



Annual Report

2019/20



**South
Derbyshire**
District Council

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Introduction to our Annual Report

The Council is delighted to have played a significant role in the delivery of services and actions that have seen the District continue to thrive over the past year.

It is important in looking back that we remember the very many positive achievements that were delivered during 2019/20, before the end of the financial year when the entire world was forced to make dramatic changes to its daily life.

The year saw important updates for the Council, not least of which was the adoption of a new Corporate Plan, the document in which we set out our aims for the next four years and which is broken down into themes - **Our Environment, Our People, Our Future.**



For the period 2020 – 2024, we have set out three key aims. The first of these is **“Keeping a clean, green District for future generations”**; the second **“Working with communities and meeting the future needs of the District”** and the third **“Growing our District and our skills base”**.

Work to deliver some of these aims was already underway, while for others it started in 2019/20.

One of the most significant of these was that we declared a Climate Emergency in June 2019. This has brought sharply into focus that we all need to make the change to a low carbon future to secure the benefits we’ve enjoyed in the past.

We adopted a Climate and Environment Strategy and actions large and small have started to follow. We have committed to striving to make South Derbyshire District Council carbon neutral by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before the Government target of 2050.

We worked hard to promote Environment Week 2019, an electric car charging point has been installed in one of our car parks in Swadlincote and planting wildflowers on the verges of several areas around the District has taken place.

We have continued to listen to and engage with our residents and businesses on this and all other aspects of our service delivery, not just at the regular Area Forum meetings but through consultation exercises and surveys, as well as on a daily basis via our increasingly popular social media platforms.

The Council is enormously proud of its many achievements in 2019/20, examples of which are provided on the pages that follow.

For many years, the District has been the fastest growing in Derbyshire and is, in fact, still one of the fastest growing areas in England.

This reflects the fact that it offers a high quality of life and is a place people want to live and work. Despite recent events, we are confident this will continue to be the case.



Frank McArdle
Chief Executive



Cllr Martyn Ford
Leader

The Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024

The Corporate Plan 2020-2024 sets out our values and vision for South Derbyshire and defines our priorities for delivering services.



It was adopted by Councillors in October 2019 and a new vision and values were also agreed.

We have identified our three key priorities as: Our Environment, Our People, Our Future. Our plan seeks to ensure that our District remains a great place to live, visit and invest.

This Annual Report demonstrates how work and activities under the Our Environment, Our People, Our Future themes contributed to that in 2019/20.

The Council's Vision

“ Our Vision is: To make South Derbyshire a great place to live, visit and invest. ”

The Council's Values

Together we will -

Take pride in our place

We will promote responsible behaviour and are committed to creating a more sustainable, cleaner, greener district.

Have respect for everyone

We will listen, be honest, open and act with integrity at all times.

Achieve excellence in all we do

We will take pride in our District, working in modern, fit for purpose ways and always striving for continuous improvement.



What the Council does . . .

Manages and maintains more than **3,000** Council homes and offers a homelessness prevention service to **those in need**.

Deals with planning applications, building regulations, tree preservation orders, listed buildings and heritage.

Manages the **Electoral Register** and organises elections.

Carries out **street cleaning, pest control** and work to prevent pollution.

Collects Council Tax and Business Rates, **pay** Housing Benefits.

Collects household waste and works to encourage recycling.

Promotes and develops economic growth, tourism, sport and leisure.

Employs Safer Neighbourhood Wardens to make communities cleaner and safer.

Deals with **licensing applications** and complaints including for taxis and alcohol.

Manages and maintains **parks and open spaces**.

Works with partners on a wide variety of **community projects**.

Supports voluntary groups, cultural activities and crime prevention work.

Works to ensure that the **food and drink** served in South Derbyshire's restaurants, cafes and pubs are safe to consume.

Provides a **24-hour, 365-days-a-year** emergency Careline service.

Our Environment

Keeping a clean, green District for future generations

Our first Climate and Environment Strategy was approved in January 2020 and our Travel Plan was adopted in late 2019, setting targets to reduce our fuel and travel.



In June 2019, South Derbyshire District Council declared a **Climate Emergency**. The Declaration means the Council will strive to make the District Council carbon neutral by 2030 and work with partners to make the District as a whole Carbon Neutral before the Government's target of 2050.

A new **electric vehicle charging point** at Swadlincote Bus Station car park on Civic Way supplied by the Council was installed. The Council successfully bid for the facility from a Government fund to help promote the uptake of electric vehicles.

South Derbyshire residents, schools, community groups and organisations were invited to apply for trees from the **Free Tree scheme**. More than 1,000 were handed out to help the District bloom and blossom in the heart of The National Forest.

The Council completed a consultation for a new Public Spaces Protection Order on Lowes Lane, Swarkestone to deal with **fly-tipping** and anti-social behaviour. The Order was approved in early 2020 and as a result a section of Lowes Lane has now been closed for access to unauthorised vehicles.

A **Biodiversity Working Group** was set up to create biodiversity opportunities. One of the first elements of its "Action Plan for Nature" for the District was running a wildflower planting pilot scheme on four large highway verges and on some Council owned land.

Church Gresley's Maurice Lea Memorial Park and Swadlincote's Eureka Park were awarded coveted **Green Flag Award** status for 2019/20. The scheme recognises and rewards well-managed parks and green spaces.

A new operator took over **Swadlincote market** and organised a fun day with fun and entertainment to mark the occasion.

46 per cent of waste collected by the Council was recycled or **composted**.

A week of activities was organised around **World Environment Day** including a Sustainable Travel day on the Delph in Swadlincote which gave people a chance to see bicycles and electric bicycles as well as electric vehicles.

New Council homes built in Overseal and handed over in 2019/20 have been constructed to high environmental standards to ensure they are **energy-efficient**, helping to keep tenants' energy bills down as well as creating a minimal carbon footprint.

Businesses and residents of Swadlincote were invited to grab a pair of gloves, don a hi-vis, pick up a picker and take part in a **World Clean-up Day** litter pick organised by The Town Team with the support of the Council.



The Council retained accreditation to International **Environmental Management System** (EMS) ISO 14001 which demonstrates that it has identified and assessed all the areas of its work which can have an impact on the environment and put in measures to address them.

The Environmental Education team at Rosliston Forestry Centre celebrated its 25th birthday and introduced Climate Change activities for all ages as part of a project commissioned by the Woodland Trust.

The Council reassured residents that all materials collected through its **recycling scheme**, apart from textiles, which go to the Salvation Army, are processed into new products here in the UK. None are exported. Plastics are turned into flakes and made into new bottles.



Our People

Working with communities and meeting the future needs of the District



A new multi-agency group to provide a joined-up approach to young people involved in **anti-social behaviour** (ASB) or crime was set up by the Council's ASB Officer. It involves schools, Police, Social Care, Derbyshire County Council Early Help Team and the Youth Offending Team.

Results of the **Survey of Tenants and Residents** (STAR) survey were published. They showed 89 per cent of the Council's tenants are satisfied with services provided, 87 per cent are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live and 87 per cent are satisfied with the value for money their rent provides.

During the year, the Council set up a service level agreement with SignLive, which provides online **video interpreting services** to give deaf customers full accessibility.

Over 250 people attended **Liberation Day** and could find out about everything from national campaign Strictly No Falling to local initiatives including learning a new skill and accessing a social driving scheme.

The Council became a member of the Hidden Disabilities **Sunflower Lanyard Scheme** to help staff recognise customers with a hidden disability and become confident to provide them with additional help or assistance.

Nominations were invited for a new set of awards designed to highlight unsung community and **sporting heroes** from across South Derbyshire. The South Derbyshire Awards are the result of combining the Active South Derbyshire Awards and the South Derbyshire Community Awards.

A new sculpture created to help promote cycling as a **healthy family activity** and to mark a range of cycling-related initiatives in South Derbyshire was launched at Green Bank Leisure Centre in Swadlincote.

South Derbyshire's fifth annual **Homeless Conference** took place, with over 40 delegates from different organisations attending. As well as sharing best practise, the event saw consultation with partner agencies about the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeper strategy.

Four new temporary **Better Care Fund** posts were created including an Occupational Therapist and a SAIL (Staying Active and Independent for Longer) Coordinator who helps elderly residents at risk of isolation and promote independent living through a scheme of physical activities.



The South Derbyshire Community Safety Partnership took "**Prison Me No Way**" sessions into the District's four secondary schools. These cover a variety of topics including knife crime, County Lines and ASB.

Work was done by the Council in 2019/20 to increase awareness of **Disabled Facilities Grants** (DFGs). Website content was revised, a publicity leaflet was produced, and a briefing note was sent to partnership meetings.

The Welfare Reform Group created by the Council to manage the rollout of Universal Credit has gone from strength to strength and now has 28 organisations as members. Actions in 2019/20 included running a **drop-in advice** and support session event in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions and the housing charity Trident Reach.



Our Future

Growing our District and our skills base



South Derbyshire District Council is one of the few councils to be building and acquiring **new Council housing** and delivered more new homes in 2019/20. Six two-bedroom semi-detached properties were built in Overseal and the Council took handover of seven new homes in Aston-on-Trent.

The Council granted planning permission for the remaining section of the **Woodville Regeneration Route**. The regeneration area will provide much-needed commercial space and 300 new homes, creating 3,100 jobs (plus construction jobs).

Through its membership of the East Midlands Enterprise Gateway Access to Work Group, the Council helped influence Midland Classic to revise a bus service linking Burton on Trent through South Derbyshire with East Midlands

Airport **improving access** to the huge numbers of jobs available from companies at the Airport and other locations along the route.

Having provided evidence of successes in encouraging young people to embrace STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths), the Council's Environmental Education Project was selected to receive one of only eight trees in the world grown from the pips from Isaac Newton's apple tree and which were blasted into space with British Astronaut Tim Peake.

The Council's independent South Derbyshire **Business Advice** Service offered advice and support to scores of existing businesses and those looking into establishing a business of their own.

The very latest card reader payment machines were installed at the Civic Offices in Swadlincote by the Council, making paying quick, easy and safe and bringing the Council in line with new regulations covering **updated security standards**.

In November 2019, the Council welcomed news that Derbyshire County Council was raising funds for a **new crossing** over the River Trent to replace Swarkestone Bridge, the regularly gridlocked causeway, to help boost the local economy and tourism in the District.

Young people attending this year's South Derbyshire Skills and Careers Event had a chance to try hands-on job-related skills across a huge range of careers. The event also gave them a chance to find out about **job opportunities** in the area and to meet local employers.

A **new community centre** at Stenson Fields was opened. The centre has two rooms available for hire, and is an ideal venue for holding exercise classes, meetings, exhibitions, fairs, seminars, training and private gatherings.

South Derbyshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP) launched its Partnership **Plan for 2020-2023**. This Plan highlights the priorities that have been identified as most important to focus on over the next three years - Anti-Social Behaviour, Protecting those Most at Risk and Organised Crime.



Business enthusiasts seeking a new challenge attended a Thinking of Starting a Business event in Hilton which focused on topics such as legal structures, tax, insurance, finding premises, marketing, skills to **support a new venture** and finance, including grants and loans to get started.

A free work club where residents can get friendly help and advice in all areas of **job hunting** became available on a drop-in basis at the Old Post Centre, Newhall and Oakland Village, Swadlincote.

A business breakfast at Toyota (UK)'s plant in South Derbyshire invited visitors to find out **how to recruit** and retain staff. Speakers included the Council's Health Partnership Manager who spoke about the importance of staff well-being and a business advice marketplace was set up.



Community engagement and consultation

The Council is keen to ensure that residents' views are taken into account when it makes decisions, and so provides various ways for people to make their views known.

During 2019/20 different consultations were carried out, to inform decision-making. Area Forums which take place in six areas four times a year also give people a chance to make their views known.

The Council's Facebook and Twitter accounts and its website are main ways in which residents now contact the Council and share their views on its work. By the end of 2019/20 the total number of Facebook fans was 22,440, Twitter followers numbered 11,448, and almost 300 queries had come in via social media.



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Your District Councillors



Aston-on-Trent



Church Gresley



Etwall



Hatton

Hilton



Linton



Melbourne



Midway



Newhall and Stanton



Repton



Seales



Stenson



Swadlincote



Willington & Findern



Woodville



Among the consultations that took place in 2019/20 were:



A ten-week 'Call for Sites' consultation inviting people to put forward potential sites for development started.



A six-week consultation on our Local Green Spaces Plan Modifications started.



Consultation was carried out for a new Public Spaces Protection Order on Lowes Lane, Swarkestone to deal with fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour.



The Community Safety Partnership ran a consultation event with all the statutory partners and representatives from the Voluntary and Community Sector to determine the priorities for the new Partnership Plan.



A eight-week consultation on the methodology for our Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) started.



An eight-week Parish Survey was carried out with Parish Councils asking what facilities were in their Parish started.

Open door approach

Tenants praised the approach taken by the Council in getting their views on new fire doors for sheltered accommodation schemes.

During September 2019, the Council's Housing Team and staff from the contractor organised get-togethers for all residents to get involved.

A coffee morning was organised at Pear Tree Court in Etwall to which residents were invited and given a chance to choose which doors they liked best and to ask questions.

At Coniston Court in Swadlincote a "pop-up" information session was set up in the car park; residents here had already had their own doors replaced in recent years, the ones to be changed under the 2019/20 programme were communal area and cupboard doors.

The Council and its contractor still thought it important to visit the scheme to let tenants know what would be happening.

No-one was left out – in the case of residents who are bedbound, the team arranged appointments to visit them and discuss the works being done.

During visits to tenants to explain why the Council is carrying out these fire safety improvements, those involved also explained the steps tenants can take themselves to stay safe within their homes.



Working in Partnership

Partnership working with other organisations allows the Council to achieve much more than it could on its own.



The Council works to strengthen existing partnerships, and to become part of new ones that will benefit the District and its residents.

New partnerships entered into during 2019/20 include Primary Authority Partnerships with three businesses – Berkeley Inns, Chilled Pubs and Olio.

A Primary Authority Partnership allows a business to form a legal partnership with a local authority in which the authority provides the business with assured, consistent regulatory advice to make it simpler and easier to comply with environmental health legislation.

Another new partnership saw the Council working with Nottingham City Council to review the carbon footprint of South Derbyshire District Council homes.

Other key partners the Council worked during the year include:

Active Nation

Active Nation manages the Green Bank Leisure Centre in Swadlincote and Etwall Leisure Centre in partnership with the Council.



Citizens Advice

citizens advice

South Derbyshire District Council helps to fund Citizens Advice so that it can continue providing vital support and advice on issues such as employment and debt.

Derbyshire County Council / Parish Councils

South Derbyshire District Council, Derbyshire County Council and Parish Councils work in conjunction on a vast array of projects designed to benefit local people.



DHOG - Derbyshire Homeless Officers

The Council is a member of this group which was successful in obtaining funding for rough sleeping/homelessness and as the year ended dealing with COVID homelessness issues together.



D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership

South Derbyshire District Council sit on the D2N2 Places and People and Skills Boards, which are made up of respected leaders from the area's businesses, skills and training providers, community and voluntary services organisations, and other local authorities to support a more prosperous and increasingly resilient and competitive economy.



Homefinder Partnership

South Derbyshire Homefinder is a partnership between the Council and various housing associations in the District which works to help people find an affordable home. During the year it reviewed its role and scope.



Law:Public



When required, Law: Public offers the Council's legal team additional expertise across its broad range of legal services.

South Derbyshire Community Safety Partnership



This statutory partnership which changed its name during the year brings together agencies to reduce and prevent incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour in the District.

South Derbyshire CVS

South Derbyshire CVS chairs the Strategic Volunteering Partnership, which is assisted by the District Council, to support all forms of volunteering in South Derbyshire.



South Derbyshire Skills & Employment Group



South Derbyshire District Council coordinates a partnership of educational institutions (schools, colleges and universities), businesses, providers, Derbyshire County Council and D2N2 to develop and implement solutions to bridging the skills gaps, address social mobility and open up opportunities that will enable individuals to achieve their potential, and raise aspirations across South Derbyshire.

Active South Derbyshire

Active South Derbyshire is the collaborative approach by a wide range of partners who support and work together to improve opportunities within physical activity, health, sport and recreational opportunities and facilities across the District.



Forestry England

South Derbyshire District Council jointly owns Rosliston Forestry Centre in partnership with Forestry England.



The National Forest Company

The National Forest Company is a co-sponsor with Rolls-Royce of the Environmental Education Project, which works to develop knowledge, respect and understanding of the environment. It also supports events and walking schemes.



South Derbyshire Active Schools Partnership

The partnership is managed by the Council's Active Communities and Health team. It has had great success with activities for young people including competitions and festivals, school games, leadership and volunteering and Bikeability.



The South Derbyshire Partnership



This partnership of the public, private and voluntary sectors promotes South Derbyshire through three groups which focus on community safety, sustainable development, health and wellbeing, and stronger communities.

Other partnerships the Council works in conjunction with include:

- Active Derbyshire
- People Express
- Public Health England
- Central Midlands Audit Partnership
- Local Energy Area Partnership
- Home Improvement Agency
- Derbyshire Traveller Issues Working Group
- Sport England
- The Football Foundation
- Sharpe's Pottery Heritage & Arts Trust Limited



Summary of accounts



The Council's income

The Council's total income for 2019/20 was £53.6m, an increase compared to 2018/19 when income totalled £52.6m.

This came from grants, housing rents, Business Rates and Council Tax, together with fees and charges.

£17.9m	Government grants
£0.4m	Other grants
£10.9m	Fees and charges
£0.5m	Interest
£11.8m	Housing rents
£12.1m	Local taxation
£53.6m	Total



The Council's expenditure

The Council's revenue account shows the cost of running our services. In 2019/20, the Council spent £47.8m on delivering services. This was more than the £46.6m spent in 2018/19 and reflects the continued growth of the District.

£14.1m	Housing Benefits
£10.9m	Housing Related Services
£7.5m	Support Services
£5.1m	Environmental & Regulatory Services
£4.4m	Cultural & Community Services
£3.9m	Planning & Development
£0.9m	Highways & Transport
£1.0m	Corporate & Democratic Core
£5.8m	Surplus

What the Council spent on land and property

The Council's capital account sets out the money spent on buying and improving land and property so the Council can offer first-class public facilities. In 2019/20, the Council spent £4.7 million on land and property assets. The Council financed this through a mixture of grants and contributions, together with investing its own capital receipts and reserves.

£0.8m	Property & Other Assets
£1.4m	Council House Improvements
£1.9m	Council House New Build
£0.4m	Private Sector Housing Renewal
£0.2m	Culture & Community Schemes
£0m	Environmental & Development Schemes
£4.7m	Expenditure

At the end of the financial year the Council draws up a balance sheet that shows how much land and buildings are worth, what the Council owes others, what others owe the Council, and how much cash the Council has.

Our net worth, as at March 31, was valued at £113.4m, a significant increase from £86.1m in 2018/19. This was due to an increase in the value of Council houses, together with the addition of land and property being held for future investment in services.



The Council's balance sheet: 31 March 2020

REVENUE RESERVES & BALANCES		NET ASSETS	
£20.9m	General balances	£159.2m	Value of land & property
£60.3m	Unusable reserves	£53.6m	Liquid assets
£15.9m	Capital reserves	-£99.4m	Less money owed by us
£16.3m	Earmarked reserves		
£113.4m Net worth		£113.4m total	

Statement from the Strategic Director (Corporate Resources)

The Accounts show that the Council once again achieved a budget surplus in 2019/20, mainly due to additional income from Business Rates and Council Tax. This reflects the on-going increase in new homes and business development in the District.

A proportion of this money has been saved and set-aside to pay for an anticipated increase in the services that the Council provides as the local population continues to grow. This includes money for bin collections, Parks and Open Spaces, and Housing, together with money for new capital projects.

The Council's level of Reserves continues to be healthy, with money set aside to spend on services and to act as a contingency should the financial position change. The Council's longer-term financial plan does forecast that some budget savings may be required in the future, and as the

financial year 2019/20 drew to a close, the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on the Council's finances were not known.

This has since started to have an impact and is being kept under review, with extra Government funding in 2020/21 likely to soften the impact. However, the longer-term position is uncertain as the Government intends to review how local councils are funded in the future.

In the meantime, the Council remains in a relatively strong financial position with opportunities to invest in services whilst maintaining a prudent position.

Kevin Stackhouse

Strategic Director (Corporate Resources), South Derbyshire District Council





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Pictures courtesy of: Berkeley Inns, Gary de Roeck, Sue Grief.

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This report can also be viewed on our website www.southderbyshire.gov.uk