

A blueprint for South Kesteven's economy

Economic Development Strategy & Action Plan

2024 - 2028

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Available online at:

<https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/your-council-and-democracy/decision-making/state-district-2023>

01 South Kesteven Economic Profile

South Kesteven is a popular and attractive location for growth and investment, with below average recorded crime levels. Hospital services are available in Grantham and Stamford.

Home to over 143,400 people, a high quality of life offer is South Kesteven's key strategic asset.

Powered by strong internet connectivity, over 97.33% of homes and businesses have access to superfast internet speeds greater than 30 megabits per second (Mbps) and 72.3% of premises have access to gigabit speeds. However, there are gaps in provision, especially in rural and isolated villages. 0.71% of South Kesteven receives speeds below 2 Mbps.

There is extensive green space and many community facilities in South Kesteven. All three of the Council's public parks in Grantham have been rated as being among the best in the country.

The four market towns of Bourne, Grantham, Stamford and The Deepings are vibrant and offer a strong tourism and visitor economy offer. Over half a century ago, Stamford became the UK's first Conservation Area and in 2021, The Sunday Times placed the market town number one for the Midlands region on its 'best places to live' list.

South Kesteven boasts outstanding schools for primary and secondary education (both private and public), with excellent further education provision.

The District has been a magnet for ambitious individuals and its influence in many areas of national and global life cannot be overstated.

Mathematicians, physicists, astronomers, alchemists, theologians, authors and a Prime Minister were educated in the District.

There is clearly a lot of work to do to make sure young people have the opportunities they deserve. The challenges faced from global competition and emerging economies demand action. For South Kesteven to meet the demands of tomorrow, bridging the link between education and work needs to happen today to support people to fulfil their potential.

The economy is diverse with 6,265 registered enterprises making South Kesteven the largest business base in Lincolnshire. In 2021, 27.77% of all new business formations in Lincolnshire were in South Kesteven. That same year the local economy was worth £2.835 billion, the highest level in Lincolnshire.

South Kesteven is home to 324 creative businesses. and the Council recognises engagement with arts can help challenge inequalities, provide economic opportunities and boosts mental health. Following consultation and stakeholder engagement, South Kesteven District Council recently approved the adoption of a Cultural Strategy. The Council funds extensive programmes of events and activities at the Guildhall Arts Centre in Grantham, Stamford Arts Centre, Bourne Corn Exchange and across the District through outreach work and projects.

The Council, through its wholly-owned company, LeisureSK Limited, operates three leisure centres. This includes the provision of activities in rural communities through outreach programmes run by the centres and Council Officers.

The Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, pledging to reduce the organisation's carbon footprint by at least 30% by 2030 and endeavour to become net-zero as soon as viable before 2050. More recently, the climate change reserve was increased to £300,000 to pump-prime and fund one-off climate initiatives.

Whilst a huge challenge, now is the time for bold collective action in developing employment and business activities.

The Council has a direct role in house building, housing adaptation and enforcement powers to improve the condition of private rented housing. It is widely reported that homes are more affordable for renters and homeowners alike, providing more are built. This means the evidence is pointing towards accelerating delivery of new housing.

The current Local Housing Need, as calculated by the Government Standard Method, results in the need for a minimum of 701 additional homes per annum. South Kesteven offers excellent opportunities to buy more for your budget, when compared with neighbouring areas further south.

All the indications from the current Local Plan Review, are that there will be considerable investment in South Kesteven over the coming decades. The refreshed Local Plan will allocate key employment sites.

Whilst keeping an eye on the challenges South Kesteven faces, the Council wants to ensure the services and opportunities provided to residents and businesses continues to be of high quality. More homes will be built and there will be development in jobs, transport and other infrastructure. However, the Council recognises it must act to shape and protect communities and guide how they look and feel.

The Council has a long-standing commitment to build on and celebrate the rich heritage and culture of South Kesteven. The contribution historic areas make to quality of life and the economy is widely recognised. There are currently 48 Conservation Areas in South Kesteven.

Conservation Areas are a link to the past that can provide a sense of continuity and stability and have the reassurance of the familiar that can provide a point of reference in a rapidly changing world. The way building traditions and settlement patterns provide local distinctiveness can deliver a catalyst for regeneration and inspire well-designed new development that brings much-valued economic and social benefits.

The District has an abundance of stunning and diverse film-friendly locations. South Kesteven has hosted productions of all scales, from feature period epics such as *The Crown*, *Bridgerton* to family favourites such as *Dr Who*. For people who prefer books to films, St Wulfram's Church in Grantham is home to the UK's oldest public library outside of an institution such as a college.

As a visitor destination South Kesteven continues to rise in profile - 2022 was the District's most successful year ever for visitors choosing to stay overnight. In 2022, a total of 3.15 million people visited South Kesteven. The visitor economy sector's total contribution was £218.18 million, which supported 2,754 jobs. In a world that is constantly evolving and where technology facilitates and influences consumer behaviour in a profound way, South Kesteven (supported by the local Destination Management Organisation) will need to constantly evolve and adapt to the travellers of today. This means developing a visitor-centric approach, connecting visitors to the area through personalised, authentic stories based on strong brand values.

South Kesteven District Council cannot shape the future of the District's economy alone. Collaboration, partnership working, joint ventures and above all, investment from the public and private sector, will be key to the success.

Responding, planning and managing change and opportunities requires the Council to take a new approach, which places working with residents, businesses, Government and partner organisations front and centre to lead to better outcomes.

There are four main town centres in the District: Grantham, Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings. Combined these market towns are home to 65% of the population. The remainder live in the network of villages, hamlets and farmhouses that dot the countryside. Key village centres include Ancaster, Billingborough, Caythorpe, Corby Glen, Colsterworth and Long Bennington.

Bourne

The delightful market town of Bourne sits on the eastern side of the District, bordering the Fens. The town dates from Anglo Saxon times and was built around a series of natural springs in what is now the Wellhead Gardens.

In the centre of the town in a beautiful setting of green open space stands the Wellhead and Bourne Memorial Gardens, on the site of Bourne Castle. The gardens are open daily for visitors to enjoy. Bourne hosts a market every Thursday just behind the Bourne Corn Exchange which is a great place to catch a show or attend an event.

Bourne has a unique motor racing heritage having been home to two of Britain's greatest racing car builders - English Racing Automobiles and British Racing Motors - who are celebrated in the town's heritage centre at Baldock's Mill. Sir Jackie Stewart and Graham Hill both drove for British Racing Motors in the 1960s.

One of the town's other famous sons, also celebrated in Baldock's Mill, was Charles Fredrick Worth. Born in the town in 1825, Charles revolutionised fashion across Europe.

Bourne is home to Bourne Woods, a quiet, atmospheric ancient woodland with home to an abundance of broad leaf and coniferous trees. In the spring the woods are a wonderful spot to enjoy native wildflowers, the area is particularly known for bluebells. You can also catch a glimpse of herons and kingfishers by the ponds and discover walking trails, cycling, plus horse riding routes and designated picnic areas.

The train commute to London from nearby Peterborough takes 50 minutes, while the A15 major north/south artery and the nearby A1 trunk road also provide great transport links.

Bourne has a great reputation for offering high quality education across its many schools. Alongside nearby Spalding Academy, Bourne Academy is ranked as the top non-selective school in Lincolnshire which means students are achieving over half a grade higher in each qualification on average, compared to similar students across the country.

In 2022, Ofsted judged the overall effectiveness of Bourne Grammar School as good. Nearby Witham Hall School, features in the Tatler Schools Guide 2023.

The Willoughby Academy is an all-age Special School for pupils with moderate, severe, profound and complex learning needs. The school caters for 100 students and is extremely well supported in the local community. In November 2023 the school was inspected by Ofsted and continues to be a good school.

Bourne has an impressive 71 listed buildings, with the town centre being dominated by small, independent retailers while some high street retailers also have a presence.

Food manufacturing is the biggest industry in Bourne, followed by engineering, retail and printing.



Grantham

Grantham is located approximately 25 miles east of Nottingham, 38 miles north-west of Peterborough and 112 miles north of London.

The town occupies a strategic position adjacent to the intersection of the A1 and A52 dual carriageways, which provide Grantham with immediate access to excellent north-south and east-west communication routes. The A1 provides direct access to London to the south and the A52 provides direct access to Nottingham and the M1, linking the town to the national motorway network, 25 miles east.

Grantham benefits from excellent rail communications, lying on the East Coast Mainline and has a fastest journey time of just over one hour to both London and Leeds.

The closest airport to Grantham is East Midlands, approximately 35 miles west of the town. East Midlands Airport serves approximately 90 destinations worldwide has 4.2 million passengers annually. The airport is also one of the UK's principal freight hubs, being the second largest cargo airport in the UK after Heathrow. The deep-water Humber Ports of Hull, Immingham and Grimsby are also easily accessible to the north-east via the A1 and A46.

There are 24 schools in Grantham (excluding independent schools), including 12 primary schools, six secondary schools and one providing sixth form education.

In December 2023, two Grantham schools occupied first and second place in the Parent Power guide, produced by The Sunday Times. King's School took the crown for best state school for Lincolnshire and Kesteven and Grantham Girls' School (KGGS) was named as the second best in the region. Walton Academy was named the third best comprehensive school in the East Midlands.

Grantham College & University Centre offers a more vocational experience for students, with opportunities to experience the world of work while students are learning and developing the skills needed for their next step, whether that is employment, an apprenticeship, or a degree.

The First World War changed women's lives in profound ways as they entered occupations previously reserved for men. Edith Smith was one such pioneer. She was the first woman in the UK to be given powers of arrest when she was sworn in as a police constable in Grantham in December 1915.

Famous former residents of Grantham include renowned physicist and mathematician Sir Isaac Newton and the UK's first female Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher. Celebrities born in Grantham include Holly Humberstone (singer-songwriter), Patrick Bamford (professional footballer), Ross Edgley (athlete, ultra-marathon sea swimmer and author), Leo Taylor (drummer), John Dixon (cricketer), Nicholas Parsons (actor and radio and television presenter) and Antonio Beradi (fashion designer).

Grantham is home to St Wulfram's Church, which has the second largest spire in Lincolnshire.

Grantham, which hosts a market every Saturday, has three parks that have been accredited with Green Flag status - Queen Elizabeth park, Dysart Park and Wyndham Park.

There is a reason why Wyndham Park has held Green Flag status for 12 years: it is an incredible space to spend time with family and friends. A café, ice cream parlour, restrooms, children's playgrounds, tennis courts, and a model boating lake are just some of the park's facilities and with plenty more to do and explore, you could happily spend all day there.

Other attractions in Grantham include the brilliant Guildhall Arts Centre, which hosts shows, groups, art collections and school holiday events, plus much more! Next door is Grantham Museum, which is free to visit where you can learn all about the town and its incredible history.

Nearby visitor attractions include Belton House, Harlaxton Manor, Easton Walled Gardens, Woolsthorpe Manor and Belvoir Castle.



The Deepings

The Deepings is the collective name given to the historic town of Market Deeping and the surrounding villages of Deeping St James, West Deeping and Deeping St Nicholas.

With a history dating back beyond the Bronze Age, the charming town of Market Deeping stands proudly on the River Welland, to the east of Stamford.

Today the town is thriving with a varied and busy high street in an attractive historic setting and is home to the ever-growing biennial Deepings Literary Festival which attracts many leading names from the literary world.

The Deepings owes its architecture and character to the merchant wealth flowing from the ancient River Welland and the former Deepings to Stamford canal, with its towpath perfect for walking and cycling. A walk down the glorious Georgian Church Street is a must, stopping off at the ancient St Guthlac's Church which dates from the 13th century. 15th century improvements were funded by Margaret Beaufort – the mother of Henry VII – whose family crest can be seen on the tower. St Guthlac's retains many features from an earlier Anglo-Saxon church, and has two sundials on the tower.

Among other gems to be found in the Deepings is the magnificent Priory Church in Deeping St James, originally a Benedictine priory that dates back to 1139. Just around the corner is the tiny market cross, converted to the village lock-up in 1819 that was capable of housing three criminals.

The Deeping is surrounded by natural beauty and wildlife lovers should not miss Deepings Lakes. This wetland nature reserve with lakes and pools is noted for its wildfowl and waterbird communities making it ideal for birdwatching. Explore the bird hide that looks over the lake or follow the path and discover the wildflower meadow.

Industry is predominantly sited in two areas, Northfield Industrial Estate and Hard's Lane, Frognall. Both locations have a mix of small and medium-sized enterprises and small and micro businesses. The larger Northfield site is where the Eventus Business Centre houses a wide variety of service sector businesses.

Market Deeping is home to some fantastic small local businesses such as the Iron Horse Ranch House which host amazing community events. The Market Deeping antiques and craft centre is another must visit when you are in town, plus there is not one but two award winning chip shops! The local library is an important support for the town.

Nearby attractions include John Clare Cottage and Tallington Lakes.



Stamford

Stamford is praised for several different qualities, from its unique blend of history and Georgian architecture to its unique and diverse range of shops. Stamford won the supreme compliment from The Sunday Times newspaper as 'Britain's top place to live' in 2021, and was proclaimed by Sir Walter Scott as 'the finest sight on the road between London and Edinburgh' while Sir John Betjeman said it was England's most attractive town.

Stamford was the first designated Conservation Area in England in 1967. The whole of the old town and St Martin's has become an area of outstanding architectural and historic interest of national importance. Stamford has over 600 listed buildings of mellow limestone including five medieval churches. It is unanimously considered a charming, character-filled and picturesque destination which has made the town an extremely popular filming location. It should be noted, however, that due to conservation regulations it can be difficult to amend the infrastructure of the town.

There is a bustling high street with coffee shops, restaurants and a vast range of retailers to tempt visitors. The local business community is thriving thanks to a group called 'Shop Stamford' which created the Little Book of Stamford and host Shop Stamford Saturdays, with exclusive events and deals. Stamford was named as having one of the best high streets in the country in 2023, ranking fourth out of 15 destinations in the list, which was compiled by The Telegraph's UK destination experts.

There is a main street market each Friday with a smaller Saturday market. Once a fortnight there is a Farmers' Market.

The popular Stamford Town Trail takes you through the market town exploring quaint passageways, main thoroughfares and market squares. Guided walks are available with official guides. There are tranquil river walks, fine Georgian buildings and an interesting cultural heritage which attracts visitors from far and wide including the magnificent Burghley House.

Other attractions include the Stamford Arts Centre, where there is something for everyone such as art classes, a gallery, dance groups, shows and a comedy club to name a few. There is also the Browne's Hospital and Museum which is a true hidden gem in the heart of the town. The hospital was founded by William Browne, a rich wool merchant of Stamford, and built in 1475 in the reign of Edward IV. The building itself is stunning and home to an exceedingly rare stained-glass window.

Stamford is the home of a vibrant poetry scene and has two poet laureates. The current Stamford Poet Laureate is Caroline Avnit and the Youth Laureate is Jasper Cairns.

There are 12 schools in Stamford (excluding independent schools), made up of 10 primary and two secondary schools.

Stamford College offers education and training to over 2,000 students every year providing a huge range of courses to suit everyone – A Levels, vocational, part-time adult courses, apprenticeships, higher education and professional training for businesses tailored to both individuals and employers.



Employment Land

In addition to the town centres, major employment areas in the District include:

Grantham Southern Gateway - a key strategic allocation to the south of Grantham running along the A1. The site is set to deliver a suite of employment sites totalling around 170ha of B2 (General Industry), B8 (Storage and Distribution) and E(g) employment generating uses, which also includes a designer outlet village.

Stamford St Martin's Park - a high-quality mixed-use development comprising of 10,000 square metres (Gross Internal Area - GIA) of offices and workshops, circa 190 dwellings, a retirement village including ancillary facilities, local food store, café and public open space.

The Deepings - extension to Northfields industrial Estate - a 14-hectare extension to the current small to medium sized enterprise site located to the north-east of Market Deeping and is serviced by good connectivity to the A15.

Bourne, land south of Spalding Road - an 8-hectare allocation to the east of Bourne within the surrounding employment context of the area, which is set to deliver B2 (General Industry), B8 (Storage and Distribution) and E(g) employment generating uses.

Roseland Business Park, Long Bennington - a 9ha addition to the well-established multi-let industrial estate, comprising some 18 buildings currently configured as 27 units ranging from 1,000 to 50,000 sq f. The site has good connectivity to the A1 and surrounding transport links.

South Kesteven District Council is currently reviewing its Local Plan up until 2041 and has commissioned an Employment Land Study (2023) to assess the balance of supply and demand in the context of changing employment needs, trends and challenges to ensure that the Local Plan review maximises future economic growth.

The Employment Land Study (2023) has identified South Kesteven has circa 361 hectares of developed employment land, circa 247 hectares of vacant land that could be used for employment generating uses and circa 46 hectares of land with potential for employment intensification.

The Local Plan review intends to continue protecting key strategic sites across the District, while ensuring that sufficient land is allocated to maximise South Kesteven's broader local economic growth objectives such as high value job generation and increased inward investment.



02 Strategy and policy context

This Economic Development Strategy is complimentary to several policy and strategy documents which have relevance to the South Kesteven economy. For ease of reading, policy and strategy documents are presented under the four categories of: national policies, national funding, regional policy and local policy.

Central Government sets national economic policies, typically in the form of legislation, ministerial statements, Government guidance and policy frameworks.

Funding relating to economic development is continually evolving, most of which is currently aligned to the Government's levelling-up agenda.

The National Planning Policy Framework

In England, the 'plan-led' approach to the regulation of land and development places Local Plans at the heart of the town and country planning system.

Under this system, Local Plans form part of the statutory 'development plan' for an area. This forms the starting point for the determination of planning applications unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Chapter three of the 2023 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out requirements for preparing a Local Plan which each local planning authority is expected to prepare, either singly, or jointly with other authorities.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

The Government is changing planning law with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023 which will see wide-ranging reforms to the planning system. From an economic development perspective the new powers will try to speed up the process, deliver infrastructure and revitalise communities, town centres and high streets whilst ensuring all development is visually appealing.

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will ensure the planning process is effective, efficient, high quality and timely. Unlocking land and stalled development sites and providing effective delivery of strategic sites features as part of the inclusive growth and regeneration focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

Heritage protection

South Kesteven is one of the most heritage-rich local authority District's in the East Midlands with 2,150 listed buildings, 600 of which are in Stamford. There are 120 Grade I listed buildings in South Kesteven and around 200 Grade II, along with 92 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

Historic England provides a comprehensive online guide to heritage protection in England.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents>

Stamford was the first urban Conservation Area to be designated in England in 1967. There are currently 48 Conservation Areas in South Kesteven.

https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-07/Conservation_Area_Locations_-_updated_November_2022.pdf

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will celebrate and promote the strong heritage and rich culture of South Kesteven. Preserving and enhancing the heritage assets of the District feature as part of the inclusive growth and regeneration focus of the economic development strategy's accompanying action plan.

Levelling up the United Kingdom

The 2022 levelling up White Paper specified 12 missions to be achieved by 2030 covering aspects of government policy. These form the backbone of what it means to 'level up' as follows: living standards, transport infrastructure, digital connectivity, education, skills, health, wellbeing, pride in place, housing, crime, local leadership and research and development.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/620b780be90e0710bdc09964/Levelling_Up_the_United_Kingdom_accessible_version_.pdf

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will work towards reducing inequalities within the District with pockets of severe deprivation eliminated by 2034. This means no part of the District would rank in the bottom decile for relative deprivation. Championing a stronger local economy features as part of the inward investment focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

Armed Forces Act

The Armed Forces Act came into force in November 2022. It conveys a duty requiring those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, should not suffer because of their service.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/35/contents>

The Council employs a dedicated Armed Forces Officer, supported by an elected member as Armed Forces Champion, and has designated officers delivering specialist support within the revenues and benefits, cost of living and housing teams.

An annual update report is presented to the relevant Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s40570/Appendix%201.pdf>

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council has a duty to help serving personnel, reservists, veterans and their families to have the same equal access to public services as civilians, recognising the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces. Supporting the delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant pledges features as part of the skills development focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

The Skills Act

In April 2022, new laws were passed through the Skills and Post-16 Education Act.

The Act includes the introduction of key measures. Of note is creating a workforce for jobs now and in the future. As a result, skills to support the green economy will be prioritised. To enable children to explore a wide range of careers, schools will be required for pupils to meet people who provide technical educational routes for example, apprenticeships, T levels and traineeships.

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2022/04/28/everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-skills-act/>

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will develop links with educational institutions to upskill residents to meet the needs of the current and future economy. A range of interventions feature as part of the skills development focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

Net zero

Referred to as the net zero target, the Government is committed to a 100% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 compared with 1990 levels.

The Government has a range of policies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, with the main policy document being the Net Zero Strategy (Build Back Greener), published on 19 October 2021 and updated in April 2022.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/net-zero-strategy>

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will reduce operational emissions to achieve the target of a 30% reduction on 2019 by 2030 and develop modelling to set a target of achieving net zero operations as soon as viable. Supporting the path to net zero features as part of the inclusive growth and regeneration focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

UK Innovation Strategy

The UK Innovation Strategy was launched in July 2022 and sets out the Government's ambitions for an innovation-led economy. Four key pillars of unleashing business, people, institutions and places and missions and technologies are areas designed to foster an environment which maximises support for businesses at the cutting edge of innovation.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-innovation-strategy-leading-the-future-by-creating-it>

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will embrace and maximise opportunities for innovation, improvement and securing external funding. Supporting innovation and enterprise activities features as part of the inward investment focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

Devolution

The 2022 Levelling Up White Paper (LUWP) sets out how opportunity will be spread more equally across the UK and establishes the Government's current approach to devolution in England.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>

The devolution proposal will create a Mayoral County Combined Authority (MCCA) as included in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. MCCAs are a new model of devolution introduced through this Act to reflect specific governance arrangements of areas with two-tier government.

The devolution deal for Greater Lincolnshire, as provisionally agreed between the Government and the local authorities of Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), North East Lincolnshire Council (NELC) and North Lincolnshire Council (NLC) on 22 November 2023, invited South Kesteven District Council to engage with the consultation exercise and implementation process.

District and Borough Councils do not sign off the MCCA as that is the responsibility of the three constituent councils of LCC, NELC and NLC. A level three devolution deal does not change the current structure of local government in Lincolnshire.

Following a motion agreed at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council, South Kesteven District Council responded to the consultation exercise and implementation process ahead of the survey's conclusion in January 2024.

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8599/CBP-8599.pdf>

National funding

Funding is typically accessed by a competitive bidding process, either directly to Government or through the Local Enterprise Partnership. The process generally includes a defined criteria relating to defined outputs, conditions (such as timescale for delivery, private sector leverage) and is often subject to a business case.

Funding availability is generally small and targeted, which emphasises the need for designing projects that can be split according to funding constraints.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) supports the Government's commitment to level up all parts of the UK, as a replacement for EU structural funding. The priorities for the funding are to support communities and place, local businesses and people and skills. South Kesteven received £3,898,582 from the UKSPF.

Rural England Prosperity Fund

South Kesteven District Council was awarded £540,460 in funding for projects to be delivered by March 2025. The fund supports capital projects for small businesses and community infrastructure aimed at helping improve productivity and strengthen the rural economy and rural communities.

Having integrated the UKSPF and Rural Fund, the Local Economic Forum (LEF) was established to bring together local stakeholders in South Kesteven to provide advice and guidance on the strategic fit and deliverability of the UKSPF Investment Plan, the Rural Fund and the Economic Development Strategy. The LEF meetings take place quarterly and are supported by three sub-groups associated with communities, local business and people and skills. The terms of reference of the LEF are available online at:

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s37012/Local%20Economic%20Forum%20-%20Terms%20of%20Reference.pdf>

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will distribute the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) and explore opportunities to develop a legacy beyond the funding period. Creating pride of place features as part of the inclusive growth and regeneration focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.



Regional Policy

Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP)

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are non-statutory bodies responsible for local economic development in England. The Government confirmed in August 2023 direct core funding for LEPs would cease from April 2024. The financial resources will instead be directed to local authorities with upper tiers encouraged to take on the LEP functions. In Lincolnshire, it has been agreed between the LEP Board and local authorities, the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) will continue to operate as an independent body for the medium term.

The GLLEP's 2021 Greater Lincolnshire's Economic Plan for Growth drew on the evidence gathered for the Local Industrial Strategy and on fresh analysis considering the impact of COVID. The plan calls for radical transformation of the economy, recognising that consumer behaviours and market incentives have changed into the long-term. That means a pivot towards more environmentally friendly modes of transport and upgrading digital infrastructure to allow innovation to thrive in Greater Lincolnshire.

<https://www.greaterlincolnshirelep.co.uk/priorities-and-plans/strategies-and-plans/>

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will work in partnership with relevant partners to deliver and support targeted initiatives across the District to help communities to be more self-sufficient. Fostering an understanding of skills and training needs for the existing and future workforce features as part of skills development focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

Lincolnshire County Council (LCC)

In July 2022, LCC published A 2050 Vision for Greater Lincolnshire. This sets out an ambition for life in Greater Lincolnshire in 2050. The document involves three spheres of action: Community, Moving and Living Well, and Economy of Innovation Working for All.

<https://lincolnshire.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s54038/Devolution%20appendix%201%20Vision.pdf>

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will work to champion community participation and collaborative partnerships with businesses and other public sector organisations Collaborating with Lincolnshire County Council to capitalise on the benefits of the Team Lincolnshire brand features as part of inward investment focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

Local Skills Improvement Plan

The Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) is an initiative funded by the Department for Education. LSIPs are a key part of achieving the aim set out initially in the Skills for Jobs White Paper, which looked to put employers more firmly at the heart of the skills system. The goal is to ensure businesses and people have the skills they need to thrive and progress. The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) was chosen to lead the development of the LSIP in Greater Lincolnshire.

<https://www.fsb.org.uk/greater-lincolnshire-rutland-lsip.html>

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will embed and strengthen the Local Economic Forum as a key institution for local stakeholders to shape the District's approach to skills, business support and investment reducing barriers some people face to employment features as part of skills development focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

Local Policy

South Kesteven Corporate Plan 2024-2027

The Corporate Plan sets out the strategic vision and key priorities of the Council. The plan underpins the delivery of all the Council's strategic activity and provides the performance framework for managing the delivery of the actions and priorities in the plan. It is good practice for a public sector organisation seeking to deliver a wide set of aims and objectives to produce a Corporate Plan and regularly review activity and achievements against it.

Following an all-member consultation and a four-week public consultation, in January 2024 Council approved the new Corporate Plan for adoption from 1 April 2024.

There are five priorities, each representing a key sphere of activity for the Council. Each priority is accompanied by a mission, a succinct statement that encapsulates the priority and defines its scope. The five priorities and their accompanying missions are:

- **Priority 1** - Connecting Communities: To enhance the strength, wellbeing, security and capacity of all our communities for a thriving and cohesive society that all our residents are proud to belong to.
- **Priority 2** - Sustainable South Kesteven: To meet the challenge of climate change and ensure a clean, green and healthy natural and built environment for present and future generations.
- **Priority 3** - Enabling Economic Opportunity: To enable and support a dynamic, resilient and growing local economy, which benefits all our communities.
- **Priority 4** - Housing: To ensure that all residents can access housing which is safe, good quality, sustainable and suitable for their needs and future generations.
- **Priority 5** - Effective Council: To deliver trusted, high quality and value-for-money services that fulfil the needs and expectations of all our residents.

<https://moderngov.southkesteven.gov.uk/documents/s40516/Appendix%201%20-%20Corporate%20Plan.pdf>

Climate Action Strategy

Following public consultation, a revised Climate Action Strategy was adopted in November 2023, setting out South Kesteven District Council's aspirations to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change within the District.

https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-10/Climate_Action_Strategy.pdf

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will lead and champion the local response to climate change with the ambition of a net zero district by 2041. Investing in clean growth features as part of the business and job creation and employment safeguarding focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

The South Kesteven Local Plan

The adopted Local Plan sets out planning policies for South Kesteven up to 2036. It sets out the vision, objectives, spatial strategy and policies for the future development of the District. It identifies land and allocates sites for different types of development, such as housing and employment to deliver the planned growth for South Kesteven to 2036.

<https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy-local-plans/south-kesteven-local-plan>

A review of the Local Plan is now under way which will roll the Local Plan forward by five years from 2036 to 2041. Housing and employment allocations are proposed in the Draft Local Plan which will be consulted on with Members, the public and stakeholders to meet identified needs in South Kesteven.

<https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy-local-plans/local-plan-review>

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will ensure an adequate supply of suitable land is allocated for commercial use and facilitated through the Local Plan. Developing investment ready projects and supplying sites for industry features as part of the inward investment focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

Conservation

The Council is currently producing appraisal and management plans for each conservation area in South Kesteven. The completed appraisals are available to download as separate documents:

<https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-development-management/conservation-and-listed-buildings-0>

More recently, the Council has permanently employed two Conservation Officers, whose roles are to advise on and promote the conservation of historic buildings, structures and areas of special historic or architectural interest so that future generations may enjoy them.

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The role of the Council is to work to conserve, promote and enhance this inheritance for the benefit of current and future generations. Preserving and enhancing the heritage assets of the District features as part of the inclusive growth and regeneration focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

Grantham Transport Strategy

In December 2022, Lincolnshire County Council published the Grantham Transport Strategy to provide the framework for improving the travel choices and everyday journeys for people living, working and visiting Grantham in the short, medium, and longer term.

Whilst taking full account of the Lincolnshire County Council Corporate Plan, Green Masterplan and Local Transport Plan 5, the strategy has a significant role to play in helping to address a range of strategic challenges that will affect Grantham over the coming years. It identifies schemes and interventions that aim to support a low carbon recovery from the effects of the COVID pandemic and allow for sustainable growth of the town and its economy.

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/7215/grantham-transport-strategy-summary>

A Grantham Transport Board has been established by LCC which includes County and District Member representation, with support from senior officers. Topics such as traffic signals, maintenance, major developments and traffic regulation orders features as agenda items.

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will develop a long-term approach to regeneration and be prepared for investment and funding opportunities. Providing effective delivery of strategic sites features as part of the inclusive growth and regeneration focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.



Emerging Trees and Woodland Strategy

In February 2024, the Council initiated a consultation exercise inviting local people to contribute towards the development of a Trees and Woodlands Strategy. The strategy sets out the Council's position on the protection and care of existing trees and areas of woodland, as well as proposals for partnership working to support tree planting schemes.

How this policy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will significantly increase tree planting across the District and manage, care and protect existing tree cover. Increasing urban tree canopy cover features as part of the inclusive growth and regeneration focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

The (emerging) Greater Lincolnshire Destination Management Plan

Following a 12-month visitor economy research project undertaken by an external research and marketing agency, Destination Lincolnshire began writing a new strategic plan for tourism and the visitor economy. The Destination Management Plan will go through an adoption process with the Greater Lincolnshire LEP, all councils and key stakeholders ending with a new collaboration agreement being signed with Visit England and national Government.

How the Destination Management Plan impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will promote and develop South Kesteven as an attractive visitor destination, focusing on our cultural and heritage strengths. Being an active partner of Destination Lincolnshire features as part of the enhancing South Kesteven's tourism and visitor economy offer focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

Armed Forces Covenant

In July 2022, South Kesteven District Council was awarded the Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold Award by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) for support for the armed forces community. This makes the Council one of only 12 Gold Award holders in Lincolnshire, and among 643 Gold Award holders in the country.

The accolade, the highest available in the ERS, recognises the Council's action to support currently serving troops, service families, veterans and cadets.

The Council's Housing Team has been kept up to date on Armed Forces Act requirements and these are reflected in the Housing Allocations Policy.

South Kesteven District Council has engaged with the recently created industry-led forum, the Greater Lincolnshire Defence and Security Network (GLDSN). The GLDSN brings together national and international defence organisations, manufacturing, research, development and innovation expertise. The network is designed to provide a single forum to overcome sector challenges and identify business opportunities in Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland.

An annual update on Armed Forces engagement is considered by the Council's Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

<http://moderngovsvr/documents/s40570/Appendix%201.pdf>

How the Covenant impacts South Kesteven:

The Council aims to encourage a defence-friendly environment across the District. Supporting the delivery of Armed Forces Covenant pledges features as part of the skills development focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.

Lincolnshire Women's Strategy

The Safer Lincolnshire Partnership created a new Lincolnshire Women's Strategy to facilitate the delivery in Lincolnshire of the outcomes sought by the Ministry of Justice's Female Offender Strategy 2018.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/719819/female-offender-strategy.pdf

The Lincolnshire Women's Strategy is hosted on the Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner's website and sees the Council committed to working together to improve outcomes for Lincolnshire women and girls at risk of entering or who have already entered the criminal justice sector.

<https://lincolnshire-pcc.gov.uk/media/3027/lincolnshire-womens-strategy.pdf>

As a signatory of the Lincolnshire Concordat, South Kesteven District Council has agreed to work with Lincolnshire agencies to identify and respond to the needs of women.

<https://lincolnshire-pcc.gov.uk/transparency/lincolnshire-womens-strategy/lincolnshire-concordat/>

How this strategy impacts South Kesteven:

The Council will work in partnership with the voluntary, private and public sectors to enable the delivery of community projects and responsive support services to meet the needs of all our communities. Safety and accessibility audits feature as part of the inclusive growth and regeneration focus of the Economic Development Strategy's accompanying action plan.



Contact

Alternative formats are available on request:
audio, large print and Braille

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