

# LDC 2022 Corporate Plan Progress Update

## Getting it right first time

- Implemented our new **chatbot** on our website; to enable a hybrid approach to our customer service, maintaining our telephone and face to face offering. The Human Parity level of the chatbot, meaning the chatbot has understood and responded to the query, has been at **92.5%** since conception.
- New scheme working with *Cheeky Wipes* to provide vouchers for local parents to swap to reusable nappies and/or wipes; to reduce our waste.
- Website promotion of free alternatives to the bulky waste service for reusable items.
- We now have a **90-Minute service level agreement** to respond to queries via social media.
- Reintroduced **District News** to provide quarterly updates on the work the council has been doing in the community, offering insight into the strategic plans and desired outcomes for the administration.
- **Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme**, from April 2022, which targets those on the lowest incomes not paying council tax.

## Sustainability and Climate Change

- Helped **181 households** install solar panels through the Solar Together Scheme plus approx. **50 households** included an EV charger quote.
- **£1937 granted** to assist the Love Our Ouse Project (for website work)
- Regionally there has been over **£2.2m awarded** to the East Sussex region, under the Sustainable Warmth scheme for retrofitting the homes of low income households.
- Waste fleet decarbonisation plan- Renewable diesel for all our fleet (not just waste but all N1st and other vehicles that fill up at Newhaven) from April 2023 has been agreed in June.
- Research continues to be done to investigate the use of ground source heat pumps.
- A new **Zero Carbon Community Worker**, has been employed to work with tenants to reduce our carbon footprint
- **£2,000 grant** to help fund Cycle Lewes's Low Traffic Neighbourhood Study
- Woodland and Hedgerows: We **planted >19,650 native shrubs/trees** as cross-slope hedgerows (3,745m) and floodplain woodland (0.14 ha). When mature we estimate that our new cross-slope hedgerows will help to store and slow down at least 11,235 m<sup>3</sup> of water (11,235,000 L).
- Scrapes, pond and temporary flood storage: We have created a **network of seasonal scrapes and ponds** across the catchment which hold

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approximately 1,023,650 L of floodwater, whilst providing important habitat for waders, amphibians and aquatic invertebrates.

- Leaky Dams: We have **constructed 286 leaky natural woody dams**, which hold back an estimated 286,000 L 2 of water per flood event.

### Building Community Wealth

- LDC **acquired the headlease to the former UTC** (now to be called The Marine Workshops) in June 2022 in order to support the regeneration of Newhaven town. The building will be developed into a mixed hub supporting marine and education, commercial space and new public space. Work is continuing on developing the tenant occupation of the building and it is planned that the Council will relocate its main office space to the property by January 2023.
- We have recently let a number of **large contracts to local contractors** including Doors & Windows Replacement Programme, Roofing Replacement Programme and Kitchen & Bathrooms Replacement Programme, all for our Homes First Team.
- LDC designed and implemented a **brand new grants programme** which allowed broader support for a wider range of voluntary and community groups for the first time. Additionally, a unique fund has been created to support those fleeing the war in Ukraine. **In response to the Cost-of-Living Crisis**, LDC has created a specific fund and post to support the local voluntary sector as it works to support people impacted by food and fuel poverty.

### Delivering Homes

- As of June 2022, estimates show, LDC are well on their way to **delivering the 200 new homes** (new build and acquisitions) by 2024.
- In addition to the council owned properties (stated above), **153 affordable units** have already been complete and **335 on site with target completions** before March 2024 (accurate at time of reporting). This would total 488 new affordable homes between March 2020 and March 2024 within the district.
- Updated and adopted a new set of design requirements that will set high standards for its new developments. In June 2022 Cabinet also approved the principles of this “**affordable homes design standard**”. Which encompasses our sustainability commitment: high thermal performing fabric elements, evaluation at concept for renewable energy sources and a review of existing stock has been done to identify lower performing properties.
- **Improved standards for adaptable housing** by targeting fully adaptable housing (M4-2 as defined by Building Control) where possible. These

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properties are adaptable to suit the needs of a wide range of people and ensure tenants can stay in their homes as they grow older.

- Suitable sites have been identified and are being built to **disabled ready standards** to meet the specific needs of families with physical disabilities.