

Date of meeting: 31 January 2019	AGENDA ITEM NO: 9
Report title: Bicester Garden Town Report	
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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Whilst all the work in Bicester relates to creating a whole place approach this report covers areas of work specifically under the Government's Garden Town Programme.

2. Background

- 2.1 In 2015 Bicester was announced as a Garden Town and has received government support to deliver the plans for the town. This is the latest report to provide an update on the work that is undertaken specifically under the Garden Town Programme.

3. Projects

- 3.1 The project report later on the agenda sets out the projects that are on going in the town. This report is highlighting new areas of work that have commenced or are about to commence.
- 3.2 Community Development at Graven Hill – A survey of new residents and residents who have plots at the site has been undertaken to understand the support residents would like to grow thier community. This has enabled some early activities to be identified to support the growing community. A connecting communities event is planned for this year to further engage the community and discussions about the use of a property, by the community, until a permanent community hall is built are taking place. Successful communities are important in creating an attractive places where people will choose to live and invest.
- 3.3 Burnehyll Community Woodland - Land south of Vendee Drive is identified for a community woodland. The transfer of the land was secured through the S106 for the second phase of the Kingsmere development. Transfer of the land is linked to construction on the development. The transfer of the land is planned for September 2019 and a working group has been formed with representatives of the BTC, OCC, Chesterton PC and a local representation. Work is taking place to prepare for the transfer of the site with work on design, implementation and long term management. A geophysical archaeological survey is being carried out to investigate whether there is archaeology on the site that needs to be protected and taken into account in the

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development of the site. A local 'Friends' group is being established to support the development and maintenance of the area. This site will provide a significant new area of green space for the benefit of residents. Access to greenspace has benefits for health and wellbeing, provides opportunities for bio diversity gain and has been shown to increase values and attractiveness of developments nearby.

- 3.4 Celebrating Bicester's Heritage - A bid was made for Heritage Lottery funding that was unsuccessful. Work is now being undertaken with partners to identify areas of work that can be taken forward. The focus is on developing a town trail to help both residents and visitors to appreciate the heritage of the town and bring more people into the town centre. Alongside this opportunities to record memories of the town from older residents are being explored. Bicester's heritage is a unique asset and provides an identity for the town. Promoting visits to the town centre and encouraging people to stay longer provides opportunities for high street businesses.

4.0 Funding

- 4.1 A further round of capacity funding for 18/19 was announced and a bid has been made for further support to cover work to support the delivery of the growth of Bicester. The outcome of this bid is anticipated shortly. It is therefore anticipated that a programme will be brought to the next meeting of the Board for review of the next phase of work.

5.0 Knowledge Transfer

- 5.1 MHCLG has been supporting a forum for the Garden Towns and Villages in their programme. An event was held on the 4th December at Ebbsfleet to share learning between the sites. This provided an informative session with good examples of work for example on green infrastructure and design and information for example on school delivery. The Bicester Team were able to share lessons from the Healthy Town work on the built environment with other sites.
- 5.2 A visit has also been hosted in Bicester of a group working on the Eynsham Garden Village to share lessons from the work in Bicester.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Board is asked to note the report