

Thurston Neighbourhood Plan Review

Vision for Thurston 2044

Thurston is a place which reflects how its residents want to live their lives where people can access facilities to meet their daily needs without having to travel outside the village. Thurston is a place that sustains the vitality, health and wellbeing of the community and permits young people, families, disabled, elderly and infirm residents the opportunity to remain part of it.

A fully self-contained centre with its own rural catchment supported by well-planned, high quality housing, business, health, education and recreation provision. Infrastructure has been improved and future growth is planned to ensure a safe and sustainable community.

New development is physically and socially integrated into the existing fabric of Thurston, is sympathetically designed, of high quality, and linked to the village by safe roads, cycle routes and footpaths, strengthening the appeal and cohesion of the village and the quality of life for its residents.

Housing:

High quality and sympathetically designed housing development has addressed the needs of the local community through a mix of new housing. New starter homes, family homes, affordable, self-build housing, and bungalows have been built, enabling young families to find affordable housing locally and older people to down-size, freeing up larger family properties for local families as their needs grow allowing people to move homes within the village throughout their lives and maintaining Thurston a popular place in which to live.

Community Infrastructure:

The growth of Thurston has enabled improvements to education and health provision. The primary school is on a new, larger site. The health centre includes GP and dental services, pharmacy and social care support which are well-used and greatly appreciated.

Thurston village retains a good range of shops and services; new retail outlets, including eating-places and shops selling everyday items are located within existing buildings and on a new development on the site of The Granary by the Railway Station.

New sports and leisure facilities and a skate park have been provided as a consequence of new development and these provide a wide range of activities popular with children and young people: teenagers no longer say, "There's nothing to do in Thurston."

Residents have access to community facilities including a central community hub, library, and a variety of local clubs.

Business and Employment:

New small-scale commercial units have helped to nurture a thriving small business community. New businesses, many of which provide local services of value to the community, have steadily sprung up and prospered; and Thurston is seen as a place where small and medium-sized companies can 'do business.'

Movement:

The asset of the railway station and the village's proximity to Bury St Edmunds has helped to nurture social and economic progress. Access to the railway station is safe and convenient facilitating public transport access to and from the village.

Improvements to pedestrian and cycle routes have increased levels of walking and cycling in the village and parking is no longer a significant issue for the station. Improvements have been made to key road junctions and pinch points around the village and measures have been implemented to deter speeding traffic.

Environment:

The health and wellbeing of all residents has been enhanced through the retention of central open spaces and improved access to the wider countryside. The village has retained its 'rural green village' feel with a network of high quality green spaces, trees hedgerows and ponds managed to encourage wildlife knitted together by connecting cycleways/ pathways.

The best of Thurston's historical buildings and spaces of value to the community, along with the surrounding countryside, have been protected and enhanced, recognising they are an important part of what makes Thurston a special place in which to live.

Objectives

Overarching Sustainability Objective: To develop and sustain Thurston as a fully self-contained service centre by ensuring any future development is sustainable and supports a range of employment, services and housing.

Housing:

H1: To ensure that the design of new housing reflects and respects the distinctive identity and rural character of Thurston.

H2: To meet the specific housing needs of younger and older people

Community Infrastructure:

I1: To ensure adequate provision of physical, community, retail, education, medical and leisure infrastructure to support the needs of existing and future populations.

I2: To encourage the provision of formal and informal sports, recreation and leisure facilities in the village which are accessible and available to a wide range of users both living and working in the area.

I3: To ensure that the necessary infrastructure required to support sustainable growth is provided.

Movement:

M1: To ensure the road and rail infrastructure serving Thurston is safe and meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

M2: To maximise sustainable modes of transport and emphasise the health and well-being benefits of walking and cycling.

M3: To ensure that new development adequately mitigates its impacts on traffic congestion and the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.

Environment

E1: To protect and enhance the rural village character, its natural and historic environment and wider landscape countryside setting

E2: To protect the village's important existing green spaces

E3: To enhance the village's natural environment and green spaces for the benefit of wildlife and minimise the impacts of light pollution from new development.