

Worthing Local Plan

2 Vision and Strategic Objectives

- 2.1 The Vision sets out what kind of town Worthing aspires to be by 2036. It responds to local challenges and opportunities, is evidence based and takes account of objectives identified by the community.
- 2.2 The Strategic Objectives, that follow, link to the Vision and are based around the three key roles for the planning system set out in the NPPF (social, economic and environmental). These objectives help to inform the three Strategic Policies that also form part of this chapter.
- 2.3 The overarching objectives and principles established in this chapter then provide the direction for the spatial strategy and policies for the plan area which are set out in the chapters that follow.

Worthing Vision By 2036

V1

Worthing will be recognised as a highly sustainable and desirable place to live, work and visit with a low carbon economy, continuing to attract high calibre businesses and significant inward investment that will help the town's economy to grow and improve its regional competitiveness.

V2

Regeneration of the town centre and seafront will have built on recent successes to unlock key development sites and deliver a vibrant and diverse retail, cultural and leisure offer for residents and visitors of all ages.

V3

Limited land resources will have been developed in the most efficient way to meet the widest range of identified needs, whilst at the same time ensuring that the borough's historic and natural environment, intrinsic character, heritage assets, and its coastal and countryside setting have been protected and enhanced, adding to the borough's natural capital.

V4

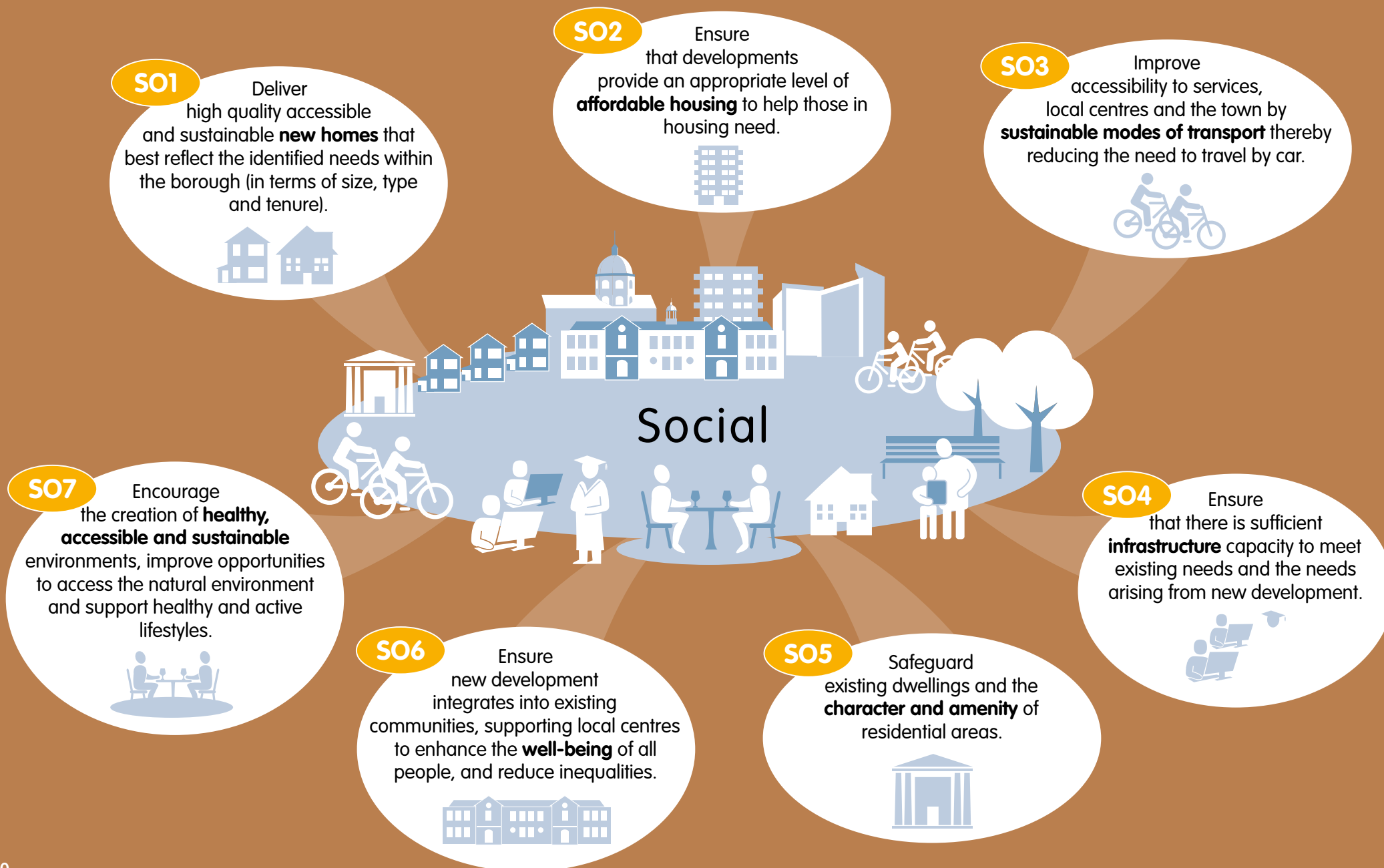
High quality new sustainable development will have been integrated with existing communities and opportunities taken to deliver new and improved facilities and services.

V5

Significant progress will have been made towards Worthing becoming a carbon neutral town. Active travel and public transport will be significantly improved and supported by a road network that prioritises sustainable transport modes. Electric vehicles will be promoted along with, and through, car clubs. A sustainable road network will be complemented by a good public transport system, giving people choice about how they travel.

V6

The borough will have prepared for the increasing effects of climate change, through adaptation and mitigation measures and by delivering a net gain in biodiversity.



Planning for a Sustainable Society

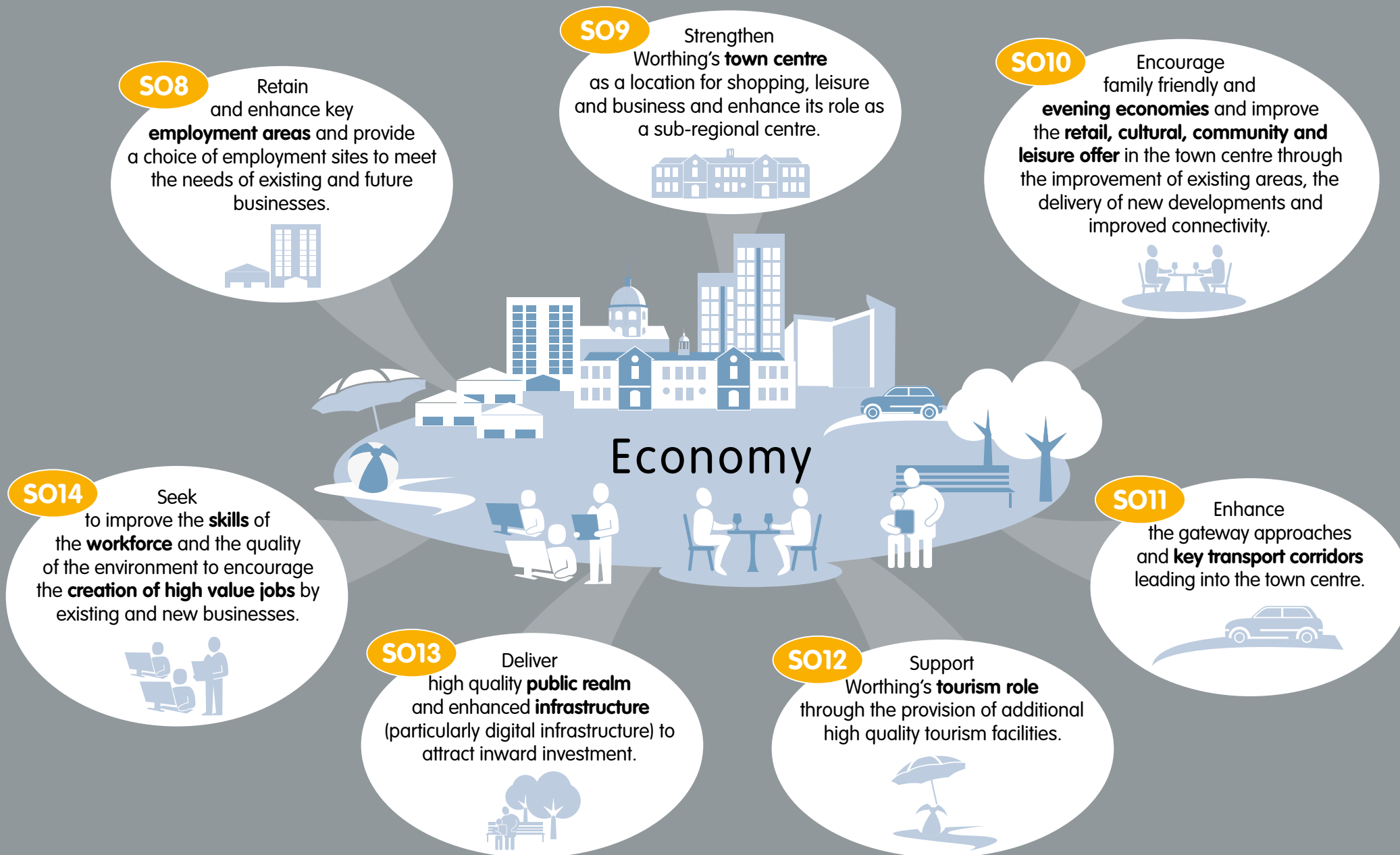
- 2.4 To achieve these objectives the Plan includes related policies that seek to create and support sustainable, cohesive communities that are strong, vibrant and healthy. To achieve this objective the Plan aims to deliver high quality, successful development in the most efficient way to help meet the identified needs of all its users. In addition, the Plan aims to improve health and well-being and address the wider determinants of health, in particular, seeking to address the variation in levels of deprivation across the borough.

Policies

SP3 Healthy Communities	DM6 Public Realm
DM1 Housing Mix	DM7 Open Space, Recreation & Leisure
DM2 Density	DM8 Planning for Sustainable Communities / Community Facilities
DM3 Affordable Housing	DM9 Delivering Infrastructure
DM4 Gypsy, Traveller & Travelling Showpeople	
DM5 Quality of the Built Environment	

Related Sustainable Development Goals





Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth

- 2.5 To achieve these objectives the Plan includes Economic related policies that seek to support Worthing's ambition to build on its current economic strengths, help local businesses to grow and equip the borough's workforce to be ready for future challenges and emerging sectors. The strategy is to protect key employment uses and plan positively for sustainable economic growth to meet quantitative and qualitative needs. This includes a policy to support digital infrastructure improvements which will help to improve the town's regional competitiveness and the creation of high value jobs. The Plan also aims to help deliver an integrated, safe and sustainable transport system.

Policies

SP1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

SS2 Development Sites

SS3 Town Centre

DM10 Economic Growth and Skills

DM11 Protecting and Enhancing Employment Sites

DM12 The Visitor Economy

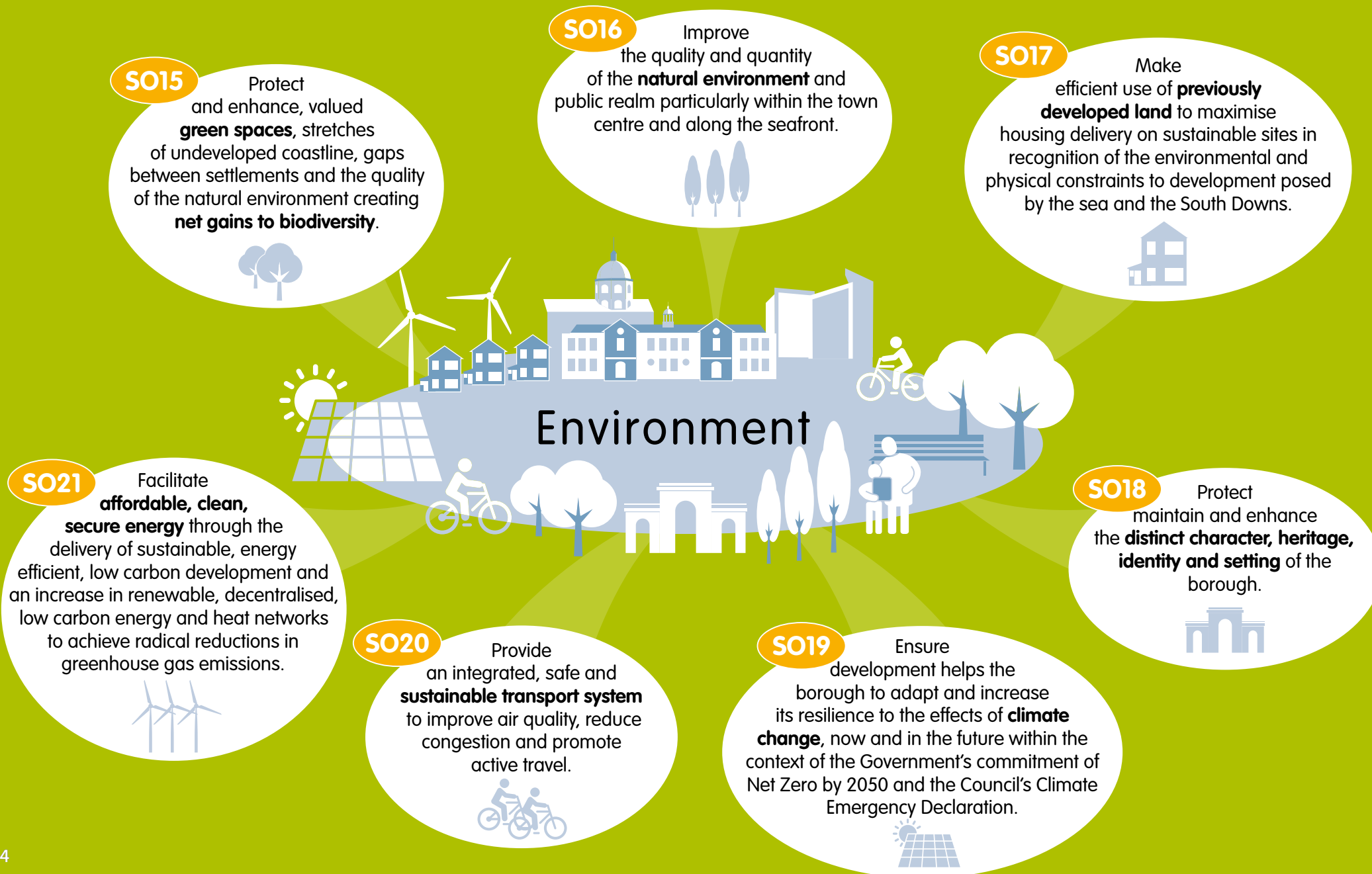
DM13 Retail and Town Centre Uses

DM14 Digital Infrastructure

DM15 Sustainable Transport & Active Travel

Related Sustainable Development Goals





Planning for a Sustainable Environment

- 2.6 To achieve these objectives the Plan includes Environment related policies that aim to deliver high quality development whilst protecting and enhancing the local environment. Policies will help to enhance the multi-functional benefits of open spaces, reduce carbon emissions, improve biodiversity, minimise pollution and respond to the changing climate. The Plan also seeks to protect and enhance the historic environment (both built and natural) which gives Worthing much of its intrinsic character.

Policies

SP2 Climate Change	DM19 Green Infrastructure
SS4 Countryside and Undeveloped Coast	DM20 Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage
SS5 Local Green Gap	DM21 Water Quality and Sustainable Water Use
SS6 Local Green Spaces	DM22 Pollution
DM16 Sustainable Design	DM23 Strategic Approach to the Historic Environment
DM17 Energy	
DM18 Biodiversity	DM24 The Historic Environment

Related Sustainable Development Goals



Strategic Policies

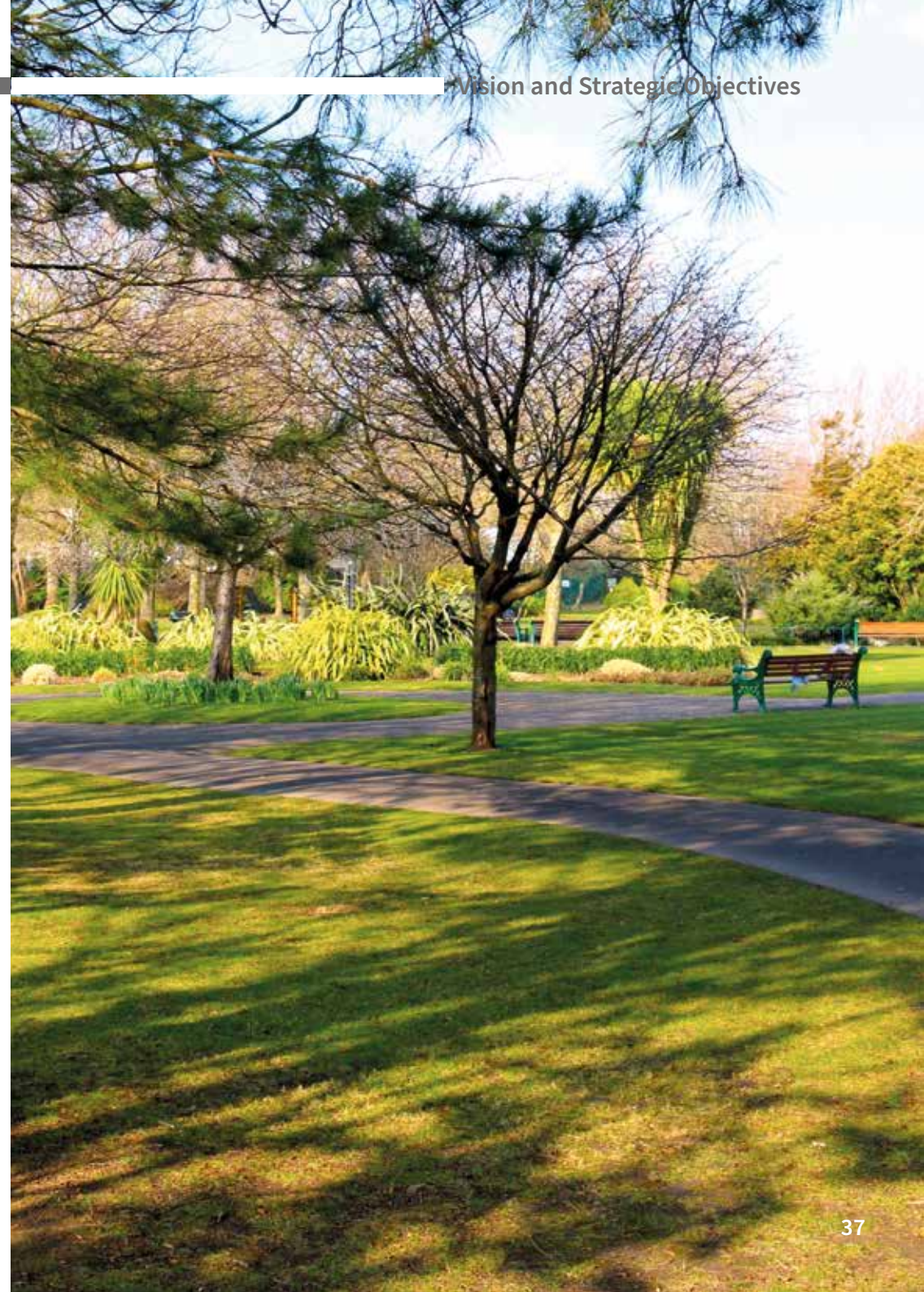
- 2.7 A fundamental principle of the NPPF is that the planning system should help to contribute to sustainable development. The NPPF defines 'sustainable' as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. To meet this aim, Local Plans must include strategic policies to establish a presumption in favour of sustainable development and address each local planning authority's priorities for the development and use of land in its area.
- 2.8 Within the context of achieving sustainable development, the Local Plan contains three overarching Strategic Policies which are considered to be core priorities. These provide a narrative and a high level / cross cutting policy approach that is then cascaded into individual Development Management Policies that follow. Put simply, the Strategic Policies capture key priorities that are of fundamental significance to the future long term sustainability of the borough but without overriding the function of the linked Development Management policies that provide the necessary detail.
- 2.9 The first of the strategic policies integrates the 'presumption' established in the NPPF into the Local Plan. However, it should be noted that this policy does not affect or remove statutory consultation on planning applications.
- 2.10 The other two strategic policies seek to address the key challenge of climate change and improving the health & wellbeing of the local population. As such, development proposals must have due regard to climate change adaptation & mitigation and the creation of healthy, inclusive and safe communities.

SP1 PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- a) When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Council will always work proactively with applicants to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.
- b) Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in Neighbourhood Plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- c) Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise - taking into account whether:
 - i. the application of policies in the National Planning Policy Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole.

Climate Change

- 2.11 Climate change is the defining issue of our time. The world is warming as a result of increased greenhouse gas emissions largely compounded by exponential economic and population growth. There is mounting evidence of its seriousness and its potential impacts. Unless greenhouse gas emissions are reduced, temperatures will continue to rise. Eventually, a tipping point could be reached, overcoming the earth's natural buffering systems, bringing catastrophic climate change. Even if all greenhouse gas emissions stopped now, it is projected that the world would still need to adapt to at least a century of irreversible climate change.
- 2.12 The impacts of climate change on the built and natural environment are being acutely felt at all scales, globally, nationally and locally. Such effects include higher temperatures especially during the summer months, increased rainfall and flooding during the winter months and an increase in extreme coastal water levels driven mainly by increases in mean sea level rise.
- 2.13 The changes in seasonality of weather events are likely to become much more prevalent and intense and this will impact negatively on public health and the natural environment. In addition, there will be disruption to agricultural production and the operation of essential services and infrastructure. Some people and places will be more exposed than others to the direct impacts of climate change. Within these places, some people may be more vulnerable to the impacts as a result of their socio-economic status. This inequality is referred to as 'climate justice'. To help address this, the Local Plan must ensure that diversity and equality is at the heart of planning for climate change and that climate change adaptation and mitigation policies do not disadvantage different groups. The Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 served as stark illustration of the need to create more sustainable, inclusive societies and green economies ("Build Back Better") that are more resilient.





International / National Response

- 2.14 It is clear that there needs to be a shift in approach to focus on planetary health. A UN Special Report (2018) on Climate Change states that in order to have any chance of reducing the risks of irreversible climate change in the future, the world needs to limit global temperature increases to no more than 2 degrees Celsius above pre industrial levels. However, the latest science indicates that 1.5°C should be set to avoid these worse extremes.
- 2.15 A reduction in greenhouse gases will be achieved through a range of measures classed as either 'adaptation' or 'mitigation'. 'Adaptation' is when adjustments are made to natural or human systems in response to the actual or anticipated impacts of climate change, to mitigate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. 'Mitigation' is an action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions. As well as taking actions to reduce emissions, it will also be important to maximise natural processes that can take carbon out of the atmosphere and lock it into features such as peat and trees, known as 'carbon sequestration'.
- 2.16 On a national level, the UK has committed to becoming net carbon zero by 2050. The NPPF makes it clear that mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy is a core planning environmental objective.

Response at the Local Level

- 2.17 West Sussex County Council's Climate Change Strategy 2020 - 2030 sets out the County's response to climate change including a commitment to work towards carbon neutrality and climate resilience by 2030.
- 2.18 Adur & Worthing Councils' declared Climate Emergency in July 2019 and have committed to work towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030. The Councils have also signed the UK100 Cities Pledge to achieve 100% clean energy by 2050. In November 2018, the Councils' adopted an ambitious programme of action on sustainability under 'Sustainable AW'. More recently a Carbon Reduction Plan (2019) has been published which sets out a pathway to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 for the Councils' own direct emissions.

Role of the Local Plan

- 2.19 The planning system is one of many tools that can be used to help minimise vulnerability to all sectors of the community and provide resilience to the effects of climate change. The way in which we shape new and existing developments in Worthing can make a significant contribution to adapting (resilience to climate change impact) and mitigating the effects of climate change through carbon reduction ('decarbonisation') and sustainable design & construction. Green infrastructure will have a major role to play in this, helping to mitigate the impacts of high temperatures, reduce flood risk, and maintain / restore biodiversity.
- 2.20 To respond to climate change, planning proposals must be accompanied by information proportionate to the scale of development proposed. For major development proposals, Sustainability Statements must be submitted to clarify how:
- the development has taken measures to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change;

- the development has considered the energy hierarchy and heating and cooling hierarchy;
- sustainable design and construction measures have been incorporated into development design;
- any potential flood risk will be mitigated.

2.21 This strategic policy below is an overarching policy designed to ensure the impacts of climate change are fully considered at an early stage to ensure that development and associated infrastructure is future proofed and resilient to recover from extreme weather conditions. This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies in this Plan.

SP2 CLIMATE CHANGE

A comprehensive and integrated approach to addressing climate change will be taken, consisting of the following elements:

Carbon Reduction

- Development proposals are expected to reduce the amount of energy used in construction and operation of buildings and improve energy efficiency, including retrofitting existing properties, to contribute to achieving zero carbon emissions.
- The Council will support and promote the creation of low carbon heating/cooling networks and the delivery of renewable energy schemes.
- Developments should prioritise active travel such as walking, cycling and public transport to reduce reliance on the private car and facilitate car free lifestyles.

- Follow the waste hierarchy to minimise, reuse, and recycle waste during the construction phase and to encourage greater levels of recycling over the lifetime of the development.

Maximising carbon sequestration

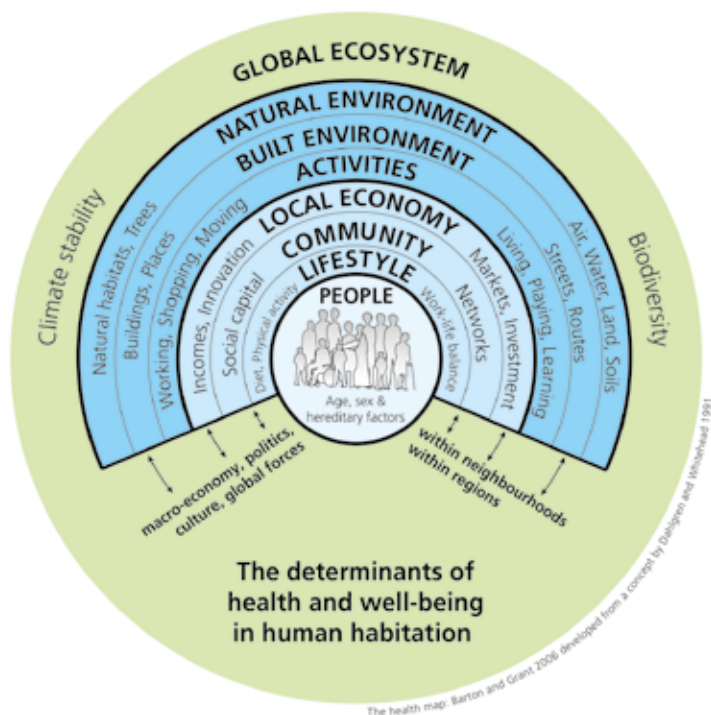
- Incorporate green infrastructure such as street trees and other vegetation into the public realm to support rainwater management through sustainable drainage, reduce exposure to air pollution, moderate surface and air temperature and increase biodiversity.
- Achieve an overall net gain for biodiversity commensurate with the scale of the development, including a positive contribution to the habitat network through habitat protection, creation and enhancement.
- Maintain the current level of tree canopy cover across the borough and seek opportunities to increase appropriate species of woodland cover.

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

- Development must be designed to adapt and mitigate the impacts of climate change and reduce vulnerability, particularly in terms of overheating, flood risk and water supply.
- Ensure buildings and infrastructure are designed to adapt to a changing climate, making efficient use of water, reducing impacts from natural hazards like flooding and heatwaves, while mitigating against and avoiding contributing to the urban heat island effect. This should include maximising opportunities for both natural heating and ventilation.
- The Council will seek adaptation and mitigation measures which improve the resilience of communities, reduce inequality and bring a range of social benefits.

Healthy Communities

- 2.22 There is strong evidence that inequalities in health and well-being are influenced by social, economic and environmental factors such as the design and quality of homes and neighbourhoods, the opportunities we have to exercise and access to health care facilities. For example, research has shown that external stressors such as light, air, pollution, noise, low or no provision of open space, or overheating can trigger a biological stress response which can impair the function of the immune response which in turn causes a range of diseases.
- 2.23 To aid understanding of the relationship between the built & natural environment and health, researchers have devised the Health Map illustrated below.



- 2.24 A recent Health Equity study for England identified that inequalities in life expectancy have risen in the last decade especially in deprived areas. Rising child poverty, a housing affordability crisis, a rise in homelessness and inequities in money and resources are all contributing to health inequalities. And these outcomes, on the whole, are even worse for Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) population groups and people with disabilities. The Covid-19 pandemic has been shown to disproportionately affect vulnerable groups especially those living in deprived neighbourhoods in poor quality and overcrowded housing. There is an urgent need to address place based poverty and inequality to support a higher quality of life, better health outcomes and health justice for all communities.

Health and Well-being in Worthing

- 2.25 Local Authorities now take responsibility for public health in their local communities. When doing so, it is important to understand the specific local health priorities in order to reduce health inequalities. Adur & Worthing Councils' Public Health Strategy 2018 - 2021 'Start Well, Live Well, Age Well' (2018) explains that there are significant health challenges and inequalities within the borough including: higher than average levels of obesity and alcohol misuse; low rates of physical activity; isolated older people and loneliness of all ages; early deaths from cancers; and high incidence of mental health issues amongst young people.
- 2.26 The Public Health Strategy identifies five priorities for action which also contribute to the ambitions shared by the West Sussex Joint Health and Well-being Strategy (2019-2024) and the Well-being and Resilience Framework. These priorities are informed by evidence set out within the West Sussex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

Public Health - Priorities for Action

1. **We all have the opportunity to enjoy good mental well-being and emotional resilience (at all life stages)**
2. **We contribute to improve environmental sustainability**
3. **We can all access and make positive use of our open spaces**
4. **We all have the opportunity to enjoy a healthy lifestyle (diet, weight, smoking, physical activity, alcohol, drugs and sexual health)**
5. **We can all enjoy good social connections via purposeful activity at all stages of our life.**

Role of the Local Plan

- 2.27 The Local Plan is one of many mechanisms to promote health and well-being and thus address the wider determinants of health. Facilitating a healthy and active community provides numerous benefits, not just on a social level but also environmentally and economically. In addition, the Plan can encourage people to make positive behaviour choices towards leading healthy lifestyles such as the provision of safe and attractive cycling and walking networks, areas for community food growing and improving access and quality of public open spaces.
- 2.28 Of increasing importance, is the role that Local Plans have with regards to addressing the public health impacts arising from climate change. With increasingly warmer summers being forecast, there is a need to protect communities, especially vulnerable groups, from heat stress. New buildings need to be designed with climate resilience in mind as well as the provision

of multi-functional green infrastructure within public realm spaces to provide shading and urban cooling. Furthermore, communities vulnerable to repeated flood events are likely to experience anxiety which may impact on their mental well-being.

- 2.29 Poor air quality is becoming a prevalent issue for public health as a result of heavy car centric lifestyles. Air pollution is the top environmental risk to human health in the UK, and the fourth greatest threat to public health after cancer, heart disease and obesity. Providing enhanced, safe and accessible active travel routes can also have a significant effect on health by encouraging participation in physical activity and promoting social interaction, in addition to reducing noise and air pollution.

- 2.30 The borough's parks, open spaces, sports / recreation facilities and green infrastructure help local communities to lead lifestyles with greater levels of physical activity, resulting in better physical and mental health, reduced stress levels and increased social interaction as well as reducing exposure to noise and air pollution. Easy, safe and improved equitable access for all to high quality open and natural space is therefore important especially within the context of climate justice. Research has shown that those people that frequently access





nature and open spaces are more likely to develop a connection thus resulting in 'nature appreciation'. This then facilitates 'pro-environmental' behaviours whereby people are more likely to behave in an environmentally friendly way.

- 2.31 The design and quality of the built environment can have a significant impact on physical and mental health of how people perceive and navigate their environments. A high quality, inclusive and accessible environment should enable everyone at all stages of life and at all levels of ability to participate equally, confidently and independently in everyday activities and to easily interact with one another. Homes need to be constructed and designed in a manner so that they can adapt to changing demands and needs of all generations thus enabling people to live independently for longer.
- 2.32 Sport England believes that being active should be an intrinsic part of everyone's life pattern. Along with Public Health England they have published guidance on 'Active Design' which comprises ten design principles to encourage and promote sport and physical activity through the design and layout of the built environment. Related to these aims, Adur & Worthing Councils are currently preparing a Physical Activity Strategy which seeks to raise levels of physical activity across all areas of the community.

- 2.33 A healthy environment is essential for a healthy economy. Growth in the provision and quality of local employment opportunities is essential in supporting socio-economic benefits. Provision of a range of varied jobs can ensure that local communities derive maximum economic benefits from those opportunities. The creation of employment opportunities need to be in accessible locations served by public transport links and walking and cycling infrastructure to encourage physical activity and also not to disadvantage those who do not have access to a car.
- 2.34 The issues of food production, quality and security impact directly on the health and well-being of current and future generations. Involvement in community food growing projects can help people establish a healthier relationship with food and be more involved in outdoor activity thus helping to address the obesity epidemic. The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the need for resilience in food security. As recognised within Adur & Worthing Councils 'And Then...' report, there is a need to develop a local food system so that it supports and expands local food production. Areas for food growing can be integrated into public spaces and shared spaces in residential and non-residential developments.
- 2.35 The Strategic Policy that follows captures these objectives and highlights the relevant elements needed to provide the foundations for achieving health and well-being amongst the built and natural environment in Worthing. Health and well-being are cross cutting themes and this policy should be read alongside other policies in this Plan that seek to address the wider determinants of health.

Health Impact Assessment

- 2.36 Most developments have the potential to positively influence health and well-being. The impacts of proposed development on the wider determinants of health must be assessed and considered by the applicant at the earliest stage of the design process. Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a method of considering the positive and negative impacts of major development on the health of different groups in the population and identify any mitigation measures for any potential

negative impacts as well as measures for enhancing any potential positive impacts, in order to enhance the benefits and minimise any risks to health. This should draw together the health benefits of the other application submission documents, including the design and access statement, design code, transport assessment and travel plan. This will allow schemes to be refined to maximise positive effects on health and well-being. When considering the health impact of individual developments, it is important that its surroundings are taken into account as well as its intended purpose. This includes uses involving vulnerable communities and sensitive uses, such as residential care homes, supported housing, schools, hospitals and health centres.

- 2.37 Screening is a preliminary assessment of what health impacts might arise from a development proposal and informs the decision of whether the proposal would benefit from further assessment. The scope of a HIA will vary depending on the size of the development and its location. Further information on the application of HIA will be set out within a Supplementary Planning Document.

SP3 HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

- a) New development must be designed to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places, which enable and support healthy lifestyles and address health and well-being needs in Worthing, as identified in the Adur & Worthing Councils' Public Health Strategy.
- b) In order to maximise opportunities to promote healthy lifestyles, where appropriate, new development must:
 - i. improve the quality and quantity of open space, informal & formal recreation opportunities and multi-functional green infrastructure assets and networks;

- ii. protect and enhance safe and accessible active travel routes and Non-Motorised User Routes to enable exercise and physical activity as part of everyday life;
 - iii. provide high quality and energy efficient homes within an attractive environment, providing social connections through inclusive and accessible development layout and public realm design that meets the needs of all including those living with dementia;
 - iv. improve provision of and / or access to education, employment and skills training recognising the clear links between income and health;
 - v. improve environmental sustainability resilience and reduce contributors to poor health and mitigating their risks, such as those associated with climate change, flooding, hazardous uses, crime, noise and poor air quality to reduce inequalities and address climate justice;
 - vi. support healthy eating and promoting healthy food choices, through increasing opportunities for sustainable food systems such as community food growing spaces and green infrastructure within development and public realm spaces to enable healthy lifestyles.
- c) The Council will support proposals for new and improved health services and facilities in locations where they can be accessed by sustainable transport modes;
 - d) Major residential and major commercial development must set out how they address the requirements of a) i - vi) as part of the planning application. In order to satisfy this policy requirement, applicants will be required to undertake a screening for a Health Impact Assessment (HIA). If necessary, a full HIA proportionate to the development proposed, will need to be prepared to demonstrate the health outcomes on the health and well-being of communities.

