

Royal Sutton Coldfield Pride in Place Regeneration Plan

Agreed by the Board for submission to MHCLG

November 2025

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1. Local Context

Likely originating from a 6th-century agricultural settlement, Royal Sutton Coldfield first appeared in the Domesday Book in 1086 as a Royal Manor.

Its location at the junction of the important route north from Birmingham to Lichfield (Mill Street, High Street) with the road from Coleshill and Warwick (Coleshill Street) contributed to its development as the local centre for a growing twelfth and thirteenth century population. During this period, the parish church (Holy Trinity) was established alongside a weekly market.

The current street layout of High Street, Mill Street and Coleshill Street reflects the town's historic core and function, with this area containing the majority of the town's oldest buildings, many of which are timber framed and later re-faced in brick with classical facades. Its historic character is recognised within the High Street Conservation Area which was first designated in 1973 with the aim of protecting the best-preserved quarter of Old Sutton Coldfield.

The town enjoyed a renaissance during the sixteenth century led by Bishop Vesey (1462–1554), a local resident whose influence helped secure a Royal Charter for the town from Henry VIII in 1528. In 2028 the town will celebrate the 500 year anniversary of the Charter, a significant milestone which the Royal Town will celebrate. The Royal Charter also established governance arrangements for the town through the Warden and Society. Bishop Vesey also founded Bishop Vesey Grammar School and was the town's first regenerator.

From the 16th to 18th centuries, the town expanded with new housing and public buildings, although most of this remained focused around the original boundary of the old town. The establishment of the first turnpike routes from 1807 appeared to be the catalyst for the physical expansion of the

town. This included changes to the width and gradient of Mill Street and the creation of The Parade; an embankment to bypass the often flooded and inaccessible Lower Parade and a unique feature of the town centre's retail core which can be seen today.

The mid-19th century saw the beginnings of suburban development, fuelled by commuter migration from Birmingham and a desire to live in a healthier, more spacious environment with easier access to green infrastructure; a trend which continues today. This was supported by the opening of the Royal Sutton Coldfield Branch Railway Line in 1862 which boosted the town's appeal further, attracting affluent new residents and visitors to Sutton Park.

Sutton Park is central to the town's identity. It is one of the largest urban parks in Europe. The Park was established as a Royal Forest by the Anglo-Saxon Kings of Mercia, at around the 9th century. By the early 12th century, it was in use as a Norman medieval deer park. The land was given to the people of Royal Sutton Coldfield by Henry VIII in 1528 and has been used since as a green resource by both residents and visitors alike. Reflecting the town's new found status as a leisure resort, during the second half of the 19th century, leisure provision at the Park increased with two horse racing tracks, two golf courses and a Crystal Palace with a fun fair, as well as swimming and boating on some of the pools.

The arrival of the railway quickened the pace of suburban building resulting in a substantial increase in the town's population and the construction of larger municipal buildings to support the growing population. In parallel, spacious suburban properties were built, often in the fashionable 'Arts & Crafts' architectural style within land of former larger houses repurposed as green private estates such as the Four Oaks Estate and tree-lined avenues around the town centre and Sutton Park. Despite 20th

and 21st century infills and re-developments, Royal Sutton Coldfield retains its character as a green and spacious suburb with high quality housing.

Today, home to over 95,000 residents (ONS, Population Estimates - small area, 2022), Royal Sutton Coldfield remains a relatively affluent town in the north of Birmingham offering a blend of city and country living, thriving local centres and excellent schools with strong transport links to Birmingham, Lichfield and the national road network. Whilst administratively part of Birmingham, the Royal Town of Sutton Coldfield retains its strong identity, with a high proportion of residents proud to live in the town, as it looks forward to celebrating the 500 years anniversary of the Royal Charter in 2028.

In addition to Sutton Park, important assets include the historic Town Hall building (1865) in King Edward Square, Highbury Theatre (1942), Sutton Arts Theatre (1945) and the recently refurbished Royal Cinema (1936). Community festivals, markets and local heritage trails further celebrate the town's identity and civic pride.

There are over 420 voluntary, community faith and social enterprise organisations offering a range of sport, leisure, environmental, education, heritage and cultural activities, as well as health and wellbeing support for Royal Sutton Coldfield's communities (Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council, Community Organisation Mapping, 2025). Many of these organisations receive grant funding from the Town Council and Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust.

The town's average resident earnings are 35% higher than the UK average (ONS, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2024). A higher proportion of residents are qualified to Level 4+ than in England as a whole and the proportion in employment is also higher than England (ONS, Census,

2021). However, there are disparities in and between wards, where there are pockets of relative deprivation.

The town's residents are increasingly more culturally diverse. In 2021, 79% of people identified with a White ethnic group, 11% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh, and 4% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African, 4% with Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups, and 2% with other ethnic groups (ONS, Census, 2021).

Whilst many residents commute to larger employment centres such as Birmingham for work, which reflects historic patterns and the town's primary status as a residential centre, public services and financial and professional services alongside retail and leisure enterprises provide important employment opportunities within the town. The retail heart of the town centre is supported by smaller local centres including New Oscott, Wylde Green, Mere Green, Boldmere, and Walmley, which offer a mix of small retail, food and beverage, services, and leisure outlets.

Various trading estates such as Minworth Industrial and Trade Park, Maybrook Business Park, and Midpoint Park provide facilities for manufacturing and small start-up companies. Commencing 2019, a new industrial space by IM properties is currently being developed at Peddimore which is expected to create 6,500 new jobs.

Despite these strengths, the town faces a number of challenges, including the need to address inequalities and adapt to future changes whilst making the most of its natural and built assets. Local businesses are struggling with rising costs. The town centre has seen vacancy rates rise to 18%, which is 4% higher than the national average (Visit Royal Sutton Coldfield BID, 2025), due to economic pressures and a combination of competition from both online retail and other nearby centres. The proportion of the town's older population

(aged 65+) is 5.1% above the national average (ONS, Census, 2021) and this is contributing to growing demand for health and social care support and accessible community facilities.

Meanwhile, much of the housing in Royal Sutton Coldfield is relatively expensive, making it difficult for young people to move into the area. Pockets of deprivation persist, particularly in the Reddicap and Walmley and Minworth wards, where residents are more likely to experience lower incomes, poorer health, lower quality housing and limited access to local services (MHCLG, English Indices of Deprivation, 2025).

The high level of car ownership and occasional congestion around the town, together with the dominance of the road system in and around the town centre, have acted as barriers to pedestrian movement (Sutton Coldfield Masterplan SPD). This has resulted in some assets such as Sutton Park and the Town Centre Historic High St Conservation Area being effectively severed from their surrounding areas.

The town has begun to tackle some of the challenges it faces. £25m has been secured from West Midlands Combined Authority for the Royal Sutton Coldfield Gateway Scheme which aims to remove some of the barriers between areas of the town centre, to improve accessibility within the centre and to and from Sutton Park. New investment from international retailer Harvey Norman has been secured as part of the re-development of the Gracechurch Centre which will help drive the regeneration of the town centre and other private sector investment is either underway (ALDI on Brassington Avenue) or planned for other town centre sites. A further £8.5m is being invested by Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to redevelop Sutton Cottage Hospital into a 'one stop' healthcare hub for the over-65s in north Birmingham. The Town Council, in

partnership with Birmingham City Council, is progressing its Active Travel Strategy for the town including identifying priority schemes to make streets safer for all users whilst increasing the provision of facilities for cycling, walking and wheeling.

The newly established Green Travel District: Sutton Connect aims to improve sustainable and active travel for residents, workers and visitors in Walmley and Minworth, and Reddicap wards. These will include improvements to transport infrastructure, active travel and way finding which are primarily funded through planning contributions from the Peddimore development. Meanwhile the Langley Sustainable Urban Extension development for new homes will bring 5,500 new homes to the area, 35% of which are proposed to be affordable, with 10% designated for social/affordable rent and 25% for affordable home ownership alongside investment in transport and community infrastructure. Over the next 10-15 years, significant engagement, planning and investment will be required to ensure that new residents to the town are welcomed, well integrated and that local services, transport and community infrastructure can meet the needs of the population without compromising the town's unique character. There is much to be proud of – but also much to address. It is important to preserve what makes Royal Sutton Coldfield special, while working together to build an even better town for the future. The PiPP provides a unique opportunity to draw on this history of civic action, using the town's heritage, green and built assets and community spirit to create a thriving, inclusive Royal Town for future generations.

2. Spatial Targeting

2.1 Description of the Pride in Place Plan Area in Royal Sutton Coldfield

Royal Sutton Coldfield serves as the largest sub-regional centre within Birmingham. The town is home to over 95,000 (ONS, Census, 2021) residents across eight electoral wards: Four Oaks, Mere Green, Roughley, Reddicap, Walmley and Minworth, Wylde Green, Vesey and Trinity, covering approximately 5,475ha (Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council, Living in Sutton Coldfield, 2025). The current £20m PiPP allocation equates to around £210 per head or £3,653 per ha.

Over half of the town's land area is green space, dominated by Sutton Park, one of Europe's largest urban parks at 970ha (LUC, 2021). The Park is a designated National Nature Reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest, providing a shared space for nature, leisure, heritage and community. The town's wider network of parks and open spaces supports biodiversity, active lifestyles and wellbeing, reinforcing its identity as a leafy green town.

The town centre, located around 500m east of Sutton Park, acts as the economic heart of Royal Sutton Coldfield. Despite their proximity, the two assets are disconnected and don't function as a cohesive unit. While the town centre retains relatively strong retail, entertainment and service functions, parts of the centre suffer from vacant units, limited diversification of use and an ageing built environment, meaning residents feel it no longer meets their needs or aspirations. In addition, there are several local and district centres which play a vital role in sustaining community life and local enterprise surrounded by residential areas.

The town benefits from six train stations (Blake Street, Butlers Lane, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, Wylde Green and Chester Road) providing strong north-south rail connectivity to the wider Birmingham area and Lichfield. A network of bus routes provides connections within the town, centred on the main bus interchange in the town centre, and to northern areas of Birmingham and Birmingham City Centre and a less frequent service to surrounding towns and centres (Midlands, Local Area Maps, 2025). To the east, the proposed Langley Sustainable Urban Extension and Peddimore Employment site (within Walmley and Minworth) will drive significant population and economic growth over the next 20-30 years.

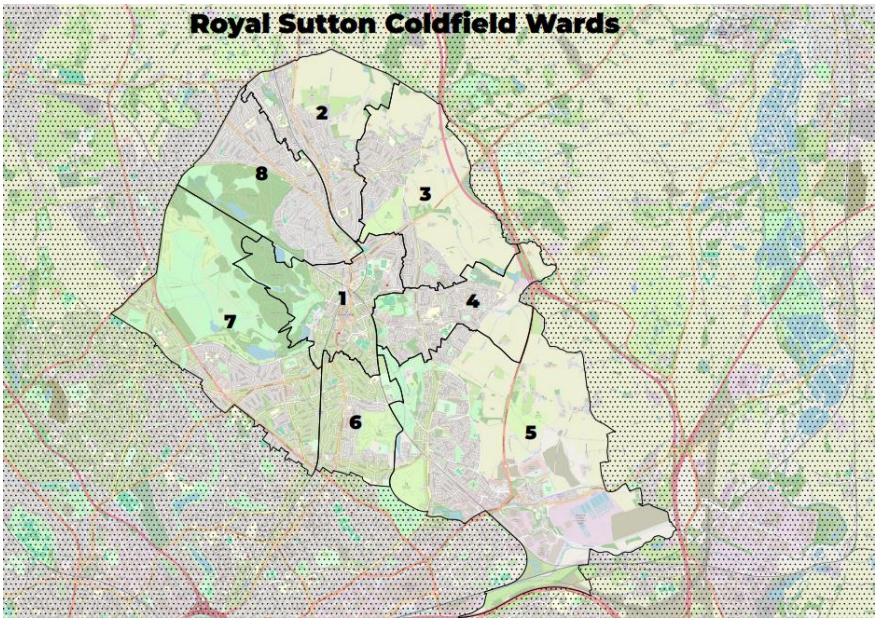
- Langley will deliver 5,500 new homes, alongside supporting infrastructure (schools, open spaces and community infrastructure), creating a new sustainable neighbourhood integrated within the existing town (Birmingham City Council, Langley SUE and Peddimore SPDs, 2019).
- Peddimore covering 71ha, will deliver 6,500 new jobs in key growth sectors for Birmingham including advanced manufacturing and logistics (Birmingham City Council, Langley SUE and Peddimore SPDs, 2019).

The Green Travel District (associated with Peddimore and Langley) will enhance active travel routes and public transport across Reddicap and Walmley and Minworth, providing a strong platform to accommodate growth. However, further investment will be required in transport, community and business infrastructure and initiatives across Royal Sutton Coldfield to support the integration of new communities.

2.2 Spatial Inequalities

The PiPP boundary reflects the eight electoral wards that form the administrative area of Royal Sutton Coldfield as shown in the map below:

Table 1: Pride in Place Boundary and Wards

Pride in Place Boundary and Wards		No.	Ward
		1	Trinity
		2	Mere Green
		3	Roughley
		4	Reddicap
		5	Walmley and Minworth
		6	Wylde Green
		7	Vesey
		8	Four Oaks

Across the town, there are notable variations in population size, structure and socio-economic profile, reflecting the scale of the town, mix of suburban neighbourhoods, Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Centre and local centres.

Vesey Ward in the west is most populous (20,112) followed by Walmley and Minworth in the south east. Wylde Green has lowest population (9,276), of all the wards.

All the wards have a lower proportion of working-age residents (16-64) than England (63%). In Reddicap this reflects a higher proportion of residents under-18 (23.7% vs 20.8% in England). Mere Green and Roughley both have a higher proportion of residents under 18 and over 64. In the remaining five wards, this reflects a higher proportion of residents over 64. Employment levels across the eight wards are all equal to or higher than the national average (71.0%). Reddicap, the lowest, is in-line with the national average. Roughly (77.2%) and Trinity (76.9%) perform particularly well.

Most wards have fewer residents with no qualifications than the England average (18.1%), with Four Oaks (7.1%) and Vesey (7.5%) performing strongest. Reddicap stands out again with 18.7%, which is only slightly above the national average. The share of residents qualified to NVQ4+ is also above national levels (33.9%) across all wards except Reddicap. The gap between the highest and lowest is significant at 14.8% between Four Oaks (46.6%) and Reddicap (31.8%), highlighting spatial inequalities in skills and opportunity.

The table below sets out key demographic and population data for each of the Wards:

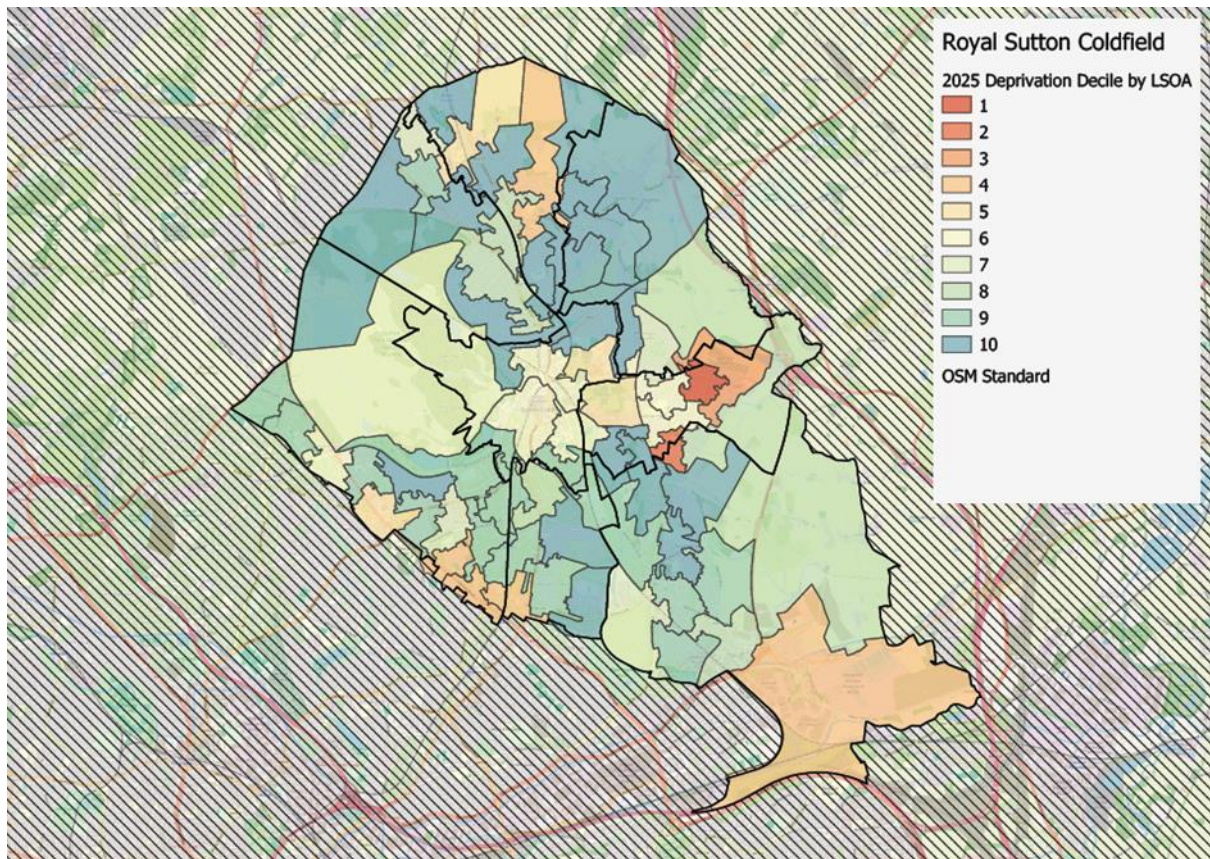
Table 2: Ward-level Socio-economic Data

No.	Ward	Pop	Pop Density (km ²)	%16-64	% under 18	% under 65	% Dis / LTHC	Emp Rate	No Qual	NVQ4+ Qual
1	Trinity	9,484	2,033	60.6%	19.8%	21.8%	20.1%	76.9%	12.5%	46.6%
2	Mere Green	10,148	2,002	56.1%	22.3%	24.3%	19.9%	74.9%	13.6%	43.0%
3	Roughley	11,959	1,615	58.7%	23.5%	20.2%	19.8%	77.2%	13.0%	42.2%
4	Reddicap	10,040	2,359	60.9%	23.7%	17.8%	25.1%	71.0%	18.7%	31.8%
5	Walmley and Minworth	16,317	965	58.9%	19.0%	24.3%	20.4%	76.5%	17.4%	35.0%
6	Wylde Green	9,297	2,786	56.8%	18.0%	27.3%	19.2%	76.3%	14.0%	46.5%
7	Vesey	20,112	1,937	59.6%	20.2%	22.4%	19.9%	76.7%	7.5%	41.7%
8	Four Oaks	9,331	1,662	56.6%	19.5%	26.6%	17.6%	74.4%	7.1%	46.6%
	England			63.0%	20.8%	18.4%	22.6%	71.0%	18.1%	33.9%

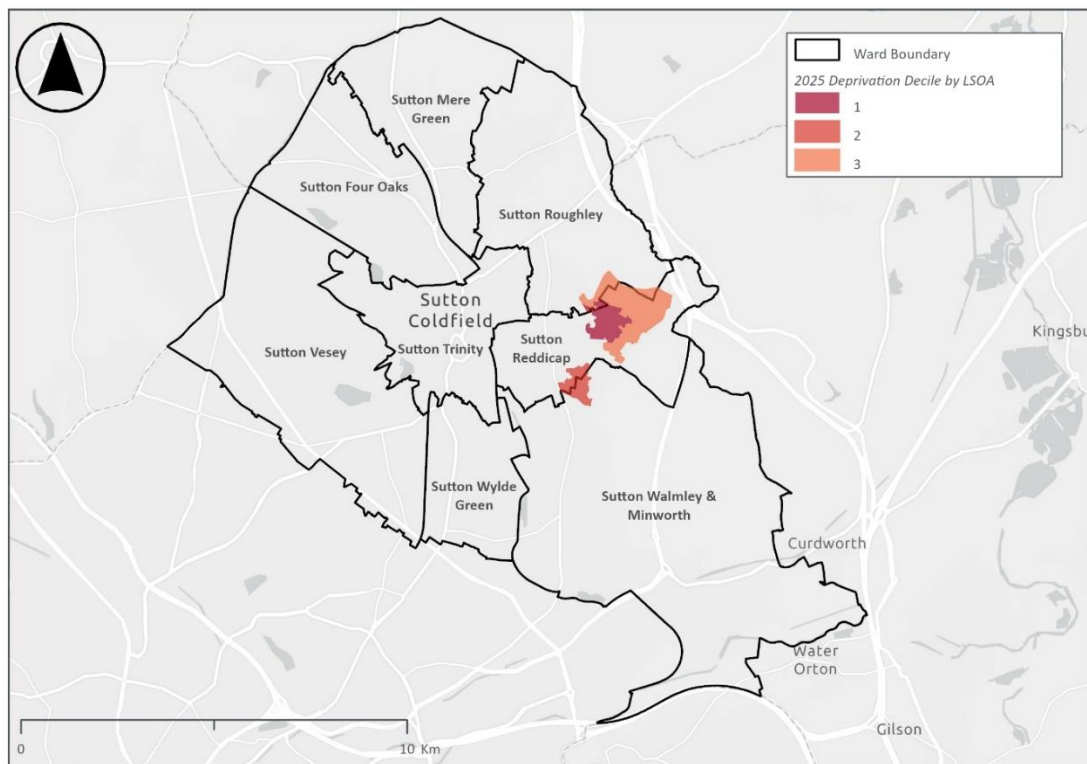
(ONS, Ward Factsheets - Census, 2021)

Whilst the above data demonstrates strong performance across social and economic metrics, meaning the town is one of the least deprived areas in Birmingham, it also shows there are some inequalities. The English Indices of Deprivation (2025) shows areas of deprivation in central Reddicap, the boundary of Reddicap and Walmley & Minworth, the south of Vesey and Wylde Green, and the north of Mere Green. These areas are characterised by lower incomes and skill-levels / qualifications, poor health and higher levels of crime compared to the other wards.

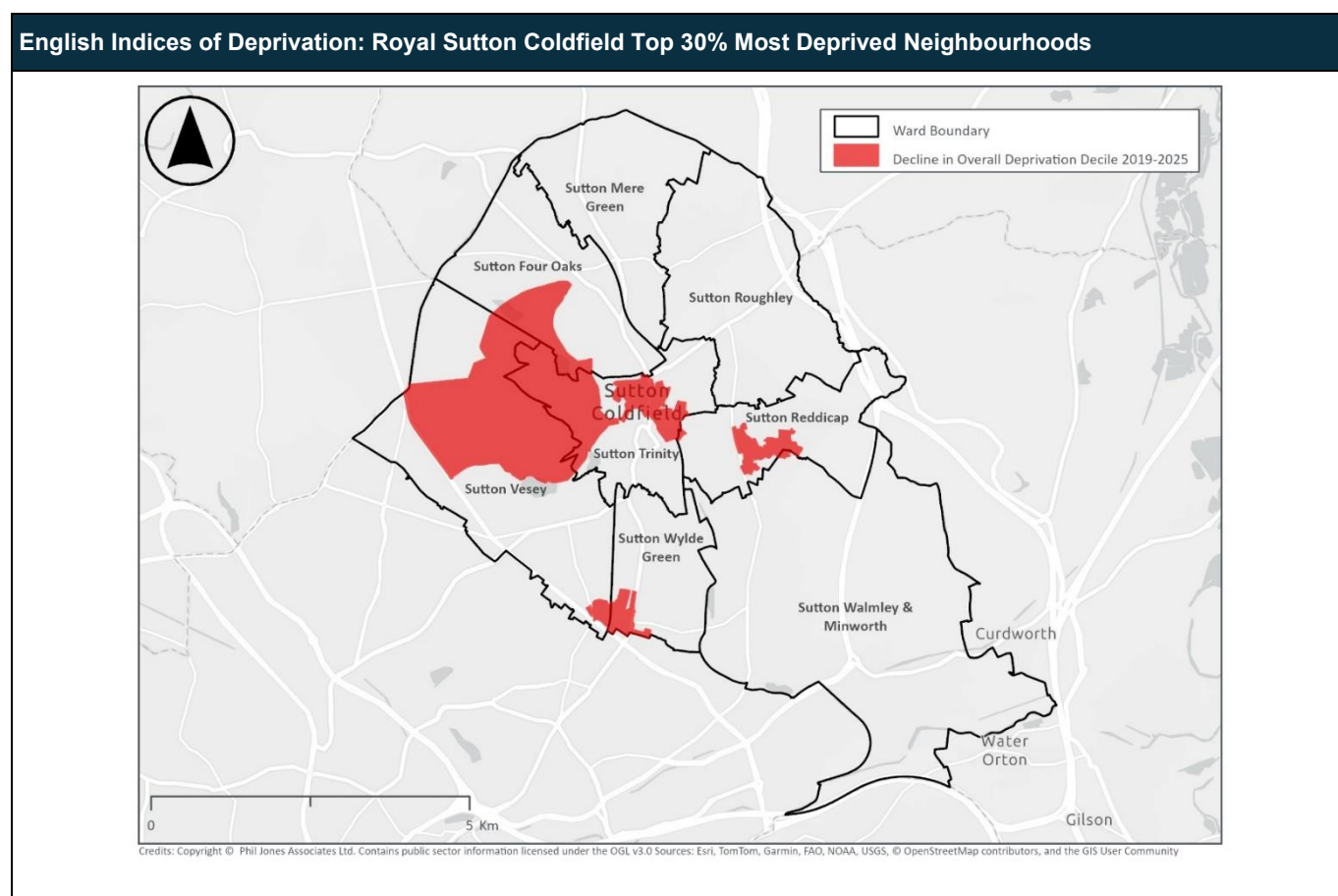
English Indices of Deprivation: Royal Sutton Coldfield



English Indices of Deprivation: Royal Sutton Coldfield Top 30% Most Deprived Neighbourhoods



In addition, there are areas which show a relative worsening of deprivation since 2019. These are located in Reddicap, Trinity, Vesey, Wylde Green and Four Oaks as shown below:



(MHCLG, English Indices of Deprivation, 2025)

The LSOA overlaying Sutton Park shows a relative decline in overall deprivation (from the 7 decline to the 6 decile). This was driven by a decrease across five domains, barriers to housing and services (-6), geographical barriers (-5) Wider Barriers (-2), income deprivation affecting older people (-1) and adult skills (-1). These shifts appear to be driven by methodological updates introduced in 2025, particularly those affecting how deprivation is measured in rural and sparsely populated areas, which the Park is likely classified as. As a result, the changes reflect statistical effects rather than any underlying changes in socioeconomic conditions.

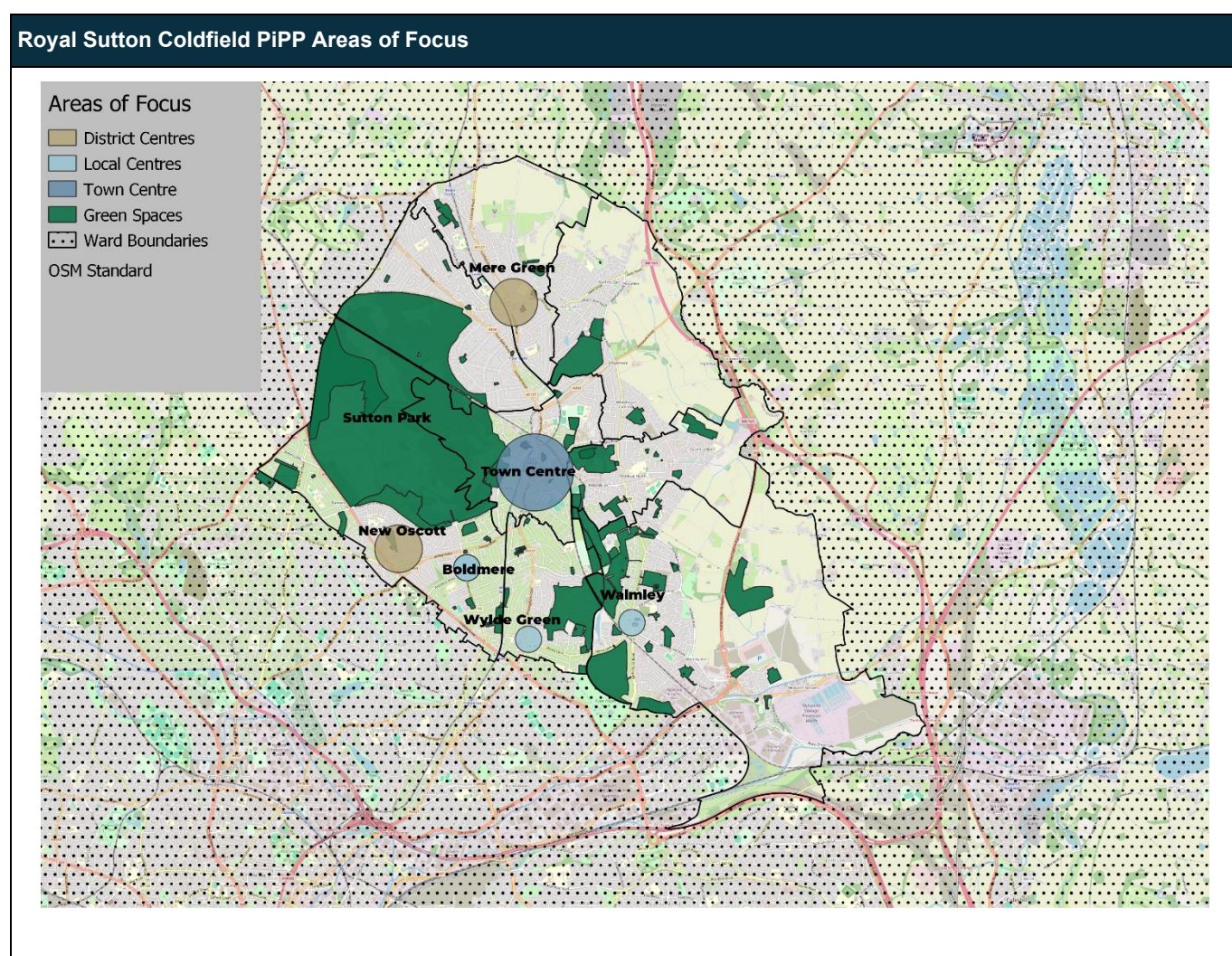
2.3 Areas of Focus for the Royal Sutton Coldfield Pride in Place Programme

A series of shared spaces across the eight wards have been identified as critical to delivering against the Priorities for Change identified in Section 3 Case for Change. Insights from the residents' survey, ward engagement, and community-led grassroots engagement highlighted a wide range of shared spaces that are central to the town's identity and to residents' day-to-day lives.

Sutton Park and the Town Centre are the most significant regional assets and the places residents value most. People told us they wanted Sutton Park to be maintained and enhanced and the town centre to be revitalised.

Alongside these major assets, residents also emphasised the importance of district and local centres, as well as community infrastructure such as green spaces, libraries, community centres and halls and sports facilities. These spaces play an essential role in supporting economic and social activity across more residential parts of the town.

Investment will therefore focus on the town's regionally significant assets, its district and local centres, and the community infrastructure where need is greatest. The key spatial areas of focus are set out below:

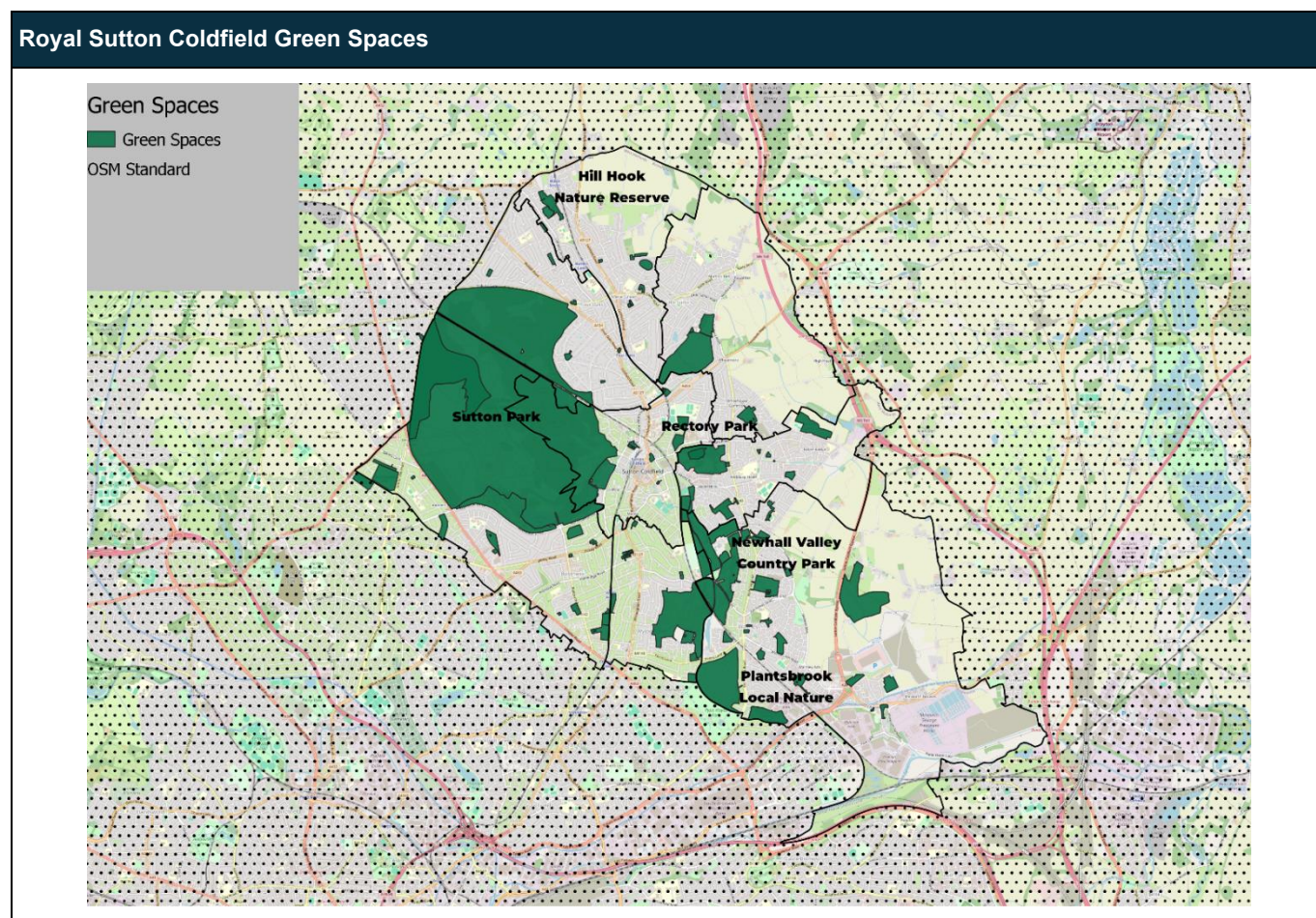


The shared spaces identified are described in more detail below:

2.3.1 Sutton Park and Wider Green Spaces

Attracting an estimated 1m visitors annually (BCC mobile phone tracking data 2025) Sutton Park is a defining feature of the town and a key civic and environmental asset for Royal Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham and the region. It is supported by a variety of small, medium and large

public green spaces across the town that provide vital community assets promoting active lifestyles, wellbeing, and biodiversity. The town's public parks, playing fields, sports facilities, play areas and allotments are shown in the map below.



(Ordnance Survey, 2025)

2.3.2 Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Centre

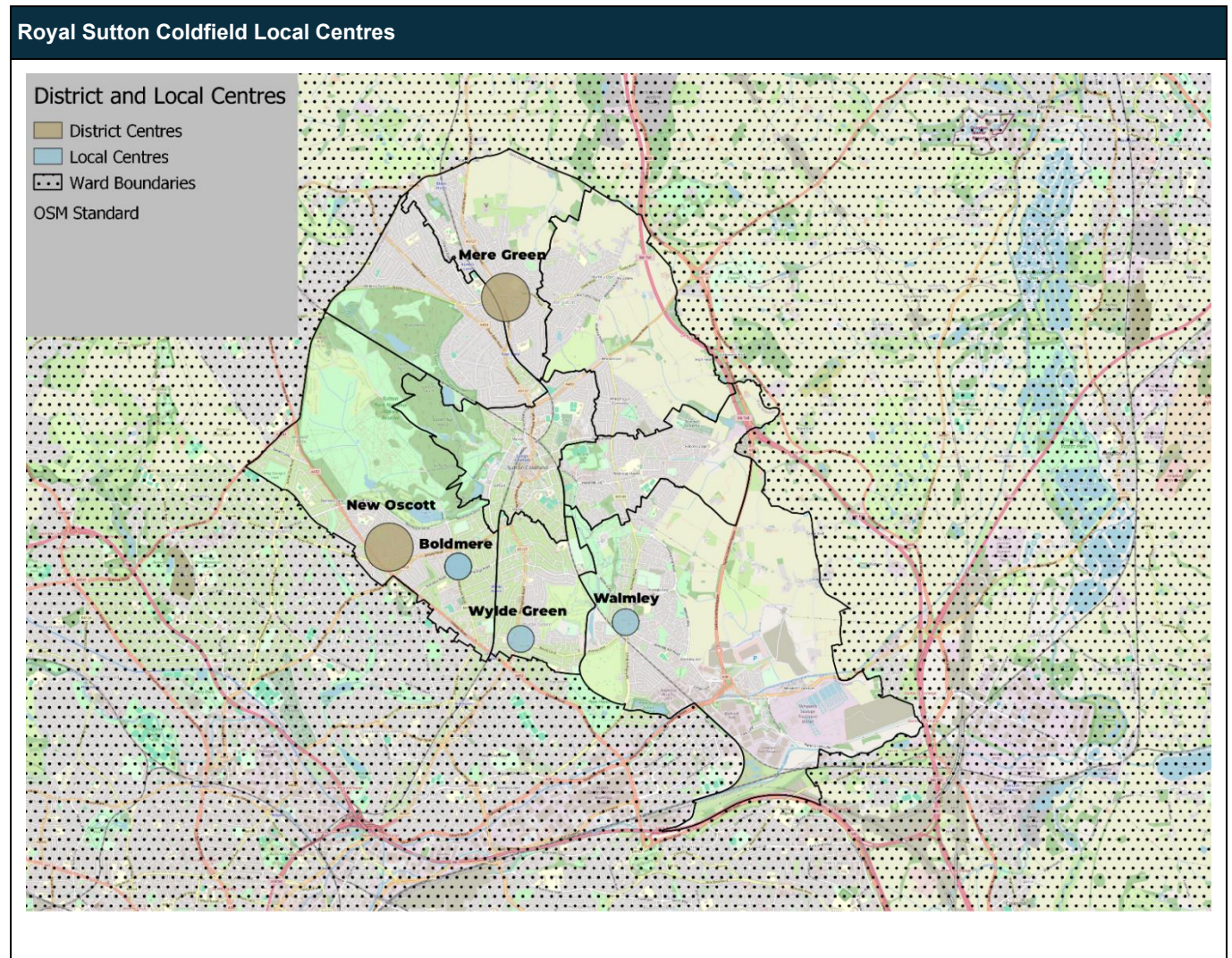
The town centre is the largest local centre in Birmingham (Birmingham City Council, Birmingham Development Plan, 2017) and focal point of civic, cultural and economic activity in the town. The town centre is in Trinity ward. Town centre vacancy rates are higher than the national average, and like many other high streets has lost anchor retailers such as M&S due to wider changes to the retail market. PiPP Investment will look to support the ambitions of the Birmingham Local Plan and Town Centre Masterplan SPD (Section 6: Alignment with other Programmes and Investments) and complement the £25m Royal Sutton Coldfield Gateway Scheme. The “Big Moves” of the Masterplan are shown in the map below:



(RSC Town Centre Regeneration Partnership, 2020)

2.3.3 Royal Sutton Coldfield District and Local Centres

While the town centre acts as the town's economic hub, local centres including Boldmere, Mere Green, Wylde Green, Walmley and New Oscott sustain local economies and neighbourhood activity in primarily residential areas of wards as shown in the map below:



3. Vision for the Future

“Royal Sutton Coldfield will be a thriving place where local people ensure that residents, businesses and visitors flourish together, connected by community, culture, shared green spaces and opportunity”

Royal Sutton Coldfield, a town which celebrates its rich heritage, embraces today's opportunities and is fit for the challenges which may lie ahead. Founded in our past, forging into the future.

Over the next 10 years Royal Sutton Coldfield will be transformed with its green nature extended from the suburbs through the town centre, seamlessly linked to the jewel in the crown that is Sutton Park. A programme of investment will restore its natural and historic features and improve the Park to meet the needs of future generations for everyone to enjoy.

The town centre will evolve to be a vibrant place with a variety of uses and spaces for business, cultural and social activities which is easily accessible for all users. It will be a 'go to' destination for residents and visitors where people dwell and meet in a safe environment with high quality design at its heart.

There will be a sense of pride in our public realm, with re-designed spaces, new planting, surfacing, street furniture and signage alongside investment in its historic fabric, providing the setting and a visible demonstration of a town which is proud of its past and confident in its future.

Key local community facilities and services will be the subject of investment and support to create stronger social networks. Strong partnerships will be developed to maximise the use of these enhanced facilities providing support for better physical health, mental wellbeing and social connection for all age groups and backgrounds.

4. Case for Change

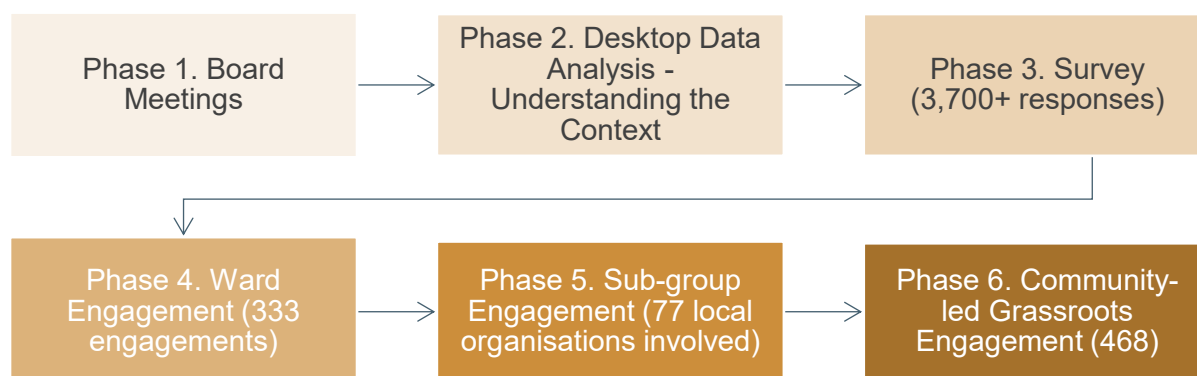
4.1 Introduction

This section presents the Case for Change. It defines the underlying challenges and opportunities that Royal Sutton Coldfield must address to achieve its long-term vision and explains how the Neighbourhood Board, supported by research, has identified a set of Priorities for Change aligned with the PiPP's three strategic objectives - Thriving Places, Stronger Communities and Taking Back Control. It briefly discusses the potential use of Local Authority Powers that may be needed to progress the PiPP investments, and it summarises the outcomes expected.

4.2 Methodology

The Neighbourhood Board commissioned consultants (Genecon) to undertake community and stakeholder engagement in 2025 to inform and enable the Board to develop the Case for Change. This has been underpinned by analysis of secondary data provided by MHCLG, publicly available data, local intelligence and relevant strategies and masterplans.

Key inputs to the research are outlined below:



Phase 1 - Board Meetings: Explored the challenges and opportunities in the town as identified by Board members along with their aspirations for the outcome of the PiPP.

Phase 2 - Desktop Review – Understanding the Context: An analysis of secondary data, including publicly available data from the ONS, government departments and local partners. This analysis helped identify structural and spatial challenges, socioeconomic trends, and emerging opportunities. The work built on and augmented data analyses already undertaken by MHCLG.

Phase 3 - Survey: This gathered broad, predominantly quantitative data on public sentiment and priorities. It supported identification of widely held opinions and allowed some demographic cross-referencing of data.

Phase 4 - Ward Engagement: Gathered more localised and specific feedback empowering local residents and community representatives and other stakeholders to share their opinions on town and ward level issues. This process also built increased awareness of the PiPP.

Phase 5 - Thematic Sub-group Workshops: Drawn from interested parties, the thematic groups offered an opportunity to discuss priorities for action and specific project ideas and proposals. The four groups were: i) Heritage, Culture, Community and Wellbeing; ii) Economy, Enterprise, Skills and Education iii) Parks, Green Spaces and Sport and iv) Sustainability and Active Travel.

Phase 6 - Community-led Grassroots Engagement: This sought to understand the needs and priorities of specific demographic groups within the Royal Sutton Coldfield community. At the inaugural PiPP Board meeting on 28 March 2025, a decision was taken that a community pot of £24,000 should be established, to passport engagement funding to voluntary/community organisations. A general Request for Proposals was published, and 5 community groups were selected to undertake community engagement, focussing on specific groups that may struggle to have their voices heard. This included, for example, children and young people, people with disabilities, busy working families, older people and older women from ethnic groups.

Data Analysis: Data was analysed within the framework of the three PiPP objectives – *Thriving Places, Stronger Communities and Taking Back Control*.

- **Thriving Places** – focuses on i) reinvigorating shared spaces, including the town centre and district and local centres, local amenities and infrastructure to drive forward enterprise, commerce, cultural activity and footfall, whilst supporting wellbeing; ii) considers how public services support community wellbeing.
- **Stronger Communities** – involves considering the existing strengths of the community along with enhancing local assets to meet community needs (building on what is already there).
- **Taking Back Control** focuses on the community's capability to bring about change. It considers how i) local community organisations can support local people to gain the right skills and capability to move into employment ii) how local organisations can help individuals to link up with businesses who need their skills. iii) how community leaders can gain the skills and strategic partnership connections to act as strong leaders in their local communities to drive change.

The analysis in relation to each PiPP Objective is presented as follows:

- Secondary evidence - including information from existing documents and national datasets
- Quantitative evidence – discusses the results of the Household and Businesses Survey
- Qualitative evidence – summarises the key themes that were discussed in the ward engagements, thematic groups and community grassroots led engagement.
- Summary of evidence and proposed investment themes.

The proposed investment themes were fed into the development of 10 Priorities for Change – (some of which are relevant to more than one of the three PiPP Objectives).

4.3 Evidence Mapping – What does the data tell us?

4.3.1 Thriving Places Secondary Research Evidence

The Thriving Places theme relates to i) reinvigorating shared spaces, including the town centre and local centres, local amenities and infrastructure to drive forward enterprise, commerce, cultural activity, footfall and wellbeing; ii) It also considers how public services support community wellbeing.

Town Centre – Royal Sutton Coldfield's town centre is the largest suburban centre and designated as the sub-regional centre in Birmingham City Council's hierarchy of centres in the adopted Birmingham Local Plan. It acts as the commercial heart of the Royal Town. There are three shopping centres Gracechurch, Red Rose and Newhall Walk and a range of additional leisure, and professional services activities. It includes a designated heritage area-the High Street Conservation Area, together with a rich mixture of statutory and locally listed buildings from a fifteenth century timber framed hall house, former seventeenth century town houses to Victorian Gothic civic buildings which collectively tell the story of how the Royal Town developed.

Sutton Park – Located near to the centre of the town, Sutton Park, at over 2,400 acres, is one of the largest urban parks in Europe comprising extensive woodland, heathland, and wetland areas and a diverse range of flora and fauna. As a National Nature Reserve, included in the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens and a designated Scheduled Monument, it remains an important site for ecological & archaeological conservation and recreation.

Local Centres – In addition to the main town centre are several local centres, including New Oscott, Mere Green, Boldmere, Walmley and Wylde Green. These neighbourhood hubs provide everyday shops, independent businesses, cafés, and essential services such as health care, schools, and community facilities. In addition, a network of smaller centres containing more limited shops and resources are located across the town.

Transport Infrastructure – Royal Sutton Coldfield benefits from good overall connectivity both within the town and to surrounding towns and Birmingham City Centre. The Cross-City rail line links the town to both Birmingham New Street and Lichfield and is serviced by 6 rail stations in the north and south of the town. Major roads such as the A38 and nearby M6 and M42 provide regional access. The local bus network provides connections between the town centre and local centres and between the town centre and Birmingham City Centre along with surrounding towns including Walsall, Lichfield, Solihull and West Bromwich with a more limited service to Tamworth.

Public Services – Administratively, Royal Sutton Coldfield is part of Birmingham and therefore statutory functions including waste collection, highways, planning and education are provided by Birmingham City Council. Education is a major strength, with Royal Sutton Coldfield benefitting from a mixture of notable private and state schools, alongside Sutton Coldfield College – the local further education institution. Healthcare

is centred on Good Hope Hospital, and Sutton Cottage Hospital which is currently being transformed into an integrated hub for healthcare services, with a particular focus on health prevention and wellbeing for older people, supported by GP practices, dental clinics, pharmacies, and Birmingham's public health programmes. West Midlands Police is the territorial police force responsible for policing Royal Sutton Coldfield. Local policing is delivered from their newly relocated Police Station based in the town centre. Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council leads the Town Centre Regeneration Partnership and is working closely with investors, developers, Birmingham City Council and the West Midlands Combined Authority to deliver the Town Centre Masterplan SPD.

The Town Council funds a clean and green service across the town and delivers a library and community service across three libraries and two community centres. It also funds the annual festive lights, floral displays, road safety initiatives, and the Community Grant Scheme.

A review of secondary data sources highlights mixed performance of the town centre in Royal Sutton Coldfield. Footfall remains high, reflecting its importance to residents, although a comparison of footfall figures appears to indicate a year on year decline. The town centre's 18% vacancy rate is above the national average of 14% (Visit Royal Sutton Coldfield BID, 2025), indicating a town centre facing increased competition particularly from the rise in internet shopping and investment in surrounding towns such as Tamworth and Lichfield along with Birmingham City Centre and purpose built retail parks for people who are prepared to travel further to shop. Local commentators highlight ageing buildings that need to be re-purposed. There is also a legacy of poor planning and transport decisions which now requires addressing. Local centres are also experiencing similar pressures to the town centre but to a lesser degree. The overall town level commercial vacancy rate is 9% (Green Streets, 2025) compared to the rate of 18% for the town centre.

The Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan SPD (2021) aims to revitalise the town centre by improving public spaces, enhancing access by active travel modes, diversifying the town centre offer, and reinforcing and investing in its historic identity. Key goals include reducing the negative impact of the ring road, creating vibrant public spaces with improved seating and greenery, and promoting town centre living through the redevelopment of vacant and under-used key town centre sites. £25 million from the Government's City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme has been secured to deliver the Royal Sutton Gateway Scheme and help unlock the regeneration of the Town Centre.

The Gateway Scheme aims to improve access to, from and around Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Centre by focusing on improving public transport, walking and cycling links. It sets out 15 individual interventions which collectively aim to regenerate the town centre by making it more attractive for residents and visitors, encouraging them to spend more time in the town (Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council, Sutton Gateway Scheme, 2025). The proposals will also look to attract inward investment and support economic growth. The scheme aligns with the Highways Big Moves identified in The Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan SPD.

Some key trends have been identified. The June 2025 Business Premises Audit by the Visit Royal Sutton Coldfield BID found 25% of town centre businesses were professional services, surpassing retail for the first time and there have been several residential developments within the town centre with more approved (Visit Royal Sutton Coldfield BID, 2025). Construction has also commenced on the first phase of the Gracechurch Centre redevelopment, and the new ALDI store is progressing which collectively demonstrates that progress is being made on delivering the diversification aspirations of the Town Centre Masterplan SPD. Whilst there has been an increase in entertainment facilities, reflecting the national trend of shops being replaced with non-traditional retail use, data suggests there are opportunities to increase representation further. For instance, there were 1.9 outlets (takeaways, restaurants, clubs, bars, pubs, fitness facilities and sports clubs) per 1,000 population in Royal Sutton Coldfield compared to 2.5 in England (MHCLG, Royal Sutton Coldfield - local data profile, 2025):

Only 15% of households have no cars or vans (vs 32% in Birmingham and 24% in England) (ONS, Census, 2021). Therefore, high car ownership highlights the need to strike a careful balance between ensuring people can use their car and offering attractive active travel

alternatives. A key aspect will involve delivering improved pedestrian and cycling connectivity to and from and within the town centre and between the town's centres and neighbourhoods and the town's network of green spaces, including Sutton Park. Overall crime is low compared to both Birmingham and England, although shoplifting rates are higher, particularly within the town centre. Further detail is included in the table below:

Table 3: Thriving Places Socioeconomic Data

Thriving Places – Socioeconomic Data		
Town-level commercial vacancy rate: 9.3% (vs 10.4% nationally) (Visit Royal Sutton Coldfield BID, 2025)	Footfall Index: 127.1 vs 100.0 nationally across the BUA (June 2025) (MHCLG, Royal Sutton Coldfield - local data profile, 2025)	Town centre vacant units: 62 (Visit Royal Sutton Coldfield BID, 2025)
Travel to Work: 81.8% of residents travel by car vs 70.6% for England (MHCLG, Royal Sutton Coldfield - local data profile, 2025)	Travel to Work: 6.4% of residents walk vs 11.2% for England (MHCLG, Royal Sutton Coldfield - local data profile, 2025)	Travel to Work: Fewer residents travel to work by public transport than in Birmingham and England (MHCLG, Royal Sutton Coldfield - local data profile, 2025)
Crime Rate: 13.0 recorded shoplifting incidents per 1,000 (vs 10.3 in Birmingham and 7.9% in England) (MHCLG, Royal Sutton Coldfield - local data profile, 2025)	Crime Rate: 74.1 recorded crimes per 1,000 residents (vs 132.6 in Birmingham and 76.7 in England) (MHCLG, Royal Sutton Coldfield - local data profile, 2025)	Crime Rate: 5.8 recorded anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 (vs 10.2 in Birmingham and 14.8 in England) (MHCLG, Royal Sutton Coldfield - local data profile, 2025)

Many public services are struggling as increases in funding haven't matched the increases in demographic growth and inflation. Birmingham City Council budgetary reductions to statutory services such as adult social care and children and family services means less funds are available for discretionary services Birmingham City Council cuts to children's services and SEND will reduce funding to the more vulnerable children in Royal Sutton Coldfield providing an additional focus for local area intervention.

4.3.3 Thriving Places Quantitative Research Evidence

Survey findings provide insight into how residents perceive Royal Sutton Coldfield's town, local centres, amenities and infrastructure.

The results implied that local residents supported the aspirations of the Town Centre Masterplan SPD. 85% of respondents identified the 'quality and mix of shops, restaurants and entertainment activities in the town centre' as a challenge and 96% stated that a capital theme they would prioritise for investment was 'improving public spaces such as the town and local centres, local parks and green spaces'.

Local centres were identified as less of a challenge with only 39% identifying the quality and mix of shops, restaurants and entertainment activities in local centres as a challenge. A large majority (80%) considered a key strength of the town was the 'quality of the town's park and green spaces'. Equally, 72% thought that the town's 'heritage, historic, architecture and Sutton Park' were a strength.

More than three quarters (78%) of survey respondents stated that a capital theme they would prioritise for investment was 'travel and transport'. This was the second most selected capital

investment priority in the Survey after ‘improving public spaces such as the town, local centres and green spaces’. For young people this rose to 81%. Public safety was a concern for nearly two thirds of respondents (64%) and improving safety was the revenue theme they would prioritise for investment. A range of qualifying remarks highlighted the need for funding for projects that improved street lighting, CCTV along with the need for a visible neighbourhood presence. Safer streets for pedestrians and cyclists were suggestions, in addition to the concern for transport and travel and community safety.

4.3.4 Thriving Places Qualitative Research Evidence

Ward engagements

Across all wards, participants identified the town centre and promoting green spaces as priorities for investment. When asked their priorities (from the list of MHCLG pre-approved interventions):

- 51% (the largest group) selected ‘Funding for improvements to town centres, neighbourhoods and high streets’
- 31% (the second largest category) selected ‘Creating and improving green spaces, community gardens, watercourses and embankments in the local area’

Other common themes included:

- The need for places to go/things to do for young people
- Safety (from crime and safety on the roads)
- Car parking (availability and cost)
- Closure of public services - especially concern for library services and community buildings
- Improved public transport – reliability, links, interchanges and routes

Thematic Sub-group Insights

All four thematic sub-groups discussed the Thriving Places themes:

- All groups proposed ways to diversify town centre uses to better meet residents’ and visitors’ needs, creating a true ‘destination’. Improving links between the town centre and Sutton Park and making more of the town’s heritage and cultural assets, were seen as major opportunities with local centres complementing and not competing with the town centre.
- Sutton Park was viewed as central to the town’s identity and important in attracting more visitors and offering more activities.
- Transport discussions highlighted car dependency whilst there was strong support for better pedestrian and cycling routes, particularly between the town centre and Sutton Park.

- Safety concerns were raised both in terms of pedestrian and cyclist safety and perceptions of personal security. Improving safety was seen as essential for encouraging active travel, increasing footfall, and boosting activity. Sub-groups suggested stronger enforcement to deter anti-social behaviour alongside positive activities for young people.

Community-led Grassroots Engagement Insights

Qualitative research undertaken by community organisations highlighted that views could vary between demographic groups, but principal themes were generally common to all. For example:

- All groups considered the town centre required investment (and local centres to a lesser extent): Older people were likely to emphasise the need for additional seating and investment in accessibility. Young people/families wanted more town centre entertainment activities.
- All groups wanted investment in local transport, connectivity and infrastructure: Older people emphasised potholes and pavements in need of repair and unreliable public transport. Working age people were likely to feel that public transport was impractical and inconvenient. There were also inconvenient parking-time restrictions. Young people needed more safe cycling/walkway routes with public transport being considered expensive.
- Fear of crime and perceptions of safety were mentioned by all demographic groups although to a lesser extent by working-age people: Youths “hanging around”, general antisocial behaviour, and a lack of lighting in some areas (side streets could feel unsafe), general anti social behaviour, speeding cars, motorbikes and mopeds were all a concern.

4.3.5 Thriving Places – Summary of Evidence and Proposed Investment Themes

The town centre faces particular challenges with a relatively high vacancy rate, underutilised buildings and spaces, barriers to connectivity within the town centre and to and from surrounding areas and Sutton Park, and safety concerns. Sutton Park provides a distinctive focal point as an environmental and community asset. Local centres play a key role as accessible neighbourhood hubs.

There were concerns about travel and transport including the availability of active travel modes, such as cycling routes and concerns about the quality of public transport such as perceptions of poorly configured routes and linkages. Public services concerns related to transport, community safety and activities for young people as a distraction for anti-social behaviour. Concerns about connectivity of active travel modes, particularly to and from the town centre and connections to Sutton Park and neighbourhoods.

Future investment should focus on-

- The town centre, and local centres improving local transport connectivity and infrastructure including improving links between the town centre and Sutton Park and active travel routes.
- Promoting safety and security

- Promoting cultural, creative and leisure activities in the town and local centres for all age groups, in particular young people
- Maintaining and enhancing heritage assets within shared spaces

4.3.6 Stronger Communities Secondary Research Evidence

Stronger Communities – involves considering the existing strengths of the community along with enhancing local assets to meet community needs (building on what is already there). The Stronger Communities theme has been considered by reviewing existing levels of community wellbeing. It also considers the availability of assets to meet community needs.

Royal Sutton Coldfield performs relatively well against many conventional measures of community strength, economic and social wellbeing.

- Deprivation is relatively limited. Two percent (one Local Super Output Area (LSOA)) of LSOAs are in the 10% most deprived in England (MHCLG, English Indices of Deprivation, 2025).
- Four LSOAs show a relative worsening of deprivation since 2019.
- Child poverty is low. MHCLG data (2025) showed that in 2022-23, 9.7% of under-16s in Royal Sutton Coldfield lived in low income families. This is lower than the England average (21.3%).
- Disability and long-term health conditions for Royal Sutton Coldfield are lower than the level for the rest of Birmingham (22%) and England (23%) (ONS, Census, 2021) (ONS, Ward Factsheets - Census, 2021).
- The population is relatively healthy. 20.3% of residents in Royal Sutton Coldfield have disabilities or a long-term health condition (vs 22% Birmingham and 23% England)
- The unemployment rate in Royal Sutton Coldfield is relatively low - around 4.2% - compared to 5.4% for England (ONS, Census, 2021).
- Employment levels are equal to or exceed the national average, Reddipap is lowest but is inline with the national average.
- There is a qualifications gap between Four Oaks and Reddipap.
- Crime rates are low (recorded crime per 1,000 population in 2022 was 74.5 compared to 76.7 for England). The same figures for anti-social behaviour were 5.8 (Royal Sutton Coldfield) and 14.8 (England). Social Trust in the Royal Town is high compared to national averages (MHCLG, Royal Sutton Coldfield - local data profile, 2025).

Royal Sutton Coldfield has a wide range of community and social assets. There are at least 420 (known) local community groups serving religious, recreational and welfare needs (Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council, Community Organisation Mapping, 2025). The largest number support children, young people and families followed by recreational arts, music and culture

organisations. Others include community and social groups and faith and worship organisations. Physical community assets include community centres and three libraries - Mere Green Library, Walmley Library, Boldmere Library and multisports leisure centre.

Table 4: VCFSE Groups

Type	Count	%
Faith and Worship (churches, mosques, study groups)	38	16
Health and wellbeing (Illness, bereavement, counselling, and wellbeing support)	24	10
Community and social groups (Friendship clubs, coffee mornings, women's/men's groups, resident associations)	41	17
Arts, music and culture (Choirs, theatre, art, crafts, music, photography, film, creative clubs)	46	19
Children, young people and families (Scouts, Guides, toddler groups, youth clubs, playgroups, family support)	54	22
Charities and community services (food banks, advice/support charities)	22	9
Education, learning and personal development (U3A, speakers clubs, bridge, hobby learning, personal growth)	9	4
Civic, rotary and voluntary organisations	8	3
Total	242	100%

Source: Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council

There are around 100 sports and activity clubs/organisations in the Town (Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council, Community Organisation Mapping, 2025), of these, dance and outdoor groups are the most popular.

Table 5: Sporting Organisations in Royal Sutton Coldfield

Activity	Count	%
Dance (including ballet, tap, Zumba, line dancing, etc.)	19	19
Martial Arts (Karate, Kickboxing, Krav Maga, Aikido, MMA, Kung Fu, TKD, Satori, etc.)	9	9
Pilates	3	3
Yoga	5	5
Fitness / Exercise (general fitness, low impact, Boxercise, Clubbercise, etc.)	8	8
Bowls (Indoor, Lawn, Boccia, Bowling Clubs)	5	5
Football	3	3
Cricket	2	2
Tennis	4	4
Rugby	1	1
Gymnastics / Aerial / CrossFit	3	3
Badminton	1	1
Boxing	1	1
Keep Fit / Aerobics (non-dance, non-yoga/pilates)	3	3
Tabletop / Mind Sports (Chess, Kurling)	2	2
Sailing / Water Sports (Sub Aqua, Sailing)	2	2
Hockey	2	2
Athletics / Running (Parkrun)	2	2
Community Sports / Umbrella Organisations (Sport Birmingham, CSPAN, SC Community Games, etc.)	4	4

Eco groups/outdoor activities allotments	19	19
Other / Mixed Sport Clubs (Wyndley Leisure Centre, Walmley Sports Club)	2	2
Total	99	100

There are also a range of outdoor Parks and green spaces. Of these Sutton Park is the most significant with an estimated 1 million visitors per annum. Sutton Park provides an important focus for community events and outings. There are facilities for jogging, walking, cycling and horse riding, sailing and canoeing lakes, fishing ponds, a model aircraft field as well as two playgrounds for children. There are also a number of restaurants (Birmingham City Council, Sutton Park - Things to see and do, 2025). In May 2022, Exeter University estimated the welfare value of Sutton Park to be approximately £15.6m per annum (University of Exeter, 2022).

There are a range of other significant parks, lakes and woodland located in Royal Sutton Coldfield. Examples include Newhall Valley Country Park, Rectory Park, Plantsbrook and Hill Hook local nature reserves, there are also ten allotment sites (Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council, Living in Sutton Coldfield, 2025). Overall, Royal Sutton Coldfield's green and natural environment is exceptional in scale, amounting to over 50% of the total land area (2,216ha) with Sutton Park (Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council, Living in Sutton Coldfield, 2025) standing as the "jewel in the crown". The MHCLG Zencity Survey highlighted that 79% of Royal Sutton Coldfield residents rated the availability of green and other attractive public spaces as good or excellent (vs a 46% national benchmark) (Zencity, 2025).

Whilst there is much to celebrate, as discussed in "Thriving Places" austerity and public funding challenges are threatening the ability of community organisations and local publicly owned assets to promote stronger communities.

Clifton Road Youth Centre closed in 2023, this was followed by the closure of Falcon Lodge Community Centre in 2024 (with the building returned to Birmingham City Council). The library in the town centre closed in 2025.

The libraries at Walmley and Boldmere and the community centres at Mere Green and Walmley were also under threat of closure but are now under the remit of Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council as part of its new libraries and community centres service (discussed in Thriving Places). Other community assets require additional funding. Sixty one percent of the 877.4 ha of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in Sutton Park is in an unfavourable "declining" condition and 28% in unfavourable "recovering" condition (LUC, 2021) highlighting the need for ongoing investment. Equally, any increased use of the Park for community purposes will also have an impact on maintenance costs which need to be considered in any programme of expanded use.

Other population and demographic factors are influencing the ability of existing community support to promote strong communities.

- 5,500 new homes are being built in Royal Sutton Coldfield over the next ten years as part of the Langley development bringing with them over 12,000 new residents. This is likely to put additional pressure on existing community services supporting Royal Sutton Coldfield residents (Birmingham City Council, Langley SUE and Peddimore SPDs, 2019).

- Royal Sutton Coldfield has an older average population than Birmingham and England. In 2022, the median age in Royal Sutton Coldfield was 45 years. The median age for England was 40. The same figure for Birmingham was 34 years (MHCLG, Royal Sutton Coldfield - local data profile, 2025). Older aged residents are likely to put significant pressure on health and social services in an environment of limited funding.

Whilst overall deprivation is low, survey research undertaken by the University of Nottingham for Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust in 2023 highlighted a number of unmet needs relevant across the town that impact on strengthening communities (Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust, 2023). These included:

- Loneliness- with many residents not seeing family and friends on a regular basis.
- Dissatisfaction with traffic and parking and the demise of local shops and amenities.
- Financial hardship – with this being apparent in some households across all wards (highlighting the need for whole town responses to social challenges).
- Higher levels of anxiety and mental health needs associated with LGBTQ+ residents and lower income groups.
- Physical wellbeing challenges – especially for older age groups.
- Upkeep and repair of homes for low income families.

4.3.7 Stronger Communities Quantitative Research Evidence

Primary research explored views of local assets, particularly, community facilities and green spaces.

The survey showed that residents viewed Sutton Park and the town's green spaces as the town's greatest collective strength and a priority to protect and enhance. The survey also highlighted demand for better play areas, more inclusive facilities, as well as investment in community and sports buildings.

- 80% of respondents identified the quality of the town's parks and green spaces as a strength (1st) and 79% considered it needed to be protected (1st).
- 59% of respondents identified improving services and activities for young people as a priority for revenue investment (2nd).
- 52% of respondents wanted to improve services for the local community (3rd).
- 27% of respondents felt access to local health services was good vs 41% who suggested it was a challenge.

Table 6: Stronger Communities Survey Responses

Stronger Communities – Survey respondent suggestions for change		
“Sutton Park is a treasure which requires investment to protect it for the future”	“Redesign older parks that are currently underutilised by adding more engaging public features such as community gardens, art installations, interactive play areas, or fitness equipment.	“Sutton Park – it is the heart of Royal Sutton Coldfield. Without the park in at least the standard it is now, the town would become a non-entity.”
“More children’s play areas and small local parks.”	“Community food hubs, local advice centres, and affordable leisure activities.”	“Plant more trees.”
Community centres and facilities.”	Leisure facilities for young people.”	“Huge investment in youth clubs.”
“Huge investment in youth clubs and activities for teenagers”	“Community food hubs, local advice centres, and affordable leisure activities.”	“Youth and skills opportunities training programmes, apprenticeships and safe spaces for young people.

4.3.8 Stronger Communities Qualitative Research Evidence

Ward Insights

Ward-level engagement provided the opportunity for local people to suggest areas for change and investment in green spaces and community facilities. Key themes relevant to the Stronger Communities theme included:

- Creating and improving green spaces
- Funding for new community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects – or improvements to existing ones
- The need for more activities for young people

- Funding for local sports, arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities
- A need for capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society, youth and community groups
- The need for a safe and supportive environment for homeless people
- Policing to target crime prevention
- Interventions to tackle anti-social behaviour

Table 7: Stronger Communities Ward-level Suggestions for Change

Stronger Communities – Examples of ward level suggestions for change		
<i>“Green spaces, especially Sutton Park.”</i>	<i>“Support outdoor health and wellbeing through local green space investment”</i>	<i>“Better play facilities in the park”, “New Kids Park”</i>
<i>“Fete – arts and craft festival”</i>	<i>“New health care in the town centre”</i>	<i>“Tree lined streets”</i>
<i>“Heritage, history, identity”</i>	<i>“Community initiatives / shared gardens / allotments”</i>	<i>“History everywhere in Sutton”</i>

Thematic Sub-Group Insights

The thematic discussions explored how Royal Sutton Coldfield’s natural, cultural and social assets could help build stronger communities.

- Participants identified Sutton Park as the town’s defining asset, central to local identity, health and community life. Protecting and enhancing it - balancing conservation with activity - was a shared priority. Better gateways, paths and facilities were seen as key to increasing use and welfare benefits. Smaller parks and green spaces were also valued as vital community spaces that should be maintained and improved for recreation, volunteering and social connection.
- Despite a strong voluntary sector, many groups lack suitable, affordable spaces. Participants called for flexible, shared and specialist facilities to support collaboration, sport and social activity. Community ownership or co-management was seen as a way to improve sustainability and reinvest locally.
- The Quincentenary Year (2028) and the town’s heritage assets were identified by members of the thematic groups as an opportunity to develop events and activities around bringing vibrancy to the town centre, local centres and parks.

- Heritage, culture and sport were highlighted as key to improving physical and mental health. Engaging residents in diverse activities was seen as essential to preventing poor health and fostering cohesion.

Overall, Royal Sutton Coldfield's strengths lie in its distinct identity, green environment and community spirit, but these require coordinated care and renewal. Protecting Sutton Park, revitalising heritage and community buildings, promoting a range of activities and improving access to inclusive facilities was essential.

Community-led Grassroots Engagement Insights

Community-led grassroots engagement highlighted a number of themes in relation to the Stronger Communities theme:

Sutton Park and other green spaces were seen as major community assets but underused. Older people highlighted the lack of public toilets; Families with primary-age children wanted upgraded play areas or "pocket parks". Sensory-friendly equipment for SEND children was also proposed; Young people requested more activity-based facilities such as a bike trail, skate parks and outdoor gyms.

There was a shared call for modern, affordable, and inclusive facilities, particularly multi-use community hubs supporting sport, heritage, and wellbeing: Older residents cited difficulty accessing amenities. One suggestion was an Infrastructure and Access Fund. Families sought affordable, safe indoor spaces and inclusive SEND provision. Ethnic communities requested culturally inclusive hubs for shared activities. Young people noted a shortage of affordable sports and youth centres and wanted free or low-cost facilities.

There was strong demand for accessible, specialist, and inclusive health services to address physical, mental, and social wellbeing: Older people mentioned issues such as falls, isolation, and limited access to care. Suggestions included intergenerational activities and expanded local support. Working-age residents identified gaps in NHS services. Families wanted more SEND activity groups and inclusive youth services. Ethnic minority women and older residents called for culturally sensitive, women-only wellbeing sessions and multilingual health campaigns. Young people linked crime, drugs, and the cost of activities to poor mental health, advocating for free sports and activity centres. Disabled people sought services more aligned with their needs.

4.3.9 Stronger Communities – Summary of Evidence and Investment Themes

The evidence shows that Royal Sutton Coldfield's key strengths are its exceptional green spaces, particularly Sutton Park and the wider park network, and these, together, support conservation, health and wellbeing. Engagement findings also stressed protecting heritage and improving community, health and sports facilities to boost accessibility and participation. Additionally, research participants highlighted the need for services and activities to be more inclusive, supporting young people, residents with lower incomes, people with disabilities. Suggested Stronger Communities investments included:

- Invest in Sutton Park
- Create and improve green spaces
- Invest in cultural, heritage and arts activities

- Invest in inclusive heritage, sports facilities and community buildings
- Improve health and wellbeing services for the local community, particularly for young people and their families. Focusing on most deprived areas.
- Address inequalities regarding employment levels, supporting people to move into employment.

4.3.10 Take Back Control Secondary Research Evidence

Taking Back Control focuses on the community's capability to bring about change. It considers how i) local community organisations can support local people to gain the right skills and capability to move into employment ii) how local organisations can help individuals to link up with businesses who need their skills. iii) how community leaders can gain the skills and strategic partnership connections to act as strong leaders in their local communities to drive change.

Table 8: Taking Back Control Socioeconomic Data

Taking Back Control – Socioeconomic Data		
Income: Average gross annual pay of £42,690, higher than in Birmingham and the UK (ONS, Ward Factsheets - Census, 2021)	Qualifications: 14.6% of residents have no qualifications vs 18.1% across England (ONS, Ward Factsheets - Census, 2021)	Qualifications: range between 12.5% (Trinity) and 18.7% (Reddicap) of residents with no qualifications (ONS, Ward Factsheets - Census, 2021)
Qualifications: 41.7% of residents are qualified to Level 4 vs 33.9% nationally (ONS, Ward Factsheets - Census, 2021)	Qualifications: range between 31.8% (Reddicap) and 46.6% (Four Oaks) of residents with Level 4 qualifications (ONS, Ward Factsheets - Census, 2021)	Employment: 75.7% of residents in employment vs 70.9% in England (ONS, Census, 2021)
Economic Inactivity: 21.3% of residents are economically inactive (vs 35.1% in Birmingham and 24.6% in England) (ONS, Ward Factsheets - Census, 2021)	Economic Inactivity: 39.7% of long-term sick or disabled who have never worked (vs 39% in Birmingham and 37.5% across England (ONS, Ward Factsheets - Census, 2021)	Growth in people on Universal Credit between Jan 2020 – July 2025 a 159.9% (vs 182.1% in Birmingham and 188.3% across England) (Department for Work and Pensions, 2025)

Employer Skills Needs

Data from the Business Register and Employment Survey provides employment information for Royal Sutton Coldfield. The largest employment sector in the town is health, followed by business and professional services, transport and storage, accommodation and food and education.

Royal Sutton Coldfield has traditionally been a commuter town with the majority of the working population commuting to neighbouring towns, in particular, Birmingham City Centre alongside employment parks in surrounding local authority areas. The Peddimore employment development has the potential to create hundreds of new employment opportunities for the town's residents and as occupiers are announced it will be important to understand the skills required and whether further interventions are required. This may impact on future reviews of the PiPP. Furthermore, the aim of diversifying the town centre may also bring in new

employment sectors; building on the business services and financial services jobs that are currently based in and around the town centre. This may represent a key area of future growth.

Table 9: Royal Sutton Coldfield Employment Sectors

Activity	Count	%
1 : Agriculture, forestry & fishing (A)	15	0.0
2 : Mining, quarrying & utilities (B,D and E)	400	1.1
3 : Manufacturing (C)	1,250	3.4
4 : Construction (F)	1,250	3.4
5 : Motor trades (Part G)	600	1.6
6 : Wholesale (Part G)	1,500	4.1
7 : Retail (Part G)	3,500	9.5
8 : Transport & storage (inc postal) (H)	4,000	10.8
9 : Accommodation & food services (I)	3,000	8.1
10 : Information & communication (J)	600	1.6
11 : Financial & insurance (K)	350	0.9
12 : Property (L)	1,250	3.4
13 : Professional, scientific & technical (M)	2,500	6.8
14 : Business administration & support services (N)	2,500	6.8
15 : Public administration & defence (O)	250	0.7
16 : Education (P)	3,000	8.1
17 : Health (Q)	8,000	21.6
18 : Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services (R,S,T and U)	2,250	6.1
Total	36,215	100

(ONS, Business Register and Employment Survey, 2024)

Whilst employment and job vacancy levels vary, regional and national reports (for example (West Midlands Combined Authority, West Midlands Regional Health Science and Case Services Training Plan, 2022), (Midlands, Transport Skills Insights Report, 2022), (West Midlands Combined Authority, West Midlands Local Skills Report , 2022), (Clarkslegal, 2025)) highlight wide ranging strategic changes in skill needs. Common issues are:

- Difficulties finding workers with the right skills.
- The need to replace older workers soon to retire.
- The need to become more inclusive (for example, employing more women in the transport industry).
- The need for wider appreciation that many employment opportunities are available at all levels from entry to graduate level.
- The need for culture change so that young people are encouraged to consider vocational routes alongside academic routes to progress into employment.
- The need for “soft” skills especially in customer facing roles.

- The need for digital skills.

Ensuring the future economic success of Royal Sutton Coldfield businesses and residents requires availability of suitable training and progression routes. In an era of continued constrained public spending, there is significant scope for local intervention to augment central government resources.

Skills for community leaders:

The community and voluntary sector in Royal Sutton Coldfield is very strong with 420 groups including over 100 sports organisations in the town. However, research undertaken by Nottingham University (2023) highlighted that the sector faced challenges. Post- covid, interest in volunteering has declined. At the time of the research, four in five people in Royal Sutton Coldfield (81%) did not volunteer at all. Ten percent volunteered for one to three hours a week, 5% volunteered for four to six hours and 4% volunteered for more than seven hours a week. The largest groups of volunteers were aged 65–74 and 45–54 (Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust, 2023).

The sector faced a range of challenges and capability issues. Many service providers reported difficulties in accessing consistent, long-term funding. Anecdotal reports highlighted that funding was often available to launch new initiatives, it was much harder to secure financial support for maintaining and developing existing, successful projects. Providers also highlighted that applying for funding was time-consuming and required specialist knowledge, particularly in understanding and using the technical terminology common in funding applications.

Many organisations lacked the skills needed to prepare strong funding bids or to meet the reporting requirements associated with grants. There was a clear need for additional training and capacity-building support. In particular, sports clubs and leisure providers expressed a desire for guidance on how to better support people with disabilities.

4.3.11 Taking Back Control Quantitative Research Evidence

The survey findings showed that general concern for promoting skills was lower than for other priorities (such as the town centre or green spaces). However, there was still a recognition of its importance amongst a sizeable group.

- 24% of respondents identified skills provision and business growth opportunities as a priority for revenue investment. The same proportion (24%) would prioritise lifelong learning and education.
- 27% considered that the availability of local jobs was a challenge.
- Support for measures to support the local community and voluntary sector were not significant. Only 8% thought the current availability of training and support programmes for local civil society and community group leaders was a strength but only 8% identified it as a challenge.

4.3.12 Taking Back Control Qualitative Research Evidence

Ward Insights

Skills needs were less of a priority discussion point in ward discussions. Only 16% chose Education and Opportunity as a Priority action theme for investment whilst only 6% viewed “Work Productivity and Skills” a major concern.

Examples of specific investments to promote skills included: Skills provision tailored to local opportunities and skills gaps; school-based programmes to support young people’s development and support for community-based learning and development.

Employment initiatives suggested focus on assisting people to move into work, providing business support and networks for smaller businesses and social enterprises and support for the visitor economy.

Suggestions to promote the capacity of community groups included enabling community wealth building and funding for volunteering and social action projects and developing social and human capital.

Table 10: Taking Back Control Supporting Information

Taking Back Control – Supporting Information		
More youth activities in secondary school	Need more digital skills	It’s difficult to get children into schools
Integrate the community through volunteering	Support for writing of funding applications for community organisations	More community cohesion is needed

Thematic Sub-group Evidence

Skills and Employment

Promoting skills and assisting local people to move into employment was a theme highlighted by the Economy, Education, Skills and Training thematic group. While the population has an education and skill level above average, some younger and vulnerable residents face particular barriers to finding employment. This was particularly so for those with additional needs due to a lack of confidence, mental health needs or a disability. Tailored education, practical/technical training, work placements, soft skills development and stronger links between schools, colleges, community groups, and employers were seen as vital for inclusion of these groups.

It was also important for employers, teachers, parents and students to understand the evolving qualifications framework. There are a wide range of progression options from school into employment, however, many schools and families continue to focus on university routes, which are not suitable for all young people. There needs to be a broader understanding of alternative vocational options for all young people and adults seeking new employment opportunities.

Voluntary and community sector – Royal Sutton Coldfield has a strong network of voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise organisations, but many lack funding, training, or coordination to reach their potential. Strengthening skills, collaboration, and administrative capacity was deemed critical for long-term sustainability.

Mechanisms to promote volunteering were important. Building practical, digital, and leadership skills was emphasised to support volunteering and the sustainability of community organisations and enterprises, especially amongst younger age groups.

Participants noted the Neighbourhood Board and Town Council's role in convening partnerships and guiding priorities. Aligning public, private, and community sector goals was seen as key to maximising resources and momentum.

Improving visibility and coordination of local activities was considered essential. Shared communication platforms, joint branding, and local noticeboards were supported.

4.3.13 Taking Back Control – Summary of Evidence and Investment Themes

The research identified a need to provide some people with additional support to enter employment by promoting education and business networks and work placements. Utilising the full range of progression routes to employment – both vocational and academic – also provided a broader range of options for young people.

There are potential opportunities for local voluntary and community groups to work with young people to assist them to build confidence, tackle mental health issues and gain skills in order to help them transition to a successful employment destination.

Local community and voluntary groups also required help to build their management capacity and to promote volunteering. There was also a need to work effectively with strategic partners across the town. Suggestions for investment included:

- Move people into employment through employer business networks and the use of work placements; and promote the wide range of transition options.
- Promote capacity, support and volunteering in Voluntary, Community, Faith, Social Enterprise and sports organisations.

4.4 Developing the Priorities for Change

Suggested investment themes were drawn together into 10 Priorities for change. Some are relevant to more than one PiPP Investment Objective.

Table 11: Priorities for Change Alignment with PiPP Objectives

Priority No.	Priority	Thriving Places	Stronger Communities	Taking Back Control
P1a	Invest in Sutton Park	✓	✓	
P1b	Create and improve green spaces	✓	✓	
P2	Invest in the town centre, local centres and high streets	✓		
P3	Invest in local transport connectivity / infrastructure, including public realm improvement, accessible, and inclusive active travel	✓	✓	
P4	Invest in heritage, sport and community buildings	✓	✓	
P5	Invest in inclusive sports events, networks and capacity		✓	
P6	Support for community-led, creative, cultural and heritage experiences and activities	✓	✓	
P7	Promote safety and security in the town	✓	✓	
P8	Investment in services for the local community e.g. health and wellbeing particularly young people and families		✓	✓
P9	Move people into employment			✓
P10	Promote capacity and volunteering in Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise		✓	✓

4.5 Powers

The following table summarises the potential powers identified by the Neighbourhood Board and Town Council that could be deployed in collaboration with Birmingham City Council to support the delivery of projects and activities that deliver against the Priorities for Change.

Table 12: Priorities for Change Powers

Priority No.	Priority	Potential Powers to Deliver
P1a	Invest in Sutton Park	Commons Act 2006 (Village Green status)
P1b	Create and improve green spaces	Commons Act 2006 (Village Green status)
P2	Invest in the town centre, local centres and high streets	Planning Policy High Street Rental Auctions Local Development Orders CIL Clean Up Notices Pavement licences
P3	Invest in local transport connectivity / infrastructure, including public realm improvement, accessible, and inclusive active travel	CIL Highways powers
P4	Invest in heritage, sport and community buildings	Asset of Community Value Local Listed Building Consent Orders Repairs Notice Local Heritage Programmes
P5	Invest in inclusive sports events, networks and capacity	Wellbeing Power (Local Government Act 2000) Community Asset Transfer
P6	Support for community-led, creative, cultural and heritage experiences and activities	Planning Policy
P7	Promote safety and security in the town	Respect Orders Bus Services (No.2) bill Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 Licensing Act 2003
P8	Investment in services for the local community e.g. health and wellbeing particularly young people and families	Planning Policy
P9	Move people into employment	
P10	Promote capacity and volunteering in Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise	

4.6 Proposed Outcomes

The following table summarises the outcomes identified by the Neighbourhood Board and Town Council.

Table 13: Priorities for Change Outcomes

Priority No.	Priority	Proposed Outcomes
P1a	Invest in Sutton Park	- Increased visitor satisfaction and events hosted - Measurable improvements in biodiversity condition - Long term – The Park builds a reputation as a regional destination
P1b	Create and improve green spaces	- Measurable improvements in biodiversity condition - Improved perceptions of local communities
P2	Invest in the town centre, local centres and high streets	- A reduction in vacancy rates and a more diversified town and local centre economy. - Growth in footfall and dwell-time and local spend - Improved perceptions of town centre vibrancy and visitor experience
P3	Invest in local transport connectivity / infrastructure, including public realm improvement, accessible, and inclusive active travel	- Increased proportion of trips made by walking, cycling or public transport - Increased linked trips between key assets e.g. the Park and the Town Centre - Reduced road accidents
P4	Invest in heritage, sport and community buildings	- Reduction in vacant or underused heritage and community assets. - Improved financial sustainability through ownership of facilities by community organisations and sports clubs - Increased heritage engagement and awareness of the town's heritage
P5	Invest in inclusive sports events, networks and capacity	- Increase participation rates in sport and physical activity, particularly for disabled people and underrepresented groups - Greater diversity of local sports networks and volunteers.
P6	Support for community-led, creative, cultural and heritage experiences and activities	- Growth in local creative and cultural events and attendance - Increased visibility of Royal Sutton Coldfield's civic and cultural identity - Increased visitor numbers
P7	Promote safety and security in the town	- Reduction in anti-social behaviour and shoplifting. - Improve perceptions of safety in public spaces - Increased participation and footfall in the evening economy
P8	Investment in services for the local community e.g. health and wellbeing particularly young people and families	- Increased levels of participation in preventative health and wellbeing services - Increase in young people engaged in positive activities and support programmes - Improved health outcomes
P9	Move people into employment	- Increased local employment and apprenticeships linked to new investment - Sustained progression from education into further education, training and work
P10	Promote capacity and volunteering in Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise	- Growth in volunteering hours and local leadership roles - Increase in the number and reach of community-led initiatives - Improved financial resilience and collaboration, capacity and skills across the VCFSE sector, education institutions and businesses.

5. Alignment with other programmes and investments

5.1 Introduction

This section discusses how the PiPP aligns with other programmes and strategies

The PiPP operates within a framework of town, city-wide and regional administrations. The impact of the PiPP investments will be maximised if they contribute towards and complement other planned and existing activity within the PiPP geography.

The Royal Sutton Coldfield Regeneration Plan sits within this strategic context, aligning directly with many of the shared ambitions of Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council, Birmingham City Council and the West Midlands Combined Authority outlined in strategies and masterplans. These converge around five shared principles:

1. **Sustainable Growth and Green Transition** – the unifying principle and ambition to be net-zero carbon as soon as possible.
2. **Connected and Accessible Neighbourhoods** – integrated active travel, public transport and key assets, safe road infrastructure.
3. **Vibrant Town Centres and Local Economies** – diversification of uses in town and local centres, improved resilience and experience-based growth.
4. **Healthy, Inclusive and Active Communities** – integration of wellbeing across transport, regeneration, culture, nature.
5. **Empowered Communities and Local Leadership** – civic pride, engagement, collaboration and partnerships.

These five themes align closely with the Priorities for Change listed below:

Table 14: Priorities for Change

Priority No.	Priority
P1a	Invest in Sutton Park
P1b	Create and improve green spaces
P2	Invest in the town centre, local centres and high streets
P3	Invest in local transport connectivity / infrastructure, including public realm improvement, accessible, and inclusive
P4	Invest in heritage, sport and community buildings
P5	Invest in inclusive sports events, networks and capacity
P6	Support for community-led, creative, cultural and heritage experiences and activities
P7	Promote safety and security in the town
P8	Investment in services for the local community e.g. health and wellbeing particularly young people and families
P9	Move people into employment

The following sections summarise the most relevant town, city and regional strategies. The table summarises their alignment with the 10 PiPP Priorities. Further information is then provided regarding the alignment of specific plans and strategies with the PiPP Priorities.

5.2 Strategies and Masterplans

The alignment of the Royal Sutton Coldfield PiPP with National, regional, city-wide and local strategies and masterplans is summarised below:

Table 14: Priorities for Change Alignment with Strategies and Masterplans

Strategy / Masterplan	P1a: Sutton Park	P1b: Green Spaces	P2: Town and Local Centres	P3: Connectivity	P4: Heritage, Sport and Community Infrastructure	P5: Inclusive sports	P6: Community, Culture, Creative, Heritage Activities	P7: Safety and Security	P8: Services for the Local Community	P9: Employment	P10: VCFSE / Community Capacity
West Midlands Growth Plan (2025-2035)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Local Skills Improvement Plan (2023)						✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Local Transport Plan Core Strategy (2023)	✓	✓			✓						✓
Birmingham Local Plan (2017)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Birmingham Local Plan - Preferred Options Consultation (2024)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					

Strategy / Masterplan	P1a: Sutton Park	P1b: Green Spaces	P2: Town and Local Centres	P3: Connectivity	P4: Heritage, Sport and Community Infrastructure	P5: Inclusive sports	P6: Community, Culture, Creative, Heritage Activities	P7: Safety and Security	P8: Services for the Local Community	P9: Employment	P10: VCFSE / Community Capacity
Birmingham's Future Together For 2035	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Birmingham Transport Plan (2021)	✓	✓									
Birmingham's Strategic Framework for Culture (2025-2035)	✓					✓			✓		✓
Birmingham Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022-2030)		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Birmingham Walking and Cycling Strategy and associated Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (2020)	✓	✓									

Strategy / Masterplan	P1a: Sutton Park	P1b: Green Spaces	P2: Town and Local Centres	P3: Connectivity	P4: Heritage, Sport and Community Infrastructure	P5: Inclusive sports	P6: Community, Culture, Creative, Heritage Activities	P7: Safety and Security	P8: Services for the Local Community	P9: Employment	P10: VCFSE / Community Capacity
Birmingham City of Nature Plan (2022)			✓	✓							✓
Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council Strategic Plan (2024)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan SPD (2021)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		
Royal Sutton Coldfield Active Travel Vision (2022) and Delivery Plan (2024)	✓	✓		✓	✓						✓

5.2.1 Regional Strategy Alignment

The West Midlands Growth Plan (2025-2035), the West Midlands Local Transport Plan (2023) and West Midlands and Warwickshire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP, 2023) establish a consistent regional focus on supporting thriving places and stronger communities.

West Midlands Growth Plan (2025-2035) (West Midlands Combined Authority, West Midlands Growth Plan, 2025)	
Vision Growth in the West Midlands will be created by productive and ambitious businesses, unleashed by human-centred innovation and its diverse and skilled people, and rooted in thriving places at the heart of the national economy. Its benefits will be felt by residents in all parts of the region, who will see their living standards rise. Relevant Priorities and Actions Our People – Improve education, skills, health and economic outcomes and become an exemplary region for disabled people. Our Businesses – support high growth clusters and innovation, ecosystems, improve business productivity, increase investment and maximise the impact of social economy organisations Our Places – transform high streets and town centres, improve transport connectivity and improve access to green spaces.	
Royal Sutton Coldfield Priorities for Change Alignment	
The Growth Plan priorities align closely with the Regeneration Plan's ambition for Royal Sutton Coldfield to contribute to the wider prosperity of the region. The Regeneration Plan supports the Growth Plan's Our Places and Our People priorities, strengthening the town's role as Birmingham's largest local centre, connecting all residents with opportunity, enhanced community and natural assets, whilst promoting collaboration, enterprise and wellbeing. Delivery against the following Priorities for Change (right) will directly contribute to the Growth Plan's priorities.	P1a: Sutton Park P1b: Green Spaces P2: Town Centre and Local Centres P3 Connectivity P4: Heritage, Sport, Community Infrastructure P5: Inclusive Sports P6: Community, Culture, Creative Heritage Activities P9: Employment P10: VCSFE / Community Capacity

West Midlands and Warwickshire Local Skills Improvement Plan (2023) (Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce 2023)	
Relevant Priorities: Priority One – Confirming Sector Needs: Define the sector-specific skills needed to enable businesses to achieve growth with a focus on engineering, green and digital industries. Priority Two – Leadership and Management Skills: Strengthen leadership and people management capability to support innovation, digitisation and the transition to net zero. Priority Three – Essential Skills for Employment: Improve digital literacy, numeracy, communication and employability skills among young people and adults to boost workforce readiness and progression.	
Royal Sutton Coldfield Priorities for Change Alignment	
The LSIP's priorities directly align with the Regeneration Plan's focus on promoting business-education links and creating pathways into local employment. The Plan also supports targeted investment in community, cultural and sports infrastructure, alongside volunteering and capacity building, that support residents to develop transferable soft skills in teamwork, communication and leadership. Delivering against the Priorities for Change (right) directly contribute to the LSIP's aims, in particular Priority Three (Essential Skills for Employment).	P4: Heritage, Sport, Community Infrastructure P8: Services for the Local Community P6: Community, Culture, Creative and Heritage Activities P9: Employment P10: VCSFE / Community Capacity

West Midlands Local Transport Plan Core Strategy (2023) (Transport for West Midlands, 2023)

Vision

A well-connected 45-minute region and 15-minute neighbourhoods, where people can travel to access what they need through a mix of walk and wheel, cycle and scoot and ride modes.

The six big moves are:

Behaviour Change – inclusive networks, engagement with the public to understand users of networks, their needs, barriers and how they make choices.

Walk, wheel, cycle and scoot – expand and integrate active travel networks and wider public transport infrastructure that make walking, wheeling and cycling a choice for journeys

Accessible and inclusive places – inclusive and accessible urban planning and design

Public transport and shared mobility – create a safe and truly integrated transport system

Safe, efficient and reliable network – reliable, safe highway networks for all road users

Green transport revolution – embedded innovation through partnerships

Royal Sutton Coldfield Priorities for Change Alignment

The LTP Core Strategy's ambitions align closely with the Regeneration Plan's focus on improving connectivity and sustainable movement across the region. The PiPP will support the delivery of this ambition in Royal Sutton Coldfield through investment in pedestrian and active travel initiatives and infrastructure that encourage sustainable transport travel choices between key community, leisure and natural assets. Delivery against the Priorities for Change (right), in particular the Walk, Wheel, Cycle and Scoot and Accessible and Inclusive Places, big moves:

P1b: Green Spaces

P2: Town and Local Centres

P3: Connectivity

P10: VCSFE / Community Capacity

5.2.2 Birmingham City Council Strategy Alignment

Birmingham City Council strategies provide the framework for development, services and growth across Birmingham, setting priorities for housing, employment, connectivity, culture and wellbeing. The PiPP Regeneration Plan aligns with key city-wide strategies including the Local Plan (2017 and emerging 2024 update), Shaping Birmingham's Future Together (2035), the Strategic Framework for Culture (2025-2035) and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022-2030).

It also supports the ambitions of Birmingham City Council's Climate Emergency Declaration (2019) and associated strategies such as, Birmingham Transport Plan (2021) and Walking and Cycling Strategy. These are not covered in detail here as their objectives reinforce the ambitions set out in the West Midlands Local Transport Plan. Given Royal Sutton Coldfield's unique role as home to Sutton Park, one of Europe's largest urban parks, the Birmingham City of Nature Plan (2022) is also of particular significance.

The following summaries focus on the adopted strategies with strongest alignment to the Royal Sutton Coldfield PiPP, highlighting where the programme will make a direct contribution to Birmingham's broader strategic ambitions.

Vision

By 2031, Birmingham will be renowned as an enterprise, innovative and green city that has delivered sustainable growth meeting the needs of its population and strengthening its global competitiveness.

Objectives

Develop Birmingham as a city of sustainable, inclusive neighbourhoods with locally distinctive character and strong, safe communities.

- To make provision for significant increase in the City's population.
- To create a prosperous, successful economy with benefits for all.
- To promote Birmingham's national and international role.
- To provide high quality connections throughout the City and with other places, including encouraging the increased use of public transport, walking and cycling.
- To create a more sustainable City that reduces its carbon footprint and waste and promotes brownfield regeneration while allowing the City to grow.
- To strengthen Birmingham's quality institutions and role as a learning City and extend the education infrastructure, securing significant school places.
- To encourages health and wellbeing through the provision of new and existing recreation, sport and leisure facilities, linked to a good quality public open space.
- To protect and enhance the City's heritage assets and historic environment.
- To conserve and enhance Birmingham's natural environments, allowing biodiversity and wildlife to flourish.
- To ensure that the City has the infrastructure in place to support future growth and prosperity.

Local Policy Context - Royal Sutton Coldfield

Town Centre (Policy GA4): A leading role in the continued transformation of Birmingham, supporting the town's regeneration and diversification through mixed-use development, diversification and improved connectivity.

Langley Sustainable Urban Extension (Policy GA5): Allocates land in Royal Sutton Coldfield for approximately 6,000 new homes, creating a sustainable new neighbourhood with integrated green and community infrastructure. The Langley SUE Supplementary Planning Document (2019) sets out the vision and development principles for the development in more detail.

Peddimore (Policy GA6): Identifies 71ha of land in Royal Sutton Coldfield for employment development. The policy states 40ha should be safeguarded for light industrial and General Industrial uses, whilst also supporting research and development and warehousing and distribution. The Peddimore Supplementary Planning Document (2019) sets out the vision and development principles for the development in more detail

Sutton Park: Identified as a nationally significant natural asset and visitor attraction within the Local Plan.

Royal Sutton Coldfield Priorities for Change Alignment

The Regeneration Plan directly aligns with the development ambitions of the Birmingham Development Plan, focusing capital investment in Royal Sutton Coldfield on activity that strengthens natural, economic, education, connectivity, heritage and community infrastructure. It complements the strategic development at Langley and Peddimore by ensuring the town has the physical and social infrastructure to accommodate and maximise opportunities associated with the planned growth. At a local level, the PiPP supports delivery against the city's priorities to revitalise the town centre, protect and enhance Sutton Park.

P1a: Sutton Park
P1b: Green Spaces
P2: Town Centre and Local Centres
P3 Connectivity
P4: Heritage, Sport and Community Infrastructure
P6: Community, Culture, Creative and Heritage Activities
P7: Safety and Security

Birmingham's Future Together For 2035 (Birmingham City Council, Our City Vision: Shaping Birmingham's Future Together 2035, 2025)

Vision

Our Vision for Birmingham is a city that has a thriving economy, tackles inequality, where all communities can enjoy greater opportunities and the wellbeing that brings.

The five priorities are:

Growth and Prosperity in Birmingham – investment and economic growth to benefit all people and places, address inequalities across the city, promote Birmingham as a great place to live, visit and do business, and businesses are supported to succeed.

Knowledge and Opportunity in Birmingham – Children and young people have a good start in life and great education, lifelong learning accessible for all, and skills shortages in key sectors are addressed.

Safety and Sustainability in Birmingham – More affordable homes are built, housing standards improved, and homelessness prevented. People are safeguarded from harm, cleanliness and waste services, and everyone benefits from reduced emissions, cleaner air and a greener city.

Health, Equity & Inclusion in Birmingham – Children and young people have a healthy start in life, people are empowered to make healthy choices to improve wellbeing, everyone can live and age well, services are citizen-focused and inclusive, everyone feels safe, heard and can grow.

Connected Birmingham – A safe, sustainable transport network, good access to online services and support to develop digital skills.

Royal Sutton Coldfield Priorities for Change Alignment

The Royal Sutton Coldfield PiPP directly supports Birmingham's 2035 Vision to be a City where all communities can enjoy greater opportunities. The Regeneration Plan provides a holistic framework for investment in Royal Sutton Coldfield that responds to all five of the priorities strategic plan. As Birmingham's largest local centre, investment to revitalise larger assets including the town centre and Sutton Park in particular, will benefit wider Birmingham.

P1a: Sutton Park
P1b: Green Spaces
P2: Town Centre and Local Centres
P3 Connectivity
P4: Heritage, Sport and Community Infrastructure
P5: Inclusive Sports
P6: Community, Culture, Creative and Heritage Activities
P7: Safety and Security
P8: Services for the Local Community
P9: Employment
P10: VCSFE / Community Capacity

Birmingham's Strategic Framework for Culture (2025-2035) (Together Culture, 2025)

The Strategic Framework is an initiative developed by Birmingham's newly established Cultural Compact, a cross-sector partnership designed to support the city's cultural sector. The Framework aims to secure long-term funding, foster local and global collaborations and position Birmingham as a cultural powerhouse.

The six pillars of the Framework are:

The Creative City – strengthening investment in Birmingham's cultural economy

A Brand for Creativity – understand the role culture plays in the image of the city, at home and abroad

Made in Birmingham – invest in talent development and workforce training

The Placemakers – expanding and protecting cultural spaces

Culture for the People – prioritising diversity, equality and inclusion in cultural programming

Magnets & Moonshots – showcase Birmingham as a cultural destination, while pursuing a plan for attracting major global cultural events and festivals

Royal Sutton Coldfield Priorities for Change Alignment

The Regeneration Plan aligns closely with Birmingham's Framework for Culture, contributing particularly to the Placemakers and Culture for the People pillars. Investment in heritage and community buildings in the town centre and local centres, alongside community-led initiatives, will strengthen Royal

P2: Town Centre and Local Centres
P4: Community, Heritage and Sports Buildings

Sutton Coldfield's cultural infrastructure and widen participation in arts, cultural and creative activities across the north of Birmingham, It is relevant across the following Priorities for Change (right).	P6: Community, Culture, Creative and Heritage Activities P10: VCSFE / Community Capacity
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Birmingham Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022-2030) (Birmingham City Council, Health and Wellbeing Strategy, 2022)	
Vision To create a city where every citizen, whoever they are, wherever they live and at every stage of life, can make choices that empower them to be happy and healthy. The strategy has five core themes: Healthy and Affordable Food – ensure access to affordable, nutritious food across the city and reduce food insecurity and promote sustainability Mental Wellness and Balance – improve mental health through evidence-based interventions and working with the voluntary sector Active At Every Age and Ability – increase engagement in sports, active travel and physical activity to support improved health outcomes, and cohesion Contributing to a Green and Sustainable Future – maximise the health outcomes associated with the natural environment Protect and Detect – collaborating to protect the health of citizens from infectious diseases, incidents and outbreaks	
Royal Sutton Coldfield Priorities for Change Alignment	
The Regeneration Plan supports Birmingham's health and wellbeing ambitions, linking place-based regeneration with improved health outcomes. Investment in shared spaces such as parks, green spaces, community, heritage and sports buildings alongside inclusive sport and community activities will strengthen the infrastructure for active, social and healthy living. The PiPPs focus on green spaces, community initiatives and volunteering aligns closely with the Mental Wellness and Balance, Active at Every Age and Ability, and Contributing to a Green Sustainable Future themes, and promote a holistic approach to wellbeing. Delivery against the following Priorities for Change will support the City's ambition for a healthier, more active city.	P1a: Sutton Park P1b: Green Spaces P3: Connectivity P4: Heritage, Sport, and Community Infrastructure P5: Inclusive Sports P6: Community, Culture, Creative and Heritage Activities P8: Services for the Local Community P10: VCSFE / Community Capacity

Birmingham City of Nature Plan (2022) (Birmingham City Council, Birmingham's City of Nature Plan, 2022)	
The Birmingham City of Nature Plan sets out the delivery plan that aims to see Birmingham recognised as a city of nature, where its parks and green spaces are both sustainably managed and funded. The Plan establishes a new governance model for the natural environment, built around five key themes : A Green City – net-zero ambitions are fulfilled, and sustainable, green and resilient development is delivered A Healthy City – residents can safely enjoy nature and engage in community gardening A Fair City – equality of access to green spaces and skills for green jobs An Involved City – green champions, learning about nature and community-led activity A Valued City – circular economy, funding for green and blue spaces	
Royal Sutton Coldfield Priorities for Change Alignment	
As the home of Sutton Park, one of Europe's largest urban parks and a defining part of Birmingham's natural infrastructure, Royal Sutton Coldfield plays an integral role in the city's green identity. Investment in Sutton Park and the town's wider network of natural assets will enhance biodiversity, improve accessibility and encourage residents from across Birmingham and visitors from further afield to actively engage with nature. Alongside wider support for community capacity building to maintain and enhance the town's green assets, delivery against the Priorities for Change	P1a: Sutton Park P1b: Green Spaces P10: VCSFE / Community Capacity

(right) will strengthen Birmingham's ambition to be a greener, healthier and more resilient city:	
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5.2.3 Local Strategy Alignment

Since its formation in 2016, Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council has developed a range of strategies and frameworks that set out local ambition for regeneration, active travel and community development. The PiPP supports this strong foundation, strengthening collaboration across civic, community and business partners to deliver impactful change for residents and businesses.

Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council Strategic Plan (2024) (Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council, Strategic Plan 2024-2028)

Vision

Founded in our past, working for our future to improve the environment, local services and facilities making Royal Sutton Coldfield an even better place.

The Strategic Plan identifies **seven priorities** for the next four years (2024-2028):

Representing Our Community Most Effectively – strong, transparent governance and local representation that reflects the priorities of the local community

Regeneration of the Town Centre – adopt a community leadership role in working with partners and key stakeholders to improve and regenerate the Town Centre

Planning a sustainable future – influence plans for major new development / new transport infrastructure and reducing the town's carbon footprint

Preserving and enhancing Sutton Park – to promote new arrangements for the management and development of the Park as a basis for helping to ensure that the investment necessary to secure its future is available

Delivering more services locally – enhance the ability of the Town Council to support actions in making Royal Sutton Coldfield cleaner and greener with more responsive local service delivery

Celebrating local arts, heritage & culture – to actively engage with and support our community, creatively celebrate, interpret and promote the heritage, character and identity of the Royal Town to residents and visitors

Sustaining thriving and safe local communities – to work alongside other organisations and community groups in preparing sustainable development programmes to promote thriving, healthy and safe local communities

Royal Sutton Coldfield Priorities for Change Alignment

The Regeneration Plan complements the Town Council's priorities by focusing PiPP investment in Royal Sutton Coldfield's key natural, heritage and economic assets, including Sutton Park, the Town Centre and wider community infrastructure, while strengthening local capacity for delivery. Connectivity improvements and investment sports, arts, cultural and heritage activities will strengthen civic pride, sustainability and health and wellbeing. PiPP delivery against all the Priorities for Change will support delivery against the Town Council's vision and strategic priorities:

P1a: Sutton Park
P1b: Green Spaces
P2: Town Centre and Local Centres
P3: Connectivity
P4: Heritage Sport Community Infrastructure
P5: Inclusive Sports
P6: Community, Culture, Creative Heritage Activities
P7: Safety and Security
P8: Services for the Local Community
P9: Employment
P10: VCSFE / Community Capacity

Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan SPD (2021) (RSC Town Centre Regeneration Partnership, 2020)

Vision

Reinvigorating the town centre by capitalising on Royal Sutton Coldfield's attractive green and historic assets and high degree of connectivity by: diversifying the town centre, increasing its accessibility, and strengthening its distinctive identity by uncovering its true heart to create a vibrant, sustainable and welcoming place for all.

Objectives

Connecting – The Parade, station, Birmingham Road and Sutton Park through active street frontages and streetscapes; and minimising perceived distance. Improve and establish strong connections between the town centre, green spaces, public transport hubs, and to destinations within wider Royal Sutton Coldfield. Overlap character areas within the town centre to facilitate a more complementary economy.

Communicating – Publish and promote Royal Sutton Coldfield's assets and attractions – markets, festivals and performances, parks and evening economy through multiple channels. Work with City Council towards a common vision and clear objectives. Clear and cohesive branding / design code.

Celebrating – Sutton Park and historic town and integrate into town centre identity and experience. Define identity as characterful and unique place where people are proud to live. Promote and support local events such as markets and festivals which bring the community together in key public spaces.

Community – Enhance key open public spaces that enable people to meet and gather naturally and at events. Invest in Library as a catalyst for improving community and cultural facilities in the town centre. Recognise and promote community groups actively investing in Royal Sutton Coldfield.

Changing – The town centre offer to reflect how people want to live work, socialise and spend free time, testing new and temporary uses. Adapt to climate emergency by actively moving away from carbon-emitting practices and proactively mitigating negative environmental impacts. Design to priorities active travel.

Complementing – Support Birmingham City Centre with localised services and housing choices, ensure diversity of uses which complement each other. Create high quality town centre environment proportionate in services, attractions and architecture proportionate to its position as the largest suburban centre in Birmingham.

Royal Sutton Coldfield Priorities for Change Alignment

The Regeneration Plan builds on the Masterplan's vision, focusing on revitalising the town centre and strengthening its connections with Sutton Park and surrounding neighbourhoods. The PiPP will work with partners to enhance heritage assets, support arts, cultural and creative activities to promote a safe, accessible and vibrant civic heart that attracts residents and visitors. Delivery against the Priorities for Change (right) will help realise the Masterplan's objectives and long-term ambition for a connected, thriving town centre for all.

P1a: Sutton Park
P2: Town Centre Investment
P3: Connectivity
P4: Heritage, Sport and Community Infrastructure
P6: Community, Culture, Creative and Heritage Activities
P7: Safety and Security

Royal Sutton Coldfield Active Travel Vision (2022) and Delivery Plan (2024) (PJA, 2022)

Vision

The Active Travel Vision for Royal Sutton Coldfield is one of transport choice, where residents and visitors have the opportunity to leave the car at home if they wish and move safely through their streets and spaces. Royal Sutton Coldfield will be a place that considers and cares for all roads users. Everyday trips will bring benefits beyond simply travelling from A to B, supporting better health, economic and environmental outcomes.

The Vision Document sets out **five objectives**:

Safer routes to Schools – make the school run a safer and healthier daily trip for more people

Better connected transport hub – integrating active travel networks and transport hubs

A better-connected and more resilient town centre and local centres – improved active travel to both the town centre and local centres

A better-connected Sutton Park – improved connectivity to Sutton Park

Stronger strategic links – integrate with the City's wider active travel infrastructure

Royal Sutton Coldfield Priorities for Change Alignment

The Regeneration Plan supports the Active Travel Vision document, focusing investment on the connectivity and community initiatives needed to walking, wheeling and cycling safer, more attractive and accessible to all. PiPP delivery will enhance connectivity between key assets, including the town centre, Sutton Park, complementing the Green Travel District

P1a: Sutton Park
P1b: Green Spaces
P2: Town and Local Centres
P3: Connectivity

approach for the Reddicap and Walmley and Minworth wards. Delivery against the Priorities for Change below will contribute to a more connected, active and sustainable town, directly supporting the: a better-connected and more resilient town centre and local centres and a better-connected Sutton Park objectives.

P10: VCSFE / Community

5.3 Existing Projects and Programmes in Royal Sutton Coldfield

The PiPP Regeneration Plan aligns with the following Town based Projects and Programmes:

Town Council Community Grants Programme: In 2024/25 the Town Council awarded 27 grants ranging from £300 to £20,000 - totalling £230,000.

Royal Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust: In the same year the Trust awarded 90 grants ranging from £150-£55,000, totalling £1.38m (Royal Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust, 2025).

Alongside these smaller-scale community grant programmes, two major investments are planned or underway, together providing the foundation for longer-term regeneration and aligning strongly with the PiPP priorities.

Royal Sutton Coldfield Gateway Scheme - £25m

Led by Birmingham City Council and supported by West Midlands Combined Authority and Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council, The Gateway Scheme builds on the Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan SPD. The scheme identifies fifteen individual interventions that collectively aim to regenerate the town centre, making it safer and more attractive for residents and visitors. The Strategic Outline Case (SOC) was approved at the end of 2024 and set out four key objectives:

- Improve the attractiveness of the pedestrian & cycling environment within the town centre
- Reduce severance across the town centre, improving links to public transport services and key locations within Royal Sutton Coldfield town centre.
- Improve bus passenger satisfaction
- Reduce car demand in the town centre and encourage mode shift from car to public transport and active travel.

The scheme is currently progressing through the detailed design stage to support the Outline Business Case stage. Works on the scheme are anticipated to commence in 2028. The scheme responds directly to views of stakeholders that the town centre requires significant investment to improve the overall environment and attract further investment to further broaden its offer. The Royal Sutton Coldfield PiPP will complement this significant capital investment in the town centre over the next ten years, supporting wider initiatives and activities that improve accessibility, safety, drive footfall and further diversity its uses and reduce the vacancy rates.

Royal Sutton Cottage Hospital Integrated Health Hub - £8.5m

Delivered by Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and due for completion in spring 2026, the project will transform Sutton Cottage Hospital into an integrated hub for health and social-care providers with a particular focus on health prevention and wellbeing for

older people. The hospital will be a 'one-stop' healthcare hub for over-65s in north Birmingham and enable the integration of primary, secondary, and community care services which includes an established local General Practice (NHS Birmingham Community Healthcare, 2025).

The PiPP will complement this investment, focusing on enhancing existing community, leisure and sport assets that support more residents with their physical and mental health, supporting the preventative health approach at a more local level.

6. Match Funding and Leveraged Investment

The Board is committed to utilising PiPP funding to leverage additional public and private sector and philanthropic funding to maximise investment in projects and programmes that have the potential to achieve the vision set out in the Royal Town's Regeneration Plan. A variety of potential funding sources could be utilised to deliver projects and programmes across each of the programme themes. This section first considers existing match funding sources. It then highlights the strategies that will be employed to generate additional investment.

6.1 Sources of existing match funding

Table 15: Sources of Existing Match Funding

Type	Organisation	Description
Government	Regional Government	Funding to the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) is being used for transport infrastructure, for example, the "Sutton Gateway Scheme" in Royal Sutton Coldfield is backed by £25m via the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement. PiPP funding could be used to augment this programme.
	Local Government	Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council awards grants to local voluntary and community organisations to support a range of projects / activities for the benefit of residents of Royal Sutton Coldfield. Royal Sutton Coldfield organisations and groups can apply for a grant of up to £20,000. These will be utilised alongside PiPP funds.
Private Investment	Infrastructure Levy / S106	Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)/S106 funds can be used alongside PiPP funds to help fund the provision of public goods, including affordable housing, community infrastructure (such as libraries or parks), or environmental safeguards. Specific large-scale projects already taking place in Royal Sutton Coldfield such as Peddimore have their own explicit s.106 and social value commitments already in place, in partnership with Birmingham City Council. Social value objectives include investment in social enterprises, funding local projects through the Peddimore Community Fund, creating pathways into employment for local, disadvantaged people and green initiatives such as Sutton Connect Green Travel District.
	Royal Sutton Coldfield BID	The BID is funded by a levy on businesses within the defined town-centre area (businesses with rateable value ≥ £7,500 pay a 1.53 % levy of rateable value in the 2022-27 term). The BID is clear that its remit is to deliver services over and above what the Police, City Council, Town Council are already providing. To support this, the BID can apply for external funding.
Philanthropic	Charities, Trusts and Foundations	Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust (SCCT) provides community grants for a range of purposes. PiPP can be used to augment these grants to support neighbourhood level events and activities run by community groups. The trust awards grants in the following categories: • The Relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage • Education • Arts, culture, heritage or science

		• Religion • Health or the saving of lives • Citizenship or community development • Amateur sport • Environmental protection or Improvement In 2023/2024, the Trust awarded £1.7 million in grants.
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6.2 Attracting New Opportunities

Additional match and leveraged funding opportunities are expected from a range of additional sources:

6.2.1 Maximising Public Match Funding

Large scale public grant schemes – Public grant funding will be sought in the form of nationally and regionally competitive programmes. Major funds are more likely to positively view proposed projects if they have secured match funding so the PiPP will have an important role in this respect. Opportunities include:

- **The Cultural Action Area programme 2023 – 2029** run by Birmingham City Council's Cultural Development Team and funded through its Enterprise Zone. The programme provides funds to support initial development work across a wide range of initiatives that will establish Cultural Action Areas (CAA) for longer-term economic and social benefit. Through this initial seed funding investment, the CAA programme seeks to utilise the power of culture to re-animate high streets and local centres. Grants of £20,000 to £100,000 are available for a 12-month period of capital and revenue expenditure. Led by strong local collaborations the CAA programme will support the development and delivery of sustainable activities, approaches, and ways of working that will enable lasting change for high streets and local centres. The programme closes in March 2029.
- The **Creative Foundations Fund (CFF)** funded by Arts Council England is an open access capital fund, to help retro fit or revitalise the restoration of renewed cultural assets. Up to £10m is available.
- **National Lottery Heritage Funding (NLHF)** up to £100k is available for open access projects relevant to Arts Libraries and Museums. National Lottery Heritage Grants, connecting people and community to the national, regional and local heritage of the UK ranging from £250,000 up to £10 million
- Natural England offers funding through the **Species Recovery Programme Capital Grant Scheme**, aimed at supporting projects that enhance habitats and aid in the recovery of threatened species. The Species Recovery Programme Capital Grant Scheme (SRPCGS) offers grants for up to £500k.
- Funded by Sport England, the **Movement Fund** provides up to £15,000 to cover a wide range of costs and items that will help deliver positive change. It also includes a capital fund for facilities for sports clubs.
- Historic England provides opportunities to explore the potential of a **Conservation Area Partnership Scheme** for the High Street Historic Quarter. This is a funding program that

supports the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. Funded projects are in the form of a partnership between a local authority, Historic England, and other funding bodies to provide grants for projects such as the repair of historic buildings and regeneration initiatives. Local authorities apply for the funding, which is then used for projects within a specific conservation area to protect its character and heritage.

- The **Fairer Futures Fund** was launched in 2022 and is delivered by Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care System (NHS). A total of £22.2m has been made available until the 2026/27 financial year across Birmingham and Solihull to fund projects that reduce health inequalities. Projects are run in collaboration between the health system and the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector.

The funding has four streams: **Citywide Small Grants, Citywide Partnership Fund, Locality Small Grants and Locality Partnership Fund**. Birmingham and Solihull are split into five localities, with the “North” being Royal Sutton Coldfield and Erdington. Under the Locality Partnership Fund, £896,381 has been awarded to the North to develop proposals for projects to support needs in each constituency. So far, proposals have centred around the theme of best start in life, mental health and healthy ageing. The Town Council has been working to move forward a business plan for the healthy ageing strand to support activities to help reduce falls given the (ageing) demographic of the Town.

- **Securing statutory funding** – Generating added value by aligning the Regeneration Plan with statutory budgets of Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council and Birmingham City Council – for example, additional investment in public spaces alongside the Councils’ capital programme.
- **CIL / s.106** – identifying opportunities for CIL/S106 where funds can be augmented by PiPP, for example, Langley Sustainable Urban Extension and Green Travel Districts.
- **Leveraging Regional Investment** – alignment with West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to ensure the plan has synergy with regional transport, skills and housing initiatives, potentially securing additional funds from devolution deals or regional investment programmes. PiPP funding can augment funding available via the WMCA “Integrated Settlement” which came into effect in April 2025. This is a single funding pot combining investments in skills & employment, housing & regeneration, transport, net zero, local growth & place.
- Plans to transform the Gracechurch Centre in Royal Sutton Coldfield with new homes, leisure, retail, commercial and other uses were supported by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) investment.
- The WMCA has agreed, in principle, to make the investment to help re-energise the town centre in line with the vision set out in the Royal Town Council's masterplan.

6.2.2 Attracting Private Investment

De-risking investment through improvement to infrastructure – using PiPP to address early stage, non-commercially viable work including site remediation, upgrades to public realm, or utility works in the town centre / local centres to reduce initial risk and cost for private developers, making investment more appealing. Minor refurbishment schemes could be combined with education/skills programmes and social value initiatives to further increase impact.

Highlighting Investable Prospects – PiPP funding could be used in the first investment period to produce detailed feasibility studies, businesses plans or a local prospectus highlighting vacant buildings or sites and the ways they could be viably and sustainably used. This will be particularly useful to support investment in the town centre, local centres and the Park and can be combined with a business / organisational incentivisation scheme.

Encouraging private sector and business organisations to co-fund – particularly investment in skills, digital connectivity and enterprise support as direct drivers of local businesses productivity and growth – BID, Chamber etc.

6.2.3 Philanthropic Match Funding

Strategic partnership with Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust – identification of locally led community, heritage or green space projects that align with the SCCT's five year plan - offering PiPP match funding.

Corporate Social Responsibility – targeting major local and regional employers, framing projects as social investments that directly benefit their employees, customers, and the creation of a local talent pipeline. For example – delivering skills and training hubs which are sponsored by local companies.

Social Value Programmes – thinking beyond purely financial return, ensuring that any procurement which takes place for the PiPP projects during the 10 year period of the Regeneration Plan recognises the link between activity and social value requirements. This can significantly increase the community benefits of project delivery e.g. see [Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility | Birmingham City Council](#).

6.2.4 Community-led Investment and Social Finance

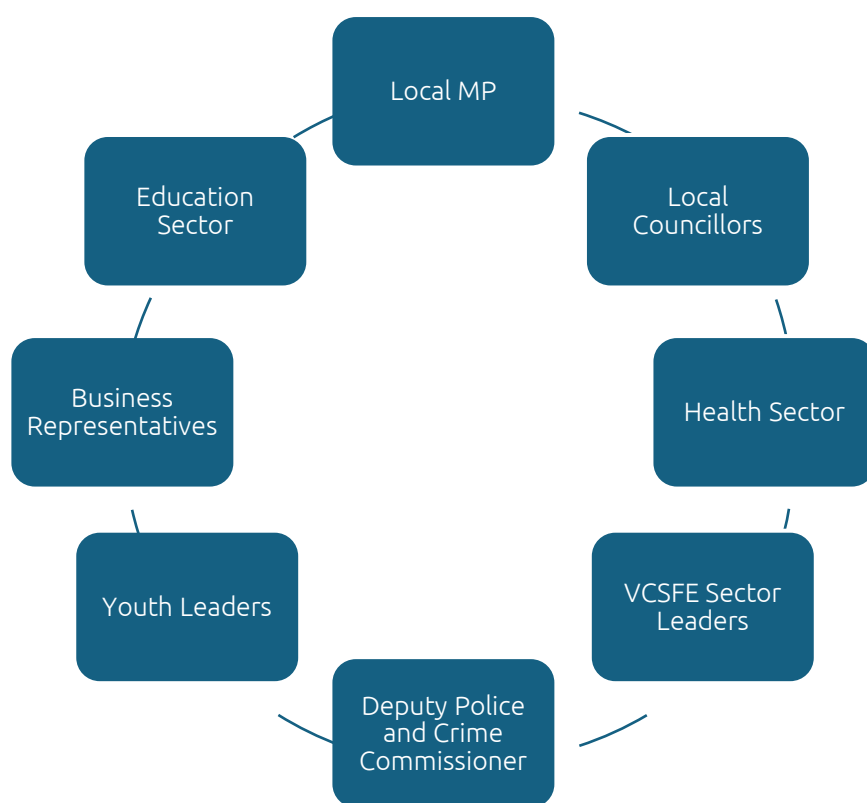
Crowdfunding: community leaders could investigate use of crowdfunding platforms to generate match funding and test public support for smaller, high-impact projects. This approach can be used to leverage a larger amount of public and private funding if the Neighbourhood Board or its partners offer a portion of the total project cost as a match-fund incentive.

Social Investment: Identify projects suitable for Social Impact Bonds (SIBs) or investment from Social Finance intermediaries, particularly those with measurable social outcomes such as skills development, health and wellbeing initiatives, or tackling social isolation. These funds typically require a reliable revenue stream or a proven track record of generating savings elsewhere in the public sector.

7. Community and Stakeholder Engagement

7.1 Neighbourhood Board Membership and Leadership

The Royal Sutton Coldfield Neighbourhood Board is made up of local community leaders and representatives, covering a wide range of sectors. This ensures that the Board can effectively act as the voice of and the connection with the Royal Sutton Coldfield community, aligning investment throughout the programme with the needs and priorities of local people and organisations – creating a thriving Royal Sutton Coldfield where everyone can connect and flourish together.



The Board is currently made up of 19 members in total, led by an independent Chair – a successful local entrepreneur and former Chief Executive Officer for one of McDonald’s largest franchised organisations, operating 26 restaurants across the West Midlands and employing nearly 3,000 local people.

Other Board members include the local MP, the Leader of Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council, local councillors, representatives of local voluntary, community, charity and faith organisations together with representatives of the NHS and West Midlands Police.

Membership of the Board will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is representative of the community, balancing stability of membership with skills, knowledge and commitment required to ensure the Regeneration Plan can be successfully delivered.

7.2 Ways of Working

The Neighbourhood Board is focused on specific neighbourhood priorities, aligned with the PiPP and distinct from the wider responsibilities of the Town Council, Birmingham City Council and the West Midlands Combined Authority.

Decisions made by the Board are implemented within the framework established through the Terms of Reference. The core responsibilities of the Board are substantial, encompassing the facilitation of the Regeneration Plan, distribution of funding in accordance with the Investment Plan, and the management of those funds through embedded processes and controls developed in partnership with Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council as the accountable body for the funding.

Whilst Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council as the Accountable Body provides the legal, financial and local strategic framework within which the Neighbourhood Board operates, the Board itself takes the role of developing and delivering the Regeneration Plan which has been co-produced with the local community.

The way this has been achieved is detailed below.

As the Board is accountable to the community of Royal Sutton Coldfield, mechanisms for ongoing, active involvement from residents will be established in an annual community engagement plan. These engagement and feedback activities will be designed to ensure that funding is effectively distributed to projects that align with the priorities in this Regeneration Plan. This will also allow the Board to adaptively manage the PiPP as it progresses, driving forward the community-led vision for change.

7.3 Engagement to Date

The Board began engaging with the community in May 2025, aiming to explore local priorities for investment and align these with the PiPP objectives, themes and interventions.

7.3.1 Meet the Chair Events

Two separate Meet the Chair events took place in May and June 2025, giving local groups and organisations the opportunity to get to know the PiPP and their local Board representatives, and support the Board to begin establishing a dialogue with local groups – gathering initial high-level views on what matters most ahead of the more wide-ranging engagement which took place from July 2025.

In total, 15 community organisations attended and shared their views. Feedback and priorities centred around the need to establish improved physical and social infrastructure across Royal Sutton Coldfield, including a need for community spaces, improvements to Sutton Park such as walking and cycling facilities, and developing a stronger cultural focus.

Across all groups, there was a strong emphasis on inclusive, collaborative process which ensures maximum participation from everyone in the community.

7.3.2 1:1 Conversations

In June 2025, Genecon were commissioned to support the Royal Sutton Coldfield Neighbourhood Board and wider community to co-produce the Regeneration Plan and initial 4-year Investment Plan. To inform the wider engagement strategy, a second step in early engagement began on 15 July 2025 with 1:1 conversations – exploring key challenges, opportunities and priorities with Board Members and a range of community organisations.

These conversations helped shape the ongoing approach to engagement activity, and the design of a community research survey.

7.3.3 Wide-ranging Community Research Survey

The formal wide ranging engagement began with the launch of a community research survey - in both digital and paper format - on Friday 5 September 2025, running until Friday 10 October 2025. This was designed to give as many local people, organisations and businesses as possible the opportunity to provide their views and feedback on local issues and priorities, and how they feel funding should be invested.

The survey was widely publicised by Board Members, the Town Council, local business networks, education providers and community groups, using a range of methods including newsletters, posts on social media, articles on websites, distribution of business cards at local train stations, and face to face interaction.

In the week beginning 29 September 2025, a copy of the survey (including the QR code to complete it digitally) was delivered to every household in Royal Sutton Coldfield, along with a list of 15 local community venues where completed surveys could be dropped off.

7.3.4 Ward Engagement Drop-in Events

Alongside the survey, 8 different drop-in events took place in local community venues – one in each ward across Royal Sutton Coldfield. Where possible, these events were scheduled to form part of wider activity that was already taking place over a range of dates and times (daytime, evening and at the weekend) – ensuring that we reached people where they already were and at times that worked for them.

Five different brief activities supported people to frame their thinking and give more qualitative responses to key questions explored in the survey. There was also an opportunity for people to ask questions, build understanding of the PiPP and find out how to get more involved through taking part in one of the thematic workgroups.

In total, more than 4000 people took part in the community research survey and ward drop in events - over 3,750 individuals and organisations responded to the survey and 333 people engaged in the drop in events.

Some of the insight from this engagement is summarised below:

- **Mixed perceptions** - Royal Sutton Coldfield is generally rated well as a place to live (average score 7.2/10) but not as well as a place to work (5.6/10) or visit (5/10)

- **There is a general sense of decline** – people feel the town centre, but not local centres, is run down, tired, and lacking vitality and many also mentioned cuts to services and facilities
- **Consensus on the priority theme** – the top ranking theme for investment across both the survey and ward engagement is Regeneration, High Streets and Heritage
- **Key distinctions** - Sutton Park is the main thing that people value and would like to see protected; the town centre is the main element that people want to see fundamentally changed and revitalized
- **Capital investment priorities** - improvements to Sutton Park, the town centre, neighbourhood and high streets were key priorities for investment in physical changes (96.4%), followed by travel and transport improvements
- **Revenue investment priorities** - safety and security was the top priority for social investment (64.2%), alongside services for young people and the community

7.3.5 Grassroots Community Engagement

To give insight into the needs of specific groups of people in Royal Sutton Coldfield, five local community organisations were commissioned by the Neighbourhood Board to work alongside Genecon, co-creating an approach to grassroots engagement. Each group was asked to develop a plan to engage with one of the following demographic groups:

- Primary school age children and their families, including SEND
- Teenagers and young people aged up to 25
- Working age people, including people with disabilities
- Ethnic communities
- Older people aged 50+

Over a one month period beginning in mid-September 2025, each organisation used a range of creative and cultural activities and events to explore the needs, opportunities and priorities for each of these groups, gathering further insight to add to the evidence gathered through the survey and drop in events.

In total across all grassroots engagement 468 people took part.

7.3.6 Thematic Workshops

To give deeper insight into emerging priority areas for Royal Sutton Coldfield, the Neighbourhood Board decided to create four thematic workgroups, inviting a range of interested parties involved in the local community to sit alongside local people and organisations with a particular interest in each thematic area. Workgroups were tasked with exploring the feasibility, risk and technical requirements of specific co-created ideas and proposals, building a greater understanding of the way that existing strengths and opportunities can be used to tackle some of the issues and challenges identified by the local community. This aims to ensure that interventions desired by the community are both practical and achievable.

The four thematic areas identified by the Board were:

Heritage, Culture, Community and Wellbeing – capturing the town’s civic identity, heritage assets, social infrastructure and community cohesion.

Economy, Enterprise, Skills and Education – focusing on local business activity, employment, skills and education.

Parks, Green Spaces and Sport – combining Sutton Park, smaller green and open spaces, alongside the town’s strong base of high-quality amateur sports clubs, to look at recreation, inclusion and biodiversity.

Sustainability and Active Travel – integrating climate action, green infrastructure and sustainable movement across the town.

Thematic workshops began on Monday 22 September 2025, using emerging insight from the survey and ward engagement to shape discussion. In total, eight workshops took place (some in-person and some online) – two for each thematic workgroup. In total, 77 people attended across all 8 thematic workshop sessions.

As part of the workshops, people were asked to think about the foundations that need to be put in place to ensure bigger ideas can be successfully delivered. Some of the specific ‘foundational’ ideas discussed and prioritised by the thematic workgroups which will inform the ongoing approach for engagement include:

- **An annual events calendar** – including celebrations that bring the community together, a volunteer / organisations fair, and inclusive sporting events, cultural activities and opportunities for people to try new things and meet new people
- **Providing funding and resources for organisations** – giving access to a shared pool of resources, and offering small grants for feasibility studies for larger projects, pilot ideas, projects and activities that could build capacity
- **Investing in opportunity** – promoting apprenticeships and local training, investing in young people through sponsorship and bursaries for identified priority skills and career pathways
- **Incentivising businesses** – promoting the town centre, local centres and high streets as places of opportunity, not places of decline and encouraging a diverse mix of independent enterprise, larger retailers and cultural uses; and building networks for people to come together and share information, skills and knowledge
- **Creating pocket parks** – for people to naturally meet, socialise and share ideas – bringing the green nature of Royal Sutton Coldfield into the town centre, local centres and high streets
- **Active travel champions** – a network of people across Royal Sutton Coldfield who can engage with local communities, promote active travel, and develop pilot projects which lead to bigger interventions later in the programme
- **Enabling effective communication** – so everyone understands and aligns around the vision for change, what is happening, and how they can get involved / engage

7.4 Securing Buy-in

From the beginning of the Royal Sutton Coldfield PiPP, the engagement strategy has been centred around four key principles:

1. **Building trust** – the Neighbourhood Board understands that for the PiPP Programme to be a success, mutual trust is crucial. This means being transparent and honest about the process, including not being afraid to answer difficult questions and being clear about what the Board and the Regeneration Plan can and cannot influence and fund.
2. **Inclusivity and accessibility** – all segments of the community will be actively sought out and offered the opportunity to be involved if they want to. This includes taking engagement activity to the places where people are or want to be; using clear, jargon free language; providing a range of opportunities to interact both online and in-person; and supporting people to have the skills and confidence to participate, share their ideas, and be part of the PiPP as it moves forward.
3. **Ensuring relevance** – the Regeneration Plan and initial four-year Investment Plan have been developed to genuinely reflect local needs, priorities and aspirations, making it a shared plan co-created with the community firmly grounded in wide-ranging insight and evidence representative of the community as a whole.
4. **Empowering ownership** – the Neighbourhood Board recognises that local people must be actively involved in designing and delivering the Regeneration Plan and initial four-year Investment Plan, because if everyone feels collectively responsible for the success of the plan they will also be motivated to work together to achieve the collective shared vision which underpins that success.

7.5 Delivering Interventions

The project lead for interventions allocated funding by the Board will vary according to the size, scale, and regulatory and planning requirements of each project. Smaller projects may be delivered by one single organisation, and larger projects are likely to be delivered involving a range of delivery partners across the public and community sectors.

7.6 Future Engagement

The approach to future engagement has been shaped around the four key principles that have guided engagement activity since the beginning of the Royal Sutton Coldfield PiPP:

Table 16: Future Engagement Principles and Examples of Future Activity

Principle	Examples of future activity
Building trust	Ensuring there is a two-way flow of information, with people given the opportunity to participate in design and delivery of interventions, and regular feedback on progress and impact. Ideas to support this could include:

	• A PiPP launch event, feeding back the results of engagement so far, announcing the winner of the Survey Prize Draw, and publicising and exploring the Regeneration Plan • Co-creation of a digital platform which supports people to share information, knowledge, resources, as well as acting as a central place to find out what's happening locally • An ongoing programme of events aimed at bringing people together, encouraging ideas sharing, and offering an opportunity for the Board to engage with local people
Inclusivity and accessibility	Building skills, knowledge and confidence for all people and organisations in Royal Sutton Coldfield. Ideas to support this could include: • A volunteers fair – giving people the opportunity to find out about the wide range of local community, interest and sports groups in Royal Sutton Coldfield, try new things and find out about available volunteering roles and the benefits of volunteering • Development of a volunteering passport, offering a way to record hours spent volunteering and skills learned, recognising and rewarding the value of volunteers and giving people a way to demonstrate transferable skills to potential employers • Creation of a youth leaders programme, acknowledging that young people now will be the leaders of PiPP in the future.
Ensuring relevance	Continuing the engagement that has begun with thematic working groups and developing these into a format which supports ongoing participation, delivery and review.
Empowering ownership	Supporting grassroots community groups and organisations to carry out their own engagement and build local capacity. Ideas to support this could include: • Creation of a small grants scheme, giving organisations the opportunity to develop their own projects and activities in alignment with Regeneration Plan priorities (for example, horticultural projects which support people to connect with and maintain local green spaces, intergenerational storytelling which creates a Royal Sutton Coldfield heritage archive, or design and installation of small pocket parks on local high streets)

The Royal Sutton Coldfield Neighbourhood Board has committed to ongoing engagement to ensure that it reflects the current needs, priorities and activity of the programme.

8. Governance

Funding will be managed through a partnership between the Royal Sutton Coldfield Neighbourhood Board, the Town Council and the local community. This partnership is integral to the successful delivery of the Plan.

The Neighbourhood Board: The Royal Sutton Coldfield Neighbourhood Board is an unincorporated body established to develop, agree and deliver the PiPP for the Royal Town and to administer up to £20m of funding between 2024-2036. Its objectives powers and framework of governance are set out in its Terms of Reference. The Board has been established in accordance with Government requirements and includes:

- Local MP: Sir Andrew Mitchell
- Local Councillors
- Police and Crime Commissioner and Police representation
- Education
- The voluntary and community sector

The Board is responsible for producing the Regeneration Plan for Royal Sutton Coldfield, which constitutes a 10-year vision and 4-year Investment Plan, and delivering the Plan in the interests of local people to improve the physical and social infrastructure of the Royal town. As required, the Board may appoint short term Sub-Groups of the Board or advisory groups to consider specific issues and advise the Board.

The Accountable Body: Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council is the Accountable Body for the PiPP supporting the Board to develop and deliver the Regeneration Plan and 4 year Investment Plan. It will also ensure that all funding decisions made by the Board comply with MHCLG guidance, assurance frameworks, funding conditions or Memorandum of Understanding between itself and MHCLG, along with all statutory requirements, including Managing Public Money, subsidy control, procurement and environmental regulations along with the public sector equality duty.

The Local Community: Ensuring the community is heard is vital for decision-making and ensuring the local community has confidence that funding is spent effectively, efficiently, and compliantly. The Board will draw up a plan to ensure ongoing community consultation including evaluation of activity delivered within the first four years and consultation to inform the development of future Investment Plans.

Other Parties: The Accountable body will consult with and comply with the requirements of key regulatory bodies such as the Planning and Highways Authority and other relevant Departments at Birmingham City Council. The Accountable Body will also commission external contractors, as required, in-order-to receive advice and support in delivering the programme

8.1 Meeting Governance and Transparency Requirements

8.1.1 Meeting governance requirements

The programme will be managed in line with the Nolan Principles and the standards expected for projects and proposals as outlined in Managing Public Money principles (regularity, propriety, value for money and feasibility). Systems and processes will be developed to ensure these systems are adhered to, including:

- Clear governance and transparent project selection routes
- Strong financial management
- Development of clear and transparent routes to investment decisions
- Compliance with procurement and subsidy law
- Risk identification and mitigation
- Development of clear programme guidelines and rules of engagement for all stakeholders
- Effective and efficient change control procedures
- Processes for handling breaches of conduct

Not all Board members have experience overseeing major government grant schemes, so training will be delivered to ensure they understand their roles and can participate fully. This will include, as a minimum, the Board's role in delivering the PiPP, Nolan principles and standards for Managing Public Money.

8.1.2 Meeting transparency requirements

Operating a grant programme transparently involves publishing clear financial data and ensuring accountability. Compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 underpins this requiring open access to spending information and active communication.

All investment decisions, particularly spending above set thresholds, will be published and promoted so communities can easily find and understand the decisions that have been made. Grant agreements will clearly define purpose, funding amount, and funding conditions, supported by due diligence, assurance checks, and fraud risk assessments.

Clear outcomes and regular performance reviews will ensure funding achieves its goals. Monitoring and Evaluation activity will guide future funding decisions. Consistent operational processes, including clear recording and reporting, will support transparency. Accessible online information will further strengthen openness and trust, making grant management more effective and accountable.

8.2 Meeting Governance and Transparency Requirements

This section describes the mechanisms through which the PiPP funding could be deployed to deliver projects and interventions that support the delivery of the Regeneration and Investment Plan priorities. A proportionate approach will be adopted, ensuring that the mechanism used reflects the scale, complexity and nature of the intervention. The following routes may be used:

Table 16: Routes to Market

Route	Description	When it may be used	Assurance Considerations
Open Call for Projects / Grant Awards	Open or targeted call inviting organisations to bid for grant funding to deliver projects that meet PiPP objectives. Awards made through a transparent assessment process	For community-led, revenue or small-scale projects where innovation and local leadership are key.	Use of Cabinet Office Grant Standards, proportionate due diligence, assessment against criteria; funding agreements and monitoring
Procurement	Competitive procurement of works, goods or services, led by the Accountable Body or a delivery partner in line with the Public Contracts Regulations	Where the Board identifies a specific requirement that could be delivered by multiple providers.	Compliance with procurement law, VfM through competition; conflicts of interest, contract monitoring.
Commissioned Delivery	Direct commissioning of a specific organisation or consortium with proven capacity to deliver a strategic or specialist project	Where the Board identifies a specific requirement that could be delivered by only one provider.	Clear rationale for direct commissioning; evidence of market testing or specialist requirement; approval by the Town Council's CEO & Responsible Finance Officer and Board.
Community Delivery	Funding devolved to local delivery partners	For local projects and activities designed and led by communities such as the delivery of small grants schemes.	Capacity and governance checks; proportionate monitoring; transparent reporting and evaluation.

8.2.1 Open Call for Projects / Grant Awards

Stage 1: Expressions of Interest

If used, the Accountable Body will draft Invitations to submit Expressions of Interest. These will be reviewed and approved by the Board. Once approved, these will be marketed by a range of social media and networking channels. The Accountable Body will also hold information and advice events such as workshops for the calls highlighting important considerations for those submitting EOIs.

Upon receipt of completed EOIs, project ideas will be reviewed by the Accountable Body using transparent criteria to ensure alignment with the Regeneration Plan and 4-year Investment Plan and compliance with Managing Public Money principles of regularity, propriety and value for money.

Projects demonstrating strong alignment with the Regeneration Plan and 4-year Investment Plan will be invited to submit a more detailed project proposal. Those not aligned will receive feedback explaining the reasons for non-selection.

Stage 2: Detailed Project Proposals

Selected applicants will be invited to submit a detailed application proportionate to the scale and risk of their proposal. Applications will be required to provide a range of evidence including, for example:

- Alignment with PiPP objectives and approved Regeneration and Investment Plans
- A clear rationale for intervention and expected outcomes
- Identification and management of risk (including fraud, financial, subsidy control, equality and environmental risk).
- Value for money
- Delivery capacity, governance and project management arrangements
- Opportunities for match funding and partnership working

Stage 3: Initial Project Assessment

A grant assessment will be carried out by the Accountable Body and summary project reviews presented to the Board for approval. Assessment criteria will consider:

- Deliverability and risk management
- Previous experience of the delivery team
- Links to other projects
- Leverage of other private and public sector match funding
- Value for money and wider benefits
- Compliance with all legal and financial requirements

Recommendations will be presented to the Board for consideration and approval, supported by the Accountable Body to ensure due process, probity and public confidence in the use of funds.

8.2.2 Procurement and Commissioned Delivery

The Accountable Body will agree a works/service specification and invite tenders against this.

For competitive tender situations, the Accountable Body will score tenders received and make a preferred tender recommendation to the Board for approval. The Accountable Body will then finalise contractual arrangements.

For commissioned works/services, the Accountable Body will ensure there is a clear rationale for direct commissioning including, for example, evidence of market testing or specialist requirement. Approval of the Town Council's Chief Executive and Responsible Finance Officer and Board will also be sought.

8.2.3 Community Delivery

The approaches set out in 8.2 will be considered when selecting organisations for community delivery (such as for delivery of small grant programmes). Expressions of Interest will be sought by the Accountable Body from relevant organisations followed by a more detailed application from the short-listed organisation/s. Where only one organisation is capable of delivering then a direct approach may be made by the Accountable Body. Each element of the process will be approved by the Board.

8.2.4 Delivery

All project delivery partners will be provided with guidance by the Accountable Body clearly highlighting appropriate use of the funds including, for example, spend eligibility guidelines, financial requirements, evidence requirements for spend, outputs and outcomes, rules for procurement of goods and services, confidentiality considerations especially for data that pertains to individual project beneficiaries, adherence to subsidy rules, branding requirements. All projects will also be required to comply with a regular financial, output and outcome reporting schedule, evidence collection and audit.

9. Assurance

9.1 Introduction

This section presents the assurance process for the management of the Royal Sutton Coldfield PiPP particularly with regard to government standards for Best Value and Managing Public Money. The section outlines the key elements of Best Value and Managing Public Money. It then discusses how these standards will be managed in the context of the Royal Sutton Coldfield PiPP.

9.2 Key elements of Best Value and Managing Public Money

9.2.1 Best Value

The Best Value duty, set out in Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1999, requires local authorities and other public bodies to ensure continuous improvement in how they exercise their functions, focusing on economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. This includes managing balanced budgets (Local Government Finance Act 1992), delivering statutory services, and ensuring Value for Money (VfM). The overall aim is to improve local services for the public in both cost and quality.

9.2.2 Managing public money

All public sector bodies must follow HM Treasury's Managing Public Money (MPM) when setting up and running grant schemes. MPM aligns with local government law embedding good governance to strengthen compliance and delivery. Key points include: regularity - public funds must only be used for intended, lawful purposes; propriety - funds must be used properly, ethically and transparently; Value for Money (VfM) - funds must be used efficiently and economically with VfM considered in programme design (e.g. grant size, admin costs) and bid assessment and feasibility / accountability. Accountability - project delivery must take place in such a way that public funds can be accounted for.

Other important elements of Managing Public Money in relation to the delivery of grant programmes include, for example, ensuring compliance and financial assurance through clear accountability, strong governance, managing risk, and ensuring full fund traceability. When delegating funds to delivery partners, setting clear conditions, reporting, and clawback terms, with due diligence and monitoring arrangements in place.

9.3 Assurance Process for the Royal Sutton Coldfield PiPP

Royal Sutton Coldfield Neighbourhood Board will integrate Managing Public Money and Best Value into governance and management processes as follows:

9.3.1 Governance & Accountability

The Neighbourhood Board

The Royal Sutton Coldfield Neighbourhood Board is an unincorporated body established to develop, agree and deliver the PiPP for the Royal Town and to administer up to £20m of funding between 2024-2036. Its objectives powers and framework of governance are set out in its Terms of Reference. The Board has been established in accordance with Government requirements and includes:

- Local MP: Sir Andrew Mitchell
- Local Councillors
- Police and Crime Commissioner and Police representation
- Education
- The voluntary and community sector

The Board is responsible for agreeing community priorities, coordinating engagement and consultation, and ensuring that all projects align with the shared vision. It will additionally oversee delivery, monitor progress, manage risks and budgets, and identify opportunities for private, public, and philanthropic investment.

The Accountable Body

Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council acts as the Accountable Body for the PiPP programme supporting the Board to develop and deliver the Regeneration Plan and 4 year Investment Plan.

The Council, through the CEO & Responsible Finance Officer, is responsible for handling finances, reporting to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), and providing secretariat and administrative support. The Council is accountable for the proper use and administration of the programme, all of which falls under the annual audit of the Council accounts, and for ensuring that decisions are made in accordance with all UK government financial and regulatory requirements.

Scheme of Delegation

Decisions will be made by the Board unless it has given prior approval for variation in the decision-making process. Any decision that needs to be made by the Board that does not fit within the timeframe of the scheduled quarterly meetings can, at the discretion of the Chair, be decided through written procedures. All members of the Board will be provided with relevant papers. Each member will then be able to reply to the Chair with their concerns, approval or rejection. The Chair will then confirm any decision made.

The Accountable Body would only refuse a decision of the Board if it were:

- not compliant with Regulatory Framework, or
- not procedurally valid, or
- Illegal, or
- would lead to the available budget being exceeded.

9.3.2 Policies and Procedures

Code of Conduct

The Board's adopted Code of Conduct, published on the Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council website, outlines the expectations of Board members when acting in their capacity as a Board member. The Board commits to conducting its business with integrity, transparency, and impartiality while managing actual or perceived conflicts of interest. Members must adhere to the highest standards of conduct, guided by the Nolan Principles – the Seven Principles of Public Life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership). All members must declare pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, update declarations annually, and register gifts or hospitality. Declarations must be made at meetings and recorded in minutes. The Council maintains the Register of Interests and oversees compliance.

There will be clear processes for managing conflicts of interests (commercial, actual, and potential) in decision making, which apply to all involved with the work of the Board.

Publication of reports and information

The Council will maintain the official record of the Board proceedings, hold copies of all relevant documents relating to PiPP funding, and ensure that the Board decisions at formal meetings are recorded by way of minutes.

The Council will publish membership and governance arrangements (including minutes of meetings and decision logs) on the Council's website. Boards will meet quarterly and will publish a documented decision-making process, profiles of board members, minutes of meetings including mention of any conflicts of interest. All Board papers will be published five days before the Board meets. The Board will follow the Town Council governance and finance arrangements when considering private reports, with the default position being that all papers are open to the public. The Board will ensure that all data is monitored in compliance with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

9.3.3 Financial Management

The Accountable Body will carry out due diligence of delivery partners to assess their financial health and capacity. Funding release will be based on delivery milestones (rather than offered upfront). Regular monitoring will take place requiring evidence of eligible spend, supported by an audit trail documenting all financial, output/outcome and procurement decisions. All PiPP investments need to stay within grant conditions.

Awards of funding delivered by delivery partners will be accompanied by a written funding agreement between the Accountable Body and the project delivery partner, setting out

responsibilities and specifying provisions for the protection of public funds, such as arrangements to suspend or claw back funding in the event of non-delivery or mismanagement.

As a minimum, these agreements will include:

- Details of the project and outputs to be delivered in a specified timescale
- Arrangements for payment (up front or in arrears, quarterly or other)
- Arrangements to suspend or claw back funding in the event of non-delivery or mismanagement
- Monitoring requirements, including the metrics and frequency of reporting
- Publicity obligations and arrangements

Agreements will be signed by the organisation and by the Accountable Body CEO & Responsible Finance Officer, who has the final sign off on funding decisions.

Embedding Value-for-Money principles

The Accountable Body will consider Value-for-Money both in the design of the programme (for example, considering grant size against administration cost) and in assessment of bids. Project delivery will be tied to milestones and measurable outputs, with recipients required to demonstrate alignment with strategic outcomes and community benefits. Social value considerations will be embedded, encouraging partners to provide added economic, social, or environmental impact.

Value-for-Money will also be realised through competitive procurement with procurement and competitive grant processes following local authority rules or equivalent standards to ensure fairness and transparency.

Transparency and reporting

As Accountable Body, Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council will keep accurate records, publish awards where appropriate and provide timely reports to MHCLG.

Where funds are delegated to partners, the local authority will remain responsible for oversight. Funding Agreements will set clear conditions, reporting and clawback terms. Delivery partners undergo due diligence and ongoing monitoring to ensure compliance.

Transparency will be maintained by publishing grant criteria, decision-making processes, and outcomes. Feedback mechanisms will allow for programme adjustments to improve value and impact.

The Accountable Body will build audit and assurance into Project Agreements from the start. Both the Accountable Body and Project Managers will ensure Auditors have access to information. Any findings will be addressed promptly and lessons learned will be captured and reported to the Board to strengthen future delivery.

9.3.4 Performance Management and Continuous Improvement

Performance will be measured against KPIs, and outputs and outcomes will be linked to strategic goals. Reporting will ensure consistent tracking of progress with clear escalation

procedures for underperformance, including fund recovery, if needed. Evaluation activity will ensure that lessons learned will be captured and shared to enhance future delivery.

A risk register will be maintained of all projects, and this will be updated on a regular basis. The risks of each project are rated using a scoring matrix based on likelihood and impact that each risk presents. Based on the risk register and as part of the programme overview, high risk projects will be highlighted to the Board.

9.3.5 Compliance with Regulatory Requirements

The programme will be managed fully cognisant of regulatory requirements. It will be the role of the Accountable Body to ensure that delivery partners are required to follow all regulatory requirements relevant to their project activity. Of key importance, procurement will follow local authority rules or equivalent standards to ensure fairness and transparency. Market engagement will encourage innovation and competition, with evaluation balancing cost, quality and social value. Delivery partners will also be required to take adequate legal advice pertaining to subsidy, highways and planning law and any other relevant regulations relevant to project activities.

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