

Hemel Garden Communities Review 2023/24



Hemel
Garden
Communities







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About Hemel Garden Communities

Hemel Garden Communities (HGC) is a Garden Town development programme that will transform Hemel Hempstead. It will create attractive, sustainable and new neighbourhoods to the north and east of Hemel Hempstead, through the delivery of up to 11,000 new homes and 10,000 new jobs by 2050.

Our Hemel Garden Communities partners - Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Futures (formerly Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership) and Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter- are working with The Crown Estate and other key landowners to deliver the HGC programme, which will provide a variety of benefits to Hemel Hempstead. These include:

- **New high-quality homes, including affordable housing.**
- **New neighbourhoods set around vibrant local centres, green spaces and play areas, all easily accessed on foot.**
- **Sustainable travel such as walking, cycling and public transport will be given priority as we target a greener, healthier environment, which includes open spaces as well as new country and district parks.**
- **New jobs will be created in Hertfordshire Innovation Quarter, a new business park, focusing on research and innovation using green technologies.**
- **Introducing sustainable transport choices and links between Maylands, the town centre and Hemel Hempstead train station, plus wider connections to both St Albans City and St Albans Abbey train stations, will achieve better connected and stronger communities.**





Chairman's Foreword



Welcome to the Hemel Garden Communities Annual Review. This year marks the 5th anniversary since we were awarded Garden Town status and we are delighted to share our achievements with you and the significant progress that has been made throughout 2023/24.

Collaboration with our partners and stakeholders, as well as local Councillors and residents, is key to delivering the Hemel Garden Communities programme. We'd like to thank everyone who has played a part in this, including support from Homes England and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities that has enabled us to accelerate a series of exciting transformational projects. These have included resurfacing sections of the Nickey Line and the Grand Union Canal towpath and implementing a Quietway at Buncefield Lane, all of which have encouraged active travel, a focus of our vision for the town.

We also extend our gratitude to key partners, Dacorum Borough Council and St Albans City and District Council, who both successfully delivered their Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultations in 2023, including more detailed proposals for Hemel Garden Communities.

As we move into 2024/25 and the next five years of the programme, we will be carrying out more extensive consultations with our partners, residents and stakeholders and embracing new opportunities to transform the town, as it grows into the future. We look forward to sharing our continued progress with you.

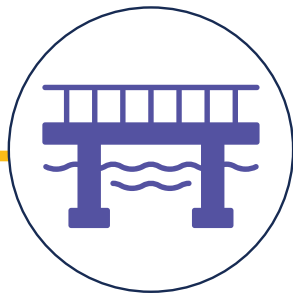
Bob Lane OBE,
Independent Chair,
Hemel Garden Communities Delivery Board





**Hemel
Garden
Communities**

Highlights



April 2023

Grand Union Canal towpath resurfaced between Nash Mills and Kings Langley.



July 2023

Publication of SADC Local Plan (Regulation 18) including HGC policies and site allocations.



**August 2023 -
October 2023**

Over 5,000 registrations during the second stage of Solar Together Hertfordshire.



March 2024

HGC Site visit to Chelmsford Garden Community.



March 2024

681 people respond to our 'Taking Care of our Spaces, Places & Communities' Survey.



January 2024

A detailed socio-economic review of Hemel Hempstead begins.



Key

SADC = St Albans City & District Council

DBC = Dacorum Borough Council



September – October 2023

528 people respond to our 'Healthy Lifestyles' Survey.



October 2023

Publication of DBC Local Plan Revised Strategy for Growth.



October 2023

HGC Position Statement is published.



December 2023

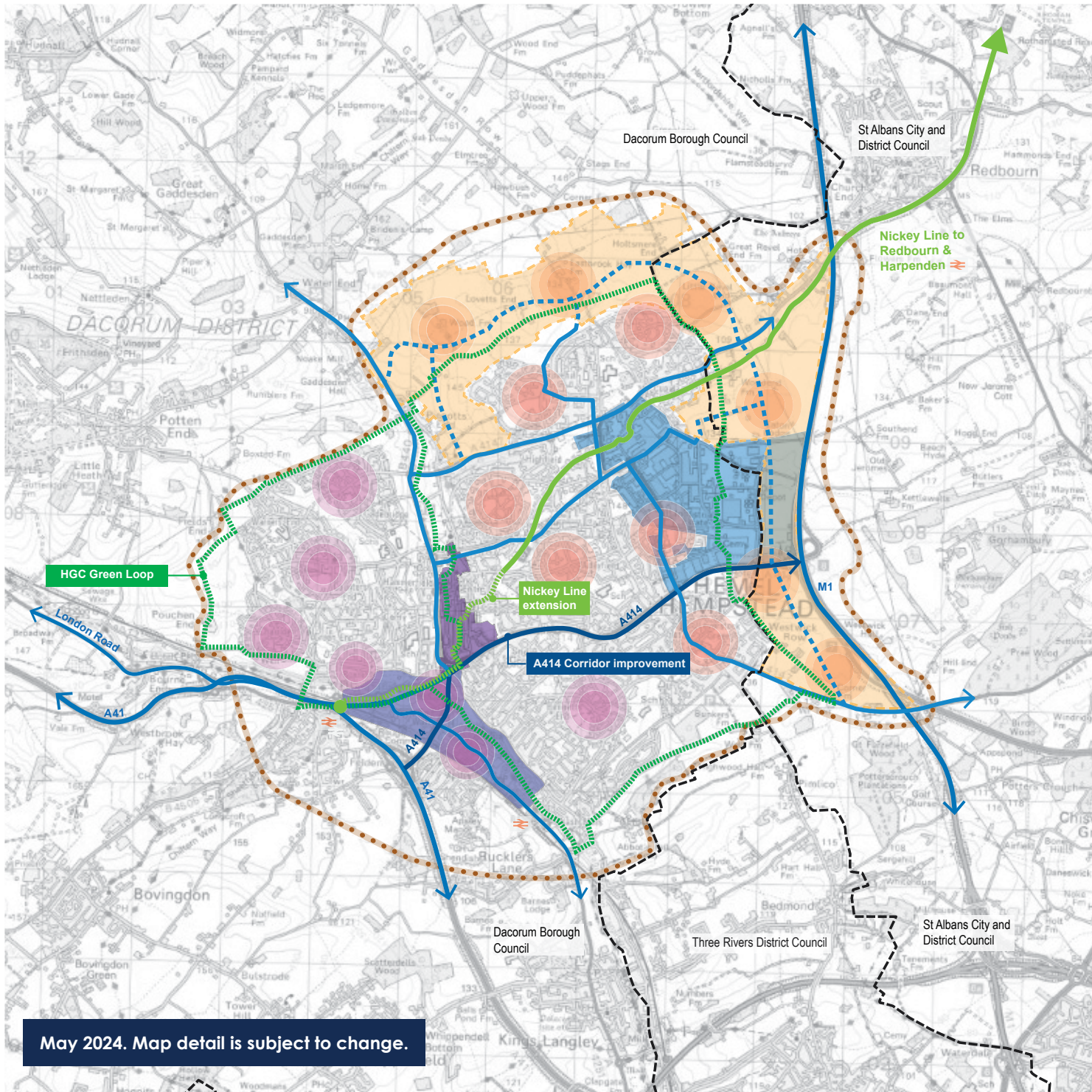
£190K funding from Homes England to drive forward the programme.



November 2023

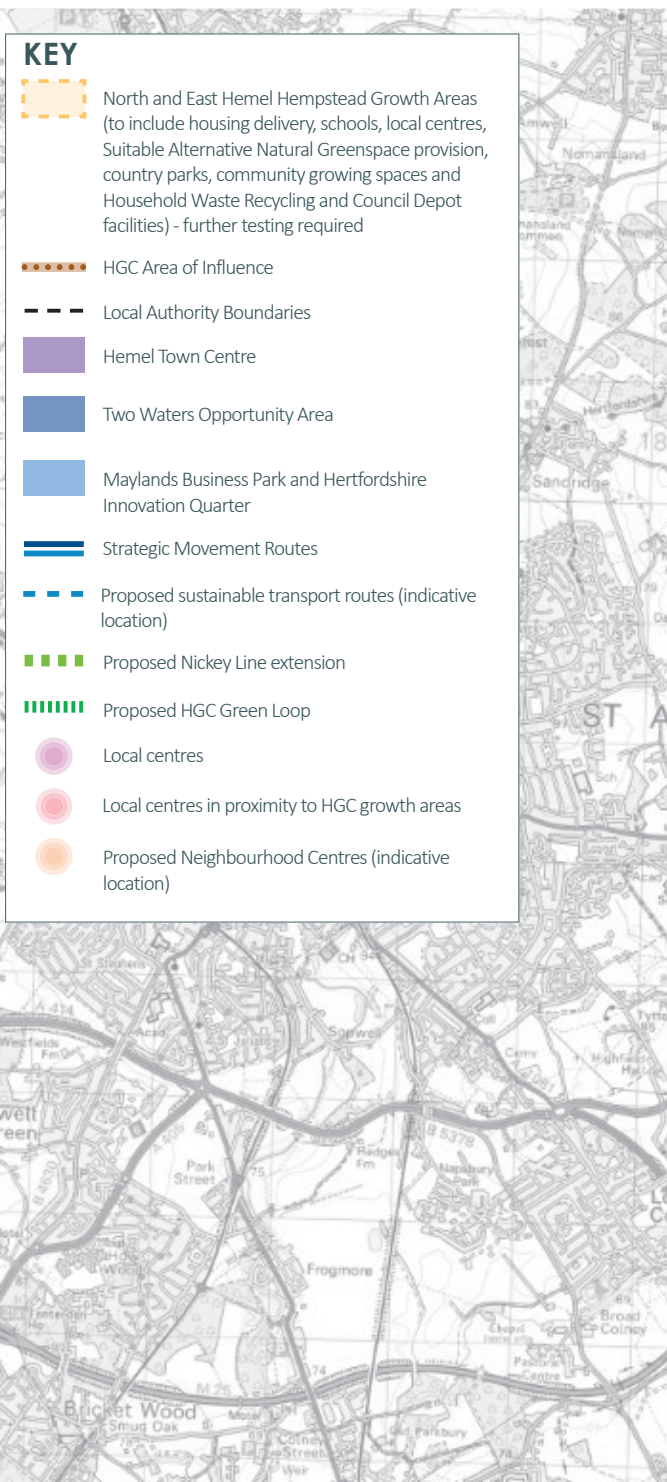
HGC site visit to Alconbury Weald & Marmalade Lane, Cambridgeshire.

Our Vision



May 2024. Map detail is subject to change.





Our Vision

Hemel Garden Communities North and East Hemel Hempstead Growth Areas

You will find our full Spatial Vision on our website:

hemelgardencommunities.co.uk/key-documents



Delivery and Progress

We have continued to deliver against all the key Hemel Garden Communities workstreams, during 2023/24.

We also contributed to the public consultations on Local Plans for Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) and St Albans City and District Council (SADC).

HGC Guidance & Strategy Key

Purple = Masterplanning Design & Framework

Orange = Economic

Teal = HGC Planning Policies

Red = Transport

Lime = Green Infrastructure

Yellow = Health & Wellbeing

Dark Blue = Other workstreams

HGC Guidance & Strategy



Framework
Plan Stages
1, 2 & 3

March 2021
- Spring 2024



Planning
Policies and
Guidance

Autumn 2022
- Winter 2025



Nicky Line
Vision &
Feasibility
Study

Autumn 2022
- Summer 2024



Herts IQ
& Socio-
Economics
study

Spring 2023
- August 2024



Stewardship
Approach

Winter 2023
- Spring 2024



Land
Assembly
Strategy

Winter 2023
- Spring 2024



Heritage
Impact
Assessment

Winter 2023
- Spring 2024



Health &
Wellbeing
Strategy

Summer 2023
- Spring 2024





Local Plans

Landscape Assessment

Spring 2023 - Spring 2024

Green Infrastructure Strategy Stage 3

Spring 2023 - Spring 2024

HGC Strategic Design Code

Winter 2023 - Spring 2024

Maylands Plus Masterplan

Summer 2023 - Summer 2024

Sustainable Transport & Vision Strategy

Spring 2024

Planning Strategy

Spring 2023 - Summer 2024



SADC Regulation 18 Consultation

July - Sept 2023

DBC Regulation 18 Consultation

Oct - Dec 2023

Listening to our Communities

We've run a number of activities over the last year, where local Councillors, residents and community groups have had the chance to see our plans.

They've also given us feedback on what they want to see in the future, within the Hemel Garden Communities area and this is now helping us shape our future work.

Workshops including key partners and stakeholders



Placemaking for the Future Workshop, July 2023

– Introduced the newly elected DBC and SADC Councillors to the Hemel Garden Communities' Spatial Vision, key workstreams, and the future Hemel Place Strategy for the existing town.

Health & Wellbeing and Green Infrastructure Workshop, September 2023 – Stakeholders were invited to discuss and comment on the emerging Health & Wellbeing and Green Infrastructure Strategies.





Green Infrastructure Quality Review Panel, November 2023 – Design South East reviewed the progress of the Green Infrastructure Strategy, with one panel member praising the 'detail and depth' of the work.

Nickey Line Site Visit and Workshop, October 2023 – Local Councillors joined the HGC team to explore the Nickey Line and discussed what improvements could be made to enable it to become a strategic green route.



≡ Site visits



Aspirational site visit to Alconbury Weald and Marmalade Lane in Cambridgeshire, November 2023

We toured Alconbury, an Urban & Civic development of 6,500 new homes and employment space, with similar aims and aspirations to HGC, to see what is possible in terms of design and key infrastructure. We also visited Marmalade Lane, a pioneering co-living development. We were joined by Councillors and key officers from Dacorum Borough Council and St Albans City and District Council.



Visit to Boxmoor Trust, November 2023

We visited the Trust to learn about their stewardship approach and how they are governed.

photo credit: Aaron Cooper, The Boxmoor Trust

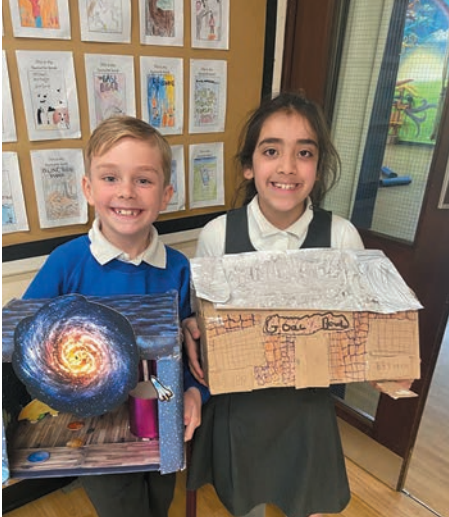


Aspirational site visit to Chelmsford Garden Community, March 2024

We toured the Garden Community development which is being delivered by Chelmsford City Council. It will have up to 10,000 new homes and includes employment space, a new through school from primary years to 6th Form, green and blue infrastructure, local centres and a new railway station. We were joined by the Chief Executives and senior officers from Dacorum Borough Council and St Albans City and District Council.



≡ Community engagement



Boxmoor Primary School visit, April 2023

We were invited to see Year 3 pupils at Boxmoor Primary School to view their Town Planning projects based on what amenities they'd like to see in Hemel Hempstead in the future.

Generation Dacorum Careers Fair, September 2023

We spoke with Year 11 students about HGC and they had the chance to complete our 'Healthy Lifestyles' survey.



St Albans City and District Local Plan Regulation 18 events, September 2023

The HGC Team attended several Regulation 18 Planning Consultation events with St Albans City and District Council in Redbourn, Leverstock Green, Harpenden & St Albans.



Dacorum Borough Council, Local Plan Revised Strategy for Growth event, December 2023. HGC joined the DBC Planning Team at the Christmas Lights Switch On in Hemel Hempstead.





DBC Climate Action Network Event (DCAN), November 2023

HGC attended the event, where residents were invited to learn about actions that are taking place locally to tackle climate change.



'Healthy Lifestyles' Survey, October 2023

We asked local residents what they would need to live a healthy life and maintain their wellbeing.

'Taking Care of our Spaces, Places and Communities' Survey, February 2024

To inform our Stewardship Strategy, our survey asked local people how they would like to see community assets within Hemel Garden Communities managed in the future.



Transforming the Town



Grand Union Canal towpath upgrade

To encourage active travel

In April 2023, work began to resurface 800 metres of the Grand Union Canal towpath between Nash Mills and Kings Langley. Bushes and trees which were encroaching onto the path, were also cut back.

Hemel Garden Communities jointly contributed to the project after receiving funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, as part of the Garden Communities Programme. The improvements were delivered in partnership with Three Rivers

District Council, Dacorum Borough Council and Nash Mills and Kings Langley Parish Councils, who have all contributed financially, with the support of Hertfordshire County Council and the Canal & River Trust.

Local resident Roy Unwin said, "The towpath used to get really muddy along this stretch, the resurfacing work has transformed it. I've seen a lot more people using the path for walking and cycling now – it's a job well done!"





Nicky Line improvements »»

To encourage modal shift

The Nickey Line has seen a number of improvement works over the last few years with the aim of transforming it for cycling and walking and promoting better accessibility.

In January 2023, Hemel Garden Communities funded the resurfacing of the link from Queensway through to Redbourn Road, as part of a long-term plan to encourage more active travel in the local area.

Our aim is to re-connect the route through Hemel Hempstead town centre and the train station, to enable rail passengers to travel sustainably door-to-door.





Solar Together installations »»

Investing in renewable energy

In August 2023, we launched the second round of the Solar Together Hertfordshire programme, in partnership with Dacorum Borough Council and other local councils in the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership. The programme was run in conjunction with independent experts, iChoosr, to make the transition to clean energy as cost effective as possible.

The second registration period closed in October 2023 and saw over 5,500 registrations across Hertfordshire, with 829 of those registrations coming from Dacorum residents.

The feedback has been positive from residents who took part in the scheme, with one saying:

"This was a completely new area for me. The proposal was clear and comprehensive. The follow-up call was helpful and professional, and the installation process was quite simply easy. Even got follow-up calls after installation."





≡ Buncefield Quietway

HGC Green Loop

Hertfordshire County Council have been reviewing the design proposals for the pedestrian and cycle route improvements on the A414 Breakspear Way in Hemel Hempstead.

The Quietway will comprise a new network of cycling and walking routes

that will run from the north-south route on Buncefield Lane, extending from Green Lane in the south to the Nickey Line in the north. They will form part of the Hemel Garden Communities Green Loop.

What's next for Hemel Garden Communities?

As we move forward into 2025, here are a few of our latest programme headlines, building on the success of the first five years:



We are developing a long term Stewardship Strategy for HGC to manage and maintain community assets.

We will be working with partners to deliver more transformative projects across the town and investing in cycling and walking routes.

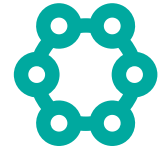


We are supporting the next steps for the Local Plans processes, including detailed proposals for the early phases of HGC.





What's next for HGC?



We will continue to consult with residents, partners and stakeholders to shape the town's transformation.



We will be setting up a Youth Forum to ensure young people input on plans for the growth of the town.

We are working with our Councillor Review Group providing them with HGC updates and events.



We will be working with partners to help secure higher quality jobs and learning opportunities.



We are championing ambitious opportunities for green space in HGC, focussing on wildlife and biodiversity.



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hemelgardencommunities.co.uk

