



**BRENTWOOD**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

# BRENTWOOD ECONOMIC STRATEGY

2017 – 2020

A shared Vision and Framework to steer Brentwood Borough Council and partner organisations to deliver economic growth for the Borough



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BRENTWOOD

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## FOREWORD

Brentwood Borough offers the best of both worlds – excellent access to jobs and services through our transport connections on the edge of London, whilst never being far away from the picturesque surrounding countryside. Brentwood is a borough of villages with a unique character and links to Brentwood market town at its centre. It's no wonder that we are such an attractive place to live, work and visit.

Brentwood Borough Council is committed to enhancing our thriving local economy and reacting to a changing economic landscape. To help achieve these aims we have prepared this Economic Strategy for the Borough.

This strategy provides a framework to direct economic development and growth for Brentwood Borough and to bring economic benefits to businesses and residents, ultimately supporting an improved quality of life for those who live, work and do business in Brentwood.

It complements the objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan and the Draft Local Development Plan for economic prosperity.

In particular it will drive forward the objectives of business advice and development; skills and employability support; facilitate business workspace, infrastructure and inward investment; stronger and more vibrant town centres; the rural economy; place-promotion and support for the visitor economy.

A range of initiatives to deliver these priorities will be implemented where possible via shared delivery and working with other public, private and voluntary sector partners.

I commend this strategy to you and look forward to us driving forward the economic growth and prosperity of the Borough together.

Cllr Louise McKinlay  
Leader of Brentwood Borough Council



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Brentwood Economic Strategy sets out a shared vision and framework to direct both economic development and growth for the Borough, bringing economic benefits to businesses and residents.

It builds on the success of the December 2014 Brentwood Economic Development Strategy and a range of initiatives that have been delivered. It is strategically aligned to economic growth plans at national, regional and county level.

Brentwood is one of the higher performing local authorities in Greater Essex, with one of the lowest unemployment rates (3.2%) and a greater share of better qualified staff with higher level occupations (33% with NVQ4 – second highest in Essex).

Brentwood is located within the Heart of Essex sub-region (with Maldon district and Chelmsford), the fastest growing sub-region in Greater Essex (1% per annum). However, to aspire to be of the highest performing regions in the UK and maintain and enhance its economic position this needs to increase to 3% per annum.

The vision for Brentwood is to be a thriving, attractive and unique destination for people to live, work and visit by protecting and nurturing its existing high quality environment, growing its prosperous economy and fostering sustainable development which is responsive to local community needs.

The key economic Aims of the vision are to:

- A1. Promote a mixed economic base and a discerning and sustainable approach to economic growth;
- A2. Encourage high value, diverse, employment uses that will provide a significant number of skilled and high quality jobs;
- A3. Encourage better utilisation, upgrading and redevelopment of existing land and buildings; and
- A4. Enable the growth of existing business, the creation of new enterprises and encourage inward investment.

The Priorities to enable these aims are to:

- P1. Support business development and growth;
- P2. Facilitate and deliver skills and employability support;
- P3. Facilitate and encourage business workspace, infrastructure and inward investment;
- P4. Facilitate and support stronger and more vibrant town & village centres;
- P5. Develop and support the Borough's rural economy; and
- P6. Promote Brentwood Borough as a place to visit and invest, encouraging the visitor economy.

An annual Economic Development Work Plan will be produced outlining the key initiatives to drive forward the Strategy and address its aims and priorities. Progress towards these will be evaluated annually with success measured against target outputs and outcomes set for each initiative. Delivery of the Strategy will require strong partnership working with shared delivery where possible to achieve a comprehensive approach, economies of scale and to minimise impact on both staff resources and the Council's budget. The Strategy will be reviewed every three years or when appropriate due to changing external factors that require this.

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# BACKGROUND

This strategy builds on the existing Brentwood Economic Development Strategy (December 2014) and a range of successful economic development initiatives that have been delivered by Brentwood Borough Council over the last two years.

These initiatives have included:

- A range of business support projects such as the first ever Brentwood Business Showcase;
- A series of business taster workshops;
- Business speed-networking event;
- Development and use of business directory;
- Business support and advice campaigns;
- Business newsletter;
- Apprenticeship wage subsidy programme;
- Opportunity Brentwood (careers event);

- Development of Discover Brentwood website as a place-making and business information tool;
- Growth and development of the Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group;
- Support for the retail sector
- A range of town centre events and public realm improvements;
- Re-engaging with the Brentwood for Growth business group;
- Incubation hub feasibility study;
- Successful EU LEADER rural funding;
- Sponsorship for business events;
- Low carbon grant funding; and
- Three Economic Development graduate internships funded by University of Essex.



# ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The Brentwood Economic Strategy is aligned to a number of national, regional and local strategies including:

## **Building Our Industrial Strategy - Green Paper**

**(January 2017)**

HM Government Green Paper, “Building our Industrial Strategy” aims to improve living standards and economic growth by increasing productivity and driving growth across the whole country. It sets out three challenges including building on our strengths and extending excellence particularly within the education and research sector; closing the gaps between our best performing companies, industries, places and people and those which are less productive; and making the UK one of the most competitive places in the world to start or grow a business.

There are ten pillars to drive forward the industrial strategy including:

1. Investing in science, research and innovation
2. Developing skills
3. Upgrading infrastructure
4. Supporting businesses to start and grow
5. Improving procurement
6. Encouraging trade and inward investment
7. Delivering affordable energy and clean growth
8. Cultivating world-leading sectors
9. Driving growth across the whole country
10. Creating the right institutions to bring together sectors and places

The key focus is to address the productivity gap with other leading countries in order to get sustainably higher wages and increased Gross Domestic Product (GDP). To do this the productivity gap between different parts of the UK need to be reduced.

## **South East Local Enterprise Partnership**

The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) was created in April 2011 to provide vision and strategic leadership to drive sustainable private sector-led growth and job creation in South East England. The Partnership includes public and private sector organisations and is responsible for managing the Local Growth Fund and European Union Structural and Investment Funds. The SELEP Strategic Economic Plan sets out the economic growth ambition and investment priorities for the area.

## **Economic Plan for Essex**

**(April 2014)**

The Economic Plan for Essex (EPfE) provides Essex County Council’s input to the SELEP Strategic Economic Plan. It articulates the challenges facing the Essex economy and the issues that need to be addressed to secure sustainable growth which include: improving skills across the Essex workforce; delivering a pipeline of infrastructure projects; enhancing productivity and key sectoral support.

# Vision for Brentwood 2016-2019

(November 2015)

Brentwood Borough Council's Vision for Brentwood document forms the Council's Corporate Plan with objectives split by key themes up to 2019. Economic Development is one of the plan's five key priorities, aiming to drive forward the agenda by:

- Supporting economic growth and sustainable development;
- Utilising Council assets to enable this;
- Working in partnership to promote Essex for shared economic gain;
- Promoting a mixed economy, maximising retail and commercial opportunities; and
- Developing the conditions for job creation and helping people get back to work.

# Brentwood Local Development Plan

2013-2033

The Council's emerging Local Development Plan (LDP) will set objectives and planning policies to shape future development in the Borough, including locations for new homes and jobs as well as transport and infrastructure provision. The latest consultation version, Draft Local Plan (January 2016), sets out a range of strategic objectives. Those focused on achieving economic prosperity are to:

- Foster a prosperous, vibrant and diverse local economy by attracting new commercial investment in order to maintain high and stable levels of economic and employment growth;
- Expand and enhance Brentwood Town Centre's retail offer in particular opportunities for high quality niche shopping;

- Promote and encourage the continued success of Brentwood Town Centre and local centres to provide a high quality public realm and mixed use developments
- Optimise the social and economic benefits that arise from Crossrail for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors to the Borough; and
- Promote and support a prosperous rural economy.

Proposals allocate over 94 hectares of employment land in the borough. From this just over 46 hectares is currently allocated, over 15 hectares is existing employment land but not previously allocated, and just under 33 hectares is new allocations. This has the potential to create approximately 5,000 jobs.

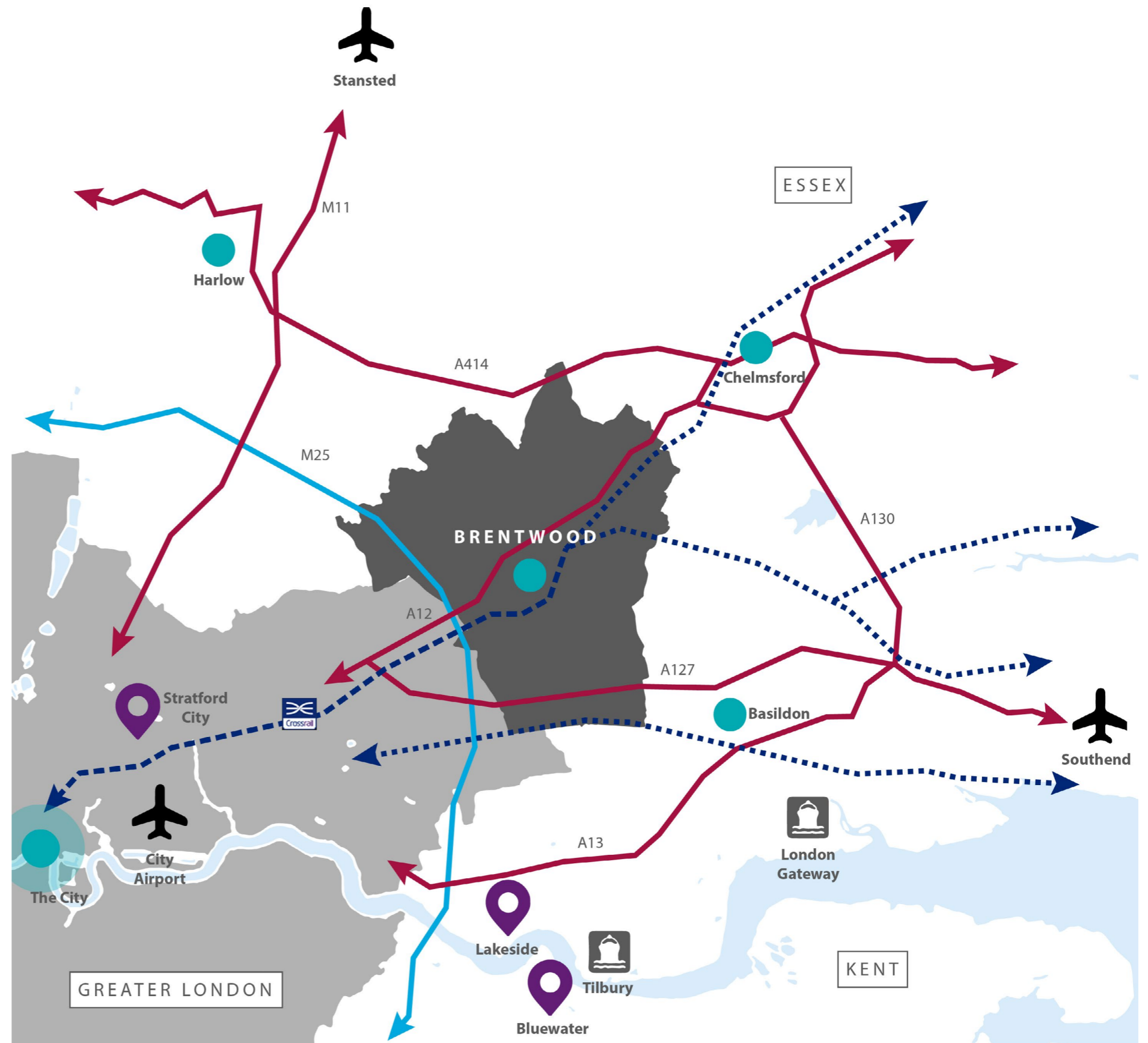


# BRENTWOOD ECONOMY

Brentwood Borough is situated in South West Essex, immediately east of Greater London and entirely within the Metropolitan Green Belt. Brentwood is a pleasant, busy market town with close proximity to both London and surrounding countryside. Rail and road links include the M25, A12 and A127, Crossrail and fast rail links into London and Stansted, City, Southend, Gatwick and Heathrow airports.

The Borough has a unique local character – a borough of villages all connecting to Brentwood market town at its heart. Within the Brentwood urban area are a range of local centres, such as Brentwood Town Centre and Shenfield District Centre. Villages with a rail station include Ingatestone to the north-east of Brentwood and West Horndon in the south of the borough.

The Borough's population is 76,100 (Census 2011), 70% of which live in the Brentwood urban area. It is a relatively affluent borough with residents able to enjoy a high quality environment, good accessibility to shops and services and job opportunities in London.



The majority of service sector business and employment is located in Brentwood Town Centre, with other business clusters nearby around Brentwood Station and Warley Business Park. Major employers include Ford Motor Company, BT, IFDS, Countryside Properties, Liverpool Victoria, Canon and McColls. The Borough has a strong predominance of businesses in the professional, scientific, technical and construction sectors (31%) as well as business administration and support services and ICT (16%) and retail (9%). More than half of total employment (39,300 jobs 2014) is provided by small businesses of up to 49 employees.

Brentwood is one of the higher performing Local Authorities in Greater Essex, with one of the lowest unemployment rates (3.2%) and a greater share of better qualified staff with higher level occupations (33% with NVQ4 – second highest in Essex).

Brentwood is located within the Heart of Essex sub-region (with Maldon district and Chelmsford); the fastest growing sub-region in Greater Essex (1% per annum). However, to aspire to be one of the

highest performing regions in the UK and maintain and enhance its economic position this needs to increase to 3% per annum. To enable this there is a need to:

- Further improve the economic productivity of the area (and Gross Value Added (GVA)) and strive for innovation and excellence;
- Focus on the Borough's high value added sectors including ICT, professional, scientific and technical services, financial services as well as the larger employers and businesses;
- Increase the number of business start-ups and improve their survival rates (currently the one year survival rate for Brentwood is the lowest in Essex - 89% survived one year and 39% at least 5 years compared to national figures of 90.8% and 41.7% respectively);
- Provide start-up and grow-on business workspace of good quality;
- Increase the number of apprenticeships (Brentwood has the lowest share in Essex – 0.59% of the population);

- Improve strategic transport infrastructure to support the economy – A12, A127, M25, Lower Thames Crossing, Crossrail stations and surrounding public realm;
- Attract inward investment and new businesses to the Borough and increase the number of local job opportunities (38,500 jobs in 2011), reducing the reliance on out-commuting (currently 55% of residents) and improve sustainability; and
- Increase the number of commercial premises in Brentwood Borough with access to superfast broadband (currently 65% compared to 76% in Essex and 83% for the UK).





## VISION

That Brentwood Borough will continue to be a thriving, attractive and unique destination for people to live, work and visit by protecting and nurturing its existing high quality environment, growing its prosperous economy and fostering sustainable development which is responsive to local community needs.

## AIMS

- A1. Promote a mixed economic base and a discerning and sustainable approach to economic growth;**
- A2. Encourage high value, diverse employment uses that will provide a significant number of skilled and high quality jobs;**
- A3. Encourage better utilisation, upgrading and redevelopment of existing land and buildings; and**
- A4. Enable the growth of existing business, the creation of new enterprises and encourage inward investment.**

# PRIORITIES

- P1. Enable and support business development and growth;
- P2. Facilitate and deliver skills and employability support;
- P3. Facilitate and encourage business workspace, infrastructure and inward investment;
- P4. Facilitate and support stronger and more vibrant town and village centres;
- P5. Develop and support the Borough's rural economy; and
- P6. Promote Brentwood Borough as a place to visit and invest, encouraging the visitor economy.

• Moores Place → •

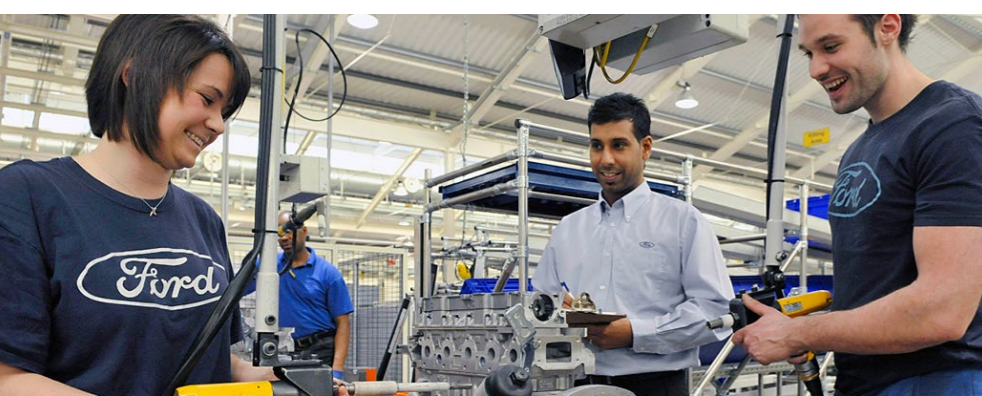
Quest Printing  
Début Beauty & Tanning  
Café A'Moore  
Blondes Hair Salon  
Angle's Café Pie & Mash

## Priority 1: Business development, growth & networking

Brentwood Borough Council will work with partners to develop a local enterprise culture and increased productivity, supporting local businesses and seeking to engender a sense of civic pride amongst the business community.

### Future Interventions

1. Deliver a range of business support, networking and advice initiatives including an annual Brentwood Business Showcase and a programme of free business advice workshops and training sessions;
2. Promote and broker the current range of partner business support initiatives, for example BEST Growth Hub business advice, Brentwood Chamber of Commerce events, LoCASE low carbon grants;
3. Develop initiatives to support start-up businesses and their longevity;
4. Manage and maintain the Brentwood Business Directory and a range of online business campaigns;
5. Produce and promote the Brentwood Business News;
6. To secure sponsorship from the private sector for key initiatives; and
7. Promote the business support available and the Economic Development Strategy at partner and business events.



## Priority 2: Skills and employability support

Brentwood Borough Council will work with partners on key initiatives to strengthen the skills base of the Borough and support local businesses by encouraging a highly qualified work force, brokering job opportunities with business demand.

### Future Interventions

1. Identify and maximise benefits of any County-led skills initiatives for Brentwood, e.g. Enterprise Advisor scheme, Apprenticeship Brokerage project, recruitment events and sector specific initiatives such as STEM;
2. Facilitate partnership working between local businesses, schools and training providers to identify and address skills gaps and broker job opportunities, e.g. Opportunity Brentwood;
3. Work with Essex County Council and training providers to deliver initiatives that enable businesses to support apprenticeship opportunities e.g. Brentwood Borough Council wage subsidy scheme;
4. Work with the University of Essex and Anglia Ruskin University to accommodate graduate internships and investigate the potential of knowledge transfer partnership opportunities for local businesses; and
5. Support people with mental health issues to enable them to gain employment, for example apprenticeship subsidy for third sector partners, e.g. Brentwood Community Print, Fitness in Mind.

## Priority 3: Business Workspace, inward investment and infrastructure

Brentwood Borough Council will work in partnership to secure economic growth and investment in the Borough; facilitate the right conditions to attract and assist businesses in growth sectors; support economic diversification and identify and promote sufficient employment land and premises to accommodate growth and enable comprehensive infrastructure such as Superfast Broadband and road and rail connections.

### Future Interventions

1. Work with Invest Essex, UK Trade and Investment and agents to develop and promote the existing and planned commercial site portfolio;
2. Support and promote infrastructure improvements such as key roads (A12 and A127); M25 improvements and the Lower Thames Crossing project; and Crossrail – enabling local businesses to maximise benefits of greater linkages, access to suppliers and wider markets, and to encourage new investors to locate to the Borough;
3. Work with developers of new employment sites including Brentwood Enterprise Park to ensure a comprehensive socio-economic package of benefits from the developments and quality added value business inward investment;
4. Work with partners to research and facilitate options for business incubation space within the borough; and
5. To support and enable the provision and take-up of Superfast Broadband by Brentwood businesses.

## Priority 4: Stronger and more vibrant town and village centres

Brentwood Borough Council will promote a mixed economy in the Borough's town and village centres to meet the needs of those who live, work, shop and spend leisure time there. We will work with business partners to improve the vibrancy of our centres and support place-promotion.

### Future Interventions

1. Work with public and private sector partners to support redevelopment opportunities in Brentwood Town Centre and create a distinctive offer with a high quality shopping environment, 'niche' independent shops and a variety of leisure and evening entertainment;
2. Support business engagement and consultation when planning for development in our town and village centres;
3. Facilitate and support the Brentwood Borough Renaissance Group to develop, grow and promote the offer in the Borough's centres including public realm initiatives and promotional events;
4. Broker business support and advice to town centre businesses, supporting their growth and increased productivity;

5. Facilitate further development of the active business trade clusters in town and village centres and stimulate their support and ownership of improvement schemes and promotional activities;
6. Develop initiatives to support the markets, digital and healthy high streets agendas; and
7. Secure sponsorship from the private sector for key initiatives.





## Priority 5: Support for the Rural Economy

Brentwood Borough Council will work with partners and local rural businesses to support diversification, redevelopment of redundant buildings and initiatives to support the sustainable development of the rural economy.

### Future Interventions

1. Continue to promote the Essex Rivers LAG LEADER European Grant Programme to businesses, encouraging them to make applications to support diversification, job creation and increased productivity;
2. Promote the range of business support and advice initiatives to encourage rural businesses start-ups and growth;
3. Promote enabling infrastructure such as Superfast Broadband, encouraging businesses to subscribe;
4. Maintain a watching brief on future funding opportunities and work in partnership to secure these; and
5. Work with the Council's Community Services Team to support rural business services such as pubs, post offices and village shops.

## Priority 6: Place-promotion and support for the visitor economy

Brentwood Borough Council will promote Brentwood as a great place to live, visit and do business in order to attract increased spend (currently £160m) and investment into the Borough.

### Future Interventions

1. Work with partners and businesses to promote the new Discover Brentwood website as a key tool for highlighting the Brentwood offer to both businesses and visitors;
2. Work with businesses and partners to improve the range and quality of the visitor offer to ensure a first class welcome and experience – improving identified gateways into the Borough and Town Centre to deliver this;
3. Facilitate opportunities to increase the level and quality of visitor accommodation;
4. Build on and maximise the TOWIE effect and widen the Brentwood brand, making Brentwood a key destination to visit and stay;
5. Maximise our benefits of membership with Visit Essex, the County Destination Management organisation; and
6. Promote the visitor economy and maximise public relation opportunities to develop and promote cultural events and initiatives.

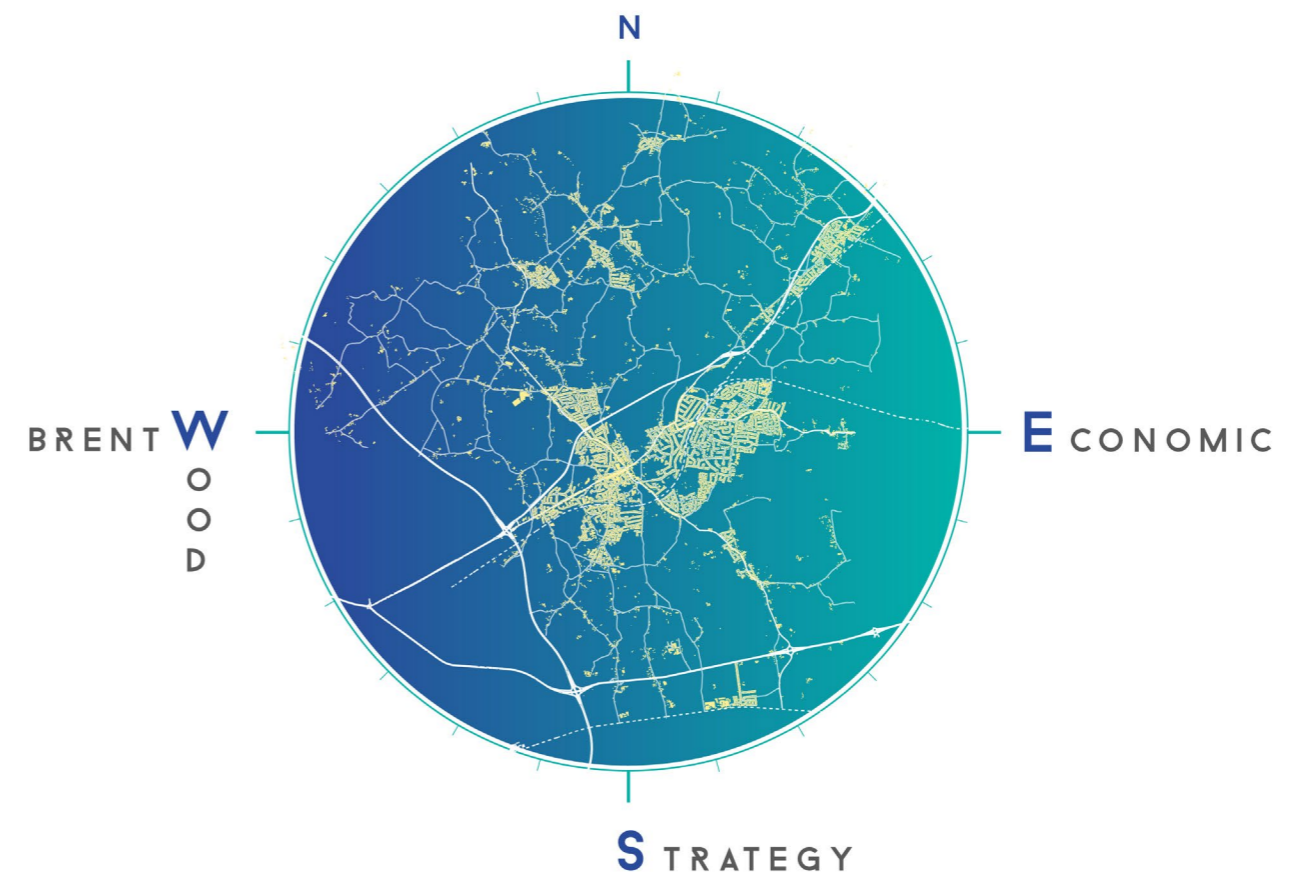
# DELIVERY & REVIEW

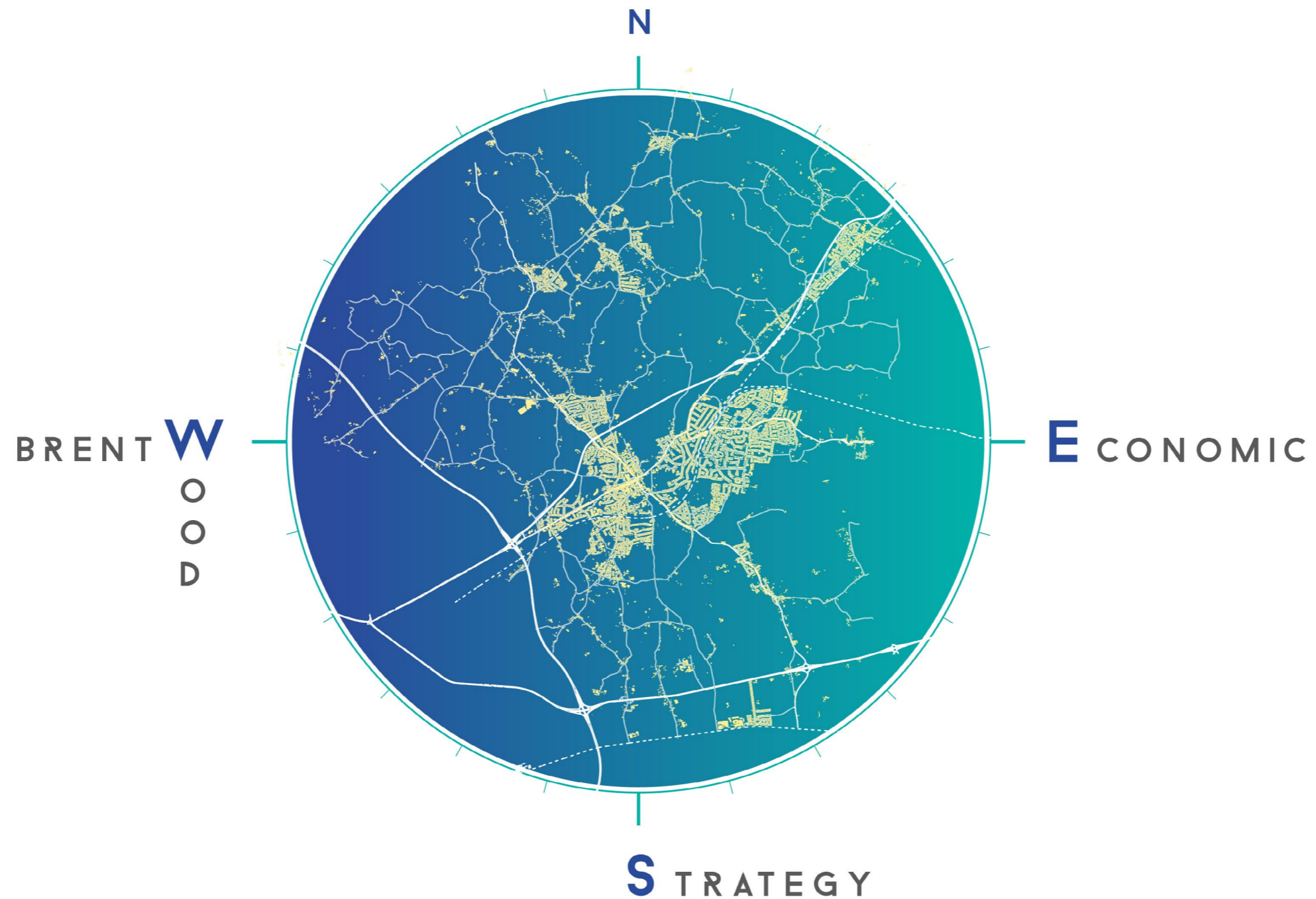
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**websites**     [www.brentwood.co.uk](http://www.brentwood.co.uk)  
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