



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Stockport Infrastructure Delivery Plan

September 2026



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1. Introduction

This Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) forms a key part of the evidence base for the Stockport Local Plan, which covers the period to 2042. This Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) supports the delivery of Stockport's Local Plan by identifying the infrastructure required to accommodate planned growth over the plan period. It provides a comprehensive assessment of the capacity, condition and future requirements of key infrastructure sectors.

This document has been prepared in collaboration with statutory and non-statutory partners responsible for delivering infrastructure to support a wide range of environmental, social and economic objectives and respond to planned growth and change.

Purpose of the document

The council is required to demonstrate that the policies and proposals set out in the Local Plan are realistic and can be delivered in a way that supports sustainable communities. In this context, the purpose of this Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is to:

- Provide a robust evidence base on the principal infrastructure requirements arising from planned development identified in the Stockport Local Plan over the period to 2042;
- Identify, where available, specific infrastructure needs, associated costs, potential funding sources and indicative delivery timescales; and
- Inform and support the planning and investment frameworks of partners involved in the provision, delivery and management of infrastructure across the borough.

The IDP is not a fixed delivery programme with guaranteed funding or set timescales. Instead, it shows that the council understands the impact of new development on infrastructure and is actively planning for it. It also ensures that these needs are kept under regular review.

As circumstances can change over time, the IDP is designed to be a “live” document. It will be updated regularly to reflect changes in population growth, funding opportunities and service priorities, helping to ensure that infrastructure keeps pace with the borough's changing needs.

National Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) requires local planning authorities to prepare robust, evidence-based Local Plans that support the delivery of sustainable development. National policy places particular emphasis on the need to plan effectively for the infrastructure required to support future growth. Strategic policies are expected to set out a clear and overarching approach to housing, employment, infrastructure and community facilities, informed by early, proportionate and effective engagement with statutory consultees and a wide range of stakeholders.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) reinforces the requirement for authorities to demonstrate that Local Plans are deliverable, particularly in relation to strategic priorities such as housing and infrastructure. It emphasises the importance of collaborative working with infrastructure providers, developers and other key partners to assess the quality and capacity of existing infrastructure, and its ability to accommodate forecast demand. Through this process, any infrastructure constraints or deficits should be clearly identified, alongside opportunities to address them and support sustainable growth.

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) forms a critical component of the Local Plan evidence base. It identifies the infrastructure needed to support the implementation of site allocations and policies, including delivery partners, indicative costs, funding sources and potential delivery mechanisms. This includes, where appropriate, the role of developer contributions such as Section 106 agreements. National policy is clear that requirements for such contributions should not undermine the overall viability and deliverability of the Local Plan. Paragraph 59 of the NPPF further emphasises the importance of demonstrating viability at the plan-making stage, thereby reducing the risk of delivery challenges arising at the planning application stage.

Infrastructure Planning in Stockport

Infrastructure is not just about physical assets like roads, utilities, schools and healthcare facilities. It also includes a wider range of services and community resources that are vital to creating sustainable, well-supported places for people to live.

While there is some overlap, infrastructure can generally be grouped into three main categories:

- Physical - The built, physical things people use every day, such as roads, railways, utilities, buildings and digital networks.
- Social and community - The services and facilities that support people's wellbeing and daily life, such as schools, healthcare, libraries, leisure centres and community spaces.
- Green and blue - Natural and landscaped spaces like parks, trees and rivers that provide environmental and health benefits.

Figure 1.1 below highlights the different types of infrastructure covered in this Infrastructure Delivery Plan, along with the key stakeholders who have been involved in assessing current provision and identifying future needs.

Figure 1.1: Infrastructure types and some of the relevant stakeholders

Infrastructure Type	Sub-sector	Partners
Physical		
Transport	Highway Network	National Highways, Transport for Greater Manchester, Stockport Council
	Walking, wheeling and cycling	Transport for Greater Manchester, Active Travel England, Stockport Council
	Bus Network	Transport for Greater Manchester
	Rail Network	Transport for Greater Manchester, Network Rail Train Operating Companies, i.e. Northern, Avanti.
	Manchester Airport	Manchester Airport Group
	Canal Network	Canals and Rivers Trust
Waste	Waste Management	Stockport Council
Utilities	Water and sewage	United Utilities
	Gas	National Grid, Cadent
	Electricity	National Grid, Electricity North West
	Low carbon energy	Stockport Council
	Digital Infrastructure	Digital telecom and internet providers Greater Manchester Combined Authority
Community and Social		
Health	GP Practices	NHS Property Services, Greater Manchester NHS Integrated Care Board
	Hospital Care and Community Health Services	NHS Foundation Trust
	Mental Health Services	Pennine Care
	Adult Social Care	Stockport Council
	Pharmacists, Dentists and Opticians	Stockport Council, private operators
Emergency Services	Fire	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue
	Police	Greater Manchester Police
	Ambulance	North West Ambulance Service
Education		Stockport Council
Cultural and community Facilities		Stockport Council, Stockport Homes, Life Leisure
Sport and recreation		Stockport Council, Life Leisure
Green and Blue		
Open space		Stockport Council
Ecological Network		Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Stockport Council, Natural England

Blue infrastructure	Watercourses	Environment Agency, Natural England, Canal & River Trust
	Flood management	Stockport Council, United Utilities, Environment Agency

Greater Manchester Context

Stockport is one of ten local authorities that make up the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. As such, effective collaboration across Greater Manchester is essential, particularly in relation to the planning and delivery of infrastructure.

The Greater Manchester Strategy 2025–2035¹, published in July 2025, sets out a shared vision for the city region to become a thriving place where all residents can enjoy a good quality of life.

This is supported by the Greater Manchester Local Growth Plan², which establishes an Integrated Investment Pipeline³ for growth and infrastructure delivery. It focuses particularly on six Growth Locations across Greater Manchester. The Airport and Southern Growth Corridor extends from Manchester Airport, through the east of the borough to Stockport Town Centre. This approach brings together previously separate pipelines for transport, housing, innovation and low-carbon energy into a single coordinated programme, enabling investment to be sequenced more effectively and to maximise value for money. The Integrated Pipeline is a live tool that will be continually updated to support the delivery of our long-term growth objectives.

Through this coordinated approach, development can be aligned with the timely provision of supporting infrastructure and services, helping to deliver well-connected, resilient and sustainable communities. This includes the provision of green infrastructure to support wellbeing and climate resilience, enhanced connectivity through the Bee Network, and investment in energy-efficient technologies to support the transition to net zero.

Internal and external infrastructure providers operating within Stockport will need to take account of this wider strategic context. Where appropriate, they will be expected to engage in sub-regional and city region discussions to ensure that local infrastructure planning and delivery is aligned with Greater Manchester's strategic priorities and investment programmes.

Stockport Town Centre

Stockport Town Centre is identified as a key focus for significant growth over the plan period and beyond. The borough's One Stockport, One Future⁴ vision sets out an

¹ The Greater Manchester Strategy: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/greater-manchester-strategy/>

² The Greater Manchester Local Growth Plan: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/wcpd5ifl/greater-manchester-local-growth-plan-2026-pdf-384kb.pdf>

³ The Integrated Investment Pipeline: <https://mappinggm.org.uk/maps/integrated-pipeline>

⁴ One Stockport, One Future: <https://www.onestockport.co.uk/one-future-plan/>

ambition to deliver 8,000 new homes in the town centre by 2040. At the Greater Manchester scale, the town centre is recognised as a growth pole within the Airport and Southern Growth Corridor, reinforcing its strategic role in accommodating housing, employment and supporting infrastructure. Spatially, this growth is guided by the Strategic Regeneration Frameworks for Town Centre West and East, alongside a broader evidence base underpinning regeneration and infrastructure planning.

The Stockport Town Centre Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) plays a central role in facilitating the delivery of growth and associated infrastructure. As the principal regeneration vehicle, it provides a mechanism for coordinating the council, GMCA, infrastructure providers, public bodies, landowners and investors around a shared delivery programme. In infrastructure terms, this includes aligning the timing and funding of transport, social, utilities and green infrastructure with planned development, and supporting the implementation of key schemes required to sustain growth, including education, healthcare, active travel, public transport, drainage and low-carbon energy infrastructure.

The town centre's infrastructure baseline has been strengthened through substantial recent investment, alongside a robust pipeline of committed and emerging schemes. Recent delivery includes the Transport Interchange, public realm improvements at Stockport Exchange, Viaduct Park and Weir Mill, as well as new cultural and community facilities such as Stockroom and the What If? hub. Looking ahead, the MDC Business Plan and associated programmes identify further provision, including a new town centre school, a health hub, enhancements at Stockport Station, the proposed Metrolink extension, active travel and highway improvements, district heat network infrastructure, sustainable drainage measures, and additional green and community infrastructure to support a growing population.

As set out elsewhere in this Infrastructure Delivery Plan, the scale of planned growth in Stockport Town Centre will place increasing demands on a range of infrastructure types, particularly transport, education, health, utilities, green infrastructure and community facilities. As the residential population expands, additional capacity and new provision will be required to ensure infrastructure remains fit for purpose and that development is delivered in a sustainable manner. The MDC Business Plan emphasises the importance of aligning infrastructure delivery with the phasing of growth, with a focus on social infrastructure, sustainable movement, drainage, utilities capacity and low-carbon energy systems. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan will therefore need to continue identifying infrastructure requirements, delivery mechanisms, funding sources and any gaps in provision as proposals evolve.

2. Transport

Stockport borough has a range of transport infrastructure. This includes:

Category	Infrastructure Type	Count
Active Travel	Public Right of Way (PROW) Footpath	235.223 km
	Bridleway	33.926 km
	Byways Open to All Traffic	6.416 km
	Restricted Byways	0.828 km
	On-road Advisory Routes. Routes along roads but with directions signs as minimum level of infrastructure	46.4km
	On-road Routes with Cycling facilities, e.g. cycle lanes and / or advanced stop lines at signals	12.4km
	Segregated cycle lanes adjacent to the carriageway	21.2km
	Traffic-free Routes, e.g. converted railway line	77.0km (some of these are also Public Rights of Way (PRoW))
	Canal Towpaths - cycling permitted	14.4km (these are also PRoW Footpaths)
Bus	Bus Station	1
	High frequency bus Services	4
Rail	Rail Stations	19
	Access for All Stations	9
	Passenger Rail lines	9
Roads	A Roads	95.7 km
	B Roads	40.3 km
	C Roads	88.3km
	Unclassified Roads	801.6km
Parking	Car Parks including Multi storey (Highway Managed)	106

Transport strategy

The future provision of transport infrastructure in Stockport is driven by three key documents:

- The Greater Manchester Transport Strategy (2040) soon to be replaced by the 2050 version⁵;
- The 5 year Delivery Plan related to the strategy; and

⁵ The Greater Manchester Transport Strategy and Delivery Plan: <https://tfgm.com/strategy>

- Stockport's Transport Strategy (in development).

Together, these documents seek to meet the transport needs of the borough's population, while ensuring that land use and transport planning are effectively aligned within the Local Plan. They also provide the framework for the allocation of funding secured and managed by the council.

The Greater Manchester Transport Strategy (GMTS) and its associated plans have been prepared by Transport for Greater Manchester in collaboration with the ten Greater Manchester districts, including Stockport. The 2040 Strategy was published in 2017, and the 2050 Strategy is currently being finalised for publication in 2026.

The Strategy sets out a long-term vision for transport in Greater Manchester, focusing on improving connectivity to support sustainable economic growth and access to opportunities for all. This is supported by a five-year Delivery Plan, which identifies key interventions, infrastructure projects and policy tools required to plan for and deliver improvements.

A central ambition of the Strategy is the "Right Mix" target, which aims for at least 50% of all journeys in Greater Manchester to be made by active travel or public transport by 2040.

The GMTS is supported by sub-strategies⁶ including (and not limited to):

- The Streets for All Strategy and Design Guide;
- Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy;
- The Greater Manchester Bus Strategy; and
- The School Travel Strategy.

The council is also developing its own transport strategy. This will be aligned to the Greater Manchester Strategy and will outline the council's aims regarding transport supporting Stockport specific issues.

These documents and associated delivery plans are intended to be live documents. This Infrastructure Delivery Plan will remain aligned with these strategies as they are updated and implemented.

Current travel choices

Around two-thirds of journeys in Stockport are currently made by car, compared to a Greater Manchester average of 58%. One in four journeys are made on foot, with 4% of journeys made by bus. Rail and cycle contribute towards the remaining 4%.

By way of insight, the Greater Manchester Travel Diary Survey (TRADS) data for Stockport in 2024 shows:

⁶ All Greater Manchester Transport Strategy Sub Strategies can be found on this webpage:
<https://tfgm.com/strategy>

- 14% of all journeys are commuting. This compares to 17% for education, 21% for shopping, and 27% for entertainment or to visit friends.
- 46% of trips made are under 2km in length, 26% are between 2km and 5km, 15% are between 5km and 10km, and 13% are over 10km in length.
- 41% of those journeys under 2km are made by car.

Walking, wheeling and cycling

Stockport recognises that its roads are under strain, carrying more traffic than they were designed to accommodate. To address this, it is essential to provide a wider range of travel choices. A key part of this is making walking, wheeling and cycling more attractive and practical.

Stockport has a strong track record of delivering active travel schemes to support these modes. Key examples include the Heaton Link improvements, the Bramhall Park to A6 scheme, the multi-user path alongside the A555, and the improvements delivered as part of the Stockport Interchange, which enhance connectivity between the town centre and Stockport Station.

There remains significant opportunity to expand this network further. As such, alongside a pipeline of council-led schemes, it is important that all future development supports and promotes active travel through high-quality design. This includes improving existing routes, creating strong connections to the wider network, and delivering new infrastructure that is safe, accessible, and usable throughout the year.

The bus network

The Bee Network, Greater Manchester's franchised bus system, officially launched in September 2023. Bus services across Stockport joined the Bee Network in January 2025 as part of the third and final tranche of the GM franchising process. This has introduced benefits such as simplified fares and contactless "tap and go" ticketing, with capped fares ensuring predictable daily, weekly and monthly travel costs. It also creates opportunities for improved coordination between bus and other transport services, as well as a more responsive approach to service improvements.

Stockport currently benefits from four high-frequency routes, primarily serving Manchester city centre and Stockport town centre. Since bus services came under local control, patronage has continued to increase.

The rollout of the Bee Network is an important step towards making public transport more frequent, reliable and affordable. Historically, bus travel has often been perceived as less attractive than car use, due to factors such as limited service provision and perceptions of lower quality. The franchising model provides an opportunity to address these challenges.

Ensuring strong connectivity to the bus network will be a critical consideration in the planning of new development.

The rail network

Stockport is served by nine rail lines passing through the borough, supporting 19 stations, with aspirations for a 20th station at Cheadle. All existing stations provide direct services to Manchester Piccadilly, and seven also offer regular connections to Stockport town centre.

There is currently a lack of orbital rail connectivity across the borough. In the short to medium term, this is addressed through bus provision. However, improving orbital connections remains a key long-term aspiration through the borough's tram-train rapid transit objectives.

Following the cancellation of the HS2 route to Manchester, Stockport Station has taken on increased strategic importance as the southern gateway to Greater Manchester. In this context, the redevelopment of the station is a central focus of the borough's rail strategy.

Despite the relatively high number of stations, step-free accessibility remains limited, with even fewer stations offering full accessibility throughout operational hours. Improvements are underway, including works at Reddish North (expected to be completed by the end of 2026) and ongoing upgrades at Bredbury, Woodsmoor and Davenport. However, enhancing accessibility remains a key priority for the borough.

Stations would also benefit from increased capacity, including platform lengthening and improved facilities both within stations and along access routes. As such, proposals for new development will be required to take account of nearby rail infrastructure and consider how they will enhance accessibility, support capacity improvements, and contribute to the effective operation of the wider rail network.

The tram network

Metrolink is Greater Manchester's tram network and the largest in the UK, with 99 stops across more than 100km of track. Stockport, however, is not currently connected to the network. Extending the network from East Didsbury to Stockport Town Centre is a key priority, with mayoral support and funding in place. The exact route and preferred option are still being confirmed, with a strong ambition to deliver the scheme as soon as possible.

There is also potential to introduce rapid transit services using emerging tram-train technology, making better use of existing heavy rail and freight lines for linkages to Manchester Airport, Tameside, Marple, and Hazel Grove. These opportunities will continue to be explored and could be delivered during the plan period.

The highway network

The borough benefits from an excellent location within the wider strategic highway network. Direct access to the M60 provides strong Trans-Pennine connectivity, supported further by the A6, A34 and A555, which offer good links to Derbyshire,

Cheshire and Manchester Airport. While the M60 is managed and maintained by National Highways, the A-road network is the responsibility of the local authority. A number of additional A-roads also run through the borough, providing important connections between the borough's eight district centres.

Given the heavily urbanised nature of Stockport, there is limited scope for significant highway capacity expansion. As a result, effective management of existing road space is critical, particularly in locations experiencing high traffic volumes. Key areas of concern include the A6 and A34, which function not only as important local routes but also as major corridors carrying through-traffic to the M60 and wider network.

It is recognised that proposed housing and economic development allocations will place additional demand on the local road network. While some impacts will be mitigated through targeted local junction improvements and the promotion and enhancement of active travel and public transport, longer-term aspirations remain to address strategic issues through larger-scale interventions. These include the A6–M60 relief road, the A6 High Lane–Disley bypass, and a range of junction improvements on and around the M60.

Canal network

The canal network is owned and managed by the Canal & River Trust. Within the Stockport local authority area there are approximately 14.8km of Trust-owned and managed waterways, comprising 4.4km of the Macclesfield Canal and 10.4km of the Peak Forest Canal. An estimated 47,493 residents, around 16% of Stockport's total population, live within 1km of a canal.

The canal network is a valuable infrastructure asset, supporting walking and cycling and delivering wider health and wellbeing benefits. It also plays an important role within the borough's green and blue infrastructure network. In addition, public road bridges over the canals form part of the wider transport network and carry critical utility services, including gas, water, electricity and telecommunications.

Towpaths should be promoted both as sustainable transport corridors and as spaces for active recreation and relaxation. Currently, towpaths across the borough would benefit from resurfacing to fully realise their potential as high-quality, off-road sustainable transport routes. Improvements to towpath access points would also help ensure they are inclusive and accessible to all users, while enhanced wayfinding would improve awareness of, and access to, the canal network.

Stockport Town Centre

Stockport Town Centre is the borough's principal centre and primary transport hub. It benefits from strong connections across the borough and to the Greater Manchester regional centre, as well as direct access to the national rail network. The town centre also benefits from excellent connectivity to the Strategic Road Network via two junctions of the M60.

The town centre is the focus of the Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC), which is delivering an ambitious programme of new housing and commercial development, alongside major transport infrastructure improvements and significant enhancements to the public realm.

The successful delivery of the Town Centre Access Plan, Stockport Interchange, and the Redrock and Merseyway regeneration schemes has established a strong foundation for future growth and investment.

Looking ahead, key transport priorities for Stockport include the delivery of a Metrolink extension to the town centre, the redevelopment of Stockport Station, and further measures to enhance sustainable access, particularly for walking, wheeling and cycling across the wider town centre area.

Manchester Airport

Manchester Airport is of strategic economic importance to the region and forms an integral part of the Airport and Southern Growth Corridor. Although located outside the borough, there are strong transport linkages from Stockport to the airport, including the A555, which provides both vehicular and active travel connections. The motorway network through Stockport, together with rail stations and bus services within the borough, also support access to the airport. Continued improvements to public transport and active travel will be important, alongside measures to address congestion on existing road corridors.

In terms of airport operations, development will need to have regard to safety considerations, particularly in relation to building heights within safeguarded areas and the provision of appropriate green and blue infrastructure (including SuDS), so as not to increase the risk of bird strike. In addition, certain forms of telecommunications infrastructure have the potential to interfere with air traffic services and navigation equipment. While detailed regulation sits outside the planning system, applicants will be expected to engage with relevant operators and demonstrate that such impacts have been appropriately considered.

Transport infrastructure and the Local Plan

The Local Plan is supported by transport modelling which assesses the cumulative impacts of planned growth on the highway network. In addition, specific transport requirements are set out for each site allocation within the Plan to ensure impacts are properly managed. The draft Plan is further supported by a comprehensive suite of transport policies, aligned with the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy, local priorities, and the requirements of relevant stakeholders.

3. Waste Management

Household waste and recycling

Waste management infrastructure comprises the network of facilities required to support the collection, preparation for re-use, recycling and composting of waste, alongside the treatment and disposal of residual waste. This also includes the transfer and movement of waste between facilities, including by road, rail and, where appropriate, waterways.

Stockport forms part of the Greater Manchester (GM) waste management system, which operates on a coordinated, 'whole system' basis across the city region. This approach integrates waste collection, transfer, treatment and recovery infrastructure, providing flexibility and resilience in managing waste flows.

Existing waste management infrastructure within the borough is provided as follows:

- Transfer stations – Bredbury
- Recycling centres – Bredbury, Rose Hill (Marple)

There is also a recycling centre and transfer station facility at Sharston just beyond the borough boundary in Manchester.

The council operates a kerbside waste collection system comprising residual waste and a range of recycling streams, with collection frequencies designed to support waste minimisation and increase recycling performance.

- Residual waste (black bin): collected fortnightly
- Co-mingled dry recyclables (brown bin): collected four weekly
- Paper and card (blue bin): collected four weekly
- Food waste: collected weekly via the green bin
- Garden waste: optional, subscription-based service

This system forms the primary mechanism for managing household waste in the borough.

Residual waste arising within Stockport is managed as part of Greater Manchester wide waste governance arrangements, delivered through long-term contractual agreements overseen by the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority (GMWDA) with SUEZ Recycling and Recovery UK. These arrangements enable a coordinated and integrated approach to waste management across the region.

The majority of residual waste collected by the council is transferred to Energy from Waste (EfW) facilities within the contracted waste management network, where it is treated to recover energy and reduce reliance on landfill. This network comprises a range of facilities both within and outside Greater Manchester.

The Greater Manchester waste system operates as a flexible network, allowing waste to be directed to alternative facilities in response to operational requirements and capacity. In limited circumstances, residual waste may be processed into Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) as an alternative energy recovery route.

Landfill is used only as a last resort, in accordance with the waste hierarchy. There are currently no active non-hazardous landfill sites within Stockport.

The principal waste streams and management routes for household collected waste are set out below:

Material	2025/26 quantity (tonnes)	Solution
Residual	40,001.65	Energy from Waste (EfW) via GM contract
Paper and Cardboard	9,483.88	Reprocessing via paper mills (separately collected stream)
Dry Recyclables	12,745.18	Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) followed by recycling
Food and Garden Waste	26,165.12	Composting and/or Anaerobic Digestion (AD)
Road Sweepings (dry)	3,012.82	Treatment and recovery, including aggregate recovery or landfill where necessary

Waste management in Stockport will continue to be shaped by national policy reforms, regional arrangements across Greater Manchester, and the need to support sustainable growth. The Government's Resources and Waste Strategy and the Environment Act 2021 together with Greater Manchester's integrated waste arrangements, establish a clear strategic direction for moving waste up the hierarchy, with a focus on reducing waste generation and increasing levels of re-use, recycling and recovery.

Key drivers of change include:

- Consistency in recycling collections (Simpler Recycling)
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)
- Deposit Return Scheme (DRS)

The council will continue to support the transition to a circular economy, prioritising waste prevention, reuse and recycling.

To support planned growth, waste management infrastructure will need to remain sufficient to meet demand, adaptable to policy and service changes and resilient to operational disruption.

Within this context, Stockport forms part of the Greater Manchester wide approach to waste management, which adopts a 'whole system' model encompassing collection,

transfer, treatment and recovery infrastructure. Future service delivery and infrastructure planning will need to respond to ongoing policy changes.

To support planned housing and economic growth within the borough, waste management infrastructure will need to be sufficient, adaptable and resilient. This will include maintaining and, where necessary, enhancing existing facilities such as waste transfer stations, recycling facilities and depot capacity, as well as ensuring that new development is designed to facilitate sustainable waste management, including the provision of adequate space and collection.

Waste management and the Local Plan

Waste management is addressed within the Local Plan through emerging Policy ENV 15, which requires new development to incorporate appropriately designed storage space for waste and recycling. This should be integrated into the overall layout of the development and allow for suitable access by residents and waste collection services.

Policy CR 1 further supports sustainable resource management by seeking to minimise resource use, promote circular economy principles, and achieve net-zero waste in construction by 2038.

4. Utilities

Water and sewerage

United Utilities provides clean water and wastewater services in Stockport. This includes a large network of water pipes, sewers, reservoirs and wastewater treatment plants that serve homes and businesses across the borough.

Having reliable clean water supplies and effective systems for dealing with surface water and wastewater is essential when planning new development. This includes making sure there is enough capacity and water pressure. Climate change also means that new development needs to take account of water efficiency, keeping surface water and foul water separate, managing flood risk, and using sustainable ways to deal with surface water runoff.

Clean water supply

United Utilities published its Water Resources Management Plan⁷ (WRMP) in 2024 which covers the period 2025-2050. This identifies Stockport within a large 'Strategic Resource Zone' which covers the majority of the North West, serving around 7 million people.

Over this period, the Strategic Resource Zone is forecast to experience a supply–demand deficit, increasing from 52.5 Megalitres per day (Ml/d) in 2025 to 314 Ml/d by 2050. United Utilities intends to manage this through a combination of leakage reduction, increased metering, improved water efficiency, and investment in new water infrastructure.

Policy CR2 in the Stockport Local Plan will play a key role in ensuring that resources, including water supply, are sufficient to meet future needs. The policy requires all new residential development to achieve a water efficiency standard of no more than 110 litres per person per day, through the use of water-saving fixtures such as low-flow taps, efficient showerheads and dual-flush toilets. This exceeds the standard Building Regulations requirement of 125 litres per person per day and reflects the tighter targets requested by United Utilities.

In addition, and outside the plan-making system, United Utilities promotes water efficiency in new development through incentive schemes for developers delivering highly efficient homes, with consumption levels of around 100 litres per person per day.

⁷ United Utilities Water Resources Management Plan: <https://www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/about-us/our-future-plans/water-resources/water-resources-management-plan/>

To date, over 86,000 plots have been registered with the scheme, generating significant cost savings for developers, estimated at around £25 million.

Wastewater and sewage

For wastewater, the cost of increasing system capacity is paid for by United Utilities. In 2023, United Utilities published a new Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan⁸, covering the period from 2025 to 2050. The plan sets out the investment needed to support planned development and to meet legal requirements. This includes meeting national targets such as those in the Government's Storm Overflow Reduction Plan.

The Drainage Water Management Plan is supported by a number of strategic planning area documents, the borough of Stockport is covered by that for the 'Upper Mersey' catchment⁹.

United Utilities are currently part of the way through a five-year strategic programme from 2025 to 2030 to invest in water and wastewater infrastructure as part of the Asset Management Plan 8 (AMP8). £13 billion of investment across the North West will also be aimed at reducing environmental impacts, enhancing resilience to climate change and creating jobs and economic growth.

New development must manage foul and surface water in the most sustainable way in accordance with national planning policy. Policy INF 4 sets out the hierarchy of drainage options for surface water. This policy is a key way to manage impact on the sewage network. It makes clear that discharge to the public combined sewer is the least preferable option and prioritises the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), particularly multi-functional SuDS, in line with the latest NPPF and NPPG guidance.

At this stage, United Utilities has not identified any specific infrastructure projects to support the scale of growth proposed in the Local Plan. However, this will be kept under review and updated as necessary to reflect ongoing engagement with stakeholders, in line with a responsive approach to infrastructure planning.

Energy infrastructure

The National Energy System Operator (NESO) is an independent public corporation created to manage Great Britain's electricity and gas systems. NESO released the transitional Regional Energy System Plan (tRESP) in January 2026. A regional energy strategic plan is a long-term, joined-up plan for how each region's energy system should meet future needs. It brings together information about local demand and energy supply to show what infrastructure is needed, where and when, so regions can reach net zero while supporting growth.

⁸ Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan: <https://www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/about-us/our-future-plans/Our-long-term-plans/dwmp-publication-may-2023/>

⁹ Upper Mersey catchment: https://www.unitedutilities.com/globalassets/z_corporate-site/about-us-pdfs/dwmp-2023/spa_11-upper-mersey-dwmp.pdf

Electricity and gas distribution networks are regulated by the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem).

The electricity industry in England is divided into four main sectors:

- The generators, who own both the large power stations and smaller renewable generators.
- The transmission companies, who own and operate the 400kV and 275kV transmission network that links the major power stations and transports electricity in bulk across the country.
- The distribution companies, who own and operate the lower voltage electricity network, connecting the smaller power stations and the national grid to every electricity customer in Britain.
- The electricity suppliers, who buy the electricity produced by the generators, sell that electricity to their customers and pay the transmission and distribution operators for the transportation of that electricity across their networks.

When bringing forward development proposals of the scale suggested for Stockport with our Local Plan, our main stakeholders are the transmission and distribution companies.

The Stockport Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP)¹⁰ provides evidence on addressing the climate crisis and the need to commit to reducing carbon emissions within the existing urban environment and from new development at the local level. The LAEP sets out that decarbonising Stockport's local energy system by 2038 is achievable and expected to require capital investment of £5.8 billion. While funding sources have not yet been fully identified, delivery is likely to rely on a combination of government funding, grants and private investment.

Electricity

National Grid Electricity Transmission owns and maintains the high-voltage electricity transmission network across England and Wales. Within Stockport, the following infrastructure is present:

- A number of 400kV and 275kV overhead transmission lines connecting Bredbury, Macclesfield, Stalybridge, Stocksbridge and South Manchester;
- Electricity substations at Bredbury (132kV and 275kV); and
- Underground 275kV cable routes between Bredbury and South Manchester.

These assets are displayed on the map below, Figure 4.1.

¹⁰ See https://gmgreencity.com/resource_library/stockport-local-area-energy-plan/ accessed 20/03/2026

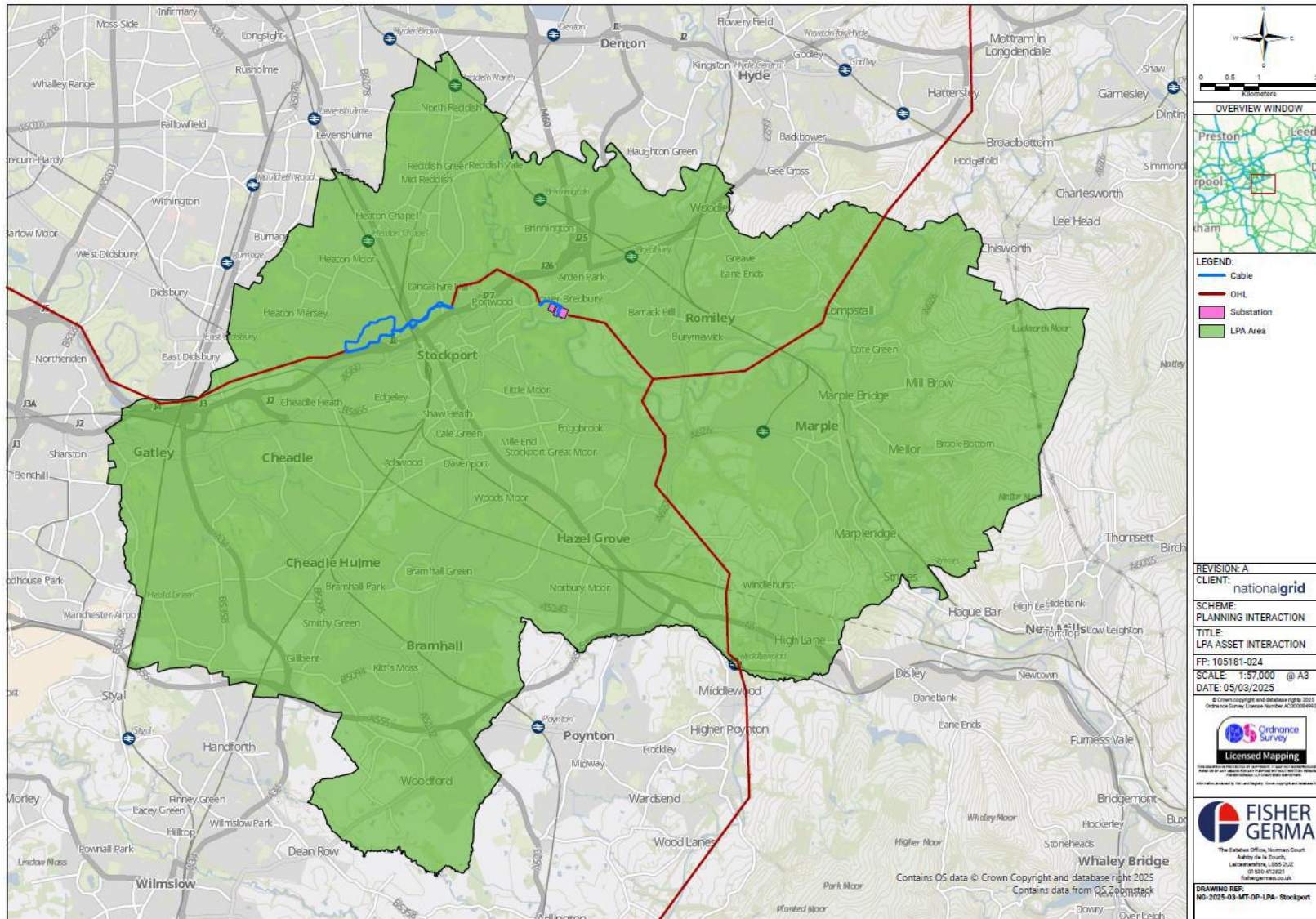


Figure 4.1: NGET assets within Stockport

In terms of new infrastructure, NGET have confirmed that there are no known new infrastructure interactions within the area. However, demand for electricity is expected to rise as the way NGET power our homes, businesses and transport changes.

Figure 4.2 below illustrates the relationship between different parts of the electricity network.

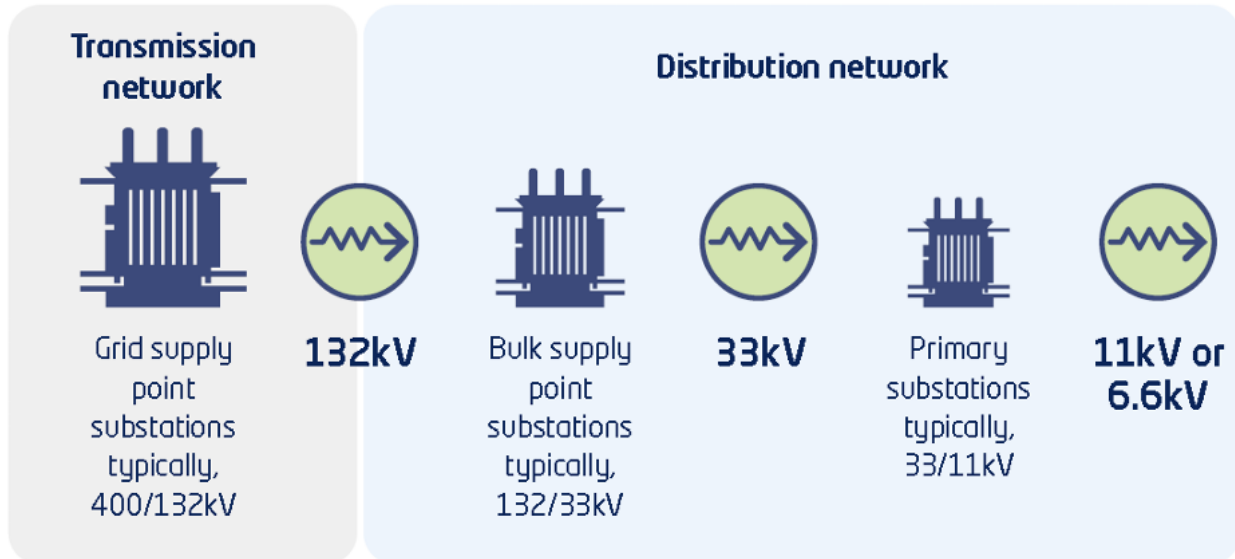


Figure 4.2 The relationship between the transmission network and the distribution network. Image taken from the SP ENW Network Development Plan

In Stockport, the electricity distributor is SP Electricity North West (SP ENW) (formally operated by Electricity North West Limited). SP ENW is responsible for maintaining and upgrading around 13,000 km of overhead power lines and over 44,000 km of underground electricity cables. Electricity is supplied from the national grid via Grid Supply Points (GSPs), with most of Stockport served by the Bredbury GSP and the remainder by the South Manchester GSP.

SP ENW plan for network capacity by forecasting future demand growth using Distribution Future Electricity Scenarios, which projects future electricity demand and generation and it is published on an annual basis. This document is informed by planned developments provided by local authorities. The council maintains regular engagements with SP ENW to make sure that forecasts of future capacity needs reflect planned growth and development. The latest Distribution Future Electricity Scenarios report¹¹ was published in March 2026.

As part of the ongoing engagement relating to the Local Area Energy Plan, the council meets with ENWL several times per year to discuss likely changes to demand resulting from growth and changing needs, e.g. the move away from internal combustion vehicles and towards electric vehicles and the associated electricity requirements. Forecasts are reviewed annually with appropriate intervention measures then put into place by SP ENW to release additional capacity in the appropriate regulatory submission period when required.

¹¹ Distribution Future Electricity Scenarios <https://www.enwl.co.uk/dfes>

The findings from the Distribution Future Electricity Scenarios informs the Network Development Plan¹², most recent version published in April 2026. This document outlines the expected network reinforcement solutions up to 2035 and the long-term flexibility service requirements to facilitate growth in electricity demand, distributed generation and battery storage. It identifies high-level interventions required between 2025 and 2035. It includes information on the Bredbury and South Manchester GSPs and outlines proposed asset upgrades and flexibility solutions to support increasing demand.

New electricity connections associated with development are assessed on a site-by-site basis, depending on the scale of demand and the capacity of the local network. Where multiple developments connect to the same network, this may trigger the need for reinforcement. The costs of connections and reinforcement are shared between developers and SP ENW in accordance with regulatory arrangements.

No concerns have been raised by SP ENW as a result of the growth proposed in the emerging Local Plan. However, additional capacity may be required in Stockport town centre to support proposed growth, including around 8,000 new homes. This issue has been raised with NESO and is reflected in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule.

Gas

National Gas Transmission owns and operates the high pressure gas transmission system in Great Britain, enabling the bulk transfer of gas around the country. Gas flows from this high-pressure system through local transmission systems and then into intermediate, medium and low-pressure distribution networks before reaching consumers. Gas Distribution Networks represent the penultimate stage in the delivery process. Cadent owns and manages the distribution network in Stockport, which falls within the North West England network. At this stage, no concerns have been identified regarding gas infrastructure in relation to the development proposed within the Local Plan.

¹² Network Development Plan: <https://www.enwl.co.uk/get-connected/network-information/network-development-plan/>



NTS

SJ

Scale: 1:589,000

Kilometres
02.55 10 15 20

© National Gas Transmission
Contains OS data licensed under the Open Government Licence.
© Crown copyright and database right (2026)
Pipeline data correct as of 15/04/2026.
Map created on 23/04/2026.
Map produced in British National Grid.

If you are planning to undertake any work please see the following website: <https://lsbud.co.uk/> or contact the Asset Protection team at least 14 days in advance on 0800 970 7000 or box.assetprotection@nationalgas.com

For further advice on GIS and mapping, please contact the National Gas GIS team: box.NationalGasGIS@nationalgas.com

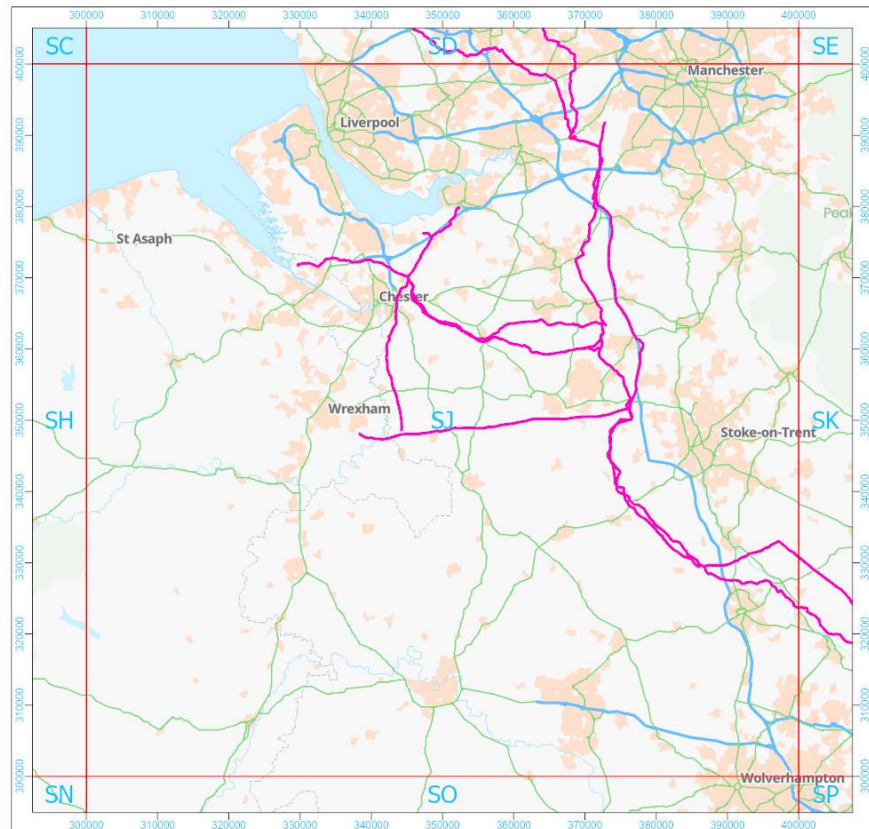


Figure 4.3: The location of national gas transmission network (which does not pass through Stockport)

In response to the declaration of a climate emergency, the council is seeking to move away from the use of fossil fuels for operational energy in new development, as set out in the Local Plan's climate resilience policies. Once adopted, these policies will restrict the use of gas in developments granted permission under the new framework. Consequently, the number of new gas connections is expected to decline towards zero over time.

Low carbon energy

To support the council's ambition to be carbon neutral by 2038, and the associated transition to decarbonised heat, proposals are being developed for a low carbon heat network focused on Stockport Town Centre and linking to Stepping Hill Hospital. The primary anchor loads for the network will be the council's existing civic estate, which is currently heated by gas, alongside the hospital. It is anticipated that heat will be sourced from the sewage network as a sustainable heat source, supplemented by gas during periods of peak demand. To be classified as low carbon, the heat network will need to achieve operational emissions of below 100 kgCO₂ e/kWh/year. New-build apartments within the heat network zone will be required to connect to the network, in line with forthcoming legislation.

Heat networks elsewhere have required investment of tens of millions of pounds; for example, £52.4 million has been invested in an energy network in Stoke-on-Trent¹³.

At the time of writing, the capital cost of the full network has not yet been established, and commercialisation work remains ongoing. A commercial partner will be required to progress to the next stage, at which point the costs of the project can be developed in greater detail.

Digital connectivity

According to Think Broadband, as of May 2026, full-fibre broadband coverage in Stockport stands at 90.79%, compared to 84.5% across England. In terms of speed, 99.45% of connections achieve superfast broadband speeds (≥ 30 Mbps), exceeding the England average of 98.6%.

In 2020, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority secured a significant government investment to deliver world-class digital infrastructure through one of the UK's largest full-fibre programmes. Through the appointment of Virgin Media Business, up to 2,700 km of new fibre optic broadband infrastructure has been delivered across the city region. The programme aimed to connect more than 1,500 public sector sites and is known as the Greater Manchester Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) project.

Within Stockport, approximately 135 sites were identified for connection, including council offices, partner facilities and schools. By early 2022, the programme had successfully connected almost all of these sites, significantly enhancing digital capacity across the borough.

Digital infrastructure is a key enabler of the One Stockport Economic Plan, which sets out a shared vision for the local economy over the next ten years. Central to this is ensuring that Stockport has the infrastructure, skills and networks required to support digital start-ups, scale-ups and established businesses, enabling them to innovate, grow and contribute to the local economy.

The Radically Digital Stockport Strategy complements this approach by seeking to empower residents with digital skills, support the growth of digital businesses and transform council services through digital innovation. The Radically Digital programme is highlighted as a key enabling programme in the Council Plan 2024-27.

Building on the success of the LFFN programme, the Greater Manchester One Network utilises this full-fibre infrastructure to provide a high-capacity, secure and flexible digital network, enabling more efficient service delivery. It also provides a platform for the development of future "smart place" initiatives.

Looking ahead, the GMAOne network will support the expansion of advanced wireless technologies, including 5G, helping to deliver smart energy systems, intelligent transport solutions and improved digital/cloud connectivity and IT security. This will

¹³ Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire City Deal:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7c55b6ed915d3d0e87bb12/Stoke-on-Trent_and_Staffordshire_City_Deal.pdf

contribute to creating a more resilient, accessible, connected and sustainable borough for residents and businesses.

Utilities and the Local Plan

Policy CR 2 in the Stockport Local Plan will play a key role in ensuring that resources, including water supply, are sufficient to meet future needs. The policy requires all new residential development to achieve a water efficiency standard of no more than 110 litres per person per day

Policy INF 6 covers fresh water and wastewater infrastructure. It requires that for sites comprising over 150 dwellings or over 1,000 square metres gross floorspace, or where the scheme is proposed to be brought forward in phases, applicants will be required to demonstrate that there will be adequate water supply and wastewater infrastructure in place to service the development, and any proposed future phases of development.

Policy INF 2 relates to digital and telecommunications infrastructure. It states that the council will support proposals which enhance communication networks and future-proof development to accommodate ultrafast broadband infrastructure, as well as other emerging or higher specification technologies, subject to compliance with policy requirements relating to local character and highway safety. The policy also requires that all relevant major development is served by Full Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) technology and incorporates ducting capable of accommodating multiple digital infrastructure providers, thereby enabling resilience and future upgrades.

5. Health Infrastructure

Health and wellbeing are shaped by a wide range of environmental, social and economic factors. As such, achieving improved outcomes requires a whole system approach. The key issues facing the delivery of health and social care facilities in Stockport include:

- an ageing population
- significant inequalities in health between different areas and population groups within Stockport
- increasing expectations
- the rise of long-term conditions
- increasing costs of providing care, and
- constrained public resources.

The organisation of health and care services across England changed on 1 July 2022, following the introduction of new national legislation. Greater Manchester (GM) now operates as an Integrated Care System (ICS), a formal partnership of organisations working together to plan and deliver joined-up health and care services, and to improve outcomes for people who live and work across the city region.

Within Stockport, the One Stockport Health and Care Board acts as the locality partnership, bringing together key organisations from across the borough. The Board has developed the One Health and Care Plan¹⁴, which sets out shared priorities and actions for improving population health.

The overarching aims of the One Health and Care Plan are to ensure that:

- People are happier and healthier, and health inequalities are reduced
- Residents have access to safe, high-quality services that make best use of the 'Stockport pound'
- People and communities are supported to improve and protect their own health
- Communities are resilient, thriving and able to support sustainable economic growth

These priorities closely align with the NHS 10 Year Health Plan for England¹⁵, particularly its three transformative shifts: from hospital to community, from analogue to digital, and from sickness to prevention. Together, these principles underpin the emerging care model.

From a planning and infrastructure perspective, this approach has clear implications:

- A greater emphasis on community-based health facilities rather than the expansion of acute provision.

¹⁴ One Health and Care Plan: <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-board/one-health-and-care-plan>

¹⁵ Fit for the Future: 10 Year Health Plan for England: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-term-plan/>

- Increased demand for neighbourhood hubs and integrated health and wellbeing facilities.
- Growing importance of co-located services, including primary care, diagnostics, mental health services, social care and voluntary sector provision.
- A strong focus on maximising the use of existing health estate before considering new build development.

Most recently, the Department of Health and Social Care published their Neighbourhood Health Framework¹⁶. It sets out a new national direction for organising health and care services around neighbourhoods and delivering more care closer to home.

GP Practices

There are currently 32 GP practices operating from 39 properties across Stockport. GP practices provide a wide range of essential primary healthcare services, including advice on health conditions, vaccinations, examinations and treatments, prescriptions for medicines, and referrals to other health and social care services.

In Stockport, the GP practices are grouped into Primary Care Networks (PCN). A PCN is a group of GP practices working closely together, aligned to other health and social care staff and organisations, providing integrated services to their local population. A PCN covers a patient population, of 30,000 – 50,000 patients, although by approval of the commissioner, this may be lower in rural and remote areas, and higher where it is appropriate. In Stockport the PCNs are:

- Bramhall and Cheadle Hulme
- Cheadle Network
- Victoria
- Heatons Group Network
- Tame Valley
- Stockport East and South

Other PCNs that may be affected by development in Stockport include:

- Middlewood
- Wythenshaw
- Gorton and Levenshulme

Viaduct Care is the GP Federation representing all 32 practices and PCNs in Stockport. The Federation works collaboratively with partners to deliver health services and support GP practices. It works closely with its member practices to help reduce pressures on services and improve healthcare outcomes for patients. At present, most GP practices are operating with significant floorspace deficits.

¹⁶ Neighbourhood health framework: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/neighbourhood-health-framework/neighbourhood-health-framework>

We have been working closely with Stockport representatives from the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board (ICB) and NHS Property Services to understand and assess the potential impact of Local Plan development on GP practices across the borough.

Using a bespoke NHS methodology, the assessment indicates that, across most PCN localities in Stockport, the development proposed in the Local Plan would exacerbate existing floorspace shortfalls. As a result, extensions and/or remodelling of existing GP practices are likely to be required within affected PCNs to accommodate anticipated growth. This position will be kept under review as the Local Plan is implemented.

The analysis also shows that, over the plan period and should the projected growth be realised, additional health facilities may be required to serve the following localities:

- Heald Green
- Woodford and Hazel Grove (one facility to serve both localities); and
- The Town Centre

The need for improvements to existing facilities, alongside the provision of new health facilities, will be monitored by NHS GM ICB (or successor body). This will be informed through the assessment of development proposals on a site-by-site basis as schemes come forward.

This position will be supported by continued collaborative working between the NHS, the Integrated Care Board, NHS Property Services and the Local Planning Authority. Maintaining a positive and proactive relationship will be essential, with early and ongoing sharing of information on site capacities, phasing, land ownership and parameter plans. This will enable the NHS to accurately model future healthcare requirements and plan appropriate provision in line with growth proposed through the Local Plan.

In order to fund new primary healthcare services, NHS England capital guidance (2026/27 to 2029/30)¹⁷ makes clear that, alongside constrained national capital budgets, developer contributions play an important role in supporting infrastructure needed as a result of growth, and should be used to fund additional healthcare provision arising from new development.

Hospital Care and Community Health Services

Stockport NHS Foundation Trust operates Stepping Hill Hospital, which serves residents from Stockport and the High Peak. The hospital provides Accident and Emergency (A&E), inpatient and outpatient services. In addition, the Trust runs 24 community clinics across the borough.

Residents of Stockport, particularly those living in the west of the borough, also access services provided by neighbouring NHS Trusts. These include Manchester University

¹⁷ Capital guidance 2026/27 to 2029/30: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/capital-guidance-2026-27-to-2029-30/>

NHS Foundation Trust (notably Wythenshawe Hospital and Royal Manchester Children's Hospital) and The Christie NHS Foundation Trust.

Many community services operate out of NHS properties such as Health Centres or estate on acute hospital sites, some operate out of other public sector estate owned by Stockport Council, some operate from commercial premises such as offices and some out of community facilities such as churches and community centres. Some services require permanent spaces to operate clinical and specialist service from while others work in a mobile way and can use bookable spaces to run services.

Increasingly, screening and diagnostic services are delivered through mobile units that house scanners and medical equipment. These units are designed to offer flexible services close to where people live. Provision of suitable sites for these units, with access to power and water, is needed across the borough, especially in the district and town centres, which serve as hubs for their communities.

Stepping Hill Hospital continues to provide essential healthcare services for Stockport residents. In September 2025, a new Outpatients Building was opened, delivering a modern and efficient facility designed to improve patient experience and clinical delivery. The building contains over 50 consultation and treatment rooms, providing high-quality environments for patients, families and carers. Services delivered from the new facility include orthoptics, optometry, dentistry, cardiology, neurology, oncology, pain management, podiatry, rheumatology and other specialties.

Despite this recent investment, elements of the wider Stepping Hill Hospital estate are ageing and in a deteriorating condition, which is affecting the quality, functionality and adaptability of some clinical facilities. The estimated cost of addressing the most significant building condition issues is approximately £130 million. In response, stakeholders have been exploring options for the delivery of a new hospital facility, with a particular focus on the potential for services to be located within Stockport Town Centre.

In 2021, Stockport NHS Foundation Trust and Stockport Council shared proposals for a new hospital facility at the former Debenhams store in the town centre, and a bid was submitted to secure funding. However, Stepping Hill Hospital was not included in the successful schemes. The Trust continues to work with the council and other partners to explore opportunities to bring forward new health and care provision. This work aligns with NHS policy objectives to shift services from acute hospital settings into community locations and to prioritise early intervention and prevention. The delivery of modern, accessible facilities is a key requirement to provide the capacity and quality of services needed by Stockport's growing and ageing population.

At present, funding for a new hospital facility has not been secured. In the absence of such a project, it remains essential that existing facilities and operations at Stepping Hill Hospital are maintained and modernised where possible. Given the age, configuration and constraints of some buildings, redevelopment is likely to require demolition and rebuild to deliver facilities that meet modern healthcare standards and operational requirements.

Mental Health Services

Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust provides mental health, learning disability and autism services to a population of approximately 1.3 million people across six Greater Manchester boroughs, including Stockport. Services support people with mild to moderate mental health conditions, such as depression, anxiety and dementia, as well as those with more serious illnesses including schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

As set out in the Pennine Care Estates Strategy (2023-2028)¹⁸, the inpatient mental health estate in Stockport comprises:

- Stepping Hill Hospital – 70 adult beds across 4 wards
- The Meadows, Offerton – 53 older adult beds
- Heathfield House, Cale Green – 22 rehabilitation beds

Alongside inpatient provision, community mental health services play a vital role in supporting adults and older people with severe mental health needs, enabling care to be delivered as close to home as possible. Community teams provide assessments, individual and group therapies, treatments and outpatient appointments where home visits are not appropriate. These teams also require physical bases to carry out administrative functions, joint working, meetings and management activities. There are currently nine community mental health estate facilities across Stockport providing a range of services, including: talking therapies, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, learning disabilities, drug and alcohol support, psychiatric intensive care, rehabilitation services and dedicated provision for military veterans.

In relation to inpatient mental health provision, the Pennine Care Estates Strategy (2023-2028) indicates that facilities at The Meadows and Heathfield House are broadly assessed as being of good quality. In contrast, the inpatient facilities at Stepping Hill Hospital are considered to be of a lower quality and may require either phased withdrawal from use or significant investment to ensure ongoing compliance with relevant standards.

With regard to community mental health facilities, the Pennine Care Estates Strategy (2023-2028) sets out that a comprehensive review of properties across Stockport will be undertaken. This review will seek to rationalise and optimise the estate to meet the evolving needs of patients and services, and to identify those facilities that best meet location, functional and quality requirements. The findings will inform future investment planning and, where appropriate, disposal strategies.

Planned housing delivery of approximately 25,000 homes is expected to generate around 55,000–60,000 additional residents. While this growth is likely to be weighted towards working-age adults, there will also be a corresponding increase in older people over time.

¹⁸ Estates Strategy 2023-2028: <https://www.penninecare.nhs.uk/thisisus>

This population growth will result in increased demand across the full mental health pathway, including community, outpatient and inpatient services. For working-age adults, national prevalence data suggests that this level of growth will lead to:

- approximately 176–357 additional people per year experiencing psychosis
- approximately 800–1,000 additional people with bipolar disorder
- approximately 19–20 additional first episode psychosis cases per year

This is expected to translate into an increase of approximately 370–800 additional patients requiring support from Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT). Based on a planning assumption of 25 patients per caseload holder, this equates to a requirement for approximately 15–30 additional clinical staff over the plan period.

In addition, demand for common mental health services is expected to increase significantly, with Talking Therapies likely to experience the largest growth in activity, reflecting higher prevalence of anxiety and depression.

Despite the working-age focus of development, there will also be a measurable increase in older people requiring support. This is expected to lead to:

- approximately 400 additional people living with dementia
- increased demand for Memory Assessment Services, Older People CMHTs and care home liaison services

Memory Assessment Services are particularly sensitive to demand and capacity. Without sufficient diagnostic and clinical capacity, increases in demand are likely to result in longer waiting times and reduced performance against diagnostic standards.

Growth will also increase demand for outpatient services and shared care arrangements with GPs, including follow-up, prescribing and monitoring activity across both adult and older people pathways.

At the most acute end of the pathway, population growth is expected to generate a requirement for additional inpatient provision. Based on planning assumptions, this equates to:

- approximately 3–8 additional adult acute mental health beds
- approximately 4–10 additional older people beds (functional and organic)

Although relatively small in absolute terms, these beds represent critical system capacity, as inpatient services already operate at high occupancy levels. Without additional provision, there is a risk of increased out-of-area placements and pressure on crisis services.

Overall, housing growth will not only increase demand for mental health services but will also require proportionate expansion of community, diagnostic, outpatient and inpatient infrastructure to maintain safe, timely and effective care.

Stockport is part of the Greater Manchester Neighbourhood Model and is a recognised pilot site for the development of integrated neighbourhood-based health and care

services. This provides an opportunity to reshape how mental health services are delivered, moving away from traditional service silos towards more integrated, place-based models of care.

In line with the NHS 10 Year Health Plan, future infrastructure will need to support:

- the expansion of urgent and emergency mental health provision, including alternatives to traditional Emergency Departments
- the development of 24/7 neighbourhood mental health centres, providing access to crisis support, assessment and ongoing care closer to home
- greater integration between mental health, primary care, community services and the voluntary sector

For Stockport, this will require a shift in infrastructure planning towards:

- co-located neighbourhood hubs, where mental health, physical health and social care services are delivered from shared sites
- flexible clinical and non-clinical space to support multidisciplinary working and partnership delivery
- facilities that support both planned care (e.g. CMHT, memory assessment, talking therapies) and urgent/crisis response

As a Neighbourhood Pilot, Stockport will build on existing locality arrangements and community asset base to develop a network of neighbourhood centres. These centres will align with wider Local Plan priorities and emerging town centre and district centre regeneration opportunities.

Future investment will need to consider:

- how existing estate can be repurposed or consolidated to support integrated delivery
- where there are gaps in provision geographically, particularly in areas of population growth
- how mental health infrastructure can be planned alongside primary care, diagnostics and community services to ensure a fully joined-up approach

At this stage, detailed schemes are yet to be developed; however, the direction of travel is clear that future capital investment will prioritise community-based, integrated neighbourhood infrastructure, with a reduced reliance on traditional acute settings.

Adult Social Care

Adult social care operates within a complex system of related public services and forms of support. Adults with care needs are supported in two main ways: formally, through services funded by individuals themselves or by their local authority; and informally, through unpaid care provided by family members, friends or neighbours. Many people rely on a combination of these forms of support, and some voluntary and community organisations also provide free, formal care services.

Local authority–funded adult social care represents only a minority of the total care provided. Unlike NHS services, adult social care is not generally free at the point of use. Instead, it is subject to means-testing, with many users required to make a financial contribution towards the cost of their care.

In relation to adult social care infrastructure, a key aim of the council is to enable people with care and support needs to live independently and participate fully in inclusive, sustainable communities. Central to achieving this is ensuring that residents have access to high-quality, accessible housing that is appropriately designed to meet a range of needs.

While housing provision itself is not addressed directly within this Infrastructure Delivery Plan, the emerging Local Plan includes policies to support the delivery of specialist and supported housing in suitable locations, enabling people to live independently for as long as possible. This approach is further set out in the council’s Specialist and Supported Housing Strategy (2026–2040)¹⁹.

Pharmacists, Dentists and Opticians

Primary healthcare provision also includes services provided by pharmacists, dentists and opticians. These services are delivered on a commercial basis in response to demand.

NHS England commissions dental services and has a statutory duty to meet the needs of the local population for urgent and routine care. Unlike GP services, NHS dental services are not restricted to defined catchment areas, allowing patients to register with practices that are convenient, for example near their place of work. However, dental practices do not always have the capacity to accept new NHS patients.

Optometrists are contracted by the NHS to provide services under the General Ophthalmic Services (GOS) contract, which pays a standard fee for each NHS-funded sight test carried out by an optometrist or ophthalmic medical practitioner.

Data for Stockport shows that current provision is:

- 59 community pharmacies, 3 internet / distance selling pharmacies, 1 dispensing appliance contractor (DAC) and 1 hospital pharmacy; and
- 52 dental practices (mix of NHS and private).

Recommendations relating to pharmacy provision are informed by the statutory Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA)²⁰, prepared by Stockport’s Health and Wellbeing Board every three years. The PNA assesses population demographics, health needs and the availability of community pharmacies, identifying any gaps in provision where these arise.

¹⁹ Stockport Supported and Specialist Housing Strategy:

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/documents/supported-specialist-housing-strategy>

²⁰ <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-board/pharmaceutical-needs-assessment>

The 2025 PNA includes an assessment of anticipated population growth associated with new housing delivery, based on current major residential applications. It concludes that there is no current or expected gap in pharmacy provision in Stockport up to October 2028, when the next PNA is due to be published.

The PNA working group will review the proposed site allocations within Stockport's Local Plan in line with the strategic principles set out in section 2.4.5 of the Stockport PNA. This will inform future PNAs and the development of the Local Plan's infrastructure policies.

It is anticipated that dental practices, opticians and pharmacies will continue to be provided by the private sector in response to market demand over the Local Plan period.

Health infrastructure and the Local Plan

As demonstrated above, population growth resulting from the Local Plan is likely to impact health infrastructure across the borough.

The council will continue to work with providers to expand and improve the provision of all types of health provision where additional infrastructure provision is required because of new housing development.

Emerging Local Plan Policy COM 7 Health Care Facilities sets out the policy basis for this. It is clear that where additional health care facilities space are required as a result of housing development, the costs should fall upon the landowners or developers.

6. Emergency Services

Ambulance

The North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust (NWAS) provides 999 paramedic emergency services, urgent care services, patient transport services, and major incident management across the North West, covering Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Merseyside. The Trust serves a population of over 7 million across an area of more than 5,400 square miles.

There are two ambulance stations in Stockport, as follows:

- Stockport Ambulance Station, Hope Street, Stockport Town Centre
- Turves Road, Cheadle Hulme

Stockport Ambulance Station opened in 1962 and is the principal base for the delivery of emergency and non-emergency ambulance services within the borough. This level of activity on this site supports approximately 30–40 operational staff on duty at any one time, in addition to a small on-site management and administrative function.

Their service includes:

- 10 -15 double-crewed Paramedic Emergency Service (PES) ambulances (subject to operational demand)
- 3 Rapid Response Vehicles
- 6 Patient Transport Service ambulances (generally operating on weekdays only).

With the exception of a modest extension completed in 2011 to improve staff toilet and shower facilities, the station's overall footprint has remained unchanged since its original construction. The internal layout, staff amenities, and the building's structure and fabric no longer meet the requirements of a modern ambulance service and are in need of significant improvement and expansion. Increased operational demand in recent years, coupled with growth in staffing levels, has placed additional pressure on welfare facilities, including locker space, which is now insufficient. While the Northwest Ambulance Service (NWAS) is considering refurbishment and remodelling works in 2027 to address some of these issues, the station has effectively reached the end of its design life and is expected to require full replacement within the next 5–10 years.

Turves Road Station is co-located with Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service. The two services are adjoined in the same building, but with separate accommodation. There is a relatively modest ambulance service presence at the site comprising:

- 1 emergency ambulance
- 3 Patient Transport Vehicles.

The building dates from the mid-1960s and may need replacement during the plan period. This would need to be in collaboration with Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS).

Fire

Fire and rescue services are provided by GM FRS.

There are five fire stations in the borough at:

- Stockport Central (currently closed and new building under construction)
- Cheadle
- Marple
- Offerton
- Whitehill

The Annual Delivery Plan 2026/27²¹ covers the second year of a four-year strategy under the Fire Plan 2025-29²² and this sets out under the pillar of 'excellence and value' a commitment to deliver a new state-of-the-art community fire station at Stockport Central and to begin construction at Whitehill.

Stockport Central Community Fire Station is currently closed as it is in the process of being demolished and rebuilt, with completion estimated in September 2026. Firefighters are temporarily based at Whitehill to the north of the town centre. This investment will see the new station include sustainable heating and lighting systems and is part of GMFRS's 16-year Estates Improvement Programme to deliver a major overhaul of the buildings and facilities, with a combination of new community fire stations and refurbishments to significantly improve their overall standard and condition.

Whitehill Community Fire Station is scheduled to be the next asset in the programme to be modernised, with initial pre-construction design principles work to commence in late 2026, although it is expected that firefighters will continue to operate from the site whilst the refurbishment takes place.

Marple Fire Station has been the subject of temporary improvement works in 2025 and work on longer term requirements is underway as part of Phase 2 of the Estates programme.

With regard to future provision, GMFRS expect that the proposed delivery of new homes over the plan period represents a significant increase in residential risk profile and service demand across the borough which may impact appliance availability, response times and demand for GMFRS attendance at incidents as the population grows. An increase in incident demand could mean that where an appliance is already committed, any further emergency may require the nearest available fire appliance to respond from the nearest fire station, which may have an impact on attendance times. The current average response time target to life risk incidents is 7 minutes 30

²¹ Annual Delivery Plan: <https://manchesterfire.gov.uk/fire-plan/annual-delivery-plans/>

²² Greater Manchester Fire Plan: <https://manchesterfire.gov.uk/fire-plan/>

seconds. As such, developments should not introduce avoidable barriers to timely response.

Police

Policing in Stockport is provided by Greater Manchester Police with the main police station located at Cheadle Heath. The main Response Team are based in this building which also contains a centralised custody facility.

There are also five outstations which are the bases for neighbourhood police officers:

- Brinnington Post
- Bredbury Post
- Cheadle Post
- Hazel Grove
- Marple

Alongside the above, a number of teams are based at Fred Perry House in Stockport town centre including multi-agency safeguarding, complex safeguarding and prevention.

Funding for policing is agreed through Council Tax Precepts. There are no planned changes to the police estate in the borough for the next 5 to 10 years although this will be kept under review.

7. Education

Stockport Council is the Local Authority responsible for primary and secondary school place planning within the borough. The council have a duty to ensure sufficient school places are available for all children resident in the borough and carry out pupil forecasting to assess current and future demand, identifying shortfall or surplus school places.

Early years provision

Stockport benefits from a diverse range of early years provision across the borough, including private day nurseries, school-based nurseries and childminders. This mixed market offers parents a variety of options for children aged from 6 weeks to 5 years. Provision comprises approximately 220 childminders, 60 private day nurseries, 22 preschools or playgroups, and 8 independent school nurseries. In addition, there are 62 state school-based nurseries and 3 maintained nursery schools.

School-based nurseries are primarily education-focused and typically operate during standard school hours and on a term-time-only basis. In contrast, private day nurseries and childminders operate independently, are generally staffed by NVQ-qualified practitioners rather than qualified teachers, and offer more flexible and extended opening hours to meet parental demand.

Early years entitlement currently provides universal funded childcare for all 3 and 4-year-olds for 15 hours per week. This increases to 30 hours per week for eligible working parents of children aged 9 months to 4 years. In addition, disadvantaged 2-year-olds are entitled to 15 funded hours per week. All entitlements are delivered over 38 weeks per year and are designed to reduce childcare costs and support parental participation in the workforce.

The Early Years team undertakes an annual assessment of provision capacity for children aged 0 to 4 to ensure compliance with the statutory duty set out in the Childcare Act. At present, there are no identified sufficiency issues in Stockport; however, this position is reviewed regularly. Should pressures emerge in future, these are more likely to arise within the private day nursery sector, as school-based provision currently has a surplus of places.

Primary and secondary provision

Stockport currently has 87 primary schools and 14 secondary schools, comprising a mix of maintained, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, and academy provision. For planning purposes, the borough is divided into 12 primary and 4 secondary planning areas. These geographies support the effective management of school place planning by enabling detailed forecasting of demand and ensuring sufficient capacity is available across each phase of education.

Pupil place forecasts are developed over 5 and 10-year periods to identify potential surpluses or deficits. These forecasts draw on a robust evidence base, including birth data, housing delivery trajectories, migration trends, and school admissions patterns. This approach ensures that place planning responds dynamically to both demographic change and planned growth.

Birth rates are falling nationally, the impact is being seen in Stockport through school admissions and birth data, with an increasing number of places available in Reception cohorts for the last 3 years which is expected to remain for 7-10 years then increase slightly but will plateau close to current figures. The impact of housing developments identified as part of the local plan indicate that there will be a slight increase in primary age children, but this will have little impact on school place sufficiency; the secondary sector will see a larger increase in children from housing over the next 5-15 years.

The current land supply does not differentiate between tenures and number of bedrooms which may have an impact on forecasting in the future, but the IDP will be reviewed regularly and will look at the infrastructure needs throughout the Local Plan period, updating sufficiency if needs are identified.

The forecast model has been updated to include the addition of anticipated pupil yields from the new housing developments included in the Local Plan and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to allow for school place planning as necessary.

In the primary sector the revised forecast has identified some areas where large developments are proposed which will see a slight uplift in pupil numbers such as Bramhall and Heald Green, however, sufficient current places will remain available within the planning area. Within all other planning areas, no significant uplift in school places will be required with schools expected to remain close to current occupancy levels leaving a surplus of places overall within planning areas and the borough.

A notable exception is the Town Centre Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) area, where approximately 8,000 new homes are proposed. These are predominantly apartment-led schemes, which typically generate lower pupil yields. To support sustainable community development and ensure access to local education provision, a new town centre school is proposed, including a two-form entry primary phase.

Secondary school forecasting has shown that the proposed housing will have an impact on places which will require the need for additional places to be created. The new town centre school is planned to offer a five-form entry secondary school which will meet most of the need created by the additional housing development throughout the borough. We anticipate that additional places will be needed over and above the provision of the new town centre school, most likely in the South and East of the borough, but due to unstable pupil numbers each year these places would be commissioned annually to meet our statutory duty.

Where additional capacity is required beyond that identified, the council will work collaboratively with schools and academy trusts to deliver expansions within the relevant planning areas. All new places will be provided in accordance with statutory School Admissions requirements, ensuring a fair and compliant approach to place allocation rather than one driven solely by parental preference.

Special school provision

Stockport has seen an increase in pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who require an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), with the highest need seen in the areas of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH). This increase is expected to continue year on year for the next five years, then will settle in line with the current numbers.

Children with an EHCP access different types of education provision based on their needs; in Stockport this includes mainstream, resource base, specialist or alternative provision. The Local Authority have increased the number resource bases, this is specialist provision within a mainstream school, offering more education places at schools within a child's local area and are committed to offer more resource bases to meet the growing need for specialist places.

Due to the rapidly increasing demand for specialist places, the Local Authority continue to have insufficient places for children within maintained provisions, commissioning Independent and non-maintained placements to meet the gap in demand. Independent placements come at a considerably higher cost than maintained placements which places increased financial pressure on the Local Authority in providing these statutory services and reducing the opportunity to invest in increased maintained specialist provision.

The Local Authority continue to assess options for creating new specialist provision and improving the facilities at existing specialist schools, including bidding to the Department for Education to rebuild existing schools, but these all come at considerable financial cost that cannot be met through existing budgets. All additional housing in the borough will increase the already existing pressure in the specialist sector and require the commissioning of additional places, this will require developer contributions from all proposed developments to support SEND placements.

Post-16 education

Stockport has 2 secondary schools which provide Sixth form education and 4 colleges which provide a range of post-16 qualifications.

The secondary schools with sixth form provision are Cheadle Hulme High School and Hazel Grove High School, which both offer a range of AS and A levels. The 4 colleges are Aquinas College, Cheadle College, Marple Sixth form College and Stockport College, these offer a range of qualifications including AS and A levels, vocational, technical and higher education courses.

There is 1 performing arts academy in Stockport, Axis Performing Arts, which offers a BTEC level 3 Extended Diploma in dancing and acting.

There is no anticipated shortfall in post-16 places at present with the selection of schools & colleges, both within Stockport and in neighbouring boroughs, offering children a wide range of options to support learning, skills and employment.

As of March 2025, 2.6% of young people (aged 16-18) in Stockport were not in employment, education or training (NEET), which is well below the Greater Manchester average of 4.5% and the National average 4.6%. The borough continues to have good levels of participation at post 16 level, which is not expected to change based on known development.

Education infrastructure and the Local Plan

The council will continue to monitor education provision, regularly updating modelling and forecasts to ensure that sufficient school places are available at all stages to meet the needs of residents across the borough. Developer contributions, secured through Section 106 agreements, are and will continue to be sought to support the expansion and enhancement of education provision where required.

Emerging Local Plan Policy COM3 provides the detail for this approach. It sets out that the council will work in partnership with relevant stakeholders to support the delivery of a comprehensive network of educational facilities across the borough. The policy adopts a flexible approach over the plan period, recognising that educational needs may change over time, and establishes the requirements and methodology for securing developer contributions towards education provision.

8. Cultural and Community Facilities

The borough contains a diverse range of cultural and community facilities, including community centres, libraries, family hubs, museums and theatres. These assets are important in bringing communities together, enhancing quality of life, and supporting opportunities for creative expression and skills development.

Community Centres

The current community centre estate consists of 25 assets owned by the council. The assets exist to support local communities and are used by micro businesses, community groups, third sector organisations and youth groups. The buildings are currently rented out on an hourly basis. This income does not provide for the full running costs, with the remaining funding provided by the council.

The council currently directly operate 12 community centres. The following buildings are directly maintained and managed by council officers:

- Brabyns Recreation Centre, Marple Bridge
- Crescent Road Community Centre, Portwood, Stockport
- Gatley Hill House, Gatley
- Kimberley Street Community Centre, Shaw Heath
- Marple Senior Citizens Centre, Marple
- New Bairstow Centre, Reddish
- Torkington Community Centre, Hazel Grove
- Underhill Community Centre, Romiley
- Adswood Young People's Centre, Adswood, Stockport
- Reddish Young People's Centre, Reddish
- Werneth Young People's Centre, Bredbury
- Woodbank Young People's Centre, Offerton

There are 8 community centres that are owned and maintained by the council but are run by committees. The committees have varying levels of responsibility depending on the specific agreement in place ranging from basic administration and cleaning to repair and maintenance. These are based within halls and community centres at Cheadle, Cheadle Heath, Hazel Grove, Heald Green, Heaton Chapel, North Reddish, Offerton and Woodley.

A further 5 community centres are run and managed by Stockport Homes Group on behalf of the council. These centres are associated with specific housing estates or locations and are used to deliver services to the residents of Stockport Homes Buildings, based within centres at Bridgehall, Brinnington (two facilities), Offerton and Woodley.

Overall, there is no current requirement to deliver additional facilities in the future, although this may change as new communities emerge as new housing is delivered.

Young People's Centres

There are three Young People's Centres in the borough:

- Adswood
- Reddish
- Woodbank

All facilities include versatile spaces for hire suitable for community groups and activities. In addition, some of the centres are occupied by other complementary services, such as a nursery provision at Woodbank and specialist support services at Adswood.

The former Young People's Centre at Werneth is now used by Stockport Music Service for rehearsals.

There are no plans to upgrade the centres at this time, although this will be kept under regular review.

Life Leisure family hubs

The council delivers leisure and active wellbeing services through its agent, Stockport Active CIC (trading as Life Leisure), which is wholly owned by the council. Avondale, Cheadle Heath

- Brinnington Park
- Cheadle
- Grand Central, Stockport
- Hazel Grove
- Houldsworth Village, Reddish
- Romiley
- Stockport Sports Village, Woodley

These facilities all include 'One Stockport Family Hub Bridges', offering a number of services including:

- Pregnancy and anti natal care
- Children's health and development
- Play sessions
- Special Educational Needs and disabilities
- Housing
- Training and employment opportunities
- Youth activities
- Mental health and wellbeing

Libraries

The current library estate consists of Central Library and Stockroom in the town centre and a further 12 assets directly delivered by the council and 3 co-located with community centres managed by Stockport Homes Group:

- Adswold and Bridgehall (Bridgehall Community Centre, managed by Stockport Homes)
- Brinnington (First House, managed by Stockport Homes)
- Bramhall
- Bredbury
- Cheadle
- Cheadle Hulme
- Edgeley
- Great Moor
- Offerton (Offerton Community Centre, managed by Stockport Homes)
- Hazel Grove
- Heald Green
- Heatons
- High Lane
- Marple
- Reddish

Since opening in May 2025, Stockroom has had a highly successful first 12 months welcoming over 1 million visitors and contributing to Merseyway Shopping Centre's busiest year on record with footfall topping 11.4 million visits. Alongside a new library, Stockroom is a family-friendly destination and creative and cultural centre within former under-used retail units, which has established itself as an inclusive and welcoming space to drop in, take part or relax.

Over a five-year period from 2021/22 to 2025/26, there has been a marked increase in usage of Stockport's libraries and the success of Stockroom has contributed to this:

- Visitors: +84%
- Loans : + 464%
- PC usage: +61%
- New memberships: +60%

Central Library is temporarily closed to the public pending the relocation of archives storage to Stockroom. The current intention is for the site to become the new home of Stockport Music Service, alongside a library offer.

A new library is also being delivered at Marple Community Hub. The library will temporarily be provided as a pop-up library in the Scout Headquarters, until the hub opens in Winter 2026/27. This will contain a new library with dedicated children's area, a flexible community room, and three smaller meeting rooms to cater for a variety of activities and groups. Other facilities at the hub will include:

- Five-lane swimming pool, children's splashpad and wet changing village

- 60-station fitness suite
- Multi-purpose activity studios
- Community care facility for Marple Clinic with health, wellbeing and support services
- Café

The libraries are a key asset in the delivery of a broad range of council services and support for our communities, offering a mix of staffed and unstaffed hours with 12 of the assets providing access for 77 hours per week. Libraries are designated as Live Well Spaces, providing services for our residents to live their best lives in their neighbourhoods. There are opportunities within the estate to improve the accessibility of council services by offering a safe warm space for services to operate from.

There is currently a large number of library buildings spread across the borough. Although as communities have developed over time the location for some of these buildings has become less central to the communities they serve. There is currently no planned provision for new communities such as Woodford Garden Village and this may require capital funding in the future.

Generally, the estate is in a mixed condition with ongoing sometimes significant requirements for capital maintenance and repair due to the historic nature of many of the assets. The buildings are mixed age and type and will require future investment to maintain services, including the opportunity to co-locate libraries within other new infrastructure builds across the borough, as well as opportunity to invest in libraries to support co-location with other services.

SMBC's Library Service will continue to explore options for new or enhanced facilities over the plan period. A Libraries 2030 Strategy is currently being prepared to look at modernising our neighbourhood library provision with a focus on maximising the opportunity for co-location with other services, ensuring they are accessible and relevant to communities across the borough.

Cultural facilities

Local authorities do not have a statutory responsibility to provide or facilitate the provision of cultural facilities or activities. Cultural facilities are provided by the council, the voluntary sector and by commercial providers. The types of facilities include museums, art galleries, theatres and music/arts venues and cinemas.

The council manages and operates 5 museums/galleries located in Stockport town centre: Stockport Air Raid Shelters

- Hat Works,
- Stockport Museum,
- Staircase House; and
- Stockport War Memorial Art Gallery.

The council also operates and manages Bramall Hall, located in Bramhall.

During 2025/26, a total of 80,000 visitors visited the 5 town centre museums. There is capacity to accommodate an increase in visitors across all 5 sites as a result of the increased number of homes being built in the town centre.

Stockport Air Raid Shelters, Staircase House and Hat Works each offer popular learning programmes linked to the national curriculum. The learning sessions are open to local schools across Stockport, Greater Manchester and beyond. There is capacity to accommodate an increased number of pupils from schools within the local area.

In May 2025, the council opened Stockroom – a new learning and discovery centre located within Merseyway Shopping Centre and its success (see Libraries section) has complemented the cultural offer within the town centre.

The Museums estate is facing ongoing issues with building maintenance, ageing and deteriorating assets, increasing costs of running the estate and constrained public resources.

SMBC's Museums Service is keen to work with developers within the vicinity of its buildings to look at ways to improve museum infrastructure and the visitor offer through Section 106 agreements, developer contributions and sponsorship. The Service is currently working closely with Cityheart/Russell Bolton Consulting, the developers of Stopford Park on the former Stockport College site who, in accordance with the Section 106 agreement for Planning Applications DC/077008 and DC/076785, will deliver a new landscaping scheme, improved public realm and the provision of 3 accessible parking spaces at the War Memorial Art Gallery.

There are a number of independent and commercial venues providing cultural facilities across the borough. The Avro Heritage Museum at Woodford is an independent attraction that preserves the legacy of this important aircraft manufacturer.

Numerous art galleries are located throughout the borough, alongside six theatres operating across locations including Romiley, Marple, Cheadle and Bramhall, as well as the Stockport Plaza and Garrick Theatre in the town centre.

A range of cinemas also operate within the borough, including the Light Cinema in Stockport town centre, the Savoy in Heaton Moor and the Regent in Marple.

Cultural activities also take place in a variety of other venues, such as community centres, churches and halls, and are delivered by voluntary, community and commercial organisations.

The council is committed to enhancing its cultural offer and will seek to do so as opportunities arise, including through external funding streams such as the Arts Council and Museum Development Fund.

Places of worship

Stockport has a diverse population, and this is reflected in the data relating to religious identity within the borough. The 2021 Census reported that Stockport's population was broken down by the following religions: 39.6% no religion, 47.5%

Christian, 0.3% Buddhist, 0.8% Hindu, 0.4% Jewish, 5.5% Muslim, 0.2% Sikh and 0.4% any other religion (5.2% of respondents provided no answer).

Given this, there are a range of places of worship and associated infrastructure across the borough to reflect the religious needs of the local community. There are 170 facilities across the borough covering faiths such as:

- Church of the Latter Day Saints
- Church of England
- Christianity
- Jehovah's Witness
- Judaism
- Hinduism
- Humanists
- Islam
- Methodist
- Roman Catholic
- Quakers

The majority of faith groups congregate in specific places of worship, while some meet within multi-purpose buildings such as community centres.

Cemeteries and crematoriums

There are 5 cemeteries and 16 closed churchyards in the borough. Of the cemeteries, 2 are actively open where a new grave can be purchased:

- Mill Lane, Cheadle
- Highfield, Bredbury

The remaining 3 sites are classed as 'closed' as there are no opportunities for burials at this time:

- Stockport
- Willow Grove, Reddish
- Park Road, Cheadle

In terms of remaining capacity, Mill Lane Cemetery has 971 plots remaining which represents 8 to 9 years of burial land left. Highfield Cemetery has 284 plots remaining, with 8 years left.

The council are exploring options for expansion of existing cemeteries to accommodate further burials over the plan period and beyond. Both of these projects are identified in the IDP schedule.

- Highfield – Issues with drainage on the current site are impacting burial creation. Land has been identified to the west in the Local Plan, although this is dependent on access being created for both pedestrians and vehicles.

- Stockport – The borough’s most accessible cemetery is currently closed to new graves. Land has been identified to the east in the Local Plan and is subject to policy on wildlife corridors being satisfied.

Cultural and Community Facilities and the Local Plan

Emerging Policy COM 2 supports the provision of new community and social infrastructure. It requires that new development is adequately supported by such infrastructure and, where deficiencies are identified, developers will be expected to provide new facilities on-site or contribute towards the provision, improvement and/or expansion of off-site infrastructure. The policy also resists the loss of community and social infrastructure unless suitable alternative provision is available or can be delivered in an accessible location, or it can be demonstrated that the existing use is no longer financially or operationally viable following appropriate marketing.

With regard to cemeteries and crematoria, emerging Policy COM 8 supports proposals for new or expanded facilities where they avoid adverse impacts on the environment, including surface and groundwater and ecological value, do not give rise to unacceptable impacts on neighbouring uses, and respect the visual character of the area. The policy also expresses a preference for the expansion of existing facilities where feasible.

9. Sport and recreation

Stockport's sport and recreation facilities form a key part of the borough's character, supporting physical activity and contributing to the health and wellbeing of residents. Both outdoor and built provision are important assets, serving local communities and, in many cases, a wider catchment across the borough and beyond.

Leisure Facilities

The council delivers leisure and active wellbeing services through its agent, Stockport Active CIC (trading as Life Leisure), which is wholly owned by the council. Their strategic approach aligns with both the One Stockport Borough Plan and the Stockport Active Communities Strategy. Life Leisure run an extensive mix of sports and leisure facilities, ranging from small community recreation centres to large multi-use sport and leisure facilities. In addition, they deliver sporting activities and health programmes of the highest quality to those people who for one reason or another cannot access a local facility.

Life Leisure currently operates eight leisure facilities-across Stockport:

- Avondale – gym and health hub, Move Well studio for people with mobility issues, swimming pool, and sports hall (badminton, table tennis)
- Brinnington Park – gym, sports hall (badminton, basketball, table tennis, pickleball, netball), and outdoor pitches
- Cheadle – gym and swimming pool
- Grand Central – gym, padel courts, and 50m swimming pool
- Hazel Grove – gym and swimming pool
- Houldsworth Village – gym, badminton courts, and padel facilities
- Romiley – gym and swimming pool
- Stockport Sports Village – gym, tennis courts and football pitches (this facility is due to change from December 2026; further details are provided in the playing pitches section)

In addition, Marple Hub is scheduled to open in autumn 2026. This new facility will include a library, swimming pool, fitness suite, studio/community space, café, and the relocated Marple Clinic.

As a Community Interest Company Wholly Owned by the council, Life Leisure operations are continuously monitored by the Board and at Scrutiny.

Alongside council-commissioned provision, there is a broad range of private leisure facilities across the borough, including:

- Private gyms and swimming pools
- Padel facilities
- Climbing walls
- A trampoline park

- Gymnastics facilities

Playing pitches and outdoor sport

The Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS)²³ provides the most up-to-date assessment of sports pitch provision across Stockport and identifies opportunities to enhance capacity and quality. The strategy covers the following sports:

- Football
- Cricket
- Rugby union
- Rugby League
- Rounders
- Australian Rules Football
- Hockey
- Lacrosse

The strategy sets out that across all sports, the current position is that demand is either being met or there is a shortfall. There is therefore a clear requirement to protect all existing playing pitch provision unless it can be demonstrated that it is surplus to requirements, or it will be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of both quantity and quality.

Demand is currently being met for hockey, rounders, Australian Rules football, and some elements of cricket. However, this should not be interpreted as a surplus. Instead, any spare capacity should be used to help address existing or future shortfalls.

Most identified shortfalls in grass pitches can be addressed through the more efficient use of existing provision. This includes improving pitch quality, installing sports lighting, enhancing ancillary facilities, bringing disused pitches back into use, and securing access to currently unavailable sites (such as school facilities). As a result, the need for new grass pitches is generally limited. However, additional provision may still be required if these measures prove insufficient, particularly for cricket or to support major residential developments and new schools.

In contrast, there is a clear and quantified shortfall in artificial grass pitches (3G), which can only be addressed through the provision of new facilities. This shortfall is significant, and increasing 3G capacity would also help alleviate pressure on overused grass pitches by enabling the transfer of play. It would additionally support the growth of teams and leagues, particularly for formats such as 3v3, 5v5 and 7v7 football.

From 1 April 2026, Stockport County Football Club will take over the operation of Stockport Sports Village (SSV), building on the strong community role established by Life Leisure since 2012. The next phase of development will position SSV as a key hub

²³ Stockport Playing Pitch Strategy: <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/documents/stockport-playing-pitch-strategy>

for football, education and community activity, supporting long-term investment and increased use of the site.

Under these proposals, SSV will become the permanent base for the Club's Academy, women's teams, Football Education programme, and Stockport Town Football Club. This will establish the site as a leading centre for football development within the borough, while maintaining and expanding provision for grassroots and community football as part of future investment.

Other outdoor sport

Provision for other outdoor sports is assessed through Stockport's Open Space Assessment²⁴, which considers the quantity, quality, accessibility and future demand of facilities based on population growth and consultation findings.

Overall, there is sufficient provision across tennis, bowls, golf and athletics to meet current and future needs, with most facilities rated as good quality and offering some spare capacity. In tennis, the majority of courts are in good condition, although some park-based courts require improvement; the focus should therefore be on enhancing existing facilities rather than increasing supply. Similarly, bowling greens are generally of good quality and able to accommodate demand, meaning priorities should centre on maintaining and improving existing provision and supporting club sustainability.

Golf provision is well distributed across the borough, with all courses assessed as good quality and no identified gaps in access. A range of membership and pay-and-play options supports flexibility for users.

Athletics provision is centred on Woodbank Athletics Stadium which includes an ongoing maintenance regime. For example, the Club has had the track professionally cleaned with plans to do this on a regular basis.

Padel is an emerging and fast-growing sport in Stockport. Governed by the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), they estimate a current shortfall of community-accessible courts in the borough and are working with the council to identify opportunities to address unmet demand.

In summary, the strategic priority across these sports is to protect, maintain and enhance existing facilities, rather than deliver significant new provision.

Sport and recreation provision and the Local Plan

Given the above, the emerging Local Plan seeks to protect existing provision of appropriate quality and value in line with national policy, whilst supporting

²⁴ Available on the Council website at [Supporting information and evidence - Stockport Council](#) from 23 September.

improvements to access, quality, functionality and capacity where deficiencies are identified. This will be achieved through emerging Policy COM 4 and COM 6.

New residential development will be required to contribute to outdoor recreational space to address the additional demand it generates, prioritising on-site provision where appropriate. Where on-site provision is not feasible or required, financial contributions will be sought towards off-site provision. This will be achieved through emerging Policy HOM 8.

The extent of provision required and the type of provision to be made or contributed towards will be established in accordance with local and national policy and informed by the council's Open Space Assessment, Playing Pitch Strategy and other relevant up-to-date evidence of need/priority.

Some allocations may specifically offer a benefit in this regard where reprovision and improvements to existing pitches and facilities can be provided alongside the development of the site. For example, development at Heald Green West (HOM 2.33) should see the reprovision of existing football pitches and changing rooms (Cheadle and Gatley Junior Football Club) within its boundary, providing the opportunity to increase the amount of usage of those pitches and an improvement in the facilities supporting their use.

Hyde Bank Meadows (HOM 2.17) includes the requirement to improve adjacent pitches at Tangshutt Fields (Gotherage Lane Playing Fields) that are currently of low value in usage terms but where there is high demand for youth pitches.

The council will also work with sports federations, National Governing Bodies and clubs to improve sports provision, including in joint bids to Sport England, the Football Foundation and other funders.

10. Green and Blue Infrastructure

This section summarises the role and provision of green infrastructure and blue infrastructure across Stockport.

Green and blue infrastructure is the network of natural spaces and links that run through the borough. It includes places like parks and gardens, playing fields, allotments, woodland, open countryside, hedgerows, rivers, canals, ponds and lakes.

As well as providing habitat, these spaces provide a range of practical benefits by working with nature, for example, helping to manage water, reduce flood risk, improve air quality, and support how we adapt to and mitigate climate change. The cross-cutting value attributed to our nature spaces is often referred to as ‘**natural capital**’.

Green infrastructure is defined in the NPPF as:

“A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.”

Green infrastructure is a big part of everyday life in Stockport. Residents and visitors use it regularly for walking, recreation and exercise, and it also shapes how places look and feel. This is particularly important in areas where green space has been restored or created from the borough’s industrial past. Overall, having a varied, well-connected and accessible network of green spaces is essential to creating attractive, healthy and distinctive places across Stockport.

The borough’s strategic green infrastructure network is assessed through a variety of studies and pieces of evidence including: the Open Space Assessment, the Landscape Character Assessment²⁵, the Ecological Network Study²⁶, and the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy²⁷.

The borough’s blue infrastructure is considered through the Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP)²⁸, and the emerging town centre Integrated Drainage Strategy (IDS). Our understanding of flood risk across the borough is detailed through the level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, and the level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

²⁵ Landscape Character Assessment: <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/evidence-planning-policy/environment-and-heritage>

²⁶ Ecological Network Study: <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/evidence-planning-policy/environment-and-heritage>

²⁷ Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/natural-environment/our-plan-for-nature-recovery/>

²⁸ Integrated Water Management Plan: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/integrated-water-management/>

Open Space

The Local Plan is supported by an Open Space Assessment which outlines what provision exists in the area, its condition, distribution and overall quality. It considers the demand for provision based upon population distribution, planned growth and consultation findings. Current open space provision in Stockport is detailed below at Figure 10.1.

Figure 10.1 : current open space provision in Stockport by typology.

Open space typology	Number of sites	Total amount (hectares) ¹
Allotments	32	38
Amenity greenspace	164	245
Cemeteries/churchyards	16	42
Civic Spaces	8	3
Green corridors	16	88
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	29	453
Park and gardens	48	285
Provision for children & young people	183	16
TOTAL	496	1,170

There is a total of 496 sites, comprising 1,170 hectares of open space. Natural and semi-natural greenspace represents the largest proportion, accounting for 453 hectares (39%) of Stockport's total open space provision.

The assessment also identified deficiencies in provision across all analysis areas when measured per 1,000 population against recommended standards, as illustrated in Figure 10.2 below.

Figure 10.2: Summary of open space types and shortfalls in different areas across the borough.

Analysis area	Parks and gardens		Natural & Semi-Natural		Amenity greenspace		Allotments		Play provision	
	0.96		1.52		0.82		0.13		0.06	
	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -
Bramhall & Cheadle Hulme Sth	0.77	-0.19	0.66	-0.86	0.65	-0.17	0.03	-0.10	0.03	-0.03
Central	1.58	+0.62	0.76	-0.76	0.81	-0.01	0.11	-0.02	0.05	-0.01
Cheadle	1.61	+0.65	0.70	-0.82	1.21	+0.39	0.15	+0.02	0.06	Level
Heatons & Reddish	0.36	-0.60	2.32	+0.80	0.86	+0.04	0.20	+0.07	0.03	-0.03
Marple	1.71	+0.75	4.73	+3.21	0.53	-0.29	0.10	-0.03	0.20	+0.14
Stepping Hill	0.53	-0.43	0.68	-0.84	0.49	-0.33	0.16	+0.03	0.05	-0.01
Werneth	0.04	-0.92	2.18	+0.66	1.19	+0.37	0.12	-0.01	0.03	-0.03

Given the identified shortfalls across a range of typologies and locations, there is a clear need to protect, manage, enhance and, where possible, expand the borough's open space provision. Several quantitative deficiencies are highlighted within the open space typologies, however, addressing these through the creation of new provision can be challenging, particularly where significant land requirements are involved.

As a result, a pragmatic approach often focuses on improving the accessibility and quality of existing provision. Opportunities to enhance current sites and strengthen linkages between them should therefore be actively pursued. Nevertheless, this also reinforces the importance of ensuring that new housing developments incorporate on-site open space provision and/or appropriate contributions, in order to avoid exacerbating existing deficiencies.

In line with the approach adopted for formal sport, proposed Policy COM 4 seeks to protect and enhance existing open space, including allotments. Emerging Policy COM 5 designates some specific areas of open space as Local Green Space where they are in reasonably close proximity to the community they serve, demonstrably special to the local community and holding particular local significance (on the basis of their beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including playing fields), tranquillity, or richness of wildlife), local in character and not an extensive tract of land. Policy HOM 8 sets out the requirement for new residential development to make provision for children's play and deliver a range of open space typologies, including parks and gardens, amenity greenspace, and natural or semi-natural greenspace.

Our Ecological Network

Current infrastructure provision

The term 'biodiversity' refers to the range of all living organisms and the ecosystems that they are part of; it includes the diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems (CIEEM, 2018). Biodiversity forms an essential part of green infrastructure, but it is detailed individually within this document due to the recent requirements set out in the Environment Act 2021 relating to nature and biodiversity.

The Environment Act 2021 brought in new requirements for when councils are making planning decisions in relation to nature and biodiversity including Biodiversity Net Gain. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is defined as an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a measurably better state than before the development took place. It is additional enhancement over and above the level required to mitigate or compensate for any detrimental impact through the mitigation hierarchy.

BNG became mandatory for most types of development nationally in early 2024. This means that developers must deliver a BNG of 10%, as measured by the statutory biodiversity metric. The preference for this is to be delivered on-site however there is the option to deliver off-site units or purchase biodiversity credits from the government.

An Ecological Network Study was undertaken to inform policies and designations within the Local Plan. The purpose of the study was to establish a coherent ecological corridor and establish linkages and opportunities for enhancement. The study describes how a coherent, evidenced-based ecological network has been established for the borough. It

included a review of the 2006 Adopted UDP Green Chain designation and considered interrelationships between adjoining authorities' ecological corridors.

Ecological assets were identified including designated sites and notable habitats, GM priority habitats and species, and open space data. Green Chain designations which fell outside of these ecological assets layer were individually considered in terms of ecological functionality in line with the Lawton principles of resources being "bigger, better, more and joined up". Identified ecological assets were subdivided to Core, Linear Corridors, Stepping Stones and Opportunity Areas using spatial analysis led by Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU).

The 'core' and 'linear' elements ecological network are shown as designations on our policies map; the presence of these designations does not necessarily preclude development however policies within the Local Plan set the expectations of what would be required from developments taking place within the network or that affect the network.

Following on from Ecological Network Study, LUC were commissioned in April 2019 to provide a comprehensive ecological study for the borough. This study includes an assessment of habitat types, described in terms of their importance nationally and regionally and in terms of their local status. The Study provides a review of the existing evidence base and, through targeted field surveys, identifies opportunities for delivery of locally-appropriate biodiversity net gain (BNG), including key linkages between these habitats.

Future infrastructure provision

Mandatory BNG provision is calculated on a site-by-site basis. Developers are required to use the statutory metric to show a proposal's percentage biodiversity net gain. The metric is used to calculate habitat value before and after development in terms of biodiversity units. A mandatory net gain of 10% must be provided, either onsite or offsite.

Where mandatory BNG is required as part of a development, the cost of provision will fall upon the landowners/developers, and this is non-negotiable.

The council is now working towards developing a co-ordinated approach to habitat banking to create habitat units within Stockport which can be used to support the delivery of mandatory biodiversity net gain (BNG) linked to new developments. The council is working collaboratively with other Greater Manchester authorities, and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) who will provide the 'responsible body' service, to provide oversight on the creation and management of habitat improvements.

As habitat units become available for sale, they will be created and maintained over a 30-year period. These units will be available to purchase to satisfy the requirements of the biodiversity net gain planning condition.

This work is still ongoing so at this point in time the habitat banking locations have not been formally agreed, but the IDP can be updated as this work progresses to identify

these key projects to which will provide ecological enhancements to support new developments across Stockport.

The emerging policies in the Local Plan place a strong emphasis on the protection and enhancement of the natural environment. Policy ENV1 seeks to ensure a holistic approach to the protection, enhancement and management of nature, including green and blue infrastructure. Policy ENV2 further supports this objective by promoting the enhancement of biodiversity through new development. It requires relevant development to incorporate green infrastructure and to strengthen the Ecological Network by enhancing and addressing gaps in its quantity, quality, accessibility, functionality and connectivity.

Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Current infrastructure provision

The Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy (GM LNRS) is a statutory spatial strategy that sets out priorities and mapped areas for restoring and enhancing nature across Greater Manchester. It identifies where habitat creation, restoration and connectivity will deliver the greatest benefits for biodiversity, climate resilience and people, and is intended to guide planning, land management and investment decisions across the city region.

Future infrastructure provision

There are 6 targets, linked to 3 aims, for the monitoring and delivery of the LNRS. Aim 1 is to: 'Enhance and protect: safeguard, enhance and restore wildlife-rich spaces', with a target of bringing 50% of sites designated for nature into active management for nature conservation by 2035, across the whole of Greater Manchester. To deliver against this target the council is preparing habitat management plans (HMP) for sites across Stockport, and our local target is to do 3 HMPs each year.

The purpose of the habitat management plans (HMPs) is to bring the sites into active management for nature conservation. This includes things like seasonal mowing and management of invasive species. In 2025 we received grant money from GMCA to prepare habitat management plans for Woodbank park, Tangshutts Local Nature Reserve and Wright Wood Local Nature Reserve.

The 'active management' of these sites, as defined by GMCA in the LNRS, will help to respond to the declaration of the ecological emergency, and strengthen Stockport and GM's ecological robustness in the face of a growing population. We are expecting to receive further grant funding this year to prepare another 3 HMPs for sites across the borough.

Emerging Local Plan Policy ENV3 is the key policy in relation to nature recovery. It requires development to support and contribute to the delivery of the priorities, targets and actions set out in the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy, including the accompanying Nature Network Map.

Blue Infrastructure

Current infrastructure provision

Over recent years there has been a national move away from treating rainwater as a liability and treating it as an asset set within a wider “blue infrastructure” system, recognising the ecological, water quality, and placemaking benefits things such as sustainable drainage (SuDS) and swales can provide. However it is recognised that the risk of flooding is increasing due to pressures in urban environments and climate change is likely to lead to more severe rainfall events. This will create additional challenges for communities and have implications for new development across Stockport.

The Flood and Water Management Act (2010) assigns capabilities for managing local sources of flooding from surface water, groundwater and small (“ordinary”) watercourses to Lead Local Flood Authorities. Stockport Council is its own Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), so we manage local flood risk across the whole borough. One of the duties placed upon the LLFA is to assist in the management of local flood risks by taking the lead in helping with infrastructure development and working with other bodies in dealing with flood risk. This duty is applied through the production of a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy²⁹ (LFRMS), which is a live strategy that is monitored by the LLFA.

Stockport sits within the Mersey River catchment, a large and complex system that drains much of Greater Manchester and flows westwards to the Mersey Estuary. Within this, the borough is primarily located in the Upper Mersey catchment. The Upper Mersey catchment covers the upper part of the freshwater River Mersey and its source tributaries (the Tame, Goyt and Etherow) that flow from the Peak District. It covers a large part of Greater Manchester and parts of the High Peak and Cheshire East local authority areas. The River Mersey starts at the confluence of the River Tame and River Goyt in our town centre, before flowing through south Manchester and Trafford.

In England, the government has introduced a Catchment-Based Approach (CaBA) for managing the water environment across all areas of the country to facilitate more integrated water management. The Mersey Rivers Trust is an environmental charity focussing on the protection and enhancement of rivers and waterbodies in the Mersey Catchment. It works in partnership with all those interested in improving the rivers and waterways of the Mersey for people and wildlife, focussing on the protection and enhancement of rivers and waterbodies, to deliver a wide range of projects including river restoration, reduction of flood risk by Natural Flood Management techniques, river monitoring, and volunteer events e.g. river clean-ups and invasive species control.

A catchment-based approach to water management looks at the whole natural drainage system, from where rain falls, through rivers and streams, to where water eventually leaves the area, rather than dealing with issues in isolation. Stockport’s flood risk,

²⁹ See <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/stockport-local-flood-risk-management-strategy>

drainage and river issues are considered as part of a wider catchment-based approach, not just borough boundaries.

Mersey Valley Way

The Mersey Valley Way along the River Mersey in Greater Manchester is the first designated national river walk in England. It runs 21km from the start of the River Mersey in Stockport town centre and follows the river through Heaton Mersey into south Manchester and Trafford, finishing at Ashton-on-Mersey. The project has been delivered by a consortium of charity and local authority partners with funding from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

Integrated Water Management Plan

The Integrated Water Management Plan (IWMP) for Greater Manchester is a long-term, partnership-led strategy for managing all aspects of water across the city-region in a more joined-up way. It is led by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), the Environment Agency and United Utilities, and is based on the idea of treating the whole water cycle including rainfall, rivers, groundwater, drainage and wastewater, as a single system rather than planning them separately.

It sets out a common vision, priorities and actions so that all the organisations involved in water work together and invest in the right places. Across Greater Manchester, the IWMP is intended to:

- Improve flood resilience, including through natural solutions like wetlands and sustainable drainage
- Improve water quality by reducing pollution and storm overflows
- Support sustainable growth, ensuring new development includes proper water management
- Build climate resilience, as rainfall is expected to increase significantly and extreme weather becomes more common
- Enhance the natural environment, including rivers and green/blue infrastructure

Emerging Integrated Drainage Strategy

The emerging Integrated Drainage Strategy (IDS) for Stockport Town Centre will outline a coordinated, place-based approach to managing surface water and flood risk in the town centre through measures like watercourse creation, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), and nature-based solutions. It will help to help mitigate future flood risk, help facilitate the regeneration of the Town Centre, and improve the quality of life for residents. This IDS is being created with key stakeholders and will coordinate with activities, projects, and policies across local, regional, and national levels.

The emerging IDS will align with development plans for Stockport Town Centre by embedding sustainable water management principles and flood resilience within the framework of urban regeneration, ensuring multifunctional spaces for water are integral to Stockport's future vision. It presents an opportunity to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) into the extensive regeneration of Stockport on a town-wide level.

Adopting a comprehensive sustainable water management approach for Stockport's regeneration, one that extends beyond traditional boundary constraints, will enable the utilisation of SuDS as a tool facilitating town-wide progress. Collectively, these initiatives have the potential to drive Stockport's transformation into a climate-resilient, appealing, and interconnected Town Centre that fosters a vibrant and prosperous community.

The IDS will guide future development, investment, and public realm improvements in the town centre, serving as a key reference for planners, developers, and the town centre Mayoral Development Corporation MDC, with ongoing input from the lead local flood authority (LLFA) and partners.

This strategy work is emerging, and projects will be identified across the town centre in due course, which can be included in the infrastructure schedule.

Flood Risk

Our understanding of flood risk across the borough is detailed through the draft level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2026) (SFRA1), the Stockport Town Centre Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2024) (SFRA2), GMCA Strategic Flood Risk Management Framework (2019), and Greater Manchester Level 2 'Hybrid' Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2020).

Following on from the recommendations of the draft SFRA1 report, it is our intention to do an updated Level 2 SFRA.

The SFRAs have informed both the strategic selection of sites and the approach to their potential development, supporting the application of the Sequential Test and ensuring that flood risk considerations are embedded within plan-making.

Flood risk assessments will be required for potential development sites in line with the policy set out in the Local Plan, and national guidance. It will be through the recommendations of the site-specific FRAs that projects may be required to enable developments to come forward, these will typically be funded by the developer directly.

Future infrastructure provision

The local flood risk management strategy identifies the various measures that are either in place or require further action to ensure flood risk is managed. Where local flood alleviation schemes are identified, communities will be engaged via local stakeholders in the project process to influence the design, bring in contributions and maximise the potential of the scheme. The strategy will look at the development of priorities for investment and at the same time explore funding opportunities.

The LLFA is working with other bodies to work together on shared projects and to try to combine contributions. The LLFA will look to other funding streams such as those driven through the Water Framework Directive or growth and regeneration. The EA have a role in bringing forward flood defence schemes through the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) and working with the LLFA and the local community to shape schemes which respond to local priorities.

As noted above, it is expected that the work emerging from the town centre integrated drainage strategy will identify projects to deliver sustainable drainage schemes across the town centre.

Green and blue infrastructure and the Local Plan

Several policies in the emerging Local Plan address blue infrastructure. The environment policies recognise blue infrastructure as a key component of Stockport's natural environment and seek to protect and enhance it. Other policies within the Plan emphasise the importance of managing blue infrastructure to ensure effective drainage and mitigate flood risk.

Policy INF 3 (Flood Risk) requires major development to adopt an integrated, nature-based approach to protect the quantity and quality of water bodies while managing flood risk.

Policy INF 4 (Drainage) complements this by setting out the requirements for drainage provision in new development, ensuring that appropriate measures are in place to manage surface water and reduce flood risk.

11. Delivery

Infrastructure will be delivered through a range of partners, including the council, public sector bodies, private sector organisations, the voluntary and community sector, and developers. Funding will also be secured from a variety of sources, including the council's capital programme, Greater Manchester funding streams (such as the proposed Integrated Settlement), central government grants, and developer contributions. These contributions may include Section 106 and Section 278 agreements, as well as direct delivery of infrastructure by developers as part of new development

The Infrastructure Delivery Schedule (IDS) is attached as an appendix to this IDP. It identifies the infrastructure required to support the development proposed in the Local Plan up to 2037. The IDS provides information on indicative costs, delivery timescales, funding sources and responsible delivery bodies, and highlights where funding has already been secured.

Emerging Policy INF 1 of the Local Plan sets out the framework for securing developer contributions towards infrastructure, subject to viability considerations where appropriate. The council does not currently operate a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL.)

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan and its associated schedules will be regularly monitored and updated to reflect changing infrastructure requirements, updated evidence, and any changes in national policy over the lifetime of the Local Plan.

Appendix 1 – Infrastructure Delivery Schedule

Transport Infrastructure								
Project name	Location	Estimated Cost (£)	Committed funding	Funding Gap	Funding Sources	Responsible for delivery	Timescale	Need/comment
Bus pinch point improvements to improve accessibility and bus priority	Borough Wide	TBC			Section 106 and GM (site dependent)	Stockport	2026 – 2050	
Enhanced Service provision - Local Service Improvement to support site accessibility	Borough Wide	TBC			Section 106 and GM (route dependent)	Stockport	2026 – 2050	
Bus Radial – A6 – Manchester Stockport	A6 Corridor	27,000,000			GM	Stockport	2032	
Bus improvement – Stockport – Ashton	330 bus route	TBC			GM	Stockport	2031	
Bus Depo Electrification	TBC	TBC			GM	Stockport	2035	
Bus Rapid Transit – Airport – Stockport		TBC			GM	TfGM	2026 – 2050	
Metrolink – East Didsbury – Stockport	Stockport	450,000,000 to 700,000,000			GM	TfGM	2027 - 2035	
Tram - Train	Stockport – Hazel Grove, Stockport – Airport, Rose Hill (Marple) – Manchester, Stockport – Tameside.	70,000,000 (per route)			GM	TfGM	2035	
Stockport Station Redevelopment	Stockport	Circa 100,000,000			GM	TfGM	2035	
Cheadle Station	Cheadle	TBC				TfGM/Stockport		
Station Access improvements	Borough Wide	TBC			Section 106 and GM (route /station dependent)	Stockport	2026 - 2050	

Stockport Town Centre Improvement Package - To improve the streets and public realm within, and access to, main town centres, for walking, cycling, public transport and placemaking whilst tackling issues such as traffic congestion, servicing, air pollution, bus service reliability.	Stockport	TBC			GM	Stockport	2026 - 2032	
Hazel Grove Active Travel Improvements Create safer, more accessible walking and cycling routes	Hazel Grove	TBC			GM	Stockport	2026 - 2032	
District Centre Sustainable Access Packages	Borough Wider	TBC			Section 106 and GM (scheme dependent)	Stockport	2026 - 2050	
Pedestrian Drop Crossing programme	Borough Wide	TBC			Section 106	Stockport	2026 - 2050	
Cycle Parking / Storage	Borough Wide	TBC			Section 106	Stockport	2026 - 2050	
Active Travel Crossing upgrades	M60 corridor	TBC			TBC	Stockport/ National Highways	2037	
School Road Safety Improvements	Borough Wider	TBC			Section 106 and GM (scheme dependent)	Stockport	2026 - 2050	
Local Accessibility Programme – Improving paths, alleyways and cut throughs.	Borough Wider	TBC			Section 106 and GM (scheme dependent)	Stockport	2026 - 2050	
Strategic Cycle network development	Borough Wider	TBC			Section 106 and GM (scheme dependent)	Stockport	2026 - 2050	
Cycle and Micro-mobility higher scheme/ scheme expansion	Borough Wider	TBC			Section 106 and GM (scheme dependent)	Stockport	2026 - 2050	
PROW Improvements	Borough Wider	TBC			Section 106 and GM	Stockport	2026 - 2050	

					(scheme dependent)			
A34 – Handforth – Cheadle	A34	TBC			GM	Stockport	2028	
Bredbury Economic Corridor Improvement Package	M60 J25 and Bredbury Gateway	70,000,000 to 80,000,000			Section 106 and GM	Stockport	2033	
Cheadle Economic Corridor Improvement Package	A560 Corridor	TCB			Section 106 and GM	Stockport	2035	
A6 M60 Link Road	Stockport East	TBC			TBC	Stockport	TBC	
A6 – High Lane Bypass	Stockport South/East	TBC			TBC	Stockport	TBC	
Mobility Hubs	Borough Wide	TBC			Section 106 and GM	Stockport	TBC	
20mph limits/zones	Borough Wide	TBC			Section 106 and GM	Stockport	TBC	
Junction Capacity improvements	Borough Wide	TBC			Section 106 and GM	Stockport	TBC	
Car Club	Borough Wide	TBC			Section 106	Stockport	TBC	

Utilities								
Project name	Location	Estimated Cost (£)	Committed funding	Funding Gap	Funding Sources	Responsible for delivery	Timescale	Need/ comment
District heat network	Stockport town centre and Stepping Hill Hospital	50-100 million	£14.65m comprised of £13.65m construction grant and £1.0m commercialisation grant.	£36.35m+	Green heat network fund, commercial partners	Commercial partner (Stockport Council acts as Sponsor and will select partner and administer approval gateway)	5-15 years	This project is needed to decarbonise heating of buildings and meet the target of Stockport being carbon neutral by 2038.
Stockport Town Centre Residential Living Area - Strategic Energy Need	Stockport town centre	TBC	TBC	TBC		SP Electricity North West	5-15 years	This project has been requested to added into the NESO 'Network Development Plan' and ED3 Business Plan. It is a distribution-connected request for additional supply to serve the proposed additional 8,000 homes across the town centre.

Health								
Project name	Location	Estimated Cost (£)	Committed funding	Funding Gap	Funding Sources	Responsible for delivery	Timescale	Need/ comment
Town Centre Health Facility	Stockport Town Centre	TBC	TBC	TBC	NHS Greater Manchester ICB/ S106 contributions	NHS Greater Manchester ICB	TBC	To support housing growth within the Town Centre.
New Primary Care facility in the Woodford/ Hazel Grove area	Woodford or Hazel Grove	TBC	TBC	TBC	NHS Greater Manchester ICB/ S106 contributions	NHS Greater Manchester ICB	TBC	To support housing growth within this area of the borough.
New Primary Care facility in the Heald Green area	Heald Green	TBC	TBC	TBC	NHS Greater Manchester	NHS Greater Manchester ICB	TBC	To support housing growth within this area of the borough.

					ICB/ S106 contributions			
Expansion and/or remodelling of health facilities in other locations as and when necessary, in response to new residential developments.	Borough wide	TBC	TBC	TBC	NHS Greater Manchester ICB/ S106 contributions	NHS Greater Manchester ICB	Ongoing, as required	NHS Greater Manchester ICB to identify a need for additional facilities when required.

Education

Project name	Location	Estimated Cost (£)	Committed funding	Funding Gap	Funding Sources	Responsible for delivery	Timescale	Need/ comment
Provision of additional primary school places in the Borough through extensions to existing primary schools.	Borough wide	TBC following feasibility work	Number of s106 contributions secured from developments	TBC following feasibility works	S106 agreements, Basic Need Funding	Stockport Council	Across the plan period	To meet identified need for additional primary school places in this area of the borough.
Woodford Primary School Expansion*	Woodford	TBC following feasibility work	s106 contribution secured from developments	TBC following feasibility works	S106 agreements, Basic Need Funding	Stockport Council	TBC	*This project was identified as part of planning appeal ref. APP/C4235/W/25/337 3210. At the time of writing, the appeal decision is subject to an ongoing High Court challenge.
Provision of additional secondary school places in the Borough through extensions to existing primary schools.	Borough wide	TBC following feasibility work	Number of s106 contributions secured from developments	TBC following feasibility works	S106 agreements, Basic Need Funding	Stockport Council	Across the plan period	To meet identified need for additional secondary school places in this area of the borough.
Provision of additional primary school places in the Borough through	Borough wide	TBC following feasibility work	Number of s106 contributions secured from developments	TBC following feasibility works	S106 agreements, Basic Need Funding	Stockport Council	Across the plan period	To meet identified need for additional primary school places

extensions to existing primary schools.								in this area of the borough.
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Cultural and Community								
Project name	Location	Estimated Cost (£)	Committed funding	Funding Gap	Funding Sources	Responsible for delivery	Timescale	Need/ comment
Stockport Cemetery - Expansion	Stockport Cemetery					SMBC	Until 2042	Will explore over plan period depending on capacity and death rate.
Highfield Cemetery - Expansion	Highfield Cemetery, Bredbury					SMBC	Until 2042	Will explore over plan period depending on capacity and death rate.

Sport and recreation								
Project name	Location	Estimated Cost (£)	Committed funding	Funding Gap	Funding Sources	Responsible for delivery	Timescale	Need/ comment
Cheadle & Gatley Junior Football Club improvements	Cheadle & Gatley JFC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	In line with development trajectory of the allocation	Development at Heald Green West (HOM 2.33) should see the reprovision of existing football pitches and changing rooms (Cheadle and Gatley Junior Football Club) within its boundary, providing the opportunity to increase the amount of usage of those pitches and an improvement in the facilities supporting their use.
Gotherage Lane Playing Fields improvements	Gotherage Lane Playing Fields	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	In line with development trajectory of the allocation	Hyde Bank Meadows (HOM 2.17) includes the requirement to improve adjacent pitches at Tangshutt Fields (Gotherage Lane Playing Fields) that are currently of low value in usage terms but where there is high demand for youth pitches.

Green and blue								
Project name	Location	Estimated Cost (£)	Committed funding	Funding Gap	Funding Sources	Responsible for delivery	Timescale	Need/ comment
Habitat Banking in Stockport	Habitat banks to be created in locations across the borough	20,000	TBC	TBC	Developer-funded biodiversity unit creation	Stockport Council	Ongoing across 0-30+ years	The cost indicated is to cover the initial 3 years of the 'Responsible Body Service' provided by GMCA, and does not cover the capital costs for habitat unit creation, or long term maintenance costs.
Integrated Drainage Strategy - sustainable drainage projects to be identified	Across Stockport Town Centre	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	Will vary depending on the specific project, but could be led by: the Council, UU, EA or developers	Ongoing across coming 5+ years	This strategy work is emerging, and projects will be identified across the town centre in due course.
Production of habitat management plans for 3 sites across Stockport: Woodbank park, Tangshutts Local Nature Reserve and Wright Wood Local Nature Reserve.	Across the borough	7,500	Grant funding received	Nil	GMCA/ Defra	Stockport Council	Completed in 2025	The purpose of the habitat management plans (HMPs) is to bring the sites into active management for nature conservation.
Production of habitat management plans for an additional 3 sites across Stockport (sites to be confirmed)	Across the borough	7,500	Grant funding TBC	TBC	GMCA/ Defra	Stockport Council	Planned for 2026	The purpose of the habitat management plans (HMPs) is to bring the sites into active management for nature conservation.