

# ANNUAL REPORT 2017 - 18



Malvern Hills District - Proud of Our Place





Great MALVERN  
ROUTES TO THE HILLS

### Great Malvern Route to the Hills

An extraordinary set of routes criss-cross together in  
Malvern, most of them starting from the railway and  
ending in the town. These routes are some of the oldest routes  
in England, earned over 400 million years ago.

#### Creative Malvern



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# change and plenty more to come

## A year of change and plenty more to come

Change has been a constant theme for local government over the last decade and Malvern Hills District Council is no exception to that. The financial challenge we and other councils face is well documented. On top of that there are many other issues facing our district from the constant need for more affordable housing to ensuring businesses can access a pool of skilled workers to continue to grow.

In order to meet these challenges we have had to make some tough decisions as well as transform the way we think about and do things. Change has therefore become our friend. By changing as an organisation we are not only meeting the challenges we face but we continue to push forward with our ambition to keep on delivering improvements for you, our residents, so the district becomes an even better place to live, work and visit for everyone. This is on top of all the day to day services we provide and you have rightly come to expect from us.

Having made a positive start last year to hitting the ambitious targets set out in our Five Year Plan, we continued to deliver on our vision during 2017/18 with some notable achievements as you will discover in the following pages. This year also saw us open ourselves up to external challenge by inviting a team of local authority colleagues from other councils in to cast a critical eye over our plans and how we are performing. The results confirmed we are a well led organisation with an ambitious and realistic set of plans that are delivering for our residents.

We are able to do all this because of our sound business plan which sets a solid foundation for us to make £1.45million of savings from our budget by 2021 as our government funding reduces, while protecting essential front line services. Something we are very proud of.

We know further change is coming as we look ahead to the next 12 months but thanks to the passion and commitment of our staff and councillors we're determined to embrace it as we continue to look to a brighter future.



**Jack Hegarty**  
Chief Executive  
Malvern Hills District Council



**David Chambers**  
Leader  
Malvern Hills District Council



# OUR FIVE YEAR PLAN



Our Five Year Plan was approved in early 2016 and sets out our priorities for improving the district up until 2021, based on feedback from you and other research and information.

We have three main priorities – **building stronger and healthier communities, driving economic prosperity and growth and making the most of our superb environment**



We set out a series of actions under each priority to help us deliver against each one. We are now in the second year of our plan and over the next few pages you will see how we are progressing against our targets.

# BUILDING STRONGER AND HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

**We want to support our communities by encouraging residents to play a more active role in the life of their local area, as well as ensure there are good quality and affordable homes for people to live in and support people to lead healthier lives.**

## In 2017/18 we:

- Delivered 155 **affordable homes** taking us to 250 in total since the start of the plan – over halfway to our target of 400 new affordable homes by 2021
- Brought 40 **Empty Homes back into use** as part of our efforts to help people access the housing market. In total 80 homes have now been brought back into use since the start of the plan, well on the way towards our target of 250.
- Recorded 447,873 visits to our **leisure centres** with an aim to increase usage by 15% by 2020
- Delivered 11 **sport and health related activities** in rural areas
- Worked with parish councils to carry out a **village health check** to help identify improvements needed
- Engaged with more than 600 residents at 12 events across the district and carried out **Meet Your Council events** in 11 wards to gather feedback on our services and help inform our decision-making.

## On top of our Five Year Plan commitments we also:

- Secured £169,100 from the Government to **support Community Led Housing** schemes

# 6



- Councillors used £17,400 from our **Ward Budget scheme** to support worthy causes in their area. This included giving money to buy new books for school libraries, new play equipment, funding activities for young people, parenting groups and the creation of a breastfeeding support group
- Launched our **Bigger Picture Survey** – the largest survey of young people aged 11 to 18 Malvern Hills District Council has ever undertaken to ensure their views are considered in our decision-making
- Made a decision on 890 **planning applications**
- Prevented 104 households from becoming **homeless**
- Hosted the Seventh annual **Malvern Hills District Community Sports Awards** with over 55 nominations and over 200 people attending the awards ceremony
- We also held our second **Malvern Hills Community Awards** to recognise the work of volunteers in the district.

# DRIVING ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND GROWTH

Malvern Hills District is a fantastic place to do business with an employment rate of 72% in 2017/18. We know we need to do more though to support businesses to grow, access the skilled workforce they need and create additional well paid jobs for our residents. Our Five Year Plan puts the economy at the heart of our vision for the district.

## In 2017/18 we:

- Supported 100 businesses to grow through **business growth and start-up programmes** taking our total to date to 207 against a target of 300 by 2021
- Created another 43 jobs at **Malvern Hills Science Park** with plans in the pipeline to buy further land to allow the park to expand further in the future
- Issued 12 **apprenticeship grants** and 7 **graduate grants** to help businesses train the workforce of the future
- Directly funded six **graduate placements**
- Awarded 8 **Proof of Concept grants** to support businesses to innovate
- Supported the rollout of **Superfast Broadband** with 96% of homes and premises across the district now being able to access the technology, beating our target of 90%
- Let 1 unit and agreed terms on further land sales at **Tenbury Business Park**
- Succeeded in lobbying with partners for £54.5million of funding to carry out dualling of **Carrington Bridge** to improve transport links to the M5



## On top of our Five Year Plan commitments we also:

- **Froze parking charges** meaning residents continue to pay the lowest parking charges in Worcestershire
- Unveiled plans for Malvern to take part in **national testing for 5G**, the next generation of mobile communication technology
- Implemented a £10,000 **support package** to help traders in Upton upon Severn affected by severe roadworks

# MAKING THE MOST OF OUR SUPERB ENVIRONMENT

We are fortunate to live in such a beautiful part of the country and we want to keep it that way while helping residents maximise the benefits of our environment to enhance their social, physical and mental well-being. Our beautiful landscape and unique towns and villages are also extremely attractive to visitors. The district is visited by 3.4million people a year with tourism worth £105million to the local economy and supporting 2,500 jobs.

## In 2017/18 we:

- Enabled more than £1.7million of **investment in open spaces** through planning agreements, taking our total in the first two years of the plan to almost £2.4million. Our aim is to secure £10million of investment in open spaces by 2021.
- Experienced an 11% increase in visitors to our newly revamped **tourism website** with 163,036 logging on to find out more about the district
- Launched a new **tourism action plan** to help boost visitor numbers to the area and promote the district to a wider audience
- Hosted visits by **coach and travel operators** in Upton upon Severn
- Worked with Google to develop **virtual tours** of the Malvern Hills with more than 148,000 views so far
- Launched a new **walking app** with over 10,000 downloads so far
- Inspected 18.5km of ordinary **watercourses** as part of our efforts to help protect communities from flooding



## On top of our Five Year Plan commitments we also:

- Increased our Litter Hit Squad to 26 volunteers with 17 **community litter picks** either led or supported by us
- Introduced a **Public Space Protection Order** for Dog Control making it an offence not to carry a poo bag or other means to clean up after a dog
- Launched our **Green Dog Walkers**, a friendly and non-confrontational way for people to support efforts to tackling dog fouling
- Hosted part of the Worcestershire stage of the Ovo Energy **Tour of Britain** professional cycling race
- Continued to support festivals across the district including the launch of a new event **Science in the Park**, attended by more than 900 people
- Hosted a series of **Outdoor Cinema** showings
- Cut **carbon dioxide emissions** by our leisure facilities by 6.5%
- Investigated more than 550 **environmental crimes**
- Achieved a 5% **reduction in the amount of waste** generated by each household in the district

# NEW ACTIONS FOR OUR FIVE YEAR PLAN

**While some of our Five Year Plan actions will take until 2021 to complete, others have already been achieved. That is why we update our plan on a rolling basis to include new actions as our priorities change and in response to the things you tell us are important to you.**

**The feedback we received from our conversations with you during 2017/18 revealed that your top three priorities were to improve our infrastructure and broadband speed, develop the skills of our young people and deliver quality and affordable housing. As a result we added the following actions to our plan:**

- Set up a company to deliver quality market rented housing
- Progress a review of the South Worcestershire Development Plan
- More early support for those at risk of becoming homeless or those facing housing difficulties
- Deliver a programme of 50 targeted community activities and campaigns across the district
- Promote our services and support councillors in meeting residents through targeted street visits and by attending 4 key festivals and events during 2018/19

- Deliver a reception facility at the Council House site. This will re-open the Council House to the public giving the council a public face
- Work with schools and partners to bring communities together
- Consider plans for relocation of Malvern Rugby Club and future uses of the existing Spring Lane site
- Work with partners to produce a series of tools and resources to help promote life skills to young people
- Purchase surplus land at QinetiQ for additional research and development based business growth
- Support the establishment of a 5G mobile technology test bed at Malvern Hills Science Park
- Deliver redesigned Priory Park play area by December 2020
- Successfully implement the effective rollout of alternate weekly collections
- Develop and deliver a marketing plan for the Malverns to include provision of online media information, an annual PR plan, social media campaigns and press visit management.

# HOW WE SPENT YOUR MONEY

In 2017/18 our budget to provide services to you was just over £8million.

Three quarters of our budget came from Council Tax or Business Rates with the other main source of income being various government grants.

These are some of the services and functions provided under each heading:



## Community Services

Waste and recycling, street cleansing, dealing with littering and fly-tipping, community safety, sport and leisure, health and well-being, volunteer support, community transport, regulatory services, land drainage



## Resources

Accountancy, IT, revenues and benefits, audit services, pensions, investment interest, land charges, human resources, property estates, investment property, Malvern Theatres, legal services.



## Economy and Tourism

Business support, events, regeneration, Tourist Information Centres.



## Planning and Housing

Planning, building control, planning policy, conservation and heritage, homelessness prevention, other housing issues.



## Strategy and Democracy

Customer service, communications, elections, democratic services, community engagement, research and consultation.

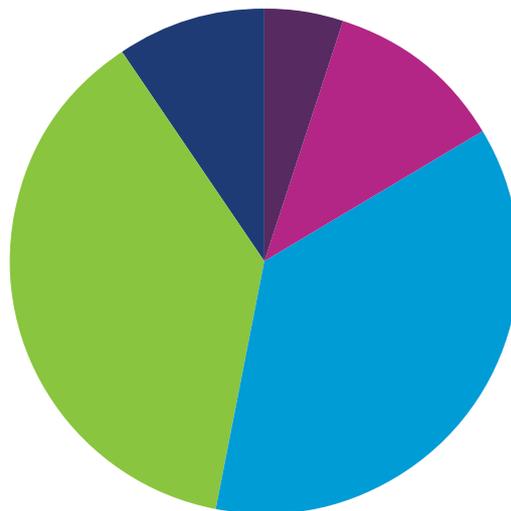


## Chief Executive's Office

Senior management and their support staff, performance management.

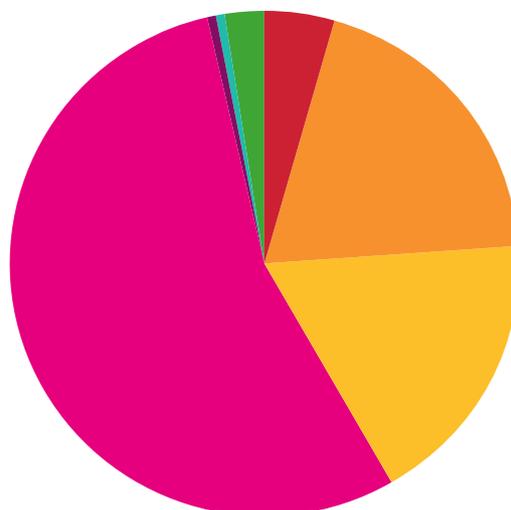
## Where we spent your money in 2017/18

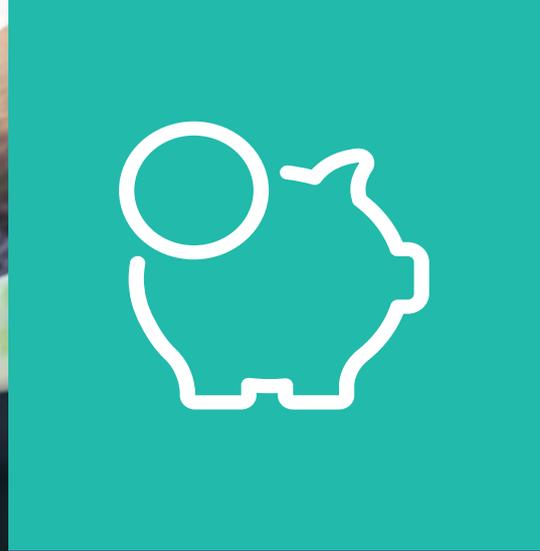
- **Community Services** £3,036million
- **Resources** £2,949million
- **Planning and Housing** £757,000
- **Strategy and Democracy** £928,000
- **Chief Executive's Office** £414,000



## Where we got our money in 2017/18

- **Revenue Support Grant** £361,000
- **Business Rates** £1,579million
- **New Homes Bonus** £1,434million
- **Council Tax** £4,429million
- **Use of Reserves** £47,000
- **Collection Fund Surplus** £51,000
- **Rural Services Delivery Grant** £182,000





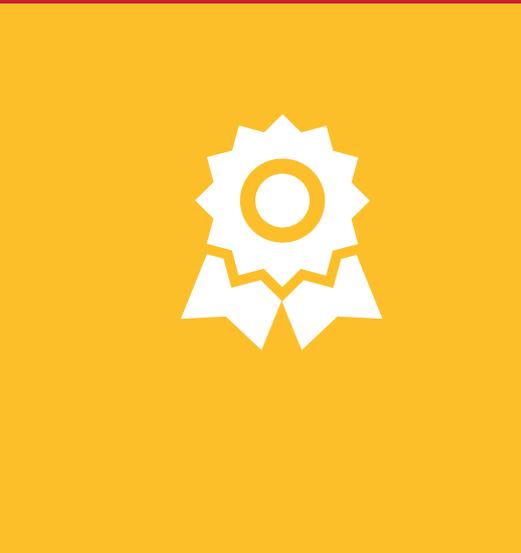
# Meeting the financial challenge

Like all councils we are facing a significant financial challenge due to reductions in our government funding, which has been steadily reducing since 2010. If it hadn't, then we would have more than £5.5million extra to spend each year on services.

In 2017/18 we delivered yet another strong financial performance. Highlights include:

- Delivering underspends on both our revenue (day to day spending) and capital (infrastructure spending) budgets
- Achieving £632,000 of savings
- Retaining our average Band D Council Tax bill as one of the lowest in the country
- Generating £243,000 of income from providing services to other councils

We're determined to meet this financial challenge by being more efficient, generating more income and transforming the way we do things rather than simply making cuts to essential front line services which our residents rely on.



**Since 2010 we have made more than £5million of savings and only 1.5% of that has come from reductions in services.**

 You can read our Statement of Accounts in full and find out more about how we spend your money by visiting [www.malvern hills.gov.uk/finance-and-performance](http://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/finance-and-performance)

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Last year's survey took place between May and June in 2017 and this is what you told us:

94%

OF YOU FEEL  
SAFE IN THE DAYTIME  
WITHIN THE  
MALVERN HILLS DISTRICT

79%

OF YOU FEEL  
SAFE AT NIGHT

40%

OF YOU FEEL YOU CAN  
INFLUENCE DECISIONS  
IN YOUR LOCAL AREA,  
UP 7% ON THE SAME TIME  
12 MONTHS AGO

58%

FEEL WELL-INFORMED  
ABOUT  
THE WORK OF THE  
COUNCIL

60%

OF YOU THINK WE DO A  
GOOD JOB  
KEEPING PUBLIC LAND  
CLEAR OF LITTER

90%

OF YOU ARE  
SATISFIED  
WITH THE  
MALVERN HILLS  
DISTRICT  
AS A PLACE TO LIVE

86%

OF YOU ARE  
SATISFIED  
WITH OUR  
PARKS AND  
OPEN SPACES

70%

OF YOU ARE  
SATISFIED  
WITH THE  
COUNCIL

JUST 27%

OF YOU ARE  
SATISFIED WITH  
LOCAL BUS SERVICES

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# WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT US

What you think about our services and the wider area is really important to us which is why we have stepped up our efforts in recent years to improve the way we engage with you. The views and feedback you provide us with are crucial to helping influence our decision-making and help shape the development of our services.

As well as our other consultations, every year we ask residents to take part in the Worcestershire Viewpoint Survey. This not only asks for your views on services provided by us but also our partners such as Worcestershire County Council and South Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group that buys in healthcare services for the area.

## HAVE YOUR SAY

If you want to get involved and have your say on how we are performing then join our email consultation list. You can also sign up to get regular email alerts from us on a range of topics including latest news, weekly waste collection reminders and more.

To sign up just visit

[www.malvern hills.gov.uk/emailalerts](http://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/emailalerts)



# TRANSFORMING THE HEALTH OF OUR DISTRICT

Malvern Hills Health and Well-being Partnership is made up of various organisations including Malvern Hills District Council, Worcestershire County Council and the NHS. The group has an ambitious five year plan to help residents across the district live healthier lives, live longer and enjoy a better quality of life. We are currently in the second year of the plan and here are some of our achievements:

## Good mental health and well-being throughout life

- Supported **240 residents** to improve their mental and physical health through the Living Well service
- Supported **2,000 people living with dementia**, and their families and friends
- Funded **SELFiE where's the HARM?** film and teaching resource which has been requested by over 40 schools and organisations across Worcestershire
- Hosted **two Volunteer Forums**, supporting organisations that offer volunteering opportunities, with 30 organisations in attendance.
- Over 40 residents benefited from the annual **Showcase of Services for Older People** held in Upton upon Severn with 25 stallholders in attendance.

## Being active at every age

- More than **1,000 young people** attended holiday camps and play schemes, increasing the number of children being physically active during school holidays.
- **Unlimited swimming** schemes at Tenbury Pool and Malvern Splash resulted in **4,000 visits** by under-8s and 2,500 visits by over-75s.
- Delivered 8 sport and health related programmes encouraging **over 480 participants** to get more active

## Reducing harm from alcohol

- Launched **Best Bar None scheme** in Malvern aimed at promoting responsible management and operation of alcohol licensed premises
- Actively promoted a number of **alcohol awareness campaigns** including Dry January and Alcohol Awareness Week
- In Malvern Hills, **16 businesses** have signed up to Worcestershire Works Well which includes reducing alcohol as one of the nine standards



# WORKING TOGETHER TO KEEP OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE

We live in an area where crime levels are very low but crime does still happen and that is a concern for residents and something we are determined to tackle.



Rural South Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership exists to help bring different organisations together to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and reduce the fear of crime. Malvern Hills District Council is part of the partnership along with West Mercia Police, YMCA Worcestershire, Hereford and Worcester Fire & Rescue Service, Fortis Living, Wychavon District Council, Worcestershire County Council, Malvern Hills Neighbourhood Watch Association and Freedom Leisure.

## Some of the actions we undertook during 2017/18 included:

- Held a public engagement event in Malvern Town Centre as part of **Hate Crime Awareness Week** with over 300 people engaging with street performers
- Delivered **home security checks** to 8 high risk victims of domestic abuse
- Delivered **5 door knock events** as part of the Rural Communities Programme to tackle rural isolation, referring to partner agencies on 119 occasions

- Delivered the **White Ribbon Campaign** against domestic abuse and sexual violence during the '16 days of action', contributing 300 pledges to never commit, excuse or stay silent about domestic abuse
- Held a **bike marking** event in Great Malvern with over 20 bikes security marked







## EMAIL ALERTS

*Sign up to receive our latest news!*

From events to consultations, and bin collections to business updates.

Visit [www.malvernhills.gov.uk/emailalerts](http://www.malvernhills.gov.uk/emailalerts) to register

-  MalvernHillsUK
-  MalvernHills\_DC
-  Malvern Hills District Council
-  malvernhillsdistrictcouncil
-  malvernhills.gov.uk