

A photograph of a person carrying a child on their shoulders, silhouetted against a bright, hazy sunset sky. They are standing in a field of tall, golden grasses that are blowing in the wind. The overall mood is warm and hopeful.

The Castle Point Challenge Our Corporate Plan



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Introduction

I am pleased to introduce Castle Point Borough Council's new Corporate Plan, the first with our new Administration at the helm.

Our 2024 Corporate Peer Challenge highlighted the good work which has been undertaken in recent years but also identified areas for improvement. We are committed to restoring our Council to full health and providing the best possible services for our residents.

Castle Point is changing. This Corporate Plan outlines our key aims and priorities and tells you about the work we will undertake to achieve them.

Above all, our focus will always remain on doing the very best for our residents and our Borough.

As an Administration we are committed to being open, listening to our residents, and giving you every opportunity to engage and get involved with our work.

We have increased our commitment to communicating with our residents and running consultations to ensure the people who matter most – you – have every opportunity to have your voices heard.

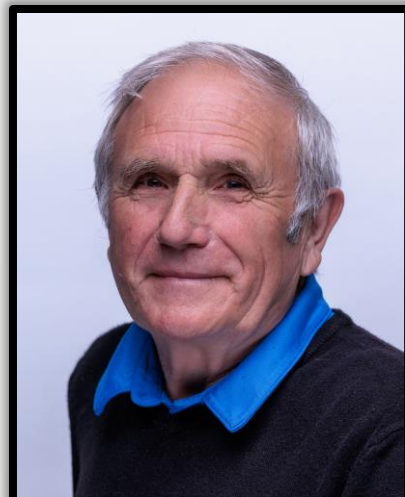
I hope you will read through our new Corporate Plan and, as we deliver on our promises and priorities over the coming years, stay involved and in touch with our Council and our work.

We stood for election on promises to represent you and what is important to you, and that remains our priority.

You can read more about our goals overleaf.

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**Cllr Dave
Blackwell, Leader**



**Cllr Warren
Gibson, Deputy
Leader**



The Administration's goals

We focus on the Council and the community we serve. That means our goals are both internal, restoring the Council to good health, and external, making the Borough a great place to live in, work in and visit



- Well-maintained parks and open spaces
- Good quality Council housing
- Satisfied customers
- Overall satisfaction with the Borough
- Strong sense of local community
- Feeling safe, especially after dark
- Affordable homes
- Supporting local businesses

Our context

84% of 16–64-year-olds in employment (compared to 75.5% Essex average).

55.9% of land in Castle Point is classified as **Green Belt**.

There is a six-year difference in healthy life expectancy between the most & least affluent areas of our Borough.

Only 42% of residents felt “fairly safe” or “very safe” after dark – despite actual low levels of recorded crime.

By 2044 Castle Point will be home to nearly **100,000** residents.

High levels of out-commuting impact on and are influenced by the quality of local employment opportunities.

30% of residents hold an RFQ4 qualification and above – compared to 40% Essex average.

Our two leisure centres, Waterside Farm and Runnymede, have a combined membership of nearly 14,000 users as well as numerous sports clubs and teams.

The number of net new homes fell from 200 in 2022/23 to minus 53 in 2023/24 – the impact of the removal of large numbers of mobile homes offset the new dwellings built.

The population of the Borough is ageing. A quarter (25.5%) of the population in Castle Point are aged 65 and above.

Over 80% of homes are owned outright or with a mortgage / loan / shared ownership.

There are 306 unique open spaces sites in the Borough with 109 assessed as **Good** or **Excellent** quality.

3,900 **self-employed workers** in 2024 - projected to grow to **4,700 by 2044**, reflecting the continuing trend towards entrepreneurship, freelancing, and the gig economy roles.

Our Council - working in partnership

Our council has changed beyond recognition in the last two years, and we continue to review, modernise and improve the services we provide, and the way we work.

Local residents receive public services from Castle Point Borough Council, Essex County Council, Essex Police and Fire and the NHS. It's important we all work together across organisations, putting residents' interests first.

We don't just work with public sector partners however, we work with anyone in the Borough with a commitment to the place, whether that's businesses, charities or local individuals.

We provide the local services that our communities rely on, including collecting and emptying the bins, housing, local planning and leisure. The County Council provide county-wide services, including schools, roads and children's and adult social care.



Our values

We are driven by our organisational values and behaviours, which underpin everything we do:

Value / Behaviour	What it means to us
Trust	Our customers, members and colleagues have confidence that we will do what we say
Respect	We create trusted and enduring relationships with our customers, colleagues and communities
Improving & Learning	We are continuously learning and innovating as we strive to improve our services to meet the needs of our customers
Customer Focus	We are service-delivery focused and put the customer at the centre of what we do

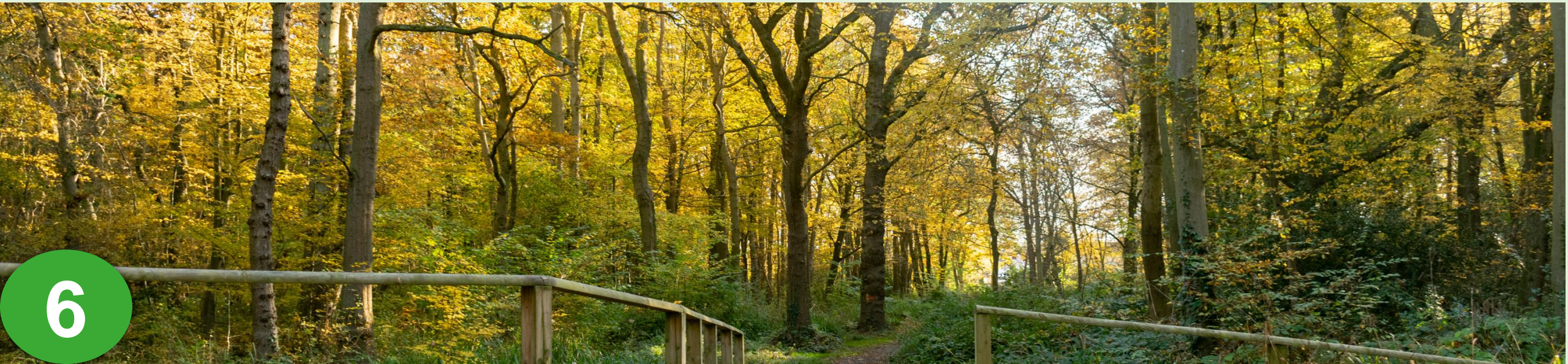
Our organisational plans

This document is our Corporate Plan for 2025-2028. The plan sets out the priorities for the Council and the outcomes we want to achieve for people who live and work in Castle Point Borough.

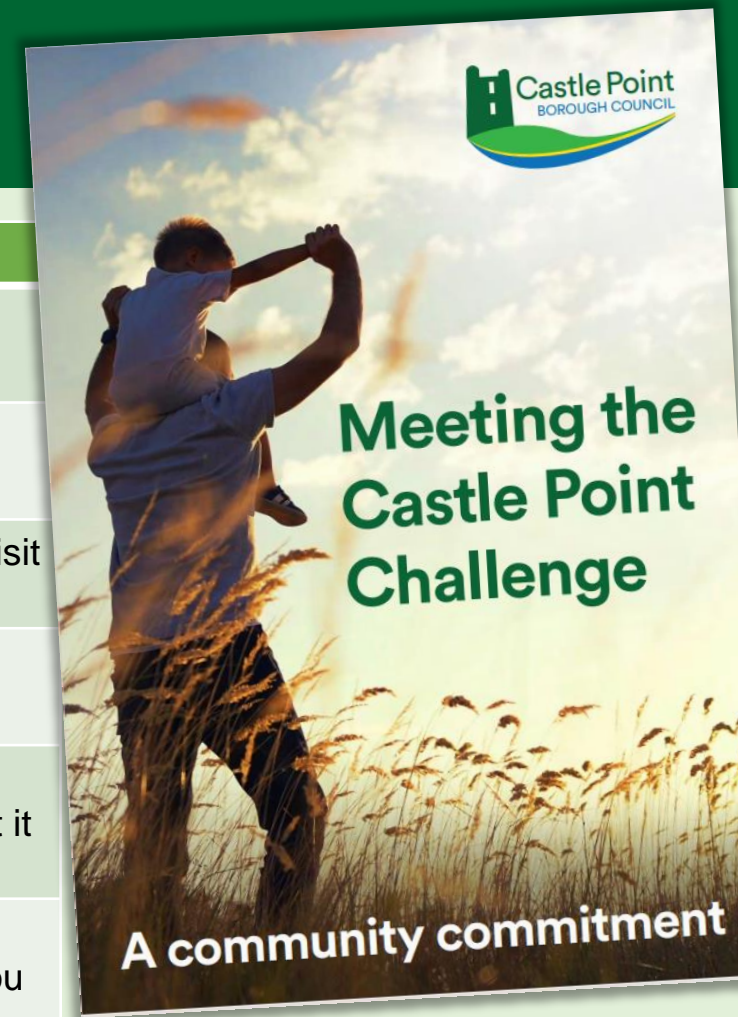
The plan also contains a set of performance indicators that will be used to measure the impact of the work that we do in the Borough.

Over the coming weeks and months, we will finalise our organisational plans – you'll be able to find these, and see how they all link into the delivery of our key priorities and commitments, on our website www.castlepoint.gov.uk

These will include the Castle Point Plan, our Place Narrative, Commercial Strategy, Waste Strategy, the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, the Council's Procurement Policy, our Housing Improvement Plan, Tourism Strategy and Climate Policy.



Our Community Commitment



We will	This means...
Put people at the front of all our decisions	providing the services that matter and working with partners and the private sector to ensure they meet the needs of the whole community
Be transparent in our decision making	increasing the number of council meetings we livestream so you can be informed about how we make decisions which affect you
Encourage pride of place in Castle Point	promoting our Borough and why it is it such a great place to live, work and visit
Protect your environment	protecting the most valuable landscapes, open spaces and heritage in the Borough, for the benefit of residents and wildlife
We will better plan the infrastructure	recognising we cannot fix everything, but where new investment in schools, health, open space and transport is needed we will set out what that is, what it will cost and when it should be delivered
Consult with you when we are considering service changes	ensuring the Borough's residents have a say, and are listened to and have your views taken into account when we consider services which matter to you
Maximise investment	developing partnerships and plans that mean we can be more successful in securing investment in the Borough
Carry out a resident survey	being better informed about your views and asking you what you want, rather than assuming we know

Ambitious for Castle Point

We will work with our partners to deliver our ambitions for our Borough

Our community commitments have formed the basis of our five new ambitions



Working for a prosperous future



Healthier and safer communities



A greener and cleaner environment



Restoring our Council to good health



We ♥ Castle Point

Working for a prosperous future



We want to ensure the best possible local economy, with opportunities for our residents to succeed and achieve.

How we will monitor our progress:

Supporting a vibrant local economy

- how many residents are in employment, and what are they earning

Education & skills

- how many residents are gaining higher qualifications / apprenticeships

Better transport

- percentage of residents who travel by means other than a car
- ability / time taken to travel to employment hubs

Attracting investment

- how many businesses are operating in the Borough, including new start-ups and business sustainability

Investing in our places and spaces

We want our town centres to be vibrant, full of life and areas of cultural activity, where our residents enjoy spending time, and which visitors want to come to. We've already committed to investing in and improving the Knightswick Shopping Centre and The Paddocks to provide thriving local amenities.

Our borough has already attracted investment from The Towns Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and our Council will supplement this to ensure all our places and spaces are maximised for the benefit of residents and visitors alike.

We have brought other Public Sector organisations into our wider estate, including our Council offices in Kiln Road, reducing the overall cost for

our organisation, and benefiting those organisations, as well as their customers who are now better able to access their valuable services.

The Council will put in place regeneration and investment programmes for the whole Borough. This will mean that we are in the best position to secure funding and inward investment in community infrastructure, the right homes in the right place and skills and training.

We will do this by working with our partners through the Castle Point Place Partnership and initiatives, such as Essex 2055 with Essex County Council, which consider the long-term infrastructure needs of our Borough.



Healthier, safer communities

Residents should feel safe in our Borough and supported to be more active in order to improve their health and wellbeing.

How we will monitor our progress:

Housing

- have we got the right homes for our residents, meeting the right standards?

Feeling safe

- percentage of people feeling safe after dark
- the number of anti-social incidents, and of reported crime

Healthier

- percentage of residents undertaking regular physical activity
- number of sports / activity clubs

Community resilience

- percentage of people who agree there is a strong sense of community
- those who volunteer regularly



Feeling safe

The Essex Residents Survey 2023 highlighted the public perception of safety, especially after dark, remains lower in Castle Point than in comparable parts of Essex, with only 42% of respondents reporting that they felt “fairly safe” or “very safe” after dark. This perception is despite levels of recorded crime in Castle Point being amongst the lowest in Essex.

Community safety is not just a matter for the police and emergency services. The Council also plays a vital role, bringing together partners as part of the Castle Point Council Community Safety Partnership, and with our own Community Safety team.

In addition to our policing colleagues, the Castle Point Community Safety Partnership is also made up of representatives from Essex Fire and Rescue, Environmental Services, Licensing, Trading Standards, other Housing Authorities and Health and Wellbeing Services.

Together, the partnership seeks to promote community safety through public engagement events, business engagement events and days of action.

We will work with residents to understand what’s most important in making our communities safe places to live, work and enjoy. Our work with the police, social services and health services will continue to address anti-social behaviour and create a safer environment for our residents to report anti-social behaviour.

In 2022 we put in place a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in place in the Roscommon Way area of Canvey Island for a period of three years in order to tackle anti-social behaviour.

We will continue to work with partners and residents to put in place measures to make places feel safer, such as design improvements to places to prevent crime and the fear of crime, as well as using community wardens and street patrols where appropriate.

Prevention will always be our preferred route, and we are working closely with organisations including local charity and youth hub Yellow Door and Sport England to divert young people away from certain behaviours.



A greener and cleaner environment



It's important to everyone that we look after our environment.

How we will monitor our progress:

Reducing carbon footprint

- amount of CO2 produced from the Council's buildings & operations

Recycling more

- percentage of household waste recycled or composted

Street scene

- operational performance measures on grass cutting, street cleanliness and fly-tip removal

Natural habitats

- how much land is on the national Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Site Register or registered as part of a countryside stewardship scheme

Focus on increasing recycling

We will help residents to reduce the amount of waste you throw away, and to reuse and repair items more and increase the amount of waste recycled. We also work to reduce environmental crimes such as littering and fly-tipping, in a bid to make Castle Point a cleaner and greener place to live.

At the moment, roughly 48% of household waste in Castle Point is recycled. This is above the national average of 45%, but we still want to do better. The best thing we can do for the environment is to reduce the amount of waste we create in the first place. We can do this by only buying what we need and making the most of what we already have.

Together, we want to help make Castle Point a great place to grow, live and work by protecting the environment by:

- avoiding waste by opting for reusable items in place of single-use products
- reusing items by purchasing or donating preloved items
- recycling as much as we can through kerbside collections or at the recycling centres
- only throwing away items that cannot be passed on or recycled

The Council follows the waste hierarchy principles. The waste hierarchy ranks waste management options based on what is better for the environment. The best thing we can do is to prevent the amount of waste being created in the first place. The worst thing for the environment is disposal, for example sending waste to landfill.



Restoring the Council to good health

We will place our Council on a sound financial footing and ensure resilience – delivering the service our residents deserve and expect.

How we will monitor our progress:

Good governance

- ensuring we have the right governance for robust, transparent and lawful decision making
- Percentage of key governance processes assessed as at least satisfactory
- monitoring our complaints and freedom of information performance

Balanced budget and value for money

- achieving a three-year balanced budget

Customer satisfaction

- overall resident and customer satisfaction with the Council

Modern ways of working

- monitoring our improved digital accessibility
- ensuring those who need to speak to someone can do so



A modern council

Our 2024 Corporate Peer Challenge, carried out by the Local Government Association (LGA), noted that significant change and improvement had taken place around what Castle Point Borough Council stands for, how it functions and the culture of the organisation

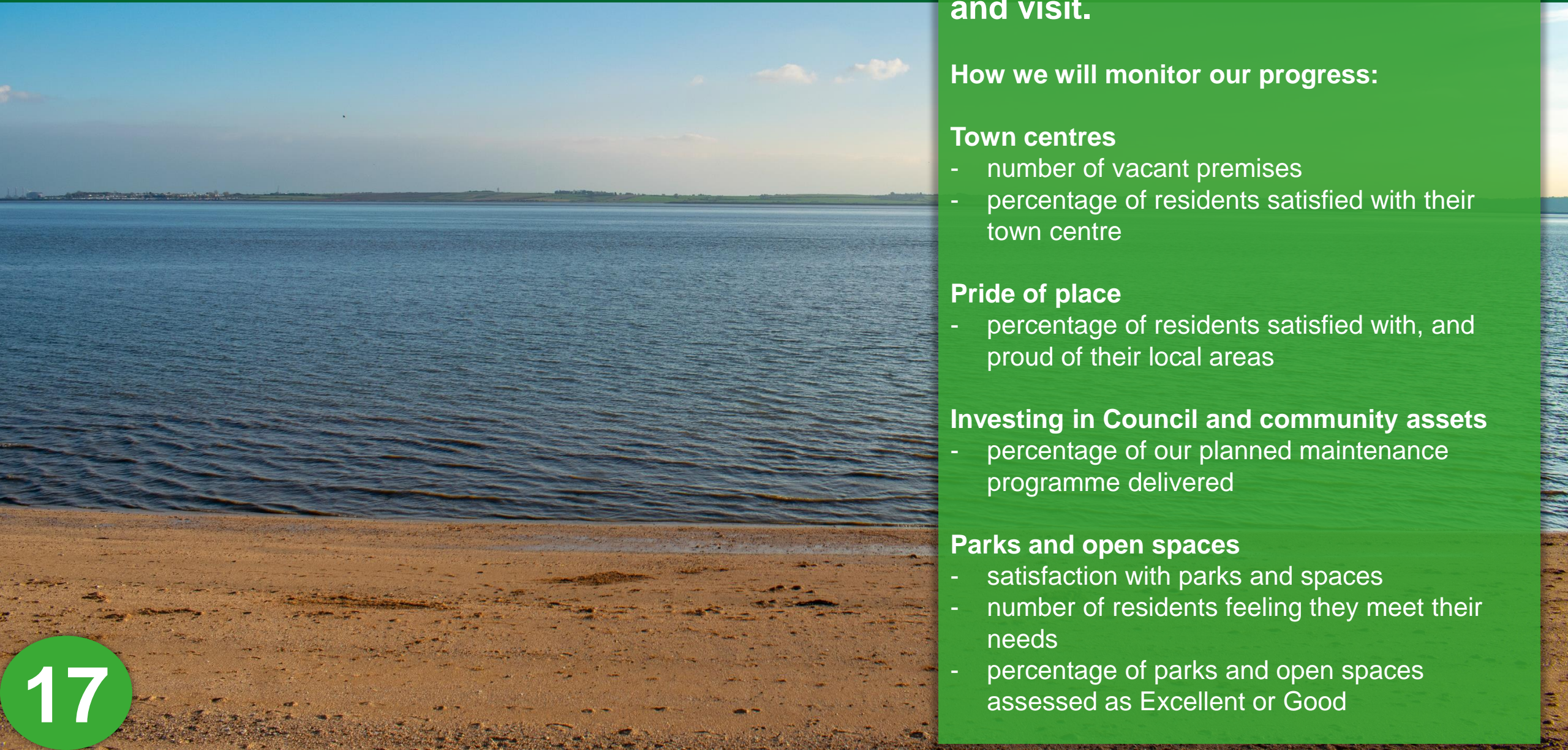
The LGA report recognised that there is still a lot to do to restore the Council to 'good health', place it on a sound financial footing and ensure resilience. It noted that a significant change agenda faces the council and recommended the development of a clear business change programme

The Council has worked hard to address the recommendations of the report, and in early 2025 will launch its new transformation programme: 'The Castle Point Challenge: Restoring our Council to good health'. This will see delivery of key improvements, including:

- The development of a new website and customer relationship management (CRM) system modernising the way that residents and businesses interact with the Council to get information, request support and access services. The CRM will transform interactions between the Council and the people it serves.
- Review of our waste and recycling service following a public consultation, and implementation of changes and a new strategy.
- Our future office- sharing our space with partners.
- Providing the best Housing services for our tenants and residents.



We ♥ Castle Point



We will help create and maintain the best possible place to live in, work in and visit.

How we will monitor our progress:

Town centres

- number of vacant premises
- percentage of residents satisfied with their town centre

Pride of place

- percentage of residents satisfied with, and proud of their local areas

Investing in Council and community assets

- percentage of our planned maintenance programme delivered

Parks and open spaces

- satisfaction with parks and spaces
- number of residents feeling they meet their needs
- percentage of parks and open spaces assessed as Excellent or Good

Pride of place

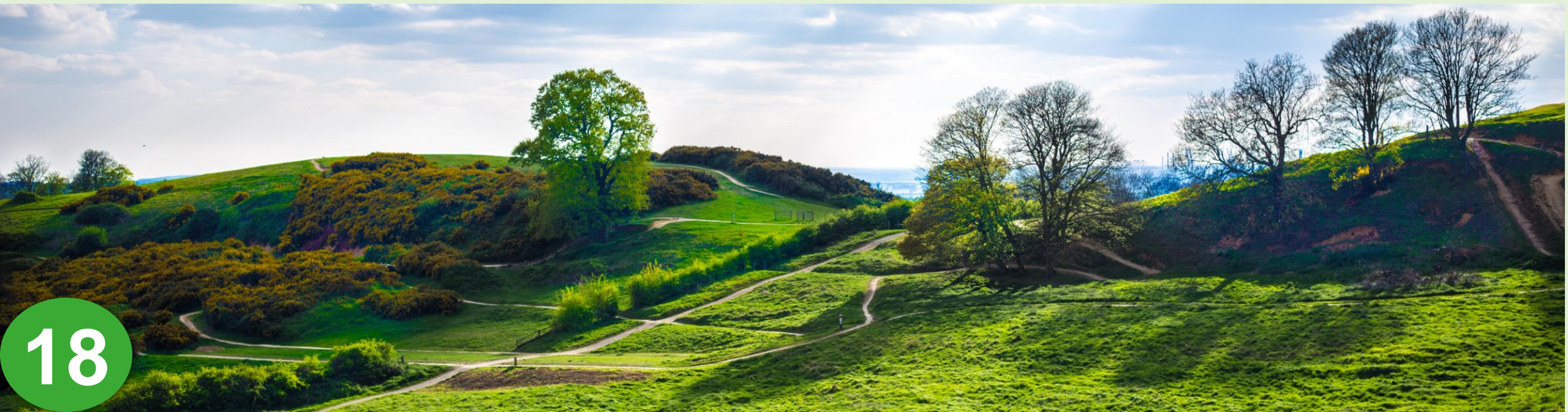
Pride of place is an emotion people feel towards the physical community that they identify with and feel a sense of attachment, belonging and deep-rooted contentedness towards. It is underpinned by their sense of safety and security, their participation and connections within the community, their engagement with local culture, heritage and sport and their satisfaction with local high streets, green and blue spaces and physical infrastructure

A key Administration commitment is to encourage pride of place in Castle Point, and we will work to promote our Borough and why it is such a great place to live, work and visit. Pride of place also feeds into the Administration's goals, including well-maintained parks and open spaces and overall satisfaction with the Borough.

Our resident survey will measure resident satisfaction with, and pride in our local area, and look to identify ways in which we can contribute to improving the things which our residents most value in our Borough.

Tourism also has a substantial role to play in the growth of Castle Point's economy, and we will look to promote our wonderful places, and why we are so proud of them, which will help us maximise the commercial opportunity and job growth for Castle Point's accommodation, food services and recreation sector.

We ♥ Castle Point and we want our residents to feel proud to live here. We will be proud to develop its significant visitor potential for the benefit of our residents, communities and businesses.



Stay informed and get involved!





We have big ambitions for Castle Point, which need to be delivered within a balanced budget, subject to any central government changes and funding and ensuring that we provide our residents with value for money.

We'll report progress on our plan regularly through our Corporate Scorecard to Cabinet and Full Council.

Of course, things change, so this plan will be reviewed to ensure it remains on the right course – if we need to refocus we'll be open about it, and the reason for it.

How we'll keep you informed

We're committed to keeping you informed about what we're doing. If you don't already, why not follow us on Facebook or X for our latest news? We're planning to open a NextDoor account in the coming months.

Castle Point Together magazine is delivered to every household to keep everyone informed and provide opportunities to engage and get involved.

A large part of engaging with residents is listening,

but it is also important to provide all residents with information about what is happening.

That's the point of Castle Point Together magazine - to explain what we have done, are doing, the decisions we have taken and are taking – and what it all means to you.

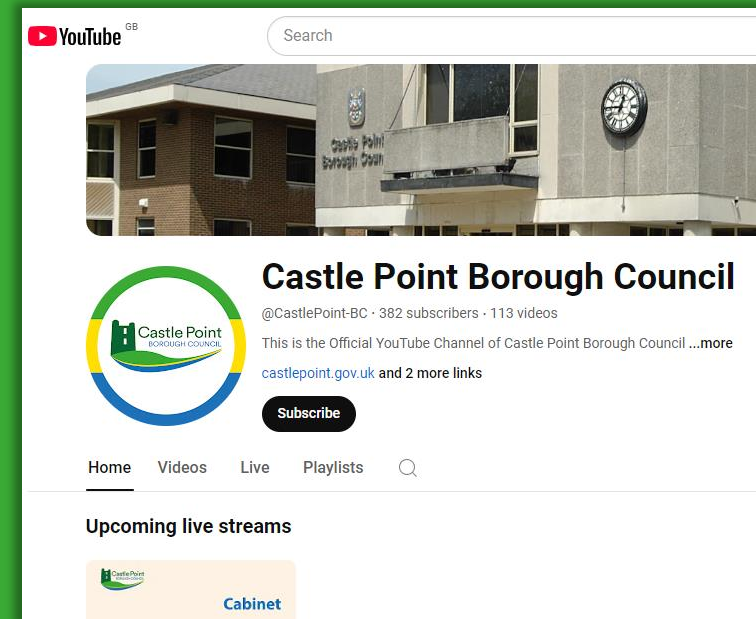
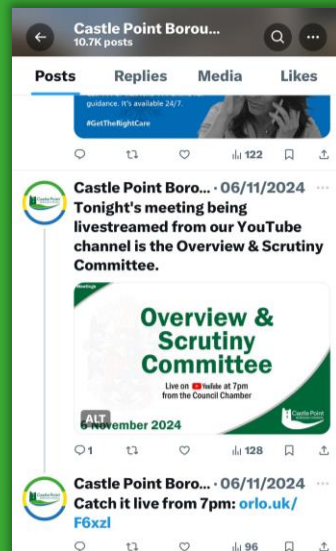


How you can get involved

We're committed to making sure you have opportunities to be heard and have your opinion on what we do.

Look out for consultations on hot topics, as well as our forthcoming resident survey. We'll promote this widely, but if you're following us on social media then you can be sure you won't miss out on your chance to be involved.

We're also now livestreaming more of our meetings than ever so you can see democracy in action.



Working together

As a Council and a community, we all win when we work together. This Corporate Plan has outlined what we will do for the Borough – here's how you can help too!

Recycling more not only helps our environment but means we can spend our limited budgets on other priorities

Going online where you can means we can focus our time supporting those residents who really need to speak to a colleague, or don't have access to a computer

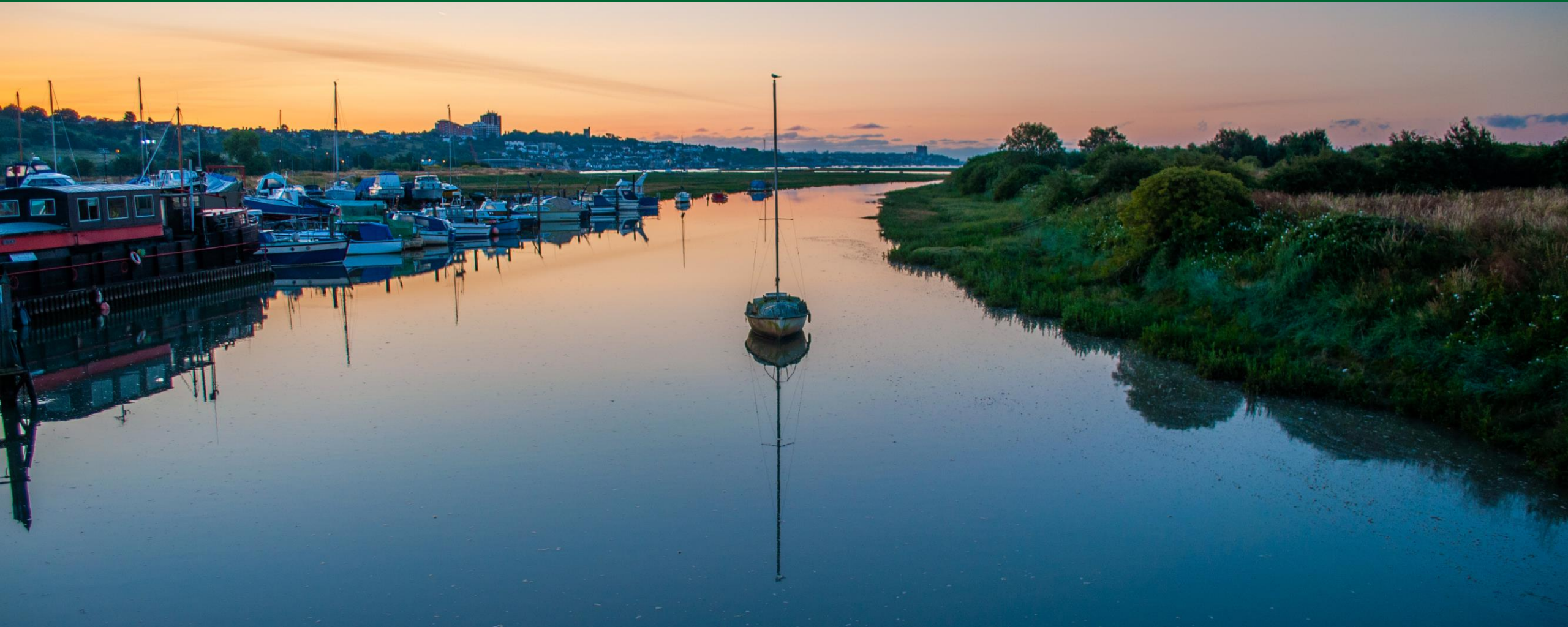
Tell us when we have done something well, or if we could do things better – we value your feedback and insight into what it's like to receive our services

Be active! Look out for all the opportunities for you and your family in your local area – not least in our leisure centres and green spaces. We want you to stay fit and healthy!

Support our local businesses where you can – we all have a part to play in revitalising the local economy

Champion Castle Point as a great place to live, work and invest – we ♥ Castle Point!

Contact us





Castle Point

BOROUGH COUNCIL

