

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-32



Contents



P2 Introduction

**P3 Our Borough:
Did you know?**

P5 What We Do

P9 Our Ambition

P10 Four Priorities

P11 Climate Action

P13 Sustainable Development

P15 Vibrant Economy

P17 Community Wellbeing

P19 Making it Happen

Dear neighbours

For many people Tunbridge Wells is a great place to live, a great place to work and a great place to visit.

Our towns and villages are full of caring, creative and community-minded people.

Our Borough has passion and dynamism!

As a Council, we are unashamedly ambitious for our Borough and we are about much more than the services we provide to residents and businesses.

This document sets out what your elected councillors and the talented Council staff want to achieve.

It contains our priorities that we believe will make Tunbridge Wells an even better place to live, work and play.

I hope you enjoy exploring our Strategic Plan.

Cllr Ben Chapelard
Leader of Tunbridge Wells
Borough Council

I believe Tunbridge Wells Borough Council is a force for good and we are committed to serving our communities.



Since we started work on our Strategic Plan the Government has announced plans to reorganise local councils, which could see Tunbridge Wells Borough Council merged with neighbouring authorities.

Whilst we do not yet know how and when this might take place, it is important that this Strategic Plan ensures Tunbridge Wells' residents have a voice in setting local priorities, no matter what the future holds.



OUR BOROUGH: DID YOU KNOW..?

19.4%
of people in Tunbridge Wells
are 65 years or over.



Tunbridge Wells
Population - 115,311
increasing to
127,046
in 2043.

19.9%
of people in Tunbridge
Wells are 15 years and
under.



The borough is
128
square miles (331 km²).

Percentage of population over
the age of 65 will increase to
27% by 2043.



There are
39 councillors
and
14 wards.



There are
14 parish
and
2 town councils.



Median monthly rent for a
two bedroom property:
£1,050.

Average price for
a home in the
borough is
£446,000.



29.4%
of households in Tunbridge Wells
have 1 person per household.



People between 16-64
years with GCSEs in
English and Maths is
84.8%.

5.5%
of people in Tunbridge Wells have a
disability substantially limiting
their day-to-day activities.

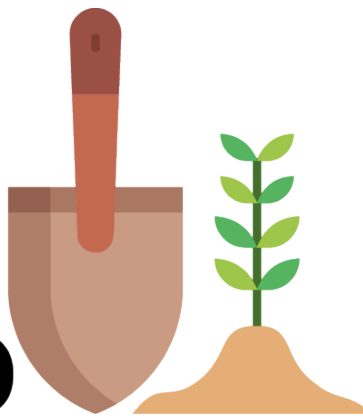
Mid-point weekly pay
before tax is
£652.



Employment rate for 16 to
64 year olds -
75.2%.

Of the 68 neighbourhoods in
Tunbridge Wells,
1 neighbourhood
is among the 20 percent most
income deprived in England, 21
are in the least
income-deprived.

Over
20,000
subscriptions to the fortnightly
garden waste collection.



What we do...



We provide events and activities such as the ice rink for residents to enjoy.

Every year, we assess the environmental impact of over

500

planning applications.



We provide **4,770** parking spaces in our car parks.



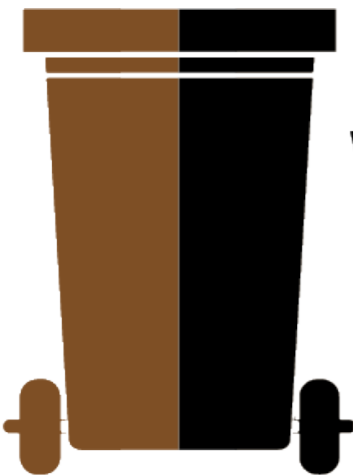
Our Community Safety Unit works with partner agencies to ensure our borough consistently remains one of the safest in the county.



Our shopping centre, the Royal Victoria Place, attracts

5 million visitors

to the town centre annually.



We collect recycling and waste from over

53,000

households each week.

We negotiate lease renewals, new lettings and receive income from rents of around

£2.5 Million

each year.

We maintain and monitor

43 CCTV

cameras across the borough to keep residents safe.



We carry out annual maintenance to ensure our buildings remain safe, compliant and in good shape.

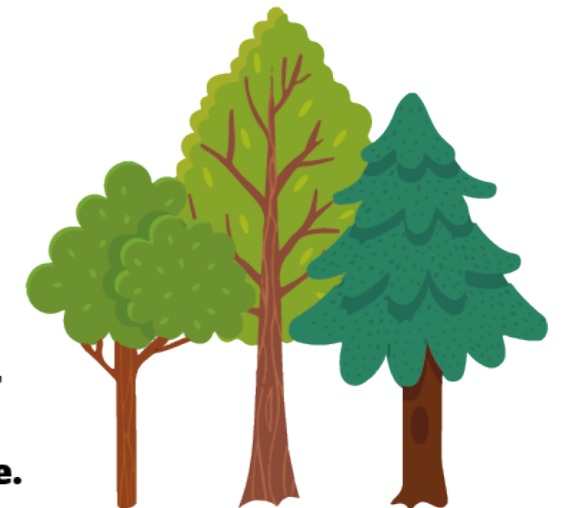


We welcome around **100,000** visitors to the Assembly Hall Theatre to more than **133** shows each year.

The Amelia Scott welcomes over **1,000** visitors a day.



We protect the public by ensuring legitimate taxis and private hire vehicles are licensed.




We manage **23 parks** open spaces and sports grounds for residents to enjoy.



We support the business community and new businesses wishing to open in the borough.





We manage local and national elections in the borough, so that over **86,000 residents can vote with ease.**

The Visit Tunbridge Wells website attracts approximately **390,000** visitors annually.



We receive approximately **£3.5 Million** in developer contributions each year to spend on infrastructure across the borough to improve local communities.



We inspect around **400** food businesses each year to check that hygiene standards are maintained for customers.

We support over **1,000** households each year with housing assistance and advice. Our work prevents over **130** households becoming homeless. We support over **100** homeless households find suitable places to live.

The Kent & Sussex Crematorium supports over **2,000** bereaved families each year.



We send our Local magazine every three months (that costs only 12p), update our website every day, and email **20,000** people every week to keep everyone informed.



We help over **3,000** residents each year who are looking to extend and improve their homes safely and sustainably.



**A place where all generations
can live healthy and fulfilling
lives in vibrant and connected
communities.**

FOUR PRIORITIES



Our Ambition  

Climate Action

We will continue our work to create a cleaner, green and carbon zero future for our Borough. Climate change is real, and the clock is ticking: we have our role to play alongside national government and must all act locally if we are to win the fight globally.

HOW

- We will deliver more or better quality natural habitat and increase biodiversity.
- We will continue to reduce the council's emissions to net zero.
- We will look to reduce congestion and encourage greener modes of transport.
- We will explore options to produce renewable energy.

An extreme weather event in 2018 caused railway disruptions, traffic gridlocks and resulted in the Pantiles being covered in mud, sewage, and rubbish.

If global temperatures rise by 2°C, our hottest summer day will reach an extreme temperature of 37.2°C.



Borough carbon emissions % change - 42.3% reduction since 2005.

Council's carbon emissions % change - 24% reduction since 2018/19.

Sustainable Development

We want the right types of homes in the right places with the right infrastructure, jobs and local businesses, whilst protecting our nature and heritage.

Our Borough needs more homes, and we must build them in a way that doesn't compromise future generations.

HOW

- We will balance the requirement to build more homes for future generations with the need to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment.
- We will support towns and villages to shape their own local areas.
- We will improve the supply of affordable housing.
- We will work with residents and partners to improve the road safety of urban/residential streets in the borough.



The borough covers 128 square miles (331km²).



Nearly 70% of the borough designated as National Landscapes (Previously Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).



2,857 listed buildings.

25 conservation areas.

Vibrant Economy

We want to support our urban and rural economies to thrive, creating local jobs in our communities.

HOW

- We will enhance the vitality of our town centres.
- We will support the creation and growth of local businesses.
- We will increase tourism in our towns and villages.
- We will work in partnership to foster flourishing and sustainable creative industries.
- We will capitalise on funding opportunities to promote businesses and the rural economy.
- We will balance visitor and resident parking and encourage responsible car use.
- We will encourage new businesses to set up in the borough.



27.4% of people in employment travel under 10km to work.

42.3% of people in employment work mainly from home.

8.2% of people in employment work in the building industry.

3.6 million visitors to the borough each year.

9.3% of people in employment work in retail.

Community Wellbeing

We will continue to look after the vulnerable and support all of our communities to flourish and fulfil their potential to be caring, healthy, connected and inclusive.

HOW

- We will work to invest in and improve sports facilities and playing fields.
- We will improve the Council's leisure centres.
- We will support our cultural venues to enrich our communities through creativity and the arts.
- We will support parish and town councils to develop their own community facilities.
- We will continue to work with the Police and other agencies to ensure that the Borough remains one of the safest places to live.
- We will support the provision of new, modern healthcare facilities.
- We will maintain our parks and green spaces for all to enjoy.
- We will bring people together to engage in creative activities that improve emotional and mental wellbeing.

We average 290 health walks annually across nine locations.

378,000 Council-owned leisure centre activities per year.



Our Creative Health initiatives engage 871 individuals annually across the borough.

Our exhibitions attract over 45,000 visitors a year.

Our One You service now helps around 170 people each year with healthy living advice.

47,000 Swim school session attendances.

Last school year, 5,516 students participated in our learning sessions.

96,000 Fitness class attendances.

30,000 Racquet court hires.

We've supported 309 individuals experiencing loneliness, which is twice as harmful as obesity.

Making it happen



Climate Action



Sustainable Development



Community Wellbeing



Vibrant Economy

We will introduce a new farmers' market, independently run in Royal Tunbridge Wells selling high quality, locally produced items.



We will review outdoor sports facilities for grass-roots clubs across the borough to improve and develop provision.



We will work with our leisure service provider to modernise and improve our existing three leisure centres in Cranbrook, Paddock Wood and Royal Tunbridge Wells.



We will create youth hubs across the Borough for 12-17 year olds providing activities chosen by young people.



A26 between Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells and the boundary with Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council cycling route.

Southborough to High Brooms walking and cycling route.

We will deliver a modern crematorium with more appropriate, comfortable and energy-saving facilities.



We will work with partners to design and deliver four improved walking and cycling routes:



Langton Green through Rusthall to Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre cycling route.

We will invest in and revitalise Royal Victoria Place, to make it a better destination for shopping and leisure.



We will continue to pursue proposals to provide a new football hub and facilities at Hawkenbury, replacing pitches at Bayham West, Colebrook and Culverden.



Royal Tunbridge Wells cross town centre cycling route.

We will plant a tree for every resident - 116,000 over 10 years.



We will enable the delivery of a community centre in Cranbrook.



We will examine how best to ensure the delivery of new affordable housing across the Borough.



We will deliver a solar energy project on the Royal Victoria Place car park.



Data Sources

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
Office for National Statistics
Draft Parking Strategy



**Thanks for
reading!**

