

## ARUNDEL - THE TOWN INSPIRED BY HERITAGE AND NATURE

### 1. INTRODUCTION

By having a Strategic Plan in place, we can best focus our aims and ambitions for the town – to challenge thinking, test direction and ensure we have guiding principles in place around inclusivity, creativity and integrity.

It is important that as a plan it is able to respond to both opportunities and challenges and evolve as required.

#### Purpose of the Town Council

Our purpose is to make Arundel the very best it can be — for residents, visitors, and businesses alike.

We work collaboratively and creatively with the whole community and our stakeholders to ensure Arundel remains a thriving town in which to live and work, and a welcoming destination for everyone who visits.

The Town Council has an overarching purpose for the well-being of the town, being sighted on our purpose enables the Town Council to make decisions in the best interest of our community.

### 2. ASSETS

In 2021, three core assets were identified as central to Arundel's identity: Heritage, Natural Environment, and People. Together, these elements underpin the town's distinctive character and enduring appeal and describe what makes Arundel special.

HERITAGE	NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	THE PEOPLE
Arundel's rich history and heritage are embodied in its iconic buildings and the preservation of the town's unique architectural character within the conservation area.	The River Arun and the South Downs National Park provide exceptional natural beauty and biodiversity, forming a remarkable environmental setting for the town.	Arundel's greatest treasure is its people — a community defined by generosity, creativity, and kindness. The dedication of our volunteers, councillors, residents and businesses is at the heart of everything we achieve.

Arundel is shaped by its history, surrounded by natural beauty, and strengthened by the people who live and work here.

The town thrives because people care about it, get involved and support one another in practical and meaningful ways.

### **3. OUR VALUES & OUR CULTURE**

Our values capture how we relate to each other as Councillors and Officers and demonstrate how we interact with the community.

Our collective behaviour creates the culture of the Town Council and this sets the tone for the way in which we work. They define what we are and determine what we can achieve.

In 2021 these four ways were identified as important principles to adhere to - Trusting, Sustaining, Connecting and Creative.

#### **a. TRUSTING**

- We value integrity, diversity, and inclusivity.
- We trust and rely on each other, holding ourselves accountable for our commitments.
- We celebrate diversity and are committed to being inclusive in all that we do.
- Mutual respect is the foundation of our work, and through our actions we build trust between the Council and the people of Arundel.

#### **b. SUSTAINING**

- We honour the past while shaping the future.
- We take pride in preserving the heritage, traditions, and natural environment that make Arundel unique.
- At the same time, we welcome change and development that remain true to the spirit of our town and reflect the needs of all residents.

#### **c. CONNECTING**

- We build strong, inclusive relationships.
- We work alongside voluntary groups, schools, churches, and other local organisations to strengthen bonds within Arundel.
- We also look outward and partner with organisations beyond the town to bring wider benefits to our residents, ensuring everyone feels included in the life of our community.

#### **d. CREATIVE**

- We embrace fresh, inclusive ideas.
- We encourage and support the development of new activities, events, and initiatives in the town, such as Elevenses and the Bee Project.
- We remain open to fresh ideas, innovative ways of working, and new partnerships that strengthen our community.

## 4. OUR POWERS AND RESOURCES

Arundel Town Council is made up of 12 volunteer councillors and a small team of officers who work together to deliver the Council's strategic objectives, along with many other important activities.

Although the Council's annual income is approximately £330,000, our discretionary budget is limited. A significant share of this income goes towards staff salaries and maintaining the historic Town Hall.

Like many organisations, we are affected by wider economic pressures. In response, we are working to develop new business initiatives that will allow us to increase our support for community grants, events, and local projects — helping us to serve Arundel more effectively.

### **People and Skills – ‘Community Talent’**

At the heart of our strategy is an understanding of the wealth of skills, knowledge, and enthusiasm that exists within the community. Arundel is fortunate to have residents whose experience, interests, and willingness to get involved make a real difference to town life.

The Town Council plays an active role in supporting and harnessing this local talent in several ways:

- Supporting community-led projects: We encourage and help residents to develop their own ideas, offering practical support and, where appropriate, funding. Examples include initiatives like Elevenses, The Green Team, and Community Speedwatch.
- Creating opportunities to get involved: We aim to build a network of Town Ambassadors and work closely with Team Arundel to increase volunteering opportunities and involvement across a wide range of activities.
- Drawing on specialist knowledge: We appoint voluntary advisors who provide expertise in key areas such as trees, planning, flooding, and contracts.
- Inviting residents into decision-making: We welcome community members to join Town Council Working Groups, giving them a way to contribute meaningfully to local projects without the formal responsibilities of becoming a councillor.

## **ARUNDEL TOWN COUNCIL STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2025 – 2028**

We have introduced four Community Priorities – each will be supported through the active working groups and committees – these are outlined in further detail later in the document and each are underpinned by their own Terms of Reference.

### **1. Built Environment**

Focus on protecting and enhancing the town's physical spaces and infrastructure to reflect Arundel's character and meet the needs of residents, visitors, and businesses.

Key Objectives:

- 1.1. Make Arundel a safe and accessible town by addressing parking, walking routes, traffic calming, safe crossings, signage, and street furniture.
- 1.2. Continue to support the LCWIP and plans for a cycle lane to Ford Station, aligning with the ambition to become a Walkers Are Welcome town.
- 1.3. Maintain and improve flood defences through regular monitoring and safe practice.
- 1.4. Complete Neighbourhood Plan Version 3.
- 1.5. Work with Arun District Council to finalise the Character Appraisal for Arundel and promote the extension of the conservation area.
- 1.6. Support ambitions for improved public transport links, including a rail connection from Arundel to Brighton.

### **2. Natural Environment**

Champion sustainability and biodiversity, making Arundel a place where the natural environment is protected, celebrated, and integrated into town life.

Key Objectives:

- 2.1. Support ambitions for improved public transport links, including a rail connection from Arundel to Brighton.
- 2.2. Reduce Arundel's environmental impact by supporting Greening Arundel and the ATC Environment Working Document.
- 2.3. Collaborate to develop and support the Food Forest as an exemplar of biodiversity and abundance.

- 2.4. Support the ambition to make Arundel a Nature Town.
- 2.5. Commit to tree planting, habitat creation, cleaner rivers, and improved recycling, including developing a Wildlife Corridor, run campaigns to enhance the town's natural beauty and raise awareness around litter and dog fouling.

### **3. Cultural Environment**

We are committed to making Arundel a town where the culture is inclusive, and where people feel safe, valued, and heard. Our goal is to celebrate Arundel's unique identity through arts, culture, heritage, and community life — ensuring the town remains vibrant, welcoming, and connected.

Key Objectives:

- 3.1. Support health and wellbeing for residents through positive initiatives that encourage diversity, inclusion and equal opportunities.
- 3.2. Recognise and support the role of arts and creative industries in shaping the town's character and enjoyment for residents and visitors.
- 3.3. Actively engage with children and young people, supporting their voice and involvement through co-production with partner agencies.
- 3.4. Support community events that bring people together, celebrate tradition, and strengthen civic identity, alongside national events.
- 3.5. Promote community cohesion through new ways for residents to connect and collaborate.
- 3.6. Develop and deliver an annual Christmas Town Event that captures the festive spirit and showcases Arundel's charm, commerce and community spirit.

### **4. Commercial Environment**

Strengthen Arundel's economic base, supporting local businesses, sustainable tourism, and community reinvestment.

Key Objectives:

- 4.1. Develop a Destination and Business Partnership Plan that brings together commerce, considered tourism and resident needs - including creating a dedicated officer role if appropriate.
- 4.2. Develop the Town Hall as both a community and commercial asset, with profits reinvested to support town initiatives and community grants.
- 4.3. Support and develop economic sustainability through initiatives such as the Farmers' Market and similar complementary schemes.

- 4.4. Develop Town Ambassadors to promote local activities, businesses, and attractions, while gathering useful feedback.
- 4.5. Strengthen partnership working with Arun District Council, West Sussex County Council and South Downs National Park to align town objectives with practical delivery (e.g. road closures and role as a gateway to the Southdowns').
- 4.6. Support and grow Team Arundel to create a coordinated, sustainable volunteer base that underpins events and activities.
- 4.7. To guide Arundel through the anticipated Devolution process, including any appropriate asset transfer opportunities.

## **WORKING GROUPS AND COMMITTEES**

Revised committees and working groups with Community Priorities – each with their own terms of reference and updates.

Statutory Committees (SC) and Working Groups (WG) to be revised as:

SC – Finance and IT

SC – Planning

WG – Arundel Farmers Market

WG - Community Events and Engagement

WG - Communications and Digital

WG - Culture and Enterprise

WG - Devolution

WG - Environment

WG - Human Resources

WG - Town Hall and Facilities Management

WG - Together Arundel (to include a focus on young people)

WG - Traffic and Access to include Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

### **Committee alignment to Community Priorities**

#### Built Environment

Planning and infrastructure / T&A / Environment cttee

#### Cultural Environment

Community Events and Engagement / Communications and Digital / Environment /Culture and Enterprise / Together Arundel (to include emergency plan)

#### Natural Environment

Planning and infrastructure / Environment / Communications and Digital / Together Arundel

#### Commercial Environment

Town Hall and Facilities Committee / Communications and Digital / Environment / Culture and Enterprise / Arundel Farmers Market / Finance / Devolution