

Otterpool Park

A new garden town in the Folkestone & Hythe district



Introduction

In 2017 we produced a Charter for Otterpool Park that set out in more detail our aspirations for the new garden town. The document built on the high level principles set out in the Expression of Interest submitted to Government in June 2016 and the Sustainability Wheel. The Charter focused on creating a place that is truly sustainable; as the plans for Otterpool Park develop these principles continue to guide our vision and are reflected in our council ambitions below.

We have a clear picture of what we want Otterpool Park to deliver.

A sustainable new garden town

Sustainable development is about maximising the environmental, social and economic benefits that development can bring, enhancing the environment, building strong communities and providing jobs; not trading one benefit against another but building in a way that delivers gains across all three and enables us to invest in communities across the district.





Enhancing the environment

A real garden town

The garden town will provide a minimum of 50% green space reflecting existing landscape features and providing three new distinctive destination parks, giving public access to a diverse natural environment. Allotments and orchards will be provided for people to grow their own food, and neighbourhoods will have easy access to playing pitches and play areas.

Creating habitats for wildlife, providing food and adapting to a changing climate

The town will be designed to provide new habitat corridors so that wildlife can move between the town and the wider countryside. The government is introducing a requirement for new development to improve biodiversity by 10% - Otterpool Park will go beyond this and deliver gains of at least 20% across the lifetime of the development. Green spaces, ponds and watercourses can also be used to provide shade, reduce flooding from storms and filter waste water, using natural processes.

Promoting walking, cycling and public transport

Walking, cycling and public transport will be at the heart of the new town, using new technologies to help people plan their journeys and order and share rides. Westenhanger Station will be enhanced to become a new transport hub where travellers can easily switch between the train and buses, bikes or taxis to get to their destinations quickly.

Reducing our environmental impact

Otterpool Park will be designed to deliver the overall ambition of a low-car and low-carbon destination by developing an integrated approach to energy, water, travel and digital planning. New buildings will be designed to minimise energy use and be carbon neutral wherever possible.

Creating strong and healthy communities

Giving residents a voice in how their town is run

The original garden towns gave residents a strong voice in how their neighbourhoods were run and this continues today, more than a century after they were founded. Otterpool Park will be developed and managed in perpetuity with the direct involvement of its residents and businesses; residents will be directly engaged in long-term management and stewardship, fostering a shared sense of ownership and identity.

Preserving cultural heritage and inspiring the new

Westenhanger Castle will be a focal point within a restored parkland and garden setting. This rich cultural heritage will inspire new contemporary design, which in turn will enhance that heritage. Development will be shaped by design codes, which will set out rules about how the town's neighbourhoods, streets, squares and buildings will be laid out.

A diverse range of housing types and tenures

Otterpool Park will deliver up to 10,000 homes across a range of housing densities, types and tenures to provide the right mix of homes for people at all stages of life and for all budgets, including more than 2,200 affordable homes. Plots will also be provided for people who want to build their own homes (known as self-build or custom-build), either working on their own projects or as part of a group with other self-builders to build their own neighbourhoods.

Innovative Approaches to Delivery

A new medical centre, drawing on the best examples from elsewhere and the latest digital technologies, will provide a 'one-stop shop', including GPs and primary care treatment during the early stages of the town's development, to pioneer new models of care and reduce pressure on hospitals.



Creating jobs and building new businesses

Diverse Employment Opportunities

Otterpool Park will help to grow businesses, both existing and new; an Innovation Centre will be built early on in the town's development, and easy access to London and Europe through High Speed rail links will help businesses access professional services and new markets. Building the garden town also offers opportunities to start new businesses in energy efficient construction and renewable technologies, and for young people to train in the new skills that our economy needs.

New town and neighbourhood centres

While the future of many of our traditional high streets is uncertain, people will still want to meet, exchange ideas, shop, relax and have a meal. New town and neighbourhood centres will be created that will provide flexibility for people to set up shops, cafes, workshops or office spaces on a temporary or longer-term basis, to share space and try out new business ideas.

Secure a digital town of the future

Otterpool Park will support advanced digital technologies, including the emergence of 5G and the IoT (Internet of Things); ultra-fast fibre optic broadband will be expanded to the premises at Otterpool Park to improve connections for new residents and immediate neighbouring communities where there are problems with broadband speeds and connectivity.

