without the requirement for an EHCP. **A new outcomes focused local area SEND Strategy** is also being developed with input from parents, carers, children, young people, health, care and education settings to sustain progress and ensure all partners continue to work together. There have been 77 additional special school places created since 2021 including expansions at Orchard School, Brackenhill School and a satellite provision at King Edward Primary School. Plans are in place for further expansion at St Giles School and Fountaindale.

- The **Early Help and Support in the Community team** has worked to develop and train a network of **over 100 volunteers (champions) across all areas of the county to promote positive health and wellbeing messages**, whilst providing an avenue of feedback directly to our Public Health department to help guide decision making based on the voices of the community.

The team also has 10 Local Area Coordinators (LAC) based in hyper local areas across the county who build relationships with residents, alongside linkages with the wider community and partners operating in each area to provide a joined up personalised support. The LACs work to support on a range of resident needs – from financial and housing, to employment and benefit provision on a non-referral basis. Specific examples include:

- A resident in one locality, who is experiencing the early stages of dementia, has been supported by the LAC to access day services along with the benefit support that they are eligible for – leading to not only social activity for the resident but also vital respite for their wife who is their main carer.
- A resident who moved into the area after fleeing domestic violence in another part of the country – the LAC worked with the individual to get settled into the community – helping them find employment, social activities as well a support for their two young children.

Another complimentary element of the service is the **Community Friendly Notts team** who work flexibly county wide in communities, to help set up community groups such as “knit and natter” and “men in sheds” in order to tackle loneliness and to increase the level of social activity in the community, which when set up is maintained by the community themselves.

- **The roll out of Family Hub Networks has been agreed and 3 Design sites will be launched in July** alongside a further 2 planned for September, with all Family Hub Networks to be in place by April 2025. The Council continues to progress co-production activities with families in high-priority areas, with consultation to shape the Family Hubs, having engaged over 700 parents and carers so far. One piece of feedback received from families included:

- *“The proposed Family hubs will be a great way for families to find out details of what is available in the community for them...Making them warm, welcoming and accessible is key.”*

- **This year we have evidenced 1616 positive family outcomes**, which exceeded our annual target of 1423, by offering high quality family support and working to meet the needs of the whole family to improve outcomes for children. We have brought together a network of support around vulnerable children and their families to identify and address the needs of the household and prevent risks from escalating. As an example, the **Peep Learning Together Programme** was introduced this year, focusing on supporting families to play and interact with their children. Feedback from families includes:

- *“I wasn’t sure about attending this group but I’m so glad we’ve come. I really enjoyed every topic and think I’ve genuinely taken something from each session”.*
- *“I have been given support and advice in discussion and feel like it has improved my knowledge in parenting. Such a friendly environment, easy to bring up any difficulties. Thanks”.*



Ambition 3

Keeping children, vulnerable adults and communities safe

We're working hard with partners like the police, district and borough councils, the NHS and Government agencies to keep all residents - especially children and vulnerable adults - safe and supported in our communities. We want to see crime levels reduced, as well as people who use our adult social care services feeling safe and secure.

Specific highlights during 2023-24 include:

- The Council undertook **102 interventions to ensure business products were safe and unsafe products were removed from the market**. These interventions ensure that residents, especially the most vulnerable in our communities, are protected from harm or fatal injury.
- The Council **delivered modern slavery training to elected members and councillors** in March 2024 to further awareness and help prevent and reduce violent crime, including residents' involvement with County Lines gang activity and violence against women and girls.
- Work has continued within Children's Social Care and with partners for providing 'right support at the right time' and ensuring that children are supported appropriately through Child in Need plans and child protection plans. Through this work **we have seen a significant decrease in the number of children supported through a child protection plan by almost 200 since November 2022**. Since April 2022, we have seen an overall decrease of 18% for both Child in Need and child protection plans jointly, which is in part due to the strength-based approach the Council is committed to.
- **Foster for East Midlands (FfEM), the D2N2 fostering recruitment support hub, was launched on 25 March 2024 - this is the first of its kind to be launched in the country** and follows six months of intensive development with regional colleagues, foster carers and the Department for Education. Foster for East Midlands has a dedicated recruitment team drawn from all four respective local authorities, a dedicated [website](#) and regional marketing reach. Since launching, FfEM has already seen an increase in the number of regional fostering applications compared to the last financial year and is now developing its support offer for carers undergoing assessment. The kinship team also continue to increase the number of Children Looked After in long-term fostering placements exiting care via Special Guardianship Order, working with partners to provide support to children and their families.

- The Department for Education has also funded **Nottinghamshire's first [Mockingbird constellation](#)**, which went live in May 2024. Mockingbird nurtures the relationships between children, young people and foster families supporting them to build a resilient and caring community of six to ten satellite families called a constellation. Our Hub Home Carers have been busy getting to know the nine fostering families in their constellation, and their young person is enjoying the opportunity to make new friends. The constellation includes a variety of families and children looked after, birth children, children with Special Guardianship Orders and adopted children.

A recent Ofsted inspection of Nottinghamshire County Council's children's services has found **the help, protection and care that children and young people are receiving to be good, and that the impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families to be outstanding**. The [report](#), published on 12 July 2024, highlights a clear improvement in the services delivered by the council following the 2019 inspection, and is the best Ofsted report Nottinghamshire has received in, at least, the past 20 years. Specific highlights include:

- That when children and young people need help or protection, social workers respond quickly to help them before any problems get any worse.
- When children or young people in Nottinghamshire need to be looked after away from their family home, social workers ensure that they are well cared for by family members who they live with or foster carers. Social workers make sure that children and young people are supported to do well at school, to have fun and friendships, and to stay in touch with people who are important to them
- For young people who are leaving care, workers see them on a regular basis and make sure that they are well prepared to live independently as a young adult. They help young people get all their important documents such as their health passport and national insurance number. Personal advisors help young people to develop skills so that they can budget and cook
- All the workforce in Nottinghamshire and those who lead services, care about what happens to children and young people. They work hard to improve services to make things better for children and young people, and they involve them in this work as far as possible. Most importantly, they want what is best for children and young people and take pride in their achievements.

Colin Pettigrew, Executive Director of Children and Families for Nottinghamshire County Council, said: "This is a huge achievement. I am immensely proud of the many hard working, dedicated practitioners, foster carers, managers and partners who work really hard every day to improve the lives of vulnerable children in the county. We are also committed to improving further and have confidence that we have the right plans in place achieve that."



Ambition 4

Building skills that help people get good jobs

Whatever stage people are at in their education, we will partner with schools, colleges, universities and training providers to ensure that the skills being taught match the needs of local businesses and new investors, while supporting the kinds of work our people want to do. We want our schools to be rated good or outstanding by Ofsted, vulnerable children to be less likely to miss education and have improved educational outcomes, with children and young people provided with sufficient early years provision and school places. We want the aspirations of our young people to be supported through to adulthood, with people leaving education with better qualifications and skills, and more people in higher paid and skilled jobs.

Specific highlights during 2023-24 include:

- The **2023 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment** has been published on the Council's website. The sufficiency assessment monitors the availability of childcare across the county, so that children can access early education to support their development and preparation for school, and to ensure there is sufficient childcare for working parents. Work to complete the 2024 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment is underway following consultation with families to better understand their childcare needs. Nottinghamshire continues to report sufficient childcare places for eligible 2 year-olds and all 3 and 4 year-olds. According to the assessment, there were approximately 6,400 x 15-hour funded places for eligible 2, 3 and 4 year-olds vacant across the County.

- Work has commenced on developing the new **Special School in Mansfield** to meet the needs of pupils with Autistic Spectrum Condition and Social Emotional and Mental Health Needs. It will have a capacity of 160 students and is expected to be completed in 2025.
- The **Multiply Scheme** (a government funded initiative) has seen £1.4m investment in 825 numeracy courses across the County and had over 3000 learners (aged 19+) participate in interventions designed to increase confidence with numbers, help apply for jobs due to a lack of numeracy skills and access maths provision and move them towards a functional skills qualification.
- We have secured funding from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) on a new **Working Well initiative** to support adults who have a physical or mental health disability, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, to help them to move into work and provide the support they need to maintain that employment. Although this is early days, we are confident that this will help support over 3000 people back into work.
- The Council hosts the **Nottinghamshire Opportunities employment and skills platform**, which is a virtual one-stop-shop to support residents find work opportunities and help employers develop their talent pool. It aims to be the go-to-place to explore local career opportunities and provides a platform for people to search for jobs, training courses, and apprenticeship opportunities. It also provides access to live jobs, apprenticeship and courses with integrated feeds, enabling the Council to connect growth sectors to employment opportunities. This year has seen more users of this platform, especially linked to some large-scale redundancy events (such as Wilkos) and targeted campaigns for jobs at the County Council.



Ambition 5

Strengthening businesses and creating more good-quality jobs

We are helping businesses grow and be more profitable, but we're shaping them to be more sustainable too. These actions will benefit everyone, but we want to particularly support those communities that would benefit most from better job opportunities. We want to see employment levels increase, with Nottinghamshire enjoying increased economic activity. We want more businesses to start and survive, supported by high-quality advice, and for our adult social care market to be stronger and more sustainable.

Specific highlights during 2023-24 include:

- The Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) bid was successful and **Nottinghamshire/ Nottingham are now one of only 33 accredited LVEPs in the country**. This new government initiative should lead to future funding and visibility of our tourism industry. The next stage is to prepare an area-wide Destination Management Plan (incorporating the county districts and the city as well as business, universities and other stakeholders), which is required to identify the local priorities and funding requirements.
- The Council's Trading Standards Service has continued to **support businesses and ensure they are aware of any regulatory changes** that may affect their business. The sectors given support during this period include large food manufacturers, a wide range of retailers regarding product safety and businesses engaged in the farming industry.

- The Council's Business and Enterprise Team (partly funded by various districts and boroughs across Nottinghamshire) have supported over 300 small and medium sized businesses on a one-to-one basis and attended 18 business surgeries throughout the year, helping result in business start-up, growth and access to finance. .
- In November 2023, Officers secured the approval to begin delivery of the **Create Growth programme**. The objectives of this programme are to support high-growth potential creative businesses to become investment ready outside of London, by developing businesses' knowledge, skills, access to finance, and to increase the number of investors willing to invest in such businesses, by educating and developing investor networks. As part of this funding, officers will be able to provide fully funded business support through workshops, peer-to-peer learning, and personalised mentoring to boost investment readiness.



Ambition 6

Making Nottinghamshire somewhere people love to live, work and visit

Nottinghamshire has so many strengths, which we want to build on to make an even more attractive place to live, work and visit. We are working towards making more of these assets for both residents and visitors, and we are prioritising the places in Nottinghamshire that would benefit the most from regeneration. We want to see increased visits to our libraries, cultural and heritage venues, with people enjoying a wide range of leisure and cultural activities and visitors spending more money in our County. We want heritage assets protected and communities supported by good infrastructure, with people looking after and enjoying the local natural environment and more sites provided by the Council successfully and sustainably developed.

Specific highlights during 2023-24 include:

- We have continued to **support the [Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan](#)** through involvement in the Strategic Transport Assessment which will ensure that appropriate transport infrastructure is provided in association with the future growth of Greater Nottingham. We also advised Rushcliffe Borough Council on its Gamston Supplementary Planning Document work which will ensure that appropriate transport facilities are planned for, alongside new developments to benefit both existing and future residents of Nottinghamshire.

- Work continues to **designate five new Local Nature Reserves** to ensure wildlife sites are protected for biodiversity and public well-being. The first tranche of 3 sites is moving forward to designation and the remaining 2 sites will be taken forward when funding becomes available. The Council is also the Responsible Authority for producing a [Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#) for Nottinghamshire and Nottingham and work is underway with a wide range of partners to gather data and identify local priorities. Consultation on the draft strategy will be taking place in late Summer/ Autumn of 2024.
- **Nottinghamshire Day was held on 25th August 2023**, with more than two thousand people estimated to have attended the celebrations at Sherwood Forest County Park. The free-to-attend event was a celebration of all things Nottinghamshire, led by the County Council working with partners such as RSPB, Notts Outdoors and Inspire, as part of the annual Robin Hood Festival.
- **The Nottinghamshire leg of the Tour of Britain Cycling Race was successfully delivered on 6th September 2023.** Across the entire 170km route, 182,500 spectators are estimated to have come out to see the race. Specifically within Robin Hood County, of those surveyed:
 - 62% of spectators came from 'outside the local areas' to watch the race.
 - 87% of fans said they would visit the area again.
 - An impressive 94% of visitors described the race as 'very enjoyable'.
 - 53% of people said the race has inspired them to cycle more.
 - 15% of visitors stayed in the local area overnight.
 - 42% of people came to watch the race with their families.
- The County Council remains committed to being **one of the best-connected county councils** in the country and is progressing with schemes to increase the superfast and ultrafast broadband coverage, as well as improving mobile connectivity.



Ambition 7

Attracting investment in infrastructure, the economy and green growth

We are working towards Nottinghamshire growing greener and improving jobs, opportunities, and quality of life for everyone, supporting a bright and prosperous future for Nottinghamshire. We want to see an increased amount of inward investment in the County, with increased economic activity and more high-quality jobs for residents. We want to see reduced carbon emissions and new green technologies progressed.

Specific highlights during 2023-24 include:

- The Council collaborated with local partners and central Government to **deliver a historic £1.14bn East Midlands devolution deal**. The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) was formally established in February 2024, with the inaugural mayoral election held on 2 May 2024. The Council is a constituent member of the EMCCA and will continue to work closely with the new mayor and the wider EMCCA to build on work to date for the benefit of local people.
- The **Inward Investment Framework** was approved this year, following a series of stakeholder focus meetings and public consultation. This Framework details how inward investment has the potential to be a key conduit for **Levelling Up Nottinghamshire**. With a focus on key market drivers, it sets out the ambition and priorities of the Council for investment into talent, market growth, and sustainable place. It outlines the role of the Council as a leader, enabler, facilitator, influencer, accountable body, investor, partner, supporter, collaborator and advisor around a shared, inclusive vision and plan. Officers have also prepared an investment prospectus which outlines the opportunities across the county.

- The County Council has helped support our district and boroughs in numerous funding bids, including the **securing of levelling up funding**. Over the last year, we have had £217.6m allocated, including:

- **£20m for Mansfield Connect**
- **£18m for Worksop town centre**
- **£16.5m for Kimberley Means Business scheme**
- **£3.1m for Ashfield's Science Discovery Centre and Planetarium**
- **£20m for Sherwood Revival scheme**
- **Two levelling up partnerships announced (£20m for Mansfield and Worksop)**
- **Five towns identified as long-term plan for towns (£20m each over 10 years).**

- Officers have helped support the **commissioning of UK Shared Prosperity Funding across the county** for £1.3m of employment and skills initiatives and £1.7m of business support activities. These will help support more people into work and provide further guidance and advice to our businesses.

- Work continues with the **A614 /A6097 scheme**, including improvements to Ollerton roundabout, Mickledale junction, Lowdham roundabout and Kirkhill traffic lights to improve connections and travel across the County.

- Through the **Sustainable Warmth Retrofit Programme** over £2.3m has been delivered, bringing the overall council total delivery to date to £6.2m, servicing over 520 homes to cut their fuel costs and improve energy efficiency. The extended programme has now also been launched which is set to deliver a further £3.2m to 160 hardest to help homes by March 2026.

- The **Heating Optimisation scheme** successfully delivered phase two this winter. This scheme helped 104 households face to face to make savings on their domestic fuel bills, with many more households being able to access advice online. The scheme achieved average cost savings of £136 on household bills which surpassed the forecasted savings of £110 and an additional 95 health and social care practitioners and housing professionals were trained to offer further support.



Ambition 8

Improving transport and digital connections

We will jointly develop an East Midlands County Combined Authority Local Transport Plan which will set out how we'll improve our transport networks, prioritising those areas that would benefit most from better connections and making use of the latest technology and data to keep Nottinghamshire moving and thriving. We want more people to travel around the County easily and safely, with more people walking, cycling, and using public transport. We want people to be satisfied with highways, footpaths, and bus services, to increase electric vehicle charging points, and to improve our superfast broadband coverage across the County.

Specific highlights during 2023-24 include:

- The **Council's Bus Network review has been completed** and further Nottsbus On Demand zones will be introduced in the next 18 months, with the latest zone to launch in July 2024. These zones operate on an on-demand basis and allow for flexible travel between bus stops and designated points within the travel zone. The zones are currently active in North Ollerton, South Newark, West Rushcliffe and Mansfield.
- Delivery of the **Nottinghamshire Bus Service Improvement Plan** is going well. 12 bus services have already been expanded and during 24/25 more services will be enhanced including the introduction of evening services. The **Newark All Rounder multi operator ticket has been introduced** to allow unlimited daily travel around Newark Town and neighbouring areas. A student travel scheme has also successfully been launched in partnership with local bus operators and local colleges in Mansfield and Ashfield, with 2,100 students now using local bus services to access education, work and leisure and the scheme has just been awarded the **prestigious Bus Centre of Excellence, Bus Initiative of the Year 2024**.

- The Council, in partnership with Stagecoach East Midlands, has **secured £2.8m in funding to introduce 23 zero emission electric buses** in Mansfield by 2026, helping further our environmental targets.
- The County Council, working in partnership with Derby, Derbyshire, and Nottingham City councils, has **developed a D2N2 areawide Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan** to help identify priorities for the future development of cycling and walking networks. Walking and cycling infrastructure programmes are developed and delivered annually as part of the annual highway programmes of work and, working with funding partners, the Council develops infrastructure schemes for the benefit of all road users in line with the Council's holistic 'whole street' approach.
- An amended version of our **Developer Contributions Strategy** has now been adopted and published, which states that developers should provide space for drop-off/pick up facilities where their development includes a site for a new school. This is now being implemented for any developments that require a new school and will ensure safe and easy access to school for all schoolchildren.



Ambition 9

Protecting the environment and reducing our carbon footprint

We pledged to combat climate change and drive greener growth at a local level, to support the UK's 2050 Net Zero national target. We are working on further reducing emissions across our transport fleet, properties, and highways, whilst simultaneously supporting and improving biodiversity, reducing waste and increasing recycling. We want the County Council to be net carbon neutral in all its activities by 2030, with all street lighting converted to LEDs by 2026, and the energy used by the Council to be reduced by 5-10% each year. We want to reverse losses of biodiversity and protect the natural environment, and increase the amount of waste reused, recycled and recovered.

Specific highlights during 2023-24 include:

- **Delivery of the Building and Office Rationalisation programme** has progressed, with works undertaken at Meadow House, Mansfield and plans being put in place for the relocation of services from County Hall. A new office at Top Wighay Farm has also commenced on site, with completion due in early 2025. Meanwhile, a public engagement exercise has been undertaken, looking at the future of County Hall itself.
- As part of our **staff travel plan**, we are working with teams across the Council to encourage and support staff to use active travel, public transport and reduce business miles. For teams which incur the highest mileage, we are holding workshops to promote and encourage uptake of greener and more active travel options. We are also piloting the use of a low-emissions shared pool vehicle and are exploring future investment into an electric pool vehicle, to minimise the environmental impact where teams do need to undertake business mileage. For all Council employees, there is information and guidance available on advanced driving and schemes including cycling, public transport season tickets and car sharing.

- We **continue to support partners to reduce carbon emissions**. Carbon Literacy training has been delivered to over 130 Scape Group staff members and over 30 Inspire staff members, giving staff the knowledge and understanding to make the necessary changes. Discussions around how to influence our supply chain's emissions have begun, involving Scape Group, Arc Partnership and Via East Midlands colleagues.
- Key property project components have been delivered to **increase renewable energy generation and reduce the Councils CO2 output**, including installation of photovoltaic solar panels at The Mill Adventure Base and the installation of Air Source Heat Pumps at County House.
- Greenwood Community Forest, which is hosted by the County Council, has **created over 170 hectares of new woodland and hedgerows** through the DEFRA funded 5-year Trees for Climate programme. With 130 hectares already created in the preceding years, this means that Greenwood has already achieved more than its original 250 hectare target, with a further season of tree planting to go before the programme ends in March 2025.



Ambition 10

A forward-looking and resilient Council

We continue to work together to build a resilient council which develops and changes, to meet the needs of Nottinghamshire's residents and improve resident satisfaction. We want to retain and recruit a highly talented workforce, to ensure the Council has a balanced budget and valued services are protected, and to ensure that people can access information, advice, guidance, support and services more easily. We will also continuously work to improve our services, making the most of the opportunities that digital technologies offer us.

- Colleagues across the Council are working to improve how we collect, use and share data effectively. This follows the **approval of the Council's new Data Strategy** at Cabinet in December 2023, which will help enable us to utilise data to continue to improve services for people and communities, target resources and drive efficiency and best value for Nottinghamshire residents. Actions within the Strategy include a review of our current databases, applications, workflows and associated data processes, plus strengthening system requirements and data standards. Key principles are to strengthen the sharing of data safely, lawfully and ethically beyond organisational boundaries, for example with the NHS, plus other Councils and partners.

- As a Council we have a **proven track record of maintaining financial stability and doing all we can to mitigate and reduce pressures on our budget**. The Council approved a balanced budget for 2024/25 at the Full Council meeting in February as planned, with the net budget requirement increased by £47.2mn to reflect the increasing demand and cost pressures upon the delivery of our services. In addition, the Draft Statement of Accounts 2023/24 were certified by the Section 151 Officer on 31 May 2024 to meet the statutory requirements and were published on the Council's website.
- A **Resourcing & Retention Strategy** and delivery plan are now in place with recruitment processes having significantly improved. Our increased candidate reach has resulted in a greater number of applicants per role and the amount of time taken to advertise for a new vacancy has reduced by an average of 10 days. The time taken to complete pre-employment checks has reduced by 50% and we have seen a significant increase in recruitment satisfaction ratings.
- The Council's **mental health and wellbeing offer has significantly improved** by increasing the number of Mental Health First Aiders, offering additional wellbeing resources to employees and providing online training for managers to help them effectively support staff with sensitive mental health conditions. Wellbeing survey tool has been piloted in schools to highlight and tailor the needs of staff and we have expanded our cohort of coaches and mentors to improve development and wellbeing. The enhancements to the mental health and wellbeing offer reflect a comprehensive approach to employee support, emphasising resilience, agility, and a healthy work environment.
- Our Adult Social Care Department (ASCH) have started to **embed the 'Making it Real Forum'** into business-as-usual activity. This is a shared space for people with lived experience, in collaboration with senior leaders, to provide oversight to the delivery of the **Local Account** * - our departmental work plan. The Making it Real forum has so far completed two 'deep dives' into areas of priority activity detailed in the Local Account and more are planned for future meetings. The deep dives allow for discussion of work already completed and its impact, and for the forum membership to input into the planning and prioritisation of next steps. ASCH have also embedded quarterly network lunches into business-as-usual. These enable people that draw on care and support that are interested in helping us shape the future of adult social care to get together and talk with us over lunch in a community setting in more detail about a pre-agreed topic.

**The Local Account itself was developed after the Big Conversation held in Summer 2023. The Big Conversation was held over multiple venues on different dates with many residents and people that draw on care and support. It enabled us to listen to people, hear what was important to them and use this to decide the following year's business priorities.*



Healthy

Prosperous

Green

